



**Manitoba Child**  
Care Association

# South Central Manitoba Child Care Association Presents Spring Conference 2026!



Annual South Central Conference  
June 12, 2026  
831 Thornhill St., Morden

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**Manitoba Child**  
Care Association

Our mission is to advocate for a quality system of child care, to advance early learning and child care education as a profession, and provide services to our members.

Our vision is to promote and support an exceptional and inclusive early learning and child care system by fueling members to be proud and excited to belong to a progressive, respected profession.

## Membership Benefits/Services



- Resource library
- Advocacy
- Professional Development
- Networking
- Reduced fees for workshops & conferences
- Information about early learning and childcare
- Discounts at select stores and events!
- Subscription to Child Care Bridges Magazine
- Group Benefits program
- Pension Plan
- Liability Insurance
- Directors and Officers Liability Insurance
- Affiliate Membership with the Canadian Child Care Federation

# Important Information!

To sign up for workshops please fill out the registration form on page 11. When filling out the registration please clearly mark the workshop code for workshops that you wish to attend.

All completed registration forms must be received by May 5, 2026. Please send completed registration to:

[mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com)

Please note - we are no longer able to process group orders submitted on a single form. Each person that wishes to attend must fill out an individual registration form.

The workshop “Managing Different Generations” is intended only for those in management positions and runs for the entire day. Frontline workers should pick from the Morning and Afternoon workshops. If a workshop is full, people will be registered for their second choice so please make sure to have a second choice.

If payment has not been arranged by June 9 you may not be able to attend. Please contact us at [mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com) with any questions.

Half day attendees do not receive lunch.

We are able to accommodate the following dietary restrictions:

- Vegetarian
- Vegan
- Halal
- Gluten Free
- Lactose Free

If you require one of these meal accommodations make sure to mark it on your registration form. Restricted diet meals will be ordered according to registrations that indicate them. Extra dietary accommodations may be available but cannot be guaranteed.

When you sign in and receive your registration information the day of conference it will include information about dietary accommodations.

Registration will run from **8:15 AM-8:45 AM**. Please arrive early in order to make sure that you are able to sign in and receive all the information that you will need for your day of workshops.

Registration will be organized by last name, with stations labeled by letter ranges. When you give your name at registration you'll receive a paper with information about the workshops you'll be attending, lunch, and details related to the Annual General Meeting.

Once you are registered, please enjoy the morning coffee and snacks, then make your way into the sanctuary. There will be a message from the Manitoba Child Care Association from 8:45-9:15. Workshops will begin at 9:30, please ensure that you are in the room for the correct workshop before they begin.

Please remember to be respectful of all those presenting; talking during presentations is disruptive to all. We want to ensure that our presenters have the best experience with us and that all those who are eager to learn are able to do so free from distractions.

**On the day of conference, it may be helpful to bring...**

- Something to write with
- Something to take notes on
- Your excitement to learn!

Cost for MCCA members for a single workshop is \$25.00, and full day attendance is \$50.00. Non-members single workshop price is \$50.00 and \$100.00 for full day.

Payment is accepted through cheque or e-transfer.

Cheques may be mailed to Box 37, Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, ROG 1M0.

E-transfer can be sent to [mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com](mailto:mccasouthcentralregion@gmail.com)

Our Annual General Meeting will be held during lunch once everyone is seated at their tables.

# Morning Workshops

## **AM-01 Positive Behaviour Management Through Building Positive Relationships with Children and Co-Workers**

Managing children's behaviour is one of the biggest challenges we have as early childhood educators.

We will start by looking at what we believe about children and the people who care for them. From there, we go on a journey exploring all the aspects of our programs and how they affect children's behaviour, both positive and negative. In this workshop, we look at children's behaviours through various lenses to understand the impact on children, we will also review Circle of Security concepts.

We want to be able to set everyone up for success.

Presented by: Cindy Curry

## **AM-02 Because it has a Song**

"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song."

-Maya Angelou

In my work and collaboration with kids, I have learned that the best adult in a child's life is the one who listens to their songs and is moved by them. Now I am not meaning their actual music but their ideas, wisdom and ways of being and living. A song so powerful that it makes you different than what you were before and deeply affects your practice and beliefs as an educator.

We often hear how our work should be 'child led' but aside from curriculum and activities, where is the 'child led' in the rest of the child care community? How much of an influence do the children have on the physical space, routines, practices and experiences offered? How are children's voices and songs inspiring and changing how we work today? How are their rights manifested here?

This workshop will explore through stories, experiences and laughs, questions and songs, how we can evolve our 20th century standards and practice to support the needs and passions of 21st century kids simply by being willing accomplices who listen to them.

