

Shifting Towards Trauma- and Violence-informed Care in the Early Learning and Childcare Sector: An Exploratory Study in Western Canada

Alison J. Gerlach, Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha, Mariel Macasaquit, and Allie Slemon

Dr. Alison Gerlach identifies as a white cis woman whose research and scholarship aims to inform how early years systems of care can be inclusive of and responsive to families who experience structural marginalization and violence. Email: alisongerlach@uvic.ca

Dr. Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha identifies as a BIPOC cis woman with an interest in exploring the relationship between trauma and the sociostructural context within which trauma is experienced. Email: Mehmoona@uvic.ca

Mariel Macasaquit identifies as a BIPOC cis woman and early childhood educator whose research interests lean into reconceptualizing early childhood education. Email: marielmacasaquit@uvic.ca

Dr. Allie Slemon identifies as a white settler and queer scholar whose work examines how social justice can be meaningfully embedded in social and health services. Email: allieslemon@uvic.ca

Early learning and childcare (ELCC) programs provide a critical context for responding to young children experiencing trauma. In shifting beyond an individualistic framing of trauma, this study explored how the emerging concept of trauma-and violence-informed care (TVIC) can be implemented in ELCC programs. Methods included interviews with early childhood educators, a parent focus group and walk-through of an ELCC centre, and participant observation. Analysis identified “a shared understanding of trauma” as foundational to implementing TVIC. Other themes included “changing the way we work with families,” “(re)designing spaces,” and “taking care of the carers.” Program- and practice-level implications are discussed.

Key words: *early childhood education, early childhood educators, Indigenous programming, structural violence*

Over the past two decades, rising awareness in the Global North about the prevalence and impacts of childhood experiences of adversity, trauma, and family violence has generated increasing attention on trauma-informed care (TIC) with children (Asmussen et al., 2022; Bartlett et al., 2017; BC Ministry of Children & Family Development, 2017; Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas, 2019; Loomis, 2018). In recent years, TIC has become integral to a wide range of public programs tailored for childhood populations with high rates of trauma. These include TIC programs for children with disabilities (Thomas-Skaf & Jenney, 2021), socioeconomically marginalized children (Holmes et al., 2015), refugee newcomer children (Fakhari et al., 2023; Rousseau et al., 2012), and Indigenous children in settler colonial countries such as Australia and Canada (Atkinson, 2013; Johnson, 2014).

In Canada, TIC has been defined as an approach to service delivery that centers trauma awareness and knowledge and its prevalence and impacts on everyday life. TIC aims to prevent retraumatization and to foster physical and emotional safety, transparency and trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. This approach involves embedding an understanding of trauma in all policies, practices, and procedures (BC Ministry of Children & Family Development, 2017).

Given that many young children spend a significant amount of their time in early learning and childcare (ELCC) programs, these environments provide a critical context for supporting the optimal well-being of children with and without known trauma experiences (Bartlett et al., 2017). However, emerging research on TIC in early childhood settings has drawn attention to wide gaps and variations in early childhood educators' (ECEs') trauma awareness

and knowledge, their capacity to provide and advocate for TIC, and the need for TIC-focused professional development (Berger et al., 2023; Chudzik et al., 2023; Sheehan et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2024)

Neitzel (2018) contends that the dominant conceptualization of trauma in the ECE profession tends to be based on individualistic, decontextualized, and psychogenic viewpoints. This perspective has been critiqued for its sole focus on children’s development and behaviour and for overlooking the social structures and systems that can create and maintain childhood adversity, trauma, and violence, particularly in the context of structurally marginalized families (Gerlach, Browne, Sinha, & Elliott, 2017; Lalonde et al., 2020; Slemmon et al., 2025; Wathen & Varcoe, 2023).

Trauma- and violence-informed care

Building on the principles of TIC is the emerging concept of trauma- and violence-informed care (TVIC), which provided the conceptual and analytical framework for the research described in this paper. In their previous work, the paper’s authors had come to realize the limitations of TIC and were drawn to exploring in their respective disciplines, and consequently in the research described in this article, the potential of TVIC to be inclusive of broader structural considerations of trauma and violence (Gerlach, Browne, Sinha, & Elliott, 2017; Moosa-Mitha, 2021; Slemmon et al., 2025). The core principles of TVIC, which are applied at all levels of a program and organization, are summarized in Figure 1.

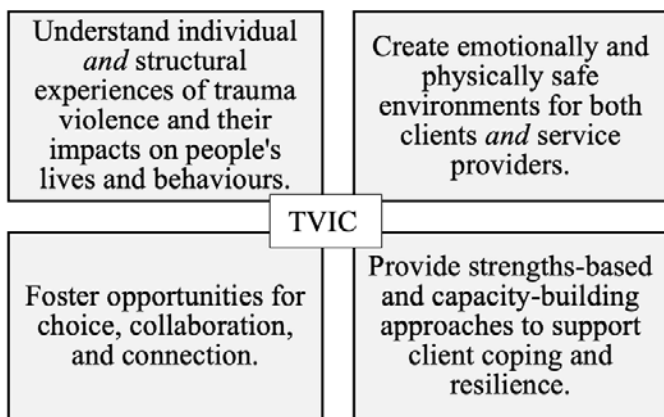


Figure 1. Core principles of TVIC (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023).

TVIC shifts attention beyond individualistic and potentially pathologizing framings of trauma and violence (Moosa-Mitha, 2021; Varcoe & Browne, 2023) by explicitly attending to the multifaceted impacts of structural forms of trauma and violence that are often beyond an individual’s control (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023). Structural violence refers to the ways that societies are organized or structured to indirectly and systemically harm people unfairly and avoidably (Varcoe & Browne, 2023). Forms of structural violence include systemic discrimination, racism, and poverty. Within settler colonial societies like Canada, structural violence in the form of colonialism is also very much a part of the historical and current fabric of society, perpetuating intersecting pathways of individual and collective trauma and violence for Indigenous communities (BlackDeer, 2023; Montesanti & Thurston, 2015).

A structural framing of trauma and violence also provokes a critical examination of the harms, inequities, and exclusions embedded in taken-for-granted care practices, policies, and systems in early years, education, health care, and child welfare contexts, among others (BlackDeer, 2023; Gerlach, Browne, Sinha, & Elliott, 2017; Lalonde et al., 2020; Rodger et al., 2023). A trauma- and violence-informed approach thus simultaneously aims to transform

care at the level of the individual and within the structures and systems that create and sustain violence and inequities (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023). Currently in Canada, there remains a lack of evidence on what it means to take up and embed TVIC into routine ELCC programming (Slemon et al., 2025).

