

A photograph of four children playing in a snowy field under a clear blue sky. The children are wearing colorful winter clothing and hats. One child in the center is smiling broadly. The snow is piled up around them, and the background shows some bare trees.

eccdc

January to June 2025

esteem calendar

Inspiring excellence in early learning and child care since 1993

January 2025



sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
January Network Meetings Licensed Child Care Supervisors Network - January 13 Preschool Network - January 15 Executive Directors and Administrators Network - January 22 Infant and Toddler Network - January 22 Please see Esteem for further details			1 ECCDC closed - week 2 of annual winter closure	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Laying the Foundation for Family Engagement 6:30-8:30pm (p. 14)	10	11
12	13	14 Igniting Curiosity: Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning in Early Childhood Education Series Part 2: 6:30-8:00pm (p. 14)	15	16 Building Relationships in School Age Programs Series Part 2 7:00-9:00pm (p. 14)	17	18
29	20 Professional Learning Series for Home Based Professionals Part 2: 7:00-8:30pm (p. 15)	21 Stimulating Language and Literacy Development in an Inquiry, Play-based Environment 6:30-8:30pm (p. 15)	22 Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management Series Part 1: 10:00am-12:00pm (p. 15)	23 Trauma-informed Emotional Regulation & Well-Being in Early Learning Settings Series: How to Help Children Feel Safe and Seen Part 1: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 16)	24 Relationships through Research: Series for EarlyON Teams Part 2: 1:00-2:30pm (p. 17)	25
26	27	28 Strategies for Promoting an Equitable and Discrimination Free Early Learning Environment 6:30-8:30pm (p. 17)	29 Effective Leadership in Early Learning and Child Care Series Part 4: 9:30-11:30am (p. 17) Book Study Part 1: Illuminating Care 6:30-7:30pm (p. 17)	30 Designing YES Spaces: Embrace the YES and Design a Space for Children 6:30-8:30pm (p. 18)	31	

A photograph of a winter landscape. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow. On the left side, there is a large, leafless tree with a dark trunk and intricate branch structure. In the background, a utility pole stands against a pale, overcast sky. The overall scene is quiet and desolate.

February 2025

sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
	February Network Meetings Home Child Care Professionals Linked with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency - February 10 School Age Network - February 12 Niagara Nature Alliance Network - February 19 Please see Esteem for further details					1
2	3	4 Self Regulation 6:30-8:30pm (p. 18)	5 Pour les éducateurs/éducatrices francophones (part 3) 18h30 à 20h30 (p. 18)	6 Wellness Strategies: Stress, Compassion Fatigue, and Resilience for Educators 6:30-8:30pm (p. 18)	7	8
9	10	11 Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series Part 1: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 18)	12	13 Plant-based Culinary Adventures in the Classroom 6:30-8:30pm (p. 19)	14	15 ECCDC Closed - Family Day
16	17 ECCDC Closed - Family Day	18 Early Learning Art Explorations Series Part 1: 6:30-8:00pm (p. 19)	19 Lead Like It Matters 10:00-11:30am (p. 19)	20 Creating Literacy-Rich, Playful Learning Experiences in the Early Years Series Part 2: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 20)	21	22 Strengthening Your Program Through Trauma-Informed Practices 8:30am-4:00pm (p. 20)
23	24 Strengthening Our Understanding of Indigenous Culture in Early Childhood 6:30-8:30pm (p. 20)	25	26 Book Study Part 2: Illuminating Care 6:30-8:00pm (p. 17) Ten Things Outstanding Board of Director Teams Do 9:30-11:30am (p. 20)	27 Trauma-informed Emotional Regulation & Well-Being in Early Learning Settings Series: How to Help Children Feel Safe and Seen Part 2: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 16)	28	

March 2025



sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
						1
2	3	4	5 A Culture of Agency: Fostering Engagement, Empowerment, Identity, and Belonging in the Early Years 6:30-8:30pm (p. 21)	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series Part 2: 6:30- 8:30pm (p. 18)	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Early Learning Art Explorations Series Part 2: 6:30-8:00pm (p. 19)	26 Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management Series Part 2: 10:00am-12:00pm (p. 15) Book Study Part 3: Illuminating Care 6:30- 8:00pm (p. 17)	27 Trauma-informed Emotional Regulation & Well-Being in Early Learning Settings Series: How to Help Children Feel Safe and Seen Part 3: 6:30- 8:30pm (p. 16)	28	29 Book Launch and Highlights with the Author: Re-imagining Heartbreak: An Educator's Journey to Reclaim Whole- Heartedness 9:30am- 12:00pm (p. 21)
30	31 Professional Learning Series for Home Based Professionals Part 3: 7:00-8:30pm (p. 15)	March Network Meetings Licensed Child Care Centre Menu Planning and Nutrition Network Meeting - March 17 Licensed Child Care Supervisors Network - March 24 Executive Directors and Administrators Network - March 26 Please see Esteem for further details				

