

Fireside Chat: Relationship with Power (June 30, 2021)

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Natalia, Marc, Virginia, Adrian, Cameron, Monika

M Marc 00:06
All right. So let me just throw up my share screen there, and we can get started. Well, it's a smaller group this time, which is, yeah, it's still great. We'll have an opportunity to chat with each other and listen to our guest speakers. Let me just share this. Yeah, everyone can see the presentation there. Welcome, everyone. So today's event is being recorded, so that we can share it with the folks who were not able to attend. The breakout rooms will not be recorded. And we're trying something a little bit different this time, my co host, Monika and I are going to switch between English and French. So to follow along in the language of your choice, we are providing a complete transcription in the link, a link in the chat so you should be able to see that and as well, our colleague Tessica from CNAC is also here to provide a summary translation in the chat. Monika, did you want to do that section in French then we'll switch to the land acknowledgement.

M Monika 01:23
Sure. Hello, Bonjour. Je m'appelle Monika. Cet atelier est enregistré afin que nous puissions le partager avec les personnes qui n'ont pas pu y assister. Veuillez noter que les discussions en petit groupe ne seront PAS enregistrées. Marc et moi allons co-animer en anglais et français. Nous partageons le lien à la transcription complète dans le chat, si jamais vous souhaitez suivre le texte en même temps en anglais ou français. Également,

notre collègue Tessica offrira des résumés traduits dans le chat pour la durée de la séance. Pour les discussions en petit groupe, nous aurions un groupe parlant en français - vous y serez placé si vous l'avez noté dans l'inscription. Sinon ou si vous n'êtes pas certain.e.s, veuillez nous l'indiquer dans le chat maintenant.

M

Marc 02:21

Thanks Monica. Alright, so CNAC is headquartered on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabe in Ottawa, Ontario. Our organization is currently led by white settlers and we have imposed a settler-colonial way of being with the land because our programs were not co-created with Indigenous people. We are committed to repairing our relationship with Indigenous communities by dismantling harmful practices, changing the way we operate, and co-creating programs. This land is at the heart of everything we do at CNAC so I would like to personally give thanks to this land for teaching me and nurturing me and giving me a place to live, work, laugh and play. Monika, you can do the French version.

M

Monika 03:10

La CNAC a son siège social sur le territoire non cédé des Algonquins Anishinaabe à Ottawa, en Ontario. Nous reconnaissons également que notre organisation est actuellement dirigée par des colons blancs et nous avons imposé une manière coloniale d'être avec la Terre parce que nos programmes n'ont pas été co-crésés avec les peuples autochtones. Nous nous engageons à réparer notre relation avec les communautés autochtones en démantelant les pratiques nuisibles, en changeant notre mode de fonctionnement, et en co-crésant des programmes. La Terre est au cœur de tout ce que nous faisons à CNAC, alors nous remercions la Terre de nous enseigner et nourrir, et de nous donner un endroit où vivre, travailler, rire et jouer.

M

Marc 03:56

Merci. Yeah, so my name is Marc St. Denis. I'm mixed race. Metis on my father's side, French on my mother's side. Like I said I live work and play on Algonquin Anishinaabe territory in what is now known as Ottawa, Ontario. I'm a father and a husband and an explorer. And my role at CNAC is that of Project Lead, which simply means that I am coordinating this Community Consultation project that we are doing.

M

Monika 04:30

Hello. Bonjour, je m'appelle Monika Goodluck et je suis située sur les territoires

traditionnels des Wendats, des Anishinabés, des Haudenosaunees, des Métis et des Mississaugas de la Première Nation Credit dans la place nommée Toronto. Je suis une femme noire, race mixte, cisgenre, nouvelle animatrice en observation active avec CNAC. Je suis mère de trois jeunes enfants. Mes origines sont de l'Afrique et l'Europe et j'ai appris français dans mon enfance à Montréal. Merci.

M

Marc 05:09

So today's event is part of a three-year Community Consultation Project we are undertaking with support from the Lawson foundation. Our goal is to meet with Forest and Nature School practitioners so that we can: articulate as a community what a quality Forest and Nature School in Canada looks like, sounds like and feels like. Improve our professional learning courses and set the stage for representing Forest and Nature School sector in discussions around policy and systems change. First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities have been learning from this land and teaching their children on the land since time immemorial. This project is not meant to advise or in any way regulate Indigenous communities. This project is specifically designed to address settler organizations who are operating on Forest or operating Forest Nature schools on Indigenous land.

