

Quality Child Care Niagara **ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORT 2023**





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"We appreciate all the QCCN [Quality Child Care Niagara] support! We are thankful to have a place to reach out to for professional guidance. Having Priyanka come to our staff meeting to facilitate discussions was helpful. Visits to our classrooms and suggestions shared are great. The suggestions coming from someone with Montessori experience are valuable."

Melanie Felvus, RECE, Casa Montessori Diploma, Director of Your Preschools



The Quality Child Care Niagara Approach

Who We Are

Quality Child Care Niagara (QCCN) is the Quality Initiative Program for Niagara’s licensed child care sector. QCCN was established in 1999 with two main goals: to strengthen early identification for early referrals of all children; and to support high quality early development opportunities for children enrolled in licensed child care. QCCN is funded through Niagara Region Children’s Services. The Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) coordinates the initiative on behalf of Niagara Region through offering training, QCCN tools, and support visits. ECCDC works alongside QCCN partners Pathstone Mental Health and Niagara Children’s Centre and receives ongoing advisement from Niagara Region Children’s Services and the Quality Child Care Advisory Committee.

Our Vision

A consistent approach to excellence in early learning for children and families through the commitment of highly knowledgeable and responsive educators.

Our Statement

A strength-based, reciprocal partnership supporting children and professionals through a continuum of collaboration, training, and the use of developmental tools.



Our Values

In describing Quality Child Care Niagara the following values explain our notion of **Quality**.



Accountability – Quality Child Care Niagara values dedication to implementing QCCN in alignment with organization policies, funding requirements, legislation and the College of Early Childhood Educators *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.



Commitment – Quality Child Care Niagara values the loyalty and devotion of educators in supporting Niagara’s children and families.



Engagement – Quality Child Care Niagara promotes programs, environments and plans which deeply connects children, educators and families and reflect their hopes, interests and strengths.



Inclusivity – Quality Child Care Niagara values, respects and promotes the uniqueness of each educator, child and family.



Intentionality – Quality Child Care Niagara encourages educators to plan with purpose and meaning through an inquiry based approach.



Inviting Environments – Quality Child Care Niagara recognizes the importance of interactive play spaces which are imaginative, flexible and fun to support competent risk taking unique to each child.



Reflective – Quality Child Care Niagara values the practice of continuous learning, questioning and critical thinking.



Respectful – Quality Child Care Niagara honours each learning program, educator, child and family as unique, competent and capable.



Responsive – Quality Child Care Niagara expects educators to consistently adapt their planning, environments and experiences; to support the strengths, interests and hopes of children and their families.

“As an educator QCCN reflects these values, statement, and vision by continuously exploring and evolving the spectrum of learning and new experiences. Every child is different and as educators we are involved in adapting and expanding our learning to fit the needs of each child.”



Quality Child Care Niagara Partners

Quality Child Care Niagara Funder

Niagara Region Children's Services



QCCN Program Coordinating Agency

Early Childhood Community Development Centre



QCCN Speech and Behaviour Supports

Pathstone Mental Health and Niagara Children's Centre



"As an early childhood educator, I am committed to being engaged inside and outside the classroom. I do this by being accountable, intentional and reflective when it comes to running programming with the children. I look to use the resources available to me such as my coworkers and supervisor staff to help keep my practice intentional, where I am not repeating activities too often so that children have lots of chances to explore new opportunities. I use other resources such as local libraries, or the ECCDC to bring in new activities for the children to explore based on their interests. As long as every day I am working with the goal in mind to work with the children's interests and incorporate thoughtful additions to the room, I believe I will be successful in putting the QCCN vision, values and statement into the early learning environment."



Quality Child Care Niagara Advisory Committee

- Ashley Bélanger, La Boîte à soleil
- Barb Heersping-Shorrock, Family and Children's Services Niagara
- Drew Kean, Niagara College
- Helene Randle (Chair), Rosalind Blauer Centre for Child Care
- Jennifer Butera, Niagara Region Children's Services
- Jennifer Saltarelli, Pathstone Mental Health
- Katherine Martin, A Child's World Family Child Care Services of Niagara
- Lori Bailey, EarlyON DSBN Curriculum Support Services
- Lorrey Ariel Bonilla, Early Childhood Community Development Centre
- Lucy Belchior/Roxane Lewis, YMCA of Niagara Child Care Services
- Louise King-Hall, Fort Erie Native Cultural Centre Aboriginal Headstart
- Melissa McLauchlan, Niagara Child Care Sector Executive Committee
- Michelle Maxwell/Rebecca Main, Niagara Children's Centre Preschool Speech and Language
- Priyanka Tan, Early Childhood Community Development Centre
- Sally Mazachowsky, Special Needs Resource Leadership Committee
- Sarah Kuhn, Niagara Region Public Health
- Sharon Milne, Niagara Region Children's Services
- Tracy Belcastro, Strive Niagara

