Inside

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Project clarifies credentialing practices across Canada

A report analyzing credentialing practices in Canada's provinces and territories, and an online guide to help early childhood educators (ECEs) find out the qualifications they need to work in the sector in all jurisdictions are part of a sector council project aimed at improving ECE labour mobility.

The recently released report, *Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada*, takes an in-depth look at the policies, approaches and systems of credentialing in all provinces and territories. The online *Guide to Early Childhood Credentialing in Canada* will be released in Spring 2010.

"The credentialing project is a way to clarify for many stakeholders what is needed for those who work in the sector to move between provinces and territories or to become certified in their own jurisdiction," said project steering committee chair and sector council board member, Mary Goss-Prowse.

The report notes that different jurisdictional approaches to credentialing, along with the challenges of finding the relevant information, have compounded staffing shortages in the sector.

"The most striking thing we found was the variation across the country," said Jane Beach, a member of the project's four-person research team. "It's not so much that everyone does everything differently, but there is nothing that everybody does exactly the same—from the definitions they use, to the certification levels, to the time it takes, renewals and how international applicants are assessed."

Online guide

The project includes an online guide to credentialing that will make it easier for ECEs to find out what qualifications they need to work in early childhood education and care in other jurisdictions.

The *Guide to Early Childhood Credentialing in Canada* will provide a searchable on-line data base with information from each province and territory including:

- specific requirements to work in regulated group child care;
- the certification process;
- renewal requirements;
- recognized post-secondary ECE programs; and
- recognition of out-of- province and out-of-country qualifications.

Project clarifies credentialing practices across Canada

Users will be able to search by topic or jurisdiction and click on links to relevant provincial ministries and credentialing bodies.

"The primary audience for the guide is ECEs—whether it's those who are about to be certified, who are moving or thinking of going into the field or those working in the sector and thinking of more training," said Kathleen Flanagan, one of the project's researchers. "They might be asking: 'Who do I call? What form do I fill out?' The information will be at their fingertips—a few mouse clicks away."

Provincial and territorial officials responsible for credentialing and directors of child care have also expressed a keen interest in using the guide, as well as doing their part to ensure it is kept up to date. "If they're getting an application from another province, they'll be able to see what the person has and what it means," said Flanagan. "At the college level, it could be used to advise students on requirements across the country, and immigration officials could use it for people thinking of moving to Canada who work in child care in their home country."

The project report, *Pathways to Early Childhood Education Credentialing in Canada*, is available Winter 2010, while the online guide will be released in March 2010. To download the report, visit www.ccsc-cssge.ca. To order a print copy e-mail: **info@ccsc-cssge.ca**.

Board change – goodbye and thanks

It is with much regret that CCHRSC received the news of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada's (CCAAC) decision to withdraw from the CCHRSC Board. "We are saddened to see them leave, as their representatives have contributed so much to our organization and our projects," said Joanne Morris, CCHRSC chair. Working with organizations through a representative board structure is an important way for the CCHRSC to connect with partners and to carry out important projects that reflect the sector's needs.

The representatives leaving the sector council board include Christine McLean (NL), Sharon Gregson (BC) and Sue Delanoy (SK). All three had a significant role in helping to advance key human resource issues. We thank them for their hard work and commitment.

The CCAAC has a long history with the CCHRSC, and was instrumental in its formation. The organization was part of the Child Care Human Resources Transition Committee in 1998, and the Child Care Human Resources Round Table in April 2000 before joining the CCHRSC board in 2003. They have since played an active part in our success as a sector council, and have provided a strong voice at the CCHRSC board table that will be greatly missed.

The CCHRSC board and staff extend sincere thanks and appreciation to the CCAAC and their representatives for their many contributions over the years. The council looks forward to continuing to work together and supporting each other's work in the future.

