

ISSUE 25: March 2025



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



## ECPN Updates

### Pedagogist Program

On February 22, 2025, ECPN pedagogist Mary Kim shared *Thinking with Dinosaurs*, an exhibition at the YMCA Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR) Early Learning & Child Care Conference in Coquitlam. This exhibit invited educators attending the conference to think with documentation as a site for reimagining curriculum-making.

At the centre of the exhibition was a large-format [field note](#) tracing a year-long inquiry with dinosaurs and children at an early years centre that Mary works closely with. At the conference, this documentation invited educators to pause with children's ongoing inquiries, noticing how

questions take shape over time. Printed field notes from other ECPN pedagogists were also shared, expanding the conversation on pedagogical narration as an active curriculum-making practice.

Throughout the day, conversations turned toward the conditions that shape inquiry: *How do materials, spaces, and time move thinking in unexpected directions? What happens when we stay with a question rather than seek resolution? How might documentation act not as a record but as a collective thinking tool?*

An educator from the centre where this inquiry unfolded joined the exhibition and offered insights into how the project continued to evolve. Their presence deepened the discussion, making visible the multiple ways pedagogical work emerges in the classroom.

This exhibition was a reminder of the possibilities that emerge through deep engagement with children's theories of the world through the processes of pedagogical narration.



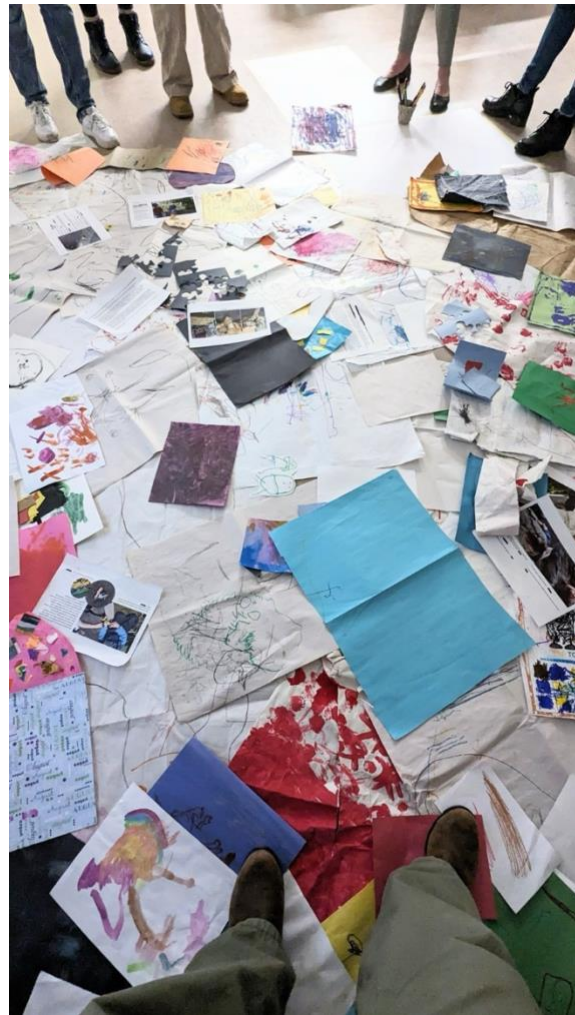


## re:materia

The [re:materia exhi'pit](#) is a participatory artistic installation and an invitation for educators in B.C. to take up the labour of disrupting cycles of consumption and waste production in early childhood spaces. Since its debut at the ECEBC Conference in May 2024 (see [Issue 16](#) of *The Here and Now*), exhi'pit has been reimagined through collaborations with(in) five early childhood communities. In February, exhi'pit moved from Kamloops Art Gallery (see [Issue 23](#) of *The Here and Now*) to Vancouver Island University (VIU), where educators, children, and VIU students encountered the installation during registered sessions alongside ECPN pedagogist Rachel Phillips, atelierista Tatiana Zakharova Goodman, and director Denise Hodgins.

*“What does it mean to be done with something?”* This question emerged early in our conversations and lingered throughout the week in our discussions with the educators, children and VIU early childhood education and care students. Rachel and Tatiana also brought elements of exhi'pit to three early childhood centres in Nanaimo, inviting children and educators to think with (waste) materials and how waste practices live in their classrooms.

We express our gratitude to VIU ECEC faculty Summer Lin and Cherie Anderson, whose collaboration with ECPN and [ECEBC](#) made the Nanaimo installation of exhi'pit possible, and to PacificCARE staff Dee McKinney and Juliet Klunder for all your support with the exhi'pit events.





# Upcoming Events

## Conversation XI

March 26th is the third session of the 4-part series, Conversation XI: Pedagogists' Engagements in Early Childhood Centres. Join us for Part III, when pedagogists will discuss how they work alongside educators to foster rich and meaningful conversations with children.



