



**NURTURING  
YOUR  
PEDAGOGY**  
2026 SPRING CONFERENCE

May 1st, 2026 at UPEI

# WELCOME

The ECDA Board and staff are proud to present our 2026 Spring Conference: Nurturing Your Pedagogy. This event has been thoughtfully developed based on the voices, feedback, and engagement of you, our members!

Whether you are just beginning your career, growing into your leadership, or somewhere in the middle, no matter where you, we are all continually shaping and refining our personal pedagogies. Pedagogy is not something that simply happens to us. It is something we nurture, grow and develop with intention, reflection, and care. It grows through our daily interactions with children, with families, with our colleagues, and through the values and beliefs we bring into this important work.

This conference is an invitation to pause, reflect, and grow together. It is an opportunity to share ideas, challenge our thinking, and deepen our understanding of what it means to support children's learning and development in ways that are both thoughtful and intentional. It is a chance to step outside of the walls of your centre and find your critical thinking friends, to find your village... to find those who share a pedagogical perspective with you!

We encourage you to take this time to nurture your pedagogy, strengthen your professional voice, and reconnect with the passion that brought you to this sector in the first place.  
We can't wait to welcome you!



# THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who makes this event possible... our facilitators, contributors, sponsors, volunteers, and attendees. Your time, energy, and commitment are what bring gatherings like this to life!

A special thank you to you, our members! This conference exists because of you! Your passion, feedback and interests guide our work and help shape each event we create. Without your voice we wouldn't know where to begin! Thank you for your voices that have helped co-design this event. We hope you leave feeling a renewed sense of passion and purpose for the work you do and the voice you have, together we are stronger! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

*"No one should teach who is not in love with teaching."*

Margaret Elizabeth Sangster

## Spring Conference

# PRICING

Members: \$95 + tax\*

Not Yet a Member: \$190 + tax\*

\*Payment is due in full prior to attending.  
Registration closes on April 25th at Midnight

#### Preventing Double Payments:

Please confirm with your Director or centre owner whether they will be covering the cost of your conference, prior to registering for the conference.

New Refund Policy: All duplicate payments will now be subject to a \$20 administration fee, which will be deducted from the refund amount.



## Spring Conference

# SCHEDULE

9:00 - 10:15	Morning Breakout Session*
10:15 - 10:45	Networking Break
10:45 - 12:00	Morning Breakouts Continued
12:00 - 1:15	Lunch
1:15 - 2:45	Afternoon Breakouts
2:45 - 3:00	Networking Break
3:00 - 4:00	Afternoon Breakouts Continued

\*Note: There will not be registration at the Spring Conference.

Attendees must head directly to their morning break-out session by 9:00 AM

*Spring Conference*

# ACCOMODATIONS

Rodd Hotels & Resorts are pleased to provide a special accommodations rate for conference delegates attending the 2026 ECDA Spring Conference: Nurturing Your Pedagogy for the dates of April 29 - May 2.

Rodd Royalty – 14 Capital Drive

Rates starting at \$145 for a Standard Room, plus taxes, per night, based on single/double occupancy, rates offer based on availability at time of booking.

The hotel offers complimentary breakfast, parking and Wi-Fi!

Rodd Charlottetown – 75 Kent Street

Rates starting at \$145 for a Standard Room, plus taxes, per night, based on single/double occupancy, rates offer based on availability at time of booking.

The hotel offers a full-service restaurant, complimentary parking and Wi-Fi!

For Reservations, please call 1-800-565-7633 and request the Early Childhood Development Association rate offer with Group Number indicated below for the preferred hotel and for the dates required, or book online with the following links to review availability and book your stay!

Click on: Special Code | Rate Access Code | Type "ECDA26" | Select Dates

Rodd Charlottetown (Group #1996916): <https://reservations.travelclick.com/85516?RatePlanId=11065610>

Rodd Royalty (Group #1996904): <https://reservations.travelclick.com/85522?RatePlanId=11065451>

  
HOTELS & RESORTS

*THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT!*



# REMINDERS

While we love to watch children run and play, this is an adults only kind of day. However, you are welcome to bring infants under 9 months.

We hope you will understand our decision to make the conference children-free, and take the opportunity to learn and network care-free!

To ensure a safe and respectful environment please be considerate of the following guidelines during the conference:

- Be respectful and polite
- Practice active listening
- No chatting; save the networking conversations for the breaks, etc.
- Cell phones on silent during the sessions
- Scent Free spaces
- NUT FREE CONFERENCE



## Parking at UPEI available

Details will be provided in the “Know Before You Go”.



## Lunch buffet tickets available (limited seats, pre-order only)

Purchase your ticket starting Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>

# LOCATION

The Conference is being hosted at  
UPEI Campus  
550 University Ave. Charlottetown, PE C1A 4P3



*OUR CONFERENCES  
ARE FOR EVERYONE WHO  
MAKES THE EARLY  
LEARNING AND CHILD CARE  
SECTOR THRIVE ON PEI!*

A M M



*Morning*  
**BREAKOUT  
SESSIONS**



A M M

# SESSIONS

## 1A: Meetings that Matter: Hosting Meetings Your Team Actually Want to Attend (Directors & Supervisors) with Carla Ward

Staff meetings don't have to feel long, unproductive, or draining. This practical session supports supervisors and leaders in transforming meetings into purposeful, engaging spaces that build connections, clarity, and momentum with their teams. Participants will explore the four key stages of planning and facilitating effective staff meetings, from preparation to follow-up, with a focus on making meetings meaningful rather than mandatory.

This session is for Directors and Supervisors



This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!

## 1B: Building Resilient Classrooms from the Inside Out: How Adult Regulation Shapes Student Regulation with Terri-Ann Richards

Early childhood educators carry an incredible emotional load. Every day requires patience, adaptability, and the ability to stay grounded while supporting children through big feelings, challenging behaviour, and constant change. But here's the truth: children don't borrow our instructions; they borrow our nervous systems.

