



early childhood community development centre



**Kiwanis**<sup>®</sup>

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## **Kiwanis Club Sponsored Project Provides Niagara's Licensed Child Care Programs with Innovative Infant and Toddler Resources**

*Thorold:* More than 170 Early Learning Programs received fully subsidized training and a treasure basket kit between April 5 2022 and June 30 2022 at the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC). The project was coordinated by the ECCDC, in close partnership with the Kiwanis Clubs of Niagara, including: The Stamford Kiwanis Club, Welland Kiwanis Club, and St. Catharines Kiwanis Club. This project was made possible by more than \$20,000 donated by the Kiwanis Clubs of Niagara.

There were nearly 200 educators who attended a total of seven training dates offered this past spring. During the training sessions, which were offered by the ECCDC's Training Team, educators had the opportunity to learn about the theory behind treasure baskets, explore materials, as well as engage in reflective conversations with their colleagues. Participants were then provided with a treasure basket kit to take back to their programs, as well as strategies to share all the information back with their teams and with families. This project provided Niagara's early learning programs with valuable tools to support curriculum and pedagogy planning during the busy fall months and beyond.

The treasure baskets that programs received contained a variety of sensory-rich items that support pre-verbal children in multiple areas of development. These innovative resources were sourced by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre, a longstanding charity offering resources, training and organizational supports to early learning programs within Niagara Region and across Ontario for close to 30 years.

This project brought great benefits to Niagara's licensed child care programs, as research has shown that treasure baskets provide our youngest learners with valuable experiences to support the development of fine motor skills, numeracy skills, as well as help support sensory development and strengthen relationships between the child and the educator.

Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Executive Director of the ECCDC, extends gratitude to the Kiwanis Clubs of Niagara for their ongoing partnership and support of Niagara's licensed child care programs. Projects like the treasure basket initiative provide early learning programs with important resources and training that assist them with ensuring their programs offer the best possible environments and experiences for children and families. "The donation is sincerely appreciated by Niagara's licensed child care programs, and the ECCDC is grateful for the strong, ongoing partnership we have with the Kiwanis Clubs of Niagara. Their generous donations throughout the past 25 years have enriched the lives of many children in Niagara." The ECCDC also thanks their primary funder, Niagara Region Children's Services for their ongoing support of these exciting projects.

**For further information, please contact Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Executive Director, Early Childhood Community Development Centre at 905.646.7311 ext.321 or [larial@eccdc.org](mailto:larial@eccdc.org).**

**The ECCDC is a charitable organization inspiring excellence in early learning and child care through thought leadership, cutting edge training, innovative resources and coaching services highlighting best practices and emerging trends. In the more than 25 years since its creation by local volunteers, the ECCDC has become Canada's leading early learning training, resource and referral organization.**

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