April 2025



sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
		1	2	3 Supporting Mental Health in Early Learning Environments 6:30-8:30pm (p. 21)	4 Reflect and Revitalize Series Part 1: 1:30-3:30pm (p. 21)	5
6	7	8 Mastering Emotional Intelligence for RECEs 6:00-8:30pm (p. 22)	9 Pour les éducateurs/éducatrices francophones (part 4) 18h30 à 20h30 (p. 18)	10 Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series Part 1: 10:00-11:30am (p. 22)	11	12 Creating Circles of Support Through Cultivating Professional Friendships in Early Childhood Education 10:00am-12:00pm (p. 17)
13	14	15 Igniting Curiosity: Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning in Early Childhood Education Series Part 3: 6:30-8:00pm (p. 14)	16	17 Supporting Families of Young Children with Special Needs 6:30-8:30pm (p. 24)	18 ECCDC Closed - Easter	19 ECCDC Closed - Easter
20	21 ECCDC Closed - Easter	22 Early Learning Art Explorations Series Part 3: 6:30-8:00pm (p. 19)	23	24 Emotional Regulation for Early Years 6:30-8:00pm (p. 22)	25	26
27	28	29 Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series Part 3: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 18)	30 Book Study Part 4: Illuminating Care 6:30-8:00pm (p. 17)		April Network Meetings Home Child Care Professionals Linked with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency - April 14 Preschool Network - April 16 Infant and Toddler Network - April 23 Please refer to Esteem for further details	

May 2025



sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
	<p>May Network Meetings School Age Network - May 14 Niagara Nature Alliance Network - May 21 Please refer to Esteem for further details</p>			1	2 Reflect and Revitalize Series Part 2: 1:30-3:30pm (p. 22)	3
4	5	6	7	8 Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series Part 2: 10:00-11:30am (p. 22)	9	10 Getting Back to the Roots of Play 10:00am-2:00pm (p. 23)
11	12	13 Creating Community in Your Early Learning Environment 6:30-8:30pm (p. 23)	14	15 Building Relationships in School Age Programs Series Part 3 7:00-9:00pm (p. 22)	16 Relationships through Research Series for EarlyON Teams Part 3: 1:00-2:30pm (p. 17)	17 ECCDC Closed - Victoria Day
18	19 ECCDC Closed - Victoria Day	20 Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series Part 4: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 19)	21	22 In the Heat of the Moment: Understanding Escalating Behaviours in Early Childhood 6:30-8:30pm (p. 23)	23	24
25	26	27 Creating Literacy-Rich, Playful Learning Experiences in the Early Years Series Part 3: 6:30-8:30pm (p. 20)	28 Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management Series Part 3: 10:00am-12:00pm (p. 16) Book Study Part 5: Illuminating Care 6:30-8:00pm (p. 17)	29	30	31 Pedagogical Documentation in Early Years Practice: Seeing Through Multiple Perspectives 10:00am-2:30pm (p. 23)

June 2025



sun	mon	tues	wed	thurs	fri	sat
1	2	3 Exploring the Possibilities of Makerspace in Outdoor Environments 6:30-8:30pm (p. 24)	4	5	6 Reflect and Revitalize Series Part 3: 1:30-3:30pm (p. 22)	7 Fostering a Sustainable Future Through Environmental Programs Grounded in Ontario Curriculum 10:00am-3:00pm (p. 24)
8	9	10	11	12 Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series Part 3: 10:00-11:30am (p. 22)	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Laying the Foundation for Family Engagement (ECCDC Conference Room)

Building and maintaining responsive and collaborative relationships with families is an ongoing journey that presents opportunities to reflect on our own beliefs and values as educators, build reciprocal trust and communication with families, and embark on the process of having the conversation. In this session we will look at strategies to develop relationships, understand how we can engage families as co-learners about and with their children, consider strategies for difficult conversations, and gain information on how we support families in experiencing a sense of belonging in our program.

Building Relationships in School Age Programs Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Building relationships and connections in school age programs matters. Relationships underpin the work of educators, and both Ontario's early years and middle years frameworks emphasize the importance of relationships, with research highlighting the beneficial impact that positive relationships have on children through their childhood and into adulthood. This series will explore how educators working in school age programs can develop supportive, trusting relationships with children and their families, and intentionally build strong, supportive relationships with the multiple partners they engage with.

Session 2: Developing relationships with schools and community partners

In this session we will investigate a variety of approaches that school age programs can adopt to plan intentional connections with school administrators and staff, both formally and informally, to build mutually respectful, strong, trusting relationships that support children and families to feel a sense of continuity between school, program, and home. We will then go on to consider how educators can build relationships with community organizations and individuals to connect their program and children with their local community.

Session 3: Facilitating relationships with families and connection between families and partner organizations

Educators will have an opportunity to consider the importance of developing supportive, reciprocal relationships with the families of children attending school age programs that are built on trust. The session will then dive into ways that school age educators can connect with the families by adopting authentic family engagement strategies and family-centred practices.

Thought will be given to how educators can meet families where they are at in a culturally responsive way. Lastly, we will contemplate ways in which they can facilitate the three-way sharing of information between families, school, and their afterschool program.

Igniting Curiosity: Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning in Early Childhood Education Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Join us for an engaging and informative series designed to inspire curiosity and foster a love of learning in young children. "Igniting Curiosity" will explore the concept of inquiry-based learning, delve into various types of inquiry, and demonstrate practical strategies for implementing these approaches in your program. Learn how to set up provocations and invitations to play and understand the differences between these concepts. Don't miss this opportunity to equip yourself with the tools and techniques to create an inquiry-friendly environment that nurtures young minds. Register today and take the first step towards making learning an exciting adventure for children!

Session 2: Delving into Guided Inquiry

This session focuses on *guided inquiry*, where the educator presents a question, but children are given the freedom to determine the process for discovering the answer. This approach balances structure with children's autonomy, fostering deeper engagement and independent thinking. Through interactive activities and real-world examples, you'll gain insights into creating meaningful, child-led explorations that stimulate curiosity and creativity. Join us to learn how to seamlessly integrate guided inquiry into your practice!

Session 3: Exploring Structured Inquiry

In the final session of our series, we dive into the world of *structured inquiry*. This session will provide you with a comprehensive understanding of how to design and facilitate structured inquiry activities, where the educator provides both the question and the process for finding the answer. Don't miss this foundational session to complete your journey into inquiry-based learning!

