

# CONNEXIONS

## Continuous Professional Learning Program Gets Underway

On September 2, 2014, the College launched a new Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program and with it, a number of online resources and tools to support and guide registered early childhood educators (RECEs) in their professional practice.

The CPL program is a self-reflective and self-directed framework designed to help RECEs reflect, plan for and document their professional learning in a meaningful way. Any learning that is already taking place can be incorporated into the CPL program process.

Before the launch, the College mailed information to members. To get started, members should read their copy of *Striving for Practice Excellence*, which is also available online at [college-cee.ca/CPL](http://college-cee.ca/CPL), to learn about the program and how they can participate.

### Most Common Questions from Members

Since the launch of the program, the College has received many inquiries from enthusiastic members. Here are the most frequently asked questions and answers:

#### How and when can I start?

You will be invited to participate in the CPL program when you renew your membership. If you're a new member, the information will be sent with your Certificate of Registration.



**CPL Introductory Phase (first year):** Complete the Expectations for Practice Module online. It's available at no cost and takes about 1-1.5 hours to complete. Details on how to access the module will be provided to new and renewing members with their mailed membership card and receipt of payment.

In this module you will learn about the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECE Act) and regulations and by-laws that govern the profession. You can print out a certificate of completion at the end of the module.

**Portfolio Cycle:** Begin the first two-year Portfolio Cycle, in which you will plan for your continuous learning by using the Self-Assessment Tool, the Professional Learning Plan and the Record of Professional Learning. These tools, their corresponding tip sheets, the CPL Portfolio Handbook and other resources, are available online.

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# The President's Message



As many of you already know, the newly elected Liberal Government passed the budget in July that will support the ongoing operation and modernization of Ontario's child care system. The Liberals also introduced Bill 10 – *Child Care Modernization Act* – which carried in its first reading on July 10.

Bill 10 proposes to amend the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* and Education Act. The Bill will repeal the *Day Nurseries Act* and replace it with the *Child Care and Early Years Act*. The College will continue to update members on the progress of Bill 10.

As we near the end of our 2012-2015 strategic priorities, we are starting to plan for our next three years. We will again be asking members and stakeholders in the early years sector for their feedback in the winter of 2015.

Members in Districts 3 – South East Region, 4 – Central East Region and 8 – South West Region will receive information later this fall about the upcoming election of Council members. Nominations will open in December and members will be elected in April 2015. We hope you participate either by putting your name forward or by placing your vote.

Members may also wish to mark their calendars for January 8, 2015 for the first live web streaming presentation of the College's Annual Meeting of Members. More details on how to watch the annual meeting live will be shared with members later this fall.

**Cheers,**

Lois Mahon RECE, President

# The Registrar's Message



On September 2, the College launched the exciting Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program for members and there is a great deal of information available online, including draft tools for members to explore before their first Portfolio Cycle. This is a very exciting program and marks the first time a professional learning framework and resources have been made

accessible universally to all RECEs regardless of their location, schedules and learning needs.

Following the publication of the last issue of *Connexions* in June, the College issued its 51,000<sup>th</sup> Certificate of Registration.

Though the traditional outreach season begins in the fall each year, College staff was busy during the summer months. Over 5,500 employers across Ontario received information about the CPL program in July, along with a new poster about RECEs and the College.

In August, we mailed information about the College to libraries in Ontario. We also sent principals across Ontario a poster to display in their schools. These efforts continue the College's recent focus on sharing information with parents about RECEs and the work of the College.

In addition to our consultations around the development of new strategic priorities, College staff will be very busy over the next several months meeting face-to-face with students, RECEs, employers and other stakeholders to share information about the College and in particular, the new CPL program.

**Best wishes,**

Sue Corke, Registrar & CEO

# Bill 10 Update

The Ontario government introduced the *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014* (Bill 10) to the Ontario legislature on July 10, 2014. Bill 143, which had similar provisions to Bill 10, did not survive as a result of the spring provincial election.

The College is excited that Bill 10 would grant the regulation-making authority for a continuous professional learning program and the accreditation of programs in early childhood education.

Bill 10 passed the first reading and is expected to be debated by members of the provincial legislature in the fall. In the meantime, the College will prepare its submission to the government when they are ready to hear from various stakeholders.

The College will share information about its submission on its website and members will receive regular updates as Bill 10 makes its way through legislative proceedings. 

## 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 sector and College news along with regular features on the early childhood education profession.

