

## Introduction

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>> [Background Music] Hello, I'm Mary Jean Gallagher; Chief Student Achievement Officer for Ontario and the Assistant Deputy Minister for the Student Achievement Division and I'm here with my colleague.

>> Jim Grieve, I'm the Assistant Deputy Minister for Early Learning Division and we are just delighted to have an opportunity to introduce this series to you.

>> Ontario Elementary Schools strive to support high quality learning, while giving every child the opportunity to learn in a way that's best suited to her or his individual strengths and needs. The Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program launched in the fall of 2010 is designed to help every child reach his or her full potential through a program of learning that is child-centred, inquiry-based, relevant, age appropriate as well as culturally and linguistically attuned. The Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program recognizes that today and in the future children need to be critically literate in order to synthesize information, to make informed decisions, to communicate effectually and to thrive in an ever changing global community. The children need to be active problem solvers who see themselves in what is taught, how it's taught and how it applies to the world around them.

>> Early years educators recognize the diverse needs of our youngest learners and work collaboratively with families and other early learning professionals to develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives that children need to be informed, creative and productive, caring and responsible, healthy and active citizens in their own communities and in the world around them. While engaged in play children are developing communication skills, thinking skills and of course problem solving skills. They are acquiring language using speaking, listening, reading and writing for authentic purposes, deepening their understanding of numeracy concepts and practising social and emotional self-regulation.

>> Indeed. Early learning kindergarten teams use reflective practice, planned observation and a range of assessment strategies to identify the strengths, needs and interests of individual children in order to plan intentional play-based learning opportunities that are appropriate for each child. The Early Learning-Kindergarten team listen and observe closely to determine what children are thinking, what concepts they are demonstrating and what they reveal about their prior knowledge.

>> The children and early years educators that you'll see in the following webcast are embarking on a journey; a journey to bring intentional play-based learning into Ontario classrooms.[music]

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