



**Kids  
Included**



# **ECS *Learning* Series 2025-26**

For Kids Included Families & ECS Staff





# Welcome!

## ECS Learning Series 2025-26

The purpose of our ECS Learning Series is to create opportunities for parents and ECS staff to learn together.

We are pleased to share our calendar for the 2025-26 program year. A variety of topics are offered to support the confidence and skills needed to meet the needs of children and families.

### ECS Staff

Please refer to the following streams to guide your attendance:



#### Core Workshops:

Designed with a focus on Kids Included values and foundational skills *for ECS staff in their first three years with Kids Included.*



#### Continuing Workshops:

Designed to provide opportunities for enhanced reflection on implementing new skills and practices *for ECS staff who have completed the core series.*

### Kids Included Parents

Parents are encouraged to attend *any* of the workshops offered. Unfortunately, Kids Included is unable to provide childcare as our staff are in the workshops.

### Registration

In-person sessions take place every month and follows the school calendar year.  
***Sessions are drop-in; no registration is needed for enrolled families.***

### Times & Location

All ECS Learning Series sessions are held at the Kids Included Office  
(*unless noted otherwise*):

**Kids Included**  
**12852 - 141 Street**  
**Edmonton, AB**

Morning Sessions: **9:00am-11:15am**  
Afternoon Sessions: **12:45pm-3:00pm**

### Contact Us

For more information:  
P: 780-454-9910  
E: [info@kidsincluded.ca](mailto:info@kidsincluded.ca)  
[www.kidsincluded.ca](http://www.kidsincluded.ca)



## Inclusion Summit on Early Learning and Care

*The future is inclusive.*

**October 20, 2025**

### Inclusion Summit on Early Learning & Care

Kids Included is delighted to host a national summit on early learning and care. This summit will build on the knowledge of early childhood educators, teachers, practitioners, leaders, policy makers and families to create inclusive early learning environments.



**Core Workshops**



**Continuing Workshops**

#### **Special Location:**

DoubleTree by Hilton West Edmonton Hotel  
16615 109 Ave NW  
Edmonton, AB T5P 4K8



## Core Workshops

**November 14, 2025**

Morning: Sharing of Program Ideas

This workshop will help DA's share with one another to create a meaningful and rich program. There will be ample time to share with one another the various parts of programming to help build an exciting program for the children you work with.

Afternoon: Organizational Elements

This will be an interactive workshop to explore the many different organizational elements that DA's use throughout their programming. This includes organizing prep days, updating IPPs and using them effectively in programs and efficient time management. Please be prepared to share ideas that work well and challenges that you have come across.



## Continuing Workshops

**November 14, 2025**

Morning: All the Reasons We Use Visuals

Join us to review all the reasons we use visuals every day with children! Visuals serve a variety of functions for many different brain systems. This workshop will describe the interplay between visuals and the prompt hierarchy, and how to be prepared to use visuals quickly in the moment. Participants will investigate how to use visual schedules for daily routines, how to establish routines within routines, and circumstances requiring a quick-draw strategy. Lastly, we will explore how visuals can be used alongside AAC systems. Attendees will have time to discuss what helps and hinders their use of visuals.

Afternoon: Positions & Transitions

Children with limited mobility often have increased difficulty switching between positions, even if they are able to maintain those positions on their own. This difficulty places increased stress on the children and their caregivers. Additionally, children with limited mobility have significantly increased risks of complications due to immobility. This workshop will identify different positions that we can use to support children. We will also discuss and explore strategies to assist children in getting in/out of different positions, and ways to teach position changes.



## January 28, 2026

### Morning: Understanding Ourselves as Cultural Beings

Thinking about how to strengthen Kids Included's understanding of culture one must first reflect on their own culture biases. During this session unpack what culture means to you and how your thoughts impact your interactions with others. The purpose of this workshop is to enhance the health and well-being of families and foster their efforts at building community so they can thrive and actively contribute to society.

### Afternoon: Brain Development and Resilience

Early brain development is a complex process involving both genetic factors and environmental influences. This workshop explores the basics of brain development, the factors that can negatively impact brain development and how we can use our role.

## February 17, 2026

### Morning: Social & Emotional Supports

How can we work with families to promote a child's sense of confidence and competence? During this workshop we will discuss strategies to promote positive peer interactions and support children as they learn to problem solve and become "Mighty Learners".

### Afternoon: Writing Personal Learning Stories (& customizing visuals)

Children are quite interested in seeing themselves featured in stories. This universal interest can be used to guide learning in natural and meaningful ways. We will discuss the key elements to include in learning stories and the value of using them with children.



