

AECEA

Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta

2024 ESSENTIAL PIECES *Conference*

empowering
refreshing
dayhome appreciation
calm
fulfilled
educator
inspired
inspiring
helpful
inspiration
love
joy
motivated
not alone
encouraging
relaxing
reaffirming



VIRTUAL

APR | 26-27 | 2024

aecea.ca/2024-essential-pieces-conference

WELCOME

There is something for everyone! Including family child care, daycare, school-age and preschool educators, consultants, ECE leaders, directors and administrators.

We are pleased that you will be joining us as “***you are an essential piece!***”

April 26 Agenda

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Welcome & A Child Rights Approach to Practice: Supporting and Leading Your Team
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	Breakout Session A
11:45 AM - 12:30 PM	Lunch
12:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Breakout Session B
2:30 PM - 2:45 PM	Break
2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	Breakout Session C
3:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Break
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Breakout Session D

April 27 Agenda

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Day 2 Welcome
9:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Breakout Session A
12:30 PM - 1:15 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM - 3:15 PM	Breakout Session B
3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	Break
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Breakout Session C
5:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Thank You



APRIL 26 WELCOME

A CHILD RIGHTS APPROACH TO PRACTICE: SUPPORTING AND LEADING YOUR TEAM

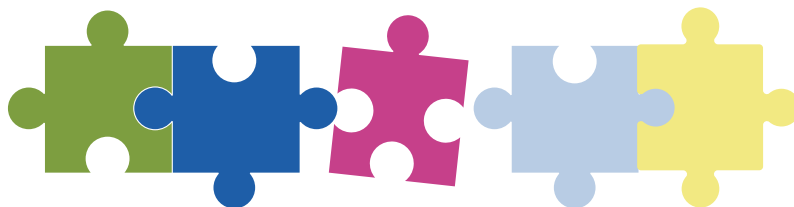
DR. SUSAN GARROW-OLIVER

In this interactive session, participants will explore their role in supporting their teams in providing early learning and care through a child rights lens. We'll discuss how program values, policies and guiding principles can be informed by a child's rights approach.

We'll explore questions such as:

- What is a child's rights approach to ECE practice?
- How do we shift the culture and landscape to honouring and incorporating children's rights in our everyday policies and practices?
- What does it look like to involve children in decision-making, and how do we gain informed consent from children?

Dr. Garrow-Oliver has been active in the ELCC profession in Alberta in many roles for over 30 years. She recently retired from her full-time role as Associate Professor in the Bachelor of Child Studies Degree at Mount Royal University but continues to teach and participate in curriculum development. Her PhD research looked at *Childcare Directors' Understanding of Leadership*, and she is currently involved in a small project with the Canadian Child Care Federation that is focusing on a child rights approach to ECE practice. Susan was humbled and proud to be nominated, and the recipient, of the *Dr Sherrill Brown Award of Distinction* from AECEA in 2023.



APRIL 26 SESSION A

MAPPING AN EDUCATOR'S CAREER JOURNEY - INSIGHTS AND INSPIRATION FOR LEADERS

PETER DIXON

Recruiting and retaining staff is a challenge facing early childhood operators around the world. At the World Forum of Early Childhood Education in 2022, a group of multi-site organizations from different countries used customer journey mapping techniques to map an educator's career pathway. This map allows ECE leaders to easily visualize and observe educators' experiences from educators' perspectives on their career journey from awareness of the profession through five stages to leadership and advocacy. Across the different stages, the map highlights educators' experience, activities, touchpoints, leadership involvement and opportunities.

The work was complemented by a survey which provided insights from an additional 20 multi-site organizations from the UK, US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

This presentation will share the Educator Journey Map as well as insights about research and initiatives multi-site ECE organizations are utilizing to support the journey of their educators.

Participants will gain resources and ideas that will be useful in helping enhance their employee experience - strengthening recruitment and retention.

Peter has over 20 years of experience working with social enterprise and purpose-led organizations, across a variety of sectors in Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Over the last 10 years, he has worked across aspects of early childhood including professional development, researching the ECE profession globally, working with children who have additional needs and designing technologies in pursuit of meaningful impact.

Co-Founder of Storypark, Peter has presented at conferences in China, Australia, Canada, US, New Zealand and France, and is a devoted dad, part-time scuba diver and avid water skier.

MINDFULNESS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

PUNAM DALAL & KIM PENA SMITH

In a hands-on workshop setting, attendees will receive practical guidance and engage in experiential exercises aimed at nurturing their mental and emotional wellness.

Punam is a Manager for the Employment Training and Bridging Department with the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association.

