

CAPABLE. CONFIDENT. CURIOUS.

From Principles to Practice: Real Ideas. Real Stories. Real Learning.

From the Framework

Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework emphasizes that children develop confidence and a strong sense of self when their languages, cultures, and family experiences are respected and reflected in their environments. Language is more than communication—it is deeply connected to identity, relationships, and belonging.

When educators create space for children to hear, share, and explore languages in everyday moments, they foster curiosity and mutual respect. These experiences help children see themselves as capable contributors while learning about the diverse communities around them.

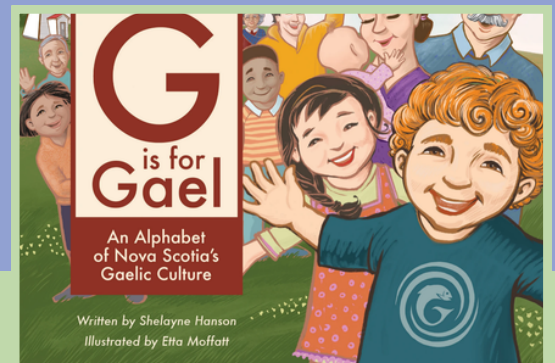
Linguistic and Cultural Responsiveness

Language is deeply connected to culture, identity, and belonging. When educators create space for children to communicate in their heritage and family languages—through words, signs, gestures, and symbols—children feel seen, valued, and confident as communicators. Everyday routines and shared experiences become opportunities for children to express themselves and connect with others in ways that are familiar and meaningful to them.

Sharing books like *G is for Gael* by Shelayne Hanson introduces children to Gaelic language and culture in Nova Scotia, while also inviting curiosity about the many languages and stories that shape our communities. When educators include books and materials that reflect children's lived experiences, and use simple greetings or familiar words from heritage and family languages, they support children's communication in authentic, respectful ways.

About this Issue

May is *Mìos nan Gàidheal* | Gaelic Nova Scotia Month, a time to celebrate language as a living part of identity, culture, and belonging. This issue highlights how honouring the languages children bring—including Gaelic—helps children feel seen, valued, and connected in early learning and child care spaces.



Learning Through Family Languages

Submitted by: Roberta Salgado, NSCECE - Horseshoe Lake Early Learning Centre

We honour children's languages by building strong, respectful relationships with families. Families are invited to complete an "All About Me" booklet, where they share information about routines, values, languages, and traditions. These booklets are kept in the learning environment and remain accessible to children and educators throughout the year.

Children often explore the booklets independently or with peers—turning pages, pointing to photos, and sharing stories in their own ways. Educators use the information families provide to guide daily practice by including familiar words in routines, singing songs in different languages, and creating visuals that reflect children's families and cultures. These experiences help children feel represented and supported, while strengthening their communication, confidence, and sense of belonging.

Languages We Speak

Submitted by: Saba Sultana, Maritime Muslim Academy

In our preschool program, we believe language is an important part of each child's identity and sense of belonging. To honour the languages children bring, we intentionally partner with families. We send home a list of common words—such as "eat," "drink," "come," and "bathroom"—and invite families to share translations in their home language. This helps us learn meaningful words children hear every day and use them during familiar routines.

We also created an early learning environment chart called *Languages We Speak*, which represents the languages of both children and educators. Children are invited to choose a language and share a familiar word if they wish. These moments create excitement and pride, as children see their languages valued and shared within the group.

Try This!

Supporting languages that may be less widely spoken in the community helps children feel seen and confident as communicators.

- Invite children to share words, signs, or gestures they use at home during play or routines.
- Include books, labels, or dramatic-play materials that reflect children's heritage and family languages.
- Use simple greetings such as *Bonjour* ("Hello" in French), *Wela'lin* ("Thank you" in Mi'kmaw), *Tapadh leibh* ("Thank you" in Gaelic) to model respect for linguistic diversity.

We'd love to feature your story from an early learning and child care program in the next issue of Capable. Confident. Curious.

If you'd like to include photos, please email us to request an Image Consent Form.

Story topic: **How do you support children's engagement and learning during everyday transitions?**

Submit by: **May 25, 2026** to be considered for the July issue.

Submit your story to: ELCCprofessional.learning@novascotia.ca

**DO YOU
HAVE A
STORY TO
SHARE?**