In this interactive session, Terri-Ann Richards explores how educator regulation directly influences classroom climate, behaviour, and connection. Drawing on neuroscience, emotional intelligence, and practical resilience strategies, participants will learn how to strengthen their own internal capacity so they can show up calm, clear, and responsive in high-demand moments.

This session will provide simple, practical tools educators can use immediately to manage stress, regulate emotions, and create safer, more connected learning environments for children.

Participants will leave with strategies to:

- Regulate their nervous system during challenging classroom moments
- Respond to behaviour with clarity instead of depletion
- Strengthen emotional resilience in demanding environments
- Create calmer, more connected classroom dynamics

Practical, empowering, and deeply relevant — this session helps educators strengthen the foundation that every classroom is built on: the regulated adult.



## SESSIONS

**1C: Risky play – Adventure Play - Challenging Play - Rough and Tumble Play – What the Terms Mean and What They Look Like in Early Learning Programs? How Might Risk Benefit Assessments Expand Children’s Play Options? with Beverlie Dietze**

Children require environments that allow them to engage in play that is adventurous, challenging, and even risky. Active play supports children in learning about their world; test what is and is not possible; learn about making mistakes; and discover new things about their space, place, and environment. This interactive session outlines some of the barriers imposed on children and strategies, such as risk benefit analysis, that support adults in advancing children’s opportunities to engage in active play that is stimulating, challenging, and fulfilling to them.

This session has **OUTDOOR** elements. Dress for the weather.



**1D: More Than a Bite of Broccoli: Why a Responsive Approach to Feeding Children Matters with Misty Dawn Rossiter**

Responsive feeding is a key component of Canadian nutrition guidance and is reflected in healthy eating guidelines for early years programs and child care centres. Responsive feeding practices support children in developing a positive relationship with food, strengthening self-regulation skills, and exploring a wide variety of foods. CELEBRATE Feeding (Coaching in Early Learning Environments to Build a Responsive Approach to Eating and Feeding) is an ongoing research initiative that partners with early learning and child care settings to support educators in creating healthy eating environments.

This session will introduce the principles of responsive feeding through the CELEBRATE Feeding Approach, including mealtime and feeding routines, supportive language, role modeling, cultural inclusion, and creating opportunities for children to learn about and explore food. The session will also highlight practical ways to apply Canada’s Food Guide within early years programs and child care centres. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own practices, discuss common mealtime scenarios in early learning environments, and identify both individual and program-wide actions that support the implementation of Canada’s Food Guide and responsive feeding practices.



## SESSIONS

### 1E: Supporting Social and Emotional Growth in Children with Carolyn Porter

This session examines how our personal beliefs, values, and lived experiences influence the way we build relationships with children. Participants will reflect on how self-awareness shapes their expectations, communication, and responses to behaviour, strengthening trust and connection. The session also highlights the adult's role in guiding and supporting children's social and emotional development.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!

### 1F: Where Do We Begin? The Journey of Discovering Your Pedagogy with Amy Sullivan

During our time together we will explore the process of establishing your pedagogy. We will start at the beginning by defining pedagogy, we will go through the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why) and create a personal statement on your pedagogy. This session aims to re-establish the connection to your own curiosity and sense of wonder through both interactive and reflective experiences.



### 1G: Building the Brain with PEI Alliance for Mental Well Being

In this interactive session, participants will be introduced to the lifelong impact of early childhood experience on brain development, behavior, and health. Using hands-on activity, we'll explore how both positive and negative experiences affect how brains are built, gaining insight into factors that lay the foundation for future well-being. This learning will be connected to three evidence-based action areas to support healthy brain development and build resilience. Participants will be guided through a reflection on how to apply these learnings in their work.



# SESSIONS

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## 1H: Math in the Early Years: It's More Than Numbers with Laura Lockie

Math is everywhere - in play, movement, routines, and problem-solving. This session challenges traditional views of 'teaching math' and focuses instead on building strong mathematical foundations through play-based learning. Educators will explore key early math concepts such as counting, sorting, patterning, spatial awareness, and measurement, while learning how to recognize and extend math moments already happening in their environments.

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## 1I: Responsive Caregiving: What Does it Mean to Care? with Dawn Gerin

Our days with infants may look like simple routines - feeding, changing, and comforting - but each interaction is an opportunity to build meaningful connections. Responsive caregiving goes beyond meeting physical needs; it strengthens attachment, supports mental health, and nurtures social-emotional development. When we recognize that 'care is the curriculum', everyday moments like diaper changes and bottle time become powerful opportunities for connection. By being intentional in these interactions, we ensure every infant feels seen, heard and respected.

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## 1J: Caring for Infants and Toddlers with Respect and Dignity: an Introduction to RIE with Kris Foreman

Started by Magda Gerber and recently re-popularized by Janet Landsbury, the RIE (Resources for Infant Educators) Approach or Educaring is a way of thinking about parenting, teaching, and caring for young children that highlights the importance of involving children in their caregiving, acknowledging how they feel, and developing attuned relationships between child and caregiver. In this session, we will go through an introduction of the approach and methods and explore how we as early childhood educators can utilize these in a childcare setting.

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## SESSIONS

### 1K: Motor Development, Physical Literacy, and Toilet Training: An Integrated Perspective with Blythe Martin

This evidence based presentation highlights the importance of physical literacy and the impact it can have on successful toilet training. The session aims to give early childhood educators the knowledge and confidence to support children through this essential developmental milestone.

The presentation explores how motor skills, sensory processing, and interoception lay the foundation for toilet readiness. Participants will learn how to assess readiness cues, implement child-led and respectful training methods, and apply inclusive strategies tailored to diverse learners, and decrease the likelihood of undesirable outcomes.

