



**cece**  
college of  
early childhood  
educators

# CONNEXIONS

VOL. 4: ISSUE 2 | WINTER '13

## Continuous Professional Learning Program – Development Continues!



**Continuous  
Professional  
Learning**

The College is advancing its work to develop a Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program that will make ongoing education an important part of being a registered early childhood educator (RECE). The first phase of consultation for the program development is complete! The College was pleased to receive valuable input from our members, partners and stakeholders from September to December 2012.

An online questionnaire was available to members of the College between October 29 and November 19, 2012. Almost 3,400 College members provided responses, which has given the College insights in a number of areas, including what type of professional learning our members are engaged in, how members are keeping track of their learning and who is providing professional learning opportunities to RECEs.

Of the RECEs who completed the questionnaire, most indicated that they have participated in continuous professional learning in the past year. Approximately 70 per cent of respondents said they had participated in 11 or more hours of professional learning in the past 12 months. Respondents also expressed an interest in participating in online learning, with more than 90 per cent of respondents indicating an interest in future online learning opportunities.

The College conducted 15 focus groups across the province during this consultation phase. RECEs and sector

Continued on page 3...

### You Can Still Get Involved in Developing the Program!

Members of the College will have another opportunity to be actively involved in developing a CPL program that meets the needs of all RECEs in the many roles and practice settings found in the early learning and care sector.

The College will be conducting a roundtable session in each region so stay tuned as we may be in your neighbourhood!

Members are also encouraged to contribute to the next phase of development by completing an online questionnaire about a sample program and tools, which will be available in the spring.

*“This is a great opportunity for members to actively get involved with the College. You can help develop the CPL program and make sure it is relevant and meaningful to you and your practice. The development and implementation of a CPL program will also help maintain public confidence in the profession and help raise the status of members of the College and the early childhood education profession in general.” ~Roxanne Lambert RECE, Standards of Practice Committee Chair*

### In This Issue...

- |  |                                      |                                    |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>2</b> Messages from the President & Registrar | <b>8</b> Prime Minister’s Awards     | <b>12</b> Investigating Complaints |
| <b>4</b> Election 2013                           | <b>10</b> Practice Matters           | <b>13</b> Protecting the Public    |
| <b>6</b> Professional Boundaries & Behaviours    | <b>11</b> Conversations with an RECE | <b>15</b> News in the Sector       |
|  |                                      | <b>16</b> Annual Meeting           |

## President's Message



The fourth Annual Meeting of Members in January was a success and I hope you will take a few minutes to watch the video recording of the meeting on our website. I encourage you to contact us with any questions you may have, and I know you will find this year's special presentation on professional boundaries valuable to your practice.

At our January meeting, Council adopted a Code of Conduct that will govern the conduct of all elected and appointed members of Council. Governance excellence was identified as part of Council's strategic priority to strengthen and build partnerships to enhance the reputation of the College. The Code is one tool that will guide us in this work.

Consultations continue on the development of a Continuous Professional Learning program for members. We thank all

those who provided their knowledge and insight through the online survey and focus groups around Ontario in the fall. This spring, we will undertake a second phase of consultation to seek feedback from more of our members, partners and stakeholders as we work toward an implementation plan for the program. Updates on the CPL program are provided to members in each issue of this newsletter, and on the College's website. If you have questions, you can call the College or send your questions to [practice@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:practice@collegeofece.on.ca).

Many of you received a Notice of Election in the mail before the holidays and nominations are now closed for members who wish to stand for election. I wish all those running in the election good luck and encourage RECEs in those districts with elections to participate in the governance process by casting their vote.

*Cheers,*



Lois Mahon, RECE, President

## Registrar's Message



The College continues to move forward with the work of Council's strategic priorities, including the development of a three-year fiscal plan that outlines the projected growth in both revenues and expenditures to 2016.

With Council's support, the College will be making a significant investment in our Information Technology (IT) infrastructure that will allow us to work more efficiently, and better serve members through more online services. Members will receive regular updates as we move to develop an online members' area, which will ultimately provide for renewal of membership and payment by credit card online.

