

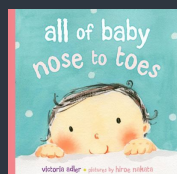
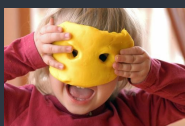
The Professional

A newsletter for the early learning and care professional, creating a bridge between research and practice in the field.

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With Appreciation For the Job We Do

Samantha Burns, RECE. Professional Resource Centre Coordinator

When I made the choice to become an early childhood educator I spent a lot of my time explaining to my family how I was more than “just a babysitter”. Yes, that dreaded phrase that has plagued our profession for decades. My family, although now very supportive, struggled at first with my decision to join the field. They wanted me to go on with my studies towards a teaching degree. I’m sure that my story is not that different from many others in the field. I’ve come to realize that part of our role often includes educating those around us about the job we do, clarifying that there is more to play than meets the eye and advocating about the learning that takes place through the opportunities for play created in our care.

For the last twelve years I have worked in child care centres across our region, however last January I made a significant career change when I accepted the position as the professional resource centre coordinator. This new position has provided me with many lenses in which to view this changing landscape of early learning and care. In light of the recent celebration of child care and ECE appreciation day I’ve found myself thinking of the roles we play as child care professionals in the field, and why so many years

ago I made the choice to make this my profession.

The reasons for which I am still passionate about this job go far beyond my adoration of children. I always found this job deeply rewarding and satisfying. I saw myself as lucky. Each day was unscripted, full of possibilities, of wonder and I still find myself marveling at the joys of working alongside children. There are down sides to child care like the tears, diapers, scraped knees and runny noses, but they are far outweighed by laughter, personal bonds and “first moments”. Of these, first moments are my favourite. These moments are made of first steps, first words, and any “I did it” statements. They are often followed by an increase in self-confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem. That classic cartoon moment of the light bulb popping overhead best describes these happenings. It’s a look you will never forget once witnessed, when a child makes that discovery. I use to say (and still believe) that we have the most important job in the world. You may think that I’m over exaggerating, or that it’s a pretty big statement

to stand up to, but when you consider that we are helping to raise the future generation, I don’t think that the statement is that farfetched. Within our child care centres are future policy makers, changes of influence and the leaders of tomorrow. That’s a pretty big responsibility, but also a privilege.

The work you do as an early childhood educator, or any professional working with young children, is invaluable. This opportunity to reflect has provided me with a bigger picture of the roles we play. I would like to share my appreciation for the many professionals in our region. Thank you for making such a difference in our community. I truly believe that tomorrow the world will be a better place because today we took the time to play, to laugh and to learn together with the young children in our lives, the future for us all.

Thank you.

Do you have something you would like to share about the work you do? Contact us! Send your submissions to prcregistration@conestogac.on.ca

Conestoga College ECE Apprenticeship Program

Are you currently working with young children in an ECE setting?
Do you hold an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent?
Is your employer willing to sponsor your training and professional development?
Interested in earning a College diploma in Early Childhood Education?
Conestoga College and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities may have the solution for you!
Explore this unique ECE Apprenticeship program--offering you the option of learning while continuing to work!

Part-time evening classes
College level credit courses offered at a nominal fee.

Receive an Early Childhood Education Certificate of Apprenticeship from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
Explore this alternative pathway to a Conestoga College ECE diploma!

Ready to Register?
Ministry of Training
Colleges and Universities,
Apprenticeship Branch
519-653-5758
or drop in at MTCU
4275 King St. East, Suite200
Kitchener, ON
N2P 2E9



For more information contact
Cathy O'Toole
Coordinator, Early Childhood
Educator Apprenticeship
519-748-5220 ext 3603
cotoole@conestogac.on.ca



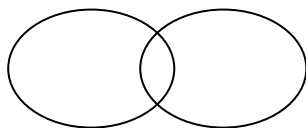
Samantha Burns, RECE and Katie Taylor, OCT, RECE
Professional Resource Centre

*"When I hear, I forget.
When I see, I remember.
When I do, I understand."*
-Chinese Proverb

Sensory exploration is way for children to explore their environment and the world around them. From the time they are infants, children use their senses to gather data and process information about their world. Sensory exploration through play can involve the whole body, and often has multiple outcomes.

