

2024

# May Newsletter



## THIS MONTH

- Celebrating Mothers
- Red Dress Day
- Moose Hide Campaign
- Endangered Species Day
- World Bee Day
- World Turtle Day
- Pre-printing Skills
- Getting Ready for Kindergarten
- Snoezelen Room Rentals
- Hooray for Outdoor Play



The EarlyON programs at Empower Simcoe are built on four foundations: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression, which promote the healthy development of children and provide parents and caregivers with support to ensure their child and family have the resources needed to raise healthy, thriving, resilient children.

To register for an EarlyON program with Empower Simcoe click [here](#) [1]



## Michele Kapteyn Supports and Services Manager

Hello EarlyON Participants,

May is the month we celebrate Mothers. Motherhood may have come about through the birth of a biological child, or by adoption, or through a fostering relationship, or you may be a grandmother who is parenting your grandchild. No matter how the relationship came to be I want to recognize and honour motherhood.

On May 9, 2019 The Washington Post ran an article, "Defining Motherhood"[2]. Amy Joyce, who authored the article asked mothers to define motherhood. All responses were meaningful; I have selected a few responses from the article as particularly poignant.



**She is a mother.** She is vulnerable (just hurt her child, and you'll see) and she is strong (just hurt her child, and you'll see). She has been elevated (she is Mom) and she has been demeaned (she is just a mom). She is full (loving a child so completely will do that to you) and she is empty (loving a child so completely will do that to you). Who says she can't have it all? She has everything.

— Sharon Holbrook



**I'd like to tell you** what motherhood means to me, except it's challenging to sit at my desk while my pockets are full of rocks.

In the four years I have spent as a mom, that's what I've become: I am the rock holder. My pockets are heavy with rocks. Rocks sag in my backpack. They clunk in my coat.

My son finds these rocks and urges me to have them, slips them into my good purse, sweetens the deal with crumbling leaves, an array of sticks, wildflowers, the occasional cicada shell.

He gives me the world. Or tries to.

— Maggie Down





**Foster parenting has been** the most challenging experience of my life. The uncertainty, the courtrooms, the restrictions, the tears—hers and mine.

Every day I think, I can't do this.  
Every day I think, There's nothing I'd rather do.  
Loving this child who isn't biologically mine is effortless; it's love that came immediately, and has become indestructible.

She is pure magic.  
Yesterday, she hugged me so tightly and I hugged her back, so tightly, and in that moment, I felt indescribable gratitude for the woman who brought her into the world. For in her own way, she is magic too.

— Katy Upperman



**Motherhood is the ache** I feel in my chest when my son can't see the flock of birds that just flew overhead. It is the vintage Valentine in April that his brother, who is not blind, and who can walk and talk, brings home to me from his trip to Hawaii. It is slipping out of my younger son's hospital bed, careful not to wake him, and returning home to be with his brother, who tells me about the girl he likes. It is the certainty with which I love them both.

— Molly Coffin



May 12, 2024, is Mother's Day this year. If you are a Mom, through whatever form that relationship came to be, I want you to first congratulate you; what an amazing privilege it is to be a mother. Second, I want to encourage you; this is one of the hardest things you will ever do, and you are doing it. And third, I want to ask you to put pen to paper and define what motherhood means to you. Once you have done that date it and store it away to share with your child at some future date. Those words you commit to paper will become a legacy, a legacy born out of love, pain, joy, sorrow, steadfastness, patience, and generosity.

Until next time,  
Michele Kapteyn



**Angelia Brooks**  
**EarlyON Indigenous Coordinator**

Do you have questions? Email Angelia at [indigenous@empowersimcoe.ca](mailto:indigenous@empowersimcoe.ca)

*I would like to invite you to learn more about the following:*

**I. May 5 is a National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S**

(Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Two Spirit and Gender Diverse People)

Also known as **Red Dress Day**, this day is to honour those missing and murdered individuals. But also to build awareness to end the violence.

**Red Dress Day** started on May 5, 2010, as an offshoot of a project by Métis artist Jaime Black. The red dresses are meant to draw attention to missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada and United States.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

In Canada Indigenous women are twelve times more likely to be murdered or missing than any other woman in Canada, and sixteen times more likely to be murdered or missing than white women in Canada...



On May 5, we wear red to honour and remember our missing and murdered women, girls and Two-Spirit people.



