

ISSUE 29: July 2025



The Here and Now: Reimagining Early Childhoods In Urgent Times



ECPN Updates

Pedagogist Program

In the 2024-2025 school year, 23 different Pedagogist Program pedagogists worked within early childhood spaces and communities to nourish collaborative dialogue about transformative education and provide support toward curriculum-making processes. Generally, the months of June and July provide opportunities for pedagogists and educators to collectively look back over the school year and consider what emerged in their work together, and what they hope to carry forward into the year ahead. To this end, pedagogists have been sharing back glimpses of their co-thinking and planning in various ways. For example, they've been attending family BBQs and graduations, and creating documentation such as posters, pedagogical narrations, children's storybooks, and videos. Some of their work will be added to the ECPN website as blog posts, field notes, and pedagogical narrations. Watch for those to be added in the months ahead.

It is also a time when we invite educators and families from the centres who work regularly with a pedagogist to share feedback with us about their experiences. In June, each participating centre received an online survey invitation to share with their educators and families. The surveys are set to close end of day on July 15, and we will be collating the data in the weeks ahead. So far, more than 90 families and 80 educators have gone to the survey. We're extremely grateful to everyone who has taken the time to share their thoughts with us. Look for an overview of the feedback in our next issue of [The Here and Now](#).

re:materia

This school year, a total of 68 participants engaged in the *Waste-as Material: Reimagining the ECE Classroom* course, 35 in the winter and 33 in the spring. This course – first developed within ECPN and ECEBC's re:materia program in November 2023 and currently hosted/delivered through the Pedagogist Program – invites educators to rethink waste materials in early childhood spaces. The first three course content modules – Relationships with Materials, Common Worlding, and Materials & Waste – provide the framework for understanding materials and waste as active participants in early childhood education. Across the course content, educators are invited to consider how materials, common worlds, waste, and documentation shape early childhood education. The modules offer a framework for thinking with materials and waste as active participants in pedagogical life, and for connecting with others who are reimagining waste in creative and relational ways. This work is grounded in broader conversations about sustainability, responsibility, and education, such as those outlined in UNESCO's [Reimagining Our Futures Together](#).

End-of-course surveys were completed by 44 participants, providing us with important feedback about their experience and how they found the course in relation to their everyday work in early childhood spaces. Most participants reported that the course added to their knowledge (93%), and 77% said they were likely to bring some of the course ideas into their practice with young children. With this year's feedback, from both participants and instructors, we are currently reviewing the course content and logistics with an aim to update the material and strengthen the experience for future participants. We anticipate offering the course next school year with fall, winter and spring cohorts. Keep an eye on the ECPN [website](#) and social media platforms ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)) for updates and on [The Hub](#) for an updated course description, Q&A and fall registration.

"The connection I was able to make between the classroom, school and the world/future I want brought me many reflections and ideas to reflect on with myself, with the teachers and with the children."

"One thing I see myself bringing into my practice is a more intentional awareness of the hidden messages in everyday materials—like plastic. This project has encouraged me to slow down and notice what our waste can teach us about our values, habits, and choices. I'd like to explore how these observations can open up conversations with children about care for our bodies, our communities, and our planet—even during something as routine as snack time."

"I really enjoyed learning about common worlding practices. I would love to take more courses that encourage us to think more with different theories like post-humanism. I enjoy learning with other people and having conversations that help bridge theory and practice. I like how the assignments were focused on documentation and encourages us to experiment with ideas embedded in common worlding."

Upcoming Events

The Spring Presentation Series wrapped up on July 8, closing another year of impactful and important webinar events. Thank you to all the presenters and participants for joining us this school year at our 6 Conversation Series and 3 Presentation Series webinars. We are currently planning events for the 2025-2026 school year and will post these on the ECPN [website](#) Events page as they get finalized.

