



Embracing the Early Years

Early Learning & Child Care Virtual Conference

Wednesday April 21st to Saturday April 24th, 2021

This year's conference will be VIRTUAL.

Sessions will be either live Zoom or pre-recorded.

Every morning, registrants will receive an email with all of the day's sessions. You can attend any of the sessions for that day.



EMBRACING
THE EARLY YEARS
capture the moment

Cost: \$60.00 Member (Hamilton and Haldimand Norfolk)

To ask about membership, please email library@ascy.ca

\$100.00 Non-Member (Hamilton)

\$130.00 Out-of-town

(This includes all sessions for all days)

Cost includes registration in the *Having the Conversation Infant and Early Years Mental Health Institute* on May 3rd and 4th
(more information to follow).



EY Swag Bags will be available to participants for curbside pickup on
April 6th, 7th, 13th, and 14th.
(available only to Hamilton and Haldimand Norfolk participants)

ASCY

Affiliated Services for
Children & Youth

Register on-line at www.ascy.ca.

If your organization has billing privileges through ASCY, email
library@ascy.ca for registration.

Wednesday April 21st 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm Career Cove

There will be a network opportunity for your centre/agency to meet with ECE students virtually.

During this time, you can promote your organization and answer any questions from potential future employees.

A Zoom link and time slot will be sent to those who register.

Please contact Nicole Colterman at ncolterman@ascy.ca to register or for more information.

Kick-off to the Conference! Wednesday April 21st 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm Live Zoom Keynote with Dr. Susan Hopkins

6:30 pm – 6:45 pm Welcome

6:45 pm – 7:45 pm The Importance of Adult Self-Reg

A vast majority of Self-Reg initiatives focus primarily on children, however, in order to regulate another, you must first be able to regulate yourself. This presentation looks at the Self-Reg needs of adults. Topics covered will include:

- Shanker Self-Reg® and how it applies to adult stress;
- the kinds of stress experienced by parents, teachers, and other professionals who work with children;
- how excessive stress affects adult functioning;
- how adult stress affects children;
- how adults can use Self-Reg strategies to manage stress and maintain and enhance their own well-being and those around them.



Dr. Susan Hopkins is a passionate advocate for children, families, schools, and communities. She leads Dr. Stuart Shanker's organization, The MEHRIT Centre (TMC), as Executive Director. Over the course of Susan's career, she has worked in every area of education from the early years to post-secondary and across contexts from Italy to the Northwest Territories.

Thursday April 22nd

You will receive an email at 8:00 AM with Zoom invites for ALL of these sessions!

LIVE ZOOM SESSION 10:00 AM-11:30 AM	Environments During Changing Times Observing and listening become an important part in creating environments that are not only inclusive but become part of the identity of the school. How do we use and move through spaces, what is the space we share with children, adults, community, and non-living? How do we think about programs in particular places, that are unique to who uses these places? In this webinar, participants are invited to explore the changes, alternations, and new ways of thinking of environments during our current times. An opportunity to share in a dialogue and to think about spaces as particular to creating and sustaining a school's identity. Presenter: Rosalba Bortolotti, RECE
LIVE ZOOM SESSION 10:00 AM-11:30 AM	Disability, Childhood, and the Effects of a Pandemic This presentation will discuss pandemic effects for families and their children who were accessing disability services prior to the provincial lockdown. Drawing on findings from the Inclusive Early Childhood Service System (IECSS) project, and Critical Disability Theory, the presentation will examine how the pandemic has illuminated existing structural barriers to participation, a lack of understanding on the complexity of disabled identities in childhood, and the need to recognize the work of families in early childhood education and care systems. Presenter: Dr. Kathryn Underwood, Associate Professor, School of Early Childhood Studies, Ryerson
LIVE ZOOM SESSION 01:00 PM-02:30 PM	Adventures in Risky Play: What is Your Yes? Join author-designer Rusty Keeler as he celebrates the beauty and benefits of risky play and the importance of adults supporting children's play. Loaded with amazing images and inspiration, Rusty challenges you to think about your own professional practice with children and encourages you to take bold new steps to support play a little more each day. What is your "yes"? What is your "no"? Let's take it to the next level! Presenter: Rusty Keeler
LIVE ZOOM SESSION 06:00 PM-07:30 PM	The Educator's Voice in Pedagogical Documentation Let's think together about the role and the voice of the educator in Pedagogical Documentation. How does curiosity, and asking our own questions, deepen our thinking as we document? What makes documentation pedagogical and how do we become researchers of children's thinking and ideas? We will take the time during this session to engage in dialogue about the teacher's perspective within documentation, and what that means for our everyday practice and learning alongside children. Presenter: Susan Stacey
Pre-recorded Session	Navigating Change as a Leader in Early Childhood Education This session will be spent in dialogue around who we are as leaders and how this impacts our relationship with small and large organizational change. One specific leadership style, Distributed Leadership, will be explored more in-depth as a framework for supporting the change process. Participants will be invited to question and make connections to their practice and the organizational problems they encounter. Presenter: Dr. Heather Beaudin, RECE
Pre-recorded Session	Self-Reg and Explosive Behaviour: Why and Why Now? Both parents and educators are seeing increasing episodes of explosive behaviour in children: challenging behaviours that at times may compromise the safety of others. Several approaches have been developed to help teachers, professionals, and parents deal with such behaviour, however, according to Dr. Stuart Shanker, these methods pay insufficient attention to the stressors which are the primary cause of the behaviour. Self-Reg teaches us that we must first begin the detective work to identify the roots of the behaviour problem. This presentation will discuss: the nature and incidence of explosive behaviour (including why and why now?), the relationship between self-regulation, stress, and challenging behaviour episodes, and stress cycles, and how they impact children's inner tension and arousal. Presenter: Dr. Susan Hopkins, Executive Director of The MEHRIT Centre