Methodology and methods

The research described in this article was guided by the following question: *What does it mean to provide ELCC that is trauma- and- violence-informed?* Informed by TVIC as the conceptual framework, a community-engaged methodology was used to conduct this research (Moczygemba et al., 2023). Guiding principles informing community-engaged research, which mirror TVIC's emphasis on collaboration and building capacity, include "leveraging strengths and resources of a community, ensuring research is mutually beneficial for all partners, co-learning among all partners, and disseminating findings for all partners" (Moczygemba et al., 2023, p. 1367).

The need for this research was identified by the leadership of a nonprofit organization—the Victoria Social Innovation Centre (VSIC) in Victoria, BC—that hosts a range of programs and that sought to partner with researchers at the University of Victoria (UVic). A partnership was formalized in 2020, and VSIC leadership and UVic researchers codesigned the research to inform the development of a trauma-informed "Little Phoenix" ELCC program in the VSIC. It was agreed that the research would expand the focus of "trauma-informed" approaches to exploring *trauma- and violence-informed childcare* (TVIC-C). Following ethics approval from UVic, the research started in 2020 and continued after the Little Phoenix program opened in 2022. The project evolved over several years, concluding in 2024.

In early 2021, prior to the Little Phoenix program opening, Gerlach used purposive and snowball sampling to recruit ECEs to participate in virtual semistructured focus groups. Recruitment resulted in 12 female ECEs participating in the focus groups, with experience ranging from recently licensed educators to ELCC managers, including in programs specifically for structurally marginalized families in BC and Alberta. Five of the educators self-identified as Indigenous with experience in providing and/or managing ELCC programs with primarily Indigenous families. Gerlach facilitated a total of four 90-minute focus groups with the ECE participants. Questions included: *How do you define trauma? When you think of TVIC-C, what are your thoughts on what this approach looks like or could look like in an ELCC program? What is needed for this approach to be implemented successfully in an ELCC program?*

In 2022 when the Little Phoenix program was running, the authors spent approximately 45 hours over several months in the program conducting observations, engaging with educators and children, and attending staff meetings. Slemon and Macasaquit also attended a local workshop on trauma-informed practice with some of the ECEs from the Little Phoenix program. Moosa-Mitha and Slemon subsequently hosted a two-hour interactive workshop with Little Phoenix educators to explore the foundations of TVIC. Six female ECEs attended this workshop, two of whom identified as women of colour. Each participant received an honorarium of \$25.

In 2023, Little Phoenix educators were invited via email to take part in an interview. Slemon subsequently interviewed two ECEs in person individually, using the same questions about the implementation of TVIC that were asked in the 2021 focus groups with ECEs.

In 2023, the Little Phoenix manager circulated a newsletter to parents who had children currently attending the program, inviting them to participate in a three-hour focus group and centre walk-through. Eight parents participated, including two fathers and six mothers; two self-identified as South East Asian, one as First Nation, and five as white, with ages ranging from 24 to 40 years old. Parent questions included: *When you learnt that this program was aiming to be trauma informed, what were your thoughts or feelings about this? If you could dream up a*

trauma- and violence-informed ELCC program that best meets the needs of children and families, what would it include? Discussion during a physical walk-through of the indoor and outdoor spaces with parents included prompts: *What things could be changed to make the space more welcoming? What parts of this space do you think help your child to feel safe and calm?* All parent participants received a \$25 honorarium, lunch, and childcare for the duration of the research event.

In each phase of the research process, participants provided informed signed consent prior to taking part. All data generated was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Detailed fieldnotes that included research, analytical, and reflexive notes were also kept throughout the research process and used as data.

Analytical process

Each researcher brought their subjective positionality, knowledge, and experience in a collaborative, reflexive approach to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2022). Employing TVIC as their conceptual and analytical framework prompted the researchers to pay attention to the structural and organizational nature of trauma and violence, examining the spatial environment and its effects on people, and acknowledging the resiliencies and dignity of all those involved in providing and receiving care. After much dialogue and collaboration, the researchers came to consensus in codeveloping a code book by which to code transcriptions and field notes. Similarly, preliminary themes were identified and refined through visual mapping activities, multiple discussions, and reading the extant literature on TVIC to reach consensus on the final themes. The authors shared a preliminary research summary with the VSIC leadership for review and feedback.

Findings

The findings are organized into four themes and interrelated subthemes, with the overarching theme of “a shared understanding of trauma” being foundational for subsequent findings, as summarized in Figure 2. Consistent with interpretive approaches to qualitative research (Wiesner, 2022), key literature is integrated with the findings presented here.

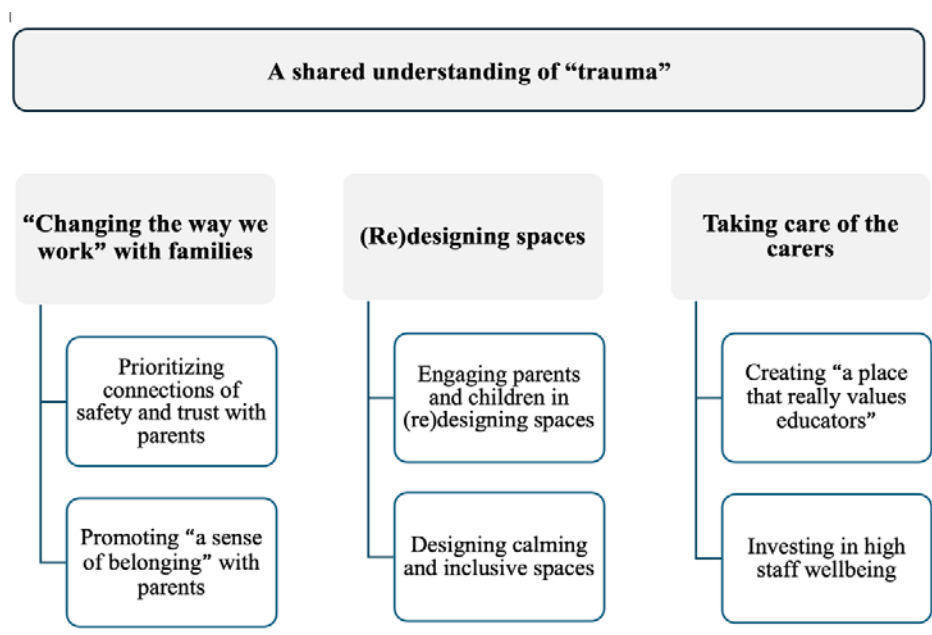


Figure 2. Overview of themes and subthemes.