### Elected Council Members

Lois Mahon RECE, President (District 1)  
Eugema Ings RECE (District 1)  
Lisa Lamarre RECE (District 2)  
Susan Quaiff RECE (District 3)  
Linda Cottes RECE (District 4)  
Roxanne Lambert 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

Madeleine L. Champagne, Ottawa  
Karen Damley, Mississauga  
Nermin Foda, Mississauga  
Rosemary Fontaine, Toronto  
Christine Forsyth, Toronto  
Bruce Minore, Thunder Bay  
Larry O'Connor, Brock  
Ann Robichaud-Gagné, Ottawa  
Nerene Virgin, Hamilton  
Ron Wideman, North Bay

### 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

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The CPL Introductory Phase and first Portfolio Cycle will span three years. After those phases, you will repeat the CPL Portfolio Cycle.

If you prefer not to wait until you renew your membership to complete the Expectations for Practice Module, you can e-mail the College at [practice@college-ece.ca](mailto:practice@college-ece.ca) to request access. All the CPL Portfolio resources, in draft versions, are available online now.

## Do I have to study or prepare for the Expectations for Practice Module?

You do not need to prepare yourself or study in advance. It is designed for all members, regardless of their familiarity with the ECE Act, regulations and by-laws. Your answers or feedback for this module will not be recorded. Once you've completed the module, you may wish to add the certificate of completion to your portfolio!

## How many learning hours or courses do I need to complete?

Once you've completed the Self-Assessment Tool and determined your learning goals, you get to decide how you're going to plan for your learning. The College recognizes that there are many ways to engage in ongoing learning, and that members know what works best for them.

## Do I have to notify the College that I have participated in the program?

Each year, when you renew your membership, the College will provide you with the opportunity to indicate the ways in which you've participated. You are not required by law to inform the College of your participation in the program at this time.

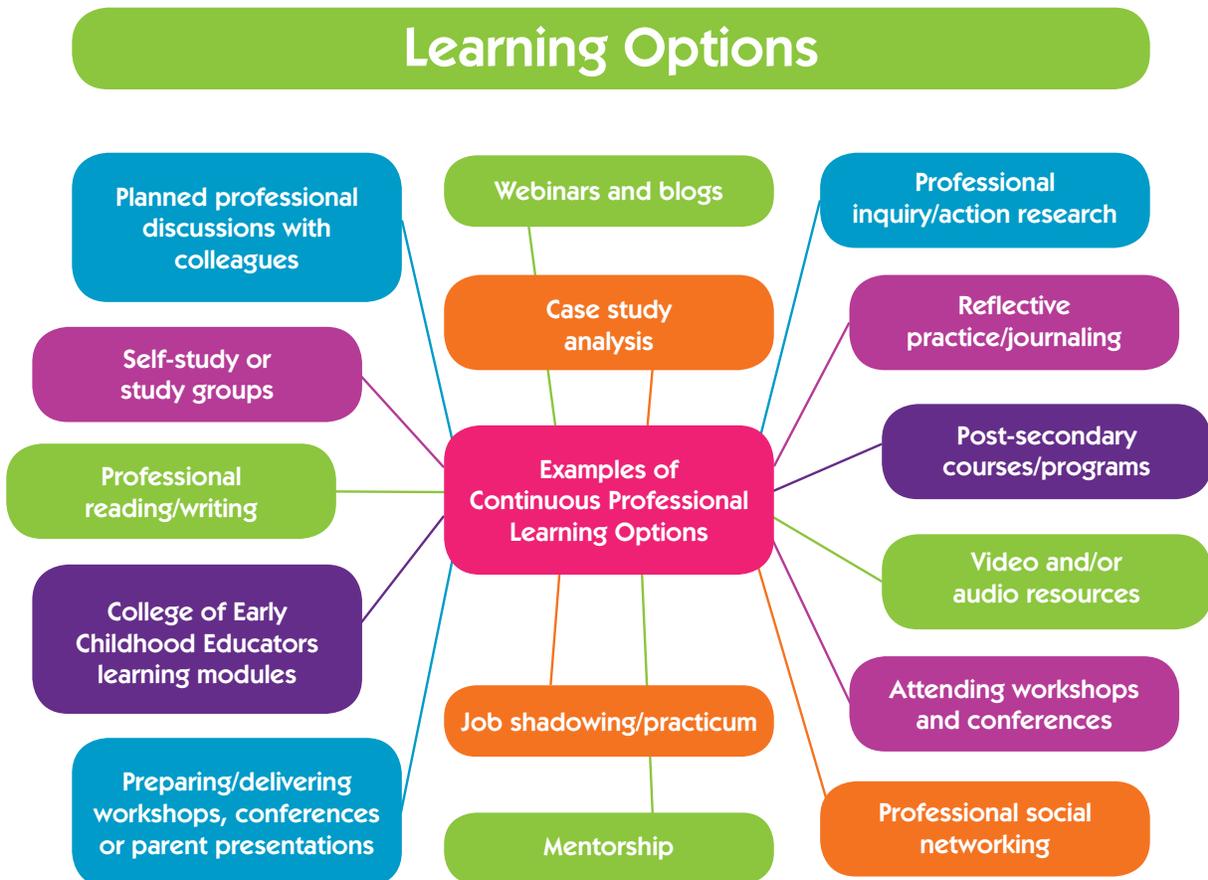
## How will this program benefit me?