To register for any session, visit www.eccdc.eccdc.org, call 905.646.7311 x304, or email eccdc@eccdc.org. To view Esteem, visit www.eccdc.org/professional-learning/esteem.

**Professional Learning Series for Home Based Professionals:
Strengthening Play in the Home through *How Does Learning Happen?*
(Webinar - all sessions)**

Session Two: Unlocking the Magic of Emergent Curriculum - An Introduction to the Emergent Curriculum Approach with Tina Geers

Step into the magical world of emergent planning – where children are the key! The way we plan play experiences for children is changing as we focus on their interests and abilities as the core concept behind planning classroom experiences and co-learn, co-create, and co-imagine with them. What is emergent planning? Is it effective? Will the children still enjoy the experiences and learn? How does it work with the Ontario Frameworks? Discover the answers to these questions and more as we look at key tips and strategies for implementing an emergent curriculum approach to children’s learning. This workshop is designed to reveal the mystery and magic of the well-known emergent curriculum concept and put it into practice in your early learning environment. Remember! Not all environments and planning are the same – just like not all children or educators are the same. So, let’s figure out how to do it so it works for everyone!

Session Three: Playful Planning: Enriching Your Emergent Curriculum Approach with Tina Geers

Playful learning experiences promote a sense of curiosity, exploration, and confidence, which are what we all strive to achieve when we plan for our early childhood environment and our children’s experiences. The emergent curriculum approach is one of the most popular and best approaches to achieve this. This approach lets the child lead the playful experiences and follow their own learning path. As early childhood educators, our job is to observe their interests and plan to complement or extend them. Being intentional about preparing a responsive environment is a key element to emergent planning. How we plan activities, play experiences, provocations and invitations and make changes to our environment all depends on the dynamics of our group of children and our ability to really listen, observe, and learn about the children’s deeper interests and abilities. Let us walk alongside the children and join them in their journeys of wonder, play and curiosity. Join me as we discuss planning strategies that work for everyone. There is no ‘one size fits all’ when it comes to planning for children’s play, so let’s explore what your journey is with the children and how you can plan for play!

Stimulating Language and Literacy Development in an Inquiry, Play-based Environment (Webinar)

Registered Early Childhood Educators are encouraged to engage in reading to children to assist in language and literacy development. However, there is so much more that can be done in all aspects of the child’s day. This webinar demonstrates ways to implement an environment rich with language and literacy activities. Join the session for an exciting discovery of stimulating language and literacy development in a play-based environment.

Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management: A Three-Part Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Session One: Hiring Strategies – Recruitment, Selection & Onboarding

Finding and selecting the right people to join our teams – those who will perform well in the role and contribute meaningfully to our workplace culture – is a challenge for every organization. This workshop explores current research and best practices to help participants evaluate and improve their current recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes. As the first phase of the employee experience, these three elements set the stage for future performance and engagement. Through individual exercises and group discussion, participants will generate practical insights that can be immediately applied to improve their hiring strategy and practices in their organization’s context.

Session Two: Coaching Strategies for Learning – Conflict, Performance, Change

In the absence of intentional coaching, employees often lack the support they need to develop and perform at their highest levels. Effective leaders are skilled at coaching the people they lead to inspire growth, change, and healthy work relationships. This workshop provides a leadership approach for coaching others effectively and provides tools that bring out the best in the people. Through the use of case studies, participants will learn a five-step coaching model for working with their employees to enable changes in behaviour, promote skill development, and resolve conflict.

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Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management: A Three-Part Series (continued)

Session Three: Employee Engagement – How to Foster Motivation

When employees are not actively engaged at work, not only do they suffer – the organization does as well. Workplaces with high levels of engagement have employees that are committed and feel a connection to the organization. Engaged employees are willing to use discretionary time, brainpower, and effort beyond what is expected of them. This workshop explores how employee engagement occurs more readily when employees are respected and cared for, when they do tasks that bring them satisfaction, and when they work in an organization that makes a difference. Participants will learn unique insights for increasing engagement and be challenged to think critically about their approach to employee engagement.

Trauma-informed Emotional Regulation & Well-Being in Early Learning Settings Series: How to Help Children Feel Safe and Seen (Webinar - all sessions)

Session One: Holistic Emotional Regulation Workshop

Emotional Regulation is a hot topic! Come and learn relational skills that will set the stage for more emotional regulation in early learning settings. Leave with hands-on tools & strategies that you can use immediately. Emotional Regulation is a skill that is modelled and practiced by caregivers. This is a skill like all others, they take time and practice to develop. Early Childhood Educators play a vital role in supporting the foundations of mental health in young children. Each day early learning professionals have opportunities to model and help shape children's emotional regulation skills. Early learning settings that offer emotionally safe spaces and foster emotional awareness teach our children necessary lifelong skills. Topics such as: emotional safety, co-regulation, neuro-affirming practices, developmental trauma, attachment styles, inclusive settings, equity, and staff resiliency are vital for the mental health of our entire ECE community, including children, teachers, and administration. Early learning settings have the potential to be the buffers necessary for the toxic stress levels we are seeing in modern families and harnessing that potential could be life-changing for families.