Occupational standards reflect the work of ECEs in a changing world

Sector stakeholders involved in developing and validating the new *Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators* are pleased by the project's "recognition of the value of the work ECEs do and the continuing changes in the sector and the field," said sector council board member and project steering committee chair, Stephanie Seaman.

The draft revised standards—reviewed by stakeholders across Canada in the Fall—were developed in large part by ECEs who identified the skills, knowledge and abilities required for their job. These new occupational standards update the first set of standards, *Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners*, produced by the Canadian Child Care Federation in 2003.

"When they are finalized, the revised standards will reflect the increasing complexity of the job due to rapid changes in the sector," said Seaman. "For example, today's ECEs have increased responsibility, work a lot more closely with families and related professionals, and also have a stronger connection with schools."

The standards are expected to be widely used by those working as ECEs, as well as employers and trainers. They will be very comprehensive, outlining the detailed tasks in all areas of the ECE core job, as well as tasks that are specific to school age and family child care practitioners. The areas covered include childhood development, programming, health and safety, family and community relations, professional development and record keeping.

A mirror and a tool

"Not everything in the standards may be done by an ECE, but everything an ECE does should be in the standards," Seaman said. "ECEs looking at the standards should be able to recognize their role, and use them to set a standard of quality for themselves."

The occupational standards will also provide a valuable tool for employers, who may use them for support when

> *"Not everything in the standards may be done by an ECE, but everything an ECE does should be in the standards," Seaman said. "ECEs looking at the standards should be able to recognize their role, and use them to set a standard of quality for themselves."*

dealing with a range of human resource issues.

"At minimum they will help employers look at job descriptions and make sure they reflect the work," said Darcelle Cottons, sector council board member and project steering committee member. "An employer could look at designing their whole hiring and evaluation of staff and long-term planning of staff growth within using the

standards—whether it's a new centre or whether they are looking at redoing what they already have."

Knowing the ever-evolving complexities of the job is also critical to post-secondary institutions training the new generation of ECEs. "There's no question the job is growing and changing," said project steering committee member and sector council board member Karen Chandler. "Ideally [the standards] should affect post-secondary curriculum review so people can look at how well they are addressing some of these developments. You don't want to have gaps."

The final standards will be available in April 2010. For information on how and when to order your copy call the CCHRSC office toll free at 1-866-411-6960 or e-mail **info@ccsc–cssge.ca**.

Making diversity, equity and inclusion meaningful in early childhood education

Here is an interesting statistic for those who work in child care: according to the Census, there has been a 34% increase in the number of same-sex partnerships in Canada between 2001 and 2006, for a total of 45,345 couples (up from around 29,000).

"This is the changing face of diversity," said Zeenat Janmohamed, coordinator of the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development and a faculty member of the School of Early Childhood Education at George Brown College. "In an attempt to be more inclusive of diversity and difference, a first critical step is to reflect on which groups are included and which ones are excluded—which children have a sense of belonging and which ones don't."

Janmohamed believes that the approach to how those excluded voices are included is key. Growing family diversity makes it "more critical than ever that early childhood training programs move away from a single way of knowing… and make room for multiple perspectives, which in turn may influence innovative kinds of teaching decisions and practices."

She says educators should be more proactive in programming, for example by seeing queer families "as part and parcel of our early childhood community…regardless of whether or not you have a gay family in the program."

Here are some of her suggestions for programming around queer families:

- Display rainbow stickers and/or triangles to symbolize a welcoming environment for queer families.
- Integrate books with queer families, such as *Tango Makes Three* and the *King and King*, into regular reading and display them on the bookshelf.
- Ask for help from your supervisor or community resources when you don't know how to answer a question such as, "Why doesn't Sasha have a mommy?" Staff could explain that Sasha may have two moms (or dads) and that both parents are real. Families of loving and caring and children and adults exist in all kinds of ways.
- Ask family friendly questions during the program, for example, instead of using "mom and dad", refer to "families" or "parents".
- Enable children, no matter what their age, to explore the fluidity of gender identity without shame or restraint in program activities.