Educators will walk away with practical tools to ensure that toilet training is positive, developmentally appropriate, and successful for every child.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



### 1L: Reducing Choking Risk in Early Childhood with Cheryl Turnbull-Bruce & Janis MacKay

This interactive professional development session provides practical strategies to reduce the risk of choking for children ages 1 to 5. This session was designed for anyone who prepares, serves or supervises meals and snacks in early learning settings (including ECE's cooks, and directors). It is also helpful for educators who lead food-related activities with children.

Participants will learn:

- Why young children are at higher risk of choking
- How to create safer eating environments
- Which foods increase choking risk due to their shape, size or texture
- Which high-risk foods should be avoided or modified before serving.

Participants will receive a printed copy of the guide: Reduce the Risk of Choking for Children Ages 1 to 5. It uses real photos to show how to modify foods that pose a choking hazard. This guide was developed by Teach Nutrition dietitians, with support from pediatric experts across Canada.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



## SESSIONS

### 1M: Using Low and High Tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Supports to Encourage Communication with Erica Ross & Janet Campbell

As Speech-Language Pathologists, we recognize that all communication is valid. Our role is to expand a child's current communication by adding tools and supports to enable them to communicate more effectively. We do this in a way that is respectful and without pressure.

Activity-based picture boards, and high tech AAC devices, can provide useful opportunities for modeling language and encouraging engagement. This session will focus mainly on low-tech augmentative communication, but will also touch on supporting those children who have a specialized communication device. This session will be highly interactive and hands-on. Expect to engage in play, discussion, and collaborative practice. This is not a sit-back-with-your-coffee type of session - your participation is required to make the most of our time together.

This session is highly interactive and participation is required.



This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



### 1N: Fun in the Kitchen: Meal Time Made Easier ft. Hands-on Cooking Demo with Shannon McQuaid

Is food a constant stress in your centre? Join recipe developer Shannon McQuaid for an interactive session on how to save time, money and your sanity in the kitchen. Topics include budgeting, meal planning and preparation. Followed by a hands-on demonstration to put it into practice!

# SESSIONS

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## 10: Reboot Your Nervous System with Darren Weatherbie

This session will introduce participants to Neurofascial Reset and its role in supporting a healthy, well-regulated nervous system. Darren will explain how the nervous system affects pain, tension, and overall body function and will demonstrate techniques that can be applied in daily life. Participants will gain a better understanding of how to control pain associated with their occupation.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



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## 1P: Success with Difficult Conversations with Elizabeth Pederson

This session will equip individuals with the skills necessary to navigate challenging conversations effectively. It will offer practical strategies and techniques to enhance communication, foster understanding, and resolve conflicts. How to approach sensitive topics with confidence, ensuring that discussions remain constructive and respectful is one of the main objectives of this workshop. Participation in this session will ultimately lead to more productive and harmonious interactions in your work and in your life.



## SESSIONS

### FR:1A: Au-delà du comportement : Comprendre avant de corriger avec Bengisu Gonul

Et si les comportements étaient des messages plutôt que des problèmes à corriger? Cette première partie invite les éducateurs à repenser leur regard sur les défis en petite enfance. À travers une approche neurodiversité-affirmative, nous explorerons comment transformer les comportements perçus comme difficiles en occasions de compréhension, d'adaptation et de co-régulation.

Les participants apprendront à :

- Passer d'une approche correctrice à une approche relationnelle
- Interpréter les comportements comme des formes de communication
- Ajuster leurs attentes développementales
- Soutenir la participation sans pathologiser les différences
- Une réflexion essentielle pour toute pratique éducative souhaitant évoluer vers plus d'équité et de compréhension.



### FR : 1B : Narration (storytelling) et musique : Faire vivre au lieu de raconter les histoires avec Arielle Bourque, CCNB

Cet atelier invite les participants à découvrir une façon créative et inspirante de transformer les moments d'histoires en expériences riches et captivantes pour les enfants. Plutôt que de simplement lire un livre, il propose d'explorer comment donner vie aux récits et créer des moments de narration immersive qui stimulent l'imaginaire et la participation.

À travers différentes approches, l'atelier mettra en lumière la narration multisensorielle, la narration sans mots, la lecture interactive enrichie (LIE) ainsi que les histoires actives et sociales qui soutiennent la compréhension et l'engagement des enfants. Les participants découvriront également différentes façons d'incorporer la musique dans la narration d'histoires, afin d'enrichir l'expérience et de soutenir l'immersion des enfants dans le récit. Les participants seront également invités à explorer des histoires évolutives cocrées avec les enfants, favorisant leur créativité et leur implication dans le récit.

Cet atelier propose ainsi des pistes inspirantes pour renouveler la façon de raconter des histoires et créer des moments marquants avec les enfants.



## SESSIONS

### FR : 1C : Gestion de classe avec Valérie Bélanger, CCNB

Cet atelier permettra d'explorer différentes stratégies pour favoriser un climat de groupe harmonieux, prévisible et sécurisant en petite enfance.

Les participants réfléchiront à l'importance de l'organisation de l'environnement, à la mise en place de routines sécurisantes et à la gestion de transitions efficaces dans le déroulement de la journée.

L'atelier abordera également les interventions proactives et réactives adaptées à l'âge, ainsi que des approches concrètes pour soutenir la résolution de conflits et le développement des habiletés sociales chez les enfants.

Cet atelier offrira ainsi des pistes pratiques pour soutenir une gestion de groupe positive, favorisant le bien-être, l'engagement et la participation des enfants au quotidien.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



### FR : 1D : Petit cerveau deviendra grand avec Mélanie Couturier & Grace Parfaite Nomba Lele, AFÉSEO

Le jeu de l'architecture du cerveau est une expérience pédagogique interactive visant à approfondir la compréhension des effets des expériences vécues en petite enfance sur le développement socioémotionnel et la santé mentale. À travers une approche ludique et réflexive, le jeu du cerveau sert de point d'ancrage pour explorer les facteurs qui influencent le développement de l'enfant, notamment les interactions, l'environnement et les expériences précoces.

