

ISSUE 36: March 2026



# The Here and Now: Reimagining Early Childhoods In Urgent Times



## ECPN Updates

### Pedagogist Program

As we continue to provide pedagogical supports to B.C. child care professionals in what is the third and final year of this phase of the Pedagogist Program (see [Issue 30](#) for more information about this Program phase), we are pleased to share a couple of opportunities that we are currently organizing for late spring.

As many of you know, the Pedagogist Program does not have enough pedagogists to work directly with all interested child care programs and within all communities across the province. One way we try to reach more educators is through structured collaborative dialogue opportunities for community educators. These offerings are often co-created in collaboration with CCRR programs, postsecondary ECE programs, and/or [ECEBC](#) local chapters/ambassadors. We are currently organizing collaborations to offer two different in-person focused dialogues for community educators in May or June.

### ***Living Commitments to Inclusion: Tracing Everyday Shifts in Early Childhood Spaces***

This focused dialogue invites educators to reflect on how inclusion is lived in the everyday moments of early childhood programs. Drawing on pedagogical work, Pedagogist Program pedagogists will share stories and traces that foreground the small yet significant shifts that occur when educators hold space for difference, complexity, and belonging. Rather than offering a model to replicate, this session aims to create room for dialogue around the uncertainties, tensions, and possibilities of inclusive practice. Together, we will think about how commitments to inclusion move from words on a page into gestures, relationships, and decisions with children, families, and communities.

### ***A 'Part 2' Focused Dialogue***

This focused dialogue is an opportunity to deepen an ECPN webinar series by bringing educators together for a local conversation about the ideas shared in the webinar and what these ideas might mean within and for their practice. Educators are invited to attend (e.g., June 2 [Conversation Series XII Part IV](#)) or watch the webinar recording prior to the session, and then join two ECPN pedagogists to explore the ideas raised in relation to their own local work context. Webinar recordings that may be of interest include Conversation Series and Presentation Series (e.g., February's presentation about [Rethinking Technologies in the Early Years](#)). Several community programs have found this to be a very successful focused dialogue opportunity.

Through March and April, we will be organizing collaborations with groups/centres/programs to offer these focused dialogues to community educators in May or June. If you have an **early years group, community program, or postsecondary class** that might be interested in having one of these free Pedagogist Program focused dialogue ProD offerings in May or June, please contact [ecpn@uwo.ca](mailto:ecpn@uwo.ca) to discuss possibilities. Space will be limited for the number of offerings the Pedagogist Program can provide.

*“Attending supports our lifelong learning, enabling and inspiring us to better care for young children. Being with other educators helps us feel more connected to each other through our shared experiences. Tomorrow, when I return to our daycare, I will be thinking about the centers in the next community who will also be challenged and delighted by their day with the kiddos.”* (Interior region educator, post focused dialogue survey, November 2025)

## **re:materia**

### **Kamloops Art Gallery re:materia Event**

Educators and ECPN pedagogists gathered at the [Kamloops Art Gallery](#) (KAG) on March 12 to experiment with a variety of non-toxic, locally sourced waste materials from the re:materia Kamloops library. Working with materials such as copper wire, plastic tubing, wool roving, and wooden pieces left over from a construction site, the group thought carefully about the properties of these specific materials and considered how different materials offer different opportunities for experimentation and thinking.

[The art gallery's exhibitions](#)—Rajni Perera's *Futures* and Bree Apperley's *Slug Eggs*—supported the group in thinking beyond simply consuming materials for human use in early childhood education. Perera's work invites an envisioning of alternative co-created futures, while Apperley's work questions the dominance and permanence of capitalist frameworks. Tricky questions emerged: What

conditions might we create for educators, pedagogists, and children to reimagine materials as important co-constructors of ideas? And how might small, everyday shifts in how we think of and with materials support the creation of alternative futures?

Re:materia Kamloops will be hosting similar events in the coming months for local educators. For more information, contact Teresa Smith at [tsmit286@uwo.ca](mailto:tsmit286@uwo.ca).



### **Waste-as Material: Reimagining the ECE Classroom**

We are excited to announce that registration for the Spring 2026 cohort of the [Waste-as Material](#) course is now open on [The Hub](#). Developed in collaboration between the ECPN and [ECEBC](#), the course invites educators to rethink waste materials in early childhood spaces. Drawing from a range of disciplines, the course explores ideas such as relationships with materials, common worlding, and materials and waste, inviting educators to consider how materials participate in early childhood education. Throughout the course, participants connect with others who are interested in rethinking waste creatively and are supported to reflect on their local contexts and collaborate with colleagues to reimagine waste flows within their programs. Please see the flyer and The Hub for more information about the upcoming cohort.

**RE:MATERIA** re:materia is a program developed by the ECPN in partnership with ECEBC



Drawing on a range of perspectives, this course invites educators to rethink waste materials in early childhood spaces.

*22 Pro-D hours will be provided for completing the course*

**Introduction:** Opens after registration, 30-minutes of Self-Paced Learning (Online content on EYPD Hub) **AND one required** 30-minute Zoom Session, March 26, 6:30-7:00 p.m. **OR** March 28, 10:00-10:30 a.m.

