



Welcome to

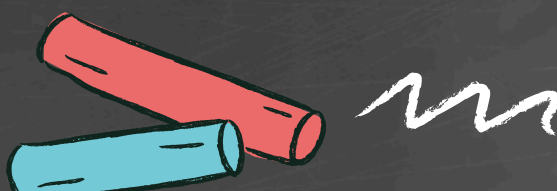
MAY 2025

VISTA's Newsletter



“ It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.

— Audre Lorde ”



Vista News

- Social Group is back on Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 3:30-5pm
- Vista closed:
 - Victoria Day (May 17)
 - Pro-D Day (May 27)
 - June Break (June 16-30)
 - Canada Day (July 1)
 - BC Day (Aug 4)
 - August Break (Aug 25-29)
 - Labour Day (Sept 1)

Upcoming Events

- ☒ Show & Tell - every Wednesday
- ☒ Spirit Days:
Crazy Hat Day - May 13
- ☒ Theme Days:
May - Robot Day
June - Summer Day



Vista News (cont'd)

- SUMMER RESPITE
 - Starting in July, drop off your kiddos on Saturdays during the day to hang out with friends in a neurodivergent-affirming space and get some “you” time!
 - Contact office@vistaacademy.org to enroll today!
 - NEW: Punch cards
 - Purchase 9 sessions and get your 10th one on us!

Introducing a NEW program...

3:1 Alternative Homeschooling

- What is it?
 - A NEW program coming to Vista, designed to complete homeschooling while prioritizing regulation, self-advocacy and communication skills.
 - Runs Mon-Fri from 9 am-2 pm.
- Who is it for?
 - Those who thrive in an alternative learning space and require more support than traditional school but less than 1:1.
- Want to learn more?
 - Contact office@vistaacademy.org to inquire about when applications open for Fall 2025!



Student Spotlight

Z has been learning at Vista since February of 2023 and we are so proud of all that she has done in her years here. When Z first started here, she was learning skills such as imitation, following one-step situational instructions (ex. "come here"), and responding to her name. Z has worked hard through a variety of programs and is now working on following a visual schedule to engage in kindergarten-related activities and learning times such as story time, letter and shape tracing, and various worksheets on body parts, counting, and more! Z has built strong relationship with her BIs and continues to expand her vocal communication each session. Z loves animals and dinosaurs and surprises us with how much she knows about her favourite topics! Z has also begun to expand her preferred play at Vista and now enjoys engaging in obstacle courses and other active, sensory room play. We so happy to have such a curious and bright learner here at Vista and we can't wait to see all the ways that Z will grow and glow in the future. Thank you for being you, Z!





Student Spotlight

C has been a Vista student since June of 2024 and she has learned, accomplished, and grown so much in her time here. C started off practicing handwriting, reading, and assessing regulation techniques that are helpful to her, all of which were interspersed throughout a 2 hour session. She now comes for full school days and completes up to 30 minutes of a variety of school subjects and is working on applying her previously assessed regulation techniques to applicable situations! A session with C never fails to put a smile on our faces and she jokes, dances and creates new things with her BIs. Crea likes to draw, build, swing, dance, and so more much during her sessions. C loves including her friends in new games and bravely stands up for what she believes in. We so proud to have such a bright and talented learner here at Vista and we can't wait to see the ways that C will continue to thrive. Thank you for being you, C!



Local Events & News

- Autism Okanagan Goddess on the Go event - May 7!
- A Framework for Understanding and Responding to ADHD - May 8
- Voyager Cares adds Autism Okanagan, Child & Youth Advocacy Centre as beneficiaries
- Two Autism charities connect kids with autism and professional hockey players for a day of fun in Kelowna
- Autism Okanagan 2025 Charity Gold Classic - Sept 5

scroll to the bottom
to find the website
links for all
underlined
words!

Local Groups

- Autism Family Meetup Kelowna Facebook Group
- ADHD and Autism Parents Facebook Group
- Kelowna Babysitters Facebook Group
- Kelowna Kids Events & Stuff to Do Facebook Group
- Autism Okanagan Groups: Digital Arts Club, Drawing Club, Mom's Meet and Mingle, Lego Club
- Canucks Autism Network Groups: Movie Club (virtual), Dungeons & Dragons Club (virtual)
- City of Kelowna: Adaptive Programs



Susan Eugenio- Turner

I am happy to be a part of the Vista Academy family, making a difference in our community and serving the unique needs of so many families in Kelowna.

