

The Professional



A Newsletter for the Early Learning and Care Professional, Creating a Bridge Between Research and Practice in the Field

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 1: Child Guidance: Addressing the Motivation Behind the Behaviour
- Page 2: Child Guidance: Addressing the Motivation Behind the Behaviour (continued)
- Page 2: RTB Tuesdays
- Page 3: Beginning with Books
- Page 3: KPL's Book of the Month
- Page 4: What's New in Childcare
- Page 4: Network Update
- Page 4: Message from AECEO President Cathy Barrie
- Page 5: Is it Safe for Children to Eat Snow?
- Page 6: Becoming a Member of the PRC

Child Guidance:

Addressing the Motivation Behind the Behaviour

by Bev Laking, RECE

"Childhood is a time of wonder. It is also a time of raw, uncensored emotions, a time of uncertainty, insecurity, and many fears. The ability to observe conscientiously, looking for children's points of view and understandings is critical in these situations. Teachers need to approach conflict as clearly and openly as we can to help children through these scary times."

-The Art of Awareness, Curtis & Carter

We as adults often respond to children from our own sense of justice and fairness. This is often quite different from what children want in a given situation. We often (without realizing we're doing it) underestimate a child's ability to work things out. We forget to look for the underlying motivations of the behavior in question. I had always believed that we should stop inappropriate behavior, step in, redirect, and assist children with labeling their feelings, encouraging problem solving and being there to take on the role of mediator. I still believe this is important however; my views have expanded since shifting my practice to be a more reflective teacher. I now take the time to pause, observe situations more closely and look to see what children are trying to achieve in a

given situation rather than take on the role of "firefighter" stepping in to put out the flames of conflict. I have adopted this phrase:

IT'S NOT WHAT THEY'RE DOING THAT IS INAPPROPRIATE, BUT IT MAY BE HOW THEY ARE DOING IT.

When I see children jumping on the couch, rather than tell them to stop, I approach the situation with the following response, "I see that you're jumping, let's get out the trampoline so you jump in a more appropriate spot." When I watch children zooming cars off table tops and having near misses with the heads of other children I approach the situation from this perspective, "This looks like lots of fun, let's move this to a

different part of the room and set up something where the cars can zoom and not hit anyone."

This approach takes the child's motivations into account, recognizes that they are REALLY not doing anything inappropriate, but just need some direction on how to carry out their desires in a more appropriate setting. In all situations it is important to consider a child's developmental level so you can have a better understanding of why they may be doing what they are doing. You will develop a greater positive rapport with children. The atmosphere in the classroom will be more pleasant, relaxed and enjoyable for all present. Conflicts that may have arisen with others will diminish. You will feel like now you're truly taking into account child's needs,

A Quality Initiative for Waterloo Region



Want help with your RTB Binder? Join Debbie Jones for RTB Tuesdays to help guide you through the RTB Process. Debbie will be at the ECE Professional Resource Centre at Conestoga College ECE building on the third Tuesday of the month from 2-8 PM.

2-6 PM : Drop-in or book an appointment.

6-8 PM : Group time and we will work systematically through the binders.

Dates for Winter/Spring 2012

- January 17, 2012
- Feb 21, 2012
- March 20, 2012
- April 17, 2012

For Further Information:

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Supervisor, Quality Initiatives
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Email:
djones@regionofwaterloo.ca

RTB Tuesdays take place at
the ECE Professional
Resource Centre
Conestoga College
ECE Building
299 Doon Valley Drive,
Kitchener

Phone: 519- 748-5220 x 3388

Website: www.eceprc.ca

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interests, desires and strengths.

We all know though that conflict with others does arise. How we as teachers support children through these situations clearly connects to whether we have children at the center of our practice and are using reflection as our guide.

Consider this:

Child guidance should be built around observing and reflecting on the child's point of view, rather than immediately jumping to reinforce rules or solve conflicts.

Here are some questions to ask your self and reflect upon when observing conflicts.

- *What is this child trying to achieve and why?
- *How would you describe the problem from the child's perspective?
- *How might this child describe his/her feelings or point of view here?
- *What are the underlying motivations of the behavior in question?

