

# ECE Week EDITION

APRIL 2025

Early Learning  
and Child Care

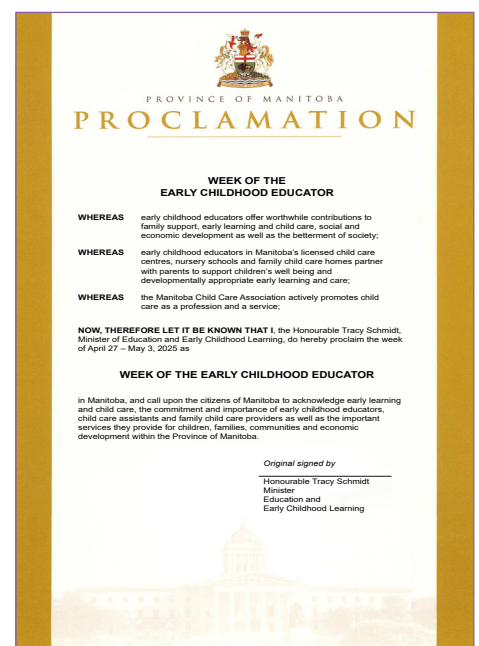
MONTHLY  
E-NEWS

## Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister

Sunday, April 27, 2025, marks the beginning of the **34th Annual Week of the Early Childhood Educator (ECE)**. This important celebration, established in 1992 by the Manitoba Child Care Association, acknowledges the invaluable contributions of early childhood educators and the profound impact they have on Manitoba's social and economic fabric.

I feel privileged to work alongside so many dedicated ECE professionals whose insights and expertise are vital to our initiatives. Nearly half of our division—around 55 members—are certified ECE IIs and IIIs, bringing decades of experience to their roles. They work across all branches of the division, including licensing, inclusion, policy, IT, and capital as well as in senior leadership, and their diverse linguistic skills, including French, German, Mandarin, Ukrainian, Portuguese, American Sign Language, Hindi, and Cree, reflect the rich multicultural community we serve.

On behalf of my colleagues in the Early Learning and Child Care Division and throughout the Government of Manitoba, I extend my sincere gratitude and best wishes for a meaningful Week of the Early Childhood Educator.



Manitoba



### ECE Week Recognized at Manitoba Legislature

On Thursday, April 24, the Honourable Tracey Schmidt, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, delivered a Ministerial Statement in recognition of the Week of the Early Childhood Educator in the Legislature. The Minister's statement reflected on the valuable contributions Early Childhood Educators make in the lives of children, families, and the community at large.

To read the full statement, visit [Hansard](#).

### Sneak Peak: A Manitoba Lens on Child Care

In the last few weeks, staff have visited a series of child care facilities across the province with a photo and video crew, capturing the day-to-day life of child care facilities. These visits captured not only colourful imagery in our busy facilities but the voices behind our valuable and diverse workforce who shared their stories on their career journey, what motivates them every day, and how their role is making a difference in the lives of children and their families on a daily basis.

These efforts are intended to help us build from the recent Become an Early Childhood Educator advertising campaign by developing a made-in-Manitoba approach aimed to further promote early childhood education as a career of choice and to support the expansion of child care services across the province.

The quality environments and the dedicated teams of Child Care Assistants (CCAs) and Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) in our licensed facilities are key to inspiring the next generation of educators and we look forward to showcasing our facilities and our child care professionals, right here in Manitoba.

Thank you to the facilities and their families for welcoming us, and the CCAs and ECEs for sharing their stories with us so openly.

More to come about these exiting new developments later in 2025!

**On the Cover this Month:** Two children from Starting Blocks Day Care Centre in Stonewall at play during our site visit.



*Troy Nelson, Site Supervisor, ECE III, Starting Blocks Day Care Centre, Stonewall*



*Emily McGregor, School Age Team Lead, ECE II, Starting Blocks Day Care Centre, Stonewall*



### Elmwood ECE Receives Prestigious Honour from Lieutenant Governor

On Monday, April 7, 2025, Lucille Leclerc was presented with a King Charles III Coronation Medal in recognition of her 50 years as an ECE III and her outstanding commitment to providing child care to the community of Elmwood. The Medal was presented at Government House by The Honourable Anita Neville, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, along with The Honourable Wab Kinew, Premier of Manitoba, and MLA Jim Maloway.

Lucille was the founding director of Munroe Day Nursery in 1974, and Cobourg Day Nursery in 1976. Lucille's 1976 application for a Community Improvement Program Grant funded by three levels of government led to the construction of a brand new facility at 75 Brazier Street. The centre was renamed Elmwood Day Nursery, and is where Lucille has been and continues to be the Executive Director for the last 49 years.

The staff of Early Learning and Child Care extend our congratulations to Lucille and commend her for her outstanding long-term work in service to children and families in Winnipeg.