A shared understanding of “trauma”

In a workshop on TIC, ECE participants from the Little Phoenix program were critical of the individualist bent adopted by the workshop facilitator:

During this workshop, an ECE critiqued normative ways of providing trauma-informed care as being centered on a Northern and Western philosophy that was more “linear,” without embracing other perspectives. This ECE then went on to suggest that within a psychological approach to trauma, “the individual becomes the problem, rather than the structures that trigger trauma responses” and that “our systems are not set up to address the underlying trauma that actually drives these responses.” (fieldnote)

Whilst critiquing the individualist orientation adopted by the workshop facilitator, ECE participants also recognized the importance of paying attention to children’s individual needs. The following quote exemplifies the nuanced perspective that ECEs adopted:

I think it means ... the approach you take with kids, being very sort of gentle and intentional and ... I think that it helps them ... develop healthy coping mechanisms, especially if they’ve had trauma in their lives and sort of modelling for them how they can behave and react to things, and also, you’re making them to feel safe. ... I’ve noticed, for example ... this child always goes over to the chalkboard alone and it seems to soothe him, so I’m gonna make sure this board is clean and nice fresh chalk, right, make it very healing as an option. (ECE)

Indigenous educator participants offered insights into their understanding of children’s trauma as manifested in their overt behaviour and not as “something that has to be punished.”

Another Indigenous ECE added:

I just heard a story from a student about a new little girl who came in and started to hit the staff right away on the first day, and in this case it was okay for them to be able to just sit there and hold the child for a good 20 minutes just to let her know that she was safe and cared for.

The “source of trauma” does not have to be known for educators to move beyond a sole focus on a child’s behaviour:

An educator shared that when two children who were refugees from Syria first arrived at the centre ... they both cried at the same time every day. She reflected on the source of trauma being unknown, though it was evident that this was a trauma response: “these kinds of things that are a mystery, but you know something’s there.” She further described that they were only consolable by being rocked and not spoken to, and that it was important for staff to provide nurturing. (fieldnote)

Understanding children’s behaviour as expressions of trauma and responding accordingly may require some educators to revisit and rethink their taken-for-granted ways of thinking and responding. As one ECE reflected: “A lot of time even ECEs they say ... these are the rules, be gentle but be firm, [but] in trauma-informed work we need to revisit these ideas and this kind of thinking.”

Educator participants also recognized the need for a shared program-wide understanding of trauma:

When we started, we actually worked together to develop a philosophy and an approach, a way of working. And we go back to that every year and look at how we’re doing it or not doing it, what do we need to change, what do we think about. (ECE)

Having a shared philosophy requires ongoing attention, particularly as new educators join a program:

If you do have educators turning over quite a bit then there's a lot of this walking back and forth because we might be trying to follow a philosophy but then everybody has their own personal philosophy. ... So that to me is a really key thing to work on in terms of establishing a program. (ECE)

This data reinforces “trauma awareness” as a fundamental starting point for designing and delivering programs without having to know the specifics of children’s and families’ experiences (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023). Findings point to educators understanding children’s individual experiences and responses to trauma—as manifested in their behaviour—rather than focusing on the behaviour itself.

“Changing the way we work” with families

Consistent with an understanding that children’s well-being is inseparable from the broader context and circumstances of their lives (McCarry et al., 2021), data signified an intentional shift beyond a sole focus on caring for the child that extended to engaging with families and specifically parents or primary caregivers:

Some educators in the Little Phoenix program noted that while other ECEs center around the child or the nuclear family only, [their program] focuses on the extended family, and that “the child doesn’t come as a separate entity.” (fieldnote)

Data in this theme emphasizes that intentionally engaging with parents and family members is integral to TVIC-C. It is organized in two interrelated subthemes: (1) prioritizing connections of safety and trust with parents, and (2) promoting a sense of belonging with parents.

Prioritizing connections of safety and trust with parents. Data highlighted an explicit focus on creating a sense of trust and safety between parents and educators. An ECE focus group discussion highlighted tangible ways of nurturing a sense of trust with parents in initial meetings by shifting the focus away from asking questions and completing paperwork onto “making connections”:

We learned pretty quickly that the way into our philosophy on childcare was through developing a trusting relationship with the parents. ... Your relationship with the family is your way into the child and helping that family using the loving, trusting relationship with them, welcoming them in, having them sit in, offering tea, cheese and crackers. (ECE)

Delaying asking lots of questions on intake was also suggested by one of the parents:

Maybe like a three or six month follow up. Like [ask us]: How are things going? Is there anything you want to share with us so we can better take care of your loved one? (parent)

Fostering relationships of safety and trust with parents required educators to be nonjudgmental and flexible in their expectations of families:

How do you make it comfortable for families? I think it goes back again to the staff. Having a very welcoming staff and even if a child comes in at two o’clock in the afternoon we say, “It’s great to see you,” not “Your child has missed the morning and it’s gonna be hard for them.” We just don’t see it in that way. When you turn your perspective somehow, you want it to work for the family, and the more you extend that relationship to the family you’ll see that they will start coming earlier because they want to be there. (ECE)

Prioritizing relations of safety and trust with parents may require that rigid policies need to be revisited and revised. Broadening routine practices in “changing the way we work” with families may also require ECEs to navigate, as one ECE said, “interpersonal relationship with families ... and so I think it definitely [requires] skill

and training.” ECE participants emphasized the importance of “learning and growing together”:

To reflect, inquire, and learn to improve our ability to develop sensitive, caring, responsive, and attuned relationships with the children and their families as per the trauma-informed approach that informs our practice. (ECE)

Significant data in “changing the way we work” with families was generated by Indigenous ECE participants who shared how their practices and policies reflected and fostered trusting relationships:

I think it’s so important to make relationships first. And I know there is definitely paperwork and all those kinds of things, but I think it’s mainly using your best judgment and not pushing, or really just looking at [the parents’] faces, feeling the energy, [asking yourself]: “Are you pushing too much into an area that they don’t want to go into?” And that’s kind of hard to say because it’s not something that you can always just have written down. ... But I think just being really, really focused on not being pushy I think is something that I would feel [is important]. Especially ... if it’s a trauma-informed centre where [parents] kind of know that maybe they’re gonna be asked to share too much. I think just being really aware of letting people guide where the conversation goes and really letting them feel like they’re in the driver’s seat is what I would feel comfortable with. (ECE)

Indigenous ECEs also described how they were “decolonizing all of their paperwork” by:

adding Indigenous ways of being and doing into those forms, even if that’s something as simple as the First Nations people if it’s specific to a certain reserve adding something from their area. All our forms have [name of Indigenous centre] logo; [it] adds a little comfort. And putting words in it, like a quote from an Indigenous book or maybe a word like [word in traditional language], which means respect. (ECE)

This participant went on to add that they had also removed questions about “gender and knowing your status card number, because those are often sensitive topics. ... If we need to know later ... we ask them then as opposed to asking them all these questions at the get go on an intake form.”

Indigenous ECEs shared further strategies that prioritized “connections of safety and trust”:

We sometimes meet families in community so [we ask parents]: “Do you want to meet at Tim Hortons? Do you feel comfortable meeting out in community or at the park?” But if they do come to the office, we offer them coffee or tea and usually the environment has comfy couches and it [doesn’t look like] I’m gonna sit you at this desk and ask you a bunch of questions. (ECE)

Another educator added:

Every Friday morning, we would set a standard breakfast for families, which was an open invitation. Most weeks we’d get two to three families that could come in and sit down and have breakfast with their child, with the program staff. It’s fairly quiet at that time, so that was really how we stayed closely connected with families.

In a province where Indigenous children continue to be overrepresented in the child welfare system (BC Representative for Children and Youth, 2024), Indigenous ECEs highlighted the importance of transparency in navigating a tricky dynamic between their “duty to report” and building connections of trust with families:

There’s a family that I can think of that I had to go over to her house and explain [that] “I’ve tried this and this and I feel terrible but I feel a duty to report, it would be better if it came from you, is there any way that I can support you to make this phone call?” She didn’t want to, and I did end up having to call.

But we have a relationship today with this family because I think I was transparent. It took some time, but I think that was a bit of a better approach than to make the phone call [without informing them first]. ... I think we need to do some education around how to approach this in a less harmful way. (ECE)

This data points to an intentional relationship-focused approach in which educators question and disrupt routine practices and policies that may be experienced as intrusive or oppressive in order to prioritize parents' feelings of safety, trust, and agency in connecting with childcare staff (Lalonde et al., 2020).

Promoting “a sense of belonging” with parents. In “doing things differently with families” and closely connected to the previous subtheme, the findings revealed an intentional focus on strategies that promoted parents' sense of belonging in programs that went beyond dropping off and picking up their children. As one parent stated: “For the trauma-informed care piece ... a sense of belonging, it's very important. These are your people, you belong here.”

The parent focus group was the first opportunity these parents had had to come together as a collective where they expressed a desire to know each other and their children:

Having more opportunities to meet and connect with the parents. I don't know any of the students or parents. Some of the kids come and talk to me, right, when I'm there for pick-up or drop-off, and I don't know their names. I would like to know more about [child]'s peers. (parent)

Another parent suggested sharing an optional “small bio” about their family and their child(ren) to “create stronger relationships”:

I'm not talking about anything super personal, but it'd be nice to have a small bio of the families to understand maybe your culture, or where you come from, or your family dynamics so when we meet each other in the hall, we have a better understanding and so we also be more respectful of each other and also be more informed, you know. So, I think ... just trying to create a stronger relationship. (parent)

Creating a programmatic culture of belonging for families was also echoed by ECE participants:

And so how can we make a space comfortable for every kind of family? I think in a trauma-informed centre ... not necessarily all families but many of them will [be coming from a place of trauma] because of circumstances that have come about in their lives, but not everybody. So, we need to find ways to help parents to be accepting of each other [and other] families too. (ECE)

Another ECE shared:

There was like a parents' night where the parents would come and all hang out together with the educators and in the actual centre, so that the parents could learn a bit more about what it was like to be in that centre. ... And I found, for myself as an educator, that it created a different relationship with the parents in talking to them one on one, like you stay in touch with them in the hallway or in the room and talking. I found for them that those events changed the relationship in a good way between the parents and the [staff].

ECE participants also talked about a deliberate focus on creating a culture of acceptance:

I know one thing we want to do is kind of learn more about all the different cultures and diversity that we have at our centre and just sort of honour those a little bit better. We have a lot of kids who are Muslim and so they celebrate like totally different holidays than the regular white North American holidays. So, yeah, just like to learn more about that and maybe a little bit more about like the languages that they speak. We have a lot of language diversity. (ECE)

Another ECE also reflected:

If you're working with a population that's new to Canada, if they face some of those barriers to health and well-being, food security is probably a reality. ... So, we do offer breakfast every day. It doesn't have to be complicated, but they can come in and there's free access to cereal, some days they get eggs and bacon but most days it's bagels and fruit. ... I think that's a pretty crucial component of a trauma-sensitive program.

An Indigenous ECE added:

Having a representation of the traditional territory that the centre is on and land acknowledgement is really important. As well as maybe some pictures and just something that represents the traditional territory that you're on. But also, to show that you care enough to know those things. And I feel like that would help a family to feel like, "Oh wow, these people really care about this."

Indigenous ECEs also shared that in their programs it was important to have a comfortable "family room" or space in programs where parents could hang out, grab a coffee, and connect with other parents, educators, support workers, and Elders. Several non-Indigenous ECE and parent participants talked about wanting or having Indigenous Elders connected and involved with their programs as a way to be respectful of the traditional territories on which their programs were located. As one parent raised: "We're on the unceded territory of First Nations but there's nothing in the program that speaks to that right now." An Indigenous ECE noted:

I think that there's no better way to honour the people whose territory you're on [than] by reaching out and making more connections. When I think about Elders that have been at the centres that I've worked at, they really bring about a lot of peace to the centre.

