

# connexions

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**cece**  
college of  
early childhood  
educators



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## About this Publication

The College of Early Childhood Educators regulates the profession of early childhood education in the public interest and works towards its vision of a profession in which all members accept responsibility for practice excellence. Published three times a year in Toronto, ON, *Connexions* provides members and the public with College and sector news along with regular features on the early childhood education profession.

**Publication Coordinator:** Sharon Ho  
**Design:** Giuliana Tarini

## Elected Council Members

Lois Mahon RECE, President – District 1  
Eugema Ings RECE – District 1  
Lisa Lamarre RECE – District 2  
Susan Quaiff RECE – District 3  
Stacey Lepine RECE – District 4  
Susan Joy Scoffin RECE – District 4  
Valerie Sterling RECE – District 5  
Richard (Dick) Winters RECE – District 5  
Heather Yeo RECE – District 5  
Anna Baas-Anderson RECE – District 6  
Sophia Tate RECE – District 6  
Susan (Darlene) Edgar RECE,  
Vice-President – District 7  
Barbara Brown RECE – District 8  
Vera Niculena (Nici) Cole RECE – District 8

## Publicly Appointed Members

François Bertrand, Hawkesbury  
Madeleine L. Champagne, Ottawa  
Karen Damley, Mississauga  
Nermin Foda, Mississauga  
Rosemary Fontaine, Toronto  
Christine Forsyth, Toronto  
Larry O'Connor, Brock  
Jason Powell, Oakville  
Ann Robichaud-Gagné, Ottawa  
Nerene Virgin, Hamilton

## College Administration

Registrar and CEO: Sue Corke  
Deputy Registrar: Laura Sheehan  
Director of Corporate Services: James Cha  
Director of Complaints and Discipline:  
Greg Coutts  
Director of Professional Practice:  
Melanie Dixon RECE



**Lois Mahon RECE**  
President

Next year, members working or living in Districts 5 – Toronto Region and 7 – Hamilton/ Niagara Region will have the opportunity to vote in the election of Council members of the College of Early Childhood Educators. Information will be mailed out later this fall to those members. Nominations will open in December and the Council members will be elected in April 2016. I hope you will participate, either by running in the election or by placing your vote.

Mark your calendars for January 12, 2016 for the College’s Annual Meeting of Members. Details will be available later this fall on how to attend the meeting or watch it through live streaming.

This past summer I reflected on my continuous professional learning: how it has impacted my practice and how I live by the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. My challenge is I am not that great at keeping records. But help arrived through an e-blast with CPL resources from the College! I hope members are enjoying this support as much as I am.

Finally, I am honoured to have the opportunity to pay tribute to our Registrar and CEO Sue Corke who will be retiring at the end of this year. As an RECE I have a deep regard for Sue. She has helped us embrace our professionalism and has represented us to stakeholders, parents and government as an integral component of early learning and care.

Sue has been an innovative thinker and leader and is well respected by other regulators. The College’s governance, approach to “right touch” regulation and policy development are seen as best practices nationally and internationally.

The College has accomplished significant milestones under her leadership. This includes promoting the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Leadership Pilot projects, the development of a continuous professional learning program, the increase in the number of members beyond anyone’s expectations, online resources, outreach to and input from our members and our stakeholders, strategic planning and much more.

Sue has successfully moved initiatives forward by developing champions and leaders. She is a force to be dealt with. Her sense of humour, her drive and her pursuit of excellence are unparalleled. Her commitment to early childhood education and to the College has been a gift to RECEs, children and families and all of us who have had the pleasure of working with her.

Sue, you will be missed. Things will never be the same without you! The mark you have left on our profession and on our College is appreciated and will be in our hearts forever. Our very best wishes to you as you begin the next chapter of your life!

Best wishes,

*Lois Mahon* RECE



**Sue Corke**  
Registrar & CEO

On December 31, 2015 I will retire from the College of Early Childhood Educators. I have been the Registrar and CEO for almost five years. I will miss the people and the work enormously. I have enjoyed every single thing about it, but a person should leave while things are going well. The College was still a new regulator when I joined it in 2011. We had about 33,000 members and some departments were still in a fledgling state. As I write this message we have just issued our 57,000 Certificate of Registration.

**Key external changes also occurred in the policy and legislative arena:**

- The introduction of full-day kindergarten with the registered early childhood educator/teacher team teaching model.
- The transfer of early learning and care policy and funding to the Ministry of Education.
- A review of the Early Childhood Education Program Standard diploma credential.
- The evolution of the relationship between the provincial government and the Consolidated Municipal Services Managers/District Social Services Administration Boards in the municipal sector.
- A focus on the play-based pedagogy expressed in *How Does Learning Happen?*
- And whoever thought that the *Day Nurseries Act* would finally be repealed!

