

Cultivating Connections

A MONTHLY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING,
RESOURCE, AND MENTORING NEWSLETTER
brought to you by the ECCDC Team

Creativity is Blooming!



Welcome to the June 2026 issue of Cultivating Connections: A Monthly Professional Learning, Resource and Mentoring Newsletter brought to you by the ECCDC Team.

This month's newsletter is filled with our favourite resources, professional learning opportunities, and ECCDC services designed to support young learners as they explore creativity and spark inspiration within your early learning program. Whether you're ready to dip your brush into paint, enrich creative movement experiences, or encourage imaginative play, this edition of Cultivating Connections is sure to inspire fresh ideas and help your creativity bloom!

Together in Community,
The ECCDC Team

Featured Professional Learning Opportunity: Environments That Inspire: Reconsidering Our Environments and Materials Series

Session 1: Before the Children Arrive – Preparing the Learning Environment: A reflective and practical session on the role of the educator as a preparer of spaces and experiences. How do we set the stage for wonder, discovery, and belonging? Want to dig deeper? This 3-part series will invite educators to consider their early learning environment and materials in a new light through the lens of Reggio-based practices. Participants will receive practical ideas for setting up their environment in a way that provokes curiosity among children, and considerations for materials that provoke thinking and exploration.

Session 1: September 22, 2026

Session 2: October 13, 2026

Session 3: November 17, 2026



Meet Your Presenter: Rosalba Bortolotti

Rosalba Bortolotti is a pedagogical consultant and Registered Early Childhood Educator with over 27 years of experience and research in the Reggio Emilia approach.

For more information, or to register, visit www.eccdc.org or scan the QR Code



ECCDC Lending Library Resources to Support Creative Play

- Exploring Transient Floral Art (#7350, *pictured*)
- Paper Crafting Materials (#5567, *pictured*)
- Exploring Patterning & Design with Mosaic Tiles (#6682)
- Exploring Geoboards (#7004, *pictured*)
- Mini Light Panel Exploration with Yellow & Blue Loose Parts (#7271)
- Game in a Bag: Spirograph Design Set for School Ageds (#6677)



A Unique Resource to Help Creativity Grow:
Exploring Transient Art (#6393)

This kit (available for borrowing through our lending library) contains materials such as:

- ✓ Sequin Fabric
- ✓ Shells
- ✓ Fabric Leaves

ECCDC TEAM FAVOURITES

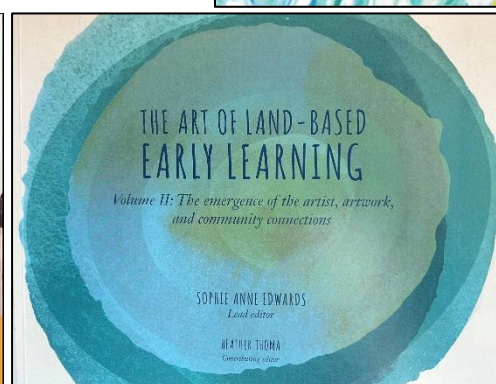
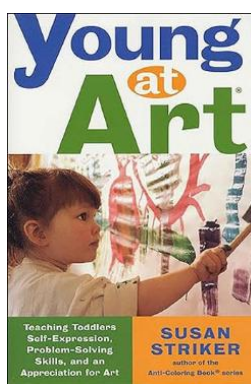
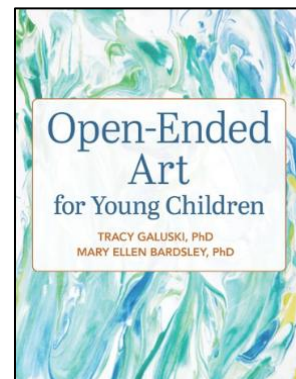
This kit is Jenn's favourite resource to support creativity! With open ended materials that are able to be re-used in new ways, this kit offers a unique opportunity creative play!

