



Early Childhood Development & Care

- Daily drop in stay and play program
- Centre-based learning environment
- Making Sense of the World learning games for children
- Daily circle time programs (songs, stories and rhymes)
- Themed special events (Halloween, Christmas, and Pajama party)
- Toy Lending Library
- Mother Goose
- Themed Resource Kits for early childhood and classroom settings

Parent Education

- Raising Great Kids
- workshops on child development and parenting topics
- Family life enrichment workshops
- Triple P Parenting Seminars
- Active Parenting Course

Information & Referral

- Knowledgeable staff on site
- Public Health Nurse available once a week at drop-in
- Visiting resource professionals at drop in
- Newsletters
 - Parent Resource Library

Family Support

- Family support & counselling
- Relationship counseling
- Parenting and child development information
- I Grow, You Grow (parent/infant group)
- Special Needs Network
- Clothing exchange
- Toy exchange
- Book exchange
- Support groups that meet at the centre
- Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies
- Breastfeeding Support Circle
- Prenatal Wisdom

Developmental Screening

- Ages & Stages Questionnaire - Developmental screening tool

The Bow Valley Parent Link (BVPL) is a collaborative community program operated and managed by the Town of Canmore Community Enrichment department. The program serves families with children pre-natal to six years of age.

Community partners involved in Bow Valley Parent Link programming include: Bow Valley Families; Bow Valley Family Child Care; Alberta Child and Family Services; Town of Canmore; Town of Banff; MD of Bighorn; Calgary Health Region; AADAC; Canmore Public Library; Banff Public Library; Canadian Rockies Public School Division; Canmore Community Day Care; Banff Child Care Centre; Bow Valley Family Childcare; Wild Rose Community Connections; Woods Homes—Home Connections; YWCA.



Guiding Vision for the Program

The vision of the Bow Valley Parent Link is to create a community where all children, parents and families have the opportunity to support and be supported in their quest to raise healthy children in a safe, loving and nurturing family and community environment.

What is it?

The Bow Valley Parent Link program provides resources for parents, caregivers and children in a hands-on, child-centred environment (playrooms). BVPL creates an environment where families can find out about available community services, gain knowledge, skills and support each other as parents. BVPL was created in the spring of 2006 with the merging of two existing family resource programs, the Sunshine Corner in Banff and the Playroom: Early Parenting Centre in Canmore. By working collaboratively and inter-municipally the program was successful in obtaining provincial Parent Link funding dollars which enabled the expansion of the programs to include all families in the Bow Valley. **No fees apply** when registering for the Parent Link program.

Why have it?

Experiences during the first years of life lay the foundations for all other development throughout our lifetime. Having an enriched environment in which to learn through play, and having the opportunity to develop relationships with adults and peers, promotes healthy development in children. The program recognizes the wealth of knowledge and experience parents bring to the task of raising children. By providing a centre where families with young children can connect, families can support each other through the sharing of experiences, information, and resources thus facilitating the development of valuable informal networks of support and encouragement. We also recognize that parenting is a challenging task and that having access to community supports and information is an important resource for families.

Who is it for?

The Bow Valley Parent Link is for all parents, caregivers including mothers, fathers, grandparents, nannies and friends caring for children 0-6 years of age.

Where is it?

Currently two full time centres and one satellite centre are being operated in the Bow Valley. The Banff and Canmore sites have a full range of services and the Exshaw satellite site offers 2 weekly drop-ins and circle time program, information and referral services and a Parent Resource Library. Seasonal events are held in Lake Louise at various locations throughout the year.

Banff

101B Bear St.
P: 403 762-1116

Canmore

600 9th St.
P: 403 678-2529

Exshaw

27 Mt. Allen Dr.
(in the school portable)
P: 403 678-2529



Program Details

Bow Valley Parent Link Team

Bow Valley Parent Link Supervisor (FT) – The Bow Valley Parent Link Supervisor is accountable for the management and development of Bow Valley Parent Link and for ensuring programs and are delivered in the five core areas and meet the needs of the Bow Valley communities.

Education Coordinator (FT) – The Education Coordinator is responsible for the development and implementation of parent learning opportunities that address the interests and needs of parents of children 0-6 years and of childcare providers in the Bow Valley. The position is also responsible for the management of community resource information and facilitating the Stay and Play drop-in program in Canmore and Banff one day per week.

Early Years Coaches (FT) – The Early Years Coach is responsible for the provision of early childhood development, family support, information and referral services. In addition, these professionals coordinate the Stay and Play drop-in program in Canmore, Banff, and Exshaw; they provide program orientations, facilitate circle time and plan and facilitate the sensory learning program based on the Learning Games Curriculum.

Child and Family Worker (FT) – The Child and Family Worker (CFW) is responsible for providing 1:1 support to families to address child development, parenting issues, difficult life transitions and providing advocacy to families in the Bow Valley. This position also plans and facilitates special interest groups and provides support to various community groups. The Child and Family Worker coordinates the parent resource library and clothing exchange and is responsible for facilitating the Stay and Play drop-in program in Banff and Canmore one day per week.



Program Assistant (FT) – The Program Assistants are responsible for providing support in various areas of programming; i.e. childcare, administrative support, and facilitate the Stay and Play drop-in program on a regular basis. They are responsible for maintaining the facility.

Relationship Counsellor – The Relationship Counsellor is responsible for providing counselling to couples in the Bow Valley 0.2FTE. This service is available for couples with children 0-18 years of age.

Programming

All programs are linked to one of the five core service areas: Early Childhood Development and Care, Family Support, Information and Referral ,Parent Education, and Developmental Screening. (See front page for overview) Daily drop-in programming is available 5 days a week at the Banff site, 6 days a week at the Canmore site, and 2 days a week in Exshaw. A daily literacy program (circle time) follows each drop-in program. A number of support groups meet at the centre and families can obtain information regarding parenting, child development or community resources from any of the FT staff or by visiting our Parent Resource Libraries. A variety of parent learning opportunities are offered throughout the year, usually with childcare available. On site toy, book and clothing exchanges facilitate the sharing of resources between families and our information bulletin boards keep families informed. Our parent exchange board gives families the opportunity to post notices to buy, sell, give away or provide information for other families. Keep an eye on our website or check out our newsletter to get the latest news, events and programs. www.canmore.ca/parentlink



Funding

As one of dozens of Parent Link Centres across the Province of Alberta, Bow Valley Parent Link is currently funded through the Alberta Ministry of Children & Youth Services with in kind donations of space from the Town of Canmore, Town of Banff and The MD of Bighorn.



In order to ensure universal access to the centre, no user fees are required. Participants volunteer support is essential to the sustainability of this program.



Volunteer Support: The more family involvement there is in the Bow Valley Parent Link, the better the program will meet the needs of those it serves. Numerous opportunities exist to participate including: sharing a cultural celebration with the group; providing a helping hand with cleaning; making play-dough; distributing information in the community; repairing toys; doing laundry; contributing to the newsletter; partnership committee membership and more. Providing encouragement and support, sharing your ideas and voicing concerns by putting your comments in the comment box or providing feedback through discussions with staff are all ways to participate more fully.

Evaluation and Feedback: Your feedback is extremely important and valuable. The goal of the program is to meet the needs of Bow Valley families. In order to achieve this goal it is imperative that families themselves are involved in the planning, development and implementation of the program and participate in its evaluation. A comment/ suggestion box is provided on site and an annual membership survey is conducted. The Program Supervisor may be contacted at 678-7128 to discuss ideas or concerns or visit www.canmore.cparentlink.