

College Advances Early Childhood Education Profession

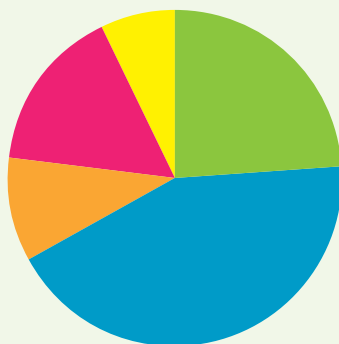
Times are changing for the early childhood education sector. A recognized profession with specialized skills has emerged in conjunction with the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* and the College of Early Childhood Educators. As the first self-regulatory body of its kind in Canada to regulate early childhood educators, the College reflects a social contract between registered early childhood educators (RECEs) in Ontario and the public. Members have the privilege to govern their profession, but are also held accountable for their behaviour. Similar to teachers, nurses and social workers, RECEs must meet and maintain professional standards.

The College relies on its membership fee to carry out the legislative requirements outlined in the *ECE Act*. It protects the public interest by ensuring that RECEs regulate themselves according to law. The \$150 membership fee is the third lowest of all professional self-regulatory bodies in Ontario, and it funds the work of the College's departments – each with a specific and unique role.

The **Office of the Registrar (OR)** supports the College's Executive Committee and carries out the work of the Council's strategic priorities which includes a mission, vision, and values. It engages members by granting them ownership over their profession through an elected and appointed Council and committees.

The **Registration and Member Services Department (RMS)** supports the College's Registration Committee and ensures the sector is protected from unqualified practitioners by allowing only those who meet the educational and training requirements to enter the profession. It conducts individual assessments for Canadian applicants, international applicants and students from various education backgrounds. RMS also provides customer service to members by answering their application/registration

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Allocation of College Funds - Fiscal year ended June 30, 2012

- HR, IT and Finance Services
- Member Services
- Investigations and Hearings
- Executive and Statutory Oversight
- Governance

*excluding rent

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President's Message



I am happy to provide you with the President's message and hope you take a few minutes to read this and to enjoy our newsletter. This fall, members will have an important opportunity to give feedback on the development of a Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program through an online survey available October 29 to November 19. This important

program will support RECEs and demonstrate their commitment to learning, quality and professional and ethical standards. I hope all RECEs will share their thoughts in early November.

In December, members in certain districts will have the chance to run for election and become a part of the College's Council. Being an elected member allows you to contribute to the regulation of your profession and it is an amazing leadership opportunity for RECEs. I encourage you to learn more on page 4-5 of this newsletter and to vote in April 2013.

During the past year, the College participated in the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) consultation on the vocational standards for the Early Childhood Assistant, Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Education - Resource Teacher programs offered in the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAATs). New program standards will reflect the establishment of the College and the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* for RECEs.

Recently, the Ministry of Education released a discussion paper on the modernization of child care in Ontario and requested feedback from stakeholders. In September, the College submitted its written response in support of a modernized child care sector that recognizes and incorporates the role of the College as the regulatory body for all of Ontario's early childhood educators.

I would like to close by extending an invitation once again to the College's Annual Meeting of Members on the evening of January 8, 2013.

Cheers!

Lois Mahon, RECE, President

Registrar's Message



It gives me great pleasure to share with you that the College issued its 40,000th Certificate of Registration in August. The transitional Council's early projections for the College's membership over its first five years of operation estimated that 30,000 early childhood educators would seek registration with the College, and we have far surpassed that expectation. The College continues

to receive applications each month, so we expect the number of registered early childhood educators in the province will continue to rise.

During the first quarter of the 2012-13 fiscal year, College staff has been working on several important initiatives. Our operational plans for the year are aligned with the five strategic priorities set by College Council, which we reported on in the last newsletter, and we now have an important risk management plan in place. You can expect to receive regular updates on the College's strategic priorities for 2012-15.

