Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership

A Resource for Professional Practice Developed by the College of Early Childhood Educators and the Ontario College of Teachers

Colleagues,

We are very pleased to offer you this professional learning resource related to interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership. This joint resource was developed as a result of a collaborative research project involving both the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood Educators.

We are happy that this resource will help to bring the ethical standards and standards of practice for both professions to life as educators work together to support early learning.

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Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership

Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership is an inquiry-based resource developed by members of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) and the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). The professional experiences reflected in this resource are the result of inquiry processes engaged in during an ethical leadership institute co-hosted by both Colleges.

This resource is designed to facilitate critical dialogue and reflection regarding interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership. Early childhood educators, teachers and educational leaders may choose to use this resource to support individual and collective professional inquiry as well as to help foster cultures of ethical practice.

The collection of narratives, ethical challenges and frameworks for interprofessional collaboration included in this resource may serve as catalysts for critical reflection, inquiry and dialogue.

Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice

Care, Respect, Trust and *Integrity* are fundamental to ethical professional practice as identified by both the CECE and the OCT. The *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017) and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* (Ontario College of Teachers, 2006) serve as effective frameworks for further exploring and investigating shared professional practice. Practitioners are encouraged to reflect on these frameworks as they explore the lived experiences included within this resource.

Inquiry-Based Professional Learning

Exploring Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership is comprised of several inquiry-based professional learning processes. These include:

- narratives
- ethical challenges
- conceptual frameworks for interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership.

The **narratives** are authentic examples of educators' experiences related to interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice. Each narrative is followed by a series of reflective questions to promote deeper inquiry and dialogue.

The **ethical challenges** are brief vignettes that illuminate various ethical dimensions and challenges associated with professional practice.

Each ethical challenge is followed by a series of reflective questions that encourage critical exploration of ethical decision-making in professional practice.

The **conceptual frameworks for interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership** invite practitioners to critically explore and co-construct key dimensions associated with these important forms of professional practice. Reflecting on professional decisions, thinking and actions through the lens of conceptual frameworks supports collegial dialogue, inquiry and reflection. A description of an inquiry-based consensus workshop methodology is provided for those who may want to develop their own conceptual frameworks related to interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice.

The conceptual frameworks are followed by a series of reflective questions that invite practitioners to delve deeper into their own collaboration and ethical practices.

Narrative One
Building a House: Co-Constructing Knowledge

On a bright, crisp spring morning, Sasha looked inquisitively through our classroom window. "Ms. Jabouin! Ms. Jabouin!" he yelled. "Look at those guys out there! They are building a house!" "So they are," she replied. The events that unfolded from this initial sighting reflected some of the most harmonious collaborations I had ever experienced with another professional.

The house that was being built across the street became a hot topic for the children; furthermore, it gave my teaching partner and me an amazing platform from which we could share our knowledge of early learning and combine our individual teaching styles. This was a true meeting of the minds, where I was able to witness the beauty of collaboration between a registered early childhood educator and a teacher.

Watching the construction of the house provided us with many opportunities for observing and documenting the children's learning and interests. We watched and listened as the children's excitement grew and they began to transform their block structures into more complex designs. At this point, we thought it was important to make the most out of this self-directed interest. I suggested that we try and contact the builder to see if we could visit the construction site. We were all very delighted when the site builder invited us to tour the model home and show the children the floor plans in great detail.

When we returned to the classroom, Sasha was the first to head back to the blocks and create a floor plan of his own. Ms. Jabouin was quick to come up with a new idea; to enhance the children's recently lived experience into something more. "Sasha, if you would like to use the blocks to build a floor plan, perhaps you could draw your plan first. Then, either Ms. Maras or I could give you the building permit required to build your structure." "Oh, okay!" he said, and proceeded to tell all of his friends that they also needed plans to get building permits to build their structures.

The construction of the house provided us with so much to build upon. The entire learning experience was facilitated collaboratively, from visiting a real model home building site to learning about building permits. We managed to focus on the children's interests and meet the appropriate learning expectations as an educator team. We provided real-life learning experiences to the children without overlooking or rejecting ideas from each other, as we valued and understood the knowledge and skills that both professions could bring to the table.

Critically Reflect on the Narrative

1. Explore how the pedagogical practices conveyed key messages regarding knowledge, learning environments, the image of learners and the role of educators.