**II. May 16 is a National Moose Hide Campaign Day**



**Moose Hide Campaign**

*The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Men who are standing up against violence towards women and children.*

*Wearing this moose hide signifies your commitment to honour, respect, and protect the women and children in your life and to work together with other men to end violence against women and children.*

*Our vision is to spread the Moose Hide Campaign to organizations, communities, and governments throughout Canada.*



**The Moose Hide Campaign**

Join over half a million Canadians in ceremony and solidarity with the goal of ending gender-based violence.

Moose Hide Campaign

### III. Endangered Species Day (17 May 2023)

- Every year on the third Friday in May, people around the world participate in Endangered Species Day by celebrating, learning about, and taking action to protect threatened and endangered species.
- This global day of action and celebration was created and founded by David Robinson and the Endangered Species Coalition in 2006, and has continued ever since.

#### Want to Learn more? Check out:

- [4] [www.endangered.org/campaigns/endangered-species-day/#:~:text=Endangered%20Species%20Day%202023%3A%20May%2019th](http://www.endangered.org/campaigns/endangered-species-day/#:~:text=Endangered%20Species%20Day%202023%3A%20May%2019th)
- [5] [www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Endangered-Species/Endangered-Species-Day](http://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Endangered-Species/Endangered-Species-Day)
- [6] [earth.org/endangered-species-in-canada/](http://earth.org/endangered-species-in-canada/)
- [7] [naturecanada.ca/discover-nature/endangered-species/](http://naturecanada.ca/discover-nature/endangered-species/)



### IV. World Bee Day (20 May 2023)

- World Bee Day is observed on 20 May each year to draw attention to the essential role bees and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy.
- Did you know there are over 20,000 species of bee in the world?

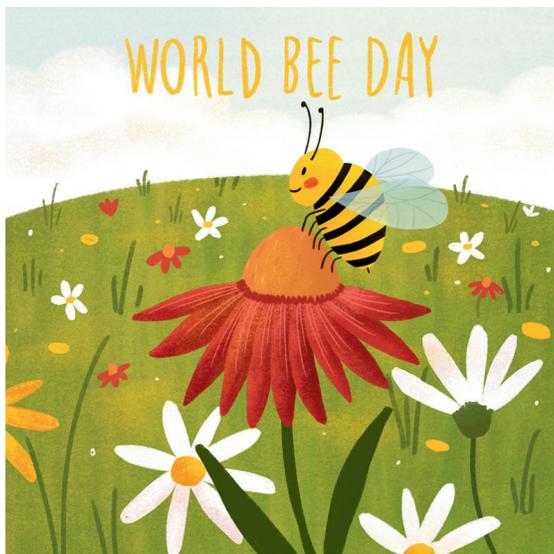
[8] <https://www.apimondia.org/world-bee-day.html#:~:text=World%20Bee%20Day%20%2D%2020%20May,people%20and%20the%20planet%20healthy.>

- Close to 75 percent of the world's crops producing fruits and seeds for human use depend, at least in part, on pollinators.
- Pollinators contribute to 35 percent of the world's total crop production, pollinating 87 of 115 leading food crops worldwide.

[9] <https://www.fao.org/world-bee-day/en>

- More than 75 percent of the world's food crops depend, to some extent, on pollination. Pollinators, like bees, butterflies, birds, moths, beetles, and even bats, help plants reproduce.

[10] <https://www.un.org/en/observances/bee-day>



GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE

## FUN FACT FRIDAY

### HONEY BEE (worker)

- flaps its wings 230 times per second
- visits 50-100 flowers in a single collection trip
- can carry pollen and nectar equal to 80% her body weight
- makes about 1/12 tsp of honey in her lifetime
- has a sense of smell as much as 100 times more powerful than a human's



# Everything you wanted to know about pollination (but were too shy to ask)

## POLLINATION 101

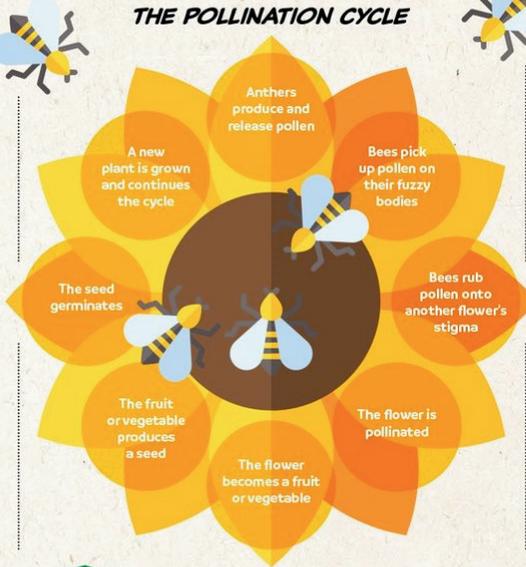
- One in three bites of food we eat are thanks to pollinators.
- 300,000 species of flowering plants across the world need pollinators to help make the seeds that become the next generation of plants.
- Sugary nectar provides pollinators with carbohydrates while pollen gives proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals.



