

May/June 2025

# esteem

*Professional Learning Opportunities to Support the Early Learning and Child Care Workforce*

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early childhood community development centre

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# Implementing Ontario's Early Learning Frameworks in Early Learning Settings

Incorporating *How Does Learning  
Happen?* in Your Program

Increase knowledge/refresher on early  
child development







## Building Relationships in School Age Programs Series *with the ECCDC Training Team*

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 3-part 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.

### Series Objectives

- Participants will identify how building and maintaining positive relationships within school age programs reflects Ontario's early learning and middle years frameworks.
- Participants will select and implement age appropriate and culturally responsive strategies to integrate within their school age programs, to create welcoming environments that support positive relationship building.
- Participants will uncover the unique challenges of developing relationships within school age programs and strategize how to overcome them.

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## Building Relationships in School Age Programs Series continued

### Session 1: Supporting Relationships With and Between Children

The first session in this series will explore how *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, *Think Feel Act for the Middle Years*, *Gearing Up: A Strategic Framework to help Ontario Middle Years Children Thrive*, and *On My Way* frames relationships. The session will then go on to explore a variety of age-appropriate strategies that educators can utilize to support them in fostering warm, caring relationships with children attending out of school programs. The session will then look at how educators can facilitate experiences and environments that enable children to develop positive peer-to-peer relationships.



All sessions presented *Via Webinar*

**Session 1: Thursday September 26, 2024**

**Session 2: Thursday January 16, 2025**

**Session 3: Thursday May 15, 2025**

7:00 to 9:00 pm (all sessions)

Niagara Educators: No Charge

Outside Niagara Educators: \$25 per session  
or \$60 for full series

### Session 2: Developing Relationships With Schools and Community Partners

The second session in this series 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. The session 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

During the third and final session in this series, 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, educators will contemplate ways in which they can facilitate the three-way sharing of information between families, school, and their afterschool program.



## Creating Literacy-Rich, Playful Learning Experiences in the Early Years: Three-Part Learning Series *with* DSBN and Niagara Catholic DSB Early Literacy Partners

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.

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## Creating Literacy-Rich, Playful Learning Experiences in the Early Years: Three-Part Learning Series continued

### Session One: Intentional Picture Books to Inspire Oral Language through a Sense of Wonder

How can we infuse oral language development through a literacy, math, social-emotional learning, and science lens with intentional picture books? How can we sprinkle vocabulary building with our youngest learners to support language development and comprehension? We will share ideas on how to connect beautiful picture books to children's experiences beyond the pages of the book. Join us as we share our top 10 read alouds and engage in interactive learning experiences that you can take right into your learning spaces tomorrow!



All sessions presented *In Person* at ECCDC Conference Room (3550 Schmon Parkway, Thorold and/or Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site (1860 Sir Isaac Brock Way, St. Catharines)

**Session 1: Thursday November 14, 2024**

**Session 2: Thursday February 20, 2025**

**Session 3: Tuesday May 27, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm (all sessions)

Cost: No Charge (*Sponsored by Niagara Catholic District School Board and the District School Board of Niagara*)

### 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

Would you love to explore literacy outdoors, but are not sure where to start? Connecting literacy to 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. ***We will begin indoors at the ECCDC, then move as a group to the Glenridge Quarry site.***





## Getting Back to the Roots of Play *with* Pierre Harrison, B.Sc., M.Sc. and B.Ed.

Research around children's development tells us that play is essential to a child's physical health and emotional wellbeing. 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.



Presented *Via Webinar*

**Wednesday June 11, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$25

Outside Niagara Educators: \$35

***The importance of play in the healthy development of children*** - This 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.