Kim is an Early Childhood Educator Employment Training Program Instructor with the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association.



APRIL 26 SESSION B

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO ACTION IN SUPPORT OF BETTER MENTAL HEALTH...AT WORK!

ROBERT MANOLSON

Everyone will leave this workshop experience with very concrete steps to reclaim positive mental health at work, centered around staff's unique needs, personal experiences, & and ideas in relation to their situation at work.

As the Business Owner of Powerful Play Experiences, Positive Workplace Mental Health...For Teams, **Robert** has travelled throughout Alberta for over 17 years now, facilitating the most amazing Play-Based Team Building and positive Mental Health...At Work, Workshop Experiences. In Person & Online!

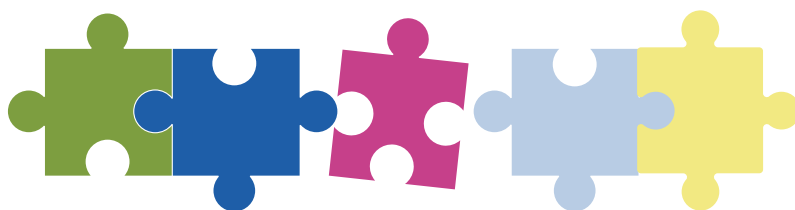
PARENTAL SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT PART 1

AYNSLEY GRAHAM

This workshop applies a functional theory to children's experience of loss and grief centred on separation and divorce in order to provide concrete positive behaviour supports in the classroom.

Aynsley is an independent Behaviour Consultant who works with caregivers and educators to teach developmental parenting practices. She holds a Graduate degree in Human Ecology, specializing in Family Ecology and Practice, and has over 10 years of frontline experience working with children and youth. Aynsley provides training, 1-1 sessions, and resources for both parents and educators who want to elevate their skills and knowledge about how to best support their tiny humans as they grow. Aynsley's work is trauma-informed and provides universal, inclusive strategies for children of all ages and abilities.

Please note that if you register for this session you will automatically be placed in Part 2 in Session C.



APRIL 26 SESSION C

TRACING TRAJECTORIES: COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AS PEDAGOGICAL SPACES

NOAH KENNEALLY & NANCY THOMAS

The Tracing Trajectories project began as a way to track how BECCS graduates were applying their learning in the field of Early Learning and Child Care and forging new ground in pedagogical leadership (Thomas, 2020; Heikka, Hujala, Rodd, Strehmel, & Waniganayake, 2019; Waniganayake, 2014). When we engaged with the first cohort of degree holders to emerge from the program, we were impressed by the variety of spaces they were working in and encouraged by their thoughtful reflection regarding the ways a degree-level education was supporting them, correlating with regarding research (Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence, 2013; Muttart Foundation, 2021).

However, what was most inspiring was that this group of participants quickly became co-researchers, and shifted from a community of learners to a community of practice (CoP) that was dedicated to continuing their learning and refining their practice. Following pathways offered by thinkers in the field (Buysse, Sparkman, Wesley, 2003; Doan, 2018; Kuh, 2012; Wenger, 1998a, 1998b), we are watching the development of a vital community of practice that inspires early childhood educators, at a time of significant systematic change in the field and when challenges particularly regarding retention are high. In this presentation, we will share our preliminary findings, our plans for the future of this project, and some suggestions regarding establishing a community of practice as a space for sharing pedagogical professional development.

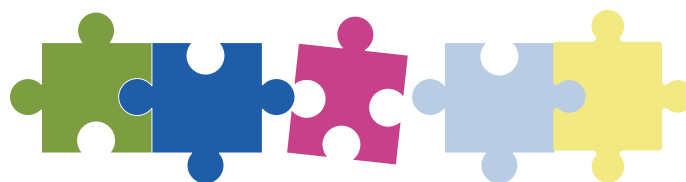
Noah is an assistant professor in Early Childhood Curriculum Studies at MacEwan University. He has worked in the field of early childhood for over 3 decades and is profoundly interested in supporting early childhood educators, children, and families as they cultivate vital and inspiring early childhood communities.

Nancy is an associate professor in Early Childhood Curriculum Studies at MacEwan University, where she has taught for over 20 years. One of her primary areas of research is in learning and leading. She has cultivated a deep understanding of early learning curriculum studies; educator's curriculum decision-making influenced by children's play and learning; and pedagogical leadership.

PARENTAL SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT PART 2

AYNSLEY GRAHAM

Continuation of Part 1 in Session B.



