

THE EARLY YEARS

RhiZONES

*a celebratory
community space for continuous learning,
reflection, and connection*

Rhizomes:

horizontal plant stems that produce roots below and shoots above; simultaneously grounding the plant and reaching in many new directions towards light



The Importance behind the concept RhiZONES

Our RhiZONES publications aim to reflect our foundations and the many pathways of possibilities we encounter across our Early Years community in Dufferin County. Similar to rhizomes, this publication includes many different intersections and areas (or “zones”) of meaning making happening in our community that simultaneously grounds us, and points us towards new directions of growth and possibility #DCECEmatters

THE EARLY YEARS

RhiZONES

In this edition:

Intention of RhiZONES.....	3
EYCC Community Roots and Shoots.....	4-5
• Relational Knowledge in Early Learning and Childcare: Implications for Pedagogy and Pedagogical Leadership by Kim Barron	
• 100 Languages of Infants by Rosie Lister	
The Reimagining Quality Project.....	6-7
Early Childhood Leaders Nominations.....	8-11
Dufferin County, Child Care Fee Subsidy.....	12
AECEO's Roadmap to Universal Childcare	13
• Reimagining Quality Project featuring Dufferin County and Seneca	
EYCC Workforce Strategy	14-16
14 RIRO - Skills for real life, a story of RIRO from facilitator Chelsea Raven	
15 Knowing Our Workforce - Results from Dufferin County	
16 Knowing Our Numbers	
16 Leading with Love and Compassion with Natalie Royer and Catherine Underwood	
Invitations and Upcoming Encounters.....	17-19
17 Merrily Podcast - Taking our Early Years Conversations Upstream AND Downstream	
18 Holiday Greetings	
19 Igniting Inspiration	

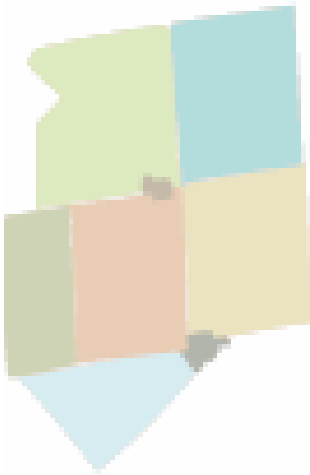


What stories do we desire for Early Childhood Education? What stories do we each bring, what links them?

In search of pathways for connection; opportunities to elevate educators and their contributions; ways to notice and celebrate each other and the groundwork happening in our community; and ways to reflect on our encounters and experiences together, Dufferin County's Early Years and Child Care (EYCC) Division has embarked on a journey of producing RhiZONES publications as an instrumental method to facilitating connection, celebration, awareness, reflection, learning, growth, and evolution in the Early Years and Child Care community within Dufferin County.

“Our challenge and opportunity is to know one another, to share with one another, and believe in one another”

Margie Cooper



EYCC Community Roots and Shoots

The County of Dufferin celebrates our early learning and child care community and the Early Childhood Educators who provide outstanding care, connection, and learning environments for Dufferin County's children, families, and fellow educators. Educators across the county are "thought leaders" and "change-makers!" Our desire is to carve out curious spaces for conversations and exchanges. Spaces of thought and engagements with education, offerings of expression, narration, and professional experiences for us to encounter as we wonder together:

"What might be possible when engaging childhood, knowledge, and worlds?"

In this RhiZONES issue, we spotlight the AECEO's Roadmap to Universal Child Care - Profile 1: Reimagining Quality Project (featuring the work being done in Dufferin County) and offerings from Rosie's Lister, RECE, and Kim Barton RECE, MSc, BSc, BASc, Pedagogical leader at the Guelph Child Care and Learning Centre.

EYCC Community Roots and Shoots

Relational Knowledge in Early Learning and Childcare: Implications for Pedagogy and Pedagogical Leadership

This article describes tensions between scientific and relational knowledge that have followed the author throughout her journey to become an early childhood educator and pedagogical leader.

The author thinks with reconceptualist theories to explore these tensions and then offers relational understandings of pedagogy and pedagogical leadership. In an examination of How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years for references of educator relationships.

This article aims to provoke thought around centering educator relationships within Early Learning and Childcare by considering relational knowledges and pursuing parallel practices alongside children.