2. Explore how inquiry-based learning is understood within this narrative.

3. Discuss the pedagogical practices that supported learning in the narrative.

4. Discuss how collaboration is understood and embodied within this narrative from the perspectives of learners, interprofessional teams and families.

5. Identify the relevance of this narrative for your own professional practice and ethical leadership.

6. Explore strategies that you might employ to foster collaboration within an interprofessional team.

Narrative Two
Learning Together: Shared Dialogue and Inquiry

I arrived at the school the first year the Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) program was implemented. Our four-person team was made up of educators who were familiar with a more traditional kindergarten program, and early childhood educators, who were new to the school system but had the knowledge of play-based philosophy and pedagogy, and experience working with preschool children. As co-educators from different professions, we were both placed in the context of rethinking our practice for the upcoming school year. With only two FDK classrooms in our school, we knew the program should be consistent in both classrooms which in turn required much planning and critical reflection.

We wanted early learning in our setting to move away from compartmentalized and instructional, to child-centred, play-based and reflective of current research. In our collaborative partnerships, we began to think critically about the possible pedagogies and philosophies that could merge to create an ideal learning environment for the children.

We pulled from experiences that had inspired us, such as post-secondary knowledge and field experiences. We thoroughly explored the new Full-Day Kindergarten document and searched for other texts that would fuel the development of our program which we had hoped would be inspired by principles of play-based learning and inquiry.

In addition to working solely with our own educator partner, we also wanted the teams to collaborate with one another, keeping in mind the developmental diversity of the children in kindergarten. It was also important to remember that all of the children would benefit from our communication and collaboration, which proved to be more difficult than we had anticipated. Other than a few 'fly-by' conversations and quick chats after school, we found it difficult to meet as a group to share our experiences, discuss the learning needs of specific children and ways we were going to move forward with the program. While the collaboration among educators was developing well, we found that we would get carried away with our own individual tasks unless a time to meet was scheduled ahead of time.

About a third of the way through the year, we began to schedule a meeting time called a "Progettiazione". This is an inquiry concept reflected in the Reggio Emilia philosophy. It is recognized as a time for educators to work together to identify next steps for program planning based on the children's interests. During this time, we experienced so much more than we had expected. The learning that took place was rich and plentiful for us in so many ways. Dialoguing with our partners more frequently provided the opportunity to share new ideas, insights, and ways emergent interests might be moved forward

with new provocations to incorporate into our own classrooms. We were able to develop a common language about the program, co-construct documentation of children's learning, and explore literature regarding various inquiries and contexts.

During these discussions, we also addressed a range of topics which had been issues of tension in the past. There were discussions around finding a place in our schedules for printing programs and guided reading, setting expectations for children along a developmental continuum, and recognizing the value of project work rather than structured activities. This provided us with a safe venue to feel discomfort, to engage in dialogue that would expand our views and encourage us to focus on the children's well-being and interests collaboratively.

Moving forward, we decided that the "Progettiazione" would occur on a bi-weekly basis as an important component of our schedule within both our current educator teams, and new partnerships in the future.

Critically Reflect on the Narrative

1. Explore how teaching and learning philosophies impact professional collaboration within inquiry-based learning environments.

2. Discuss how different understandings of inquiry-based learning can contribute to tensions within professional collaboration.

3. Explore how tensions can be positively addressed within collaborative teams.

4. Discuss the importance of dialogue for collaborative practice and ethical leadership. Explore system structures and practices that might be needed to support this dialogue.

5. Analyze the planning processes your team engages in through multiple lenses: inquiry, voice, power and privilege. Consider the perspectives of the learners, families, and interprofessional teams in your analysis.

6. Identify the relevance of this narrative for your own professional practice and ethical leadership.

7. Explore strategies that you might employ to foster collaboration within an interprofessional team.

Ethical Challenge One
Reflecting on Principles

An ethical challenge or dilemma that I encountered in my professional practice involved my partner and me communicating a difference of opinion regarding the documentation of observed student learning to a parent during a meeting. This created tension in our relationship and contributed to the parent's lack of confidence in us and the program.

After the meeting, it was evident that we needed to discuss the tension between us, our difference in opinion and our subsequent actions. We came to realize that presenting differing views to the parent portrays a division within our early learning team. We referred to our professional ethical standards to identify the importance of trust, honesty and integrity. I explained how I enjoyed working with her and how it might be helpful to communicate with each other before presenting learning outcomes to parents.

