

Annual Meeting Explores Professionalism And Regulatory Trends

The 2014 Annual Meeting of Members featured a special presentation by Richard Steinecke, senior partner of the law firm Steinecke Macuire LeBlanc, on professionalism and regulatory trends.

Steinecke discussed how registered early childhood educators (RECEs) are given the responsibility and privilege to self-regulate their profession. Similar to social workers, lawyers and many health care professionals, RECEs are governed by a College that holds them professionally accountable for their actions.

Fictional Case Study: Upeksha's Error

Steinecke gave an example of self-regulation by using a scenario in which a fictional RECE named Upeksha mistakenly puts the wrong snack in a child's backpack, resulting in that child having an allergic reaction.

Upeksha immediately takes professional responsibility and informs the child's parents about her mistake, but they react negatively to the situation. Despite Upeksha responding appropriately, the parents make a complaint to the College. The RECE responds to the Notice of Complaint in writing to explain her mistake and the actions she has taken since the incident.

As a self-regulatory body, the College's role in this case is not to take sides but to follow its mandate to protect the public interest. Unlike advocacy groups, it is accountable to several parties including the Ministry of Education, the Office of the Fairness Commissioner and the public in general.



Richard Steinecke LL.B. used a fictional case study to demonstrate what professionalism means for RECEs.

As an RECE, Upeksha has to comply with professional standards that guide the profession. In this situation, she unwittingly failed to enforce Standard III: B of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, which states that ECEs familiarize themselves with relevant medical conditions including allergies of the children in their care. However, she tries to prevent future oversights by posting a written policy for handling snacks on the staff bulletin board.

Since Upeksha has acted like a professional during the course of the incident, the Complaints Committee could reasonably reach a resolution by acknowledging the parents' concerns

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President's Message



The College started a new year with the 5th Annual Meeting of Members, which you can read about in this issue. We were very pleased to see over 50 members and 30 early childhood leadership students in attendance and encourage you to watch a video recording of the meeting on the College's website. All members have the opportunity to pose questions to the College regarding the work

during 2012 to 2013 and we would like you to submit any questions and comments to us.

In early December, the Ministry of Education proposed Bill 143. The Bill will amend the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECE Act), the *Education Act* and will repeal the *Day Nurseries Act* by replacing it with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2013*. The Ministry's announcement coincided with the statutory review of the ECE Act, which was to be completed in February 2014. We will continue to inform you on Bill 143 and the impact the potential changes will have on members.

This issue of *Connexions* marks the end of my second term as an elected Council member from District 1 and third term as Council President. It has been an honour to serve on Council from the North and North East Region and I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues on Council and College staff for their tremendous work in reaching new heights as the first professional self-regulatory body for early childhood educators in Canada.

Cheers,

Lois Mahon RECE, President

Registrar's Message



The College has entered the second half of our 2013-2014 fiscal year and we are already more than halfway through the Leadership Pilot project.

Leadership Pilot participants have completed a self-assessment and learning plan to assist them in setting goals for their own unique self-directed learning needs and

interests. The 25 participants have also finished four out of the five online learning modules, with the final module to be completed in late March. On page 4 of this issue, we explore the second module's focus, pedagogical leadership. A recap of past modules is also available on the College's website for those interested in learning more about the various topics. The Leadership Pilot will wrap up in May 2014 with a two-day closing retreat and the program's outcomes will be shared with all members.

Since the College established an external relations team in the spring of 2013, we have conducted or participated in approximately 75 presentations around the province, directly interacting with about 3,700 members and prospective members. More outreach will continue through this spring.

The College issued 2,922 Certificates of Registration during the first half of the fiscal year, for a total of almost 47,000 Certificates of Registration since its inception.

Best wishes,

Sue Corke, Registrar & CEO

and by issuing a caution. The caution can remain a private matter, but serve as a reminder for the RECE to uphold the profession’s standards.

Right-Touch Regulation

Through the example of Upeksha’s mistake, Steinecke demonstrated what it means to be a professional and the balance that self-regulatory bodies must achieve to protect the public interest while governing a profession.

