

The Birch Bark Basket

The Birch Bark Basket project is intended to promote understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal societies in ways that are consistent with best and promising practices for young children. The Birch Bark Basket learning resources have been designed to help early childhood programs sensitively and appropriately integrate Aboriginal content (First Nations and Métis) into their day-to-day activities.

The Learning Resources consist of this Resource Guide and Resource Baskets for each of six topics:

- Storytelling
- Games
- Music and Dance
- My Family
- My Community
- Food and Nutrition

These topics were chosen because they reflect important aspects of Aboriginal culture and are topics that are commonly addressed in programs for young children. This makes it easy to integrate the activities and content into regular programming in ways that allow all children to see themselves and their heritage in their playroom or classroom.

For each topic, the Resource Guide includes information on cultural background, the learning principles involved, tips for planning and implementation, and activity suggestions. The materials are intended for use with children up to 12 years of age although not all activities will be applicable to all ages.

We hope that the Birch Bark Basket resources will be an excellent support to your programming. The most important resources in integrating Aboriginal content, however, are the families and community in which you work. Aboriginal peoples are culturally diverse, even within each community, so it is important to seek the guidance of elders and other community leaders to find out what activities are appropriate and what resources are available in a particular community. Families, whether of Aboriginal heritage or not, can tell you about their cultural practices and knowledge as well as their hopes for their children's cultural learning and sharing.

These Resource kits are available in all regions of the province. Please contact the ARCQE office (780-421-4930 or 1-866-429-4930) and/or the ARCQE website www.arcqe.ca for information on R.A.P. cards or map with locations where Birch Bark Baskets resources can be accessed.