Let's take a closer look at the opportunities for learning sensory exploration presents and link it with the early learning frame work.

- When children use their senses to identify and differentiate properties and materials this is called *sensory discrimination*. This can often lead to building a *vocabulary* list of *descriptive language*.
- When children separate the dry materials from liquid, or the rough from the soft, they are *classifying*, comparing, sorting and grouping those materials according to common properties. Try graphing the similarities and differences using overlapping hoops.



- When children dump, pour, and fill they are coordinating

their senses with motor skills (*sensory motor integration*). Provide buckets, pullies, scales and scoops.



- Children use play dough, sand and other sensory materials for *representation* when they build mud pies, or create objects to express their ideas. Try including a variety of sensory items through out the classroom like adding play dough to the house centre.
- When children roll, pinch and pull play dough they are working their *fine motor* skills, further developing the muscles needed for writing.
- When children *listen* to music they develop *auditory skills*. Add props that they can use to follow the *pattern* of the beat.
- Try providing space so they can add *movement* to *express* themselves when listening to music.
- Children practice *hand-eye coordination* when they put together puzzles or during pouring, dumping, and filling experiences with materials set out for exploration.

Connections to Sensory Exploration

Where can you create hands on experiences that are full of learning opportunities? Break out the goop it's time to get tactile!

- Social conflict can occur providing the opportunity to identify problems. Information is gathered and brainstorming solutions can take place for *problem solving*. *Turn-taking*, *collaboration* and *social interactions* can take place in small groups. Get the group of children to count how many people will be using the play dough, and come up with a plan on how make sure that everyone gets a piece. Will they be equal?
- Light and shadow play can provide an opportunity to *understand two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes*. Try adding an overhead projector to your classroom with a variety of three dimensional items to cast shadows on the wall. For additional fun look for objects that project colour!

The skills learned through sensory exploration can be linked to every domain of development as outlined in the early learning framework (ELF). For learning that you can really "hold on to", "sink your teeth into" or "see it to believe it" include sensory exploration in your programs.

References:

Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning (2007). Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Settings in Ontario. Toronto: ON.



Beginning with Books

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

Babies love books and reading to infants from the very beginning is an important way to help them to develop early literacy skills. In addition to reading to babies, there are many literacy games you can play to help them on the road to becoming confident, capable readers.

Here are a few of our favourite literacy activities for infants:

- Encourage families to make their own books with baby by using their own family photographs. Babies love looking at pictures of faces – especially of people they love!
- Sing lots of songs together. Babies love the rhythm of language, especially song...they don't care how well (or not so well) you sing. Singing also helps children to hear the smaller sounds in words, as there is usually a different note for each syllable. This is the beginnings of phonological awareness, a skill which will later help them become readers.

ery rhymes to infants, you are providing a language rich environment.

- Play literacy games. Peek-a-boo is always a favourite.
- Songs like "Head and Shoulders" help babies to learn about their body parts – this is vocabulary building!
- Encourage families to view the bathtub as a great place for literacy play – water play teaches all kinds of concepts such as more and less; floating and sinking; and volume and capacity.
- Babies love mirrors - use them to discover body parts, for visual discrimination exercises and more. A small locker mirror makes a perfect mirror for babies to use to view themselves and their worlds.
- Talk to babies and describe what you are doing as you move thorough out the day.

Infants can move throughout the day. Infants can comprehend what is being said before they have mastered the actual skills and abilities they need to talk. Help them build their receptive language abilities.

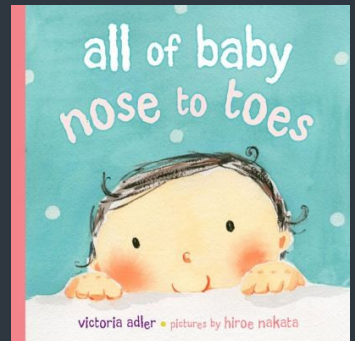
- When you read to babies in your care, give them a chance to talk back! As baby babbles to you about the book, he is beginning the development of narrative skills – one of the 6 early literacy skills children need to develop to become readers.

