

Using SECD as a learner resource

This is an excerpt from the SECD Facilitator Guide (p. 15-20)

1. General information

SECD resources work well as a main or supplementary textbook for a course or set of courses. Learners can access all of the content themselves on a computer, tablet or smartphone – true mobile learning. Instructors can assign SECD webpages or videos, readings, or other elements within a module for learners to review before a class or to use for an assignment, just as they assign pages to read in a traditional textbook. For suggestions, see **Appendix A - Integrating SECD topics into early years courses** and **Appendix B - Integrating Prenatal Development Module into nursing/health courses in the SECD Facilitator Guide**. Simply share the Manitoba Access homepage link with learners - mb.scienceofecd.com

The screenshot shows the SECD MB ACCESS website. At the top, there are logos for SECD MB ACCESS, Canada, and Manitoba. Below the logos are navigation links: Resources, About Us, How To Use, and Contact Us. A large banner image features a young child holding a colorful pinwheel. To the right of the image is a text box with the following text: "The Science of Early Child Development (SECD) is a knowledge translation and awareness initiative designed to make current research accessible to improve outcomes for learning across almost the lifespan of early experience on lifelong health and well-being. The resources below are focused in any order and are independent from one another." Below the banner is a section titled "SECD Resources" with a disclaimer: "The content on this site is available only to people located in Manitoba. To avoid content, your browser will prompt you for your location by clicking through to the SECD resources page. Please ensure that you are in Manitoba, as this content is for educational purposes only." Below this are six resource cards, each with a small image and a title: "Full Version", "Introductory Edition Modules", "Child Development Primer", "Introduction au développement de l'enfant", and "Prenatal Development Module". Each card has a brief description and a "View" button.

2. Suggestions

Using SECD for one course or several courses:

The SECD resources contain a wealth of information. Some instructors use the SECD as the learner resource for **one course**, building a course around a living textbook and/or module. Whether the class happens face-to-face, online or a combination of the two (hybrid delivery), the SECD resources contain ample material and variety of topics on which to base a full course.

Other instructors/programs use SECD as a core or supplementary resource in **a range of courses or throughout a program**. Learners would access SECD material that is applicable to each course or learning objective.

See **Appendix D - Course outline examples in the SECD Facilitator Guide** to see examples of courses that require learners to access the SECD.

Assigning content to learners - one approach:



Whether learners are using SECD for one course or throughout many different courses, to maximize their exposure to the content consider dividing the material so that each learner delves into selected topics. Each learner then collaborates with others who explored other topics to share highlights about “their” material. Learners benefit from hearing information from others and from the experience of explaining what they learned.

For example, in a module, have learners do a thorough review of one of the research pages and then present information to people who reviewed the other pages. This works well in both face-to-face settings and in online forums with learners.

The following screenshot shows the first page of the research section, and the section table of contents, from the Ecology of Childhood (EC) module in the North American Edition.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview ▾ Research ▾ 2. Ecology of childhood research 2.1 Families 2.2 Early childhood education 2.3 Early intervention 2.4 Integrated early childhood programs 2.5 Neighbourhoods and communities Links to practice ▾ References and transcripts 	<h2>2. Ecology of childhood research</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the make-up of a family influence children's development and well-being? • Are the roles of fathers changing? • How might parents' work for pay impact the lives of their children? • What kinds of early childhood programs make a difference? How can these programs be scaled up? • How do communities affect the lives of children? • How do children adapt to very different habitats?  <p>The ecology of childhood research examples examine the environments and experiences that influence children's development.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



After choosing or being assigned one of the pages, learners could respond to questions such as:

- How could you synthesize the information you reviewed?
- For the research you reviewed, what are the implications for people who work with children and families?
- Who are the stakeholders that would benefit from learning about this area of research and why do they need the information?
- What suggestions do you have for future research activities related to this topic?

More in-depth study:

In the SECD resources, there are opportunities to go more deeply into a topic. Elements marked as “**Want to know more?**” provide links to readings, videos and websites for this purpose.

Learners and instructors can use these for advanced study. These elements are also useful for learners preparing assignments on those topics.

The following example is from the Prenatal Development module.

► Prenatal Development

A public awareness campaign about alcohol and pregnancy is being promoted by Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries. Explore more about this initiative including some helpful resources available to the public on the “Be With Child Without Alcohol” webpage.

