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Welcome to the Outdoor Play Canada September 2025 Newsletter

OPC projects and activities encompass all traditional territories of the Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island, within the land we now call Canada.

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Join Us!

Learn more about Outdoor Play
Canada membership!

Learn more about our
Community of Practice!

Featured Announcements

National Truth and Reconciliation Day - September 30th



[September 30th](#) is the [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#), an opportunity for the public to recognize and commemorate the legacy of residential schools, the intergenerational harm they caused to Indigenous families and communities, and to honour those affected by this injustice. This federal holiday is an effort on behalf of the Government of Canada to respond to actions outlined in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#), specifically, Call to Action 80. Members of the public are invited and encouraged to recognize this day through quiet reflection and/or participation in a community

event. Outdoor Play Canada recognizes this day of reflection and supports the journey to truth and reconciliation through outdoor play.

To learn more about the [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, click here.](#)

Several organizations across Canada have developed resources in celebration of Indigenous history and culture. Resources include the [Canadian Olympic Committee Indigenous Legacies through Sport Series](#) and the Outdoor Learning School & Store's [Indigenous Learning Resources](#) and [21 Actions for Indigenous Learning](#).

Celebrating the Third Biennial Breath of Fresh Air 2025 Summit!



OPC held yet another successful [Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit!](#) With record numbers this year, attendees attended talks from over 40 speakers across three days in the beautiful Wesley Clover Parks Campground. Major highlights include the launch of the 2025 Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play, keynote address by Dr. Stewart Brown, his daughter (Lauren) and grand-daughter (Mia), and the announcement of the 2025 OPC Award Winners! Learn more [here.](#)



**The 2025 Position Statement on Active
Outdoor Play is now available in all 6 UN
languages!**



Want to see the Position Statement published in your language and help us review? Contact us at info@outdoorplaycanada.ca



SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2025 — Ottawa, Canada – Outdoor play is as advantageous for adults as it is for children and should be integrated more often into healthcare practice, according to new global research released today by Outdoor Play Canada. A three-year study and consultations with more than 200 global experts representing all inhabited continents found outdoor play promotes confidence, facilitates ongoing learning, and fosters a sense of community and belonging, among many other benefits. The research is included in the [Global Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#) and was released at the [Breath of Fresh Air \(BoFA\) Outdoor Play Summit](#) taking place September 25-27 in Ottawa, Canada. [Learn more here!](#)

Access & Endorse the AOP10 here!



 **Practice**





[Discover Algonquin College's Play, Learn and Teach Outdoors in the Early Years \(PLaTO\) Program!](#)

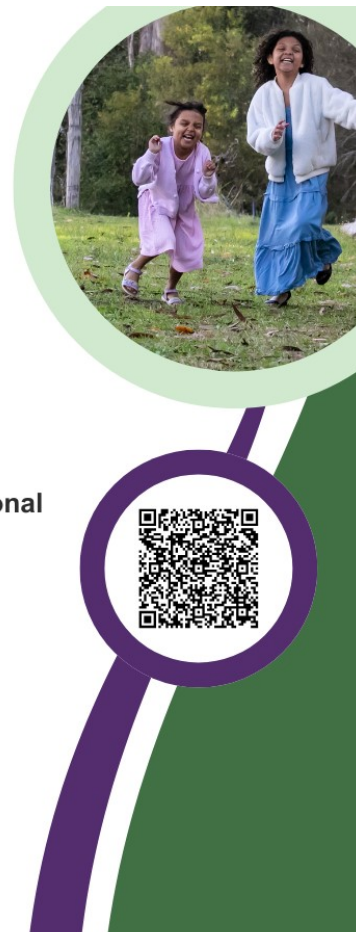
Algonquin College's **Play, Learn, and Teaching Outdoors in the Early Years** certificate program immerses early learning professionals in outdoor pedagogical practice through the [Outdoor ECE National Framework](#) of the [Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play](#). In this program, you explore concepts of active engagement, nurturing holistic development, and building meaningful connections in outdoor pedagogical practice.

REGISTRATION WINTER 2026

PLAY, LEARN AND TEACH OUTDOORS IN THE EARLY YEARS

Algonquin College's PLaTO certificate immerses Early Learning Professionals in a program based on the national framework by the Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play.

-  Enjoy a more personalized learning environment with small classes.
-  Benefit from supportive and experienced faculty who are active in their industry.
-  Gain the latest industry knowledge and skills to be career-ready upon graduation.
-  Flexible delivery, accessible for working professionals.



For more information, please scan the QR code or visit:
algonquincollege.com/PLaTO



Guidance on Nature Connection - Pre-birth to Age 5 Years

A new [Inspiring Scotland](#) publication, [Starting Out to Play](#), supports practitioners, working with parents, families, and carers, to make the most of the multiple benefits to health, well-being and learning found in connection to nature pre-birth to age 5.