Professional Learning Opportunities to Support Creative Play in Early Learning Environments

- Environments That Inspire: Reconsidering Our Environments and Materials Series, Session 1: Before the Children Arrive: Preparing the Learning Environment (**September 22, 2026**)
- Digital Technology and Materials in Early Learning: Light, Shadow, Pixel, Clay (**December 8, 2026**)
- Outdoor Creative Art Play (**ECCDC Customized Professional Learning Opportunity**)
- Expanding Children's Imaginative and Dramatic Play, A 3 Part Series (**ECCDC Customized Professional Learning Opportunity**)
- Makerspace for School Ageds (**ECCDC Customized Professional Learning Opportunity**)

Resource Lending Library Recommended Reading to Support Creative Play

- Open Ended Art for Young Children (ART.0004, *pictured*)
- Young at Art: Teaching Toddlers Self-Expression, Problem-Solving Skills, and an Appreciation for Art (ART.0017, *pictured*)
- 50 Fantastic Ideas for Small World Provocations (CUR.0067)
- Makerspaces: Remaking Your Play and STEAM Early Learning Areas (CUR.0064)
- Music and Children (MUS.0002)
- The Art of Land Based Early Learning, Volume 2: The Emergence of the Artist, Artwork and Community Connections (OUT.0062, *pictured*)



Highlight's from Last Month's Professional Learning

Thank you for joining us - you May-de learning fun!

We're pleased to share these photos from professional learning sessions that took place this past May!



905-646-7311



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Alternative Opportunities to Expand Your Knowledge and Understanding of Creative Play in Early Learning

Articles to Read



The Benefits of Creative arts for children in early childhood

This article offers an overview of the benefits associated with creative arts experiences for young children with links to physical, sensory, cognitive, social and emotional areas of development. [Click here](#) to access the article.



What will we make? Using process art to spark preschoolers' development

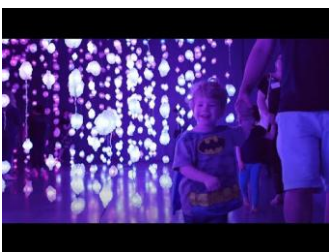
This National Association of Early Year Children article, written by Loretta Ferando-Smith, includes a case study around processed art experiences for 4–5-year-old children. The article includes practical strategies to support educators. [Click here](#) to access the article.



Brain research shows that the arts promote mental health

This University of Calgary article, written by Brittany Harker Martin, highlights how art can be used to build capacity for managing mental and emotional well-being and includes tips for educators regarding how they can use art-based mindfulness with children. [Click here](#) to access the article.

Videos to Watch



Creativity and early childhood development

This video highlights the research project Art & Wonder, young children and contemporary art research project and includes examples of children engaging with a variety of creative experiences. [Click here](#) to watch the video.



Why is process more important than product in toddler art?

This video speaks to the importance of open-ended art experiences for toddlers. [Click here](#) to watch the video.

Websites to Visit



Reggio Children Ateliers

Thinking of setting up an Atelier in your program? If so, then check out the Reggio Children website which has a webpage devoted to Ateliers. You can explore a variety of different ateliers including light, digital, paper, clay and many more. [Click here](#) to visit the website.



Navigating the dichotomy of a creative process vs final product

This webpage article from Playful Transformation, written by Miriam Beloglovsky who is the co-author the Loose Parts book series, prompts educator to rethink how we view the product of children's processed art. The article offers a number of reflections to prompt educators to shift their thinking regarding their role in the creative process of young children. [Click here](#) to visit the website.



Creative art outdoors

Painting with nature starts with a nature walk. If you would like to explore creative arts beyond the classroom then hop over to the 'Hands as we grow' website which is full of inspiration and great tips for incorporating creative arts in the great outdoors. [Click here](#) to visit the website.

Blog Post to Read



The studio approach to early childhood education

If you would like inspiration regarding adopting an art studio approach, then check out this blog post from technology rich inquiry-based research written by Diane Kashin. [Click here](#) to read the post.

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ECCDC Pro Tip!

When registering for professional learning opportunities online, be sure to include your preferred email address!

Why Is This Important?

This is the email address that will be used to send you the zoom link for webinars, as well as any updates or follow up information related to the workshop!

**Thoughts?
Questions?
Connect with us!**

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