Members will be most interested to learn that the College is working on developing a Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) Program. As part of the program, the College will initiate a leadership pilot for RECEs, with the support of the Ministry of Education. The project will address an identified need for building leadership capacity in the early learning and care sector. It will also give the College an opportunity to gain feedback from members about different ways to engage in ongoing learning. More information about the CPL program can be found on page 6-7 of this newsletter.

As part of Council's strategic priority to engage more with members, the College will be busy making presentations to RECEs across the province this year. If you would like the College to come to your organization to talk about what the College does, professional and ethical standards, the complaints and discipline process, or other College work, we hope that you will contact us.

Best wishes!

Sue Corke, Registrar & CEO

College Advances Early Childhood Education Profession continued...

questions, renewing their memberships annually, maintaining accurate records and updating the College's public register of members.

The **Professional Practice Department (PP)** supports the Standards of Practice and Registration Appeals Committees. One of its main objectives is to reach out to applicants, members, employers, government and the general public about the profession. It also implements professional and ethical standards and keeps members up to date on College and sector news through a website, newsletters, professional advisories and annual reports. The PP department will develop a continuous professional learning program for members in the near future.

The **Complaints and Discipline Department (C&D)** supports the Complaints, Discipline and Fitness to Practise Committees and acts in the public interest by reviewing and investigating complaints made against College members. Members have the right to procedural fairness and are given an opportunity to review and respond to allegations made against them. The C&D department also coordinates

discipline and fitness to practise hearings and is transparent about its processes by educating members through communications such as the *Member Newsletter* and publications on the College website.

Corporate Services (CS) hires and retains qualified staff members for skill-specific roles in all departments. It integrates new employees by educating them about the College's purpose and helps them transition effectively in their new roles. CS promotes a diverse, fair and respectful environment that reflects the values of College members and the people they serve. It maintains the College's IT infrastructure and system including complex software required to manage member information. Lastly, CS ensures the College manages its resources well and allocates its budget effectively.

These departments will carry out the directions of Council and its strategic priorities for 2012-2015, which will continue to grow and shape the early childhood education profession.

To learn more, visit www.collegeofece.on.ca.

About this Publication

The College of Early Childhood Educators regulates the profession of early childhood education in the public interest and works towards its vision of a profession in which all members accept responsibility for practice excellence. Published three times a year in Toronto, ON, the *Member Newsletter* provides members and the public with sector and College news along with regular features on the early childhood education profession.

Council Elected Members

- Lois Mahon RECE, President, District 1
- Eugema Ings RECE, District 1
- Lisa Lamarre-O'Gorman RECE, District 2
- Susan Quaiff RECE, District 3
- Linda Cottés RECE, District 4
- Roxanne Lambert RECE, District 4
- Valerie Sterling RECE, District 5
- Richard (Dick) Winters RECE, District 5
- Heather Yeo RECE, District 5
- Anna Baas-Anderson RECE, District 6
- Sophia Tate RECE, District 6
- Susan (Darlene) Edgar RECE, Vice-President, District 7

- Barbara Brown RECE, District 8
- Vera Niculena (Nici) Cole RECE, District 8

Publicly Appointed Members

- Ann Robichaud-Gagné, Ottawa
- Bruce Minore, Thunder Bay
- Carol Crill Russell, Maynooth
- Christine Forsyth, Toronto
- Larry O'Connor, Brock
- Nerene Virgin, Hamilton
- Rosemary Sadlier, Toronto
- Ron Wideman, North Bay
- Rosemary Fontaine, Toronto

College Administration

- Registrar and CEO: Sue Corke
- Deputy Registrar: Laura Sheehan
- Director of Corporate Services: James Cha
- Director of Complaints and Discipline: Greg Coutts
- Director of Professional Practice: Melanie Dixon RECE

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MEMBER NEWSLETTER

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Elections 2013

The College is holding its third election of Council members on April 29, 2013 and encourages registered early childhood educators across the province to get involved in their profession.

