

[The Child and Nature Alliance of Canada's](#) (CNAC) Fireside Chats series is a virtual space for Forest/Nature School practitioners to meet, share experiences, and answer questions related to a theme. The purpose of Fireside Chats is to engage with the Forest/Nature School community of practice to co-develop a set of **Quality Indicators for Forest/Nature School**. The series is part of the 3-year Community Consultation Project CNAC is undertaking, with support from the [Lawson Foundation](#).

To learn more, visit <https://childnature.ca/community-consultation-project/>.

What to Expect

- Conversation with Guest Speakers (TBA)
- Facilitated Breakout Room Discussions (have your cameras and/or microphones ready!)
- Questions and Polls in the chat

Registration

This event is open to Forest/Nature School practitioners in Canada.

Register for free: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrceqvpzssEtESRk0oNk_FORUWI-0noFwW

(Zoom Meeting link will be provided upon registration).

Please note: The main event (i.e. Conversation with Guest Speakers) will be recorded. Breakout room discussions will not be recorded.

Theme and Discussion Questions: Relationship with Play

During this Fireside Chat, we are going to dive into four [Principles of Forest/Nature School](#) practice and how they relate to our **Relationship with Play**. We would love to hear from you during the event. Here are the questions that we will ask (you can also [fill out this survey](#))!

Principle of Practice

Forest/Nature School values children's play—self-directed, freely chosen, intrinsically motivated—in and of itself. Forest/Nature School programs provide adequate time and space for children and youth to dive deeply into their play.

Discussion Questions

- 1) What is unique about play at a Forest/Nature School in Canada? Does it differ from play elsewhere?
- 2) Who is excluded from this understanding of play?

Principle of Practice

Discussion Questions

Forest/Nature School relies on loose, natural materials to support open-ended, creative play and learning.

Loose Parts: "materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways" (Simon Nicholson, 1971).

Forest/Nature School prioritizes building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, who have been learning from this Land since time immemorial.

Forest/Nature School practices, policies, and programming reflect and prioritize the building of engaged, healthy, vibrant, and diverse communities through consideration of access and equity in our decisions and actions.

Access: To provide accommodations where necessary to ensure all children have the resources and support to participate fully in your forest/nature school program.

Equity: To ensure all children feel safe, comfy, and proud of who they are at your Forest/Nature School program.

3) How can you tell a Forest/Nature School program values play? What does a Forest/Nature School practitioner do to put the value of play into action?

4) What does it mean for a child to have agency? How does a Forest/Nature School support agency in children?

5) Is play with loose parts an essential element of a Forest/Nature School in Canada?

6) How do you use loose parts in your Forest/Nature School program? How do loose parts improve the quality of your program?

7) What does play have to do with building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit?

8) How can/does the Forest/Nature School sector in Canada support accessible and equitable play for all children?

9) How can the Forest/Nature School Sector in Canada include and support other worldviews and forms of childhood play?