**Module 1: Relationships with Materials**

March 30 - April 19, 2026  
4 hrs of Self-Paced Learning  
(Online content on EYPD Hub)

**AND**

1.5 hrs Zoom Session with Instructor  
Two Date Options:  
• April 16, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
• April 18, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

**Module 2: Common Worlding**

April 20 - May 10, 2026  
4 hrs of Self-Paced Learning  
(Online content on EYPD Hub)

**AND**

1.5 hrs Zoom Session with Instructor  
Two Date Options:  
• May 7, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
• May 9, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

**Module 3: Materials and Waste**

May 11 - May 31, 2026  
4 hrs of Self-Paced Learning  
(Online content on EYPD Hub)

**AND**

1.5 hrs Zoom Session with Instructor  
Two Date Options:  
• May 28, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
• May 30, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

**Module 4: Bringing it all Together**

June 1 - June 21, 2026  
3 hrs of Self-Paced Learning  
(Online content on EYPD Hub)

**AND**

1.5 hrs Session with Instructor  
Two Date Options:  
• June 18, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
• June 20, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

**Registration open March 11 - 25, 2026. For more information about the course and how to register visit:**  
<https://bcearlyyearshub.ca/> **This is a free, publicly funded course**

The B.C. Early Childhood Pedagogy Program, delivered by the ECPN, creates spaces for vibrant public conversations about pedagogical projects and processes that matter to early childhood communities in B.C. For more information visit [ecpn.ca](http://ecpn.ca).

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# Upcoming Events

## Conversation XII: Pedagogists' Engagements in Early Childhood Centres

Registration is open on the [Events](#) page of the ECPN website for the next Conversation Series. Conversation XII: Pedagogists' Engagements in Early Childhood Centres is a four-part series 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 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 IV: Working with Pedagogical Commitments

**Date:** June 2nd, 2026

**Time:** 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time

How pedagogists and educators work with pedagogical commitments in their practice.

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# ECPN Highlights

## Publications

Several new [publications](#) are now available on the ECPN website. These pieces extend conversations that have been unfolding through ECPN gatherings, projects, and collaborations, offering opportunities to pause with ideas emerging in early childhood education. We invite educators, pedagogists, researchers, and students to take some time to read, reflect, and perhaps return to these writings with colleagues. Publications can often serve as starting points for conversation, opening space to think together about the questions, tensions, and possibilities shaping early childhood pedagogy today.

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# Continuing the Conversation

In February, the ECPN hosted the presentation [Rethinking Digital Technologies in the Early Years: Philosophy, AI, and Practice](#) with Professor Susan Edwards, Director of the Early Childhood Futures research program and Head of Discipline for Early Childhood Education at Australian Catholic University. The presentation invited educators to pause with an increasingly urgent question: What does it mean to live and work with digital technologies (and now artificial intelligence) in early childhood education?

Digital technologies are no longer on the periphery; they are woven into the social, cultural, and economic conditions that shape children's lives. As Professor Edwards suggested, rather than approaching technology simply as a tool to be used or avoided, educators might benefit from thinking more carefully about what technologies do, what assumptions they carry, and how they shape worlds.

One concept Professor Edwards introduced was "technical code." Technical code refers to the assumptions and values embedded within technologies themselves. Technologies are not neutral;

they are designed with particular purposes and logics that shape how they function and how people interact with them. When educators encounter digital tools or emerging technologies such as AI, these embedded assumptions can influence decisions about learning, communication, and documentation. Thinking with technical code invites educators to ask different questions: What actions does this technology encourage? What ways of seeing children, learning, or knowledge might it privilege? What possibilities might it close down?

Another distinction Professor Edwards highlighted was between AI *in* education and AI *and* education. AI *in* education refers to technologies designed to directly shape teaching and learning, such as tools that generate materials, track progress, or automate assessment. AI *and* education invites educators to consider the broader technological worlds children are part of. Children are entering societies increasingly structured by algorithms and automated systems. This raises questions about the kinds of digital futures children are inheriting and the forms of awareness, literacy, and responsibility needed to live well within these worlds.

For early childhood educators, these questions can feel both unfamiliar and pressing. The field has long emphasized relationships, play, care, and attentiveness to children's experiences. Digital technologies—particularly AI—can sometimes appear to sit uneasily alongside these commitments. Perhaps the task is not to treat technology as separate from pedagogy, but to consider how pedagogical thinking can guide how technologies are encountered.

As Professor Edwards suggests, philosophical reflection can play an important role. It allows educators to step back from the immediate pressures of new tools, policies, and expectations and ask deeper questions about purpose and responsibility. What kinds of educational worlds are we trying to create? What values should guide our decisions when new technologies enter early childhood spaces? How might educators remain attentive to children's experiences while also recognizing the technological conditions shaping children's lives?

At the same time, educators are navigating practical realities. Digital tools are already present in many centres through communication platforms, documentation tools and administrative systems. Artificial intelligence is quickly entering these spaces as well, sometimes embedded in software used for planning, writing, or information management. These developments make it increasingly important to approach digital technologies thoughtfully rather than reactively.

As conversations about AI and digital technologies continue to unfold across education, early childhood education brings a valuable perspective. The field's commitments to relationality, ethics, and attentiveness offer important ways of thinking about technological change.

Rather than asking only *whether* technology should be present in early childhood spaces, we might ask: What kinds of relationships between children, educators, and technologies are being created? What assumptions about knowledge, learning, and development are embedded in the tools we encounter? How might educators remain critically engaged while also navigating the realities of digital society?

As AI and digital technologies continue to evolve, we invite educators, pedagogists, and researchers to remain in conversation with one another. What are you noticing in your own contexts? What questions are emerging in your pedagogical work? And how might early childhood education continue to contribute thoughtful perspectives to wider conversations about technology, ethics, and the futures children are inheriting?



Early Childhood  
Pedagogy Network

