



**Holiday Joy is Optional** By Kathy Lynn, Professional Speaker, Writer and Broadcaster



Many parents see Christmas as a time for children and assume they must sacrifice everything for the children, must do everything for the children and make the holiday a perfect and memorable experience for the children.

When my oldest child, Chelsea, was a baby and I was pregnant, I read a magazine article that saved our Christmas. I was ready to bake and decorate and shop 'til I dropped. This was my first Christmas as a parent and by golly it was going to be perfect! The author of this article wisely reminded me that the perfect Christmas memories of my childhood came from when I was older, not from when I was an infant. I considered my 11 month-old daughter and my rapidly expanding waistline (her brother was born 3 months later), and in coordination with my husband, designed a Christmas that made sense for us that year.

Chelsea loved the lights on the Christmas tree, chewed happily on the boxes containing gifts, and truly appreciated the relaxed and happy atmosphere of that holiday season. Every Christmas is not perfect; like everyone else, I sometimes get so involved in my dreams and expectations that I come close to ruining Christmas for myself, and everyone around me. But there are some guidelines that can help make Christmas a good time for all family members.

**Extended Family:**

Discuss your expectations and values with all family members who will be joining you over the holidays. Many problems arise due to clash in values ("But we always eat at noon.") or expectations ("I just assumed that if I cooked Christmas dinner, you'd have us all over for the next holiday.") Remember to deal with these issues each year there are new or different family members in town. Missing this conversation can lead to dreadfully hurt feelings that no-one will understand.

Deal with whether you will be with his family or her family in clear fashion and in a way that is fair to all. Two big meals in one day can ruin the holiday for you, to say nothing of your waistline. Try to plan spending relaxed and comfortable time with whatever relatives you want to visit.

My cousin, parent to four adult married children and grandmother to six, tells me that she rotates Christmas and Boxing Day. One year they all show up on Christmas, the next year it's Boxing Day. So far, it's working beautifully and all of her children's in-laws agree.

**Shopping:**

The obvious issue is to be in control of your budget. Purchase only things you can afford,

and be realistic.

Involve children in shopping for their parents and siblings. From the age of 18-24 months, children should be actively involved in choosing gifts. Little ones may in fact make gifts for family members. A piece of artwork from a two-year-old is priceless in the eyes of Grandma. The important thing is that children understand that they are making or buying gifts for family members. Once they have an allowance, they should pay all or part of the cost for gifts for their parents and siblings. Having the parents buy something, and putting the child's name on it, is not teaching the child anything about the joy of giving or well as the fun and frustration of shopping within a budget.

**Involving the Children**

Children who can write can help address Christmas cards, younger children can stamp and seal envelopes.

Kids love to help bake. We often get so tied up in the need for perfection, we can't allow our children to do their best, to participate, and to proudly serve the cookies or squares they baked. The kids are underfoot while you're trying to bake anyway, so you may as well get them working. These same children can take over the bak-

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**DATES TO REMEMBER**

<p>CPPPBC Office closed for the holidays between Dec. 20th and Jan. 1st, re-opening on Tuesday, Jan. 4th, 2011</p>	<p>Upcoming CPPPBC Board Meetings                  Monday, December 6th, 2010                  Monday, January 10th, 2011</p>	<p>CPPPBC Annual 'Spring Fling' Awards Night &amp; Banquet at the Delta Burnaby Hotel                  Saturday, April 17th, 2011</p>
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*Wishing You and Your Family a Safe and Happy Holidays  
 From the CPPPBC Board and Staff*

# What's the Big Deal About Playground Insurance?

By Hilary Feldman, CPPPBC Financial Advisor



Maybe you've noticed that there has been a lot more talk about insurance recently. Of course, this may not be happening at your own school, but some preschools are wondering if something has changed. The short answer: no – nothing has changed about the group insurance policies offered through the Council. What has changed is the legal climate in BC. Unfortunately, preschools face a greater chance of being sued as a result of injury.

Access to preschool playgrounds has been the latest hot topic. It mainly depends on your location. So, if your playground is located in a municipal park, public school, or community centre, then you probably don't own the equipment. Preschools operating in their own buildings, churches, or other private properties may own their playground equipment.

If your preschool doesn't own the playground equipment but you use it during preschool hours, then your existing liability insurance is fine. On the other hand, if your preschool owns or rents the playground, then liability insurance is more of a concern.

Why is this? Our group insurance covers all normal preschool operations. So children, parents, and teachers are insured during preschool hours and other preschool events. Outside of these times, the insurance does not apply. If someone uses your playground outside of preschool, and they are injured, the preschool insurance would not be involved.

"So what?" you might think. Well, if it's a serious injury, the person (or family or estate) might sue the owner/operator of the playground. That means that the preschool, individual executive members, and possibly the teacher, could be named on a multi-million dollar lawsuit. This is true even if the injured person was trespassing on private property at the time. Under BC law, children also retain the right to file a suit for a number of years, in case an injury

has serious consequences later on.

Nobody wants to be named in a civil suit for damages. So we need to do our best to ensure that the situation never arises. If your preschool is used by other groups outside of preschool hours, you need to consider the options. Although serious injuries are unlikely, it's important to be prepared. You could seal off the playground with a higher fence and locks, and put up clear signs that the playground is only for preschool use. You could open the playground but get users to sign a waiver form. You could enter into an agreement with other user groups, which states that they will cover liability and your preschool is exempt from responsibility. Various solutions are possible, depending on your school's situation and community relationships.

Our current insurance policies are specifically for cooperative preschool operations. Opening a playground for public use is entirely different – and involves a much higher risk bracket. Municipalities and school boards pay huge premiums for their playgrounds.

