Interaction

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 2, FALL 2016

Helping Immigrant Children and Families Become New Canadians

Journey in a New World: Strategies to Ease Integration for Newcomer Families

Culturally Responsive Practice at the Intercultural Child and Family Centre

Child Care Centres on the Military Base – Behind the Force

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November 20th

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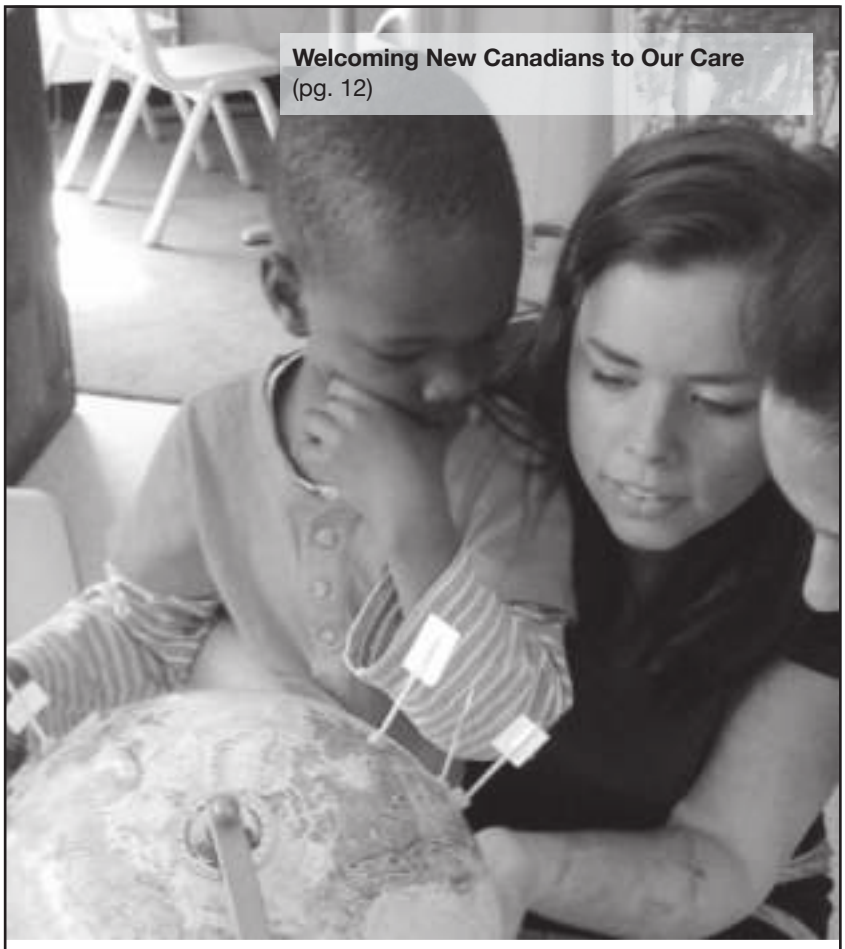

Welcoming New Canadians to Our Care
(pg. 12)

Welcoming New Canadians to our Care

Departments

One new resource sheet accompanies this issue: #108 – *What You Should Know About… Getting Your Vulnerable Sector Check*

Front cover photo: Google Images.

Behind the Scenes

At the height of the fall season as I write this, I have feelings of promise mixed with discouragement for the Syrian people and other world refugees seeking a safe home in the world. More than 100 children have been killed and another 200 wounded, in bombings in Aleppo in October alone. Thousands have died in this five-year war to date. Families and children are living a nightmare in these countries. And while Canada's government has taken in 25,000 refugees to date, many more are to come in 2017. Many more have nowhere to go, die at sea trying to escape their war torn countries or live in refugee camps for months or years.

For those who do make it to Canada, our child care sector is seeing a huge influx of these refugees as we welcome the children into our country and in our centres and home child cares. Immigrant and refugee families form a substantial and growing portion of the population of Canada. And here, our role in helping these families become new Canadians to support each child to thrive and live a better life in their new country is a big role indeed. We are building community across social and cultural differences, building a climate of inclusion and addressing inequities of opportunity.

This issue of *Interaction* looks at how we can be culturally competent and deepen our practice to be culturally responsive to children from other countries. Learn about existing barriers that immigrant educators and student educators' face – how their understandings and experiences are marginalized in ECE theory and practice. Explore ways for early childhood professionals to support young newcomer children as they adapt to a new language and a new environment.

And read in the IDEAS section about a revolution in how we provide early environments in respect to self-regulation developments. We learn how early childhood environments might be carefully considered to balance a child's need for experiences with their reactions to these experiences in *A Revolution from Within: the Shanker Method*™ self-reg perspective and early years learning environments**.**

As 2016 comes to an end, CCCF is buoyed by an energetic and passionate meeting with our affiliate and board members that took place in Ottawa in September – a face-to-face meeting that has not taken place for many years. We are ready to work with our government in creating a national system for early childhood education and care for all Canadian families and children.

Claire McLaughlin
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CCCF is about the value of children. We *value* children.

In order to protect and enhance our children, to promote their safety and their healthy growth and development, we are committed to providing Canadians with the very best in early learning and child care knowledge and best practices.

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INSIDE THE FEDERATION

National Child Day November 20

This year CCCF is focusing on the entire Convention on the Rights of the Child. CCCF is proud to promote and support a world fit for children. Since 1999, we have been promoting children's rights and working in partnership with leading children's rights organizations and individuals like the (former) Honourable Senator Landon Pearson, to develop resources for practitioners and parents.

One way we promote children's rights awareness is by celebrating National Child Day. The day was proclaimed by the Government of Canada on March 19, 1993 to commemorate two historic events for children: the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1959, and the UN adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989.

This year, we are pleased to promote our revised poster of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child in child friendly language*, developed with UNICEF. We are selling the posters on our website with details on how to purchase it. Additional CCCF resources about children's rights are available on our website: www.cccf-fcsge.ca/topics/childrens-rights/ and in the e-store: https://www.strategicprofitsinc.com/mastercart/Cart/product_details.php?mid=477425671397585447&product_id=387928331406751639.

CCCF and Provincial and Territorial Affiliate Partners Meet in Ottawa

The Lawson Foundation funded a very vibrant, robust and informative meeting of the CCCF and its provincial and territorial partners in September 2016 – the first of its kind since 2008. And with the generous and continued funding support from The Muttart Foundation to the CCCF, along with our affiliate and national partners we are charging forward with a renewed and passionate commitment to building a better Canada for children across Canada. Over three days, new connections and renewed relations among our sector were forged and with this, a stronger, unified voice.

Specific Resources about Children's Rights

A helpful resource for practitioners working with children and families new to Canada is the Canadian Child Care Federation's online resource, *Partnerships in Support of Children's Social Well- Being*. It's available for free download by CCCF members at http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca/professional-development/members-resource-library/tools-to-enhance-partnerships-in-support-of-childrens-social-well-being/. The user-friendly, accessible tools address key elements of social development, including learning positive behaviour, building self-esteem, enhancing problem-solving skills, strengthening communication skills and supporting cultural identity. The tools have been developed using an asset-based approach that recognizes and honours the strengths of families, while acknowledging the perspectives and experiences of practitioners.

FROM WHERE I SIT

What We Know About Working with our New Federal Government on National Child Care

by Don Giesbrecht, CEO CCCF

One year can feel like a long time. One year can also feel like a snippet in time when a sector such as ours has been waiting for so long for something—anything—that signals a way forward for Canada's children and families. Yet here we are, one year after the federal election that promised to "develop a child care framework that meets the needs of Canadian families, wherever they live' and little has yet changed. We have also been promised that this National Early Learning and Child Care Framework will "deliver affordable, high-quality, flexible and fully inclusive child care for Canadian families." Understanding that this is a complex task and that every province and territory over the past ten years has continued to create policy and direction (some may argue lack thereof depending on where they live) for their respective child care sectors, we look cautiously at the one-year anniversary of the last federal election as a benchmark to progress.

What do we know one year later? We know that the Honourable Jean Yves-Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, has met with his provincial and territorial counterparts and that they have struck a committee to create a national framework, one that they can all (hopefully) agree on. We also know that in the spring 2016 federal budget, $500 million was approved for the 2017-18 fiscal year to be spent on the national framework with $100 million of that to be used on creating a framework specifically for Indigenous children and families. Minister Duclos has recognized that $500 million is not a sufficient amount of funding when it is dispersed around the country and he has also recognized that a one-year funding commitment will not satisfy or incent the provinces and territories to want to significantly invest and move forward.

One of Minister Duclos' immediate challenges, amongst many others, will be to obtain multi-year funding. The provinces an territories remember all too well the 2005 bi-lateral child care agreements with the then Paul Martin government that were negotiated only to be disposed of, almost immediately upon taking power, by our previous federal government. They are, I believe, extremely cautious about any new federal/provincial/territorial agreements that are not multi-year.

We are also looking to Minister Duclos to build an aspirational child care framework—one that is comprehensive and holistic in its policy goals so that all provinces and territories can build child care systems for all children and families that require high quality, affordable, inclusive and developmentally appropriate child care. The current policy principles announced by Minister Duclos' office are as follows: Quality, Affordability, Inclusivity and Flexibility—noting that the word *universality* has been dropped from the federal government's discussions with the provinces. This is concerning, but perhaps the policy principle of flexibility will encompass the tenants of universality.

However, it is important to note that Minister Duclos, in a CBC news story in mid-September 2016, noted that a targeted approach to child care, given the limited federal funds, would be the best way to approach the national framework. Targeting does not, as promised in the government's election platform, create or deliver an affordable, high-quality, flexible and fully inclusive child care framework for Canadian families. To say the least, we are getting mixed messages.

The CCCF, along with our national partners Childcare Research and Resource Unit (CRRU), Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC) and Campaign 2000, presented Minister Duclos with a policy framework when we met with him in January 2016. Called the "*Shared framework for building an early childhood education and care (ECEC) system for all*" it is built on three fundamental policy principles:

1. That there be common federal/provincial/territorial policy frameworks.
2. That there is a plan for long-term sustained funding.
3. That there is system-building and policy development shared by federal/provincial/territorial and local governments, with the participation of key stakeholder groups such as educators, researchers, and parents.

We believe these principles will serve the federal government, and guide the provincial/territorial governments well as they

chart a path forward. They are evidenced-based and provide the broad brush strokes to build a system across Canada that will provide children and families with high quality, inclusive and affordable child care. These principles will also hammer down other long standing issues that exist across Canada's child care sector, specifically the human resource issues of recruitment and retention of the early learning and care workforce.

