



Putting the Public into Early Learning and Child Care

Panel Three: Policy Research Informing Best Practice

December 1 2023



Dr. Jessie-Lee McIsaac
Associate Professor
Canada Research
Chair, Early Childhood:
Diversity and
Transitions

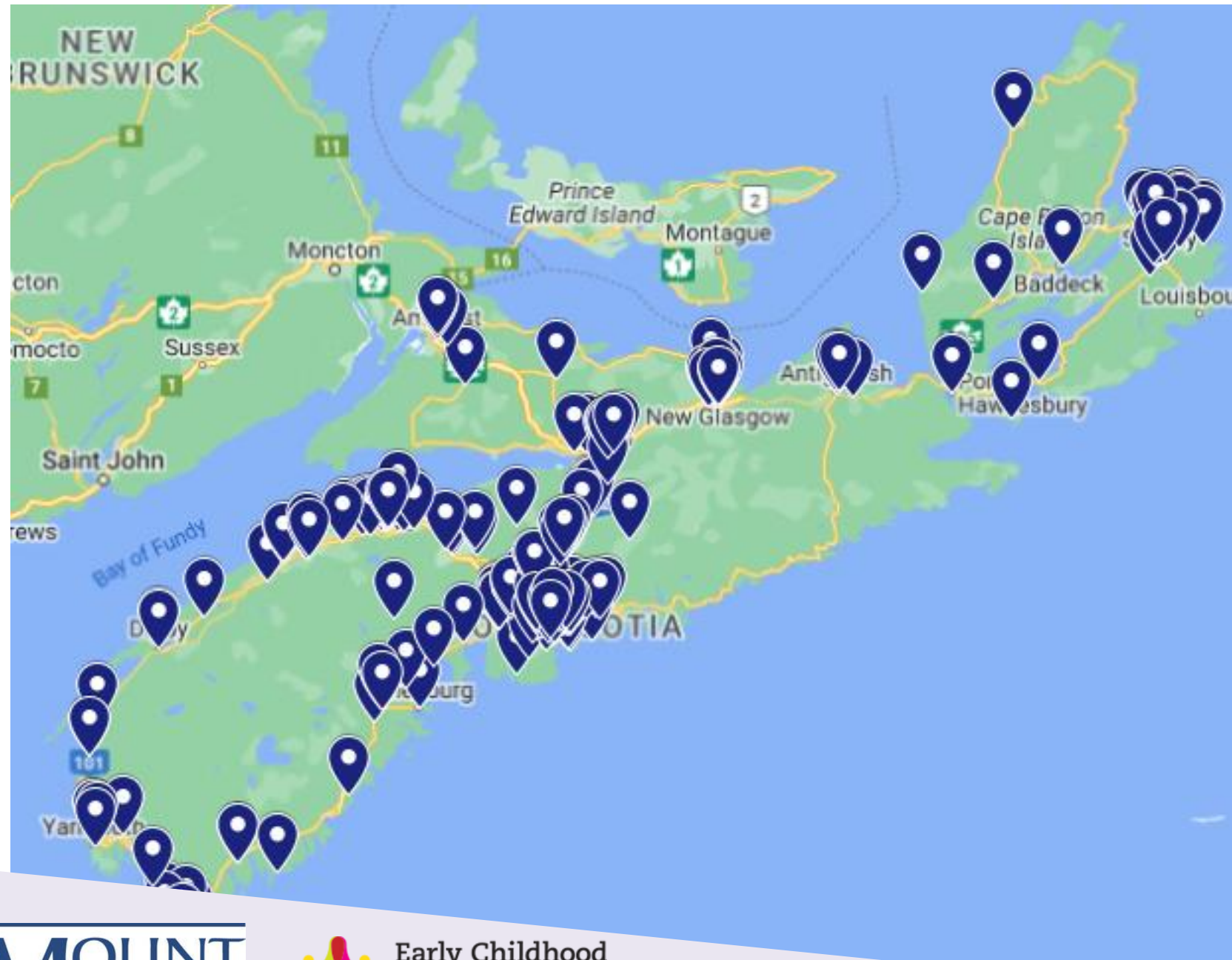
Enhancing access to early learning and child care