Through this experience, I have gained insight into the importance of co-constructing principles for collaborating with the early learning team and communicating with parents. Just as I do with my students, I learned the importance of formulating these principles at the beginning of the school year with the early learning team. Our principles guide how we respect each other's views while working through professional conflict. The principles also inform how we would communicate student learning outcomes with parents.

Also, I thought about what it means to be a partner on a team. I feel that being a partner means being in relationship with others; it involves recognizing the strengths of others, as well as the strengths that we add to the relationship. I believe that when we focus on what each of us "can" bring to the relationship, the emphasis moves away from what we sometimes "do not." There can be challenges in any relationship, but these challenges can be teachable moments that enable us to consider differing perspectives that can enhance practice.

In relation to being a partner in my school, I see myself as part of a team; it involves a collaboration of individuals with a shared vision and that work interdependently to achieve a common outcome. This embodies the values and principles conveyed in the professional ethical standards of both the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood Educators.

Critically Reflect on Practice

1. Reflect on an incident in your own professional practice when you experienced tension related to interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice.

2. Identify practices for engaging in dialogue with parents and families that convey an ethical and collaborative stance.

3. Identify the assumptions and beliefs that guide your professional practice related to engaging in partnerships with families, colleagues and community organizations.

4. Critically analyze how the values and principles embodied within the ethical standards of your profession are embodied within your interprofessional collaborative practice.

5. Identify insights you gained from this experience for your own professional practice.

Ethical Challenge Two
Questioning Ethical Responsibilities

Taking a nature walk on the public trail behind the school is a common outdoor activity that we engage in several times throughout the year. With the harsh weather and ice storms that we experienced this past winter, the Conservation Authority put up a temporary trail closure sign that warned of potential unsafe conditions on the path. Despite this sign, we did observe many dog walkers and joggers continue to use the path. We were hopeful that the winter clean up would take place before our scheduled nature walk in a couple of weeks.

The day of our nature walk had arrived. When I got to school that afternoon I was disheartened to see that the temporary trail closure sign remained. I was also uneasy to learn that other members of the school's early learning team ignored the sign and took classes on the nature walk anyway. They assured me that they had walked the path before school started and it was clear — at least there were no obvious dangers that they spotted. What should I do?

After weighing the potential and unknown risks and the responsibility to ensure the safety of the children, my teaching partner and I decided that we would not take the class on a nature walk on the public trail. Instead, we took a nature hunt around the property surrounding the school. The children had a great time listening and looking for signs of spring.

Parents trust that schools and educators are committed to their child's well-being and safety. While the potential risks may have been minimal, my professional judgment told me that even the slightest possibility that a student could be injured would be too great a risk to take. This situation caused some minor tensions between me and other members of the early learning team. Although I did not make any direct comments, it seems that our refusal to take the children on the path could have been perceived as an assertion of judgment on their actions and interfered with future collaboration. However, I did not want to jeopardize my certification and the safety of the children for an activity that I viewed as being too risky.

On the other hand, I did not report this incident to the principal or families of the children that participated in the nature walk on the temporarily closed path. I was concerned about what this might do in terms of my ongoing interprofessional collaboration with fellow early learning team members. By default, am I equally guilty of not upholding my own ethical responsibilities by failing to do so? Educators are in the public eye. The public and specifically parents trust educators with the duty to care for their young children, which is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly.

Critically Reflect on Practice

1. Discuss your professional response to this incident, the associated practices and thinking that is illuminated.

2. Analyze the assumptions and beliefs that are inherent within this written experience.

3. Discuss proactive and responsible actions that educators can employ to support safety and well-being in learning environments.

4. Discuss the ethical challenge(s) embedded within this experience.

5. Discuss the ethical and professional challenges embedded within this experience.

6. Explore the professional practices that could be employed to ensure the safety of all involved.

7. Explore the ethical dimensions associated with the pedagogical practices and decisions enacted within this written experience.

8. Reflect on the role an ethical leadership stance might have on the experiences discussed.

9. The author appears to question their own ethical leadership stance in the following statement:

   "By default, am I equally guilty of not upholding my own ethical responsibilities by failing to do so? Educators are in the public eye. The public and specifically parents charge educators with a great duty of care to their young children, which is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly."

   Discuss the importance of critical reflection and the analysis of professional judgment for informing an ethical leadership stance.