Early childhood educators have also shown their capacity to take on leadership roles. Regardless of position or work setting, many leaders, new and seasoned, have emerged. Networks and communities of practice have sprung up all over the place. Innovation and mentoring can be found throughout the province. It has been our pleasure at the College to enable these initiatives through advisory groups, round table discussions, case study workshops, outreach presentations, practice resources, leadership pilots, symposia and other techniques at our disposal.

But we have noticed through our 28 discipline hearings that there are certain vulnerabilities in the sector. We have dealt with cases of inappropriate disciplining of children, fraud in situations with inadequate oversight and cases of sexual misconduct. We have had situations where a member failed to report concerns about suspected child abuse or negligence. Practice guidelines to inform members about these topics are in progress. The College has issued a professional advisory on the duty to report. As part of the College's commitment to transparency, we publish the details of discipline hearings in our publication, *Connexions*, and on our website.

In parting, let me say how much I admire the leadership of Council and staff. I cannot imagine a more collegial and productive organization. It has been a delight.

Thank you,



For more information contact us at: [communications@college-ece.ca](mailto:communications@college-ece.ca)

The Professional Advisory can be read at [college-ece.ca/resources](http://college-ece.ca/resources)

## Child Care Modernization Act

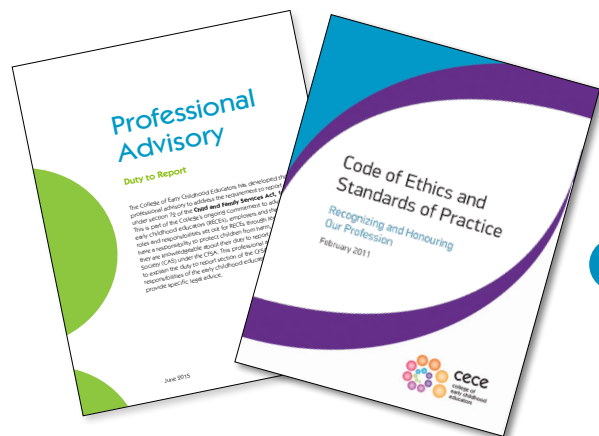
On August 31, 2015 the Ontario government passed the *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014* (Bill 10). This legislation brought about many changes to the early learning and care sector including amendments to the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. The College now has the authority to mandate continuous professional learning and to accredit programs in early childhood education. There have also been changes to who is required to become a member of the College. Anyone working within the scope of practice in early childhood education and who meets the College's registration requirements is required to be a registered early childhood educator. This includes resource teachers, home child care visitors and individuals providing care in licensed or unlicensed home child care settings.

## Professional Advisory: Duty to Report

The College created this professional advisory to inform registered early childhood educators (RECEs) about the requirement to report child abuse under section 72 of the *Child and Family Services Act, 1990* (CFSA). RECEs have a responsibility to protect children from harm so it is important that they are knowledgeable about their duty to report to a Children's Aid Society under the CFSA.

## Review of Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

As part of its strategic priorities, the College will begin a review of By-law 21: Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Feedback this past winter on the new strategic priorities showed that a continued emphasis on professional practice and standards continues to be an important focus for members. The review will take into consideration all the changes in the early learning and care sector in the last four years since the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice were implemented. Members and stakeholders will be consulted during this review. Stay tuned for more information on how you can participate!



# Affirming the Importance of Leadership in Early Childhood Education



As the director of the Bayridge Drive and Henderson Child Care Centres in Kingston, ON, Krystal Oxbro RECE is passionate about continuous professional learning.

This past September Oxbro and 39 other registered early childhood educators (RECEs) began to participate in the College of Early Childhood Educators' second Leadership Pilot (LP2). At the same time as the launch of the LP2, the College held a symposium on leadership and professionalism. The Leadership Pilot and symposium both support the College's Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program.

From September 2015 to May 2016, RECEs from licensed child care centres including First Nations will participate in the LP2 to enhance their leadership skills and further their understanding of the professional expectations outlined in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Community Liaisons from 23 Consolidated Municipal Services Managers, District Social Services Administration Boards and three First Nations will help the participants make connections in the broader early learning and child care community through existing networks, professional learning committees and quality assurance programs.

Oxbro is part of a continuous professional learning community in Kingston and

Frontenac. She also meets monthly with the staff from the two child care centres in her organization. Both groups currently focus on the Ministry of Education's vision for the early years, *How Does Learning Happen?*

"It has been so valuable and I feel my own growth," said Oxbro of her own continuous professional learning. "I also see the growth of the educators I work with."

Oxbro believes leadership empowers RECEs. "I think when people are happy and confident in their work, they strive for excellence. I think leadership is important because it helps each and every individual educator realize their own potential and make positive changes which impact on children."