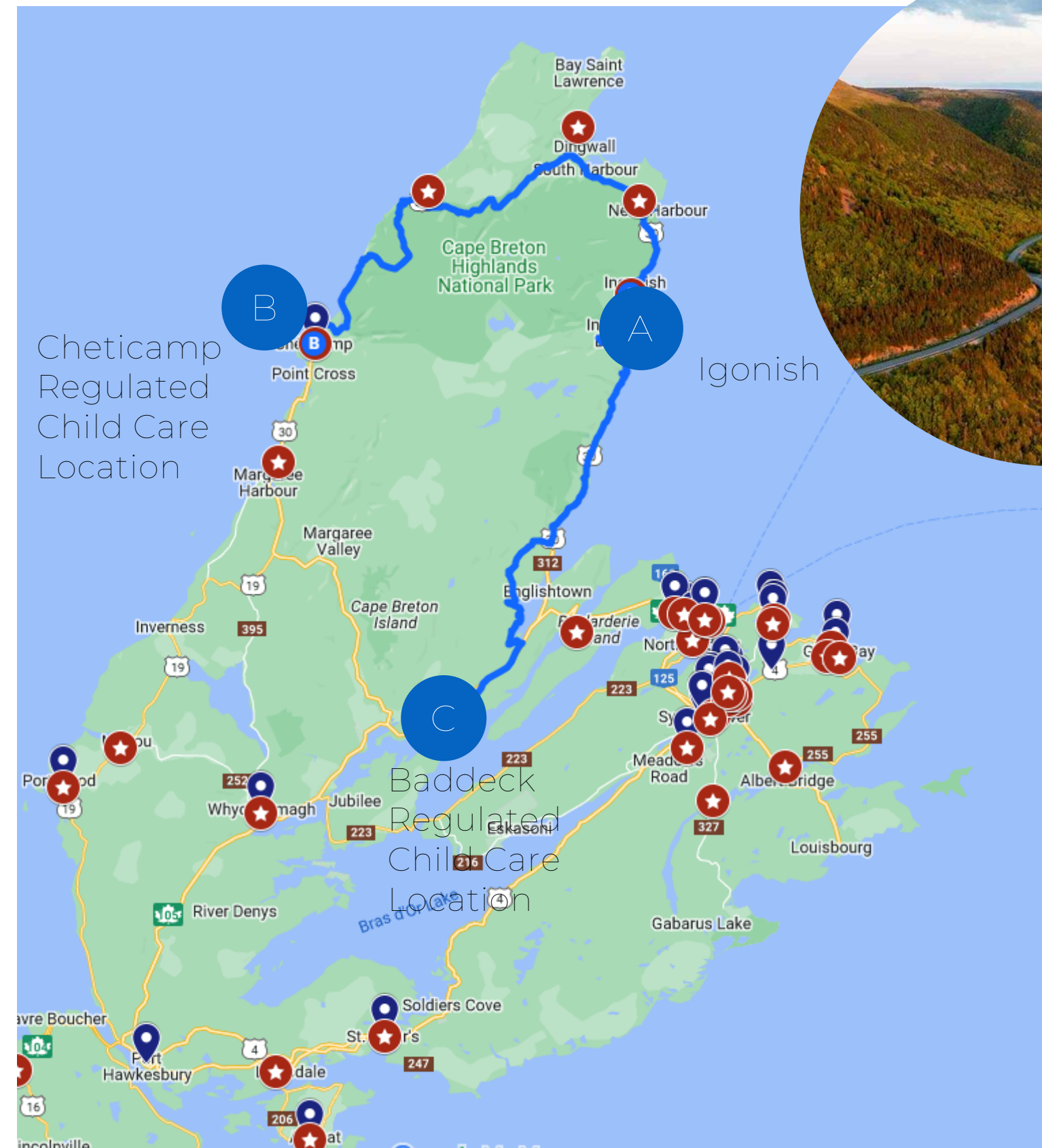


297 child care centres with infant, toddler, and preschool age groups (including 14 Family home agencies).



253 Pre-primary locations





A case example of child care gaps from a family living in Ingonish, Cape Breton (point A).

- Cape Breton-Canso has historically high rates of poverty.

To access child care, travel is ~ 1.5 hrs to Cheticamp (point B) or ~1.2 hrs to Baddeck (point C).

