

SEEECCC APRIL 2020 EMAIL UPDATE

www.earlychildhoodedm.ca/southeast

www.facebook.com/SEEECCC



MESSAGE FROM SOUTH EAST EDMONTON EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY COALITION (SEEECCC)

We are at day one of our new reality. Our direct provincial funding is discontinued but our coalition volunteers are still passionate and committed to the early years. Our goal is to try to continue on the journey we began five years ago.

Over the past five years, we have had the good fortune of developing wonderful partnerships, of meeting parents and child care professionals and of taking the story of the importance of the early years to a very broad audience through our newsletter, Facebook page, website, workshops, and our involvement on boards and initiatives throughout our city. We thank all of you for your contributions as partners, presenters, participants, followers of our communication networks, as this initiative has always been a collaborative endeavor. Our journey would not have been possible without you.

We ask that you stay committed to working with us as we explore ways of continuing this work, we began together. We are hoping we can find a way to continue the newsletter, our Facebook presence, and our workshops. We know for certain that we will continue our membership on community boards and initiatives to keep telling the early years story. It is imperative that we get our political leaders to understand that it is in everybody's best interest to ensure that all children have enriched early childhood experiences as it sets their life's trajectory. We will be following up with you once we have a clearer picture of our future.

To provide you with an overview of our five-year journey, we have developed a summary of our achievements. Our coalition becoming the early-years Hub/anchor for our area was our foundational achievement. Not having a parent link in this area, local families were not connected to services and opportunities and were not at community tables. We communicated by Facebook, website and monthly newsletters with parents, schools, childcares, playschools and family serving agencies about family activities, relevant research, options for participating in research or workshops; by letter with all candidates in every city, provincial, federal and school board election; surveyed all candidates in several elections for their opinions on early childhood, collated responses, and shared with the 6 other Edmonton coalitions and the public; and met with Ministers of Education, Health, Community and Human Resources, and Children's Services. We received validation from the community on the timeliness and value of our varied communication strategy. We brought an early years' lens to many community groups and initiatives. For example, executive members provided input to Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB) early childhood policy, to the Multicultural Health Guide, to End Poverty Edmonton, city's RECOVER initiative, Indigenous Talking Circles, and to many other initiatives. Through connections of executive members, we worked with the immigrant and refugee community and a childcare serving these families. For instance, we helped this childcare secure a substantial grant to modify the facility and assisted them in increasing their community connections. We enabled parent participation in many University of Alberta (U of A) research studies. In partnership, we organized and provided professional development (PD) sessions for parents and early years' educators on topics such as Self-Regulation, Childhood Anxiety, Play/Risky Play, Physical Literacy, and many others to audiences of 60 to 135; and brought pre-screening service into our area. In fact, we have a workshop on Circle Time ready to go once we can again congregate in groups.

We have reflected on our journey. We know there still is a significant need to educate policy makers and the general public about the importance of the early years. Through our community-embedded work, we have a good understanding of our area strengths and needs, about underserved areas, about pockets of poverty, about cultural diversity, about services required. We know that partnerships are essential in meeting the needs of families and children and these must be based on trust developed over time. We know that to have a broad reach we need to use social media and to ensure our messages consider cultural and language differences. We also know it is important to deliver our messages face to face and to specific audiences. Our reflections tell us there is a need for the work we have been doing and that we have established partnerships and communication channels, as well as dedicated volunteers to help us do this work. This is why we are exploring avenues to help us continue this work, this journey.



ECCA- EARLY CHILDHOOD COALITIONS OF ALBERTA

<https://ecdcoalitions.org/>

Thank you to the communities across Alberta who contributed to increasing the awareness of early childhood! In Alberta, nearly 100 Coalitions connected locally, regionally and provincially, both in person and virtually. Diverse membership and a democratic space fosters shared leadership among local community members and professionals

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1gps_7fLj4

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

STRESS, HOPE & THE ROLE OF SCIENCE: RESPONDING TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

<https://mailchi.mp/harvard/the-center-on-the-developing-child-statement-separating-families-647053?e=fe9d4399d7>

The COVID-19 pandemic has the capacity to affect every person in the world—and how each individual responds can potentially affect everyone else. In addition to the efforts of courageous health care providers, first responders, and a wide range of workers providing other vital services, countless numbers of selfless individuals are leaping into action to meet the rapidly changing needs of people most affected by the economic, social, and health impacts of this crisis. We at the Center on the Developing Child (<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/>) especially wish to honor and support the extraordinary efforts of our colleagues across the early childhood community who are working tirelessly to assure the continuing availability of essential services while focusing public attention on the many challenges facing families with young children.