This program is designed to help you fulfil your requirement as a member of the College to engage in ongoing professional learning. The Expectations for Practice Module will help you build an

understanding of the College and your ethical and professional responsibilities as an RECE. The CPL Portfolio Handbook offers a framework that helps you reflect on, plan for and record your ongoing learning.

Ongoing learning is important for early childhood educators because there are constant advancements in what we know and understand about how children develop and learn. Deepening your knowledge and skills enables you to enhance the quality of service and care, regardless of your position or the area of the profession in which you may work. ©

The College highly encourages RECEs to participate in the program to meet their ethical and professional responsibilities, as outlined in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Participation is not mandatory at this time, but the College continues to seek a regulation for the program.



# Cultivating Teams in Full-Day Kindergarten

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## *How one principal guided RECEs and teachers into classroom partnerships*

By Julia Lipman Baker

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In 2011 Pam Garbutt, principal at Pope John Paul School in Kitchener, ON, was tasked with launching the school's full-day kindergarten (FDK) program.

After learning through the experiences of schools that rolled out the program the previous year, Garbutt approached the school's registered early childhood educators (RECEs) and teachers with an innovative idea for how to establish teaching teams.

"Our teachers were generally paired with RECEs in a classroom, but we didn't formally connect them until Thanksgiving," says Garbutt. "They got to see each other's working styles, personalities – all the things that go into good relationships."

When four-and five-year-olds showed up on their first day of school, they weren't introduced to just one RECE and teacher in their classroom. Instead, they were introduced to the program's 12 educators.

During those introductory weeks, Garbutt says she witnessed RECEs providing invaluable expertise.

"In the team of a teacher and RECE, the RECE was so helpful and one of the biggest roles they have is easing transitions," says Garbutt. "They know how to calm a small child and work with parents...and not be surprised by students who are reluctant or exhibit the different behaviours that go along with transitions in young children."



*Pam Garbutt*

Once the initial transition to the program was complete, Garbutt consulted with her lead teacher and RECE to come up with the best plan for formally pairing teams of educators now that they'd had time to work with each other.

Garbutt asked the 12 RECEs and teachers to put their names into a hat with their top two choices for partners.

"Everyone understood that they could work with anyone, but I said if you could pick your own partner, who would it be?" she says. "I had that unique experience that everyone picked the same people. It works like finding a partner in real life – you know what you're looking for."

Although Garbutt moved on to become president of the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario after the FDK program's second year, she says the teams were still very much intact upon her departure.

"We had lots of informal meetings as we were developing the program and touched base every week at the start of the week for 'cheers and fears' to share what was going well, what wasn't and problem-solve together," says Garbutt. "The success we had came from lots of collaborative work at the front end. We set the tone early for trust and collaboration." 🌟

**“Everyone understood that they could work with anyone, but I said if you could pick your own partner, who would it be?”**”

# Staff Profile

## *The role of the College Investigator in handling complaints*

By Greg Coutts



### **Have you ever wondered what happens when the College receives a written complaint?**

The Complaints Committee considers and investigates all written complaints regarding the conduct or actions of members of the College. That process begins when the College Investigator, a member of staff who investigates on behalf of the Complaints Committee, gathers facts from the complainant and often from the workplace in which the complaint originated. All matters related to the complaints process are confidential and so, the College Investigator is cautious in the way she conducts her investigation.

Some investigations are conducted on the phone while others are done through a face-to-face meeting with the people involved. If there are witnesses who have first-hand knowledge of what went

on, the College Investigator will arrange to interview them and take down their statements. In the interest of fairness, the respondent (a College member) is provided with the complaint, along with all related information. The respondent is given an adequate amount of time to respond to the complaint and the opportunity to seek legal advice if she/he chooses to do so. If the College Investigator receives new documents or information after receiving the respondent's answer, she sends it to the respondent with the request to reply to it should she/he so choose.