Session Two: Adverse Early Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Attachment Styles in Young Children

During this workshop we teach caregivers and educators the science of stress on trauma in children and families. We highlight how the ACEs research can guide and support why we need to create connected,

compassionate, and calm relationships with children. We will also look at Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and why it is vital we see its value in this generation of children. See the magic that comes from attuned and empathic relationships, and how we can help children of all ages manage the day-to-day stresses of their lives – especially those with trauma, neurodiversity, and complex attachment styles. We walk participants through the theories of co-regulation of emotion, nervous system regulation, and attachment science. Feeling connection is our most powerful tool, especially if there is developmental trauma or toxic stress in the lives of children. Attunement is a magical place of deep connection that is cultivated when we slow down, get curious, and consciously attune to children. Attunement is a special micro-space that has a frequency - when you feel it, you know it. These connected and compassionate spaces are vital for all children to thrive and shine, but even more so if there has been developmental trauma, attachment issues and neurodiversity. This workshop session is based on the interpersonal neurobiology approach taught to us by Dr. Dan Siegal, which helps us use our personal calm neurology to support attachment, co-regulation and emotional safety. In these emotionally rich spaces children can thrive because they feel grounded, connected and seen.

Session Three: Emotional Safety and Cultivating Emotionally Rich Spaces in Early Learning Settings

In this workshop we will show how and why educators need to create connected, compassionate, and calm relationships with children. Come learn why we must also focus on respectful and empathic relationships to help children manage the day-to-day stresses of their lives. We will discuss the best practices and trends that are changing the way we need to address emotional awareness in the lives of this generation of children. When spaces are truly emotionally safe – everything can change for the better. Lisa Pinhorn will walk your educational staff through the theory of Emotional Regulation and how it can expand our understanding of what it means to feel safe within learning settings. Emotional safety is vital to the mental health of our entire educational community, including children, teachers, and administration. Our schools have the potential to be the buffers necessary for the toxic stress levels we are seeing in modern families.

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Relationships through Research: Cultivating Connection and Engagement with Children and Families through Teacher Research: A Three-Part Series for EarlyON Teams (Webinar - all sessions)

EarlyON programs are bubbling with endless possibilities for curiosity, creativity, innovation and connection. Through intentional research questions, we can deepen our understanding of who children are, the competencies they hold, and the ideas they have as we listen and observe carefully, think with one another, and respond thoughtfully.

Part 2: Studying the Question - Looking Together

Once we have a question ready to study, we are ready to listen and look closely. In Part 2, we'll look at multiple ways to document children's thinking and ideas in response to our research question. This includes creating a research board, a parent/caregiver documentation invitation, and sharing secondary research on our topic with families. We'll then think about how to look for big ideas and overarching themes in the documentation that we are capturing as a way of pulling our research together. At the end of this session, participants will have tangible ideas for documenting answers to their research question with families.

Part 3: Sharing the Findings - Celebrating Together

Once we've spent time listening, observing, gathering artefacts of children's thinking and ideas, studying and thinking together, we have the opportunity to celebrate all that we've learned and share this learning with others outside of our programs. In Part 3, we'll look at how we can create captivating and meaningful displays and other artefacts of our research findings that include photos, children's work, our written observations and interpretations, and more.

Creating Circles of Support Through Cultivating Professional Friendships in Early Childhood Education: A Professional Conversation (ECCDC Conference Room)

Adult professional friendships are integral to early childhood education, giving educators daily support and collaboration, nurturing their professional and pedagogical growth, and-not to be discounted-making the job fun. During this workshop, participants will explore what it means to be a friend, how to make friends and keep friends, and what happens when friendships end. All are invited to attend. Workshop participants will be invited to join a series of professional conversations following this launching session. Dates and times to be explored as a group.

Strategies for Promoting an Equitable and Discrimination Free Early Learning Environment (Webinar)

This session is being offered by Dane Marco Di Cesare, PhD, Assistant Professor, Brock University, Faculty of Education. Dane will offer strategies to support early childhood educators in providing an environment free of gender identity and gender expression discrimination through creating gender-inclusive and gender-affirming spaces. The session will introduce gender vocabulary and discuss children's developmental milestones related to gender, speak to strengthening self-awareness to check assumptions and interrupt biases about gender. Dane will offer practical and tangible ideas and strategies for co-creating gender justice curricula in early years' classrooms.

Effective Leadership in Early Learning and Child Care Series (Webinars)

Session 4: Performance Management Part 2 - Great Onboarding Practices, Getting off the Roller Coaster, and Employee Retention Strategies

In our last session you will learn how great onboarding prevents future performance issues and improves retention. You'll also learn how to get off the feedback rollercoaster with employees who yo-yo between doing better and doing worse. We'll look at three strategies that will help build strong supervisor-employee relationships that support long-term retention and prevent turnover.

Book Study - Illuminating Care – The Pedagogy and Practice of Care in Early Childhood Communities (Webinar - all sessions)

Please join the ECCDC Coaching and Mentoring team to explore a five-part book study on Illuminating Care – The Pedagogy and Practice of Care in Early Childhood Communities, by Carol Garboden Murray. We will dive deeply into the concept of defining care as an action, an attitude, and an ethic for the early learning and child care community. The book study is for all those who work within the early learning and child care field as we will be exploring how we look to elevate care for the children in our programs and acknowledge the essential role that early childhood educators have in building a strong profession. We will be looking to dispel the myth and discover the truth of care for young children, consider how we move beyond a basic standard of care, name care as a core value in the work that we do, and explore care ethics and a responsive care philosophy.

Designing YES Spaces: Embrace the YES and Design a Space for Children (Webinar)

Design an innovative early learning space that will allow children to discover who they are rather than telling them who they are. Environments that encourage educators to be able to say “yes” to children address children’s agency, risky play, knowing their limits, leadership and workplace culture, teaching children to respect boundaries, feeling control over their life, giving children the autonomy to know and feel who they are, and so much more.