This year, five of the College's eight electoral districts have the opportunity to elect members to College Council, which governs the work of the College.

If you're a member from one of the following districts, you may want to consider running for election.

Electoral District	Number of Members of the College to be Elected April 2013
3 – South East Region	1
4 – Central East Region	2
5 – Toronto Region	3
7 – Hamilton/Niagara Region	1
8 – South West Region	2

Determining your electoral district

Your electoral district is determined by where you practise your profession. If you're not working in the field or if you're working outside of Ontario, your district is based on your primary place of residence. More information about the geographical regions that belong to each district is available on the College website.

Why is it important to get involved?

It's important to get involved because elections allow members to bring their skills, knowledge and experience to assist in the regulation of their profession.

The early childhood education profession is regulated by the College, which is governed by a Council of 24 members. Ten of these Council members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council and 14 are registered early childhood educators (RECEs) elected by fellow College members.

This means that members can make a difference in how their

profession is regulated by running for Council or by simply voting for an RECE whom they trust to govern early childhood educators.

What would I be doing as a Council member?

As a Council member, you would be responsible for making decisions related to how the College is governed. These decisions could range from entry to practise requirements to standards of practice and professional misconduct.

You would also need to come to the College's office to attend Council and Committee meetings, which would typically require a commitment of eight to 12 days per year. In addition to receiving a daily honourarium, you would be reimbursed for reasonable and related travel expenses.

How do I know that I am eligible to run for Council?

You may be eligible to run for Council if you are a current member in good standing, belong to one of the five electoral districts listed to the left and do not have any outstanding fees with the College.

There may be restrictions when it comes to members who have been charged and found guilty of professional misconduct, incompetence, incapacity or similar allegations. Also, to avoid any possible conflicts of interest, members might not be able to run for election if they are employed by or sit on the governing body of an early childhood education advocacy group, such as a union or professional association.

To learn more, visit the "Elections FAQs" page on the College website or send an e-mail to election@collegeofece.on.ca.

How do I run for Council?

In December, current members in good standing will receive a Notice of Election by mail or e-mail, with information on how to download a nomination package from the College website.

This package will include the forms that you need to fill out in order to run for Council. You will need to find two College members to nominate you. Since you can only run for election in your own electoral district, these two members

must be from your district. They also must be members in good standing, meaning that they've paid their membership fees and their Certificates of Registration are not suspended. Fill out the necessary forms and send them back to the College in an envelope addressed to the Registrar. Your completed nomination package needs to arrive at the College by 5 p.m. ET on February 1, 2013.

How can I participate if I'm not from one of the five electoral districts? What are other ways to get involved?

Even if you're not from one of five districts up for election, you can still get involved by applying to be a non-Council committee member. This option is also open to all members in good standing, but who do not wish to stand for election.

Non-Council committee members are registered early childhood educators who sit on one of the College's committees but don't participate in Council meetings or Council decision-making. Committees make decisions related to registration appeals, complaints, professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity, and make policy-based recommendations.

The eligibility requirements for non-Council committee positions are similar to the requirements to run for Council. You should visit the "Elections FAQs" page on the College website for complete details around eligibility.

More details about the application process will be available for all members on the College's website in December.

For more information about elections, visit the College website, www.collegeofece.on.ca, send an e-mail to election@collegeofece.on.ca or contact the College at 416 961-8558, ext. 239.



Important Dates

December 14, 2012

Members receive a Notice of Election by this date and information on how to download the nomination package from the College website.

February 1, 2013

Deadline for nomination submissions to stand for election.

February 28, 2013

Deadline to be a member of the College in good standing in order to be eligible to vote in the 2013 election.

March 22, 2013

Members receive a voting package by mail or email, which explains how they can vote. Members can cast their votes once they've read the instructions and know how to proceed.

April 29, 2013

Election Day (last day to vote).

