



EARLY LEARNING SERVICES INVITED TO ENGAGE IN PROVOCATIVE DISCUSSION ON CHILDREN AS COMPETENT, CAPABLE LEARNERS

For Immediate Release: Tuesday October 22, 2013

Thorold, ON: Individuals and organizations involved in providing early learning and child care services for young children are invited to attend a feature presentation to dialogue on the way in which an educator's view of children informs the early learning environment, activities, provocations, and interactions. This professional learning opportunity will take place on Thursday November 7 from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at the Holiday Inn Suites Conference Centre on Ontario Street in St. Catharines. Admission is \$25.

This event is entitled **Windows and Mirrors: How Our Image of Children Impacts Our Early Learning Programs** and will feature a presentation by Ontario Ministry of Education Officers Rod Peturson and Dianne Riehl and Ministry of Education Child Care Advisor, Karen Calligan.

The presentation will also explore the shifts that are happening in the Ministry of Education's early learning initiatives and how an image of the child as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential is informing and guiding changes that are occurring in Ontario schools, family support programs, and licensed child care centres. The ECCDC is excited to be a co-host. "We're absolutely thrilled to be working with our community partners in bringing this fourth collaborative professional learning opportunity to Niagara" says Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Interim Executive Director with the ECCDC. "Offering collaborative events bring educators together from a variety of early years sectors to engage in meaningful discussion, share best practices and ultimately build strong, respectful relationships to foster children's growth and learning." Dr. Mary Louise Vanderlee from Brock University's Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Program agrees; "Inter-sector collaboratives create a space to empower those directly caring for and educating our youngest children. This is a fabulous professional development opportunity that I would encourage educators and educators in training to attend".

"The DSBN believes in life-long learning. Professional development opportunities such as this help our outstanding staff to build on their existing knowledge and skills, which will ultimately benefit the students they work so hard to support," said John Dickson, DSBN Superintendent of School Support Services. Niagara Catholic Director of Education, John Crocco concurs; "participating in collaborative exercises such as these provide excellent opportunities for sharing best-practices. It is critically important that students begin their journey in education with their best foot forward," said Mr. Crocco. "Niagara Catholic offers many innovative early learning programs and we are excited to share those initiatives with others whose focus is on providing excellence in early learning programming to children. We also look forward to hearing what others in Niagara are doing to ensure children are ready for school. We are extremely pleased to be a partner in the Windows and Mirrors event."

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Lindsay Milligan, a Faculty Member with the Niagara College Early Childhood Education Department, also encourages students and community members to attend this valuable presentation. "Niagara College Early Childhood Education Program is proud to be part of this event as we support the work that community partnerships do to create quality professional Early Childhood Educators". Those interested in attending are encouraged to register soon by contacting the ECCDC at 905.646.7311, ext. 304, or eccdc@eccdc.org.

This opportunity is sponsored by Niagara's Early Years Professional Learning Collaborative, a planning committee comprised of representatives from Brock University, Niagara College, Early Childhood Community Development Centre, Niagara Catholic District School Board and District School Board of Niagara. The Professional Learning Collaborative brings together knowledge, skills and resources to offer those working in Niagara's early learning and child care sector with cross-sector professional learning opportunities.

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For more information, please contact any member of Niagara's Early Years Professional Learning Collaborative

- Dr. Mary Louise Vanderlee or Dr. Debra Harwood, Brock University - mvanderlee@brocku.ca or dharwood@brocku.ca
- Kendall Cappellazzo or Donna Dagleish, Niagara Catholic District School Board - kendall.cappellazzo@ncdsb.com or donna.dagleish@ncdsb.com
- Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Early Childhood Community Development Centre - larial@eccdc.org
- Lindsay Milligan, Niagara College Lindsay Milligan - lmilligan@niagaracollege.ca
- Pam Rao, District School Board of Niagara - Pam.Rao@dsbn.org