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*Junction Creek
Stewardship Committee*

*Comité d'intendance
du ruisseau Junction*

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PRESS RELEASE -- November 17, 2021

Early Childhood Creative Collaborations (ECCCo) has partnered with the Junction Creek Stewardship Association (JCSC) to engage children, families and educators in the green spaces along and near Junction Creek. We have received funding from the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative for the **Tiny Traces along Junction Creek** project.

This project is designed to respond to COVID, which has created unique challenges to families, communities as well as childcares and schools. The project responds to issues such as isolation, increased online learning, and mental health challenges. Our aim is to animate the educational opportunities that encounters with the local ecologies offer in terms of rich, complex experiences that bring us closer to understanding the world we live in and the complexity of our interconnectedness.

Over the next eight months, we will work with daycares and schools along the creek, beginning with neighbourhoods in the Flour Mill. We are working in partnership with Better Beginnings, Better Futures and have planned our first community event for children and their families in the Early ON program on November 20th, 2021 that will include giving thanks, a walk, new learning, and getting creative with an elder, an ecologist, and an artist.

Environmental artist Sophie Anne Edwards, the lead author of *The Art of Land-Based Early Learning* books is supporting the project by creating ecologically responsive invitations that will change regularly to keep participants returning to, learning from and with the ecosystem of the Creek and surrounding green spaces. This is an opportunity for children and families to follow their curiosities about the creek ecosystem, to learn about and care for the ecology and to engage with art materials to document what they are learning and thinking.

Creativity Boxes filled with art materials, inquiry guides and other materials will be installed along the creek, near participating childcare centres and schools. A combination to the lock on the box will be provided to participating families. Parents, guardians and children are invited to leave their artwork in the box or upload images to our website (coming soon).

To culminate the project and celebrate the research and art of the children, we will create a city-wide public exhibition of children's work -- at bus stops, in local shop windows and other public spaces.

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