

# CEDAR PARK Playgroup Press

Easter 2003

Hi everyone! We've heard that the ground hog didn't see his shadow--do we dare say that spring is really here? No more coats and hats, mitts, boots or other stuff. Yippee! Let the good times roll.

This year playgroup members have been extra-keen and there are no duty day derelicts. This is an unprecedented achievement! Everyone has been willing and able to help with tasks and sick day replacements. It's made our job easier and for this we thank you.

Another big thank you is for your generosity this past Christmas. The Christmas baskets were a great success and we even received a thank-you note from one of the recipients. Look for it on the bulletin board at playgroup.

If you're planning to go on vacation this spring, please remember that we are always collecting those little soaps and shampoos that you get in hotels for the West Island Women's Shelter. Just leave them in the plastic box near the blackboard.

There are members on the executive committee who will not be returning next year and we will need volunteers to replace them. Look for a poster at Playgroup letting you know what positions are available. Think about supporting your playgroup!

Donna Cameron-Trudel & Jennifer Sampson  
Playgroup Co-ordinators

## In this issue:

Family Health: Meningitis  
Your Child's Physical Activity  
Safe Sleeping for Babies  
Date Night Dining  
Introduce them to the Arts  
Staying Safe at the Playground  
The Importance of Reading  
An Easter Craft  
Classified Ads  
Just for the Kids: Colouring Page!

## Has Your Child Got Wheels? Get a Helmet!

By Janice Parnell-Fasciano

Activities with wheels are fun and are good ways to get exercise. But it's important to stay safe. Head injuries are the #1 cause of serious injury and death to kids on wheels. A helmet could save your child's life!

Find more safety tips for kids on wheels at:  
[www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca) or  
1-888-SAFE-TIPS



## Family Health: The ABCs of Meningitis

By Jill Sockett, BScN

### Various Types of Meningitis

Meningitis is an inflammation of the meninges, the lining surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by many different kinds of bacteria (such as meningococcus, streptococcus, or haemophilus influenzae -HIB) as well as by viruses. The bacterium that causes meningococcal meningitis has many different strains or serogroups. The most common strains found in Quebec are serogroup B and serogroup C. Over the last few years' outbreaks of meningococcal type C meningitis have been reported in Quebec and Ontario, as well as in other Canadian provinces. The focus of this article is on meningococcal type C meningitis, for which there now exists a vaccine.

Serogroups of Meningococcal Meningitis	Area of Prevalence
<b>A</b>	Responsible for epidemics in Africa. A vaccine is available for people who are traveling to certain regions in Africa.
<b>B</b>	Found in Quebec. No effective vaccine
<b>C</b>	Found in Quebec. One of the leading causes of meningitis. Vaccine now available.

### Meningococcal Type C Meningitis

Most people who are exposed do not easily become infected. However in a small group of cases, the bacteria invade the body and produce meningitis. In communities where outbreaks occur, the most susceptible groups are preschool children, especially those under one year of age, and adolescents. Meningococcal type C meningitis is rare in adults. The bacteria that can cause this type of meningitis are usually found at the back of the nose and throat. The infection is spread from one person to another through contact with these secretions (think of shared juice boxes, cookies, water bottles, toys and kisses as examples). The infection may be passed on even if the infected person does not show any symptoms of the disease.

### Signs and Symptoms Meningococcal Type C Meningitis

- Fever (usually high)
- Drowsiness/impaired consciousness
- Irritability, fussiness, agitation
- Severe headache
- Vomiting
- Stiff neck
- Pain on moving neck
- Rash (may or may not be present, often a later sign)

In infants under 12 months of age, clinical signs are often more difficult to recognize and may include fever, inconsolable irritability or screaming, difficulty feeding,

vomiting, bulging of the fontanel (soft spot), drowsiness, and/or convulsions. Although meningococcal infection may be treated with antibiotics, 10-20% of those infected may be left with serious health problems. And even with treatment, 10% of those infected may die.

