

# 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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## What Does it Mean to be a Professional?

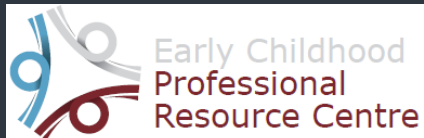
by Samantha Burns, RECE

For years this profession has been rallying for public support to first and foremost see early childhood educators beyond the insulting view of glorified babysitter to what we truly are – professionals in early learning and care.

First the Early Childhood Educators Act of 2007 was established, then shortly after the College of Early Childhood Educators was created. But what does this really mean for advancing our profession? And what does this really mean about our practice?

The College released the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice in February of 2011, mailing out a copy to pre-existing members and new members upon registration. Currently there are over 40,000 certificates of registration, so that means that those 40,000 members should know about our professional code of ethics – right? However, every time I encounter or

engage in conversations across our community, I am surprised at how many educators have not really taken the time to read through it and understand our obligations to the profession. Perhaps this is because we have grown to rely on our centre supervisors to relay important messages, and are not always familiar with seeking information or taking the lead – after all, many of us are not in front of a computer, but rather engaged with children in the classrooms. However, if we want to be seen as professionals we need to start taking on a certain level of independence, and this may fall beyond the time limits of our employment. One of the greatest points I cannot stress enough with other educators is that your professional practice goes beyond your basic employment – you are more than where you work. There seems to be this idea that we are bound within the limits of what our work provides us, time and funding for professional development being amongst the biggest concerns. I hear



Consider joining the PRC this fall as will be offering a 10 hour course focused around the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Dig deeper with us and join in the conversation!

To register or to find out more about this opportunity [click here](#).

This 10 hour course will offer a close examination of ethical obligations to children, families, and community as well as the expectation around professional practice in the early learning field.

Professional practice goes far beyond basic employment, but what does this really mean for the individual? Face to face sessions combined with reflective self-study will allow the participant to dig deeper and connect personal beliefs to practice as the landscape of early learning and care continues to shift.

Part 1: October 28, 2013  
Part 2: November 18, 2013  
Part 3: December 2, 2013

Time: 6:30-8:30 PM  
+ 4 hours of self study in between sessions.

Location: ECE Building,  
Conestoga College

it time and again –“if my work valued PD, they would pay for my time and/or the PD”. However what the College implies is that you are the professional, and as a professional there are expectations on your practice, one being that (standard IV, A.1) Early Childhood Educators are current in their professional knowledge about the continuum of child development and the pedagogy related to early learning, curriculum planning, parenting and family dynamics (2011). This implies that the responsibility stays with the educator, not the employee. After all, you will remain a professional regardless of where you are employed. In support of the growth of professional knowledge and learning, the College has just released further information regarding the implementation and expectations for a Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program to be implemented September of 2014.

But what does this really mean for the individual within this profession? It needs to start with understanding our ethical and professional obligations – to children, families, communities, and to the profession itself. There seems to be a misconception towards the College as being designed to protect us as a field, leading to a real misunderstanding around the roles and responsibilities of the College.

While it is undisputable that the creation of the College has helped raise the profile on

educators, and along with it the accountability of our standards of practice, we cannot forget that the College is really designed to protect public interest as a regulatory body. In short, this means the College controls who can use the title of Early Childhood Educator.

Complaints against educators are reviewed by a panel, and those that are found to violate the code of ethics and standards of practice are then taken to a discipline hearing. The hearings are public and findings can be reviewed and found on the College's website at <http://www.college-ece.ca/en/Public/Pages/Disciplinary-decisions.aspx?ref=True>. To date this includes over 16 hearings.

Knowledge is power, so pull out your Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and dust it off.

If you want more information on the College and their role please [click here](#).

If you want more information on our advocacy body (the AECEO) please [click here](#).

If you want to download a copy of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, please [click here](#).

Sources:  
College of Early Childhood Educators. (2011). Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice: Recognizing and Honouring our Profession. Toronto, ON, p.19.

# Brain Health and Handwork

By Sandy Christie, RECE Associate Faculty, Conestoga College.

**Question:** What do neuroscience, Rudolph Steiner and finger knitting have in common?

**Answer:** An appreciation of the incredible link between the hands, the heart and the head in healthy development from birth to death.

