



It Takes A Village *Daycare*

Brenda and Theaston White , Owners, It Takes a Village Daycare

For Theaston and Brenda White, the best part of working with children is seeing them thrive in an environment meant for them to grow and learn, and seeing them happy at the end of the day. On February 1, 2011, the couple opened It Takes a Village, a daycare centre located in Clayton Park. Here they're able to experience this satisfaction every day.

"Brenda and I both share a great love for children," Theaston explains, as part of their reasoning for opening up the daycare. For a number of years, Brenda had provided childcare from the family home to supplement the household's income. As their three girls – Baleigh, Brooklyn and Bria – got older, the idea came to them to expand into something larger outside of the home.

"The more we discussed it and shared our plans, there were many people who were generous enough to lend support and resources into making our dream a reality," says Theaston. He adds that since he was working full time, it was through Brenda's steadfast commitment that all their plans were able to unfold. The name comes from an old African proverb 'It takes a village to raise a child.' "Our goal is to create a sense of community for parents and children who attend our facility," Theaston says.

He shares a story demonstrating that the children at the centre stay true to another saying: Kids say the darndest things. "A little boy once bit another little boy in the toddler room. When we questioned him about why he had bitten the other child, he claimed a raccoon that happened to have the

same name as him was hungry and wanted a snack, so he bit his friend."

With their girls involved in extracurricular activities and a Yorkie-Poodle mixed dog to take care of, the family has a demanding schedule. It's a pleasant thing then, that children are able to infuse busy lives with laughter.

In addition to the inherent uniqueness of the children who attend It Takes a Village, the



Whites feel a few additional qualities set the centre apart. For instance, it aims to provide an open door policy and a nutritious menu that is 80 percent organic. "Unlike other daycares that do not accept children after the designated drop-off times, we keep an open door," says Theaston. "We want parents to feel comfortable walking into our centre." They also encourage open dialogue between staff and parents to avoid potential issues that may arise in a childcare setting. And, important to both the children and their parents, Theaston describes the daycare setting as "Warm, friendly and fun!"

by: **Abena Amoako-Green**

The Whites have learned a lot in the last year. "Licensed childcare facilities are heavily regulated by the provincial government's Department of Community Services," Theaston says. "As such, there are many demands in place to ensure the full and comprehensive setup of new facilities." They've made it through their first year and have several business goals for 2012, including expansions and enhancements to service delivery. ☺

It Takes a Village – Daycare

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Fun Facts

Favourite Quote:

"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

– Howard Thurman