
Training and Retention in the First Nations ECE Sector: A Report from the Frontlines



Prepared for the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council

*By the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
November 2012*

The BC Aboriginal Child Care Society gratefully acknowledges and warmly thanks our funders, the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council, and the many people who gave so generously of their time, knowledge and opinions.

Without all of them, this project would not have been possible.

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Executive Summary

Training and Retention in the First Nations ECE Sector: A Report from the Frontlines is the result of research that gathered first-hand information from professionals working in the field of Aboriginal Early Childhood Education (ECE). The specific aim of this research was to assess aspects related to the training and retention of Early Childhood Educators in First Nations Communities across British Columbia. The research generated recommendations to guide strategic planning and policy changes to encourage new Aboriginal educators to join the field, to reduce barriers to training, and to retain qualified staff.

Our research found that:

- *An overwhelming majority of the respondents were managers or supervisors of ECD programs (71%)*
- *The ECE workforce in First Nations communities is aging as 50% are over the age of 40*
- *There is a wide variation in wages in on reserve programs; and seniority, training, and education do not always translate into higher wages*
- *Large numbers of staff in child care programs have not completed ECE certification (35% in the interior and 85% in the North)*

In this report BC ACCS recommends to the First Nations ECD Council that:

The council convene key stakeholders at all levels of ECD to collaborate on:

- developing a strategic training plan to increase the number of qualified workers
- exploring the costs and benefits of implementing a living wage standard for First Nations ECE employees
- adapting existing human resource management “best practices” tool kit to provide guidelines and standards for First Nations licensed child care and Head Start employers
- exploring minimum standards for the “Aboriginal Perspective” designation given to ECE training institutions
- revising basic ECE training so that it includes instruction on working with exceptional children and on human resource management
- securing government funding that supports regional training opportunities for First Nations ECE staff

Finally, we recommend further study of on-reserve ECD programs be undertaken to obtain comprehensive data about wages, benefits, and staffing in this sector, focusing on front-line non-managerial staff.

Section 1: Introduction

In late February and early March, 2012, with support from the First Nations Early Childhood Development Council (FNECDC), BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BC ACCS) researchers collected information from individuals with first-hand knowledge and experience related to the issues of recruitment, training, and retention of early childhood educators (ECEs) working on-reserve in First Nations child care centres, preschools, Head Start, and other early childhood development (ECD) programs. Data was gathered through:

1. **An on-line survey** - targeted at those currently working as ECEs, Assistant ECEs and program managers in First Nations communities;
2. **Interviews** - with ECE Students, Instructors, Coordinators and Staff from post-secondary institutions that offer ECE training programs.¹
3. **Focus groups** - with participants who work in First Nations ECD programs, including some recent ECE graduates.

The intent of the research was to obtain facts and informed opinions on issues related to human resources development for ECD programs serving First Nations in British Columbia. The report concludes with a list of recommendations based on the detailed quantitative and qualitative data that has been gathered and analyzed. These recommendations build on the content of *The BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework*,² by identifying strategic actions, policy changes and suggestions for further research all of which are needed in or to develop and maintain a qualified ECD workforce responsible for delivering high quality services to all First Nations children and families in British Columbia.

Section 2: On-line Survey

On-line Survey Methodology

Statistical experts were consulted prior to generating the on-line survey questions. The survey was derived from pre-existing tested and validated questionnaires developed by mainstream ECE researchers. Adaptations were made in order to make the survey tool more relevant to the Aboriginal ECD context. There were a total of 42 questions, most of which were “yes or no” style or multiple-choice. Only 4 questions were open ended.³ The on-line survey was launched on February 22, 2012. E-mail invites were sent to 173 different e-mail addresses, targeted at on-reserve licensed ECD centres and Head Start programs across British Columbia. The survey was also highlighted in the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society’s Facebook page as well as the BC ACCS E-News on February 27th, March 5th and again on March 12th.

¹ The BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) offers a list of all “approved” ECE training institutions offering an Aboriginal perspective at http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/training_institutes.pdf

² www.fnecdc.ca

³ See Appendix A for a copy of the on-line survey questions.

Approximately 30 telephone calls were made to individual program managers on-reserve during the 2 days prior to the survey deadline of March 13th, 2012. Those targeted for telephone calls were individuals identified by the survey software as having not yet logged on to the on-line survey. In addition to e-mail reminders, managers were also encouraged by telephone to pass the survey link on to their staff. The survey was closed at midnight on March 13th, 2012.

Who completed the survey?

Figure 1: MCFD Regions⁴

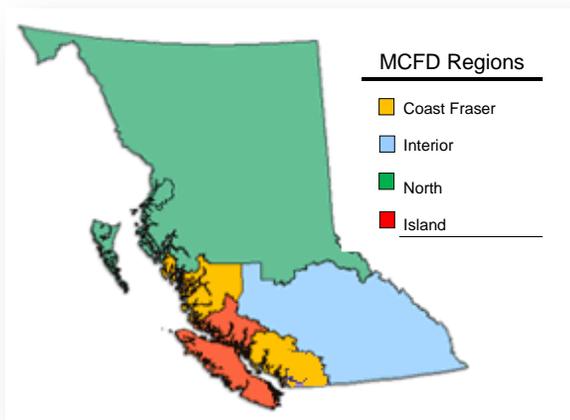
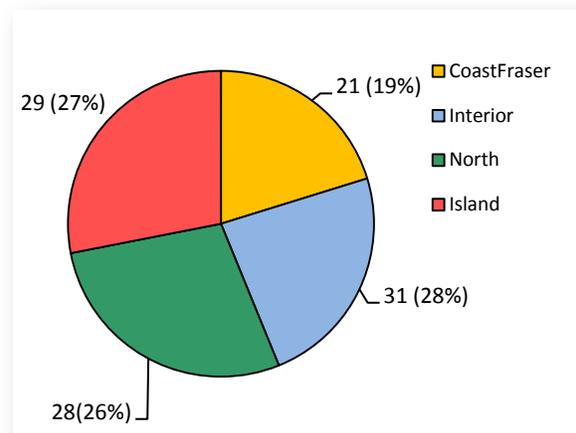


Figure 2: Respondents by region



109 respondents completed the survey, of which 68% identified themselves as First Nations, 4% identified as Métis and 29% indicated they were non-Aboriginal. 97% of the respondents were women. 81 of the respondents indicated that they have Basic ECE certificates and 55% of that group also have post-basic credentials. In their written comments, 3 respondents noted that they have qualifications in other areas. One holds a B.Ed., one holds a B.Sc., and one holds a Master's degree.

Where do the respondents live?

Respondents were from all regions of the Province. Figure 1 illustrates the locations of the MCFD regions in British Columbia. The survey respondents were fairly well-distributed geographically, with the North having 28 respondents (26%), the Island having 29 respondents (27%), the Interior with 31 respondents (28%) and the Coast Fraser region with 21 (19%). Figure 2 indicates the regional distribution of the survey respondents.

⁴ Source: <http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/index.htm>

What are the respondents' ages, experience, qualifications, and jobs?

The vast majority of the survey respondents were over the age of 35, with the largest number of respondents in the 45 to 54 (40%) year old age group. The respondents were an experienced group, with 76% having more than 5 years of experience and 48% having more than 10 years of experience working in the field of ECE. A large majority (90%) of respondents work in full-time positions (30 hours a week or more).

Consistent with the maturity and experience of the respondents, a larger majority of the respondents were program supervisors or managers. There were more than twice as many manager respondents (77, which is 71%) as staff respondents (31, which is 29%). Figure 4 illustrates the ages of the respondents separated into two "job position" categories: managers (in red) and staff (in blue).

Figure 3: Survey respondents by position Type

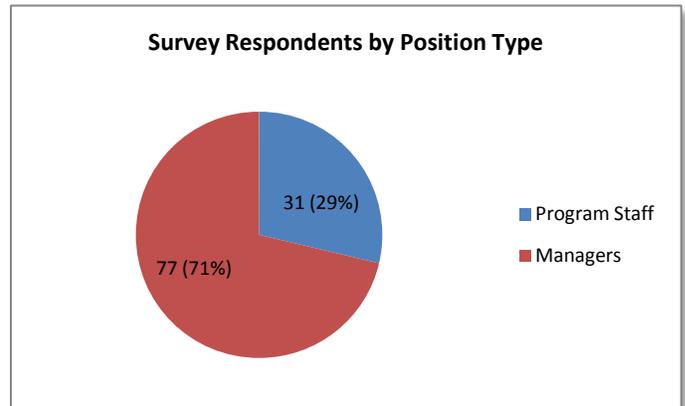
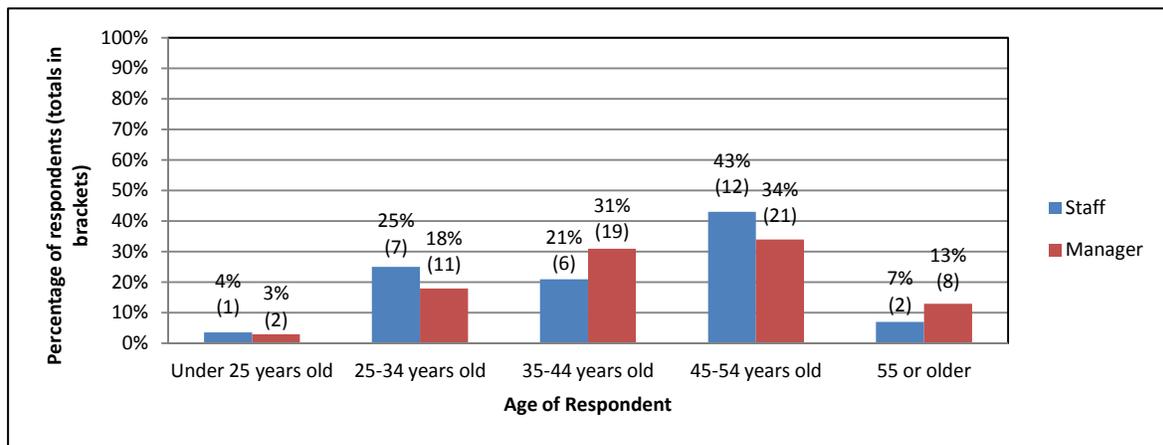
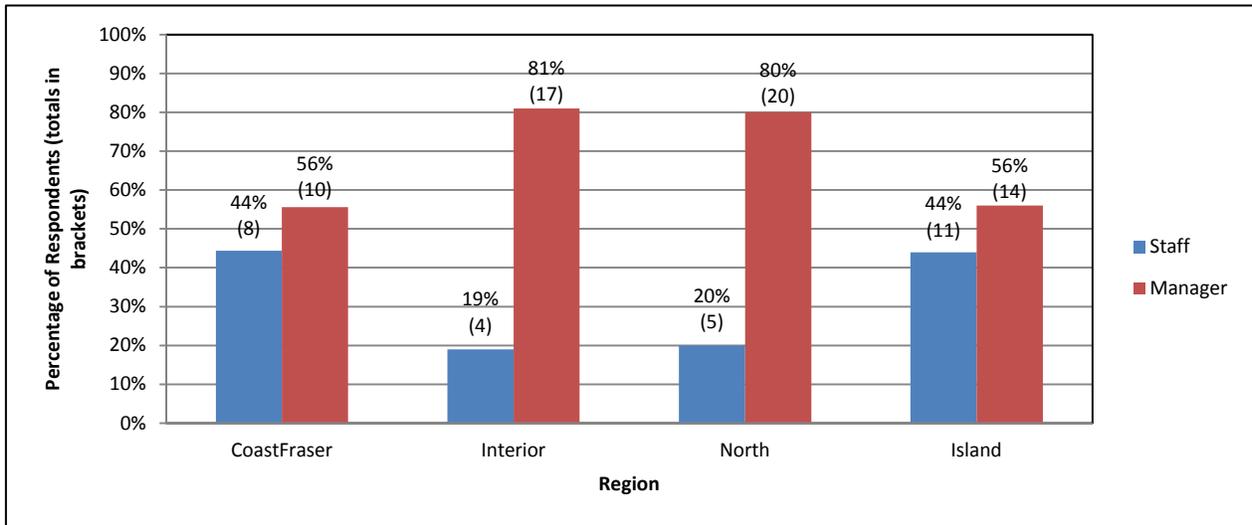


Figure 4: Age of respondents, by position type



As shown in Figure 4, half of the staff respondents were 45 years or over, with 43% being 45-54 years old and 7% being 55 years or older. Almost half of the manager respondents were 45 years or over, with 34% being 45-54 years old and 13% being 55 years or older. Only 4% of staff and 3% of managers were under 25 years old.

Figure 5: Staff and managers, by region of the Province



As Figure 5 illustrates, in all regions, managers outnumbered staff as survey respondents. This was especially apparent in the Interior and the North, where managers made up 81% and 80% of all respondents respectively.

In terms of the qualifications of the survey respondents, the majority of respondents in all regions were ECE certified. Coast Fraser had a much higher rate of ECE certification among respondents than the other regions, with 89% of their respondents having ECE certification. With regard to the *type* of ECE certification of the survey respondents, Figure 6 shows the various levels of ECE certification, by region of the Province.

Figure 6: ECE certification, by region of the Province

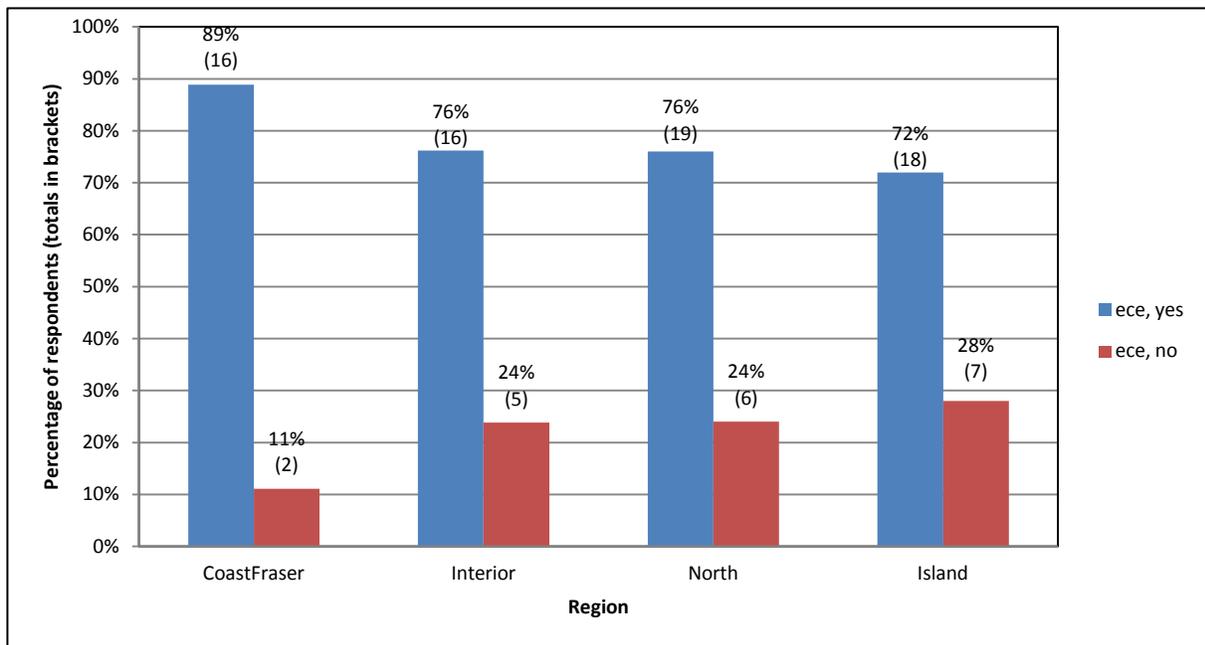


Figure 7: Type of ECE certification, by region of the Province

	Coast Fraser	Interior	North	Island
No ECE	2(11%)	5(24%)	6(24%)	7(28%)
Basic ECE only	4(22%)	7(33%)	12(48%)	8(32%)
IT	1(6%)	3(14%)	3(12%)	0(0%)
SN	4(22%)	1(5%)	0(0%)	1(4%)
Both IT&SN	7(39%)	5(24%)	4(16%)	9(36%)
Total	18(100%)	21(100%)	25(100%)	25(100%)

Note: IT=Infant and Toddler; SN= Special Needs

Where were the respondents trained?

Of the 87 respondents who answered the question about where they received their ECE training, 80 were trained in BC and 7 were trained in other Provinces. More BC-trained respondents (20) were trained in private institutions than in any single public post-secondary institution. Of the 60 respondents trained in BC public post-secondary institutions, 11 completed their training at Northern Lights College, 9 at Thompson Rivers University, 8 at each of Northwest Community College and the University of Victoria, and 7 at North Island College. Smaller numbers of respondents completed their ECE training in other public colleges and universities.

What training delivery models did respondents access?

The majority of respondents (63%) completed their ECE training in face-to-face classes. Another 25% of respondents completed their training through a combination of face-to-face classes and distance education. Only 11% completed their training entirely through distance education. 31% of respondents moved away from home to take their ECE training.

What were the strengths of the training the respondents received?