Presented by: Marc Battle

### **AM-03 Kickstart Outdoor & Risky Play in Your Program**

We will have a brief introduction about why outdoor and risky play are important for all ages and then move on to how to build a foundation for a program that prioritizes outdoor play including risky play as an important part of child development. You will get tips on how to make these things a reality in your program while still following licensing guidelines and keeping the children safe and happy! If you've ever wondered how Forest School programs are allowed to have 3 year olds who use knives and start fires- this is the workshop for you!

Presented by: Corine Anderson

### **AM-04 Mental Health**

This workshop is specifically tailored for child care professionals across Manitoba. This session focuses on practical, "in-the-moment" regulation tools and long-term burnout prevention. It will explore Somatic Grounding, The wellness Compass, Emotional Intelligence, The Change Triangle and creating an individual Self-Care Blueprint. Participants will leave feeling validated, lighter, and equipped with a personal roadmap for the season ahead!

Presented by: Kelly Vipond

### **AM-05 Best Choices: Ethics Part IV**

Important Note: On May 22, 2025, a revised Code of Ethics was ratified by the MCCA membership. As a result, the ethics workshop series will be revised to reflect the new code and will include updated content. This is a chance for you to complete your ethics journey.

In Manitoba and Canada, those who work in early learning and child care environments have a Code of Ethics to guide our standards of practice. Using this code is a professional obligation. This four-part series occurs in a specific order, with each workshop a pre-requisite for the following session. The series helps us to use this code in our daily practice and continues to receive rave reviews. Here's your chance to join us in some serious fun!

This capstone workshop will help you to make a commitment of ethical practice in your daily work and enhance your awareness of your own values, beliefs and assumptions. You will also understand why, when faced with an ethical dilemma, it is difficult to follow through with your best choice. Bring your binder or handouts from Part III and your ethics certificate to receive your Part IV sticker.

Presented by: Michele Grant & Monica Lytwyn

# Afternoon Workshops

## **PM-01 Just Let Them Play! A Journey in Understanding How Children Learn**

We have heard “Children learn best through play,” but what does this really mean? How do children learn through play?

Join me as we explore what exactly happens when children are allowed the time, space, and materials to play. We will look at developmental domains, curriculum areas, emergent curriculum, schema theory, risky play and how this all fits with children playing.

We will look at different kinds of activities and play environments. We will push the boundaries of traditional practices and dig deep into why we do what we do with children and where we might want to make some changes. And we will fit in some time to play!

Presented by: Cindy Curry

## **PM-02 More Than Words: Signing with Infants and Toddlers**

Discover the benefits of incorporating signs into your daily interactions with infants and toddlers. Signing empowers young children to communicate their needs and feelings before they can talk. These signs are tools to help reduce frustration, support emotional regulation, and build confidence in early communication.

In this engaging workshop, participants will explore practical strategies for implementing signs naturally throughout the day in early learning environments. Emphasis will be placed on creating meaningful, consistent opportunities for children to use signs in everyday routines.

Through a play-based approach, we will blend signs into songs, music, and storytelling. Participants will experience how signing can bring stories to life and deepen children’s engagement and understanding.

Each participant will receive a Little Signing Stars Step-by-Step Guide to support application beyond the workshop.

Presented by: Serena Yong

### **PM-03 Gardening with Children**

Learn some gardening basics, tips, tricks and activities that you can do with your children to start growing and gardening with your group. This workshop will be a combination of instruction and some make and take activity time so come prepared to get messy!

Presented by: Corine Anderson

### **PM-04 Childhood Anxiety**

In this session you will learn about anxiety in young children. We will cover signs of anxiety and how it might present in children of different ages. We will talk about some of the types of anxiety, and which ones may be more likely to appear at certain ages or stages of development. This session will also look at strategies and tips to help, as well as things to avoid.

Presented by: Michelle Friesen

### **PM-05 Building Block II - Building and Ensuring Positive Self-Esteem**

Handle with Care is a program for promoting the mental health of you children in community-based child care. Developed by the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Toronto-based Hincks-Dellcrest Centre, this 9 unit program provides child care practitioners with ideas and strategies for promoting the mental health of children between ages 0–6.

Building Block 2 of the program centers around how fostering children's self-esteem involves helping them recognize and appreciate who they are and what they can do. Using a mix of small group activities and large group discussion, participants will learn how self-esteem is a central issue in children's development and mental health. As well, the importance of temperament, of both children and child care participants, will be explored.

Presented by: Michele Grant

## **MG-01 Managing Different Generations (full day)**

Please note; this workshop is suitable for Directors, Assistant Directors and Supervisors only.

