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## Child Care Connections



*Step into new beginnings.....*

## Good Questions

At the Early Learning and Child Care Conference in April, Jim Grieve, the assistant deputy minister for the Early Years Division spoke about the new document, *'How Does Learning Happen? : Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years'*. One thing he talked about was the importance of questions. Good questions help us when we are reflecting on our practice, when we are observing what the children are doing and when we are engaging with them.

He spoke about the value of different types of questions and used the terms *'thin questions'* and *'thick questions'*. What is a thin question? What happens when we ask a thin question? We generally get a simple answer that doesn't lead to anything further. The dialogue stops. What is a thick question then? Like the examples below, it is a question that asks the other person to really think about something at a deeper level. It goes beyond a one word response. It opens up a world of possibilities that lead forward. What direction will the conversation or investigation go? These thick questions allow us to see what children are thinking about and help them to expand their own learning.

Good questions also help us as educators working with young children. They can help us think about what we are seeing and hearing. *'How Does Learning Happen?'* is built on four foundations: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. Each one of these comes with some suggested questions for reflective practice. Take some time to look at some of these questions and see where they might take you!

### Thin questions

- ◆ **Who?**
- ◆ **When?**
- ◆ **What?**
- ◆ **How many?**



### Thick questions

- ◆ **What would happen if...?**
- ◆ **What might....?**
- ◆ **How did....?**
- ◆ **Why did....?**
- ◆ **How do you feel ....?**
- ◆ **What do you think...?**

## *From the Professional Learning Coordinator*

I am writing this just after the June election while the dust is still settling. Knowing that whatever happened, we would still be moving forward with the new pedagogy was reassuring. For those of you who may not have had the chance to become familiar with it, 'How Does Learning Happen?' offers a strong support for moving forward. It builds on the ELECT/ELF but offers more concrete connections to what we do day to day. Over the coming year we will be looking at bringing out professional learning opportunities that link to the pedagogy as we all become more familiar with it.

The face of professional learning is shifting as we learn more about how learning happens for both children and adults. As we look to offer children more of a role in their own learning, we are also looking at educators, those working with young children, to take more control of their own ongoing professional learning. Thank you to all of you who participated in the professional learning survey as that information really helps with planning to support you all.

*Katherine Orgill, RECE*

## *From the Quality Initiative Coordinator*

For the past few weeks I have visited a number of programs to complete third party assessments for the Raising the Bar as part of gold level achievement and maintenance. This has been a wonderful opportunity to get to know the programs better and to begin conversations about the vision and new resources from the Ministry of Education, such as "How Does Learning Happen?" I have been invited to attend staff meetings from several programs that I have visited to share observations and explore ways of connecting to the new pedagogy for early learning environments.

Over the next few weeks I will be building the peer review teams for peer review day so please contact me if you would like to put your name forward or nominate someone you feel would be a good candidate. I am expecting approximately 35 binders to be submitted this year which is an increase over last year.

*Susan Scoffin, RECE*

RTB binder check in will be on Thursday August 28 from 1-4. This will be another opportunity to 'check in' ask questions, receive feedback prior to submission day.



"The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky."



## *World Forum - a window on the wider world*

In May, I had the privilege to attend the World Forum on Early Childhood Education. 851 participants from 81 countries gathered in Puerto Rico to celebrate, learn and share. Not a day went by that I was not moved to tears by the courage, creativity, passion and love of the presenters. Many of the stories were about overcoming great obstacles to deliver nourishing educational programs for children. This was not an ordinary conference where experts talk long and hard about statistics and studies and double blind standardized testing. Instead, this was a forum to share experiences and stories about the extraordinary work that is being done around the world on behalf of children and families. They were based on relationships with children, with nature and with each other. They were based on democratic principles of collaboration, equity, social justice and transparency. The stories told of learning journeys that transcended barriers and built strong loving programs on behalf of children. Respect and dignity were kept at the forefront of their purpose even in the most desperate conditions. Although these conditions were present, the stories were not about them. The stories were about the beautiful experiences in the orphanage in Ecuador, or the extraordinary courage of leaders in Zambia and the peaceful program in the bush in Tasmania. The stories had a common thread. They were all formulated on a foundation of holistic well being for children, families and ourselves.

This international forum is held every two years and is an incredible way to forge relationships that increase our understanding and respect for other cultures and our own.

Respectfully,  
Sheila Olan, RECE

## *Upcoming Learning Opportunities*

Carol Anne Wien

Pedagogical Documentation

Saturday, October 25 9:00—4:00

<http://www.investinginquality.ca/event/pedagogical-documentation>

Deb Curtis

Transforming Places....Transforming Practice

Friday and Saturday, September 26 and 27

<http://www.investinginquality.ca/event/transforming-places-transforming-practice>

How Does Learning Happen?

Thursday, August 22

9:30 - 3:30

[With Investing in Quality](#)

Workshop on Transitions

Michelle Erridge and Kelly Nesbitt-Cullon

September 30

Details to come

For information, contact Katherine Orgill at (705) 749-3488 ext. 218 [katherine@investinginquality.ca](mailto:katherine@investinginquality.ca)  
For full details and registration forms, visit [www.investinginquality.ca](http://www.investinginquality.ca) Check periodically to see new additions.

## CECE Update

The Pilot Leadership Project that I have been involved with since September 2013 wound up with a 2 day closing retreat at the end of May. The project exceeded everyone's expectations...31 individuals began the project in September and 31 individuals completed project expectations and received their certificates of participation! The projects undertaken by the mentees were rich and diverse with a breadth in scope and a deep commitment to the topic selected. 12 mentees presented their work at the closing retreat. RECEs did projects on such topics as pedagogical leadership, emergent curriculum, supporting families with children with autism, outdoor environments, professional portfolios, and nutrition just to name a few. The transformation of the RECEs from capable practitioners to leaders in the sector was profound. I was so impressed with the outcome of the CPL project that I am thinking of ways to implement something similar that would build the leadership capacity in our community.

*Susan Scoffin, RECE*

## How Does Learning Happen?

How Does Learning Happen? <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf>

At the end of May, IIQ staff offered a day for all educators to gather together and study the new pedagogy, 'How Does Learning Happen?' This will be offered again on Thursday, August 21.

"The small group activities get you thinking and reflecting on yourself. It helps you realize who you are or can be as an educator..."

"Love the round table discussions."

"Opportunities for new theories and ideas."



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