10. Explore the types of dialogue, relationships and cultures that an inquiry and leadership stance could support.

Ethical Challenge Three
Responding to Colleagues' Inquiries

An ethical challenge for me emerged in relation to my role as a co-host for an institute on inquiry-based learning in the early years. Following the institute, I attempted to extend this professional dialogue related to inquiry by hosting monthly visits to early learning teams and administrators. These opportunities provided a venue for a rich dialogue. However, I was challenged in responding to frequent requests to provide precise information about our program; for example, "What are the names of the learning centres and may I have your descriptions? Can I use your checklists? What provocation did you put forth? How did you organize it? Where does your Drama Centre go? What books do your students write in?"

The issue is not whether I am willing to share resources and ideas I have co-developed alongside my colleagues or ideas that have worked for me. I am concerned that others (teachers, ECEs, etc.) are always looking for a formula — a prescription that can be applied to their own context without reflection or consideration for their own space. Offering these resources may be seen as formulaic practice rather than invitations for inquiry.

As an educator who aims to inspire others to shift their pedagogy to reflect what is developmentally appropriate and meaningful to young children, I am always torn between giving others what they want, a tool that might jumpstart them into making change in their environment or inspiring them to think differently about inquiry-based early learning and the opportunities we provide for children.

You can't win every battle. More than anything, I've recognized that we are all on a journey, and that one has to start somewhere. While I may be trying to inspire someone to change one particular part of their program, e.g. worksheets, sometimes in order for them to do that, they need explicit tools that will support them in moving forward.

Critically Reflect on Practice

1. Reflect on the assumptions and beliefs in this written experience.

2. Analyze the ethical dimensions associated with collegial relationships and collaboration. Analyze the ethical challenge encountered within this written experience.

3. Discuss the author's comments related to formulaic practice and invitations for inquiry.

4. Reflect on the relevance of this experience for your own ethical and collaborative practice.

5. Discuss the language and/or metaphors used in this written experience.

6. Analyze the messages related to professional learning that are conveyed within this written experience.

7. Explore potential strategies that might futher dialogue and collaborative inquiry.

8. Discuss your vision of ethical leadership

9. Reflect on the significance of adopting a critical inquiry stance for ethical leadership.

Using a Conceptual Framework Within Professional Practice

A conceptual framework is an inquiry tool that can promote dialogue, inquiry and reflection related to collaboration and ethical practice. The conceptual framework that was co-constructed for interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership was developed using a consensus workshop process.

An outline of this process is provided to enable practitioners to co-construct their own conceptual frameworks for interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice within their own unique professional contexts. Co-constructing such a conceptual framework helps to develop a shared understanding among colleagues regarding collaboration and ethical practices.

Consensus Workshop

The consensus workshop[1] is one of many facilitation methodologies developed by the Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA Canada). It is a dialogic and inquiry oriented group process that focuses on the co-creation of knowledge related to a specific area of professional inquiry.

The goal of a consensus workshop is the co-construction of a conceptual framework that reflects shared understandings

related to a specific area of inquiry. The consensus workshop facilitation process ideally enables an organic and dialogue-based creation of a conceptual framework to emerge from the lived experiences and wisdom of participants. As such, it is a democratic process that honours all voices and recognizes how the wisdom of every participant manifested in each of their lived experiences is essential for a deeper collective dialogue, inquiry, reflection, understanding and wisdom.

The following information provides an overview of the consensus workshop process and its application with members of the College of Early Childhood Educators and the Ontario College of Teachers.

Consensus Workshop Process

At a joint ethical institute on interprofessional collaboration and ethical leadership, members from both Colleges were invited to participate in a consensus workshop that explored the ethical dimensions of interprofessional collaboration. The consensus workshop facilitation is comprised of the following processes outlined on page 14.

