ISSUE 33: December 2025

The Here and Now: Reimagining Early Childhoods In Urgent Times

ECPN Updates

Pedagogist Program

As 2025 draws to a close, it's with joy and gratitude that we extend to you our warmest season's greetings.

This calendar year has held many wonderful moments with unwaveringly dedicated educators and colleagues who work each day to create early years spaces that young children deserve. At the same time, we recognize that the field, and society more broadly, continues to face many challenges. These challenges have very real consequences and can, at times, feel insurmountable. We remain committed and hopeful, continuing to work collectively toward more just worlds and enlivening conditions for early childhood education.

> Hope doesn't mean denying these realities. It means facing them and addressing them by remembering what else the twenty-first century has brought, including movements, heroes, and shifts in consciousness that address these things now. (Rebecca Solnit, 2016, as cited in The Marginalian)

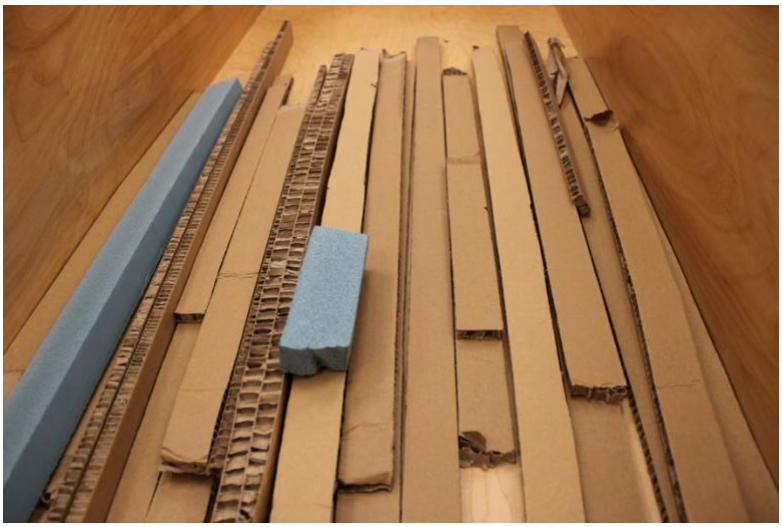
Guided by the vision of the B.C. Early Learning Framework, we will continue supporting educators in rethinking and deepening their pedagogical practices in ways that honour their unique contexts, communities, and histories. We look forward to continuing this vital work together in 2026.

The Early Childhood Pedagogy Network (ECPN) will be closed for the winter holidays December 23, 2025, through January 4, 2026.

re:materia

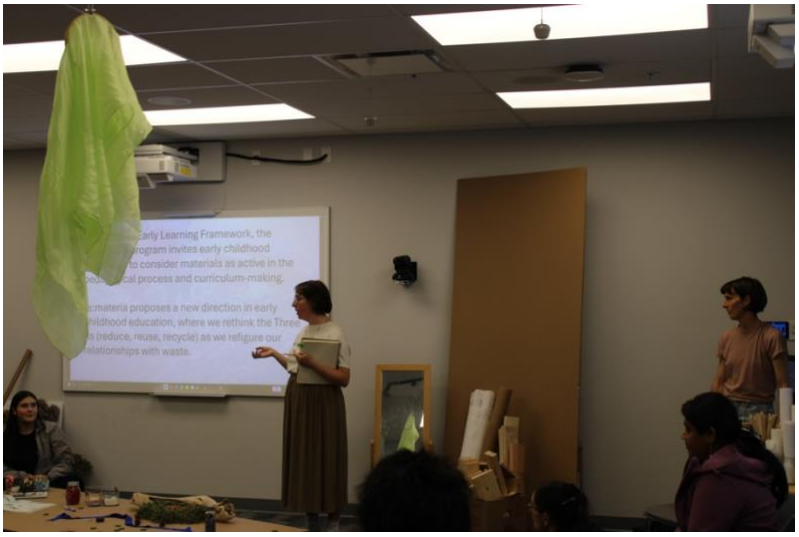
The re:materia project engages early childhood educators in creatively and critically reimagining pedagogical processes and curriculum-making around waste. Grounded in social and ecological justice frameworks, re:materia proposes new directions for early childhood education that rethink the Three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and refigure young children's waste futures. The re:materia program is a partnership between ECPN and ECEBC.

