

Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators

Infant Care Profile and School Age Profile

The Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) describe what a person must know and be able to do in order to perform effectively, safely, and efficiently in the occupation. The standards apply to anyone who provides education and care in programs for children aged 0-12 years, in a variety of age groupings and settings.

In addition to the Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators, two resources are available for ECEs working with infant and school age children. The Infant Care Profile and the School Age Profile provide additional information on the skills and knowledge required of ECEs working with these age groups, and are meant to compliment the Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators, not replace them.

Infant Care Profile

The Infant Care Profile was developed and updated by ECEs working in infant care settings across Canada. The Profile expands on 47 sub-tasks taken from the Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators with a focus on only the skills and knowledge required in an infant care environment. This information is organized into the following sections:

- Child Development, Learning and Care
- Equipment and Facilities
- Family and Community Relations
- Personal and Professional Development

The Infant Care Profile provides a current snapshot of the skills, knowledge and abilities required of ECEs working within an infant care setting.

School Age Profile

The School Age Profile was developed by ECEs working with school age children across Canada. It expands on 27 sub-tasks taken from the Occupational standards for Early Childhood Educators, with a focus on only the skills and knowledge required in a school age environment. The School Age Profile provides a current snapshot of the skills, knowledge and abilities required of ECEs working in a school age setting. The skills and knowledge are organized under the following nine Tasks:

- Facilitate the development and behaviour of children
- Develop, implement and evaluate programs
- Support the holistic development of all children
- Meet health, safety and well-being needs
- Meet nutritional needs
- Guide children's behaviour
- Develop and maintain a safe environment
- Use digital technology
- Collaborate with schools

The School Age Profile also includes information on trends and issues affecting the occupation today, with sections on detecting and addressing bullying in school age children, teaching social and civic responsibility to school age children, and using digital technology in a school age setting.

How to Use Occupational Standards and Profiles

Early Childhood Educators

Self-assessment: Use the standards to benchmark skills and knowledge against what is required in the occupation; to set professional goals and learning objectives; and to identify training and professional development opportunities.

Career Advancement: Use the standards to understand what is required of an Early Childhood Educator in different settings and with children of different ages; to develop the necessary skills and knowledge for advancement; to prepare cover letters and applications for Early Childhood Educator positions; and to prepare for certification or licensing.

Child Care Administrators

Develop Job Descriptions: Use the standards to set clear expectations of candidates; to clarify hiring needs by identifying skills and knowledge gaps in the organization; and as a reference to clarify the relationships between roles within the organization.

Develop and Conduct Performance Appraisals: Use the standards as a benchmark for performance; to identify skills and knowledge required of employees; to identify employees' areas of strength and weakness; to identify employees' training needs; and to set employees' professional development goals and learning objectives.

Provide Leadership: Use the standards as a reference to build community awareness; as a tool for collaborating with parents, volunteers and other stakeholders; and to improve leadership and communications skills overall.

Postsecondary Faculty and Trainers

Inform, assess and improve curriculum: Use the standards to identify minimum skills knowledge and abilities to be covered in new program; as a program evaluation tool to ensure that skills required of the occupation are covered in existing programs; and to benchmark current practices and develop learning goals and objectives for students.

Improve Portability of Credentials: The standards were developed by Early Childhood Educators representing jurisdictions across Canada, and can be used to develop program credentials reflecting the realities of these jurisdictions. Use the standards to identify the skills and knowledge required in various occupational settings; to identify the skills and knowledge required when working with a variety of age groups, and to identify the skills and knowledge required when working with children of varying backgrounds and needs.

Policy Makers

Assess curriculum: Use the standards to benchmark current practices and to determine if minimum required skills, knowledge and abilities are covered in curriculum.

Improve Portability of Credentials: The standards were developed by Early Childhood Educators representing jurisdictions across Canada, and can be used to develop program credentials reflecting the realities of these jurisdictions. Use the standards to identify the skills and knowledge required in various occupational settings; to identify the skills and knowledge required when working with a variety of age groups, and to identify the skills and knowledge required when working with children of varying backgrounds and needs.

Certification and Licensing: Use the standards to ease labour mobility by developing nationally recognized certification and licensing programs; to establish competencies for certification and licensing programs; to improve consistency of programming to ensure all learners meet certification and licensing requirements; to ease labour mobility issues by establishing credentials.