#### Objectifs

- Mieux comprendre l'impact des premières années de vie sur le développement global de l'enfant
- Illustrer les liens entre expériences précoces, développement socioémotionnel et santé mentale

Cette activité mise sur l'apprentissage expérientiel, en cohérence avec le principe fondamental selon lequel c'est en jouant que l'on apprend.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



P M

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*Afternoon*  
**BREAKOUT  
SESSIONS**



P M

# SESSIONS

### 2A: Developing Self-Esteem in Young Learners: Empowering Confidence Through Encouragement with Carla Ward

This session challenges educators to move beyond surface-level praise and explore how intentional language builds authentic, lasting self-esteem in children. Participants will reflect on how their words shape children's identity, motivation, and sense of self. The focus is on encouragement, autonomy, and fostering inner confidence rather than approval-seeking behavior.



### 2B: Building Resilient Classrooms from the Inside Out: How Adult Regulation Shapes Student Regulation with Terri-Ann Richards

Early childhood educators carry an incredible emotional load. Every day requires patience, adaptability, and the ability to stay grounded while supporting children through big feelings, challenging behaviour, and constant change. But here's the truth: children don't borrow our instructions; they borrow our nervous systems.

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## SESSIONS

### 2C: Infants and Toddlers in the Great Outdoors with Beverlie Dietze

Infants and toddlers require opportunities to explore their worlds in unique ways. They benefit from being on the ground, touching the leaves that surround a mud puddle with ice, or using those wooden spoons to see what happens when they hit them on something soft or something hard. This session will explore ways to connect infants and toddlers to outdoor spaces and places that contribute to stimulating their sense of curiosity and wonderment.

This session has OUTDOOR elements. Dress for the weather.



### 2D: Beyond What You See: The Perception-Perspective Mindset Shift with Eloise D'Aubin

Explore the lenses we use to interpret reality shapes our decisions, relationships, and creative output. In this interactive session, participants will uncover the subtle differences between perception (what we see) and perspective (how we frame what we see), practice tools for expanding mental flexibility, and walk away with practical “mindset-shift” toolkit that can be applied instantly in the workplace, leadership, and personal growth. This session is ideal for anyone looking to boost creativity, improve collaboration, and lead with greater empathy this spring.



### 2E: Supporting Social and Emotional Growth in Children with Carolyn Porter

This session examines how our personal beliefs, values, and lived experiences influence the way we build relationships with children. Participants will reflect on how self-awareness shapes their expectations, communication, and responses to behaviour, strengthening trust and connection. The session also highlights the adult’s role in guiding and supporting children’s social and emotional development.

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## SESSIONS

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### 2F: Where Do We Begin? The Journey of Discovering Your Pedagogy with Amy Sullivan

During our time together we will explore the process of establishing your pedagogy. We will start at the beginning by defining pedagogy, we will go through the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why) and create a personal statement on your pedagogy. This session aims to re-establish the connection to your own curiosity and sense of wonder through both interactive and reflective experiences.



### 2G: Applying the Resilience Scale to Promote Mental Well-Being with PEI Alliance for Mental Well Being

Why are some people more resilient than others? In this session, participants will examine this question using the Resilience Scale, a practical tool developed by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative to help visualize the factors that impact resilience and influence well-being outcomes throughout our lives. Depending on your goals, participants will either explore how the Scale can be used to understand individual resilience or how the Scale can be applied more broadly in a community context. Using the concepts to the Resilience Scale, participants will discuss how they might support resilience-building at work, home, or within the greater community.



### 2H: Behavior Bias: What is it and What Can We Do About it? with Laura Lockie

Our personal experiences, beliefs, and expectations influence how we interpret and respond to children's behavior. This reflective session helps educators identify what behavior bias is, how it shows up in the early learning environments, and why awareness matters. Participants will explore the power to pause, reflect, and respond with intention, ensuring that all children feel supported, understood, and valued. The focus is on curiosity over judgement and advocacy over labels.



## SESSIONS

### 2I: Beyond the Bottles and Diaper Changes with Dawn Gerin

This session invites us to rediscover our “why” in infant care and reimagine the powerful role we play in the lives of our youngest learners. Together, we’ll explore the image we hold of the child and the educator, discuss key theorists and examine how our values shape our impact. Through meaningful reflection and advocacy, we’ll reignite our passion, strengthen our voice, and champion the vital importance of our work for children and families.



### 2J: Embedding Consent and Autonomy into our Early Childhood Pedagogies with Kris Foreman

Consent... For a diaper change? In this session, we will be growing our understanding of what consent and bodily autonomy can look like in Early Childhood Education. What would teaching and teaching with consent look like? How does it change when you’re working with infants, young toddlers, and preschool aged children? How do we balance ensuring safety and wellbeing in the early years with a child's innate desire to say ‘no’ and assert themselves and their individuality? We will be delving into these questions and more in this session as we explore the what, how to and why educators should embed consent and autonomy into their pedagogies.



### 2K: Motor Development, Physical Literacy, and Toilet Training: An Integrated Perspective with Blythe Martin

This evidence based presentation highlights the importance of physical literacy and the impact it can have on successful toilet training. The session aims to give early childhood educators the knowledge and confidence to support children through this essential developmental milestone.

The presentation explores how motor skills, sensory processing, and interoception lay the foundation for toilet readiness. Participants will learn how to assess readiness cues, implement child-led and respectful training methods, and apply inclusive strategies tailored to diverse learners, and decrease the likelihood of undesirable outcomes.

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## SESSIONS

### 2L: Reducing Choking Risk in Early Childhood with Cheryl Turnbull-Bruce & Janis MacKay

This interactive professional development session provides practical strategies to reduce the risk of choking for children ages 1 to 5. This session was designed for anyone who prepares, serves or supervises meals and snacks in early learning settings (including ECE's cooks, and directors). It is also helpful for educators who lead food-related activities with children.