College Developing Continuous Professional Learning Program for Members

The College of Early Childhood Educators is developing a Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) program that will make ongoing education an important part of being a registered early childhood educator (RECE).

Enhancing the Practice of Early Childhood Educators

Continuous professional learning enhances the practice of early childhood education. Engaging in continuous learning helps RECEs remain current in their knowledge, skills and professional values. It also promotes public trust in College members and the profession.

The College recognizes that professional development has always been important to RECEs. The difference is that there will soon be a requirement for members to demonstrate their engagement in ongoing learning. This places the profession in the company of more than 40 highly respected self-regulated professions that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing practice through continuous professional learning.

The CPL program will support RECEs by allowing them to reflect on their practice and to identify ways in which they can grow professionally. The program will be accessible to all RECEs, regardless of different learning styles, geographic locations, career stages and career ambitions.

Public Confidence in the Profession

The CPL program will maintain public confidence and raise the status of College members and the profession. Members will be able to demonstrate their commitment to stay current in their practice, to maintain the ethical and professional standards of the profession, and to provide quality programming for the children and families with whom they work, their employers and society.

Legislation

The College has a legislative duty, under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, “to establish and enforce professional standards and ethical standards that are applicable to members of the College” and “to provide for the ongoing education of members of the College”. The CPL program will fulfill this requirement by allowing the College to “prescribe ongoing education requirements for members of the College”.

Get Involved in Developing the Program!

The College wants members to be actively involved in developing the CPL program to ensure that it meets the needs of all RECEs in the many roles and practice settings found in the early learning and care sector.

An important part of developing the CPL program will be consultation with College members, stakeholder organizations, associations and institutions, employers and the public. The process will encourage member and public input through a variety of means, including focus groups and interviews. Members are encouraged to contribute to the development of the program by completing an online survey available to them from October 29 to November 19, 2012.

Email practice@collegeofece.on.ca for information on how you can become involved in the development of the CPL program.

Leadership Pilot Project Takes the Lead!

As part of its development of the CPL program, the College is designing a voluntary Leadership Pilot project that focuses on building leadership capacity in the early childhood education profession.

The early learning and care sector has recently experienced dramatic changes, including the self-regulation of early childhood educators, the introduction of the concept of member accountability, the implementation of full-day kindergarten and the growing cultural, spiritual and linguistic diversity of the children and families with whom members work. All early childhood educators will need to identify new options for continuous professional learning.

Involvement in the Leadership Pilot project will be limited to a small number of RECEs, including aspiring leaders and RECEs currently in formally designated leadership roles. Participants in the project will engage in learning opportunities that integrate the knowledge, skills and values found in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* into learning activities designed to enhance leadership capacity.

Visit the website, www.collegeofece.on.ca or email practice@collegeofece.on.ca for information on the Leadership Pilot project development. Details on the selection process for participants in the Leadership Pilot will be available in 2013.

College Appoints Deputy Registrar

The College is pleased to announce the appointment of Laura Sheehan as Deputy Registrar, effective October 15, 2012. In her new role, Laura will take on several of the Registrar's statutory functions under the *ECE Act* and will step into the role of Acting Registrar when the Registrar & CEO is away.

Prior to her appointment, Laura was Director of Registration and Member Services, a position she has held since the College established operations in late 2008. Under her leadership, the College implemented a registration system, developed policies and procedures and registered over 40,000 members to date. Laura was also the College's Acting Registrar from September 2010 to April 2011.

Laura will continue to lead the Registration and Member Services Department in addition to her new duties as Deputy Registrar. Please join the College in congratulating Laura on her appointment.

Pamphlets Available

Five pamphlets relating to the work of the College are available on the College's website. Members can download the pamphlets online or request copies from the College.

- About the College of Early Childhood Educators
- Becoming an RECE in Ontario
- Ethical & Professional Standards for Early Childhood Educators
- How to File a Complaint with the College of Early Childhood Educators
- Responding to a Complaint: What to Expect When a Complaint Has Been Filed Against You.