Promoting a sense of belonging was also evident in parent and ECE participants' emphasis on having mechanisms for parents to have a voice and visibility in program design and delivery:

A safe environment for us to share our views and what we feel that can improve the institution and how it can help our kids. ... I really like that you guys called us here to do this [focus group] ... looking for ways to improve and ... it's ongoing discussions, it's not just one discussion, and that's great. ... It comes down to communication. ... I think that these meetings are a great way for us all, kind of, move forward together. (compilation of parent comments)

"Learning from parents all the time" and wanting "to be together [with parents] as a team" were also recurring themes taken up by ECE participants as being integral to TVIC-C:

Giving [families] choices and voice in some of the activities and encouraging them to share things if they're able to. Getting their opinions on what's happening daily. (ECE)

This data highlights that creating an environment of belonging for families requires that educators are knowledgeable about, inclusive of, and responsive to the socioeconomic, cultural, and historical contexts of families and communities' lives (BC Ministry of Children & Family Development, 2017; Lalonde et al., 2020; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2014).

Overall, the data captured in "doing things differently with families" conveys a shared program-wide philosophical approach, highlighting practices and policies in alignment with TVIC (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023). A recurring theme of an intentional relationship-focused approach was particularly evident in data generated by Indigenous educators, highlighting how their programming was responsive to Indigenous families' experiences of historical and ongoing colonial violence (Gerlach, Browne, & Greenwood, 2017).

(Re)Designing spaces

Trauma-informed design assumes that the design of spaces and structures can influence behaviours, emotions, identities, and a sense of dignity and worth. Further, the design of spaces can reduce retraumatization and promote healing (Committee on Temporary Shelter, 2018). A significant amount of data was generated on the theme of “(re)designing space”; it is organized into two subthemes: (1) engaging parents and children in (re)designing spaces, and (2) creating calming and inclusive spaces.

Engaging parents and children in (re)designing spaces. The parent walk-through activity proved very effective for generating ideas about the various spaces. As the first point of entry to the program, parents talked about the constrained entry space, which had individual cubbies for children’s personal items:

I do find like when we do drop-offs and pick-ups and there’s so much overlap between the parents ... There’s not enough space for us to stick around and have a conversation. I feel like I have to do pick-up really quick and get out of the way. If we ... [had] more space to say goodbye or to have a conversation with the educator, or the parents. I feel like there’s not enough space. I feel rushed. (compilation of parent comments)

Another parent raised the importance of having thoughtful “transition spaces” during drop-offs and pick-ups because this can be emotional for both children and parents:

Having a safe space for [children] to come in, you can sit, say goodbye, take their rain boots off, and then they can be welcomed by their educators and then take a deep breath and then walk in and see the other kids. (parent)

Changes to the physical space was considered important, with ECE participants noting the importance of involving children in the redesign of their ELCC space:

We shifted the babies’ space so they were all more mobile, and one of the babies woke up and ... we brought her out and she burst into tears. And it took us a while to figure out that what was upsetting her was [that] we had changed the environment. So, we changed it back, but the next day we did do it with her awake. ... She was okay then. It was waking up to something that was different. (ECE)

Including children in (re)designing space was also taken up by another ECE:

We designed our whole outside playground with one- to three-year-olds at our centre. One of the ECEs took that on and it was an amazing exercise and she documented it and we tried to do as much as we could in terms of their input. ... The kids really told us what they loved and what they didn’t like, I mean two-year-olds can give you a lot of information. (ECE)

This data highlights the importance of educators engaging with children and parents in the (re)design of their physical environment (Henderson, 2017; Neitzel, 2018). Specific attention was paid to the notion of designing spaces that invite parents to “stick around” so that they feel welcomed and can have a sense of belonging in their ELCC programs.

Creating calming and inclusive spaces. When the physical environments of ELCC programs are designed from a trauma-informed orientation, they foster safety and avoid the risk of retraumatizing children. This includes how colours can be experienced depending on families’ sociocultural, geographical contexts, and personal experiences and histories (Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas, 2019; Henderson, 2017). As one ECE participant noted: “We’ve definitely tried to keep the stimulation pretty neutral in most of the space, like the

whole walls are neutral, there's not a lot of clutter." The effect of the physical environment on children and families is something that Indigenous programs have put thought into:

I think about what the environment looks like. I feel like a lot of centres where you have trauma or not can be very bright and busy and can give anyone anxiety. I think if it's a trauma [-informed centre], an area where you know that there's going to be people coming in with a little bit extra trauma possibly, [the place should be] a calming environment. (ECE)

The participants in this research were all located in urban-based centres, and there was discussion about children having access to nature and the calming effects of "bringing the outside in," in alignment with a trauma-informed approach (Bartlett et al., 2017). As one parent highlighted during the walk-through of the Little Phoenix program:

I would like to have more nature stuff ... that they can actually interact with, rather than just plants off to the side. That would be really neat ... I like how there's like a lot of natural light in there ... Well, the colours really matter to me. I think a lot of natural materials. I feel like you can't really go wrong with natural looking [material] ... Representing the outside inside I feel is calming for me personally. (compilation of parent comments)

An Indigenous ECE highlighted the importance of a "nature-based philosophy" being reflected in the physical environment:

Bring the outdoors in with plants and rocks that aren't too big that [children] will trip on or shells or branches ... that's probably one of your best ways is to make sure that the indoor environment reflects a nature-based philosophy. ... We also have a garden space that's right beside the outside of our daycare here. It's pretty new. The kids really enjoy going there and showing them what vegetables to plant, how we take care of them. (ECE)

Participants highlighted the sensory nature of ELCC spaces and the importance of designing "a calming environment" and having designated "quiet areas" particularly for children who, as one parent described, get "overstimulated really easily." Similarly, an ECE participant shared:

I think about a space that is sensory informed—there is a focus on attention for what the sensory experiences of the children are and trying to perhaps see it from the children's perspective. ... So, for example, the amount of light that might be available to them in the space and whether there are spaces that have less light or more light. Sound, and being aware of where the sound is coming from and how it feels. And most of all the sense of movement that's going on within the room. (ECE)

An Indigenous ECE added:

We have tents. Tents for if you need to go by yourself to self-regulate. It's big enough that if they have a support worker the support worker can go in with them if it's required by, yeah, that tent is probably a big hit. ...Yes, sensory spaces are great. (ECE)

Overall, the data in this theme further emphasizes the meaningful involvement of children and parents in the codesign of inclusive childcare spaces (Neitzel, 2018) with an emphasis on creating environments that are calming, that foster healing, and that avoid the risk of retraumatization (Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas, 2019; Henderson, 2017).