When asked how well their training provided them with knowledge of child development, respondents overwhelmingly (99%) indicated either “quite well” or “very well”. Similarly, 94% of respondents felt “quite well” or “very well” prepared in the area of activity planning and design. 81% felt “quite well” or “very well” prepared for communication with parents and 73% felt “quite well” or “very well” prepared to support children with special needs. This relatively high rate of satisfaction with their preparation to support children with special needs is noteworthy because it significantly exceeds the 35% of respondents who had post-basic special needs credentials. Many individuals without those credentials felt well-prepared to support children with special needs. However, it must also be noted and acknowledged that more than a quarter of the respondents (27%) felt “poorly” or “not so well” prepared to support children with special needs.

What are the gaps in the training that respondents received?

Only 44% of respondents felt “quite well” or “very well” prepared in the area of administration and finance and only 34% felt “quite well” or “very well” prepared with regard to knowledge of historical impacts of colonization on First Peoples of Canada. Although all of the “approved” training institutions offer courses related to child development and activity planning; only some of them offer courses in the administration of ECE programs. Similarly, only 8 of 56 “approved” training institutions are identified as offering “an Aboriginal Perspective.”

Figure 8: List of challenges to completing ECE training

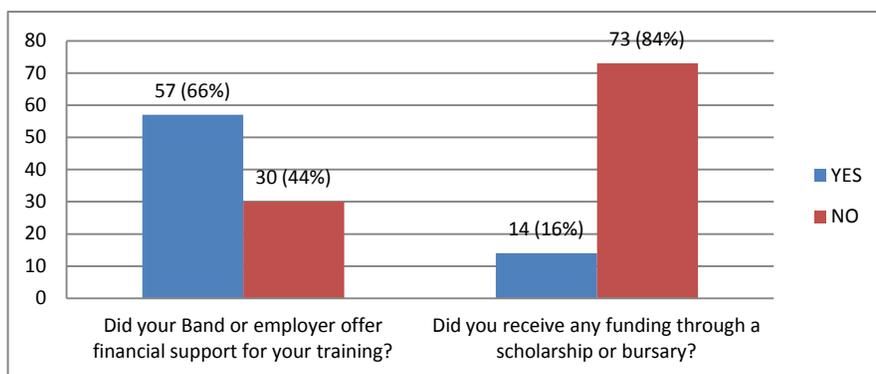
	Biggest Challenge	2nd Biggest Challenge	3rd Biggest Challenge	Number of times mentioned
Cost of living expenses	29	18	10	57
Balancing family/friends and studies	15	18	22	55
Balancing work and studies	14	16	15	45
Cost of tuition and books	10	12	12	34
Difficulty of assignments	4	11	11	26
Moving away from home community	6	7	9	22
Difficulty finding a practicum	5	7	6	18
Difficulty of practicum	3	7	5	15
Getting accepted into program	2	3	7	12

Note: 88 of the participants answered this question.

What challenges did the respondents have during their training?

Cost of living expenses were noted as a challenge by 57 respondents. This was also rated the number one challenge by 29 respondents. Balancing commitments to family/friends while juggling studies, was noted as a challenge by 55 respondents, and rated as a number one challenge by 15 respondents. This was followed by balancing work and studies, noted as a challenge by 45 respondents and rated a number one challenge by 14 respondents.

Figure 9: Financial Support for ECE training



What kind of financial support did respondents access?

Figure 9 illustrates two sources of financial support that students accessed for their ECE training. A significantly larger proportion of students (57 individuals or 66%) received Band support, than those who accessed funding through a scholarship or bursary (14 individuals or 16%).

This means that fewer than 20% of all participants that responded work in centres where every team member holds a current ECE license to practice.

What were the top challenges to enrolling in ECE training programs?

Since this question was about the challenges people face in enrolling in an ECE training program, only those who did not have any ECE certification. Among the 21 respondents, 9 of them noted balancing work and studies as a challenge, although only 2 noted this as the biggest challenge. Moving away from home community and cost of living expenses were noted as the biggest challenge by 5 respondents each (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: List of challenges to enrolling in ECE training

	Biggest Challenge	2nd Biggest Challenge	3rd Biggest Challenge	Number of times mentioned
Balancing work and studies	2	4	3	9
Cost of living expenses	5	2	0	7
Balancing family/friends and studies	2	3	2	7
Cost of tuition and books	2	3	2	7
Moving away from home community	5	0	1	6
Difficulty of assignments	1	0	2	3
Getting accepted into program	2	0	0	2
Difficulty finding a practicum	1	0	1	2
Difficulty of practicum	1	0	0	1

Note: only 21 of the participants answered this question because participants were only asked this question if they had NO Basic ECE certification.

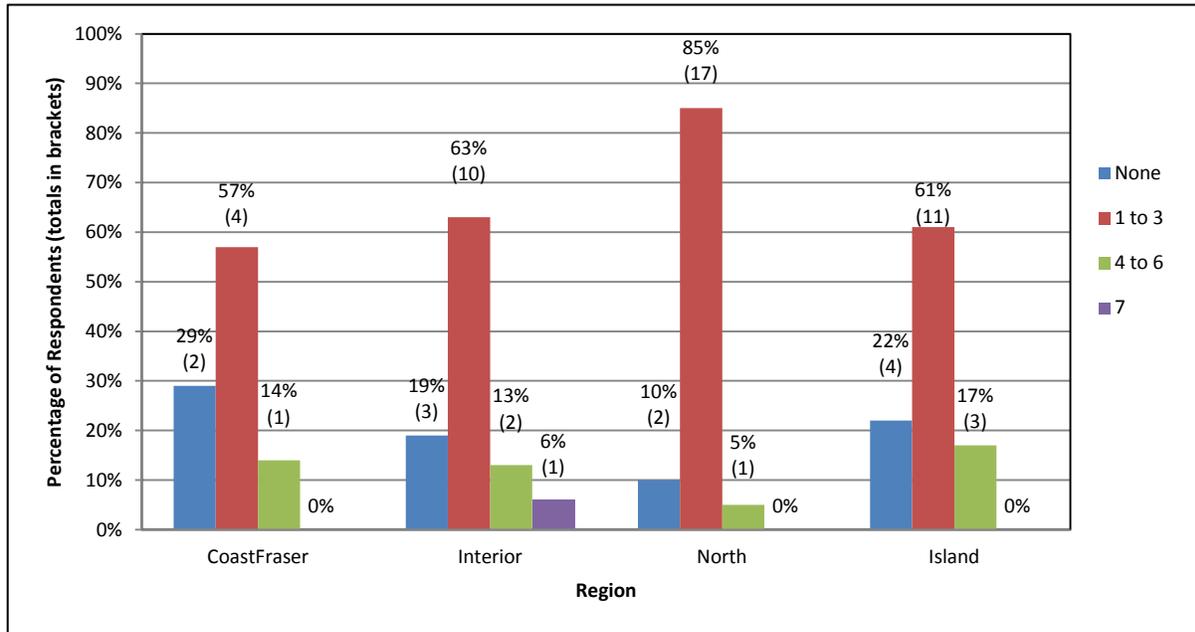
Who are the respondents' colleagues?

Survey respondents were asked to identify how many staff members working in their programs and directly with children, are **without** a Basic ECE certificate. Most respondents indicated that they have at least some staff members who work directly with children and **do not have** Basic ECE certification. In fact, only 10% of North respondents, 19% of Interior respondents, 22% of Island respondents and 29% of Coast Fraser respondents indicated that all of their staff members working directly with children have ECE certification. Figure 11 shows the numbers of staff members working directly with children, without ECE certification, broken down by region.

This means that fewer than 20% of all participants that responded work in centres where every team member holds a current ECE license to practice. What it does not tell us is if those members fulfil other important roles within the

program such as: cultural teachers, Elders, or bus drivers. In future studies it will be important to examine the roles of all members of the staff teams as well as their qualifications.

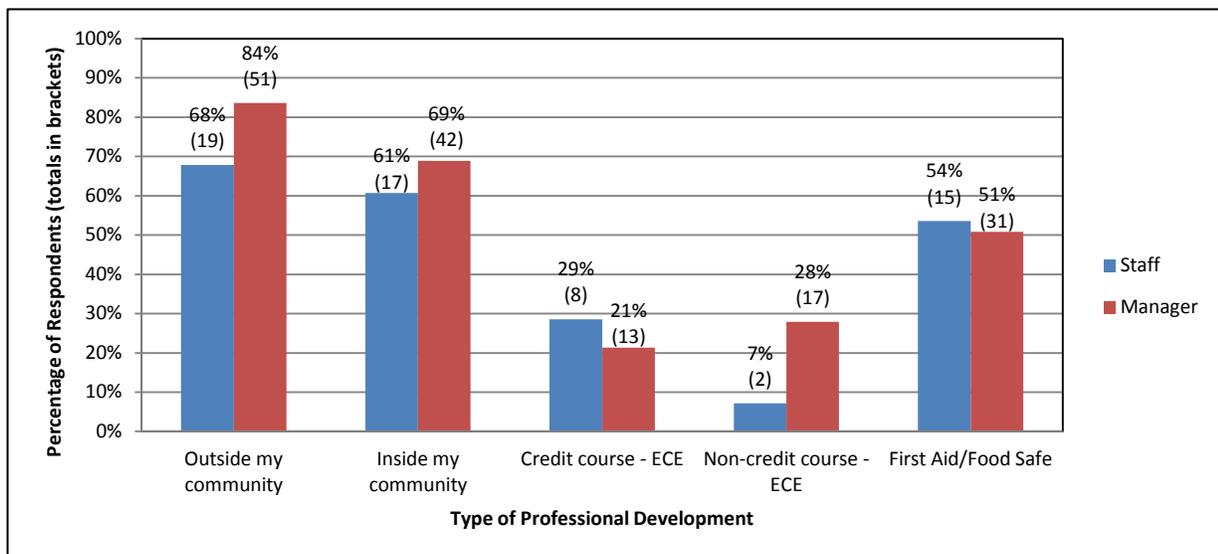
Figure 11: Staff members working with children, without a basic ECE certificate, by region



To what extent did respondents access professional development opportunities?

In the year preceding the survey, 95% of managers and 93% of staff participated in at least one professional development activity such as a workshop, conference, or course. All respondents who participated in professional development identified associated benefits, primarily improvements to their practice, learning new skills, and making connections with colleagues. Figure 12 shows the types of professional development that respondents participated in over the past 12 months, broken down between staff (in blue) and managers (in red).

Figure 12: Types of professional development participated in during the past 12 months, by position type



Participating in professional development opportunities outside their communities was the most common type of professional development opportunity participated in during the past 12 months for both staff (68%) and managers (84%), compared to professional development inside their communities (61% of staff and 69% of managers). More than half of staff (54%) and managers (51%) reported participating in first aid and food safe courses during the past 12 months. It is interesting to note that only 7% of staff participated in non-credit courses (other than food safe or first aid) with ECE content this is a very low number of respondents and indicates a very low participation rate in on-going professional development within the staff group.

Figure 13: Types of professional development participated in during the past 12 months, for staff, by region

	Coast-Fraser	Interior	North	Island
Outside my community	5(63%)	4(100%)	3(60%)	7(64%)
Inside my community	5(63%)	3(75%)	2(40%)	7(64%)
Credit course - ECE	1(13%)	0(0%)	4(80%)	3(27%)
Non-credit course - ECE	1(13%)	0(0%)	1(20%)	0(0%)
First Aid/Food Safe	5(63%)	3(75%)	1(20%)	6(55%)
Total who participated in professional development	8(100%)	4(100%)	5(100%)	9(82%)
Total respondents	8(100%)	4(100%)	5(100%)	11(100%)

As depicted in Figure 13, staff respondents in all regions, except the Island, took part in some form of professional development in the past 12 months. On the Island, 82% of the staff respondents took part in professional development. Most staff respondents took part in professional development outside their communities and this was true for all regions. However, North respondents (40%) were less likely than other region respondents to have participated in professional development opportunities inside their communities. It is hard to tell whether this indicates a lack of opportunities for professional development available to participants within Northern communities. The reason for accessing outside community opportunities was not identified in the data collection.

How did employers support access to professional development?

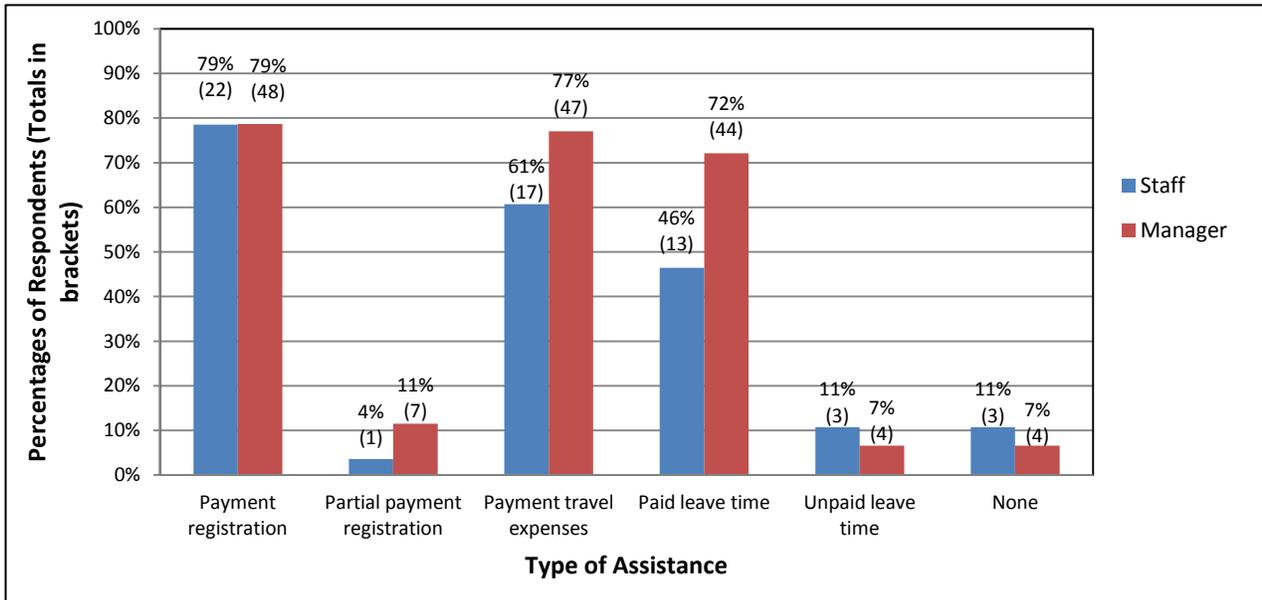
It is concerning to note however, that in almost every category, managers fared better than staff in attaining support for professional development.

Only a small margin of participants (11% of staff and 7% of managers) did not receive some form of assistance from their employers to support their professional development.⁵ The most common types of assistance were payment of registration (79% of respondents) and payment of travel expenses (72%). It is concerning to note that managers generally fared better than staff in attaining support for professional development. Only when receiving support for payment of registration were managers and staff able to access the same level of assistance. Interestingly, managers were over 25%

⁵ Note: One of the requirements for renewing an ECE Licence to Practice in British Columbia is proof of 40 hours of professional development completed within the five years preceding the renewal application. There is no application fee to renew an ECE licence.

more likely to have their leave time paid whereas, staff respondents were more likely to be given unpaid time off to access professional development. These patterns may be linked to lower rates of on-going professional development in staff versus managers and could be seen as a potential for internal conflict as managers are receiving better support to continue their professional development. Figure 14 illustrates the responses, by position type.

Figure 14: Assistance from employer for professional development participation during the past 12 months, by position type



What are the challenges in accessing professional development opportunities?

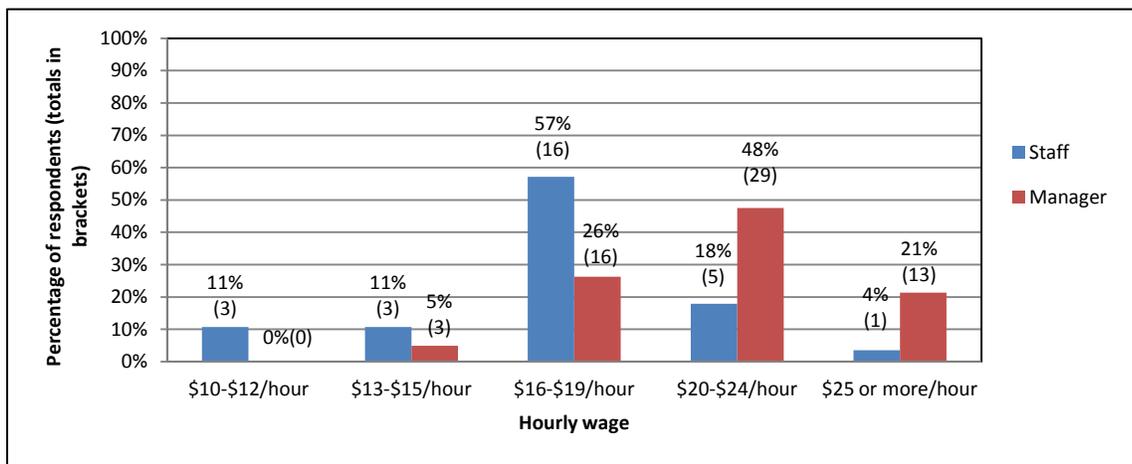
Accessing professional development was a challenge for respondents. A lack of replacement staff was the most commonly noted challenge in attending professional development opportunities, with 58 respondents noting this as a challenge and 27 noting this as the biggest challenge. This was followed by travel distances being too far (noted by 45 respondents as a challenge and 19 respondents as the biggest challenge), high costs (noted by 44 respondents as a challenge and 13 respondents as the biggest challenge), and leaving family/community responsibilities (noted by 39 respondents as a challenge and 14 respondents as the biggest challenge). Figure 15 illustrates the overall distribution of responses to this survey question.