To request copies of any of the College's publications, please contact communications@collegeofece.on.ca or call the College at 1 888 961-8558.

What's in a Name?

Understanding the different titles within the early learning sector

Several acronyms and names exist in the early learning sector and it's easy to be confused about which ones to use in specific circumstances. There are three names that often intermingle: early childhood educator (ECE), registered early childhood educator (RECE), and designated early childhood educator (DECE). All are applicable to early childhood educators in Ontario, but are only appropriate in certain situations.

Early childhood educator and registered early childhood educator are **protected titles** used in Ontario by individuals who are registered members of the College of Early Childhood Educators and who plan and deliver inclusive play-based learning and care programs for children. These two titles are

protected and anyone who uses them must be registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The titles may be used in several instances such as when one describes his/her job as "early childhood educator".

The acronym RECE is a **designation** to affirm that an individual meets the standards required of a registered member of the College. The designation reflects the protected scope of the early childhood education profession. The acronym is only used after a name or signature. For example, one may end a letter with Dominique, RECE. Note that there are individuals who hold the designation, but do not work in the early child care sector. For example, Crystal, RECE, works as a policy

analyst for the provincial government.

A designated early childhood educator is a **job title** created by Ontario's Ministry of Education in the *Education Act*. It's an occupational role for early childhood educators who work in school classrooms with an Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT). The general rule is that only those who are registered with the College may fill these positions. An example of title usage is: Deanna, RECE, works for the Toronto District School Board as a designated early childhood educator.

Below is a chart that gives you an idea of how titles, designations and job titles are applied in other professions in Ontario.

Title/s	Designation	Examples of Job Titles	Regulatory Body
early childhood educator, registered early childhood educator	RECE	designated early childhood educator, child care supervisor, professor	College of Early Childhood Educators
Ontario teacher, certified teacher	OCT	elementary school teacher, principal, superintendent, director	Ontario College of Teachers
nurse, registered nurse	RN	nurse, nurse practitioner, nursing supervisor	College of Nurses of Ontario
dietitian, registered dietitian	RD	clinical dietitian, community dietitian, health and wellness specialist	College of Dietitians of Ontario

Conversation with an ECE



Caroline Fisker, RECE
Simcoe, Ontario

The College is made up of over 40,000 unique members – each with a different background and story to tell. Conversation with an ECE features registered early childhood educators (RECEs) who are passionate about their profession and the people they serve.

In this issue, we share the story of Caroline Fisker, a recent graduate from Georgian College. After working for over 15 years in a previous career, Fisker decided to return to school and pursue her passion for early childhood education. Although she only became an RECE this year, Fisker is already working towards a promising career in the sector.

What type of work do you do?

I am currently on a supply list with a local child care centre. When I am working, my day usually consists of preparing and planning out activities that emphasize development-guided play. There are a few positions opening up within the Simcoe County District School Board that I'm interested in. When those opportunities surface, I'd ultimately enjoy working with the school board.

I currently co-facilitate a social skills program with a children and family services agency using the Dina Dinosaur development strategy, which emphasizes children's social and emotional competencies. At this point in my career, I am growing my formal experience working hands-on in the field and taking on all the opportunities that are available to me.

What do you love about your job?

The reason I love working in this field is the overall impact you can make on a child. For example, when a child has difficulty expressing something and you can enable that communication it's an incredibly rewarding feeling.

What are some challenges that come with it?

I think financial limitations are the biggest concern for ECEs

today. It's difficult for early childhood educators to support themselves on the wages they are making. Additionally, when you are at work, you are working with your heart and that can have an emotional and physical drain on an individual.

What does the RECE title mean to you?

Being an RECE gives me a sense of pride; however, it also holds an incredible responsibility. Being a registered member of a [self-regulatory] College means you are held to a higher standard and must comply with a code of ethics and professional standards because of the nature of the individuals you work with. You are held accountable for this and I think that's important.