In the spring of 2012, we implemented a Registration and Member Services Survey: Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practice and Early Career Transition. Information was collected from approximately 2,500 Early Childhood Education diploma and degree holders, who graduated from approved Early Childhood Education programs in Ontario in 2011. The information shared by these recently

registered members of the College provided a valuable baseline of information that may be used to assist the College and other stakeholders develop new policies and practices that will benefit Ontario's young children, their families and Ontario society.

More information is available in this newsletter about the College's exciting Leadership Pilot program, which will kick off in September 2013 with a Leadership Symposium in Toronto, ON. Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) will have the opportunity to apply for the small pilot this spring, and the lessons we learned will inform the development of a Continuous Professional Learning Program (CPL) for all members.

If you have questions about the Leadership Pilot, please call the College or e-mail [leadership@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:leadership@collegeofece.on.ca).

*Sincerely,*



Sue Corke, Registrar & CEO

stakeholders were invited to participate in these focus groups. Some of the themes that emerged from these group discussions included:

- the importance of transferring new learning into the practice setting
- the College should provide clear guidelines and supporting tools to assist members in self-assessment and planning their learning goals
- to respect that in the profession there are differences in learning styles, career stages and career goals
- the recognition that there are barriers to accessing professional learning opportunities for some RECES, which may include cost, time constraints and location of available training

### Update on the College's Leadership Pilot Project

As part of its development of the CPL program, the College is designing a voluntary Leadership Pilot project that focuses on building leadership capacity in the early childhood education profession.

Participants in the Leadership Pilot will complete a minimum of 80 hours of professional learning in areas related to leadership in the early childhood education sector. Learning activities throughout the project will be directly linked to enhancing leadership capacity specific to the professional expectations outlined in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Participants will have the opportunity to identify their own strengths and

interests, and a portion of learning hours will be devoted to self-directed learning opportunities.

A key component of the Leadership Pilot will be mentorship. The College will be seeking six experienced RECES who will be supportive mentors to the Leadership Pilot participants throughout the pilot project.

Visit the Continuous Professional Learning page on the website, [www.collegeofece.on.ca](http://www.collegeofece.on.ca) for more information, including: eligibility requirements, program structure, curriculum and important dates. Applications to take part in the Leadership Pilot as a participant or as a mentor to the pilot participants will be available on the website from March 1 to April 30, 2013.

## 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-O'Gorman RECE, District 2  
Susan Quaiff RECE, District 3  
Linda Cottés 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 Council Members

Madeleine L. Champagne, Ottawa  
Carol Crill Russell, Maynooth  
Rosemary Fontaine, Toronto  
Christine Forsyth, Toronto  
Bruce Minore, Thunder Bay  
Larry O'Connor, Brock  
Ann Robichaud-Gagné, Ottawa  
Rosemary Sadlier, Toronto  
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

The College of Early Childhood Educators holds the copyright to *Connexions* but encourages digital or hard copy reproduction of this publication in its PDF format in whole or

# CONNEXIONS

VOL. 4: ISSUE 2 | WINTER '13

in part for educational purposes or non-profit use, providing full acknowledgement is given.

Copying in any other circumstances, including but not limited to any commercial use, re-use in commercial publications, or for translation or adaptation, is not permitted without prior written permission from the College.

To request permission to reprint or republish material from this publication, or if you are unclear of the copyright holder, please contact:  
[communications@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:communications@collegeofece.on.ca)

© 2013 College of Early Childhood Educators

# Elections 2013

On April 29, 2013, the College of Early Childhood Educators will hold its third election to elect members of the College to its governing body, the Council of the College.

The Council is composed of 14 registered early childhood educators (RECEs) who are members of the College and elected by fellow members of the College, and 10 members of the public who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

## Nominations Closed

The 2013 elections will take place in five of the College's eight electoral districts. Members of the College received a Notice of Election in December 2012 and nomination forms were available on the College website from December 14, 2012 through to the nomination deadline, February 1, 2013.

## Eligibility to Vote

Individuals must be members of the College and in good standing as of February 28, 2013 in order to be entitled to vote for candidates in the same electoral district as themselves.