Quality Child Care Niagara Coordinator

- Priyanka Tan, Quality Child Care Niagara Coordinator, Early Childhood Community Development Centre

"Over the past year I became a supervisor for the first time. I was newly back to the centre after having my children and being away for a few years, and I was having a hard time remembering all the information. I was pleasantly surprised with all the support I got from the ECCDC Team and the QCCN Support Priyanka gave me. Thank you all so much. So now when the time comes to help other supervisors, I know a great group of people to refer them to."

L'année dernière, je suis devenu superviseur pour la première fois. Je venais de réintégrer le centre après la naissance de mes enfants et quelques années d'absence, et j'avais du mal à me souvenir de toutes les informations. J'ai été agréablement surprise par tout le soutien que j'ai reçu de l'équipe de l'ECCDC et par l'aide que Priyanka m'a apportée au sein du QCCN. Merci beaucoup à vous tous. Désormais, lorsque le moment sera venu d'aider d'autres superviseurs, je connais un groupe de personnes formidables à qui les adresser.

Nicole Dunnink, RECE, Supervisor of La Boîte à soleil – LaMarsh



"[Through QCCN] I enjoyed learning and having the opportunity to grow my understanding on the developmental needs of children and how I as an educator can support the children and their families."

Quality Child Care Niagara Services Offered in 2023

247

Individuals completed the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training

1500+

DISC Preschool Screen (DPS) and Speech and Language Checklist completed

745+

Children received further support following the implementation of QCCN Tools and Resources

3900+

Educators have been trained in QCCN since its inception

"QCCN has been a great addition to our team. It has helped our [centre] achieve higher goals by providing excellent services. Priyanka has been visiting us often, and the extra training sessions have helped all staff become more familiar and comfortable with all the mandatory documents, and how to complete them correctly. The resources provided to all centres in the Niagara Region are exceptional. Thanks to the entire QCCN Team for making my team more confident in knowing what they do."

Tanya Nanda, RECE, Supervisor of EYES Turtle Club Daycare



"The Brigance Readiness Binder, QCCN Developmental Reference Charts, and the Developmental Profiles Textbook are beneficial planning and developmental resources help to support us in the early learning environment by allowing a clear pathway regarding all individualized needs in our program. Children learn in various ways and at very different paces. These documents allow for us as educators to get an idea of different lesson ideas, the complexity of child development, and even key aspects associated with child development and learning in several different areas. These would be very beneficial to an educator like me, who is fresh in the field and becoming accustomed to the many different learning styles!"

Support Visits, Tools, and Resources

Beginning in 2022, a new service model called the Level of Support was implemented as a method to prioritize QCCN Support Visits by allocating more time with programs that require additional supports, whereas previously all programs received an annual QCCN Support Visit once a year. To reflect this year's Level of Support for each centre, Niagara Region Children's Services issued a questionnaire in which the collected data determined the individual centre's Level of Support to either 1, 2, or 3. Based on a centre's Level of Support, the QCCN Support Visits were customized to support the needs of each centre through an asset-based approach.

Additionally, as of September 2023 Niagara Region Children's Services updated the policy for Short Term Specialized Support Funding which included QCCN visiting centres that were in receipt of Short Term Specialized Support Funding during their first seven weeks to complete ECCDC's Program Inclusion Reflection Tool with the centre. Following the seven-week point, Niagara Region Children's Services staff met with the centre to review the completed Program Inclusion Reflection Tool along with additional requirements from the centre.

- **125 Support Visits** with **50 centres** were completed
- **600 educators** were consulted during the Support Visits

Centres continued to implement the mandatory DPS and Speech and Language Pathology Referral Checklist for each child which were recorded in the monthly QCCN Statistical Reporting. The Behaviour C.A.R.E. Checklist, Environmental Rating Scales, Caregiver Interaction Scales, and the Program Profile have been utilized as needed basis. QCCN Resources; such as, Brigance Readiness Binder, Developmental Profiles Textbook, Family Engagement Strategies, and QCCN Developmental Reference Charts were also used by centres to support their ongoing quality journey.