*The Honourable Wab Kinew, Premier of Manitoba; Lucille Leclerc, Executive Director, Elmwood Day Nursery; The Honourable Anita Neville, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba; and Jim Maloway, Member of Legislative Assembly for Elmwood*

### O.K. on a Roll at Constable Finney School

Program proving the nomadic approach to child care space can work

Imagine moving into your first home and setting up a cozy living room space with a safe and engaging play area for young children. Then imagine having to disassemble and put away every piece of furniture, every plant, book, toy, poster and rug—leaving nothing behind—at 9 a.m., only to set it all up again by mid-afternoon. And then repeat—every single weekday.

For most people, it sounds like quite a chore, but for dozens of child care facilities across Manitoba, it's just part of the routine for a successful roll-away program.

*"It's a bit like Tetris," says Brenda Bachinsky, Executive Director of [O.K. Before and After School Child Care Centres](#). "It's always a bit challenging, moving and fitting everything, but we have gotten better and better at it over time. We're so efficient now, a visitor might never know the room has to be set up and taken down every day."*

'Roll-away,' or 'pull-out' programs are common in school-based child care centres, where facilities have agreements to share school division space and resources. Centres will often set up before and after school in gymnasiums, libraries, or classrooms to accommodate school-age (ages 6-12) children, then take everything down again during the day to make way for classes. Roll-aways are also common in spaces like community centres, where equipment must be put away to accommodate evening and weekend events.

O.K. Before & After School C.C, founded in 1984, operates five programs in Winnipeg, with two being roll-aways. Balwinder Khangura is Site Manager at O.K.'s [Ecole Constable Edward Finney School](#) (CEF) location in The Maples. Each weekday at 9 a.m., school-age children are off to their classes and Balwinder and her team of three set to work dismantling their space inside CEF's early-years gymnasium.

At 2:30 p.m., the team have roughly 30 minutes to turn the gymnasium back into a fun and relaxing space for the children to enjoy until closing at 6 p.m.

*"We really strive to make it a safe, comfortable space for the children," says Khangura, "We don't want to sacrifice anything just because it's a roll-away program. The plants, decorations, art, and natural colours make it feel cozy. Everything we do is guided by our values, which we have on display for everyone that comes into our program. Those values guide our approach to delivering a high-quality program."*

*"We've had new teachers or substitute teachers in the school see this and they can't believe it. 'When was this set up?', they ask, 'Is this not a gym anymore?'"*

The program has almost everything on wheels, and uses light-weight, easy to carry items throughout the set up. Art is hung with no-damage adhesive hooks. But the true success of the program hangs on one factor: teamwork.

*"We have a great relationship with the school and division," says Khangura, "They go above and beyond with sharing resources and keeping us informed on things. Balwinder and her staff are so organized, efficient, and enthusiastic—the program just couldn't be as successful without this outstanding team effort."*

On April 9, O.K. Before & After's other roll-away program at O.V. Jewitt School was recently featured as part of a Manitoba Child Care Association workshop on creating successful roll-away programs. The Journey of a Roll-Away Program tour visited O.K. Before & After at O.V. Jewitt, Sunny Mountain at Governor Semple Children's Place, and Seven Oaks Child Day Care Centre at Morrison School.



Balwinder Khangura, ECE III, Site Manager; Husan, CCA; Joyellen, ECE II; Nadiia, CCA

Do YOU have a tip on running a successful and efficient roll-away program? Send it our way via [cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca) with the subject "ROLL-AWAY TIP," and we could feature your helpful guidance in a future edition.





## Meet the ELCC Team

### Suzanne Pazdor, ECE III, Child Care Coordinator

The best part of my job is working in the community, seeing first-hand the work the child care sector provides to offer an inclusive, safe and quality child care for children and families.

When I complete my inspections, I often walk into facilities and, it's funny, the children will sit beside me and ask, 'What are you writing? Why are you here? 'Are you so-and-so's boss?' And I always smile and say, 'No, I'm just here to make sure you're having fun and you're safe.'

My story is the same as lot of people in the sector. My mother used to babysit in the home, so our house was always filled with children—family or neighbourhood kids. I helped out in the summers and after school, and that's how it started. I knew I wanted to go into the child care field.

I graduated from Red River College Polytechnic (Community College back then) in 1984 and started my career at Brooklands Day Care Centre. While working, I earned my management certificate from the University of Manitoba in '89 and became director in 1990. I worked my entire 22-year career at Brooklands, until beginning my next journey with Manitoba Government's Early Learning and Childcare Division in 2007. I've had the privilege of working in the child care sector for almost 41 years.

It's a good time to be in child care right now. I feel like there is still so much excitement, so many new initiatives coming our way, and we have a strong team of child care advocates in Manitoba. There are still challenges, but there have been so many important, positive changes. More people recognize the importance of the work, and regard child care workers as professionals. The one thing that has always remained the same is how people in the sector advocate for quality, inclusive, and positive child care for children. From day one, that's always been the case.