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[1] For a complete description of this facilitation process, please refer to Stanfield Brian R. *The Workshop Book: From Individual Creativity to Group Action.* New Society Publishers. British Columbia 2002

Processes	Description
Reflecting on lived experiences and professional knowledge	Guided imagery was used to encourage a deeper reflective exploration regarding their own lived experience and understanding of ethical dimensions of interprofessional collaboration. **Participants were then invited to individually reflect and list key thoughts or ideas emanating from their reflections.**
Dialogue and sharing the individual lists	Participants were invited to enter into pairs to share, compare and discuss their lists. There was an opportunity to clarify ideas, to identify where there were similarities or duplication of ideas and to generate more ideas emerging from the resulting dialogue. Ultimately, the pairs arrived at a combined list of ideas. **Ideas were then transferred to cards, one idea per card, using 3-5 words in large block letters.**
Selection and random posting of dyad cards on the wall as directed by the facilitator	Each pair was then asked to post two cards randomly on the wall. The facilitator invited the pair to determine which cards they would like to post first but with a reminder **that all cards/ideas eventually would be posted**. (No idea is abandoned.)
Clustering of posted concept cards on the wall by the collective group	Once all pairs had posted two cards each, the facilitator then invited the large group to consider how cards might be paired into clusters. The point of pairing is not simply to connect ideas that seem similar. More fundamentally, the **pairing of ideas seeks to explore how two ideas combine to shape and inform a deeper concept**. The conversation that ensues during the pairing process is **essential for the large group to co-create a collective understanding of concepts that emerge from the pairing of ideas**. When all cards had been paired, the facilitator then invited dyads to randomly post two more cards. These new cards then either formed new cluster pairings or were connected to previous pairing clusters. The framework on page 16 indicates how this process resulted in nine cluster columns of ideas in the exploration of interprofessional collaboration and its ethical dimensions.
Naming of the clusters	The final step in the consensus workshop process is to name clusters. Up to this point the clusters had remained nameless and were identified only by neutral symbols (i.e., a circle, square, triangle, etc…). Not naming the clusters as they are emerging is essential to enable deeper concepts to form freely without the constraint of a defining label. But once all cards have been clustered, it is time to ask, "What is this cluster really about?" **The process of naming clusters is usually the most difficult step in the consensus workshop method but it is also where the richest, deepest conversations and co-creation of shared understandings occur.** In the dialogic process of naming the essential ethical dimensions of interprofessional collaboration, clusters are analyzed, reconfigured and synthesized in a dynamic interplay of card movement and emerging shared understandings. In the end, the **participants named nine essential ethical dimensions of interprofessional collaboration in the conceptual framework they had co-created**: Open-Mindedness, Forward Thinking, Team-Building, Support for Growth and Change, Professional Collegial Relationships, Professional Growth, Professional Accountability, Constructive Partnership, Reflective Practice (see page 16).

The conceptual framework that emerges through consensus can become an important reference point for professional teams. It becomes a 'living document' that can be further discussed and refined as colleagues explore their shared practice.

Exploring a Conceptual Framework for Interprofessional Collaboration and Ethical Leadership

The conceptual framework on the opposite page, *Essential Dimensions of Interprofessional Collaboration,* was co-constructed by members of the CECE and the OCT using the consensus workshop process[2]. This framework s an example of the core elements generated by this group of practitioners identified as being necessary for interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice.

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[2] A description of this process can be found on pages 13-14.

Reflecting on the Conceptual Framework (see chart page 16)

1. Critically explore the ethical dimensions that exist within this framework.

2. Select one column from the chart and collaboratively explore the implications of these concepts for your shared professional practice with colleagues.

3. Discuss how the concept of professional voice is honoured and respected within your professional practice and context.

4. Identify new insights gained from reflecting on this framework.

5. Identify the essential dimensions of interprofessional collaboration that significantly support interprofessional collaboration in your professional practices. Generate ideas for how you might use the Essential Dimensions of Interprofessional Collaboration framework for your professional practice.

