

**NOTICE OF PUBLICATION BAN**

In the matter of College of Early Childhood Educators and Christopher Bruce Wilson, this is notice that the Discipline Committee ordered that no person shall publish or broadcast the identity of, or any information that could identify any person who is under 18 years old and is a witness in the hearing, or the subject of evidence in the hearing or under subsection 35.1(3) of the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.

**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE  
OF THE COLLEGE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS**

**PANEL:** Katie Begley, RECE, Chair  
Geneviève Breton  
Chrystal Morden, RECE

**BETWEEN:**

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| COLLEGE OF EARLY         | ) | Vered Beylin                                 |
| CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS      | ) | For the College of Early Childhood Educators |
|                          | ) |  |
| And                      | ) |  |
|                          | ) |  |
| CHRISTOPHER BRUCE WILSON | ) | Self-represented                             |
| Registration # 16280     | ) |  |
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|                          | ) | Elyse Sunshine                               |
|                          | ) | Rosen Sunshine LLP                           |
|                          | ) | Independent Legal Counsel                    |
|                          | ) |  |
|                          | ) | Heard: January 23, 2025                      |

## **DECISION AND REASONS**

This matter was heard by a panel of the Discipline Committee (the “Panel”) of the College of Early Childhood Educators (the “College”) on January 23, 2025. The hearing proceeded electronically (by videoconference) pursuant to the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007* (the “ECE Act”) and the College’s Rules of Procedure of the Discipline Committee and of the Fitness to Practise Committee.

At the outset, the Panel noted that the hearing was being recorded in the Zoom platform at the direction of the Panel for the hearing record and ordered that no person is permitted to make any audio or video recording of these proceedings by any other means.

## **PUBLICATION BAN**

The Panel ordered a publication ban following a motion by College Counsel, on consent of the Member, pursuant to section 35.1(3) of the ECE Act. The order bans the public disclosure, publication and broadcasting outside of the hearing room, any names or identifying information of any minor children who may be the subject of evidence in the hearing.

## **THE ALLEGATIONS**

The allegations against the Member were contained in the Notice of Hearing dated December 19, 2024, which provided as follows:

1. At all material times, Christopher Bruce Wilson (the “Member”) was a member of the College and was employed as a Registered Early Childhood Educator (“RECE”) with the YWCA Hamilton, which operates a before and after school program in Lisgar Elementary School (the “Program”) in Hamilton, Ontario.
2. On or about the afternoon of October 19, 2022, the Member and an early childhood assistant (the “EA”) were jointly responsible for supervising a group of seven school-aged children, including a four-year-old child (the “Child”). While transitioning the group from St. Anthony Daniel Catholic Elementary (the “School”) to the Program, the Member failed to

notice that the Child left the group and walked away with an unknown adult and another child. Sometime after that, the EA noticed that the Child was missing and informed the Member. The Member searched for the Child and eventually found them walking back towards the School with the unknown adult. In total, the Child was unsupervised for approximately 15 minutes.

3. By engaging in the conduct set out in paragraph 2 above, the Member engaged in professional misconduct as defined in subsection 33(2) of the ECE Act, in that:

a) The Member failed to supervise adequately a person who was under his professional supervision, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(2);

b) The Member failed to maintain the standards of the profession, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(8), in that:

i. The Member failed to observe and monitor the learning environment and take responsibility to avoid exposing children to harmful or unsafe situations, contrary to Standard III.C.2 of the College's Standards of Practice;

ii. The Member failed to provide safe and appropriate supervision of children based on age, development and environment, contrary to Standard III.C.5 of the College's Standards of Practice;

iii. The Member failed to implement strategies to ensure sufficient time for safe and supportive transitions while maintaining supervision at all times, contrary to Standard III.C.8 of the College's Standards of Practice;

iv. The Member failed to know the current legislation, policies and procedures that are relevant to his professional practice and to the care and education of children, contrary to Standard IV.B.1 of the College's Standards of Practice;

v. The Member failed to model professional values, beliefs and behaviours with children, families and colleagues, and/or failed to understand that his conduct reflects on him as a professional and on his profession at all times, contrary to Standard IV.C.4 of the College's Standards of Practice;

c) The Member acted or failed to act in a manner that, having regard to the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful,

dishonourable or unprofessional, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(10);

d) The Member failed to keep records as required by his professional duties, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(18); and/or

e) The Member acted in a manner that is unbecoming a member, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(22).

