

Frequently Asked Questions

Learning Outside Together: Incorporating traditional wisdom & promising practices to futureproof child care programs (LOT)

General program information:

What is the Learning Outside Together (LOT) program?

The LOT program is an online professional development opportunity for Early Childhood Educators.

What will I learn?

The program will cover a multitude of topics that will help early childhood educators become enthusiastic and more confident about bringing their ECE practices outside.

Participants will watch videos, read, listen and reflect on:

- Indigenous traditional knowledge and wisdom
- Concepts of land as teacher
- How educators adapt their practices to the different seasons
- How to talk and work with licensing officers, managers, and parents
- Ways to improve your outdoor spaces
- How to explore alternative outdoor spaces for your program
- Sustainability practices
- Honoring the land and traditional territories
- The role of the educator
- and much much more!

Who is the LOT program for?

Educators who have an ECE Basic certificate and are currently working in child care and early learning in British Columbia.

Does it matter where I live or where I work?

All ECEs working in BC are welcome to apply. It doesn't matter if you live in an urban, rural or remote setting. As long as you can access the internet! (And if you can't please let us know, we may be able to help.)

Who made the LOT program?

The LOT program is a partnership between ECEBC, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society and the non-profit Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. The project partners are supported by a Steering Committee comprised of experts, Elders, and passionate educators. The content for the LOT program

includes interviews from 24 Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, was developed by Dr. Enid Eliot and numerous individuals provided additional feedback and insight (including our colleagues at Metis Nation BC). It took a community to develop this course and we are incredibly grateful to all those who generously provided their time, stories, wisdom, and insights.

Costs, certificates and accessibility:

Is the LOT program free?

Yes, the LOT program is free right now thanks to funding from Future Skills Centre Canada and an anonymous donor.

How much time will it take?

We estimate you will need to commit to three hours each week over a period of 12 weeks.

Every week there will be an hour of online learning, an hour of exploring your outdoor space, and an hour of online meetings with your small group and peer mentor.

What if I have issues accessing internet / devices for accessing internet?

Please consider applying and letting us know any relevant details. We should be able to help, but we need to know what you need!

How can you teach an online course about land as teacher and moving your ECE practice outdoors?

We made the choice to put the program online so that we can reach as many people across the province as possible. Each week you will be asked to go outdoors (in your local area), to observe and reflect. You will then come back inside and meet with a small group online. We hope that this format is successful. We will be learning from the experiences of the first groups and adapting as needed.

Will I receive a professional development certificate for participating in the LOT participant program?

Yes, you will receive a Pro-D certificate for 32 hours.

Timelines and time commitments

When does this program start and end?

The first cohort will start in the beginning of March 2022 and end in May 2022.

There are 10 weeks of content, one week of a break, and a celebration at the end.

The break will be scheduled at a time convenient for most of the group members.

I want to participate but I am away for a week, can I still participate?

Yes! Please apply and note this in your application. As each small group can choose a “break week”, we should be able to accommodate your schedule.

How much time do I need to commit?

Each week there will be approximately 1 hour of self-paced learning, 1 hour of reflection outdoors, and a 1 hour meeting with your mentor group.

Can I work at my own pace?

Yes. However, the online component and outdoor component must be completed before your weekly check-in with your small group.

When does the small group meet?

The small group meeting will be scheduled at a time that works for everyone in the group.

What if I can't join now. Will you offer this program again?

Yes! We expect to have a group start each spring and fall (until 2023).

After the program & Mentoring opportunities

Will I be in a community of practice?

Yes. You will be in a small group with a mentor (3-7 people). As a group you can decide whether or not you want to keep in touch after the program is completed.

Who are the mentors?

The mentors will be ECE's from across the province who have the skills and interest in mentoring participants and facilitating group discussion. They are your peers.

Can I become a mentor?

You are welcome to apply to be a mentor after you complete the LOT program.

Do mentors receive training or support?

Yes. There is a 7-week mentorship program to give ECEs the skills and knowledge to support and mentor their peers.

Mentors meet weekly during the 7-week program to ask questions, share thoughts, reflections and experiences.

Mentors will continue to meet weekly, as a group, to support each other as they support the ECEs going through the 10 week LOT project.

(This means that during the 10 week LOT project mentors have two meetings per week: one with the other mentors and one with their small group of participants)

Who made the mentorship program?

This project is a partnership between ECEBC, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society and the non-profit Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. The project partners are supported by a Steering Committee

comprised of experts, Elders, and passionate educators. The content for the mentorship program includes interviews from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, was developed by Liz Brown and Karolyn Hendra. Numerous individuals provided additional feedback, insight and support of Liz Williams. It took a community to develop this course and we are incredibly grateful to all those who generously provided their time, stories, wisdom, and insights.

Is the mentorship training program free?

Yes, it is free right now thanks to the funding provided by Future Skills Centre Canada and an anonymous donor.

Is there compensation for being a mentor?

Yes! Mentors will receive a professional development certificate for 20 hours as well as an honorarium.

Evaluation:

Who is doing the evaluation and how will I be involved?

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, a non-profit and partner on the Learning Outside Together project, will be conducting an evaluation. They will be using quantitative and qualitative data collection through surveys and interviews. These will be distributed pre and post program implementation with an additional 3-month follow up survey.

Why am I being evaluated?

You are not being evaluated, our program is!

Evaluation is carried out to evaluate and improve the online program and to evaluate the short and long term impact the Learning Outside Together program has made to educators practice across BC.

How will my information be stored?

SRDC handles and stores participant data appropriately and securely within Canada. Only authorized SRDC staff and contractors have access to SRDC's corporate network infrastructure, and permission to access individual files is granted based on a need-to-know basis. The survey platforms being used for this project (Voxco and Qualtrics) are compliant with all privacy protection legislations in Canada.

Each time SRDC collects data it provides an informed consent process. This process describes how data will be collected, stored, and used. SRDC provides a toll-free helpline and email support to answer further questions. Its practices comply with privacy principles and requirements of federal and provincial legislation and Treasury Board policies. It holds Facility Security Clearance at the Secret level and Document Safeguarding Capability up to the Protected B level. SRDC's clearance was renewed in 2009 indefinitely. SRDC has been subject to several external data and security audits over the years and met requirements on each occasion.

Additionally, Learnbase will store basic contact information from participants who register on the Early year's professional development Hub (where you will access the online content).

Will my information be shared?

We will not share your name or personal details without your informed consent.

We will share the impact of the project with the funders and others who are interested. We will make sure that you cannot be identified within these documents.

We may share quotes you have given us (but only with your permission).