

[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 (Maria Joao Paulo, Alix Wilson, Margaret Fraser)
- Facilitated Breakout Room Discussions (have your cameras and/or microphones ready!)
- Questions and Polls in the chat

## Registration

**Register for free:** <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrcu6sqTgjGNMEbLbL5Dm5pm4vMxOKij5N?fbclid=IwAR1ul76c-D1hHzzTZ0oNv9kSnhzG7CckJs-bJRshdksHI84WMCqWqtxF8GQ>

(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 Trust

This Fireside Chat, we're going to dive into five [Principles of Forest/Nature School practice](#) and how they relate to our **Relationship with Trust**. We'd love to hear from you during the event: Here are the questions that we'll ask (you can also [fill out this survey](#))!

### Principle of Practice

Forest/Nature School Is led by educators who share power with learners through play-based, emergent, and inquiry-driven teaching and learning methods.

### Discussion Questions

- 1) CNAC describes the pedagogy of Forest/Nature School (FNS) as play-based, emergent, and inquiry-driven.
  1. What does **play-based** mean in your FNS practice?
  2. What does **emergent** mean in your FNS practice?
  3. What does **inquiry-driven** mean in your FNS practice?
  4. Are all of these essential?
  5. Is anything missing?

## Principle of Practice

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**Inquiry:** A process of learning that involves exploring, asking questions, making discoveries, and testing those discoveries (1).

### Types of Inquiry (2):

- *Structured Inquiry:* Students follow the lead of the teacher as the entire class engages in one inquiry together.
- *Controlled Inquiry:* Teacher chooses topics and identifies the resources students will use to answer questions.
- *Guided Inquiry:* Teacher chooses topics/questions and students design products or solutions.
- *Free Inquiry:* Students choose their topics without reference to any prescribed outcome.

1 [Exploratorium](#) (2021)

2 Fitchman, N. (2011) via [MacKenzie, T.](#) (2021)

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Forest/Nature School views children and youth as innately competent, curious, and capable learners.

## Discussion Questions

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2) How do Forest/Nature School **educators/practitioners** in Canada support emergent and inquiry-driven learning? I.e., What would you see and hear that indicates that a program is a highly emergent and inquiry-driven learning environment?

3) In your Forest/Nature School practice, which of the four types of inquiry (described by Fitchman, N.) most closely resembles the learning that occurs? Can you share an example?

4) Does your Forest/Nature School program/practice incorporate **structured inquiry**? Can you provide an example?

5) Does your Forest/Nature School program/practice incorporate **controlled inquiry**? Can you provide an example?

6) Does your Forest/Nature School program/practice incorporate **guided inquiry**? Can you provide an example?

7) Does your Forest/Nature School program/practice incorporate **free inquiry**? Can you provide an example?

8) CNAC describes Forest/Nature School pedagogy as a pedagogy of trust. What does trust look like and sound like in your program/practice? Who/what participates in that trust?

9) How does a Forest/Nature School educator/practitioner in Canada show that they trust children as learners?

## Principle of Practice

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

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

## Discussion Questions

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10) Are loose parts *necessary* for emergent and inquiry-driven learning to occur at Forest/Nature School in Canada?

11) What is the relationship between loose parts and emergent- and inquiry-driven learning?

12) How does a Forest/Nature School program in Canada, including its staff, build trust with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities?

13) How does a Forest/Nature School program in Canada, including its staff, build trust with communities who are often excluded from the Forest/Nature School movement in Canada (e.g., urban immigrants, disabled folks)?

14) Is emergent and inquiry-driven learning accessible to everyone? What barriers exist?