The latest studies in **neuroscience** verify the critical importance of early stimulation coupled with nurturing relationships in the actual wiring of the human brain. Fine motor skills generally involve the hands and fingers. What is fascinating is they do not operate in isolation. The hands and fingers are a portion of a system of parts that must work together for success; the eyes, the brain, and the muscles to name a few. Additionally, research has shown that there is a direct link between age related losses in memory and declines in motor skills that result from a lack of mental and fine motor exercise. What is at play is the intricate dance between the mind and the body via specialized chemicals called neurotransmitters that connect movement to attention and memory. Jeff Lichtman, M.D., Ph.D. is quoted as saying that muscle activity in the fingers and hands is the key to keeping the synaptic activity occurring in the brain alive (Franklin Institute, 2004).

**Rudolph Steiner**, founder of the Waldorf School movement, is one of the giants upon whose shoulders every great early childhood educator stands. Steiner's approach to curriculum design stimulates the development of the whole child. In a sensory rich environment, children are inspired to use their imagination, develop emotional well-being and a sense of community while also

learning to attend, make real choices and plan opportunities for personal growth and development. Of particular importance in the Waldorf curriculum are the many occasions for children to use their minds, hands and hearts in a warm, nurturing and aesthetically appealing environment. Painting exercises, playing with open



ended sensory materials including blocks, clay, water and sand, daily opportunities to dramatize learning, performing with instruments such as the recorder, gardening and handworking including finger knitting are all staples of Steiner's approach to curriculum planning.

Don't know what finger knitting is? In a Waldorf classroom, children are introduced to this knitting technique during the early years and are given the chance to carry the technique with them for life. **Finger knitting** involves the coordinated use of both hands to repeat a pattern of finger

movements that is both soothing and absorbing. Long strands of braided wool are then further manipulated in a wide variety of ways each carefully designed by the children and adults to extend their play. Items conceived and constructed using the finger knitting process are at once beautiful and practical. As we now know, experiences that instill feelings of satisfaction, initiative and competence ensure the homeostasis of the brain's chemistry. It is this intricate balance of hormones that results in well-being or illness. Furthermore, repeated fine motor movement and patterns of learning contribute to the hard-wiring of the brain. To learn how to finger knit, go to [http://youtu.be/xMQr\\_nLn4FM](http://youtu.be/xMQr_nLn4FM) and check out the Waldorf Finger Knitting video hosted by Sunii and his mom.

Now, get yourself a skein of wool and start knitting! Your brain will thank you.

## References

Burns, K. (2007, October). Waldorf Finger Knitting with Sunii & Mama. Retrieved from [http://youtu.be/xMQr\\_nLn4FM](http://youtu.be/xMQr_nLn4FM)

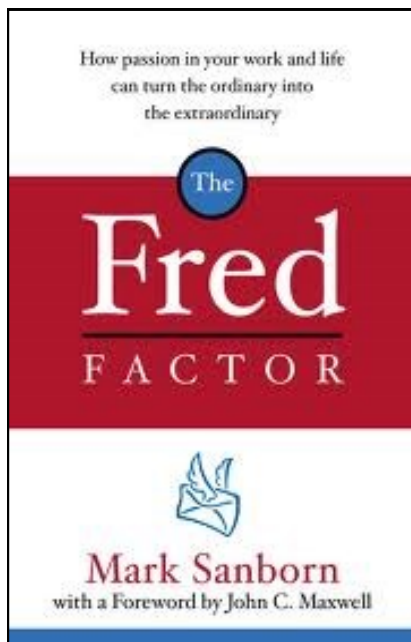
Lichtman, J. Dr. (2004). Muscles Activate Brain Receptors. *In Journey of the Developing Brain*. The Franklin Institute Online. Retrieved from <http://www.fi.edu/learn/brain/exercise.html>



## The Fred Factor by Mark Sanborn

A review by Allison Moffat, 2nd year ECE student

I recently read The Fred Factor by Mark Sanborn; this book focuses on striving to be your ultimate best. The story of Fred, the postal worker, shows how one person can change the way the public perceives them and their profession by doing thoughtful things. By investing himself completely in his work he became fulfilled, acknowledging the difference and impact he made by engaging with others. He became the difference. He did not do these thoughtful things to get better pay; he did them because he believed it was the right thing to do. Parallel lines can be drawn



for Early Childhood Educators. No one chooses this field for the money, and it is well known that educators are underpaid and not valued

within the public eye. There are lessons from Fred that we can take with us in this field to gain professional fulfillment with the work we do regarding our relationships. Fred took the time to meet each one of his clients, understand their individual needs while getting to know them on a personal level. He was sure to follow through on everything he committed to and often took it to the next level. This sounds almost unheard of, doesn't it? Can you imagine if we all followed Fred's lead? What if every educator took a few extra minutes to make sure the children in our care had a day to remember; or if educators created an environment that focuses on welcoming the voices of the families rather than assuming many of them are in a hurry to get out the door? The gift of empowerment and a sense of belonging is priceless.