We remain optimistic but vigilant. In fairness, Minister Duclos did convene a meeting of Canadian stakeholders in late June 2016 to discuss the framework and to solicit input from those in attendance, but communication and information sharing has been scant since that time. We remain optimistic, but also vigilant.

Compared to the past 10 years, we have a federal government that is actually discussing the importance of child care for Canadian families and further, has earmarked funding—$500 million—for next year's federal budget for the same. But as a reminder and contrast, recall that under Paul Martin's government, there was $5 billion in funding committed over a 5-year time span.

Regionally, we have child care announcements from provincial governments, such as the September 2016 commitment from the Province of Ontario to create 100,000 high quality, regulated child care spaces over the next five years and the recently released child care report from the Province of New Brunswick, both of which clearly indicate the pressing and urgent issue of child care for children and families and spell out the need for significant reforms of current child care systems. I use the words 'child care systems' loosely; it is fair to argue that Canada is quite bereft of child care systems.

We are also buoyed by support for CCCFs work via the Lawson Foundation, who funded a very vibrant, robust and informative meeting of the CCCF and its provincial and territorial partners in September 2016—the first of its kind since 2008. And with the generous and continued funding support from The Muttart Foundation to the CCCF, along with our affiliate partners (and national partners) are charging forward with a renewed and passionate commitment to building a better Canada for children across Canada.

Let me be very clear—there is reason for optimism, but there is also work to be done. Developing and creating a national framework for early learning and child care will take time and the collective work of Canada's child care sector. It is imperative that we are solution focused and rooted in evidence-based solutions. We know that creating child care spaces is important, but we also know that you can't create them without a related workforce strategy, plans for capital investment and proper public policy solutions. It's time for Canada to get off of the current hamster wheel and one-off Band-Aid solutions, for a complex set of interrelated issues. Our children deserve no less.

Child Care Centres on the Military Base – Behind the Force

Within the Wainwright Military Resource Centre Child Development Centre

by Kelly Mazerolle

"We're being posted to New Brunswick" a child told her caregiver. "You're moving to Gagetown this summer. That will be fun!" the caregiver replied. This is one of the most difficult parts of the job for the caregivers with the Wainwright Military Family Resource Centre Child Development Centre (WMFRC CDC) who often do not have the opportunity to watch the children in their care grow up.

Canada's military is quite extensive, from the navy to the air force, to the army and reserves. There are soldiers stationed on bases across Canada, the United States, and overseas. The Military Family Resource Centre prides itself as being the "family behind the force". There are 32 MFRCs located in Canada, nine in the United States and five in Europe. Several of them also have a daycare onsite. The Wainwright MFRC Child Development Centre is a licensed and accredited centre for children ages 19 months to six years (not yet attending grade 1). It is very convenient for the families to have a child care centre right on the base as many of them choose to live in military housing.

"There's nothing like that moment when the military member returns home. One three year-old boy, his mom came to pick him up after having been gone over a month. When he saw her, he started sobbing, she started sobbing. We were all crying."

One of the benefits to being a daycare on base, besides having a close-knit community who not only works together but also spends its leisure time together, is the access to field sites for visits such as the Military Police, the fire hall, doctor and dentist office and cafeteria all within walking distance. There is also a community garden, gym, ice rink and several parks.

Military members are posted every few years to a new base. When families arrive after the move, it is very important to help the children integrate successfully into their new community. The WMFRC CDC helps to smooth the transition by offering

Bluors, S. (2016)

child care in both English and French. There is some shock, however, when families who had subsidized child care in Quebec find out how much it costs for a spot in Alberta. They use the Ages and Stages questionnaires to assess where each child is at developmentally, every September, and adjust their planning accordingly. It is a challenge, considering the fact that children arrive with a variety of preschool experiences, from across Canada and outside of the country as well.

Some intervention is also needed during deployment. Deployment is when the military member is sent away for further training or active duty. The period of deployment, which could last anywhere from six weeks to six months, or longer, takes a toll on the families. "Child care staff notice a difference in the child's behavior when a parent is gone," remarks Stacey Buors, director. The WMFRC CDC strives to provide the family with support during that time. "Often, extended family members are far away so we become quite close with the families of the children in our care," states Buors.

At the daycare, caregivers work with the children to teach them self-regulation techniques such as deep breathing, one-to-one conversations, and opportunities to be by themselves if needed. The caregivers are very empathetic, some having ties with the military themselves. They have books on deployment and a globe in the room. They keep consistent routines and have a deployment box for the child which could include a piece of clothing from the parent and a photo. "There's nothing like that moment when the military member returns home. One three-year-old boy, his mom came to pick him up after having been gone over a month. When he saw her, he started sobbing, she started sobbing. We were all crying," Buors remembers. The other children are developing empathy as well, as they understand what it feels like.

Of course, the opposite is also true. Many families stationed in Wainwright are posted to other bases as well. "We work so hard to foster their development and wonder if everything we taught them will continue to be reinforced. It is hard with all of the changes they go through. We don't just work with the families, they really confide in us. We see pregnant mothers leave and know we'll never have the chance to meet the new baby," says Buors.

The WMFRC CDC is ready to meet new challenges. It was chosen in the fall of 2015 to participate in the third phase of the creation of Alberta's New Early Learning Curriculum Framework: Play, Possibilities and Participation. The caregivers have worked closely with their pedagogical mentor to examine their view of children, their role as an educator and how they use the environment. It has been very beneficial to have the framework as a resource as it has allowed them to communicate

Buors, S. (2016)

what they are doing in the centre to the families, by involving them in the process. The families were invited to share their own views of their children over muffins and juice. The children had spent the morning baking the muffins for the occasion. The caregivers also create learning stories and share them with the families by displaying them on a bulletin board. Some of their stories have become interactive, like the time the children took apple slices and put one in vinegar, one in water and one in an empty cup. The children were asked to predict which one would turn brown first. When the learning story was displayed on the board, it was incomplete. The parents were asked to share their predictions before the rest of the story was added.

The caregivers have also used an iPad to take short videos of the children during the day. When the parents arrive to pick up their children, the iPad is on a stand and a chalk board beside it invites the parents to "press play to see what we did today". One time they were treated to a lesson on how to Riverdance, produced by the children and the cook at the Centre.

As their pedagogical mentor, it has been very rewarding working with the WMFRC CDC Director and caregivers. Their hard work and dedication has helped to elevate the profession of caregiver. It will be exciting to see what they produce in the future.

Kelly Mazerolle is the founding director of the Wainwright MFRC Child Development Centre. She is currently the Program Head for Early Learning and Child Care at Lakeland College where she teaches in both English and French.

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A Revelоution From Within: The Shanker Method™ Self-Reg Perspective and Early Years Learning Environments

by Elizabeth Shepherd and Brenda Smith-Chant, Psychology Department, Trent University

The understanding of how a child's experiences impact their lifelong well-being is undergoing a revolution. Much of the initial research emphasized the importance of providing early enriched environments for young children. For example, based on the observation that neural connections in the brain that are not used in the early years are pruned away (Mustard & McCain, 2002), there was a focus on providing stimulating environments for children, particularly in the areas of language, cognition, and social development. However, as our understanding of the early years increases, it is apparent that early environments must be carefully considered to balance a child's need for experiences with their reactions to these experiences (Shanker, 2013). This understanding is leading a revolutionary shift towards appreciating the importance of self-regulation.

The importance of self-regulation for lifelong well-being is founded on an understanding of stress and how it impacts development. Unfortunately in common usage, stress has a negative connotation, as in "I am so stressed". This actually refers to the perception that the levels of energy needed to cope with a situation are not sustainable. In psychological terms, stress is neither bad nor good. It is simply how energy is allocated in the body. Stress is necessary, but needs to be managed so that energy is available for activities, such as self-protection, learning, and thinking, but also so that the body restores and repairs itself (e.g., sleep). Self-regulation refers the techniques used to shift energy resources to accomplish these activities (Shanker, 2013).

Shanker (2013) notes that humans begin to acquire self-regulation skills at the earliest stages of development. Not only is childhood where self-regulation skills are experienced and learned, but it is a time of great stress as they are exposed to many new and challenging experiences. They rely on the adults in their environment to help them manage how they allocate their stress (energy) resources and to help them manage if their stress is not matching the energy needs for the environment. For example, crying is a natural tool children use to engage others when they need help managing their stress (e.g., I have hunger stress, I need comfort to calm down, I need stimulation - talk to me). Children learn self-regulation experientially and developing these skills is extremely important. Chronic hypo- (too little) or hyper- (too much) arousal of stress levels can be detrimental to "higher" functions such as language, social cognition, problem-

solving, and self-control (see van der Kolk, 2011). Self-regulation is a way to consider the stressors in the environment and eliminate, manage, or cope with them to support children's developmental needs and abilities.

The framework used in self-regulation in our paradigm is termed The Shanker Method™. Self-Reg has five domains; biological, emotional, cognitive, social and prosocial (The Shanker Method™, n.d.) that encompasses the stressors and responses to cope with those stressors that have been identified in research. The framework outlines the role of caregivers in assisting children to develop their self-regulation abilities at an individually-sensitive, culturally-meaningful level. According to Shanker (2013), self-regulation requires no special tools, checklists, or program. Rather, it is based on understanding the stress-response and stressors across the five domains.

The Biological Domain

Newborns are heavily dependent on their caregivers, not only for survival and basic care, but for the development of their brain. Infants become highly attuned to their environment and adapt to it accordingly. It is during this time that the child first learns how to self-regulate by being regulated by others. It is the role of the caregiver to identify the infant's states of arousal and up- or down-regulate the child's behaviour accordingly (e.g., rocking to sooth a crying infant).

Neurologically there is a hierarchy for dealing with stress, with the most ancient mechanisms in the brain responding to threat and the newer, "higher" areas of the brain aiming for social engagement (MacLean, 1970). The hierarchy is as follows: 1) social engagement; 2) fight-or-flight; 3) freeze; and, 4) dissociation. If one of the mechanisms proves inadequate to deal with the present stressors, the brain shifts to the next. Exposing a child to prolonged and excessive stress can negatively impact development (Lupien, McEwan, Gunnar & Heim, 2009), resulting in a condition known as allostatic overload. Shanker (2013) points out that during allostatic overload, children respond to stress in an extreme way, such as being overly clingy (social engagement), having explosive tantrums (fight-or-flight), freezing in fear (sometimes mistaken as compliance), or even falling asleep (dissociation). When this happens, the brain reverts from social brain engagement to manage stress to a more ancient fight-or-flight or freeze state. When this occurs, the areas involved in thinking and problem solving are compromised, as explained by stress responses in the emotional domain.

