



Mill Bay Nature School Weekly Newsletter

May 4-8

Mill Bay Nature School 2025/2026

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School Garden Community Clean up



On Saturday, May 9th we will be hosting our annual school garden clean up. This year we are needing to weed and put to bed some of our lower garden beds to leave for this season. We also need weeding of our raspberry garden as well as major landscaping around our pond area. We will need a weed eater (or 2), pruners and loppers to cut back the brambles and shape the willow dome.

We are asking for support from 9:00-12:00. This is a fun event, that brings our community together to make this amazing learning space a interactive place for our students to learn in.

Bus registration now open



The bus registration is now open for the 2026/2027 school year. Please register your child before May 31 for the next school year.

<https://www.awinfosys.com/das2/sd79/public/transportationrequest.asp>

Next PAC meeting May 5 Zoom 7-8pm

Topic: Mill Bay Nature School PAC Meeting

Time: May 5, 2026 07:00 PM Vancouver

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/67210545838>

Meeting ID: 672 1054 5838

One tap mobile

+15873281099,,67210545838# Canada

+16473744685,,67210545838# Canada

Join by SIP

- 67210545838@zmca.us

Join instructions

https://ca01web.zoom.us/meetings/67210545838/invitations?signature=mEHh0OzOkSjbkYRjznQ5HhtU9XZKAo_wESjGWXERVY

2026 BCCPAC Conference & AGM Minutes

Conflict Resolution Workshop: Presenter Nadia Kyba

- Conflict does not mean failure
- Delaying conflict doesn't solve the issue
- Becomes complex when the problem isn't clear. It takes work and not a quick fix

Common Challenges

- Taking things personally
- Not knowing *what step to take next*

- Reacting too quickly instead of intentionally

Framework to use

- Prevent
- Anticipate
- Address

Prevent

- Set up your values (in your home, classrooms, pacs). This sets up expectations and assumes the norms. Make them detailed. (For PACS making sure roles are clear and defined, everyone understands when minutes will be sent out, when the agenda will be sent out, who responds to emails, etc)
- This is a code of conduct which should be created collaboratively and reviewed yearly

Anticipate

- Guessing based on information you have to decide what to do next • Before responding ask yourself
 - What do I know for sure
 - What is my focus
 - What story am I telling myself
 - What else could be true
 - Risks if I respond to soon and how I respond

Have a multihypothesis mindset. (There's always more than one possible explanation.)

Regulation

- Regulate yourself before responding

Lisa Beare Minister of Education and Childcare

- ERASE- Training info and resources
- Report it tool - helps keep concerns confidential and anonymous
- Accurate- Provides parents info on how learning resources are chosen
- Literacy screening mandatory - SK-gr 3 multiple times a year
- Every child deserves support. No unnecessary barriers should be there - out reach teams provided in the province

- Indigenous councils in every school and indigenous studies for graduation is required
- Movement to connect childcare and education
- Moving school into community hub programs- changing schools and classrooms into multipurpose buildings. Classrooms into after school care spaces and funding to upgrade/create these changes and make solutions
- Changes in autism funding. More info will be provided

WORKSHOP: Veena- Family Support Work

Inclusive learning

POPARD outreach programs **Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders.**

<https://autismoutreach.ca/>

Free workshops available throughout the year

Districts can invite Veena to do presentations

IEPs must be reviewed at least once a year. INVOLVE the parent. Encouragement after spring break review. Ask how they are implementing it. What strategies are being used. Gather feedback -Students also encouraged to be part of this especially high school.

GUEST SPEAKER Hanna Beach

Hidden Roots of Anxiety & Aggression and how to Grow resilient kids

Play vs Entertainment

Play has a natural rhythm—it's an inhale and an exhale. There's engagement, and then release.

Entertainment, on the other hand, is a constant inhale. It keeps kids stimulated, but never gives them space to come down. ALL dopamine.

Too much stimulation means kids aren't getting enough **"void" moments**— the boredom that actually allows creativity, regulation, and emotional processing.

Why Play Matters: Free play supports emotional regulation and when emotions are processed, behaviour improves.

When play is removed and replaced with constant high-dopamine and stimulation input:

- Frustration builds

- Emotions have nowhere to go
- This can show up as aggression or dysregulation

Play gives kids a safe outlet to:

- Release tension
- Work through frustration
- Make sense of their feelings

Parents today are the first cohort, raising children without a play-based upbringing.

Play is FAR more than just Fun: it's where children practice

- Courage
- Problem-solving
- Independence and cooperation
- Emotional regulation and healthy emotional development
- Releases frustration
- Manage uncertainty

When we over-direct or overprotect (like in helicopter parenting), we unintentionally remove those opportunities and can end up increasing anxiety instead of building confidence.

Rethinking Play, Parenting, and Connection

Play is starting to become a performance— kids going down a slide and immediately looking for praise.

But play isn't meant to be evaluated. It's meant to be experienced.

Letting Kids Struggle (Without Fixing)

Many adults struggle to say no or to sit back when things are hard. But it's okay (IMPORTANT) to let children face challenges.

Instead of rushing to fix:

- Acknowledge their feelings
- Stay connected
- Trust that they can work through it

This builds:

- Confidence
- Emotional resilience
- Less anger and frustration
- A stronger relationship with you

It's uncomfortable to watch kids feel sad or frustrated.

But part of the work is learning to sit with **your own discomfort** while holding space for theirs.

Play as Emotional Release

Play changes a child's psychology.

It acts as a **release valve** for their emotions.

For example:

If kids are playing something like "COVID tag," it can feel concerning—but it's actually normal.

This is how children:

- Process what they hear and experience
- Make sense of the world around them

A Disconnected Culture

We're living in a time with:

- Less eye contact
- Less presence
- Fewer emotional needs being met **Children are relationally undernourished.**

We All Need a Release Valve

This doesn't stop in childhood. As kids grow, play evolves into:

- Music
- Dancing
- Art
- Hobbies
- Movement

The Role of Connection

Kids don't just need supervision, they need connection.

Parents and caregivers can practice the “**reach-for**” method:

- Start conversations
- Offer compliments freely
- Initiate connection (don't wait for them)
- Show consistent love and presence

Children don't need constant fixing or performance-based praise.

They need space to feel, play, struggle—and stay connected to you through it.

And book recommendation written by the guest speaker Hanna Beach

<https://plumleafpress.com/product/sometimes-i-feel-that-way-too/> (Kids book)

All her information is incredibly valuable. <https://hannahbeach.ca/>

Parent resources:

<https://foundrybc.ca/>

Foundry offers free and confidential mental health and wellness services for youth ages 12-24 in British Columbia and their families.

<https://familysmart.ca/>

FamilySmart supports parents and caregivers whose children are experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenge. (Support, resources, workshops)

<https://ldsociety.ca/school-age-programs/>

Neuroaffirming programs for K to grade 12 that support early intervention, build resilience, and foster foundational skills.

Important Dates



May 13: 2-hour early dismissal

May 12: Division 4&5 field trip to Brentwood

May 18: Victoria Day: Schools not in session

Contact Us



Alison Leslie

Principal

amleslie@sd79.bc.ca

Ann-Marie Braithwaite

Head Secretary

millbayheadsecretary@sd79.bc.ca

Office Phone: 250-743-5504

Visit our website for calendar and other happenings around the school:

<https://natureschool.sd79.bc.ca/>

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