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The Here and Now: Reimagining Early Childhoods In Urgent Times



ECPN Updates

Pedagogists, Pedagogical Projects, and Making the Work Visible

Pedagogists within ECPN's [Early Childhood Pedagogist Program](#) work alongside educators and children in curricular projects that engage with the B.C. Early Learning Framework's vision; *respectfully living and learning together*. Pedagogists design and nurture pedagogical projects within local contexts that are deeply responsive to the conditions of our times. These projects are situated in the social, political, cultural, linguistic and material lifeworlds of communities. They are also designed through a deep engagement with pedagogical narrations. Through this dialogical curriculum-making process, pedagogists create spaces for educators to consider how to live well with young children ([Vintimilla & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2017](#)). A fundamental and exciting element of project work is making the work visible to others.

The [BC Early Learning Framework](#) describes the pedagogical narration process as including making “children’s learning processes and inquiries as well as educators’ **pedagogical choices** visible and open to interpretation and reflection” (p. 51), which in turn shapes curricular decisions and collective creation. Pedagogists work closely with educators in their early childhood programs to experiment with how to make visible traces from their collective curricular work to invite collaborative dialogue and pedagogical decision making within the classroom/centre. They also work to foster conditions for making project work visible beyond the classroom to deepen inquiries and curriculum, as well as provoke public discussion within early childhood education.

*Educators who bring pedagogical narration into the public sphere are contributing to broadening the dialogue of childhood, learning, and education by opening spaces for multiple perspectives and multiple ways of doing and being. By engaging the community in these conversations, educators resist a “one-size-fits-all” model of early learning and open possibilities for generating **localized pedagogies** that respond to the diverse historical and cultural contexts of B.C. communities. (p. 52)*

Last year, ECPN pedagogists Kirsten MacDougall-Seiler and Friday Bailey curated an exhibit for the Terrace Art Gallery, [Childhoods: Becoming, Inheriting, and Unbounding Bodies](#). The exhibit contained glimpses of a long-term inquiry with a group of children and educators, where tracing and drawing life-sized bodies sparked the co-creation of a curriculum that challenged idyllic notions of childhoods. Also last year, ECPN pedagogist Gloria Albarracin led the curation of an exhibit, [Spiders and Spider Webs](#), at the Prince George Public Library that showcased the process and results of children and educators, alongside their pedagogist Gloria, to reimagine curriculum as an ongoing process that values listening and collaboration. So far this year, two pedagogists have worked with their centres to bring traces of their project work to a broader public audience in their local community.

ECPN pedagogist Megan MacDonald and Capilano University atelierista Tatiana Zakharova-Goodman have been supporting young children and educators in taking up questions of abilities, care, roots, and rituals, exploring them through conversations, drawings, sculpting, and movement. This month a public exhibit on display at Britannia Community Centre in Vancouver offered glimpses of the complex work happening in the early childhood spaces at Britannia. Passersby and community centre attendees were invited to pause, look and pay attention to the theories, stories and ideas that emerged from the children and early childhood educators working together to think more deeply about their world.



As well this past month, ECPN Pedagogist Maria Jeong joined educators, administrators, families and children in North Vancouver to celebrate children’s ideas and encounters with materials at the North Shore Neighbourhood House’s annual art exhibition. The exhibit included installations that offered curated documentation traces of their – the children, educators and Maria –

collective long-term project work thinking with black birds, mermaids, bears and spiders. Included in the exhibit was a provocation for visitors to experiment with charcoal and share reflections of their encounters.



Fueled by ECPN’s commitment to model forms of engagement that enrich public discussion within early childhood education, the ECPN provides information on our ECPN website in a variety of ways about the pedagogical projects pedagogists design and nurture. Recordings of the [ECPN Conversation Series](#) is one avenue through which the early childhood public can hear pedagogists offering insights about their pedagogical project practices and processes. Several of our website [blogs](#) draw on long-term project work to share critically reflective posts that focus on topics or ideas that relate to, and inspire, transformative early childhood education for 21st-century childhoods. [Field notes](#) created by ECPN pedagogists put forward incomplete accounts of project work ‘in the midst’, relating minor moments that take place with educators and children. ECPN [pedagogical narrations](#) story pedagogical processes and curricular trajectories and to date there are four pedagogical narrations on our website. These various glimpses are offered not as blueprints for practice but rather as provocations for local, situated discussions that might spark creative pedagogical processes and transformative change for the sector to support *respectfully living and learning together*. We will continue to develop blogs, field notes, pedagogical narrations and conversation series that help illuminate what is possible in early childhood programs. We are also in the process of developing a new website section, Stories, that will share glimpses of pedagogists’ work in new and exciting ways. More to come . . .

ECPN Highlights

Blog Post: Provoking



The third installment in the “Storying With” series, Provoking, explores a crucial aspect of the ECPN pedagogist’s work; the act of questioning to provoke intentionality and thoughtful consideration of daily practices. Drawing on insights derived from ECPN pedagogists Tracy Barkman, Mary Kim, Rachel Phillips, and Karen Rodden’s presentation at the 2023 ECEBC conference, *Power of Story*, this post shares stories that highlight what transformative possibilities provoking can bring to educators’ practice in early childhood spaces.

[See Details](#)

Presentation Series: Formations, Re-Formations and Malleabilities: Working With Children's Ideas



Across two sessions, June 17 & 18, Sylvia Kind and Johanna Po led a wonderfully rich and provocative presentation series that discussed cultivating conditions for collective and experimental thinking, what it might mean to work with children's ideas, and what these processes might activate. Drawing on their work with Capilano University Children's Centre, in their first session Sylvia and Johanna unpacked how they understand ideas in their work, and the second session focused on drawing as an ideating process.

82 participants who joined for *both* sessions, and the responses shared in the webinar chat and the post-webinar online survey were extremely positive. Many expressed their gratitude for the offering and noted various ways they were inspired in relation to their own work in early childhood education. All survey participants noted that the material presented added to their knowledge, and almost all said it was likely that they would bring some of the ideas presented to their practice with young children (24% chose *somewhat* likely; 71% chose *extremely* likely).

“I will from now on see drawing as an extension of the children's wondering not as a response of knowing something.” (Educator, Vancouver Coastal region)

“I really enjoy these workshops they give me excitement to continue my practice in supporting children in their learning collectively.” (Educator, Island region)

“These are really great generative sessions. We enjoy bringing our students to these and then continuing the conversations in our post secondary classes.” (Instructor, Northern region)

Upcoming Events

At this time, there are no upcoming Series events (i.e., Conversation Series, Presentation Series) from the ECPN. We are currently planning for webinar events for the 2024-2025 school year. Please keep an eye on the [Events page](#) of the ECPN website for future offerings.

Continuing the Conversation

As we exit June and the dedicated National Indigenous History Month celebrations, we encourage you to continue your efforts in celebrating, learning about, and honoring Indigenous voices. Keep listening to and learning from Indigenous peoples by exploring resources like books, articles, and podcasts created by Indigenous individuals in Canada. Maintain critical reflection and conversation about our roles as participants in educational projects shaped by colonial legacies on occupied land.

We also invite you to carry the spirit of PRIDE into July, continuing to celebrate the vibrant and diverse 2SLGBTQIA+ community and fostering inclusive and supportive environments for every child. As the school year draws to a close, remember that the inclusion of diverse

curricula in education still faces challenges. It is crucial to stand together and champion the values of acceptance, love, and understanding. Every child deserves to see themselves reflected in their learning experiences and grow up in a world that celebrates all identities.

While there is work to be done, together, we can build a future where every child feels seen, heard, and valued.



Early Childhood
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