Taking care of the carers

ECE participants drew attention to how childcare was located within a broader socio-political context in which

their profession and contributions to society were profoundly undervalued. Participants consistently spoke to structural conditions in the provincial ECE landscape that constrained their work, including low wages, minimal vacation, and poor benefits. As one ECE reflected: “because shock of shock early childhood education is not respected in our society. ... I mean there’s a whole bunch of ways that it tells me—we don’t actually really respect what you do.” Key factors in feeling undervalued included stressful working conditions, low pay, no benefits, and ratio expectations.

In taking up a structural analysis, the data in this final theme of “taking care of the carers” is intricately tied to ECEs’ capacity to provide TVIC-C within the current socio-political context. This data is organized into two subthemes that are closely interrelated: (1) creating “a place that really values educators” and (2) investing in “high staff well-being.”

Creating “a place that really values educators.” ECE participants expressed the need to feel appreciated and valued. As one ECE shared: “I think that sometimes we forget about the educators and the fact they need also to be comfortable, and they need to feel like it’s a place for them.” Valuing educators was identified as key to retaining long-term staff, which required concrete supports including supportive leadership:

One of the things that’s really important ... leadership that’s both respectful and responsive to the educators because she treats the educators the way that we want to treat the families and the children. And I think that that is such a key piece that that kind of respectful, responsive, sensitive, caring is part of the whole team. (ECE)

Participants also identified how having scheduled paid time during regular hours for planning and staff meetings, and a supportive team approach with regular meetings and supervision “that doesn’t involve overtime” to debrief, can mitigate the effects of working in a challenging environment and help to retain educators:

It is tough, and it is challenging. I think one of those things that has really kept me at [centre], because I’ve been there for six years now, is just having a supportive environment. So, we have supervision up to once a week or ... every other week. And then we also do quarterly team building days where we are all together and we’re doing something fun, we’re doing something cultural, or our health and safety protocols. ... I feel like that brings us together in a really good way. (ECE)

ECEs also described how feeling valued was attached to having a meaningful “voice in a centre”:

I feel like when you invest your time, and you feel like you have a voice in a centre and your voice mattered I think that really [helped]. I mean it’s more than just work and it’s more than just a paycheque, it’s like, “Whoa, I’m coming to work because what I contribute to here matters.” (ECE)

Similarly, an ECE shared:

Turnover in ECE job is really high and most of it, to me, is not only because of their low wages but also ... really given space to make decisions and how much flexibility they’re given. ... A place that really values educator’s opinion, thinking ... really involve them in bigger decision making. ... We have a lot of educators that they’re really burnt out. ... So, I think, open and honest communication with the ECEs. (ECE)

Intentional program-level supports and policies that contribute to educators feeling valued, including having a voice in decisions about their program and work environment, can build staff resiliency, support staff retention, and foster continuity in relationships among staff and with parents and children. These efforts are fundamental to organizations taking up TVIC (Javan et al., 2023).

Investing in staff well-being. There was a strong correlation between educators feeling valued and looked after and provision of TIC. As one ECE reflected: “I think if staff have high well-being, then it will contribute to their ability to provide trauma-informed care.” Seemingly simple solutions can have a meaningful impact on staff feeling like they are “taken care of”:

I have one quick idea also about the coffee breaks and lunch breaks—a proper place for staff to have their food. Sometimes you don’t want to hear any more crying, or you really as an adult, [want] to be able to go back to that room [with] that open heart and open arms, you really need to be taken care of. (ECE)

ECEs described other strategies to promote their well-being. Indigenous ECEs shared how they had supportive organizational policies, with one saying:

On Fridays we close. Some days we do wellness activities as opposed to training and case management. So, one day we went for half a day for a walk in the nature. It doesn’t have to be really complicated, but just recognizing and acknowledging the need to take care of yourself. (ECE)

Another ECE added:

I think obviously the support in terms of your own wellness is also really important. We have had days where we’ve gone on planned walks with local knowledge keepers, and we’ve done beach walks to collect shells for smudge purposes and just different things that kind of bring us together in a really positive and spiritual way at times. That’s really helped. (ECE)

An Indigenous ECE also shared how they could take an hour of paid self-care each month without having to provide justification or details.

The findings in “taking care of the carers” provide insights into how educators’ sense of worth and well-being were negatively impacted by the socio-political and cultural context of their professional and working environment (Massing et al., 2022). Working with children and families experiencing trauma can result in high staff turnover (Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas, 2019). Consistent with TVIC, the strategies and policies outlined above require organizational and program-level supports (Javan et al., 2023).

Discussion

As previously discussed, within the ELCC sector there are varying understandings of how trauma is conceptualized and thus what constitutes trauma-responsive care (Berger et al., 2023; Sheehan et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2024). Consistent with emerging evidence on how TVIC can be implemented in diverse community settings (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023), this research highlights that a foundational starting point for implementing TVIC-C is a program-wide “shared understanding of trauma” as both interpersonal and structural (Gerlach, Browne, Sinha, & Elliott, 2017; Lalonde et al., 2020; Rodger et al., 2023). In shifting beyond decontextualized and individualistic understandings of trauma and attending to the complex interactions of multifaceted organizational and societal structures, TVIC-C is well aligned with and expands on Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) ecological systems theory.

This broader understanding changes “the way educators work with families” by intentionally fostering a program-wide culture of safety, acceptance, and belonging for *all* family members. Highly aligned with TVIC (Lalonde et al., 2020; Wathen & Varcoe, 2023), educators prioritized “connections of safety and trust” with families with experiences of discrimination, abuse of power, and harm in their previous encounters with child-related services (Moosa-Mitha, 2021; Wright et al., 2019). A deliberate relationship-focused approach was further emphasized by

Indigenous ECEs as a strategic response to Indigenous families' historical and ongoing experiences of interpersonal and colonial forms of trauma and violence (Gerlach, Browne, Sinha, & Elliott, 2017; Isaac & Jamieson, 2015; Wright et al., 2019)

Implementing TVIC-C required educators to revisit taken-for-granted program policies and procedures to ensure they were not inadvertently causing families distress or retraumatization. It was also important that parents and children had a meaningful voice in their ELCC programs—thus programs needed to be informed by and responsive to their ideas, concerns, cultural contexts, and lived realities (Clervil et al., 2013; SAMHSA, 2014). Moreover, collaborating with parents helps to ensure that TVIC-C is implemented in ways that are meaningful and responsive to the communities and families being served. Implementing TVIC-C in this way also serves to reduce the power inequities that can exist between parents and educators, creating a program-wide culture of collaboration and reciprocal learning. This intentional shift in power dynamics is well aligned with evidence on mitigating inequitable family-professional decision making and affirming parental self-efficacy in knowing what works best for them and their children (Hancock & Morgan, 2024).