In the case of a member who is practising the profession in Ontario, the member's electoral district is the electoral district in which the member principally practised at least 60 days before the election. In the case of a member who is not practising the profession or who is not practising the profession in Ontario, the member's electoral district is the electoral district in which the member had principally resided at least 60 days before the election. The College's eight electoral districts are described on the College's website.

## Voting Information

In **March 2013**, members eligible to vote who have provided the College with a valid e-mail address will be sent a notice by e-mail of how to obtain access, by electronic means, to a ballot, a list of candidates, an explanation of the voting

procedures and candidates' biographies and statements for their electoral district.

Members eligible to vote who have not provided the College with an e-mail address will be mailed a package in March 2013 that contains a ballot, a list of candidates, an explanation of the voting procedures and candidates' biographies and statements for their electoral district.

## Casting Your Vote

In some electoral districts, there is more than one College member to be elected to Council. For example, in a heavily populated geographical district such as Electoral District 5 – Toronto Region, there are three College members to be elected from that electoral district, while in Electoral District 3 – South East Region, there is one College member to be elected from that district.

The number of votes that a member may cast will depend on the number of College members to be elected to Council from the electoral district in which the member is eligible to vote. The explanation of the voting procedures for each electoral district will provide further details.

## April 29, 2013: Election Day

Ballots must be received by the College or submitted electronically in accordance with the voting procedures by no later than 5 p.m. ET on Monday, April 29, 2013. Results of the College's elections will be posted on the website when they become official.

## A New Council

The elected Council members will take office at the first regular meeting of the College's Council after the election, which is currently scheduled for June 2013.

## Other Ways to Get Involved

Members of the College who are not elected members of Council have an opportunity to apply to serve on a committee of the College. These committees include the Complaints, Discipline, Fitness to Practise, Registration Appeals, Registration, and Standards of Practice Committees.

Most committees usually meet at least four to six times a year, and committee members are paid an honorarium per day. Reasonable travel, accommodation and meal expenses are reimbursed.

At the first regular meeting after the election, non-Council members will be appointed by Council to serve on committees. As the composition of the committees is complex, it is expected that only a small number of non-Council members will be appointed each year.

All members of the College will receive more information

soon on eligibility requirements to serve on College committees and how to apply.

## Future Elections

Future elections will be staggered so that Council members are not elected in all eight electoral districts at one time. For a schedule of the present and next elections in each of the College's electoral districts, please visit the College's website.



| Electoral District         | # of Members of the College to be elected | 2013 Candidates   |  |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| 3. South East Region       | 1   | Marlene Feenstra, RECE  | Susan Quaiff, RECE   |
| 4. Central East Region     | 2   | Wilhelmine Babua, RECE<br>Rosario Dizon, RECE<br>Roxanne Lambert, RECE  | Linda Cottes, RECE<br>Kathleen Gradwell, RECE<br>Shelley McLaughlin, RECE  |
| 5. Toronto Region          | 3   | Fareeha Aslam, RECE<br>Patricia Doyle, RECE<br>Ann Fraser, RECE<br>Valerie Sterling, RECE<br>Richard (Dick) Winters, RECE | Katherine Begley, RECE<br>Sayonara Estrela, RECE<br>Paul Jackson, RECE<br>Joanne Tuck, RECE<br>Heather Yeo, RECE |
| 7. Hamilton/Niagara Region | 1   | Susan (Darlene) Edgar, RECE   | Barb Vanry, RECE   |
| 8. South West Region       | 2   | Barbara Brown, RECE<br>Nicola Findlay, RECE<br>Janice McGuire, RECE   | Vera Niculena (Nici) Cole, RECE<br>Karen Kennedy, RECE   |

# A Fine Line: Navigating the Professional World

By Jann Lee

## From Occupation to Profession



Claudia Newman

Early childhood education achieved professional status in Ontario with the passing of the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, which created the College of Early Childhood Educators. The Act and the College confirm that only individuals with a specialized set of knowledge and skills in child development can practise the profession of

early childhood education in this province.

Claudia Newman, a trainer and consultant in professional ethics and boundaries, says it is important for registered early childhood educators (RECEs) to recognize that as members of a professional self-regulatory body, they are now considered professionals in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, RECEs must understand that society regards professionals as individuals whose work comes with a high degree of power and responsibility. “It’s recognition that your work can do good, but also cause harm,” she points out.