## FOODS THAT NEED OUR POLLINATORS



## THE POLLINATION CYCLE



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Plant things that give bees something to pollinate — think yellow, blue and purple flowers. Bees also love sunflowers and herbs, so this is your incentive to start an herb garden.
- Install an urban beehive.
- Rather than exotic plants, choose plants that are native to your area. This is one of the easiest and impactful things you can do. Any garden specialist can help.
- If you want to attract monarch butterflies, plant milkweed — it's the only plant they will lay their eggs on. Monarch populations have declined by 90% because they can't find milkweed.
- Help us restore and protect grasslands. Our grasslands are filled with native plants that allow our pollinators to thrive.

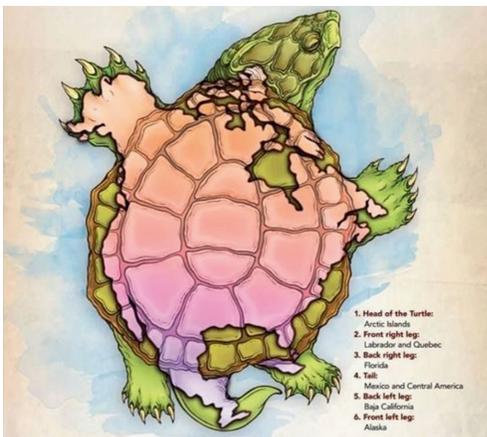


Support our conservation efforts to help our pollinating population at [ducks.ca/join](https://ducks.ca/join)



## V. World Turtle Day, May 23. 2023

- Turtles are very important to Indigenous people.
- The turtle's shell is how our Indigenous Ancestors were able to keep track of the months and days. Check out the 13 Moons on Turtles Back
- North and Central America is often referred to as Turtle Island, by Indigenous People.



### 13 Moons ON TURTLES BACK

THE TURTLE'S SHELL WAS THE FIRST WAY NATIVE PEOPLE KEPT TRACK OF TIME AND SEASONAL CHANGES.

THE OUTER SHELL HAS 28 SMALL SCUTES WHICH REPRESENT THE DAYS BETWEEN EACH MOON (MONTH).

THERE ARE 28 DAYS FOR ONE MOON (MONTH).

THE INNER SHELL HAS 13 LARGE SCUTES WHICH REPRESENT THE MOONS (MONTHS) FOR THE YEAR.

THERE ARE 13 MOONS DURING ONE LUNAR CYCLE (YEAR).

Learn more about the 8 species of turtles that live in Ontario:



**Blanding's Turtle**

*(Emydoidea blandingii)*

**Threatened in Ontario,  
Endangered in Canada**



**Eastern Musk Turtle**

*(Sternotherus odoratus)*

**Special Concern in Ontario and  
Canada**



**Northern Map Turtle**

*(Graptemys geographica)*

**Special Concern in Ontario and  
Canada**



**Painted Turtle**

*(Chrysemys picta)*

**Midland painted: Special  
Concern in Canada**

**Western painted: Not Listed**



**Snapping Turtle**

*(Chelydra serpentina)*

**Special Concern in Ontario and  
Canada**



**Spiny Softshell Turtle**

*(Apalone spinifera)*

**Endangered in Ontario and  
Canada**



**Spotted Turtle**

*(Clemmys guttata)*

**Endangered in Ontario and  
Canada**



**Wood Turtle**

*(Glyptemys insculpta)*

**Endangered in Ontario,  
Threatened in Canada**

- [11] Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre <https://ontarioturtle.ca/>
- [12] Turtles-Nests-and-Nest-Protection.pdf
- [13] <https://ontarioturtle.ca/turtles/some-interesting-turtle-facts/>
- [14] <https://ontarioturtle.ca/turtles/>

Hatchlings are born with an “egg tooth” on their upper snout that falls off after a few days of exiting the nest.

Hatchlings face many more threats and the survival rate is approximately 1%.