Kim Barton RECE, MSc, BSc, BASc, Pedagogical leader at the Guelph Child care and learning Centre

Read more;

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/aeceo/pages/2524/attachments/original/1689964260/Centring_Relational_Knowledge_in_Early_Learning_Childcare.pdf?1689964260



100 Languages of Infants

Without Audible languages, how might we make or limit the languages we respond to?

Join Rosie as she explores the relational pedagogies of listening.

“Childcare is a collective, a place of life, communication, and relationships, and at the infant stage, we are it’s ambassador”

[https://www.dufferincounty.ca/sites/default/files/rtb/One%20hundred%20plus%20languages%20of%20infants.docx%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.dufferincounty.ca/sites/default/files/rtb/One%20hundred%20plus%20languages%20of%20infants.docx%20(1).pdf)

“Listening, then, as a metaphor, listening as sensitivity to the patterns that connect, to that which connects us to others; abandoning ourselves to the conviction that our understanding and our own being are but small parts of a broader, integrated knowledge that holds the universe together”

Listening produces questions, not answers” (Rinaldi, C. 2005)

The Re-Imagining Quality Project

We invite you to share your story with us.

We invite you to re-imagine quality with us.

We invite you to contribute to the creation of a new quality framework in Dufferin.

We don't want to create this for you, without you.

We want to co-create it with you.

A quality framework for the people, by the people

(for educators, children, and families, by educators, children, and families).

Here in Dufferin County, we have the desire to re-imagine quality, to step away from a check list of standardized items that tells us whether or not we are operating quality licensed child care, through such a narrowed and non-contextual lens, a linear process that omits reflection and collaboration. We have the desire to co-create a new quality framework, one with room for context and place, for community contribution, that is reflective of what high quality child care means to us, as educators, and to children and families, and community.

Beyond the single stories of safety and development; beyond the single story of ECEs being technicians, or robotic; beyond the single story of education for the purpose of filling the vessel. We have the desire to hear rumblings of what quality early childhood education means through the storytelling of our educators, children, and families through opportunities to participate in re-imagining quality. In alignment with the original posted video on Raising the Bar, called Re-imagining Quality, and thinking about what lives in your heart today; a cross pollination has occurred as we reflect on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. All child care operators in Dufferin County have access to their own copy of the book "My Heart Fills With Happiness" and are being invited to engage with us - see page 7 for an example of how you might engage with the re-imagining quality project, alongside an Indigenous book reading.

As a part of the re-imagining quality project, highlighted by the AECEO (see page 16) within the roadmap to universal child care, we aim to weave our stories of quality together. It is through installations such as these that may not directly ask "what is high quality early childhood education" where a story is told of what is valued by our community and what orientations we might pay attention to in creating our criteria and definition of high-quality early childhood education. Your contributions, over time, will help co-create a new quality framework that considers context and place and that may aid educators to achieve pedagogical security.



What fills your heart with Happiness?

What fills your heart with happiness x Re-Imagining Quality Installation enacted during the gathering:

Reading of Monique Grey Smith's "What Fills My Heart with Happiness"

(All centres should have access to a copy provided by the County)

Participants were given sticky notes to write down their reflections on the following questions:

What fills your heart with happiness today when you think about:

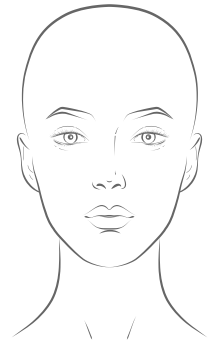
- 1) Someone you love; who comes to mind, what do they mean to you? What do they bring to your life? What moments do you cherish most with them?
- 2) A food that you enjoy with those you love, a traditional/cultural or favorite dish
- 3) Song; music and dance; listening to music or creating it; what might your favorite ways of creating music tell us about you? What might your favorite songs tell us about what lives in your heart? What memories come to mind? How do you offer yourself, loved ones, colleagues or children opportunities to share musical experiences and to create music?
- 4) The natural environment; what relationship do you have with the natural environment? What memories do you have with nature?
- 5) Stories; what stories do you hold close? How might we create safe spaces for storytelling and sharing? How do you allow yourself, colleagues, children, and families to share stories? What do you do with those stories?

What does all of this tell us about what brings meaning to your life and what's important to you? What does it tell us about the kind of world we want to live in? What possibilities could this open up in our work? What if we brought this into focus in our classrooms/centres? What might that look like? How do we create more opportunities for children and families, educators, and ourselves to live alongside those things that fill our hearts with happiness? What impact do we want to have on one another? What world do we desire to live in and how is our story of quality aligned with what lives in our hearts? How do our contexts and place tell our story of quality?

