

# WINTER 23/24 E-NEWSLETTER



## Meet Program Coordinator, Amaka Amadike!

Hello all, it is with great joy and excitement that I welcome you to our quarterly newsletter! I am thrilled to inform you of the exciting news in this edition.

We have included upcoming cultural celebrations and recent events for you. A community conversation continuing in the new year is highlighted here. Did you participate in the National Child's Convention with ARCQE in November? Read this newsletter and follow the links for highlights of the event. If your program qualifies for this project in Southern Alberta and you have not contacted us, what are you waiting for? Contact us immediately through the ARCQE website, or click the link to sign up.

I am happy to be on this journey with you all and looking forward to the great things we can do together. I wish everyone a fantastic start to their New Year!

- Project Coordinator (PC)  
Amaka Amadike

## SELF REFERRAL FORM

Enhance & support culturally responsive practices in your early learning program. Fill out the **Self Referral Form** and hear back from our project coordinator to see how you can get unique support and resources.

## MENTOR TRAINING

Cultural Mentors meet in Southern AB for intensive 2-day training opportunity to deepen your understanding of cultural diversities, supporting newcomers, and honouring Indigenous and Metis communities. Cultural Mentors aid programs in developing philosophies and aligning front line practice and program values. Contact PC Amaka today! [amendy7200@gmail.com](mailto:amendy7200@gmail.com)

## National Child Day Conference

Thank you to those who attended ARCQE's 14th annual National Child Day Conference! Many connections were made and attendees learnt from amazing speakers. If you attended, thank you! Next year is being planned to be bigger and better. Stay tuned!



## ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

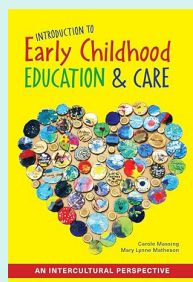
Answer 5 questions in **CCC's Engagement Questionnaire** to help accomplish this and get entered to win a CCC Resource!

**ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**  
ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS!



## COMMUNITY CONVERSATION JAN. 24, 2024

Programs shared interest in further supporting outdoor play and creating culturally responsive environments in connection to the Principles and Matters to be considered. To support this interest, CCC is facilitating a Community Conversation on the Introduction to Early Childhood Education & Care: An Intercultural Perspective.



Join us on **January 24, 2024** in reading **Chapter 9- Creating Environments for Play from an Introduction to Early Childhood and Care: An Intercultural Perspective**. We will discuss highlights from the chapter, and how to implement strategies in our practice and philosophies!



## FEATURE RESOURCE

In a world rich with diversity, let's weave a tapestry of unity by celebrating the vibrant hues of our differences. We live in a wonderfully diverse world with people of different cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles. We should embrace and celebrate our differences rather than fearing or rejecting them. The article "Promoting an appreciation and celebration of our differences" by Donna Housman reminds us that we can create a more inclusive and harmonious society where everyone feels valued and respected early in life.

She talks about emotions being our first language and the critical connector that unites us all. As she explains how children can learn to understand differences, she mentions that children are not born with understanding and essential differences in judgement skills. Still, they learn them, and learning and managing one's emotions and responding to others is the basis for developing the ability to accept and embrace differences. Let's remember that.

How are you supporting children in learning and understanding differences in early childhood? Please read this article to learn important factors and strategies to engage with so we can harmonize in the beautiful melody of appreciation of our differences.

## RECOMMENDED ARTICLE

## MEET A MENTOR

My name is Julia Kunz and I was born and raised in Lethbridge. I am a mother of 4 and have been working as an ECE for 15 years serving children and families in a variety of ECE settings. I am an advocate for outdoor play and think outdoors is the best place for educators and children to start on their CCC journeys. I am also enjoying supporting educators' with their reflective practice and documenting their successes.



## INSPIRATION & REFLECTION

### RECOGNIZING HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS ACROSS CANADA'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

CCC would like to highlight celebrations going on in your program! What do you, your team members, and families celebrate? Contact CCC Program Coordinator Amaka Amadike at [amendy7200@gmail.com](mailto:amendy7200@gmail.com) to share. We would love to highlight them in our upcoming edition. Below is a list of celebrations across diverse cultures that gives information on celebrations happening around this time of the year in Southern Alberta.

#### Winter Celebrations of Canada's Indigenous Peoples

The winter solstice falls on December 21, the "shortest day of the year" with the least amount of total daylight. For thousands of years, First Nations communities around the world have recognized the winter solstice as a day of celebration, ritual, and tradition. Blackfoot First Nations of Treaty 7 territory in Southern Alberta saw the solstice as the return of the sun, as each day it remains for a little bit longer. Celebrations often focused less on spiritual ceremony and more on games, community dances, and feasts. Many elders have shared stories of visiting different communities throughout Blackfoot territory, each with their own unique styles of drumming, singing, and dancing.

#### Kwanzaa

This African-American holiday isn't religious or spiritual—rather, it's a cultural holiday celebrating African heritage. It lasts for seven days, from December 26 to January 1, and each day a candle is lit on the "kinara"—a candelabrum similar to the menorah used in Hanukkah.

#### Bodhi Day

Different communities recognize this Buddhist holiday on different days, depending on their calendar. Japanese Buddhists celebrate Bodhi Day on the same date every year: December 8. However, it changes each year for Mahayana Buddhists who follow the Chinese lunar calendar. Bodhi Day celebrations will also fall on December 8 this year. Bodhi Day is a celebration recognizing the Buddha's awakening and enlightenment, achieved under the bodhi tree. To celebrate, people decorate trees with colourful lights, but instead of the evergreens we see at Christmas, they'll use a Ficus tree. The lights symbolize the many different paths to Nirvana, as well as our interconnectedness.

#### Hanukkah

Jewish communities will celebrate the Festival of Lights from December 18 to 26 this winter. It honours the purification and rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees after the Jewish people defeated the Greek Syrians in 165 BC. During the battle, the Temple's candelabrum burned for eight days and nights, despite only having enough oil remaining to last for one day. This miracle is recognized by the ritual lighting of the menorah. It holds eight candles—one to light for each day of the festival.



**SOUTHERN ALBERTA SUPPORT!**