**"I think leadership is important because it helps each and every individual educator realize their own potential and make positive changes which impact on children."**

- Krystal Oxbro RECE

For more images from this event visit [college-ece.ca](http://college-ece.ca)



The symposium featured speakers who inspired the RECEs and stakeholders from the early learning and child care sector on the topics of leading through change and leadership in action. Dr. Jillian Rodd gave the keynote speech which affirmed the importance of leadership in early childhood education. The psychologist and educational consultant focused on the need to initiate change and developing leadership capacity.

**“We need leaders to foster a collaborative climate with a focus on sharing and creating knowledge, building competencies and increasing their leadership capacity,”** said Rodd.

**Rodd encourages all RECEs to think of themselves as leaders. She believes leadership is important because it recognizes the professional responsibility of RECEs and empowers them to improve the quality of early learning and care.**

Rodd’s experience has been that many ECEs say they just work with children and aren’t leaders. But she encourages them to think differently.

“I say (to them) have you made any changes in your practice because you wanted to make things better for the children you were with?” said Rodd. “That is an act of everyday leadership. You make some improvements every day and they are small acts of leadership because you are making things better. That is what leadership is all about, trying to improve quality and trying to get better outcomes for children. So you are a leader. But it hasn’t been noticed by the individual and it hasn’t been named. But it should be.”

Christine Gagnon RECE is another LP2 participant who believes in pointing out the leadership of her staff. The supervisor of two *La Boîte à Soleil* child care centres in Welland, ON encourages her staff to be leaders by pointing out their good work and practices.

“It motivates them to keep going,” said Gagnon.

“It builds up their confidence because they want that recognition.”

Rodd encourages all child care centres to make leadership a topic on the

agenda of their staff meetings so RECEs can share their leadership activities. She understands leadership can be challenging in a profession where ECEs say they are caught in a trap of increasing demand, high expectations, limited resources and capability.

But Rodd thinks child care settings where mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning encourage RECEs to persevere as leaders. Discussing the mistakes that leaders have made and the lessons learned from them also encourages people to continue as leaders.

Rodd says ultimately leadership is important because leaders are “agents of change who inspire and mobilize action towards a shared vision of transforming the current system on behalf of children and families.” ■

# Election 2016

In April 2016, the College will hold its sixth election of Council members. Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) will be elected to Council in two of the eight electoral districts.

A 24-member Council governs the College. The Council is made up of 14 RECEs elected by their peers. The remaining 10 are appointed by the Ontario government. The Council develops and approves policies regulating early childhood educators in Ontario.


**Get involved in the governance of your College. Run, nominate, vote.**

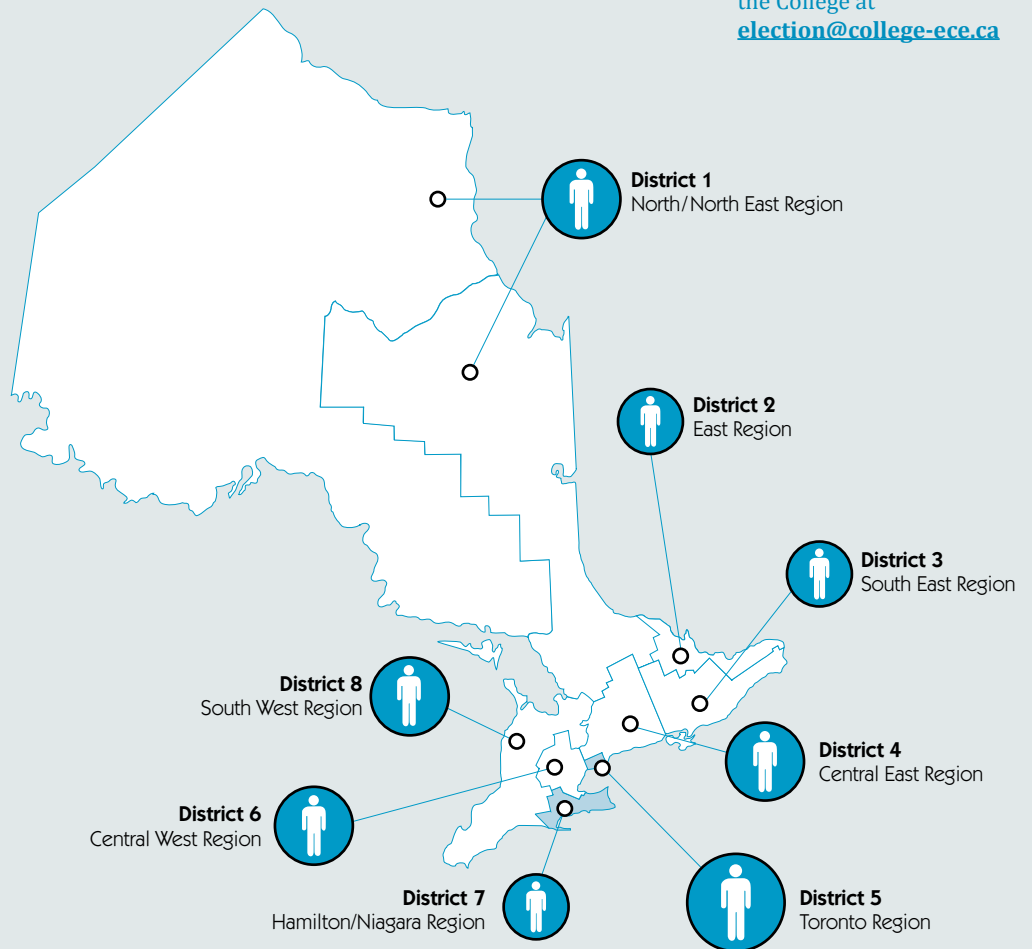
- Will you be a member in good standing as of December 2015?
- Are you a member in one of the electoral districts up for election?
- Do you want to participate on the College's Council as a member of your profession?