APRIL 26 SESSION D

ECE INSIGHTS ON THE IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED IN THEIR COMPENSATION AND WORKING CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY ELCC SYSTEM BUILDING IN ALBERTA

DR. CHRISTOPHER SMITH

The recent commitment of federal, provincial and territorial governments to develop a multilateral workforce strategy presents an opportunity for ECEs to provide their input into the improvements needed to ECE compensation and working conditions. The results from focus group discussions highlight the changes that certified educators see as central to building a high-quality ELCC system in Alberta.

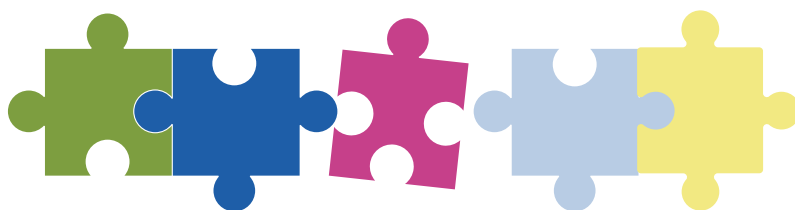
Christopher is the Associate Executive Director of the Muttart Foundation and has lead responsibility for the Foundation's work in the area of early learning and child care. Christopher also serves as a member of the National Advisory Council on Early Learning and Child Care and holds a doctorate degree.

USING NARRATIVE AND EMPATHY-BASED APPROACHES TO EXPLORE THE EXPERIENCES OF ETHNOCULTURAL FAMILIES IN EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

DR. PIETER DE VOS

The session will share lessons from the Journeys Project — an applied participatory research project exploring the experiences of ethno-cultural families in childcare in Edmonton in partnership with the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care and the Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative. The project blended narrative and human-centred design approaches to produce an illustrated resource for childcare practitioners. Participants in this session will have an opportunity to get hands-on experience with empathy-mapping.

Pieter is a facilitator, consultant, engaged academic, and documentary photographer. He draws on methods from the worlds of social innovation, strategy, and anthropology to help community-based organizations navigate an increasingly complex world. He recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship with the Evaluation Capacity Network where he undertook applied participatory research on the experiences of ethno-cultural families in childcare in Edmonton. Pieter has a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Alberta as a MSc in Public Health. His research focuses on using narrative and visual methods to explore community understandings of home and belonging in an informal settlement in South Africa.



APRIL 27 SESSION A

EDUCARING: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR RESPECTFUL CARE

KRISTY THOMAS

This session will introduce participants to Magda Gerber's Educaring approach. We will look at how simple actions can actively engage children as participants in their care and how we can intentionally offer respectful care to children as young as infants all through life. We will also look at how this approach aligns with FLIGHT.

Kristy is the owner of Inspired By Infants where she shares workshops pertaining to her role as a Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) Associate and the work of Magda Gerber.

As an early learning professional, she has been in the field for 25 years in a wide variety of roles from front-line educator to consultant/instructor and program director. As a parent of 2 teen girls, she believes life is a lifelong opportunity for learning and she loves having conversations about anything Early Learning!

It is her passion to share the Educaring approach with parents, educators and anyone that is interested in offering respectful care to individuals from birth all through life.

BEHAVIOUR WAYFINDING BASICS

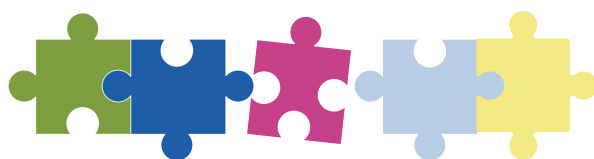
AYNSLEY GRAHAM

This workshop introduces the Behaviour Wayfinding Framework: an assessment tool that allows Educators to develop common language, concepts and strategies to provide positive behaviour supports for children of all ages and abilities. Core concepts reviewed include:

- emotional regulation/coregulation,
- development parenting,
- common language,
- developmentally appropriate tasks,
- child-centred care, and
- Using a visual

Aynsley is an independent Behaviour Consultant who works with caregivers and educators to teach developmental parenting practices. She holds a Graduate degree in Human Ecology, specializing in Family Ecology and Practice, and has over 10 years of frontline experience working with children and youth. Aynsley provides training, 1-1 sessions, and resources for both parents and educators who want to elevate their skills and knowledge about how to best support their tiny humans as they grow.

Aynsley's work is trauma-informed and provides universal, inclusive strategies for children of all ages and abilities.