### Prevention

Ways to help prevent meningococcal type C disease include practicing good basic hygiene such as washing one's hands frequently, not sharing things that have been in contact with another person's saliva, and vaccination. A mass vaccination campaign against meningococcal type C meningitis was funded by the provincial government in September 2001. This same vaccine (Menjugate) is now available to children who did not receive the vaccine during the previous campaign. The vaccine is available free of charge for children over one year of age through your local CLSC (or through your paediatrician or family doctor for a small fee). As vaccines must be kept in a special fridge, some doctors working in private offices charge a small handling fee (\$5 - \$10 per vaccine) to defer these costs. The vaccine may also be administered to infants under one year of age, although it is not presently being funded by the government for this age group. Thus the vaccine is more costly for infants two months to one year of age (anywhere from \$75 - \$100), however many private health insurance plans will cover some or all of the expense.

Menjugate is an effective vaccine, which has been extensively administered in Europe and is generally well tolerated. Remember though that the Menjugate vaccine does not provide protection against other meningococcal serogroups or other types of meningitis. There are however other available vaccines which do offer protection against other bacteria which cause meningitis (such as the Pevnar vaccine for streptococcal meningitis and the Hib component of the Pentacel vaccine which protects against meningitis caused by haemophilus influenzae type B). Discussion of these vaccines is beyond the scope of this article. However, the following two websites are worth surfing for those interested in obtaining more information on childhood vaccinations.

[www.immunize.cpha.ca](http://www.immunize.cpha.ca) & [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

In conclusion, the purpose of this article is not to persuade you to vaccinate your children against meningitis, but rather to give you some information about the different types of meningitis and to make you aware of the Menjugate vaccine's availability. (Anything free is worth writing about!) I would encourage all of you to talk to your respective health care providers about its risks and benefits for your particular child/children.

## Supporting Your Child's Physical Activity

By Janice Parnell-Fasciano

It is alarming that children today expend four times less energy than 40 years ago and do 75 per cent less exercise than children in 1980. Some 60 per cent of Canadian children do not meet average fitness standards. Girls are especially under-active. Even at four years old, a girl spends an average of four hours a week less than a boy being physically active, already believing that boys are better at physical activities than they are.



Activity is an important part of children's physical, mental and emotional development. Providing opportunities for them to develop physical skills reaps benefits in every aspect of their development, for the rest of their life. A positive attitude towards active play at an early age positively affects their later involvement in physical activity and fitness.

### 10 Ways to Encourage your Child to Be Physically Active

1. Be an active role model yourself. When mom or dad participates in physical activity, the child's participation rate tends to increase.

2. Provide everyday clothing for your child that encourages free movement and mobility. Avoid fancy, frilly or stiff outfits or clothing your child has been told to "keep clean". For your own sanity, provide clothing that is easy-care.
3. Photograph your child being active. Enlarge the photo. Frame it. Hang it. Show your child you are proud of it!
4. Actively support your child's involvement in physical activity. Buy good equipment. Go and watch you child's games. Drive your child to and from practices. They are as important as games. Consider volunteering. Your child's physical activity is a priority. Don't make a child sacrifice involvement in sport to baby sit or do housework.
5. Take your child to the park and be active together. Help your son and your daughter learn the fundamental skills of running, throwing, catching and kicking a ball.
6. Emphasize the fun rather than competition and slimming attributes. Encourage your child to try a variety of new activities, and help him or her learn the skills and acquire the equipment they need to participate. Avoid comments about your child's body size and shape. Love and support your child just the way s/he is. Don't undermine a child's confidence and take the joy out of playing. Help your child to learn the skills needed to enjoy sport.
7. Introduce your child to active women. All too often, women in sport are viewed as cheerleaders, water girls or chauffeurs. Both boys and girls need to be exposed to women who are athletes, coaches, officials and leaders in sport.

Buy sports books about women athletes. Watch women's sport events on TV with your child. Take your child to women's sport competitions in your community. Read the sports pages with your child and follow the performances of Canada's great athletes such as Silken Laumann, Kate Pace, Angela Chalmers, Myriam Bedard, Ljiljana Ljubisic and Alison Sydor.