What does the College of ECE mean to you as a member?

I feel connected to my profession. I have confidence in what I'm doing because if I didn't meet certain standards, I couldn't be a part of the College. I also have peace of mind knowing that other individuals are just as qualified and responsible to the code and standards.

Ontario Premier Honours RECEs

If leaders are supposed to practise what they preach, then educators are expected to practise what they teach.

At Floradale Public School in Elmira, ON, Gloria Bauman, RECE, and Janet Martin, OCT, not only teach their kindergarten students to play fair and cooperate, but also demonstrate the principles of teamwork every day in the classroom. By sharing their expertise with each other, Bauman and Martin have learned to harmonize their different approaches to early learning, working together to develop programs based on the needs and interests of their students.

Their joint efforts were recognized last May when the early childhood educator and teacher were named Full-Day Kindergarten Team of the Year at the Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence ceremony in Toronto.

Deserving recipients, Bauman and Martin have a history of achieving tangible results. When Bauman and Martin

promoted the benefits of full-day kindergarten, registration in the program more than doubled for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

The willingness of the two educators to embrace play-based learning also proved to be effective. Students who completed their first year of full-day kindergarten met the school board's reading targets – a vast improvement from the previous year.

Bauman and Martin are the first recipients of the Full-Day Kindergarten Team of the Year award, which was created to reflect changes in the Ontario education system and to highlight the importance of early learning.

The award category is open to any team comprised of a registered early childhood educator (RECE) and teacher (OCT) working together in full-day kindergarten in a publicly-funded elementary school.



Premier Dalton McGuinty and Minister of Education Laurel Broten with 2011-2012 award recipients.



Gloria Bauman, RECE (L) and Janet Martin, OCT won the Full-Day Kindergarten Team of the Year award.



Charlene Moss, RECE (M) celebrates with College President Lois Mahon, RECE (L) and Barb Mortley, RECE (R).

Of course, educators in the public school system are not the only ones being celebrated. The Ministry of Education also created the category Early Childhood Educator of the Year to highlight the achievements of an RECE working in a licensed child care setting.

This year, that RECE is Charlene Moss, who works at Arbour Glen Day Nursery in London, ON. Moss takes on an approach that allows young learners to grow as individuals and develop a sense of community involvement.

She nurtures the children's different interests and encourages them to use their imagination to develop creative artwork, all while taking the time to teach the children about the larger world around them. The passionate educator even had the children in her care organize a tea party to honour a local veteran on Remembrance Day.

This year's panellists included a parent, a principal, a student, a support staff member, a teacher, a parenting editor for the *Toronto Star* and an early childhood educator.

The selection panel is responsible for recommending award recipients and for ensuring transparency in the selection process. The panellists have the task of evaluating the nominations, which can be submitted by a parent, colleague or employer—anyone who is not a family member of the nominee.

The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence is meant to honour remarkable educators who help children and students realize their full potential, and judging by their success in the classroom, it's clear that Gloria Bauman, RECE, and Charlene Moss, RECE, are doing exactly that.

Please join the College in congratulating these members on their outstanding achievement!

For more information about the Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence, visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/teachingawards/index.html>.

College Hosts Case Study Writing Workshop



This past June, 12 RECEs attended a College case study workshop, facilitated by Dr. Patricia Goldblatt, editor of *Cases for Teacher Development*. The RECEs first examined an original case, written by a member of the College. Dr. Goldblatt had the participants analyze the elements of the case, reflect on how ethical and professional standards were demonstrated and not demonstrated throughout the case, and explore how ethical and professional standards might have assisted the characters.

The participants then had the opportunity to share their stories and begin developing their own cases, which were based on real-life professional experiences. The cases highlight ethical or professional dilemmas that could be linked to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

Case studies give meaning and context to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. They highlight the complex

dilemmas associated with professional decision-making and action. They also encourage College members to examine problem-focused issues from a variety of perspectives and to explore the implications of a range of decision-making options.

