

Winter 2008

**A BULLETIN OF THE
CHILD CARE HUMAN
RESOURCES SECTOR COUNCIL**



Inside

Page 4: Making ECEC more gender balanced

Page 5: Bringing a different perspective to ECE

Page 6: New project focuses on supporting employers • CCHRSC has several new projects in the works

Page 7: ECE faculty come together to network and share

Page 8: New Brunswick: Director mentoring program takes off

Page 9: The HR Management Toolkit – free resources for non-profit organizations

Page 10: How to reach us

Canada

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

People, Programs and Practices

Report outlines ways to meet the need for trained ECE workforce

A new sector council report sets out a comprehensive strategy for improving the quality and consistency of training in early childhood education, and increasing the size and capacity of the trained child care workforce across Canada. The three-pronged, pan-Canadian strategy focuses on recommendations aimed at people (the workforce), post-secondary programs and practices.

People

The report's key workforce recommendation is that the sector move towards establishing a strong profile for an Early Childhood Educator (ECE), which requires an ECE post-secondary credential as a mandatory qualification for the job. Minimum training should be set at the current post-secondary ECE requirement in each province or territory, but not less than one year. Those without formal post-secondary credentials, while still an important part of the early childhood team, would have a different designation than early childhood educator, such as early childhood assistant.

The report also recommends that governments look at ways to increase the qualifications of ECE directors, which it defines as ECEs with specialization in leadership and management.

"We wanted to develop a professional profile for the sector and finally acknowledge that there's a core body of knowledge that someone working with young children needs to have," said Kathleen Flanagan, one of the principal researchers with the consulting team. "To be recognized as an ECE means you should meet your professional requirements for training."

Programs

Voluntary accreditation of post-secondary programs is the major approach the report recommends for improving ECE training programs. This long-term strategy should involve sector-wide consultation, with the CCHRSC taking the lead in establishing a voluntary accreditation council and program. The proposed accreditation council should include representation from national child care organiza-

Continued on page 2



Report outlines ways to meet the need for trained ECE workforce

Continued from page 1

tions, the post-secondary sector, labour and employers, and have links to the Council of Ministers of Education and the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada.

“We are not suggesting that post-secondary programs have identical curricula, but that there be a consistent set of higher level principles—a set of components for existing programs to assess themselves against,” Flanagan said. As with all parts of the training strategy the accreditation program would be

“Canadian in nature, but reflect the differences in the provinces and territories.”

Practices

Access to post-secondary ECE programs through different delivery models and supporting the existing ECE workforce have long been challenges for the sector.

Current training program delivery “isn’t meeting our workforce needs,” said Arlene Ross, employer representative on the training strategy project

steering committee and Executive Director for Ottawa-based Global Child Care Services. She said that alternative strategies could go a long way to attracting a greater number of people to the field from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The report focuses on five key areas for strategies: ongoing professional development, mentoring and coaching, flexible delivery models, prior learning and assessment recognition (PLAR), and assessment of international credentials.

Project reports available

In addition to the full-length strategy, *People, Programs and Practices*, several other reports were produced as part of the Training Strategy Project, including:

Expert Focus Group Report

Summarizes the findings of five expert focus groups with participants including the Provincial Territorial Directors of Early Childhood Education and Care and the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Affinity Group.

Focus Group Report

Summarizes the findings of 29 focus groups conducted with child care employers, front-line ECEs, pre-kindergarten and pre-primary teachers, labour, and licensing officers.

Student Survey

Contains the results of a survey of ECE students in eight different provinces/territories. Topics explored include: program satisfaction, plans upon graduation, and more.

Faculty Survey

Contains the results of a survey of 159 early childhood education faculty across Canada. Topics explored include: job satisfaction and future plans, perceptions about students, adequacy of training regulations, and more.

Follow-Up Survey

Describes the findings of the Follow-Up Survey conducted with former ECE students who were initially surveyed as part of the Working for Change study (2004).

