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CHILD CARE HUMAN
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New HR Toolkit enables ECEC sector to support staff

An online tool unique to the early childhood education and care sector will help managers—especially those new to their role—to develop sound human resource practices that support their staff. The CCHRSC Human Resources (HR) Toolkit will be released in the spring. It is a quick and effective way for directors, supervisors and other management staff to learn about and implement a wide range of HR practices.

“The HR piece is really important,” said Arlene Ross, chair of the toolkit project steering committee and executive director of Global Child Care Services. “Employees in the sector want to work for an organization that has the capacity to respond through policies and practices that are applied consistently. Quality doesn’t happen without your staff feeling supported, and that is a retention tool in and of itself.”

The CCHRSC’s toolkit is modelled after the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector’s comprehensive HR Toolkit. The new toolkit contains ECEC-specific resources, templates and links on human resource issues such as developing policies and job descriptions, evaluating employees, strategic planning, planning for succession, labour relations, and keeping current with relevant legislation. It also includes many suggestions for benefits and low-cost ways aimed at valuing and retaining staff.

Users of the toolkit can browse by section – employers, employees, or board members. They will then be directed to sections tailored to their sub-group, or

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— Joanne Glaser, the lead consultant for the team that worked on the toolkit

they can simply use the search function, or browse all content. They will find information on human resource issues common to all sectors, as well as those specific to ECEC.

Easy to use

“We wanted to make it user-friendly” said Joanne Glaser, the lead consultant for the team that worked on the toolkit. “Many senior managers in child care do not have an HR background so we were looking to provide them with a useful resource they could access for free.”

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada’s
Sector Council Program

The CCHRSC has long recognized the need to find ways to support managers in ECEC organizations, especially those in smaller centres who typically come from the ranks of early childhood educators, have little training in human resource issues, as well as limited time and tight budgets.

“The toolkit will be helpful to all managers but particularly those in stand-

capacity to do it here. Someone who is not aware of these things would not know their policies might be out of date.”

Both Ross and Glaser stress that the toolkit has some limitations. The samples are samples only, and because HR issues can be complex, the toolkit suggests that centres seek the help of a lawyer or other professional if they are in doubt.

Not wanting to recreate the wheel, the CCHRSC looked at a number of HR toolkits to use as a starting point. “We started from a very good place with the HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector’s toolkit, and wanted users from our sector to see themselves,” said Ross. She expects the toolkit will be widely consulted, not only by managers, but also by sector employees, post-secondary institutions and labour. “We tried to give examples grounded in the real life experiences of early childhood educators and employers.”

The toolkit will be promoted extensively through the CCHRSC web site, networks and organization workshops, as well as through HR tips on Twitter.

A number of toolkit presentations will be taking place online and across Canada in March, April and May 2012. For more information, please contact the CCHRSC.

The toolkit will be available in Spring 2012 – visit www.ccsc-cssge.ca for more information.

“Provincial child care organizations sometimes receive requests from members about things such as how to evaluate their executive director, build a better board or develop organizational policies. These organizations will be able to refer their members to the toolkit, and send them a link that provides more information, how-tos, and in some cases templates. It’s a great resource.”

—Karen Ohlson, former board member, Manitoba Child Care Association; executive director, KIDS Inc., Winnipeg

alone programs where there might be an ECE with little HR experience who has fallen into a supervisor’s job,” said Ross.

For example, the toolkit contains extensive sections on legislation applicable to workplaces and the sector, with links for all provinces and territories, and in many cases samples of related policies. “I spend lots of time developing policy around new legislation that comes out on health and safety, or accessibility, or from our ministry, but I’m linked in and have the

A mirror to the sector

The project team and many stakeholders worked to make the CCHRSC’s adapted version of the HR Toolkit specific to the ECEC sector by collecting and verifying samples, ideas and information during key informant interviews and stakeholder workshops, as well as ensuring the use of language and terminology familiar to the sector.



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HR Toolkit

What they're saying

Time-poor and budget-crunched ECEC employers often find themselves hard pressed to develop human resource policies from scratch, all the while worrying whether or not they are 'getting it right'. The comprehensive range of information, tools and resources contained in this ECEC-flavoured HR Toolkit will give employers an enormous kick-start and a boost of confidence that they can do it and are not alone – others have gone before them and can help!”