**Pierre Harrison** grew up in Northern Ontario. He enjoyed a playful childhood filled with bumps and scrapes, wonder and adventure, and eventually earned a B.Sc. in Biochemistry, a M.Sc. in Protein Chemistry and a B.Ed. with qualifications to teach at the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior levels in Ontario. Pierre facilitates play training workshops across Canada and in Europe. He is also invited to keynote on play, inquiry and learning at national and international conferences. To date 15,290 teachers, educators, recreation leaders, health care service providers, parents/caregivers and members of the general public have taken Pierre's Play Ambassadors Oath. Pierre also organizes and facilitates Adventure PlayDays in schools and in community spaces across Canada. To date, 15,045 children have enjoyed his PlayDays.





# Supporting Children with Unique Needs



## In the Heat of the Moment: Understanding Escalating Behaviours in Early Childhood *with* Acclaimed Author Barbara Kaiser

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.



Presented *Via Webinar*

**Thursday May 22, 2025**


6:30 to 8:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$35

Outside Niagara Educators: \$55



**Barbara Kaiser** is the co-author of *Challenging Behavior in Young Children*. She has taught at Acadia University and at Concordia University and College Marie-Victorin. In addition to presenting workshops and keynote speeches on challenging behaviour throughout the United States, Canada, Australia, Singapore, and Europe, Barbara has acted as chief consultant for *Facing the Challenge*, an instructional DVD based on *Challenging Behaviour in Young Children* (Devereux Center for Resilient Children), and a workshop, *What Do You Do With the Mad That you Feel for Mr. Rogers' Family* Communications, Inc. Barbara founded and was the director of two child care centres and an after-school program. A master's degree in educational administration from McGill University gives her a firm theoretical foundation, but above all her perspective is practical, realistic, and compassionate, stemming from decades of working with children, families, and teachers.

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# **Strengthening Diversity and Inclusion within Early Learning Settings**





## Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series *with* ECCDC Training Team

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.

### Series Objectives

- Consider what inclusion is and how it is woven into our daily practices through self-reflection and self-awareness.
- Discuss and identify what behaviour and development are and link them to inclusive practices that support children and families.
- Revisit and review relationships, self-regulation, development, environments, daily practices, and curriculum, ensuring the use of inclusive language and practices using the Program Inclusion Reflection Tool.

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## Exploring Inclusion in Our Early Learning and Child Care Programs Series continued

### 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.



Presented *Via Webinar* (all sessions)

**Session 1: Tuesday February 11, 2025**

**Session 2: Tuesday March 18, 2025**

**Session 3: Tuesday April 29, 2025**

**Session 4: Tuesday May 20, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm (all sessions)

Niagara Educators: No Charge

Outside Niagara Educators: \$75 for the series

### 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.

### 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.



# **Engaging Families in Authentic Ways**





## Creating Community in Your Early Learning Environment *with Joel Seaman*

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.



Presented *Via Webinar*

**Tuesday May 13, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$25

Outside Niagara Educators: \$45



**Joel Seaman** (he/him) is a classroom teacher, Kindergarten Specialist, AQ instructor, educational presenter, and firm believer in play-based learning and all things Early Years. He has presented workshops and courses for educators throughout Ontario. Most recently, he was approached to develop lessons and appear as an educator on TVO Kids Power Hour of Learning.



# Connecting Children to Nature



## Exploring the Possibilities of Makerspace in Outdoor Environments *with* ECCDC Training Team

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.



Presented *In person in Niagara*  
(ECCDC Conference Room)

**Tuesday June 3, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$10

Outside Niagara Educators: \$25





## Fostering a Sustainable Future Through Environmental Programs Grounded in Ontario Curriculum *with* Jacob Rodenburg

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.



**Presented In person in Niagara**  
(ECCDC Conference Room)

**Saturday June 7, 2025**

10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Niagara Educators: \$25 includes a light lunch

Outside Niagara Educators: \$45 includes a light lunch



**Jacob Rodenburg** has taught in the field of Outdoor Education for almost 30 years. He is currently the Executive Director of Camp Kawartha and teaches part time at Trent University in environmental education. Recently Jacob co-authored an award-winning book called "The Big Book of Nature Activities" with naturalist Drew Monkman. Jacob conceived of an environmental framework for children of all ages called the Pathway to Stewardship & Kinship.

