

A pedagogy of care: two experienced RECEs reflect on reopening

Qualified, Capable & Ready A Special Series for RECEs



Lorrie Baird RECE

Lorrie is the Executive Director of Pedagogy at [Compass Learning and Care](#) in Peterborough. She's been a leader in the profession for 35 years. With her passion for pedagogy and reflective practice, Lorrie was invited to be a contributing author for the Ministry of Education's [Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from research about young children](#) (2013).



Dr. Diane Kashin RECE

Diane taught early childhood education at both the degree and diploma level for 30 years. Now retired, she writes a [blog that explores pedagogy and curriculum](#) within the ECE profession. Dr. Kashin's most recent focus has been on the six pedagogical approaches within the Ministry of Education's [How does learning happen?](#) (2014).

1 What's on the minds of RECEs now?

Lorrie:

"We're wondering about the children who are returning to child care: how do we maintain continuity with those children? Some staff feel scared, but most are excited to see the children again."

Diane:

"People may be worried about the idea of having to constantly sanitize and also about having to remove items from the learning environment."

2 How does this relate to an RECE's approach to pedagogy?

Lorrie:

"It's important to not let COVID-19 take pedagogy away or make it feel overwhelming. For many of us, our relationships with our teams are stronger since COVID-19. We know the importance of relationships and working together. And the pandemic has made it clear that learning happens in relationships."

Diane:

"It's about re-thinking some of our approaches to pedagogy and curriculum and re-examining the *why*. For example, sharing. As RECEs, we encourage sharing, but is it so bad if we let children have their own toys and materials? What's so bad about allowing them to think and explore the most potential with whatever item they're interacting with? Re-think the rituals we use with children, because anything can be turned into a ritual or tradition. We can even make new ones if the old ones are no longer safe."

3 How can RECEs best be reminded that they're capable, qualified and ready?

Lorrie:

"Think about how your practice aligns with your values. We have to go back to the basics and fundamentals of the sector to find ways to move forward and change actions we would have taken before the pandemic."

Diane:

"RECEs should be receptive to learning and increasing their knowledge about pedagogy and curriculum. You can do this by engaging with the learning community. I also encourage you to join a social group to connect and support others. Feeling isolated in the profession can happen, so let's do what we can to come together. Social media is a great vehicle to reach others and connect with people across the globe."

4 What guidance do you have for others in leadership roles?

Lorrie:

"Because you're writing all of the policies plus the curriculum, ground yourself in your values when making decisions. Ask yourself if your values as an educator are reflected in your decisions, policies and statements. It's also important to find the strengths of your team. Don't feel like you're alone: reach out to your team and get the support you need."

Diane:

"Often, there's a lot of siloes in ECE. So, come together to share your work and support each other. Be sure to acknowledge accomplishments, too. Recognize that leadership is in all of us, whether an RECE is in a formal leadership role or not."

5 Parting thoughts?

Lorrie:

"As we return to practice, think about the purpose of pedagogical leadership. How can you help bring back to life the approaches in *How does learning happen?* Doing so will enable you to see children's competence."

Diane:

"Every child has also been in lockdown, so each will have a story to tell. We want to hear their voices as we return to practice. Find out what new things they've learned and build off of these."