Nomination information will be sent to current members of the College in the noted electoral districts in December 2015.

 [Get Involved Now!](#)

## Electoral Districts

 Stay tuned for more information or contact the College at [election@college-ecce.ca](mailto:election@college-ecce.ca)



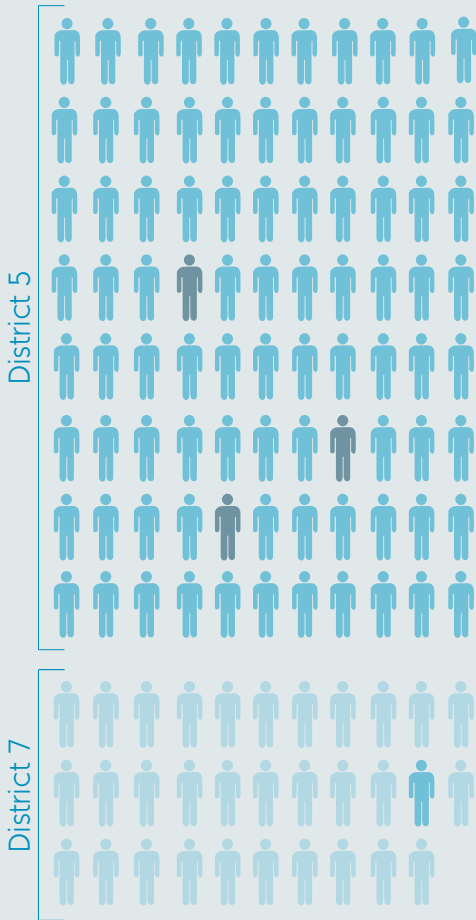
Electoral District	Number of Council members to be elected
5 – Toronto Region	3
7 – Hamilton/Niagara Region	1



Did you know?

# 15000+

Members Are Eligible To Vote  
In District 5 And District 7



Important Election Dates 



Notice of election will be sent to members eligible to participate.



Deadline for nominations to be received by the College at 5 p.m.



Deadline to be a registered member in order to be eligible to vote.



Voting opens.



Voting closes at 5 p.m.



Results of the election will be announced.

# GAABAAGANG GIVES CHILDREN A SPACE OF THEIR OWN

Open the curtain to what looks like a shelf in the **Ekwaamjigenang Children's Centre** and what one will see instead is a space filled with toys, pictures, mirrors and enough room for a child to lie down.

This quiet space, also known as a Gaabaagang, is an area where children can choose to go to be alone. Children use the space one at a time and can stay there as long as they need. The curtained-off space is part of every room in the centre, from infant to kindergarten.

The principles and document for the Gaabaagang were created in collaboration with resource teacher Debbie Levesque RECE, who works at the Lansdowne Children's Centre in Brantford, ON. Inspiration for the Gaabaagang arose after a child asked a registered early childhood educator (RECE) where they were going. When the RECE said she was going for a break, the child replied that they needed a break too.

"The idea for the Gaabaagang came out of respect for the children," says Patti Barber RECE and supervisor at Ekwaamjigenang Children's Centre on the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation in Southern Ontario. "Children are people that adults have to respect. The name 'Ekwaamjigenang' means our sacred gifts as children are one of the many gifts the Creator has given us to be responsible for."

The Gaabaagang gives children a private place for downtime or to cry, be angry or upset. Ekwaamjigenang introduced the space over a year ago. The children are taught to respect the Gaabaagang as an individual space and to give each other their privacy.

"They can hit the wall or rip paper," says Courtney Tuckett, the RECE in the mixed preschool room (preschool and kindergarten-aged children). "There's a blanket, weighted toys and different items inside there that really help them calm down. We also put pictures inside on the top so children can focus on something and have that space where they're not bothered."

Shannon King, RECE in the preschool room, recently had a child choose to enter the Gaabaagang after becoming upset when another child tried to help him build a train track.





**“Children who can’t deal with their emotions on the spot go in and it’s very calming for them.”**

- Shannon King RECE

“He didn’t want anyone talking to him and didn’t want anyone else building the train tracks,” says King. “So he got up and went into the Gaabaagang. Children who can’t deal with their emotions on the spot go in and it’s (the space) very calming for them.”

