

The here and now: Reimagining early childhoods in urgent times

[1]

ISSUE 1: Bill 14, 2021: What else might this legislation generate for the field of early childhood education in BC?

Author:

Source: Early Childhood Pedagogy Network

Format: Report

Publication Date: 1 Nov 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online [2]

Excerpted from newsletter

Bill 14, 2021: What else might this legislation generate for the field of early childhood education in BC?

On October 27, 2021, two new pieces of early learning and child care legislation were enshrined in British Columbia law. Putting political intention into formal legislation is an important step in holding government and policy makers accountable for promises made. But, how we enact the new legislation will determine the strength or weakness of the system we continue building together with early childhood education educators throughout the province.

What else might this legislation generate for the field of early childhood education in BC? Among other things, we hope the new legislation helps signal to all residents of BC the importance of early education as a pedagogical space for children versus the imagined 'future citizens' zone children are too often relegated to in public discourse. As residents of south-western BC remain gripped in the aftermath of devastating flooding, and north coast residents brace themselves for yet another atmospheric river forecast by meteorologists for this week, it is becoming more apparent that the youngest in society are living in extremely difficult and uncertain times.

Have we paused to ask ourselves who is this child we envision the new Act(s) serving? Whether they are refugees from another country, experiencing ongoing colonial violence, displaced due to fire or floods, or feeling the societal strain of living in pandemic times, children in this province must be supported through the expansion of an early educational system that takes seriously our ethical obligation to help children respond in new ways to the challenges of living in a rapidly changing world. Will we enact the legislation in ways that nurture the ability of educators to rethink their pedagogies and everyday practices, and to enliven the vision of creating more livable and just worlds set out by government in the BC Early Learning Framework (ELF)?

Equally important, if we are to realize another part of the impetus behind passing the new Act(s) - to better the lives and working conditions of educators and increase retention of educators in the field - we must support these educators to understand their crucial role within the re-envisioned paradigm of early childhood education outlined in the BC ELF:

Educators collaborate with children and their families as partners in research. This means educators are continually observing, listening, and experimenting with an openness to the unexpected. The role of the educator has shifted away from being a transmitter of knowledge toward being a collaborator who creates the condition so that children can invent, investigate, build theories, and learn. (2019, p. 18)

While acknowledging the urgency behind creating more childcare spaces, we at the ECPN remain committed to asking questions that support educators, children and families in the process of realizing the pedagogical aspirations set out by the province. We look forward to continuing our work with governments at all levels to enact a system that honours the BC ELF vision in ways that matter to the unique worlds that each early childhood community carefully crafts everyday.

Region: British Columbia [3]

Tags: pedagogy [4]

inclusion [5]

indigenous early learning and child care [6]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/22/01/here-and-now-reimagining-early-childhoods-urgent-times-0> [2]

https://www.ecpn.ca/application/files/4816/3823/1775/The_Here_and_Now_ISSUE_1_PDF_version-final.pdf [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/pedagogy> [5]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8952> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9174>