The Emotional Domain

Shanker (2013) describes emotional regulation as the ability to "monitor, evaluate and modify" emotions. Children often have difficulties with emotional regulation. Not only do they have to recognise their emotion, but they have to assess whether their emotion is appropriate for the situation and up- or down-regulate themselves accordingly. Emotional regulation is acquired as we interact with others. For example, when a caregiver picks up and sooths a crying infant, it teaches that child to seek calming touch when upset.

When helping a child to regulate their emotions, caregivers often rely on "left-brain processes" such as language and problem-solving (e.g., telling a child to stop crying). However, when someone is very stressed, left-brain processes go off line to focus energy resources to the areas of the brain and body associated with fight-or-flight responses (Lupien, McEwan, Gunnar & Heim, 2009). Thus, in this state, left-brain processes are not effective for self-regulation. A child must be calmed down before they can respond to problem-solving efforts by others.

Such emotional reactions in children are sudden and extreme and a child is not receptive to attempts by a caregiver to calm them down. This can feel overwhelming for those trying to assist the child. Because of this, caregivers should focus on the "three R's" of emotion regulation: *Recognize, Reduce* and *Restore*: Recognize the signs of escalating stress. Reduce the stress. Restore energy (Shanker, 2013). Once a child is calmer, they can bring back the left-brain capabilities they have to think and learn, processes that require considerable energy.

The Cognitive Domain

Shanker (2013) describes the cognitive domain as the thinking processes involved in learning: attention, sensory perception, memory, problem-solving, etc. Attention is critical to the cognitive domain and sustaining attention places a lot of demand on the child. If sustained attention is needed for a task, stress in any other domain that requires energy to cope can make it even harder to maintain focus. If a child has a problem self-regulating in the other domains, this can further limit their ability to focus their attention.

Self-regulation is concerned with the foundations of these cognitive processes, or the so-called *roots of attention*, which need energy before "higher" types of cognitive skills can be learned and used. These roots include a child's ability to take in and process different kinds of sensory information, internally (within the body) and externally (environmentally). Problems with this processing are often subtle and easily overlooked, as they involve the way the brain process sights, sounds, and other information. Sensory demands can take away resources needed for higher level thinking. For example, a noisy environment could hamper the ability of a child to maintain attention on story-book reading.

According to Shanker (2013), if there is an overload in the roots of attention a child may not be aware of what they are experiencing, leading to confusion and insecurity. This hyper-cognitive arousal leads to challenging behaviours, including distraction, irritability, the inability to listen, and low frustration tolerance, creating a cycle of even greater stress on the child and further exacerbating these behaviours. Self-Reg enables us to break this "arousal cycle" by keeping a child's stress load within a manageable band. Through this the child better learns how to identify and reduce stressors which render them inattentive. Much of these skills are learned naturally through play and social interactions.

The Social Domain

Shanker (2013) describes the social domain as the stressors and skills for managing stressors that occur when we interact with others. For example, even very young infants smile at others to engage with people on a social level. These social behaviours develop throughout childhood, but even a benign social act requires energy (stress) to process. This means that even the most benign social interactions trigger a more extreme stress response. For example, even a stranger smiling at an infant can trigger a stress response in the social domain and make them cry: the well-known stranger anxiety response (Bowlby, 1973). In fact, Ainsworth's (1970) famous Strange Situation method to determine attachment styles reflects a child's need for social engagement, the first stage of stress response, in the presence of a social stressor.

Social situations are demanding of energy. Shanker (2013) points out that the tendency to react to social interactions in an extreme way can be increased if there are other stressors in the environment or other domains. A child who responds by lashing out at others or withdrawing from social interactions is experiencing a stress response. This means, unfortunately, that the energy needed to think through or control their behaviour has been shifted to the fear response parts of the brain and the child will have difficulty problem-solving. In fact, further

demands on the child to use energy to think and interact socially could increase, and not decrease the stress response. For example, having a child say "I am sorry" when overstressed can result in worse behaviour.

The Pro-Social Domain

Shanker (2013) also included pro-social domain stressors in the Self-Reg framework. The pro-social domain is based on the observation that we are all born with a brain which expects social engagement and learns to identify behaviours that are not the norm. The foundations of this domain are with us at birth. Naturally, newborns become distressed in the presence of another crying baby and toddlers will try to hug or distract someone who is upset.

Empathy is a characteristic of our pro-social abilities. The pro-social domain is both a resource for dealing with stress and a source of stressors. The implications are that we can be triggered into a stress response when we experience the feelings and stress of others or encounter behaviours we don't understand or are not typical in our experience. For example, the Self-Reg framework explains why we react negatively when we experience selfishness or cruelty in others, or we stop being thoughtful when we are overwhelmed and stressed.

A Revolution from Within: Changing to a Self-Reg Perspective

The benefits of moving to a Self-Reg framework represents a major shift in how we understand behaviour and learning needs. For example, Shanker (2013) explains how an overly busy, colourful and complicated room can undermine a child's ability to focus their attention on learning by creating stress demands in the visual system, or why a child may seemingly explode into a temper tantrum when being offered a choice that creates a small cognitive demand, or even why a caregiver experiences anger or frustration when they see a child being cruel to another. The stress response is a foundation for understanding how we manage the energy needs to run our bodies and our minds.

The implications is that there is a need to revolutionize how we approach early learning environments. To support this need, Shanker (www.self-reg.ca) proposes five steps (the three R's plus two more): reframe, recognize, reduce, reflect, and respond. The first step, reframe, is for caregivers to understand the difference between a stress response and misbehaviour (a deliberate and thoughtful act). Step two is to look for stressors impacting the child across domains and then, step three is to eliminate, modify, or address the stressors to reduce the stress response. Once the child is calm, we can reflect with them, so that they learn to identify their own stress responses and states and the methods that work reduce the stress response when it occurs for themselves. This allows them to engage in step five, responding to their own stress responses and needs. Understanding and undertaking these steps and appreciating the stress responses and energy needs in the early learning environment will improve lifelong outcomes for children.

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FOCUS

Welcoming New Canadians to Our Care

WELCOMING NEW CANADIANS TO OUR CARE

C'mon In … And Welcome!

Supporting newcomers in Canadian child care centres

by Roma Chumak-Horbatsch and Lily Chung

"Young children learning L2[2] are one of the fastest growing segments of the global population."[3]

Introduction

Since 2000, early learning programs across Canada in large, high-immigrant "gateway cities" and also in smaller urban areas, have witnessed a substantial increase in newcomers, or children who arrive with little or understanding of the language of program delivery. These children represent a very diverse group. Many are born in Canada to recently arrived immigrant parents and grow up in homes where one or more heritage[4] languages are spoken. Others come to Canada with families who have left their countries under various circumstances. For example, over 25,000 newcomers have arrived in Canada from Syria since November 2015 and thousands more are expected by early 2017. A recent Citizenship and Immigration document[5] reports that 18% of these newcomers are children between the ages of 0 and 4 years of age and 21% are between 5 and 11 years.

Some newcomer children are learning one language at home, while others grow up in multiple-language households. Some arrive with little or no exposure to the majority language (English or French), while others have been exposed to the new language through siblings and other family members, community experiences, and the media. In all cases, young newcomers attending majority language programs find themselves in a unique language-learning situation: as they continue to develop their home language or languages, they begin to learn a new language.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau welcoming newcomers[1]

As newcomer parents across Canada begin French or English language courses, and start to integrate into the labour market of their new country, they are often concerned and unsure about the education of their young children. As Canadian early childhood professionals (hereafter EC professionals)[6] welcome newcomer children and families, they too are concerned as they face the challenge of adopting appropriate strategies and practices to meet the needs of these new arrivals.

This article will explore ways for EC professionals to support young newcomer children as they adapt to a new language and a new environment.

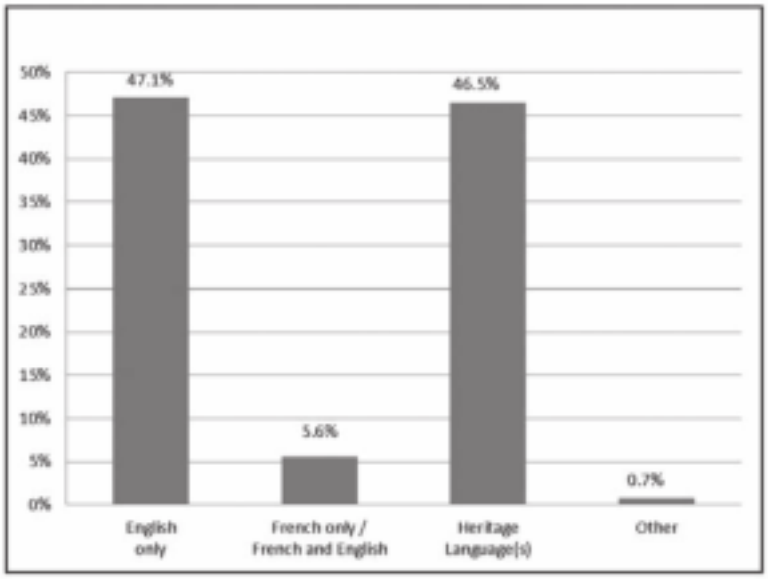
Our exploration begins by looking at the results of a recent survey (referred to here as the Toronto Childcare Language Survey[7]) of the languages spoken by the children and staff in Toronto child care centres. These findings are summarized and situated in the broader Canadian context.

Toronto Childcare Language Survey

Children's home languages

3,251 parents whose children attend 260 Toronto childcare centres responded to a home language survey and identified the language or languages used in their homes. Figure 1 shows that there is a fairly even split between English only and heritage languages. Nearly half (47.1%) of the parents reported that English only was used in the home, while 46.5% reported a heritage language as the primary language used in the home.

Figure 1: Children's Home Languages (N=3,251)



In the heritage language group, 6% reported that two or more heritage languages were used in the home. 109 different heritage languages were identified by parents, with Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog, Arabic and Bengali topping the list. Six Chinese dialects—Cantonese, Mandarin, Fujianese, Hakka, Taishanese and Taiwanese—were identified, although in some cases, the Chinese dialect was not named. Figure 1 also shows that 5% of parents reported French, and French and English. The *Other* language category reported by a small number of parents included American Sign Language and Aboriginal languages.