<https://www.dufferincounty.ca/sites/default/files/rtb/What%20fills%20your%20heart%20with%20happiness%20supervisors.pdf>

If you take up this engagement, or something similar, we would be delighted if you shared your documentation with us, in contribution to our Re-imagining Quality Framework.

Early Childhood Leaders of Dufferin County's Early Years and Child Care Community



#DCECEmatters

Do you know an Early Childhood professional who:

- lifts others (colleagues, children, community etc) up?
- inspires others?
- ignites curiosity?
- provokes reflection?
- invites new ways of thinking and being?
- elevates the rights of children and families?
- is continuously learning and evolving?
- is a great mentor?
- shines bright in some unique way?

Perhaps this person is a leader in thinking alongside pedagogical practices of inclusion, belonging, well-being, resilience, democracy and social justice, creative arts and aesthetic knowledges, expression and voice, culture, language and literacy, environmentalism... or otherwise.

We invite you to nominate a RECE, ECA, cook, or any other professional working in/alongside licensed childcare in Dufferin County, who is a thought leader, a change maker, or someone who inspires and lifts others up. If you wish to shine a light on an Early Childhood Leader in Dufferin County, please scan the QR code to fill out the following nomination page, also found on Raising the Bar under Resources.



You will find our fall nominees highlighted over the next several pages. As we had so many nominations to feature for our Early Learning Celebration, some nominations will be featured in the Winter 2024 Issue.

If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then, you are an excellent leader." - Dolly Parton

"Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flowcharts.

It is about one life influencing another." - John C. Maxwell

Early Childhood Leader: Ashleigh McAdam

RECE at Sandbox Tech Child Care, Toddler Program



Nominee Highlights:

Ashleigh comes to work every day with a passion for children. She starts out her day by getting the classroom set up and engaging with parents. Ashleigh is honest and heartfelt when engaging with parents at drop-off values what they have to say and communicates it as needed to the appropriate staff. Supporting children through morning transitions (especially on hard days) is something that she does so naturally and calmly. Ashleigh's programming is well thought out and executed in fun and engaging ways. She thinks of planning that engages the families, from family trees to celebrating cultural holidays. Ashleigh brings cooking and hands-on experiences for all the children to be active and get engaged with. Ashleigh has a natural nurturing disposition for all children. She is incredible when working with children with special needs. She supports them to reach goals, supports them emotionally, and helps them to communicate their wants and needs. Whether it is starting with sign language and then into verbal communication, or if it is for structure, repetitive routine, and expectations she never gives up. She believes they can and will do it. Ashleigh is currently also in University getting her Bachelors in Early Childhood Education. So while she is working full time she is also still enrolled in University online in a full-time program. Her wealth of knowledge is shared among her co-workers. Ashleigh is constantly collaborating with co-workers, supervisor, and director. She asks questions and ideas to dig deeper and get a better understanding of the children or the families. Ashleigh is constantly in open communication with families, whether it is with emails, verbal conversations, or phone calls. She is approachable to co-workers and the children. She has built many wonderful and honest relationships with anyone who comes through the door. Ashleigh engages in the county workshops and shares the knowledge she gains there. She really enjoyed Mindful Mike and brings the tools of calm and recognizing emotions and needs into the learning environment. Ashleigh really is a remarkable caregiver and co-worker.

What lives in Ashleigh's heart today?

Ashleigh is currently writing her thesis on Early Intervention. This core value is integrated into her classroom. If she sees or feels a child would benefit from support from our local services she is eager to get them implemented and has true honest conversations with families about the concerns, the child's needs, and how we can support the child to be the best version of themselves. To be able to help a child grow and develop to be competent and capable of the many things they can do. Ashleigh works as a team player with the iCAN consultants and together they set goals and expectations for the child to develop and reach.

Nominated by: Robin Cornelius, Supervisor at Sandbox Tech Child Care

"I am a mom/wife/daughter. I have 3 children of my own and I love spending as much time with them as possible. They each have their own interests and I love watching them grow and develop in life through their passions. I have been working at Sandbox Tech Child Care for 20 years. I have been a supervisor for the last 8 years. I truly enjoy the children that come through the centre. I love our staff and watching them grow through their lives as well."