M

Monika 06:07

Cette séance fait partie d'un projet de consultation communautaire de trois ans que nous entreprenons, avec le soutien de la Fondation Lawson. Notre objectif est de rencontrer les praticien.nne.s de l'école de la nature afin de pouvoir : Articuler, en tant que communauté, à quoi ressemble, ce qu'on entend et ce qu'on ressent en vivant une école de la nature de qualité au Canada. Améliorer nos cours d'apprentissage professionnel ; et Préparer le terrain pour représenter le secteur des écoles de la nature dans les discussions sur les changements de politiques et de systèmes. Depuis des temps immémoriaux, les communautés des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuits apprennent de la Terre et enseignent à leurs enfants sur la Terre. Ce projet n'a pas pour but de conseiller ou de réglementer de quelque manière que ce soit les communautés autochtones. Il est spécifiquement conçu pour s'adresser aux organisations de colons qui opèrent des écoles de la nature sur des terres autochtones.

M

Marc 07:13

The Fireside Chat Series is a virtual space for Forest and Nature School practitioners to meet, share experiences and answer questions related to a theme. During this Fireside Chat we are going to dive into four principles of Forest and Nature School practice, which

were developed in 2018 and how they relate to our Relationship with Power. We want to learn from you what these principles look like on the ground, how we can measure the principles? What are the measurements? and how do we know a Forest and Nature school program is meeting these principles and is there anything missing? Our hope for the conversation is to have a lively discussion about quality practice in Forest and Nature School. We (CNAC) are not here to judge anyone's practice or be critical. I hope we can all see that everyone here is passionate about Forest and Nature School and it is likely that there are differences between us and what we value as essential. I hope we can all keep an open mind and embrace differences of opinion. If you have any questions or thoughts after this, you are more than welcome to share them in whatever way is best for you. This can be video, audio, written or something else and send them to community@childnature.ca. You can also complete a survey which we will be putting in the chat at the end which will be available on our website as well.

M

Monika 08:44

Objectif de la discussion informelle d'aujourd'hui. La série Causeries au coin du feu est un espace virtuel permettant aux praticiens des écoles de la nature de se rencontrer, de partager leurs expériences et de répondre aux questions liées à un thème. Au cours de cette Causerie au coin du feu, nous allons nous plonger dans quatre Principes de pratique de l'école de la nature, élaborés en 2018, et la manière dont ils sont liés à notre Relation avec le pouvoir. Nous voulons que vous nous disiez à quoi ressemblent ces principes sur le terrain. Comment pouvons-nous mesurer ces principes ? Quelles sont les mesures ? Comment savons-nous qu'un programme d'école de la nature respecte ces principes ? Et y a-t-il quelque chose qui manque ? Nos espoirs pour la conversation. Nous espérons avoir une discussion animée sur les pratiques de qualité dans les écoles de la nature. Nous (la CNAC) ne sommes pas là pour juger la pratique de qui que ce soit ou pour critiquer. J'espère que nous pouvons tous voir que tout le monde ici est passionné par l'école de la nature, et il est probable qu'il y ait des différences entre nous et ce que nous considérons comme essentiel. Nous espérons garder l'esprit ouvert et accepter les différences d'opinion. Points pratiques. Si vous avez des questions ou des idées après cette session, vous pouvez les partager de la manière qui vous convient le mieux (vidéo, audio ou écrit) et les envoyer à community@childnature.ca. Vous pouvez également remplir le questionnaire de cette session qui sera lié au chat et disponible sur notre site web. Merci

M

Marc 10:37

Thanks, Monica. So yeah, now we have the honor and privilege to introduce our three guest speakers. We will be doing this in English only because that is the language of their choosing. So Virginia Lewis, one of our guest speakers, has a huge passion for outdoor

education and its many forms and believes children are happiest when surrounded by nature and provided the opportunity to follow their hearts and curiosities. She is founder of Edmonton Forest School, which is a not for profit Forest and Site School in Edmonton, Amiskwacîwâskahikan Treaty six territory. Before embarking on her forest path, she was a grade 1 French Immersion teacher for 8 years, who loved exploring the many ways to connect the natural world to urban kiddos. She is a passionate educator who wishes to break down the barriers to risky outdoor play and ensure that every child has access to the fundamental learning that is found on the land.

M

Monika 11:48

Thanks. So Adrian Alphonso. Using he/him pronouns is the Director of Clear Paths at Momenta. He's driven by adventure, determination and resilience and takes pride in providing the best cycling programming possible, while easily convincing his audience of the array of physical and psychological benefits that cycling provides. I agree. In addition to his role with Momentum, Adrian has over 10 years of experience sitting on countless committees and boards for both profit and nonprofit groups. Currently, he holds board positions with Trails Manitoba and International Mountain Bike Association of Canada. In 2018, Alphonso was the recipient of the CBC future 40 Award. Welcome Adrian.