## **EVIDENCE**

The parties advised the Panel that agreement had been reached on the facts and introduced an Agreed Statement of Facts, which provided as follows:

### **The Member**

1. The Member has had a certificate of registration with the College for approximately 15 years. He is in good standing with the College and does not have a prior discipline history with the College.
2. At all material times, the Member was employed as a site supervisor with the Program.

### **The Incident**

3. On the afternoon of October 19, 2022, the Member and an EA were jointly responsible for supervising and transitioning a group of seven school-aged children, including the Child, from the School to the Program.
4. While crossing a roadway, the Member failed to notice that the Child left the group unsupervised and walked away with an unknown adult and another child. Sometime after that, the EA noticed that the Child was missing and informed the Member, who began searching for the Child. The Member found the Child walking back towards the School with the unknown adult. In total, the Child was unsupervised for approximately 15 minutes;

however, it is unknown how far the Child walked during this time and whether they crossed any roadways.

5. After the incident described above, the Member:
  - a. Later that day, provided false and/or misleading information to the Child's mother, by telling her that on the walk over from the School he "lost sight" of the Child "for a bit" because the Child was not listening and became preoccupied speaking with friends;
  - b. Did not document the incident; and
  - c. Did not report the incident to the YWCA's management.

### **Additional Information**

6. Another parent advised the Child's mother that the Child had left the group unsupervised and walked away from the group with another child and their parent. On October 24, 2022, the Child's mother reported the Incident to the YWCA's management, who were unaware that the Incident had occurred.
7. The Member's employment at the YWCA was suspended for one day. Additionally, the YWCA removed the Member's "Site Supervisor" designation and transferred his employment to another location.
8. If a child goes missing, the YWCA's Missing Child Policy (the "Policy") requires staff to notify the child's caregivers and complete an Accident, Incident and Injury Report within 24 hours. Further, the Policy states that if a child goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, that constitutes a serious occurrence, and according to the YWCA's Serious Occurrence Policy, all serious occurrences must be reported to the Ministry and management. The Member confirmed that he reviewed all the YWCA's policies at the start of the academic year, which was approximately a month and a half before the Incident occurred.

9. If the Member were to testify, he would advise the following:
- a. The Incident was “most likely the lowest point” in his career and he feels “deep regret and remorse” that he did not provide the Child’s parents with the “full extent” of the Incident.
  - b. Following the Incident, he has reviewed the YWCA’s policies and has been “more diligent” in conducting headcounts.
  - c. In the future, he intends to seek “extra coaching and support” from his management as well as colleagues.

### **Admissions of Professional Misconduct**

10. The Member admits that he engaged in and is guilty of professional misconduct as described in paragraphs 3 to 5 above, and as defined in subsection 33(2) of the ECE Act, in that:
- a. The Member failed to supervise adequately a person who was under his professional supervision, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(2);
  - b. The Member failed to maintain the standards of the profession, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(8), in that:
    - i. The Member failed to observe and monitor the learning environment and take responsibility to avoid exposing children to harmful or unsafe situations, contrary to Standard III.C.2 of the College’s Standards of Practice;
    - ii. The Member failed to provide safe and appropriate supervision of children based on age, development and environment, contrary to Standard III.C.5 of the College’s Standards of Practice;
    - iii. The Member failed to implement strategies to ensure sufficient time for safe and supportive transitions while maintaining supervision at all times, contrary to Standard III.C.8 of the College’s Standards of Practice;

- iv. The Member failed to know the current legislation, policies and procedures that are relevant to his professional practice and to the care and education of children, contrary to Standard IV.B.1 of the College's Standards of Practice;
  - v. The Member failed to model professional values, beliefs and behaviours with children, families and colleagues, and/or failed to understand that his conduct reflects on him as a professional and on his profession at all times, contrary to Standard IV.C.4 of the College's Standards of Practice;
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- c. The Member acted or failed to act in a manner that, having regard to the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(10);
  - d. The Member failed to keep records as required by his professional duties, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(18); and/or
  - e. The Member acted in a manner that is unbecoming a member, contrary to Ontario Regulation 223/08, subsection 2(22).

## **THE MEMBER'S PLEA**

The Member admitted to the allegations in the Agreed Statement of Facts.

The Panel received a written plea inquiry signed by the Member. The Panel also conducted a verbal plea inquiry and was satisfied that the Member's admission was voluntary, informed and unequivocal.