**Early Childhood Leader:
Brittany Armitage**

RECE, Preschool Program at Credit Meadows YMCA



Nominee Highlights:

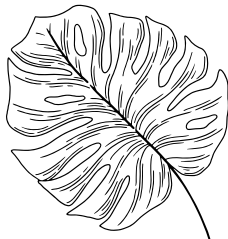
Brittany continuously goes above and beyond to engage the children and make them feel like valuable members of their childcare community. Brittany's programming, along with her commitment to celebrating special milestones for the children and their families, is exceptional. You can tell how much she loves her work and how much of an impact she has on the children, families, and colleagues she works with.

What lives in Brittany's heart today?

The children, their happiness, well-being and development are always first in Brittany's heart. She is extremely passionate and knowledgeable and values inclusivity and fostering a sense of belonging.

Nominated by:

Chelsea Trovo, Resource Consultant at DCAFS, iCAN Program
Chelsea Supports the Preschool program at Credit Meadows YMCA



**Early Childhood Leader:
Christina Mesenchuk**

Assistant Supervisor, Third Street Child Care

Nominee Highlights:

Since Christina's very first day at Third Street Childcare, she has been an integral part of the team. She has built strong relationships with colleagues and families, with a simple hello she can brighten a day. Christina is great at making adults and children feel welcome as they enter the centre doors. After 20-plus years in the field, the passion in Christina still burns bright. She truly loves what she does and that resonates with her day-to-day interactions. She has been a great mentor to new ECE's joining the field.

What lives in Christina's heart today?

What lives in all our hearts as nominees and nominators is the importance of building a centre where everyone feels that they belong, and are welcome and that we provide nurturing care for our families.

Nominated by: Michelle Pearce and Christine MacDougall

"Christine and I have both been in the Field for 25 plus years and have worked alongside Christina for the last 4 years"

Early Childhood Leader: Kirsten Almand

RECE Supervisor of B&A Programs at YMCA



Nominee Highlights:

I have nominated one of the most, if not the most, important people I have ever come across in my career. My boss Kirsten Almand who oversees so many centres in our region (and does it with respect, honesty, and care) goes above and beyond in everything she does. She answers every question, email, or phone call, and never once makes us feel like it's a silly question. KIRSTEN without a shadow of a doubt always puts her staff first (which is rare in this field at times) and always pushes us to be the best versions of ourselves. She supports, encourages, and talks us through tough and sometimes stressful situations.

She always answers the phone and always supports her staff with regard to ministry inspections. However, what I admire most is she steps in and HELPS with the children. She covers programs that are short-staffed by working the floor herself. That is a trait more people above in head office positions need to try. Kirsten always leads by example and how rare is that nowadays? Not to mention she does it all with a sense of humor and great laugh (which we all need in this field) and keeps a wonderful smile on her face. I would not stay in my place of work without her. That's how motivating she is! She doesn't forget where she came from and the front-line work that's needed because she still does it. She is what we need more of in this field. During COVID-19 times and after, many of us struggled with mental health that we never expected. I have never felt like I wasn't good enough as an educator as I did back then, but Kirsten was the support I needed to continue in this field when I wanted out. She accepted and understood and always gave options, and not once did I feel like she didn't have our backs. I owe her my career because, without her check-ins, I may not have had the courage to continue in this field.

Kirsten is a steady, reliable, compassionate leader who puts staff and children above money, numbers, and labels. I am so proud to call her a mentor to me. I am also proud to say she is the best boss I've ever had, and likely will ever have. I can't see how anyone can top this gem in our field. The reason we stay is because of her and will always be because of her. She deserves recognition for being way above the rest and always being there for her staff (even if it means sacrificing herself in the process). We always talk about leaders and heroes in our program with the children... well this lady exemplifies these words. Thank you, Kirsten, for being the boss we all want and deserve in a field that often forgets how important little words of positivity are. You are and will always be the best this world has to offer. We are very lucky to have you on our side.

What lives in Kirsten's heart today?

What lives in Kirsten's heart today is her love for her kids. I think her being such a brilliant mum is the reason why she understands this field so well. For me, because Kirsten and I share the same values of relationship building and teamwork first, I think that's why we have always worked well together. I'm sure she will agree that communication and support of each other in early childhood is crucial to building a trusting and caring environment for the children, families, and staff. Our team at St Ben's has always been very vocal in terms of talking and respecting everyone. I know Kirsten when she comes into our school notices the fun-loving and open conversations, we have with everyone from the custodians to the teachers, to the children, and the families. The best part about her is she is also like this, so she meshes in so well and joins these conversations too. Her values are why she's good at her job but her ability to see the whole picture is why she is great. She sees children for who they are, not what they are/have. She sees educators for the joy they bring not the stressful situations they are thrown into. She sees every person's potential and the potential of the program, not the little mistakes that happen because we are humans and not robots. Quality early childhood is about compassion, care, relationship building, and trust, but it's also about what you choose to see beyond what is in front of you. This is something Kirsten does and my coworkers do.