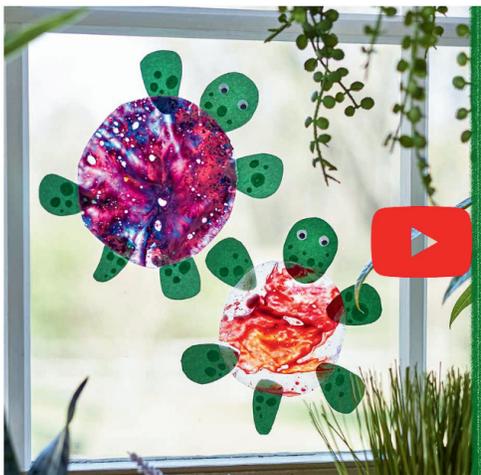
[15] <https://www.kidsforturtles.com/blog/turtle-hatching-season-is-upon-us/>



- Here is a video about Freshwater Turtles in Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language). Gaa-zhiiwitaagamizinong nibiing gaa-dazhiikewaad Miskwaadesiwag (Turtles, Ojibwe / Tortues, ojibwé) [16] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs\\_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe\\_W5&index=17](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe_W5&index=17)



[17] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs\\_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe\\_W5&index=19](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe_W5&index=19)



## Turtle Suncatcher

powered by  
Crayola  
Crayola

Turtley awesome! Shell-eborate World Turtle Day and make a suncatcher with this melted crayon turtle craft for kids.

[18] <https://www.crayola.com/crafts/turtle-suncatcher-craft>



[19] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpkN0ycubDs>



[20] <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-bee-hotel>



**Amy St John**  
**Early Literacy Specialist**

Do you have questions? Email Amy at [earlyliteracy@empowersimcoe.ca](mailto:earlyliteracy@empowersimcoe.ca)

**Pre-Printing Skills**

Why are pre-printing skills important? Before children are successful at writing letters or numbers, children need to be able to copy the basic strokes for drawing.

**What are the pre-printing strokes?**



Vertical line  
 Horizontal line  
 Circle

Cross  
 Diagonal line  
 Square

"X"  
 Triangle

**Playing with Pre-Printing**

Add a dash of fun by including a variety of materials when practicing pre-printing skills. Here are some ideas:



Cover an old cookie sheet with salt, rice, sand, pudding, or shaving cream, etc. Practice drawing shapes with a finger or Q-tip.



Draw in the sand at the park.



Draw with shaving cream or soap suds in the tub.



Fill a large Ziploc bag with conditioner or hair gel and draw shapes on the surface of the bag with a finger.

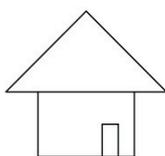


Construct shapes using pieces of string, pipe cleaners, clay, playdough, etc.



Draw on the sidewalk with chalk or a paintbrush and water

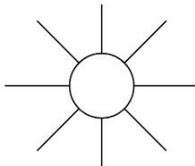
Once your child has learned how to draw the basic shapes, they can begin to combine them to create simple pictures on their own. For example:



House



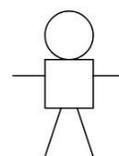
Face



Sun



Rocket ship



Person

# Getting Ready for Kindergarten



Preparing for kindergarten is an exciting milestone for both children and parents alike. As the first official step into the world of education, getting ready for this new chapter involves a mix of emotions, from nervousness to anticipation. Here are some tips to try over the next few months to help make the transition smooth and enjoyable for everyone involved.

## Routines

One of the key aspects of preparing for kindergarten is establishing a routine. By setting a daily schedule that includes time for waking up, having breakfast, getting dressed, and any other necessary tasks, children can begin to develop a sense of structure and responsibility. This routine can help ease the transition into the more structured schedule of a kindergarten classroom and busy mornings.

## Supporting Social and Emotional Development

Another important aspect of getting ready for kindergarten is helping your child develop social and emotional skills. Encouraging your child to interact with other children through playdates and visiting EarlyON can help build their confidence and social awareness. Additionally, teaching about kindness, empathy, and sharing can go a long way in assisting your child to navigate the social dynamics of a kindergarten classroom.