When she has completed a thorough investigation, the College Investigator prepares an Investigation Report for the Complaints Committee. The report outlines both the complainant and respondent's versions of the story. It also includes any relevant facts and information, collected during the investigation, that substantiate their stories. The College Investigator must stay impartial and unbiased in her reporting. In addition to the Investigation Report, the College Investigator prepares a Book of Documents for the Committee that contains all the facts and information provided to the College during her investigation. The Complaints Committee examines all the information put before it prior to arriving at a decision.

### **Role of employers and supervisors in investigations**

If it is necessary, after informing the complainant, the College Investigator may ask the employer and the supervisor to provide specific information about the member and to verify certain information.

Employers and supervisors are asked for facts, not an opinion on what happened with respect to the complaint. For example, they may be asked about the member's employment status or whether the member was suspended with or without pay as a result of the incident in question. The College Investigator might also inquire as to whether there was a pattern of behaviour related to the complaint.

### **When there are multiple investigations of the same incident**

Quite often, there are other investigations into a matter occurring at the same time. The employer might be doing its own investigation or it may have informed the Children's Aid Society (CAS) or the police who, in their turn, carry out an independent investigation.

If this is the case, the College Investigator will hold back on her investigation, primarily because she does not want to question witnesses and interfere in the CAS or the criminal investigation. A second reason for holding back is so that she can include the findings from the other investigations in her report. When criminal investigations are taking place, the member will usually be requested to provide the College with an undertaking that they will not practise the profession during the time when the College investigation is on hiatus.

In situations where a matter has gone before the courts and the evidence has been submitted and tested, the finding and the decision of the trial judge could be used as evidence in the College's investigation.

## What can happen during the Complaints Committee's review

The matter before the Complaints Committee is not a hearing where witnesses are examined, cross-examined and credibility is established. Rather, it is a documentary review and is meant to be a screening process to determine which matters are more serious and should be referred to a hearing and which ones should result in other outcomes, such as advice, a reminder or a caution given by the Complaints Committee to the member. In some cases, the Committee will determine that no further action should be taken as the matter is not related to professional misconduct, incapacity or incompetence or is outside the Committee's jurisdiction.

There are occasions when the College Investigator will request direction from the Complaints Committee before she even sends the complaint to the respondent for a response. At other times, the Committee might ask her to investigate further as they feel they do not have all the information they need to make a decision.

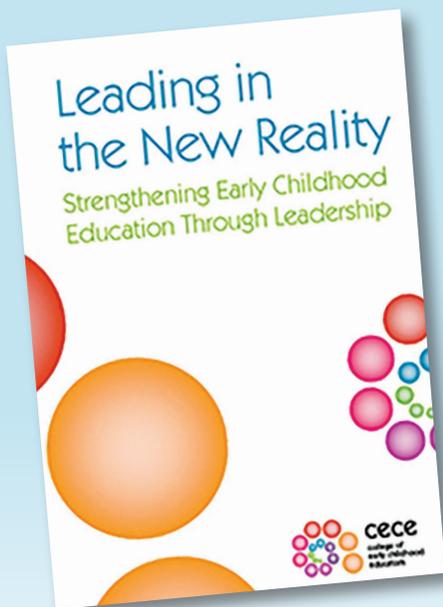
The College Investigator's role, as the eyes and ears of the Complaints Committee, is crucial in producing a well-researched and complete Investigation Report that will assist the Complaints Committee in carrying out their task. 



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*Visit the Complaints and Discipline section of the College's website to learn more about hearings, decisions, rules of procedure and available resources.*

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## Order Your DVD Today!

What are the key qualities of early childhood education leaders?

The College has produced a DVD resource, *Leading in the New Reality: Strengthening Early Childhood Education through Leadership*, for members and the public.

The DVD is available for purchase for \$20, including shipping and handling. To order, fill out the order form available online and e-mail [practice@college-ece.ca](mailto:practice@college-ece.ca) or call 1 888 961-8558, ext. 252.

# Innovations In Professional Learning

## *Aféseo and AECEO embrace the use of technology*

By Zakiyya Nazroo

The professional associations, Aféseo and AECEO, offer a variety of continuous professional learning options to early childhood educators (ECEs). Some of these opportunities facilitate professional reflection and learning through the use of technology.

### LaboTFO

Francophone ECEs now have access to a training and experimental laboratory, LaboTFO, for use in their professional development work. The lab is a partnership between the *Association francophone en éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario* (Aféseo) and *GroupMédia TFO*, creator of the multimedia platform *TFO Éducation*. It is located in Aféseo's office in Ottawa, ON. The lab offers ECEs access to two interactive and multifunctional rooms, comprising diverse electronic gadgets such as tablets, a holographic keyboard, interactive boards as well as a screen system allowing distance learning through video-conferencing.

