ISSUE 19: August 2024

The Here and Now: Reimagining Early Childhoods In Urgent Times

ECPN Updates

re:materia

Some exciting events are being planned with exhi'pit, re:materia's participatory artistic installation and exhibition space led by atelierista Tatiana Zakharova-Goodman. This autumn, events and professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals will be taking place in **Castlegar, Kamloops** and **Nanaimo**. Advertising and registration for the events will begin in September.

We are also organizing the next Waste-as Material course offerings. Our intention is to offer the course to cohorts this autumn. For more information about the course, you can read the description on the EYPD Hub.

Early Childhood Pedagogist Program

August marks the start of another contract year for the Early Childhood Pedagogist Program, which is funded by the B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care and hosted by ECPN. Currently, 16 pedagogists are working with educators and early childhood centres in 24 communities across British Columbia. We are looking forward to expanding that reach as our plan is to hire more pedagogists for the 2024-2025 school year.

ECPN

Early Childhood Pedagogy Network

We're Hiring

Pedagogists

Deadline: September 15, 2024

Send cover letter and resume to: ecpn@uwo.ca

The ECPN is looking for enthusiastic and dedicated early childhood professionals to join the team as a **pedagogist** supporting educators' pedagogical practice in British Columbia.

For more information about the ECPN:

ECPN BC | @EcpnBc | ecpn@uwo.ca | www.ecpn.ca

ECPN Highlights

Pedagogist Program Reach and Impact

Across the 2023-2024 school year, the Pedagogist Program provided support and professional development to more than 3,100 early childhood professionals in B.C. The feedback we receive across each contract year is instrumental to our maintaining and strengthening the suite of support services the program offers to the sector. Over the next few newsletters, we will highlight a different service stream and some of the positive responses from educators, directors, families and other professionals in the field we received in 2023-2024. For August, we begin with our knowledge mobilization and virtual education stream.

Building on the ECPN project's (2020-2023) successful online professional development opportunities, the Pedagogist Program provided opportunities to the sector for virtual learning through three key areas: a digital library of resources, courses and webinars.

Digital Library

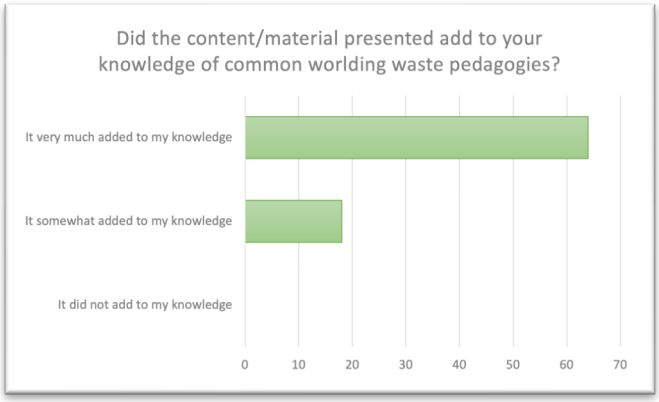
The ECPN website was redeveloped at the end of 2023 with a fresh look and more user-friendly layout. There are also now pages available in low-band width mode. The website's digital library includes examples of pedagogical projects that ECPN pedagogists engage in alongside educators. This year seven blog posts, three field notes, one pedagogical narration, one mini-docuseries and six video recordings of webinar conversations/presentations were added to the digital library. Whether the pedagogist role is new to you, or you are regularly engaging in pedagogical practices and conversations, the ECPN website is a wonderful resource that can support your work.

Materials Course

In the fall of 2023, in collaboration with ECEBC, we developed and launched a new online course funded through BC Campus and connected to the re:materia project called Waste-as Material: Reimagining the ECE Classroom. We received 135 expressions of interest to participate in the pilot. Seventy-four began the course in November and 45 completed the 4-module, 20-hour professional development course at the end of January. We learned a tremendous amount from instructor and participant feedback during the pilot, which helped make improvements for the next course offering in the spring. March through May, participants worked through the 4-modules, now spread over 22 hours of professional development, with 37 completing the course.

By participating in this course, educators connected with others who want to rethink waste creatively and were supported to think locally and converse with their colleagues to reimagine waste flows in their context. They gained critical thinking skills and new insights about how waste-as-material might be possible in their own early childhood professional practice. All four modules had lessons and assignments that invited participants to engage with the course content in relation to their own practice. Through the course activities participating educators:

- strengthened their critically reflective and ethical practices about materials by writing in their course journal and discussing in the live gatherings their questions, wonderings, ideas, concerns and excitements about each module's ideas and engagements.
- increased their (new) knowledges about and approaches to waste flows and materials in early childhood education by reading, watching, and listening to the module content resources and being part of the group discussions with course leaders and colleagues.
- enhanced connections with other early childhood professionals and community members by engaging in synchronous gatherings with course leaders and participants.