## **SUBMISSIONS OF THE PARTIES ON LIABILITY**

College Counsel submitted that the Member failed to provide adequate supervision of a four-year-old child under his care. Specifically, the Member failed to observe and monitor the Child, and to provide appropriate supervision based on their age and the learning environment. While College Counsel acknowledged that another non-RECE staff was present and shared responsibility for

supervising the Child at the time, any failure on the part of other staff does not diminish the Member's professional responsibility as an RECE.

College Counsel noted that transitions are known to require increased vigilance. The Member failed to ensure enhanced supervision during this particular transition.

Furthermore, the Member failed to document and report the incident to management, a responsibility paramount to the profession, especially as it relates to a child's safety. This failure, combined with the Member's dishonesty regarding the Incident involving a child's safety, demonstrates a failure to model professional values, and erodes the public's trust in RECEs.

College Counsel submitted that the Member failed to adhere to current professional policies and procedures. His conduct was disgraceful, dishonorable, unprofessional, and unbecoming of a member.

College Counsel also submitted that the Member, if given the opportunity, would express deep regret and remorse, stating that this incident represented the lowest point in his career. He has since become more diligent in head counts and is seeking further training to enhance his practice.

The Member made no submissions.

## **FINDINGS AND REASONS FOR DECISION**

Having regard to the facts set out in the Agreed Statement of Facts, the Panel accepted the Member's admission and found him guilty of professional misconduct as alleged in the Agreed Statement of Facts and the Notice of Hearing.

The evidence established that the Member engaged in professional misconduct by failing to provide adequate supervision to a four-year-old child under his care. The Member failed to observe and monitor and provide appropriate supervision tailored to the Child's age and learning environment. This failure is particularly concerning given the known increased vigilance required during transitions, which the Member failed to implement. The Panel noted that while another staff member was present, this did not diminish the Member's professional responsibility as an RECE.



The Panel agreed with College Counsel's submission that the Member failed to adhere to current professional policies and procedures, particularly the requirement to report and document an incident involving the safety of a child. This failure, along with the Member's dishonesty regarding the incident, showed a lack of professional values and erodes public trust in the profession. The Panel therefore found that the Member's conduct could reasonably be regarded by other members as not only unprofessional, but also clearly unbecoming of an RECE.

While the Panel acknowledged the Member's remorse and commitment to improving his practice through increased diligence and further training, these factors do not negate the seriousness of the misconduct. The Member's failure to adequately supervise a young child during a transition, and his subsequent failure to report and document the Incident, constitute a serious breach of his professional obligations.

#### **POSITION OF THE PARTIES ON PENALTY**

The parties made a joint submission as to an appropriate penalty and costs order and submitted that the Panel should make an order that includes the following elements:

- The Member should be verbally reprimanded before a Panel of the Discipline Committee to occur within 60 days from the Order.
- Directing the Registrar to suspend the Member's certificate of registration with the College for 9 months (or longer contingent on completion of terms, conditions and limitations).
- Directing the Registrar to Impose the following terms, conditions and limitations on the Member's certificate of registration:
  - Successful completion of a course in Professionalism and Ethics before resuming employment or practice as an RECE
  - The Member must obtain a mentor acceptable to the College and participate in a mentorship program for a minimum of seven sessions, of which two sessions must be completed before the Member resumes employment or practice as an RECE.

The Member should pay costs to the College in the amount of \$1000 within 12 months of the date of the final order.

## **Submissions of the College on Penalty and Costs**

College Counsel submitted that this case is not unique and that unfortunately, failure to supervise is a common occurrence. What is troubling, however, in this case, is that while being in a supervisory role, the Member not only failed to properly supervise the Child, but then later provided false and/or misleading information to the Child's mother. Further, the Member did not document the incident nor report it to management.

College Counsel submitted that in carrying out its mandate to protect the public, the Committee should order a penalty that achieves the following:

- Sends a message to other RECEs that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated;
- Deters other members and specifically this Member from engaging in similar conduct;
- Encourages the member to reflect on their wrongdoing;
- Rehabilitates and supports the member in returning to practice; and
- Provides consistency within range of penalties in similar cases.

