

Our History

“To Be or Not to Be” – That is the question!

Imagine it's 1979 and there is no licensed, subsidized child care in the community of Sackville – a community growing by leaps and bounds and highly populated with young families. Well, that was the case. So, what was done about this situation? Well, let us take you on a stroll down Memory Lane!

- In the late 70's, an active committee of concerned and interested persons explored the feasibility of establishing a child care program to support lower-income families.
- Through a lot of research on this committee's part, the realization was that due to a lack of space, as well as zoning restrictions, having a non-profit facility was not possible. And, after much consideration and negotiations, “Family” day care (in-home child care) evolved as a pilot project, to be initially managed by the Department of Community Services.
~ **“The wheels were in motion!”** ~
- A Program Co-Ordinator was hired by the Department in June of 1980 (Joyce Beaudry), who later came under a voluntary board's direction. In the winter of '81, the Sackville Family Day Care Association was officially incorporated with the Registry of Joint Stocks.
- Through the years, this one-program, one-person operation grew to include multiple complimentary services, until it became a formalized Family Resource Centre in 1993 – a Community “Hub Model” of services for children and families.

“How Did We Get Here?”

- Financially – From 1981-1986, the association operated, annually, from a \$25,000 grant from the Department of Community Services.
- Today (2025) the association's annual budget is \$817,342 with funds coming from both the Federal and Provincial levels of Government. Staff is now made up of 12 dedicated and committed individuals.
- The one-girl operation, working from Community Services' space, has now grown to a large family resource centre on Memory Lane, fully owned by the association with an approximate value of over 1.5 million dollars.

How Did This Happen?

- In the mid 80's, a small house on the Cobequid Road was mortgaged to offer both on-site preschool and after-school programs. In 1993, this house was sold and the current facility on Memory Lane was purchased.
- Multiple short-term grants were secured from various levels of government over the years - Federal Departments, including Health Canada, Justice, Employment and Immigration – Provincially, the Department of Community Services, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and Prevention & Early Intervention.
- Programs expanded to support children and families in the areas of in-home child care; on-site preschool; lending library; Child Care Information and Support Services; clothing depot; in-home visitation; family support programs and an array of other on-site programs, as identified by participants.
 - Community-development approaches were enhanced and community partnership work grew stronger.
 - In 2009, the Association changed its name to the **“Memory Lane Family Place Association”**.
- The building was expanded, as the result of both fundraising activities and government grants from Child Care Services (Repair and Renovations – Start-Up and Expansion).
- In July of 2021, the National Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Plan was announced. A long wait for the child care community and a welcomed announcement!
 - In June of 2025, the Memory Lane Family Place organization celebrated its 45th year of operation.

So, to go back to the question, “To Be or Not to Be”, the answer is a resounding “YES!”. We were to be – we still are being and intend to always be.

We “became”, as a direct result of dedication and commitment from so many individuals, parents, children, board members and staff; government support; partnership engagements; rigorous evaluation work and evidence-based practices. A tiny pilot project has grown to support thousands of children and families. It has been an historical journey and with continued visioning, the journey will continue to even greater heights.

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“A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.”

— Forest E. Witcraft