- Much further travel is required for infant care
- Access depends on available spaces
- No public transportation is available and the route can be difficult during the winter months

To access Pre-primary, travel is ~25 minutes -

- Universal access to a space
- Bus transportation is provided
- *Before and after school care may be available.*

 Regulated Child Care Centres

 252 Pre-primary locations

*Please note this map does not include day home centres

Value of school-based early learning program

- Ease of access for parents – **all** children are welcome and supported
- Supported familiarity, transition and connection to school community
- Informed parents of the value of play-based early learning through communication with early childhood educators



Journal of Child and Family Studies
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02214-9>

ORIGINAL PAPER



The Perceived Value of a Universal Early Learning Program: A Parent Perspective

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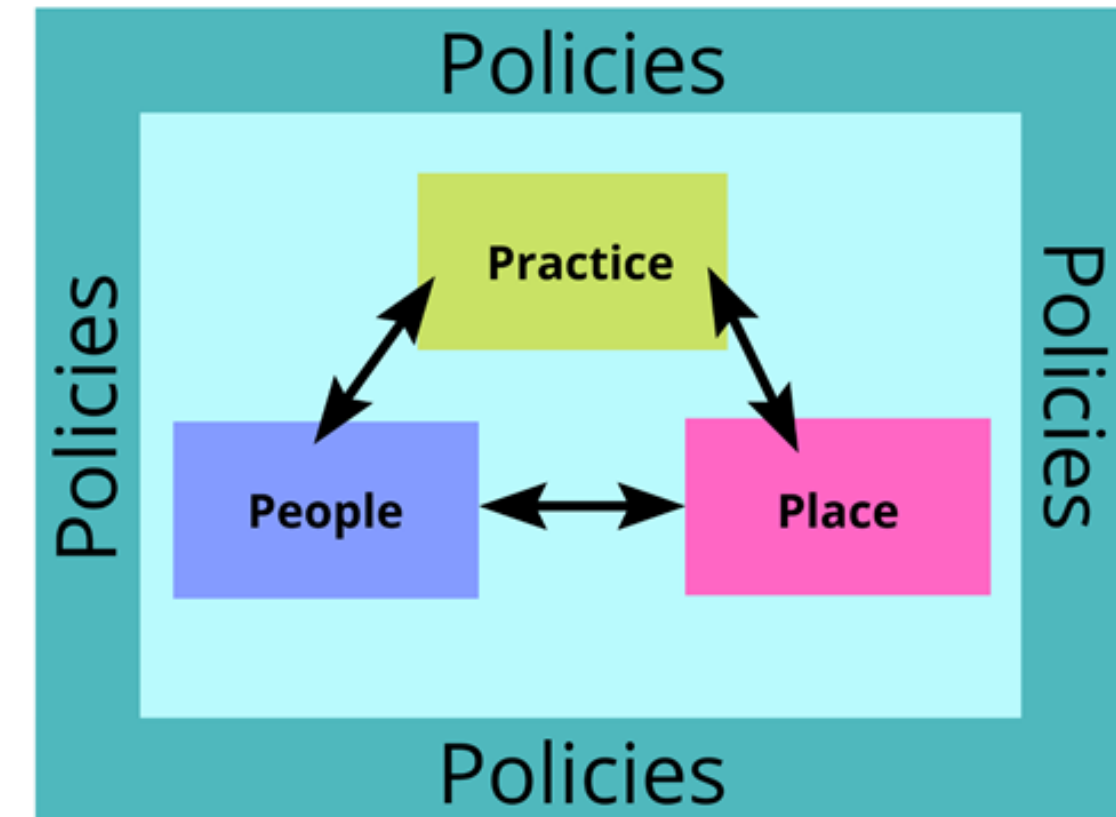
Families' Experiences of a Universal Play-based Early Childhood Program in Nova Scotia: Implications for Policy and Practice

Patrick L. Carolan^a, Jessie-Lee D. McIsaac^{b,c}, Brenna Richard^b, Joan Turner^b, and Christine McLean^b

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Describing quality in school-based programs

- **Policies:** Government investment, regulation and standards, assessment and evaluation
- **Practice:** Pedagogy, adult-child ratios and class sizes, educator-to-child interactions, **inclusion and diversity**
- **Place:** Learning environment, location, dosage
- **People:** Educator qualifications and experience, professional development and training, wages and working conditions, **partnerships with administrative staff, teachers, and principals** involvement of families and communities



A Scoping Review of Quality in Early Childhood Publicly-Funded Programs

Christine McLean^{1,2} · Jessie-Lee D. McIsaac^{1,2,3} · Oriana Mooney² · Sarah B. Morris² · Joan Turner^{1,2}