Mark Sanborn indicates that everyone makes a difference. The idea refers to deciding how you approach your work and with what attitude you chose.

*"If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause*

*to say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.'"*

- Martin Luther King Jr.  
October 26, 1967

So how do you, in essence, become a Fred? It begins with a choice to hold a positive outlook and attitude. It means deciding to do the right thing for the right reason, considering others in regards to your actions, and


### The Seven Principles of Relationship building

- **Be Real.** Create a goal to add value and try new things, let the actions demonstrate your philosophy.
- **Be interested.** Follow the children's lead, be interested in them.
- **Be a better listener.** Understand and appreciate others, then decide how to guide them.
- **Be empathetic.** Take the time to listen, you will understand how the person feels and why.
- **Be honest.** Make promises that will be kept. Have integrity.
- **Be helpful.** Remember how it feels when someone holds the door open? Encourage yourself to do the little things.
- **Be prompt.** Give the gift of being on time, there are not enough hours in a day.

taking (and making) opportunities. It is easy to slip in to a narrow negative approach, that results in highlighting mistakes and placing blame, we have all been there. Instead of spiraling downwards, try to change your mind set to a more positive one by incorporating whole hearted enjoyment to the day. Always keep in mind, it's the little opportunities that can make the world of difference. You matter, and those around you matter.

The Fred Factor is all about choices and which direction is going to make you the best person possible. This book hands the power to the reader, so they can then choose which direction they are going to go. This can be applicable in all areas of your personal and professional life. In early childhood education, we are encouraging children to reach their full potential, why shouldn't we invest in ourselves

as well? Think about the audience we already have watching us, and be the example you want for the future. It is said that we have slipped away from personal connection in the twenty first century, life is very quick paced. We are so focused on what is next; we often forget what is happening in the moment around us. Try to slow down and allow your actions to show who you truly are. We need to take a moment to appreciate the now. No one has the ability to dictate where your life is going to go. Remember you are in the driver's seat to personal happiness and satisfaction. This book is worth the read for educators wanting to discover just how capable they are in the world. Your potential is unlimited. You can find this read and many others in the leadership section of the Professional Recourse Centre library.

A poster for the 'Save the Date Early Learning Gala'. The title 'SAVE the DATE' is written in a large, ornate, blue and green font. Below it, 'Early Learning Gala' is written in a smaller, green font. The background is a light blue and green pattern. At the bottom, there are three columns of text: 'Hosted by: The Child Care Network of Waterloo Region', 'Date: Wednesday October 23, 2013 6:30 PM', and 'Where: St. George Hall 665 King St. North, Waterloo ON. N2J 4G8'.

# SAVE the DATE

## Early Learning Gala

**Hosted by:**  
The Child Care  
Network  
of Waterloo Region

**Date:**  
Wednesday  
October 23, 2013  
6:30 PM

**Where:**  
St. George Hall  
665 King St. North,  
Waterloo ON. N2J 4G8



The Early Learning Gala is an evening dedicated to honouring the profession of early childhood educators who support our Region. Tickets will go on sale through the Professional Resource Centre in August with an **Early Bird Special** of \$12.00/ticket if you register before September 30, 2013, \$15.00/ticket afterwards.

No tickets will be sold at the door. On-line payments with credit cards will be accepted.



Light appetizers, cash bar and door prizes available.

We look forward to having you join us - so please save the date!

# *What's Cooking ?*



## **Homemade Crackers**



### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup oatmeal, blended until fine in a blender or food processor
- 3 tablespoons wheat germ
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/4 cup olive or other oil
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- Optional: 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh herbs

### **Directions:**

1. In a food processor or blender mix the flour, oatmeal, wheat germ, salt and optional herbs.
2. Add in the water, olive oil & cheese and blend. The dough should come together into a ball. You can add more water or oil if the dough seems too dry.
3. Roll the dough out as thin as possible on a floured surface and cut out shapes using a knife or cookie cutter.
4. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet and bake at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until they start to turn golden.

*\*Tip\** Find a fish-shaped cookie cutter and make your own goldfish crackers!



