



# Roots of Empathy Racines de l'empathie

March 2011

## MARY GORDON

President and Founder  
Roots of Empathy

“Over the course of the school year, as the children develop a relationship with “their baby”, they are encouraged to observe how the baby’s behaviour illustrates her temperament. The discussion of temperament is entered into with tremendous enthusiasm by the children. The context is exploratory and non-judgmental. They delight in identifying their own temperament traits and illustrate these traits by sharing stories of what they did as babies or toddlers. These discussions not only increase self-reflection and, consequently, self-knowledge, but also engender an understanding of their classmates in a very positive way.”

# Elgin Street Public School



Volunteer instructor Sarah Eastway has been supporting Mr. Hunter’s grade 2 Roots of Empathy class this year. Mom Alana and baby Gehrig have delighted students with their visits. Students have enjoyed a wide variety of literature that encourages them to talk about their own emotions and experiences. The topic of sleep especially engages students as they can easily empathize with the baby who may feel lonely or scared at bedtime. Dreams and nightmares are something all children can relate to as well as the importance of routines surrounding sleep. Each person has their own approach to getting to sleep and this reinforces the topic of temperament.

# Queen Elizabeth Public School



Volunteer instructor Andrea Miller has been teaching Roots of Empathy in Miss Hyde's grade 3 / 4 class. Mom Holly and baby Emma have been eagerly welcomed by students. At each baby visit changes and new milestones are charted and discussed. Emma's first attempt at crawling was witnessed by students who cheered as she made her way across the green blanket. This strong attachment to the baby creates an opportunity for Andrea and Miss Hyde to discuss emotions and temperament with students. As they begin to understand Emma's personality they learn that we are all unique and we should have empathy and respect for one another.



Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

LYLE S. HALLMAN FOUNDATION

THE KITCHENER AND WATERLOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Are you a proud parent with a baby who will be 2 – 4 months old in October?

You and your baby could be a Roots of Empathy family!

**For further information contact:**

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