After being in the Gaabaagang, the child speaks with an RECE about their emotions. RECEs place themselves in view of the Gaabaagang to let the child know they are available for a talk or a hug when the child is ready. The space thus allows for co-regulation between the child and the RECE.

“We feel children are in a moment of vulnerability when they are deeply upset and hurting,” says Barber. “They’re dysregulated. When they’re dysregulated they may not understand all those deep feelings they’re having. They need the support and help of a caring adult so the child isn’t left to figure out how to regulate themselves. The caregiver helps guide them in co-regulating their emotions, labelling their emotions and talking about their emotions.”

**RECEs at Ekwaamjigenang tell the children “nimajii-toomin maamwi” which means we are on this journey together.**

“We use that term to say to the child ‘we are here for you’ because in the moment the child may not want you (the adult) there,” says Barber. But it ends up they do want the caring, connected adult next to them.” ■

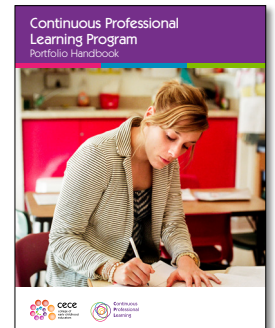
**In what it calls a “living document,” Ekwaamjigenang says the principles for the Gaabaagang include:**

- Encourage and support children’s self-control and regulation.
- Foster kindness and respect of children.
- Allow children to take time to calm down until they are ready to act with a clear mind.
- Allow children to be in a better frame of mind which in turn allows them to be open to discuss what happened and what needs to be done.
- Help children form positive beliefs about themselves, their world and their behaviour.
- Support children struggling with emotional regulation and help them identify and validate their feelings.

# CPL Portfolio Cycle **Has Launched**

This past September, the College of Early Childhood Educators launched the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program's two-year Portfolio Cycle. The College is encouraging registered early childhood educators (RECEs) to read the CPL Portfolio Handbook and begin the CPL Portfolio cycle. RECEs can use the Self-Assessment Tool, the Professional Learning Plan and the Record of Professional Learning to plan and document their professional learning. These tools and components along with the CPL Portfolio Handbook and other resources are available online.

You are encouraged to begin the CPL Portfolio cycle when you renew your membership. The program's cycle provides the tools for members to reflect, create and act on goals relevant to their practice. After completing the two years, members will begin another cycle and focus on new goals and areas of learning. ■



## Voluntary CPL Program Roll-Out: 2014 to 2017



Since September 2014, RECEs have been completing the Expectations for Practice Module online and then participating in a survey about the module. **Ninety percent of respondents agreed that completing the module enhanced their knowledge of the expectations for practice for RECEs.**

### Some feedback from the Expectations for Practice Module

- Members would like more information on the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, the complaints process and how to handle dual relationships
- Members want to be informed about upcoming changes to the profession and new legislation that will affect RECEs

# Educators Continue to Explore Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership

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Text: Sharon Ho  
Photo: Giuliana Tarini



Collaboration is an essential part of Tracy Briscoe’s work in full-day kindergarten (FDK).

“I need to collaborate with others to learn different perspectives, to gain more insight and to network,” said the registered early childhood educator (RECE) who began her sixth year in FDK this past September. “Collaboration, within these teams, is essential to providing quality education and care to early learners and their families.”

The implementation of FDK across Ontario has meant that Ontario Certified Teachers (OCTs) and RECEs work together to provide children with inquiry and play-based learning experiences.

Briscoe finds that regular communication between her and her teaching partner is essential to their collaboration.

“I don’t get paid for planning time but my teaching partner and I talk regularly,” says Briscoe. “If we don’t have duties we eat lunch together. So we talk about what we’re working on, what we’re working towards and we also collaborate as a team with the other school teams.”

In July 2014, the College of Early Childhood Educators and the Ontario College of Teachers co-hosted a summer institute, a forum for the two professions to explore the theme of interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership. The institute sought to create a shared understanding of ethical collaborative

practices within the FDK program context. As a result, a resource booklet was created to support the ethical and professional standards of both regulatory colleges.

A second summer institute was held this past July to introduce the draft resource, *Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership* and to gather feedback on the booklet from the educators. It can be used by professionals who work in collaborative settings.

Patrizia De Marco OCT also participated in the summer institute.

“Collaboration for me means looking at all the relationships that are involved in educating a child and then building those relationships and finding the strengths that everyone has to offer to the child’s growth and development,” said De Marco.

She found the summer institute to be invaluable because it allowed for reflection and collaboration with RECEs. De Marco plans on sharing the resource with colleagues at her school.

