

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

December 2003

*Wishing you a Christmas filled with all the wonder and joy of that first Christmas night so long ago*

*Wli Nipialasutma*

*aqg*

*Wli Puna' ne' wi*

*Eskasoni Community Health Centre Staff*

ESKASONI COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1  
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

## BULLYING AND YOUR CHILD

Gone are the days where children who experienced bullying were told to "put up with it" or "don't tell tales out of school". Psychologists have identified bullying as a problem that can seriously affect children of all ages and can result in deep psychological scarring.

There are things parents and children can do about bullying.

Parents should be aware of the signs their children are being bullied, or may be a bully.

### Why do children become bullies?

- Someone else—perhaps a parent or sibling—is picking on them
- someone bigger and stronger is pressuring them into being a "tough" person

- they think the world revolves around them
- they are looking for attention, sometimes negative attention is better than no attention at all
- they have family problems
- they have no true friends and feel lonely
- they feel bad about themselves and want others to feel bad too
- they feel insecure, and bullying makes them feel powerful
- they want classmates to think they are strong and in control
- they don't care or think about other people's feelings

### How can I tell if my child is being bullied?

Be concerned if your child...

- is frightened of walking to and from school or is unwilling to go to school
- begs to be driven to school or changes his/her route to school



- begins to do poorly in school
- comes home regularly with belongings destroyed or missing
- has unexplained cuts or bruises, stops eating or begins to have nightmares, becomes withdrawn, distressed or suicidal

### With your child...

- listen and be supportive—take bullying seriously
- reassure your child that

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## Flu Vaccination: An Ounce of Prevention

### Facts On Flu Vaccinations

Influenza, known as the flu, is caused by two different types of viruses and occurs in Canada every year, usually during the late fall and winter months. The usual

symptoms of influenza are **sudden onset of fever, headache, chills, cough, chest discomfort, sore throat, sore muscles and joints, headache and tiredness**. Influenza can cause severe illness such as bronchitis and pneumonia and even

death, especially in people over age 65 and those with chronic illness. Every year in Nova Scotia over 2500 hospitalizations and over 400 deaths are the result of influenza infection.

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# Flu Vaccinations (cont'd.)

Influenza vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza and its complications. Since influenza viruses change from year to year, vaccinations need to be repeated every fall. Influenza vaccinations are especially important for:

- People with chronic conditions such as heart, lung or kidney disease.
- People with conditions such as diabetes, cancer, immune suppression, anemia, or HIV
- People 65 years or older.

Health care workers and those who live or care for individuals in the above high-risk groups.

The only people who should *not* receive influenza vaccine are people who have severe or anaphylactic allergies to eggs or who have had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of influenza vaccine.

Every fall, starting mid-October, influenza vaccine is available at no cost from your CHN or Doctor. There are many myths about influenza vaccine but in reality it is a very safe and well-tolerated vaccine.

## CAN THE INFLUENZA VACCINE GIVE PEOPLE INFLUENZA?

No, the manufacturing process kills the virus particles in the flu vaccine, so the vaccine cannot cause an Influenza infection.

## I GOT THE FLU VACCINE LAST YEAR AND STILL GOT FLU



## SYMPTOMS. HOW?

Possible explanations for getting Influenza-like illness despite being vaccinated are:

The vaccine did not give full protection and the person got true Influenza. This will happen to a few people, but without vaccination the illness would probably be much more severe.

Many other viruses give people flu-like symptoms. Influenza vaccine does not prevent these other illnesses; it only protects you against true influenza. The Influenza-like symptoms are probably due to infection by another virus.

## IS IT TRUE THAT SIDE EFFECTS OF INFLUENZA VACCINES ARE WORSE THAN THE FLU ITSELF?

No. The benefits of Influenza vaccine far outweigh any risks, especially for people at high risk of getting severe Influenza and its complications. Most people experience few or no side effects.

After a flu shot, some people may

blame the symptoms of another illness on the vaccine. Taking Tylenol (Acetaminophen) shortly after your flu shot may decrease the frequency of side effects such as redness, pain and swelling at the injection site.

If you do experience the rare flu-like side effects, they will usually disappear in 24 - 28 hours, while the flu can last for 10 days or more and may leave you feeling unwell even longer. Also, a true case of Influenza always leaves open the possibility of complications, such as pneumonia, and even death.

If you are 65 years of age or older, or in one of the other "high-risk" categories, then the best way to protect yourself from influenza is to have yourself, and your close contacts [household members and care givers], immunized every fall.

