



On the Road with Children's Activities BUS

Brief Description

The ORCA (On the Road with Children's Activities) Bus is an initiative of Success by 6[®] Powell River in partnership with PRESS (Powell River Education Services Society), a non-profit entity of School District 47. School District 47 donated a decommissioned school bus to the project, and various community members have been involved in the refit. The ORCA Bus is supported by volunteer seniors and will bring early childhood development (ECD) programming and resources to all preschoolers, including those in outlying communities in the Powell River area. The ORCA bus will visit preschools and daycares for the first few months following its Launch in November, and then will travel from Saltery Bay to Lund, including Texada, bringing information, programs, activities and fun to neighbourhoods along the way. The bus is literally a vehicle for intergenerational exchanges, for early childhood development, for learning and connecting, and for bringing services like early literacy supports, information about health and nutrition, puppets, stories and cultural exchange to all areas of the region. Community programs and services will be encouraged to use the bus for outreach programming. Powell River Library staff will travel on the bus and provide lendable resources! A regular route will be followed that will allow neighbourhoods to become accustomed to the ORCA Bus visits.

The Early Childhood Years

The grounds for investing in our children's earliest years are well-established. Research shows that every dollar spent on early, enriched opportunities for children avoids up to seven dollars later in health, social service and justice system expenses. According to the latest research on brain development, the most critical period of a child's development is from conception to age six. Amazingly, 90% of the brain's growth occurs by age 5. This is when a young child is developing emotional and social attachment, language and motor skills. If a brain is stimulated from infancy, children will learn easily and function well physically. Early stimulation will help a child reach his or her full potential as an adult.

Objectives of the Bus

The goals of the ORCA (On the Road with Children's Activities) Bus are to work in collaboration with community and private sector partners to:

- Facilitate literacy, early learning and readiness to learn
- Increase parents' ability to access and link with community resources
- Support and empower parents in their roles as the primary caregivers/educators of their children
- Reduce isolation and anxiety
- Develop social networks

On-Board Programming

- Stories
- Songs
- Games
- Crafts
- Puppets
- Healthy snacks for kids
- Early literacy supports
- Community Visitors
 - Agency personnel provide information specific to their agency
- Community brochures and information
- Parent resources and referrals
- Cultural exchange