## January 28, 2026

### Morning: Self-care for the Caregiver

Caring for others can be rewarding but it can also be tiring, overwhelming, confusing and stressful. Come learn some ways to incorporate self care into your daily living so that you are better equipped to manage stress from day to day to continue to live a healthy life and provide care.

### Afternoon: Responsive Mealtime Routines (In Group Settings)

Mealtimes can be stressful for both children and educators, but it doesn't have to be! Drawing from multiple evidence-based frameworks, participants will gain a better understanding of typical feeding development and common challenges; as well as develop an appreciation of the complexity of feeding and how to support all children's participation at mealtimes. Recognizing their role and responsibilities in creating responsive mealtime routines, participants will leave with at least one strategy they can use right away to support mealtime participation in their program.

## February 17, 2026

### Morning: AAC Module Learning

Grit has recently produced a series of AAC learning videos that can be shared with families and community partners. During this workshop DA's will have an opportunity to view the modules, explore the content and learn how to share these new resources.

### Afternoon: Power Mobility

Power mobility technology has a big impact on children who are not otherwise able to move around themselves, and even for some children who can move themselves. Power mobility (power wheelchairs and other power mobility devices) can help with cognition, visual spatial skills, independence, as well as mobility. We will discuss many of the reasons why power mobility is so important to bring to the children we work with as well as how we can do that.



March 20, 2026

Morning: The Art of Family  
Centered Practice

Everything we do either improves or lessens a family's strength, skills and confidence. Our actions, as professionals, directly influence the experiences and outcomes for families. What does it mean to be family centered and how do you ensure families have a central role in your team. Join us to learn more about your role in supporting families in a family centered-friendly way

Afternoon: The Road to Inclusion

Inclusion is a developmental process that starts in the family and extended family and then expands to the community and school. Inclusion is lifelong! What is your philosophy? what is GRIT's philosophy? Join us to explore these questions and how we as parents and professionals can support the inclusion of children with disabilities throughout their lives.



March 20, 2026

Morning: Re-visiting the Paradigm Shift

The NRF reminds us that behaviour is a stress-response, and that it is multifaceted. It emphasizes the need for a neurodevelopmental match in our expectations for children, and what they are able to do. Still, our values, beliefs, and assumptions can sometimes 'get in the way' of the responding in the most effective way. In this highly reflective workshop, participants will explore the beliefs and values they may unconsciously hold regarding children's behaviour; identify developmentally appropriate and neuro-affirming expectations; and investigate strategies to help families and community partners see behaviour in a more holistic way.

Afternoon: Getting to Know Equipment

We often use a variety of adaptive equipment to assist children to get in/out of different positions, and to be able to participate in a variety of activities. We will discuss some of this equipment (e.g. wheelchairs, gait trainers, standing frames, adaptive gaming devices), how to safely use them, and the "why" behind their use. We will bring in samples of some of these devices, so you have some experience with them in a non-stress environment.

May 27, 2026



Core Workshops



Continuing Workshops

Morning: EDIAR

How can we start being aware of our own implicit biases? Would we recognize micro-inequities if we saw them? In this workshop, participants will define the different types of biases that we all have; describe micro-inequities and their impact on relationships with colleagues and families; and identify the steps to respond to situations where biases and micro-inequities are present.

Afternoon: Professional Development: Play Edition

Wrap up a year of learning and playing with... learning and playing! Join your colleagues as teammates for an afternoon of game-show style activities that test your knowledge of all things inclusion. This session will involve a little bit of teamwork; a little bit of brainwork; and a lot of fun!



**\*Kids Included Staff Only via Special Invite\***

**Friday December 5, 2025 & Friday April 24, 2025 | 9:00am-4:00pm**

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training® (NCI)

*\*please note extended workshop hours.*

**DAs identified by Education Leads; will be notified via email invitation for online course registration.** Completion of the online learning modules is mandatory prior to attendance of this workshop. The online course takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete and should be completed during prep time. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® training focuses on prevention and intervention training. This equips staff with strategies for safely defusing anxious or violent behavior at the earliest possible stage. Learn how to organize your thinking about how behaviour escalates and how to respond appropriately during moments of chaos.

Facilitator: Katie Benedik , OT, Certified CPI Trainer



Kids Included (formerly GRIT) has been a leader in inclusive and equitable childcare practices for children with disabilities and their families for over 40 years. As Canada's hub for inclusive early child care and education, Kids Included's professional knowledge is informed by research and industry best practices to achieve the highest possible outcomes for children, families, educators and community partners. Kids Included early learning providers work directly with families to leverage their already-established knowledge and strengths. Kids Included programs enable children with disabilities and their families to live their fullest lives and meaningfully participate in everyday activities and routines through programs for families and educators.

[www.kidsincluded.ca](http://www.kidsincluded.ca)