“There are so many dimensions that can be explored from an ethical perspective that I think it’s a great exercise to go through at the beginning of the year.” ■

📖 The Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership resource booklet is available at [college-ece.ca/resources](http://college-ece.ca/resources)

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# The Evolution of Professional Learning for RECEs in Ontario

Visit [college-ece.ca](http://college-ece.ca) to read the full article originally published in the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario's Summer *eceLink* 2015.

Professional learning is an integral part of the early childhood education and care (ECEC) landscape. Decades of research have identified that ongoing professional learning of early childhood educators (ECEs) and staff is a critical element in the provision of high quality ECEC.

As regulated professionals, registered early childhood educators have ethical and professional responsibilities to enhance their practice along with gaining new skills and knowledge to cope with the ever changing needs of children and families. In the context of Ontario's ongoing agenda to "modernize" child care and the broader ECEC sector, increased attention has been devoted to the professional learning of the ECEC workforce resulting in significant changes in this area. ■

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## Honorary ECE designation

The College of Early Childhood Educators is very pleased to award Mr. Jim Grieve with an honorary ECE designation. The College confers this honorary designation in appreciation of his exemplary service in supporting the mandate of the College to regulate early childhood education in the public interest and for the significant contributions he has made to the ECE profession in Ontario.

As the former Assistant Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Education, Grieve personified many of the values that guide the work of the College: fairness, respect, accountability and a commitment to forward thinking. Throughout his tenure as ADM, he worked tirelessly to foster positive and collaborative relationships, not only with government partners, but with registered early childhood educators (RECEs), children and families throughout the province.

Grieve has always shown tremendous respect for the work that RECEs do for children and families and he has been a big supporter of the College's vision that all RECEs take responsibility for practice excellence. He has spoken to our members on behalf of the Ministry of Education on several occasions, including at the 2013 Leadership Symposium and at the annual meeting of members in January of 2015. His words of wisdom and his commitment to collaboration and innovation have always been an inspiration. ■





Wendy Strachan RECE discovered her passion for early learning and care after raising her own children. After being an accounting clerk and then staying home to raise her children, Wendy went back to school six years ago to obtain a diploma in early childhood education. She then became a home-based child care provider in Waterford, ON. Wendy currently looks after children aged one to three.

The College of Early Childhood Educators comprises unique members – each with a different background and story to tell. Conversation with an RECE features registered early childhood educators (RECEs) who are passionate about their profession and the people they serve.

 [Nominate an RECE you'd like us to have a conversation with by sending an e-mail to \[communications@college-ece.ca\]\(mailto:communications@college-ece.ca\) or call 1 888 961-8558 ext. 307](#)

**Q: Why did you decide to become a home based child care provider?**

A: You get to really know the family and the children. So you are able to do more with them and give them different experiences.

**Q: How do you create and carry out developmentally appropriate programs for children of different ages?**

A: You start out big and wide and then narrow it down. In the mornings, we do all the open-ended creative activities. While you are doing that you are bringing in bits and pieces for the older ones. In the afternoons when the younger children go down for a nap, you go into more detail with the older children on what we did in the morning.

It's nice when you see the older ones trying to help the younger children or the younger ones actually learning things that they may not learn if they were actually in their own age group.

**Q: How do home visitors support your work?**

A: They bring in professional development activities for us to do. The home-based child caregivers also get together once every two or three months to do core training around topics and documents such as *How Does Learning Happen?* One downside of being home though is that you do not have someone to bounce things off of. But they are only a phone call away.

**Q: How do you stay connected in your professional learning?**

A: The Ontario Early Years Centres in my community put on a lot of workshops that child caregivers can go to. I also go to a group for licensed and unlicensed home-based child care. We live in a pretty small community where everyone knows everyone so information is shared pretty quickly.

**Q: For other home care providers who have ECE credentials what would you tell them are the benefits of joining the College?**

A: I think being an RECE gives families the assurance about standards and ethics and that you are willing to be accountable to them. It gives the parent of the child assurance that knowledge (on the part of the RECE) is there. ■

**Q: I am concerned about the development of a child in my program. As a registered early childhood educator (RECE), what can I do to support this child? What steps should I take?**

R: Whether a child may or may not be diagnosed with a disability or exhibit characteristics typical of some exceptionalities, all early childhood educators are required to “recognize children’s unique characteristics and access the resources necessary to adapt the early learning environment to suit the child (Standard II: A.2).” Furthermore, RECEs “must access current evidence-based research and are able to transfer this knowledge into practice (Standard IV: E.1).” It is your ethical and professional responsibility, as an RECE, to pursue and engage in the ongoing learning required to access the supports for each and every child in the program.

Early childhood educators do not work alone. From the moment a child enters a child care centre, a relationship between the educator, child and family begins to develop. A child’s family is your primary resource and chief collaborator. Standard I: C reminds RECEs to “strive to establish and maintain ongoing and open communication regarding the development and learning of a child...with the child’s parents and/or legal guardians.” Exchanging knowledge, resources and creating relationships with families “based on trust, openness and respect for confidentiality” (Ethic B) provides a foundation for discussing developmental concerns and determining necessary supports for a child.