Nominated by: Tara Bishop, RECE School Age Educator

Tara has worked in the field for 15-plus years and attended Humber College to obtain her ECE Diploma. Tara adores animals and children and settled on a career supporting and loving every child that comes into our care. "I am beyond lucky to have two amazing co-workers and my team educator in our school-age room and I, have been together caring for the children for over 10 years. I know that is rare to have and I'm eternally grateful that we both share a great passion for the work we do. I find connection with your team is of the utmost importance In this field."



Dufferin County's Child Care Fee Subsidy



Meet Dufferin County's Early Years and Child Care Division Community Services Workers, Child Care Fee Subsidy Aimee Cowan and Jenna Jenkins, RECE



Aimee Cowan

Aimee is an integral part of the County of Dufferin's Community Services Department, providing supports to the community for over 20 years. During this time, she has worked within the Ontario Works, Community Housing, and Early Years and Child Care divisions. Aimee is a valued source of knowledge and is able to assist families navigate a multitude of local resources in order to meet the needs of their diverse situations.



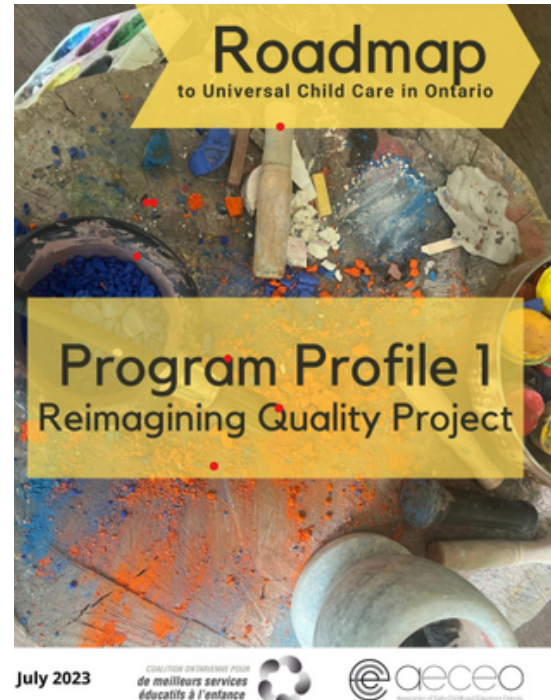
Jenna Jenkins
RECE

Jenna has worked in the field of Early Childhood Education for over the past 20 years working as an Early Childhood Educator, an Autism Therapist, Child Care Programs Officer (Quality Assurance) and as a Community Services Worker assessing eligibility for Child care Fee Subsidy. She believes that all families should have access to high-quality child care experiences for their children regardless of their socio-economic status and that together as a community we can provide support for all children and families in Dufferin County to be healthy and thrive.

What is Ontario's Child Care Fee Subsidy?

Child Care Fee Subsidy helps parents and guardians with the cost of licensed child care. Parents/Guardians must be working, or attending an approved education program, or fulfilling a participation agreement with Ontario Works, or be in receipt of a referral from a Community Agency or appropriate medical professional. Eligibility for Child Care Fee Subsidy is based on both income and eligible hours of care.

Early Years and Child Care A Roadmap to Universal Child Care in Ontario



The early years and child care division acknowledges the importance responding to the conditions of our times and creating openings for vibrant dialogue about pedagogical projects and process that might matter to early childhood communities. The early years and child care sector continues to face exciting successes, changes, challenges, and ebbs and flows with the implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System. In July 2021, the first edition of the Roadmap to Universal Child Care in Ontario was released by the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare (OCBCC) and the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO). The Roadmap set out a vision and pathways forward.

