

Monday 2nd November 2015 6:00pm to 8:00 pm Ontario Early Years Centre, Erie-Lincoln Port Cares

1. Welcome and Introductions

Participants were welcomed, to the renamed Emergent and Reflective Practice Network, and introduced themselves. In attendance were Samantha Beuparlant, Lori Brady, Jodi Lacasse , Michele Merritt, Sharon Milne, Donnie Petsche, Leah Philbrick, Laura Rasmussen, Kristen Richardson, Jacquie Rodgers, Brenda Steele, Robyn Williams-Hindrea, Catherine Willick, Shari Hill (minutes) and Ginette Wilson (facilitator and minutes)

Regrets: Kelly-Ann Wilcox and Patricia Couroux

2. Acceptance of Minutes from Last Meeting

The minutes were adopted by Jacqui Rodgers and seconded by Sharon Milne.

3. Acceptance of the Agenda

The agenda was accepted with an addition; Kelly Wilcox who was unable to attend, asked for the Niagara College T-shirt campaign to be shared with participants.

4. Tour of Port Cares led by Lori Brady followed by

- An exploration of the centre's journey from a theme based approach to an emergent approach
- Reflections and sharing of thoughts regarding Port Cares emergent journey

Lori Brady explained that as this is an Early Years centre therefore they have children attending from birth to six years of age along with their parents and/or carers such as grandparents who must stay with the children. The centre started on their emergent journey in 2012 and included a shift to how staff learn with the children from ELECT documentation. They dismantled their theme based totes and now utilized the items in the spaces that make sense. Staff value the importance of being present on the floor with the children and planning the environment with the children and with their interests in mind. Once the environments were de-cluttered and intentional, staff found that the children enjoyed the spaces more and that there was less flitting from activity to activity.

The centre has 2 rooms for interactive play, with an adult available at all times with the children. There are three staff who work together in the mornings one of whom documents the children's experiences and the staff have an assigned time each week to document, reflect together on the strengths and needs of the children. Documentation is shared with parents and visitors in frames and binders with an interactive documentation bulletin board where parents and carers are encouraged to add their thoughts. The two play spaces include; an *active large muscle room* with books, sensory, dramatic play, mats, infant discovery area (healthy baby/healthy brain offers networking with other parents), "chill out zone" (soft cushions, seats, provocations, a variety of lights, fabric on ceiling)- children often bypass quiet room to go to active room and a *fine motor room*- cozy home areas, plants, puzzles, science, several simple provocations on tables with clipboards, Charlie the fish with clipboard and Betta reference book, light table, art area (Artist comes in every Friday morning, taught educators to observe children as they create), loose parts in mason jars and so on.

Lori quoted Margaret Wheatley "We are all bundles of potential that manifest only in relationships."

Participants who took photographs that included children, are reminded to only use them for internal purposes.

A participants question included; if inconsistency of children attending was difficult. Lori acknowledged that sometimes it can be more difficult, however it is important to be present with the children through documenting and reflecting, know the children's interests, spend time with the children and the families. If documentation is changed all the time? Lori explained that changing documentation is not scheduled but is changed when needed and includes some simple and some more in-depth documenting as exploring the four foundations and a photo takes time.

5. Sharing examples and photographs of 'provocations for learning' and examples of 'documentation' followed by reflective discussion.

A general discussion took place which included the cost of printing photographs and suggestions included using black and white photographs, Pic college app which can include multiple photographs and text, using a digital picture frame.

Participants shared examples of the following provocations; play dough and name recognition, marshmallows with tooth picks, water coloured paint with pipettes, coloured gems on silver trays, scales, fabric on the table

Ginette asked if participants brought documentation:

Jacqui Rodgers brought some photographs of provocations to share with network participants which included, playdoh/play dough and name recognition, marshmallows with tooth picks for fine motor, water coloured paint with pipettes for water mixing, coloured gems on silver trays for colour sorting, and a student who created a scale with baskets and string. She also noted how adding fabric can change a provocation and that some children will spend up to 55 minutes at an activity.

A participant noted that visiting other sites and seeing documentation excites, motivates and challenges educators.

Kinderdaus staff shared a pineapple project that their centre had investigated with the children, which will be followed by 'a strange nut' investigation that they are going to research together with children

6. Sharing how participants have implemented strategies gained from Professional Learning Opportunities such as Susan Stacey, Tim Gill, Diane Kashin, Joanne Babalis etc. Followed by a discussion regarding speakers that participants would like the ECCDC to coordinate for Winter 2016.

Participants shared the following; Susan Stacey's session had encouraged them to look deeper into what they see regarding children's thinking, they are spending more time reflecting together with fellow educators regarding the strengths of children and that the 'Unscripted Classroom' is a great easy read book. The Bus Tour was very well received as it demonstrates how easy emergent learning and that people often try too hard. Participants asked if there would be one next year, however they thought that it would be useful to hold it earlier in the Spring and to include the OEYC's.

7. Development Resources available at the ECCDC
 - Highlight 'The Beautiful Stuff Store'
 - Emergent Literacy Award AOE nominations

'The Beautiful Stuff Store' was shared and participants were encouraged to visit the ECCDC workroom to 'Mess About' with the natural, unique Loose Parts, view the regularly changing provocations to learning and to purchase a bag of 'Beautiful Stuff' for \$5.

If participants have any nomination for AOE Emergent Literacy Award there is still time to send them in. If they have any nominations can they please send them to the ECCDC by the 4th November.

8. ECCDC Resource Display

- Resource Reference List (see attached with the minutes) and Resource Display which included a Treasure Basket for Infant and Toddlers and a Loose Parts kit.
- Professional Learning Opportunities offered in the Fall Esteem including new sessions by Adam Bienenstock, Joanne Babalis and Diane Kashin, followed by a discussion regarding future needs. Flyers circulated.
- Bienenstock and CEF launched renewed education program

Kelly Wilcox asked for the Niagara College T-shirt campaign to be shared with participants.

Niagara College ECE program T-shirt campaign flyers were circulated. If centres are interested in purchasing T-shirt they are asked to send in one order form per centre with a cheque directly to Drew Kean at Niagara College and orders can be collected from the ECCDC on December the 8th and 9th between 11am and 3pm.

9. Future Network Development

- Spring meeting and future meetings-standing agenda item pedagogical reflective discussion using photographs and documentation from practice-Attentiveness Protocol

Participants are happy for this to be a standing agenda item and would also like to revisit the reflective photo card activity, using own documentation, which Kelly Wilcox facilitated at a previous network meeting. Participants are asked to look in the next issue of ESTEEM for the date of the Spring meeting.

10. Meeting Evaluation

Evaluations will be emailed to participants who are asked to complete and return to the ECCDC.