APRIL 27 SESSION A

THE POWER OF YOUR ECE STORY: REDISCOVERING YOUR ECE WHY

ANISHA ANGELA

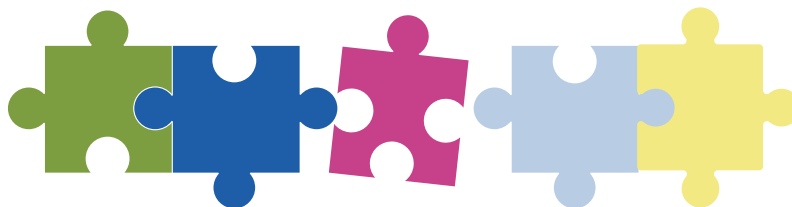
Being an ECE is an incredibly rewarding profession. However, it can also be frustrating, draining, and sometimes discouraging. In these moments, it is so important to remember why you chose this profession. This workshop will teach ECEs what exactly an ECE story is and the different parts of it. If you feel that you've lost your 'why,' this session will reconnect you with your story and remind you why you chose this profession.

Anisha is an Early Childhood Education (ECE) coach and expert who has been in the industry for over 14+ years. With a degree in Early Childhood Education Studies, Anisha has held many roles over the years. She has led childcare programs, taught college programs, and worked as a senior manager overseeing 45+ childcare locations.

She is also the CEO and Founder of her business, "The Early Childhood Coach + Co" a powerhouse for all things childcare consulting, coaching, and training. Her success has allowed her to gain exposure through Breakfast Television, Authority Magazine and The Today Show. Anisha wants to see other members of the ECE community succeed and loves to share her wealth of knowledge through speaking at a variety of events.

Anisha's speaking engagements focus on diversity in ECE, leadership, mental health and burnout in ECE, and effective communication with parents and staff. She has spoken at over 400+ events worldwide and is always looking forward to her next engagement.

Please note, this session is only 1.5 hours.



APRIL 27 SESSION B

FOLLOWING THE ONGOING ASSESSMENT CYCLE WITH INTENTIONALITY AND CREATIVITY

LETITIA BANDY

Following the ongoing assessment cycle with intentionality and creativity provides a framework to ensure children can grow and thrive. In this PowerPoint and lecture, session participants will explore how all adults can be keen observers, review various types and sources of documentation, learn strategies for tracking documentation data, and how to make data-informed instructional decisions that drive outcomes for children. Participants will devise working plans for including parents, staff and others in documenting child interactions and activities.

Letitia is an Early Childhood Education Instructional Coach/Trainer with over 20 years of cumulative experience as a classroom teacher, center director, Head Start Birth to Five Education Manager, Head Start Special Education Coordinator, Early Head Start Coordinator, mentor, trainer and instructor.

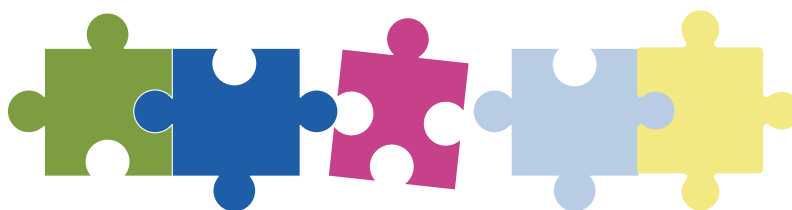
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS APPROACH TO EARLY LEARNING

DR. EMMIE HENDERSON-DEKORT & JEWEL MAY

Emmie and Jewel will present content that will help teach early childhood educators to consider and integrate a Children's Rights Approach to Early Learning and Practice. They will be presenting some of the strategies that have been presented since November through a webinar series project in conjunction with Mount Royal University and the Muttart Foundation. It will be an information-based presentation with some opportunities for discussion and sharing examples of practice.

Emmie is a contract faculty member at Mount Royal University and also teaches in the Early Childhood Education program at Bow Valley College. She is passionate about children's rights and advocating for the universal application of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Early Learning practices.

Jewel is a fourth-year student in the Child Studies program at Mount Royal University. She is also a passionate advocate for the rights of children in the early learning field.



APRIL 27 SESSION B

NURTURING THE ROOTS OF WELL-BEING IN CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND YOURSELF

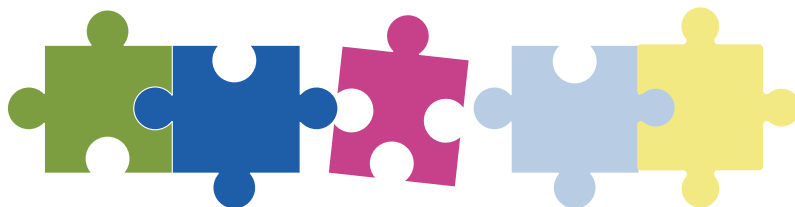
GINA BLANK

When children feel safe and secure in their relationships and environment, they are able to participate and learn. Children's sense of safety and security builds the foundation for mental health and depends on the regulation, attunement, and well-being of the adults around them.