Self Regulation (Webinar)

Learn the ins and outs of self-regulation. What it is, how to recognize dysregulation, ways to promote independent self-regulation in the children you work with and more! The journey to self-regulation is a skill learned through co-regulation with a calm and compassionate adult. We will show how the best self-regulation strategies are modelled and moulded by emotionally regulated grown-ups.

Pour les éducateurs/éducatrices francophones (Webinar - all sessions)

Comment aider nos enfants à développer l'autorégulation et mieux gérer ses comportements - L'autorégulation aide l'enfant à s'ajuster et à gérer son attention, ses émotions, son comportement, ses pulsions, ses réactions face aux différentes situations ou changements dans son environnement. Les recherches récentes démontrent l'importance de développer cette habileté dès le jeune âge car c'est étroitement lié à la réussite scolaire et sociale pour la vie durant. Cet atelier offrira des stratégies pratiques pour favoriser ce développement.

La diversité intégrée en tout et partout - Nous préparons les enfants à vivre et à réussir dans un monde diversifié et en constante évolution. Nous avons un rôle à jouer pour rendre les enfants plus ouverts aux gens différents de lui. Par le biais d'activités interactives les participants vont réfléchir sur leur responsabilité collective et individuelle en tant qu'éducateurs et éducatrices de la petite enfance pour créer un milieu où la diversité et l'inclusion sont acceptées, normalisées et valorisées. De nombreuses idées seront données pour enrichir et valider les activités, les interactions, les matériaux et les ressources dans leurs milieux respectifs.

Wellness Strategies: Stress, Compassion Fatigue, and Resilience for Educators (Webinar)

In many organizations it is common to find employees suffering from the adverse effects of stress, which can lead to loss of focus, productivity, and

well-being. In the helping field, there are additional factors related to the nature of supporting people that can contribute to compassion fatigue or secondary trauma symptoms. This webinar will help participants identify personal stress factors and introduce them to practical strategies for managing stress and increasing resilience.

Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series (Webinar - all sessions)

The Exploring Inclusion four-part series will offer opportunities for educators to explore tools and resources through case studies while considering their daily inclusive practices to support children within their early learning and child care programs. Educators are strongly encouraged to attend all four sessions as the series has been created to build upon each session.

Session 1 — Educator Self-Reflection and Self-Awareness

During the first session educators will have an opportunity to utilize the practice of self-reflection to understand how their actions within the early learning and child care program can impact both their own development and the development of the children in their care. Various interactive and hands-on experiences will be explored to support developing educators' self-awareness of their expectations. Participants will have an opportunity to consider strategies and techniques that support their development and those of the children in their care to move forward in navigating next steps of their learning journey with resiliency and empathy.

Session 2 – Reflecting on Inclusive Practices Utilizing the Program Inclusion Reflection Tool

Following on from session one's self-reflection, participants will consider how to use the Inclusive Program Reflection Tool of what do they see through the eyes of the child and how utilizing an inclusive approach supports children's behaviour and development. An opportunity will be provided to breakdown the tool and reflect upon how they can use it within their own programs moving forward.

Session 3 - Environments as the Third Educator

If we look at the environment as the third educator through the lens of the Program Inclusion Reflection Tool, what do we need to consider regarding our inclusive practices? Take a step back and reflect on your environment. Does it reflect those living in the space? Can children lead their own play? Moving from structured play to unstructured play, empowering children to extend and plan their play, choice of materials, curriculum modifications, adult reminders and incorporating the element of fun.

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Session 4 – Breaking Down Our Daily Practices for Inclusivity

As educators navigate a new pathway, the final session will take a deep dive into inclusive early learning strategies, challenging our daily practices and routines, use of language, equitability, power relationships and how it translates to best practices. Moving forward educators will have an opportunity to consider next steps for implementation into both their daily practice and early learning environments and early learning and child care programs.

Plant-based Culinary Adventures in the Classroom (Webinar)

Join us for an exciting webinar that explores innovative ways to incorporate plant-based culinary adventures into early learning environments. Discover creative and engaging activities that introduce young minds to the wonders of nutritious, plant-based foods. This presentation will share practical tips, delicious recipes, and interactive ideas to make healthy eating a fun and educational experience for both educators and young learners.

Learning Objectives: understand the importance of teaching healthy eating habits in early childhood; learn about the plant-based food groups: whole grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables; discover fun and interactive ways to teach children about nutrition; gain practical skills for creating simple, nutritious meals and snacks in an interactive culinary demo; and develop strategies for engaging children in meaningful conversations about food.

Early Learning Art Explorations, a Three-Part Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Session One: Process? Product? Examining Our Ideas About Young Children and the Arts

What is art? Why do we engage in artistic experiences with young children? What are children pursuing in their relationships with art materials? What values and beliefs do we hold about young children and the arts and do our practices align with these? What if there's more to the arts with young children than process and product? Do common mantras like 'process-based art' speak to the complexity that is inherent in children's pursuits with art materials? Together, in this 1.5-hour session, let's deconstruct 'process' and 'product' in children's art experiences and consider what other possibilities might exist for children if we shifted some of our language, thinking and practices.

Session Two: Creating an Outdoor Studio

Come and discover the value and possibilities in creating an outdoor art studio. We will consider questions such as: What could an outdoor studio look like? Feel like? Would it be a permanent or transient space? Or have elements of both permanency and fluidity? Would there be a difference in the materials that are offered outdoors vs indoors? What possibilities does an outdoor studio hold that an indoor studio doesn't? How could space be used? What elements could tie the indoor and outdoor studios together? Material, space and outdoor provocation ideas will be shared as part of the conversation, and we will also take time to explore 1-2 art and nature provocations together.