The following general steps will help you avoid Influenza and the many other viruses that are around every fall and winter:

- Wash your hands frequently with hot water and soap
- Avoid close contact with people who are coughing and sneezing
- Eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly and get enough sleep. This helps you fight off infections.

**Please call the Health Centre to make a vaccination appointment.**

## HOSPITAL TAXI PHONE NUMBERS

**ATHANASIOS 379-2183**

**VINEY SAPIER 379-2001**

**SPENCER 379-2561 / 1399**

**MARY J. DENNIS 379-2709**

**ANDREW JOHNSON 379-2317**

**JEAN MARSHALL 379-2929**

# Laughter: The Best Medicine ☺

## UN-NATURAL CHILDBIRTH

A boy was assigned a paper on child-birth and asked his parents "How was I born?"

"Well honey ..." said the slightly prudish parent, "the stork brought you to us."

"OH," said the boy. "Well, how did you and daddy get born?"

"Oh, the stork brought us too."

"Well, how were grandpa and grandma born?" he persisted.

"Well darling", said the parent, by now starting to squirm a little, "the stork brought them too!"

Several days later, the boy handed his paper in to the teacher who read the opening sentence with some con-

fusion :

"This report has been very difficult to write due to the fact that there hasn't been a natural childbirth in my family for three generations."

## SWEET TOOTH

A little boy was taken to the dentist and it was discovered that he had a cavity that would have to be filled.

"Now, young man," asked the dentist, "what kind of filling would you like for that tooth?"

"Chocolate, please," replied the youngster

## PUT IT WHERE?

A woman brought her baby to see him, and he determined right away that the baby had an earache. He wrote a prescription for ear drops. In

the directions he wrote, "Put two drops in right ear every four hours" and he abbreviated "right" as an R with a circle around it.

Several days passed, and the woman returned with her baby, complaining that the baby still had an earache, and his little bottom was getting really greasy with all those drops of oil.

The doctor looked at the bottle of ear drops and sure enough, the pharmacist had typed the following instructions on the label:

"Put two drops in R ear every four hours."



## DIABETES CORNER:

### What is Diabetes?

A disease where the pancreas is not able to produce the necessary amounts of insulin.

### What is Insulin?

A hormone produced by the pancreas that breaks down food into energy.

### Types of Diabetes:

#### Type 1

- Insulin Dependent; juvenile diabetes)

#### Type 2

- Non-insulin dependent
- Insulin dependent

#### Gestational Diabetes

- Occurs during pregnancy
- Ends with birth
- Increased risk for diagnosis in mother and child

### Blood Sugar Levels

#### Without Diabetes

- Fasting blood sugars: 3.8 – 6.1 mm 01/L

- After meals (1 – 2hrs.) 4.4 – 7.0 mm 01/L

#### With Diabetes

- Fasting Blood Sugars: 4 –7 mm 01/L
- After Meals (1 – 2hrs.) 5 – 10mm 01/L

### Symptoms of Diabetes:

#### Low Blood Sugars (Hypoglycemia)

- Extreme Tiredness
- Mood Changes
- Trembling
- Dizziness
- Paleness
- Sweating
- Blurred Vision
- Headaches
- Anger
- Slurred Speech

#### High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)

- Extreme Tiredness

- Drowsiness

- Dry Mouth

- Extreme Thirst

- Frequent Urge To Pee

### Causes of Type 2 Diabetes:

#### Uncontrollable Risk Factors

- Genetic pre-disposition as in Indigenous Peoples
- Heredity (1 Parent = 50% risk for children or both Parents = 75% risk for children)

- Age

#### Controllable Risk Factors

- Obesity or carrying more weight than is healthy
- Lifestyle Changes ie) eating habits, physical activities, personal attitude

- Living out of balance

#### Complications from Diabetes

- Blindness

- Cardio-vascular Complications:

- Heart attacks
- Strokes

# GOOD HEALTH AND HYGIENE: It's In *YOUR* Hands!



Hand washing is the single most important way to reduce the spread of infection.

## WHY IS HAND WASHING SO IMPORTANT?

Washing your hands and your children's hands is the best thing you can do to stop the spread of germs. The moment that you finish washing your hands, you start to collect germs again by opening doors, wiping faces, playing with children's toys and changing diapers. You cannot avoid collection germs, but you can reduce the chance of infecting others by knowing when to wash your hands.

## WHEN SHOULD PARENTS WASH THEIR HANDS?

Parents should wash their hands before and after activities that have a high risk of spreading germs.