Consistent with TVIC (Javan et al., 2023), this research highlights the need for explicit policies to support a working environment that attends to “staff well-being” and a collaborative culture that includes staff debriefings and reflective supervision (Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas, 2019). Educators are the heart of ELCC programs, and implementing and sustaining TVIC-C requires that educators' voices and agency are recognized in contributing toward a change process. This shift in power dynamics may also be viewed as a pushback by educators against broader relations of power embedded in neoliberal and capitalist politics that have historically undervalued both ECEs' contributions to society and the ELCC system as a whole (Conforzi, 2024; Eizadirad & Abawi, 2021). Maintaining a stable program workforce by attending to the well-being and agency of its educators is also foundational to the relational practices discussed in this research and central to enacting TVIC (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023).

Expectations of educators to implement TVIC-C need to consider the broader socioeconomic and neoliberal contexts of their profession and the ELCC sector (Moss & Roberts-Holmes, 2021). Currently in Canada, this sector is undergoing significant structural and workforce challenges, with ECEs experiencing lack of professional recognition, burnout, and a recruitment and retention crisis (Conforzi, 2024; Massing et al., 2022). These serious structural factors, including ECEs having sufficient financial compensation, will need to be addressed if TVIC-C is to be implemented as a routine standard of quality care.

The research described in this article would have been enriched by engaging with parents from more than one ELCC program and by including children's views and experiences. Future research on TVIC-C needs to centre the lived experiences and perspectives of parents and children as key change makers.

Conclusion

In Canada, TVIC-C remains underexamined (Slemon et al., 2025). This paper provides insights into shifts in routine practices and policies so that ELCC programs are responsive to families' and children's experiences of interpersonal and structural trauma and violence (Wathen & Varcoe, 2023). The authors call for TVIC-C to become routinely “baked into” all levels of the ELCC system in response to the prevalence of, and continuities between, communities' and families' experiences of interpersonal and structural forms of violence that adversely impact young children at a critical stage of their lives (BC Representative for Children and Youth, 2024). Rather than being a one-time endeavour, shifting toward TVIC-C will require a continuous process of reflection, adaptation, leadership, and collaboration to drive lasting and transformative changes.

Acknowledgments

This research engaged with people living on diverse Indigenous territories in western Canada, including traditional, unceded, and treaty territories. The authors are grateful for and indebted to those who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial and commit to continuing to learn to live in ways that honour the people of this place and the place itself.

The authors sincerely thank the Victoria Social Innovation Centre and the Little Phoenix ELCC program for their partnership on this study, and all the ECE and parent participants who shared their time, lived experiences, and knowledge.

This research was funded by a grant from the Victoria Foundation.

References

- Asmussen, K., Masterman, T., McBride, T., & Molloy, D. (2022). Understanding the use of trauma-informed approaches within children's social care. Early Intervention Foundation report. <https://www.eif.org.uk/report/trauma-informed-care-understanding-the-use-of-trauma-informed-approaches-within-childrens-social-care>
- Atkinson, J. (2013). Trauma-informed services and trauma-informed care for Indigenous Australian children: Resource sheet no. 21 produced for the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/uploadedFiles/ClosingTheGap/Content/Publications/2013/ctg-rs21.pdf>
- Bartlett, J. D., Smith, S., & Bringewatt, E. (2017). Helping young children who have experienced trauma: Policies and strategies for early care and education. Child Trends and the National Center for Children in Poverty. <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/ecetrauma>
- BC Ministry of Children & Family Development. (2017). *Healing families, helping systems: A trauma-informed practice guide for working with children, youth and families*. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/child-teen-mental-health/trauma-informed_practice_guide.pdf
- BC Representative for Children and Youth. (2024). *Don't look away: How one boy's story has the power to shift a system of care for children and youth*. https://rcybc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RCY-Dont_Look_Away.pdf
- Berger, E., O'Donohue, K., La, C., Quinones, G., & Barnes, M. (2023). Early childhood professionals' perspectives on dealing with trauma of children. *School Mental Health, 15*(1), 300–311. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-022-09551-0>
- BlackDeer, A. A. (2023). Violence, trauma, and colonialism: A structural approach to understanding the policy landscape of Indigenous reproductive justice. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 24*(4), 453–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2023.2212402>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise, and Health, 11*(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Toward good practice in thematic analysis: Avoiding common problems and be(com)ing a knowing researcher [Editorial]. *International Journal of Transgender Health, 24*(10), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26895269.2022.2129597>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. SAGE.
- Child Care Resources Inc. & United Way of Central Carolinas. (2019). *Creating a trauma-informed early childhood system: Review of the literature and summary of findings*. <https://uwcentralcarolinas.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Creating-a-Trauma-Informed-Early-Childhood-System.pdf>
- Chudzik, M., Corr, C., & Fisher, K. W. (2023). Trauma-informed care: The professional development needs of early childhood special education teachers. *Journal of Early Intervention, 46*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10538151231164898>
- Clervil, R., Guarino, K., DeCandia, C. J., & Beach, C. A. (2013). *Trauma-informed care for displaced populations: A guide for community-based service providers*. The National Center on Family Homelessness, a practice area of American Institutes for Research Health and Social Development Program. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Trauma-informed-care-for-displaced-populations.pdf>
- Committee on Temporary Shelter. (2018). *Trauma-informed design: How the physical environment supports recovery from homelessness*. https://cotsonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Trauma-Informed-Design.BOD_.pdf
- Conforzi, J. (2024). How policies created without early childhood educator input create toxic working environments that objectify educators. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 0*(0), 14639491241288892. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14639491241288892>
- Eizadirad, A., & Abawi, Z. E. (2021). State of emergency: Mapping inequities in early childhood education and care in Canada. In Z. E. Abawi, A. Eizadirad, & R. Berman (Eds.), *Equity as praxis in early childhood education and care* (pp. 1–20). Canadian Scholars.
- Fakhari, N., McIsaac, J.-L. D., Feicht, R., Reddington, S., Brigham, S., Mandrona, A., McLean, C., Harkins, M. J., & Stirling Cameron, E. (2023). Looking through the lens: A photovoice study examining access to services for newcomer children. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 18*(1), 2255176. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2023.2255176>