Nineteen percent of all surveyed centres included English only speaking children, while 81% reported heritage language-speaking children. The number of heritage languages spoken in the centres varied widely, from 1 to more than 16: 66% of centres reported between 1 and 5 heritage languages; 23% reported between 6 and 10; 8% reported between 11 and 15; and 2% reported that more than 16 heritage languages were spoken by the children.

Staff[8] languages

The supervisors of 257 centres reported that, in addition to English, their staff (a total of 3,225) spoke 109 different languages, with Chinese, Spanish, French, Italian and Hindi reported most often. When staff languages are compared to the heritage languages spoken by the children, a strong pattern emerges (see Table 1) with a match between seven of the top ten languages spoken by children and staff.

Taken together the findings of the Toronto Childcare Language Survey reveal that Toronto child care centres are treasure chests brimming with different languages—where English and heritage languages have similar representation, where French, American

Table 1: Match-Mismatch: Children's Heritage languages and staff languages

CHILDREN	STAFF
Chinese	Chinese
Spanish	Spanish
Tagalog	French
Arabic	Italian
Bengali	Hindi
Portuguese	Portuguese
Farsi	Tagalog
Hindi	Urdu
Russian	Farsi
Tamil	Tamil

Sign Language and Aboriginal languages are marginally represented and where staff are speakers of heritage languages.

(c) Beyond Toronto

What about child care centres in other Canadian cities? What characterizes their language reality? The lack of language data makes it challenging to answer this question directly. For this reason, we go to an indirect source, the non-official language data from the 2011Census Canada[9]. With this information, we can build a general language profile for child care centres in four Canadian cities.

When we compare the languages in the Toronto Childcare Language Survey (columns A and B) of Table 2 with the languages listed for the city of Toronto (column C), we find both language match (Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog) and language mismatch (Arabic, Bengali, French, Italian, Hindi).

Not surprisingly, this tells us that the languages reported in the Toronto Childcare Language Survey reflect the broader language picture of the city of Toronto. It would appear, then, that the same is true for the other four cities, for Montreal, Vancouver, Edmonton and Ottawa-Gatineau where children attending child care in these cities are most likely speakers of some combination of the languages listed in columns D, E, F and G. Based on this comparison, we can conclude that newcomer children are a very real presence in child care centres across Canada.

Table 2: Toronto Childcare Language Survey languages and home languages of five CMAs (Census Canada 2011)

TORONTO CHILDCARE LANGUAGE SURVEY 2016		CANADA CENSUS 2011: LANGUAGE DATA				
Children	**Staff**	**Toronto**	**Montreal**	**Vancouver**	**Edmonton**	**Ottawa – Gatineau**
Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Arabic	Chinese	Chinese	Arabic
Spanish	Spanish	Punjabi	Spanish	Punjabi	Tagalog	Chinese
Tagalog	French	Urdu	Italian	Tagalog	Punjabi	Spanish
Arabic	Italian	Tamil	Chinese	Korean	Spanish	Somali
Bengali	Hindi	Tagalog	Creole	Farsi	Arabic	Farsi
A	B	C	D	E	F	G

Home languages matter!

> *"… Begin where children are and build on what they know and bring."*[10]

What does the above language information mean? Are children's home languages important? Why should EC professionals care about children's language backgrounds?

Home languages *do* matter! And here's why… the language lives of young children are an important part of their identity and their overall development. It marks and colours their sense of self, their connection to their culture, religion, family and community. Their language learning guides their understanding of the world, sets the foundation for literacy development[11] and affects their future school performance. Familiarity with newcomer children's language lives is critical for EC professionals who are faced with the challenge of selecting practices that will best build on these children's language skills and help them grow linguistically.

Instructional practice with newcomer children

What, then, is the most effective way to support newcomer children? What is the best way to integrate them into the program and meet their language needs? Which of the three instructional practices commonly used with newcomer children, assimilative, supportive and inclusive best responds to the quote at the beginning of this section to "begin where children are and build on what they know and bring?"

Table 3 sets out the main features of each practice and provides sample strategies.

A number of studies on childhood bilingualism[12] have concluded that inclusive practice best supports newcomer children.

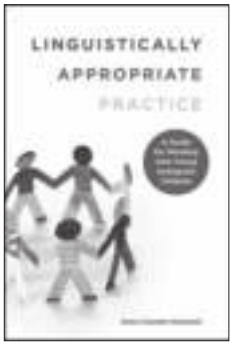
While assimilative and supportive practices rest on out-dated and inaccurate assumptions about childhood bilingualism, hurry newcomers into the majority language, discount their home language skills and fail to recognize their bilingual potential, inclusive practice builds on newcomer children's strengths and recognizes the personal, social, cognitive, linguistic and economic advantages of bilingualism. In line with childhood bilingualism research[13], this practice views young newcomers as bilinguals in the making or "emergent bilinguals"[14], portraying them as capable, active, language learners. Inclusive practice extends the knowledge that children have of their home language(s) and views their prior experiences as important contributors to building their identity. Finally, inclusive practice bridges the two language worlds of newcomers, integrating their home language(s) into the early learning program.

Linguistically Appropriate Practice (LAP): A Guide for Working with Young Immigrant Children is a resource that is widely used by Canadian EC professionals who are

Table 3: Instructional practices with young newcomer children. From Chumak-Horbatsch 2012

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE	ASSIMILATIVE	SUPPORTIVE	INCLUSIVE
Main features	Teaching and learning the majority language. Absorbing newcomers into the majority language and culture as quickly as possible.	Teaching and learning the majority language. Acknowledging home languages. Celebrating cultural differences.	Teaching and learning the majority language. Validating and supporting children's home languages. Integrating home languages into the curriculum. Using children's home language skills as a resource. Working closely with families to promote bilingualism and bi-literacy.
Focus	Monolingual, mono-literate, mono-cultural	Monolingual, mono-literate, inter-cultural	Multilingual, multi-literate, and inter-cultural
Sample strategies	Limit the number of newcomer children in each classroom. Discourage interaction between children who speak the same home language.	Use key words and phrases in the home languages to ease communication: *Come here; bathroom; Do you want some help? It's OK; sleep; stop; eat.* Organize multicultural celebrations.	Greet children in their home languages. Invite family members to share and author dual language books.

adopting inclusive practice and joining a growing movement that is transforming early care and education in Canada.



What is LAP?

LAP:

- Is an inclusive approach to working with newcomer children;
- Views newcomer children as emergent bilinguals, not simply as learners of the majority language;
- Acknowledges newcomer children's dual language and literacy needs;
- Builds partnerships with families;
- Recognizes the importance of home languages;
- Builds on children's home language and literacy experiences;
- Promotes bilingualism;
- Encourages home language use;
- Helps all children experience, understand, and accept linguistic diversity; and
- Is designed to help prepare children for the complex communication and literacy demands of the 21st century.

Adopting LAP is a two-step process.

Step One: Background information
Familiarity with:

a) The principles of childhood bilingualism;
b) The language reality of newcomer children; and
c) Instructional practices currently adopted with newcomer children.

Step Two: Adopting inclusive practice

a) Preparing the centre and informing parents; and
b) Implementing activities that weave home languages into the program.

Sample activities

The three activities described here are used in the early stages of adopting inclusive practice. Page numbers from the LAP book follow each activity for quick reference. Hint: having a translation app like Google Translate on your cellphone will help to quickly find translations and check pronunciations.

1. Language Chart (p.65)

Documenting children's home languages is an important first step in launching LAP. Working with the children, prepare a home language chart (see Table 4 for an example). With the help of parents and the Internet, special features such as celebratory days, instruments, flowers, and animals can be added to the chart.

Table 4: Sample Home Language Chart

Language	Number of Speakers	Speakers
English	3	Miss Ross, Joshua, Elizabeth
Mandarin	4	Huan, Lin, Shan, Miss Peral
Arabic	4	Amira, Baraka, Akbar
Urdu	5	Sabirah, Johara, Tahir

2. Bilingual name cards (p.107)

Invite parents to print their children's names in their home language on the backs of prepared name cards. The above example shows a child's name in English on one side and in Arabic on the other. Encourage children to sign their artwork in their two languages.

3. Language Ball (p.115)

As a soft, medium-sized ball is passed around the circle, children provide translations of words such as numbers, shapes, colours, familiar objects, foods and greetings. For example, a Mandarin-

speaking EC professional starts the game by holding the language ball and calling out **chair** in English and then **yizi**, which is Mandarin for chair. She passes the ball around the circle and children provide translations of **chair** in their home languages. Once the children become familiar with the procedure, they can lead the game.

Response to LAP activities

EC professionals report that activities such as the ones described above are both enjoyable and tremendously important to newcomer children. At first, children are surprised to hear their home language outside the home and somewhat shy to participate, but they quickly come to understand that they belong to their new group, that they have a voice and that their language is important and valued. This language support serves as a bridge and helps them transition more smoothly into a new place with a new language. Over time, they develop an awareness of languages and show an interest in their own home languages and those of others. For example, a child holding up a toy cow said: "I speak Arabic and my cow speaks Hebrew". They play and experiment with language rhythms and patterns and imitate and attempt words in each other's languages. They talk about languages with each other and use them as identity markers for themselves and their friends: "I speak Urdu and so does Zairah and Sadaat." Parents also respond positively to including home language in the classroom. As they see their children's interest, excitement and pride in languages, they express their gratitude: "Thank you for encouraging our language." and are more open to becoming engaged in the life of the centre.

Conclusions

In closing, we return to the image of our Prime Minister welcoming newcomer families at the airport. Let's take his heart-warming gesture as a reminder of our role in supporting newcomer children. As we commit to inclusive practice and guide newcomers in their bilingual and multilingual journeys, our centres will become environments where all languages matter and where newcomer children walk happily and confidently in their language worlds.