Community Spotlight

Susan is a small business owner in Kelowna and is also one of the amazing community members who volunteer to be on Vista's board! Susan is originally from Oliver, BC and now co-owns a security company and a first aid/security training company with her husband. At Turner Security & Medic Services, they offer specialized training to support those who may require an alternate way to learn. They feel very passionate about ensuring the success and comfortability of their students, which is something that has greatly impacted those seeking to learn first aid and security in the Kelowna community. Susan aspires to support others within the community, especially those who are caretaking someone who may need lifelong support. Her life mission is to advocate, protect, and create a happy and safe life for her children, one of whom is neurodiverse. She hopes that in doing so, she can aid others on a similar path. Susan hopes to take her son and daughter to explore the world in the future, as she knows that travel is a great way to experience new things and practice gratitude! Thank you for all the meaningful support you provide in our community, Susan!



turnergroup.ca



General News



- Upcoming Days of Significance: Mother's Day (May 11), Father's Day (Jun 15)
- White Paper: Economic Inclusion for Autistic People in Canada
- Neurodiversity: 2024 Year in Review

Resources

- Autism Information Services British Columbia (AIS BC)
- Child Grants - Variety Children's Charity of BC
- Funding for Families - Cops for Kids
- Individual and Organization Funding - CKNW Kids' Fund
- Funding for Families - Autism Canada: Community Assistance Program (CAP)
- Physical Activity Grants - Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- Physical Activity Grants - KidSport Canada



Check out these fun Instagram accounts to learn more about neurodiversity:

@kidscreativetherapy
@autisticselfadvocacy
@the_adhd_collective_



DID YOU
KNOW



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Types of Play

All learners have their own unique way of playing and all forms of playing are important to their learning and development. In general, there are 6 types of play that children engage in throughout childhood.

1) Unoccupied Play

- Learning about and discovering one's body through movement.
- Typically the first type of play engaged in.

2) Solitary Play

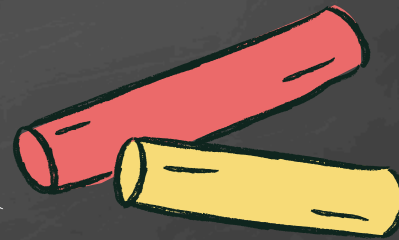
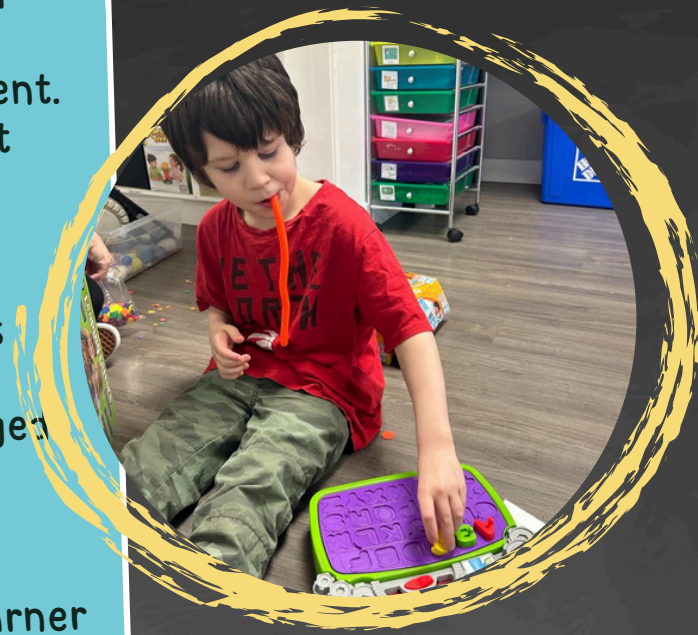
- Self-directed play that allows the learner to explore and create on their own.

3) Onlooker Play

- Exploring how those around the learner like to play by observing the play of others without joining in.

4) Parallel Play

- Playing with separate toys beside another learner.
- Learners may be sharing toys as well but not directly playing with each other.



How kids learn to play: 6 stages of Play Development. Pathways.org. (2025).
<https://pathways.org/kids-learn-play-6-stages-play-development>

Hubbard, E. (2023, April 23). The 6 stages of play and how to facilitate each stage for healthy development. Brightest Beginning.
<https://brightestbeginning.com/stages-of-play/>

Types of Play



5) Associative Play

- Playing with other learners by engaging with the same toys or games but with a low amount of direct interaction between learners.
- Play may also include direct interactions but learners may have separate goals/intentions.

6) Cooperative Play

- Playing with other learners with more direct interactions, maybe with a common goal between learners.
- Imaginative play, board games, and sports are examples of cooperative play.

While we generally refer to these 6 types of play, it's important to remember that each learner is unique and their play will be unique as well. Using a categorization system such as this one can help us label a learner's play while also being mindful that learners may explore different types of play in a variety of contexts. Some learners may prefer one type of play at one point in the day and prefer another type of play later in the day. There is lots to be learned in all types of play so we love to celebrate all forms of play and engagement during our sessions at Vista!