- Gerlach, A. J., Browne, A. J., & Greenwood, M. (2017). Engaging Indigenous families in a community-based early childhood program in British Columbia, Canada: A cultural safety perspective. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 25(6), 1763–1773. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12450>
- Gerlach, A. J., Browne, A. J., Sinha, V., & Elliott, D. (2017). Navigating structural violence with Indigenous families: The contested terrain of early childhood intervention and the child welfare system in Canada. *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2017.8.3.6>
- Hancock, C. L., & Morgan, C. W. (2024). Disrupting Inequitable Family-Professional Decision-Making in EC/ECSE: Alternate Possibilities Through the Humanist Frame. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 0(0), 02711214241259366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02711214241259366>
- Henderson, I. (2017). Trauma-informed early education classroom design: Designing child and family-friendly spaces for recovery from trauma [Webinar]. <https://www.earlychildhoodwebinars.com/webinars/trauma-informed-early-education-classroom-design-designing-child-family-friendly-spaces-recovery-trauma-ileen-henderson/>
- Holmes, C., Levy, M., Smith, A., Pinne, S., & Neese, P. (2015). A model for creating a supportive trauma-informed culture for children in preschool settings. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 24(6), 1650–1659. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-014-9968-6>
- Isaac, K., & Jamieson, K. (2015). Aboriginal early childhood policies and program in British Columbia: Beyond the rhetoric. In M. Greenwood, S. de Leeuw, N. M. Lindsay, & C. L. Reading (Eds.), *Determinants of Indigenous peoples' health in Canada: Beyond the social* (2nd ed.; pp. 169–181). Canadian Scholars.
- Javan, T., Sandu, J., & Wathen, C. N. (2023). *How organizations take up trauma- and violence-informed care*. University of Toronto Press.
- Johnson, S. (2014). Knucwénte-kuc re stsmémelt. s-kuc Trauma-informed education for Indigenous children in foster care. *Canadian Social Work Review/Revue Canadienne De Service Social*, 31(2), 155–174. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43486319>
- Lalonde, D., Tabibi, J., & Baker, L. (2020, March). Trauma- and violence-informed approaches: Supporting children exposed to intimate partner violence. *Learning Network Newsletter*, 31. http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/our-work/issuebased_newsletters/issue-31/Newsletter_Issue_311.pdf
- Loomis, A. M. (2018). The role of preschool as a point of intervention and prevention for trauma-exposed children: Recommendations for practice, policy, and research *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 38(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121418789254>
- Massing, C., Lirette, P., & Paquette, A. (2022). “With fear in our bellies”: A pan-Canadian conversation with early childhood educators. *In Education*, 28(1b), 41–61. <https://doi.org/10.37119/ojs2022.v28i1b.646>
- McCarry, M., Radford, L., & Baker, V. (2021). What helps? Mothers’ and children’s experiences of community-based early intervention programmes for domestic violence. *Child Abuse Review*, 30(2), 114–129. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2671>
- Moczygemba, L. R., Singh, R. L., & Baffoe, J. O. (2023). Research and scholarly methods: Community-engaged research. *Journal of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy*, 6(12), 1366–1373. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/jac5.1881>
- Montesanti, S. R., & Thurston, W. E. (2015). Mapping the role of structural and interpersonal violence in the lives of women: implications for public health interventions and policy. *BMC Women's Health*, 15(1), 100. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-015-0256-4>
- Moosa-Mitha, M. (2021). *Trauma and healing in early childhood years within refugee newcomer populations: A decolonial analysis*. Prepared for the Office of the Representative of Children & Youth in BC. <https://dSPACE.library.uvic.ca/items/dba52613-42f0-43a3-aada-c51268a23753>
- Moss, P., & Roberts-Holmes, G. (2021). Now is the time! Confronting neo-liberalism in early childhood. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949121995917>
- Neitzel, J. (2018). Research to practice: Understanding the role of implicit bias in early childhood disciplinary practices. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 39(3), 232–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2018.1463322>
- Rodger, S., Hibbert, K., Sereda, M., & Specht, J. (2023). The trauma- and violence-informed classroom, K–12. In C. N. Wathen & C. Varcoe (Eds.), *Implementing trauma- and violence-informed care: A handbook* (pp. 138–151). University of Toronto Press.

- Rousseau, C., Measham, T., & Nadeau, L. (2012). Addressing trauma in collaborative mental health care for refugee children. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 18*(1), 121–136. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104512444117>
- Sheehan, C., Butler, J., & O' Neill, C. (2023). The provision of trauma awareness training in the early childhood education & care profession: A systematic review. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 53*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-023-01565-w>
- Slemon, A., Gerlach, A. J., Moosa-Mitha, M., & Macasaquit, M. (2025). Scoping review of trauma-informed early learning and child care in Canada: A critical analysis. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies, 16*(4). <https://doi.org/10.18357/ijcyfs164202522591>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2014). *SAMHSA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach*. Available from: https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/medicaid_health_homes/docs/samhsa_trauma_concept_paper.pdf
- Sun, Y., Bowden, M., Cameron, L., Skouteris, H., & Blewitt, C. (2024). Understanding the need and opportunity for a trauma-informed early childhood organisations (TIO) program using intervention mapping. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 49*(2), 169–184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/18369391241250103>
- Thomas-Skaf, B. A., & Jenney, A. (2021). Bringing social justice into focus: “Trauma-informed” work with children with disabilities. *Child Care in Practice, 27*(4), 316–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13575279.2020.1765146>
- Varcoe, C., & Browne, A. J. (2023). Integrating understanding of structural and systemic violence into trauma- and violence-informed care. In C. N. Wathen & C. Varcoe (Eds.), *Implementing trauma- and violence-informed care: A handbook* (pp. 25–38). University of Toronto Press.
- Wathen, C. N., & Varcoe, C. (2023). *Implementing trauma- and violence-informed care: A handbook*. University of Toronto Press.
- Wiesner, C. (2022). Doing qualitative and interpretative research: reflecting principles and principled challenges. *Political Research Exchange, 4*(1), 2127372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2022.2127372>
- Wright, A., Jack, S., Ballantyne, M., Gabel, C., Bomberry, R., & Wahoush, O. (2019). How Indigenous mothers experience selecting and using early childhood development services to care for their infants. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 14*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2019.1601486>