Participants will learn:

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Participants will receive a printed copy of the guide: Reduce the Risk of Choking for Children Ages 1 to 5. It uses real photos to show how to modify foods that pose a choking hazard. This guide was developed by Teach Nutrition dietitians, with support from pediatric experts across Canada.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



### 2M: Speech-Language Pathology Basics for Early Childhood Educators with Erica Ross & Janet Campbell

This introductory/refresher session is designed for educators who are new to our sessions-or those looking to revisit foundational speech-language pathology (SLP) knowledge and practice.

Participants will explore:

- Key early communication and speech milestones
- Signs that may indicate concern
- Practical strategies to promote early language development
- How to embed language-building strategies into daily routines and common activities within early learning centres.

This session emphasizes collaborative discussion and group brainstorming rather than hands-on practice.



# SESSIONS

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!

## 2N: Fun in the Kitchen: meal time made easier ft. hands on cooking demo with Shannon McQuaid

Is food a constant stress in your centre? Join recipe developer Shannon McQuaid for an interactive session on how to save time, money and your sanity in the kitchen. Topics include budgeting, meal planning and preparation. Followed by a hands-on demonstration to put it into practice!



This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!

## 2O: Reboot Your Nervous System with Darren Weatherbie

This session will introduce participants to Neurofascial Reset and its role in supporting a healthy, well-regulated nervous system. Darren will explain how the nervous system affects pain, tension, and overall body function and will demonstrate techniques that can be applied in daily life. Participants will gain a better understanding of how to control pain associated with their occupation.



## 2P: Activity Based Team Building: Action Based Activities with Elizabeth Pederson

Playing nice with others is not just a lesson for kids, but also adults. In the workplace, teamwork is one of the ingredients for success, along with strong bonds, trust, and high morale. Team building is a fantastic way to bond and bring employees together. A chance to improve teamwork and productivity will happen in this dynamic, participatory session. Opportunities to explore and improve self-discovery, building better relationships, and giving the mind a refresh, will be explored and practiced. When done right, team-building activities & exercises for adults promote dramatic, personal growth that improves work performance & overall happiness.

This session is for Directors and Supervisors



## SESSIONS

### FR:2A: Prendre soin de soi pour mieux accompagner : Le rôle du système nerveux dans la pédagogie avec Bengisu Gonul

La pédagogie ne se vit pas seulement dans les stratégies - elle se vit dans le corps.

Cette deuxième partie explore l'impact du stress, de la fatigue et de la surcharge sur les interactions éducatrice-enfant. En comprenant les bases du système nerveux et de la co-régulation, les éducateurs apprendront à reconnaître leurs propres signaux internes afin de préserver leur énergie et soutenir des environnements plus apaisés.

Les participants découvriront :

- Les bases du système nerveux en contexte éducatif
- L'impact du stress sur la relation éducative
- Comment reconnaître leurs propres déclencheurs professionnels
- Des stratégies concrètes pour soutenir une pédagogie durable
- Une invitation à nourrir sa pratique en prenant soin de soi autant que des enfants.



### FR:2B: Gestion de classe avec Arielle Bourque, CCNB

Cet atelier permettra d'explorer différentes stratégies pour favoriser un climat de groupe harmonieux, prévisible et sécurisant en petite enfance.

Les participants réfléchiront à l'importance de l'organisation de l'environnement, à la mise en place de routines sécurisantes et à la gestion de transitions efficaces dans le déroulement de la journée.

L'atelier abordera également les interventions proactives et réactives adaptées à l'âge, ainsi que des approches concrètes pour soutenir la résolution de conflits et le développement des habiletés sociales chez les enfants.

Cet atelier offrira ainsi des pistes pratiques pour soutenir une gestion de groupe positive, favorisant le bien-être, l'engagement et la participation des enfants au quotidien.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



## SESSIONS

### FR:2C: Neurodiversité et communication adaptée avec Valérie Bélanger, CCNB

Cet atelier aborde l'approche neuroaffirmative, qui reconnaît et valorise les différentes façons dont les enfants perçoivent, ressentent et interagissent avec le monde.

Les participantes découvriront comment adapter leur communication verbale, non verbale et paraverbale afin d'envoyer un message cohérent et plus facile à décoder pour tous les enfants.

La formation explorera également les notions de co-régulation et d'autorégulation, ainsi que l'importance de la prévisibilité et de la sécurité affective dans le quotidien éducatif.

Des pistes concrètes seront proposées pour adapter les attentes et l'environnement afin de soutenir les besoins variés des enfants.



### FR:2D: Petit cerveau deviendra grand avec Mélanie Couturier & Grace Parfaite Nomba Lele, AFÉSEO

Le jeu de l'architecture du cerveau est une expérience pédagogique interactive visant à approfondir la compréhension des effets des expériences vécues en petite enfance sur le développement socioémotionnel et la santé mentale. À travers une approche ludique et réflexive, le jeu du cerveau sert de point d'ancrage pour explorer les facteurs qui influencent le développement de l'enfant, notamment les interactions, l'environnement et les expériences précoces.

#### Objectifs

- Mieux comprendre l'impact des premières années de vie sur le développement global de l'enfant
- Illustrer les liens entre expériences précoces, développement socioémotionnel et santé mentale

Cette activité mise sur l'apprentissage expérientiel, en cohérence avec le principe fondamental selon lequel c'est en jouant que l'on apprend.

This session is being offered in both the morning and afternoon!



Your

# FACILITATORS

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## Carla Ward (she/her)

Carla is a passionate educator, speaker, and podcast host with over 20 years of experience inspiring teachers and leaders to reconnect with their purpose and bring joy back to their work. A proud Early Childhood Educator, Carla's approach reaches across roles and age groups, focusing on what truly matters in education: connection, curiosity, and intentional practice.