M

Marc 12:30

And Laura Burki, has lived her whole life on the west coast of Vancouver Island, right on the edge of beautiful forests and oceans, which has gifted her with an unbounded love for nature. Playing outside and getting muddy, finding creatures and breathing in fresh air has been an integral part of her life, and she considers it a privilege to be in a position where she can support these experiences for children and their families. Laura is proud to be part of the LGBTQ community on Vancouver Island holding space for kiddos and their families. Hey, Monika, did you want to start with the first question there?

M

Monika 13:16

Yeah. So to start things off, we're going to explore the principle that Forest and Nature School views children and youth as innately competent, curious and capable learners and aims to promote their holistic development. So the question that we have to ask of you, Virginia, Laura, and Adrian is: What is the role of children at Forest and Nature School? And does this differ from other approaches?

A

Adrian 13:39

I believe I can start with that. I believe the role of the child in this power dynamic is to show up fully and be present, speak their truths of what they're feeling and experiencing. Because that may provide us with direction with where they would like to go. So just two simple things. You present and speak your truth.

M

Monika 14:16

Simple and powerful. Sorry, were you going to go on Adrian?

A

Adrian 14:19

I think so. I just noticed that. How is it different from other approaches? I don't think kids are encouraged enough to speak their truth and or express themselves so that they can feel safe. So this is probably the best place for them. Thank you.

M

Monika 14:38

Thank you. Virginia I see your microphone is off. Maybe Laura is also just not on my screen.

V

Virginia 14:45

Oh, yeah. Can you hear me?

M

Monika 14:47

Yes.

V

Virginia 14:48

Okay, great. The role of the child at Forest School, is to come with what just like Adrian said, to come with whatever they're carrying and to just be ready for the day, ready for whatever the path takes us. So whether that's maybe an emotional path, or maybe it's a path of energy and excitement, but just being them coming with the way that they are, and being happy and joyful, I shouldn't say happy, but us being happy with how they come and supporting them in that is really essential. And I think that it's, I'm gonna speak to a little bit of my classical training as a teacher, for a public school board. And from other approaches, I find that the child is not encouraged to be the way that they're coming and to not have kind of the time and the space for them, you just have to kind of push through curriculum, and you kind of just got to go with it. And there's no time for feelings, there's

no time for the creative energy that they might be having that day in a certain space, but not getting in another space. So I really love how we kids come maybe, especially this year, with COVID, we've had a lot of kids, just their mental health hasn't been great. And for them to just come in and kind of unwind and connect, and be given that space just to breathe, and feel how they're feeling. And then maybe work through some of those things. I think that that's really important.

M

Monika 16:30

I feel so much more relaxed and refreshed, just listening to both of you speak in your answers. Thank you. Did Laura have to go? Marc? I'm not seeing Laura on my screen. Are you there? Laura?

M

Marc 16:47

It looks like Laura had to take off. That's understandable. We're playing it by her. She's running a Forest and Nature School herself. And, you know, sometimes you just have to go and jump in the in the mud. So yeah, so the next question, then for the two of you is another principle of practice is that: Forest and Nature School is led by an educator who is rooted in and committed to the Forest and Nature School, pedagogical framework, its theoretical underpinnings and practical applications. So Adrian, I'll start with you. What is the role of an educator at a Forest and Nature School program?

A

Adrian 17:31

I may oversimplify it. But I believe that the role of educators is to listen and provide a safe experience so that is my role as the wiser person in the situation. We've made the plans and assessed and did all the risk assessments, that I'm providing a safe space for learning to happen, as well as many other things, adventure. But yeah, to listen, I must listen. And yeah, that's, that's my one piece of questions. So that's what I got.

M

Marc 18:14

Yeah, thanks Adrian. Like, sometimes the simple answer is the most profound one. Virginia, same question. What is the role of an educator?

V

Virginia 18:25

I believe that just like what Adrian touched on is that our role is to listen. And I think that we do most of the learning, I really believe that I do some of the best learning when

they're teaching me things, which is really amazing. So I see it more as just like Adrian said, like a co creator, co player, we are there for most of them, like the safety, you know, that there's only so many times that I really have to jump in with kind of the safety things, especially near the end of the year. But just being there as a guide for safety, I think would be the biggest thing and more there just to co create, learn with them. And play, my gosh, play adventure and not be worried about all the things that that they should be doing. Because what they're doing is right, everything that they're, they're being drawn to, and excited about is right and it's important, and for us to support that and encourage it is, is the best. Yeah.

M

Marc 19:41

Thank you, Virginia, that that really resonated with me. Especially the learning from the children in my experience at the Forest Schools. The kids, they really taught me how to play again and that was just so amazing. So thank you. Adrian i'm going to bounce back to you. Can you perhaps share an example of a power imbalance that exists between an educator and a child at a Forest and Nature School?