The proposed resolution between the College and the RECE aligns with a regulatory trend called right-touch regulation (RTR). Originally from the United Kingdom, RTR strives for balance by using appropriate regulatory force while achieving desirable results for a profession.


“It’s about not being too harsh or loose, but being intelligent about how you do regulation,” explained Steinecke. “Instead of reacting to a complaint, [RTR] aims to improve the practice. For example, if you have \$10,000 to spend,

do you want to spend it on a public hearing or is it better to develop a learning program?”

Right-touch regulation emphasizes partnership instead of policing.

Steinecke ended by encouraging proactive and transparent regulation. “Reactive regulation is linear. Proactive is cyclical. It’s a different way of thinking and regulators are moving to this type of approach.”



To watch the Annual Meeting and Steinecke’s presentation, stay tuned to the College’s website. 

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 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

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- Carol Crill Russell, Maynooth
- Rosemary Fontaine, Toronto
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- Bruce Minore, Thunder Bay
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- Director of Professional Practice: Melanie Dixon RECE

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Engaging Colleagues through Pedagogical Leadership

By Sharon Ho

In 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Education published *Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children*, a professional learning resource for early childhood educators and individuals who work in early years settings.

The resource contains several research briefs, one of which focuses on pedagogical leadership. Authors Lorrie Baird RECE and Anne Marie Coughlin RECE define the concept by combining two definitions: pedagogy as “the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning” and leadership as “the act of guiding individuals or groups.”

Thus, pedagogical leadership means leading or guiding others in the study of the teaching or learning process of children.

According to Coughlin and Baird, pedagogical leaders can include people “who see themselves as partners, facilitators, observers and co-learners alongside educators, children and families.”

Why is Pedagogical Leadership Important?

This type of leadership is important because it supports learning in the program and assists early childhood educators in thinking about the teaching and learning process.

“I think if we want to consider how learning happens, we want to parallel the practice that we have with children to that of adults,” says Baird, who is the associate executive director for Kawartha Child Care Services and an associate with Harvest Resources. “In order for us to grow knowledge, we need multiple perspectives and engagement in dialogue together. Learning doesn’t happen in isolation.”

Another significant benefit of pedagogical leadership is that it brings leaders in early childhood education together.

“We need to make a connection between the work our leaders are doing outside the classroom with the work our leaders are doing inside the classroom,” says Coughlin, the educational director at London Bridge Child Care Services. “If we are going to make a difference, work together and build a community, then we want to think about the role of education in our community. We have to find ways to think about it together.”

Who Can Be A Pedagogical Leader?

According to Baird, pedagogical leaders need to be interested in research and be curious about the thinking and learning process. “Pedagogical leaders help us question our thinking and help us think more deeply about our work,” she says.



Photo courtesy of edu.gov.on.ca



Photo courtesy of edu.gov.on.ca

Baird adds that this type of leadership can come from different roles. It can be through RECEs who work directly with children or leaders with a pedagogical focus who go into programs and support RECEs to deepen their understanding of their own professional practice.

"I believe when we have time to pause, reflect, consider our own practice and have an opportunity to think with others, it allows us to become more thoughtful about our interactions," says Baird. "It influences how we design our environments, how we move through routines and how we write and talk about young children."

Pedagogical leadership also means creating a culture that challenges RECEs to learn and grow, says Coughlin. She believes this type of leadership should nurture RECEs' abilities to be reflective and to see themselves as researchers.

Creating such a culture involves professional learning but it doesn't necessarily entail participating in formal professional development programs. RECEs can become pedagogical leaders by reflecting on their daily work. This reflection involves discussing ideas with peers, being open to new perspectives and becoming a critical thinker, says Coughlin. She believes developing these skills can happen in any environment.

"I know every single time I have a conversation with somebody, it's an opportunity to listen to ideas, an opportunity to think together, to grow and reflect," says Coughlin. "Everything we do during the day should support the teaching and learning process. It can help move us towards the place we want to be regardless of what it is."