The laboratory is described as an exploratory place where participants can familiarize themselves with advanced technological tools. Two workshops, *Bebelles technologiques* and *De l'écran à l'étang*, are available to interested parties to guide them in this exploration process and to demonstrate the benefits of technology for pedagogical and learning purposes.

"These technological tools encourage a certain form of democracy," says Martine St-Onge, executive director of the Aféseo. "People from more isolated regions, who generally have less access to resources because of the distance separating them, can now find information on early childhood education as well as participate in the training offered. Web videos are also available to those who are unable to attend face-to-face training sessions."

 | More information on the LaboTFO can be found at [afeseo.ca](http://afeseo.ca)

### AECEO's E-Portfolio Development

The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO) launched a new certification process for its members last April. This process is for registered early childhood educators (RECEs) who want to become AECEO certified for the first time.

This certification process supports reflective practice and aims to enhance the professional skills of ECEs. One component of the certification involves creating an E-Portfolio. RECEs can also use E-Portfolios to provide information about their professional background, values and beliefs, professional practice and reflection about their work to a wider audience.

Such portfolios are "a vehicle for reflective practice, for use in a job application or interview processes, or for entry into academic programs," says Sue Parker, office manager for the AECEO. "Having an online presence, including a personal brand, is becoming more and more recommended as a career development and job search tool. For RECEs, an E-Portfolio can be an important aspect of their online brand."

The use of technology in these professional learning opportunities offered by Aféseo and AECEO also allow participants to connect with one another through a blog or online forum. These were set up as ways to encourage collaboration and provide ECEs with the opportunity to discuss and exchange views on their own professional experiences. 

 | More information on the certification process can be found at [aeceo.ca](http://aeceo.ca)



Monique Lanthier, a trainer for Aféseo's workshop *De l'écran à l'étang*, familiarizes herself with the technology used in the workshop.

# Election 2015

In April 2015, the College will hold its fifth election of Council members. Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) will be elected to Council in three of eight electoral districts.

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

The elections scheduled for April 2015 are as follows:

Electoral District	Number of Council members to be elected
3 - South East Region	1
4 - Central East Region	2
8 - South West Region	2

## Get involved – Make a difference. Participate!

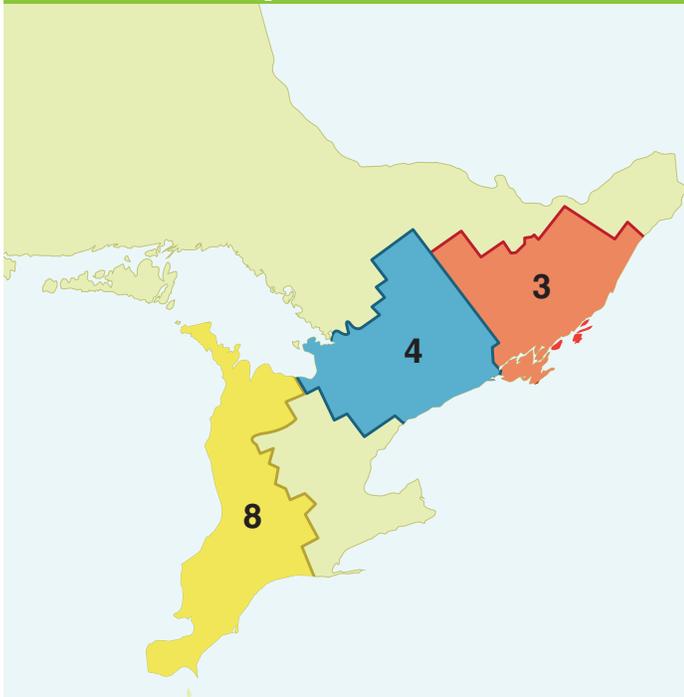
- Will you be a member in good standing as of December 2014?
- Are you a member in one of these electoral districts?
- Do you want to participate on the College's Council as a member of your profession?

If you have answered "yes" to all of these questions, you may be eligible to stand for election.

Nomination information will be sent to current members of the College in the noted electoral districts in December 2014. Stay tuned for more information or contact the College at [election@college-ece.ca](mailto:election@college-ece.ca).

 Visit [college-ece.ca/election](http://college-ece.ca/election) for more information

## District Map



*\*This map is a graphic representation of the districts in Ontario scheduled for elections in 2015. The map is not to scale.*

### 3 South East Region

Counties of Hastings and Lanark, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and Lennox and Addington, the County of Prince Edward, the County of Frontenac and the City of Kingston

### 4 Central East Region

Counties of Haliburton, Peterborough, Northumberland and Simcoe, The Regional Municipalities of Durham and York and City of Kawartha Lakes

### 8 South West Region

Counties of Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth, Middlesex, Oxford, Elgin, Lambton and Essex and Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Stratford

# The Road Ahead

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## *Looking toward a new set of strategic priorities*

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Since June 2012, the Council of the College has been focused on a set of five strategic priorities that span three fiscal years. June 2015 will mark the end of that period and the Council is beginning to plan for a review and consideration of new priorities.