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Endnotes

1. https://www.google.ca/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8q=PM+trudeau+welcomes+syrian+family+photo
2. L2 refers to a second or additional language.
3. Kan and Kohnert 2005
4. A heritage language is a language other than English or French (the two official languages of Canada) and Canadian Aboriginal languages.
5. Population Profile: Syrian Refugees: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2015)
6. Early childhood (EC) professionals include staff who work directly with young children and are responsible for all aspects of program planning and delivery, namely, childcare staff as well as kindergarten and primary grade teachers.
7. The Toronto Childcare Language Survey (2016) was conducted by Toronto Children's Services and Ryerson University. Contact Roma Chumak-Horbatsch for additional information (rchumak@ryerson.ca).
8. Staff is used as a plural collective noun to refer to the employees of childcare centres.
9. Canada Census Language Data (2011)
10. Goodwin (2001)
11. Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, and Christian (2007).
12. Ball 2011; Chumak-Horbatsch (2008, 2012); Coelho (2012); Cummins (2001, 2004, 2006, 2006); Cummins and Early (2011); Goodwin, (2002); Schwarzer, Haywood and Lorenzen (2003).
13. Garcia and Kleifgen (2010)
14. García (2009)

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WELCOMING NEW CANADIANS TO OUR CARE

Bridging Between Cultural and Professional Practice in Diverse Early Childhood Settings

by Christine Massing and Mary Lynne Matheson

The ability to draw upon the strengths of diverse cultural perspectives is both an asset and a challenge to multicultural societies. Immigrant and refugee families form a substantial and growing portion of the population of Canada. Statistics Canada (2010) foretells that the ethnocultural diversity of Canada's population will increase dramatically by 2031, when one in three people is projected to be a visible minority, one in four is expected to be foreign born, and more than one-third of these individuals are anticipated to be children. However, Friendly and Prabhu (2010) have expressed the concern that early childhood education (ECE) programs in Canada are not equipped to meet the needs of this very diverse population. Therefore, it is important to recruit and retain culturally diverse educators as they have been found to possess the life experiences, cultural bridging and mediation skills, repertoires of approaches, and cultural understandings needed for working with children and families from similar backgrounds (Adair, Tobin, & Arzubiaga, 2012; Bernheimer, 2003; Tobin, Arzubiaga, & Adair, 2013; Wilgus, 2013). Since they are bilingual or multilingual, they can also make immigrant children feel more at home and can translate the meanings behind practices to colleagues or families (Massing, 2015a).

The national and provincial need for early childhood educators (Beach, Friendly, Ferns, Prabhu, & Forer, 2008) coupled with the overall accessibility of the field to newcomers (Service Canada, 2011) suggests that ECE can be an entry point into the Canadian workforce for immigrants. However, they experience numerous barriers to advancing their educational qualifications and their standing in the field. Many are motivated to further their education by enrolling in ECE diploma or certificate programs (Langford, 2007). The high cost and significant time commitment required (CCHRC, 2009), as well as the need for fluency in English or French, are all impediments to accessing higher education (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010). However, as will be discussed here, one of the more significant barriers is that immigrant educators and student educators' understandings and experiences are marginalized in ECE theory and practice. In this article, we first provide an overview of this dominant framework of ECE and how it is experienced by immigrant educators and student educators. Then, we discuss ways that these various tensions are being addressed in practice at the Intercultural Child and Family Centre (ICFC) in Edmonton, Alberta.

Dominant Framework of ECE

Early childhood practice has long been anchored in Western child development theories which advance Euro-North American societal values, norms, and practices. Based on research with white middle-class children, such theories have been criticized for suggesting that all children progress through the same universal developmental stages irrespective of the familial, social, and cultural contexts in which they live their lives (e.g., Lubeck, 1996; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). When immigrant children are assessed against these norms, they are seen to be deficient. By extension, their families are deemed to lack skills and be in need of "training" to effectively parent their own children (Cannella, 1997; Lubeck, 1994). Educators are expected to have knowledge of these western theories and "developmentally appropriate practices" (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009) to be viewed as professional. This developmental framework influences many of the regulations, certification requirements, curriculum frameworks, and other policy documents. In this framework, there is little or no value attached to the cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) held by immigrant educators or student educators.

Immigrant Educators' and Student Educators' Experiences

Knowledge of western child developmental theory undergirds the majority of ECE post-secondary programs (Muttart Foundation & Langford, 2014), and immigrant student educators are introduced to many unfamiliar concepts and practices. The idea of "learning through play", for instance, is dissonant with many immigrant student educators' own experiences "back home" where play and learning were strictly

separated; play took place outdoors and was largely unsupervised by adults, while learning took place in school and was teacher-directed (Massing, 2015b). The instructors in Langford's (2007) study used the authority of child development theory to eliminate immigrant student educators' own culturally-based practices. Likewise, while immigrant student educators may view written texts, such as their ECE textbooks, as the authoritative sources of information about Canadian ECE theory and practice (Massing, 2015a), such textbooks do not necessarily portray diversity and difference as strengths (Langford, 2007). Bjartveit and Panayotidis (2015) explain that reading ECE textbooks gives immigrant student educators the impression that their conceptions of child development and child-rearing practices are "abnormal".

When immigrant student educators come to understand that what they bring is "different" than the norm, they may experience anxiety, isolation, and a sense of inferiority compared to their non-immigrant classmates (Moles and Santoro, 2013).

As Massing (2015a) found in her one year study of immigrant and refugee women's experiences studying in an early childhood education college program in Alberta, many began their studies with a sense of competence rooted in the knowledge they had gained through experiences as mothers, teachers, siblings, or familial caregivers in their home countries. However, over the course of their studies, their confidence was eroded as they came to realize that such experience was not valued in the new context. When immigrant student educators come to understand that what they bring is "different" than the norm, they may experience anxiety, isolation, and a sense of inferiority compared to their non-immigrant classmates (Moles and Santoro, 2013). Various studies on immigrant educators and student educators suggest that since their own experiences as parents are not seen as professional, they feel obliged to shed these beliefs and practices in the workplace (Adair, Tobin, & Aruzibiaga, 2012; Hujibregts, Leseman, & Taveccio, 2008; Jipson, 1991; Ortlipp & Nuttall, 2011; Wilgus, 2006). The student educators in Massing's (2015b) study, however, did not always reject their own understandings and beliefs in favour of adopting the dominant practices. When the gap between the expected care practices in field placement sites and their own beliefs was too large to reconcile, they sometimes rebelled. For instance, they assisted infants and toddlers who struggled to feed or dress themselves as a means of ensuring the children's well-being, even when they were explicitly told not to do so. Even more commonly, they consciously or unconsciously chose elements from their own cultural experiences and from the dominant teachings in their coursework and seamlessly wove these together.

Curriculum Framework

While provincial curriculum frameworks draw upon western theories, concepts, and values, most affirm the need to foster children's respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Many of the frameworks also encourage educators to be responsive to the local sociocultural contexts of children's lives by acknowledging families as the child's first educators and forming partnerships. As noted by Prochner, Cleghorn, Kirova, and Massing (in press), though, very few frameworks offer concrete examples which might assist educators working with immigrant children in incorporating familial languages, knowledges, and values in meaningful ways. The absence of guiding examples in frameworks often leads ECE programs to embrace a superficial "fun, food, and fashion" approach to diversity, bringing in music, materials, clothing, and celebrations from different cultures. This issue affirms the complexities of culture and how challenging it is to first gain access to the diverse experiences, values, and beliefs of immigrant families and then to incorporate these into curriculum documents and practice. The work undertaken by educators at the ICFC is aimed at bringing forth immigrant educators' funds of knowledge in order to contribute to understandings of how deeper aspects of culture might be incorporated into ECE programs.

Background on the Intercultural Child and Family Centre

The diversity of the families, children, and educators at Intercultural Child and Family Centre (ICFC) makes it uniquely positioned to take on the task of addressing these tensions and barriers. The ICFC was started seven years ago by a group of Eritrean and Ethiopian parents who desired culturally resonant child care, and it is now a not-for-profit, accredited centre enrolling 60 children. The majority of the families are newcomers to Canada, while all of the educators are immigrants or refugees from Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, or Africa.

The ICFC has been the site of several participatory action research projects. It also hosted a workplace-based pilot program, funded by the Alberta Government, aimed at bridging immigrant educators into post-secondary ECE programs. The lack of recognition for immigrants' educational credentials and experiences in their home countries often results in them being certified at the lowest level (as child development

assistants). Therefore, many immigrant educators do not have the power to influence policy or programming, and they are unable to improve their credentials through post-secondary studies due to the language requirements (CCHRSC, 2009). This bridging program was initiated as a means of addressing these concerns, and many educators at the ICFC participated in this program. More recently, the ICFC has been a pilot site for the implementation of the Alberta curriculum framework *Play, Participation, and Possibilities* (Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette, & Thomas, 2014). One of the instructors in the bridging program became the mentor for the curriculum framework pilot and is now the educational coordinator for the centre. Her sustained engagement working alongside the director, educators, and the children and families over a period of several years has allowed her to form relationships with them. This closeness has been enhanced by her willingness to listen to educators and to learn from them, rather than simply insisting that they adopt the dominant practices.

Translation Issues

During the pilot for the curriculum framework, most of the educators struggled to make sense of the language used, especially in the holistic goals descriptors. Even those educators who were fairly proficient in English found the terminology to be largely inaccessible. Not only did they need to navigate the professional language or jargon of early childhood in the framework (Prochner et al, in-press) and in ECE textbooks, but these terms were underpinned by Western values and beliefs which were wholly inconsistent with their own experiences and understandings. For example, the curriculum framework describes the child as a "mighty learner and citizen—strong, resourceful, and capable" (Makovichuk et al, 2014). This image of the child as competent was not congruent with some of the educators' own images of the child as a "gift from God", "precious", "innocent", or "a treasure". Notions of children's competence were defined differently in their home countries as young children often made significant contributions within their households. Similarly, the idea of children as citizens seemed difficult to imagine for some educators, many of whom had not necessarily experienced full rights of citizenship themselves. Consequently, the mentor and educators' work with the curriculum framework began with the "dispositions to learn"—playing and playfulness, seeking, participating, persisting, and caring—terminology that was easier to understand, though it was interpreted quite differently cross-culturally. While the disposition of caring and the holistic goal of well-being were easiest for educators to understand and recognize in children's play, other holistic goal descriptors did not necessarily speak to their experiences or understandings of the adult-child role. Both in the bridging program and in the pilot for the curriculum framework, then, the mentor's task was, in effect, to interpret the content for the educators which was not as simple as explaining terms using English words that were familiar to the educators.

Drawing out Cultural Funds of Knowledge

Similar to many participants in Massing's (2015a) study, the educators had adopted practices which they interpreted as being "the right way" or the "rules" for professionals working in child care. The dominant ECE theories and practices were so powerful in their minds that they feared that even small changes would not be well-received by licensing and accreditation agents. Many practices were so entrenched that the mentor sometimes found it difficult to convince them to question them in relation to their own beliefs.