It is important to go beyond the rhetoric of diversity, equity, inclusion and multicultural practice, says Janmohamed, and that means "educators need to be more attuned to how family composition has changed, and how that change impacts on early childhood policy, program and practice."

The term "queer"

Historically, "queer" was a derogatory term used to describe lesbians and gay men. In the 1980s, within the lesbian and gay civil rights struggle, a movement emerged to reclaim the word and use it in a positive way. Today, "queer" is frequently used as an umbrella term to recognize and acknowledge an array of sexual and gender identities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, two spirited and "questioning" people.

— Source: *Building Bridges: Queer Families in Early Childhood Education*

Queer family resources for ECEs

- *Building Bridges, Queer Families in Early Childhood Education*, by Zeenat Janmohamed and Ryan Campbell, available online from **www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/** and **www.childcareontario.org**
- The LGBTQ Parenting Connection, **www.lgbtqparenting-connection.ca**
- *Getting Ready for Benjamin: Preparing Teachers for Sexual Diversity in the Classroom*, edited by Rita M. Kissen

Early childhood, school staff work together for seamless services

New Brunswick has launched four demonstration sites that are piloting seamless programming for children and parents by integrating kindergarten, early learning and child care programs, parenting support services and community resources.

The government-sponsored sites —located in Bath, Moncton, Robertville and Saint John—opened in Fall 2009. They are part of the province's 10-year early learning strategy and the work of Margaret McCain, New Brunswick's early learning advisor.

The sites operate under a unique partnership with the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation that provides communications support and resources the research and evaluation work of the University of New Brunswick's Health and Education Research group (HERG). They are designed to influence public policy by demonstrating best practices, and are among 13 the foundation supports in Atlantic Canada.

The demonstration sites were developed in response to community needs, are governed by non-profit, community-based boards, and are all housed in local schools.

Staff plan together

"Schools are the preferred location because part of what we want to do is ease the children's transition into school and we want early childhood educators to link with kindergarten teachers to plan programming," said Dria McPhee, the social development ministry's project manager for the sites.

For example, the four-year-olds in the preschool program at Step Ahead Bath Family Learning Centre spend a morning a week with the kindergarten class in the elementary school next door. Step Ahead provides a continuum of child and family programming for children from two to 12 years of age. Housed in Bath Middle School, it is the first to provide licensed child care in this small community, whose village and surrounding area has a population of 2,800.

"When we're all together, you can't tell our children from the kindergarten children and you can't tell who's the kindergarten teacher and who's the early childhood educator," said centre director Rebecca Derrah, who manages three early childhood staff.

Although the demonstration sites are still in their infancy, early childhood and school staff have wasted no time finding ways to work together effectively.

"In Bath, the principals have embraced the learning centre as part of the whole school community," said Dr. Ruth Morrison, project manager of HERG. "Overall there is brainstorming and collaboration on issues as they come up…and a recognition of the importance of quality early childhood care and the impact it will have when the children get to kindergarten and Grade 1 and 2."

In one site, for example, a Grade 2 teacher who was having difficulty planning a program for a child with special needs consulted the early childhood development director. Together, they created a program for the child, "and that may not have happened if there wasn't a centre in the school," said Dr. Morrison.

Four provincial government departments are involved in the demonstration sites—social development, education, health, and wellness, culture and sport. The sites are receiving $100,000 annually from the government for the first three years and are designed to become self-sustaining by the end of the demonstration phase.

Integration of education and ECEC

In November 2007, Dr. Charles E. Pascal was asked by the Ontario government to recommend the best way to implement full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds. Dr. Pascal's report, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, was released in June 2009.