Friday April 23rd

You will receive an email at 8:00 AM with Zoom invites for ALL of these sessions!

LIVE ZOOM SESSION 10:00 AM-11:30 AM	Good Grief: Supporting a Healthy Grief Process in Young Children Supporting children who are grieving a significant loss, such as a death, in their lives is challenging for even the most experienced of educators. Yet childcare spaces and communities play such an important role in supporting a grieving child. This live presentation will include practical strategies and approaches for supporting children's grief, useful resources, a Q&A, as well as stories and important messages from children that illustrate "best practice" guidelines for supporting a healthy grief process. Presenter: Andrea Warnick, Registered Nurse, Registered Psychotherapist
Pre-recorded Session	Supporting Grieving Families Using Mindfulness and Compassion Mindfulness and compassion are essential elements of providing grief support to children. They play a significant role in bearing witness to the suffering of a grieving child, which is one of the most challenging aspects of supporting children's grief. These skills also go a long way towards helping children navigate big feelings - including those of sadness, anger, and anxiety. This presentation will share creative ways of using mindfulness and compassion to support a healthy grief process in kids. Presenter: Lisa Robinson, Children's Grief Therapist
Pre-recorded Session	An Educator's Guide to Understanding Children's Mental Health In Early Childhood Education, our intention is to build meaningful relationships with children by sharing in their interests and support social emotional well-being. As we learn more about infant mental health, we want to continue to support children's wellness throughout childhood. In our school-aged settings, we spend time with children from 4 to 12 years old. It can feel overwhelming for educators to plan for this diverse age group and understand individual mental health needs. In this workshop, we hope to empower you with knowledge as we consider children's social emotional well-being and explore diagnoses such as ADHD, autism, anxiety, or other developmental concerns. This workshop will encourage educators to engage in meaningful discussions and practice self-reflection to feel more confident in understanding children's mental health. Presenter: Natalie Busato, RECE, Nicole Colterman, RECE, and Katie Boyd, RECE

LIVE ZOOM 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm Keynote Address by Ann Douglas

Journeying Together: The Why and How of Family Engagement

Wondering what it takes to inspire families to engage with your organization in a sustained and meaningful way? In this thought-provoking and information-packed presentation, Ann Douglas surveys the latest research on family engagement in education, health care, and related settings and delivers a powerful action plan for childcare organizations that are truly committed to engaging with the families they serve.

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is a regular contributor to CBC Radio and a bestselling parenting book author. Ann is the creator of The Mother of All Book series and the author, most recently, of Happy Parents, Happy Kids and Parenting Through the Storm. A passionate and inspiring speaker, Ann delivers keynote addresses and leads small-group workshops at health, parenting, and education conferences across the country.



