

Cultivating Connections

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

Unbe-leaf-able Outdoor Learning



As the seasons begin to change, we look forward to cooler days, falling leaves, and plenty of opportunities to explore the outdoors. Whether you're looking for more opportunities to strengthen your knowledge of outdoor learning, searching for unique resources to support children's nature experiences, or looking for additional supports for enhancing outdoor play within your early learning program, our team is here to help!

This month's Cultivating Connections is filled with resources designed to enhance outdoor play and learning for children, including: new professional learning opportunities, podcasts, lending library materials, and more.

Let's branch out and grow together this fall!

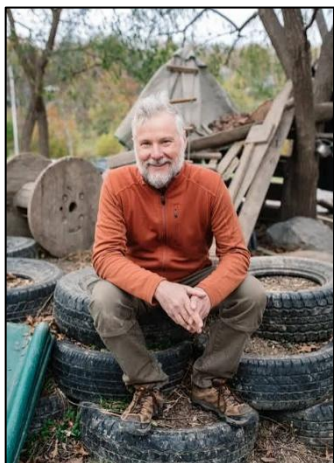
Together in Community,
The ECCDC Team

ECCDC Customized Professional Learning Opportunities to Support Nature Play & Outdoor Learning

- **Sustainable Pedagogy:** Explore the pillars of sustainable pedagogy and practical strategies to support educators in affording young children experiences to develop sustainable relationships with the environment.
- **Taking Emergent Literacy Outdoors:** This session utilizes an emergent literacy theoretical framework to support educators in their intentional planning of literacy experiences outdoors that are fun, motivating, and spark children's curiosity. This session can be facilitated outdoors!
- **Embracing Technology Outdoors and In Nature:** Explore what it means to strike a balance between virtual and real experiences with physical activity, creative activity, and connections to nature, and how to critically evaluate apps and digital technologies outdoors.
- **Creating Outdoor Learning Programs, A 3 Part Series:** If you are looking to bring further intentionality to your space by creating a unique outdoor learning program that truly connects children to nature, this three-part series is for you!
- **Outdoor Spaces for Play and Inquiry, A 3 Part Series:** This series explores fun and engaging big body and not so big body outdoor play experiences with low-cost materials and how outdoor play supports children's physical literacy, as well as how educators can meet the outdoor play needs of more introverted children.

Connect with us at eccdc@eccdc.org to learn more, or to start planning a customized professional learning opportunity for your team, agency, or early learning community!

Leaf Through These Online Resources to Support Outdoor Learning and Nature Play



It's All About Taking a Risk with Rusty Keeler - ECCDC Podcast

In this edition of the ECCDC podcast we are joined by follow podcaster and long-time friend and support of the ECCDC Rusty Keeler. Rusty has spent the past 30 years traveling the world designing natural play environments and championing children's right to play. A pioneer in the global movement to connect children with nature, Rusty inspires educators, communities, and change-makers to reimagine what's possible for outdoor play. Rusty is currently the Vice President of the USA chapter of the International Play Association.

Rusty shares his experiences and thoughts on outdoor play, the concept of risk-taking in children's play, common misconceptions and provide insights into striking the balance between safety and stimulating play experiences. [Click here](#) to listen!



Land Based Learning: Considering The Fundamentals

This article expresses that land-based learning is a powerful approach to outdoor education because it goes beyond physical activity, mental wellbeing, nature connection, community engagement, and curriculum learning. Most importantly, it incorporates Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, recognizing the land itself as a teacher. [Click here](#) to read more.

The Benefits of Extending Outdoor Play Times and How It Can Encourage Creative Thinking – ECCDC Podcast

Many things have changed over time, but the importance of outdoor play remains. Join us as we explore the benefits of extending your outdoor play times, what that may look like with different centre dynamics, and how it can be implemented through creative thinking in the best interests of the children, educators, and the centre as a whole. We will have an opportunity to dive into creative topics such as Easy Art Outdoors, Classroom on Wheels, and Optimizing Outside, while hearing firsthand from some of the centres who helped bring to light these great ideas. [Click here](#) to listen.





YOU'LL FALL FOR THESE RESOURCES!

Support learning outdoors with these resources available for borrowing through our lending library.

- Tops and Bottoms Storytelling Set (#6389)
- Investigating Weather (#3524)
- Loose Parts for Autumn (#5817 - pictured)
- Not A Stick Storytelling Experience (#5896)
- Exploring Sounds of Nature Through Music (#5394)
- At the Farmer's Market (#7466)
- Exploring Trees & Leaves Through Storytelling Experiences (#2323 - pictured)



Squash Your Outdoor Programming Goals with These Resource Sheets from the Canadian Child Care Federation!

Children at Play in the Great Outdoors

Exploring Nature with Children

Outdoor Play Environments

ECCDC QUICK TIP!

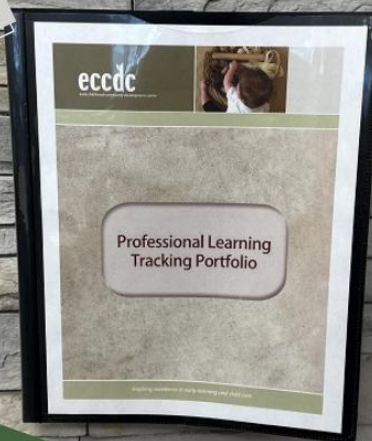
Make tracking your professional learning easy with our Professional Learning Tracking Portfolio!

The Professional Learning Tracking Portfolio includes sections for tracking attendance at workshops, certificates, network opportunities, reflections about articles read and much more. This 25 page portfolio includes 5 refill sheets for each of the 5 categories included.



ORDER NOW

www.eccdc.org/estore



Visit www.eccdc.org/estore for more great resources to support your professional growth!

Take Learning Outside: Check Out This Month's Featured Resource



This child-sized wheelbarrow is the perfect way to transport leaves, pumpkins, and more. Whether you're looking to inspire big-body play, support the play schema of transporting, or simply looking to add something new and engaging to your outdoor environment, this wheelbarrow is ready for exploring, hauling, and plenty of imaginative play.

Curious about how you can borrow this and other materials to support your professional practice? Connect with us at eccdc@eccdc.org to discover more about our resource lending library collection!

Fall Into a Good Book with These Recommended Titles to Support Your Exploration of Nature Play

- Ready...Set...Wonder! Nature Prompts for the Early Learning and Care Educator (ENV.0013)
- My World Outdoors (OUT.0065)
- Into Nature: A Guide to Teaching in Nearby Nature (ENV.0021)
- Hey Kids! Out the Door, Let's Explore! (ENV.0007)
- Dirty Teaching: A Beginner's Guide to Learning Outdoors (OUT.0059)
- Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators (OUT.0037)
- Backyard Habitat for Canada's Wildlife (OUT.0054)
- Embracing Risky Play at School: Getting Kids Outdoors to Explore, Learn, and Grow (OUT.0092)
- Engaging Imagination in Ecology Education: Practical Strategies for Teaching (OUT.0085)