The support I get from working with like-minded people really keeps me going. Continue your professional development to ensure you can offer children your very best. Support one another by taking the time to listen, sharing your knowledge, mentoring others, and being active in the child care community.

And take the time to celebrate your accomplishments.

Happy ECE Week! Thank you for the important work you do, and for the compassion and dedication you give every day to children and families in Manitoba.

"And one more thing: **Go Jets Go!**"



*Suzanne Pazdor, ECE III,  
Child Care Coordinator*



Each month, the division will answer a common inquiry received from facilities in a question-and-answer format.

#### This Month's Question

*How much can a child care worker in Manitoba expect to be paid?*

#### Answer

Manitoba's ELCC wage grid provides guidance to licensed and funded child care facilities in recommending equitable and competitive salary scales across employee positions and classifications.

In Centres, boards of directors are responsible for establishing wages. This approach preserves the authority of boards while ensuring consistent and better wages are provided to the early learning and child care workforce. Boards are encouraged to pay hourly wages higher than the Starting Point as the facility's budget allows. However, wages should not fall below the Starting Point and should support employees being paid on average, at or above the Target.

To view the wage grid and for more information, visit:  
[manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students\\_workforce/wage\\_grid.html](https://manitoba.ca/education/childcare/students_workforce/wage_grid.html).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS

### ECE Week Celebrations

Would you like to share some of your facility's ECE Week photos? Email us at [CDCInfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:CDCInfo@gov.mb.ca) with the subject line "ECE Week 2025" and you could be featured in our next edition!

### Congratulations to MCCA Award Recipients!

The Manitoba Child Care Association recently announced the [2025 MCCA Award Recipients](#), recognizing exceptional skill, dedication and caring in the child care sector.

- Leader of the Year: **Lynn Martin**, Kiddies Northern Preschool
- Exceptional Early Childhood Educator: **Susan Pridham**, Riverview Ashland Childcare Inc.
- Exceptional Caregiver: **Melanie Orvis**, River East Scholar's Nursery School
- Dr. Gretta Brown Scholarship:  
**Andrée Labossière**, Université de Saint Boniface  
**Ho Kan Hogan Lau**, Red River College Polytechnic
- MCCA Student Scholarship Award: **Maureen Alarcon**, University College of the North
- Volunteer of the Year: **Hollie Boychuk**, Board Member at River East Scholar's Nursery School Inc.
- Children's Service Recognition Award: **Sina Romsa**
- Friends of Child Care: **Anne Grewar**

The entire team at Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Division extend their warmest wishes and congratulations to this year's award recipients.

## Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation— May 1, 2025

The Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*, builds on existing requirements of Manitoba's Human Rights Code and requires organizations to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that exist digitally, in-print, or through interaction with technology or people.

All licensed early learning and child care centres, including nursery schools, as well as family and group child care home providers with one or more employees (including casual staff), are required to comply before May 1, 2025.

For more information, visit: [www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare\\_news/current\\_circulars.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/current_circulars.html).

## Mental Health Week—May 5 to 11

The Canadian Mental Health Association has designated May 5 to 11 as [National Mental Health Week](#). This year focuses on **Unmasking Mental Health**, recognizing that living with a mental health challenge is hard enough; but masking can make it even harder.

Like many professions, child care comes with a host of physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges that can take their toll on an individual's mental well-being.

CMHA has recently launched a [mental health toolkit](#) available for free to all Canadians. Early child care providers are encouraged to take time this month to consider their own mental health, and the mental health of those they work with and care for.



## The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act Declaration— May 30, 2025

The [Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act](#) requires annual information about funding received from Government, including funding provided to support wages. Eligible facilities are required to comply with the provisions of the Act, including the Declaration form, which must be signed and returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning by May 30, 2025. For details of this requirement view the circular or download the declaration form.

For details of this requirement view the [circular](#) or download the [declaration form](#).

## Emergency Preparedness Week—Be Prepared, Know Your Risks— May 4 to 10, 2025

Everyone has a role to play in an emergency. [Emergency Preparedness Week](#) (EP Week) is a national event supported by Public Safety Canada and is an opportunity for you to take action to ensure you are prepared to protect yourself, your family, and your community during an emergency.

