

Kindergarten & School-Age Conference 2026

Please join us at
Limberlost Place, 185 Queens Quay East
March 28, 2026
9:00 am - 4:00 pm



*Explore topics that underscore the quality in the
Kindergarten & School-Age experience!*

Day at a Glance:

8:30 AM

Registration

9:00 AM

Welcome

9:15 AM

Keynote: Landy Anderson

Topic: Ms. Anderson will explore the lifelong impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and discuss the importance of countering early trauma through positive childhood experiences, resilience-building, and nurturing relationships. Drawing on Western and Indigenous perspectives, she will examine parental influence, social adjustment, and the central role of play, love, and belonging in supporting children's mental health and holistic well-being.

10:15 AM

Morning Workshops

(see "Workshops" for options)

12:00 PM

Anita Grant, Hello Hair: A Program Overview

Topic: Ms. Grant will share her personal story and explores how everyday moments, like hair care, can become powerful opportunities for learning and belonging.

12:30 PM

Lunch

1:45 PM

Keynote: Dr. Andrew B. Campbell (Dr. ABC)

Topic: Dr. ABC will illuminate the significance of fostering impactful connections among colleagues, stakeholders, and the broader community. This keynote examines strategies for intentional collaboration, prioritizing trust and communication. Together, we will delve into practical best practices reminders to establish and maintain these relationships, highlighting the role of equity, empathy, shared vision, leadership, and collective responsibility.

2:30 PM

Afternoon Workshops

(see "Workshops" for options)

4:00 PM

Closing

Keynote Speakers



Landy Anderson

**Director, Indigenous Strategy & Senior Advisor, Indigenous Relations,
George Brown Polytechnic**

Landy is mixed heritage Métis and Chinese and walks in two cultural worlds. Landy's Chinese name translates as 'beautiful jade,' and her Indigenous spirit name translates as 'one who brings the drum' or brings balance. She is Wolf Clan. Her Métis community is Gaspé Peninsula Lower Saint Lawrence and Magdalen Islands. Her career has been shaped by a commitment to anti oppressive practices, with a focus on systemic change to improve outcomes for Indigenous communities. She is deeply committed to education as a pathway out of poverty and has developed job readiness, training, and educational programs to help youth succeed and thrive. She has experience managing Indigenous education programs including Aboriginal Head Start, before and after school programs, alternative high school classrooms, and General Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs.

Landy holds credentials as a Child Care Worker from George Brown College and advanced degrees, including a Master of Education with a focus on Urban Indigenous Education from York University and a Master of Social Work from Laurentian University. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Human Studies and Interdisciplinarity. Additionally, she teaches an Indigenous child and youth well-being course (Mino Bimaadsiwin) at Trent University. Landy is the author of *The Foster Parent Survival Guide: How to Navigate the Child Welfare Matrix* and *How to Care for a Traumatized Child*. She is also the founder of the Duty to Report Campaign – A Call to Action, which advocates for legislative changes following the inquest into Katelynn Sampson's tragic death, aiming to improve public awareness and accountability in reporting child abuse and neglect.



Andrew B. Campbell (Dr. ABC)

Educator, Advocate, Speaker, Coach, Storyteller & Author

Andrew B. Campbell (DR. ABC) is an Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, in Leadership for Racial Justice in Teacher Education in the Master of Teaching Program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto OISE. He is Coordinator for the Black Future Educators' Program (BFEP) and the newly appointed Director of the Centre for Black Studies in Education (CBSE). DR. ABC is known to the OISE and wider community for his leadership on advancing equity, leadership, 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and teacher education. DR. ABC's exemplary work has seen numerous awards bestowed to him, such as a 2024 recipient of the Black History Month Award, from the Jamaica Canadian Association; The 2022 Award for Excellence in Initial Teacher Education from University of Toronto; The 2021 Distinguish African Caribbean Award from University of Toronto, African Alumni Association; The 2021 Champion Educator Award from ONABSE (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators) and numerous others. He presently teaches courses in anti-discrimination education, leadership, educational change, urban education, and Black Educators' Identity and Pedagogy. He has presented at numerous conferences and has delivered many presentations as a keynote speaker, motivational speaker, and workshop facilitator. He loves people, food, fashion, travelling and bringing his community together for a good meal.