Although the educators were unaccustomed to observing children in their home countries, the skills of observation and documentation of children's play were introduced to educators. Photos and stories proved to be particularly powerful means of identifying and sharing activities of cultural significance. Discussions about a child carefully preparing her "baby" for bed and crawling into bed alongside her baby illustrated the importance of co-sleeping in her family. A child who was drawing a picture of his house told an educator the story of his relationship with his "aunty," thus showing the custom of living with members of the extended family. A small group of children playing with babies described their understandings of birth customs; from baby showers before the baby is born to celebrations and naming ceremonies weeks after birth. As Massing (2015a) also found, the educators believed that religion, and the teaching of religious values, was "not allowed" in Canadian child care, but when the educators undertook to photograph the children's play it created opportunities for discussing this idea further. A learning story captured by an educator, entitled "the Coffee Ceremony", depicted a young boy's knowledge of this cultural ritual and his own religious practice, sparking discussions of his religious play, including singing in church, blessing others, and praying. Coming from similar backgrounds as the children, educators were able to utilize their cultural knowledges to interpret the children's practices.

Their thinking about the children and their colleagues also shifted as their observations permitted them to gain an understanding of each individual's own funds of knowledge. For instance, a number of educators had expressed concern about the language development of one of the toddlers, an immigrant from Somalia. As information was collected, the educators realized that when the Somali educator spoke to him in her home language, he understood her perfectly. When one educator, who was a very accomplished cook, observed a child

lining dishes up in a row on the floor, she noted that they ate like this at home. The next day this educator brought in a meal composed of dishes from her country, laid a tablecloth on the floor, arranged the dishes, and everyone sat on the floor to share the meal. Little by little, the educators gained confidence in what they knew about caring for and teaching young children and felt comfortable changing existing practices in the centre.

Relating these Funds of Knowledge to Professional Practice

As a starting point to relating cultural to professional practice and Alberta's curriculum framework, the educators learned about the 'dispositions to learn'. Initially each of the dispositions was assigned a colour in order to colour-code all of their observations, photos, and planning cycle experiences. Using photos to work from, the educators practiced identifying dispositions in the children's actions. A one page handout with photos was created to illustrate the various dispositions, and this was later updated and personalized with photos educators took of children in the centre who were exhibiting the five dispositions. Using pictures of children, each room created their own poster depicting children's dispositions to learn and they shared a slide show with many photos of children at play with families to further illustrate these dispositions. An edition of the centre's monthly educator bulletin focused on educators using curriculum framework dispositions to guide their interactions with children.

Through repetition and the use of different strategies, the mentor was able to interpret the dispositions in a way that the educators could relate to their own experiences, understandings, values, and beliefs. The educators were also introduced to the idea of learning stories, however, producing written stories in English was very intimidating for them. The mentor again encouraged the educators to rely on visual means. Once a series of photos depicting an event had been assembled into story form, the educators orally explained the "story" and discussed it in relation to the 'dispositions to learn'. Those who had the confidence and skills wrote these stories themselves and volunteer mentors with English and computer skills assisted other educators. In this way, they could produce visual representations depicting the different ways in which children demonstrated the dispositions. More recently, the educators have been supported in keeping journals—combining written and visual texts—in their home languages or in English. As the educators began to analyze the children's play experiences and interactions with others, they were able to relate instances of cultural significance to the curriculum framework goals, bridging between their understandings of "back home" and the alien concepts and theories.

As the educators began to analyze the children's play experiences and interactions with others, they were able to relate instances of cultural significance to the curriculum framework goals, bridging between their understandings of "back home" and the alien concepts and theories.

Sharing Learning with the Community

Visual approaches allowed the educators to showcase their funds of knowledge, as well as those of the children and families with whom they worked, and to do so in formats that could be shared with others. Families were then encouraged to add their comments. Their work on learning stories has resulted in the production of a collection of illustrated learning story booklets showing cultural nuances that might otherwise have been overlooked. Practice in the ICFC has been enriched by the blend of perspectives on the meanings behind children's play. As one of the pilot sites for the curriculum framework, the ICFC became part of a 'community of learners' whereby the educators were able to visit other programs and also showcase their own work. These kinds of opportunities served to further bolster their self-confidence as they were able to share their funds of knowledge more widely in the professional community.

Conclusion

Immigrants' funds of knowledge need to be formally acknowledged and incorporated both in ECE post-secondary programs and in the field (Gupta, 2013). In the program described here, the mentor provided bridging (Rogoff, 1990) by using either the educators' experiences "back home" or current experiences in the ICFC as a starting point from which to build understanding of new concepts and theories. However, it is important to note that the educators did not simply receive the dominant teachings from the mentor, but were engaged in a reciprocal process whereby they also interpreted culturally-significant activities for the mentor and for their colleagues. Through these experiences, the educators and mentor learned from one another and from the children about deeper aspects of culture—values, beliefs, and worldviews. The traditional power structure in the relationship between mentor and mentees

was shifted as they together negotiated the various meanings underlying children's actions and constructed understandings of how to bring these into dialogue with the dominant professional expectations.

The work they have undertaken creates possibilities for envisioning meaningful intercultural practice in ECE settings.

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WELCOMING NEW CANADIANS TO OUR CARE

Culturally Responsive Practice at the Intercultural Child & Family Centre

by Jasvinder (Jazz) Heran and Mary Lynne Matheson

"Tell me what makes your centre intercultural?" our visitor asked. As director of the Intercultural Child and Family Centre (ICFC), I proudly described all the supports we have in place for our families: assistance with subsidy application and registration, help with accessing resources such as the Food Bank, translation and counseling services right in our building, referrals, support for families pertaining to settlement issues, and monthly parent events with meals and child–minding. Our staff are good at singing and speaking in their own and children's home languages, cooking ethnic food with children, and celebrating culture through clothing, rituals, music and dance.

On our tour of the centre, we visited the toddler room. Our visitor gently provoked us by saying, "It's interesting that aside from the educators and children themselves, you could be in any daycare in the city." I looked around the toddler room as if for the first time and took in the row of Fisher Price high chairs along one wall, six cribs lined up along another wall, and two change tables in the centre of the room. To my dismay, I realized that this was a room that screamed "custodial care" and it did not speak to the cultural diversity of our centre's families and staff. Any artifacts that represented culture were hanging from the ceiling or up high on a bulletin board where children couldn't see them. We realized right then that we had some work to do on our playroom environments. But how might we begin with such a huge task?

Later, when ICFC became a participant in the pilot for Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (PPP) we visited other participating programs and became further inspired by the Framework's goal of Diversity & Social Responsibility and in particular an indicator for Inclusiveness and Equity:

> *"Children appreciate their own distinctiveness and that of others learning about their cultural heritages and those of other families within the centre and broader society" (Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette & Thomas, 2014, p. 111)*

In order to help children appreciate their distinctiveness and that of others, we knew that we had to respect their backgrounds and reflect those in the playroom itself. Staff became excited when they realized that reflecting culture in the playroom environments was as valuable as the food, dance, and songs that they were already sharing. Our mentor from the PPP pilot project at MacEwan University suggested that if we were feeling overwhelmed, we might want to start with the housekeeping

Initial transformation of the preschool room house area included adding a homemade low table, ethnic fabrics, pictures depicting spices and dishes from Ethiopia and Eritrea, wooden bowls, babies of all colours and cultural clothing and footwear.

We soon noticed that the hominess and location of the couch in this area invited families past the doorway and into the room.

Preschool Room “Before” - lots of primary colours, plastic toys and clutter

Preschool Room “After” - natural materials, subdued colours and cultural artifacts

centre and ask ourselves, “How can this space look like the children’s homes?” This is where our focus began. Inspired by this project, however, our educators were keen to expand to the entire room.

We looked at the children, families and staff in each of our three playrooms and thought about how those spaces could better reflect the communities in each. Our educators participated in a shopping trip to a local charity store in search of culturally relevant dress-up clothes and other artifacts; they also brought in items from home that spoke to their own cultural backgrounds. Seeing this happening, some families reciprocated by also contributing personal items for the rooms. As we collected these, we realized that we had to be aware of adding genuine artifacts and respecting the cultural integrity of precious items. This continues to be a challenge as we try to make conscious decisions about what to have in our room environments.

At the same time as we began adding to rooms, we began removing plastic and commercial toys while incorporating more natural materials and loose parts. De-cluttering was a big part of our transformation as we sorted through years of accumulations on shelves and window sills—something we have to be aware of even now. With these new changes to our room environments, we soon realized that we could take down the “multicultural bulletin boards” which had been created for our first accreditation visit because our whole room spoke of the intercultural nature of our children, families and educators.

While transforming the environments in each room we needed to be consciously aware of who were the educators and children in each and resist the urge to duplicate generic cultural artifacts in all rooms. For example, we suspended a piece of lattice from the ceiling in two of the playrooms above the housekeeping areas and from each hung kitchen items, something we had seen in a centre we had visited as part of the PPP pilot project. In the toddler room we hung miniature Ethiopian bread baskets and in Out of School Care, we hung chop sticks and lanterns to reflect the backgrounds of children and staff in each of the rooms at that time. We removed the cribs in the toddler room except for one which was placed on its side with a mattress and pillows to create a cozy “alone” spot for reading or cuddling. The whole toddler room was transformed from a space that had previously depicted custodial care to a place that invited our youngest children to play and discover.

Toddler Room “After” - A Place for Exploration

Shortly after our initial room transformations, we invited families into the playrooms and asked them, "What in the playroom feels like your home?", "What represents your culture?" and "What could be added or changed to better represent your family and culture?"

Sealed spice jars with small amounts of lentils and beans in the preschool room's house area have prompted children's conversations about familiar ingredients.

Parents indicated that the natural elements reminded them of their home countries. Many recognized artifacts such as the *sungka*, a game that an educator brought back from a trip to the Philippines, the Ethiopian bread baskets and the sealed bottles with small amounts of lentils and beans. We needed to make a conscious decision about using these real food items in our play kitchen since many of our families experience food scarcity issues; a dialogue with some parents in the preschool room led to their consent and contribution of special ingredients they use at home.

Our staff have been hired, as much as possible, to reflect the cultural diversity of the families in the centre. This means that there is usually someone in the room who is able to talk with parents and children in their home language. It also means that educators have a diverse repertoire and knowledge of cultural practices. As a result of our involvement in the PPP pilot and guidance from our pedagogical mentor, staff have been encouraged to document these experiences and write learning stories to recognize cultural practices they observe in children's play. Some of our most memorable learning stories have been titled "My mom's bread is thin" – a comment from children's conversations while making an Ethiopian bread called himbasha, "We eat like this at home"—a comment upon seeing a lunch of mesir wat, tikel gomen and injera served on a communal plate on the floor, and "Safwan understands Somali"—an insight by an educator when she realized a toddler who seemed non-responsive and non-verbal responded to instructions spoken in Somali.