In collaboration with Thompson Rivers University, located on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, the re:materia team is creating a re:materia centre where early childhood educators and students can access and experiment pedagogically with waste materials. Currently a small but growing waste library is available in the Early Childhood Building at Thompson Rivers University. The waste library is community-created, containing materials from local business and groups.



Selection of locally sourced waste materials available in the waste library

On October 21, the Kamloops re:materia team introduced the waste library to a group of early childhood educators and students. Sharing moments from her practice, ECPN pedagogist Teresa Smith invited participants to consider how particular waste materials might offer children possibilities for collective experimenting, imagining and transforming. Inspired by ideas proposed in ECPN's *Waste As Materials* course, the group contemplated how educators might begin bringing the waste materials to children to invite collective thinking.



The re:materia team will be inviting this group of educators and student educators back to the re:materia centre in January to spend more time with the waste materials and to experiment with bringing the materials into their classrooms, either to think particular concepts that are already living within the classroom or introduce a waste material in ways that will draw children together to collectively get to know the material.

Further updates will be shared on the ECPN website and monthly newsletter.

ECPN pedagogist, Teresa Smith inviting educators and student educators to reimagine their relationship with waste materials.

Upcoming Events

Conversation XII: Pedagogists' Engagements in Early Childhood Centres

Registration is now open on the Events page of the ECPN website for the next Conversation Series. Conversation XII: Pedagogists' Engagments in Early Childhood Centres is a 4-part seires that will invite

pedagogists to discuss various aspects of their work and how they collaborate with educators to create lively pedagogical spaces across British Columbia. This series builds on and continues conversations from last year's Conversation XI. If you are interested in revisiting previous conversations, visit the Series page of the website.

Part I: Engaging Children's Processes
Date: January 27th, 2026
Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time
How pedagogists and educators work together to attend to children's processes in curriculum-making.

Part II: Conversations with Children
Date: February 24th, 2026
Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time
How pedagogists work alongside educators to foster rich and meaningful conversations with children.

Part III: Attending to Children's Lifeworlds
Date: April 16th, 2026
Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time
How pedagogists engage observation practices that connect to pedagogical processes

Part VI: Working with Pedagogical Commitments
Date: April 16th, 2026
Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time
How pedagogists and educators work with pedagogical commitments in their practice.

ECPN Highlights

Blog – Seeing Otherwise: Photography as Pedagogical Storytelling Practice

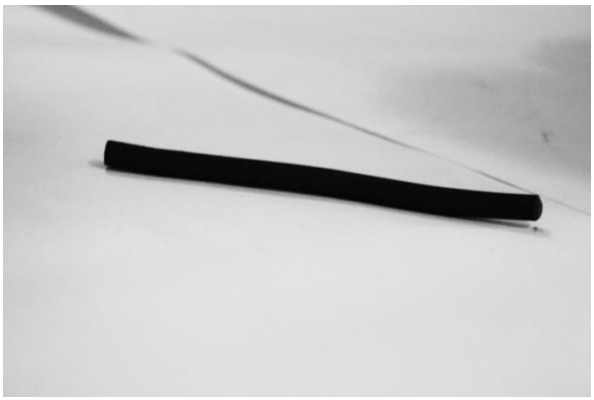
In this blog post, pedagogist Chelsea Hann invites us to think with photography, not as a nuetral tool for documentation, but as a pedagogical companion that shapes how we notice, interpret, and respond. Working alongisde an inquiry with charcoal, Chelsea explores what happens when the camera turns toward material movement, texture, and relation rather than toward evidence of learning. Photography becomes a practice of attument, lingering with gestures, traces, and material procovations.

Read More

Rather than capturing what is complete, Chelsea positions photography as a form of wittnessing and as an ethical and aesthetic act that opens space for complexity and wonder. This piece asks: What might photography create in relation with children and materials? How do we attend to the nonverbal, the more-than-human, the ephemeral in our documentation practices? What responsibilities emerge when we make something visible?