The aggravating factors in this case were:

1. The Member was in a supervisory role and therefore in a position of trust and authority;
2. The Member failed to supervise a four year old child;
3. The Member failed to notice the Child walked away with an unknown adult;
4. The Member did not notice the Child was missing; it was the EA who noticed. The Child was unsupervised for roughly 15 minutes;
5. The Member provided misleading and/or false information to the Child's mother. She learned what really happened through another parent;
6. The Member failed to document the incident. Keeping records is paramount to the obligations of RECEs. Failing to document interferes with investigations and prevents correcting problems in the future;
7. The Member failed to report the incident to management which hindered the YWCA from reporting a serious occurrence to the Ministry of Education, which caused the YWCA to be non-compliant with its legal obligations;
8. The Member was in direct contravention of the YWCA's policies. As the site supervisor, it was his obligation to ensure that policies were being followed.

The Member's conduct was serious enough to erode public trust in RECEs, particularly those in a supervisory role.

The mitigating factors in this case were:

1. The Member agreed to the Agreed Statement of Facts and took responsibility for his conduct. The Member showed insight and saved the College the time and costs of a contested hearing.
2. The Member has been practicing for approximately 15 years with no prior history of misconduct.

Other considerations in this case that went into the proposed penalty were:

1. The Child suffered no injury or harm.
2. There was no evidence to suggest that the incident had any emotional impact on the Child.
3. This was a single incident and there was no pattern of behaviour.
4. Once the Member realized the Child was missing, he began looking for them.

College Counsel presented the Panel with two cases with similar misconduct and comparable penalties to demonstrate how the proposed order in this matter was formulated:

- *College of Early Childhood Educators v. Simonetta, 2022 ONCECE 3*
- *College of Early Childhood Educators v. Akosah, 2022 ONCECE 9*

### **Submissions of the Member on Penalty and Costs**

The Member made no submissions on penalty and costs.

### **PENALTY DECISION**

The Panel accepted the joint submission on penalty and made the following order as to penalty:

1. The Member is required to appear before the Panel to be reprimanded within 60 days from the date of the Order.

2. The Registrar is directed to suspend the Member's certificate of registration for a period of
  - a. 9 months; or
  - b. the period of time required to comply with terms, conditions and limitations set out in paragraphs 3(a) to 3(f) below,whichever is greater.

The suspension will take effect from the date of this Order and will run without interruption as long as the College has not otherwise prohibited the Member from practising or suspended the Member for any other reason.

3. The Registrar is directed to impose the following terms, conditions and limitations on the Member's certificate of registration:

#### **Coursework**

- a. Prior to the Member commencing or resuming employment as an RECE or engaging in the practice of early childhood education, as defined in section 2 of the ECE Act, the Member must successfully complete, with a minimum passing grade of 70% (or to the satisfaction of the Director if a grade is not assigned) and at his own expense, the following course (subject to the Director's pre-approval):
  - i. Professionalism and Ethics
- b. The Member must provide the Director with proof of enrollment and successful completion of the course.

#### **Mentorship**

- c. Prior to the Member commencing or resuming employment as an RECE or engaging in the practice of early childhood education, as defined in section 2 of the ECE Act, the Member, at his own expense, will arrange a mentoring relationship with a Mentor, who:

- ii. is an RECE in good standing with the College,
  - iii. is employed in a supervisory position,
  - iv. has never been found guilty of professional misconduct and/or incompetence by the Discipline Committee of the College,
  - v. is not currently found to be incapacitated by the Fitness to Practise Committee of the College,
  - vi. is not currently the subject of allegations referred to the Discipline Committee or the Fitness to Practise Committee of the College, and
  - vii. is pre-approved by the Director. In order to pre-approve the Mentor, the Member will provide the Director with all requested information, including (but not limited to) the name, registration number, telephone number, address and résumé of the Mentor.
- d. The Member will provide the Mentor with a copy of the following documents within 14 days of being notified that the Mentor has been approved by the Director, or within 14 days after the release of such documents, whichever is earliest:
- i. the Panel's Order,
  - ii. the Agreed Statement of Facts,
  - iii. the Joint Submission on Penalty and Costs, and
  - iv. the Panel's Decision and Reasons.
- e. The Member will meet with the Mentor at least every 2 weeks after the Mentor has been approved by the Director to discuss the following subjects:
- i. review of the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice,
  - ii. the acts or omissions by the Member, which resulted in the Discipline Committee finding the Member guilty of professional misconduct,
  - iii. the potential consequences of the misconduct to the parents/children affected, and to the Member's colleagues, profession and self,
  - iv. the coursework the Member is ordered to complete, as set out in paragraph 3(a) above,
  - v. strategies for preventing the misconduct from recurring, and
  - vi. the Member's daily practice and any issues that arise, to ensure that he is meeting the College's Standards of Practice (without disclosing personal or

identifying information about any of the children under the Member's care, or clients of his employer(s)).