Pedagogical Leadership in Action

Reflection, learning and support can also take place through supporting other RECEs. Lisa Lalonde RECE, a Leadership Pilot participant, provides resources on the topic of pedagogy with her blog, *Early Childhood Professional Learning Community*.

Lalonde wanted to create a free and accessible professional learning resource for her peers and in one blog post, she

discusses how to create a curriculum module:

This module has been designed to promote individual professional learning accessible to you whenever or wherever you are most comfortable. This opportunity is intended to be either independent or collaborative in nature depending on where you are in your own learning journey. You can reflect as an individual, come together with colleagues, or even share ideas and suggestions at your next staff meeting.

Early years programs and organizations can also support pedagogical leadership. Kawartha Child Care Services, where Baird works, is committed to developing professional learning communities and supports early childhood educators who want to become pedagogical leaders.

"Our pedagogical leaders didn't take any training," says Baird. "What they did was commit to continuous learning around best practices, coaching, mentoring and meeting educators."



Do you have a pedagogical leadership experience to share? E-mail your story to practice@college-ece.ca.

Leadership Pilot Modules

The College's Leadership Pilot, which is aimed at increasing leadership capacity amongst RECEs, has already begun exploring several topics with participants. The modules' facilitators often refer to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* when exploring various subject matters such as participatory leadership, pedagogical leadership and facility management.



For those interested in learning more about past modules, please go to the College's website for a brief recap.

Election 2014

This spring, the College will hold its fourth election to elect members to its governing body, College Council.

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

Nominations Now Closed

The 2014 elections will take place in three of the College's eight electoral districts:

- District 1 – North and North East Region
- District 2 – East Region
- District 6 – Central West Region

Members of the College received a Notice of Election in December 2013 and nomination forms were available on the College website from December 13, 2013 until the nomination deadline, January 31, 2014.

Eligibility To Vote

Individuals must be members of the College and in good standing as of February 28, 2014 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 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 in Ontario, the member's electoral district is the district in which the member had principally resided at least 60 days before the election. The College's eight electoral districts are described in Ontario Regulation 222/08: Designation of Geographic Areas.

Voting Information

In March 2014, 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 at the same time.


Casting Your Vote

In some electoral districts there is more than one College member to be elected to Council. 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, included in the voting package, will provide further details.

Election Voting Period: March 21 to April 29, 2014

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 Tuesday, April 29, 2014. Results of the elections will be posted on the College's website when they become official.

A New Council

The elected Council members will take office at the first regular Council meeting after the election, which is currently scheduled for June 2014. 



The College's 2013-2014 Council

Membership Resource

Leaving the Profession for a Period of Time?

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) often have questions about their membership when they are preparing to take a leave of absence from practising the profession. The reasons for wanting to take a leave may include parental leave, a change in career, relocation to a different province or country, or other personal reasons.

It is important for members to understand that their membership cannot be put on hold or postponed. A Certificate of Registration can only be current or show suspension, cancellation, resignation or revocation.

Members wanting to take a leave from practising the profession have several options:

1. Maintain Membership Public Register Status: **Current**

You can maintain your membership and avoid reinstatement fees by renewing on or before your anniversary date. By doing so, you may continue using the protected titles and designation, practise the profession (even on a part-time or as-need basis) and retain a current status on the College's public register.

2. Cancel Membership Public Register Status: **Cancelled/Resigned**

If you do not renew and wish to avoid having your Certificate suspended due to non-payment of fees, you must submit the Request for Membership Resignation Form to the College. Once this form is received, your Certificate will be cancelled and your registration status on the College's public register will indicate "Cancelled/Resigned".

You can reinstate your membership within a period of three years by submitting a Request for Membership Reinstatement Form and payment of \$200, which includes a \$50 reinstatement fee and the \$150 renewal fee.



More information is available on the College's website under the Members section or by calling the College at 416 961-8558 or 1 888 961-8558.