As a result of an announcement made by the Ontario Government on October 27, 2009, up to 35,000 kindergarten students across the province will be enrolled in full-day learning beginning September 2010. This is a significant development for the ECEC sector as four- and five-year-olds will learn under the guidance of a teacher and an early childhood educator in order to build a stronger school system and well-educated workforce. The goal is to have the program fully implemented in all schools by 2015-16. CCHRSC is exploring the impact integrated early learning and education systems will have on human resources in the ECEC sector through the Emerging Issues project (see page 8).

4th Annual ECE Affinity Group Forum

Since retention and high turnover rates have been identified as the most predominant problems facing the ECE sector, mentoring and leadership have become even more significant. This was the theme of the 4th Annual ECE Affinity Group Forum, held in Edmonton, Alberta in November 2009.

The forum, hosted by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) at MacEwan University, included a number of presentations, keynote speakers, panels and workshops attended by over 65 participants. The forum is focused primarily on faculty teaching in ECE training programs across the country.

The forum featured two fascinating keynote presentations on the mentoring experience – the first from a Canadian profile, and the second from an East African profile. Cathy Smey Carston, a faculty member with the Department of Child and Youth Studies at Mount Royal University, presented findings from her research on the experience of mentoring in the ECE field. The findings focused on the impacts of mentoring on employment retention and the implications it has for ECE programs. The other keynote presenter, Najma Rashid, spoke about the Madrasa Preschool and Resource Program in East Africa. As regional program director, Najma described the mentoring model used to approach teacher training since early 1996, and how it has added value to the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Her participation in the forum was sponsored through the Aga Khan Foundation Canada.

There were a number of mentoring workshops for forum participants to attend, as well as an interactive panel discussion on mentoring from a pan-Canadian perspective, which discussed promising mentoring initiatives happening across the country. For instance, participants learned about the Mentoring Pairs for Child Care (MPCC) project in Ontario, as well as a variety of successful initiatives from the Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC). Congratulations to Jane Hewes and the ECE Affinity Group Steering Committee as the forum was once again a tremendous success and an excellent opportunity for those involved with ECE college and university programs across the country to share innovative ideas and new concepts that are helping to improve the way ECE graduates enter the workforce. The 5th Annual ECE Affinity Group Forum will be held November 4 – 6, 2010 in Vancouver, B.C. For more information on the ECE Affinity Group, please visit the ACCC website at **www.accc.ca**.

Workforce Shortages project complete

The results of the Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages in ECEC project were released in October 2009. The research and analysis from the project demonstrates that retention—not recruitment—is the predominant problem in the sector's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff. This is because recruitment challenges are primarily caused by staff turnover, with close to nine out of 10 new recruits being required to replace existing staff. As a result, employers must constantly search for new recruits in order to maintain services, let alone expand service delivery.

By examining factors such as the available workforce, creation of new child care spaces, projected birth rates, and parental employment patterns, this project determined the current shortages facing the sector, and found that:

• Workforce shortages in the ECEC sector are more likely to occur than in other sectors and more likely to persist longer without action to address the underlying causal factors.

• Between 2001 and 2007, there was a cumulative shortage of 24,766 ECEC workers.

• Across Canada, 4,802 workers were still needed to fill available ECEC positions in 2007.

A number of recommendations were made that can help organizations, government, employers, trainers, educators and others, address both recruitment and retention issues. A full list of recommendations can be found in the report, *Recruitment and Retention Challenges and Strategies*.

In addition to the *Recruitment and Retention Challenges and Strategies* report, the CCHRSC produced a range of reports based on the project findings. To download complete copies of the Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages in ECEC project reports, please visit our website at **www.ccsc–cssge.ca**. To order print copies of the reports, email **info@ccsc–cssge.ca** or call 1-866-411-6960.

Good data, research key to understanding human resource issues

Sector council studies have shown that there is a lack of consistent and reliable data available on the early childhood education workforce. Without quality data, accurately defining and addressing labour market issues from a provincial/territorial or pan-Canadian perspective is difficult. The sector council's *Labour Market Information Research Agenda* project was created to address this challenge.