6. How does this conceptual framework resonate with your own lived professional experience?

Essential Dimensions of Interprofessional Collaboration Chart

Ethical Dimensions

Open-Mindedness	Forward Thinking	Inter-professional Communication and Team-Building	Support for Growth and Change	Professional Collegial Relationships	Professional Growth	Professional Accountability	Constructive Partnership	Reflective Practice
Win-win	Willing to take chances	Ability to listen	Shared commitment to change/ challenge and growth	Mutual respect	Co-construction of pedagogy and goals	Collective understanding of programs (play-based and inquiry-based learning)	Listening without judgment	Evolution
Honesty with care	Open to change in an unselfish manner	Open, honest and clear communication	Understanding individual experiences	Trust	Conscious communication through different modalities	Be relevant to provincial curriculum, policies, resources and legislation	Valuing differences	Hermeneutics, Interpretation and Sacredness of view
Flexible expectations	Open to new ideas	Respectful language	Dedicated time for professional growth	Respect process and each other	Reflection and collaborative professional development	Challenging ideas come from practice	Share your voice	Collaborative reflection
Positive attitude	Confidence to move forward — change can be positive	Common understanding of roles	Valuing strengths and respecting weaknesses	Professional politeness: be sensitive	Passion for learning	Clear knowledge of the Ontario curriculum	Keep a positive perspective	Positive attitude
Respect: as professional, giving voice and active listening	Productive conflict leads to reflective practice	Build respect with honesty and care	Have courageous conversations	Respect partner's needs: comfort level, basic needs	Reflecting on practice	Documentation	Open communication	Looking at the bigger picture
Intersubjectivity, recognizing other perspectives	Flexibility	Shared responsibility	Acceptance — ideas, opinions, experience and feedback	Mutual professional respect	Risk taking	Formal assessment	Appreciation — for skills, life	Curiosity
Every voice is valued	Self-advocacy	Comfort level to have courageous conversations	Supportive administrator	Working toward a shared vision (defining the content)	Problem solving	Formative assessment	Be a 2nd level listener (to be a conscious, active listener)	Reflection and sharing
Be patient	Investigation for professional growth, to continue on the learning curve	Trust the partnership	Authentic relationships	Sharing positive experiences		Decisions/actions based on best interest of the child	Open and honest to deal with challenges	Forgiveness
Forgiveness	Open to learning (Joy)	Forgiveness	Perseverance	Defining goals — clear roles, responsibilities, accountability		Advocate/champion philosophies within FDK model	Relative detachment	Honour/allow space for professional dissonance
Accepting the process to move forward	Be brave and question	Identify abilities	Mentorship	Build relationship with one another		Making learning visible	Trust ability to navigate conflict	
Values of Integrity	Use a diversity of resources	Common language		Co-construct goals and follow through			Professional voice — effective talk with purpose	
	Integrate technology	Purposeful communication					Sense of humour	
							Critical friend	
							Role versus roles	

Note: Similar concepts may inform different ethical dimensions and, as a result, may appear in multiple columns.

Creating a Conceptual Framework

Create a conceptual framework with colleagues using the consensus workshop process for interprofessional collaboration and ethical practice.


Reflecting on the Consensus Workshop Process

1. How would you describe the ethical dimensions of the consensus workshop process?

2. How might the consensus workshop process itself illuminate principles of collaboration?

3. Where might you use a similar process in your own professional work?

Note: Similar concepts may inform different ethical dimensions and, as a result, may appear in multiple columns.

Appendix 1:
College of Early Childhood Educators —
Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

Code of Ethics and
Standards of Practice

For registered early childhood
educators in Ontario

July 2017

cece
college of
early childhood
educators
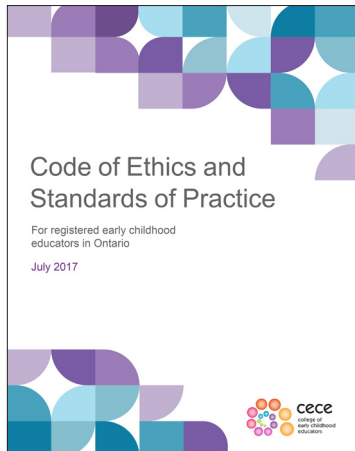
Explore how the ethical and professionl standards are reflected in the narratives, ethical challenges and frameworks.

The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice communicate to registered early childhood educators (RECEs) and the public the scope and nature of the profession. The Code of Ethics sets out the ethical values that guide the professional practice of RECEs. The Standards of Practice outline the expectations regarding knowledge, skills and actions in six key areas. The four ethics and six professional standards are interconnected, and taken together, they support RECEs in using their professional judgement and making ethical decisions in their daily practice.

Code of Ethics

RECEs are dedicated to upholding the Code of Ethics. The Code reflects the profession's core set of beliefs and values of care, respect, trust and integrity. These beliefs and values are fundamental to RECEs and guide their practice and conduct.

A. Responsibilities to Children

RECEs make the well-being, learning and care of children their foremost responsibility. They value the rights of children and create learning environments where all children can experience a sense of belonging and inclusion. RECEs foster children's joy of learning through child-centred and play-based pedagogy.

RECEs respect and nurture children's first language and/or traditional language and culture. They demonstrate a commitment to address the unique rights and needs of Indigenous children and their families. They respect each child's uniqueness, dignity and potential.