—*Arlene Ross, HR Toolkit project steering committee chair; executive director, Global Child Care Services, Ottawa*

“Through this toolkit, frontline managers in the child care sector will be able to access a wealth of HR management the-

ories and practices. In addition, this toolkit will enable them to find easily adaptable HR tools and templates.”

—*Lily Chen, HR Toolkit project steering committee member; human resources director, Association of Neighborhood Houses of British Columbia, Vancouver*

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“In our administration leadership course one of the modules is human resources and we talk a lot about organizational behavior, culture and aspects of policy development. The toolkit will be an excellent resource for this course because it contains the philosophical background and practical tools that can be used.”

—*Susan Willis, coordinator, Early Childhood Administrator Continuing Education Course, Mount Saint Vincent University; faculty, Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education, Halifax*

“The information in the toolkit helps promote understanding of labour issues specific to the ECEC sector and generally, with sections on labour practices and employee standards that can be used to support positive union-management relations. Unions will find the examples of language that have been negotiated into collective agreements in the sector particularly interesting, especially language related to retention.”

—*Margot Young, HR Toolkit project steering committee member; researcher, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Ottawa* ■

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New look for CCHRSC website—www.ccsc-cssge.ca

CCHRSC is excited to announce the launch of our new website! Our site has a fresh new look and our information, tools and resources have been reorganized to make sure our site is easier than ever to navigate. The new site provides greater opportunities for those interested in the CCHRSC to find valuable HR information on the child care sector.

Some of the exciting features of our new website include:

- a dynamic “News and Information” section where we will highlight CCHRSC projects, tools, and reports;
- an expanded listing of ECE courses and programs across Canada;
- links to tools and resources early childhood educators can use in their day-to-day work;
- our new video interview series profiling various careers in ECEC;
- easier, more simplified access to our new HR Toolkit and Guide to ECEC Credentialing; and
- an easy-to-use online order form to order free print copies of some of our most popular publications.

We hope that you’ll take a few minutes to explore our new site and take advantage of some of the new tools and resources.

Connect with CCHRSC

In addition to our new website, we’ve also launched our social media tools, including Twitter and LinkedIn, that we will use to keep our subscribers/followers up to date and informed of current HR information for the child care sector. Follow us on Twitter @CCHRSC and search for our LinkedIn groups by typing “CCHRSC” into the search field.



Sign-up with us online

If you’d like to continue to receive information from the CCHRSC, it is very important that you sign-up with us online. As a result of recent funding changes, we are moving to online communication with our stakeholders and will be reducing the frequency and number of print publications distributed. Signing up is easy – simply visit our website and scroll down to the yellow banner that says “Newsletter Signup”. ■

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council website. The URL is www.ccsc-cssge.ca. The header includes navigation links: Home, HR Toolkit, ECEC Credentialing Guide, Contact Us, Board Members, Français, and a search bar. The main content area features a large banner with the text "AT CCHRSC, WE DEVELOP RESEARCH, STRATEGIES & TOOLS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CANADIAN CHILDCARE WORKFORCE" and a "Learn More" link. Below the banner is a "NEWS & INFORMATION" section with a "More News" link. The "NEWS & INFORMATION" section contains three items: "Online Order Form", "Our Current Projects", and "Take Our Survey - We Want To Hear From You". A "WORKFORCE" section is partially visible at the bottom.

Videos profile ECE sector jobs

“My name is Gina Gasparrini and I’m the Executive Director of St. Mary’s Child Care Centre. I have a three-year college diploma in early childhood education... and once I became the executive director I realized that I really needed some more training on the administrative and management side of it so I went back to school at night and got two university certificates in management. I always had a passion for young children... so then I made a decision that’s what I wanted to do with my career.”

So begins Gina Gasparrini’s first-person story in one of 14 new CCHRSC videos in the series, *Working in Early Childhood Education*, to be launched on the sector council’s revamped website beginning March 2012.

“I think these videos are important because our sector really needs to enhance its professional image,” said Gasparrini, whose child care centre—a centre de la petite enfance (CPE)—is in Montreal. “I really wanted it to come across that it’s not just a job, it’s a career, and it’s a rewarding and stimulating career to choose.”