Reflective Practice Institute Training

We continued to offer the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training through five (5) on-demand Webinar Modules to licensed child care centres, EarlyON centres, Niagara College Early Childhood Education program students, and Niagara College Six Nations Polytechnic Early Childhood Education program students. Each of the webinar modules were revised from the previous year to reflect the most up-to-date information along with the addition of auto-closed captioning to support various learning styles.

Webinar Modules

- 1 Introduction to QCCN Reflective Practice Institute and DPS
- 2 Environmental Supports
- 3 QCCN Developmental Planning Tools
- 4 Becoming a Reflective Practitioner and Engaging Family and Children
- 5 Speech & Language and Emergent Literacy

Licensed Child Care Centres in Niagara

Educators supporting infants, toddlers, and/or preschool programs who previously *did not complete* the full **Quality Child Care Niagara Reflective Practice Institute** had registered to participate in the **five (5) Webinar Modules** that were offered in **two (2) rotations** throughout 2023. Each rotation was available over a three-month period, and educators were able to complete the training at their own pace and schedule.

In addition to the five (5) Webinar Modules, educators that have *completed* the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training in the past (between November 2021 to August 2023) and currently supporting infant, toddler, and/or preschool programs in Niagara are required to complete the *mandatory* new **QCCN Speech and Language Training** to ensure the community continues to receive consistent QCCN training to support their work. This **1-hour pre-recorded Webinar Module** training includes the new Niagara Children's Centre's Online Referral Portal, updated Checklists, Referral Process, and documents. Centres are welcome to complete the QCCN Speech and Language Training as a team during their staff meeting or educators can complete it at their own pace and schedule.



QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training 5 Webinar Modules

Training Dates

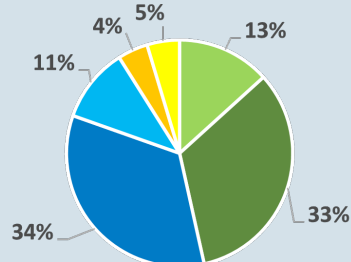
- May 15, 2023 – August 14, 2023
- September 11, 2023 – December 11, 2023

Statistics and Testimonials

- **163 educators** representing **51 centres** completed the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training
- **84% of educators** were working in the field on a **full-time** basis
- **12% of educators** were working in the field on a **part-time** basis

Educators Working With...

■ Infants ■ Toddlers ■ Preschool ■ School age ■ Admin ■ Other



- **97% of educators** indicated the QCCN Tools and Resources from the training to be **impactful** to their current practice.

QCCN Speech and Language Training 1-hour Webinar Module

Training Dates

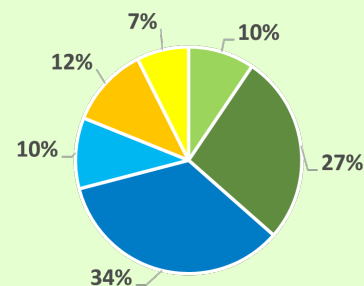
- October 23, 2023 – October 21, 2024

Statistics and Testimonials (October 23 – December 31, 2023)

- **131 educators** representing **31 centres** completed the QCCN Speech and Language Training
- **91% of educators** are working in the field on a **full-time** basis
- **8% of educators** are working in the field on a **part-time** basis

Educators Working With...

■ Infants ■ Toddlers ■ Preschool ■ School age ■ Admin ■ Other

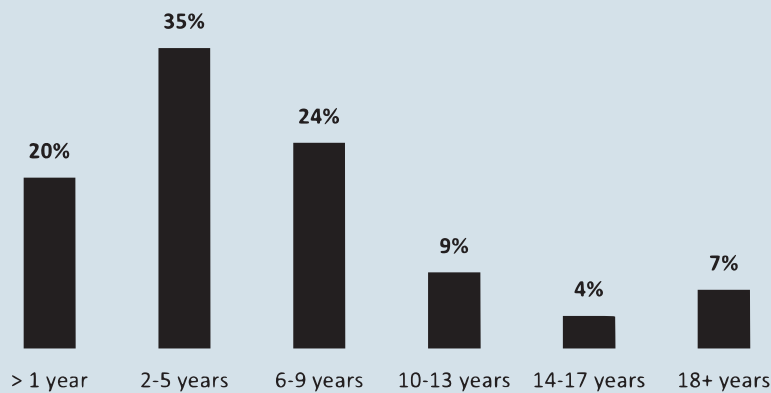


- **95% of educators** indicated the QCCN Speech and Language Tools from the training to be **impactful** to their current practice.