### Wash your hands before:

- Cooking or eating (breastfeeding moms need to wash their hands too)
- Feeding a baby or child
- Giving medication to a child

### Wash your hands after:

- Changing a diaper
- Handling pets or animals
- Wiping noses (when possible!)
- Helping a child to use a toilet
- Using the toilet yourself
- Taking care of a sick child

## WHEN SHOULD CHILDREN WASH THEIR HANDS?

Children should wash their hands before:

- Eating or handling food and water play

### Children should wash their hands after:

- Having a diaper change
- Playing outdoors or in sand

- Going to the toilet
- Playing with pets or animals

## What is a good hand washing routine?

- Wet your hands under running warm water
- Scrub your hands with soap for a count of five
- Rinse your hands under running water for a count of five
- Dry your hands with a clean towel
- Use hand lotion after washing your hands to prevent your skin from getting sore.

Information for this article can be found on the following website:

[caringforkids.cps.ca](http://caringforkids.cps.ca) and was prepared by C. Lamoureux,



# BULLYING AND YOUR CHILD (Cont'd.)

## What can I do if my child is being bullied?

With your child...

- listen and be supportive-take bullying seriously
- reassure your child that it isn't his or her fault
- ask how they've been dealing with the bullying
- talk about what actions you can both take to solve the problem

- promise to consult your child before taking any action

With the school...

- talk with the school principal and ask what they can do to help
- suggest the school contact the bully's parents
- ask that bullies be kept after school until other children have left
- encourage the school to develop a "no bullying" policy, if they don't already have one

- contact your school's liaison police officer

# Stuff and Such:

## FIGHT THE FLU BUG

- Rest As Much As Possible  
Give your body a chance to fight the bug
- Drink Plenty Of Fluids  
6 to 8 glasses of water each day
- Eat Well If You Are Hungry  
Hot soups and other nourishing foods will help you regain your strength.
- Try To Stay Home  
Bugs travel easily so avoid spreading your bugs to others.
- Wash Your Hands Often
- Keep People With Flu Away From Babies



## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL PATIENTS OF ESKASONI CLINIC

It is VERY important that patients of the Eskasoni Clinic do their best in keeping medical appointments outside of the clinic to specialists or tests at the hospital.

It is understandable that sometimes people are unable to keep their appointment. You may forget or have difficulty getting a drive. If you have difficulty getting a drive please contact the Health Centre and our staff will help you get a drive.

It is very important that patients keep their appointments with specialist, because if you miss more than 2 appointments they have the right as specialists to refuse service.

There are so few specialists in the Cape Breton area, so please do your best to keep your appointments.

## The Solvent Abuse Spiral

By.

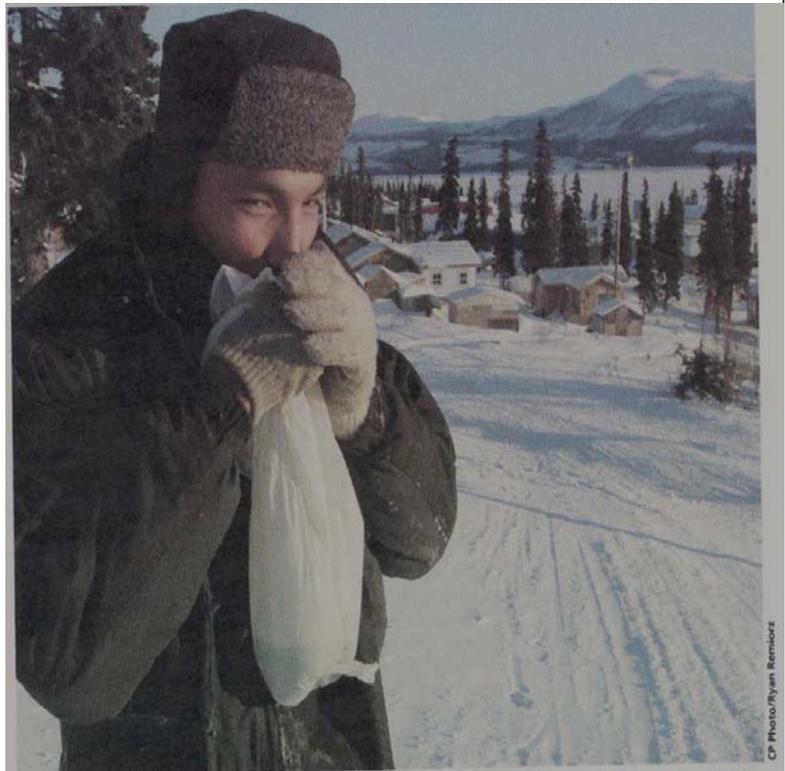
Dr. Gilda Frent

When it comes to solvent abuse in Canada there is very little good news. In fact, new research suggests the brain damaging effects of solvents may continue - even after the parent has stopped using.