Retirement

Members who are retiring but wish to remain active in their profession can still maintain their Certificate of Registration by renewing every year. Retiring members who wish to discontinue their membership should fill out the Request for Membership Resignation Form. Once this is received, the Certificate will be cancelled and the registration status on the College's public register will indicate "Cancelled/Resigned".

3. Membership Suspension for Non-Payment of Fees Public Register Status: **Suspended for Non-Payment of Fees**

If you do not renew your membership by submitting the annual membership fee and Renewal Form or cancel your membership by submitting a Request for Resignation Form, you will eventually fall into what the College calls "suspension for non-payment of fees". This change in status will happen 90 days after your renewal date if you have not renewed your membership and paid the appropriate late fee of \$20.


There are three things you need to know about this:

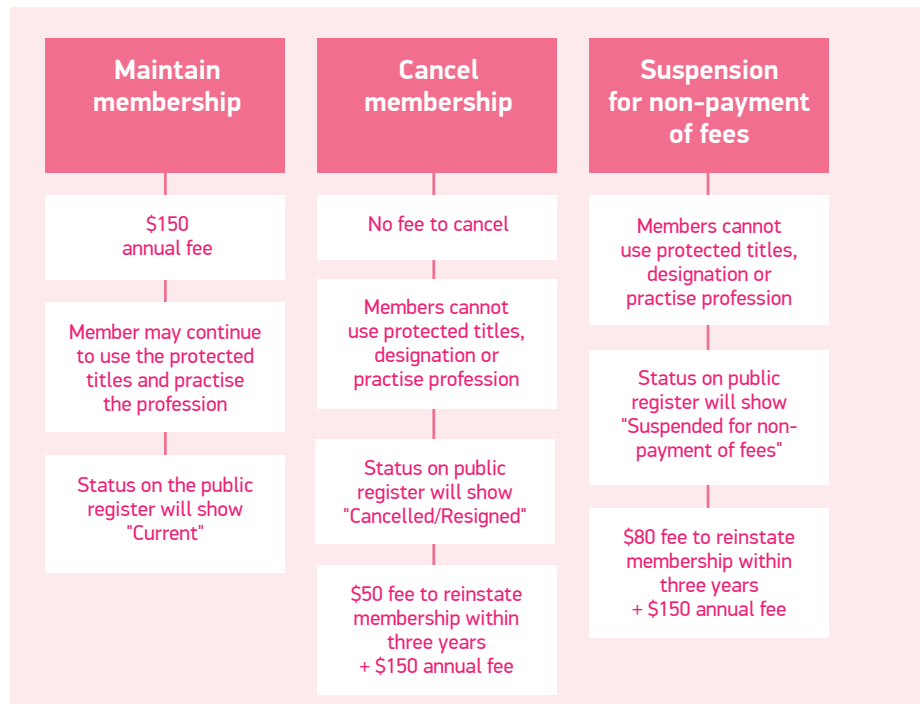
1. If you wish to return to practising the profession, there will be an \$80 fee to reinstate your membership, in addition to the \$150 renewal fee.
2. If someone looks up your name on the public register, your status will indicate that you are suspended for non-payment of fees.
3. If you want to reinstate your membership after three years has passed, you will have to re-apply as a new member and pay a \$75 application fee in addition to the \$150 membership fee.

Members who are suspended for non-payment of fees cannot practise the profession, and are not permitted to use the protected titles and designation "early childhood educator" (ECE) or "registered early childhood educator" (RECE) and their French equivalents.

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Returning to the profession after more than three years

The College can only reinstate a member's Certificate for a period of three years. Members who would like to return to the profession after their Certificates have been either cancelled or suspended for non-payment of fees for more than three years must re-apply and meet the current registration requirements as new members. 



The Public Register: Up-to-date information on RECEs

The College's public register, available online, identifies whether a person practising early childhood education in Ontario is registered with the College and provides status information on a registered early childhood educator (RECE).

Unlike an RECE's membership card or wall certificate, the public register is frequently being updated and is a useful tool for employers, parents and the general public. If an individual is listed as "Current" on the public register, they are entitled to work as an early childhood educator in Ontario and to use the protected titles "early childhood educator" (ECE) or "registered early childhood educator".