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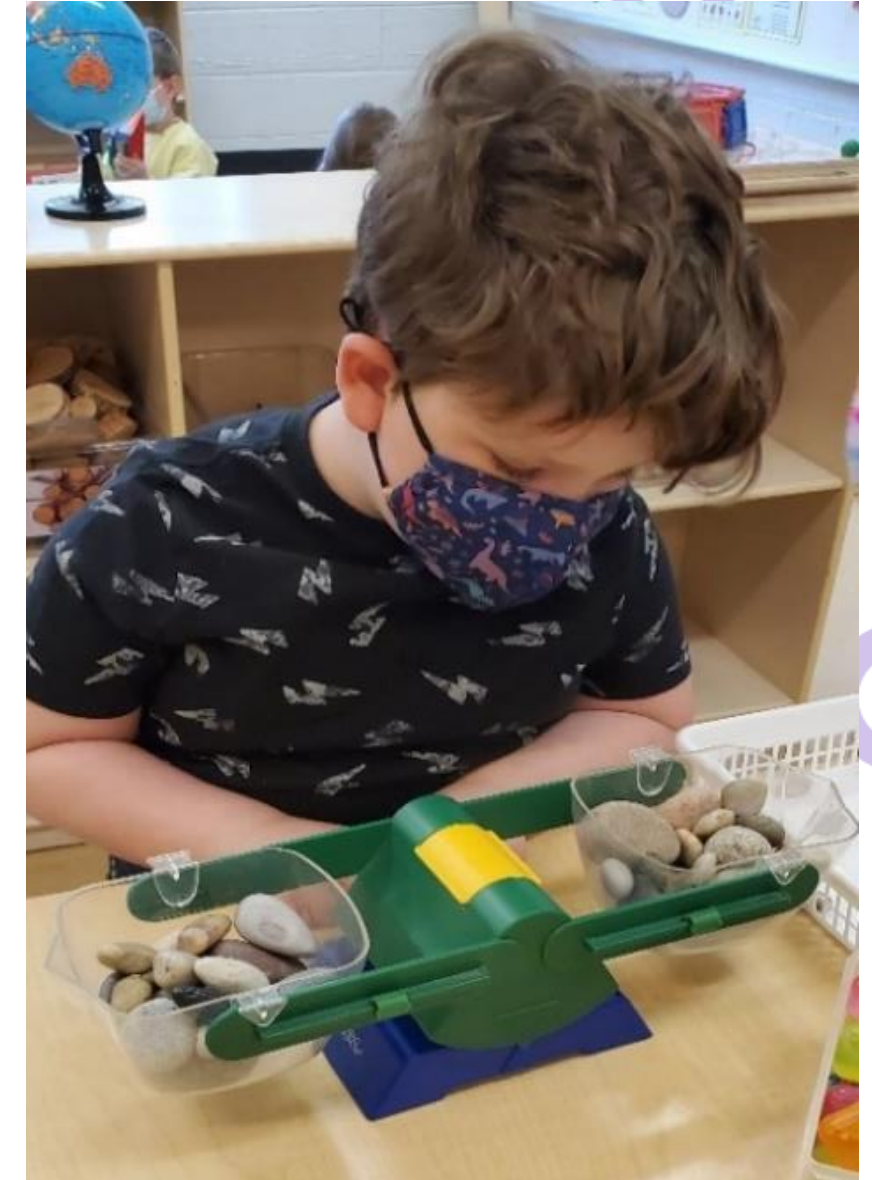
Abstract

Defining quality in early learning and child care (ELCC) settings is complex. With an increased emphasis on universal ELCC systems to support greater access for families, research is needed to provide clarity on the concepts that contribute