Session Three: Reflections on the Value and Possibilities of Recycled Materials in Children's Play

Bottle caps are buttons on a space shuttle, an empty wrapping paper tube is a telescope, leftover laminate is the windshield on a cardboard car. Recycled materials hold infinite possibilities. Children naturally see these possibilities and breathe new life into materials that we as adults might otherwise discard. In this 1.5-hour session, we'll think together about the important role recycled materials hold in children's play and how we can nurture and deepen this natural relationship between children and recycled materials. We will also take some time ourselves to explore the possibilities of a few recycled materials.

Lead Like It Matters (Webinar)

Join Debbi Sluys for this new workshop to empower your leadership path. Participants will have conversations on the following workshop topics in order to reinvigorate your perspective on leadership and recommit to building the capacity of others. Participants will regain confidence in themselves as a leader and become an empowered decision maker. The workshop will also encourage leaders to apply strategies to re-engage with their Team to help cultivate a positive culture within their organization. The workshop will help participants feel better prepared to respond to today's challenges as a leader. Upon conclusion, the participant will **be better prepared to respond to today's challenges as a leader.**

1. The IT Factor - what is it?
2. Study yourself - to build confidence
3. Study others - to empower your teams
4. Study yourself in relationship to others - to build community
5. Empower Decision making - for sustainability.

Creating Literacy-Rich, Playful Learning Experiences in the Early Years: Three-Part Learning Series (In person, Glendridge Quarry Naturalization Site)

Are you interested in learning more about the importance of playful, joyful practices that foster early literacy learning? Join us as we bring to life our favourite picture books, explore the power of mark making, and enjoy the fresh air while tapping into literacy experiences outdoors! Educators will experience ways in which literacy learning happens all around us and in many different playful, intentional contexts using a variety of materials. You will leave with practical tips and inspiring ideas to enhance your early years program, both inside and outside the classroom. These sessions are for educators of preschool and kindergarten age children.

Session Two: The World of Mark Making - Early Writing Behaviours

Join us for this interactive session as we explore the world of mark making in the early years! We will share inspiring ideas of materials that you can add to your environments to spark curiosity and wonder in learners of all ages. Together we will reflect on the stages of emergent writing and begin to notice the trails of learning that are sprinkled around our learning spaces. Through this hands-on exploration using a variety of materials, educators will reflect and gather ideas on how to weave mark making experiences within their indoor and outdoor spaces. Come join us for an evening filled with opportunities to explore, play and leave your mark!

Session Three: Discover Literacy While Exploring Outdoors

The outdoors is a wonderful way to inspire children to use their imagination and engage in learning using the elements of nature that are right at our fingertips! Grab your rain boots and hats to join us for this outdoor session as we experience group games, storytelling, and invitations using natural materials and loose parts to develop early literacy skills. We will share practical tips and interactive experiences that will give you ideas for starting up an outdoor routine in any season and weather, from green spaces to concrete jungles.

Strengthening Your Program Through Trauma-Informed Practices (Webinar)

Trauma is prevalent in our world and has an impact on many of the people we interact with, including our clients and colleagues. Compassionate and trauma-informed care is essential to providing effective support and building sustainable services. This workshop explores how to build a

trauma-informed culture in a workplace setting that integrates knowledge throughout the organization. Participants will develop an understanding of the pervasive impact of trauma on individual health and relationships. Guiding principles will be explored for increasing emotional and physical safety, culturally sensitive empowerment, and creating greater resilience for all parts of an organization. Becoming trauma-informed creates a sustainable foundation in any work setting to promote strength, engagement, and recovery.

Strengthening Our Understanding of Indigenous Culture in Early Childhood (ECCDC Conference Room)

During this session, participants will explore ways they can strengthen their understanding of Indigenous Culture and how to apply this knowledge within their early learning environments. Through this session, participants will receive helpful resources to continue their learning on Indigenous Culture and ways in which they can apply this knowledge to create culturally safe learning environments for Indigenous learners and educators. Participants will also explore the ways they can support land-based pedagogy for all early learners.

Ten Things Outstanding Board of Director Teams Do (Webinar)

Join your board colleagues, senior managers and bestselling author and Canadian board governance expert Paula J. MacLean, for this interactive virtual session on how to create a GREAT board! We'll explore how to fully understand and strengthen your board's governance role. And we'll also discover the six ways that boards can hold senior managers accountable, without the board getting involved in operations. Each participant will also receive a copy of a customizable template for creating a board governance policy manual.

Topics we will touch on include:

- 3 different models for nonprofit boards
- Roles and fiduciary duties of policy boards
- Responsibilities of individual board members
- Term limits and why they are important
- Board recruitment and orientation of new members
- Financial stewardship
- 4 quarters of board activity
- Succession planning for the board and executive director/CEOs

A Culture of Agency: Fostering Engagement, Empowerment, Identity, and Belonging (Webinar)

Deeply engage all young learners with a sense of agency and belonging. What gives some early childhood classrooms that special “buzz” of learning? How do those educators create the culture of learning for their students, where all children are deeply involved and drive their own learning with curiosity and care? Using her everyday research approach, in the tradition of the pedagogistas of Reggio Emilia, author Lisa Burman observed several special classrooms with children ages three to eight and identified some common engagement, agency, identity, and belonging, which together combine to create a culture of agency. The term agency is widely used, but often misunderstood as “giving children choice.” Agency is far more than this, and the most powerful learning happens when personal agency is connected to community we are only as strong as each other. These connections form the heart of a democratic one that values the rights of the child and empowers participation, shared power, respect for diversity, and self-efficacy. Her framework for supporting a culture of agency has five Relationships, Rituals for belonging and identity, Language of agency, Environment, and Learning Contexts. Using this framework along with the book’s guiding questions and goal-setting tool will help you bring intentionality as you build your classroom culture to support children’s agency and learning.

