

“What is Ethical Practice?”

Ethical decisions involve **choosing the right action** in situations where the welfare of people is at stake. These decisions are based on our ideas of how people ought to behave, how we ought to treat one another, and what our obligations are to people.

Ethical practice involves **recognizing** when decisions have ethical components, knowing how personal values and beliefs affect ethical decisions and being skilled in the use of an ethical decision making model, utilizing the NSCCA Code of Ethics and other important considerations.

The fundamental purpose of setting up a Code of Ethics for Early Childhood Educators is to encourage the highest standard of practice and care for children and their families.

The Code of Ethics divide overall ideals Early Childhood Educators aspire to as a profession and can be used to help make difficult decisions. It can be used as a reference to help clarify our thinking and prioritize our responsibilities.



“What is right rather than expedient...
What is good rather than practical...
and what acts a members must never
engage in or condone.”

Lillian Katz

Nova Scotia Child Care Association

L'Association des Services de Garde à l'Enfance de la Nouvelle Écosse

The Nova Scotia Child Care Association (NSCCA) is a non-profit organization that recognizes that child care practitioners are the main ingredient in high quality child care and provide a valuable service to society. The organization is committed to improving standards and guidelines for the profession and thereby increases the quality of child care. NSCCA is dedicated to increasing the recognition of the important role of child care practitioners in providing quality child care to our children.

If you require support from an Early Childhood Ethics Mentor, please contact us at 423-8199 and we will set you up with a mentor. All discussions will be kept confidential, and if requested, anonymous.

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Nova Scotia Child Care Association

L'Association des Services de Garde
À l'Enfance de la Nouvelle Écosse

*A guide to Ethical
Practice for Early
Childhood Educators*

NSCCA Code of Ethics



The NSCCA Code of Ethics is a compilation of the beliefs regarding:
What is right rather than what is expedient
What is good rather than practical and
What acts members must never engage in or condone

The importance of Ethical Practice

On a daily basis Early Childhood Educators are faced with decisions where the welfare of children and colleagues is at stake, where others are affected by decisions made. Caring for Nova Scotia's children is a huge responsibility and requires that practice is ethical. Having the ethical decision and professional integrity for Nova Scotia Child Care Association (NSCCA) members. Ethical practice is the NSCCA's commitment to society. Ethical decisions involve choosing the right action in situations where the welfare of people is at stake. These decisions are based on our ideas of how people ought to behave, how we ought to treat one another, and what our obligations are to people (Griffin & Ricks, (1984) *Taking Right Action*, Vancouver: ECEBC

Code of Ethical Conduct and Guiding Principles

Guidelines for responsible behavior in child care practice: How to use the NSCCA Code of Ethics

Ask yourself what the ethical decision is related to, who are the persons to consider in this decision and refer to the statement under the related headings.

What is the decision related to?

Building Relationships

Trusting, caring and cooperative relationships that respect the worth and uniqueness of the individual

Stimulation

Stimulation that encourages growth in the whole person

Protection

Healthy and safe environments

What persons do I need to consider?

- Children
- Parents
- Colleagues
- Community

NSCCA Members Commitment to Ethical Decision Making

Should a decision arise that would compromise our ethical code, we are committed to following the decision making process.

Proceed with Ethical Decision making

1. Identify the actual issue or practice that is causing a problem
2. Indicate which individuals and or groups are to be considered in the solution of the dilemma
3. Explain what considerations each person/group is owed and why (including rights and considerations, the values that relate to the issue/practice and person/group
4. Develop alternative courses of action and act with a commitment to that action. Assume responsibility for that course of action
5. Apply values and principles conscientiously
6. Choose a course of action and act with a commitment to that action. Assume responsibility for that course of action
7. After a period of time, evaluate the action and assume responsibility for the consequences of that action



NSCCA Code of Ethics is divided in three parts

- ▶ Built upon Core Values that we hold as an organization and profession
- ▶ Based on principles that define exemplary practice and ideals
- ▶ Acts as a professional decision making tool

Being a conscientious practitioner...

Conscientious practitioners are familiar with the knowledge base of early childhood education and early child development, and keep current through professional development and training. They recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of every child, while respecting the dignity of each family and its culture, language, customs and belief. Conscientious practitioners establish and maintain relationships with respect, trust, and cooperation of colleagues. They create a climate of trust and candor that will enable staff to speak and act in the best interest of children and families, and the field of early childhood education.

The most important principle: Protecting the rights and well-being of children in our care. Above all, we shall not harm children, or participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally damaging or physically harmful to children