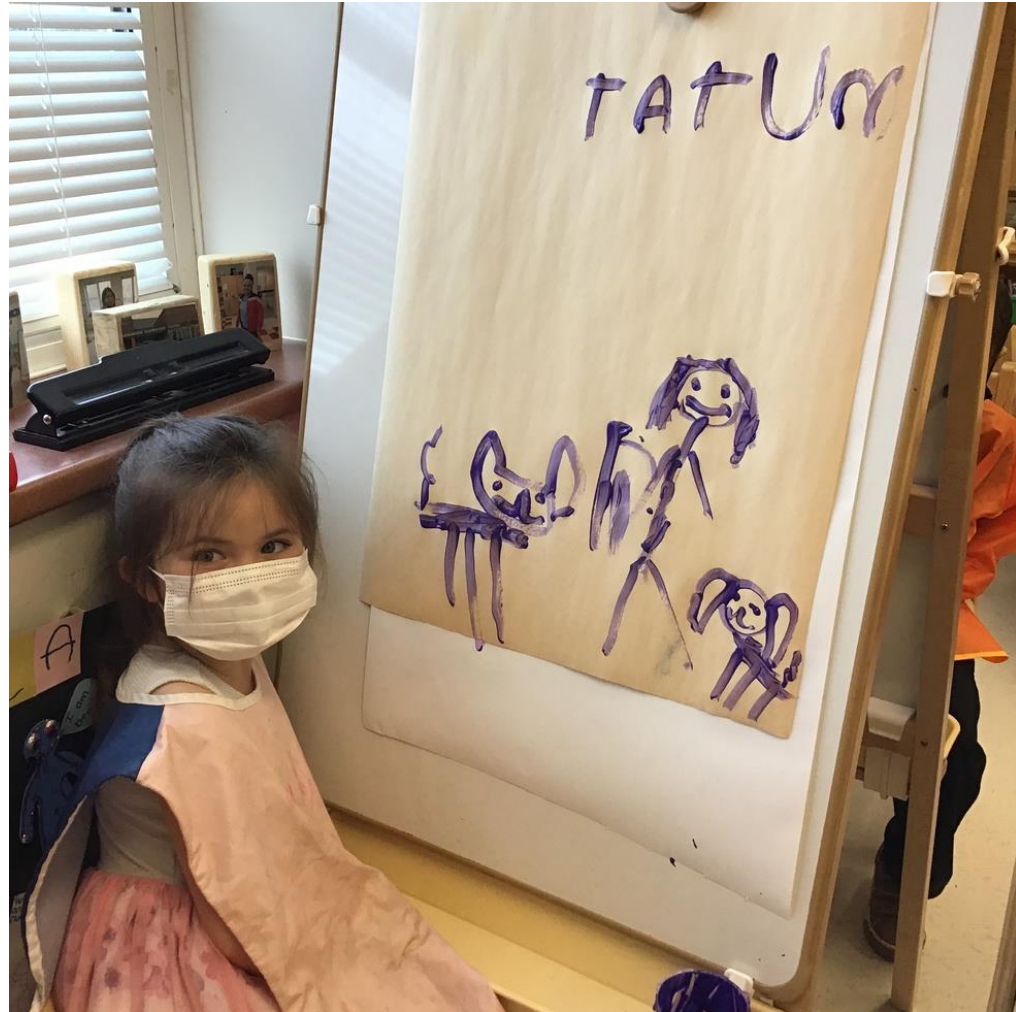


Making learning visible through play

- With early learning in school there can be a view that learning for school achievement is separate and different than what can be achieved through play – can create tension for early learning play-based programs in schools
- Our study aimed to make numeracy and literacy visible in play through pedagogical documentation
- Three groups of Pre-primary educators (n = 17)
 - Rural, Francophone, African Nova Scotian, or Black educators and communities



BLACK AND AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN COMMUNITIES



Expression through paint

"We were having a group discussion about feelings. After, the child in the photo walked to the art materials and decided that she wanted to paint. When she was painting, she talked at great length about how much she loves her cat and dog, and how her favourite colour is purple. She also wrote her name. This story went on for about 15 minutes, if not longer. It just got so big, and it all stemmed from feelings..."



Community Connections

"They were asking: 'Why are there numbers on these houses?'. And when I asked them if they had seen the same number on different houses, they replied 'no, they're all different.' I explained why each house was unique, and then they began making connections with numbers in real life. We found numbers everywhere - on cement trucks, transit buses, apartment buildings, and a variety of street signs. This activity also extended their literacy knowledge with some new vocabulary such as "apartment, university, pharmacy and transit".

FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITIES

Please note all quotes have been translated from French and are therefore not exact quotations.



Accessible Materials

She found a lead pencil broken on the ground and she began to write on a rock. She went to get a reference because she did not remember how to do the letters herself. Then she did the whole alphabet on her big rock. There were lots of others who followed, some followed with the letters of their names, and others just did drawings.