EXPLORE
Be with child without alcohol

Changing alcohol consumption behaviours can be challenging, and even more so for those who struggle with addictions. Explore useful information about alcohol and pregnancy on the Coalescing on Women and Substance Use: Linking Research, Practice and Policy website. The site features six areas of practice under the “Alcohol and Pregnancy” banner. For each, a grey sidebar appears on the left with links to information on relevant research findings, helpful strategies, further resources for practice and reflective questions.

EXPLORE
Alcohol and pregnancy

Want to know more?

Oral health is also linked to prenatal development and outcomes such as preterm birth and low birth weight babies. Read more about how poor oral health may affect a pregnancy and prenatal development on the Government of Canada website.


READ
Oral health and pregnancy

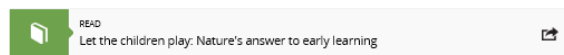
Prenatal nutrition guidelines, as they relate to Canada’s Food Guide, can be found on the Health Canada website – a useful resource for health professionals working with the child-bearing aged population.

READ
Food and nutrition: Prenatal nutrition guidelines for health professionals – Background on Canada’s Food Guide

3. Assignment ideas

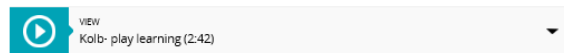
Throughout all SECD resources, many of the readings, videos, and ‘Consider’ examples are followed by **questions for reflection**. Instructors can assign the elements and corresponding questions as the basis for assignments. For example:

 Assign a topic for learners to review and have them write a **thought paper or essay** to answer the question that accompanies the material. This example is from the Communicating and Learning module in the Introductory Edition.



Active play optimizes brain development, promotes physical growth, and fosters social and emotional development. Young children come to understand their world, navigate their surroundings and learn to negotiate with others. Children develop a repertoire of flexible responses to situations they create and encounter, develop self-regulation and learn to overcome day-to-day challenges.

Listen now as Dr. Bryan Kolb explains why and how active play is essential for brain development.




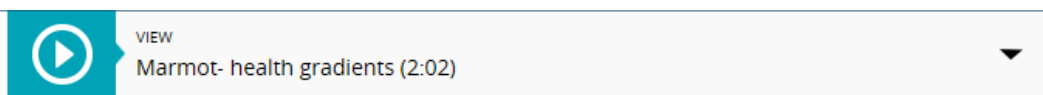
Yet, in childcare facilities, physical activity levels are low, with as much as 89 per cent of kids' time spent sitting still.

Less than half of kids aged four to five—and just one third of two- to three-year-olds—participate in regular, unorganized sports and other physical activities each week. (Active Healthy Kids Canada, 2010)


A large body of research confirms the importance of play (not just for physical activity but for all areas of development). It is not something to simply “fit in” if there is time, but rather a necessity essential for healthy child development.


Q Think about your own childhood memories of play. What was your favourite play activity and why? What do you think you were learning in this play?
How would you describe opportunities for children to play in your community?
Is safety an issue or not?

 Use a question for a **group debate**, requiring learners to explore a controversial topic and prepare arguments supporting opposing sides. This example is from the Developmental Health module in the North American Edition.



Q Marmot says social gradients show “Action has got to be across the whole of society, not simply on the poor. If you focus only on the bottom, you miss most of the problem”. What does this mean?
How does gradient research he cites support this argument?

 Have learners **design a brochure or poster** to share information with a group of parents (e.g. expectant parents or parents of toddlers). Topics such as, attachment, aggression, self-regulation, executive function, guidance, friendship, language development, mental health, milestones, nurturing, parenting and stress, are just some of the topics that would be appropriate for a parent audience and would test learners abilities to communicate with parents on these subjects. Learners could complete this assignment individually or in groups.

 Have learners use SECD material to prepare a **policy brief or a presentation** to a stakeholder group on a matter related to early childhood. For example, have learners choose a stakeholder group to whom they will present SECD material to explain the importance of sensitive and responsive caregiving in early childhood. Learners should use research from SECD and create a policy brief, a slide presentation, article or video. Possible stakeholder groups include:

- Policy makers involved in education, health, etc., indicating level of government
- Expectant parents or parents of a particular age group
- Early childhood educators/teachers
- High school students
- A funding agency
- A research council (e.g. SSHRC)