We all have rules in our programs but, do we have too many and what are they based upon. Too many rules can be confusing for both children and adults. Are all the adults on the same page, sometimes this is not the case. We can all make rules with the foundation that it is for the safety of the children. For years now I have adopted the following philosophy. It is the foundation of my practice in supporting children through behavior situations;

- 1. You can't hurt yourself.**
- 2. You can't hurt others, whether that is physically or verbally.**
- 3. You can't hurt the toys/materials in the room.**

To give you more insight in to how to apply these approaches here are some "tips"

When looking at a situation:

- If what the child is trying to achieve is okay then provide the appropriate outlet.
- If not, step into problem solving mode with the child.

Provide explanations as to why you are doing what you're doing. i.e. I can't let you throw sand because... if you want to throw what could we use instead?

If the situation involves others:

- Clarify the cause and effect of the situation. Ask children what's happening? Listen to both sides. State your observations as well.
- Encourage children to put words to their feelings.
- Encourage children to problem solve and make decisions, use open-ended questions. I.e. what do you think you could do with that? How could we solve the problem of both of you
- Wanting to use the same toy?
- Assist the child in finding other options if necessary. Provide choices.
- Be supportive, ask for their ideas, give cues, and be there to reinforce their choices; offer assistance to get them started with their new idea.

My final thought on this topic is the most Important, though. A reflective, intentional teacher is one that is involved in what is occurring in the room. If you just place yourself on the floor with the children, perhaps either in or close to those areas where there is more activity occurring and engage, communicate, and scaffold learning, you will see that the level and amount of conflict that may have erupted just naturally disappears.

Further resources:

The Art of Awareness, How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching; Deb Curtis & Margie Carter, RedLeaf Press

How Children Solve Problems, Guidelines for Early Childhood Educators – Online Article <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/home.jsp> (enter: how children solve problems in the search box)

Rethinking the Rules – Online Article <http://www.naeyc.org/> (enter Rethinking the rules in the search box)



Beginning with Books

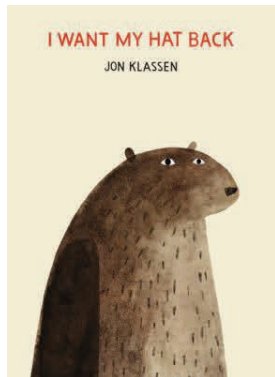
Laura Dick, Literacy Librarian and Laura Reed, Coordinator of Children's and Teen Services, Kitchener Public Library.

I Spy with My Little Eye by Edward Gibbs

A very clever version of the Eye Spy game in which children look through a spy hole in the book to discover what vibrantly coloured animal is hiding. (picture book, ages 3 - 6)



Perfect Square by Michael Hall
Laura Dick's favourite picture book of the year. A deceptively simple story of a square who wants to be something else. Brilliant illustrations. (ages 4 - 8)



I Want My Hat Back by Jon Klassen
Laura Reed's favourite picture book of the year. A bear has lost his hat. He wants it back. He almost gives up the search until he remembers something important. The most unexpected ending of the year. (ages

Picture a Tree by Barbara Reid
With her trademark plasticine illustrations, Barbara Reid focuses on trees. Picture a tree – what do you see? A pirate ship? Home for the birds? An umbrella? Picture book for ages 3-6.

Stuck by Oliver Jeffers
Floyd's kite gets stuck in a tree. How will he ever get it down? Will throwing his sneakers, a cat, a ladder, a whale and an ocean liner up into the tree help? Probably not. (picture book, ages 3 - 8)

2011 Favourites or What We'd Put in Santa's Bag

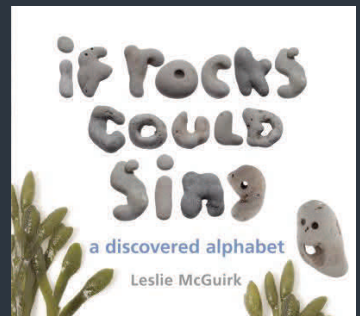
There are many, many, many children's books published each year. Some are treasures, some are not. Here are 10 of our favourite 2011 titles:

Bailey by Harry Bliss
Bailey the dog surprises and charms his fellow classmates with his irrepressible antics. (picture book, ages 4 - 7)

Happy Pig Day by Mo Willems
Another wonderful Elephant & Piggie Book. This time it's all about Piggie as she celebrates her favourite day of the year – Pig Day. (easy reader, all ages)

I Don't Want to be a Pea!: the story of Hugo and Bella by Ann Bonwill
Hippo and bird are great friends, but when they are invited to a costume party, they just can't seem to agree on the right costumes. (picture book, ages 3 - 8)

Children's Book - of - the Month



If Rocks Could Sing: A Discovered Alphabet by Leslie McGuirk

This is another favourite from 2011. This is a book born out of obsession, determination, and luck. McGuirk collects beach rocks. Over many years she was able to find rocks shaped like each letter of the alphabet, along with rocks shaped like objects for each of those letters. The result is a deceptively simple alphabet book, a book which can be poured over and revisited. There is something quiet and incredible about it.