- f. The Member will complete a minimum of 2 mentorship sessions to the satisfaction of the Director prior to commencing or resuming employment as an RECE or engaging in the practice of early childhood education, as defined in section 2 of the ECE Act.
- g. After a minimum of 7 sessions, the Member can seek the Director's permission to stop participating in the mentorship sessions by providing the Director with a report by the Mentor that sets out the following:
  - i. the dates the Member attended the sessions with the Mentor,
  - ii. that the Mentor received a copy of the documents referred to in paragraph 3(d)
  - iii. that the Mentor reviewed the documents set out in paragraph 3(d) and discussed the subjects set out in paragraph 3(e) with the Member, and
  - iv. the Mentor's assessment of the Member's insight into his behaviour.
- h. All documents delivered by the Member to the College or the Mentor will be delivered by email, registered mail or courier, and the Member will retain proof of delivery.

#### **Other**

- i. Within 14 days of commencing or resuming employment as an RECE, the Member will ensure that the Director is notified of the name, address and telephone number of all employers.
  - j. The College may require proof of compliance with any of the terms in this Order at any time.
4. The Member is required to pay the College's costs fixed in the amount of \$1,000, to be paid within 12 months of the date of this Order.

## **REASONS FOR PENALTY**

The Panel understands that the penalty ordered should protect the public and enhance public confidence in the ability of the College to regulate RECEs. This is achieved through a penalty that addresses specific deterrence, general deterrence and, where appropriate, rehabilitation and remediation. The penalty should be proportionate to the misconduct.

In considering the joint submission, the Panel was mindful that a jointly proposed penalty should be accepted unless its acceptance would bring the administration of justice into disrepute or it is otherwise not in the public interest. It is the Panel's conclusion that the penalty ordered met the objectives outlined above. Accordingly, the Panel accepted the joint submission.

In reaching its decision, the Panel carefully considered the joint submission of the parties, the aggravating and mitigating factors, and the findings of comparable cases submitted by College Counsel. The Panel acknowledged that failure to provide supervision of children continues to be a common occurrence that is brought before discipline panels. Transitions further heighten this risk, as was shown in the present case. The Panel stresses the importance of RECEs exercising increased caution and supervision strategies of all children throughout transitions.

This case added a troubling element of the Member's dishonesty towards the Child's mother and YWCA management. Such behavior cannot be tolerated. Dishonesty erodes the public's trust in RECEs.

Based on the aggravating and mitigating factors in this case, combined with the Child being unharmed, and a lack of evidence to suggest a negative emotional impact on the Child, the Panel found that the proposed penalty was appropriate.

The suspension, along with the reprimand, will act as a specific deterrent to the Member, and a general deterrent to other members of the profession from engaging in such conduct. The mentorship, course work, and terms, conditions and limitations imposed on his certificate of registration will help to protect the public by rehabilitating the Member before he is able to return to practise.

The Panel would like to send a strong message to the membership that documenting and reporting incidents is an essential responsibility of RECEs. When a member does not document or report an incident, they are interfering with the ability of authorities to investigate. Additionally, it prevents the ability to learn from and fix issues that may cause and/or lead to an incident in the first place. A failure to document and report puts children's safety at risk.


### **ORDER AS TO COSTS**

Subsection 33(5)(4) of the Act provides that in an appropriate case, a panel may make an order requiring a member who the panel finds has committed an act of professional misconduct to pay all or part of the College's legal costs and expenses, investigation costs and hearing costs.

The parties are in agreement with respect to costs and the amount of costs to be ordered. The Panel agrees that this is an appropriate case for costs to be awarded and the amount proposed by the parties is reasonable.

The Panel orders that the Member pay the College its costs, fixed in the amount of \$1,000 to be paid within 12 months of the date of this Order.

**I, Katherine Begley, sign this decision and reasons for the decision as Chair of this Discipline panel and on behalf of the members of the Discipline panel.**



Katherine Begley, RECE, Chair

February 27, 2025

Date