To ensure that all children aged 0-5 years have the best possible start in life, the guidance draws on expertise from across the early childhood play, learning and health sectors. It has been developed in partnership with parents and early years practitioners and is framed around research from around the world.



The Canadian Child Care Federation's Outdoor Play Training Course

Fall is the Perfect Time to Reimagine Outdoor Play

As the seasons change, so do our outdoor environments — and so do the opportunities for children to grow, explore, and connect through play.

The [Canadian Child Care Federation \(CCCF\)](#)'s **Outdoor Play Training Course** is a rich, thought-provoking professional development experience that explores how outdoor play supports children's development, well-being, and sense of place. The CCCF is Canada's largest national organization dedicated to supporting early learning and child care professionals through evidence-based resources, professional development, and advocacy.

You'll learn about:

- ✓ Risky play and child-led exploration
- ✓ Designing intentional outdoor spaces
- ✓ Loose parts, nature pedagogy, and environmental sustainability
- ✓ The adult's role in making outdoor play meaningful
- 📅 Approximately **45 hours of learning**
- 📄 **Certificate of completion included**
- 📅 **Self-paced** — start anytime this fall

🔥 Whether you're starting a new school year or deepening your outdoor practice, this course will challenge and inspire.

👉 **Learn more & Register here** >> <https://outdoorplaytraining.com/>

Outdoor Play Training!

**OUTDOOR PLAY TRAINING
ONLINE**
Registration opens July 1, 2025

Outdoor Play Training Online course content was researched and developed by Drs. Beverlie Dietze and Diane Kashin, educators Joanne Keilty and Cheryl Hatten (Lethbridge College) and Erin Holmes (Northern College). The course is hosted by Canadian Child Care Federation.

\$100 or \$75 for CCCF Members

Outdoor Play Training Online offers 45 hours of professional development in 12 modules. Certificate available upon completion.

CCCF | FCSGE
CANADIAN CHILD CARE FEDERATION | FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES SERVICES DE GARDE ÉDUCATIVE

The Outdoor Learning School & Store's Fall Courses

The Outdoor Learning School & Store is offering a series of free and accessible online workshops and courses this fall designed for educators and practitioners interested in outdoor and nature-based learning.

- Free Fall Virtual Workshops → [Explore the schedule](#)
- A Walking Curriculum for the Early Years (online course) → [Learn more](#)
- Social Emotional Learning Strategies through Nature-based Learning (online course) → [Register here](#)
- 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning (Use coupon code **4Seasons25%** for a 25% discount!) → [Learn more here.](#)

ONLINE COURSES FOR ADULTS
Fall 2025

Braiding Sweetgrass for Educators (October)
Monique Gray Smith

A Walking Curriculum for the Early Years (October)
Dr. Gillian Judson, Klara Redford, Dr. Michelle McKay

Social Emotional Learning Strategies (November)
Jade Berrill, Lauren MacLean

Knucwetwécw-kt (November)
Jenna Jasek
WORKING TOGETHER: SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS CHILDREN'S SUCCESS THROUGH NATURE-BASED LEARNING

Indigenous Language Learning (Sept to Dec)
TAUGHT BY INCREDIBLE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS

4 SEASONS of Indigenous Learning
A CHARITABLE NON-PROFIT

REGISTER [OUTDOORLEARNING.COM/EVENT](https://outdoorlearning.com/event)
OUTDOOR LEARNING SCHOOL & STORE

Fall 2025 to Spring 2026

25% Coupon Code:
4Seasons25%

4 SEASONS
of
Indigenous
learning



Leona Prince
Jesse Wentz
Dr. Lyla June
David Robertson
Debra Fisher
Mark Thomas
Jenna Jasek
Dr. Gregory Cajete

outdoorlearning.com/4-seasons

Active for Life's Fall Activities

🌿 STEM Activities

Parents and caregivers have a superpower: they can encourage kids to keep asking questions. And they can help guide children to solve problems and spark their curiosity with fun outdoor STEM activities. [Learn more here.](#)

🍂 Fall Scavenger Hunt

As the temperature drops and the leaves start to change, it's a great time to get outside with kids and enjoy fall! Print off this fun scavenger hunt to guide your next outing. [Learn more here.](#)



[Proset Inclusive Tennis](#)

Proset is a special needs adaptive program, designed to teach neurodiverse individuals tennis and pickleball to all ages and abilities. Immersed in the environment, coaches, parents and volunteers help pave the way to success for all our students, in a way that is fun, challenging and motivating.

Learn more about ProSet [here!](#)



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Research

[The Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play is seeking a post-doctoral fellow!](#)

WE ARE SEEKING

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

The Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play, in collaboration with CHEO-RI, University of Ottawa and University of Toronto, is seeking a Postdoctoral Fellow to join their team and help lead research on inclusive outdoor play, child development and population health

Requirements

- PhD in health-related field
- Experience working with young children of all abilities and their families
- Proficiency in quantitative and qualitative methodologies
- Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team and conduct



- Ability to work in an interdisciplinary team and conduct community-engaged research
- Passion for the outdoors and inclusion

GET IN TOUCH!