As the host of The Everything ECE Podcast and founder of The ECE Experience conference, ECE Podcast Academy, and The ECE Latte Lounge, Carla empowers educators around the world to reflect, grow, and lead with authenticity. Her work blends research, reflection, and practical strategies to help educators thrive in their classrooms, teams, and professional journeys. Known for her warmth and humour, Carla makes professional development feel like a conversation with a trusted friend. Whether leading a keynote, mentoring entrepreneurs, or hosting her podcast, her mission is simple: elevate education and celebrate the incredible people who bring learning to life.

## Terri-Ann Richards

Terri-Ann is a Canadian speaker, consultant, and author known for her work helping humans, teams, and organizations build the inner capacity to thrive under pressure.

Often called The Happiness Architect™, Terri-Ann teaches practical strategies rooted in resilience, emotional intelligence, and sustainable high performance — helping people regulate stress, strengthen relationships, and perform at their best without burning themselves out.

With more than two decades of entrepreneurial experience, Terri-Ann blends research-backed psychology with real-world grit to help audiences navigate adversity, change, and emotional demand.

She has spoken for organizations across Canada and was recently named a 2026 delegate to the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference. Terri-Ann is also a TEDx speaker and the author of several books, including *Becoming the Eight Percent*.

Her work focuses on one powerful idea: when we strengthen the human behind the role, everything else improves. --> [www.TerriAnnRichards.com](http://www.TerriAnnRichards.com)



Your

# FACILITATORS

## Dr. Beverlie Dietze

Dr. Beverlie is passionate about advancing children's opportunities to engage in outdoor experiences. She is the author of ten textbooks related to play and children's programming and has several peer-reviewed articles published on early childhood and adult education topics. She is the publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the Canadian Play Outdoors magazine.



## Carolyn Porter (she/her) - Kids Included Inc.

Carolyn is an ASaP Coach with Kids Included. Her role is to support educators implementing the Pyramid Model in their childcare rooms to ensure all children's participation and belonging through responsive relationships, quality inclusive environments and supportive learning opportunities. She has lived in Grande Prairie for 9 years and lived in Ontario before that. Carolyn has 20 years' experience working in child care in different roles (educator, director, supervisor, support). When she is not working, she is doing things with her 2 children and husband and baking sourdough.



## Eloise D'Aubin

Transformational Coach, Leadership Mentor & Learning-Design Expert

Eloise D'Aubin is a dynamic, Vancouver-honed Coach-Practitioner who blends deep expertise in Emotional Intelligence with proven leadership-coaching, professional-mentorship, and curriculum-design skills. She empowers individuals, families, couples, entrepreneurs and youth to make lasting, high-impact changes - whether the goal is personal growth, team performance or business success.



Your

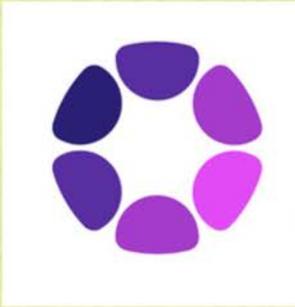
# FACILITATORS

## Amy Sullivan (she/her)



Amy lives in beautiful St. Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia. She has two adult children, Simon (20) and Hannah (24) and they are well on their way into adult hood. Amy currently lives with her three feline fur babies. Her passion for Early Childhood started as a young girl and she ended up graduating from Holland College with her ECE in 2000. Amy has since continued on the path of supporting individuals of all ages by graduating with her Counselling Skills diploma in 2017 followed by receiving her credentials as a Registered Counsellor in 2018. Throughout her career as both as an ECE and Counsellor, Amy has had the honor and privilege to support early childhood educators for over 20 years. Amy believes that lifelong learning is a gift and is happy to be a part of it with all of her interactions.

## PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being



The PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being is an independent, not-for profit whose mission is to support and empower our community partners so we collectively create a future where everyone on PEI can achieve and maintain the best possible mental well-being throughout their lives. The training & development arm of our organization is concerned with building a shared knowledge base around what impacts mental well-being and how we can work toward improving both personal and community resilience.

## Kris Foreman (they/them)



Kris is an Early Childhood Educator from Fredericton, New Brunswick. Kris graduated from St. Thomas University with a BA in Gender Studies and Native Studies and they have been working in childcare for about a decade. They currently run a licensed ELC Home called Seeds & Sprouts Childcare and are a parent to a four year old named Oliver. As an educator, Kris believes our jobs are political and our pedagogies and classrooms reflect that. Their work centers creating spaces for children to be wholly themselves and to model co-regulation, conflict resolution and advocacy skills hand in hand with child-led play and discovery.

Your

# FACILITATORS

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## Laura Lockie (she/her)

With over 20 years of experience in early childhood education, Laura is passionate about creating meaningful learning experiences that inspire curiosity and creativity. Her work emphasizes process-based art, early literacy development, and the importance of outdoor learning in the early years. Committed to lifelong learning, she advocates for approaches that nurture both children and educators through play, exploration, and intentional practice.



## Shannon McQuaid

Shannon is a Registered Dietitian and was born and raised on PEI. She completed her dietetics degree at UPEI and practiced on PEI for over 10 years. She describes herself as a home cook and loves trying new recipes. For the past 5 years, Shannon has worked as a freelance recipe developer, content creator and food stylist working with local marketing boards such as Lobster PEI, PEI Seafood and PEI Potatoes. It's a passion of hers to teach others quick and easy recipes while having fun in the kitchen.



## Elizabeth Pederson

Elizabeth has over 25 years of experience in business and is passionate about helping people. She has worked as an instructor in Business Administration courses, managed a private post-secondary school for 15 years, and provides consulting services in areas such as workplace culture, leadership, and communication. She is also a regular facilitator at the University of Prince Edward Island and a published author. Elizabeth is a mother of three and a grandmother of two.