Throughout 2009, the project brought together a panel of experts to identify research priorities designed to help the sector council, employers, and sector decision-makers understand and make better use of existing public data sources. The depth and variety of expertise of the panel and the project's consultant, economist Robert Fairholm, helped to inform research priorities. The end result is a long-term research agenda that contains recommendations designed to address data gaps on the ECEC workforce and improve labour market information for the sector.

Information tools

The project has also produced a number of tools that provide new information on the workforce, and can help those working in the sector understand key data collection methods and how they can be used.

The *Portrait of Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce (2009)* provides a statistical overview of the labour market situation in the sector: who is in the workforce (how many ECEs and Assistants—and how many work in child care centres or in family child care—kindergarten teachers, teaching assistants, babysitters, nannies and parents' helpers), their ages, earnings, levels of education and employment rates, as well as the number of people employed in ECEC across Canada. This updated workforce snapshot was one of the research priorities identified in the *Labour Market Research and Data Development Agenda and Action Plan* and contains information useful to researchers, policymakers, academics, forecasters, ECEC directors, ECEs, and students.

Fact sheets

A series of user-friendly fact sheets are also being produced that will explain public data sources that are relevant to ECEC human resource trends. Papers are being developed on each of the following topics:

- the National Occupational Classification (NOC/NOC-S);
- the Census;
- the Labour Force Survey (LFS);
- the Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours (SEPH); and
- the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

The question-and-answer fact sheets describe what data are collected, their limitations and uses, and their relevance to the ECEC sector. For example, information from the Census can be used to analyze trends in increases or decreases in the number of ECEC workers and examine trends in relation to earnings and place of work (see "Did you know?" for an example). The Labour Force Survey can assist in determining patterns of employment such as unemployment for ECEs and assistants. All of this information helps to inform ECEC program planning and development as well as overall decision-making. As a result, it is important that those working in the sector understand and have access to the information produced.

Getting better numbers

ECE researchers rely heavily on Census data, currently organized within the NOC (National Occupational Classification) system. Changes to the NOC framework are considered every 10 years, and in line with the project mandate, the expert panel recommended ways to re-organize and re-define the NOC system to better reflect occupations related to the ECEC sector. These changes will help to improve the quality of data collection in some of Statistics Canada's surveys, including the Census. "With clear and consistent definitions and proper terminology, you get better data." said sector council Executive Director, Diana Carter. "This provides key stakeholders with accurate and reliable information for decision-making."

To download a copy of *A Portrait of Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce (2009)* visit **www.ccsc-cssge.ca**.

Did you know?

Between 2001 and 2006, the broader ECEC workforce (including ECEs and assistants, kindergarten teachers, teaching assistants, babysitters, nannies and parents' helpers) increased by 7.7%. The fastest growing category was ECEs and assistants, which grew by 24.9%.

PROJECT UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Curriculum Development for Child Care Administrators

The Curriculum Development for Child Care Administrators project is now underway and focuses on exploring the feasibility of developing curricula that post-secondary institutions could use to create a post-diploma certificate program designed for ECEC administrators, managers, and directors. The possibility of several post-secondary institutions partnering with CCHRSC to develop and pilot curriculum for child care administrators in a 2nd phase of the project will also be explored.

Research to be conducted includes a broad survey of post-secondary institutions, a literature review and key informant interviews that will help confirm where ECEC administrator training currently exists, identify curricula gaps, and identify priority areas for curriculum development.

Once the research phase is complete and the approach is determined to be viable, criteria for a partnership approach to curriculum development will be identified. Interested educational institutions and qualified personnel who could be potential partners in this project will also be identified.

Examining the Human Resource Implications of Emerging Issues in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

Several issues in ECEC are becoming increasingly important and have led to a need to better understand their impact on human resources in the sector. That's why the CCHRSC has developed the Examining the Human Resource Implications of Emerging Issues in ECEC project. These issues include, but are not limited to:

- inclusion (cultural diversity and special needs);
- school-age care (for children aged kindergarten – Grade 12);
- family child care; and
- integrated early learning (child care) and education (school) systems.