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# **Strengthening Early Learning Programs: Legislation and Small Business Operational Strategies**





## Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management: A Three-Part Series *with* Achieve Centre

### Session One - Hiring Strategies – Recruitment, Selection and 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.



Presented *Via Webinar*

**Session One: Wednesday January 22, 2025**

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Niagara Administrators: \$35 per session or \$85 for the full series

Outside Niagara Administrators: \$55 per session or \$125 for the full series

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*Niagara Registrants are invited to attend the Executive Directors and Administrators Network following Session One to connect about issues and opportunities to share strategies, suggestions and best practices with their colleagues from 12:00 to 1:30 pm*



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

### 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.

### 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.

**The Achieve Centre** provides training (in-person and online), consulting, books, and free resources in the areas of leadership, workplace culture, conflict, and communication. At the heart of our training materials and resources is a belief that everyone deserves to like where they work. We hope that the impact of our work ripples out into the world, inspiring learning and improving lives.



Presented *Via Webinar* - all sessions

**Session Two: Wednesday March 26, 2025**

**Session Three: Wednesday May 28, 2025**

10:00 am to 12:00 pm (all sessions)

Niagara Administrators: \$35 per session or \$85 for the full series

Outside Niagara Administrators: \$55 per session or \$125 for the full series

*Niagara Registrants are invited to attend the Executive Directors and Administrators Network following Session Two to connect about issues and opportunities to share strategies, suggestions and best practices with their colleagues from 12:00 to 1:30 pm*



## **Reflect and Revitalize: Onboarding Educators and Families While Bringing Your Program Statement and Centre Values to Life Series** *with ECCDC Training Team*

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!

### **Series objectives**

- Understand the purpose and components of a mission, vision, values, and program statement in supporting your organization.
- Develop strategies for effectively communicating onboarding processes and program statement to educators and families.
- Identify methods and techniques to engage and reflect with educators and families within the program utilizing the onboarding process and program statement.

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## Reflect and Revitalize: Onboarding Educators and Families While Bringing Your Program Statement and Centre Values to Life Series continued

### 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.



All sessions presented *Via Webinar*

**Session 1: Friday April 4, 2025**

**Session 2: Friday May 2, 2025**

**Session 3: Friday June 6, 2025**

1:30 to 3:30 pm (all sessions)

Niagara Administrators: No Charge

Outside Niagara Administrators: \$65 for full series

### 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.





# Inspiring Leadership in Early Learning and Child Care



## Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series *with* Alison Grbic

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. They will learn to:

- Go within, listen to themselves and their own needs by getting quiet, doing things they enjoy to do the inner reflective work, discover areas of healing, acceptance, and releasing past wounds, fears/doubts to live as their true authentic self.
- To see the value of self-care and its benefits as they fill their cup and to function at their optimum to best support others without self-sabotage.
- To gain insight, wisdom, and intuitive knowledge to guide them each day and “to tune in/tap in”.
- Use the “Intuitive Model” as a guide to recognize, honour, and access their intuition and take action based on their intuitive promptings, providing clarity to make difficult decisions or face conflict or stressful situations as self-reliant, confident, and empowered leaders.
- To balance empathy, accept others, set healthy boundaries, and use intuitive discernment with people/situations to support others in traumatic/adverse situations by being objective, grounded, and through intuitive interactions, creating deeper connections and understanding of self/others.
- To understand intuition works in tandem with emotional balance and through use of “Steps to Emotional Balance” to improve self-awareness, acceptance of self/others, and reflect on areas that require healing of triggers/wounds, old beliefs, biases, and assumptions or attachments. Building their own emotional/mental health, raise their vibration, and create more happiness, opportunities, and positivity in their own lives, having a ripple effect on teams and communities as they are better “equipped” to support others and share this knowledge in reciprocal ways.
- Emotionally healthy, intuitive leaders in our sector have a profound, positive impact on uplifting the emotional/mental well-being of children, families, staff, overall building sustainable systems, and communities to overcome adversity.