Your

# FACILITATORS

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## Misty Dawn Rossiter (she/her)

Misty Rossiter (she/her) is a Registered Dietitian and a Professor of Foods & Nutrition in the Department of Applied Human Sciences at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI). Misty has been conducting research in early years nutrition for close to 20 years with a particular interest in responsive feeding practices and nutrition policy. She co-led the CELEBRATE Feeding project with Dr. Jessie-Lee McIsaac and their work supports early learning settings to create environments that encourage children to develop positive relationships with food. Misty holds a BSc in Foods & Nutrition from UPEI, a MSc in Applied Human Nutrition from Mount Saint Vincent University, and a PhD in Family Relations and Applied Nutrition from the University of Guelph.



## Erica Ross (she/her) & Janet Cambell (she/her)

Erica Ross, SLP, graduated from University of Toronto and Janet Campbell, SLP, graduated from Dalhousie University with their Masters in Speech-Language Pathology.



Between the two of them they have over 40 years of experience building and supporting communication opportunities for preschoolers. They are both continually learning so that they can have a therapy practice based on current research, having fun, finding joy, and building on each client's strengths. Erica and Janet share a love of golden retrievers and golden doodles, beach days, peanut butter cups, and lift the flap books. Both 'Islanders', Erica lives and works in Summerside and Janet is in Charlottetown.

Your

# FACILITATORS

## Cheryl Turnbull-Bruce, RD

Cheryl is a Registered Dietitian with 35 years of experience in nutrition education. She currently works with Teach Nutrition from Dairy Farmers of Canada. Born and raised in PEI, she has worked in various positions over the years, focusing on developing resources, delivering presentations, doing individual counselling or leading dietitian teams. Cheryl has helped design and deliver engaging programs which simplify nutrition science and provide practical information and skill building activities. She has been dedicated to helping individuals and communities make informed food choices that support wellness.



## Janis MacKay, RD

Janis is a Registered Dietitian with 22 years of experience. She currently works with Teach Nutrition from Dairy Farmers of Canada and has facilitated workshops, conferences and other events across PEI. Janis has an established background supporting schools and childcare centres on the topic of food and nutrition. Her first-hand experience raising four children brings real-life experience to her work.



## Darren Weatherbie

Darren is a Manual Osteopath based in Charlottetown, PEI and a graduate of the National Academy of Osteopathy. He specializes in Neurofascial Reset (RAPID-NFR), a neurologically based therapeutic technique that targets the central nervous system to release tension and restrictions in muscles, fascia, tendons, and nerves. Through hands-on assessment and guided movement, his treatments aim to reduce pain and improve mobility and overall body function.



Your

# FACILITATORS

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## Blythe Martin (she/her)

Blythe is a physiotherapist and proud co-owner of Collective Health Inc. She graduated from Dalhousie University's physiotherapy master's program in 2010 and joined Collective Health in 2013, where she has made significant contributions to the clinic's success and reputation for providing exceptional care.

Since completing her master's degree, Blythe has pursued advanced training in several areas of physiotherapy. She holds special certifications in pelvic floor physiotherapy, with a particular focus on pediatric and women's health issues. These additional qualifications have enabled her to provide comprehensive and personalized care to her patients, helping them achieve optimal health and well-being.

Outside of her professional life, Blythe is a proud mother to her children, Libby and Will. She enjoys an active lifestyle, often spending time swimming, hiking, and going to the beach with her family. Blythe's passion for health and wellness extends beyond her work, as she is dedicated to leading a balanced and healthy life for herself and her loved ones.

## Dawn Gerin

Dawn, originally from Manitoba, lives in Halifax with her husband, father and two cats. She is the proud mother of one adult child, Stephanie (30). She studied Childcare in 1989 in Manitoba, and has also worked in Ontario and Nova Scotia with Infants and School-age children.

Dawn has worn many hats during her time in the field: Directors, owner/operator and (her preferred space) working on the floor. For the past 25 years Dawn has been employed by Point Pleasant Childcare, 17 years working with infants (3months to 18 months).

Mentoring and supporting other Educarers is important to Dawn as we are life long learners who learn best from each other. She has contributed and collaborated to various work re: Infants and their care and hopes to be able to share her knowledge to build a better childcare community for all.



Your

# FACILITATORS

## Bengisu Gonul (she/her)

Bengisu est ergothérapeute et fondatrice de Your Nextdoor OT. Titulaire d'une maîtrise en ergothérapie de l'Université McGill, elle a travaillé auprès d'enfants et de familles dans divers milieux : école, centres de la petite enfance, domiciles et programmes communautaires.

Sa pratique s'appuie sur des approches respectueuses de la neurodiversité et centrées sur la famille, avec un accent sur le traitement sensoriel, la régulation et la participation authentique. Passionnée par la création de classes inclusives et « sensoriellement intelligentes », elle met son expertise au service du bien-être, de la résilience et de l'apprentissage des jeunes enfants.



## Arielle Bourque, CCNB

Le développement de l'enfant et les pratiques éducatives en petite enfance sont au cœur du travail d'Arielle depuis plusieurs années. Elle s'intéresse particulièrement à cette période déterminante où se construisent la curiosité, la confiance et le plaisir d'apprendre.

Au fil de sa carrière, elle a exploré différentes réalités du milieu de la petite enfance. Elle a travaillé directement auprès des enfants comme éducatrice, dirige un service de garde éducatif et contribue à la mise en place de programmes destinés aux familles ayant de jeunes enfants.

Elle a également animé des cours prénataux et postnataux ainsi que des groupes de soutien pour les parents, ce qui lui a permis de développer une compréhension approfondie des réalités vécues par les familles dès les premières étapes de la vie de l'enfant. Son parcours l'a aussi amenée à évoluer dans des contextes où l'inclusion et l'adaptation des pratiques éducatives occupent une place importante, enrichissant sa compréhension du développement de l'enfant et du travail éducatif auprès des enfants, des familles et des équipes.