Where to find the public register

The public register is available as a button link on the homepage of the College's website and in the Public section.

Why use the public register?

Employers and parents can verify whether there are any restrictions on a member's practice. The public register also provides the following information:

- Notation if a member's Certificate of Registration is suspended for non-payment of fees or penalties
- Notation if a member has been referred to a hearing
- Any terms, conditions and limitations imposed on a member's Certificate
- Notation of suspension, cancellation or revocation of a member's Certificate
- Findings and orders of hearings committees

A member's personal information – such as date of birth, home or business address or other contact information – is not available on the public register. 

Canada Celebrates Professional Contributions of Early Childhood Educators

By Jann Lee

Last fall, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the 2013 recipients of the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education, which recognizes early childhood educators (ECEs) who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and creativity in their practice.

Amongst those honoured were Angelique Sanders RECE from Toronto, ON, Linda Magill RECE from Carleton Place, ON and Karen Chaplin RECE from Mississauga, ON.

"Through their dedication and skill, these remarkable educators are helping build the foundation young children need to get the best possible start in life," Prime Minister Harper said. "They are models of excellence whose high standards inspire both their colleagues and the children in their care."

The awards are offered at the national level as Certificates of Excellence and at the regional level as Certificates of Achievement.

Angelique Sanders, a registered early childhood educator (RECE) at the Ryerson University School of Early Childhood Studies Learning Centre, received a Certificate of Excellence for integrating different languages into the centre's programs through a new learning approach called Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP).

Since 2011, Sanders has been using each activity as an opportunity to incorporate and discuss multiple languages. For example, the children create bilingual name cards and learn how to sing, count and identify colours and shapes in different languages. The RECE prepares sign-in books for families to write their names in their first language and invites parents to share books and stories written in their home language. Sanders' experience and interest in languages has made LAP a natural approach for her.

Continued on page 10...



Angelique Sanders RECE received national recognition for fostering an early learning environment in which language and literacy skills are encouraged and embraced. (Photo: Jill Thompson)



The Town of Carleton Place also honoured Linda Magill RECE (left) with The Community Builder Award for her outstanding dedication to the children and families of the community. (Photo: Carleton Place Child Care Services)

Like Sanders, Linda Magill RECE from Carleton Place Childcare Services also promotes diversity to young children and incorporates Spanish, French and sign language into her programs.

She is keenly aware of the children's interests, which influence her programming. Magill also invites role models from the community — she has asked police officers, librarians and paramedics to speak about their jobs. The inclusive environment Magill created has been well regarded by parents and colleagues.


Karen Chaplin RECE from Erindale Nursery School also builds lasting memories through play-based activities. Similar to Sanders, Chaplin incorporates LAP into her practice by encouraging children to greet each other in their first language. Like Magill, she facilitates local visits from role models in the community.

Families are integral and Chaplin invites parents to local events such as tree decorating at the mall or trips to a pioneer village. She connects to local organizations to enhance her knowledge of the resources available to families.

Niagara Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence

The Prime Minister's Awards was not the only honour given to ECEs last fall. Recognition for the profession has been evident across the province and in November 2013, the Early Childhood Community Development Centre in partnership with the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario recognized the contributions of staff and volunteers working in Niagara's early learning and child care programs with the Niagara Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence.

Over 50 RECEs, program staff, volunteers, full-day early learning programs and students in early childhood education programs received acknowledgement for their contributions to the sector in a special awards ceremony in St. Catharines, ON. For over 15 years, the awards have celebrated different types of achievements from professionalism amongst early childhood educators to child care centres that have implemented eco-friendly initiatives.

Congratulations to all of the RECEs who have received awards for their outstanding achievements. 



For more information, please visit the Prime Minister's Awards website pma.gc.ca.



To view a list of winners from the Niagara Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence, please visit eccdc.org.