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## Intuitive Leadership Team Building Boot Camp Series continued

### 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.



Presented *Via Webinar* - all sessions

**Session 1: Thursday April 10, 2025**

**Session 2: Thursday May 8, 2025**

**Session 3: Thursday June 12, 2025**

10:00 to 11:30 am (all sessions)

Niagara Administrators: \$55

Outside Niagara Administrators: \$75

### 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.



**Alison Grbic** is an Early Childhood Educator who has been in the field of Child Care and Early Learning, serving families and children ages 0-12 years old, for over 30 years. She has experience in many leadership roles such as a Supervisor/Manager of various child care centres, before/ after school, and summer camp programs; Owner/Operator of 2 child care centres; Manager of 5 Ontario Early Years Centres; ECE Field Advisor for Seneca College, and currently over 10 years as Senior Manager of 19 EarlyON Child & Family Centres with the TCDSB and business owner of an educational/professional development & training company, On Eagles Wings. Alison is a strong advocate for early learning programs/services, community growth and development and mindful,

intuitive teaching and leadership, focusing on the value of each individual. She is passionate about supporting and empowering educators, parents, families and children and aims to help them reach new heights as they move along the continuum of their own unique learning journey!



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# **Position Specific Training Series**



## Relationships through Research: Cultivating Connection and Engagement with Children and Families through Teacher Research: A Three-Part Series for EarlyON Teams *with* Victoria Armstrong

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 1: Forming the Question - Brainstorming Together

Research begins with a question. In Part 1, we'll begin by diving into what teacher research is, how and what we observe, what makes a researchable question, and how we can go about forming a specific question for research with other colleagues and families. At the end of this session, participants will have a process that they can utilize with families to create a researchable question for their programs.



Presented *Via Webinar* (all sessions)

**Part 1: Friday October 25, 2024**

1:00 to 2:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$15 per session or \$40 for the full series

Outside Niagara Educators: \$35 per session or \$85 for the full series

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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 continued

### 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.



Presented *Via Webinar* (all sessions)

**Part 2: Friday January 24, 2025**

**Part 3: Friday May 16, 2025**

1:00 to 2:30 pm (all sessions)

Niagara Educators: \$15 per session or \$40 for the full series

Outside Niagara Educators: \$35 per session or \$85 for the full series

### 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.



#### **Victoria Armstrong, RECE, B.ECS, Owner Side By Side (SBS) Consulting Services**

For over 15 years, Victoria Armstrong has devoted her life to living out this view of children and supporting and challenging others to live out this view of children also. A published author and dance instructor, she has held a variety of roles throughout her early learning career; Classroom Educator, Pedagogical Leader, College Professor, HR and Communications Specialist, Coordinator and Early Learning Consultant. A large part of her career was dedicated to the pioneering and growth of a children's art initiative that integrated local artists into early learning and licensed child care programs. Her passion for the arts in early childhood along with giving visibility to children's thinking through the process of pedagogical documentation is what has given her career specific direction over the past 8 years.



