



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MEMBER'S STATEMENT

**Kim Crockett and the Field and Forest Nursery School
Deanne Crothers, MLA for St. James
November 18th, 2015**

The concept of kindergarten, developed in the 19th century, literally meant “the children’s garden”. A new preschool program being offered at Discovery Children’s Centre in my constituency of St. James, is incorporating that idea by taking some preschool aged children out into the garden to receive part of their early childcare education.

Kim Crockett, an early childhood educator at this centre has trained as a Forest Nature School Practitioner. In September she implemented the Field and Forest Nursery School program at Discovery Children’s Centre. This program focuses on learning in the outdoors, encouraging unstructured, self-directed outdoor play. It provides children the time and opportunity to follow their own instincts to explore and investigate what is of most interest to them in the outdoors and the natural world around them. The program includes not only time spent in their own “Adventure Playground” at the centre, but also one day a week in the forest at Living Prairie Museum.

Kim has been working at Discovery Centre since she was a teenager, and has a degree in Developmental Studies and a diploma in early childhood education. She has been a huge asset to the Centre’s Executive Director Ron Blatz and his team. Her keen understanding of the benefits of this program, combined with her patience and energy, makes her a wonderful guide to the children enrolled in the Field and Forest Nursery School. Mr. Speaker, I’m glad to have her here as a guest joining us in the gallery today.

I’m thankful that we have educators like Kim who are finding innovative ways to help us keep our kids healthy. Kim’s dedication and hard work has not gone unnoticed, and I know families in St. James have seen the difference her outdoor education makes for their kids. Thank you to Kim and Discovery Children’s Centre for contributing to the educational development of our pre-school children, which not only helps them to be school ready but is ensuring that they remain connected to the natural world around them. The wonderful work that early childhood educators like Kim do in this province will have positive implications for years to come.



Deanne Crothers, MLA for St. James