Case studies stimulate professional inquiry and reflective practice. Discussing a case is a shared professional learning experience through which members gain an enhanced understanding of their practice and professional community. College members develop knowledge and strategies and bring enhanced meaning and context to ethical and professional standards.

The 12 workshop participants hold a variety of roles in the early learning and care sector. Some work directly with children, while others hold supervisory positions or teach early childhood education at the post secondary level. The participants have varying years of experience in the profession, ranging from two

years of experience to 30 years.

The College anticipates that the completed cases will be used as a resource for members, stakeholders and employers, allowing them to see how the College's ethical and professional standards can influence decision-making and behaviour in daily practice.

The College would like to thank all of the participants and looks forward to other opportunities to engage its members!

If you have questions about the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice or any other questions related to professional practice, send an email to practice@collegeofece.on.ca

Practice Matters



Practice Matters features questions regarding the College and the early childhood education profession. Director of Professional Practice Melanie Dixon RECE addresses issues that RECEs face and applies the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* to various situations.

Do you have a professional practice question? Email practice@collegeofece.on.ca for more information.

Q: Are RECEs expected to complete a certain number of hours of professional development annually, in order to maintain their Certificate of Registration?

At this time, the College does not specify ongoing education requirements for members. A program is in development that will emphasize the importance of continuous professional learning and outline the College's expectations of members to remain current in their knowledge, skills and professional responsibilities.

One of the ways that the College regulates the early childhood education profession in Ontario is by establishing and enforcing ethical and professional standards that are applicable to members of the College. The College published the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* in February 2011. Within this document, you will find many references to the College's expectation that members will engage in continued learning.

In particular, refer to the Code of Ethics and Standard IV: Professional Knowledge and Competence.

To learn about how to get involved in the development of the College's Continuous Professional Learning program, see page 6-7 of this newsletter.

Q: Does the College have a rule against RECEs practising in the same environment where their own child has been enrolled?

The *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* states that registered early childhood educators (RECEs) should avoid dual relationships that could impair their professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation or harm to children under their professional supervision.

A dual relationship is defined as a situation in which an RECE has a relationship with someone beyond a professional setting. This includes having a personal relationship with the child, the child's family, a colleague or supervisor.

The College expects members in a dual relationship to evaluate whether its existence might impair their professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation or harm to a child under their professional supervision.

The College also recognizes that it may be extremely difficult or impossible for members working in certain small communities or remote locations, or in certain ethnic or religious communities, to entirely avoid dual relationships or situations which may give rise to a conflict of interest.

In those circumstances, members should declare the conflict of interest, take appropriate steps to address it and attempt to eliminate the conflict if possible.

For more information on dual relationships, please review Standard V: Professional Boundaries, Dual Relationships and Conflicts of Interest and the related endnotes in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. You can always contact the Professional Practice department for further information.

Investigating Complaints

The College of Early Childhood Educators takes professional accountability seriously by investigating written complaints about members that relate to alleged professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity. Its Complaints Committee reviews complaints and either refers them to the Discipline Committee or Fitness to Practise Committee for a hearing or resolves the matter by other means.

Investigating Complaints features examples of cases – without identifying information – that were considered by the Complaints Committee and not referred to a hearing.

Case #1

Complaint:

Misrepresenting employment history.

Committee's Decision:

Written caution

Summary:

The College received a mandatory report from a school board after it suspended the Member when it became aware of her attempts to misrepresent her prior employment history. The employer alleged the Member altered a 'confirmation of employment letter' and misrepresented the duration of her previous work experience.

In response to the complaint, the Member acknowledged that she altered a 'confirmation of employment letter' and she indicated that she misunderstood

what constituted "full-time" employment.