## Being a Professional

What exactly does the identity of professional mean for RECEs? As professionals, how should RECEs carry themselves in the workplace? Unequivocally, being a professional means knowing the rules that govern your profession and applying those rules in your every day practice.

Newman says that professionals understand first and foremost that they serve the public and meet a public

need. “A professional is in a position of trust. Being a professional means that you put the needs of your clients first, that is the children and families with whom you work,” she explains.

Professionals are also expected to carry a high degree of self-awareness - they know their strengths and weaknesses and the rules that apply to the work they do. “When in doubt, professionals have the courage to ask for help or assistance,” says Newman. “They know their boundaries and put a plan in place to rectify any mistakes and learn from them.”

## Recognizing Professional Challenges

In the workplace, challenges are inevitable. In particular, issues arise when professionals struggle to clarify the boundary between professional and personal behaviour. Newman says this struggle happens when professionals inadvertently allow their personal bias to influence their behaviour in the workplace or when their interpretation of the rules causes conflict and issues.

A common example in today’s workplace involves high staff turnover and the effect it can have on professionals in certain sectors. In early learning, for example, new staff require training and time to get to know programming routines and the unique needs of children and families. During the transition, existing staff must balance extra demands and also maintain high professional standards.

One challenge that can quickly arise in a situation where someone is stretched thin is less time in their busy day for observation and documentation. “While it may be seen as a workload or time management issue it is fundamentally an ethical one, for observation and documentation is a critical component of the work that you do,” Newman says. Even though the individual

wants to maintain high professional standards, they simply don't have time for documenting. Is their professional behaviour compromised?

Newman says that while documentation can be a tedious task, it serves an important purpose that aligns with an ethical and professional principle: continuity of care. Documenting is especially important for professionals who are providing early learning and care to children and critical information to families. Thus, the simple act of skipping documentation can have damaging consequences.

## Facing Challenges

While professionals have many challenges to face in the workplace, they also have tools and resources to meet those challenges. Newman has two tips for those who want to be proactive in maintaining professional behaviour.

The first is to recognize when you need help, and to have the courage to go seek it. Supervisors and managers can offer a lot of guidance with their years of experience in the sector and professionals can learn and grow through enhancing their skill sets and seeking out continuous professional learning opportunities.

Newman's second suggestion is to be aware that professionals can step over the line between personal and professional both intentionally, and inadvertently. Children and families can also push professional boundaries. The responsibility professionals have is to know what is and is not appropriate, and to think back to the guiding principle of protecting the public interest.

Professionals also need to clarify the expectations of two key players: the organizations they work for and the regulatory body they belong to. When in doubt, they need to clarify the rules and procedures they must abide by as members of their profession.

Do you have a professional practice question?  
E-mail the College at [practice@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:practice@collegeofece.on.ca).

Check out the newsletter's regular feature, Practice Matters, for answers to common professional practice questions.

# Prime Minister Honours Registered Early Childhood Educators

## By Agatha Wong

Four registered early childhood educators (RECEs) were honoured in the fall when they received the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

During the ceremony in Ottawa, ON, Prime Minister Stephen Harper spoke about the contributions that educators bring to Canadian families, stating that they "help lay the foundation" for children to "interpret and navigate the world."

Indeed, while there is a tendency to view RECEs as individuals who protect children from external danger, it is important to remember that RECEs also expose children to the outside world, teaching them how to interact with larger society and helping them connect with their communities.

Certificate of Achievement recipient Charlene Moss, RECE, is a prime example. During her summer program, Moss helps the children at Arbour Glen Day Nursery in London, ON, learn about the world around them through local field trips. To date, they have visited museums, markets, farms and conservation areas and have even taken a city tour on a double-decker bus. To encourage the children to give back to their community, Moss has them save Canadian Tire money for the *Toys for Tots* program and arranges monthly visits to a local nursing home.