Local MP Brad Butt presents a Certificate of Achievement to Karen Chaplin RECE from Erindale Nursery School in Mississauga, ON. (Photo: David Paterson)

Conversation with an RECE



Marcy Atchison RECE
London, ON

Marcy Atchison RECE worked for many years as a cook for London Bridge Child Care Services, where she realized her passion to work with children.

With help from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' (MTCU) apprenticeship program and her employer, Atchison returned to school to earn an Early Childhood Education diploma. She graduated with honours and became an RECE in 2012.

What drew you to the early learning and care sector?

When I finished high school, I cooked part-time for a sorority house. I then applied for a cook's position at a London Bridge Child Care Services centre for the summer. A new London Bridge centre was opening up downtown and they needed someone full-time so I applied. The position offered the opportunity to job share in a classroom in the afternoon as an early childhood assistant. I was very excited for the chance to work directly with children.

How did you balance working and studying?

It was tiring but rewarding as well. I didn't spend a lot of time with friends or family for three years. I wanted to graduate with honours and do well, so I pushed myself. I worked forty hours a week and went to school three nights a week. I couldn't afford to go back full-time so I utilized the MTCU's apprenticeship program and was sponsored by my employer.

What important lessons did you learn from the program?

All my classmates were from different centres so we were

able to network and connect through our shared experiences. Not only did I learn from my professor, I learned from my peers as well. During discussion, someone would bring up a situation they faced personally and we would all discuss how we could have handled that situation effectively.

What does professional recognition mean to you?

Now we're looked at as professionals, whereas back when I started, I heard the term "babysitter" a lot. Now we work at child care centres, not daycare centres. We are caring for the child, not the day. Recognition means I'm seen as a capable person who is providing quality care and programming for children and their families.

What would you most like people to know about your profession?

I'd really like the community, not just people that have children, to realize that it's a very rewarding experience to work with children. Sometimes it can be tiring. But, it's worth it when you see all those little milestones and realize how the children teach us as educators. If you take the time to listen, they are full of knowledge. It's just not us teaching them.



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. 251.



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-ecce.ca for more information.

Practice Matters

While the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* frequently refers to children as the primary group who falls under an RECE's professional supervision, it is important for RECEs to be aware of their roles and responsibilities in the supervision of their colleagues. **Ethic C. Responsibilities to Colleagues and to the Profession** addresses supervision by requiring RECEs to "support experienced colleagues, those who are new to the profession and students aspiring to the profession."

Support and guidance goes hand in hand with professional supervision. Through their employment titles and roles, RECEs often have other staff, students or volunteers (i.e. supervisees) under their professional supervision. In a position of authority and trust, such RECEs "provide guidelines, parameters and direction... that respect [the supervisee's] rights. RECEs ensure a level of supervision which is appropriate in light of the supervisee's education, training, experience and the activities being performed (Standard IV: C.3)." In this way, RECEs are role models with the opportunity to demonstrate appropriate, quality supervisory skills that facilitate a secure learning environment for all.

The adage "safety comes first" cannot be underestimated. According to the Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(2), early childhood educators are guilty of professional misconduct if they "fail to supervise adequately a person who is under the professional supervision of a member."

The phrase "professional supervision" is used throughout the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Can you explain who falls under the "professional supervision" of registered early childhood educators and what this entails?

A **Ethic A. Responsibilities to Children** of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* states: "Early Childhood Educators make the well-being and learning of all children who are under their professional supervision their foremost responsibility." In order to ensure the well-being and learning of children, RECEs must place the "safe and secure supervision of children based on age and stage of development" (Standard IV: B.1) as one of their highest priorities in their professional practice.

Keeping current attendance records, maintaining ratios and scanning the environment are fundamental to quality supervision but RECEs must consider other factors when working directly with children. For example, relevant medical conditions or guardianship and maintaining open lines of communication with families (Standards I and III) are essential in providing safe and healthy learning environments, and therefore appropriate supervision.

Put it into Practice!

Read "In the Public Interest" on pages 14 and 15. Take a look at the College's website for a complete list of disciplinary decisions, some of which address the neglect of duty in supervising children, colleagues and staff.