Figure 15: List of challenges to attending professional development

	Biggest Challenge	2nd Biggest Challenge	3rd Biggest Challenge	Total # of times mentioned in "top 3 challenges"
No replacement staff	27	17	14	58
Travel distance is too far	19	13	13	45
Cost is too high	13	22	9	44
Can't leave my family/community responsibilities	14	9	16	39
No opportunities that interest me	5	7	13	25
Can't afford to take unpaid leave time	8	6	7	21
Can't get leave time	0	7	5	12

Note: 88 of the participants answered this question

Figure 16: Wages by position type



What wages do respondents receive?

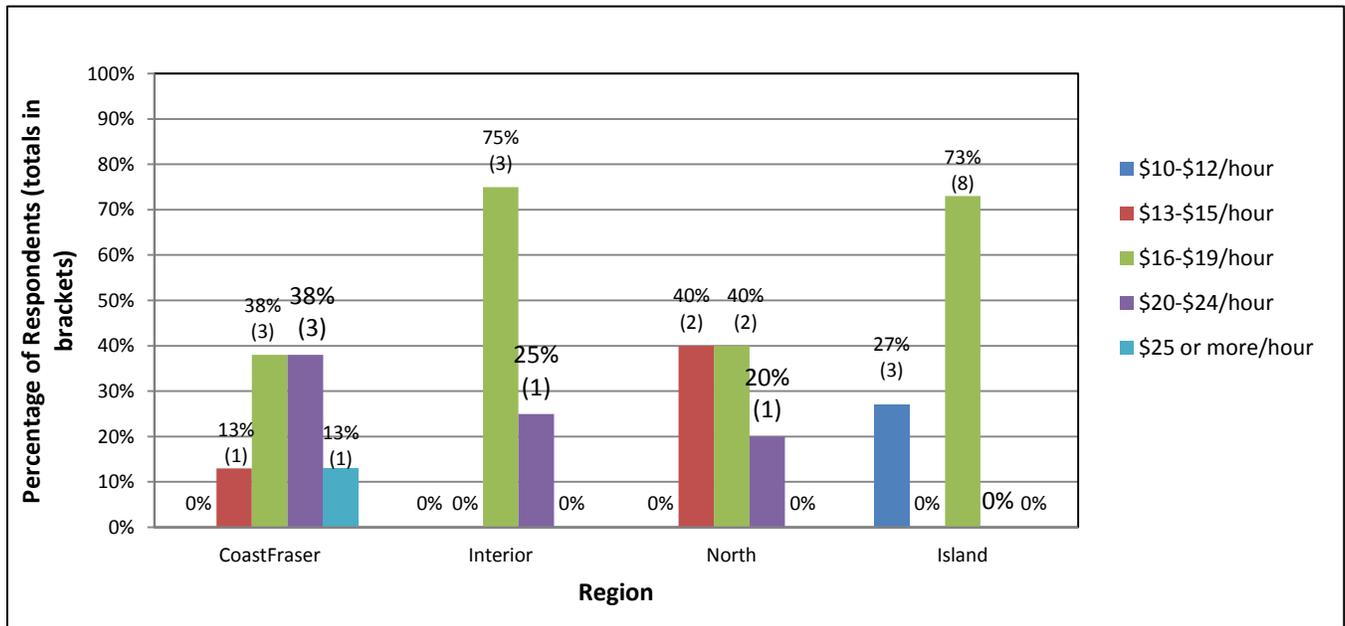
In 2011, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives released a living wage scale for Vancouver earners as \$18.81/hour and \$18.03/hour in Victoria for each parent in a two-parent, two-child family⁶. Although not all families have this composition and this number would obviously vary throughout the Province, among the salary ranges presented in the survey data, it would be fair to assume that those earning either \$20-\$24 per hour or \$25 or more per hour would be earning a living wage. As the survey data does not break down the earnings between \$16-\$19 per hour, there is no way of knowing whether these people are earning less than a living wage (e.g., earning \$16.00/hour) or earning more than a living wage (e.g., earning \$19.00/hour).

⁶ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2011. Living Wage 2011 update. Making Paid Work Meet Basic Family Needs in Metro Vancouver.

Figure 16 shows that only 69% of manager respondents (48% making \$20-\$24/hour and 21% making \$25 or more/hour) and a mere 22% of staff respondents (18% making \$20-\$24/hour and 4% making \$25 or more/hour) are making a \$20/hour or more. For the purposes of the following discussion, we will refer to those making \$20 per hour or higher as “making a living wage” and those making under \$20 per hour as “not making a living wage”. Figures 17 and 18 show the wages for respondents in different regions of the Province, for staff and managers respectively.

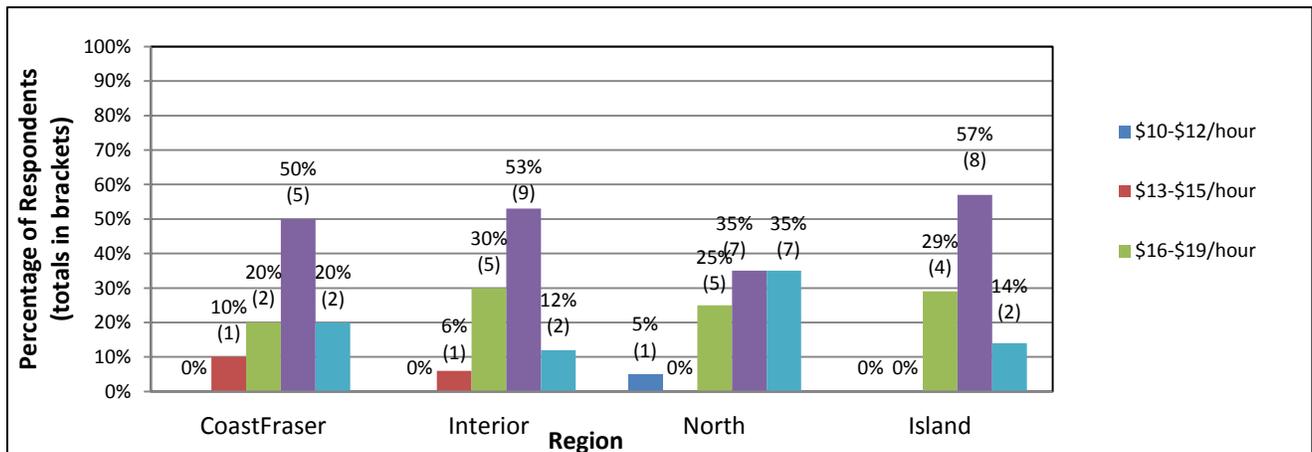
A mere 22% of staff respondents are making a \$20/hour or more.

Figure 17: Wages for staff, by region of the Province



Most staff respondents in three of the four regions are not making a living wage. 0% of Island staff, 20% of North staff (20% earning \$20-\$24/hour) and 25% of Interior staff (25% earning \$20-\$24/hour) reported making a living wage. In the Coast Fraser, 51% of staff (38% earning \$20-\$25/hour and 13% earning \$25 or more/hour) indicated earning a living wage.

Figure 18: Wages for managers, by region of the Province



As shown in Figure 18, in all regions, most manager respondents reported making a living wage. 65% of Interior managers (53% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 12% earning \$25 or more/hour), 70% of Coast Fraser managers (50% earning \$20-24/hour and 20% earning \$25 or more/hour), 70% of North managers (35% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 35% earning \$25 or more/hour) and 71% of Island managers (57% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 14% earning \$25 or more/hour) indicated making a living wage. Although the type of position held (manager as compared to staff) does seem to correlate with the likelihood of making a living wage, developing “seniority” in a current position does **not** appear to be related to making a living wage. Figure 19 shows the respondents’ wages broken down by number of years in a current position.

Figure 19: Wages and number of years in current position, Province as a whole

	<1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	10-20 years	>20 years
\$10-\$12/hour	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	2(8%)	2(10%)	0(0%)
\$13-\$15/hour	0(0%)	2(13%)	0(0%)	2(8%)	1(5%)	0(0%)
\$16-\$19/hour	2(33%)	5(31%)	8(42%)	9(35%)	7(33%)	1(100%)
\$20-\$24/hour	3(50%)	6(38%)	5(26%)	10(39%)	10(48%)	0(0%)
\$25 or more/hour	1(17%)	3(19%)	6(32%)	3(12%)	1(5%)	0(0%)
Total	6(100%)	16(100%)	19(100%)	26(100%)	21(100%)	1(100%)

Note: with small sample sizes of 6 participants spending less than 1 year in their current position and 1 spending more than 20 years in their current position, the ranges between the two make it difficult to compare results. This matter requires further study to determine the experiences of new professionals to the field.

Figure 20: Wages and number of years in ECE field, Province as a whole

	<1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	10-20 years	>20 years
\$10-\$12/hour	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	2(8%)	2(7%)	0(0%)
\$13-\$15/hour	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4(16%)	1(3%)	0(0%)
\$16-\$19/hour	2(50%)	1(25%)	7(50%)	8(32%)	10(32%)	4(36%)
\$20-\$24/hour	1(25%)	2(50%)	5(36%)	6(24%)	16(52%)	4(36%)
\$25 or more/hour	1(25%)	1(25%)	2(14%)	5(20%)	2(7%)	3(27%)
Total	4(100%)	4(100%)	14(100%)	25(100%)	31(100%)	11(100%)

In addition to asking about number of years in a current position, the survey also asked how many years respondents have been in the ECE field. Figure 20 shows the respondents’ wages broken down by number of years in the field. The data reveals that most survey respondents had at least 3-5 years’ experience in the ECE field, with just four respondents having less than 1 year experience and just four respondents having 1-2 years’ experience (*note: the sample size for these two ranges were too small to compare to other ranges*). In the other experience ranges, between 1/3 and 2/3 of the respondents reported earning a living wage, ranging from 44% of those respondents with 5-10 years’ experience (24% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 20% earning \$25 or more/ hour) to 63% of those with more than 20 years’ experience (36% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 27% earning \$25 or more/hour).

Although there does seem to be a correlation between years of experience in the field and the likelihood of making a living wage, based on the survey data, having or not having ECE certification does not appear to be related to making a living wage.

Although there does seem to be a correlation between years of experience in the field and the likelihood of making a living wage, based on the survey data, having or not having ECE

certification does **not** appear to be related to making a living wage. Similar percentages of those respondents with ECE certification (55% of these respondents, with 36% earning \$20-\$24/hour and 19% earning \$25 or more/hour) and without ECE certification (50%, with 45% earning \$20-\$24 hour and 5% earning \$25 or more/hour) earned a living wage.

However, those respondents with post-basic certification were more likely to earn a living wage than those without: 76% of respondents with both Infant and Toddler and Special Needs, 72% with Infant and Toddler and 67% with Special Needs reported earned a living wage. These numbers were much higher than for those respondents with no ECE or with basic ECE only. Figure 21 shows the percentage of respondents within each wage range, based on level of certification.

Figure 21: Post-basic certification and wages

	No ECE	Basic ECE only	IT	SN	Both IT&SN
\$10-\$12/hour	2(10%)	1(3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
\$13-\$15/hour	4(20%)	1(3%)	1(14%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
\$16-\$19/hour	4(20%)	19(61%)	1(14%)	2(33%)	6(24%)
\$20-\$24/hour	9(45%)	6(19%)	3(43%)	3(50%)	13(52%)
\$25 or more/hour	1(5%)	4(13%)	2(29%)	1(17%)	6(24%)
Total	20(100%)	31(100%)	7(100%)	6(100%)	25(100%)

Note: IT=Infant and Toddler; SN= Special Needs

What benefits do respondents receive?

In addition to questions about salary ranges, the survey also asked questions about benefits. The most common benefit types received by both staff and managers are extended health/dental (received by 82% of staff and 84% of managers) and pension plans (86% of staff and 84% of managers). Most staff and managers also had paid leave available (64% of staff and 72% of managers) and professional development opportunities available (68% of staff and 70% of managers). All staff respondents indicated receiving benefits, while only four managers (7%) mentioned having no benefits available.⁷

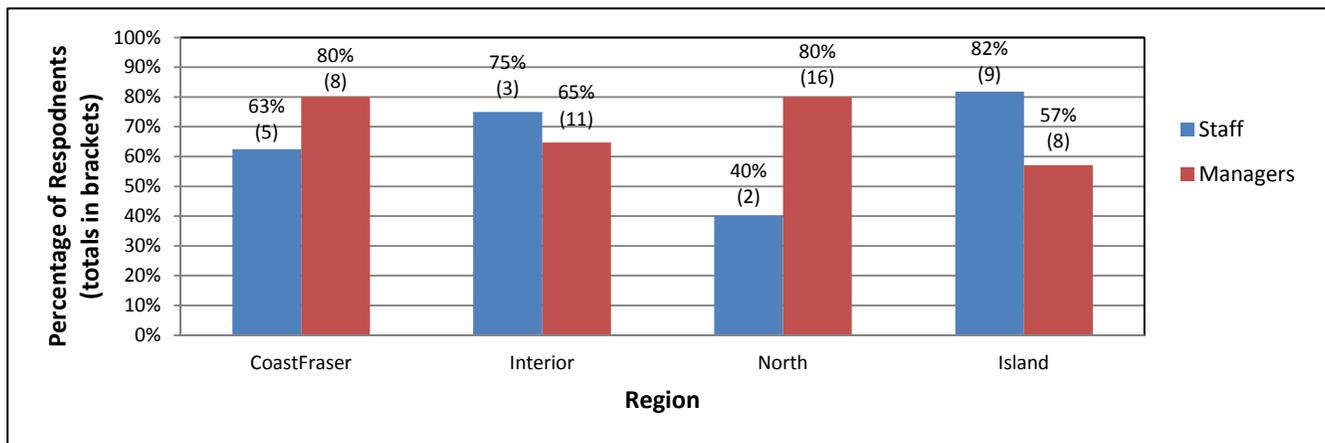
86% of staff and 84% of managers have access to pension plans.

As noted above, most staff and managers in all four regions had extended health/dental benefits; however, the percentage of Island region staff respondents (73%) and Island region manager respondents (64%) with extended health/dental benefits was lower than for other regions. Similarly, while most staff and manager respondents across all

⁷ All 4 of the manager respondents who reported having no benefits available were from the Island region.

regions indicated that they had pension plans, it is noteworthy that among all regional groupings by position type (staff vs. managers), managers from the Island (64%) appeared to have the lowest availability of pension plans.

Figure 22: Professional development benefits available by region of the Province



Most staff and manager respondents indicated that professional development benefits were available; except for North staff (only 40% indicated that such benefits were available). The Island was unique in that it had the highest percentage of staff respondents (82%) indicating that professional development benefits were available, but the lowest percentage of manager respondents (57%) indicating that professional development opportunities were available.

Although the survey identified the types of benefits received by respondents (extended health/dental, pension plans, paid leave, etc.), the nature and extent of those benefits is not known from the survey; further research into these benefits is recommended.

What are respondents' attitudes toward their jobs?

A remarkable 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I take pride in my own work."

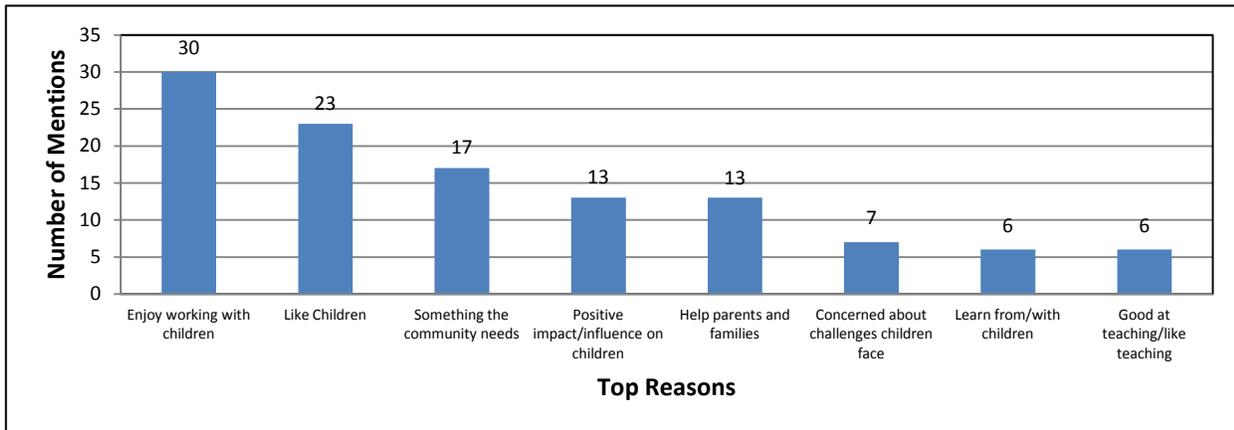
Respondents reported positive attitudes toward their jobs. A remarkable 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I take pride in my own work." 83% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel I am part of a team."