Community involvement is also a vital part of the programming at Acorn Early Learning Centre in Ottawa, ON, thanks to Joanne Saunders, RECE. The Certificate of Achievement recipient is keen to teach the children in her care that they can make a difference on a local and global level. Saunders and her students have organized a number of successful fundraisers, collecting over \$3,200 for the Red Cross in Haiti and \$915 for the Ottawa Mission's Christmas dinners. When Saunders and her students came across a sick turtle in a local pond, they named her Ella, brought her to a turtle-care organization and wrote a book called *Saving Ella*.

The proceeds from the book then went towards Ella's rehabilitation.

Connecting with the natural world seems to be an effective way for children to grow and learn because Patricia Barber, RECE and a Certificate of Achievement recipient, also encourages the children at Ekwaamjigenang Children's Centre in Hagersville, ON, to explore nature in their everyday activities. Barber has created an outdoor classroom equipped with a garden, flowerbeds, birdfeeders and sweetgrass circles. She has the children plant, grow and harvest their own vegetables and allows them to take "bean breaks" to eat their beans.

Beyond her dedication to child development, Barber is also actively involved in the professional growth of other early childhood educators. She helped reorganize the Indigenous Supervisor's Network, which was renamed South West Region Progressive Early Learning Aboriginal Centres of Excellence Network. The PEACE Network holds regular meetings and an annual conference for early childhood educators.

Certificate of Excellence recipient Lisa Lamarre, RECE, also recognizes the importance of supporting fellow early childhood educators. An elected member of the College of Early Childhood Educators' governing Council, Lamarre chairs the Election Committee and sits on the Registration Committee.

On a day-to-day basis, Lamarre uses her early learning expertise to run a demonstration program at Algonquin College Early Learning Centre in Ottawa, ON, where post secondary students get hands-on experience in the field. Lamarre ensures that the children's growth is mapped using the early learning framework (ELECT) and supports educators by giving them time to document each child's progress.

Lisa Lamarre, RECE, receives the Certificate of Excellence Award from Prime Minister Stephen Harper at the awards ceremony in Ottawa, ON.



Office of the  
Prime Minister  
  
Cabinet du  
Premier ministre

Every year, the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education recognize outstanding early childhood educators whose dedication and skill have had a positive impact on the children in their care. Nominations are made by parents, colleagues, supervisors and any other community members who have direct knowledge of an educator's contribution.

A selection committee made up of early childhood education practitioners and stakeholders from across the country then chooses award recipients, presenting Certificates of Excellence to the 10 top-ranked nominees and Certificates of Achievement to the next 15 top-ranked

nominees. Winners are selected based on their innovative approaches, efforts to engage family and community, ability to support development and overall commitment to children.

As 2012 recipients, Moss, Saunders, Barber and Lamarre received financial awards, which they can use towards professional development, equipment, resource materials or other tools to improve developmental programming and children's experiences.

Please join the College of Early Childhood Educators in congratulating these four members on their outstanding achievement.

For more information about the program, please visit the Prime Minister's Awards website at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/pmaece-ppmepe.nsf/eng/home>.

# Practice Matters



**Practice Matters** features questions regarding the College and the early childhood education profession. 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@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:practice@collegeofece.on.ca) for more information.

**Q: The *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECE Act) and its related regulations and by-laws enable the College to govern the profession of early childhood education, and the *Day Nurseries Act, 1990* (DNA) sets out specific provincial standards that must be met by licensed child care settings. As an RECE, what other legislation or policies do I need to know in order to practise according to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*?**

**Standard IV: Professional Knowledge and Competence** of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* states that RECEs have a responsibility to “know, understand and abide by the legislation, policies and procedures that are relevant to their professional practice and to the care and learning of children under their professional supervision.” (Standard IV: A.2)

The standard is written in a broad way because the College is aware that RECEs practise in a range of roles and in a number of different settings, including licensed child care programs, full-day kindergarten, special education and intervention programs, and family resource programs.

Some RECEs work in administrative roles and may not have children under their professional supervision. RECEs may work for the Ministry of Education, a municipality, the College or an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT), for example.

A piece of legislation that applies to all RECEs regardless of their practice setting is College By-law No. 21 Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. This by-law came into force on February 28, 2011 and prescribes the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Practice for all members of the College. By becoming a member of the College, each person makes a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession, to enhance the care and learning of children and to be accountable to the public of Ontario.