8. Plan active vacations or weekend excursions. Try hiking, cross-country skiing, rafting.
9. Avoid comments about what boys and girls should or should not do. Make observations without making reference to gender. Avoid comments such as "you throw like a girl". Behavior guidelines are for all children.
10. Plan activities within your child's abilities so your child can achieve success. Praise and encouragement will foster your child's self-esteem



Adapted from a resource developed by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport email: [caaws@caaws.ca](mailto:caaws@caaws.ca)

## Safe Sleeping for Babies

By Hilary Jones

It is impossible to describe how it feels to watch your baby sleeping yet we all worry about what may happen while they are asleep. Each and every one of us has at one time or another, crept into their baby's room during the night to check they are still breathing. Things like SIDS and suffocation are extremely rare but there are some simple precautions that we can all take to ensure when we do actually get to sleep, we do so with peace of mind:

- **Follow the “back to sleep” rule.** Babies should be laid on their backs to sleep. Some parents worry that a baby on its back may be sick and choke but there is no evidence that this is the case. In exceptional circumstance because of specific medical problems, your doctor may advise you to put your baby to sleep on its tummy but this should not be done without the advice of a professional.
- **Don't smoke and avoid smoky atmospheres.** Never let anyone smoke in the room in which the baby sleeps and if possible, in the house at all. Since there is now an established link between smoke and crib death, it is not rude to insist on this rule.
- **Don't let your baby get too hot (or too cold).** For the first few weeks of life, babies can't fully regulate their own temperature and the room they sleep in should ideally be kept around 18C. After the first month, babies are good at keeping themselves warm and overheating can be a positive danger if too many clothes or bedclothes are used. The chart below indicates the number of sheets and blankets to use depending on the temperature of the baby's room. It assumes they are wearing a diaper, an undershirt and a sleep suit:

24C-75F	Sheet only
21C-70F	Sheet plus one layer of blanket
18C-65F	Sheet plus two layers of blanket
15C-60F	Sheet plus three layers of blanket

(a blanket doubled over counts as two layers)

- **Do not use pillows, heavy duvets, sheepskins etc** for babies or allow them to have longhaired soft toys when they are under a year. Crib bumpers are debatable. Increasingly in Canada parents are being advised not to use them. This has always been the case in the UK.
- **Be careful about letting your baby get too hot in other situations as well.** If your baby is asleep when you come in from outside, try to remove as much of their outdoor clothing as possible e.g. hat, snowsuit, extra blankets etc. Baby carriers also need to be watched, remember the baby is next to your body and you generate a lot of heat!
- **Check how warm your baby is by feeling their tummy or the back of their neck.** Hands and feet can often feel cold but the baby is in fact nice and warm.
- **Follow the “feet to foot” rule.** To prevent a baby shuffling down under the bed covers and overheating or suffocating, they should be placed in the feet to foot position i.e. with the feet of the baby close to the foot of the crib and with the covers coming no higher than the chest. This leaves the arms (which are almost always up when a baby sleeps), upper chest, head and neck well clear of the covers.

Unfortunately, there are no rules to prevent babies waking up at 3am in the morning to feed or to play!  
Sweet dreams!

*Based on advice from the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association (UK)*

## Date Night Dining

By Cheryl Roscoe

In keeping with our current restricted budget, we've been alternating our more serious dining adventures with cheap dates--and have tried some inexpensive places that we've really enjoyed. But of course, every now and then you've just gotta go for the gold...

### **B.Y.**

961 St. Jean, 426-1688

### **and Palais Imperial**

120 du Barry (corner St. Charles), 426-3888

I don't know what got into me in February. I normally gravitate to homey European foods when it's -30 degrees outside, but for some reason I had cravings for oriental food - and no, I'm not pregnant! Located just north of the 40, B.Y. is a great choice for a relaxed dinner, and is especially convenient when you're planning to see a movie afterwards at the Guzzo cinema (where the extra-cushy seats are good for digesting). Featuring a prix-fixe tasting menu popularized by the still successful Zen, you eat until you burst (if so inclined) for \$20.00. The pan-fried Chinese dumplings are quite delectable and the shrimp dishes were nicely prepared - no overcooking here. The crispy beef was less successful here than at the Palais Imperial, but overall the meal was very enjoyable. For a date night, I preferred the atmosphere at B.Y. than at the Palais Imperial. B.Y. has a more elegant decor and plays relaxing jazz. As it's smaller, it's also more intimate, lending itself to coherent conversation. If you are planning to double date, you may want to try the Palais Imperial. The price is the same and the food is equally good (although they seemed to have fewer dumpling varieties on the menu) and they are accustomed to handling larger parties. There was a large party of 12 or so nearby and I noticed the heaping platters of rather attractive food arriving quickly. Needless to say, it's a bit noisier than B.Y., but it's comfortable and it looks like they are a nice little garden for warm-weather dining. Also, if you're lucky enough to have children who eat voluntarily and without discrimination, you could (if desperate) take them along.