In the Roadmap, they described how, “a growing number of early childhood education and care theorists and philosophers have called for a rethinking of dominant, technical approaches to defining and monitoring quality” and that, “it is the important role of well-educated early childhood educators with decent work who bring “quality” to life through caring relationships and pedagogy with young children and families.” Dufferin County early years and child care division, along with Seneca Lab school were featured in program profile of "reimagining quality"

Early Years and Child Care Workforce Strategy



Reaching In...Reaching Out (RIRO) Resiliency Skills Training



Skills for real life, a story of RIRO from Chelsea Raven

RIRO spoke to me from the moment I heard our lead facilitator, Ann Willke from Wellington County, share the story of RIRO with us, before we chose to move ahead with it and have a group from Dufferin County participate in the facilitator training. Once I became engaged in the RIRO training itself, I realized how much it really had to offer me. It came to me at a time when I had only been back to work after my second child for about 6 months, when post-covid illnesses had reared their ugliness throughout my household a number of times, my youngest child adjusting to a new group of children in his classroom, and one child embarking on his first days in Junior kindergarten. RIRO couldn't have come at a better time for me (well, perhaps coming a little sooner wouldn't have hurt).

As my youngest, Harold, was adjusting to a new group of children - he was the only one who hadn't moved up to the next room with his peers - I noticed more clinging, sadness, and an entirely different demeanor from my normally energetic, easy going and happy child. This went on for about a month or so, meanwhile I was learning a few things from RIRO. RIRO highlights something called "Thought-feeling connections" which helped me support Harold during this time. The thought-feeling connections simply makes connections between what thoughts we might be having, related to what we are feeling. In Harold's case, he was exhibiting sadness. Perhaps even a little bit of embarrassment (feeling like he's not a big kid/stuck with the younger kids). RIRO connects sadness to the thoughts of actual loss, or a loss of self-worth, and embarrassment to thoughts of a loss of standing with others. Imagine if everyone else around you went off to a cool new place without you - just as Harold's peers went off to the big kid classroom without him. Of course he may have been thinking, I'm not worthy, my peers or educators don't think I'm a big kid, etc. Once I had a conversation with Harold's educators about my own realizations (they had noticed his sadness as well), we were all able to support Harold in noticing that many of his friends went off to the other room. We were able to help Harold express his emotions of sadness as we connected thoughts to feelings alongside him. It seemed as though this acknowledgement of his thoughts and emotions, and our support in expressing, helped him to come out of his funk. There is nothing more satisfying as a parent, than seeing your child light up again after such a funk.

RIRO also highlights the importance of self-regulation, through the use of "relax" skills (the tools/hobbies/experiences we use to bring us back to calm). It was the constant reminder to slow down and put my own oxygen mask on, the ability to reflect on my own thinking and challenge my own beliefs (also supported through RIRO), and find my controllable aspects in situations, that I was able to navigate the transitions of JK, new classroom, and being back to work, with a little more confidence, grace, and ease. When the chaos becomes overwhelming, I ask myself - What can I do in this moment to bring a sense of calm back? Are my own thoughts holding me captive to the chaos and dysregulation? What do I have control over in this moment?

RIRO continues to support me through life's times of challenge and change, alongside my family, my colleagues, and those I cross paths with at work and otherwise. Each time I facilitate, something new is learned.