Additional Resources:

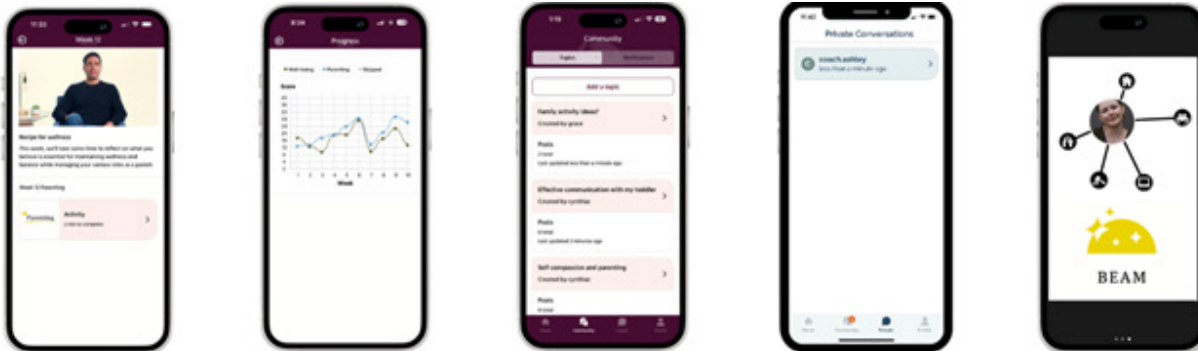
- [Emergency Preparedness for Children](#)
- [Safety Tips](#)
- [Publications](#)



## BEAM Program—Seeking Participants for May 2025

Dr. Leslie Roos, at the Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba, along with the University of Manitoba have been implementing BEAM (Building Emotional Awareness and Mental Health), a 12-week app-based program to promote family mental health and reduce parenting stress. It's designed for Manitoba parents with children aged 2 to 5 years. Through this online, self-paced program, parents can choose to access learning modules when it works best for them. The weekly time commitment is around 60 minutes.

The next cohort starts on **May 20, 2025**. Participants will be compensated.



For more information and to register, visit [www.thebeamprogram.com](http://www.thebeamprogram.com) or email [beam.research@umanitoba.ca](mailto:beam.research@umanitoba.ca).

## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE DIVISION UPDATE

### Early Learning and Child Care Connecting with Community at Career Fair Canada and the St-Pierre-Jolys Job Fair

On Wednesday, March 26, staff from ELCC attended the Winnipeg Job Fair and Training Expo organized by Career Fair Canada at the RBC Convention Centre. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about new career options and meet with hiring managers.

On the same day, two ELCC staff members attended the St-Pierre-Jolys Job Fair at the Recreation Hall in St-Pierre-Jolys. The event was organized by the local Community Employment Resource Centre and was open to the entire community. About 200 visitors stopped by to learn more about job opportunities and educational options.



Lindsay Ortlieb, Policy Analyst (left), Darcy Orvis, Inclusion Support Program Coordinator (centre), and Aaron Bachmann, Inclusion Support Program Coordinator (right), attended the Career Fair Canada on behalf of ELCC



Melissa Shapiro, Policy Analyst (left), and Tasha Ducharme, Certification and Training Supports Clerk at RBC Convention Centre



## ECE Week Tea Party

On Friday, April 25, staff at 114 Garry kicked off the 2025 Week of the Early Childhood Educator with a spring Tea Party, featuring dainties, light bites, coffee and tea. Staff from 210 Osborne as well as staff from across Manitoba were able to join in the festivities, along with Deputy Minister Brian O'Leary who took time out from his busy schedule to have a 'cuppa' with the ELCC team.

*Twenty-eight of ELCC's fifty-five ECE-certified staff pose with Deputy Minister Brian O'Leary (back row, centre) at our ECE Week Tea Party*



## Staffing Updates

We continue to welcome new staff into our division to support Manitoba's priorities for early learning and child care and support career growth and development of existing staff.

**Annabelle Konan** joined the Policy and Planning Branch as a Bilingual Policy Analyst with the Strategic Policy and Intergovernmental Relations Unit at 114 Garry on March 31. Annabelle holds a Master's degree in Public and International Affairs (University of Ottawa) and Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration (L'Université Canadienne des Arts, des Sciences et du Management, Côte d'Ivoire). She has over 10 years of experience in a variety of roles in Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, and Canada, most recently with Meta.

**Olaolu 'Ola' Coker** joined the Funding and Financial Assistance Branch as Director, Financial Operations at 114 Garry on April 15. Olaolu holds a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Manchester and a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Ado-Ekiti. He is a designated accountant (ACCA, UK) with over fifteen years of experience in business management, financial control, corporate accounting, budgeting, treasury management, and SAP expertise in both the private and not-for-profit sectors.

For the list of key department contacts, visit [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aboutus.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aboutus.html).

## We Value Your Input!

Would you like to share some of your facility's ideas or tell us about a program or celebration at your facility? Would you like to share a quote about why you love being an early childhood educator? Email us at [CDCInfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:CDCInfo@gov.mb.ca) with the subject line "ELCC Newsletter" and you could be featured in our next edition.

### For general inquiries about the Early Learning and Child Care Division

**Website:** [www.manitoba.ca/childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/childcare)

**Email:** [cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca)

**Phone:** 204-945-0776

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