COVID-19 AND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Click on the link to see some helpful tips from Alberta Health Services to help deal with and overcome some of the stressors during this pandemic and help you cope with the present situation and maintain good mental health.

<https://www.calgaryandarearcsd.ca/assets/Uploads/General-Resources/COVID-19-and-your-Mental-Health.pdf>

MENTAL HEALTH: COPING & CONNECTION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES DURING COVID-19

Children react on what they see from adults around them. Coping with Covid-19 calmly and confidently can help support your child. (Alberta Health Services)

<https://www.calgaryandarearcsd.ca/assets/Uploads/General-Resources/Coping-for-Children-and-Families.pdf>

CASA PRESENTS: THE IMPACT OF PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH WEB SERIES

CASA is proud to continue to bring you "The Impact of the Pandemic on Mental Health Web Series," an ongoing interactive live series featuring insights from experts. We have an engaging set of topics and speakers lined up that we think will be of great value to you in these unprecedented times.

[Join us](#) online from the comfort of home on the dates and times below:

***CASA Family Advisory Council: A Parent's Perspective on the Pandemic**

March 30, 2020- 2:30-3:15 PM MST

***CASA Youth Council: A Youth's Perspective on the Pandemic**

April 2, 2020 2:30-3:15PM MST

***CASA Practicing Self-Care in a Time of Social Distancing and Isolation**

April 9, 2020 2:30-3:15PM MST

The livestream will be interactive, and you will be able to submit questions for each speaker over text, email or the chat function. Video of each session will be available afterwards if you are not able to attend the live stream.

YEG COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Attached is a very detailed document compiled by community social workers who focused on gathering information about food security initiatives, educational resources, business resources and so much more!!

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS- (SELF-ISOLATED DOESN'T MEAN ALONE)

Isolation is a risk factor for family violence, so during this time of physical social distancing, we encourage everyone to stay socially connected. Consider staying connected with family, friends, colleagues and community however you can: through phone, text, video chat or social media.

Update you Organization's Service Changes

Encouraging Albertans experiencing family violence to call the Family Violence Info Line. The trained staff on the line can provide advice and support, and information on supports and services available in the caller's area.

Please take the time to update the Family Violence Info Line with any changes to your agency's service delivery by emailing: database@ab.211.ca

Please note, the Family Violence Info Line will continue to help Albertans get connected to the right information and supports. They are doing their best to meet the increased demand. However, Albertans may experience higher than normal wait times to reach someone.

For Latest Updates on Services, Support, or Resources:

Follow us on twitter: [@AlbertaCSS](#)

Family Violence Info Line

- o Call **310-1818** | 24/7 | 170+ languages
- Chat online [alberta.ca/SafetyChat](#) | 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. daily | English

Information on the Government of Alberta's response to COVID-19:

- [alberta.ca/COVID19](#)

EPL AT HOME

<https://www.epl.ca/epl-from-home/>

Bring the Library to you! While our branches are temporarily closed, our online resources are always available. Whether you want to learn a new language, read an eBook or eAudiobook, stream an award-winning movie or enjoy a story time with your little one, there's a world of possibilities instantly available at your fingertips

CBC KIDS NEWS- WHAT IS SOCIAL DISTANCING (PHYSICAL DISTANCING)

<https://www.cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/watch-what-is-social-distancing>

#COVIBOOK

SUPPORTING AND REASSURING CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD

Manuela Molina has created this short book to support and reassure our children, under the age of 7, regarding the COVID-19. This book is an invitation for families to discuss the full range of emotions arising from the current situation. It is important to point out that this resource does not seek to be a source of scientific information, but rather a tool based on fantasy. My recommendation is to print this material so children can draw on it. Remember that emotions are processed through repetitive play and stories read multiple times. Share COVIBOOK and help ease kiddo's anxiety all over the world. <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