At KPL, we offer programs just for babies, designed with their developmental needs in mind. Call your local library to find out about their infant programming.

If you have any questions or just want to talk to us about books, don't hesitate to contact either of the Lauras!



Children's Book - of - the Month



All of Baby Nose to Toes
by Victoria Adler,
illustrated by Hiroe Nakata

Need a book for babies? This is a great choice. It is about something babies can understand - their own bodies! With playful rhymes Adler introduces each of the baby's body parts, from an adorable nose to ten chubby toes. The rhythm and rhyme are perfectly accompanied by Nakata's cheerful watercolours. Be sure to make it interactive - don't forget to touch your baby's nose too!

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

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

Tuesday
November 16th,
2010
6:30-8:30pm
Our Place Ontario
Early Years
Centre
154 Gatewood
Road, Kitchener
Laura.Dick@kpl.org

Bridging Cultures in Waterloo Region:

Understanding and Working with the ESL Community from an Early Literacy Perspective
Presented by: The Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region

For more information about early literacy events including this upcoming Literacy Café please visit our blog at:
www.earlyliteracyalliance.blogspot.com

Welcome to the team!



The Professional Resource Centre would like to welcome Katie Taylor to our staff. That's right, we are growing! Katie will be joining us on a part time basis as we continue to grow our services for our community. With a strong background in Early Childhood Education as well as a Primary/Junior Teaching Degree, Katie brings experience from both sides of the professional field of early learning and care.

Do you have something to share?

If you have something to share, we would like to hear about it. Please send us your latest and greatest experiences in the field!

"It's wonderful to have a working computer in the room. As one child in my care pointed out 'If you don't know the answer you can just 'Google It' and we do! Having the computer available as a resource has provided us with an opportunity to look deeper into the children's interest."
-Susan Dell

What's New in Childcare

Links to the news in Early Learning and Care

On October 27th, 2010 a press conference held at Queen's Park addressed the issue of Ontario's shortage of ECE's. For more information please: visit www.childcareontario.org/?p=4121#more-4121

"With passion and commitment, they [ECE] work hard to give children the foundation they need to reach their full potential and contribute to our success as a province. Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day is a great opportunity to celebrate these contributions" The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Ontario's Minister of Education.

October 27th, 2010 was the 10th anniversary of Child Care Worker and Early Childhood



Educator Appreciation Day. For more information and quotes from parliament please visit:

www.childcareontario.org/?p=3820#more-3820

Journal for the Association for Psychological Science released *The Effects of Preschool Education: What We Know, How Public Policy Is or Is Not Aligned With the Evidence Base, and What We Need to Know* October 2010. To read the full journal visit www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/journals/pspi/the-effects-of-preschool-education.html



A Message from your Local AECEO President, Cathy Barrie:

This year the AECEO celebrated it's 60th birthday. We were at this years Fall Focus handing out birthday cake to celebrate 60 years in the field! What an amazing turn out at this years Fall Focus! We were thrilled to see so many members and new faces participating in this event. On behalf of the AECEO we would like to thank our community for their support and dedication to the profession. It's because of our community's strong commitment and investment in the well being of young children that our local branch has continued to thrive. We look forward to reaching our members (and those in the community) through our new partnership with the Professional Resource Centre. Our next executive meeting will take place November 17th at the PRC. 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



Raising the Bar
Early Childhood Education
An ASCY Community Initiative



Region of Waterloo
SOCIAL SERVICES
Children's Services

**A Quality Initiative
for Waterloo Region**



**Child Care
Network**
of Waterloo Region

November Update 2010

The RTB Network Leaders met on November 2, 2010 from 6 PM to 7:30 PM

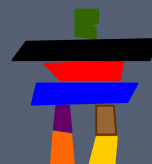
at the Professional Resource Centre in the ECE building at Conestoga College to discuss their current needs and future direction. At this time, the Preschool Network leader position is vacant. Please contact Debbie Jones if you are interested in leading this informal preschool network.