B. Responsibilities to Families

RECEs build and maintain responsive and collaborative relationships with families. These relationships are based on mutual trust, openness and respect for confidentiality. RECEs work in partnership with families, sharing knowledge and resources to support the well-being and learning of children.

RECEs recognize and respect the uniqueness and diversity of families. They provide meaningful opportunities for families to engage in and contribute to the learning environment and their child's experiences.

C. Responsibilities to Colleagues and to the Profession

RECEs build positive relationships with colleagues by demonstrating respect, trust and integrity. They support, mentor and collaborate with colleagues, including students aspiring to the profession.

RECEs value lifelong learning and reflective practice and engage in the Continuous Professional Learning program. Through their practice and leadership, RECEs support the advancement of the profession in their workplaces and in the wider community. They recognize that their conduct as professionals contributes to the public's trust in the profession.

D. Responsibilities to the Community and to he Public

RECEs provide and promote high quality early years programs and services to support children and families. They build connections and collaborate with community partners to enhance programs and promote the integration of services. RECEs communicate the value and importance of early childhood education in their communities and to the broader public. They advocate for the well-being of children and families.

Standards of Practice

The College has established the following six standards dealing with specific issues in the practice of early childhood education:

I. Caring and Responsive Relationships

II. Curriculum and Pedagogy

III. Safety, Health and Well-Being in the Learning Environment

IV. Professionalism and Leadership

V. Professional Boundaries, Dual Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

VI. Confidentiality, Release of Information and Duty to Report

Please consult the full-text version of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* available on the College of Early Childhood Educators website, college-ece.ca/standards.

Appendix 2:
Ontario College of Teachers — Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice

Explore how the ethical standards and standards of practice are reflected in the narratives, ethical challenges and frameworks.

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* represent a vision of professional practice. At the heart of a strong and effective teaching profession is a commitment to students and their learning. Members of the Ontario College of Teachers, in their position of trust, demonstrate responsibility in their relationships with students, parents, guardians, colleagues, educational partners, other professionals, the environment and the public.

The Purposes of the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* are:
- to inspire members to reflect and uphold the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- to identify the ethical responsibilities and commitments in the teaching professionto guide ethical decisions and actions in the teaching profession
- to promote public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* are:

Care
The ethical standard of Care includes compassion, acceptance, interest and insight for developing students' potential. Members express their commitment to students' well-being and learning through positive influence, professional judgment and empathy in practice.

Respect
Intrinsic to the ethical standard of Respect are trust and fair-mindedness. Members honour human dignity, emotional wellness and cognitive development. In their professional practice, they model respect for spiritual and cultural values, social justice, confidentiality, freedom, democracy and the environment.

Trust
The ethical standard of Trust embodies fairness, openness and honesty. Members' professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, guardians and the public are based on trust.

Integrity
Honesty, reliability and moral action are embodied in the ethical standard of Integrity. Continual reflection assists members in exercising integrity in their professional commitments and responsibilities.

The *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*

The *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* provide a framework of principles that describes the knowledge, skills, and values inherent in Ontario's teaching profession. These standards articulate the goals and aspirations of the profession. These standards convey a collective vision of professionalism that guides the daily practices of members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

The Purposes of the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* are:
- to inspire a shared vision for the teaching profession
- to identify the values, knowledge and skills that are distinctive to the teaching profession
- to guide the professional judgment and actions of the teaching profession
- to promote a common language that fosters an understanding of what it means to be a member of the teaching profession.

The *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* are:

Commitment to Students and Student Learning

Members are dedicated in their care and commitment to students. They treat students equitably and with respect and are sensitive to factors that influence individual student learning. Members facilitate the development of students as contributing citizens of Canadian society.

Professional Knowledge

Members strive to be current in their professional knowledge and recognize its relationship to practice. They understand and reflect on student development, learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum, ethics, educational research and related policies and legislation to inform professional judgment in practice.

Professional Practice

Members apply professional knowledge and experience to promote student learning. They use appropriate pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, resources and technology in planning for and responding to the needs of individual students and learning communities. Members refine their professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection.

Leadership in Learning Communities

Members promote and participate in the creation of collaborative, safe and supportive learning communities. They recognize their shared responsibilities and their leadership roles in order to facilitate student success. Members maintain and uphold the principles of the ethical standards in these learning communities.

Ongoing Professional Learning

Members recognize that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration and knowledge.

Reflections

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