Matériaux accessibles

«Elle a trouvé un crayon de plomb par terre cassé. Puis elle a commencé à écrire sur une roche [...] elle est allée chercher une référence parce qu'elle se souvenait pas comment faire [les lettres] elle-même, puis elle a continué comme ça. Puis elle a fait l'alphabet au complet sur sa grosse roche. Il y avait plein d'autres qui ont suivi, certaines ont suivi avec les lettres leurs noms, d'autres ont juste fait des dessins.»



Labelling Nature

*...it's not important what she wrote, the words, the specific letters, or even the images that she drew, it's not that at all. It's the idea that what they put on paper is their way of sharing their knowledge with other people, even if sometimes for some students, they don't understand that is what they are doing. But that, that's power.**

Étiqueter La Nature

«...ce n'est pas important qu'est-ce qu'elle a écrit, les mots ou les lettres spécifiques qu'elle a écrites ou même les images, c'est pas ça du tout. Ce que je trouve qui est important dans ça c'est qu'elle a appris que 'ce que je mets sur le papier là, ça, c'est ma façon de partager mes connaissances avec d'autres personnes', même si des fois pour certaines élèves on ne l'a pas compris, mais ça, c'est du pouvoir.»

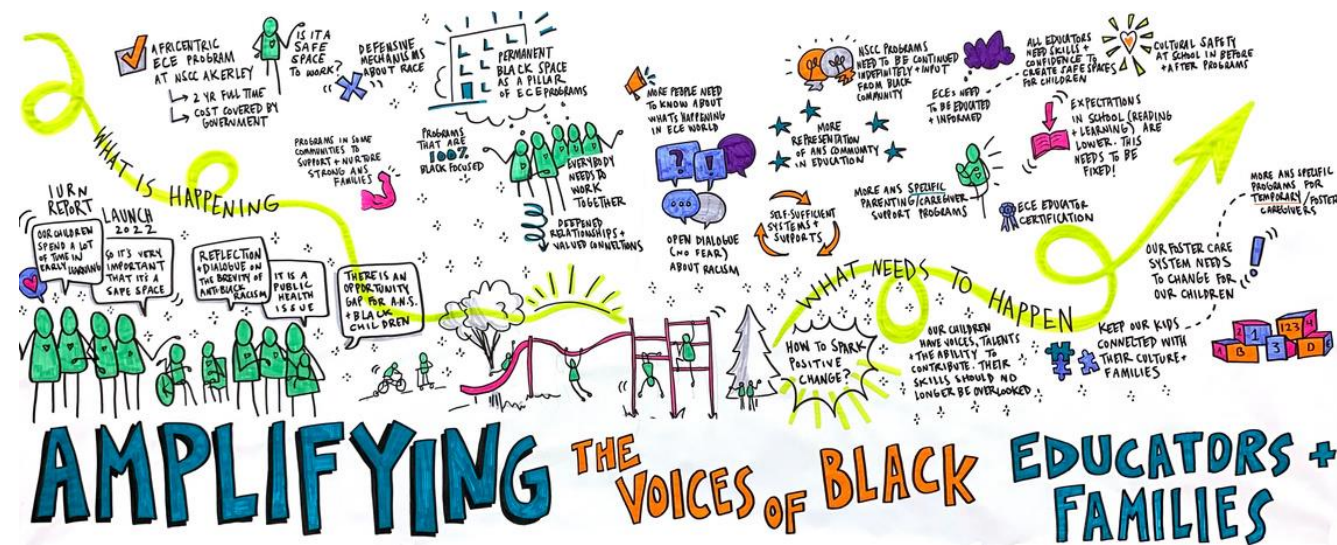
Anti-Black racism in early childhood

- Intergenerational impacts of racism
- Children precluded from culturally safe environments
- The importance of positive self-identity and cultural pride

"In my children's daycare there was this picture of emotions right and then there's a picture of emotions like sad, happy, grumpy, whatever, you know, angry, and the Black kid was angry."

"My wife is often sitting with my daughter, and she's telling her about her hair, she's telling her about her skin colour, and reminding her about the proud families that she came from."

-Parent



<https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.43.8.01>

Original qualitative research

Anti-Black racism in the early years: the experiences of Black families and early childhood educators in Nova Scotia

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Thank you

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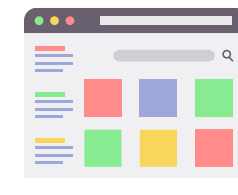
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