For further information...Debbie Jones, Supervisor,
Quality Initiatives Phone: at 519-883 2111 Ext. 5044
Email: djones@regionofwaterloo.ca

Fall Focus was a great success with over 450 guests.

Congratulations everyone on a successful Year 6.

"I believe in the power of you and I"



The Importance of a Best Start for Children

A glance at full day learning

Katie Taylor, OCT, RECE, and Samantha Burns, RECE, Professional Resource Centre.

Children who are entering Junior or Senior Kindergarten are experiencing a new curriculum approach that honors the value in play. This “play to learn” approach will build on experiences that support the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of young children. This play-based environment will also create opportunities to develop a foundation of skills important to lifelong learning. This is a classroom full of sensory discovery experiential learning, and hands on materials. The job of children is to play. According to Adshead and Clarck (2010) developmentally appropriate play happens through hands-on, exploratory activities that are relevant to children and their world. Children make meaning through interactive and social collaboration. Primary teachers and Early Childhood Educators model, guide and support learning as children build academic and social skills through purposeful play experiences. As adults we have our ideas of what should be happening in the play environments of our children however, taking a lead from the children based on observations will lead to creating more meaningful learning experiences.

This new approach doesn't mean that the role of the educator is non-existent or that the children rule the classroom. Educators are actively involved in observing, looking for teachable moments, listening and asking questions, en-

couraging critical thinking and guiding children to new levels of understanding when they are developmentally ready. Children will demonstrate their learning by saying, doing and representing through play. The educators in the program will then respond, challenge and extend the learning experience to meet the needs of the children in their program. Children become the leaders in their own learning, and the educators become their guiding compass. Taking the time to be involved in this process allows for wonderful shared learning experiences.

The importance of a best start for children are undisputed. Play-based curriculum designed to be responsive to the individual needs of young children is a step in the right direction!

References:

Adshead and Clarck. (2010) *Paths to full-day learning*. Retrieved November 1, 2010, from <http://bctf.ca/publications/NewsMagArticle.aspx?id=21012>

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2010). *The Full Day Learning Kindergarten Program Draft version*. Retrived from http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kindergarten_english_apr13.pdf

Authentic Materials in the Classroom

If you want to incorporate authentic materials in your classroom check out these other kits available in the PRC!



Real Science Tools include; glass beakers, tweezers, test tubes, funnels and eye droppers to name a few items. This is a kit that is sure to rise questions and support the quest for some answers. We can offer you some suggestions on how to introduce these materials into your classroom. Looking for the next interesting project? Are the children in your program interested by all the construction happening around town?

Then check out our tool kit!

Again we are introducing authentic materials to incorporate into your classroom.



This kit includes a measuring tape, gloves and safety goggles, a level, hammers, screwdrivers, wrenches and work aprons. Add your own wood and nails and you are ready to create new experiences!

What's New in the Resource Centre Spotlight

We believe that young children should have experiences with real materials. You can go into any store that caters to young children and pick up a packaged kit full of plastic and lifeless representational pieces. One of our goals with the kits being created in the Professional Resource Centre is to introduce real materials into the classroom. We have created a third musical instrument kit full of interesting and authentic instruments for young children to use. This new kit has a Ukulele, Bongo drum, Cabasa and a Croaking Frog to name a few items you will find available. Share this kit with the young children in your life and discover the inner rhythm and creativity in each child! Explore your voice, sound and movement - no experience needed!



Hours for November

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE

Monday 1-9pm
Tuesday 10-6pm
Wednesday 1-9pm
Thursday 10-6 pm
Friday 10-4pm
Saturday 10-2pm

Conestoga College
ECE Building
299 Doon Valley Drive
Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4M4
519-748-5220 ext 3388

The Early Childhood Professional Resource Centre

Become a member 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!