Lower rates of satisfaction were associated with other aspects of their jobs. Although 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "My supervisor provides positive support and feedback", that leaves 26% of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement, or who responded "so so". While 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "My work is valued and respected in my community", that leaves more than a third (35%) who disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement, or who responded "so so". Only 52% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have adequate time for planning during working hours" meaning that almost half (48%) of respondents do not feel they have adequate time for planning during working hours.

What attracted respondents to careers in ECE?

Survey respondents were invited to write their answers to the question “Why did you choose to work in this field?” The answers are both informative and inspiring. The common themes expressed in their answers are shown in Figure 23. The overwhelming impression is that the respondents enjoy their work and have a desire to make a positive difference in the lives of children. They are committed to caring for children and supporting their development.

Figure 23: Why did you choose to work in this field?

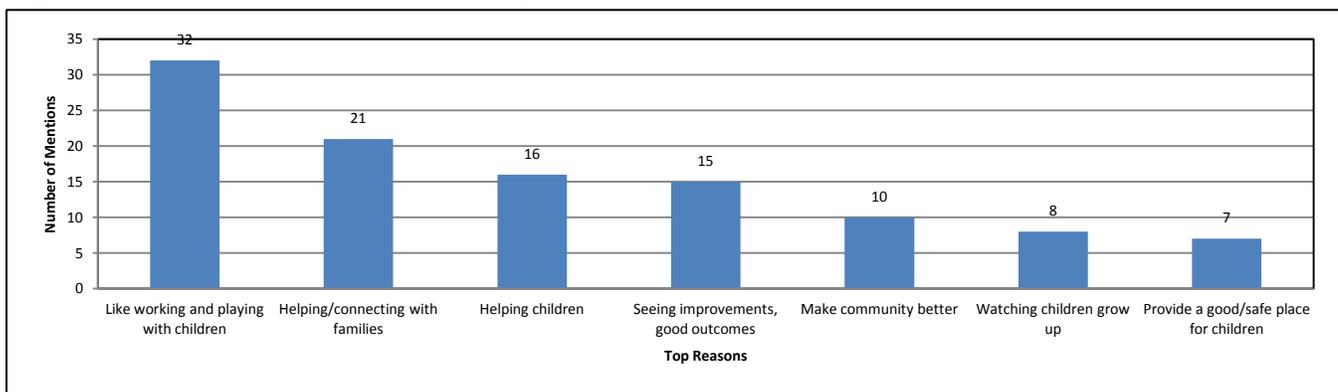


Note: Respondents often mentioned more than one reason, so the number of mentions exceeds the number of respondents. Reasons mentioned five times or more are shown on this graph.

What keeps respondents in the field of ECE?

Survey respondents were asked “What motivates you to continue doing the work you do?” The reasons that respondents gave (see Figure 24) overlap significantly with their reasons for choosing this career in the first place. They enjoy working with children, supporting their development, and meeting their needs. Caring for and educating young children is a source of satisfaction, pride, and joy for the respondents. Respondents recognize the contributions they are making to the well-being of children. Words such as “positive change” and “better chance” were often mentioned. The respondents are strong believers that their programs work and help children to reach their potential.

Figure 24: What motivates you to continue doing the work that you do?



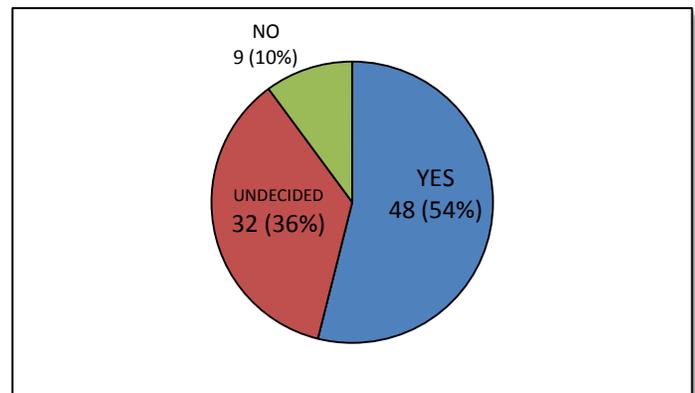
Note: Respondents often mentioned more than one reason for being motivated to keep doing the work, so the number of mentions exceeds the number of respondents. Reasons mentioned five times or more are shown on this graph.

Would respondents recommend a career in ECE to others?

Respondents were asked to answer in their own words if they would recommend a career in ECE to others. The following is a summary of their responses:

The survey found that more than half of the respondents answered in the affirmative (see Figure 25). Affirmative respondents often noted both the pros and cons of working in the field while writing passionately about the importance of working with children. Respondents noted the altruistic aspect of this field and the lack of respect and recognition; even so, child care was noted to be a fulfilling and rewarding career.

Figure 25: Would you recommend this career choice to others?



Among the respondents who responded in an undecided manner, personality fit with ECE was noted to be a very important factor in making recommendations. One respondent mentioned that staff must be very dedicated to working with children or they “will not last long in the ECE field”. Essential personality characteristics that respondents indicated were necessary included: patience, tolerance, and energy. The respondents warned that anyone considering a career in ECE should be aware of the financial constraints of the work. In other words, people who are patient and passionate about working with children, and who are not driven by financial achievement, would be an ideal fit for child care. Among the respondents who did not recommend this career choice to others, low wages was the primary factor. These respondents felt underpaid and undervalued. One respondent stated that “I would not have picked this career if I was aware of the limited financial opportunities it has”. Other factors in not recommending this career choice were: long hours, low community recognition, high burn out rates and minimal room for career advancement.

“I would because it is such an important career! It is very rewarding and satisfying. We are undervalued but yet so strong in our beliefs!!!”

Additional comments

The final on-line survey question left room for respondents to add any additional comments they felt appropriate. Although there were many positive sentiments about their work, the final question also seemed to provide a safe space for individuals to express their concerns with some of the negative aspects of their work. The concern most frequently cited was a need for higher wages in the ECE sector. Some respondents put exact figures on how much pay was needed, with one respondent advocating: “\$20/hour or more”. Another respondent wrote bluntly that “if you want to get rich, childcare is not the employment pursuit for you”.

Along with not being “financially recognized” by society, some respondents indicated that communities do not appreciate the important work they do. Some respondents perceived a link between this devaluation and the lack of funding available from government and other sources. Not only did the respondents think that funding for their programs was low, but that “funding sources were demanding and complicated” and that “the necessary forms and applications become another job”.

Section 3: Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interview Methodology

Key-informant interviews were designed to address the topics and research questions posed in the background paper.⁸ Several ECD experts were consulted during the development phase of the interview questions and it was decided that the interviews would target ECEs currently working in the field as well as program coordinators/instructors from 5 post-secondary institutions in BC. All 5 of these institutions specialize in Aboriginal ECE training or offer an Aboriginal component to their ECE training program.

Key-informant interviews with the representatives from post-secondary institutions included 13 questions.⁹ 25 questions were posed during interviews with the ECEs.¹⁰ In order to gain valuable and detailed information, more than half of the questions were open-ended. Interview times varied in length from 45 minutes to 2 hours.

3.1 Interviews with Early Childhood Educators

Who participated in the face-to-face interviews?

Four ECEs were interviewed individually by BCACCS researchers. These key informants all work in different communities in the Northern health region. One of the individuals is a part-time ECE in two programs, a Head Start Parent and Tot program and a Head Start Preschool program for 3-year-olds. She has been an ECE for 6 years. The second individual is a Strong Start facilitator who has been in that position for 4 years. The third individual is a program manager in an agency that offers Aboriginal Supported Child Development services and Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program services. She has been in that position for 4 years. The fourth individual is a preschool teacher who has been in that position for 18 years. All four key informants are members of First Nations.

⁸ In February of 2012 the BC ACCS published a background paper in order to guide this research project. It is available separately as “A Background Paper: Human Resource Strategy for ECD: Training and Retention for First Nations in BC”

⁹ See Appendix B for the questions posed to post-secondary key informants during interviews.

¹⁰ See Appendix C for the questions the ECEs were asked in the individual face-to-face interviews.

How did they access training?

One of the key informants has a basic ECE certificate she earned by attending a full-time, face-to-face program that was offered in her community. Another key informant commuted an hour and a quarter each way to attend a full-time, face-to-face basic ECE program. The other two key informants both left their home communities in order to attend full-time, face-to-face basic ECE programs as no training opportunities were available near their home. One of the key informants later completed two post-basic programs as well as Infant Development and Supported Child Development certificates by distance.

Was their training culturally relevant?

The informants were asked *“In any of your ECE training courses (now or in the past), did you find that there was any First Nations cultural content, cultural practices, or cultural relevance?”* The following quotations were pulled from the answers and reveal the extent of cultural relevance in the basic training these individuals received:

- *“Not a lot. Very minimal. There was basic information about the 6 components of Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) programs.”¹¹*
- *“[The History of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada included] small reading pieces and brief discussions – not very much.”*
- *“There was no First Nations cultural content in the basic ECE training....There was some diversity/multicultural content, but not First Nations-specific content.”*
- *“The only cultural relevance in the basic ECE training was when [the students] were learning about circle time. The instructor encouraged [the students] to use their own traditional stories, songs, and instruments in preparing circle activities.”*
- *“A couple of Elders came into the classroom to tell stories.”*
- *“Elders from a language immersion program came to the ECE class.”*

On a scale of “Poor, OK, Good, Excellent,” 3 key informants rated their ECE courses as “Poor” in relation to teaching the historical impacts of colonization on First Peoples of Canada. With respect to this aspect, the fourth key informant rated her training as half way between “Poor” and “OK.”

All four key informants answered “Yes” when asked if they thought colleges should offer a core course entitled “Introduction to First Nations Perspectives in ECD.” None of the key informants had any Aboriginal instructors for any of their ECE courses. It is noteworthy that all four of the key informants completed their basic ECE training in institutions identified on the MCFD list of approved training institutions as offering “an Aboriginal Perspective.”¹²

¹¹ The 6 components: Culture and Language, Education, Health, Nutrition, Social Support, Parental Involvement.

¹² See section 3.2: “What does offering an ‘Aboriginal Perspective’ mean?”

What were the strengths and gaps in their ECE training?

The key informants rated their preparation related to knowledge of child development highly. One individual rated her child development training as “Excellent” and the other three rated it as “Good.” Their preparation in relation to activity/program planning and design was also rated highly. Two key informants rated it as “Excellent” and two rated it as “Good.”

Two of the key informants rated their preparation related to supporting children with special needs as “Poor” and one each rated their preparation in that area as “OK” and “Good.” One of the 4 key informants has completed a post-basic special needs diploma and one has completed the in-class courses but has not yet completed the practicum requirements of the diploma program.

One key informant spoke of the need for more training related to working with First Nations families, including strategies for building relationships with families. She also advocated more content on the history of the local First Nation. She said that being a member of the First Nation is not sufficient preparation for working with First Nations families. Another key informant said her training would have better prepared her for her work in a First Nations community if it had included more First Nations cultural knowledge and content and if she had been able to have an on-reserve practicum placement.

What challenges did individuals experience accessing their ECE training?

Three of the key informants identified “Balancing family and friends with studies” as among their top three challenges while studying ECE. Two identified having to move away from home and one identified commuting a long distance to the training location every day. The individual who completed some of her training by distance identified the delivery model as one of her top three challenges. She found the lack of one-on-one support that you get in an on-line learning situation to be a challenge.

What have been the key informants’ experiences related to staff retention?

The key informant who works as an Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program and Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program consultant reported that in the past year between 7 and 10 ECEs left the 5 ECE programs she serves. All left because of the low wages and most of them have been hired by the school districts as either teaching assistants or Strong Start facilitators. The pay scales are higher for these jobs. Another key informant reported that 6 ECEs left the programs in which she works. Two left to relocate in order to access more ECE training. One was let go. Three left the community for other reasons.

When asked about reasons why people leave the ECE field, one key informant identified low pay and stress. They seek jobs with lower stress and higher pay. Another key informant expressed the opinion that some leave the field because

they do not understand the local cultural protocols and they sometimes offend people without realizing it. Two of the key informants identified low pay as the reason for people leaving the field.

3.2 Interviews with Personnel from Training Institutions

Who participated in the interviews?

Interviews were conducted in early March, 2012 with faculty members from 5 ECE training programs.¹³ Five interviews were conducted by telephone with individual faculty members; in addition, there was one group interview, conducted in-person, with four individuals participating from one institution. The group interview participants included an instructor, a supervisor from the on-campus children's centre, a student advisor / liaison worker, and a teaching assistant. Four of the post-secondary institutions represented were public, whereas one was a private institution. Three of the 5 offer distance education. All 5 are designated on the MCFD list of approved training institutions as offering an "Aboriginal Perspective." Four of the 5 institutions offer both basic and post-basic programs.

Where are the training institutions located?

One of the institutions is located in the Coastal Fraser region, one is in the Interior region, one is in the Vancouver Island region, and two are in the North region.

What does offering an "Aboriginal Perspective" mean?

This descriptor is used by MCFD in its "Approved Training Institutions Offering Early Childhood Education Programs" document¹⁴. An ECE Training Analyst at MCFD confirmed that the notation is based on "training institutions self-identifying that they offer an Aboriginal focused program"¹⁵. The Ministry does not assess the extent to which programs are "Aboriginal focused" or consider how Aboriginal perspectives are built into the programs. No criterion needs to be met in order to receive this notation and no evidence is required to support the assertion that a program "offers an Aboriginal perspective."

Descriptive Features of the programs:

The participating institutions offer a number of experiences, opportunities and teachings in their efforts to provide culturally relevant training to Early Childhood Students. The following is a list of some of these offerings. Not all institutions offer all opportunities and some institutions are in the process of indigenizing their program:

Method of Delivery: Depending on the institution the following types of delivery models may be available: on-site learning, on-line learning, combination of on-line and in-person learning, and components of in-community learning.

¹³ See Appendix B for the questions the faculty members were asked.

¹⁴ http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/training_institutes.pdf

¹⁵ Personal communication, March 19, 2012

Certificates Available:

- A post-basic First Nations certificate reflecting “First Nations cultural values and attitudes.” This certificate was offered once and completed by 8 students in 2011 but it is not always available.
- Aboriginal ECE (AECE) certificate program in collaboration with three other BC post-secondary institutions and one out-of-Province institution (at one location was offered in partnership with 6 First Nations, once using a generative curriculum model.)
- Basic and post-basic ECE courses that are not designated as Aboriginal-specific.

Program Curriculum Development:

- Teachings that follow a 2009 publication the “Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Guide”. Features of the philosophy found in this publication include promoting/exploring place-based education, holistic child development, and acknowledging First Nations territories and traditional knowledge.
- ECE training programs that are based on Aboriginal ways of raising children.
- Curriculum that is developed from an Indigenous point of view.
- Human development taught using the medicine wheel as a framework.
- Programs that focus on raising children in an Aboriginal community context.
- Communal ways of living and learning incorporated into the program.
- Publications by Aboriginal authors are used as resources.
- Curriculum that has been based on work done with local groups and through obtaining guidance and cultural content from Elders.
- Assignments that require students to learn about First Nations cultures and develop relationships with Elders and others with cultural knowledge in their communities.
- Opportunities for students to collect cultural knowledge and share it with one another first person or in their virtual classrooms.
- One of the AECE courses focuses on the history, foundations, and philosophies of Aboriginal ECE programs.
- Opportunities for local First Nations to have input related to language, local history, traditional foods, and media.
- Incorporation of the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada into curriculum.

Access to Cultural Experiences:

- Students may be able to attend ceremonies and other cultural events, participate in smudging, take part in drum-making, beading, moccasin-making and singing. They may have the opportunity to attend Indigenous cultural workshops and in talking circles and language sharing.

Access to Mentorship:

- Guest speakers and Elders that share traditional approaches with students and instructors.
- Access to Elders and knowledge keepers for consultation (in some locations this is available on-site on a daily basis – i.e. an Elders-in-Residence program).

Other Student Services:

- Practicum placements in Aboriginal Head Start programs.
- Gathering place specifically for Aboriginal students
- Collaborative arrangements with local First Nations in the community to sponsor local students

Ratings specific to the historical impact of colonization:

All the interviewed instructors were asked to rate their programs on their ability to provide information to students about the historical impact of colonization on the First Peoples of Canada. The instructors were asked to rate their programs on a scale of: poor, ok, good and excellent. The instructors had a wide variety in their responses reaching the full span of the scale. One instructor responded poor, two Ok, one good and one excellent.

Common themes from all post-secondary institutions interviewed:

The interviews with faculty members in these 5 training institutions reveal a wide range of initiatives, each attempting to meet the needs of First Nations learners and prepare students to work successfully with First Nations children and their families. Further research is required to evaluate the relative effectiveness of these initiatives and to determine levels of student satisfaction with the various training models. However, some themes deserving of immediate attention were identified and are as follows:

Who teaches ECE courses?

Interview participants from the institutions were all asked how many of the ECE program instructors in their institutions are Aboriginal. Four of the 5 institutions have at least one Aboriginal instructor teaching ECE courses. However, it is not clear if these Aboriginal instructors are guest lecturers, full-time, part-time or short-term employees.