Special Guest Speaker



Anita Grant,
Author & Founder, *Hello Hair*

Anita Grant is the author and founder of Hello Hair, a social impact brand using hair as an entry point to support children's identity, confidence and sense of belonging. Inspired by her own lived experience and her journey into motherhood, Anita created Hello Hair to bridge the gap between hair care, culture and early learning. Through books, hands-on tools, and educational experiences, her work supports families and educators in nurturing whole-child well-being—rooted in care, representation, and connection.

Workshops - Morning

Workshop 1: Nature Connection - Principles & Practices

EverGreen Brickworks Staff

Description: Participants will explore essential principles and practices to fostering a deeper connection with nature and develop practical strategies for incorporating these fundamentals into their daily routines through experiential approaches to outdoor play and learning.

Workshop 2: From Chaos to Calm: Navigating Behaviour with Confidence in School-Age Programs

Amanda Boyd, B.A., C.Y.C. CTP, Certified Trauma, Child & Youth Counsellor

Description: Behaviour is communication—and when children struggle, they are often expressing unmet needs. This interactive workshop explores the underlying causes of challenging behaviour through a trauma-informed lens. Participants will gain insight into how stress, regulation difficulties, and developmental factors influence behaviour in school-age settings. Through practical strategies, ready-to-use tools, and real-life scenarios, educators will learn how to de-escalate situations, build connection, strengthen emotional regulation, and create safer, more responsive classroom environments. Walk away with renewed confidence and concrete techniques you can implement immediately.

Workshop 3: Supporting Gender-Expansive and Affirmative Pedagogy in the School-Age Classroom

Shailja Jain, RECE, MEd, PhD Candidate, Professor & Coordinator, George Brown Polytechnic

Description: This workshop will focus on how gender expansive and affirmative pedagogy has the potential to create transformational change in the school age classroom. Research has demonstrated that having educational and familial support can make a tremendous difference in livability, self-confidence and worth as well as an overall sense of belonging for gender diverse youth. Participants will engage in a series of discussion-based activities that support building pedagogical strategies for gender affirmation through multiple mediums. Participants will also have the opportunity to explore tools that facilitate having these conversations with families. This workshop is meant to be collaborative and hands on, applying theory to educator practice.

Workshop 4: Global Sustainability in Early Childhood Programming

Angela Oulton, OCT, RECE, PhD Candidate

Description: We are witnessing climate change unfold globally in real time. This change is not spontaneous but rather, is the result of what Rob Nixon (2011) calls "slow violence". Put differently, the present polycrisis (resource depletion, "natural" disasters, a warming climate, etc.) is the result of harmful human activity over time. Education, therefore, is increasingly being called upon to solve current ecological problems and secure the future of humanity/the planet through its development of environmentally conscious future global citizens. What is the role of Early Childhood Education then, in fostering a situated, yet global sustainability ethic in/with young children? In this session, we will discuss our current understandings of sustainability and climate change, critically consider the worldviews that have contributed to the climate crisis, and wonder together as we grapple with these challenges and their implications for curriculum and pedagogy in our hope-full and care-full work as Early Childhood Educators.

Workshop 5: Developing Skills and Community in School Age Programs: Principles and Practices in School-Age Childcare That Promote Positive Social/Emotional Environments

Alexandra Felsted RECE Ryerson School Age Childcare Centre, GP; Debbie Niroshin RECE Ryerson School Age Childcare Centre, GBP; Beth Stockton Professor, School of Early Childhood Education, GBP & Amanda Tavares RECE Ryerson School Age Childcare Centre, GBP

Description: In this workshop, participants will revisit the principles of school age programs. The workshop will focus on cooperative school-age environments that encourage children to inquire about "Who am I in the world?" School-age Educators will share examples of practice in a George Brown Polytechnic community school-age program.

