



# Pedagogical Inquiry

Exploring “How Does Learning Happen?”

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“**Pedagogy:** the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning.” (ELECT, 2007)

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## Durham's Best Start Network

### Child Care Sub-Committee

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June 2022

Dear Colleagues,

The Best Start Network Child Care Sub Committee is excited to share with you the recently updated and expanded professional learning tool **Pedagogical Inquiry: Exploring "How Does Learning Happen?"** The goal of these Inquiry sessions is to help bring the Province of Ontario's vision of pedagogy to life.

The original series of sessions was developed by the Best Start Child Care subcommittee in 2014 and shared with the Durham child care community in 2015. In 2019, the committee once again came together to create additional inquiry sessions and modernize the existing sessions to reflect the vision of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Each session in this tool is intended to take 15 to 20 minutes each to complete and reference Ministry of Education documents including **"How Does Learning Happen?"** They can be used individually or within a group of educators. Educators will have the opportunity to evaluate, examine, develop, refine, and understand the information contained in the Ministry of Education documents to establish a strong foundation for learning and development.

We hope you enjoy your Inquiry experiences!

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Durham's Best Start Network

Lisa Rankin and Julie Gaskin  
Co-Chairs, Durham's Best Start Network, Child Care Sub-committee

## Historical Acknowledgement

In 2014, Durham's child care and early learning professionals were first introduced to the Ministry of Education's document "How Does Learning Happen?" (HDLH). This document inspired the Best Start Network (BSN) Child Care sub-committee to begin to engage in conversations about pedagogy. A working group was formed from the BSN Child Care sub-committee. This working group was tasked with developing ways to promote HDLH in the present and ways to keep HDLH alive in the future.

The result of the working group's dedication, diligence and motivation is the document before you: Pedagogical Inquiry: Exploring "How Does Learning Happen?" This resource was created and available to the community only months after their journey began.

In 2019, the BSN Child Care sub-committee engaged the early learning community in an information gathering process and then began to develop extensions to the original Pedagogical Inquiry tool incorporating "Think, Feel, Act Empowering Children in the Middle Years" (2018) and "Think, Feel, Act" (2013).

In 2022, the BSN Child Care sub-committee reconvened to revise the document to be more inclusive of children and families. The committee reviewed the tool from a lens of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. The new and updated paperless version, can be utilized by all educators in the early learning and child care sector to develop a strong foundation for learning and development.

Durham's early learning and child care professionals are part of a community of practice committed to reflection and continuous learning. The intent of this resource is to support continuous professional learning by providing opportunities to engage in conversations and explore HDLH through reflective practice.

We are proud of the work that has been done in development of the Pedagogical Inquiry tool. Educators are encouraged to examine and apply their learning with intention, purpose and understanding of Ontario's pedagogical documents.

### **We would like to recognize the working group participants:**

- Cyndi Campbell, RECE, Quality Assurance Program Manager, Children's Services (2014)
- Jody Chapman, RECE, Executive Director, Fairy Glen Day Care (2014, 2019, 2022).
- Millie Forbes, RECE, Quality Assurance Program Manager, Children's Services (2014).
- Julie Gaskin, RECE, BA, Early Learning Manager – Children's Services (2014, 2019, 2022).
- Ruth Patterson, RECE, BA, Director of Programs, Schoolhouse Playcare Centres of Durham (2014, 2019, 2022).

- Tracy Barclay, RECE, BA, Training Specialist, Children's Services (2019, 2022).
- Lori McMulkin, RECE, Director, EduKids Child Care (2019, 2022).
- Monica Moreno, RECE, Supervisor, P.R.Y.D.E Learning Centres (2019).
- Lesley Smid, RECE, Program Manager, P.R.Y.D.E Learning Centres (2019, 2022).
- Debbie Ellis, RECE, Indigenous Training Specialist, Children's Services (2019, 2022).

# How Does Learning Happen?

**Understanding of Children as Competent, Curious,  
Capable of Complex Thinking, Rich in Potential**

**Pedagogical Inquiry: Exploring “How  
Does Learning Happen?”**

## **Goal**

To bring the Province of Ontario’s vision of pedagogy to Durham’s early learning and childcare environments.

## **Objectives**

Educators will:

1. Evaluate their personal beliefs regarding pedagogy and how children learn.
2. Examine, explore, and document pedagogical learning.
3. Incorporate the Provincial Framework for Child Care and Early Learning in Ontario into personal philosophies and organizational visions.
4. Have a better understanding of Ontario’s guiding pedagogy.
5. Build a vision of all children as competent, curious, and capable of complex thinking and rich in potential.

# How Does Learning Happen?

**Understanding of Children as Competent, Curious,  
Capable of Complex Thinking, Rich in Potential**

**Guidelines for using “Pedagogical Inquiry:  
Exploring How Does Learning Happen?”**

A copy of “How Does Learning Happen?”; “Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children”; and “Think, Feel, Act – Empowering Children in the Middle Years”, should be available to assist with learning.