When it began to formulate the current set of strategic priorities, the College's Council recognized that the priorities which had governed the formative years of the College from 2009-2012 had been successfully completed: over 38,000 Certificates of Registration were issued, the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* was published and all of the College's core governance structures and processes were in place.

Guided by our strategic priorities since 2012, the College has now issued over 51,000 Certificates of Registration and launched the Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program informed by a highly successful Leadership Pilot project.

Over the next six to eight months the College will develop strategic priorities for 2015-2018 using a similar consultative approach to the one taken in 2011-2012.

### January to March 2015

College staff and Council members will hold a series of roundtable discussions with a wide representation of members, stakeholders and government.

### March 2015

The College will engage members in a survey to receive their input.

### April 2015

College staff will report to Council on the feedback obtained from the survey and roundtables. Council will undertake a facilitated session to deliberate on the next set of strategic priorities.

### June 2015

Council will formally approve its strategic priorities for 2015-2018.

Updates throughout this process will be shared in *Connexions*, through e-blasts and on the College's website. 

## Strategic Priorities 2012-2015

### Strategic Priority One

Implement a comprehensive post secondary pre-service quality assurance mechanism.

### Strategic Priority Two

Implement a continuous professional learning (CPL) requirement that both supports member competency and encourages a culture of life-long learning.

### Strategic Priority Three

Implement a member engagement strategy which will lead towards a shared professional responsibility for practice excellence.

### Strategic Priority Four

Implement an information strategy to strengthen public knowledge and understanding of how the College protects the public interest.

### Strategic Priority Five

Strengthen and build relationships to enhance the reputation of the College.

# Conversation with an RECE

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.

Magic Castle is a free child care service for children aged 0 to 12 years who have family undergoing cancer treatment at the Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, ON. In this edition we speak with Magic Castle's RECE, Alketa Kumbaro, about her work in a health care-based setting.



*Alketa Kumbaro RECE  
Toronto, ON*

**Q: How do you form a relationship with a child you don't see on a regular basis in a potentially stressful situation?**

**A:** I try to gather key information from the families before the child comes in for a visit. It is important to have a sense of their likes and dislikes. I also ask the families if there are any special needs or behavioural challenges that I should be aware of. After each visit I write observation notes on each child. The observations are used to help identify the likes, interests and needs of the children. By identifying their interests and needs I can ensure that I plan for each child's specific needs if they return to the program.

**Q: How do you plan your daily programming?**

**A:** We have a play-based program that includes following the child's lead. When planning for my weekly program, I base it on the interest and ages of the children that I know will be attending the program. Sometimes you may get children that drop in and then I modify my program based on the ages and

stages of the child. During school breaks and the summer time, Magic Castle sees many school-aged children. During this time we create activities that they are interested in.

**Q: What can RECEs do to support children whose families may be focused on their health issues?**

**A:** We, as RECEs, feel obligated to get as much knowledge as possible in order to support the families and their children. Right now, I'm in a learning session on how to support families when illness and death occurs. Getting involved in learning sessions, workshops and connecting with other similar services helps me gain the knowledge to fulfill that obligation to support the families and children in need during these hard times. 🌐

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*Nominate an RECE you'd like us to have a conversation with by sending an e-mail to **communications@college-ece.ca** or call **1 888 961-8558, ext. 307.***

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# Practice Matters



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

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



Previous columns of **Practice Matters** can be found on the Professional Practice section of the College's website, [college-ece.ca](http://college-ece.ca)

**Q:** My employer has recently instituted a new policy that prohibits employees from smoking within the immediate vicinity of the child care centre and strongly discourages any smoking during breaks and lunches. Am I required by the College to adhere to this policy?

**A:** According to Standard IV: A.2, registered early childhood educators are required to know, understand and abide by all policies and procedures relevant to their professional practice. This includes employer policies. Only in instances where there is a conflict between the College's ethical or professional standards and the policies or procedures of a member's workplace, would the member have an obligation to adhere to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* and not the employer policy.

In this case, the employer's policy complements Standard III: Safe, Healthy and Supportive Learning Environments. Standard III requires that members maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for children and that they promote a healthy lifestyle, including but not limited to nutrition and physical activity. As a result, it appears that this policy reflects the research which emphasizes the importance of protecting children from the potentially harmful health effects of second-and third-hand smoke. 