- More RIRO sessions coming in the New Year 2024 -



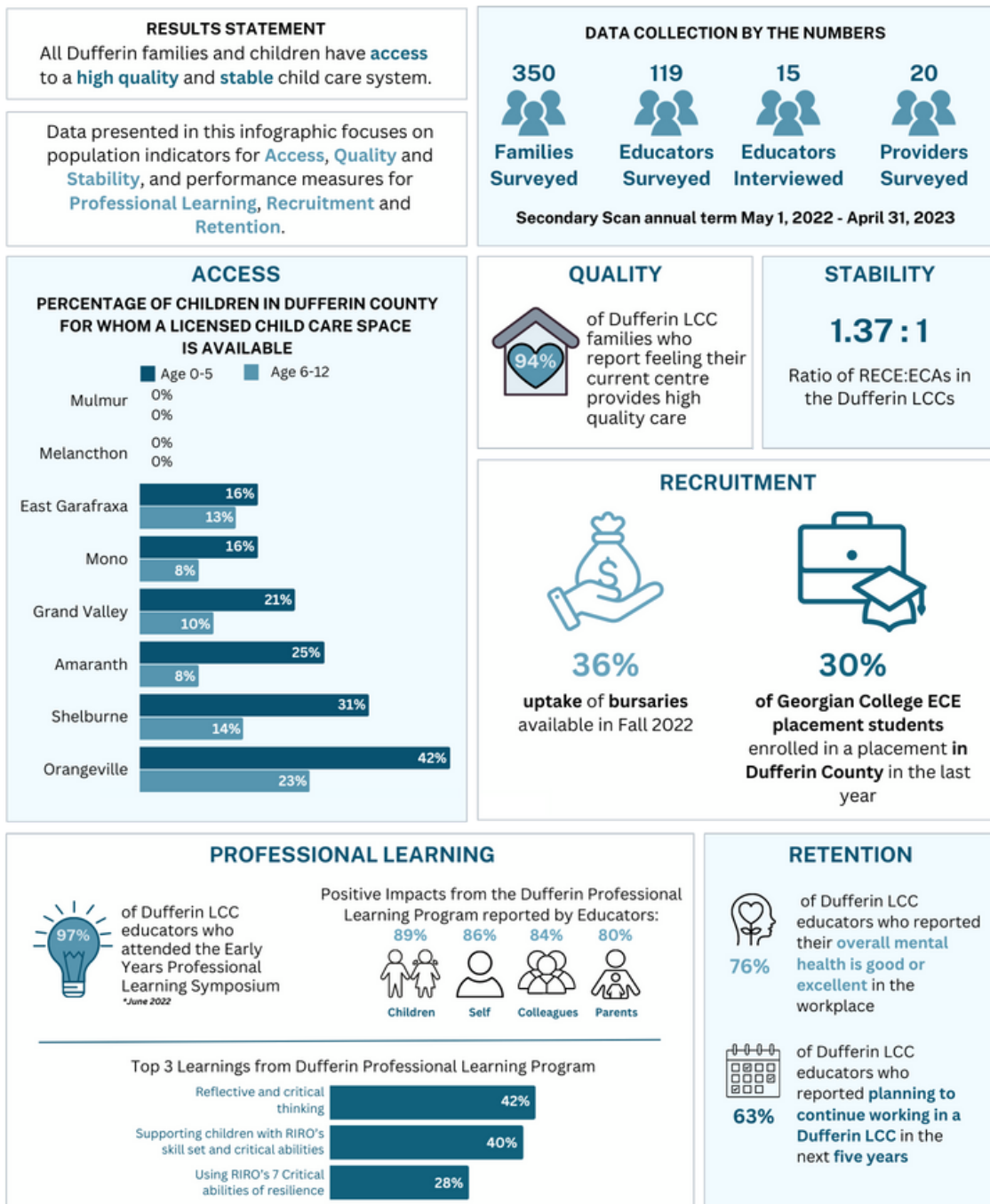
Early Years and Child Care Workforce Strategy

“Qualified early learning and care professionals like Registered Early Childhood Educators are a vital part of high quality child care. Without a vital workforce, there is no child care. We’re committed to supporting the next generation of ECEs, and are proud to continue to invest in these Georgian College bursaries.”

- Lori-Jane Del Medico, Program Manager, Early Years and Child Care, Dufferin County



Knowing our Workforce: A Strategy for Dufferin Early Childhood Educators Evaluation 2022/23



Early Years and Child Care Workforce Strategy

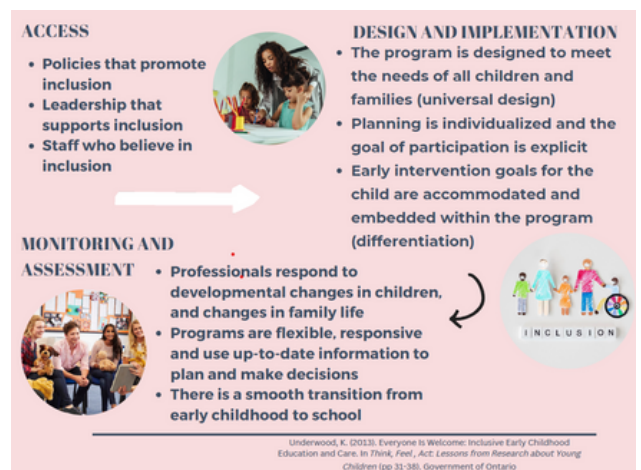


Knowing our Numbers: A community approach to Understanding the ECE Workforce

The County of Dufferin's Early Years and Child Care Division is participating in Atkinson Centre's "Knowing Our Numbers," a community collaboration for municipalities to come together in collecting and reporting data related to the Early Childhood workforce, in order to better understand the state of the Early Childhood workforce at a regional level and support the County and province wide partners in policy development, planning, investment decisions, or developing stronger workforce strategies which will support the implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System.