There is no right or wrong way to utilize this tool; individuals or teams may be at different starting points in their journey of understanding Ontario’s pedagogy for early learning. Each of the sessions can be adapted to all age groups.

Begin the pedagogical journey with the “Pre-reflection.”

- Complete all sections of each inquiry session in the order of your choice.
- Use the “Summary of inquiry sessions” for planning and completion purposes.

**Each inquiry session includes:**

- Title of the session
- Learning outcome
- Materials required
- Activity to be completed
- Questions for reflections
- Points to ponder

## Just Getting Started or Continuing Your Journey . . .

### Helpful Tips

- ❑ Where to start? Review the Pedagogical Inquiry: Exploring “How Does Learning Happen?” package
- ❑ Explore the package and determine the implementation process best suited for you and/or the early learning and child care educators. If you are new to this tool, start at the very beginning of the package and establish an appropriate starting point.
- ❑ There is no right or wrong way to utilize the **Pedagogical Inquiry: Exploring “How Does Learning Happen?”** package; individuals or teams may be at different starting points in their journey. Start at the foundation that most suits your environment.
- ❑ It is beneficial to have a copy of [“How Does Learning Happen?”](https://files.ontario.ca/edu-how-does-learning-happen-en-2021-03-23.pdf) (<https://files.ontario.ca/edu-how-does-learning-happen-en-2021-03-23.pdf>) This is an important document to give to all new educators. This document explores the provincial framework for Early Learning and Child Care in Ontario.
- ❑ It is beneficial for all educators to have a copy of [“Think, Feel, Act” \(2013\)](https://files.ontario.ca/edu-think-feel-act-lessons-from-research-about-young-children-en-2021-01-29.pdf) (<https://files.ontario.ca/edu-think-feel-act-lessons-from-research-about-young-children-en-2021-01-29.pdf>)
- ❑ A good starting point would be the **Video Discussion Starters**, which can be implemented individually or within a team setting. These videos can be used at any time during your Pedagogy Inquiry journey.
- ❑ All activities can be adapted to all age groups with critical thinking and reflection.
- ❑ Remember that all the activities and research may be used for continuous professional learning and professional development.
- ❑ Although the activities may highlight specific pages in the Ministry of Education publications, we encourage and recommend that educators read the article completely to enhance their understanding of its concept.

## Understanding of children as competent, curious, capable of complex thinking and rich in potential

### Video Starters

#### Segment 1

##### “How Does Learning Happen?” and Program Regulations

Great starting point!

Explores:

- An overview of “How Does Learning Happen?”
- The Ministry policy statement.
- Programming licensing requirements under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).
- How they work together.
- To review the above-mentioned documents, click the video link below:

[vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/157729808](https://vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/157729808)

**Length:** 11:25

**Highlights or fast track:** Start the video at 4 minutes 48 seconds to review the key elements if time is not on your side!

**Tip:** This may be a video you start and stop to allow for discussion

#### Segment 2

##### Program Statement

[\(vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/158693788\)](https://vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/158693788)

Explores:

- What is the connection between “How Does Learning Happen?” and the new requirements under the CCEYA.
- Articulate our view of the child.
- What you want to achieve and how you will do it.
- Develop and refine goals and approaches.

**Length:** 9:27

**Highlights or fast track:** Start the video at three minutes to review the key elements – if time is not on your side!

**Tip:** This may be a video geared towards reflection of your current program statement; it can be viewed as a group or in classroom meetings.



### Segment 3

#### Approaches to Foster Positive and Responsive Relationships

(<https://vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/157718786>)

Explores:

- ‘Belonging.’
- Inclusion - Language and Cultural.
- Connection between behaviours and relationships.
- Self-regulation: goals and approaches.
- Documentation.

**Length:** 21:52

#### **Highlights or fast track:**

3:02 – How do the children in your program see themselves and their families reflected?

12:38 – Dr. Stuart Shanker on Self-Regulation

17:30 – Chris Rayner – Stress Factors for Children

**Tip:** These two short videos could be viewed individually prior to discussing as a group.

### Segment 4

#### Planning and Approaches to Support Exploration, Play and Inquiry

(<https://vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/157718785>)

Explores:

- Differences in the new and old requirements.
- Key elements in “How Does Learning Happen?”
- Making changes to ensure inclusion.
- Fostering further exploration.
- Building on a child’s questions and theories.