Read and reflect upon one of the decisions. In your practice, is professional supervision an area for growth and leadership development? How might you modify your practice or incorporate new learning to improve your supervisory skills?

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.

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

Complaint:

Acting unprofessionally by treating a parent unfairly, breaching confidentiality, withholding information and preventing access to the parent's child.

Committee's Decision:

No further action to be taken.

Summary:

The parent filed a complaint against the supervisor of the centre her son attended, the nature of which surrounded her custody arrangements with the child's father.

The parent alleged that the supervisor, a registered early childhood educator, did not provide adequate opportunities for her to have supervised visits with her son and disclosed personal and confidential information to the child's father. The parent also indicated that the Member did not provide the last name of an assistant

who worked at the centre and did not provide a written explanation when the centre could no longer accommodate supervised visits.

The College notified the Member of the complaint filed against her, and the Member denied all the allegations against her. After a thorough investigation, the Complaints Committee reviewed the facts of the case.

"The Committee recognizes the sensitivity and complexity of custody issues and understands that these situations are unfortunate and often challenging for the parties involved," the Committee said in its decision. "It is with this context in mind that the Committee considered the present matter."

"In the Committee's view, the Centre and Member went to great lengths to support [the parents] involved in this difficult situation," the Committee found. "Early childhood educators are reminded that they should set realistic and attainable parameters when offering services to families and should draft and implement policies related to custody issues."



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

In the Public Interest

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

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

Cynthia Skinner Certificate Registration Number: 08675 Cancelled/Resigned; Reprimanded

The College's Discipline Committee found Cynthia Skinner guilty of professional misconduct for acting inappropriately towards the children under her care and towards her co-workers.

Skinner, who resigned from the College prior to the hearing, was in attendance via teleconference and was not represented by legal counsel. The hearing took place on May 29, 2013.

After an early childhood education placement student and colleagues raised concerns about how Skinner treated the children under her care, her employer and the Children's Aid Society investigated the allegations against her.

Skinner was found guilty of restraining a child and permitting children to go outside without gloves and with their jackets undone. She also pleaded no contest to using physical force on children, to using an inappropriate tone of voice around them and to intimidating staff.

The College's Discipline Committee accepted Skinner's guilty plea and her undertaking not

to re-apply to the College for six months following the decision. She also signed an undertaking that she will successfully complete a course on professional supervision in early learning and care, pre-approved by the Registrar, at Skinner's own expense, in the event that she re-applies for reinstatement of her membership.

In its reprimand, the Committee noted that Skinner has demonstrated a blatant disregard for the dignity of children and families by her harmful and negligent actions. Her failure to provide a nurturing learning environment was in violation of Standard I: D of the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

"By neglecting to support and encourage coworkers in order to enhance the culture of her workplace, the Member has failed in her responsibilities to colleagues and to members of the early childhood education profession," the panel said.

A notation regarding the Committee's findings appears with the Member's status on the College's public register.

Dorothy Rainey
Certificate Registration Number: 08291
Cancelled/Resigned; Reprimanded

The College's Discipline Committee found Dorothy Rainey guilty of professional misconduct for failing to fulfill her role as a supervisor.

Rainey, who resigned from the College prior to the hearing, was in attendance but was not represented by legal counsel. The hearing took place May 29, 2013.

From 2011 to 2012, Rainey worked as a regional supervisor and managed 15 employees including Cynthia Skinner RECE, who was later found guilty of professional misconduct. Under Rainey's supervision, Skinner faced allegations of inappropriate treatment of children and staff. In March 2012, Rainey received a performance memo from her employer who outlined concerns about Rainey's leadership and relationship-building skills. She subsequently resigned from her employment.

In an Agreed Statement of Facts submitted to the Discipline Committee, the former RECE admits that she failed to perform supervisory functions that were necessary to support the development of staff and to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment for children. This included not addressing employee concerns about the hostile work environment and failing to report certain offences to the Children's Aid Society.