Literature Review

Contains the results of a comprehensive literature review and environmental scan, with a focus on emerging themes and trends in post-secondary institutions.

Download the reports at: www.ccsc-cssge.ca

Report outlines ways to meet the need for trained ECE workforce

Continued from page 2

The sector's Occupational Standards (for Practitioners and for Administrators) have an important role to play as the framework for addressing issues in each of the three key areas.

Positive directions

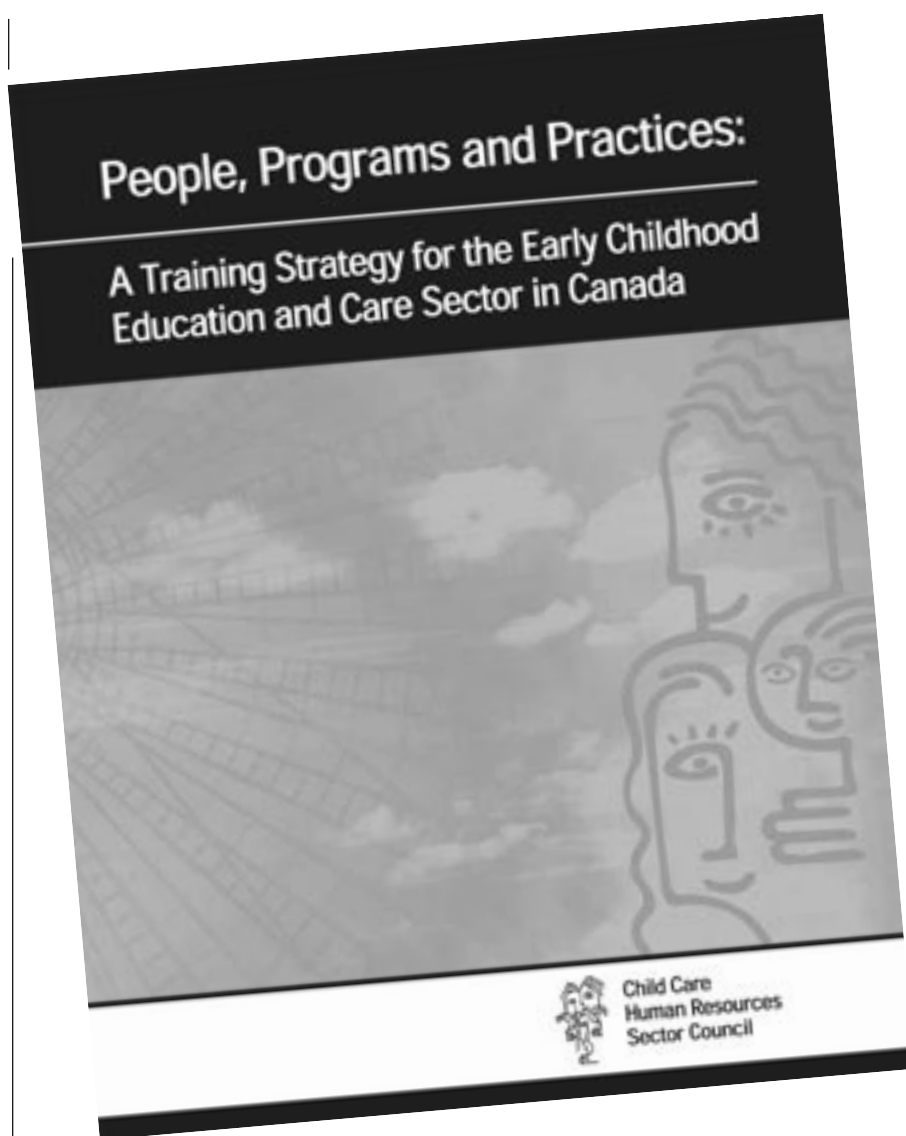
"The report gives us a very current picture of ECE training in the pan-Canadian context," said Gyda Chud, co-chair of the training project steering committee and Director of Continuing Studies at Vancouver Community College. Chud said the strategy sets the stage for post-secondary institutions to refocus earlier training initiatives such as national training guidelines; accreditation; and transferability, portability and articulation. It also "points us in some really clear and positive directions for how we approach ongoing professional development."