**Length:** 14:38

#### **Highlights or fast track:**

4:44 – Inclusion

5:50 – Space, Material and Time: Educators as Co-Learners

9:23 – Room for Development - Reflective Practices

**Tip:** This segment provides an opportunity for reflection and building on current planning and approaches.

## Segment 5

### Approaches to Support Parent Engagement and Communication

(<https://vimeo.com/endlessfilms/elmfinal/video/158119876>)

Explores:

- Regulations regarding parent engagement and documentation.
- What is pedagogical documentation.
- Questions around documentation.

Min Elm Final Video

**Length:** 16:26

**Highlights or fast track:**

2:58 – Karyn Callaghan – Parent Engagement and How to Encourage It

12:00 – Examples of how documentation is being used

**Tip:** This segment provides an opportunity to explore open communication with parents and their involvement within your program.



# How Does Learning Happen?

Are You a Pedagogical Leader?

## What Does Pedagogy Mean?

“How Does Learning Happen?” states pedagogy is “the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning.” (ELECT 2007).

The pedagogical approach for educators can be identified by the words below. What words are missing?

*Extensions*    *teach*    *SHARE*    *learn*    *child-led*  
*Methods*    *Study*    *emergent*    *creative*  
*explore*    *Concepts*    *partnership*    *inquiry*  
*discover*    *play-based*    *relationship*    *risk-taking*  
*reflective*    *provocation*    *curiosity*

## Pedagogical Leader Defined:

“Pedagogy can be defined as the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that supports that understanding of learning. Essentially it is the study of the teaching and learning process. Leadership is often defined as the act of leading or guiding individuals or groups. If we are to combine these two we are offered the notion of pedagogical leadership as leading or guiding the study of the teaching and learning process” (Coughlin & Baird, 2013).

Read the article “Pedagogical Leadership” by Anne Marie Coughlin and Lorrie Baird on page 16 of “Think, Feel, Act” (2013).

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**All Educators are Pedagogical Leaders!**

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# How Does Learning Happen?

## Pedagogical Leadership Videos

With Anne Marie Coughlin and Lorrie Baird

### Reflective Thinking

Pedagogical Leadership: Encouraging Educators' Reflective Thinking in Early Years Settings

[Pedagogical Leadership - Encouraging Educators Reflective Thinking in Early Years Settings](#) (4:21 minutes)

### Possibilities

Pedagogical Leadership: Recognizing Possibilities for Professional Learning in Early Years Settings

[Pedagogical Leadership – Recognizing Possibilities for Professional Learning in Early Years Settings - YouTube](#) (3:26 minutes)

# How Does Learning Happen?

## Other Pedagogical Leadership Supports

### Habits of Documenting

Click the link below to watch a video about documenting habits:

(3:52 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8aaxrHQQ4o>

### Metaphor for Leadership in Early Childhood Education and Care

Click the link below to watch a video about leadership in early childhood education:

4:05 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch? HJM5mF0Ec&feature=youtu.be>



## Understanding of children as competent, curious, capable of complex thinking and rich in potential

### Pre-Reflection

**Learning Outcome:** Educators will reflect on their personal philosophy of how learning happens.

#### Materials Required:

- Template: “Pre-reflection” form (page 19 of this booklet)
- A copy of “How Does Learning Happen?”

#### Activity:

1. Review the organization’s philosophy and discuss/reflect:

- Why do we have a philosophy?

- What does it mean?

- How is it demonstrated?

2. Review page 14 of “How Does Learning Happen?” and reflect:
  - What do each of the pedagogical approaches (e.g., responsive relationships) mean to you?
  - How are these approaches reflected in your organization’s philosophy?
3. Examine any two or three photos contained in the document “How Does Learning Happen?” and reflect on:
  - What learning may be happening in these photos?
  - What connections do you see between this learning and the organization’s philosophy?
  - In what way does this mirror your own personal philosophy of how learning happens?

4. Complete the “Pre-reflection” (page 19 of this booklet).
5. These reflections will be reviewed in a future inquiry.
6. As a supervisor/pedagogical leader, take time after the meeting to reflect on the “Points to ponder for supervisors/pedagogical leaders” if applicable.

### Possible Questions for Reflection during Activity:

Some possible questions to ask when looking at the photos to help discussion

- What do you see?
- What do you wonder?
- What do you want to know?

### Points to Ponder for Pedagogical Leaders:

Do you or the team understand the purpose of your program's philosophy?



How are the principles demonstrated in daily actions?

How can you expand the team's understanding of the program's philosophy, if applicable?

What further action is required to ensure you are implementing the philosophy?

## Pre-Reflection

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This reflection is meant to be personal and need not be shared with others.

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Please document your personal beliefs on the following:

- What did you do in the past week to promote learning?
- What learning happened during this time?
- How did that learning happen?
- What will you do in the week to come to expand on this learning?
- How did this demonstrate your own understanding about how learning happens?

Once this reflection is completed, please place in your binder for future self-reflection.

## Understanding of children as competent, curious, capable of complex thinking and rich in potential

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