What are the graduation rates for Aboriginal students?

Most of the public post-secondary institutions interviewed do not track Aboriginal students separately, so the faculty members were unsure of their precise graduation rates. One interviewee estimated the graduation rate at their institution to be about 80%. In the AECE program offered in partnership between a public post-secondary institution and 6 First Nations, the drop-out rate was 62% with only 6 graduates from the class of 16 Aboriginal students who enrolled. In the private institution, over 81% of the Aboriginal students in the certificate program graduated last year, whereas

100% of the Aboriginal students in the diploma program graduated. Clearly, there is a great disparity in both the graduation rates between institutions and between programs offered by the same institution.

What factors cause students to disengage or leave?

In the individual interviews, faculty members identified a range of factors that make it difficult for students to complete their training programs. Financial pressures rank highly. One faculty member stated “Students are always living close to the poverty line.” Three interviewees noted that some students come in unprepared from high school, with inadequate basic skills. The First Nation-sponsored program offered by one of the institutions allows students to enter the ECE program without meeting all of the usual pre-requisites, causing problems for students who are ill-prepared. Another faculty member observed that full-time studies often overload students who have other responsibilities and part-time students tend to be more successful. Two of the faculty members identified students’ personal issues as contributing to leaving rates. One of the faculty members identified lack of family support as contributing to the number of students who are unable to complete their training.

One of the faculty members explained how funding practices of employers may be contributing to the leaving rates. It was noted that some students do not complete their programs because they are able to secure employment without having full ECE certification. There is no or insufficient financial incentive from employees to go beyond “assistant” status. ECE programs with licensing variances for staff without ECE credentials create a disincentive to completion of training when they do not reward graduates with pay raises.

The funding students receive from their First Nations is seen by one faculty member as being insufficient, and thereby having a negative impact on graduation rates. Funding may only be provided by First Nations Bands for one year but one basic ECE program is offered over a two-year period.¹⁶ Some First Nations, according to this informant, do not identify ECE as an academic program, which may negatively impact students’ funding support system as well.

The group interview participants from the institution with the 62% leaving rate among Aboriginal students in a partnership program identified some contributing factors: inadequate literacy skills; financial pressures; transportation difficulties; child care problems; heavy course loads; deaths in the community; home responsibilities; practicum challenges; and lack of access to computers. The top three challenges in that program were the cost of living expenses, difficulties related to practicum, and balancing family/friends with studies. It is noteworthy that of the 10 students who did not complete their program, 3 are currently working as ECE assistants. This could indicate that the students are still interested in working in the field but may have faced too many barriers to complete their training.

¹⁶ Due to funding cutbacks, ECE courses are being offered over four semesters for full and part time students and are not being compressed in three semesters over 12 months as in the past.

How could ECE training programs better meet the needs of First Nations students?

The faculty members proposed a variety of ways in which their institutions could improve their ECE programs and better prepare students to work in First Nations communities. The following themes were identified:

<u>Curriculum Content</u>	interactions with parents and co-workers, operations of centre, cultural components (history, cultural practices, protocol and languages of BC First Nations), credit for prior experience
<u>Training Delivery</u>	more flexible models, mixed-delivery, outreach, community visits, feedback, mentoring
<u>Student Supports</u>	technology, pre-admission skills upgrades, teaching-assistants, on-campus day-care, career counselors
<u>Increased Funding</u>	to raise Aboriginal instructor salaries, to pay for Elder/Knowledge Keeper honoraria, to offer bursaries, to recruit more Aboriginal students, to increase advertising of the program

One of the interviewees prefaced her suggestions for improvement with the word “funding” to emphasize that the institution’s existing budget does not support implementing the improvements she proposed.

The comments of one of the faculty members regarding students’ experiences in their practicum placements suggest a need to better prepare students to work with exceptional children. This faculty member observed that students are not prepared for the high incidence of children with special needs, from 50% to 70% in some programs. This faculty member stated that students are not prepared to effectively support children who are ‘in care’ and who have attachment issues, children with speech and language difficulties, or children who are diagnosed or undiagnosed and who demonstrate behaviours associated with FASD.

What trends have faculty members noticed?

Based on their own observations and experience, the interviewees identified these trends:

- One faculty member reported the academic calibre of her students has generally improved but others reported a specific decline in English writing skills
- Decreasing drop-out rates
- More acceptance of on-line education in Aboriginal communities
- Average age of students is decreasing
- The economic status of students is getting worse

Is there support for a new core course?

Faculty members were asked if colleges should explore the option of offering a new core course titled “Introduction to First Nations Perspectives in ECD”. Only one of the institutions is already offering this as a post-basic First Nations certificate. The other four institutions enthusiastically supported the suggestion and stated that it should be available for instructors as well as students. The group interview members mentioned that a course like this would also be useful for non-Aboriginal instructors who may lack community connections and knowledge of ceremonial protocols.

Section 4: Focus Groups

Focus Groups Methodology

To create a more complete picture of the workforce challenges facing on-reserve ECD programs, it was determined that community focus groups would be a necessary part of this research project. Two communities were selected for their varying levels of access to ECE training institutions: one northern community with very limited access¹⁷ and; one rural community with a moderate level of access.¹⁸ This was done in order to investigate opinions and experiences as they relate to regional differences in access to ECE training. Focus group questions and discussions focused on access to training, cultural relevance in training and advocating for change.

Who participated in the focus groups?

A total of 15 ECD personnel¹⁹ participated in the focus groups. 10 were front-line ECEs or ECE assistants who work directly with children, the majority of whom work in licensed group daycare programs or other type of ECD programs. 5 of the participants were managers of ECD programs. A number of the participants had ECE qualifications but were currently working in their community in other ECD roles such as Supported Child Development consultants. 3 were cultural teachers. Both focus groups were conducted in remote communities where ECD personnel often fulfill more than one professional role.

The qualifications of the focus group participants were varied: 2 had no ECE training (but had other post-secondary training and qualifications), a few were ECE Assistants, 7 held basic ECE certificates, and 2 held post-basic qualifications;

¹⁷ “Very limited access” is defined by BC ACCS researchers as having no local ECE training institution, with the nearest ECE training institution accessible only by air or water, not by road/ground transportation.

¹⁸ “Moderate level of access” is defined by BC ACCS researchers as having a local college campus which only periodically offers individual ECE courses and has, on two occasions in the last decade, offered a complete Basic ECE Certificate training program. The nearest ECE training institution which regularly offers complete ECE training programs (both Basic and Post-Basic) is located within 2.5 hours driving distance of this community.

¹⁹ Many of the focus group participants were First Nations, but some were non-Aboriginal people who work in First Nations ECD programs and/or in ECD programs serving First Nations children and families.

4.1 Focus Group Questionnaires

The focus group participants completed written questionnaires²⁰ at the outset of each focus group, and then engaged in oral discussions with the BC ACCS researchers conducting the focus groups.

How did the participants access ECE training?

The majority of the focus group participants have or are in the process of earning ECE certificates. Only one person reported having to move away to access ECE training. Ten participants said they completed some of their ECE courses on-line.

In this regard, the focus group participants differed from the respondents who completed the on-line survey. Among the on-line survey respondents, 31% had to move away from home to take their ECE training and only 36% completed some or all of their courses through distance education.

Was their training culturally relevant?

Twelve of the participants stated that their ECE courses contained information about First Nations values and practices, with one person of the 12 qualifying their “Yes” answer by adding “a little bit.” When asked if that information was relevant to the communities in which they are working, 9 said “Yes” with one of these 9 qualifying their answer with “very little.”

Why do they remain in the ECE field?

The focus group participants overwhelmingly agreed that their daily work is meaningful and gives them respect in their communities.

What factors make retention uncertain?

Participants were not asked to specify a living wage amount. Instead, they were asked if their current wages and benefits were adequate for their living expenses. Eight of the participants answered “No”, while seven answered “Yes”, however two of the “Yes” respondents qualified their “Yes” replies by saying “Yes, for now” or “Yes, but could always use more.” So in the matter of wages and benefits the picture is unclear. It is important to note that a large part of this group hold managerial positions, and multiple levels of specialized education which are indicators in receiving a stronger living wage according to our findings. It would be interesting to know how the participants’ responses to benefits and wages correlated to their training, position, and years in the field.

Access to professional development is also a cause for concern. ECEs are required to complete professional development in order to be able to renew their licenses.²¹ However, only about half of the focus group participants

²⁰ See Appendix C for the ECE focus group questionnaire.

stated that they have enough local opportunities to access the professional development hours they need. It is important to remember that in this focus group several members held other ECD specialties and some members were still completing basic training so this question would not have been as relevant to those participants. Even given this, having half the group indicate a lack of local opportunities does show a lack of available training. This is particularly important because in order for ECES to maintain their license to practice, they must continually access on-going professional development. For this to happen it is essential to provide them with opportunities to conveniently access professional development programs within their community; otherwise their licenses will lapse and they may move onto other fields rather than go through the complex process of renewal.

4.2 Focus Group Discussions²²

What delivery model is preferred?

The focus group participants strongly advocated for community-based training as the best means of building the ECE workforce. One group spoke positively about an AECE program that had been offered in their community in the past. There was strong indication that face-to-face instruction is valued by the group members.

Participants said their family responsibilities make it difficult or impossible to travel or relocate in order to access training. Participants in one focus group stated that post-basic training is not offered at the local college although there is a need for it.

Participants in one focus group noted the particular need for special needs training while participants in the other focus group noted the particular need for infant and toddler training. Three participants who would be qualified to take post-basic training said they would enrol if it were taught locally.



“It would be wonderful for us to be able to take some courses in nearby places to improve our skills.”



“Distance education lacks the one-on-one support you get in a classroom, especially for a visual hands-on learner like me.”

Although local face-to-face courses are preferred, participants have, of necessity, accessed training in other ways. They stated

that if people are motivated, have computers at home, and are good independent learners, on-line courses may be effective. One participant is currently taking post-basic courses on-line. Participants spoke positively about a month-long intensive summer institute offered in another community in the region. They found courses offered by teleconferencing and video-conferencing difficult because students are bound by specific time frames and delivery dates scheduled by the college. This can be limiting and introduce another barrier to accessing learning. In comparison a distance program offered by a private institution was discussed which allows students to work at their own pace and to mail in assignments but their courses are more expensive than those offered by public institutions.

²¹ One of the requirements for renewing an ECE Licence to Practice is proof of 40 hours of professional development completed within the five years preceding the renewal application. There is no application fee to renew an ECE licence.

²² See Appendix D for the questions used in the discussions with the focus group participants.

“One good thing was that they were close to our ocean during their training and the instructors really incorporated that into the course work. One instructor showed us all the math and science that there is outdoors.”

Participants in one of the focus groups described their ideal as ECE training delivered locally by a local person rather than having an outside person come in to deliver training. The group pondered whether training institutions could contract with local people to deliver credit courses in their community.

How was cultural knowledge included in participants’ ECE training?

The focus group participants discussed ways in which they gained cultural knowledge as part of their ECE training. One of the groups spoke positively about the Aboriginal “cultural week” at the local college, an event that included speakers from local First Nations. Practicum placements in programs with strong cultural components were also beneficial.

In-service training was identified as a source of cultural knowledge. The Infant Development Program and Supported Child Development consultant explained that her employer, the regional health authority, requires all staff to take an on-line cultural competency course paid for by the employer. Some school districts offer on-the-job training in First Nations history for their employees. Programs like these might be beneficial to ECEs and students if they were accessible to a wider group.

The participants also discussed the difficulties they experience incorporating culture into their own ECE programs. One participant recommended a curriculum specialist be hired to develop a language and culture curriculum that ECEs could include in their programs. They felt most ECEs do not have the time, knowledge, or curriculum development backgrounds required to strengthen the language and culture components of their programs.

One participant described ECE training as including “just a sprinkling of First Nations local culture.” That participant advocated more in-depth preparation for working in small First Nations communities, including, for example, information about local protocols.

How did participants evaluate their training?

The participants were invited to discuss the positive and negative features of their ECE training. The discussions primarily elicited drawbacks rather than strengths. The message that permeated the discussion was the desire for more and “better” quality training. Participants identified gaps in their preparation to perform these aspects of their jobs: communicating with staff; program management and administration; and preparing reports (for governments and other funders). One focus group called for greater emphasis on practical aspects of ECE and less emphasis on theory.

“It also would have helped to have more training about working with First Nations families - about the importance of building relationships. Even though I am a member of the local Band where I live and work, being a member of the Nation and understanding how to work with the families in the community are two very different/distinct things.”

Suggestions were made to improve

practicum experiences, such as restructuring them to allow more time for activity preparation and completion of school assignments. Practicum experiences were unsatisfactory for some participants. For example, there were too few placements available locally so some students had to leave the community to complete their practicum courses; participants expressed a desire for more Aboriginal practicum experiences in programs with strong cultural components; and participants identified the need for mentoring of new ECEs by senior ECEs.

Section 5: Discussion

5.1 Training Issues

A detailed discussion of training available around the Province and the appropriateness of curricula is beyond the scope of this research project. However, it is possible to provide an overview of trends related to the experiences of ECEs working in First Nations communities. The research has identified a number of key topics that appear to be the primary training issues facing BC First Nation ECEs (see Figures 7 and 9). The research also identified some of the strengths of these programs.

“Children are so unique in their development and personalities. It takes knowledge from our ECE training to take these young children under our wings and help them fly through their developmental stages.”

Most of the institutions try to enhance their programing by providing access to Elder support for the students; guest lecturers for Aboriginal topics; and other cultural resources such as print and audiovisual materials. Many of the ECE courses also incorporated ceremony and cultural events but this is dependent upon the knowledge of the instructor and how they are able to access funding support for it. Despite these positive aspects of the programs, some concerns remain. All the key informants from post-secondary institutions, as well as all of the ECEs interviewed commented that there are very few Aboriginal instructors. Only two of the six institutions interviewed

had more than one. Another missing element is the lack of a course on First Nations Perspectives in ECD. It was generally agreed upon that such a course would be very useful for everyone.

Although the institutions felt that they were providing good or excellent training in all aspects with the exception of a course on historical impacts on First Nations, the ECEs felt that some topics were not covered as well. Most ECEs who had not done their post-basic felt unprepared for working with the high number of children with special needs. Many

ECEs also felt unprepared for administrative and financial responsibilities, especially if they were promoted to supervisory roles early in their careers.

“The courses that are required to get trained and certified to work in this field are not as easy as people think. Each course is very thorough and has a lot of studying requirements.”

Student life is often difficult and the study found there are several great challenges for students to overcome in order to enroll in a program and graduate from a program. The most common challenges were the high cost of living on a low budget (housing, child care, food, books, etc.) and finding balance between family and community life or work and the need for study time (see Figure 7 & 8).

Most students reported receiving financial support from their Band for tuition and minimal living expenses. However, financial challenges were the most cited reasons for not completing their training. Only a small minority of students received any funding through a scholarship or bursary (See Figure 9). It is also important that students entering into training programs be prepared with the skills they will need to succeed. Bands can insure such success by supporting Adult upgrading programs. Institutions may have various means of supporting students; but to make an impact, support must be consistent. Some of the best help comes from local advisors or staff who assist students with basic living needs such as locating food banks and child care programs. These supports, as well as providing access to computers and financial assistance, seemed to show more success in retaining students to the end of their training. Some institutions have gathering places for Aboriginal students where they can study together, eat their lunch, hold meetings, etc. However, having access to training is not always possible for many reasons such as travel costs, access to technology and the need to be available for or receive family support.

Practicums are an integral part of the ECE training experience. Practicums can be very difficult to arrange in small and remote communities. There are few sites and many have to juggle students from multiple programs. Students have several practicum placements during their training, and experiences vary. Some students felt a need for clearer practicum guidelines because they didn't know the expectations of the practicum program site. Others really appreciated the cultural experiences they learned from Elders and experienced ECEs who have worked in the field for many years.

Mentorship was identified as an important support for new ECEs. It was noted that Elders should be encouraged to pass on their knowledge. Those new to the field should be actively seeking out cultural knowledge from their community

“I want to stress this to community, the importance of mentoring, especially to know our children will be well taken care of for generations to come.”

knowledge keepers. Many students are strong in their culture and are learning their language. They share these teachings throughout their training and in their work with children.

Based on the information gathered from frontline ECEs, it is recommended that:

- Relevant Aboriginal organizations and appropriate provincial Ministries collaborate to develop a set of minimum standards for evaluating the curricula of the training institutions approved as having an “Aboriginal perspective”.
- The content of the Basic ECE curricula be examined and revised to include a specified number of hours of instruction on working with exceptional children as well as human resources/management.

5.2 Professional Development Issues

As previously noted in this report, ECEs are required to renew their licenses every five years; part of the re-licensing requirement is to obtain 40 hours of professional development. Thus having access to professional development is crucial to maintaining quality early childhood development programs. Aboriginal ECEs often choose workshops and training events that will enhance their cultural knowledge and ability to work with First Nations children and families. Most training institutions do not have courses specific to First Nation traditional learning included in basic and post-basic programs, although some institutions have activities such as drumming and singing or elective courses that are available to students if they choose to participate. Professional development opportunities help support a culture of continual learning, and expand on the teaching offered in Basic and Post-Basic programs. Other than First Nation and Aboriginal content, the interviewees also mentioned needs for increased administration and reporting skills, management training and more communication skills for working not only with parents but with peers and other program members.