Leading with Love and Compassion A Discussion about Belonging and Disability With Natalie Royer and Dr. Kathryn Underwood

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plays a crucial role for early childhood educators when cultivating spaces of belonging for children and families they walk alongside. Dufferin County Early Childhood Educators were joined by Dr. Kathryn Underwood in conversations on disability and inclusion. Together we explored practical strategies on disability and inclusion and how it intersects with race and how we can support educators in the classroom.



Dr. Underwood has many publications, like the one here featured in Ontario's Think, Feel, and Act - lessons from research about young children;

<https://files.ontario.ca/edu-think-feel-act-lessons-from-research-about-young-children-en-2021-01-29.pdf>

WHY BELONGING?

Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.

Jon. A. Powell



There's a new podcast in town—and it has a lesson for everyone!



Join Stephen Hurley, voicEd Radio, and Michelle Schurter, Millennial Strategist, as they bring the theory, practice, and policy of Early Years education into one conversation.

The birth of this podcast will bring listeners unique experiences as they hear from both practitioners who work directly with children every day and those behind-the-scenes who conduct early childhood research and shape Early Years policy. Merrily—whose name reflects one of the earliest songs we learn as children—takes an upstream—downstream approach, putting early years educators in conversation with thought-leaders in the field (upstream), and encourages those outside the early years to think about how the learning in these earliest stages of life is critical for all citizens today and tomorrow(downstream).

After months of planning and creating, Merrily is ready to create honest and robust conversations about the importance of early childhood education not just for early childhood educators, but society as a whole. Join Stephen and Michelle as they paddle merrily upstream and down with delightful guests diving deep into early years' conversations! Listen now! Merrily podcast can be found on Spotify, iTunes, and voiced Radio!



Holiday Greetings

To Dufferin County's Early Years and Child Care community,
As the end of the year draws near, the Early Years and Child Care Division would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for an amazing year! This year has been a journey, and we commend you for striving through the challenges and changes to make the best of these ever-changing times in our sector. We know it's been difficult, but you've shown remarkable resilience and have risen to the challenge in countless ways. You have and continue to care deeply for both the well-being and relationships you make with children and families in Dufferin County. Every educator and child care provider should be incredibly proud of their efforts and the impact that they have made on the lives they have touched. As the holiday festivities will soon be upon us, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation for your dedication!

Warm regards,

The Early Years and Child Care Division

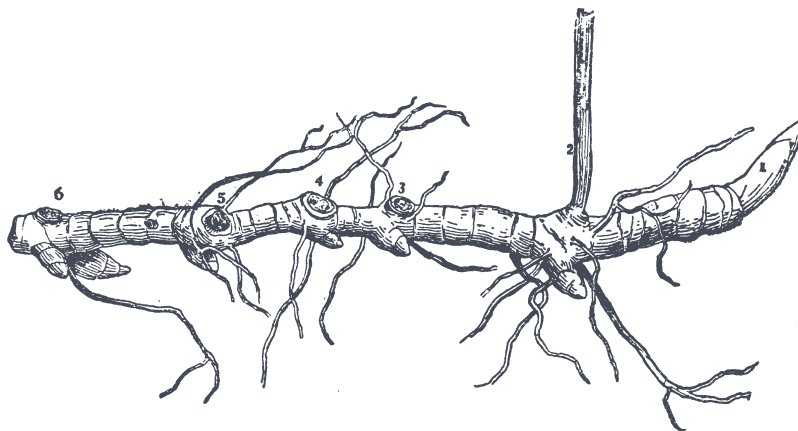
**"Warmest wishes to you and your family in
the upcoming season"**

Igniting Inspiration

“For us, pedagogy invites educator to consider that it is not enough to continue ‘window shopping’ for the newest educational approach or model to apply. Much more is at stake, and much more is possible. Pedagogy demands that early childhood education become ever more attuned to the situated complexities in which we live. In other words, pedagogy requires that we carefully and attentively study the conditions that create early childhood education, and that early childhood education creates. As we have learned from feminist scholars such as Isabelle Stengers (2015) and Donna Haraway (2016)”

- Cristina D. Vintimilla & Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw (2020)

How might we think of pedagogy in early childhood education?



THE
EARLY YEARS

RhIZONES

*a celebratory
community space for continuous learning,
reflection, and connection*



thank you for reading and
engaging with this publication