A

Adrian 20:09

It, just from my experience, and I'll only speak on my experiences and what I've seen. So the power imbalances are typically on who is the knowledge holder. As an adult, I really must, or educator, I must allow for conversations to happen. And if I want to stick with a curriculum, or what I know is best, that's typically where I feel I get my conflicts from. So I have to, again, go back to listening and be part of a co-curation of an experience within the educator and the child experience it is who actually is the knowledge keeper? And how do we support that?

M

Marc 21:07

Thanks, Adrian. Yeah, it seems like there's a lot of pieces that we're balancing and trying to create that that sense of co-creation, that can be difficult. Virginia same question to you. Do you have an example of a power imbalance that has occurred at a Forest and Nature School?

V

Virginia 21:28

Yes, I have. Just like Adrian, I'm going to speak directly to some of my experience. We typically work with kiddos from age 3 to 10. So not a lot of the older teen, teenage years. So kind of the younger one. And we find a lot of or I found a lot of power imbalance when

we're doing, when we're watching children play, and maybe it's rough and tumble play. I think rough and tumble play has been some of our biggest challenges is that we have a couple kiddos that really want to play that way. And then we have kiddos that are very nervous about that. And instead of putting myself and saying no to that, and saying no we can't do that, how can I encourage, how can I give space to these kids that are really looking for an outlet to play in this way. So creating boundaries together, finding a way to create a space for them to have that kind of like that power shift and to have that freedom and not be led by someone saying no, you can't do this, or that's not safe. Because this this and this, how can we make this safe? And how can we give you the power to play as you need to play as safely as possible. And another point we do have, we do a lot of risky play, especially with water, we do a lot of risky play with water and we have had a couple of times where we had some safety lines that were crossed a little bit and then asserting kind of the child wanted to have a little bit more power because they felt so comfortable in the space. So how can we enable them to feel powerful to feel confident and capable in those situations? And really, look at ourselves, take a minute, take a breath and just say, hey, what am I doing? Is this really the best way to solve this problem? just, you know, a lot of things we talked about is take a breath, see what happens next, you know, just really give the kids time and space to figure out their, not their problems, but figure out what what they're looking for what they're searching for, what are they seeking, in that moment that they were maybe pushing a little bit more or wanting that power dynamic to change? How can we encourage that? So that was really long winded. I'm sorry.

M

Marc 24:08

No, that was great. I could listen to the two of you talk forever. Again, like everything the two of you say just resonates and I'm thinking specifically now of my experience with my children, especially my older one who's four, and how there's that like natural almost like a compulsion to just say no, when he's asking them to do something that, you know might be perceived as risky for example, or even just something that, you know, I'm annoyed by and just say no, and just like really taking that step back and be like, what's this? Who's this response for? Is it for myself or is it for my kid? And yeah, I think that's a really interesting point to bring up. Monika, I think you have the the next set of questions.

M

Monika 24:59

Lots of resonating with me. And I'm having like a whole conversation in my head about what I'm hearing from both Adrian and Virginia. So thank you. So here's a big question. So Forest/Nature School programs in Canada operate on and benefit from Indigenous lands as we know. The next principle of practice we want to discuss is how Forest and Nature

school prioritizes building reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples who have been learning from this land from time immemorial. So our question and maybe Virginia you can start this time is since, as we said, Forest and Nature School programs operates and benefit from Indigenous lands. How does a settler run Forest/Nature School program share power with First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities?

V

Virginia 25:58

That's a great question. One that I think, we're always trying to work on this. And this is probably the hardest question, but also the hardest focus for us right now is to really build that. So I would say, having open relationships, relationships were we are listening to the communities, to the Indigenous communities for specifically in our area, it's the Papatashchase, Cree, people that are on the land that that we work on. So opening up conversations, building those relationships, listening, we've had a few elders that have come out to work with us, and just giving them the space and the time to share what they are feeling like they want to share, and focus on in that day, and not creating, like a curriculum, I want to say like, set objectives and more so just let's just have this time and this space to talk and share and be people and be present on this land because that is the most important and most important things. So I'm not sure if that was the right thing, but that's what we're working on currently.

M

Monika 27:30

I don't know if there's ever a right or wrong thing, so long as there's progress and awareness. And, you know, you said something that you're working on and I guess the wrong thing would be harmful. So I shouldn't say there is not a right or wrong thing. But thank you, and recognize that people are different places in their journeys along this right. Adrian, can I invite you to answer the question? If you need me to repeat it? I could do so as well.