Today's workforce includes four generations working alongside one another, each shaped by different values, communication styles, and life experiences. In a diverse and fast-paced environment, these differences can lead to misunderstanding, conflict, and reduced productivity if not well understood. This workshop helps participants explore how generational and cultural perspectives influence workplace relationships. You will identify key characteristics of each generation, examine common stereotypes and unconscious biases, and learn how these assumptions affect communication and teamwork.

Through practical strategies and discussion, you will strengthen your ability to engage, motivate, and collaborate with colleagues of all ages and backgrounds. The session also introduces communication techniques that support clarity, respect, and healthier workplace interactions.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Recognize generational values and work styles.
- Identify and challenge stereotypes and unconscious biases.
- Improve communication across generations and cultures.
- Apply strategies to build stronger, more productive workplace relationships.

Presented by: Melenie Olfert

# Presenter Biographies

**Cindy Curry** has been in the field of early childhood education for over 37 years. She is continuously advocating for play-based, inquiry-driven programs and children spending their days outdoors in all weather. As a college instructor at the University College of the North and workshop facilitator, she can find many opportunities to share the message of the importance of play.



**Michelle Friesen** is a school psychologist at Western School Division. She has been working as a school psychologist for more than a decade. Prior to that, she spent many years working with children in multiple settings including daycares, preschools, and with various agencies. Michelle studied child development along with psychology, and has undergraduate degrees in developmental studies and psychology along with her master's degree in educational psychology.

**Michele Grant** has been involved in Manitoba's early childhood community for many years as an early childhood practitioner, centre director, adult educator and volunteer. She is a past board member of both the MCCA and the CCCF and is a founding member and past chairperson of the MCCA Ethics Committee.

**Monica Lytwyn** is an ECE III with a Bachelor of Human Ecology and a Master of Education in Early Childhood Education (ECE). She is an original member and past chair of MCCA's Ethics Committee. Monica has worked in a number of capacities in early learning and child care (ELCC) over the years including as a volunteer, an Early Childhood Educator, a supervisor, a consultant, and even a policy analyst and supervisor in ELCC for the Province of Manitoba. She is currently an instructor in Early Childhood Education at Red River College Polytechnic.

**Corine Anderson** is the Director of Riverview Ashland Child Care Centre Inc., an ECE III and a Forest School Practitioner. She grew up in a forest in Saskatchewan (yes that's a thing) and has been living in Winnipeg and working in Early Learning & Child Care for about 25 years. She's a founding member of the Manitoba Nature Summit and sits on MCCA's Public Policy & Professionalism Committee. She's an advocate for regulated Outdoor & Land-based Early Learning in



Canada. When she's not nerding out about child care policy you can find her in a garden, sitting around a camp fire, reading a book, learning to cook a new food or travelling.

**Melenie Olfert** has worked for several years as a consultant sharing her knowledge and expertise through leadership projects and workplace training. With a background in adult education and training, Melenie is now a published writer, as well as an accomplished and certified speaker on workplace diversity, equity and inclusion, collaborative communication and leadership development. Further to her training experience, Melenie teaches with The University of Winnipeg's PACE program where her teaching background helps support the diversity of the Canadian workforce by bridging gaps and collaborating together for successful career and business growth.

**Michele Grant** has been a dedicated member of the early learning and care community for over 45 years. A passionate advocate for high-quality child care, she is committed to ensuring that all children receive the support they need to thrive. Michele has been actively involved in promoting Handle with Care, a program focused on fostering the mental health of children ages 0–6 in community-based child care settings. Through this work, she supports educators with practical strategies to nurture children's emotional well-being and development.

**Kelly Vipond** brings a wealth of diverse experience to her practice, having served as a teacher, coach, and school counsellor before transitioning into psychotherapy. Based in Morden, Manitoba at Kelly Vipond Mental Health Services, she specializes in the treatment of anxiety and depression. Kelly's mission is to provide a safe, confidential environment where clients can explore their internal worlds. By turning self-discovery into actionable change, she helps individuals build meaningful lives that truly align with their core values.

**Marc Battle** is an Early Childhood Education instructor at Red River College Polytechnic.

**Serena Yong** has over 15 years of experience teaching her Little Signing Stars program. She recognizes the powerful role visual communication can play in early childhood development.

Serena is passionate about helping caregivers and educators support language growth, reduce frustration, and strengthen connection with young children through the use of sign. She offers child care visits in the Winnipeg and has several resources available for use.



# Registration due May 5, 2026

No refunds after May 15, 2026

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MCCA #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Half day attendees do not receive lunch**

Dietary restrictions:  Vegetarian       Lactose free       Halal  
 Vegan       Gluten free

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Morning Sessions

1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

## Afternoon Sessions

1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

## Purchase Options

	<u>MCCA Member</u>	<u>Non Member</u>
Half Day	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00
Full Day	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00

Your total cost for the day: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment must be made in full by June 9th**

Centre Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Centre Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_