Register for Part III  
Here

Registration links for the remaining two sessions can be found on ECPN's website [Events](#) page.

### Part III: In Conversation with Children

**Date:** Wednesday, March 26, 2025

**Time:** 6:30–8:00 p.m. Pacific Time

How pedagogists work alongside educators to foster rich and meaningful conversations with children.

### Part IV: Working with Pedagogical Commitments

**Date:** Thursday, April 24, 2025

**Time:** 6:30–8:00 p.m. Pacific Time

How pedagogists work alongside educators to create situated and relevant pedagogical commitments.

## Re:materia: Waste-as Material

The winter offering of the re:materia course, Waste-as Material: Reimagining the ECE Classroom, is well underway, with educators engaging in conversations that foster rethinking waste in early childhood education. The spring cohort will run from April 7, 2025, to June 29, 2025, offering another opportunity for educators to participate. You might choose to register with a colleague to engage with the course materials collaboratively.

Developed in 2023 by the ECPN and ECEBC's [re:materia project](#), this 12-week course invites educators to rethink waste materials in early childhood spaces. Across four modules, participants will engage in online learning and interactive Zoom sessions designed to connect educators with others who want to rethink waste creatively. Professional development certificates are provided to everyone who completes all four course modules, including attending live sessions for each module and submitting all assignments (22 hours).

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## ECPN Highlights

### Field Note – Dinosaurs

Through an in-depth inquiry with children and educators, pedagogist Mary Kim engaged with the complex and evolving fascination children held with dinosaurs. This inquiry invited both children and educators to think beyond typical representations and co-construct curriculum through rich dialogue and experimentation. This field note invites us to consider how inquiry emerges through children's relationships with materials, stories, and speculative worlds, opening space for rethinking what it means to learn with and alongside dinosaurs.



Read More

## Blog Post – Ruptures in the Margins: Storytelling Outside of Euro-Western Practices Part 2

In this blog post, ECPN pedagogist Chelsea Hann critically engages with storytelling beyond Euro-Western frameworks and considers how Indigenous narratives challenge dominant paradigms. She reflects on the ethical responsibilities of engaging with human and more-than-human stories, attending to the way bears, humans, and drought stories weave together and invite complexity. Chelsea invites readers to critically examine the stories we tell and the frameworks we live within, encouraging attention to more ethical and responsible storytelling.

[Read More](#)



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## Continuing the Conversation

As hints of spring begin to appear, we want to take a moment to reflect on the ideas of possibility that emerge with both the season and early childhood education. Spring invites us to attune to cycles of renewal, emergence, and transformation—concepts that resonate deeply with the pedagogical work of the ECPN. In past issues, we have explored the role of educators and pedagogists in reconceptualizing ECE and rethinking its possibilities (see Issues [7](#), [9](#), and [23](#)). As researchers have written, we can “think collectively about what might be possible in early childhood education, and to actively create transformative processes within the field” ([Vintimilla & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2020, p. 4](#)). Since its inception, the ECPN has engaged in the ongoing project of rethinking and unsettling dominant understandings of early childhood education.

Yet, even as early childhood education is a space of reimagining, it is often positioned within dominant discourses as a solution—a means for “fixing” social issues, preparing children for the future, or addressing perceived deficiencies. Neoliberal narratives such as “children are our future” and “early intervention” suggest that by investing in young children and early learning, we can change the future outcomes of current political and societal choices. This framing assumes that social issues such as inequality, injustice, and oppression are separate from early childhood education—external problems to be remedied through educational interventions. Within these logics education is positioned as a neutral, technical tool capable of correcting societal dysfunction rather than an ongoing, situated practice entangled in the very histories, systems, and structures it is so often imagined to resolve ([Peter Moss, 2014](#)).

However, rather than being an isolated fix for the future, education has historically functioned as a vehicle for both oppression and systemic injustice. The histories of colonialism, racism, and other exclusionary practices are deeply woven into educational institutions, shaping how knowledge, power, and belonging are structured. We bear witness to these injustices and recognize that our work is not separate from them but embedded within their complexities.

Instead of viewing early childhood education as a means to fix systemic inequities, we understand it as a site of ethical and political engagement—one where we must actively situate ourselves within

these narratives, confront the inequalities we perpetuate, and resist taken-for-granted assumptions about the role of education.

We invite you to move with us beyond solutions-oriented thinking. Rather than searching for fixes, how might we co-create pedagogical spaces that hold space for uncertainty, contradiction, and the unfinished work of justice? How might we, together, challenge the dominant narratives that frame early childhood education as a corrective tool and instead think of it as a site for collective response, relational responsibility, and the emergence of possibilities?

At the ECPN, we take up this work not as a resolution, but as an ongoing commitment—one that is lived, questioned, and continuously reimagined. In doing so, we engage with the complexities of education as a shared, collective space where new possibilities for pedagogical transformation and livable futures can emerge.