Our survey research indicates that 93% of staff and 95% of managers reported having participated in professional development opportunities in the past 12 months (see Figure 10). The survey indicates that managers have more opportunities for training than staff (however, more managers than staff completed the survey). A high percentage of respondents accessed training outside their community. Respondents from the North were significantly *less* likely than other respondents to have participated in professional development opportunities inside their communities (see Figure 11). Comments from the focus groups support the appeal for more local and regional training be made available, especially in the North.



“I would really appreciate more support, educational/professional development, and to be properly paid according to my credentials.”

Funding must continue to be available for travel and accommodation or professional development will become less accessible for many Aboriginal ECEs. Most survey respondents received some help for participating in professional development opportunities, the most common being payment of registration and travel expenses (see Figure 12). Respondents in the survey found several challenges in their ability to access professional development (see Figure 13).

The greatest challenge was the lack of replacement staff while the ECEs attended training. Many centres are forced to close their doors to children while staff attending training.

"I would like to have more professional development training to further my knowledge on working with the children. They are our future and we are helping to raise them."

—Survey Respondent

Other challenges included not being able to easily leave the community, and the high cost of training and the travel associated with it. The ECEs interviewed stated they would prefer to have more local and regional training (basic ECE certification and professional development for licensed ECEs) available.

Based on data gathered from the survey, combined with direct communications with ECEs, it is recommended that:

- ECEs be supported in accessing professional development and training through increased advocacy and funding.
- Aboriginal organizations providing professional development and capacity building training be supported through increased advocacy and funding.

5.3 Wages

The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC) website notes that “[e]arly childhood educators (ECEs) and assistants on average earn less than other workers and less than most women in other occupations”²³ (based on 2006 Census data; new information will be available in 2013). The website also notes that currently “no pan-Canadian wages scales or approach to compensating the child care workforce exists. However, some Provinces/Territories have developed wage scales or strategies for their region and these can be used as a point of reference.”²⁴ The website then provides links to wage scales or strategies from five Provinces: British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. A review of those 5 links, as well as additional data about wages and pay scales for ECEs in some Canadian Provinces (found outside the CCHRSC website/links), reveal that:

- Quebec appears to be the only Province in Canada where hourly rates for ECEs and assistants are prescribed by law.²⁵
- In a 2008 BC Early Childhood Educator Registry survey report (published by MCFD in 2009), the “estimated average wage for respondents working in the field of ECE [was] \$17.43.”²⁶
- BC Work Futures, in its occupation profile for ECEs and assistants, provides some basic information on the workforce trends based on the 2006 Census, reporting that the full-time full-year salary is only \$20,632, which is below average in comparison to other occupations. 95% of the employees in this sector are female, which is above average compared to other occupations.²⁷

²³ <http://www.ccsc-cssge.ca/hr-resource-centre/wage-scales>

²⁴ <http://www.ccsc-cssge.ca/hr-resource-centre/wage-scales>

²⁵ http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/SF_remuneration_personnel_salarie_2007-2012.pdf

²⁶ http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/pdfs/ece_registry_survey.pdf

²⁷ <http://www.workfutures.bc.ca/wfa/viewProfileDetails.do?pageNo=page1&bundleId=39>

- From the actual wage survey data that is available online for Canadian Provinces, it is evident that hourly rates in the ECE sector vary widely both between and within Provinces. The data collected for the purposes of this report confirms that this is also the case in the First Nations ECE sector in BC, with considerable regional variation in wages paid for qualified ECEs, especially those working in Aboriginal Head Start programs specifically.²⁸
- There are no provincial guidelines or standards in place to determine fair and adequate compensation for ECEs employed in Aboriginal Head Start or on-reserve licensed child care centres.
- The Manitoba Child Care Association publishes both Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scales (for 2005 through 2010) and Hourly Salaries (average hourly rates of pay for ECEs and assistants for 2004 through 2011). The Hourly Salaries information for 2011 indicates that the average hourly rate of pay is below \$20 per hour for early childhood educators who are classified as staff or supervisors. It is not until educators in Manitoba reach the level of Assistant Directors or Directors that the average hourly rate of pay exceeds \$20 per hour, with the highest average hourly rate being \$26.51 (for Directors classified as ECE III).²⁹

“Wages for staff need to reflect the work they do...standards in training and wages should be reflected across the board.”

The Manitoba 2010 Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale (Appendix G) would provide an excellent starting point for the future development of a similar Guideline for the on-reserve First Nations ECE sector in BC. The Manitoba Guideline is detailed, well designed and straight-forward. It links increasing salary levels to increasing qualifications and experience.

In an informal wage survey of on-reserve Head Start programs³⁰, the following data was gathered:

Managers/Coordinators: A total of 31 respondents reported hourly wages from a low of \$16/hour (Vancouver Island region) to a high of \$33.65/hour (also Vancouver Island region), with average hourly rates across the 5 regions ranging from \$22.89/hour (in the North East) to \$24.40/hour (on Vancouver Island).

Supervisors/Senior ECEs: A total of 17 respondents reported hourly wages from a low of \$16.07/hour (in the South West) to a high of \$25/hour (on Vancouver Island), with average hourly rates across 5 regions ranging from \$17.46/hour (South West) to \$20.90/hour (Vancouver Island).

²⁸ Please refer to section on Head Start wages beginning at the bottom of this page (p38)

²⁹ <http://www.mccahouse.org/ece-workforce.htm>. The 2010/2011 Hourly Salaries information for Manitoba is included as Appendix F to this report, and the Manitoba 2010 Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale is included as Appendix G.

³⁰ South East, South West, North West, North East, and Vancouver Island

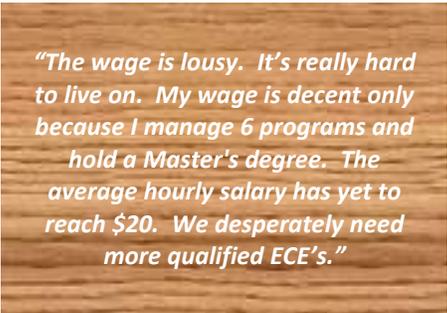
Infant Toddler or Special Needs (Post Basic certification): A total of 15 respondents reported hourly wages from a low of \$15/hour (in the South East) to a high of \$22/hour (on Vancouver Island), with average hourly rates of \$16.63/hour in the South West and \$18/hour on Vancouver Island.³¹

Early Childhood Educators (Basic certification): A total of 20 respondents reported hourly wages from a low of \$12/hour (in the North East) to a high of \$25/hour (also in the North East), with average hourly rates across 5 regions ranging from \$15.52/hour (South West) to \$18.19/hour (South East).

ECE Assistants / Casual: A total of 24 respondents reported hourly wages from a low of \$10/hour (in the North West) to a high of \$20/hour (in the North East), with average hourly rates across 5 regions ranging from \$11.86/hour (South East) to \$15.95/hour (North East).

In contrast to that data which shows wages for 5 different position types, our survey respondents were divided into two groups: (1) staff and (2) managers. Nevertheless, both sets of survey data reveal that there is wide variation in wages across the Province and within regions, and a significant proportion of this workforce earns less than \$20 per hour.³² Moreover, both sets of data establish that most non-management staff receive significantly lower wages: 79% of staff respondents in our survey reported making under \$20 an hour (57% making \$16-\$19/hour, and 22% making less than \$16/hour³³). In the survey data for on-reserve Head Start programs (described immediately above), the average hourly wage is under \$18 an hour for all the respondents in the IT/SN (Post-Basic certification), ECE (Basic certification) and ECE Assistants/Casual categories in all regions.

Even in management positions, a considerable proportion of managers and supervisors receive less than a living wage. In our survey, roughly one third of all manager respondents make less than \$20 an hour: 30% in Coast Fraser, 35% in the Interior, 30% in the North, and 29% on the Island.³⁴ In the survey data for on-reserve Head Start programs, there were respondents in both the Manager/Coordinator category and the Supervisor/Senior ECE category from all 5 regions who reported making less than \$20/hour, with the lowest reported hourly rate for a Manager/Coordinator at \$16/hour (Island region) and the lowest hourly rate for a Supervisor/Senior ECE at \$16.07/hour (South West region).



"The wage is lousy. It's really hard to live on. My wage is decent only because I manage 6 programs and hold a Master's degree. The average hourly salary has yet to reach \$20. We desperately need more qualified ECE's."



"If you are in it to make a difference you will succeed but, if you're in it for the money then go elsewhere."

³¹ There was only 1 respondent from the South East and 1 from the North East for this job category, and no respondents for the North West, so average hourly rates could not be calculated for those 3 regions.

³² See Figures 14 through 19 and the accompanying narratives, in Section 2 of this report

³³ See Figure 14, in Section 2 of this report

³⁴ See Figure 16, in Section 2 of this report

Another striking pattern revealed by the survey data relates to wages as compared to length of time in the field.³⁵ There is considerable variation in the hourly rate within each “length of experience” category (described by numbers of years, in 6 ranges). More than half (56%) of the respondents with 5-10 years’ experience in the field are earning under \$20 an hour. Of those with 10-20 years’ experience in the field, 42% are earning under \$20 an hour. Almost 37% of those with over 20 years’ experience are earning less than \$20 an hour. So although it appears that ECEs are more likely to get paid a living wage the longer they stay in the field is not a certainty. This lack of financial progression alone could be a significant deterrent to continuing a career in ECE.

Several patterns that were emerged from the survey data in regards to qualifications.³⁶ It appears that there is a strong link between higher wages and respondents with post-basic qualifications, and higher wages and managerial positions. However it can be seen in figure 19 that respondents who are unskilled or in the assistant category still earn wages in the approximate range of qualified ECEs. It seems clear that this would provide a strong disincentive to further training as has been suggested earlier in this report.

Low wages are clearly a concern for this sector, and this is borne out by the survey data and also by the interview and focus group data. When asked whether they would recommend a career in ECE, many survey respondents raised the issue of low wages. When interviewed and asked about staff retention, all but one of the ECE key informants identified low wages as the primary reason for people leaving their positions and/or leaving the field entirely. Wages were also a concern for most of the focus group participants, with a majority of them indicating that their wages and benefits were not adequate for their living expenses.

“This is a great 2nd income for a family but not enough for a single parent.”

Based on the wide variation of wages reported in the data collected for this report, and the lack of any provincial guidelines or standards to determine what is a fair and adequate compensation for ECEs employed in Aboriginal Head Start or on-reserve licensed child care centres, it is recommended that:

- A further, in-depth study of on-reserve ECE programs be undertaken in order to obtain comprehensive data about the wages and benefits in this sector; and
- An economic analysis is undertaken of the implications of implementing a living wage standard for certified staff employed in this sector.

5.4 Workforce Trends and Issues

³⁵ See Figure 18, in Section 2 of this report

³⁶ See Figure 19 in Section 2 of this report

The total number of on-reserve ECEs working in BC in early childhood development programs, including licensed group child care programs, is not known. BC ACCS researchers requested this information from the BC ECE Registry; however, officials within the Registry were unable to provide it in time for this report. According to a 2006 Census, there were a total of 1,285 people with Aboriginal identity in BC who was classified in the occupational category of ECEs and Assistants.³⁷ Of those, 320 worked “at home” and 965 worked “elsewhere” which may mean in licensed group child care or other ECD programs. Based on the number of on-reserve ECEs who attend our annual professional development conference, BC ACCS estimates the number of ECEs working in on-reserve programs to be between 400 and 500.

“It would be nice to recruit more males in the field of childcare. Having a male in the daycare would mean so much to the little ones we care for.”

The results of this research project suggest that the on-reserve ECE work force is aging. Approximately half of the respondents in this survey were 45 years or over, with 43% of the “staff” respondents being 45-54 years old and 7% being 55 years or older, and with 34% of the “manager” respondents being 45-54 years old and 13% being 55 years or older. Only 4% of staff and 3% of managers were under 25 years old (see Figure 3). If the survey respondents are generally reflective of the on-reserve childcare employees, this could indicate a potential problem of replacing older workers who may retire in the future. A similar trend was noted in an unpublished survey of on- and off-reserve ECEs done by BC ACCS in 2007. We contend that this trend is generally reflective of the sector and it is recommended that First Nations programs and employers receive professional development opportunities on the topics of succession planning and program management. This trend in the workforce would also highlight significant implications for training.

One of the most troubling findings of this research is the high number of staff who do not have their basic ECE certification and who are working directly with young children. What we do not know from the survey is what roles these staff are fulfilling. Are they Elders or cultural workers who can enrich programs and increase Indigenous content in the program or simply unqualified child care workers who lack the knowledge and training of certified professionals? More research is needed to determine these questions as this makes a difference in being able to accurately assess the quality of care being offered.

“There are not enough young people going into the field of ECE, and it’s disheartening to not know who will take over and continue with all the hard work that has been done.”

Survey respondents from the Interior, North and the Island indicated that between 24-28% of their staff did not have ECE certification. The research results indicate that programs in the North continue to be particularly challenged in this regard. It is more difficult to access training because of a smaller population spread over a large geographical area with consequently fewer training options. There are many small First Nation communities who struggle to maintain ECE capacity. It is recommended that the provision of basic training for uncertified individuals who are already employed in

³⁷ Statistics Canada. (2006) National Occupational Classification for Statistics (NOC-S) 2006. Catalogue no. 12-593-XIE. Special run conducted by Statistics Canada for Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2008. Childcare Resource and Research Unit, Toronto, ON

First Nations ECD programs be addressed on a priority basis by First Nations leaders, service providers, policymakers and funders. From mainstream and international research, we know that having fully qualified ECEs working in programs and centres improves staff morale and positively impacts the quality of care and education being delivered.

The good news learned from this research project is that ECEs employed in on-reserve programs appear to have good access to employee benefits. A survey of ECE wages and working conditions by the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) in 2008 suggests that 54% of ECEs working in mainstream programs received no group benefits. Compared to mainstream employers, First Nation employers, including Bands, are doing a good job. Further study is definitely required to understand the full extent of benefit coverage, how these are calculated and the possible variances in benefits to on-reserve ECEs across regions and communities of BC.

Data collected during this project suggest a number of improvements to the sector can be made to improve program quality or the experiences of ECE staff as well as the children in their care. To that end, it is recommended that:

- Policymakers, funders, public training institutions, and elected First Nations leaders work together to develop a Province-wide plan for addressing the large number of ECEs currently approaching retirement age.
- Funding be leveraged to develop human resource/management tools for employers and staff.
- A task force be established to address the issue of non-certified staff working in on-reserve ECD programs.

Section 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

After their introduction more than a decade ago, the number of federal and provincial First Nations ECD programs grew with moderate rapidity until 2005-2006. This growth, together with the need for funded programs to conform to provincial licensing requirements, created a new and growing need for more college or university-trained early childhood educators (ECEs). The demand for qualified ECEs has always exceeded the supply and our research suggests that the First Nations ECE sector needs a reinvigorated approach for dealing with ongoing issues of staff turnover, training and retention.

"I wish the government would contribute more funding towards early learning, in pay, in resources, supplies etc."

Although the majority of on-reserve ECD programs depend almost entirely on federal government funding for their existence, the majority of ECD programs operate within a policy vacuum with little or no new funding since 2007. We maintain that inadequate funding serves to depress wages for First Nations ECEs, in particular for ECEs working in "stand alone" on-reserve Head Start programs. A minority of the 202 BC First Nations communities have been able to augment the low levels of funding by operating a variety of ECD programs that can be centralized or partly integrated and are more likely able to compensate their ECEs more fairly. For small, northern and remote First Nations communities, with populations of less than 200, there may be less flexibility or capacity to operate ECD programs let alone attract and retain qualified ECEs. It also needs to be noted that for over most of the last decade, the context of First Nations ECD has sat in a landscape of growing Aboriginal child poverty and cut-backs to social services, including child care. These conditions combined with reductions in services adversely affect many families, especially those living in poverty.

"I wish that the funding sources were not so demanding and complicated - in order for those trying to do their work at the same time trying to complete proposals, the necessary forms and applications becomes another job."

The issues and challenges facing the First Nations ECE workforce are long-standing and complex. Changes, both short and long term, are needed and are required at all levels of ECD programming and policy. For the most part the recommendations listed below will require additional federal and provincial investment both in terms of policy and funding. First Nations communities, particularly leaders and employers, need to reflect on current practices and policies and consider what measures they can put in place over the short and long term.