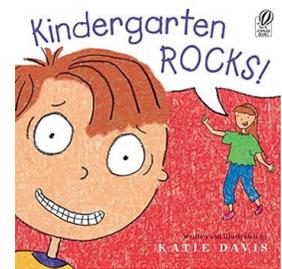
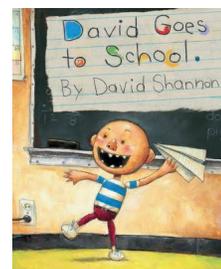
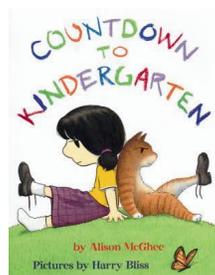
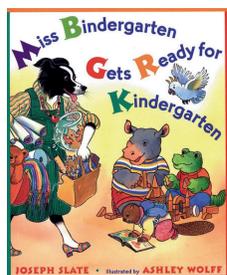
## Involve Your Child

Lastly, it's essential to involve your child in the process of getting ready for kindergarten. Let your child pick out their backpack, school supplies, and even help choose their outfits for the first day. By involving your child in these decisions, you empower them and make them feel more in control of this new experience.

*Getting ready for kindergarten is a significant milestone that can be made smoother with a little preparation and a lot of love and support.*



## Hooked on Books – Kindergarten





**Empower  
Simcoe**

BE • BELONG • THRIVE

## **SNOEZELN ROOM RENTALS**

For children 6 years and younger

### **WHY**

These multisensory spaces provide community partners with access to developmentally appropriate materials and equipment.



### **WHEN**

Bookings are available Monday afternoons and Friday mornings in Barrie. Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings will be available in Bradford

### **WHERE**

EarlyON Child and Family Centre  
129 Ferris Lane, Barrie

EarlyON Child and Family Centre  
118 Bradford Street, Bradford

**COMING  
SOON**



### **PRICING**

\$25.00 - 30-minute bookings  
\$225.00 - Ten 30-minute bookings

### **ORIENTATION**

An orientation is required and will be provided by program facilitators who are familiar with the equipment.



For pictures of the space or to book the Snoezelen Room visit:  
[www.empowersimcoe.ca](http://www.empowersimcoe.ca)  
Questions? Contact us at:  
[ffs-129Ferris@empowersimcoe.ca](mailto:ffs-129Ferris@empowersimcoe.ca)



Hooray  
FOR OUTDOOR  
PLAY!



Support the Hooray for Outdoor Play campaign and help build a new, accessible playground at the EarlyON Child and Family Centre, 129 Ferris Lane, Barrie. With a \$300,000 goal, this initiative aims to create a recreational and outdoor learning space, expanding the EarlyON Programming.

**Your donation today directly contributes to constructing this vital playground,** fostering holistic child development through social interaction, physical activity, and imaginative play. The playground is under construction, set to be ready later this year, providing a safe space for children to build friendships and have fun. Make a difference – donate now to create lasting memories for families like yours at Empower Simcoe's EarlyON Child and Family Centre in Barrie.



TO DONATE, VISIT  
EMPOWERSIMCOE.CA

## Links

- [1] <https://www.empowersimcoe.ca/earlyon-child-family-centres/>
- [2] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/style/wp/2019/05/09/feature/the-protector-the-multitasker-the-holder-of-rocks-10-moms-define-motherhood/>
- [3] <https://moosehidecampaign.ca/>
- [4] <https://www.endangered.org/campaigns/endangered-species-day/#:~:text=Endangered%20Species%20Day%202023%3A%20May%2019th>
- [5] <https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Endangered-Species/Endangered-Species-Day>
- [6] <https://earth.org/endangered-species-in-canada/>
- [7] <https://naturecanada.ca/discover-nature/endangered-species/>
- [8] <https://www.apimondia.org/world-bee-day.html#:~:text=World%20Bee%20Day%20%2D%2020%20May,people%20and%20the%20planet%20healthy.>
- [9] <https://www.fao.org/world-bee-day/en>
- [10] <https://www.un.org/en/observances/bee-day>
- [11] Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre <https://ontarioturtle.ca/>
- [12] [Turtles-Nests-and-Nest-Protection.pdf](#)
- [13] <https://ontarioturtle.ca/turtles/some-interesting-turtle-facts/>
- [14] <https://ontarioturtle.ca/turtles/>
- [15] <https://www.kidsforturtles.com/blog/turtle-hatching-season-is-upon-us/>
- [16] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs\\_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe\\_W5&index=17](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe_W5&index=17)
- [17] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs\\_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe\\_W5&index=19](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXioJL6VG2E&list=PLSQo-gTeDRVKPs_bNpr6h8lt2TIAe_W5&index=19)
- [18] <https://www.crayola.com/crafts/turtle-suncatcher-craft/>
- [19] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpkNOycubDs>
- [20] <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-bee-hotel>