Workshops - Afternoon

Workshop 1: Working with Clay

Paul Stewart, Artist

Description: In this hands-on workshop participants will learn techniques for working with clay and some simple projects that can be implemented in your programs. You will also have the opportunity to experiment with these techniques and make a clay mask of your own design.

Workshop 2: Drumming - An Interactive Experience

Terri Segal, Expressive Arts Practitioner, Facilitator & Educator

Description: In this interactive Drumming Workshop, participants will engage in FUN, collaborative and inclusive rhythm-based activities through African Hand Drumming (Djembe) and an exploration of "Global Grooves", sparking new ideas and gaining practical music strategies to bring back to your classroom to foster connection, creativity and learning.

Workshop 3: Nourishing Bodies and Nurturing Connections Through Food

Janet Nezon, MHSc, Founder, Rainbow Plate

Description: In this playful, hands-on workshop, we'll reflect on our own food experiences and how they shape our work with children. Stepping into a child's perspective, we'll explore Rainbow Plate's joyful, sensory-based approach to food. Through engaging food activities, we'll experience this approach in action and uncover practical strategies to help children become confident, curious eaters. Along the way, we'll consider how food supports children's learning, relationships, identity, and their growing understanding of the world around them.

Workshop 4: Children & Creativity - Exploratory Beading Through a Process-Art Lens

Jessica Borowets & Erin Shadoff, The Artful Child

Description: This hands-on professional development session introduces educators to an exploratory, process-based approach to beading that moves beyond traditional jewellery-making. Beads are presented as open-ended materials that support creativity, fine-motor development, problem-solving, self-regulation, and child agency in kindergarten and early years settings.

Educators will explore how materials can be scaffolded differently across ages, developmental stages, and classroom rhythms, from simple, sensory-based invitations to more complex construction and design experiences. The focus is on how materials are introduced, how much direction is offered, and how educators can step back while still feeling intentional and skilled in their role. Examples include: paper beads, clay beads, beading on skewers; wire beads and sculpting, non traditional "beads" and beading with recycled and repurposed materials.

Workshop 5: Learning Module - Activating Outdoor Learning in All Space

Evergreen Brickworks Staff

Description: Participants will explore activating outdoor spaces through the transformative power of Loose Parts, learn design approaches that make the most of existing resources, and develop practical strategies for creating dynamic, engaging outdoor learning environments. Activities may include: Loose Parts Build, Nature-based games, and Placemaking Activities.

Workshop 6: Hello Hair's Crown Quest - Rise in Your Roots

Anita Grant & Nikki Taylor, Hello Hair

Description: Crown Quest is a 90-minute, game show-style workshop designed to bring hair education, cultural pride and confidence-building into child care programs. The workshop combines fun, hands-on learning with the four educational pillars:

1. The Roots - Cultural and historical significance of hair
2. The Research - Science of hair and product knowledge
3. The Journey - Practical styling techniques
4. The Growth - Self-esteem, affirmation, and wellness

Three teams. One crown. Endless fun!

Workshop 7: Critter Bots With The Maker Bean Cafe

Sofia Lagrotta, Education Director & Lorraine Sit, Co-Owner, Creative, Maker Bean Cafe

Description: Join Sofia Lagrotta and Lorraine Sit of the Maker Bean Cafe to learn about physics and momentum by creating your very own Critter Bot. You will start by assembling the laser-cut pieces and learn how to install and wire a single-axis motor to get your Critter moving with a 9V battery.



Registration Form

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March 28, 2026 - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
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Please complete and submit the form below to ece@georgebrown.ca

*all fields are required

Name	
Organization	
Phone	
Email	
Allergies/ Accomodation needs	
Role in Sector Child Care School Board	Role in Sector RECE ECA/untrained Supervisor Aurhtorized Recreation Other (Please Specify)

Please choose one workshop to attend:

Morning Workshop

first choice: 1 2 3 4 5

second choice: 1 2 3 4 5

Please choose one workshop to attend:

Afternoon Workshop

first choice: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

second choice: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7