If you have any questions about books or early literacy, please send us an email .

Laura.Dick@kpl.org
Laura.Reed@kpl.org



Save the Date!

EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE CONFERENCE

24th Annual Early Learning & Child Care Conference
Saturday, March 24, 2012
Conestoga College
Doon Campus

What's New in Childcare

Links to the News in Early Learning and Care



EARLY YEARS STUDY 3
Margaret & Wallace McCain Family
Foundation, November 22, 2011

Early Years Study 3, is the third report in the groundbreaking series on the social, economic and scientific reasons to invest in early childhood education programs. This study also presents the Early Childhood Index, which is used to monitor the funding, policy, and quality of early education programs. These Early Years studies call to attention the importance of early childhood education, not just for the future of Canada, but for the survival of the human species and the world as a whole. Click to read more about the [Early Years Study 3](#).

**ABORIGINAL CHILDREN—CANADA
MUST DO BETTER: TODAY AND
TOMORROW**
Canadian Council of Child and Youth
Advocates
November 2011

"The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates is a nation-wide alliance of child advocates that is appointed by the

Canadian provinces and territories. The Council's objective is to promote and protect the rights of children, including Aboriginal children. In this Special Report to the UN Committee of the Rights of the Child, the Council has called for urgent attention regarding the critical challenges that impact Aboriginal children's lives. Follow the link to learn more about this Special Report. [Aboriginal Children Canada Must Do Better: Today and Tomorrow](#)

**BUBBLE WRAP OFF: KIDS GO
BACK TO NATURE**
Elissa Doherty, Herald Sun (AU)
November 24, 2011

Child care centres in Australia have begun a revolt against nature deficit disorder, the ever-growing disconnect between children and the natural world. Mission Australia has begun redesigning child care centres in Australia to fight "bio-phobia", which is the term used to describe the irrational fear that many parents now have about their children getting dirty or hurt by playing outdoors. Fighting against the "bubble-wrap generation" the Government of Australia's national quality framework for childcare centres stipulates child care centres must offer children a connection with the natural environment. To read the full article, please [click here](#).



**A Message from
your Local AECEO
President, Cathy
Barrie:**

Join Cathy Barrie
and the executive
team of the

Waterloo-Wellington Branch of the AECEO as they host their next branch meeting on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Afterwards stay for our popular popcorn series session—based on the video workshop series by Lisa Murphy, facilitated by Cathy Barrie!

Together we will view the video "Process Oriented Art with Young Children". In this video, Lisa discusses the differences between "process art" and "product art". She also shares some of her favourite unique art materials, and tips for facilitating process orientated art. Lisa encourages all caretakers to see art in a different light, and support children throughout the process of creating works of art.

If you would like to connect with our branch or have any questions please leave us a voice mail by calling 519-748-5220 ext 8026



A Quality Initiative for Waterloo Region

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RTB Umbrella Networks

- Cooks Network
- Emergent Network
- Full-Day Kindergarten Network
- Home Child Care Network
- Infant & Toddler Network
- Nursery School Network
- Preschool Network
- School-Age Network

Upcoming Network Meetings

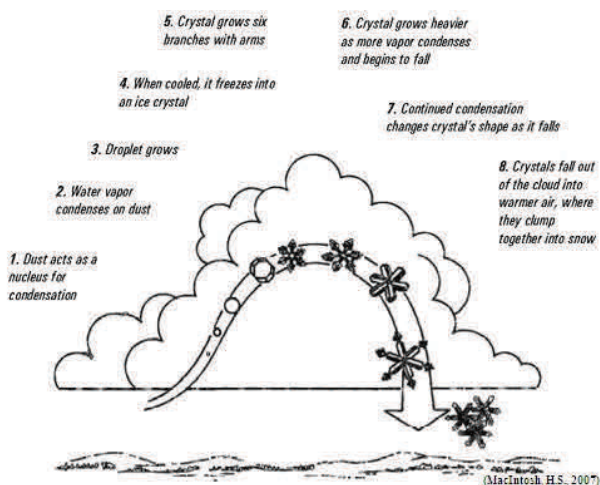
- Nursery School Network—Thursday, January 12, 2012
9:00am—10:00 am @ Moppet Preschool
171 Frederick Street, Kitchener
- Infant /Toddler Network—Wednesday, January 25, 2012
6:30pm—8:30pm @ PRC