There is no system in the body that is not affected by solvent abuse. The adrenal gland, the kidneys and the lungs suffer, but they do not suffer as much as the brain. Not only is the brain damage permanent, but it also continues after abstinence. The abusers develop movement disorder, speech problems, and often dementia.

The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program has nine solvent abuse treatment centers across Canada.

If you, a friend, or family member would like help for solvent abuse please contact your family doctor.



A young Innu man inhales gasoline as he makes his way home at dawn in the remote Innu community of Davis Inlet, Nfld., January 2001.

CP Photo/Ryan Remiorz

# FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME AND EFFECTS

## NO AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL IS 'SAFE' DURING PREGNANCY

When a pregnant woman drinks, the alcohol passes from the mother's blood into the baby through the placenta. Since the baby's liver is still developing, it cannot get rid of the alcohol as fast as the mother's liver can.

Alcohol stays twice as long in the fetus as in the mother, and the blood alcohol level equals that of the mother. The effect of alcohol on the developing fetus depends on the stage of development. For example, the risk of abnormalities in the baby's appearance is higher when alcohol is consumed during the first trimester (first 3 months) of pregnancy.

During the second trimester, if the mother continues to drink, there is an extremely high-risk of miscarriage.

The brain is the main concern during the third trimester because the brain continues to grow and develop even after birth. For this reason, breast feeding mothers who drink will inevitably damage their baby's brain cells because of the passing of alcohol from the mother to the child.

One group of abnormalities observed in babies affected by alcohol is known as FAS – Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. FAS is recognized as the leading cause of mental retardation in infants.

A Child with FAS Has 3 or More of

the Following:

### Facial Characteristics

small head, thick upper lip, flat cheekbones, narrow, small eye openings and a small jaw

*Developmentally, FAS children have reduced growth before or after birth, typically skinny and small, growing into small adults.*

### Central Nervous System

delayed developmental or intellectual impairment, mental handicaps, small brain and head circumference brain malformations, behavioral disorders, learning disabilities as well as attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity.

Another effect of consuming alcohol during and after pregnancy is called Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE).

This resembles FAS, but does not have all of the same characteristics. FAE is often referred to as the invisible disability because it is more thought of as behavioral problems.

Since the brain is in continuous growth throughout pregnancy and after, consumption of alcohol while pregnant and breastfeeding will affect different areas of the brain resulting in behavioral problems.

FAE, unlike FAS must only meet two of the criteria mentioned above to be diagnosed. 1) Central nervous system and 2) Reduced growth before and after birth.

Children born with FAE tend to become

over stimulated from such things as bright lights and loud sounds (and consequently have difficulty focusing in school). For example, the brightness of fluorescent lights and the buzzing noise they make. These things can cause agitation and frustration for children with FAE and can simply be reduced by reducing the amount of stimuli around the individual so that he or she is not disturbed.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Q. How much Alcohol is too much?*

There is no known safe level of drinking. When you know your pregnant or even suspect, STOP DRINKING!

*Q. Is there a cure?*

No! Unfortunately, these effects are irreversible and children born with FAS must carry the burden for their entire lives.

(From FAS & FAE: Saving Our Children, NADACA)



## Recipe of the Month: Christmas Shortbread Cookies By Anita MacKinnon Dietitian

### Ingredients

- 1 cup margarine
- 2/3 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 2 cups flour

### Equipment

- cookie sheet
- large bowl
- wooden spoon
- dry measuring cups
- rolling pin
- Christmas cookie cutters

### Method

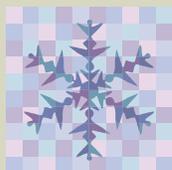
1. Wash your hands in hot soapy water.
2. Wash your work area with hot soapy water, then rinse and dry it.
3. Turn the oven on 300°.
4. Set out the equipment and ingredients you will need.
5. In a large bowl, cream the margarine and brown sugar.
6. Add flour and mix well.
7. Form the dough into a ball and chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour.
8. Roll the dough out until it is 1/4 inch thick.
9. Cut out cookie using the Christmas cookie cutters.
10. Sprinkle with red or green decorations.
11. Place on cookie sheet.
12. Bake in oven for 18-20 minutes.
13. Cool for a few minutes before you eat them.