LIVE ZOOM 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm Ann Douglas and Dr. Jean Clinton

Technoference: A Community Conversation

Join Dr. Jean Clinton and Ann Douglas for a community conversation about the challenges of parenting in the digital era. This is your chance to catch up on the latest research about the impact of technology on the parent-child relationship and to swap strategies and solutions for supporting parents. We will be talking about technoference (the impact of technology on relationships); how social media affects the experience of parenting, for better and for worse; and how to combat the feelings of loneliness and isolation that the most "connected" generation of parents ever is experiencing. Expect a wide-ranging conversation that highlights the challenges and identifies the opportunities to make a difference for parents.

Dr. Jean Clinton is a Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster, division of Child Psychiatry. Dr. Clinton was appointed as an education advisor to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Education 2014 - 2018. Her special interest lies in brain development, and the crucial role relationships and connectedness play therein.



Saturday April 24th

9:00 am to 10:00 am Live Zoom Keynote with Marc Battle

Pushed by the Circumstances

No kid is seeking anything when he joins a gang; he's always fleeing something. He's not being pulled; he's being pushed by the circumstances in which he finds himself.

Greg Boyle

In Eastern Philosophy there is a saying that there is truth beyond the scriptures. This idea has always resonated with me as I have spent the better part of my life in Early Childhood Education seeking wisdom about my work and life with children from sources not related to ECE. I have explored the thoughts from leaders in the disability rights movement, the civil rights movements, democracy and community building. However, one of the most impactful moments for me was attending a circle with an Indigenous knowledge keeper and four ex-gang members from Winnipeg. This circle tied up all of my thoughts and understandings about the power of our work and if we listen to the advice of these men we can build a place of nurturance, love, understanding, and respect for all who are connected to our programs. This workshop will explore how we can integrate the experiences of ex-gang members into our practice in ECE.

Marc Battle is an ECE instructor at Red River College in Winnipeg, who also works with Aboriginal Head Start programs. Marc first worked at Toronto's Children Services, then at the child care centre at Durham College. For six years, he taught ECE at Northwest Community College in BC. Inspired by fellow ECE instructor Joan Turecki, he became interested in emergent curriculum, which builds on the children's interests, and in incorporating a more artistic approach to child care programs. He has been at Red River College since 2002. Marc is a passionate speaker on a variety of topics including risky play, rich learning environments, quality interactions, inclusion, and guiding children toward discovery of their full potential.

Saturday April 24th

You will receive an email at 8:00 AM with Zoom invites for ALL of these sessions!

LIVE ZOOM SESSION 10:30 AM-12:00 PM	Curriculum and Pedagogy in Unprecedented Times Pedagogy and curriculum are words often spoken but often misunderstood. In this interactive webinar, we will focus on pedagogy (how learning happens) and curriculum (the content of the learning) in the unprecedented context of a global pandemic. This time is like no other in the lives of children, families, and educators. If we are guided by values and an articulated philosophy, practices that support all to grow and flourish are possible. The webinar will help you link theory to practice and offer you inspiration for planning and programming that reflects the pedagogical approaches of <i>How Does Learning Happen? (2014)</i> , particularly play, exploration, and inquiry. Presenter: Dr. Diane Kashin, Ed. D, RECE
LIVE ZOOM SESSION 1:00 PM-2:30 PM	Children Can't Bounce Off the Walls if There Are No Walls Unfortunately, there is a rise in concerns about the physical and mental wellness of children related to a coincidental rise in sedentary lifestyles and decreased outdoor time. Educators and administrators understand the importance of building resiliency in children through outdoor learning environments, but how can this be done using simple and effective programming ideas to engage children? This "funshop" will explore outdoor programming ideas that will appeal to a diversity of interests of the children in your care, and at the same time it can be done on a shoestring budget. Using loose parts outside, building imagination stations, discovering the wonder of nature right in front of you, and getting the most out of your outdoor learning environment will be shared at this presentation. Maximizing outdoor play and learning in both quantity and quality will be explored as a way to enrich the time for both the children and educators in the current challenges we are facing. Presenter: Alan Thomson