A

Adrian 27:56

No, it's clear. I think is worded very well and respectful. And the question itself invites me to feel like I'm trusted and I trust the question. So good job to CNAC or whoever compiled this in a respectful way. So I just want to acknowledge that this is something that could be extremely uncomfortable. And I think we're within a timeline of Canadian history that we need to feel uncomfortable. So I do have an answer. So let me get to it. So it's about trust and building relationships of trust. If we feel safe. If an organization is showing a First Nations community accountability, which is a certain step of reconciliation, by looking at

the calls to action, and for organizations to create their very own, working in a good way documents, and identifying which calls to action they're committed to uniquely that shows accountability and that's a stepping process. We are in a time of truth and reconciliation. And the truth is hurting us right now as Indigenous peoples, but it's only hurting because we haven't been heard. Our stories are coming out with an art, song, music and of course the needs. There's two, I believe there's two steps to reconciliation, but they are not within order. There has to be accountability and I just suggested a very simple way for organizations to do it. But there's also reparations and reparations are not for every organization, reparations are for the government, or the church, or whoever else was involved in this genocide and acquisition of land. The dispossession of Indigenous people, or recreation would be hashtag land back. But we're not going to be doing that right now. But we will be looking at what we can do to be accountable of not just how we speak of Indigenous peoples, we need to stop using the eraser narrative when we do land acknowledgement and speaking of peoples and ceremonies as a past, there's millions of Indigenous peoples and families every day, who identify as Canadian and as Indigenous. And often, when you employ, I guess, employing Indigenous and First Nations members of the community is reparation a little bit, because you're involving processes and ways of knowledge, to better your programming because Indigenous values take into consideration the whole community as a unit, from infants, and children, to adults and teenagers to help everybody is considered, and the well being of the health. So when we speak of land, when we speak of education, and help, and knowledge sharing, and I guess now reconciliation, we need to have more conversations. And we only get there by involving Indigenous peoples in planning and steps for. I believe I was speaking my truth and that's my best answer. Miigwech.

M

Monika 32:19

I'm a little bit speechless. I was like, yes to everything that you're saying and I also just want to acknowledge, while you showed appreciation for you know, how the question was phrased, I also feel like, you know, could contextualize that a little bit more within the current context, and the current sort of news cycle and the intensity of that and, you know, the intense impact, it has to kind of be constantly reminded of the truths that, you know, you and other Indigenous peoples have known about and live for generations, and you know, and it continues, so, I just want to own up to that and apologize for that and also really show deep appreciation for the thoughts and the labor that you put into your response and your calls to action on the call to action that all of us, particularly those of us who are not Indigenous and you know, that CNAC can take there's a lot of really powerful, accurate stuff in there. So thank you for sharing that. I appreciate that.

M

Marc 33:37

Yeah, thank you. So our next question is about access and equity. We know there is a need to support the development of accessible and equitable experiences for all children at Forest and Nature Schools in Canada. This is why Forest and 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. So Virginia, I'll start with you here. How does a high quality Forest and Nature School program share power with families, caregivers and communities?

V

Virginia 34:18

That's a great question and one that we're always working on. One thing that we, that I truly believe is that we need to have more connections and programs where different communities can join and be a part of Forest School. So that would be for us specifically, in our context would be we have a site school that operates with schools, all across Edmonton, and then they come to, but they come to a land, a park, anywhere that's close to them and then they spend a week in that space, learning from the land in a Forest School way, and then they go back to their classroom. And this is kind of an educational specialty, I guess that's happening in Edmonton and Calgary with these immersive site schools, and that allows kids that have not been able to spend time on the land, it gives them the opportunity to connect and build a relationship with the land and a relationship to themselves. And we think that it's incredible, it's probably some of our best work has been not necessarily with the kiddos that are in our Forest School programs that, whose family knows about us are close to our area, and have the means to come to it, we find it so much more incredible and kind of like spiritual, like, it's almost like you've been changed by your experience inside school seeing these kids and their joy and their happiness and the time and the space that they're being given when they're not usually given that space and seeing how they develop in five days. We think that that's just just incredible, and teaching the teachers how to incorporate this into their everyday planning, right. This is really important to get more people educated in this learning from the land and allowing children that time and that space. So how can we get all the kids out there? And how can we teach teachers and share that responsibility and that power together and be a place of support for everyone? And that's something that we're going to be working on forever.

M

Marc 36:48

Thank you, Virginia. My wife is a teacher. So I know that there's often that struggle of trying to find those resources, not having time, because you're spending all of your time just prepping and then teaching and then then trying to get your snack and so, you know.

I think it's really cool that the perspective you bring there is like sharing what you learn in your circles of influence. And I think that's really important is that we do, we do share our, the knowledges that we acquire over time. Adrian, same question to you. Let me know if you need me to repeat it.