Rainey entered a guilty plea of professional misconduct and agreed not to re-apply to the College for a period of six months following the Committee's decision. The panel accepted her plea and found her guilty of professional misconduct for failing to fulfill her role as a supervisor.

"Through her inaction, she has neglected her responsibility to provide guidelines, parameters and direction to her supervisees and to support a safe, healthy and inviting environment for children and families," the panel said.

A notation regarding the Committee's findings appears with the Member's status on the College's public register.

Daniel Capstick
Certificate Registration Number: 00137
Cancelled/Resigned; Reprimanded

The College's Discipline Committee found Daniel Capstick guilty of professional misconduct for failing to adequately supervise a person, maintain standards of the profession and keep records as required by his professional duties.

Capstick neither attended nor was he represented by legal counsel at the hearing on September 19, 2013.

Capstick was a site supervisor for almost two years at the place of employment where the professional misconduct took place. He was found to have used a laptop computer that belonged to the Centre to search the Internet for sex and personal ads. He also kept pornographic pictures of women on the laptop and at least one video clip containing sex and nudity.

Capstick also neglected some of his duties as a supervisor. He did not conduct fire drills despite telling the head office that he had done so and failed to review the Centre's policies and procedures with new staff despite providing information to the head office that a review had been done. Capstick also did not train staff on children's anaphylaxis plans.

Capstick agreed to these facts and entered a guilty plea to the College's Discipline Committee. The Committee reprimanded him and found him guilty of professional misconduct. He resigned from the College and has undertaken to not re-apply for membership for six months from the Committee's decision.

Specifically, Capstick was found guilty of professional misconduct for acting in an inappropriate manner and failing to provide a safe and healthy environment for children and staff.

The College found Capstick breached Ontario Regulation 223/09, section 2, subsections (2), (8), (10), (18) and (22) and Standards III: A.1, IV: A.2, IV: C.3 and IV: E.2 of the College's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

Standard III: A refers to keeping safe and healthy learning environments. Standard IV: A.2 refers to knowing the rules relevant to an RECE's professional practice. Standard IV: C.3 refers to providing guidelines, parameters and direction to supervisees. Standard IV: E.2 refers to acting as role models and avoiding conduct that could be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession.

A notation regarding the Committee's findings appears with the Member's status on the College's public register.

News in the Sector

Ontario Proposes Changes to Child Care Legislation

On December 3, 2013 the Ontario Government introduced proposed changes to the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (ECE Act) as part of the proposed new *Child Care Modernization Act* (Bill 143). The Bill successfully passed through the Ontario Legislature on its first reading on that same day.

Bill 143 would enact the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2013* (which would repeal the *Day Nurseries Act*), amend the ECE Act, amend the *Education Act* and make consequential amendments to other Acts. Changes to the ECE Act as part of the new legislation would coincide with the College's statutory five-year review, which began in the spring of 2013.

The statutory changes that are proposed for the ECE Act are largely consistent with the College's submission to the Ministry of Education in the summer. Some of the amendments include changes to the profession's scope of practice, registration requirements and the College's complaints and discipline process.

The College has worked collaboratively with the Ministry of Education to propose updates to the ECE Act and is pleased that the Ministry is focused on updating legislation to support children and families in early years settings. The College has reviewed the proposed legislation and provided a complete update to Council in January. It looks forward to participating with the Ministry in the next steps of the legislative process.



To find out more about Bill 143, visit the College's website or go to ontla.on.ca.

Professional Learning Resources for ECEs

Are you interested in deepening your understanding of young children and thinking about your daily work as an RECE from a new perspective? The Ministry of Education has recently created six research briefs and seven videos for educators working in early years settings.

The briefs and videos discuss research findings and provide tips for educators related to seven elements of quality early years programming. These elements include: positive adult-child relationships and brain development, learning environments, pedagogical documentation, pedagogical leadership, self-regulation, parent engagement and inclusion.



The resources can be found on the Ministry of Education's website edu.gov.on.ca.

The College's website and e-mail have changed.

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