LIVE ZOOM SESSION 1:00 PM-2:30 PM	Do Math Apps “Teach” Numeracy Skills to Young Children? Dr. Lee, the co-author of “Let’s Talk About Math”, will discuss how touch screen technology provides the potential for unique learning opportunities to build early math skills. Although this technology is pervasive, the educational quality of apps is often not readily available to educators and parents with some of them simply “masquerading” as educational software. In this workshop, participants will be introduced to ways to curate educational math apps by content and developmental standards. Presenter: Dr. Joanne Lee, Associate Professor, Child Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier
Pre-recorded Session	Foundations of a Mindful Early Learning Practice The four foundations within <i>How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)</i> are all important elements within mindful practice. Think about mindfulness as the anchor to all the learning you have had to date and all the learning yet to come. It holds the balance. It keeps things steady. It connects back to the vessel. This workshop will provide you with insight and leave you with tools to use in your work. Presenter: Melodie Spencer, Professor, RECE, Mohawk College
Pre-recorded Session	Mindfulness for Children and Educators Mindfulness for children and educators will focus on the what, why, and how of mindfulness practice in the classroom. This workshop will begin with an exploration of what mindfulness practice is. We will then explore why mindfulness is beneficial for all involved in the classroom. Finally, we will be introduced to several mindfulness strategies for children, as well as for educators, which we will practice together. Presenter: Michelle Edey, Professor, RECE, Mohawk College
Pre-recorded Session	Joyful Math: Invitations to Play and Explore in the Early Childhood Classroom Join author/educator Deanna Pecaski McLennan as she discusses building a kindergarten classroom in which math is inseparable from everything students do. She will encourage you to create invitations to engage with math through art, literacy, and outdoor play. With stories from her own classroom, Deanna will inspire you to be curious about math, take risks, try new approaches, and collaborate with children as co-learners. Presenter: Deanna McLellan

Once the conference is over, all registrants will receive access to most of the sessions, to view from Tuesday April 27th to Saturday May 1st.

REGISTRATION

Conference Policies

- Registration and refund deadline is **Friday April 9, 2021.**
- **ASCY will not issue any refunds after the deadline date.**
- ASCY may alter or change a session due to unforeseen circumstances.

Presenter Bios

Kathryn Underwood

Kathryn is a Professor in the School of Early Childhood Studies at Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada. Her research asks questions about care, childhood and disability, and institutions, with growing emphasis on the divide between public and private relationships that work to organize children and families. She is the director of the Inclusive Early Childhood Service System project.

Rosalba Bortolotti

Rosalba is an educational consultant and pedagogical mentor with over 25 years experience in early childhood education and research. Inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, Rosalba continues to work and study with teachers, consultants, families, schools, and organizations throughout different communities across Ontario, Canada, the US, and internationally. Rosalba is the owner and founder of Acorn Collaborative, operating since 2005, and the previous owner of Acorn School. She brings her professionalism, experience, and research as continuous learning with others, educators, children, and families. Rosalba is an educator, artist, researcher, mentor, collaborator, leader, and lifelong learner. She brings her journey as continuous learning with others, building on relationships, collaborating, dialoguing, and offering deeper thinking in group settings, mentoring and supporting leadership. Her goal is to continue to advocate for children's rights, learning and teaching together with educators, families, and children. Rosalba continues to visit the municipal infant-toddler and preschools of Reggio Emilia, and attend webinar and study groups. She has also worked as a lead teacher in the Seneca Lab School in the kindergarten programs and part time professor in the School of Early Childhood Education at Seneca College.

Rusty Keeler

Rusty is a natural playscape designer and author who, for 30 years, has traveled the world designing outdoor play environments and speaking about the benefits and beauty of saying "yes" to children's play. Rusty is the author of multiple books on play and playscapes including *Adventures in Risky Play: What is Your Yes?* He is the co-founder of the social justice initiative called the "Just Play Project" in Ithaca, NY, which works to support all children's right to play. With Rusty's support, the city of Ithaca declared itself America's first "Free Range Kid City".

Susan Stacey

Susan has worked for over 35 years in ECE as a Lab School Director, Practicum Advisor, and Instructor. Her work and books focus on Inquiry Based practices, including Emergent Curriculum, Pedagogical Documentation, and inspirations from Reggio Emilia. She has been heavily involved in professional learning for the N.S. Early Years Framework, and collaborates with educators across Canada and around the world.