## ESKASONI COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

44 Spencer's Lane  
PO Box 7745  
Eskasoni, Nova Scotia  
B1W 1B3

Primary Care: 902-379-2500  
Home Care: 902-379-3200  
Dental: 902-379-2130  
Fax: 902-379-2421  
HeadStart: 379-2232  
Mental Health: 379-2910  
Pharmacy: 379-2255  
Prenatal 379-1301

*Your Best Source for Health Information*



## PHONE NUMBERS

<b>Eskasoni Band Office</b>	<b>379-2800</b>
<b>Smoker's Helpline</b>	<b>1-877-513-5333</b>
<b>Kids Help Phone</b>	<b>1-800-668-6868</b>
<b>Poison Info</b>	<b>1-800-565-8161</b>
<b>Gambling Help Line</b>	<b>1-888-347-8888</b>
<b>RCMP Eskasoni Detachment</b>	<b>379-2822</b>
<b>Persons in Emotional Distress</b>	<b>562-4357 or 567-2911</b>
<b>Youths in Emotional Distress</b>	<b>567-0330</b>
<b>Emergency</b>	<b>911</b>

## DIABETES (cont'd.)

### Type 2 Diabetes in Aboriginal People in Canada

- Rare before 1940's
- Today 3-5 times higher than National average –26% age adjusted rate
- High rates of complications
- In some Aboriginal Communities:
  - Half of the 50 year olds have diabetes
  - Mother with diabetes in pregnancy leads to half of this children developing diabetes by age of 30 years



### Nova Scotia First Nations Diabetes Fact Sheet

- Diabetes is a life long condition
- People with Diabetes have a lot of extra sugar in their blood
- Once someone gets diabetes they have it for the rest of their lives.
- A lot of native people in Nova Scotia (18%) have diabetes just like a lot of Native people everywhere else. More Native people here in NS have diabetes compared to the general population of NS (5%).
- When a person has diabetes, he/she can develop serious problems with some parts of their

body; like the heart and blood vessels, kidneys and eyes.

The good news is that diabetes can be prevented by eating healthy foods and participating in regular exercise.

*Nova Scotia First Nation Regional Health Survey (1999)*

**DROP IN TO THE DIABETIC CLINIC AT THE HEALTH CENTRE DAILY TO HAVE YOUR SUGAR OR CHOLESTEROL CHECKED.**



# Weight Loss Success: An Interview with Johnny Bernard

By: Norma Campbell, Dietetic Intern

Have you ever wanted to lose a few pounds but thought “Oh, I can’t do that” or “That’s way too much work”? Well here is an inspirational story to get you motivated!

Johnny Bernard is a bright and pleasant 26 year old man from Eskasoni. Most people would recognize him as the full time file clerk and receptionist at the Eskasoni Health Care Center. Soon, Johnny will start a second job as a Mikmaq Hospital liaison and interpreter at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital. It will take a lot of energy and a strong, healthy body to work two jobs, and that is something Johnny has not always had.

Two years ago, on October 15, 2001, Johnny came into the Eskasoni Health Care Center complaining of chest pains. Tests showed he has high blood pressure, his cholesterol was up, and he had an abnormal heart beat. This was certainly enough to scare Johnny into changing his bad habits. The first thing that Johnny did was to quit smoking. He says this was very hard at first but he knew he had to do it for the good of his health. Next, Johnny went to see his good friend Anita MacKinnon, the dietitian at the Eskasoni Health Center. Johnny says that Anita helped him a lot by telling him about good foods to eat and the importance of physical activity. Johnny notes that losing weight was very hard at first because he had also just quit smoking. However, Johnny kept at it and continued to see Anita and also attended her Healthy Cooking Classes.

After Christmas of last year, Johnny had successfully quit smoking, has begun to participate in regular physical activity, was eating healthy, and had lost his first 10 pounds! Now, approximately 1 year later, Johnny is still smoke free, active, and has lost a total of 30 pounds. Johnny’s goal is to continue his healthy ways and hopefully lose some more weight. He also hopes he is a positive role model for others looking to improve their health, especially his younger brother and sister.

As for advice, Johnny says “You have to remember that weight loss is not an overnight process. It takes a lot of determination and effort. Personally, I think it is all worth it when it comes down to your health. Great support, help, and strong encouragement is always available at the Health Center. There is always someone there to help, but the first step comes when you decide to get up and start walking and eating right. Once you start, don’t give up!”

When asked how he feels now, Johnny said “There are not enough words to describe how I feel. All I can say is that I feel great. I feel more active, energetic, and much more confident.”

Congratulations Johnny! You will certainly need the extra energy when you start your new job!