### **Smoked Meat Pete, 99 Grand Blvd., Ile Perrot**

You're probably wondering what's gotten into me here, but I just had to give Smoked Meat Pete a plug. Looking for a real quick dinner one evening so that we could go see Lord of the Rings at a decent hour, we headed out to Ile Perrot as it's not too far to get back to the Colisée. I had been meaning to go ever since my friend Manny

Gordon - who is true smoked meat aficionado - stated that it was better than Schwartz's. Having parents who grew up near the Main, it was drummed into me at an early age that Schwartz's was the gold standard for smoked meat, and it was considered a blessed event whenever my father bought some home (usually only during vacations). Well, it was indeed most excellent smoked meat. I'd have to go back to Schwartz's to confirm it was better, but it's definitely primo stuff. Pete's lacks the cheek-by-jowl seating of Schwartz's - which is a good thing. I don't mind sharing a table at close quarters with complete strangers at lunchtime, but on date night I like to be alone with my husband. Naturally, they don't take reservations, but tables turn over quickly. If you arrive and see an empty table, I would suggest one person snags while the other places the order (you order at the counter, but they serve you at your table). Dinner for two, including a glass each of real beer, is under \$20.00. Can't beat that.



### **Ferreira, 1445 Peel, 848-0988**

Ferreira is a fabulous place if you enjoy great food and a very chic atmosphere - and money is not a major obstacle. Truly a gorgeous place, with a distinctly Mediterranean feel - great colors and décor - it's popular among the well-heeled business community. It's packed weeknights (I went on a Tuesday!) we managed to get without a reservation only because we arrived at 6:30 p.m. It is the only high-end Portuguese restaurant in town (that I know of) and reminds me that this cuisine is highly underrated. The menu, naturally, features a wide variety of fish and there is a daily selection listed on the blackboard, but the regular menu offers some interesting and distinctly Portuguese options, both for entrees and the main course. I had a fabulous grilled sardine entrée with corn bread crisp and a spicy tomato confit that was most delicious. The fresh fish is cooked to perfection, as are the accompaniments. There is also a good selection of non-meat dishes. I was actually out with coworkers from our US office, and my fellow foodie ordered an absolutely perfect rack of lamb. The wine list also features little known but excellent Portuguese wines, and the staff will match your meal by the glass as well. Desserts are varied, interesting and delectable. If you are looking for a light dessert, try the caramelized pear. The down-size, for me, is the noise factor. It does get quite loud, and service declined as the evening wore on. Expect to pay at least \$150.00 for two.

## Introduce them to the Arts

By Cheryl Roscoe

Did You Know: You can purchase a family membership to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts? In addition to the obvious benefits such as admission to all art exhibitions and previews to major shows, a 10% discount at the boutique and bookstore and a free subscription to the magazine Collage (good for your kids' collages if you aren't into reading about art), there are other benefits that make it an accessible place for stay-at-home moms. There is a quiet member's lounge with comfortable chairs you can use if you need to breastfeed, and on rainy weekdays there are areas where an active toddler can safely burn off some energy! For older kids there are seasonal workshops and activities held at the museum--and it's never too early to introduce your kids to art. You'd be surprised what they like! The current Gauguin show "Voyage into Myth" would also make a great prelude to a date-night dinner.

## Staying Safe at the Playground

By Janice Parnell-Fasciano

Playgrounds are fun! Your child gets the chance to explore, test his or her skills, and meet other children. But playgrounds can also be dangerous. Most kids get hurt when they fall from equipment.