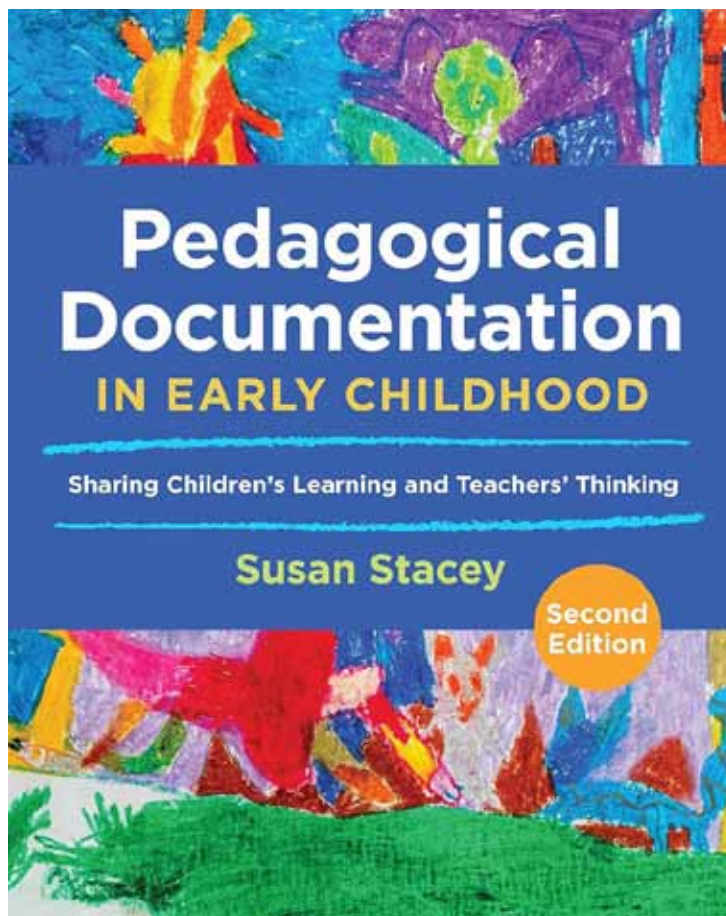


**Very Special Presentations  
Featuring Acclaimed  
Authors, Researchers  
and Storytellers**

## Pedagogical Documentation in Early Years Practice: Seeing Through Multiple Perspectives *with* Acclaimed Educator, Author and Researcher Susan Stacey with A Special Book Signing

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.

The afternoon will provide participants the opportunity to engage in a hands-on exploration of pedagogical documentation.



Presented ***In person in Niagara*** (ECCDC Conference Room, 3550 Schmon Parkway, Thorold)

**Saturday May 31, 2025**

10:00 am to 2:30 pm

Niagara Educators: \$65 includes a light lunch

Outside Niagara Educators: \$75 includes a light lunch

Copies of *Pedagogical Documentation in Early Childhood Education: Sharing Children's Learning and Teachers' Thinking* may be purchased in advance and Susan will happily sign the book during lunch time. Participants may choose to purchase a copy of the book through ECCDC for \$80. Please ensure your book order is placed by **May 8, 2025**

# Creating Circles of Support Through Cultivating Professional Friendships in Early Childhood Education: A Professional Conversation

*Book written by Diane Kashin and Launched in Niagara with the Loving Care of Cindy Green and Support from Diane's Family*

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.

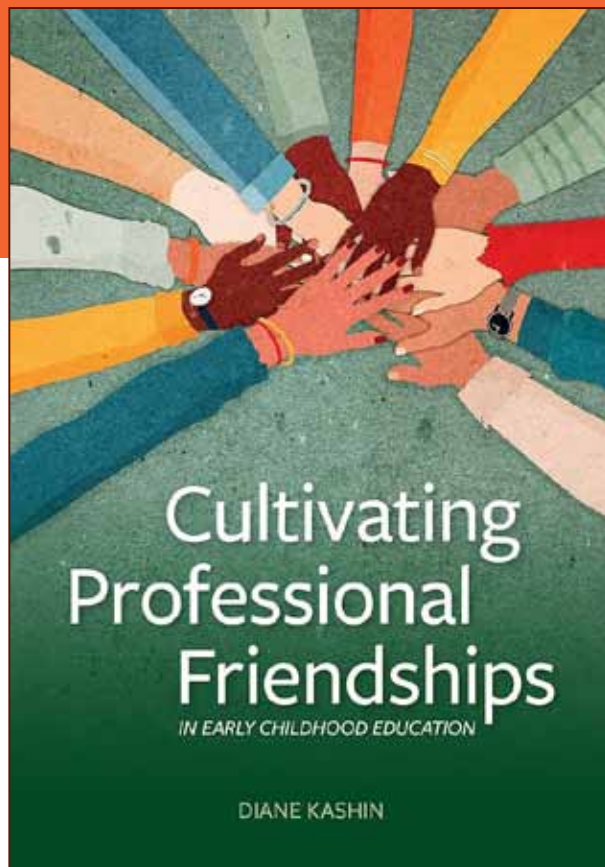
Together with Dory Kashin, Cindy is excited to share reflections about the big ideas inherent in this book as well as Diane's writing process.