Book Launch and Highlights with the Author: Re-imagining Heartbreak: An Educator’s Journey to Reclaim Whole-Heartedness (ECCDC Conference Room)

Reimagining Heartbreak was edited by Ann Pelo and Margie Carter and is part of the Reimagining Our Work (ROW) book collection, a book series that inspires early childhood educators to reimagine their work and thinking alongside children. Stop. Look. Listen. Feel. Come fully alive in your encounters with young children. Reimagining Heartbreak is a call to return to fullhearted, embodied teaching. It is a journey through the woods and into the depths. Shelley Brandon’s stories reveal the extraordinary beauty that is possible in ordinary life. Can you dare to bring your whole self to your work with young children? Can you afford not to? Join Author Shelley Brandon to explore some main highlights of her book, to learn about her inspiration in writing it and to consider key messages in our work with young Children. Books may be ordered in advance and Shelley will be happy to sign books during the day.

Supporting Mental Health in Early Learning Environments (ECCDC Conference Room)

This workshop, presented by Niagara College Professors Angela Hayes and Cathy Teixeira, will look at the importance of supporting mental health in early learning environments. Participants will explore the ways they can create secure relationships and spaces for young children to learn and grow, and the importance of these relationships on young children’s mental health. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the ways they currently support children’s well-being and mental health in their learning environment and next steps in their journey.

Reflect and Revitalize: Onboarding Educators and Families while Bringing Your Program Statement and Centre Values to Life Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Are you ready to breathe new life into your onboarding processes and program statement to create a more cohesive team and early learning and child care program? Join us for a dynamic and collaborative series designed to deepen your understanding and enhance the impact of both your onboarding processes and program statement. We will be exploring the connection between the foundation of your mission, vision, values and program statement. Don’t miss this opportunity to reconnect with your core values and inspire your team and families!

Session 1 – Onboarding Educators

In this session, participants will dive into the heart of their program by exploring its vision, mission, and core values. Educators will gain clarity on their roles and responsibilities, ensuring alignment with your program’s foundational principles. Participants will be equipped with practical strategies to effectively integrate the program’s philosophy into their teaching practice and foster a cohesive learning environment. Through detailed explanations, real-life examples, and reflective conversations, educators will leave empowered to uphold the program’s goals while nurturing a supportive educational journey. This session is designed not only to onboard educators effectively but also to enhance retention by fostering a strong connection to your program’s mission and values.

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Reflect and Revitalize: Onboarding Educators and Families while Bringing Your Program Statement and Centre Values to Life Series
(Webinar - all sessions) continued

Session 2 – Onboarding Families

In this session, we will dive into the onboarding process for families as it is a critical first step to ensure families feel welcomed and informed as they enrol their child in your program. The process is crucial to build a strong foundation and relationship with the family as highlighted within *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Within the session we will highlight how providing a thorough onboarding experience will provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the family's goals for their child and consider how your program's mission, vision, and values align with their expectations of your program.

Session 3 – Moving Forward with Your Program Statement

In this session, participants will identify key elements in program statements that inform decision-making, such as values, goals, and pedagogical approaches. You'll discover techniques to engage staff and families in ongoing conversations about the program statement and its implementation, fostering a sense of community and shared vision. Additionally, you'll learn how to align your program statement with goal setting and staff performance evaluations to ensure consistency and clarity. We'll also explore opportunities for supervisors to support and share program statements with their teams, encouraging input and development.

Mastering Emotional Intelligence for RECEs (Webinar)

We have had knowledge of the concepts of Emotional Intelligence for some time, but many haven't readily addressed them. In this seminar you will define Emotional Intelligence (EI) and learn the essential components. After completing a brief quiz, you can gain a sense of your personal Emotional Intelligence (EI) which will assist you in ascertaining the importance of possessing a healthy one. Finally, a discussion will ensure where strategies on how to achieve an elevated Emotional Intelligence and become a master of your EI will transpire. Join Carolyn for a journey that promises to be life changing, knowing that it will benefit our professional and personal life.

Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series (Webinar - all sessions)

Leaders will learn practical steps to support their own mental and emotional health through focusing on 3 areas: Self Care, Emotional Balance, and Intuitive Knowledge.

Part 1: Intuitive Knowledge Skill Development and Tuning and Tapping In

Tuning in and finding inner power to lead/interact intuitively building confidence, self-trust, and healthy ways to oversee/work in sync with organizations and teams. This enables professionals to make better decisions and see situations from a higher, more objective perspective, seeing the whole picture in any given situation to come out of stagnant situations and lead agencies/staff through change and adversity.

Part 2: Emotional Balance, Self Care, and Seeking Joy

Facing fears and healing past triggers/wounds to increase inner emotional stability and create emotionally intelligent/balanced teams and work environments. Through also practicing self-care and seeing it as a necessity, not a luxury, and learning to put ourselves first to operate at our optimum to better be able to support, serve, and uplift others. Participants will gain effective emotionally intelligent skills to best fulfill their own emotional balance as well as remain calm, balanced, and grounded in stressful, toxic, challenging, or adverse situations in communities and workplaces.

Part 3: Resilience Reset and Making Effective Choices

Gaining self-awareness and removing personal biases/assumptions to create neutrality towards people/situations, removing of old belief systems, and seeing what areas we are going to keep, remove, or adjust. Participants will look at practical ways of becoming resilient which they can implement in their programs/organizations through using systematic methods to break down each area of their responsibilities or goals, looking at the past and present ways of doing things, and how we want to rebuild or rethink the future.