Field Note – Tracing Charcoal: A Material Encounter

This field note is a visual narration of an ongoing material inquiry with charcoal. Moving through the images, a story unfolds of how charcoal unsettles expecations of order, how it marks skin and surfaces, and its moods as it move sthrough spaces. The images in this field note trace lively relations between bodies and material. The gestrues, residues, and rhythms invite slower, more attentive ways of being together. This field note accompanies the blog above, Seeing Otherwise, Photography as a Storytelling Practice.



Read More

Field Note: Slow Encounters with Orange Peels

What happens when we linger with what is usually cast aside? In this field note, pedagogist Lu Jiang invites us into an inquiry that began with orange peels and unfolded into a rick pedagogical exploration. Rather than treating peels as waste to be managed, educators and children stayed with their transformations: their resistance to being smashed, their lingering scent, their slow decay.

Through these encounters, orange peels became more than remanants from mealtimes, they became thinking companions that provoked questions about care, waste, and relationality. This field note asks us what possibilities emerge when we shift from caring *for* waste to caring *with* it. How might materials like orange peels invite us to rethink curriculum as something that lives in gesture, rhythms, and shared attention rather than predetermined outcomes?

Read More

Continuing the Conversation

December often brings a shift in rhythm. We generally move indoors more, gathering in spaces that feel warm and familiar while the outside world settles into its cold, grey, and blustery mood. December can invite a slower pace for lingering, for conversations, and for reading.

At the ECPN, we work at reading, not as a way to extract knowledge but to linger with ideas. Pedagogists move carefully alongside educators to cultivate conditions for engaging collectively with texts of various forms, from various disciplines. Over the past months, the ECPN has been sharing monthly reading recommendations on social media. These recommendations are invitations to think alongside others, to bring questions back to our centres, and to (perhaps) meet unfamiliar language. For many, reading is for joy and pleasure. While this matters, reading can also be a pedagogical practice that noursishes how we meet and respond to that which is unfolding in our work with children, families, materials, and place in the 21st century.

In Affrica Taylor's keynote address at ECEBC's 50th Anniversary Conference (2019), she conveys the importance of "thinking with others" in relation to how we "make sense" of, and within, our pedagogical practices with young children. In her lecture she notes that:

> If we have a very depleted source of concepts to think with, the sense that we'll make of something will be constrained. It basically means doing a lot of reading, engaging a lot with materials that aren't specific to your discplinary field, thinking beyond what's already thought, thinking in ways that exceed the kind of frames that predominate . . . . to get beyond those, to think differently about what's going on here, to really push the boundaries and stretch yourself, you've got to read broader. (Thinking with others clip, 0:57)

Taylor's call to the sector to read, and to read outside the discipline of early childhood education, as a means of expanding the ideas we have to think thoughts with, fits well with the vision of early childhood education put foward by the B.C. Early Learning Framework (ELF).

The B.C. ELF describes the early childhood educator as a researcher and collaborator who seeks to extend their own learning and makes intentional pedagogical choices in their practice. This perspective asks us to listen, experiment, and attend to multiple perspectives (p. 18). The framework invites us to draw on more than one theoretical approach (p. 28), because practice in the 21st century is dynamic, situated, and plural (p. 27). It reminds us that new ideas and approaches matter and that introducing new languages can help us see differently and express the complexitites of early learning in our times (p. 5).

Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw and Kathleen Kummen also maintain that "new language pushes us to think differently, and thinking differently is hard work" (Pacini-Ketchabaw & Kummen, 2022, p. 28). Encountering new ideas or words that are not familiar when we read is expected, and desirable, when we read as a pedagogical practice. Pacini-Ketchabaw and Kummen invite educators to stay with the discomfort of the unfamiliar and to remember that "introducing new language is not a critique of practice 'as it used to be' but rather an ongoing response to children's ever-changing lives" (p. 27).

Reading becomes a way of practicing this openness and of cultivating the patience and curiosity our work demands.

How might reading nourish pedagogical practices – how we listen, how we notice, how we respond? How might reading help us hold space for complexity and multiplicity? How might reading foster openness, patience and curiosity, dispositions vital in the work of early chilhdood education?

As we settle into the indoor rhythms of December, perhaps we can think of, and engage with, reading as an important part of our our pedagogical life.

Visit the ECPN Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn pages for monthly reading recommendations that invite us to extend beyond the familiar and to think with others.

ECPN Early Childhood Pedagogy Network