In addition to being a daughter, wife, mother, bubbie, sister, friend, professor and mentor, **Diane Kashin**, EdD, RECE was an early learning educator who shared her research, wisdom and passion with so many. She was an author of many books pertaining to early learning and care and her blog [tecbiresearch.blog](http://tecbiresearch.blog) was followed by thousands. In her final book, *Cultivating Professional Friendships in Early Childhood Education* (2024), Diane invites educators to delve into the theory that professional friendship is a practice that enhances professional learning and growth. In her work with educators, it was her aim to embed opportunities for play. Playful adults are more inclined to invite young children to follow their curiosities through play and inquiry. Diane's enthusiasm and knowledge about social constructivism and pedagogical practices invited, sustained and deepened the thinking of so many. Diane, we are your legacy.

**Dory Kashin**, daughter of Diane Kashin, is an Event Planner by trade and is currently a Creative Operations Manager at Hootsuite. Dory has worked alongside Cindy and her mom; sourcing and lugging materials, securing venues, planning and setting up food and beverage and has been a sounding board for many of our professional dreams.

**Cindy Green B.Sc., RECE** is a retired ECE professor from a community college in Ontario and currently works as an early learning and care consultant. Cindy and the late Diane Kashin, professional friends for a number of decades deepened our relationship throughout the years as we were passionate to engage in pedagogical ponderings that kept us up all hours of the night! Cindy is honoured to have been one of Diane's personal and professional friends.

*In loving memory of Diane Kashin, author, colleague, friend.*



Presented **Via Webinar**

**Monday June 9, 2025**

6:30 to 8:30 pm

Cost: \$25



The background features several overlapping squares in various shades of green and brown. In the top right, there are light green squares. On the left side, there are medium green squares with a small light green square and a small brown square overlapping them. In the bottom right, there are brown squares, including a large dark brown one.

# **Niagara Communities of Practice Network Meetings**



Are you an early learning and child care professional looking to connect with peers, share resources, and stay updated on the latest trends?

Our 2024/2025 Networks offer a unique opportunity for professionals across various programs to come together for insightful discussions, collaborative brainstorming, and mutual support. Whether you're seeking innovative solutions for everyday challenges, exploring new ideas, or simply looking to connect with others in the field, our networks provide the perfect platform to enhance your practice and strengthen the community.

Join us and be part of a supportive environment where your voice matters, your ideas flourish, and your professional journey is supported.

# Niagara Networks Spring 2025

## (March to May 2025)

### Licensed Child Care Centre Menu Planning and Nutrition Network Meeting (formerly Licensed Child Care Cooks Network)

**Gardening and Farm-to-Table - Integrating Food Education into Curriculum:** Connect children with the origins of their food through gardening and farm-to-table education. This network will explore ways to incorporate hands-on food education into your curriculum, from planting and harvesting to preparing and enjoying fresh produce. Join us to share ideas, discover resources, and plan activities that teach children about nutrition, sustainability, and the joys of growing their own food.

- **Monday March 17, 2025** | 6:30 to 8:00 pm | In person

### Infant and Toddler Network

**Connecting with Nature: Outdoor Learning and Play for Infants and Toddlers:** Connect with the great outdoors and uncover the benefits of nature-based learning. During this network, we will discuss outdoor play and exploration, providing practical ideas for integrating outdoor play into your practice. Come and be a part of this network to share how we create stimulating outdoor experiences that foster physical development, sensory exploration, and a lifelong love for nature.