"I have been implementing waste materials in my program over the past several months, but on a generally small scale. This course has inspired me to really commit to this in my daily practice."
Educator, Coastal region, May 2024

"The content and the way that it was presented was very meaningful for me! To have the videos, articles, the book, "Encounters With Materials in Early Childhood Education", and the rich dialogues with other "life-long learners" really inspired me to keep reading, to keep asking questions, and to do my own research!"
ECE Manager, Interior region, May 2024

"It was very refreshing to see that the learning was very open. I really appreciated the journaling aspect as well as the gatherings. I found this is where I was able to connect the most around the content and learn from others."
Director/Manager, Island region, January 2024

"Our classroom had already encountered the ethics of waste and worked with intentional practices around material, but this course brought a renewed interest and engagement with both the children and educators. It brought forward the idea of holding waste in tension with our pedagogy and with our ethics. In our classroom and in the studio, we have chosen to encounter waste more deeply, making it visible and living with waste materials (cardboard, food waste) as agentic."
Educator, Northern region, January 2024

"This course provided such rich opportunities to expand my thinking. I found it difficult to wrap my head around this new way of viewing the world, in such a curious and thought-provoking way. Since beginning the course, I have been challenging how I view my work and the materials present daily. I am grateful for the conversations it has inspired, the research that has come from it, and this new wealth of knowledge I have to work with and build upon."
Program Manager, Fraser region, January 2024

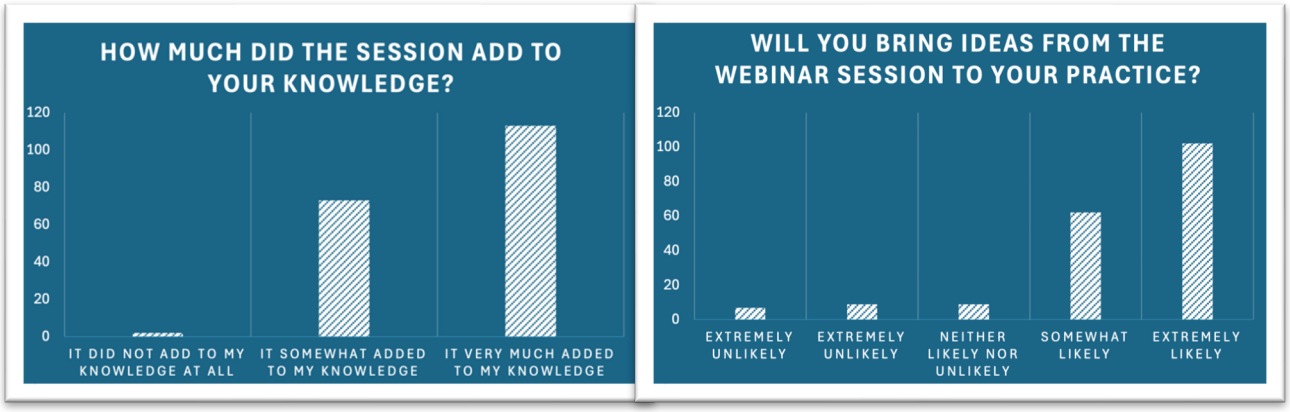
Webinars

Also, in collaboration with our project partner ECEBC, the Pedagogist Program provided several webinars this year, reaching 647 B.C. participants and an additional 78 attending from other provinces/countries. The webinars included:

- Drs. Cristina Delgado Vintimilla and Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw in dialogue with York University professor David Cecchetto
- Two presentation series – one 2-part series with Dr. Fikile Nxumalo, and one 2-part series with Dr. Sylvia Kind and Johanna Po

- Four offerings from our conversation series, where pedagogists shared insights on their pedagogical practices and processes.

Webinar participants were invited to provide feedback via an online survey. Across the 2023-2024 contract year, 238 post-webinar feedback surveys were completed. Based on 236 responses, surveys were completed by participants in Vancouver Coastal (33%), Island (20%), Fraser (15%), Interior (14%), Northern (11%) and outside B.C. (6%). Based on the B.C. respondents who answered the questions, 34% self-identify as a visible minority, 5% self-identify as Indigenous, and 21% said they were ECE students. The majority have some kind of ECE certification (88%) and most (66%) work in licensed group care. Most said the webinar content very much added to their knowledge (60%) and that it was extremely likely they would bring ideas from the webinar into their practice with young children (54%).



"Thank you so much for these conversations. Thinking with you and the resources you share help to keep the local conversations going and encourage us to revisit, keep thinking and listening for alternative stories, voices, and relationships."

Postsecondary instructor, Interior region, April 2024

"Thank you for all your great resources and webinars - they have helped my learning and development tremendously."

Educator, Island region, May 2024

Upcoming Events

We are currently planning for webinar events for the 2024–2025 school year. Keep an eye on the Events page of the ECPN website for future offerings.

ECPN Early Childhood Pedagogy Network

The ECPN's Early Childhood Pedagogist Program is funded by the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

British Columbia
Supported by the Province of British Columbia