A

Adrian 37:29

We're good. So, I'm just gonna be focusing on some key words in the question, such as accessible and equitable experiences, as well as how to get high quality programming to communities. So I got maybe three quick suggestions, and were points of conversation. The first one is providing information for the families ahead of time on what objectives might be coming up, or their goals of Forest School program. And for those families to afterwards, ask questions. So how do they support that child by telling them what to expect? And as well as how to ask the right questions on allowing them to share about how they retained the experience. This requires ongoing conversations for the caregivers, and the child themselves. But I believe in order to be truly accessible and equitable, our very own Forest School practitioners, all need to be trauma informed. The truth is, we may be serving people who are coming to us who are already in, maybe not dire situations, but already with some packages. And if our practitioners can navigate that in a good way that's how we become a lot more inclusive, and a lot more accessible to the benefits of being outdoors and using the land as an educator by meeting those needs specifically. And when you do that, that turns out to be great for everybody. Whether they have needs on a different level or not. So that's all I have for that. Thanks.

M

Marc 39:42

Miigwech Adrian. Yeah, that's a really interesting point that I hadn't considered before. Being trauma informed. And it also reminds me too of something you were saying earlier, and I think the previous question about how trust is so integral to that power sharing. And that it seems like it's almost impossible to share power if you can't trust. So it's the responsibility for creating that trusting environment is, is something that us in the sector of Forest and Nature School programs and organizations need to work on. Yeah, so thank you to Adrian and Virginia, so much for joining us as guest speakers. We're now going to be moving on to the breakout rooms and Adrian and Virginia will be in one of them. So we'll find out we're going to get thrown into those random rooms, but it'll be fun. And so let me explain a bit about that. So we all have a sense of what will happen. So we're going to divide up into facilitated breakout rooms. That means that there will be someone there, CNAC staff member who will be asking the questions, and we're going to discuss in the first room. How does a Forest and Nature school program show that they believe children are competent, curious and capable learners. So what we're looking for here is specific

and concrete practices that programs used to support this view of the child. Each breakout room has already been assigned a facilitator, like I said, who will take notes on the conversation. And then after the breakout room, we will bring everyone back. And we will ask for the facilitators to share a summary of their conversation, we will likely not be able to hear from everyone while we might this time because we have less of a crowd but in the case that we can't hear from everyone we will have all of the written notes collected which will then be part of the Community Consultation process. So all of it comes back fitting into the quality indicator so thank you so much. The breakout rooms will last for about 15 minutes. I will invite Monika to share this in French as well.

M

Monika 42:16

Nous allons maintenant vous diviser dans des petits groupes maintenant pour discuter le suivant: Comment un programme d'école de la nature montre-t-il qu'il croit que les enfants sont des apprenants compétents, curieux et capables (c'est-à-dire, quelles sont les pratiques spécifiques et concrètes que les programmes utilisent pour soutenir cette vision de l'enfant)? Chaque groupe salle de discussion a déjà été assignée à un animateur qui prendra des notes sur votre conversation. Après la discussion, nous ramènerons tout le monde dans la grande salle et nous allons demander à votre animatrice/animateur un petit résumé. Chaque salle aura une animatrice/un animateur qui va prendre des notes pendant votre discussion. Les groupes vont durer à peu près 15 minutes et les discussions ne sont pas enregistrées. Même si votre groupe ne peut pas partager leur rapport, nous allons collecter les notes et ils seront envoyés à CNAC pour analyser. Si vous trouvez que vous êtes dans un groupe anglophone et vous préférez être dans un groupe francophone, vous pouvez retourner à la grande salle et nous pouvons vous mettre dans le bon groupe. So it's just saying if you end up in an English speaking group and you prefer to be in the French speaking group, you could just leave that room and come back and we'll put you in the right group

M

Marc 43:47

Yeah, and just a heads up to the breakout room leads. We were originally planning for more rooms. So it's going to be myself, Natalia are going to be co-leading and then Cameron, Busola and Mirani you're also going to be co-leading a room and then Monika, you'll be in the French room. So go ahead, Charlene, and send us off All right. Welcome back, everyone.

M

Monika 1:00:10

It was a great breakout room. So if I was stuck in there, that would have been completely

fine. But if that's how these discussions go, they're fast and and rich. And on that, on that note, we'll ask for, should we start with a little summary from Cameron and Natalia?



