

# Play, participation and possibilities: An early learning and child care curriculum framework for Alberta <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Full text online <sup>[2]</sup>

Supporting documents <sup>[3]</sup>

Excerpts from the introduction:

Play, participation, and possibilities: An early learning and child care framework for Alberta frames curriculum meaning making that highlights the relationships and curriculum decisions shaping responsive practices in early learning and child care communities. It is a guide for early childhood educators to use in their everyday work with young children and their families in Alberta. It builds on early learning and child care frameworks that have been developed in other parts of Canada and around the world, in particular the New Brunswick framework for early learning and child care.

The Alberta framework recognizes, appreciates, and values:

- the practice of relationships among educators, children, and families that make visible the uniqueness of each child care centre and family day home in Alberta.
- the co-constructed nature of early learning curriculum: recognizing the unique nature of learning in early childhood, educators make curriculum decisions "in the moment," extending play and learning through thoughtful reflection and dialogue with children, families, and other educators.
- the search for a shared professional language—a language that may cause pause, calling upon us to reflect deeply in order to make the values, principles, and goals that frame practice in early learning and child care clear to ourselves and visible to others.

Play, participation, and possibilities is grounded in a vision of strong, active and energetic early childhood communities places of vitality - where the rights of children as citizens are recognized and where the diversity of Alberta families is reflected and can be expressed. A preliminary set of shared professional values - values for early childhood communities, values for early learning processes, and values for meaningful relationships with families - emerged from the provincial consultation process. The framework's Guiding Principles emphasize the significance of children's family and early experiences for their learning and citizenship in early childhood communities today and in the future.

In Section 2, the main ideas in the framework are organized around five interrelated, core concepts:

- **The image of the child:** A mighty learner and citizen introduces the theoretical foundation of the framework and reflects critically on the multiple images of the child that are embedded in the multiple perspectives of learning that inform our work.
- **A practice of relationships:** Your role as an early learning and child care educator describes the complex and multifaceted relationships that frame the dynamic work of educators, who co-construct curriculum meaning making as co-learners, co-researchers, and co-imagers of possibilities alongside and in relationship with children, families, other educators, and professionals.
- **Mighty learners:** Nurturing children's dispositions to learn explores the rich potential that each child already brings to every learning situation—their dispositions to learn—and the educator's role in strengthening these dispositions as part of a strong foundation for learning in early childhood. The co-inquiry planning process and the documentation of children's experiences through learning stories is introduced.
- **Responsive environments:** Time, space, materials, and participation considers how the major framework concepts—the image of the child as a mighty learner and citizen, the practice of relationships, and the dispositions to learn—are reflected in and revealed through the everyday experiences, interactions, and routines in an early childhood program.
- **Transitions and continuities:** Supporting children and families through change reflects on the critical role of educators and early childhood programs in enhancing the continuity of the child and families' experience during the many transitions that occur in the early childhood years—the daily transitions with/in programs, as well as transitions between programs and into formal school settings.

**Region:** Alberta <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** curricula and pedagogy <sup>[5]</sup>

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