# From Canada to Kenya: Promoting the Power of Early Literacy Experiences

by Tarah Korir, former Conestoga ECE student

*Books, books, books, I'm  
always wanting more.  
Books, books, books, You  
can buy them at the store.  
But I love reading and I'm  
needing books  
incessantly,  
So now I'm off to get  
some at the library.*

These song lyrics were written for me by my mother when I was just four years old. They reflect my early childhood literacy experiences. My parents instilled in me a love of reading through bedtime stories and frequent library visits.



In contrast, my husband's early literacy experiences in a remote Kenyan village were far from enjoyable. Learning to read was very challenging. He had no access to children's stories or to a local library. The only reading materials he was exposed to were English textbooks shared among many classmates. Since his parents never attended school, they were

unable to read stories to him.

Reading experts have identified six pre literacy skills that provide the foundation for learning to read and write. These skills are vocabulary, print motivation, print awareness, narrative skills, letter knowledge and phonological awareness. In my travels to Kenya, I have observed many barriers to developing these skills, including a limited access to print materials and an understanding of the value of reading picture books.

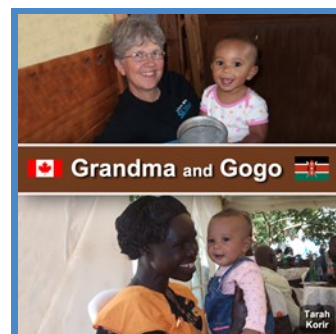
Promoting early literacy skills in Kenya could help children to achieve greater success in school. In 2010, my husband and I co-founded the Kenyan Kids Foundation to empower impoverished families in the Cherangany region of Kenya. Part of our mandate is to improve access to education. One of our initiatives has been to create a local library. Our English and Swahili collection focuses on stories that relate to Kenyan children's everyday lives in order to make reading

more relevant and enjoyable. To help children associate reading with pleasure, administrators, teachers, and parents must believe in the importance of story time on a regular basis. In order to increase children's early exposure to literature, we have loaned our collection of picture books to local nursery schools.

In addition to a regular class story time, we hope to implement a home reading program in which students will take home a different book each week. Our foundation also hopes to introduce a school reading buddies program where older students read to younger students.

By providing literate role models and positive early literacy experiences, it is my hope that more Kenyan children will develop an early love of reading that leads to greater academic success.

For more information about the Kenyan Kids Foundation or to find out how you can help, visit [www.kenyankidsfoundation.org](http://www.kenyankidsfoundation.org)



Grandma and Gogo is a non-fiction children's book that presents the everyday life of a two year old girl as she divides her time between her Grandma's house in Canada and her Gogo's house in Kenya.

This book helps children learn to appreciate cultural differences. Proceeds from this book will support the Kenyan Kids Foundation's work promoting early literacy in Kenya.

Grandma and Gogo may be purchased at the Professional Resource Centre at Conestoga College.

# Join the Network that is Right For you!

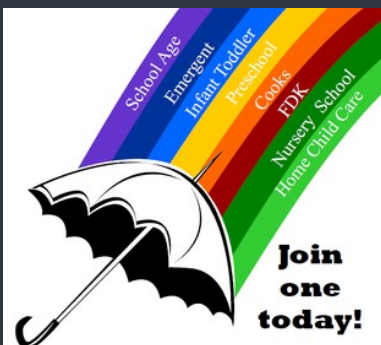
## RTB Umbrella Networks

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

## Upcoming Network Meetings

Visit [www.eceprc.ca](http://www.eceprc.ca) for more information on these networks and current events.

Upcoming network meeting will be posted under the community calendar.



Unfortunately there have been many references to child care in the news recently, stemming from a tragic incident; the death of a toddler in a Vaughan home providing unregulated care. Waterloo Region has also had its own shocking story related to care where a provider has been charged with allegedly poisoning children. A list of related news stories and links to the full articles are noted below:

### [Ontario child care review needed in wake of tot's death](#)

Source: TheStar.com, July12,2013

### [Is the Ontario government doing enough to protect children in unlicensed daycares?](#)

Source: TheGlobeandMail.com, July 19, 2013

## What's New in Childcare

### Links to the News in Early Learning and Care

### [Parents stunned as caregiver is accused of poisoning children](#)

Source: TheRecord.com, July22,2013

### [Child care by the numbers: Safe and affordable daycare remains elusive](#)

Source: CBC.ca, July23,2013

### [Open Letter to All Canadian Premiers About Canada's Dire Child Care Situation](#)

Source: Canadian Child Care Federation, July 23, 2013

### [A Letter to the Prime Minister](#)

Source: Canadian Child Care Federation, July 23, 2013

### [Parents can access unlicensed daycare complaints](#)

Source: TheRecord.com, Aug. 2,2013

### [Who's Watching the Kids? Video](#)

Source: CBC's Marketplace, Aired February 22, 2013

## Upcoming RTB Tuesdays at the Professional Resource Centre:

September 24, 2013

October 22, 2013

November 26, 2013

2:00pm—6:00pm Drop-in or book an appointment

6:00pm—8:00pm RTB Binder Support

For Further Information Contact:

Debbie Jones, Supervisor, Quality Initiatives

Phone: 519-883 2111 x. 5044 Email: [djones@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:djones@regionofwaterloo.ca)







## Beginning with Books

Laura Dick, Waterloo Public Library and  
Laura Reed, Kitchener Public Library.

world around them.

What kinds of

*Ten Tiny Babies* —  
or anything else by  
Karen Katz

*Touch and Feel Farm*—  
touch and feel books are  
an excellent way to give  
babies a sensory  
introduction to books.  
There are lots of titles in  
the Touch and Feel  
series

*Goodnight Moon*—  
Margaret Wise Brown

*Piggies*—Audrey Wood

*Freight Train*—  
Donald Crews

*Where's Spot?*—Eric Hill

Don't forget cloth books  
for chewing on and  
plastic books for the bath  
tub. Babies chew on  
books. Chewing on  
objects is a baby's way  
of understanding them—  
make sure there are  
plenty of books around  
for the baby in your life  
to explore with his hands  
AND his mouth!

books should you begin  
with when reading to  
babies? Look for books  
that have large, clear  
colourful pictures —  
preferably photographs  
rather than illustrations,  
books that rhyme or  
play with words, books  
that have few words per  
page and, most  
importantly, books that  
you enjoy reading.  
Anything you enjoy, the  
baby will enjoy.

Here are some favourite  
books for babies:

*Ten Little Fingers and  
Ten Little Toes*—  
Mem Fox

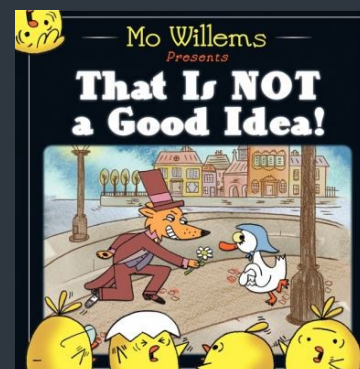
*I Went Walking*—  
Sue Williams

*Moo Baa La La La*—  
or anything else by  
Sandra Boynton

### Books for Babies!

You might think that  
babies are too young to  
enjoy books, but you  
would be wrong. The  
best way to ensure a  
child becomes a reader  
and a writer is to read to  
them from the very  
beginning. Babies love  
to cuddle with grown  
ups and reading aloud  
to a baby is a great way  
to get some cuddle time  
in! Reading aloud  
teaches a baby many  
worthwhile skills such  
as how communication  
works while also  
introducing concepts  
such as numbers,  
letters, colors, and  
shapes in a fun way. It  
builds listening,  
memory, and  
vocabulary skills and  
gives babies  
information about the

## Children's Book - of - the Month



**That Is Not a  
Good Idea!**  
by Mo Willems

One day, a very  
hungry fox meets a  
very plump goose. A  
dinner invitation is  
offered and accepted.

Will dinner go as  
planned? Or do the  
dinner plans involve  
an unhappy ending?  
Mo Willems is back,  
and his wacky sense  
of humour makes this  
one a sure fire hit and  
a great read aloud.



**EMBRACING  
THE EARLY YEARS**  
capture the moment

[Click here and register!](#)

**Embracing the Early Years  
Capture The Moment Conference**

**Wed, Nov 20, 2013 to Sat, Nov 23, 2013**

Holiday Inn, Burlington Hotel & Conference Centre

In partnership with: Affiliated Services for Children & Youth, Hamilton Best Start, Home Child Care Association of Ontario, Mohawk College-School of Human Services Early Childhood Education, Conestoga College & The Early Childhood Education Professional Resource Centre, Guelph Wellington Quality Child Care Initiative, The Halton Resource Connection and Halton's Our Kids Network and Sheridan College - Early Childhood Education Department.



## PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE



### PRC Hours of Operation for September & October

Monday.....9am-8pm  
Tuesday.....9am-8pm  
Wednesday.....9am-8pm  
Thursday.....9am-5pm  
Friday.....9am-5pm  
Saturday.....9am-1pm  
Closed on Sundays

The PRC will be closed for all  
statutory holidays and the  
Saturday of any long  
weekend.

# The Early Childhood Professional Resource Centre

*Tell a Friend Today!*

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!

Visit our website: [www.eceprc.ca](http://www.eceprc.ca)



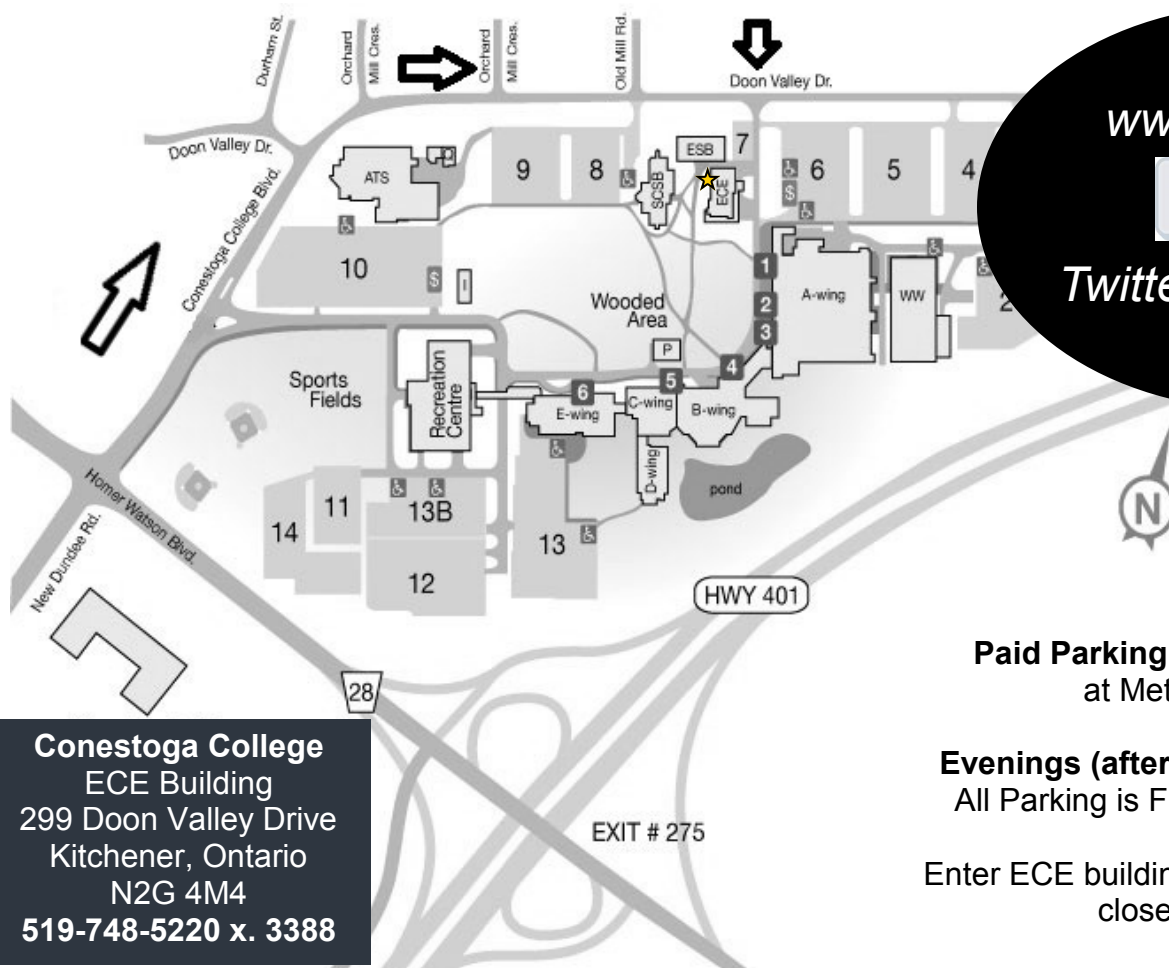
Region of Waterloo  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
Children's Services



CONESTOGA  
Connect Life and Learning



LYLE S. HALLMAN  
FOUNDATION



[www.eceprc.ca](http://www.eceprc.ca)



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**Paid Parking Available (Mon-Fri)**  
at Meters in **Lot #6**

**Evenings (after 4 PM) and Weekends**  
All Parking is Free—Use Lot #6 or #7

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

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