Another PPP indicator for Inclusiveness and Equity—"Children appreciate their own distinctiveness and that of others becoming knowledgeable and confident in their various identities, including cultural, racial, physical, spiritual, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic" (Makovichuk et al, 2014, p. 111)—prompted an educator to write a learning story entitled, "The Blessing". This story recognized a child's knowledge of religious traditions as he blessed play food before sharing it with other children and prayed before "eating" it. Because spiritual identity was identified in PPP, it was validated as an important aspect of identity for this educator and was recognized and named in this learning story.

We would like to say that our centre has become pretty good at integrating the more visible aspects of culture such as music, clothing, food, dance, and the physical spaces in our playrooms. However, at a recent staff meeting we looked further at culture and realized that we knew less about the more invisible, deeper aspects of culture such as values and beliefs, child rearing practices, roles within families and gender roles. This has lead us on a new path with the realization that these are things that we will be privileged to when we build deeper relationships with parents, genuinely wanting to find out more and engaging in more intimate dialogues with families. This was highlighted in the toddler room when a child who was new to the centre was having a hard time settling at naptime despite staff's efforts using traditional early childhood practices such as back rubbing and singing. When we created an opportunity to connect more closely with her parents we learned that baby wearing, co-sleeping and continued breastfeeding were practiced at home—little wonder that this child had a hard time falling asleep on a cot by herself even with a caring educator by her side attempting to sooth her. This experience taught us that child-rearing practices are an integral part of the culture of our families and that our future direction needs to move beyond our playroom environments and artifacts.

We humbly acknowledge that we have much to do and learn in our quest to be to more culturally responsive in meaningful and deeper ways. Our hope is to be more aware of and responsive to the hidden or invisible aspects of culture and respond with wise practice by integrating the best of early childhood practice and the best of cultural practice into our work with children, families and our room teams.

Jasvinder (Jazz) Heran is the Director at ICFC in Edmonton, Alberta, and is a graduate of the Early Childhood Program at MacEwan University. Jazz has worked in the field of child care for over 25 years and has had extensive experience as an owner and operator before coming to ICFC in 2013. Jazz can be contacted at jasvinder@icfc.ca

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WELCOMING NEW CANADIANS TO OUR CARE

Journey in a New World

Strategies to Ease Integration for Newcomer Families = Tailoring Integration to the Needs of the Child

by Samantha Pemberton, RECE and Lyne Tremblay, RECE, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services, Ottawa

Andrew Fleck Child Care Services provides a licensed preschool/kindergarten and school-age program located within Charles Hulse School. As Ottawa became home to many new Syrian families we were excited that a few chose to settle in the already multi-lingual, multi-cultural neighbourhood where our program is located. Over 75% of the students attending the school and our program speak a first language other than English or French so when more than 50 new children from Syria joined the school we anticipated and were ready to also welcome additional families.

Several families inquired about our services and with the help of an in interpreter this gave us the opportunity to start forging a strong relationship and building trust. We engaged with each family individually so we could offer encouragement and support by responding appropriately to the questions, concerns and needs of each child and parent. Our program has developed strategies and best practices to support families, as embedded within our own Statement of

Practice and Guiding Principles. We also refer to a document entitled *"Growing up in a new land – Strategies for working with newcomer families"* available at the following website: http://www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/Growing_up_new_land_FINAL.pdf

We start with an intake meeting with each family, taking the time to listen and ask or answer questions. These meetings are a critical part of getting to know the families who may possibly be joining our center so we can determine how we can best meet their needs and support them. We talk about their family, their home language and some of the challenges they may be experiencing. We ask them what is important to them regarding care for their child, and their goals. Often these families will speak a language other than English. We are fortunate to have a diverse team of Early Childhood Educators and Assistants who speak Arabic, Somalia, Spanish, English and French. Whenever it's required some families will bring in someone to translate. We support parents in filling out the proper documents required by us but also for accessing fee subsidy if necessary. These families will often not be able to fill out some of the registration information. They will not have doctors or medical information, or even a second guardian as they may have left family or husband/wife at home. For the time being we leave those parts empty. We encourage families to update this information as soon as they can. We encourage connections with others in their community often facilitating introductions with the hope that friendships and community supports are established outside of our program.

From experience we are prepared that orientation into our program can at times be difficult therefore we tailor the integration period to the anticipated needs of the child. We always ask that families stay and engage in activities with their children and the Educators. This allows the child time to feel like they belong, understand the transitions and routines. The family is able to translate what is occurring throughout the day. Once the children and families feel comfortable we have a few days of very short times when the parent leaves the room. After saying good bye to the child, with reassurances that they will return soon, the parent leaves. The first time may only be 15 minutes slowly increasing to half days then full-days. We always encourage family participation; we ask families to share stories, interests and materials with us which enriches the children's inquiries.

From experience we are prepared that orientation into our program can at times be difficult therefore we tailor the integration period to the anticipated needs of the child. We always ask that families stay and engage in activities with their children and the Educators.

Often adjusting to a completely new routine can be difficult for the children. We try to limit the amount of transitions offering more open ended activities and free play. This allows more time for the Educators to form relationships and bond with the children. We do discuss the transitions and routines that occur at home.

Often children will refuse to try or eat the foods provided. While we offer a variety of foods from the Canada food guide, many of these will be new. We try to support families by allowing them to bring a lunch from home but ensure we serve them our lunch as well so they continue to be

exposed to our recipes in the program. We provide families with the menus to encourage that a similar variety of foods is brought. We ask for family involvement when planning the menus. It's great to learn of different recipes that the children have eaten at home and would enjoy. We make sure to respect food allergies or restrictions; for example at this site and at several of our other locations, we do not serve pork and all the meat provided is Halal.

We are careful to not assume understanding of any family's culture or to depend on research that might not be accurate which is why instead we invite and rely on the families attending the program to provide or share their customs with us.

We focus on developing a communication with strategy each individual family, based on their needs. All Educators have, clipped to clothes, a ring of pictures to serve as a visual aid to support explaining common items or routines. These can be used to support the parents and all children throughout our day; the children themselves will often use the aid express what they need. We also ask families to provide the words in the language they speak at home to support the use of the visual aids. "Show me" is a phrase you will hear often in our program, children are prompted to use concrete items when making a request we ask them. The other children often become fantastic "interpreters" and will even translate what is being said if they understand the child's first language. Of course Google translate, while not perfect, is a great resource when needing to explain something to a parent. Our website, as an example, has Google translate embedded so the information on it is accessible to all families. We are fortunate that many materials from our Public Health unit and other support services such as our OEYC have been translated into multiple languages. It always surprises us how quickly the children learn English; typically we will hear them singing songs first, before speaking in full English sentences. We are proud of our welcome wall, where each family provided how they would say "hello" in their home language. We posted it on the entrance door for all families to see.

We also created a family tree. Families and staff shared their family photos. Some families may not have one so we took one of them to post. Some children brought in more than one photo so that we can see the family that is still living back home and the family that is living here.

Casual family events are important for building connections. For example, at one of our recent *Family Gathering Dinner Event*, the Program Manager (who is not onsite daily) started speaking to one of the parents in French. This allowed the parent to share so much more, because while the Educators had been doing their best to communicate with the mom, they knew that she had more to say. From this event a connection with another parent was also made. The parents are now assisting each other with drop-off and pick-up and have become a great support for each other

With guidance from the families we purchased some wonderful music and instruments from around the world knowing that music and dancing is so engaging and provides a universal way for everyone to connect.

We are careful to not assume understanding of any family's culture or to depend on research that might not be accurate, which is why instead we invite and rely on the families attending the program to provide or share their customs with us.

For example, one of our preschoolers recently arrived wearing a bright, beautiful dress and bracelets. Mom was also wearing celebratory clothing and shared that it was their New Year, and that they would be celebrating over the next couple of days. This was such a wonderful inquiry not only for the children but the educators as well. This led to some of the children asking about the world and about where we came from, so an educator brought in a globe. The children started inspecting the globe and discussing the different countries. We looked for and found where we live now and the educator then showed the children where they used to live or where their parents used to live. Hearing the familiar names brought out some great conversations: "I lived in Nunavut", "My dad is from Libya but I was born in Canada", "I'm from Africa", "My dad lives in Africa". We decided to start placing our names on the globe. It has been so wonderful to see the many places we have connections with.

We feel very privileged to be able to be a part of supporting these new Canadians in their journey in a new land; we have learned so much from having such diversity in our program and look forward to continuing to learn more.

RESEARCH UPDATE

Advancing Early Childhood Development: from Science to Scale

University of Toronto researchers contribute to *The Lancet* series on early childhood development

University of Toronto (U of T) researchers are making a major contribution to a new series on early childhood development by *The Lancet*, one of the world's oldest and best known general medical journals. The massive undertaking, which includes 45 authors from 22 global institutions, includes work from five U of T researchers — the most from any single institution. The 2016 *Lancet* Early Childhood Development Series highlights early childhood development at a time when it has been universally endorsed in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This series considers new scientific evidence for interventions, building on the findings and recommendations of previous *Lancet* series on child development (2007, 2011), and proposes pathways for implementation of early childhood development at scale. The Series emphasizes 'nurturing care', especially of children below three years of age, and multi-sectoral interventions starting with health, which can have wide reach to families and young children through health and nutrition. Find it on *The Lancet* website at: http://www.thelancet.com/series/ECD2016

Valuing children, families and child care: New Brunswick Child Care Review Task Force final report

Author: Whitty, Pam & Haché, Corinne
26 Aug 2016, Province of New Brunswick

The New Brunswick Child Care Task Force Review was commissioned by Serge Rousselle, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, to provide recommendations for "a path for creating the right conditions for quality childcare that are accessible, affordable and inclusive, and that support parents' participation in the workforce.

In the fall of 2015, consultations with early learning and child care educators, operators, parents and organizations, interest groups, government agencies and arm's-length government agencies took place across the province. Surveys, focus groups, bulletin board forums and several submissions provided additional information on the current child care situation in New Brunswick. Extensive analyses, undertaken in conjunction with provincial, national and international research, underpin the findings and recommendations.

