



# Community Of Practice

On behalf of Communities Together for Children and the TBDSSAB, we are excited to introduce a different style of professional development to the Early Years Community within the District of Thunder Bay.

Communities of Practice (COP) are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning and professional development. The focus of COP is to reflect on our work as Early Childhood Professionals. As outlined in Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, critical reflection is a part of our role. Moreover, *How Does Learning Happen?*, states that "A process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of high-quality programs that continuously improve and create contexts that are meaningful for the children and families/caregivers they serve... Through critical reflection, educators test long-standing views and taken-for-granted practices and consider new approaches and ways of thinking about their work (2014, p. 20). These COP sessions will be a great way to examine our values and beliefs about working with children, network with others who may have solutions to or be experiencing similar challenges, and to stay current on information and trends in Early Childhood Education.

For our COP sessions, we will allot a 2-hour time period and allow a maximum of 15 registrants so that everyone has a chance to participate. These sessions will occur on a monthly basis, however educators can attend as many or as few sessions as they wish. At these sessions, we would encourage educators to always bring photos, documentation, observations, and other items that may be relevant to the topic of the month. These items will help to lead the discussions and learning that will take place.

When participating in a COP session, we would expect the following etiquette to be adhered to:

- Act professionally and in a respectful manner
- Comments and suggestions are non-judgemental and are given tactfully
- Conversations will revolve around the topic of the month (unless the group collectively agrees to change topics)
- Confidentiality is adhered to

For further information or to register for a COP session, please contact Jodi or Kelly. Please note that WebEx is available for all COP sessions.

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