There will likely be legislation, policies and procedures that apply specifically to a certain role or practice setting. An RECE working in licensed child care may need to understand the DNA, the *Child and Family Services Act, 1990* as well as the policies and procedures set out by their employer. Another RECE working in a different setting may need to be more familiar with the *Education Act, 1990*, the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* or other pieces of legislation. The legislation, policies and procedures you should know will depend on the nature of your practice.

## Put it into Practice!

Brainstorm with your colleagues to create a list of all of the legislation, policies and procedures that apply to your practice. Do you know and understand this important information? If you have strength in this area, perhaps you can take a leadership role in educating your colleagues on the importance of understanding and abiding by the legislation, policies and procedures that are relevant to your practice setting.

# Conversation with an RECE



Niza Chaudhry, RECE  
Mississauga, ON

The College of Early Childhood Educators is made up of over 40,000 unique members – each with a different background and story to tell. **Conversation with an ECE** features registered early childhood educators (RECEs) who are passionate about their profession and the people they serve.

In this issue, we feature an ambitious RECE who is not afraid to take the lead. Niza Chaudhry may be new to the field, but she's already accomplished a lot. She's on her way to completing a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Early Childhood Leadership and holds two part-time jobs as a substitute early childhood educator and as a resource assistant for Halton Resource Connection. Chaudhry is also building connections in the sector by coordinating a partnership between Quality First and students in early childhood education at Sheridan College.

## What do you love about the early childhood sector?

I love having a sense of ownership. Every day, I learn something new and current in our field. As a substitute RECE, I go to various child care centres and learn from different RECEs who each have a unique way of doing things. They, along with my professors, are my greatest mentors.

As a student, I'm always encouraged to go for what I'm most interested in. I love learning about new topics that relate to the field of early childhood education – every week, I'm blown away by the science that I learn. In particular, I'm interested in brain development, which is the thesis that I will be working on for my course.

## What are some challenges that you see in the sector?

There's the challenge of not being recognized. There are many misconceptions out there and I usually have to sit down and explain to people what I do. For example, in my culture, people usually think that what we do is babysit kids. I explain to my relatives and friends the difference between an early childhood educator and a nanny/babysitter, which is that RECEs specifically study child and brain development.

We go through a lot of educational training to do the work that we do.

## What does the RECE title mean to you?

To me, it means there's a regulator who ensures quality in the early childhood education profession. There are standards and requirements for those who want to become an early childhood educator and for this, I'm proud.

## What does the College of ECE mean to you as a member?

It means that our profession is separate from teachers. It gives us a good reputation and confirms that we have a special set of knowledge and skills that cater to children. It also gives me a sense of belonging.

Nominate an RECE you'd like us to have a conversation with by sending an e-mail to [communications@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:communications@collegeofece.on.ca) or call 1 888 961-8558, ext. 251.

# Investigating Complaints

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.

**Investigating Complaints** features examples of cases – without identifying information – that were considered by the Complaints Committee and not referred to a hearing.

## Behaving inappropriately & violating centre policy

### Complaint:

Behaving inappropriately and unprofessionally and violating centre policy by leaving a supply teacher out of ratio

### Committee's Decision:

Not referred and no further action taken

### Summary:

The College received a complaint from an RECE's former co-worker who alleged the Member behaved in an inappropriate and unprofessional manner by intimidating and harassing them, and in the way the Member handled a crying child on two separate occasions.

The Member allegedly grabbed a child by the hand and sat them in a corner, and on another occasion they

allegedly screamed at a child repeatedly, and forcefully pushed them to sit down. The person who filed the complaint also alleged that the member violated employer policies by leaving a supply teacher outside with 16 children and out of ratio.

In response to the complaint, the Member denied she communicated unprofessionally with the person who filed the complaint. With respect to leaving a supply teacher over ratio, both the Member's supervisor and a co-worker provided information that the Committee determined indicated the Member adequately supervised children in her care with respect to ratios.

The Member also denied allegations of acting inappropriately with children.

The Committee reviewed statements from the Member's co-worker and supervisor, in which it found no information to support the allegations made by the person who filed the complaint.

As a result, the Committee directed that no further action be taken regarding the complaint.