Since September 2009, project research has included a literature review on emerging issues, interviewing key informants and surveying sector stakeholders. More than 800 respondents, including experts on emerging issues, employers, trainers and others from across Canada have completed the survey to date. "The survey was created to better understand a number of trends and issues relevant to the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector and their potential impact on human resources in the sector," said Robyn Osgood of Blueprint Public Relations.

A report on the research and findings is currently being developed and will include a ranking of the top three emerging issues, identified through research and consultations with sector stakeholders.

The report will also identify the best approach for sector-wide consultation designed to increase the capacity of the sector to address the top human resources issues identified. It is hoped the CCHRSC can move forward with the consultation process in a second phase of the project to begin by 2011.

20 facts about Canadian ECEC *

1. Number of children in 2007:
- 4.7 million 0–12-year-olds
- (1.0 million 0–2s, 1.0 million 3–5s, 2.6 million 6–12s)
- In 1995: 5.1 million 0–12s
- In 2005: 4.7 million 0–12s

2. Children with mothers in the paid labour force in 2007:
- 3.1 million 0–12-year-olds
- 623,000 0–2s; 651,000 3–5s; 1.8 million 6–12s

3. Birth rates per 1,000 population in 2007:
- 11.1 Canadian average
- Provinces/territories range – from 8.7 to 25.2

4. Number of regulated child care spaces in 2008: 867,194

5. Percent of 0–12-year-olds for whom there was a regulated child care space in 2008: 18.6%

6. Percent of 0–5-year-olds for whom there was a regulated child care space in 2008: 20.3%

7. Proportion of total child care spaces in regulated family child care in 2008: 16%

8. Proportion of child care spaces that were school-aged in 2008: 36%

9. Number of provinces/territories in which kindergarten for five-year-olds is full school-day in 2009: 3

10. Number of provinces/territories providing kindergarten for a substantial proportion of four-year-olds in 2009: 1

11. Total provincial/territorial budget allocations for regulated child care in 2007/08: $3,087,442,746

12. Growth in total provincial/territorial child care budget allocations between 2005/06 and 2007/08: $147.3 million

13. Number of provinces/territories that have/are developing an early childhood curriculum framework in 2009: 5

14. Percent of spaces that were for-profit in 2008: 25%

15. Number of provinces/territories in which more than half the growth in centre spaces (0–5s) was for-profit: 6 (of 9)

16. Number of provinces/territories that require a four year early childhood related degree for any centre-based staff: 1

17. Number of provinces/territories that set early childhood requirements for certified kindergarten teachers: 0

18. Number of provinces/territories that require some early childhood training for regulated family child care providers: 9

19. Income for child care centre staff in 2006: $25,100 (Canada-wide median full-time, full-year employment income)

20. Number of initial maternity leave claims allowed in 2007: 225,749
Total births: 354,085
64% of births resulted in maternity benefit payment

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(Note: please indicate the target audience and planned use).

Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce

Released in November 2004, this study profiles those who work in child care, the environment they work in and the challenges they face. Available reports consist of:

• **Project CD:** includes all Working for Change project reports in both languages (Main Report, Executive Summary, Literature Review, Profiles and Case Studies).

• *Working for Change: Main Report* – provides an in–depth profile of the workforce, and the working environment, context and challenges.

• *Working for Change: Executive Summary* – provides a concise overview of the study's main findings.

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People, Programs and Practices: A Training Strategy for the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector in Canada

Released in 2007, this report recommends ways to improve the quality and consistency of ECEC training in Canada. Developed in response to the need for a consistent approach to child care training, as identified in *Working for Change*, the strategy is a critical step in helping provinces and territories meet increasing demands for well–trained staff.

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