Arielle enseigne depuis plusieurs années au programme d'éducation à l'enfance au Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick. Dans ce rôle, elle accompagne les futurs professionnels dans le développement de pratiques éducatives réfléchies et sensibles aux besoins des enfants. Son enseignement s'appuie sur son expérience de terrain et sur sa formation universitaire, qui s'est poursuivie jusqu'à l'obtention d'un baccalauréat en études de l'enfance et de la jeunesse avec une mineure en psychologie.

Son expertise porte notamment sur la littératie émergente, l'observation et la documentation pédagogique, ainsi que sur l'intégration d'approches créatives dans les environnements éducatifs en petite enfance.



Your

# FACILITATORS



## Valérie Bélanger, CCNB

Depuis plusieurs années, Valérie Bélanger consacre sa carrière au domaine de l'éducation et du développement de l'enfant. Son parcours professionnel a débuté dans la province du Québec où elle a travaillé comme éducatrice en garderie. Cette expérience lui a permis de développer une compréhension approfondie du développement global des jeunes enfants, de leurs besoins ainsi que de l'importance d'un environnement éducatif bienveillant, sécurisant et stimulant.

Elle a ensuite poursuivi son parcours au Nouveau-Brunswick en occupant des postes d'assistante en éducation et en effectuant de la suppléance dans différentes écoles du District scolaire francophone Nord-Est. Ces expériences lui ont permis de travailler auprès d'enfants ayant des profils et des besoins variés, tout en développant des compétences importantes en adaptation, en intervention et en collaboration avec les équipes-écoles.

Depuis quelques années, elle enseigne au Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) dans le programme d'éducation à la petite enfance. Dans son rôle d'enseignante, elle souhaite transmettre aux futures éducatrices et éducateurs non seulement des connaissances théoriques, mais également des valeurs essentielles telles que l'empathie, le respect, l'ouverture et l'importance de reconnaître l'unicité de chaque enfant.

Son parcours professionnel est aussi profondément influencé par son expérience personnelle. Maman de deux enfants ayant des besoins particuliers, elle s'est intéressée davantage au développement de l'enfant, à l'inclusion et aux approches adaptées. Cette réalité l'amène à se perfectionner continuellement afin de mieux comprendre et soutenir les enfants ainsi que les familles qui les accompagnent.

Elle croit profondément que chaque enfant possède un potentiel unique et mérite d'être accueilli tel qu'il est. Après tout, ce sont souvent nos différences qui deviennent nos plus grandes forces et qui enrichissent le monde qui nous entoure.

## Mélanie Couturier & Grace Parfaite Nomba Lele, AFÉSEO

Nous sommes l'organisme provincial francophone qui est le porte-parole et qui agit pour la petite enfance en Ontario. Par le biais de nos réseaux et de nos Centres de leadership, nous construisons, développons et évaluons la capacité du secteur de la petite enfance francophone par l'employabilité, l'apprentissage, la mobilisation et l'innovation sociale.



Meet

# OUR TEAM

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**Jennifer Nangreaves (she/her)**

Executive Director

Jenn has been leading the ECDA of PEI as Executive Director since March 2021, bringing over a decade of experience in the Early Learning and Child Care sector across both PEI and Alberta. With a background in sociology, early literacy, and Indigenous Peoples studies, and as a passionate Early Childhood Educator, Jenn is deeply committed to ensuring children and ECEs are supported, valued, and heard. She believes that when ECEs are supported, children thrive: and she's here to make that happen.

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**Megan McPhee (she/her)**

Professional Learning and Operations Manager

Megan joined the ECDA team in 2019, after working as a frontline Early Childhood Educator for 12 years. Her diverse educational background and extensive experience in the field have equipped her with a unique perspective on early childhood. Megan believes in creating inclusive learning environments where every child feels valued and empowered. She is a creative mess maker, and loves to learn with her heart and soul. Her innovative approach to education, combined with her commitment to continuous learning, have fueled her journey at the ECDA.

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**Karoll Aguila (she/her)**

Office Administrator

Karoll joined the ECDA in June 2025 with over seven years of experience in customer service and office management. Passionate about workplace culture and people operations, she brings a creative, solutions-oriented mindset. Karoll is committed to continuous learning and contributing to a positive, productive work environment.

Meet  
OUR TEAM

### Julian Taylor (he/him)

Marketing and Communications Manager

Julian Taylor is the Marketing, Communications, and office prankster at the ECDA of PEI. He loves goals, quality, and working as a team to accomplish projects. Julian is here to make sure the ECDA's visions become reality.



### Jay Baglole (they/them)

Professional Learning Coordinator

Jay is the Professional Learning Coordinator, who originally joined the ECDA in 2022 as the Pyramid to Retention project Coordinator. With over 17 years experience in the Early Learning and Childcare sector, they are a passionate advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the early years, valuing visibility and well-being for all children, families and educators.



### Megan Drummond (she/her)

Special Projects Coordinator

As Special Projects Coordinator, Megan Drummond plays a role in helping the organization achieve its mission to support early childhood educators, contribute to building a strong early learning system across PEI, and creating awareness of the impact of positive learning experiences in licensed quality care in the early years. Her passion lies in creating environments where educators, children, and families feel truly welcome - and where love of learning can flourish. Megan believes that strong, supportive early childhood experiences are foundational to healthy communities.



### Ujunwa "Ujay" Aja-Onu (she/her)

Handle with Care Coordinator

Ujunwa Aja-Onu, known as Ujay, is a project manager and development professional with over 10 years of experience in program design, management and stakeholder engagement. Before joining the ECDA, Ujay served as the project manager for the Cleantech Academy project at Holland College and had previously worked with organizations such as ActionAid and Oando Foundations in Nigeria, before transitioning to Canada.



# See you May 1st!



## Questions?



[info@ecdaofpei.ca](mailto:info@ecdaofpei.ca)



(902)-368-1866



[www.ecdaofpei.ca](http://www.ecdaofpei.ca)