As parent participation preschools, we want to welcome everyone – that's how community-building works. But we can't afford to ignore the increasingly litigious nature of society. Each preschool can discuss various preferences and solutions based on your membership.

Feel free to contact the Council staff or Board if you have more questions.



## Holiday Joy is Optional

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By Kathy Lynn, Professional Speaker, Writer and Broadcaster



ing as they become ten or eleven after those earlier years of marvelous training.

There are many tasks for children in preparation of Christmas dinner; salad preparation, washing vegetables, tearing bread for stuffing, making decorative name tags for the table, setting the table, clearing up and washing the dishes (or loading the dishwasher). All these jobs give children the opportunity of working alongside adults, doing real work.

Children love to be actively involved in choosing and decorating the tree, hanging a wreath, displaying cards.

In other words, Christmas is not just for children, it's for all of us and

if we all share in the planning, the preparation and the presentation of our holiday traditions, we can all share in the joy.

These concepts hold whether you celebrate Christmas or another winter holiday. Make your holiday just that; **your** holiday. Consider the age of your children, the tradition, values and expectations of all family members, and only do what you can and want to do. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Kathy Lynn is a professional speaker, broadcaster columnist and author of *Who's In Charge Anyway?* and *But Nobody Told Me I'd Ever Have to Leave Home*. For information or to book Kathy for a speaking engagement, go to her website at [www.ParentingToday.ca](http://www.ParentingToday.ca)

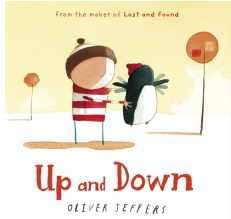
# Some Winter Picks

By Carolyn Hart, BC Certified Teacher



STORYTIME STANDOUTS

Before sharing three special books with you, I would like to extend an invitation to visit my 'new' website. Featuring many, many printables, picture book recommendations, chapter book suggestions as well as information about early literacy and my workshops, I sincerely hope you will find it useful. Please be sure to visit [www.storytimestandouts.com](http://www.storytimestandouts.com)



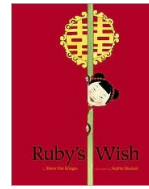
In Up and Down by Oliver Jeffers we meet two friends who do everything together. They enjoy making music and they love a good game of backgammon. All is well until Penguin decides that it is his destiny to fly. Without explanation to his best friend, Penguin embarks on a mission to discover the secret of flight. Boy is bereft - he can't understand his friend's sudden disappearance. It is indeed fortunate that Boy sees an advertisement for an upcoming circus performance involv-

ing a cannon and a very familiar face. Boy races to be there and to soften his friend's landing.

With a lovely message about friendship and celebrating one's unique abilities, Up and Down will be thoroughly enjoyed by children aged three and up.



It is Christmas Eve and his rabbit friends have moved into a new burrow. Fletcher suddenly realizes that Santa won't know about the rabbits' new home. Together with his forest friends, Fletcher leaves a trail of arrows for Santa to follow. Unfortunately, a snowfall on Christmas Eve conceals the signs. What happens next is truly magical... Fletcher and the Snowflake Christmas uses rich description and evocative, pastel illustrations to tell a heartwarming story of friendship. A great addition to your holiday bookshelf.



Many years ago, Ruby lived with her grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins in a huge house in a city in China. At that time, girls did not typically have a chance to go to school but Ruby was fortunate. In her household, because there were many children, a teacher came and taught all the boys. Unlike her girl cousins, Ruby did not want to be married; she wanted to go to university. Each day, Ruby worked hard to study with the boys in addition to learning all of the household skills expected of girls. Ruby's Wish is beautifully illustrated and lovingly told. Based on a true story, it will be enjoyed by children five years and up.

**Storytime Standouts** is written by Carolyn Hart. Carolyn is a former PPP parent and a B.C. certified teacher. She presents Early Literacy programs at Richmond community centres and programs for adults throughout the Lower Mainland. For more information, email her at [carolyn@storytimestandouts.com](mailto:carolyn@storytimestandouts.com)



TEACHERS CORNER

## Children as Scientists

By Nicola VanHeyst, Supervisor, LVPPP



Children are natural scientists; exploring, experimenting and problem-solving to discover how and why things work. They are also mathematicians who want to figure out relationships among objects and create order in their activities. Adults can help children express and develop their logical/mathematical intelligence as the solve problems throughout the day. Adults can become the child's "laboratory assistant" by extending their thinking, sharing knowledge and constructing hypotheses together. Listen to what the children are saying as they play, and repeat what they have said so that they can have an opportunity to clarify for you what they meant. Offer new words to extend their vocabulary and enrich their language skills. Allow the children to make a hypothesis and try it out, before you step in with your knowledge. By allowing the children to make mistakes, you teach them that failure is okay too. When children are allowed to fail, and they

try again, they learn the positive side to risk-taking. If you never take a risk, and always fear failure, then you cannot learn.

When exploring outdoors, it is a good opportunity to allow children to take risks, such as: climbing trees, jumping from rock to rock, walking on slippery logs, climbing up large rocks, and so on. Research has shown that if children are exposed to risks like these, they are a lot less likely to be seriously hurt as adults.

Try to avoid saying "be careful!" If a child asks you if he/she can do something, put the question back to the child. If we always tell them what they can and can't do, they will not be able to judge for themselves when the time comes. Trust them to know what they are capable of.




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email: [cppadmin@telus.net](mailto:cppadmin@telus.net)  
or Phone: 604-435-4430




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Contact Roberta at [cncbcb@telus.net](mailto:cncbcb@telus.net) or (604)435-4430.

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Council Office: Monday to Thursday 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

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