Center on the Developing Child- Harvard University

The third episode of the Center's new podcast, The Brain Architects (<https://harvard.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=641f78fe500d565329121ffc9&id=1df93a085b&e=fe9d4399d7>), explores how serve-and-return interactions help make strong connections in developing brains and build the foundation for children's lifelong learning, behavior, and health. Listen as a panel of experts explains how serve and return can be a part of our everyday lives and become second nature with practice.

PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES

EDMONTON & AREA WILD CHILD PROJECT

The Wild Child team has been working hard to explore different options to continue supporting our Wild Child community. We fundamentally feel that staying in touch with distance learning opportunities for teachers and families is more important than ever. The Wild Child team has developed a unique online

platform designed to allow students to build a relationship with nature with their families from home, and at the same time reduce isolation by providing families an opportunity to feel part of a community.

Social distancing doesn't mean you have to stay inside! They are encouraging your community to go outside, into their backyard or other natural areas where there aren't many other people, is very beneficial to their physical and mental health. The online platform will include experiential learning, hands-on activities and games, Wild Child challenges (#wildchildwednesdays), weekly adventure blog and weekly videos!

["We Can't Be Outside Together, Let's Be Outside Apart"](#) encourages families to go outside while following guidelines for social distancing: 1) Staying 2 meters apart from others, 2) Washing your hands before and after your activities, and 3) Staying home if you have a sore throat, cough, other symptoms or have recently returned home from travelling.

Check out these platforms and share with your community and encourage them to go outside!

Website: <https://wildchildedmonton.wordpress.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wildchildedmonton/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/wild_child_edmonton/

FAMILY FUTURES RESOURCE NETWORK SUMMER PROGRAM BROCHURE

FOR SUMMER 2020 PROGRAMS:

ONLINE AND PHONE REGISTRATION START DATE: May 1, 2020 @ 9:00 A.M.

Family Futures Resource Network provides excellent early childhood programs and services, both registered and drop in. These programs offer parents and caregivers opportunities and experiences to support their children in their social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development. These programs also provide a natural environment for families to build social connections and increase protective factors for children. Their offices are currently closed until April 6, 2020. They will be monitoring the situation closely and re-evaluating the situation on April 6, 2020. Please check their webpage and Facebook for updates.

<https://www.familyfutures.ca/>

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY IN PROMOTING HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTAINING STRONG PARENT CHILD BONDS

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182>

Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth. Play also offers an ideal opportunity for parents to engage fully with their children. Despite the benefits derived from play for both children and parents, time for free play has been markedly reduced for some children.

10 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PLAY

- 1. Children learn through play:** cognitive skills, physical abilities, new vocabulary, social skills, and literacy skills
- 2. Play is healthy:** Play helps children grow strong and healthy.

3. **Play reduces stress:** Play helps your children grow emotionally. It is joyful and provides an outlet for anxiety and stress.
4. **Play is more than meets the eye.** Play is simple and complex. There are many types of play: symbolic, sociodramatic, functional, and games with rules--to name just a few.
5. **Make time for play:** As parents, you are the biggest supporters of your children's learning. You can make sure they have as much time to play as possible during the day to promote cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development
6. **Play and learning go hand-in-hand:** They are not separate activities. They are intertwined. Think about them as a science lecture with a lab. Play is the child's lab.
7. **Play outside:** Remember your own outdoor experiences of building forts, playing on the beach, sledding in the winter, or playing with other children in the neighborhood. Make sure your children create outdoor memories too.
8. **There's a lot to learn about play.**
9. **Trust your own playful instincts:** Remember as a child how play just came naturally? Give your children time for play and see all that they are capable of when given the opportunity
10. **Play is a child's context for learning:** Children practice and reinforce their learning in multiple areas during play. It gives them a place and a time for learning that cannot be achieved through completing a worksheet. Play provides rich learning opportunities and leads to children's success and self-esteem.

<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-things-every-parent-play>