In addition, RECEs often work with other professionals who provide guidance and direction when implementing strategies for children in need of additional supports. Reaching out to supervisors, colleagues and resource

teachers are important steps in helping you adapt the learning environment or create strategies. It is essential that educators, “working collaboratively with community resource persons and members of other professions, access the resources and expertise available in their communities (Standard IV: C.4).” In these situations, it is important that RECEs seek out available supports in their communities.

Careful observation and clear documentation is one of the best ways to initiate communication and collaboration with others. Standard IV: B.3 states that RECEs are required to “observe and monitor the learning environment and anticipate when support or intervention is required.” Observation and documentation enables and empowers early childhood educators to communicate their concerns, discuss next steps and be receptive to the expertise of families and colleagues. ■



Practice Matters features questions regarding the College and the early childhood education profession. The College’s Director of Professional Practice, Melanie Dixon RECE, and the Professional Practice team address issues that members face and apply the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* to various situations.

📧 Do you have a Professional Practice question? E-mail [practice@college-ecce.ca](mailto:practice@college-ecce.ca) for more information.

**Put it into Practice:** What resources are available to you in your centre, community or online? Do you have access to current screening or observation tools? Review what you use to document children’s learning and development. Take stock, reflect and discuss with your colleagues.



The College of Early Childhood Educators takes professional accountability seriously by investigating written complaints about members that relate to alleged professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity. Its Complaints Committee reviews complaints and either refers them to the Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee for a hearing or resolves the matter by other means.

Details of College investigations remain confidential until such time as a case is referred to the Discipline Committee or the Fitness to Practise Committee. The Complaints Committee decisions below are published solely for educational purposes and do not identify the people involved.

## Complaint

Sharing sexually explicit material with colleagues at the workplace

## Committee's Decision

Written caution

## Summary

The College received an employer notification regarding the professional conduct of a Member alleging:

- The Member repeatedly showed sexually explicit photos to colleagues in the workplace where children were present.
- The Member discussed topics of a sexual nature with colleagues in the presence of children.
- The Member asked a colleague personal and inappropriate questions about her relationship with her husband.
- The Member's inappropriate and unsolicited interactions made her colleagues feel uncomfortable at work.

While the Member did not deny the allegations against her, she did deny the way in which they were presented.

The Member explained:

- While waiting for the children to arrive, she looked through her purse and discovered a stack of photos she had forgotten about. She showed the pictures to her colleague. The Member did not know that there was a sexually explicit photo in the stack and as she was reviewing the pictures with her colleague, an inappropriate photo was revealed. She immediately put the pictures back in her purse.
- She received a picture via text message from an unknown number. She discussed the picture with her colleagues to determine who sent it and showed the picture to one colleague. The picture may have also been seen accidentally by other colleagues as she showed them other pictures on her phone. The Member maintains that no children were present at the time.
- On a few occasions she joked with her colleagues about mature subject matter, but she did not believe any children could hear her.
- Since her colleagues never indicated that her actions and comments were unwelcome, she did not consider them to be inappropriate or harassing.

The Complaints Committee concluded that the Member's actions were unprofessional, inappropriate and detrimental to the workplace environment.

The Committee noted violations of the *Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice*, including:

- Ethic C – The Member failed to demonstrate respect for her colleagues.
- Standard IV: E.2 – The Member did not serve as a role model for children by discussing mature subject matter at the centre and bringing in inappropriate material.
- Standard V: B – By failing to abide by the centre's sexual harassment policy, the Member failed to respect the centre's established boundaries. ■

The Discipline Committee hears matters regarding professional misconduct or incompetence while the Fitness to Practise Committee addresses those related to incapacity.

The Discipline Committee usually orders that a summary of its decisions and findings related to professional misconduct or incompetence be published in the College publication, **Connexions**. In the Public Interest contains the most recent summaries. It directs attention to the process the Committee follows and the standards the Committee adopts in arriving at its decision.

Visit the **Complaints and Discipline** section of the College's website to learn more about the Legal Assistance Project.

**Shawna Swain**  
**Certificate of Registration number: 14837**  
**Reprimand; Suspension; Ordered to complete course; Terms, Conditions or Limitations**

At the April 22, 2015 hearing, a panel of the Discipline Committee found Shawna Swain guilty of professional misconduct for misappropriating funds from the child care centre where she worked. Swain, who has been a member of the College since June 2009, was represented by her legal counsel at the hearing.

Swain was a supervisor at the child care centre at the time the professional misconduct occurred. She was responsible for the centre's day-to-day finances. In March 2014, an audit of the centre's 2013 financial records revealed that approximately \$15,707 in child care funds were unaccounted for. After further investigation, numerous anomalies in the financial records between 2011 and 2013 were also discovered. The centre's internal investigation found Swain responsible for the unaccounted funds and the financial anomalies because she was responsible for the centre's financial records at the time.