Is it Safe for Children to Eat Snow?

Dirt, Pollution and Bacteria...Oh My!

by Amber Holmes, RECE, Professional Resource Centre Staff

With the winter weather upon us, you can't help but notice that white, fluffy stuff falling from the sky. With this change in seasons brings an age-old debate surrounding the health hazards of children eating snow. The major concern for parents and teachers is regarding the concentration of pollution and bacteria in snow. Before we delve into this debate, we will first begin with a look at how snow forms.



As you may know, water vapour moving about in the atmosphere condenses, and if it is cold enough, it falls in the form of snow. In order for water vapour to form a crystal, it must first condense around a particle in the atmosphere, such as dirt, a pollutant or bacteria. When it becomes heavy enough, it falls to the ground as a snowflake. In the time it takes for a snowflake to form and fall to the ground, the crystal collects an array of pollutants that are in the air (MacIntosh, 2007).

According to the Canada Safety Council, one of the pollutants found in snow is a type of bacteria called *Pseudomonas syringae*, which causes diseases in some plants. A study was conducted to determine if the bacteria

found in the atmosphere, and consequently, contained in snow, could cause disease in humans. Based on this study, most experts agree, there's not much cause for concern (Canada Safety Council, 2009).

According to Dr. Joel Forman, "We eat stuff that's covered with bacteria all the time, and for the most part it's killed in the stomach," Dr. Forman, who is a member of the pediatric academy's committee on environmental health, went on to say "Your stomach is a fantastic barrier against invasive bacteria because it's a very acidic environment." However, this is not true of all people. Babies on formula often don't have as much acid in their stomachs, which could make them more vulnerable to bacteria in general (San Diego Union-Tribune, 2008).

According to the Canada Safety Council, there have been no clinical reports about children getting sick from eating snow, so allowing children to eat fresh, white snow in moderation seems to be the key (Canada Safety Council, 2009).

References:

- Canada Safety Council (2009). Don't make a 'meal' of snow. *Safety Canada*, XLXIII (1), 8. Retrieved from <http://canadasafetycouncil.org/sites/default/files/eng1-01-2009.pdf>
- MacIntosh, H. S. (2007, November 09). *Don't Eat Yellow Snow or Black or Brown or Pink*. Retrieved from <http://www.treehugger.com/culture/ask-treehugger-donatmt-eat-yellow-snowaor-blackaor-brownaor-pinka.html>
- Study: Say no to eating snow. (2008, March 5). *San Diego Union-Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20080305/news_lz1n5read.html

The general consensus is that eating small amounts of snow is harmless. Catching flakes on the tongue or scooping a mitt full of fresh snow won't hurt a child. However, eating large quantities of snow, or eating snow that has been on the ground and is a different colour (brown, black, pink, and of course, yellow) could potentially be harmful.



If you find that the children in your care are adamant about making a meal out of snow, here's an activity you can try. Collect some snow in a container and bring it inside to melt. Once melted, strain the water using a coffee filter, and have the children inspect the debris with a magnifying glass. They may be surprised just how much dirt and grit they'll find in a scoop of fresh snow!



**PROFESSIONAL
RESOURCE CENTRE**

Winter Hours of Operation

Monday—Wednesday

9am—8pm

Thursday & Friday

9am—5pm

Closed Saturday and Sunday

**Closed from December 22,
2011 until January 2, 2012**

Conestoga College

ECE Building

299 Doon Valley Drive

Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4M4

519-748-5220 x. 3388

The Early Childhood Professional Resource Centre

Tell a Friend Today!

Did you know that being a member of the Professional Resource Centre is recognized as belonging to a professional organization? Our evidence based resources combine current research and quality materials to enhance your programs, and understanding of learning.