In the short videos, early childhood educators, supervisors and executive directors from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia show and tell what it takes and what it’s like to do their jobs—from how they started in their careers in the sector and the details of their credentials, experience and workdays, to what their centres look like and how the programs operate. A variety of settings are included, such as university and hospital workplace child care centres, a parent co-operative, Inuit, Aboriginal Head Start, and francophone programs.

“We wanted to help people see what they can do in ECE, so we tried to get a broad range of settings and positions,” said Mary Goss-Prowse, CCHRSC board member and a member of the video project steering committee. “These videos are useful for keeping people in the sector up to date on where else they might go with their qualifications or spur them to finish a diploma.

They are also for people who are not in the sector, yet to help them get a taste of what the jobs are like.”

Different audiences

In addition to being accessible on the web site to single users, the CCHRSC will promote the videos for use by ECE faculty in post-secondary institutions (with a targeted mail-out of DVDs to the sector council’s faculty network), career counselors and in human resource workshops.

Cindy Page, a CCHRSC board member and ECEC instructor at Northern Lights College and Vancouver Island University sees a number of uses for the videos by post-secondary institutions.

“The profile videos help the students take themselves out of a small sector and

see themselves within the context of the profession. That’s a key point,” said Page, who was also a member of the steering committee for the Communications and Website Update project. “The videos at UBC, for example, really give students a flavour for larger scale management as well as what it’s like in smaller infant-toddler programs. And beyond the

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— Gina Gasparrini, the Executive Director of St. Mary’s Child Care Centre

administration or role of the ECE, the students can also use the videos as an opportunity to observe the philosophy of the programs in action.”

To view the *Working in Early Childhood Education* videos, visit:

www.ccsc-cssge.ca ■

“You Bet We Still Care!”

For the first time in 15 years, the early childhood education and care sector is collecting and analyzing data to shed light on how working conditions, benefits and wages affect job satisfaction and retention of employers and employees. The online survey conducted by the CCHRSC will also examine effective strategies used by employers to recruit and retain employees.

It is the first such survey to be done since the 1998 *You Bet I Care!* study, “a highly respected and valuable pan-Canadian research study that looked at similar issues,” said Jamie Kass, chair of the project steering committee and CCHRSC board member. “This new survey builds on the 1998 *You Bet I Care!* and on *Caring for a Living*, another pan-Canadian baseline study on child care done in 1991. Like the other two studies, the new survey will give the sector information that is not available anywhere else.”

The study—called *You Bet We Still Care!*—will include two surveys, one for employers and one for employees about educational qualifications, duration of employment, job satisfaction and terms and conditions of employment. Some of the same questions used in *You Bet I Care!* will be asked again to examine trends over time. The survey will be completely confidential and not tied to individual responses.

Major survey to look at what keeps people working in ECEC

“The survey results and analysis will support employers, governments, researchers, child care and labour organizations as well as ECEs by identifying HR practices that are linked to higher levels of employee job satisfaction and rates of retention,” said Kathleen Flanagan, co-lead for the research team. This information could help employers develop effective strategies to recruit and retain employees. The results will be housed at a university, where researchers will be able to use the data for years to come.

As well, participating employers will have advanced access to the final report, which will contain information on emerging practices. “Employers are very interested in knowing what others are doing and how they might improve job satisfaction and retention at their centres,” said Flanagan. “The report will give them information on some of the practices that have been found to be successful in the sector.”

“The survey will paint an accurate picture of our field. Boards and employers need that information to plan for their workplaces. The data that we get as a result of this sharing will provide solid evidence of what is working and where we are struggling. It will provide the foundational evidence for important initiatives in our field that will move us towards valuing and properly compensating the workforce, and improving quality.”

— Ruth Bancroft at Langara Child Development Centre in Vancouver, B.C.

Good for employers, employees

The new survey is welcome news for employers such as Ruth Bancroft at Langara Child Development Centre in Vancouver, B.C.

