



HELLO PARENTS,

Children are naturally curious about the world around them. They first learn about their immediate environment (home, backyard, neighbourhood) and as they grow older, they gradually expand their curiosity and knowledge to find out about their city, province and beyond. Our province Ontario is a complex region made up of hundreds of nationalities, dozens of languages and countless traditions. It is known for its vast forests, beautiful provincial parks, four of the five Great Lakes and the world-famous Niagara Falls. In this newsletter, you will find activities that will help your child learn about Ontario.

ACTIVITIES

INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

The **common loon** is an icon in Ontario. They are large diving water birds with red eyes, sharp pointed bills, and black and white bodies. They are known for their calls, which are nature's most hypnotic, mysterious and beautiful sounds.

MATERIALS:

- Rubber ducks and frogs
- Shallow container with water
- Sounds of the lake soundtrack (below)

DIRECTIONS:

- [Click here](#) for sounds of loons and other water animals.
- Set up the materials and water (you can also do this activity while your child is taking a bath).
- Let your child explore water and rubber toys while the lake sounds play in the background.
- Observe which sounds spark your child's interest and talk about them.

[Click here](#) for more activities.

TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

GO FISHING

Ontario is home for 250,000 lakes, all of which contain around 20% of the world's fresh water supply. **Fishing** is one of the favourite pastimes of Ontarians.

MATERIALS:

- A collection of leaves – these will be the pretend fish
- Rubber or shaped fish (cut out shapes of fish from foam, plastic lids, etc.)
- Measuring cup
- Large container

DIRECTIONS:

- Fill the large container with water.
- Drop the leaves, rubber or cut out shaped fish in.
- Encourage your child to catch the fish with the measuring cup.
- With your child, count how many fish they caught, talk about the colours, etc.

[Click here](#) to read "Rainbow Fish" by Marcus Pfister and J. Alison James.

PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

MAKE A DREAM CATCHER

Dream catchers are handmade willow hoops woven with a net and decorated with beads and feathers. They are traditionally placed above children's beds for protection. The first dream catchers were made by the peoples of Ojibway who still live in some regions of Ontario.

MATERIALS:

- A paper plate
- Scissors
- String or wool
- Beads
- Feathers or felt
- Hole punch

DIRECTIONS:

- Cut out a circle from the centre of the paper plate leaving about 3cm edge around.
- Punch holes around the rim of your paper plate.
- Cut long pieces of string and lace them through the holes creating a criss-crossing web.
- Leave some longer pieces of string hanging at the bottom and loop beads through them.
- Weave feathers into the dream catcher's web.
- You can hang it near your bed.

[Click here](#) to read "Blackflies" by Robert Munsch and indigenous Algonquin artist Jay Odjick.

JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

BUILD A DAM LIKE A BEAVER

Beavers are native to Ontario. They are most comfortable in water. They build dams to create ponds so that there is enough deep water around their homes (called lodges). In winter, they can move freely under thick ice. They use their teeth to cut down and trim trees and logs.

MATERIALS:

- Large, shallow container
- Sticks, twigs, straw, leaves
- Playdough
- Water

DIRECTIONS:

- [Click here](#) to watch a video about beavers building a dam.
- Gather your materials.
- Build a dam across the container using some of the materials.
- Test the dam by pouring water on one side. Did any water go through?
- Now, tweak your dam by adding different materials until it keeps all the water on one side of the container.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Ontario animals.

SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

CHALLENGE YOURSELF WITH A QUIZ ABOUT ONTARIO

MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Pencils

DIRECTIONS:

- Read the questions below and find answers.
- Later, you can quiz your friends or family members and add more questions.
 1. What is the name of the lake near Toronto?
 2. What is the capital of Ontario?
 3. What are the two provinces that border with Ontario?
 4. What is the origin of Ontario's name?
 5. What is the name of the National Park near Windsor?
 6. What is Ontario's official flower?
 7. What is the official bird of Ontario?
 8. Name three famous people born in Ontario.
 9. Name three tribes native to Ontario.

[Click here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) to find the answers and learn more about Ontario.



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

PLEASE, SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK, COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS TO CHILDCAREMAIN@NCCE1.ORG

A TIP FOR TODAY

- Go with your child on a tour of your neighbourhood and notice what interesting places you can visit.
- Find interesting and fun activities for the whole family in the local area or further in Ontario.
- Create fond memories for your child in places you visit by doing something special (have a picnic, have a photo shoot, play games etc.).
- [Click here](#) to learn about Ontario.