Our members receive a monthly newsletter, discounts on in-house workshops, lending privileges for our library and access to our data bank of research and early learning and care articles. Members also receive updates on current information in the ELC community and have access to our work stations and equipment (laminator, computer, binding machine, etc.)

Join today and discover the value of belonging to a professional organization that is invested in your professional growth, our community, and the future!



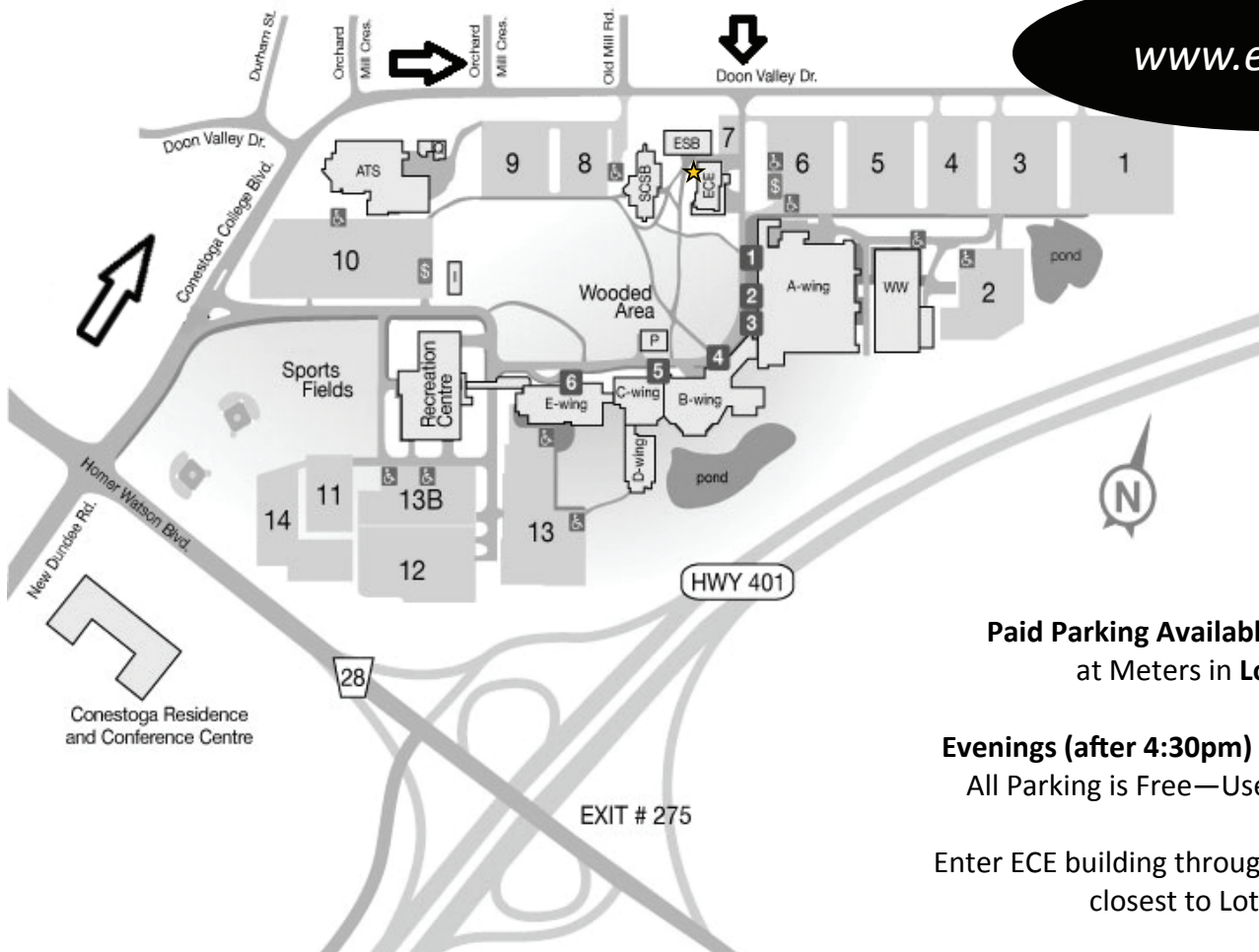
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SOCIAL SERVICES
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Enter ECE building through the side door,
closest to Lot #7.