"I found it very valuable and helpful for QCCN to provide training for educators. After viewing the 5 modules, I was able to understand how important it was as educators to truly support the QCCN's values, vision, and statement practices. Prior to moving to Niagara, I did not do any training, and I felt that my learning in the profession was stagnant. I find it important to continue to grow as educators and I truly feel that the QCCN's trainings for educators is useful."

QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training 5 Webinar Modules

Length of time in the child care field



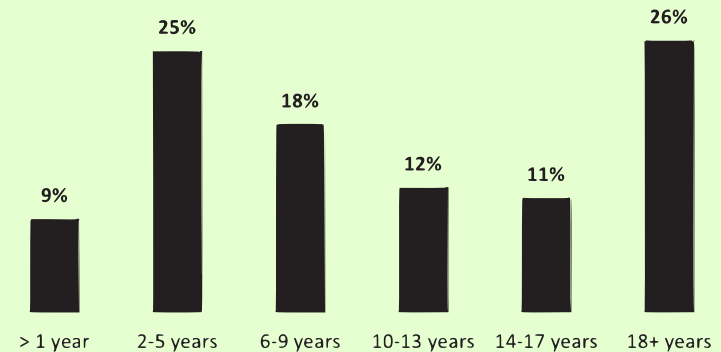
"I found that the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute did a great job at keeping my engagement by incorporating different strategies of learning (i.e., visual, audio, and kinesthetic)."

Did you know?

Some educators that were new to Niagara came from the following places: Brampton, Hamilton, Vaughan, Guelph, London, and Toronto.

QCCN Speech and Language Training 1-hour Webinar Module

Length of time in the child care field



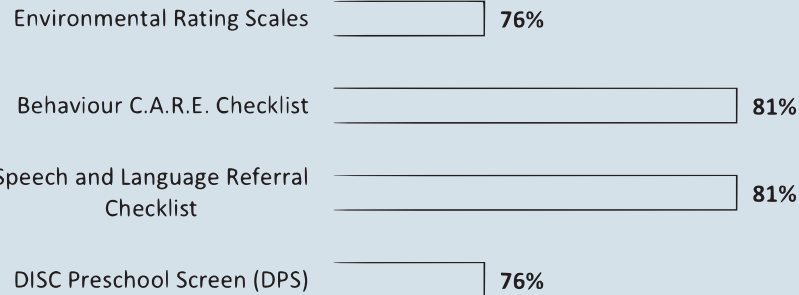
"The most valuable aspect of this webinar module training lies in the emphasis on practical strategies, such as language-rich activities and open-ended questioning, to enhance interaction with children. The focus on creating a supportive environment adds a layer of understanding, emphasizing the importance of fostering communication skills in a holistic and inclusive manner."

Did you know?

- **79% of educators** completed the QCCN Speech and Language Training at their **own pace and schedule**
- **19% of educators** completed the QCCN Speech and Language Training **as a staff team**

QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training 5 Webinar Modules

□ Level of Confidence



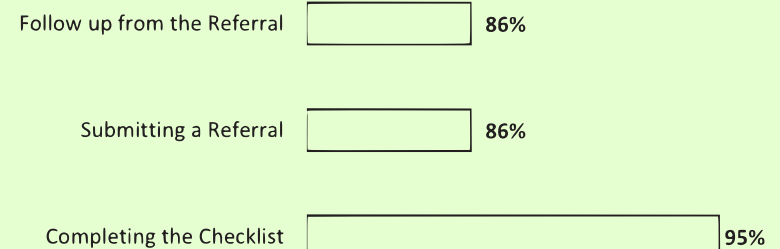
"I am confident that I can use each tool efficiently and effectively and I can create warm, welcoming environments for children to learn and grow. I am also confident in my ability to create positive relationships with children and their families, along with working well with my coworkers and team!"



QCCN Speech and Language Training 1-hour Webinar Module

"I thought the example of how to complete a Birth to School Start Speech and Language Pathology Referral Checklist was very valuable in this webinar. The example on how to complete the checklist was very informative and good for visual learners like myself."

□ Level of Confidence



"All information shared in this module is very important and to have the opportunity to revise the content is a bonus and better for us as educators as it reminds us to keep being mindful during our interactions with the children as those moments help us so much to discover about the child, what they're about, how they communicate and connect with others, their intentions and so on."



QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training 5 Webinar Modules

Centres who participated in 2023 QCCN Reflective Practice Institutes Training

ACW - Fairview

Adamo Montessori Academy – Main

Adamo Montessori Academy – Welland

Althorp Montessori School – Thorold

Althorp Montessori School

Anna's Daycare Centre

Au Coin Des Petits - Centre Prescolaire

Beamsville Early Learning & Child Care Centre

Bee Montessori Niagara - Hagar Site

Bee Montessori Niagara - Portage Site

Beyond Montessori School

BGC Niagara - St. Gabriel Lalemant Child Care Centre

Childcare Central

Fort Erie Co-operative Nursery School

Fort Erie International Academy Childcare

Fort Erie Regional Child Care Centre

Grandview Community Daycare

Grassie Christian Preschool

Great Lakes Christian Preschool

Greenbelt Academy & Early Learning Centre

Grimsby Community Preschool

Hickory Creek Childcare

Kidzdome Preschool

La Boîte à soleil - Franco-Niagara

La Boîte à soleil – LaMarsh

La Boîte à soleil - L'héritage

La Boîte à soleil - Nouvel Horizon

La Boîte à soleil - Saint Joseph

Lakeview Community Day Care Co-operative

Mini Retreat Childcare

Nelephant Montessori (Toddler)

Nelles Before and After Care Program

North End Co-operative Preschool

Pathways Academy and Early Learning Centre

Power Glen Early Learning & Child Care Center

St. Thomas Day Care

Strive Niagara Family Learning Childcare Centre

Strive Niagara Sven H. Dohnberg Centre

Terra Viva Montessori Bilingual - Port Dalhousie

The Chestnut Tree Preschool – Beamsville

The Chestnut Tree Preschool – Grimsby

Top of the Ridge Day Care

Vineland Christian Preschool

Way To Grow Daycare – Smithville

Way to Grow Daycare - St. Catharines

Way To Grow Daycare - St. Davids

Way To Grow Daycare - St. Nicholas

Welland Parent Child Care Centre

Western Hill Child Care Centre

YMCA Child Care - Our Lady of Fatima-Grimsby

YMCA Child Care - Our Lady of Mount Carmel



QCCN Speech and Language Training 1-hour Webinar Module

Centres who participated in 2023 QCCN Speech and Language Training

- ACW - Country Kids
- ACW - Fairview
- ACW - Kids World
- Althorp Montessori School
- Althorp Montessori School - Thorold
- Anna's Daycare Centre
- BGC Niagara - St.Gabriel Lalemant Child Care Centre
- Branscombe Early Learning and Family Centre
- Childcare Central
- Fort Erie Regional Child Care Centre
- Grandview Community Daycare
- Grapeview Day Care Centre
- Grimsby Community Preschool
- La Boîte à soleil - LaMarsh
- La Boîte à soleil - L'héritage
- La Boîte à soleil - Saint Joseph
- Les Coccinelles Zélées - Immaculée Conception
- Les Coccinelles Zélées - Saint-Francois-d'Assise
- Nelephant Montessori School (Casa)
- Port Dalhousie Nursery School
- St. Catharines Regional Child Care
- St. Thomas Day Care
- Stamford Green Day Nursery
- Terra Viva Montessori Bilingual - Scott Street
- Thorold Community Child Care Services
- Toks Christian Daycare
- Top of the Ridge Day Care
- Welland Regional Child Care Centre
- YMCA Child Care - Durdan Loretto
- YMCA Child Care - Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- YMCA Child Care - Our Lady of the Holy Rosary



EarlyON Centres in Niagara

Educators from EarlyON centres that are part of Quality Child Care Niagara who previously did not participate in the **three (3) Webinar Modules**; DISC Preschool Screen (DPS), Speech and Language Referral Checklist, and Behaviour C.A.R.E. Checklist, were offered a catch-up QCCN training session from **October to December 2023**.