6.2 Recommendations

This research informs strategic planning for the purpose of developing and maintaining a qualified ECD workforce to deliver high quality services to all First Nations children and families in British Columbia. Based on the data gathered the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society recommends to the First Nations ECD Council that:

1. Key stakeholders meet on a priority basis to begin developing a training strategy to address the high number of uncertified individuals who are already employed in First Nations licensed child care and Head Start programs, with particular focus in the North region.
2. An economic analysis be undertaken to determine the potential effects of implementing a living wage standard for certified staff employed in First Nations licensed child care and Head Start programs.
3. Human resource management “best practices” tool kit/s be adapted to provide guidelines and standards for First Nations licensed child care and Head Start employers.
4. An Aboriginal ECD organization enter into discussions with MCFD and the Ministry of Advanced Education on the topic of developing a set of minimum standards to be used in evaluating ECE training institutions that currently have or are seeking to gain an approved “Aboriginal Perspective” designation.
5. The MCFD criteria for approving institutions offering ECE training be revised to require all basic training to include a specified number of hours of instruction on the subjects of working with exceptional children and human resource management.
6. British Columbia and Canada allocate funding to support local and regional professional development opportunities for all staff of First Nations ECD programs, in particular, on the topics of working with exceptional children and human resource management.
7. Further, study of on-reserve ECD programs be undertaken to obtain comprehensive data about wages, benefits, and staffing, in this sector, focusing on front-line non-managerial staff.



“The work does need more value placed on it. Federal and provincial governments NEED to take some financial responsibility to ensure the most fragile members of society are supported, nurtured, valued.”

Appendix A- On-line Survey Questions

Do you currently work in a licensed childcare program or licensed/unlicensed Headstart program ON-RESERVE?

- Yes
- No

Are you:

- Male
- Female

Are you:

- First Nations
- Métis
- Inuit
- Not Aboriginal

What is your age?

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55 or older

Do you have any children under the age of 18 living with you?

- Yes
- No

How many children in each age category are living with you?

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Infants | <input type="radio"/> 1 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 2 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 3 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 4 or more |
| 1-2 year olds | <input type="radio"/> 1 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 2 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 3 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 4 or more |
| 3-5 year olds | <input type="radio"/> 1 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 2 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 3 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 4 or more |
| 6-8 year olds | <input type="radio"/> 1 |
| | <input type="radio"/> 2 |

- 3
- 4 or more
- 8-12 year olds 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more
- 13-18 year olds 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

In which region of the province do you currently work?

- Vancouver Coastal
- Fraser
- Interior
- North
- Vancouver Island

What is your role at your centre?

- Program Staff
- Program Supervisor/Manager

How many staff members at your centre work directly with children?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 or more

How many staff members at your centre, who work directly with children, DO NOT have a Basic ECE certificate?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 or more

Do you work full or part-time?

- Full-time (30 hours/week or more)
- Part-time (less than 30 hours/week)

Which age group do you MOST OFTEN work with?

- Infant/Toddler
- 3-5
- School Age

How long have you been working at this particular centre?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- More than 20 years

How long have you been working in the field of ECE?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- More than 20 years

Do you have a Basic ECE Certificate?

- Yes
- No

Are you currently enrolled in a post-secondary ECE program?

- Yes
- No

Do you have any Post-Basic Certification?

- Infant and Toddler
- Special Needs
- Both Infant/Toddler & Special Needs
- None

Where did you take your ECE training? If more than one, check all that apply.

- Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
- College of New Caledonia
- Northern Lights College
- Native Education College
- Northwest Community College
- University of Victoria
- Vancouver Island University
- Capilano University
- Other, please specify: _____

How did you complete your classes?

- In person classes
- Distance education
- A combination of distance and in person classes

Did your Band or employer offer financial support for your training?

- Yes
- No

Did you have to move away from your home to take your training?

- Yes
- No

Did you receive any funding through a scholarship or bursary?

- Yes
- No

Did your training include any First Nations cultural content or instruction?

- Yes
- No

What kind of First Nations cultural content and instruction did you receive? (Check all that apply)

- Guest Lectures
- Access to Elders/Knowledge Keepers
- Taking part in Ceremonies or other Cultural Events
- Cultural Teaching Resources
- Other

How do you feel that the training you have received prepared you in the following areas:

Knowledge of child development

- Poorly
- Not so well
- Quite well
- Very well
- Don't know

Supporting children with special needs

- Poorly
- Not so well
- Quite well

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Activity planning and design | <input type="radio"/> Very well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |
| | <input type="radio"/> Poorly |
| | <input type="radio"/> Not so well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Quite well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Very well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |
| Communication with parents | <input type="radio"/> Poorly |
| | <input type="radio"/> Not so well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Quite well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Very well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |
| Administration and finance | <input type="radio"/> Poorly |
| | <input type="radio"/> Not so well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Quite well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Very well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |
| Historical impacts of colonization on First Peoples | <input type="radio"/> Poorly |
| | <input type="radio"/> Not so well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Quite well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Very well |
| | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |

Do you feel that your practicum placement adequately prepared you for your current work?

- Yes
- No
- I did not complete a practicum

What are your top 3 biggest challenges to enrolling in or completing your Basic ECE training?
(Select 1 as your biggest challenge, 2 as your second biggest challenge and 3 as your third.)

- Getting accepted into a program 1
 2
 3
- Moving away from my home community to study 1
 2
 3
- Cost of tuition and books 1
 2
 3
- Cost of living expenses while attending the program 1
 2
 3
- Difficulty of the course work/assignments 1
 2
 3
- Difficulty finding a practicum placement 1
 2
 3
- Difficulty of the practicum 1
 2
 3
- Balancing my family/friends and my studies 1
 2
 3
- Balancing my work and my studies 1
 2
 3

In the past 12 months, have you participated in any professional development activities, such as a workshop, conference or course?

- Yes
- No

In the past 12 months, how many professional development activities have you participated in?

- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- More than 6

What types of activities did you participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Professional development outside my community
- Professional development in my community
- A credit course related to ECE at a post-secondary institution
- A non-credit course related to ECE
- First Aid or Food Safe Training

In the past 12 months, has your employer provided any of the following types of assistance to enable you to participate in professional development activities? Check all that apply.

- Payment of registration/course fee
- Partial payment of registration/course fee
- Payment of travel expenses
- Paid leave time
- Unpaid leave time
- None

What benefits do you receive from professional development opportunities? Check all that apply.

- Improve practice
- Learn a new skill
- Make connections with colleagues
- Obtain higher qualifications
- Learn about new research or policy
- Meeting professional development requirements for ECE licence renewal

What are the top 3 challenges you face in attending professional development opportunities? (Select 1 for the biggest challenge, 2 for the second biggest challenge and 3 for the third.)

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Travel distance is too far | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cost is too high | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| No replacement staff | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cannot get leave time | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cannot afford to take unpaid leave time | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cannot leave my family/community responsibilities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| No opportunities available that interest me | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

What is your hourly wage?

- Less than \$10
- \$10-\$12
- \$13-\$15
- \$16-\$19
- \$20-\$24
- \$25 or more

Have you received any wage increases since beginning your current position?

- Yes
- No

Do you expect to get a wage increase in the next 12 months?

- Yes
- No

Do you receive employee group benefits? (Check all that apply.)

- Extended health/dental
- Paid leave
- Unpaid leave
- Professional Development
- Pension Plan
- None

Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements as they relate to your experience in your current position

I take pride in my own work

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- So So
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I feel I am part of a team

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- So So
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My supervisor provides positive support and feedback

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- So So
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My work is valued and respected in my community

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- So So
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I have adequate time for planning during working hours

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- So So
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Why did you choose to work in this field?

What motivates you to continue doing the work you do?

Would you recommend this type of career choice for others? Please explain why or why not.

Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

Appendix B – Key Informant Interview Questions (Post-Secondary)

1. General:
 - a) Name of College:
 - b) Position/Title:
 - c) Length in current position:

2. What types of programs does the college/university offer:
 - a) Basic ECE certificate
 - b) Post Basic IT
 - c) Post Basic Special Needs

3. Course Content:
 - a) Does the institution offer in-person or distance education (or a combination)?

 - b) What is the institution’s definition and extent of “Indigenous content”?

 - c) What types of Indigenous content do ECE students receive? (Read this entire list and check off all that apply)
 - Guest Lectures
 - Ceremonies/Cultural Events
 - Access to Elders/Knowledge keepers
 - History of Aboriginal peoples in Canada
 - Cultural Teaching resources
 - Other

d) How well do you think the courses prepare students for:

	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent	Don't know
Knowledge of child development	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting children with special needs	1	2	3	4	5
Activity/program planning and design	1	2	3	4	5
Communication with parents	1	2	3	4	5
Administration and finance	1	2	3	4	5
Historical impacts of colonization on First Peoples in Canada	1	2	3	4	5

4. Instructors:

- a) How many instructors in the ECE program are Aboriginal?
- b) Where are they from?

5. Aboriginal Students in the ECE Program:

- a) How many apply?
- b) How many enrol?
- c) Graduation rate?
- d) Drop-out rate?
- e) What factors do you believe contribute to drop outs?
- f) What are the top three challenges specific to Aboriginal students? (Please read this entire list to the key informant and have them choose their top 3)
 - o Getting accepted
 - o Moving away from home
 - o Cost of tuition/books
 - o Cost of living expenses
 - o Difficulty of course work/assignments
 - o Difficulty of the practicum
 - o Balancing family/friends with studies
 - o Balancing working with studies
- g) What kinds of supports are available to students? (Use the following list only when needed to prompt some ideas)
 - o Counseling
 - o Career Advise
 - o Scholarships
 - o Band Funding
 - o Grants
 - o Loans
 - o Bursaries

6. Does the college/university have an Aboriginal Student recruitment strategy?

7. Are there different entrance requirements for Aboriginal students?

8. Are there procedures in place that gives credit for prior learning?

9. Do you have any data that speaks to trends in the following areas?

- a) Students entering already have some ECE experience
- b) Number of students applying
- c) Demographics of students applying (age, gender, economic status, region of province)
- d) Academic calibre of students
- e) Graduation rates
- f) Student drop-outs
- g) Students GPA
- h) Students planning to work in regulated child care
- i) Students planning on continuing their education

If you have data for the above areas, do you track for the overall student population as well as the Aboriginal population?

Compared to 5 years ago, how have these aspects changed: increased, decreased, no change, not sure.

10. How do you feel the ECE program could be improved to better meet the needs of Aboriginal students to prepare them for the work they do in First Nations communities? (Ask as an open-ended question and then prompt with some of the following if necessary)

- a) Physical space
- b) Library
- c) Technology
- d) Administration
- e) Research initiatives
- f) Government policy
- g) Department leadership
- h) Quality of teaching staff
- i) Curriculum
- j) Student recruitment
- k) Student retention
- l) Class sizes
- m) Practicum Placement
- n) Links to career opportunities

11. How well do you feel the practicum placement meets the needs of Aboriginal students and prepares them for the work they will be doing in First Nations communities?

12. Do you seek feedback from Aboriginal students about the training they receive and their overall experience as post-secondary students at your college/university? (If so, explain how)

13. Should colleges explore the option of offering a core course entitled “Introduction to First Nations Perspectives in Early Childhood Development”?

Appendix C – Key Informant Interview Questions (ECEs)

General

1. Name of centre/program where you work, and location:
2. Type of ECE/ECD program where you work:
3. Your job title/position:
4. Length of time in that position:
5. Your ECE qualifications (if any):
6. Name of college(s) where ECE training taken: (*indicate if in-person or distance education*)
7. Are you Aboriginal (First Nations, Métis or Inuit)? _____

Cultural Relevance in ECE Training

8. In any of your ECE training courses (now or in the past), did you find that there was any First Nations cultural content, cultural practices, or cultural relevance?
Please explain/provide examples:
9. If there was First Nations content in any of your ECE training courses, what type of content was it? (*check all the apply*):
 - Guest lectures
 - Ceremonies/Cultural Events
 - Access to Elders/Knowledge Keepers
 - History of Aboriginal peoples in Canada
 - Cultural Teaching Resources
 - Other (*please describe*): _____

10. How well do you think your ECE courses prepared you in relation to the following?

	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent	Don't know
Knowledge of child development	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting children with special needs	1	2	3	4	5
Activity/program planning and design	1	2	3	4	5
Communication with parents	1	2	3	4	5
Administration and finance	1	2	3	4	5
Historical impacts of colonization on First Peoples in Canada	1	2	3	4	5

11. Did you have any Aboriginal instructors for any of your ECE courses?

12. What were the top three challenges for you in doing your ECE training?

13. What kinds of supports were available to you as an ECE student?

14. How do you feel your ECE training could have been improved to better meet your needs as an ECE student and to prepare you for the work you do in a First Nations community?

15. How do you feel your practicum placement(s) met your needs as an ECE student and how well did it prepare you for the work you do in a First Nations community?

16. How do you feel your practicum placement(s) could have been improved to better meet your needs as an ECE student and to prepare you for the work you do in a First Nations community?

17. During any of your ECE training, did the college or ECE department ask you for feedback about the training you were taking and/or about your overall experience as a post-secondary student?

18. Do you think that colleges teaching ECE should offer a core course entitled "Introduction to First Nations Perspectives in ECD"?

Retention of ECE Staff

19. How many ECEs have left your program(s) in the last year, and do you know why they left? Also, for those who left, do you know if they went to another ECE job or left the ECE field entirely?
20. How long have you worked in the field of ECE and what makes you stay in the field?
21. Thinking about the ECE staff you work with now and have worked with in the past – both those who have stayed in the field and those who have left – why do you think they choose to stay in or to leave the ECE field?
22. Do you think that access to and participation in professional development courses/workshops encourages ECEs to remain in the field? Why or why not?
23. What do you feel are your biggest challenges in retaining ECEs in your program(s)?
24. What do you feel are your most effective strategies for retaining ECEs in your program(s)?
25. Is there anything else you would like to add/tell us?

Appendix D – Focus Group Written Questionnaires

ECE Job Information

1. What type of Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Early Childhood Development (ECD) program do you work in? *If more than one, please check all that apply*

- Licensed group daycare program
- Other daycare program
- Aboriginal Head Start Preschool
- Other preschool program (or nursery school program)
- Other ECE or ECD program (please describe): _____

2. Which of the following best describes your current ECE or ECD job/position? *If more than one, please check all that apply*

- Manager or Supervisor
- ECE (on-the-floor) staff working directly with children
- Elder
- Cultural and/or Language Teacher
- Family Involvement Worker
- Cook
- Bus Driver
- ASCD or SCD consultant (please circle whether ASCD or SCD)
- AIDP or IDP consultant (please circle whether AIDP or IDP)
- Other (please describe) _____

ECE Qualifications

3. Do you have any of the following ECE certificates? *Please check all that apply*

- Basic ECE Certificate
- Post-Basic Special Needs (SN) Certificate
- Post-Basic Infant Toddler (IT) Certificate
- Combined Post-Basic SN & IT Certificate
- Other (please describe) _____

Access to Training

4. Did you need to move away from your community to do your ECE training?
 Yes
 No
5. Did you do any of your ECE courses online?
 Yes
 No
6. Were you able to access any of your ECE training in your community?
 Yes
 No
7. If yes, did having access to training in your community encourage you to stay and work there?
 Yes
 No

Cultural Relevance in Training

8. Did your ECE courses contain information about First Nations values and practices?
 Yes
 No
9. Was that information relevant to the community you work in?
 Yes
 No

Incentives to Remain in the ECE Field

10. Do you feel your wages and benefits are adequate for your living expenses?
 Yes
 No

11. Do you have enough professional development to assist you in improving your skills?

Yes

No

12. Do you have enough local opportunities to get your ProD hours for ECE licensing renewal?

Yes

No

13. Do you feel you are participating in meaningful activities in your daily work?

Yes

No

14. Do you feel your work gives you respect in your community?

Yes

No

15. Is there anything else you would like to add/tell us?

Appendix E – Focus Groups Discussion Questions

Access to training:

How could having easier access to ECE training in your community build the ECE work force?

Cultural relevance in training:

How was cultural knowledge shared in your ECE training?