In the Agreed Statement of Facts, Swain admitted to falsifying receipts to the amount of more than \$32,000, failing to pay child care fees owed to the centre, purchasing personal items and expensing them through the centre, failing to deposit \$1,844.65 in cash payments made by parents into the centre's bank account and reimbursing herself with \$3,138.91 in petty cash without providing receipts, among other things.

At the hearing, Swain's lawyer indicated that she has had no previous history of disciplinary action involving professional misconduct with the College and has repaid the centre more than what was misappropriated. Swain's lawyer also said that by admitting to the allegations against her, Swain took responsibility and demonstrated remorse for her conduct.

Based on the Agreed Statement of Facts, a Joint Submission as to Penalty, a plea of guilt and counsel submissions, the Committee found Swain guilty of professional misconduct. She was reprimanded, suspended for six months and ordered to take a course in Ethical and Professional Standards. If Swain completes the course within three months of her suspension, the latter three months of her suspension would be remitted. In addition, if Swain is employed as an RECE within 12 months of the order, she is required to provide the Registrar with a report from her employer stating that she has shown honesty and integrity in carrying out her responsibilities as a registered member of the College.

The Committee found Swain to have breached Ontario Regulation 223/08, section 2, subsections 8, 10, 16, 17, 18 and 22 and Standards IV: C.2 and IV: E.2 of the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

A notation regarding the panel's decision appears with the Member's status on the College's public register.

**Darlene Campbell**  
**Certificate of Registration number: 21781**  
**Reprimand; Suspension; Ordered to**  
**complete course**

At the April 22, 2015 hearing, a panel of the Discipline Committee found Darlene Campbell guilty of professional misconduct for misappropriating funds from the child care centre where she worked. Campbell, who received her Certificate of Registration in September 2009, was not in attendance at the hearing, nor did she have legal representation.

Campbell was a supervisor at the centre. She was responsible for the centre's bookkeeping at the time of the professional misconduct. In September 2014, a discrepancy was discovered in the centre's ledger. It was discovered that there was a child in the centre whose name was entered into the centre's record keeping program for attendance only, but there was no record of fees ever having been collected. When the discrepancy was brought to Campbell's attention, she denied taking any money from the centre. But a few days later she provided the Program Director with an envelope containing documents and funds belonging to the centre. Campbell indicated that she found the funds and documents at her home.

A subsequent internal review found that Campbell misappropriated funds by using payments made by some families to pay the centre fees owed by other families, falsifying tax receipts, failing to maintain accurate records, failing to deposit cash and cheque payments from families, losing and misplacing cash and cheque payments and falsifying the Centre's ledger. Campbell admitted to these actions in an Agreed Statement of Facts.

Based on the Agreed Statement of Facts, the Committee found Campbell guilty of professional misconduct by breaching Ontario Regulation 223/08, section 2, subsections 8, 10, 17, 18 and 22 and Standards IV: C.2 and IV: E.2 of the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

The Committee considered the Joint Submission as to the penalty. Campbell was given a six month suspension and ordered to take a course in Ethical and Professional Standards. If Campbell completed the course within three months of the order, the latter three months of her suspension would be remitted. As she was not present at the hearing, the Committee ordered her to appear before the panel at a later date to receive an oral reprimand.

In its decision the Committee wrote, "By issuing families false tax receipts, incorrectly applying their child care fees to other accounts and forcing some to bear the financial burden of others, the Member undermined her relationships with the families by lying and taking advantage of their trust."


The decision continued, "It is regrettable that the Member failed to show up for the hearing even though she had told the College one day earlier that she would be in attendance. The fact that she failed to attend the hearing or even provide the College with an explanation for her absence is disappointing and reflects poorly on her professionalism."

A notation regarding the panel's decision appears with the Member's status on the College's public register. ■

# News in **the Sector**

## The Best Start Resource Centre

Ontario's Maternal Newborn and Early Child Development Resource Centre provides evidence-based resources, networking opportunities, training, professional development and consultations to service providers who work in preconception health, prenatal health and early child development.

 More information about the organization and resources available can be found at [en.beststart.org](http://en.beststart.org)

## Notice of Annual Meeting

The College of Early Childhood Educators is pleased to notify members about the seventh Annual Meeting of Members.

**Date:** [January 12, 2016](#)

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.– 9:00 p.m.

**Location:** [DoubleTree by Hilton, 108 Chestnut Street Toronto ON M5G 1R3](#)

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to inform members of the activities of Council and the College. No motions are proposed nor votes taken at the Annual Meeting.

Members are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting, but it is not mandatory. The meeting will be livestreamed on the Internet for the members who are unable to attend in person. A video recording in both English and French will also be available on the College's website in winter 2016.

Stay tuned for more information on how to register to attend the meeting.

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