# Protecting The Public

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

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

**Isabelle Belfiore**  
**Certificate Registration Number: 33294**  
**Reprimanded; Cancelled/Resigned**

**Megan Gosse**  
**Certificate Registration Number: 31066**  
**Reprimanded; Current Member subject to Terms, Conditions or Limitations**

**Kavita Singh**  
**Certificate Registration Number: 29822**  
**Reprimanded; Current Member subject to Terms, Conditions or Limitations**

**Sivamini Srikrishnarajah**  
**Certificate Registration Number: 19883**  
**Reprimanded; Current Member subject to Terms, Conditions or Limitations**

The College's Discipline Committee found Isabelle Belfiore, Megan Gosse, Kavita Singh and Sivamini Srikrishnarajah guilty of professional misconduct for failing to adequately supervise the children in their care and exposing them to physical risk.

All four Members attended the public hearing on October 15, 2012. Belfiore and Gosse were represented by legal counsel while Singh and Srikrishnarajah represented themselves.

At the time of the incident, all four RECEs were employed at a child care centre in Markham, ON. On August 16, 2011, Srikrishnarajah, the supervisor, checked and confirmed the security of the centre's playground fence and gate. However, no further safety checks were performed and the gates were unlocked, their latches accessible to children.

That morning, the Members accompanied 13 toddlers into the playground. When Srikrishnarajah went inside, Belfiore, an assistant, and Gosse and Singh, who each supervised a room of toddlers, stayed outside with the children.

While under their supervision, eight toddlers left the playground unnoticed by the Members. Five returned to the playground while three walked across a nearby parking lot to a Shoppers Drug Mart adjacent to the Centre. During the incident, Belfiore was using her cell phone. The children had left the playground for 10 minutes before the Members were informed of their absence.

Store employees found the children unaccompanied and notified police. The Centre was alerted and Gosse and Srikrishnarajah retrieved the toddlers. Police questioned

Continued on page 14...

employees of the store and the Centre about the incident. The Centre's license was suspended after the incident was reported to the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, and it subsequently closed down. No charges were laid by the police.

The Members agreed to the facts of the case and entered a guilty plea and a joint submission on penalty, which was accepted by the Discipline Committee panel. "Their behaviour, which falls short of the professional standards, has caused members of the public to question the professionalism of early childhood educators," the Committee panel said in its finding of professional misconduct. The Committee also found that the RECEs "failed to work collaboratively with [their] colleagues to provide

a safe, secure and healthy environment for children."

The Discipline Committee panel directed the Registrar to impose a requirement on each Member's Certificate of Registration that they participate in and successfully complete a course of study in "Professional Supervision in Early Learning and Care", at their own expense, within six months of the Committee's order. If any Member does not fulfill the requirement, the Registrar is directed to suspend her Certificate of Registration for three months.

A notation regarding the finding, the suspension order and the term, condition and limitation appears on each Member's status on the College's public register and full decisions are published on the College's website.

### **Tammy Uithoven** **Certificate Registration Number: 17525** **Reprimanded; Current Member subject** **to Terms, Conditions or Limitations**

The College's Discipline Committee found Tammy Uithoven guilty of professional misconduct for failing to maintain a safe environment for the children in her care.

Uithoven attended the hearing electronically, via teleconference, on November 5, 2012. The allegations against Uithoven stemmed from a November 2011 Ministry of Children and Youth Services licensing inspection at a centre at which Uithoven worked as a supervisor.

In an Agreed Statement of Facts and guilty plea presented at the College hearing, Uithoven acknowledged that she did not fulfill her obligation as a supervisor to conduct monthly fire drills between September 2009 and November 2011 and that she had filled out the Centre's fire drill records to indicate that drills had been conducted during that period. Uithoven also acknowledged that she had requested that two employees record children with subsidized day care spots at the Centre as being present on days when they were absent.

The Committee found that the Member's conduct as described in the Agreed Statement of Facts constitutes professional misconduct and recorded the Member's guilty plea and the Agreed Statement of Facts in its finding of professional misconduct.

"The Member was not diligent in observing mandatory policies and procedures related to her practice and failed to maintain a safe environment for the children in her care," the Committee said. "In a profession built on trust, the Member acted deceitfully by falsifying records and asking her colleagues to do the same."

