A qualified and valued workforce is foundational

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Who am I?
I am not an ECE?
Why do I value ECEs?
Each person write down what alternative career you would have chosen if you did not become an ECE.

I will randomly select people from the audience, and we will all together as a group say, ‘What would you have done?’ and the selected person will respond and also tell us why.
the what

Educator value
Are educators valued? How do we value the work educators do?

the how

Advocate
How can you make your voice heard? Who needs to be at the table?

the why

You matter!
Educators are foundational to quality early learning and child care. What do educators do that is so important for child outcome?
Educator value
Are educators valued?
How do we value the work educators do?
The Early Childhood Workforce in Canada

302,000+

1%

STATISTICS CANADA. NOC code 4214. ECEs and Assistants
What Does the Workforce Look Like?

- 96% are women
- 90% are aged 55 or younger
- <55 identify as Indigenous
- 76% work full-time
- 25% are self-employed, versus 15% in other professions
- 35% are immigrants or non-permanent residents, versus 25% in other professions

Atkinson Centre Workforce Report: [https://shorturl.at/lpEJ7](https://shorturl.at/lpEJ7)
Percent Change in Salary for Teachers and Early Childhood Educators by Province/Territory (2017-2020)

Growing inequities in the time of crisis

Educator burnout

Income loss

‘she’session

Increases in child abuse and domestic violence

Education loss
Politically convincing
Labour market
Labour force participation
Women’s rights

Child/Educator
Child/Educator

Politically convincing
Labour market
Labour force participation
Women’s rights
RECEs are filling in gaps in the system. There is no time for mentorship, collegial collaboration, excursions. Educators are often only able to provide basic care.

Staff turnover is high – this affects the quality of early education programs.

Compensation = value
Decent work = value
Opportunities for career advancement = value
the how

Advocate
How can you make your voice heard?
Who needs to be at the table?
1. What are the top 3 important elements you require as an ECE to do your job effectively?

2. What are some key issues and challenges you face as an ECE?

3. What are some of the benefits you would expect working as an ECE in a high quality ECE program?

4. How do you think parent / public perceptions of your role as an ECE will change with increased access and affordability?
Promising Practices – Recruitment/Retention

- College Tuition
- Social Assistance/employment
- Certificate programs for supervisor
- Mentoring programs
- Board of Directors training

knowing numbers
### Promising Practices – Wages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committed to Wage Grids</th>
<th>Wage Grids</th>
<th>MBM</th>
<th>Supervisor Rate</th>
<th>Rate Based on Centre Size</th>
<th>Non-RECE Staff</th>
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<td>8 jurisdictions</td>
<td>6 of the 8 jurisdictions now have wage grids or guidelines</td>
<td>Only 4 provinces meet Market Basket Measures (MBM)</td>
<td>PEI, NS, NL, MB have dedicated rates for supervisors</td>
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- **Committed to Wage Grids**: 8 jurisdictions committed to develop wage grids or improve their existing grids.
- **Wage Grids**: 6 of the 8 jurisdictions now have wage grids or guidelines.
- **MBM**: Only 4 provinces meet Market Basket Measures (MBM).
- **Supervisor Rate**: PEI, NS, NL, MB have dedicated rates for supervisors.
- **Rate Based on Centre Size**: MB establish rates based on centre size & recognize assistant supervisors.
- **Non-RECE Staff**: Most compensation systems do not recognize non-RECE staff.
Promising Practices – Benefits

- Only QC funds benefits and only in CPEs
- Only PEI and QC fund a defined benefit pension plan (QC only in CPEs)
- MB funds a defined contribution plan
- Only PEI and NS have committed to establishing benefit plans
the why

You matter!
Educators are foundational to quality early learning and child care.
What do educators do that is so important for child outcome?
Cognitive sensitivity refers to a person’s ability to create a cognitively stimulating environment when interacting with a less experienced partner while being attuned to this partner’s emotional state.

Research findings suggest that process quality indicators, and educator–child interactions in particular, are key drivers of children’s outcomes in pre-kindergarten settings. Process quality indicators were shown to correlate with children’s cognitive activity, cognitive and language outcomes and children’s behavior and social skills.
You will be getting into groups (observers, actors).

I have several emotions written down and a sentence on the next slide.

One person in a group will select a mood and read the sentence to the group, expressing the mood they’ve selected.

Observers will guess the mood.
It is really raining hard today;
I hope my basement doesn’t flood
Observers - what aspects of the person were you paying attention to when trying to guess the mood?
Actors - what was the experience like for you?

Particularly when the group could not guess your mood?
Designate one ‘expert’ and the rest are the ‘child’
‘Expert’ holds drawing, ‘child’ DO NOT LOOK AT THE DRAWING!!

Goal: Have the ‘children’ draw the drawing without looking at the picture using only instructions from the ‘expert’

Strive to be as clear and precise in your instructions and communication
‘Child’

What was this experience like for you?
What did the ‘expert’ do that was helpful?
What would have been more helpful?
Major barrier to cognitive sensitivity....

staff turnover – revolving door
What do we Know?
Quality Early Childhood Education Has Been Shown To:

**Diverse population**
Positive benefits seen with low and middle SES environments. Stronger benefits with low SES, dual language learners, and new comer families.

**Socio-emotional**
Important long term benefits including reduced substance abuse, high school drop outs, juvenile and adult criminality and higher levels of employment and income.

**Literacy and numeracy**
High quality ECE enhances child language and numeracy with economically disadvantaged children benefiting most - thus reducing socio-economic related disparity.

**Educator practice**
Positive impacts more likely to endure when incorporating rich, warm, and stimulating educator interactions.

**Parent engagement**
Those with the greatest benefits also incorporate a parenting component to optimize child-parent interactions.

**Economic benefits**
Benefits outweigh the costs through decreases in spending on special education, family transfers, social assistance – and increasing economic production.
“Part of being a professional is being recognized for what we actually do and the expertise that comes with that work versus a weak interpretation of what we do. It is up to us, those expert professionals, to educate others in the correct terminology, in standing up for our work, in showing our work ethic in all that we do” (Winick, 2020).
Words matter. If we wish to present an image of professionalism, we need to talk the walk, not just walk the talk. This is an example of advocacy, leadership, and being an agent of change.

We look after and educate children, not days. We work in a sector, learn in a specific field. We work in direct contact with children not literally on the floor (well, sometimes 😊). We are educators not workers and we are educated and experts in our craft. We need to be proud of what we do and who we are, and let that pride show visibly.
Advocacy is…

• …taking a stance

• …being a risk taker (even if just a teeny-weeny risk)

• …being an agent of change

• …knowing change takes time, effort, and intentionality

• …using your voice to go beyond making noise, and to include creating understanding, and movement toward a better/stronger outcome

And remember, there are others that are taking a stand with you!