- **7 educators** completed the three-webinar module QCCN Training
- **100% of educators** indicated the QCCN Tools and Resources to be **impactful** to their current practice
- **100%** reported being **confident** in completing the **Speech and Language Pathology Referral Checklist** and **Behaviour C.A.R.E Checklist**
- **66%** reported being **confident** in completing the **DPS** and some educators received **in-person support** following the training to gain higher level of confidence in DPS

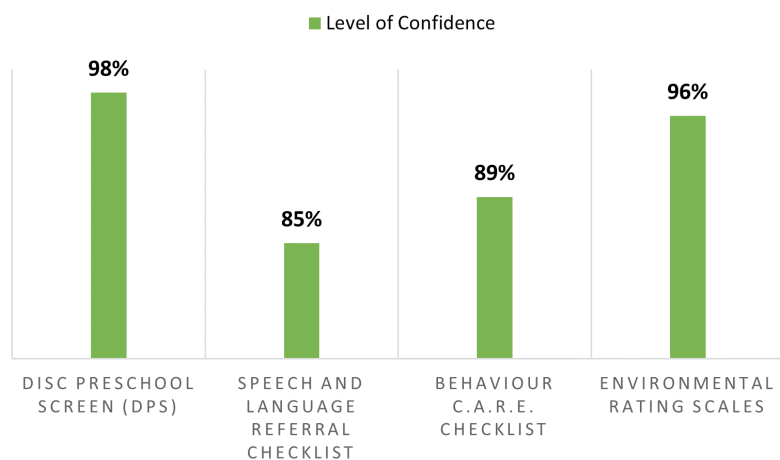
"I found DPS, speech and language developmental checklist and C.A.R.E most valuable. It is such a wonderful tool to improve the quality of program for children and assist me in creating an inclusive program for each child. Furthermore, it helps me in gaining further insight on each child's individual speech and language skills. And, it assists me to document and observe the overall environment and the individual child."



Niagara College

This year we had the opportunity to offer the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training to **three (3) Niagara College student groups; Niagara College Accelerated Early Childhood Education** program students (January to February 2023), **Niagara College Early Childhood Education** program students (October to December 2023) and **Niagara College Six Nations Polytechnic Indigenous Early Childhood Education** program students (October to December 2023). Each student received the same training as educators in licensed child care centres to ensure consistency as the students enter into the early learning and child care field.

- **77 students** completed the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Training
- **94%** of the students indicated they have gained a **greater understanding of the QCCN Tools and Resources**
- **95%** have attained **new knowledge** following the training
- **96%** of the students reported the QCCN Tools and Resources to be **impactful** to their current and future practice



"I just want to say that I learned a lot from this training session because they provided us with practical knowledge which I did not get in my home country. They only provide theoretical knowledge. So these training sessions helped me a lot to learn and help me to get ready to work in the exciting field of Early Childhood Education."



Community Conversation Cafés

Fostering quality through our community of practice, QCCN Community Conversation Cafés, has been one of the ways Quality Child Care Niagara has continually engaged with the community. Various topics were offered virtually and in-person, based on the emergent trends, program requests and feedback, and the community's needs for support.

- **9 QCCN Community Conversation Cafés** were offered to the Niagara community
- **111 participants** attended the QCCN Community Conversation Cafés

Reflecting on the Environment & Our Daily Practice, Part 1 • May 24, 2023

Reflecting on the Environment & Our Daily Practice, Part 2 • June 21, 2023

Follow up from the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute • September 13, 2023

Cultivating Reciprocal Relationships with Families • October 25, 2023

Provocations and Engagement • November 22, 2023

Follow up from the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute • December 13, 2023

Further Support Following the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Niagara College Six Nations Polytechnic • December 7, 2023

Further Support Following the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Niagara College, Part 1 • December 7, 2023

Further Support Following the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute Niagara College, Part 2 • December 7, 2023

"I hope QCCN will continually give more trainings for educators relating to new concepts and ideas to use in the classroom as well as resources that speak about new trends in teaching varied age groups of children."



Webpage and Statistics

- QCCN Main Page had **2,434 visits** this year (12% ↑ from 2022)
- QCCN Resources and Tools page: **2,444 visits** (39% ↑ from 2022)
- QCCN Training page: **710 visits** (47% ↑ from 2022)
- QCCN Vision, Statement, and Values page had a **77% increase** in visits since last year
- Environmental Rating Scales page had a **48% increase** in visits since last year
- The month of **October 2023** had the **highest** number of activities across the QCCN website

“QCCN has been very supportive in helping us out at our school. We were able to have all staff trained for the DPS training, which in return helps us support our children in the center. The ECCDC Staff have been able to come in to visit, give ideas and suggestions on how to better our program, and where we can get supplies for our outdoor playground. Their Team was able to assist me in finding a mentor to help me throughout my journey as Supervisor. We look forward to continuing our partnership with QCCN.”

Sandra Fenwick, RECE
Supervisor of Terra Viva Montessori Bilingual
- Scott Street