- **Wednesday April 23, 2025** | 6:30 to 8:00 pm | In person at Niagara Nursery School and Child Care Centre (14 Anderson Lane, Niagara-on-the-Lake)

### Home Child Care Professionals Linked with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency

Are you contracted with one of Niagara's home child care licensed agencies: Wee Watch or Niagara Region Home Child Care? If so, this Network is for you. Come to tour the ECCDC, borrow resources, problem solve with your peers and engage with others in similar positions. All sessions will take place at the ECCDC, 3350 Schmon Parkway, Thorold. Registration in advance is required by contacting [eccdc@eccdc.org](mailto:eccdc@eccdc.org).

- **Monday April 14, 2025** | 7:00 to 8:30 pm | In Person at ECCDC

### Licensed Child Care Supervisors Network

**Using the Niagara Inclusion Tool - Supporting Diversity and Inclusion in your Centre:** Discover practical ways to integrate the Niagara Inclusion Tool into your center's practices to promote diversity and inclusion. This network will explore how to assess and enhance inclusivity and support children and educators in creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all. Join us in conversation around strategies implementing inclusive practices that celebrate differences and nurture a sense of belonging.

- **Monday March 24, 2025** | 6:00 to 7:30 pm | In person

Continued on page 49





## Preschool Network

**Inclusive Environments - Using the Niagara Inclusion Tool:** Learn how to create inclusive preschool environments that celebrate diversity and support all children's unique needs. This network will look at the Niagara Inclusion Tool through collaborative discussions for implementing the tool through supportive practices. Join us to promote a welcoming atmosphere where every child can thrive.

- **Wednesday April 16, 2025** | 6:30 to 8:00 pm | In person at North End Co-Operative Preschool (677 Niagara Street, St. Catharines)

## Executive Directors and Administrators Network (formerly Executive Directors Network)

Executive Directors are invited to attend this network to connect about issues and opportunities to share strategies, suggestions, and best practices with their colleagues. The Executive Directors and Administrators Network meeting will take place following Recruitment, Retention and Performance Management Series Session Two: Coaching Strategies for Learning - Conflict, Performance, Change with Achieve Centre for Leadership. Participants are invited to watch the webinar at the ECCDC and join the in person meeting which follows. For more details on this session, please refer to page 40.

- **Wednesday March 26, 2025** | 12:00 to 1:30 pm | In Person at ECCDC (3550 Schmon Parkway, Thorold)

## Niagara Nature Alliance Network

**Outdoor Cooking and Nature Recipes: Exploring Culinary Delights in the Wild:** Blend the excitement of outdoor activities with the joys of cooking in nature. This network will explore creative ways to incorporate cooking into outdoor activities. Join us to share recipes, plan outdoor cooking events, and discover how to turn nature's offerings into delicious adventures.

- **Wednesday May 21, 2025** | 6:30 to 8:00 pm | In person (n to be announced)

## School Age Network

**Supporting Smooth Transitions with Children in Before and After School Programs:** This network will focus on supporting children during their initial first few months in before and after school programs. Discover practical strategies to ease children's transitions, build rapport, and create a sense of belonging. Explore with us transition techniques and activities that promote positive relationships among children, families, and educators.

- **Wednesday May 14, 2025** | 6:30 to 8:00 pm | In Person at Under The Rainbow - Wakanioten Child Care (748 Buffalo Road, Fort Erie)



## Coming Soon to a Computer Near You!

Microlearning Mondays – Elevating  
Professional Development through  
Bite-Sized Videos

Get ready for Microlearning Mondays, where we bring you short, focused videos designed to deliver timely insights and actionable strategies on current topics and trends. Dive into topics like "Exploring Inquiry-Based Learning in Early Childhood Education," "Integrating STEAM Education into Early Learning Environments," "Myths of Outdoor Play," and "Developing Fine Motor Skills Through Play." Stay tuned for quick, impactful learning experiences that fit into your busy schedule, coming soon!

The ECCDC extends gratitude to Niagara Region Children's Services for subsidizing costs associated with many of our programs and services in support of Niagara Region's early learning programs.



Early Childhood Community Development Centre

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Any of the sessions you read about in esteem can be customized to meet the individualized needs of your program or organization.