Métis Nation of Ontario Early Learning & Child Care

ELCC ADVISORS' NEWSLETTER

February 2027

Ways to Carry a Métis Baby Story Bag Presentation

February 18, 2027 10:00 AM EST
Online Professional Learning Opportunity

What can the many ways we carry babies teach children about culture, belonging, and caring for one another?

Discover how the Métis Nation of Ontario's Ways to Carry a Métis Baby Story Bag, featuring Métis author and artist Leah Marie Dorion, can inspire meaningful storytelling, dramatic play, and cross-cultural connections. Join the Early Learning and Child Care Advisor Team on February 18, 2027, to explore the cultural significance of Métis baby-carrying traditions, the difference between cultural appreciation and appropriation, and practical ways to nurture empathy, belonging, and a community of care through play.

Child care owners and operators are encouraged to purchase the Story Bag and invite their educators to attend! Together, we can move beyond simply including cultural resources to using them intentionally and respectfully in everyday practice.

Purchase Your Story Bag Here

Register Here

ELCC INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARTNERSHIP ADVISOR TEAM

The ELCC Advisor Team at the Métis Nation of Ontario is dedicated to enhancing relationship building with existing early learning centers/programs across Ontario and strengthening relationships with regional municipalities.

Jennifer Boston JenniferB@metisnation.org
Courtney Scott CourtneySc@metisnation.org
Sylvie Hebbard-Langille sylvieh@metisnation.org
Ashley Gour AshleyG@metisnation.org

Professional learning opportunities that fit your schedule!

The Education and Training Branch offers flexible, self-paced online learning modules designed specifically for early years professionals!

Explore Métis culture, land-based learning, storytelling, and culturally responsive practices through engaging modules, including The Giving Tree and Toddlers and Land-Based Learning. Discover practical strategies to bring authentic Métis perspectives into everyday learning while strengthening your confidence in cultural appreciation and inclusion.

Are you a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE)? These modules may also support your Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) Portfolio through the College of Early Childhood Educators when aligned with your individual learning goals and the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

Professional learning is more than gaining knowledge. It's about reflecting, growing, and turning that learning into meaningful action for children and families.

Learn anytime, anywhere, at your own pace!

Explore the MNO's Free Self-Paced Learning Modules

What can the many ways we carry babies teach children about culture, belonging, and caring for one another?

Across cultures and communities, caring for babies reflects love, connection, and responsibility. While caregiving traditions may differ, these shared experiences offer meaningful opportunities for children to explore culture, relationships, and belonging through play.

The Education and Training Branch invites early learning professionals to discover the Ways to Carry a Métis Baby Story Bag, featuring the beautifully illustrated story by Métis author and artist Leah Marie Dorion. This culturally grounded resource includes a child-sized doll moss bag carrier and educator resource cards that bring Métis traditions into early learning through storytelling and dramatic play.

From Cultural Appreciation to Meaningful Connections

Imagine children gently carrying dolls, comforting babies, and sharing how different families in their community care for one another. These everyday experiences invite conversations about diverse caregiving traditions while celebrating the distinct cultural knowledge shared through the Métis story.

Drawing on the principles of Illuminating Care, educators can recognize caregiving as more than a routine. It is an opportunity to nurture empathy, relationships, and a community of care.

However, meaningful inclusion requires more than adding cultural materials to a classroom. The MNO's Cultural Appropriation and Appreciation in the Early Years reminds educators to honour cultural origins, centre authentic Indigenous voices, and understand the significance of the resources they share.

Cultural appreciation is not about recreating another culture. It is about learning from it, respecting its distinctiveness, and discovering meaningful connections.

Care, Allyship, and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #12 emphasizes culturally appropriate early childhood education for Indigenous families. At the same time, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes children's rights to cultural identity and play.

When early learning programs intentionally invest in authentic Métis resources, they create opportunities for Métis children to see their identities reflected and for all children to develop understanding, respect, and empathy.

Allyship begins with intentional choices: whose stories we share, whose voices we centre, and how we help children experience care and belonging.

Bring This Learning into Your Program

We encourage child care owners and operators to invest in the Ways to Carry a Métis Baby Story Bag and support educators in using it respectfully and meaningfully throughout their daily practice.

Purchase the Ways to Carry a Métis Baby Story Bag through Wintergreen Learning Materials

Learning to care for one another also means learning to honour one another.



References

Dorion, L. M. (2014). Ways to carry a Métis baby. Strong Nations Publishing.

Métis Nation of Ontario. (n.d.). Ways to carry a Métis baby story bag kit [Early learning resource kit]. Wintergreen Learning Materials. https://www.wintergreen.ca/metis-nation-of-ontario-ways-to-carry-a-metis-baby-story-bag-kit-english-wgn6543en

Métis Nation of Ontario. (2026). Cultural appropriation & appreciation in the early years: A guiding document. https://www.metisnation.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/EDIT-Cultural-Appropriation-and-Appreciation-in-the-Early-Years_2026.pdf

Murray, C. G. (2021). Illuminating care: The pedagogy and practice of care in early childhood communities. Exchange Press.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to action. https://nctr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

United Nations. (1989). Convention on the rights of the child. https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text

Métis Nation of Ontario