

KidCareCanada was first conceived in 1987 as “After They’re Born”, a TV parenting show that was given provisional acceptance by CBC television.

## **1987**

In 1987 Estelle Paget wrote a proposal, mostly in the bedroom of Patty Kealy, a UBC colleague with terrific computer skills. The proposal described the concept, rationale and goals.

### Research on Early Childhood Development

Excellent research was taking place in the area of Early Childhood Development in universities across Canada and around the world. Yet most parents, who could use this information, rarely had the ability to access it.

### *Early conceptions*

The program would include:

- Childhood development;
- Leading researchers describing – in easy-to-understand language – to parents and their children, what the research was and how parents could apply it;
- Real parents would be filmed implementing and modeling the advice and behaviours;
- One section in each show would focus on injury prevention and medical care;
- Another short section would include a parenting tip.

Estelle took the proposal to Dr. Andrew Macnab, Paediatrician at BC Children’s Hospital, who enthusiastically supported it, adding his expertise to the concept.

The Red Cross Society BC and Yukon was a willing partner. They hoped to piggyback their newly-minted “Child Safe” program on the parenting show.

Phil Reimer, then CBC weatherman, and independent producer, provided production and budget mentoring.

The program but did not see the light of day at that time as funding was not secured by the time Estelle, a single mother of two children, needed to return to teaching at UBC. The project was put on the back burner where it simmered ... for twenty years.

## **2007**

Fast forward to 2007. Estelle began working with physicians in Northern Medical Health and shared the goals of the proposed program, now called KidCareCanada. She learned there was **an urgent need** to support new parents through a visual medium.

For several years, Estelle had been applying discoveries made in neuroscience, through brain-imaging technologies, to adult learning contexts in faculty development. In the intervening years since 1987 exciting new research in cognitive development in infants, using similar technologies, had also been taking place. Estelle was keen to find a way to enable key

researchers in Early Childhood Development to “translate” their work into auditory messages and visual images that new parents could easily understand.

## **2008**

Estelle re-contacted Dr. Andrew Macnab, now a highly decorated Distinguished Scholar with a long list of accomplishments in promoting child health. He was immediately eager to help make KidCareCanada a reality. Given the new research, they decided to focus on the critical first three months of life.

Estelle wrote a new concept paper and took it to TV broadcasters only to learn that this was no longer the ideal venue. Other means to reach new parents through a visual medium were identified and it was decided that a DVD would be the ideal approach.

Dr. Macnab and Estelle met with various leaders in Early Childhood Development and shared the concept paper widely. Other researchers, physicians, midwives, nurses, leaders in Infant and Childcare, members of foundations and other community groups expressed their support along with members of the general public.

## **2009**

Estelle approached filmmaker Hilary Pryor of May Street Productions to help develop and produce the DVD for new parents. To facilitate fundraising, KidCareCanada needed to sit in a society with a charitable designation. Hilary suggested the Educating Toward Change Society as a holding place for KidCareCanada, and requested that Irene Ross Green be involved in the KidCareCanada project.

Estelle continued to conduct an environmental scan to learn about other resources to support new parents. Two wonderful DVDs had been developed for new parents - “The Period of Purple Crying” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3f97psdLPC4>, and “Baby’s Best Chance, A Guide for Expectant Parents” <http://www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca/tools-and-resources/video/#/babys-best-chance-chapter-1>. A KidCareCanada DVD would be an excellent complement to both of these resources, responding to some of the comments made by new moms in the Best Chance DVD.

The DVD, “The Period of Purple Crying”, based on over 25 years of research by Dr. Ron Barr, was proving a valuable resource for new parents. It informs them about persistent infant crying and raises awareness about the dangers of shaking an infant.

Similarly, Baby’s Best Chance prepares new parents for pregnancy, birth and adjusting to a new baby.

### *Inspirational research and support*

Leading researchers, colleagues and supporters began sharing resources and information about Early Childhood Development.

Important research behind “Building Blocks for a Healthy Future”, Sponsored by the Norlien Foundation, in Partnership with Alberta Mental Health Board (2007), provided a wealth of resources as did the work of the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). The remarkable work of the Council for Early Childhood Development, including “The Early Years Study Three Years Later” and “The Early Studies Two” provided critically important research.

Members of the CECD and Fellows generously shared time and resources, as did Family Practice Physicians in Northern Medical Health, leaders of Infant Development Programs, members of government, Pediatricians, Aboriginal Centres, Public Health Nurses, Social workers, Early Childhood Educators, leading physicians and nurses in BC Children’s Hospital, the BC Healthy Child Alliance and Midwives.

The message was consistent: **there is a great need to find a way to “translate” the science of Early Childhood Development into auditory and visual messages that new parents can understand and apply.** Healthy attachment is key to the life-long health of individuals – and it is hard to translate the theory into practice.

### **2010**

Sample DVD – “Bath Time”

With funding from UBC KidCareCanada, in Association with the Educating Toward Change Society, developed a 15 minute DVD, based on guidelines from the Canadian Paediatric Society and the BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport (BEST BABY). The DVD models healthy attachment and bath safety.

Real parents and their young infants meet with Dr. Stefanie Green, Maternity Practice Physician in Victoria, BC and Dr. Andrew Macnab, Pediatrician and Urologist. A new dad models how to bathe his 3 week old son in a bath tub. An Aboriginal mom demonstrates nurturing and responsive care while bathing her 3 month old daughter in a portable plastic tub. Another new mom bathes her little son in the kitchen sink.

A challenge was figuring out a way to show the infant perspective. In a first version of the DVD, 2 animated infants provided messages.

### **May 2010**

The DVD was screened at a large event in Vancouver, BC, hosted by Mr. Ned Goodman, a leading Canadian businessman and Chancellor of Brock University. About 100 people – from business, health, Early Childhood Development and the public, attended the event where Mr. Goodman also gave a talk on the trends in the economy.

Approximately 60 people provided written feedback. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one exception. Many found that the animated infants detracted from the flow of the DVD, and the voices of the animated infants were “annoying”.

On the other hand, they strongly supported the goals and positive aspects of the DVD that included:

- modeling by real parents and their adorable babies
- examples of effective nurturing
- friendly and approachable experts speaking in everyday language and yet conveying key messages from current research
- summarizing of key points

The DVD was revised. With input from Infant Development specialists key messages were highlighted. Freeze-framed images of infants replaced the animated infants and a voice-over and written text provided key messages.

In July 2011 KidCareCanada separated from the ETC Society and formed the KidCareCanada Society. It has applied for charitable status.

This second version of the DVD, “Bath Time”, will be used in a Research Study to be conducted in Victoria, Duncan and Sooke BC.

Results from the study will be reported on in a session led by Dr. Andrew Macnab and Estelle Paget on March 6, 2011 at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Meeting on Indigenous Child Health.