### Did you Know?

- Your playground may not meet Canadian standards for safety. Many playgrounds do not because these standards are fairly new. It may take some time before your playground is safer. Use this information to help keep your child safe at the playground.
- If your playground does not have a deep, soft surface or if you think some of the equipment is unsafe, call the group or body that looks after the playground.

### Safety check:

- ✓ **Before you go to the playground, check your child.** Take off anything that could strangle your child.
- ✓ **Check the playground before your child plays.** Look for a deep, soft surface or rubber surface. This will help protect your child when he or she falls. If your playground does not have a deep, soft surface, keep your child on equipment that is close to the ground.
- ✓ **Supervise your child closely.** Stay close enough to stop him or her from falling off equipment.



Adapted from Safe Kids Canada, Safe Start and the Canadian Institute of Child Health. For more information call 1-888-SAFE-TIPS or visit [www.safekidsCanada.ca](http://www.safekidsCanada.ca)

## The Importance of Reading

By Cheryl Roscoe

A few suggestions for choosing books for young children:

- Visit the library and ask the librarian for some recommendations. Let your child choose some books--if you can persuade him to stop running up and down the stacks. Go back alone if required.
- Book attributes young children appreciate include: repetition, rhyme, predictable text, coloured pictures, humour, imagination and suspense (yes, suspense!).
- If your child has a favorite book, he might enjoy other titles by the same author.
- Offer your child different kinds of books: folklore, fiction and nonfiction, multicultural stories that may expose him to new experiences, as well as books about issues relevant to his life, such as friendship or personal interests. Go ahead and try some poetry too.
- Choose books that *you* can read to them enthusiastically and that you enjoy too (again, and again).

Remember that what your children read is less important than that they read. A love of books, leading to a lifelong enjoyment of reading is the most important consideration.

---

## Craft Corner: Tissue Paper Dyed Easter Eggs

This is the perfect simple project for an Aunt with a fancy house who isn't used to visiting rugrats or a daycare full of eager toddlers. It's much less risky (for clothes, furniture and rugs) than setting out bowls of dye \*grin\*.

### Materials:

- hard boiled eggs
- squares of tissue paper in many different BRIGHT colors (1 1/2 inch squares are about right) must be fresh tissue paper... not the old, ratty, recycled 200 times tissue paper I usually use for crafts \*grin\*
- Spritzer of water or bowl of water

### Directions:

- spritz or dip egg in water (get it all wet)
  - pick up squares of tissue paper one at a time and lay around the egg. Feel free to use different colors and to overlap them
  - Spritz with water again if the tissue paper didn't get completely wet.
  - Set aside in a bowl or margarine container to dry.
  - When the egg dries, the tissue paper will fall off, but the pretty colors will stay behind. It gives something of a stained glass look to the eggs.
- 

# Classified Ads

### FOR SALE:

Kelty Kids backpack child carrier

A top of the line model in pristine condition, suitable for infants and children up to about 40 pounds (if you can take it!). Great for hiking. Paid \$200.00, asking \$90.00. Call Jamie or Cheryl @ 694-8565.

### MEMBER ADVERTISEMENTS:

#### Need help with your Tax Return?

Alana Bourque, CGA: Accounting and Financial Services  
(514) 694-4750

#### Discovery Toys

Please contact Carol Tollett (music committee) at 693-9347 or email [tollett@avantages.net](mailto:tollett@avantages.net) OR see me in person at playgroup! Look for catalogues (in snack area) in case you might like to order any educational toys. For FREE toys, ask me for information (no obligation).

#### Web Design

West Island Online

Customized Web Design for your Small Business. Personalized Service Guaranteed!!

