



early childhood community development centre

**November 2017: For Immediate Release**

***Celebrating the Stars of Niagara's Early Learning and Child Care Community!***

## **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence Celebration**

This year's annual Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence will celebrate the accomplishments of Niagara's early years sector with an *Oscars Themed Gala*. The event will take place on Thursday November 16, from 5:30 to 9:00 pm at the Holiday Inn & Suites on Ontario Street in St. Catharines.

The Awards of Excellence recognizes the professionalism and dedication of educators, students and volunteers involved in Niagara's early learning, kindergarten, and child care programs for their expertise and devotion to children and families. This special ceremony will be hosted by 105.7 EZ Rock's Tami Jeanneret. We are also thrilled to have Darlene Edgar, Director of Children's Services, Niagara Region; Shannon Fuller, Assistant Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Education; Cynthia Abel, Manager of Registration and Member Services from the College of Early Childhood Educators; Lois Mahon, Past President of the College of Early Childhood Educators and longtime ECCDC Supporter; Member of Parliament Chris Bittle; and Member of Provincial Parliament Jim Bradley in attendance. The Awards of Excellence are coordinated by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC).

More than 300 guests will attend this year's Oscars themed gala, which is sponsored by Louise Kool & Galt, one of Canada's leading suppliers of educational toys and classroom equipment. Many local businesses also support the event, including: YMCA of Niagara; A Child's World Family Child Care Services of Niagara; Minuteman Press; PenFinancial Credit Union; Mountainview Homes; Brock University Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Degree Program; Pathstone Mental Health; and The St. Catharines Standard.

This year the Awards of Excellence Celebration also features a special video presentation, entitled "*How Does Learning Happen in Niagara*"? The ECCDC and students from the Niagara College Film Department collaborated to develop this unique video which highlights the vital role that educators and early learning environments play in enhancing the skills and development of Niagara's youngest citizens.

The Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence Celebration helps raise awareness of the significant contributions that high quality early childhood education programs make to community prosperity and quality of life in Niagara. This year's theme celebrates the stars of Niagara's early learning and child care community! The ECCDC is pleased to have many community partners presenting awards, including; Niagara College, Brock University, Quality Child Care Niagara, Niagara Region Children's Services, Speech Services Niagara, Niagara Child Care Sector Executive, District School Board of Niagara, Niagara Catholic District School Board, and Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds.

*The ECCDC is an independent charitable organization dedicated to providing Niagara's early learning and care programs and providers with affordable access to the specialized learning resources, training and supports they need to deliver high quality care. Among the ECCDC's services are the operation of a lending library of classroom resources and learning equipment, a workroom for educators to research and develop new learning activities for the children in their care, and professional development programming for both centre and home based child care providers. The ECCDC's services are available to all of Niagara's ECEs and teachers, as well as others involved in the care and education of children.*

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