Cameron 1:00:50

Well, we had a great discussion. And I was actually quite, quite shocked when I saw the breakout room was closing because we'd only just started that discussion. But what came through in and I would invite everyone who is taking part as to, to jump in after our summaries, just in case I've perhaps missed, misquoted or left something out important. But one of the things that I underlined word key words, because I think those really talked about one was attitude. It is really about a different attitude around the hierarchy of really not putting people up above. But actually bringing us all to a different level with different knowledge and capabilities. But it really comes with an attitude to note, number one as a way of demonstrating it. The other one is that it tied to that is that having conversations. So one of the ways to know that is that you've had conversations you are having conversations, and that is an ongoing thing. It's not a singular starting point, it is something that happens over time on an ongoing basis, even things like like restating, asking children, and really showing through words, as well as reflections, what heard, said and seen. So it's often a lot of small practices, but it's done consistently and persistently. That was another one. Another piece that also came up was also the idea of one way to show us is actually where the education happens, by virtue of our choices, in terms of where Forest and Nature school, programming takes place, we are showing the children, we are showing parents, and we're perhaps showing ourselves that we have, we have trust and confidence and in children and in the idea of creating spaces or leading them to space, I should say where people are, they can be curious, they can be confident, and they can demonstrate their activity by things like slippery rocks, babbling brooks, those kinds of things. And then I guess, lastly, what I would, one of the things that was mentioned was a great quote was this idea about talking about the idea about shifting our behavior and how we position ourselves as educators from being a leader, sort of at the front to being an organizer to facilitating organizational activities in our learning environments of bringing people into that same space. So those were some of the big ideas that came from among many that came from our groups discussion. Jump in the chat, I suppose if there's anything I missed or misstated.



Monika 1:03:49

You covered a lot, Cameron, how did you all manage that?



Cameron 1:03:56

What's even funnier is that we hardly even went through the questions. Very thoughtful people in some very considered answers.

M

Monika 1:04:05

Yeah. Wonderful. Thank for that summary. All right, Natalia, you're up.

N

Natalia 1:04:10

All right. I'm always a little nervous to follow Cameron because he's such a great public speaker and has like such a radio voice. But I'll do my best, very similar themes in our conversation. Something that came up was that we know children are confident, competent, curious and capable, when they actually don't really rely on the educator anymore, when they're kind of able to sit in that space, like really direct their own play and learning and kind of turn to the educator when they need them, but they're really out there independently on their own. Something else we talked about was actually creating a safe space to fail, that is really important for children to learn. And for that to be modeled, actually, by the educator. So we talked a lot about how educators are co learners with the children and that they are not the experts and that educators can demonstrate making mistakes failing, and that's okay and that children can really learn from that. Offering space for them to problem solve on their own kind of resisting that urge to jump in, give opinions direct the play, kind of taking a pause, stepping back, and allowing them to problem solve on their own asking questions like, why, maybe why didn't that work? What else could we try so that they're kind of problem solving on their own, and that they see that they do have the skills and the knowledge and the confidence to problem solve on their own? I'm trying to see what else we had here. Yeah, and just kind of following the lead of children allowing their imagination and creativity to take the lead. If I missed anything, please feel free to jump in.

M

Monika 1:06:29

So wonderful. It's so great to hear, like overlap, and then also different things that groups came from. It's gonna be great to collate all of the information. Thank you.

M

Marc 1:06:43

Yeah, thank you both or I guess all because really, they're just reporting back of all of your voices. So we're going to jump into the next breakout room and this one is similar question, but there is a slight difference in that the question we're going to be asking in this next breakout room is: How does an educator at a Forest and Nature School program

share power? So this is more at the level of the individual, the individual educator rather than the program as a whole? So you can think about perhaps, in the relationship between the educator and the child you know, what are the specific dynamics that are at play? And how does the educator share power with that child or with community

M

Monika 1:07:41

Nous allons répartir bientôt dans les petits groupes pour discuter : Comment un éducateur/une éducatrice d'un programme d'école de la nature partage le pouvoir - Au niveau individu, peut-être entre éducateur/éducatrice et enfant ou avec la communauté? Les salles de discussion dureront 15 minutes

M

Marc 1:23:57

Thank you so much everyone for participating in that second breakout room. We'll now invite a couple of folks just to share a bit about their breakout rooms in summary. Perhaps Monika then can I invite you to share a summary of your breakout room and please feel free to do so in French and maybe, Julie Can I ask you to provide a translation in the chat. Thank you so much, Julie.