The employer suspended the Member without pay for 15 days and a warning that any further concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour would be subject to termination. The Member's pay scale was adjusted to reflect her actual work experience and she arranged to repay all monies she received as a result of the inaccurate information.

The Committee noted that the Member expressed remorse for her actions, has taken steps to rectify her mistakes and understands that she will have to regain the trust and respect of her work colleagues. However, it found that the Member did act unprofessionally and did not fulfil her commitment to abide by the College's Code of Ethics, which states: "Early childhood educators interact with colleagues and other professionals in ways that demonstrate respect, trust and integrity. Through their conduct,

early childhood educators strive to enhance the status of the profession in their workplaces and in the wider community".

The Committee cautioned the Member in writing and reminded her that she should abide by the College's Code of Ethics and avoid conduct which could reasonably be perceived as reflecting negatively on the profession of early childhood education.

Protecting The Public

Complaints against members that are reviewed by the Complaints Committee can be referred to the Discipline Committee for a hearing. The Discipline Committee hears matters regarding professional misconduct or incompetence while the Fitness to Practise Committee addresses those related to incapacity.

The Discipline Committee sometimes orders that a summary of its decisions and findings related to professional misconduct or incompetence be published in the College Publication, *Members Newsletter*. **Protecting the Public** contains the most recent summaries. It directs member's attention to the process the committee follows and the standards the Committee adopts in arriving at its decision.

Member Name: Tabatha Antone Certificate Registration Number: 24692 Suspended

The College's Discipline Committee directed the Registrar to suspend Tabatha Antone for repeatedly driving under the influence of alcohol and failing to comply with remedial actions.

Antone did not attend the public hearing on June 28, 2012, nor was she represented by legal counsel.

During the period of April 2009 to June 2011, Antone was charged three times for operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol.

Antone's employer suspended her with pay during an investigation into her conduct and on July 7, 2011 her employment was terminated and a complaint was filed with the College.

Having considered the exhibits filed, and based on the submissions made by counsel for the College, the Discipline Committee panel found Antone guilty of professional misconduct. "Among their roles and responsibilities, early childhood educators are

entrusted with caring for the children of others and are to set positive examples," the panel said. "While the Committee acknowledges that the Member was off duty at the time of the incident (on April 9, 2011), her conduct could reasonably be perceived by clients as an impediment in the performance of her job as an early childhood educator.

The Committee panel directed the Registrar of the College to suspend Antone's Certificate of Registration for a period of six months, with three months remitted for the suspension already in effect as a result of the interim order of the Executive Committee to suspend the Member's Certificate of Registration.

The panel also directed the Registrar to impose a term, condition and limitation on Antone's Certificate of Registration requiring her to complete a professional assessment with respect to alcohol and substance use and comply with any treatment or other recommendations resulting from an assessment prior to seeking reinstatement of her Certificate of Registration.

A notation regarding the reprimand and the term, condition and limitation appears with Antone's registration status on the College's public register.

News in the Sector

This past spring, the provincial government announced that it would allocate an additional \$242 million of child care funding into the 2012 budget. As a follow-up to this commitment, the Ministry of Education recently released a discussion paper on how to modernize the sector.

The paper, entitled *Modernizing Child Care in Ontario: Sharing Conversations, Strengthening Partnerships, Working Together*, proposes capital investments to help child care providers adapt their programs and centres to suit the needs of younger children as older children leave for full-day kindergarten. It also talks about developing

mandatory guidelines for providers and updating the *Day Nurseries Act*, which has not been reviewed for almost 30 years.

Through its discussion paper, the Ontario government wanted to start a dialogue with the child care sector and families on a long-term vision for child care. The Minister of Education Laurel Broten invited public input on the modernization report, recognizing that many Ontarians – particularly early learning professionals – would be directly impacted by changes to the sector.

The College was one of many sector partners to submit feedback. Our submission is available on www.collegeofece.on.ca under About Us in the Act & Regulations section.



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