Contextual factors, enabling conditions

The report's recommendations were developed taking into account contextual factors such as labour force shortages, a growing reliance on immigrants in the workforce, and the increased involvement of the education sector in the development and delivery of ECEC programs.

An additional challenge to recruitment and retention in the sector comes from "increasing job opportunities for early childhood educators in related positions with higher wages, and better benefits and working conditions," notes the report.

"Many other sectors are scooping up ECEs," said Flanagan. "The ECE credential is becoming very attractive. The whole profession is evolving. And



when you look at the range of career choices in early childhood, only regulated child care programs depend primarily on parent fees. All others are part of a system."

Flanagan said that the training strategy can be most effective if it is part of a broader, systematic effort to plan and implement a comprehensive approach to ECEC. The strategy's impact will be influenced by government policies that affect the availability and quality of training, and the capacity and size of the

workforce.

"What the strategy will look like will depend upon the extent of these 'enabling' conditions," said Flanagan. "Public policy cannot be separated from any aspect of an early childhood education and care approach—whether we're talking about training, curriculum, compensation, working conditions or the broader question of quality."

A copy of the training strategy report can be downloaded at www.ccsc-cssge.ca.

Making ECEC more gender balanced

It's estimated that only about three per cent of the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce in Canada is male. Yet a more gender-balanced ECEC workforce would have many benefits for child care programs, say many employers and men who work in the sector.

“Young boys would be exposed to more positive male and female role models, and girls would also benefit from what male ECEs would bring to the programs,” said Ron Blatz, Executive Director of Discovery Children’s Centre Inc. in Winnipeg. Blatz also heads up a group for men working in ECEC.

In Canada and abroad, those who feel the sector should try to increase the percentage of men in the workforce say this is especially important for children who have no male presence at home. They also say that men in ECEC provide children with opportunities to experience different approaches to play and interactions, and are able to model behaviour that breaks through male stereotypes.

“A good male educator is neither super-nurturing nor super-masculine,” said John Helfler, an ECE working at the Early Learning Centre at Algonquin College in Ottawa. “You need to be well rounded so that when you work with the children you don’t just project that you are male, but an honest and credible person.”

A 2005 survey conducted in the

U.K. found that three-quarters of parents also believe it is important for young children to have both male and female teachers; 61 % believed male teachers have a crucial role to play in helping children feel more confident with men.

Several reasons have been advanced for the small percentage of males in ECEC: low wages, societal perceptions of men working with young children, peer judgment, and the prospect of likely being the only male in an ECE training program and the workplace.

Recruitment efforts

Denmark, Belgium, Britain and Norway are among the countries that have conducted campaigns to increase the presence of men working in ECEC.

There are many possible strategies for recruiting more men into the field, including:

- ensuring men see themselves represented in advertising and promotional material;
- using language in job advertisements that makes men feel welcome to apply;
- strategically placing advertisements in publications read by men; and

- providing material to career and guidance counselors on ECEC as a desirable occupation for men.

In Scotland, an innovative program funded by government targets second-career males and emphasizes group support and mentoring. The program revolves around a two-stage, nine-month ECEC evening course. Students can find out if ECEC appeals to them during the first phase and then continue studying into the second phase—all without leaving their day jobs because classes are held in the evening. Those who pass the nine-month course receive credit for their first year of college and can become credentialed after one more year of college.

In Canada, Blatz has started a program called Men in ECE Club 2-10 that aims to get employers to commit to having a least two men in their ECEC programs, working towards 10% by 2010. At Blatz’s centre, 20% of the workforce is already male. So far, 51 Manitoba employers have signed on to Men in ECE Club 2-10, and Blatz hopes the initiative will take hold in other parts of Canada and beyond.