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## Put it into Practice!

Review Standard III: Safe, Healthy and Supportive Learning Environments, and reflect upon your own practice as an RECE. Think about ways in which you promote a healthy lifestyle to the children under your professional supervision. Would you consider yourself to be a good role model?

Brainstorm ways to incorporate health, nutrition and/or physical activity into your curriculum. If this is an area of strength in your practice, consider taking a leadership role and encouraging your colleagues to consider ways to maintain and improve the health and safety of the learning environment.

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# Investigating Complaints

The College 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.



*Visit the Complaints and Discipline section of the College's website to learn more about hearings, decisions, rules of procedure and available resources.*

## Case 1

### Complaint

Member permitted the use of an unsafe toy at the centre which caused harm to a child.

### Committee's Decision

No further action to be taken.

### Summary

The College received a complaint concerning the professional conduct of a member from the parents of a child at the centre. The parents indicated that:

- Their child had been injured at the centre while playing with an unsafe toy supplied by the Member.
- The Member provided false and inaccurate information when first communicating the extent of their child's injuries to them.

The Member denied all allegations and explained:

- That she had participated in a consumer product safety workshop, both before and after the incident, and in her professional opinion the toy did not pose a risk.
- The toy was present in the centre during regular inspections by the health unit and yearly licensing visits by the Ministry of Education and its safety was never called into question.

- She followed the centre's protocol when notifying the parents of the incident.
- She did not provide false information about the child's injury; rather, she provided the parents with the information she had at that time.

After reviewing the information before it, the Complaints Committee determined that the Member's actions did not constitute professional misconduct. The Committee recognized that:

- The toy was not introduced to the centre maliciously, but "to support the new curriculum and to teach the children about everyday objects."
- The Member underwent professional training in product safety and was qualified to determine whether or not the toy was an appropriate addition to the centre.

Both the Committee and the parents were upset that the child suffered such an injury at the centre. Nevertheless, the Committee is of the view that the Member took the appropriate precautions before introducing a new toy to the centre and that she provided the child's parents with information about the situation in accordance with the centre's protocol.

Continued on Page 14

# Case 2

## Complaint

Making a series of prank orders targeting both the centre and centre staff.

## Committee's Decision

Written reminder.

## Summary

The College received two separate complaints from the director of a centre concerning the professional conduct of two employees. The director alleged:

- The employees had, without authorization, used her name and phone number to order food and a male entertainer to be sent to the centre. The director said she was contacted by the owner of a male entertainment company and she immediately cancelled the order.
- Later that day, several food orders were delivered to the centre.
- The director also alleged that the employees' prank ordered food to be sent to the home of one of the centre's supervisors as well.

The Members were individually notified of the complaints filed against them and they provided responses to the allegations.

- Member A did not deny the allegations against her. However she indicated that while she had knowledge of food orders being placed to the home of the supervisor, she was not the one who placed the orders.
- Member B admitted she was involved in placing the food orders to the centre, but denied any involvement in ordering food to the supervisor's home and the order for a male entertainer.

After reviewing the information before it, the Complaints Committee concluded that the Members' behaviour was unbecoming of registered early childhood educators and reminded them of the College's ethical and professional standards.

- The Members acted contrary to Standard IV: E.II the Committee found that the Members failed to act as role models, indicating "the absence of direct child involvement does not excuse an RECE from adhering to this professional standard."
- By involving their colleagues in their prank and failing to respect their director's and supervisor's privacy, the Members "demonstrated a lack of good judgement and a failure to establish professional and honest relationships with their colleagues," a direct violation of Standard IV: C.I and Standard IV: C.II.
- The Members also failed to uphold Standard V: B. By targeting colleagues as well as their families, the Members demonstrated a total disregard for their professional boundaries.

# Case 3

## Complaint

Making disparaging comments about a colleague to other educators and to parents.

## Committee's Decision

Written caution.

## Summary

The College received a complaint from a colleague of a Member who alleged that she was being bullied and disparaged by the Member when she returned from an injury-related leave of absence. The colleague alleged:

- The Member made disparaging comments about her professional competencies to parents and other educators.
- The Member criticized her colleague's work performance and made insensitive remarks about her personal life.
- The complainant found the Member's comments to be slanderous, intentionally hurtful and put her professional reputation in jeopardy.

The Member denied the allegations and explained:

- Her colleague's absence caused her to be burdened with an unreasonable workload and she discussed this with her colleague in a professional manner.
- The Member said her discussions with parents and other educators were about the general work environment, not about anyone specifically and that her colleague misconstrued the situation.