“The survey will paint an accurate picture of our field,” she said. “Boards and employers need that information to plan for their workplaces. The data that we get as a result of this sharing will provide solid evidence of what is working and where we are struggling. It will provide the foundational evidence for important

initiatives in our field that will move us towards valuing and properly compensating the workforce, and improving quality.”

The survey team hopes to collect 1,000 completed surveys from employers and 4,000 from employees in every province and territory. Results will be analyzed according to a variety of centre characteristics, including governance models, location and culture.

Bancroft will encourage her employees to complete it because the results will

“empower individual ECEs and raise the professionalism of the sector.”

For Shauna Hanratty, an early childhood educator at Andrew Fleck Child Care Services in Ottawa, the survey will give ECEs an opportunity to reflect on their work and “allow us to realize how significant our role is. It will show that we have educational qualifications and training for the work we do, and that will help bring a sense of increased knowledge and professionalism.”

It is important that employers and ECEs respond to the survey. These types of surveys are rarely conducted; THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO BE HEARD!

The survey will be conducted throughout spring 2012. ■

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6th Annual ECE forum

Training ECEs and administrators in an evolving sector

Times are changing in the early childhood education (ECE) sector—and post-secondary institutions are trying to find ways to ensure their courses adequately prepare ECEs and administrators for the complexities and increased responsibilities of their professions.

“Evolution and Revolution in Early Childhood Education Programs”, the theme of the most recent Association of Canadian Community Colleges ECE Faculty Forum held in late 2011, underscored this point in several of its workshops, covering issues such as the challenges of joining early learning with education, technology and ECE, and using new HR research and tools from the CCHRSC to improve recruitment and retention.

The 6th ECE Affinity Group forum was held in Ottawa and supported by Algonquin College, Cégep de l’Outaouais, La Cité Collégiale and Heritage College.

Practical uses

“In our workshop we looked at how instructors could use the sector council’s occupational standards and the research on understanding and addressing workforce shortages in multiple ways to help prepare educators as they enter the field,” said Cindy Page, CCHRSC board member and ECEC instructor. Page co-presented the session on strengthening recruitment and retention, which focused on statistics and trends, various ways to use the occupational standards in

ECE courses, and what role colleges could play in the education of family child care providers and home visitors.

“We know that turnover and demand rates are going through the roof,” said co-presenter Joanne Morris, faculty at the College of the North Atlantic. “We looked at the mutually beneficial roles of ECEs and administrators and the critical role faculty play in preparing people and training them to be qualified to work in these increasingly complex roles to move the sector forward.” Her presentation also

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focused on the ECE administration training gap—one she said colleges are eager to address.

Page provided an example of how to use the occupational standards in ECEC courses to compare provincial standards to the sector council's. "When we start looking at transferability across Canada, how you can move from provincial to national standards becomes really important," she said. She also demonstrated how the standards could be used in practicum competency assessments and recognized prior learning portfolio development.

Many of the participants attend the affinity forum every year. They see the annual forum as a way to learn from

others in the post-secondary education sector and network. "I find these forums very empowering because of the opportunity to share with other professionals at the college level in ECE across Canada," said Laura Massie, faculty at Heritage College's Early Childhood Department in Gatineau, Québec, and co-presenter of the workshop on IT and ECE. "I've been [teaching] for 30 years, so it's exciting to

meet others who have the same kind of investment and are still interested in learning and doing creative things. The forums are a springboard for so many ideas."

To download some of the forum presentations, visit: www.ccsc-cssge.ca ■

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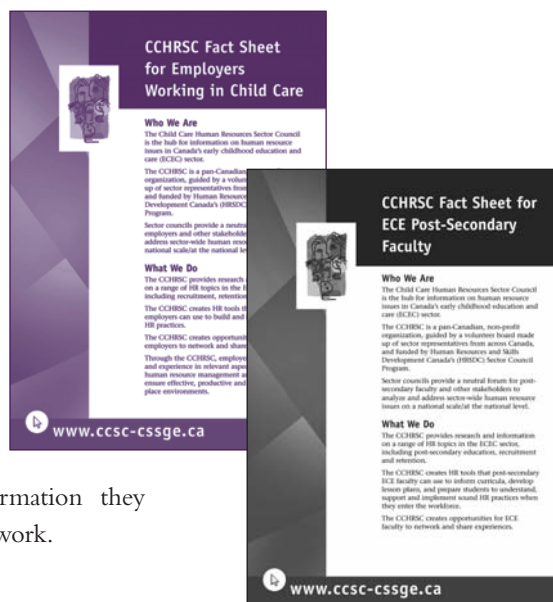
New Publication: Fact Sheets for ECEC Stakeholders

CCHRSC has recently released a series of Fact Sheets geared towards our primary target audiences, including – Child Care Administrators, ECE Post-secondary Faculty, Decision/Policy Makers, and front-line ECEs.