Heather Beaudin

Heather is a Registered Early Childhood Educator in Ontario, Canada. She holds a Doctorate of Education from the University of Western Ontario and a Master of Education from Wilfrid Laurier University. Her research work and interest is in early educational leadership, specifically how leaders can use a distributed leadership framework to navigate organizational problems. Recently, as a Pedagogical Leader, Heather has spent extensive time working alongside educators and leaders to support the deepening of pedagogical practice.

Andrea Warnick

Andrea is a Registered Nurse and Registered Psychotherapist whose passion lies in helping individuals, families, and communities support people of all ages who are grieving an illness or death in their lives. With years of nursing and counselling experience, both in Canada and abroad, and a Masters degree in Thanatology (the study of dying and death) Andrea brings to her work a rare mixture of medical and psychosocial expertise. Andrea is the host of KidsGrief Q&A, a free monthly forum through Canadian Virtual Hospice where she responds to questions about supporting grieving children and youth. Andrea lives in Guelph Ontario, from where she runs Andrea Warnick Consulting, a group practice of 15 therapists who provide grief counselling and education across Ontario.

Lisa Robinson

Lisa is a Registered Social Worker with Andrea Warnick Consulting who focuses her professional and creative energy on supporting children, youth, and young adults through tough situations. Her primary focus is on the intersections between grief, anxiety, and trauma. Lisa has over 12 years of experience working with individuals and families who have been impacted by the death of someone close to them, life-threatening illnesses, and other losses. She highly values developing strong therapeutic relationships with her clients as the basis for this work.

Ann Douglas

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is a regular contributor to CBC Radio and a bestselling parenting book author. Ann is the creator of *The Mother of All Books* series and the author, most recently, of "Happy Parents, Happy Kids and Parenting Through the Storm". A passionate and inspiring speaker, Ann delivers keynote addresses and leads small-group workshops at health, parenting, and education conferences across the country.

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Dr. Diane Kashin

Diane is a registered early childhood educator who, before retiring, taught early childhood education at both the degree and the diploma level. Diane is passionate about early childhood education curriculum and pedagogy. She facilitates workshops and webinars and presents keynote addresses locally, nationally, and internationally.

Alan Thomson

Alan Thomson has been an educator with school age children for over 30 years. For the last 3 years he has activated creative spaces and programs at the London Public Library. He believes that simple approaches are the cornerstone of a successful learning environment. Everyone can remember moments where a child played more with the box or container that a toy was packaged in. In his funshops, Alan likes to explore creative ways to get the most "use of the box" in simple, low cost, and creative ways.

Joanne Lee, Ph.D.

Joanne is an Associate Professor in the department of Psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. As a developmental psychologist, her research focuses on early childhood learning in language and mathematics through both technology and traditional play in home and childcare settings. She co-created "LittleCounters®", a play-based program supporting early numeracy development and numeracy school readiness. Drawn from the program, she co-authored a guidebook titled "Let's Talk About Math: The LittleCounters® Approach to Building Early Math Skills" for early educators, parents, and caregivers.

Michelle Edey

Michelle is a professor in the Early Childhood Education program at Mohawk College. She teaches a variety of courses, focusing on curriculum development, advocacy and professional ethics, working with families, and reflective practice. Michelle values co-learning and mindfulness in the classroom, with an emphasis on deep reflection and authenticity.

Deanna Pecaski McLeannan

Deanna Pecaski McLeannan, Ph.D. is a full-day kindergarten teacher based in Windsor, Ontario and a 2020 Prime Minister Award recipient for teaching Excellence in STEM. She has devoted her research and practice to exploring the potential for rich mathematics learning through playful inquiry and exploration. Deanna looks at life through a mathematical lens, and recognizes opportunities for authentic, complex engagement in all experiences children have.

Melodie Spencer

Melodie has been an Early Childhood Educator for close to 30 years and has worked directly with children ages birth to 12 years, supervising childcare and managing family support services. These experiences brought her to teaching part time at Mohawk College in 2013 while still working in the field. Melodie began teaching full time in 2016. Melodie has a diploma in Early Childhood Education and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. She also holds a number of certificates that guide her teaching including Conscious Care and Support from the University of Toronto with a focus on mindfulness.