In this session, participants will:

- Reflect on the current state of well-being of children, families, and themselves;
- Identify factors that impact regulation and well-being; and,
- Investigate practices that nurture regulation not only in themselves but with children and families as well.

Gina has a Bachelor of Science in psychology, as well as a master's in General Special Education. She has worked with GRIT for twenty years in a variety of roles: supporting children with disabilities; coaching early childhood educators; and most recently, coordinating and facilitating professional learning for community partners and the public. When she is not supporting adult learning, she can generally be found outdoors with a camera, a good book, or both.



APRIL 27 SESSION C

IMPACTING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR WITH SENSORY INTEGRATION

SHARON NESS

We live in a time where everyone, including young children, is bombarded with more visual images than ever before experienced by human beings. Researchers are linking detrimental behaviours with over and under-stimulation. Even though most early learning environments have little to no screen opportunities, children do manage to access them outside of programs and have accessed them in abundance with the COVID-19 pandemic. Educators are well positioned to make positive, impactful changes to their programs, allowing children to make sense of visual information that guides them to achieve desired behaviours. Sharon will lead participants in the discussion to create an awareness and understanding of the power of their learning environments and how to proactively make changes that can positively impact children's behaviour.

Sharon is certified as a Level 3 ECE and as an Associate Certified Coach, she has been working with Creative Childcare Consulting for over seven years. With over 30 years of experience in the field and a deep commitment to Adult Education, her passion is to empower educators to be the best they can be for themselves and the children they care for.

NURTURING AND RESPONSIVE ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT INCLUSION

JANICE COMRIE & JULIA MOORE

ASaP and ICC are two innovative programs used in Alberta, with success in addressing challenging behaviour and supporting children's social and emotional development. Their use of the Pyramid Model supports the practice of relationships and the creation of inclusive environments. Objectives include:

- Describe the similarities and differences between Inclusive Child Care and ASaP supports in early learning and child care settings
- Identify the benefits of using Pyramid Model practices with ICC and ASaP coaching supports
- Determine which supports would be the best fit for your program

Janice is the Inclusive Child Care (ICC) manager with the GRIT program. GRIT serves Edmonton and area, as well as the North Central Region west of Edmonton. She has worked in the field of early learning and care as an educator, consultant and administrator for 30+ years. Janice is a passionate, lifelong learner with a master's degree in education, focused on early childhood and music education.

Julia is an ASaP coach and program manager. She has worked in various roles in the early learning and childcare sector for over 20 years. She is a proud Mother and Step Mother and travels back to BC to visit family, friends and the ocean whenever she has a chance



LAST DAY TO REGISTER APRIL 19, 2024

Conference Rates

AECEA Professional Member Rate	\$94.50**
Non-Member Rate	\$126.00*
Student Rate	\$52.50*

*All prices include GST

**One conference registration at this rate per individual professional membership

Registration information

Complete registration online at <https://aecea.ca/2024-essential-pieces-conference>

Once payments are received a receipt will be issued and emailed to the payee. Please ensure current email information is included when registering.

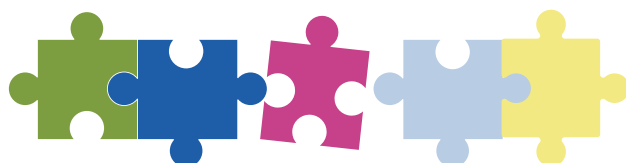
To purchase an AECEA Professional Membership, go to <https://aecea.ca/membership/professional-student>

Contact info@aecea.ca with any questions you may have.

Cancellation Refund Policy

All cancellation requests must be received by **April 19, 2024**, to receive a partial refund.

No refunds will be made for requests received after April 19, 2024. Refunds are subject to a 50% cancellation fee. Refunds will be issued in the same form payment was made. Please allow up to four weeks for processing.



A conference like this does not happen without the hard work of a group of dedicated volunteers. The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta would like to thank all the following volunteers on the AECEA conference committee:

Shirley Rempel - AECEA Board & Family Dayhome Provider

Stephanie Short - AECEA Board & Stepping Stones Daycare Society

Tamara Wood - AECEA Board & Thornhill Child Care - VIK Academy

Michelle Jeanveau - Family Dayhome Provider

Meagan Payne - Calgary & Region Family Day Home Agency

Allison Goddard - ELCC diploma & EA



THANK YOU