Call Lisa Fisher at 514-232-8325 or visit us on the web at [www.westislandonline.net](http://www.westislandonline.net)

#### Playgroup Executive Committee Position Available! (All of the other available positions have been filled)

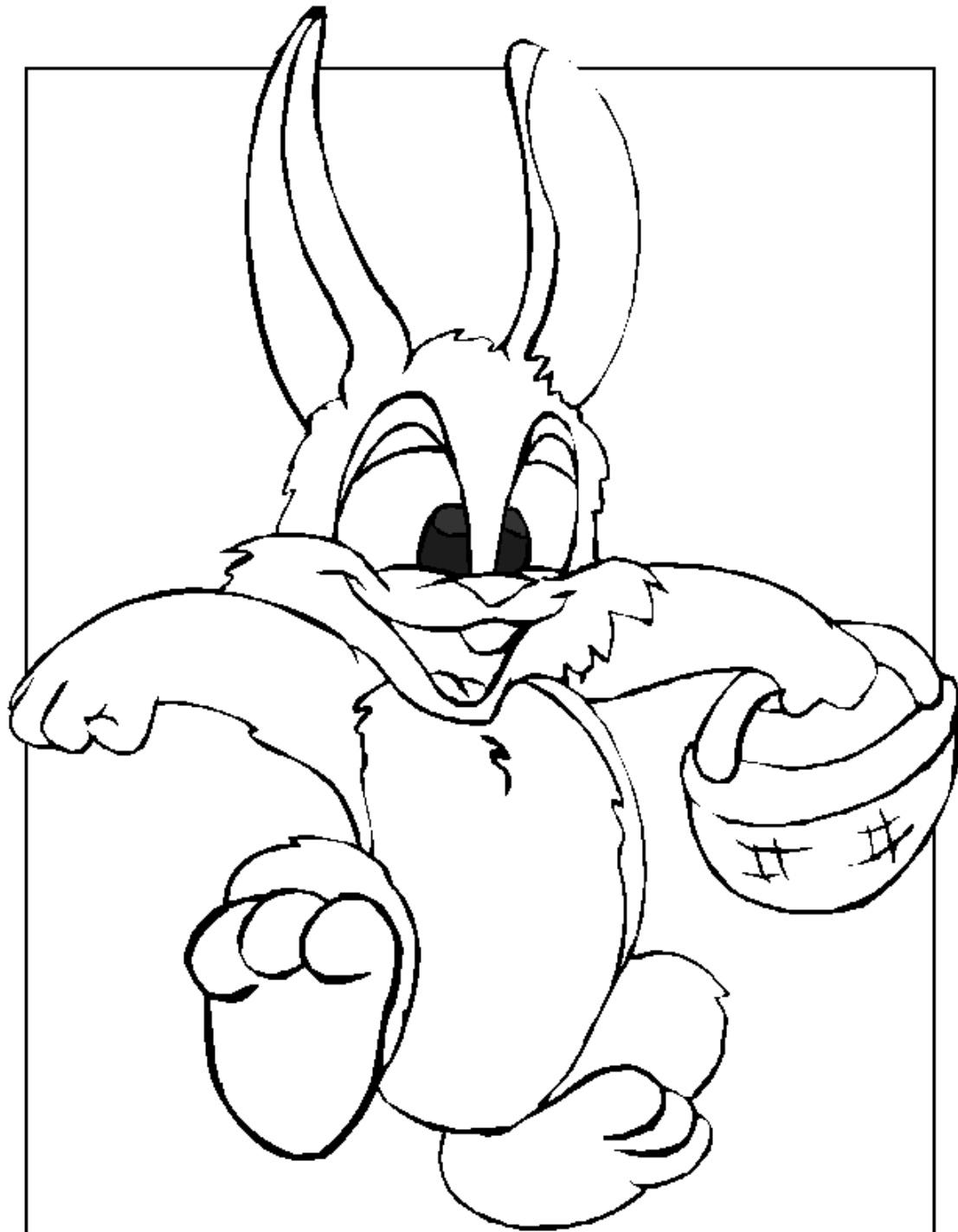
We need one more co-coordinator for Kids Parties for 2003/04. Are you good at event planning? Do you have great organizational and delegation skills and enjoy working with people? This could be the position for you! If you're interested, contact Jennifer or Donna.



**Linda Sestock**  
Affiliated Real Estate Agent  
(514) 697-9181  
[linda.sestock@royalalpage.ca](mailto:linda.sestock@royalalpage.ca)



Courtier immobilier agréé  
Franchisé Indépendant et Autonome  
50, boul. St-Charles, Bureau 16  
Beaconsfield, Québec H9W 2X3



**Happy Easter**