M

Monika 1:24:48

And Julie can also write things in that I missed out. La partage de pouvoir est un élément essentiel - oui!! C'est la façon de faire d'être - ça fait parti des principes - le renversement de pouvoir Pour partager le pouvoir, il y avait des thèmes: La confiance - la confiance des enfants et la confiance entre éducateur éducatrice et les enfants, ce qui est établie vraiment par prendre le temps d'avoir des bonnes relations entre nous, comme adultes, et les enfants, avec les parents, avec les structures et les systèmes dans lesquelles on travaille comme les écoles, les conseils scolaires, etc. S'il n'y a pas une bonne relation, s'il n'y a pas de confiance, la partage de pouvoir n'est pas possible Une des défis et quelque chose qu'on fait souvent comme adulte, comme leader, c'est vraiment réfléchir; alors réfléchir avant de réagir: L'éducateur, l'éducatrice doit écouter aux enfants en particulier quand un élève veut du pouvoir, notre rôle c'est vraiment d'écouter et réfléchir - pourquoi c'est important pour l'enfant, quels sont les risques et comment assurer leur sécurité, comment puis-je, comme adulte, leur soutenir? Alors, au lieu de dire non ou c'est trop difficile, c'est comment est-ce qu'on donne aux enfants l'opportunité d'avoir le pouvoir. Si comme adulte, on prend la décision, on doit vraiment expliquer pourquoi on prend la décision à leur place comme adulte - c'est un respect important Plus on connaît les enfants, plus on peut partager le pouvoir; par exemple, pour une programme qui a commencé en septembre, maintenant on leur fait plus de confiance parce qu'on les

connaît mieux. Que c'est tout un processus - quand on les rencontre pour la première fois, on ne les sait pas, on ne les connaît pas leur historique - leurs expériences à grimper, courir, sauter, à utiliser des outils, tout ça, alors ça prends du temps pour établir les relations avec les enfants, les relations positives avec les enfants, et que plus qu'on fait ça, plus qu'on peut partager le pouvoir. C'est toujours un effort, comme adulte. Un dernier point que je veux partager est que les écoles à nature, l'expérience d'être dehors - c'est une espace, une opportunité, un droit où les enfants peuvent parler et s'exprimer et quand on parle de la langue française comme langue seconde pour beaucoup d'enfants, les enfants prennent plus de risques à parler et s'exprimer en français dehors, en nature, même sur le cour que dans une classe où toute est structurée. I'm sure that was a lot for Julie. I had the easy job, but maybe we should have done the reverse.

M

Marc 1:28:17

Merci beaucoup. Yeah, it's really, it's really interesting that a lot of what you said, I think is reflected in my own group as well about that relationship and trust and self reflection as an educator, so thank you for sharing that. I am conscious of the time right now we're a little bit past. So I think what we'll do is we'll just we'll go into our closing remarks. And then all of the notes will be collected, like I said, and we'll be able to use that as part of this process for the quality indicators development. So thank you so much, everyone. Yeah, so I do want to say thank you to everyone for participating. And I specifically want to give a huge thanks to our guest speakers, as well as Julie for jumping into the chat there and handling the whisper translation, very, very much appreciated. And Monika, as well for co hosting with me, and then of course, the CNAC team. But most importantly, for everyone for coming and participating and sharing their thoughts and ideas. So just as a reminder, and this is also for the folks who are watching this as a recording is that we do have a formstack survey, which will be put into the chat and will also be in the description of the video that you can go check out so if you weren't able to attend live or if you feel like there's more things you want to share the same questions that we discussed today will be available there and you can you know, go and give your feedback that way. And then the recording of this will be up on our website in the next week or two. And the next fireside chat is going to be on the relationship with trust. So this is about kind of the Forest and Nature School pedagogy as well as like inquiry so trusting a child's inquiry and that will be on August 31 at seven o'clock pm Eastern. And then finally if you ever want to get in touch, we do have an email address that is community@childnature.ca and Charlene will hopefully be putting that in the chat too. So yeah thank you so much. Monika I'd invite you to close us out in French.

M

Monika 1:30:27

Merci tout le monde pour vos contributions et votre participation. Un grand merci à Virginia et Adrian pour tout ce que vous avez partagé. Merci à mon co-animateur Marc et l'équipe de CNAC. Merci pour l'opportunité de discuter en français et dans les petits groupes. On veut vous rappeler du sondage sur formstack - si vous n'avez pas eu l'opportunité de répondre à tous les questions ou vous regardez l'enregistrement, vous pouvez ajouter des commentaires dans le sondage de formstack. Remerciez l'auditoire de sa participation et dites-lui que nous apprécions sa contribution alors que nous cherchons à co-créeer un ensemble d'indicateurs de qualité pour la pratique des écoles de la nature. On veut vous rappeler que l'enregistrement ainsi qu'un résumé des conversations seront disponibles sur notre site web dans les prochaines semaines. La prochaine causerie du coin du feu est 31 août à 19h00 Heure Avancée de l'est (HAE) sur le thème: Relation de confiance (pédagogie et enquête de l'école de la nature) Pour nous contacter : community@childnature.ca. Un grand merci à tout le monde d'avoir venu. On vous souhaite un bon jour demain et un petit pause pour tout le monde pour l'été.



Marc 1:32:07

Bye every everyone. Thank you so much for coming. We'll see you next time.