Throughout the consultation process, parents identified the high cost of early learning and child care services, accessibility and availability as their chief concerns. Operators cited viability of their centres as their central concern. Early childhood educators and operators conveyed the importance of and their passion for working with young children and their families, while recognizing that early childhood education as a profession is undervalued by society, as evidenced by low wages and challenging working condition

The five overarching recommendations pertain to: governance, educational practices, early childhood education as a professional field of practice, public investment, children's rights, and parental engagement.

Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission: Final Report

Flanagan, Kathleen & Beach, Jane
6 Jan 2016, Government of Manitoba

In March 2015, the Government of Manitoba established the Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission in order to move towards implementing a universally accessible system capable of growing to meet the needs of all families looking for a licensed child care space, inclusive of centre and home-based child care services. In pursuing this objective, the Commission was instructed to support the highly valued community-based, non-profit model, better integrating ELCC and education systems, and maintain and improve quality of care within the ELCC system.

This report focuses on identifying a strategy for Manitoba to move toward a universally accessible system of Early Learning and Child Care. As outlined in the Request for Proposals that guided the work of the Commission, the research has focused on the licensed ELCC system, including both centre-based and home based programs for children from birth to 12 years of age.

ACROSS CANADA AND BEYOND

NATIONAL

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government made big promises to Canadian families. In the federal budget of 2016, it declared that high-quality, affordable child care is a necessity. The government will be taking action, as the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs develop agreements with provinces, territories and Indigenous communities to fulfill election commitments on child care. The 2016 federal budget proposes to invest $500 million in 2017-18 to support the establishment of a National Framework on Early Learning and Child Care. Of this amount, $100 million would be for Indigenous child care and early learning on reserve. Developing the Framework will begin in 2016-17, and will be a joint effort that the Government, provinces, territories and Indigenous peoples will all contribute to in its creation. Investments under the new Framework are expected to flow in 2017-18 but no provincial talks have taken place as of yet to outline how this will unfold.

ALBERTA

The Alberta Child Care Association (ACCA) said they've created a committee who is ready to review the province's child care licensing regulations that expire at the end of October. The committee is beginning with research, looking at things like The Muttart Foundation's work, and are also looking at what other provinces are doing that Alberta could adopt.

This review comes just months after a toddler died in an Alberta child care and where the caregiver faces criminal negligence charges. ACCA wants parents

and the public at large to understand the differences and benefits of licensed versus unlicensed child cares – that licensed quality programs are regulated by the government, are well supported and have to follow standards and procedures with accountability.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The federal government, in its 2016 budget, promised to spend $500 million next year on child care, while 46 municipalities and government agencies in B.C. have endorsed the $10 a Day Child Care plan, including Vancouver in 2011. And this year there are three resolutions dealing with child-care affordability before the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) convention to support the $10 a day plan. Child care costs and affordability come up at the UBCM every other year, but she believes it is now a much more pressing issue. Sharon Gregson, a leader in the the $10 a Day Child Care campaign, says under their plan school-aged children would also be covered, as well as infant and toddler daycare. Given the level of support for the plan, Gregson believes this will be one of the top three issues heading into next year's provincial election. The ministry of children and families has pledged to create 13,000 new licensed child care spaces by 2020. Still, it's not enough and it doesn't ease affordability.

ONTARIO

Within the next five years, Ontario will help to create another 100,000 new, licensed child care spaces so that more families in Toronto can find quality, affordable care.

Today's announcement reaffirms the commitment the government made in the recent Speech from the Throne. Ontario will help to create the new, licensed child care spaces for infants, toddlers and preschoolers within the next five years, with the first spaces opening in 2017. Approximately 20% of 0-4 year olds in Ontario are currently in licensed child care. Research indicates that demand is much higher. Creating 100,000 new spaces will double capacity, creating spaces for about 40% of children 0-4 years old. Ontario's ban on child care wait list fees took effect September 1, 2016.

MANITOBA

In the April election, Manitoba voters elected Brian Pallister and the Progressive Conservative Party after nearly seventeen years of NDP government. MCCA representatives subsequently met with the new Minister of Families, Scott Fielding and submitted recommendations for improving child care in Manitoba and were encouraged to hear that his government supports early learning and child care as an essential service.

MCCA has engaged Probe Research to help identify member, parent and public experiences and opinions on a range of child care related topics for the province. It will be the most in-depth formal research undertaken in Manitoba in recent years on the topic of child care. The organization hopes the results will help to advance child care as service and profession with the new provincial and federal governments.

NEW BRUNSWICK

A major New Brunswick daycare expansion plan that was put before voters in the 2014 provincial election and scheduled to get underway this spring 2016 has been indefinitely shelved by the Gallant government, the second major daycare promise it has backed away from in two years. Child care expansion was the single largest social program proposal made by Liberals in the 2014 campaign with Brian Gallant committing to spend $120 million over five years to add 6,000 new daycare spaces. That campaign promise included a commitment to spend the first $40 million during the current fiscal year. But Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Serge Rousselle said he can't proceed with the promise because a report from a child care task force he appointed was overdue and he wants to see what the Trudeau government's daycare plans are first. With the child care task force report, released in August has not seen a recommitment of these promises to date.

NOVA SCOTIA

Daycare workers who are currently among the lowest-paid in Canada will get a raise and subsidies for parents will increase under a new plan to revamp Nova Scotia's early childhood education system. The five-year plan announced by Education Minister Karen Casey in July 2016 will also increase the number of daycare spaces, while boosting the threshold for families who are eligible for maximum subsidies. As of October 2016, early childhood education workers will see a pay rise in accordance with their level of training, from an average low of $12.84 an hour to between $15 and $19 an hour. Minister Casey said the increases will push wages to the national average, but based on data from 2012.

Other child care investments in the province include changes to the Nova Scotia's child care subsidy program. Families with an income of $25,000 or less are now eligible for the maximum subsidy, up from about $20,000 previously. Family incomes between $25,050 and $70,079 will qualify on a sliding scale. About 700 families currently receiving a partial subsidy will now receive the maximum. According to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the change brings 1,200 new families into the program.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

P.E.I.'s Early Childhood Development Association says the province needs to overhaul its childcare subsidy program. For the second year in a row, funding for those subsidies has been cut in the provincial budget. So a single parent with one child — who makes below $1,453.34 a month, net — qualifies for a full subsidy of up to $34 a day depending on the age of the child. But that subsidy shrinks as income increases. The province argues too few people are currently accessing the program to justify increasing the budget.

But Sonya Hooper, executive director of the ECDA, said it's become too hard to qualify for the program". The minimum wage has gone up, which is fantastic, but the sliding scale hasn't changed to accommodate that." she said. "So in the absence of changing the sliding scale to match the rise in minimum wage there's more strain on families now, accessing child care than there had been." The income cutoffs have to be adjusted and brought up to date.

QUEBEC

Twenty years after the Family Policy, Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance (AQCPE) and the Institut du Nouveau Monde (INM) announced the launch of an Early Childhood Education Commission.

Quebec's Family Policy will turn 20 in 2017. Louis Senécal, AQCPE President and CEO believes a survey of early childhood education in Quebec must be made. He says that the Commission will serve as a platform for nonpartisan debate and it is now time to forge a collective vision of its future. Equal Opportunity is considered central to the Goals of Quebec's Family Policy. The Quebec Government published its family policy, Les enfants au cœur de nos choix, in 1997 and is designed to promote economic development by helping women return to the workplace and by supporting the equal opportunity by all children to high-quality educational daycare services.

SASKATCHEWAN

Five daycares in Saskatchewan are petitioning the provincial government for a property tax exemption for every licensed non-profit daycare in Saskatchewan. They are also appealing their commercial taxation. One daycare's taxes doubled last fall after a City of Regina property reassessment. This daycare, as well as four others, had been paying residential taxes. Paying commercial taxes, is a struggle for the non-profits to stay in business, and may translate into higher daycare fees for families. The budget last year for one daycare included $17,000 in bingo fundraising and $10,000 in family fundraising. The daycare's children raised $1,500 through recycling cans and bottles. If daycares were covered by the Education Act, as other early learning centres are, they would be exempt from property taxation. Schools are exempt from property taxes, and so are the daycares located within them

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

20
National Child Day November 20, 2016
National event that takes place across Canada
www.cccf-fcsge.ca

28-30
Victoria ,British Columbia
From the Outside Looking In..."
British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society
2017 Indigenous Disability and Wellness Gathering
http://bcands2017gathering.com

FEBRUARY 2017

25
Charlottetown, PEI
2017 Early Childhood Development Association of PEI Winter Conference
This one-day conference will focus on discussing old and new approaches to delivering early childhood education and care programs and begin to bridge the gaps.
http://earlychildhooddevelopment.ca

MARCH

1-4
Vancouver, BC
The 7th International Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Research: Results and Relevance 2017
Integrating Research, Policy and Promising Practice Around the World
www.interprofessional.ubc.ca

2-3
Edmonton, Alberta
Early Childhood Development Support Services
10th Annual ECDSS Conference
Working Together, Drilling Deeper
www.ecdss.ca

MAY

4-6
Vancouver, BC
ECEBC's 46th Annual Conference: *Pathways to Professionalism: Believe, Be Hopeful, Be Bold*
www.ecebc.ca

5
Charlottetown, PEI
2017 Early Childhood Development Association of PEI Spring Conference

This year's spring conference will explore sessions related to technology, math, and science in early learning and child care settings! More informatioin will come your way in February.

Contact: bbell@ecdaofpei.ca
Or: http://earlychildhooddevelopment.ca

25-27
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Manitoba Child Care Association's (MCCA) 40th Early Childhood Education Conference
www.mccahouse.org/

RESOURCES

Three Little Piggy Banks, Financial Literacy for Children, Pamela George

This book is targeted to children, ages 4-8, and teaches the basic principles of personal financial management. It is about 5-year-old twins Ella and Andy who use their 3 Little Piggybanks called: Savings, Sharing and Spending.

They are given an allowance every week. They speak about what they do with their allowance by using their respective piggy banks:

- They talk about the importance of saving up for something that they want.
- They talk about how good it feels to help others by sharing some of their money (charity).
- Lastly, they talk about how much fun it is to have money to spend after having done the other two important things: Saving and Sharing.

Pamela's passion is to help people, especially at a young age, to build strong and lifelong financial literacy skills. This book is one of the many ways that Pamela does this.

ISBN: 978-1-77205-176-6
Title: Three Little Piggy Banks
Subject: Financial Literacy for Children
Author: Pamela George
Illustrator: Meredith Luce
Pages: 44
Ages: 4-8
Price: $12.95
Buy it here: http://www.dc-canada.ca/Three_little_piggybanks/index.html