Interested in learning more? Send us a message!

✉ majames@cheo.on.ca

✉ mtremblay@cheo.on.ca



www.outdoorplaycanada.ca/ccop

Hybrid; Ottawa, Ontario

[A global PhD network for research and collaboration: Connecting children to land, place, and nature – Part III](#)

Read [Part I](#) and [Part II](#).

Part III – How do we cultivate a sense of connection—to place, to nature, and to each other—in increasingly diverse and ecologically challenged educational settings? This third and final blog post explores three research perspectives that address this question from different angles. In closing, the authors reflect on how the PhD network itself offers a model for future collaboration in outdoor learning research.

[Read the third blog post here.](#)

[Can play help children develop resilience – Findings from a study with doctors and nurses across Canada](#)

In 2024, researchers from UBC – Dr. Michelle E. E. Bauer, a Research Associate in Pediatrics, Dr. Ian Pike in the Department of Pediatrics, and Dr. Meghan Gilley, an emergency room practitioner at the BC Children’s Hospital – conducted a project to understand emergency room doctors’ and nurses’ perspectives on children’s play safety, and they investigated how exposure to severe injuries and death in emergency rooms resulting from play-related activities could cause practitioners to re-evaluate their play safety practices at home.

Click [here](#) to read more.



Resilience is what gives my child the mental strength to be able to push past challenges and find solutions for herself.
— Martha

What is resilience?

- Learning to cope with failure
- Overcoming fear
- Facing stress and uncertainty
- Building self-confidence
- Being more independent
- Developing distress tolerance
- Regulating negative emotions

What does resilience look like during play?

- Falling from a bike and getting back on even with scraped knees
- Overcoming nervousness while climbing higher on playground equipment without adult help
- Playing Tag with friends in unfamiliar environments while learning where to step without tripping

If my child is going to play on a swing and fall off, I can't really prevent that. That's something that my child has to experience on their own.
— Kelly

How can I help my child build resilience?

- **Sit on your hands!**
You can watch and see how your child handles challenging tasks without intervening right away.
- **Ask your child how they want you to help!**
Your child can tell you what makes them feel safe and happy during play, which lets you know what works for them.
- **Make environments safe AND exciting for them!**
You can encourage risk-taking and the use of safety equipment and strategies to avoid potential dangers, such as cars.

I think having an obstacle that you have to overcome helps them build resilience. When they finally succeed, they learn to overcome a challenge.
— Perry

Bauer, M. E. E., Cunningham, L., Gilley, M., & Pike, I. (2025). Children's risky play and resilience: Perspectives of emergency care practitioners. *Child: Care, Health & Development*. DOI:10.1111/cch.70056
This study was supported through funding by BC Children's Hospital Research Institute under grant numbers #GR027911 and #GR029411. It was approved by the University of British Columbia's C&W Research Ethics Board under #H23-00102.

BC INJURY research and prevention unit

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 **Become an Outdoor Play Canada Member!**

We believe that if all parents, neighbours, care providers, practitioners, policy makers, researchers, educators, insurance providers, schools and municipalities better understood the value of outdoor play for physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental health and development, they'd be more likely to prioritize, initiate, nurture and support efforts to get everyone, of all ages, outside.

If we want outdoor play to be an integral part of daily life in Canada, we're going to have to get our hands dirty. [Roll up your sleeves and join us!](#)

In an effort to improve accessibility and inclusivity, the OPC membership now consists of two options: general (\$0–99) and champion (\$100) members.

All members have access to the members-only section of the website regardless of payment. Champions have the added bonus of being celebrated on our [About Us](#) page and will have a tree planted in their honour at our new [Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play](#), located at Wesley Clover Parks in Ottawa, ON!



Join the movement! — become an OPC member! Show your support of our effort to promote, protect, and preserve access to play in nature and the outdoors for all people living in Canada.

Become a Member Now!

Join our Community of Practice!

The Outdoor Early Childhood Education Community of Practice, led by the [Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play partnership](#), is geared towards early childhood educators across Canada who are interested in and/or already support regularly bringing children outdoors!

The overarching ethos is to promote collaboration, empower practitioners to promote outdoor play opportunities across a variety of settings, and ensure outdoor early childhood education programming is culturally appropriate and place-based.



Learn more and sign up here!

We welcome blog posts and summaries of relevant research studies for publication on the OPC website. If you have any items that you think would be of interest to fellow OPC members, please contact info@outdoorplaycanada.ca. We respect the amount of unnecessary emails you receive so the plan is for a maximum of one OPC newsletter every other month. Your feedback and comments are always welcome.

Thanks for reading and have fun until our next newsletter!



Don't know what to play? Check out our Adventure Calendar!

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