ECPN Highlights

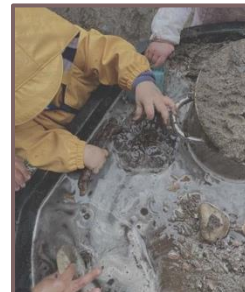
Echoes and Emergences: Centring Black Life in Canadian Early Childhood Education

Dr. Fikile Nxumalo engaged participants in a conversation about what it means to centre Black life in early childhood education in Canada. Drawing on relational Black knowledges, she invited educators to resist the colonial erasures and anti-Blackness that persist in our field. [This session](#) called for pedagogies that affirm Black childhoods through place-based, justice-oriented approaches—ones that unsettle dominant multicultural narratives and open space for more expansive, life-affirming possibilities in early learning contexts.



Playing in the Anthropocene: Pedagogical (Re)Openings

In [this conversation](#), Lisa Goddard and Adrienne Bacelar de Castro invited educators to think with play beyond developmental outcomes or neoliberal logics of preparation. They proposed play as a pedagogical site for world-making within the complexities of the ecological crisis. This presentation opened up possibilities for considering how children's play might respond to and reimagine the conditions of the Anthropocene.



Amplifying the Voices of Transgender Kids in a Trans/Gender Justice Program



Presented by TK Hannah, this webinar centered the voices, experiences, and perspectives of transgender children who participated in an affirming trans/gender justice camp in British Columbia. By emphasizing children as knowledge-holders, the discussion stressed the importance of taking children's gender agency seriously and honoring their capacity to speak for themselves. Participants were invited to consider what becomes possible when we listen differently, when we co-create pedagogies with children that honour their identities, voices, and ways of being.

Continuing the Conversation

Across Canada, early childhood educators are being invited into complex conversations—conversations that might, for some, feel like they're stretching beyond the field's usual borders. The ECPN presentation series this school year has offered powerful provocations and reminders that early childhood education does not exist outside of the ethical realities of the times we are living in. Each

presentation—*Echoes and Emergences: Centring Black Life in Canadian ECE, Playing in the Anthropocene, and Amplifying the Voices of Transgender Kids*—call educators to reflect on what it means to live their practice in today’s world.

The presentations in this year’s series share a common thread: they extend an ethical invitation. More than just offering information they pose important questions for the sector. What does it mean to practice early childhood education within the contexts of the climate crisis, anti-Blackness, and transphobia? What does it mean to stay with these questions—not as abstract ideas, but as real conditions shaping the lives of children, families, communities, and educators?

Early childhood and primary pedagogies are dynamic and complex and involve multiple, diverse, and changing relationships. There is no “one-size-fits-all” way to practice. Rather, pedagogies occur in relationship with families, children, communities, legislation, policies, places, ideas, materials, and histories. This complexity may bring tensions and difficult conversations as educators grapple with questions of what learning and education can be, and who children and educators can be. Education and care without these complexities and uncertainties are unavoidable in a democratic culture. While tension can be uncomfortable, it can also help educators focus on what children bring into the world and what the world brings to children. Engaging with complexity means accommodating many ways of thinking, seeing, doing, and knowing as well as being a condition of professionalism in early learning.

(BC ELF, p. 27)

Each presentation turns us toward the situatedness of our work. There is no single way to respond, but there is a shared call to resist what is taken as “normal” or “neutral” in early childhood settings. These gatherings remind us that our pedagogical choices matter, and that theory can be a tool for imagining what is possible. Whether drawing on queer theory, Black studies, feminist geographies, or environmental humanities, these series challenge us to think with frameworks beyond ECE—and to make space for interdisciplinary, justice-oriented dialogues in our everyday practice.

The presenters also shared carefully curated resources to support ongoing thinking and collective study. They offer entry points for deepening the conversation in your context and continuing the work beyond the events themselves. If you were unable to attend a presentation within the series, two are available via the ECPN website to watch as recordings, [Echoes and Emergences: Centring Black Life in Canadian ECE](#) and [Playing in the Anthropocene](#). You can also [email](#) the ECPN office if you would like to get a presentation resource list. Let us know which one you are interested in receiving.

We encourage you to (re)visit the session recordings, watch with your colleagues, and ask together:

- What does it mean to be an early childhood educator in these times?
- What are the ethical contours of our practice in this place?
- How are we responding to what emerges in our practice —right here, right now?