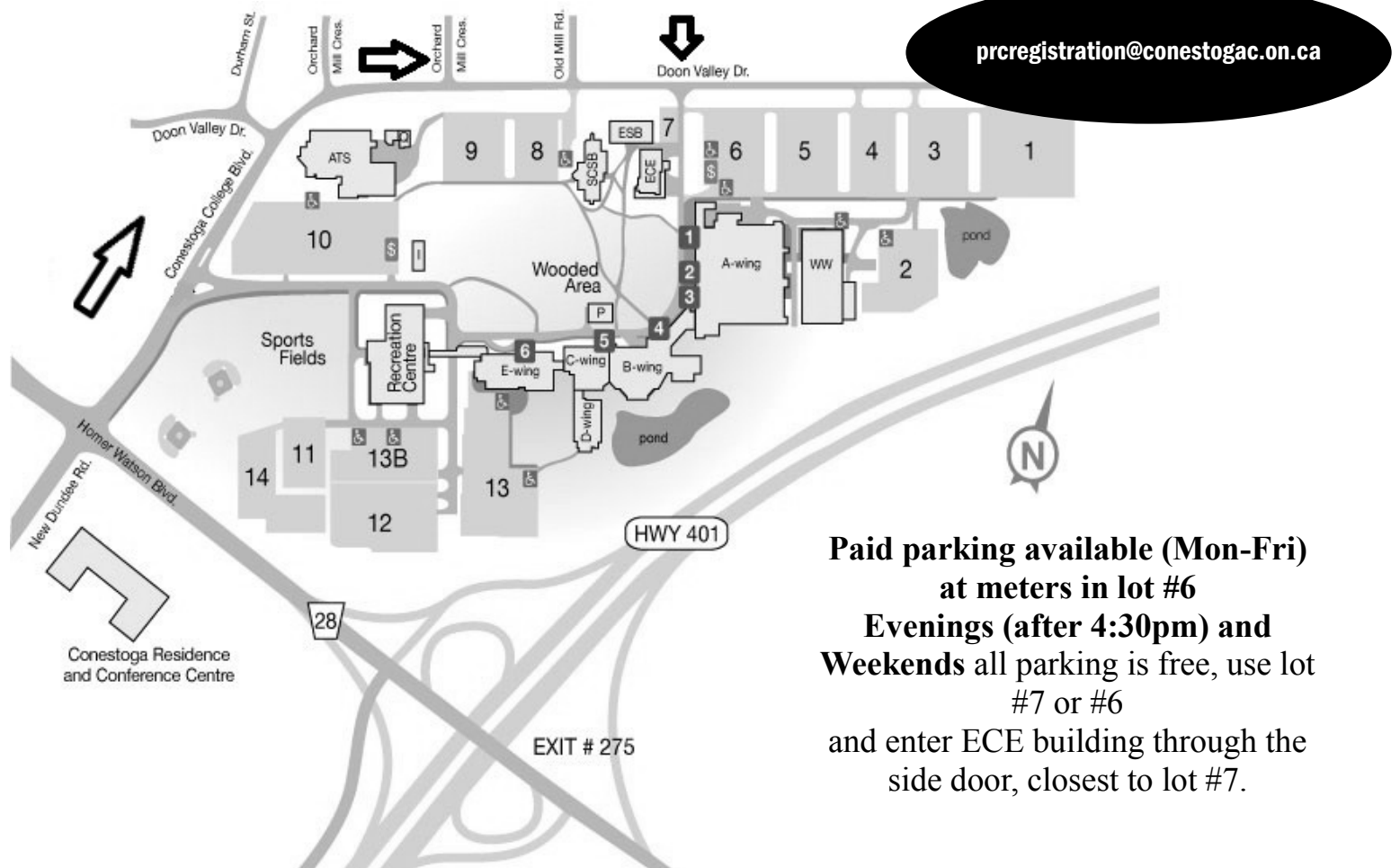
Region of Waterloo
SOCIAL SERVICES
Children's Services



CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning



LYLE S. HALLMAN
FOUNDATION



Paid parking available (Mon-Fri)
at meters in lot #6
Evenings (after 4:30pm) and
Weekends all parking is free, use lot
#7 or #6
and enter ECE building through the
side door, closest to lot #7.