The Fact Sheets are a very helpful resource that provide a listing of our tools, reports, and publications that each audience would find useful. They also explain the many ways that each of these resources can be used to benefit each particular audience.

For instance, the Post-secondary Faculty Fact Sheet outlines the many ways faculty can use the Occupational Standards to develop or improve existing curricula. The Fact Sheet for Policy Makers explains which of CCHRSC's various research reports containing valuable ECEC workforce data and information they could use to inform their work.

The Fact Sheets can be downloaded from our website or print copies can also be requested from the Online Publications Order Form. Visit the Publications section of CCHRSC's website for more information. ■



Internationally trained ECEs face major barriers: Ontario study

An Ontario-based research report on the career paths of internationally trained early childhood educators concludes that the sector still has “much work to do when responding to internationally trained early childhood educators.”

The report, *An investigation of the career paths of internationally trained early childhood educators transitioning into early learning programs*, was published by the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development.

The report presents the experiences and career paths of 25 internationally trained professionals in the Access to Early Childhood Education Program (the first step in the accreditation process in Ontario for internationally trained educators). The program was established in 2006 through a partnership between the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario in partnership, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office and the School of Early Childhood at George

While citing a number of challenges such as travel to classes, a high course workload, and difficulty with the English-language proficiency test and entry process, the vast majority of participants said the program was useful or extremely useful, and felt they gained knowledge about early childhood in the Canadian context. Most wanted more opportunities for experience in centres and greater English-language support during and after the program.

Participants’ employment experiences, however, were generally negative. The study found major barriers in job searches, including “lack of Canadian experience, English proficiency or accent discrimination. Additional challenges included a lack

The report said that a majority of the graduates were employed in “part-time, precarious employment [51% part-time; 12% supply] despite the combination of ECE equivalency from Ontario and additional post-secondary education from outside Canada.” Another 16% were unemployed. Only 20% had full-time employment.

Among the recommendations participants made was the provision of professional development for early childhood employers on issues of discrimination.

The report concludes that the ECE and education professions need to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the skills, experiences and expertise of internationally trained educators, and “consider the opportunities to support diverse learners in Ontario through the integration of diverse educators in the workplace.”

To download the report, visit: www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/Resources/Publications/index.html



The study found major barriers in job searches, including “lack of Canadian experience, English proficiency or accent discrimination. Additional challenges included a lack of recognition of former credentials, racism, difficulty searching for jobs and going through the interview process. Often, they received no response at all from potential employers.”

Brown College. It bridges internationally trained early childhood educators into the Canadian workforce.

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CCHRSC Moving Forward

As of March 31st, 2013 HRSDC's Sector Council Program will no longer provide core funding to sector councils. This means that the funding for CCHRSC will end and the Board is now looking at what this means for the future direction of our council. Feedback from our stakeholders confirms that we have been producing work of great value that has benefited employers, child care and labour organizations and groups doing research and policy. The CCHRSC Board is discussing the best ways for these resources to continue to be available.

Over the course of the 2012/2013 the CCHRSC will be working on completing three important projects:

- HR Toolkit – will be completed in May 2012
- Employer/Employee Survey “*You Bet We Still Care!*” – will be completed in December 2012.
- Occupational Standards: Child Care Administrators Update & Profile on School-Age Child Care – will be completed by March 2013.

our website. We'll do our best to keep you updated on any new developments and look forward to your continued support and interest in our work. Be sure to sign-up with us online to continue to receive information and updates from CCHRSC. Simply click on “Newsletter Signup” at the bottom of our homepage at www.ccsc-cssge.ca ■

To learn more about these projects, visit the “Projects & Publications” section of