Emotional Regulation for Early Years (Webinar)

This workshop helps Early Childhood Educators put emotional regulation front and center in their classrooms. Participants will learn a child-centered, trauma-informed framework for understanding and interpreting emotional outbursts. Using that framework, they will learn classroom strategies to use when children are in the green, yellow, and red zones of emotional regulation. Teachers particularly appreciate tools to "trick" the brain back online during an outburst, and strategies to include emotional regulation tools in the daily curriculum so children grow in their capacity to manage emotions. This workshop is best suited for educators but could easily be adapted for parents.

Getting Back to the Roots of Play (St. Catharines Museum)

PLAYLearnThink has been promoting play based and inquiry-based learning for over 20 years.

Research around children's development tells us that play is essential to a child's physical health and emotional well-being. Play stimulates all aspects of a child's development, i.e. the physical, social, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Through play children, armed with curiosity and a spirit of inquiry, explore their environment and build knowledge about the world around them. In doing so they prepare the foundation on which they will build a life of resilience, creativity, self-confidence and life-long learning. Play is also essential for the continued growth of adults. That's why PLAYLearnThink workshops incorporate playful ways of engaging participants. Whether working as a group on a challenging task or experimenting with various materials, the focus is always the use of play to nurture imagination and foster creativity which leads to great feats of problem solving and a heightened self-esteem.

1. Overview of the importance of play in the healthy development of children - This section is an engaging presentation on play and learning through play. It includes what we know from research and practice. It touches upon different topics such as the benefits of self-directed play, exploring risk, nature play, resilience and the adult's role in supporting play. I also share videos and stories from personal experiences and touch upon what is happening in various parts of the world.
2. Loose parts play - Participants will play and create with a multitude of materials (loose parts) and tools. They will plunge into the joy of self-directed, spontaneous play and thus feel firsthand what children experience during free play.
3. Debrief.

Creating Community in Your Early Learning Environment (Webinar)

An early learning community provides equal voice to all involved – teachers, students, families. Each member's unique perspective is honoured, valued, celebrated, and reflected in the space. As a learning community, the focus is not on arbitrary rules and discipline, but on co-created expectations, self regulation, teamwork, mutual respect, and accountability. During this webinar, you will explore why building a community in your early learning environment is so important, how to go about building a community, and the different roles of the educators and children.

In the Heat of the Moment: Understanding Escalating Behaviours in Early Childhood (Webinar)

We've all been there: a child is beginning to melt down or heat up! What do you do next? In the heat of the moment, has your response ever escalated a child's challenging behaviour? Children's behaviour can escalate quickly. Your feelings about that escalation can erupt just as quickly. De-escalation – helping children calm down – takes time and only happens intentionally. This webinar explores the stages of escalation and ways you can respond that will support and help children to be able to return safely to the group.

Pedagogical Documentation in Early Years Practice: Seeing Through Multiple Perspectives (ECCDC Conference Room)

Morning: Emergent Curriculum – Debunking the Myths and Creating a Shared Understanding

This workshop will explore the common myths and misapplications around Emergent Curriculum: what it is, and is not, how it translates into daily practice, and the educator's role in the process, including the Cycle of Inquiry. We will think through and practice the journey of Emergent Curriculum, from observations and reflective dialogue to thoughtful responses to children's ideas, questions, and theories. Through investigation of examples from real classrooms, we will create a shared understanding of Emergent Curriculum that can be taken forward into your practice.

Afternoon: A hands-on exploration of Pedagogical Documentation

What is the difference between documentation and pedagogical documentation? What are the many ways in which Pedagogical Documentation might be used as a tool for understanding children's theories and ideas, for creating questions for ourselves that lead to our own professional growth, and for communicating with families and society at large the brilliance of young children's thinking? We will explore these questions as we move through the process of creating a rough piece of documentation and engaging in dialogue with each other about the thinking involved.

To register for any session, visit www.eccdc.eccdc.org, call 905.646.7311 x304, or email eccdc@eccdc.org. To view Esteem, visit www.eccdc.org/professional-learning/esteem.

Exploring the Possibilities of Makerspace in Outdoor Environments (St. Catharines Museum)

This workshop will provide a hands-on opportunity to engage in a Makerspace in an outdoor environment, also known as a Natural Makerspace. Participants will explore what a Makerspace is and the common materials involved, the difference between an indoor and outdoor Makerspace, the benefits of a Natural Makerspace, and materials to consider in the outdoor environment. Educators will also have the opportunity to discuss barriers they may face in a Natural Makerspace and ways to overcome these barriers.

Fostering a Sustainable Future Through Environmental Programs Grounded in Ontario Curriculum (ECCDC Conference Room)

How do we activate, empower, and inspire children to adopt a sustainable future? We show them. Jacob Rodenburg has spent the past 30 years fostering environmental stewardship in children. During this time, Jacob has created over 90 curriculum linked outdoor and environmental programs. Join this session to explore how to enhance environmental awareness and learn ways you can provide students with practical, hands-on environmental activities from schoolyard naturalization to environmental science projects.

Supporting Families of Young Children with Special Needs (Webinar)

Families with children with special needs face unique challenges navigating the early years, and even further challenges once they enter the school system. Having supportive, caring and knowledgeable educators supporting them in the early years can make all the difference to these families. This webinar will explore ways we can support families with children with special needs during the early years and how we can prepare them once their child is ready to enter school. Participants will explore common obstacles these families may endure and how to support them in the process.



The ECCDC extends gratitude to Niagara Region Children’s Services for their longstanding commitment to funding many of ECCDC’s local services and supports