Bringing a different perspective to ECE

Profile: David Murphy, Early Childhood Educator, Little People's Workshop, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Ever since he was in his teens, David Murphy knew he related well with children.

"There was something in me that said 'I have to work with children—I can make a difference,'" he said.

For 10 years, he's been doing just that. When he earned his Early Childhood Education (ECE) Diploma in 1997, he found a job right away in a child care centre. For the last eight years, he's been working at Little People's Workshop.

Along with another ECE, Murphy is responsible for the kindercare and after-school room, where a total of 32 children are enrolled part-time and full-time.

The main challenge of the job "is trying to get to know the children and their temperaments and how to work with them." Being a male in child care with a deep voice, he said, means that children naturally take notice. This can be helpful in many situations, but he is conscious to ensure that the children perceive him as approachable.

"I find a lot of children look up to you and try to mimic what you do, so I say, 'Why don't you try to draw and I'll do what you're doing?' or 'Why don't you pretend you're the teacher or the captain?' Reversing the roles works well with a lot of our children."

The benefits of working in ECEC are clear for Murphy. "Sometimes I wonder who has more fun—me or the children. Every day you go home with a smile on your face because you did something for someone. And every day is different."

With very few males working in ECEC in Newfoundland and Labrador, Murphy is accustomed to working in a female-dominated environment. He said the centre's owner, staff and parents are very supportive. Still, he feels it would be desirable to have more men in ECEC. "Children need a male role model. It exposes them to a different perspective."



David Murphy and Little People's children enjoy outdoor play time.

New project focuses on supporting employers

“Positive management and leadership practices contribute to attracting skilled staff, an increased sense of teamwork, better moral, professional development opportunities and ... quality programs.”

– Working for Change, 2004

Employers play a key role in shaping the workplace culture, often determining the human resources approach and day-to-day environment for employees. In turn, employers in early childhood education and care have a direct and significant impact on retention, recruitment, and training/professional development. With the sector facing extensive labour shortages and ever increasing turnover among trained staff, finding ways to help employers meet human resource challenges is more critical than ever.

The Supporting Employers Project is designed to do just that. Phase I of the two-phase project began in September 2007. Key activities include:

- Defining the range of employer models in the sector (e.g., non-profit, commercial, workplace) and creating in-depth profiles of the five most common.
- A complete mapping of employer needs and related human resources

issues (by model) through extensive sector-wide consultation.

- Working with sector employers to identify priority human resources issues.

From there, tools and “innovative practices” that could assist employers in addressing priority human resources issues will be identified. Phase II of the project—scheduled for 2009—will focus on developing those tools and sharing them with employers.

“As recruiting and retaining staff becomes more challenging, I look forward to accessing resources that will better enable me to not only understand the workforce climate, but also to be pro-active and strategize within that environment.”

— Denise Gilbert,
Project Co-Chair and Executive Director, School House Playcare

CCHRSC has several new projects in the works. Below, a snapshot of two that are just beginning...

Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages will examine factors such as the creation of child care spaces, parental employment patterns, and birth rates to determine the current and projected shortages facing the sector. As a result, the project will provide hard data that the sector can use to demonstrate specific shortages and their potential impact. By understanding and documenting the shortages, CCHRSC will be able to move forward and focus on identifying and implementing solutions.

Pathways to ECE Credentialing focuses on ensuring that an ECE credential achieved in one province/territory can be understood and recognized in another. Currently many provinces or territories have different practices for certifying or registering early childhood educators, while others have no formal system or process in place. As a result, a credential achieved in one province is often not recognized in another, creating a barrier to entry. By analyzing existing practices and developing tools including Essential Skills and Language and Literacy Profiles, this project will result in the creation of a tool kit that can be used to compare and assess ECE credentials anywhere in Canada.

ECE faculty come together to network and share

Faculty at post-secondary early childhood education (ECE) programs across Canada don't often get a chance to meet and talk about their work and the latest developments in child care. But when the opportunity arises, they make the most of it.