Cultural relevance in training:

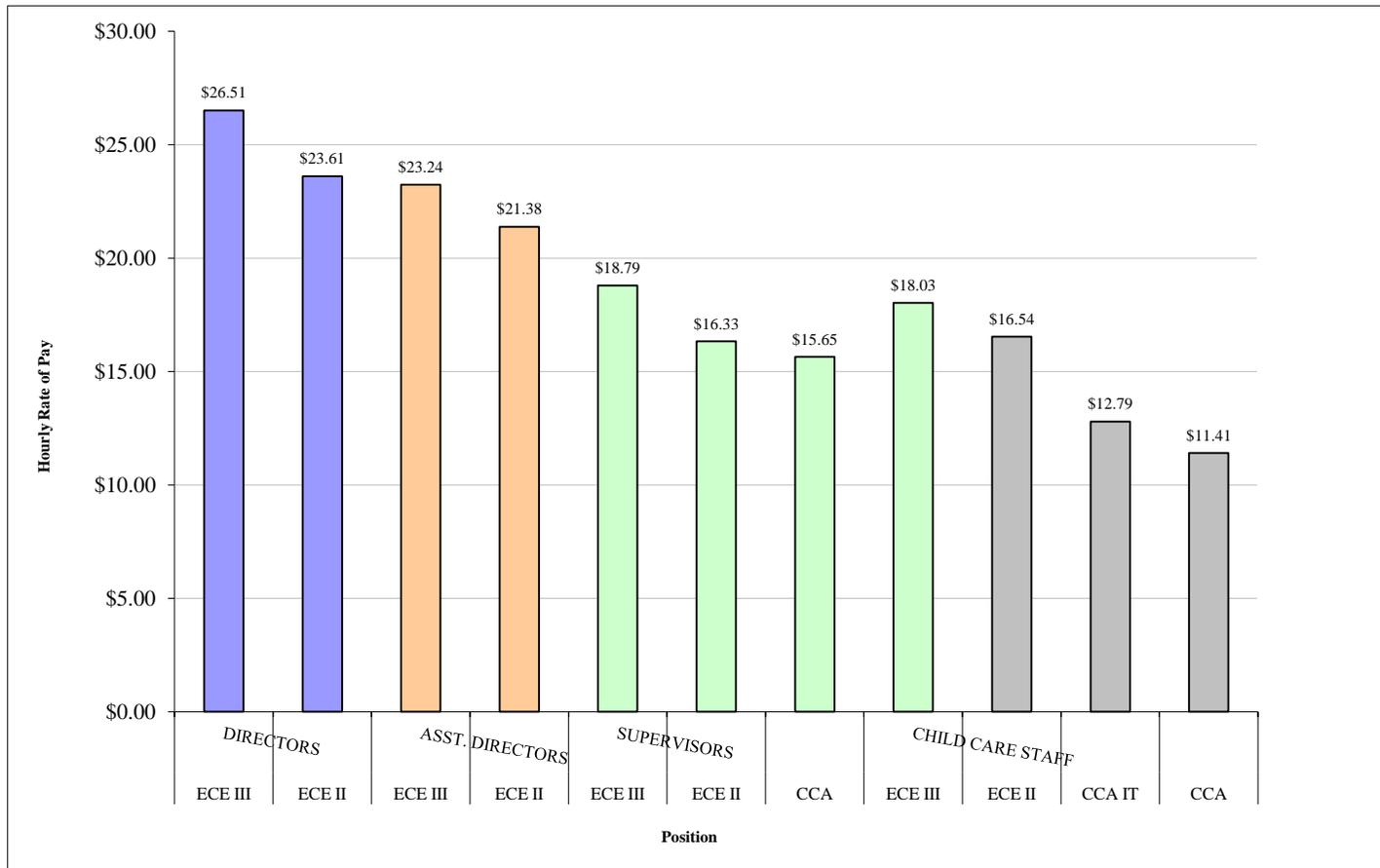
What were the positive and negative features of your training?

Advocating for change:

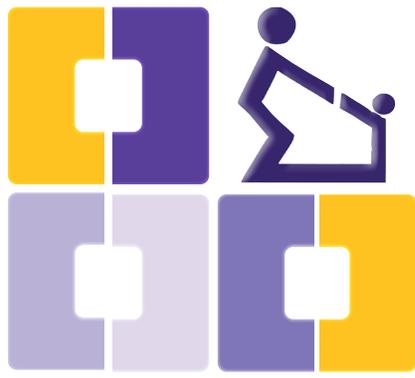
How can delivery models of approved ECE training programs be improved to better meet the needs of First Nations students?

CHILD CARE
MANITOBA AVERAGE HOURLY RATE OF PAY
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS (ECE) AND CHILD CARE ASSISTANTS (CCA)
2010/2011

	DIRECTORS		ASST. DIRECTORS		SUPERVISORS			CHILD CARE STAFF			
	ECE III	ECE II	ECE III	ECE II	ECE III	ECE II	CCA	ECE III	ECE II	CCA IT	CCA
Hourly Rate of Pay	\$26.51	\$23.61	\$23.24	\$21.38	\$18.79	\$16.33	\$15.65	\$18.03	\$16.54	\$12.79	\$11.41
Average hours worked/week	37.3		35.4		36.1			37.8			



>Figures obtained from funded child care centre budget information.
 >Includes salary figures from centres with fiscal year beginning in 2010: April, July, September, October, and January 2011
 >Includes only salaries of 30 hours or more per week.
 >CCA IT = Child Care Assistant in Training



MARKET COMPETITIVE SALARY GUIDELINE SCALE

For Early Learning and Child Care Centres 2010

What's new 2010?

To reflect changes to market rates in Manitoba, as well as the relationship of relative salaries between jobs in the scale, a 1.5% increase from the Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale 2009, was recommended by People First HR Services



How Can I Use This Guideline?

The Manitoba Child Care Association provides the research based Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scales to our members as an educational tool to use when career planning, or seeking employment. The Board of Directors can use it as a guideline when establishing wage and compensation rates or may adopt the scale as is if it is affordable.

Recruitment is the Most Challenging Issue

Recruitment of qualified staff/lack of qualified staff is the most challenging issue employers in Manitoba face in fulfilling their human resource management role. (Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, 2009) More than 70% of child care centres in Manitoba report that ECEs are the most difficult to recruit, the main reason being that wages are too low. Research shows that good wages and working conditions are associated with higher job satisfaction and morale, lower staff turnover, more developmentally appropriate, more sensitive, less harsh care giving, better language development, and higher levels of appropriate play in children. (Doherty, G. (1995). Quality matters: Excellence in early childhood programs. Don Mills, ON: Addison-Wesley Canada)

In funded centres, parent fees and operating grants are controlled by the Government of Manitoba, and do not generate enough revenue for the majority of funded early learning and child care centres (ELCC) to pay competitive wages to their employees.

Back in 2007, The Manitoba Child Care Association advised the Government of Manitoba that funding to ELCC centres must increase by 20-25% to enable the childcare workforce to earn competitive wages and have competitive benefits, including a pension plan. In response the Government of Manitoba provided a 3% increase in 2008. In 2009, the Government of Manitoba provided a further 3% increase and a wage adjustment fund to top up the wage of an ECE to \$15.50 an hour and a Child Care Assistant in ECE training to \$12.25 an hour to eligible child care

centres. There was no increase to the wage adjustment fund or to operating grants in 2010.

Without the financial resources to pay competitive wages and benefits, it is inevitable that Boards of Directors will have a problem attracting and retaining skilled and qualified Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Assistants. In 2010, more than a decade after the shortage of Early Childhood Educators was first identified, around 30% of licensed child care programs continue to operate with an exemption to the licensing requirements for proportion of trained staff because they cannot recruit employees with the qualifications required by The Community Child Care Standards Act. The licenses for regulated programs can be viewed online at www.manitoba.ca/childcare.

A history of the MCCAs salary guideline scales is available on our website www.mccahouse.org. Click on Advocating for Quality.

The Labour Mobility Act and Early Childhood Educators

Labour Mobility is a pan Canadian government initiative that has been in effect since 1994. It was reinvigorated by Provincial Premiers in 2008 with the re-writing of Chapter 7 of the agreement which applies to licensed/regulated professions, one of which is Early Childhood Education. After Chapter 7 came into force on April 1, 2009, the Province of Manitoba must recognize the qualifications of Early Childhood Educators certified to practice in any other jurisdictions in Canada. Given the wide range of qualifications for Early Childhood Educators across Canada, employers are advised to carefully review the educational credentials as part of the recruitment process for Early Childhood Educators.

Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators

The Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators were revised by the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council in 2009. Employers can use them for guidance in defining skill levels and knowledge for ECEs in specific settings or positions. They are available to download at <http://www.ccsc-cssge.ca>



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINE SALARY SCALE

The wages are based on the definitions and job descriptions in the Human Resource Management Guide for Early Learning and Child Care Programs, Manitoba Child Care Association, 2007.

- Annual salary is based on a 40 hour week. For work weeks with fewer hours, the salary should be pro-rated.
- This salary scale is current as of August 2010 and is designed to reflect the competitive market and relative values within the scale.
- Level 1 is the salary scale minimum. This salary is appropriate for someone who meets the educational requirements but lacks the required experience and some of the necessary skills. This salary is appropriate for someone new to the job and requires considerable guidance and supervision.
- Level 5 is the salary scale maximum. This salary is appropriate for someone who is fully proficient in the job. They have developed the necessary skills and require very little guidance or supervision. This salary is typically reflective of someone with four years experience in the job.

MCCA recommends that employers:

- contribute a minimum of 1% of gross annual salary toward the cost of 24 hours per year of professional development in early learning and child care for each employee that has successfully completed the probationary period. As part of professional development, employers should consider paying all or subsidize the annual MCCA membership for each employee that has successfully completed the probationary period.
- provide all employees with a salary scale relevant to their position, a job description, personnel policies, an employment contract upon hiring
- employ graduates from CCEPAC approved early childhood education programs (or recognized equivalent) as primary care givers
- develop a written plan to follow should you become unable to meet the requirements of the Community Child Care Standards Act, whether related to proportion of trained staff, qualifications of staff, staff to child ratio's or group sizes.

MARKET COMPETITIVE SALARY GUIDELINE SCALE 2010



DIRECTOR

- As defined in The Community Child Care Standards Act, Manitoba Regulation 62/86
- Director I Manages a facility of 50 spaces or less
- Director II: Manages a facility of 51-100 spaces
- Director III: Manages a facility of 101-150 spaces
- Director IV: Manages a facility of 151-200 spaces
- Participates in at least 24 hours of ECE professional development per year.
- MCCA recommends that centre directors acquire a relevant credential in management.

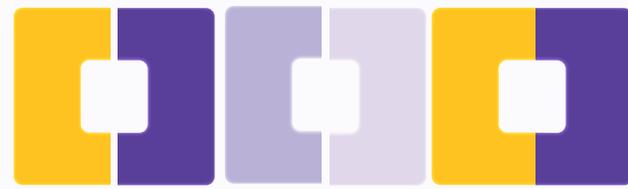
THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CENTRE DIRECTOR ARE:

1. Program Management
 - A. Health and Safety
 - B. Curriculum
 - C. Families
2. Organisational Management
 - A. Centre Administration
 - B. Government Regulating Body
3. Financial Management
4. Human Resource Management
 - A. Personnel Policies
 - B. Career Development and Training
5. Public Relations
6. Professionalism

Job		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Director IV	Annual	\$68,749	\$73,037	\$77,333	\$81,629	\$85,926
	Hourly	\$33.05	\$35.11	\$37.18	\$39.24	\$41.31
Director III	Annual	\$62,492	\$66,397	\$70,303	\$74,209	\$78,114
	Hourly	\$30.04	\$31.92	\$33.80	\$35.68	\$37.56
Director II	Annual	\$58,380	\$62,029	\$65,677	\$69,326	\$72,974
	Hourly	\$28.07	\$29.82	\$31.58	\$33.33	\$35.08
Director I	Annual	\$49,262	\$52,342	\$55,420	\$58,500	\$61,578
	Hourly	\$23.68	\$25.16	\$26.64	\$28.12	\$29.60

A guideline job description is in the Human Resource Management Guide for Early Learning and Child Care Programs, MCCA 2007





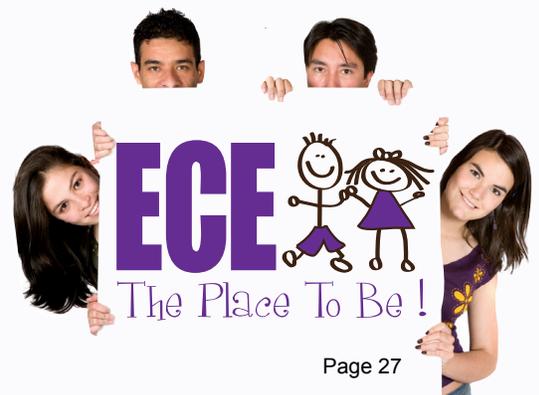
MARKET COMPETITIVE BENEFITS PACKAGE

People First HR Services advises that a comprehensive benefits package can be a key factor in attracting and retaining employees. They suggest the following benefits are considered to be market competitive:

- A group medical plan which includes prescription drugs, hospital, paramedical, medical supplies and travel coverage
- A dental plan which covers preventative, basic and major treatments
- A short term disability plan which provides income to the employee for short periods of incapacity. This can be done through an insured plan or through salary continuation
- A long term disability plan which provides income to the employee in the event that they can't return to work for an extended period of time.
- Life and accidental death & dismemberment insurance
- The cost of these 5 plans would be shared equally between the employer and the employee with the premiums structured so as to make any benefits under the disability plans tax effective.

MCCA offers our members a comprehensive group benefits program through Health Source Plus that includes all these, includes a substantial health and wellness program, along with a management assistance program. Employers that offer the MCCA Group Benefits Plan will find it helpful to recruit and retain employees that want to maintain consistent group benefits coverage. Coverage is transferable to any licensed child care program that participates in the plan.

- A vacation plan which provides 2 weeks vacation initially, 3 weeks at 3 years of employment, 4 weeks at 10 years and 5 weeks at 15 years. Directors would normally start at 3 weeks
- Eleven public holidays
- A retirement savings plan which allows employees to contribute from 3% to 5% of their salary with the employer making a matching contribution.



SUPERVISORS I & II/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/ECE WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING/NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER

An individual who has the dual responsibility of the administration of the centre and the delivery of the program. This can also include nursery school teachers, unit leaders, assistant directors and centre directors who are included in the child/staff ratio.

SUPERVISOR III/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

- A Supervisor/Assistant Director, whose job description includes a significant portion of the child care program administration in a facility of 51 to 100+ spaces. Examples include orientating and directing staff; managing employee records, developing staffing schedules, assisting in identifying professional development opportunities and record keeping.
- Participates in at least 24 hours of ECE professional development per year.

THE MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY ARE:

1. Health and Safety
2. Program
3. Families
4. Administrative Management:
 - A. Government Regulating Body
 - B. Administration
 - C. Children and Families
 - D. Operational Management
 - E. Financial Management
 - F. Personnel Policies and Procedures
 - G. Career Development and Training
 - H. Public Relations Professionalism
5. Professionalism

SUPERVISOR I/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/OR ECE WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING/NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER

- A supervisor, whose job description includes a portion of the child care program administration in a facility of 50 spaces or less. Examples include orientating and directing staff; managing employee records, developing staffing schedules, assisting in identifying professional development opportunities, record keeping.

OR

- An ECE III, having completed a CCEPAC approved, ECE post diploma program, and whose duties are primarily those performed by an ECE working with children with additional support needs, infants, school-agers, aboriginal children, or any other recognized specialization.

OR

- An ECE II or III working in a nursery school, whose duties are primarily those performed by an ECE working with children and whose job description includes a portion of the child care program administration duties.

AND

- Participates in at least 24 hours of ECE professional development per year.

Job		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Supervisor II/ Assistant Director (ECE II or III)	Annual	\$43,740	\$46,475	\$49,208	\$51,943	\$54,676
	Hourly	\$21.03	\$22.34	\$23.66	\$24.97	\$26.29
Supervisor I/ ECE II or II with Specialized training or Nursery School Teacher (ECE II or III)	Annual	\$39,445	\$41,910	\$44,376	\$46,841	\$49,307
	Hourly	\$18.96	\$20.15	\$21.33	\$22.52	\$23.71

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR (ECE):

- As defined in The Community Child Care Standards Act, Manitoba Regulation 62/86.
- Duties are primarily those performed by a front line practitioner or primary caregiver for infants, preschool, school-age children, or a nursery school teacher with out administrative duties.
- Participates in at least 24 hours of ECE professional development per year.
- The ECEs primary responsibility is the care and education of children. The ECE presents, directs, and assesses the positive emotional, physical, social, and cognitive development of children in a child care setting, by implementing appropriate activities and programs according to each child's individual developmental abilities, interests, and needs.

THE MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR ARE:

- Establish and Maintain a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment
 - Safety
 - Health
 - Learning Environment
- Advance Physical and Intellectual Competence
 - Physical
 - Cognitive
 - Communication
 - Creative
- Build Positive Self Concept and Individual Strength
- Promote Positive Functioning of Children and Adults
- Coordinate Home and Centre
- Supplementary Responsibilities
 - Program Management
 - Professionalism



Job		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Early Childhood Educator (ECE II or III)	Annual	\$34,186	\$36,323	\$38,459	\$40,596	\$42,733
	Hourly	\$16.44	\$17.46	\$18.49	\$19.52	\$20.54

A guideline job description is in the Human Resource Management Guide for Early Learning and Child Care Programs, MCCA 2007

CHILD CARE ASSISTANT

- As defined in The Community Child Care Standards Act, Manitoba Regulation 62/86.
- Participates in at least 24 hours of professional development in early childhood education per year.

The Child Care Assistant (CCA) assists the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) with the care and education of children. This includes assisting the ECE in directing and assessing the positive emotional, physical, social and cognitive development of children by implementing appropriate activities and programs according to each child's individual developmental abilities, interests and needs.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANT IN ECE TRAINING

To be considered a Child Care Assistant in ECE Training, the CCA must be actively pursuing an ECE classification. This includes an employee doing their CBA, CBA/PLA, and IEQ programs. A written contract is required between the facility and the CCA that includes a start and end date for training. The 40 hour orientation course required by Regulation is not considered a CCA in ECE training.

Job		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Child Care Assistant in ECE in training	Annual	\$27,348	\$29,057	\$30,767	\$32,476	\$34,185
Educator (CCA)	Hourly	\$13.15	\$13.97	\$14.79	\$15.61	\$16.44
Child Care Assistant (CCA)	Annual	\$21,914	\$23,284	\$24,653	\$26,024	\$27,393
	Hourly	\$10.54	\$11.19	\$11.85	\$12.51	\$13.17

A guideline job description is in the Human Resource Management Guide for Early Learning and Child Care Programs, MCCA 2007