After considering the facts of the case, including witness testimony, the Complaints Committee determined that the Member behaved in a manner unbecoming of a member of the profession.

- Although the Member denied the allegations against her, witness interviews supported the claims made against the Member, indicating the Member did in fact make inappropriate and unprofessional comments to and about her colleague.

As stipulated in Standard IV: C. in the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, RECEs are expected to build a climate of trust, honesty and respect in the workplace.

The Committee issued a written caution to the Member, advising her to change her behavior and attitude towards her colleagues and recommended that she review the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. 

# In the Public Interest



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

## Laura Yates Certificate of Registration Number: 25045 Reprimanded; Ordered to complete a course

A Discipline Committee panel found Laura Yates guilty of professional misconduct for failing to work collaboratively with staff, making disparaging comments to parents about the Director of the centre where she worked and conspiring to have the Centre's Director removed from the Centre. Yates has been a member of the College since September 7, 2012.

At the August 14, 2014 hearing, Yates was in attendance via videoconference and was represented by legal counsel.

Yates had been working for one year at the Centre where the professional misconduct took place; she held the position of Assistant Director. When the Centre's Director took a leave of absence, Yates was appointed Acting Director and was to resume her duties as the Assistant Director upon the Director's return.

Two weeks prior to the Director's return to the Centre, Yates contacted several parents and made disparaging comments about the Director, criticized the management of the Centre and indicated that several staff would be

quitting their jobs, which would cause the Centre to close. Yates also encouraged several staff at the Centre to quit their jobs and to contact the Ministry of Education and the Children's Aid Society with concerns about the Director and the Centre. Yates threatened some staff that if they did not comply with her requests, there would be negative consequences, including having the College revoke their RECE licenses.

Based on the Agreed Statement of Facts, a Joint Submission as to Penalty, a plea of guilt and counsel submissions, the panel found Yates guilty of professional misconduct. She was directed to appear before the panel for a reprimand and was ordered to complete a course, at her own expense, in "Ethics and Professional Standards." The course must be completed before she can return to practise as an RECE.

Both College counsel and Yates' counsel made submissions on the issue of whether to publish Yates' name on the College's website and in the College's newsletter, *Connexions*. College counsel argued that publication of name upholds the principles of transparency and fairness expected by the public, acts as a specific deterrent to the Member and a general deterrent for the profession. The Member's counsel argued that Yates' professional misconduct is less severe than other discipline matters and that it more closely resembles the one discipline matter where the Member's name was not published.

Upon considering both submissions, the panel determined that publication of name was necessary to uphold the overarching principles of transparency and accountability to the public. The panel wrote in its decision, "It is understood by the Committee that findings of professional misconduct may cause the Member to experience varying degrees of harm or distress. However, the Committee has the duty to protect the public interest, which will not be compromised in order to alleviate the discontent of a Member who purposefully disregarded the standards of the profession."

The panel found Yates to have breached Ontario Regulation 223/08, section 2, subsections 2(8), 2(10) and Standards IV: C.1, IV: C.2 and IV: E.2 of the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

"The Member abused her position of authority and manipulated her colleagues in order to achieve a self-serving objective," the panel wrote. "The Member did not support her colleagues, but rather used intimidation to coerce them into compromising their values, creating a climate of distrust, dishonesty and disrespect."

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

# NEWS *in the* SECTOR

## Annual Meeting

The College's sixth Annual Meeting of Members will take place on January 8, 2015 in Toronto, ON. Members are invited to attend the meeting. However, it is not mandatory and no motions will be put forward and no votes will be cast. The College is working on plans to livestream the meeting.

 Stay tuned to [college-ece.ca](http://college-ece.ca) for more information.

## Full-day kindergarten in place across Ontario

In September, Ontario finished putting in place full-day kindergarten (FDK) for 265,000 four- and five-year-olds in approximately 3,600 schools across the province. Since FDK was introduced in 2010, the Ontario government says approximately 10,000 early childhood educator positions have been created.

## Important Dates

- December 12, 2014** . . . 2015 Election nominations open
- December 2014** . . . . . 2013-2014 Annual Report released
- January 8, 2015** . . . . . Annual Meeting of Members
- January 30, 2015** . . . . . 2015 Election nominations close
- February 2015** . . . . . Winter issue of *Connexions*
- March 20, 2015** . . . . . 2015 Election voting opens
- April 8, 2015** . . . . . Aféseo Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day
- April 29, 2015** . . . . . 2015 Election voting closes
- May 2015** . . . . . Election 2015 results
- June 2015** . . . . . Spring/Summer issue of *Connexions*
- June 2015** . . . . . New College Council forms

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