“It's great being able to meet other professionals who do the same job and are in the same position across the country, and to share and exchange some of our ideas, issues and concerns,” said Diane Nyisztor, Coordinator of the Early Childhood Education Department at Vanier College in Montreal. Nyisztor was one of 82 participants at the second Association of Canadian Community Colleges ECE Affinity Group forum, held in Toronto in October 2007.

Even though ECE policies may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, “the training issues are very much the same,” said Nyisztor. “For example, the whole notion of play is an important concept, yet we're all struggling to make sure our students have a good foundation in play and see it in the child care centres they go into.”

Nyisztor said the forum also gave her an opportunity to strengthen social and professional ties. “It allowed me to reconnect with people I've met over the years and don't see on regular basis, and catch up and find out what they are doing.”

Packed agenda

The 2 ½-day forum was packed with

panels, speakers and presentations on topics ranging from ways to ensure an education and career ladder for child care professionals, to the sector council's new training strategy and current cross-Canada initiatives in policy and practice. There were also informal sessions on: ways to ensure

finity group's coordinating team, and sector council chair. Morris facilitated the “hot and happening” discussion.

“You couldn't get people to stop talking. The whole conversation got people stimulated and they were impressed by each other.”

Morris said she would like to see the next forum—planned for Montreal in November 2008—build on these discussions and include new approaches in course content. “The



students have good practicum experiences; strategies to support struggling students; redefining “school readiness” to include play-based and holistic learning; and “It's hot and it's happening”—new approaches to learning in programs.

The informal sessions were very popular because they engaged and energized the participants, said Joanne Morris, a member of the af-

ECE job is expanding and is more and more demanding at the field level, and we're forever looking at what we need to add to programs to make graduates ready to meet these demands.”

In the meantime, the coordinating committee will post topic-related excerpts from the forum on its web site (www.accc.ca/networking) to encourage ongoing discussion.

New Brunswick

Director mentoring program takes off

Stepping into a director's position in child care can be a daunting experience. Training opportunities are often few, and support is hard to find. "It's sink or swim," said Tammy MacTavish, Director of Stepping Stones Childcare Services in Miramichi, New Brunswick. That's why she and others like her are involved in D2D (director-to-director) Mentoring, a project sponsored by the New Brunswick Association for Community Living and funded by Family and Community Services, New Brunswick Government.

"I really felt directors were isolated from each other," said program coordinator Dixie Mitchell, who initiated D2D Mentoring. "Sometimes you move from being an early childhood educator right into the director position without ongoing support."

D2D Mentoring is based on the Daloz mentoring model and puts directors into mentoring pairs by region. Both people establish the areas they want to develop and how their relationship will work, and make a signed commitment to meet regularly.

"It's an arrangement where mentoring partners learn from each other and where you are equal. This is important because it sets a positive tone from the first," said MacTavish.

The program provides opportunities to acquire leadership skills, network, and learn from others'

experience. Provincial meetings of all pairs are held every month in a different location, and the program aims at three weekend retreats per year. Each session focuses on a topic of interest identified by program participants—for example, payroll, human resources, or developing a parent handbook. Regions also hold "conversation cafes", especially useful for those unable to attend the larger meetings.

The program, begun 1 ½ years ago, continues to expand. "I do think it will keep growing," said MacTavish. "As busy as we are in our jobs, I know this is the one thing that I do for me."

For more information contact:
Dixie Mitchell,
D2D Coordinator,
NBACL
506-472-4513
or mmmccc@nb.sympatico.ca

Publisher:

Child Care Human Resources
Sector Council
151 Slater, Suite 714
Ottawa, ON, K1P 5H3

Editors: Bozica Costigliola,
Samantha Peek

Design:

JPP Communications

Translator: Jocelyne Tougas

Printed by union labour
at Impart Litho

Legal Deposit NLC—BNQ 2008

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

The *HR Management Toolkit* – free resources for non-profit organizations

Is your organization trying to do more with less? Most early childhood education and care in Canada is delivered by non-profit organizations. And when revenue depends on government funding and parent fees, human resources training and tools often don't fit the budget.