The Committee reprimanded the Member and directed the Registrar to impose a term, condition or limitation on her Certificate of Registration requiring her to participate and successfully complete a course of study in "Professional Supervision in Early Learning and Care" within six months and at her own expense.

The Member is also required to provide her current employer and the teacher with whom she shares a classroom with a copy of the decision. A notation of the reprimand and the term, condition or limitation appear on the Member's Certificate of Registration on the College's public register and a full decision is published on the College's website.

# News in the Sector

## TD Economics Special Report

In November 2012, a TD Economics Special Report was released in support of investment in early childhood education to help address Canada's core economic and social challenges.

The report called for more federal funding for high quality early childhood education, pointing out that the investment can help reduce poverty, address skills shortages, improve productivity and innovation, and a host of other national priorities.

The full report is available online <http://www.td.com/economics/analysis/economics-index.jsp>.

## Ministry of Education outlines new funding formula for child care in Ontario

In early 2013, the Ministry of Education introduced new Ontario Child Care Service Management and Funding Guidelines. In response to the transformation of the child care sector, this funding framework enables a more flexible formula which is required in order to meet the particular needs of local communities in Ontario. This includes increased service ability and access for both full fee paying and subsidized families, particularly in growth areas. This will further assist the transition and implementation of full-day kindergarten.

For more information, visit [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

## Ontario Early Years Framework

In January 2013, the Ministry of Education released the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework, which focuses on the need for a shared vision to help support children's learning and development from birth to age six; access to quality programs and services; and movement towards a seamless experience for users of services.

The College's role in the early learning and care sector was highlighted in the framework document, which was meant to provide strategic direction to early years partners both within and outside government.

For more information, visit [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

## Naming the College's Newsletter

If you were one of over 1,000 members who voted on a potential name for the College's regular publication in January, you've likely already noticed that the results are in! Members had the opportunity to vote for one of three publication names put forward, or to suggest their own.

All member submissions were considered, and many names given by members were very similar to the three put forward. The name Connexions was selected based on feedback received by English and French members.

Thank you to those members who took the time to share their ideas or favourites with us!

**Ontario Ministry Appointments:** New Premier Kathleen Wynne's 27-member cabinet was sworn in on February 11, 2013. New Minister of Education Liz Sandals, from Guelph, is a previous Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education. New Minister of Children and Youth Services Teresa Piruzza, from Windsor West, is a previous Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister responsible for Women's Issues.

# Fourth Annual Meeting of Members

On Tuesday, January 8, 2013 the College of Early Childhood Educators held its fourth annual meeting of members at the Metropolitan Hotel in Toronto, ON. Over 50 members of the College were in attendance along with special guests from the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders in the early learning and care sector.

The purpose of the annual meeting of members was to inform members of the activities of the College during the fourth fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2012. The meeting was chaired by the College's President, Lois Mahon, RECE.

The Honourable Laurel Broten brought greetings on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Lois Mahon, RECE, presented the President's report on behalf of the College's Council. Susan (Darlene) Edgar, RECE, provided a report on behalf of the Registration Appeals Committee.

Desmond Levin from Crowe Soberman LLP, Chartered Accountants, provided members with a report on the College's financial position for the fourth fiscal year and

affirmed that the College is financially sound.

The official business of the meeting finished with a brief question and answer period, which was followed by a special presentation on professional boundaries by Claudia Newman, a boundaries trainer and past president of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

Members who could not attend the annual meeting of members can pose questions at any time by contacting the College at [communications@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:communications@collegeofece.on.ca) or 1 888 961-8558, ext. 251.

A video recording of the fourth annual meeting of members will be available on the College's website in March.



## CONTACT US...

College of Early Childhood Educators  
438 University Avenue, Suite 1900  
Toronto ON M5G 2K8

Telephone: 416 961-8558  
Toll-free: 1 888 961-8558  
Fax: 416 961-8772

e-mail: [info@collegeofece.on.ca](mailto:info@collegeofece.on.ca) | website: [www.collegeofece.on.ca](http://www.collegeofece.on.ca)