Yet numerous studies have identified the need to develop resources that will support managers, administrators, and directors in the sector and increase their capacity to build a skilled workforce. While the CCHRSC has a number of projects and initiatives under way in this area, there is another sector council offering valuable HR tools for the not-profit sector.

The HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit sector incorporated in 2005, becoming only the second “social” sector council (after CCHRSC). One of their first initiatives was the development of the *HR Management Toolkit*, offering free practical tools and information on human resources management. Although the tools are designed for voluntary and non-profit organizations, many are just as relevant to commercial operations. Users can access information in a number of areas, including:

-
- **Employment Legislation** – Employment standards, human rights legislation, and occupational health and safety are covered.
-
- **Human Resources Policies** – Contains a guide to writing HR policies and procedures and sample policies in 37 different areas (from compensation to leaves to workplace diversity).
-
- **Staffing** – Valuable information on laying out a staffing plan, job design, the recruitment process, orientation and more.

- **Compensation and Benefits** – Information on employment benefits, retirement plans and salary surveys (including how to assess them).

-
- **Training and Development** – Explores factors affecting working and learning in the voluntary/non-profit sector including understanding the employee as an adult learner and implementing an employee training and development program.

-
- **People Management** – Information on performance management, work teams and different generations in the workforce.

-
- **Workplaces** – Information on what makes a good workplace, the role of flexibility and job quality in non-profit organizations.

Taking a strategic look at human resources is always a good idea. Visit www.hrcouncil.ca to access the tool kit and see how it can be of use to you!

How to reach us

Child Care Human Resources Sector Council

151 Slater, Suite 714
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H3
Phone: (613) 239-3100
Toll free: 1-866-411-6960
E-mail: info@ccsc-cssge.ca

CCHRSC Board

Karen Chandler

Professor, George Brown College
Representative: Canadian Child Care Federation

Darcelle Cottons

Director, UBC Child Care Services
Director at large

Sue Delaney

Executive Director
Saskatoon Communities for Children
Representative: Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada

Joanne Fournier

Enseignante en Techniques d'éducation à l'enfance
Cégep du Vieux Montréal
Representative: Confédération des syndicats nationaux

Denise Gilbert

Executive Director, Schoolhouse Playcare Centres
Director at large

Mary Goss-Prowse

Registrar of Certification, Association of Early Childhood Educators, Newfoundland and Labrador
Representative: Canadian Child Care Federation

Maureen Hall

Director, Today's Family
Director at large

Marta Juorio

Representative: Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada

Jamie Kass

Child Care Coordinator CUPW
Representative: Canadian Union of Public Employees

Christine McLean

Past Chair, Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada
Representative: Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada

Dixie Mitchell

Child Care Consultant
Director at large

Joanne Morris

- Sector Council Chair
Faculty, Early Childhood Education, College of the North Atlantic
Director at large

Gay Pagan

Child Care Organizer
Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union
Representative: National Union of Public and General Employees

Kathy Reid

Director, Manitoba Child Care Program, Manitoba Dept. of Family Services and Housing
Provincial/Territorial Director
Director at large

Shane Richard

Co-owner / Operator, Little Wonders Child Care Nova Scotia
Director at Large

Josée Roy

Adjointe à l'exécutif
Confédération des syndicats nationaux
Representative : Confédération des syndicats nationaux

Stephanie Seaman

Chairperson of the BCGEU
Community Social Services-Lower Mainland Local (303) & Child Care Worker
Representative: National Union of Public and General Employees

Janet Towers

Executive Director
Saint John YMCA-YWCA
Representative: Canadian Child Care Federation

Margot Young

Senior Research Officer, CUPE
Representative: Canadian Union of Public Employees

STAFF

Diana Carter

Executive Director

Samantha Peek

Communications and Project Officer

Kathryn Ohashi

Finance and Project Officer