

# ECE Workforce Rights 2024

ECEBC Conference 2024

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# ECE Workforce Rights 2024

- Analyze the status of the early childhood workforce across Canada.
- Review of wages, health benefits, other working conditions.
- Workforce conditions vary depending on public v. private sector, collective agreements, provincial commitments to the ECE workforce.
- Review access to pre-service and in-service training and other professional development.



# Develop strategic solutions to the ECE workforce shortage.

CWELCC Monitoring of new spaces across Canada.

Nearly 100,000 new spaces created for children under six across Canada - aim to create another 150,000 spaces by 2026.

Engage educators, early learning leaders, government partners, labour organizations, advocacy groups, and researchers.

Compare ECE workforce rights to other care sectors (Nursing, Teaching, Special Needs Resourcing).

Develop a National Campaign on ECE Bill of Rights





# Early Childhood Education Report 2023

The ECER was informed by 2004 review of early childhood education and care (ECEC) conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Canada had significant gaps.

21 benchmarks to rate quality based on measurements for governance, funding, access, learning environments and accountability – max score of 15 points.

Spending has increased in every jurisdiction – focus on public funding to reduce parent fees.



Wage supplements for staff



Increase in access and funded professional learning



Annual reports available



Licensed capacity meets needs of 50% of children under age 4



Common ECEC policy framework

# BC ECER Summary

BC received points for:

# BC Context



- Similar ECE workforce challenges in BC as across Canada.
- Address educator shortages in BC.
- 25% of employers offer pensions. Employment benefits are crucial for job satisfaction (ECEBC Report).
- Ensure expansion with enough qualified professionals.
- Staff exits and anticipated departures were at their highest levels in 2022 (ECEBC Report).
- Seek well-qualified staff remains challenging.
- Manage the impact of for-profit development on quality.

# BC Challenges

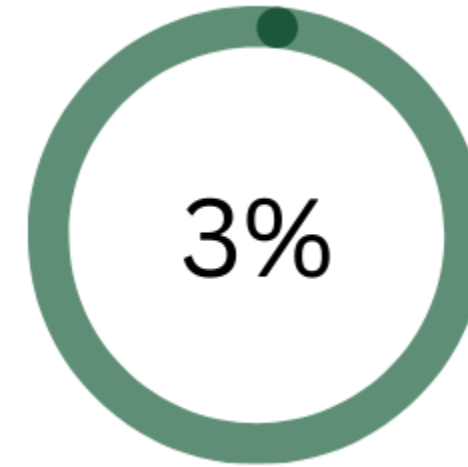
What would make a difference to ECE Workforce



**Lack a wage scale**



Less than 2/3 of staff in child care have ECE qualifications



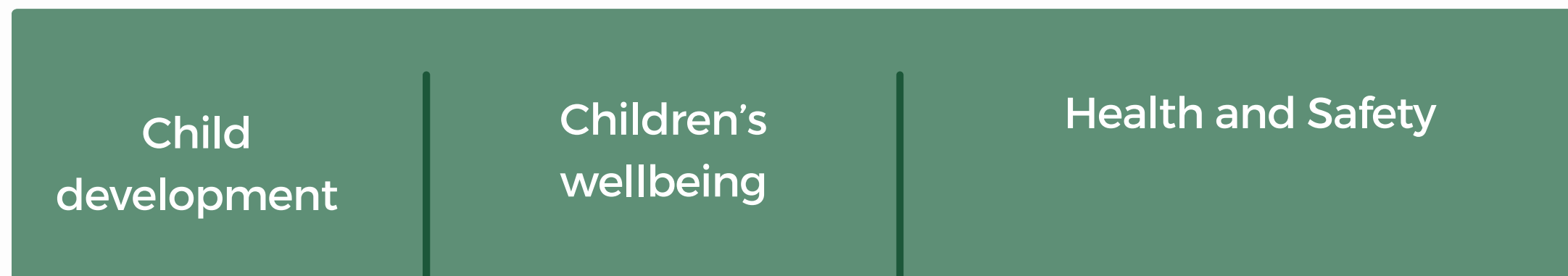
Does not spend at least 3% of overall budget on ECEC



**Kindergarten teachers not required to have ECE qualifications**

# Training Requirements in BC

- ECEs complete an early childhood education program at a recognized university or college.
- Certification is obtained through the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- **ECEAs training: Does it meet your programming needs?**



- ECE training programs designed to meet sector needs but have gaps, especially in rural areas.
- The province has initiated measures to improve training standards and availability.





# Scope of ECE Workforce Rights



Review employment standards across the care sector. Develop a national online platform for stakeholder engagement.



Advocate for better compensation and standards.



Constitutional challenge of federal funding with PT requirements.



Some Provinces and Territories are working to improve wages and conditions through CWELCC (ECE Report 2023).

# Support Strategies

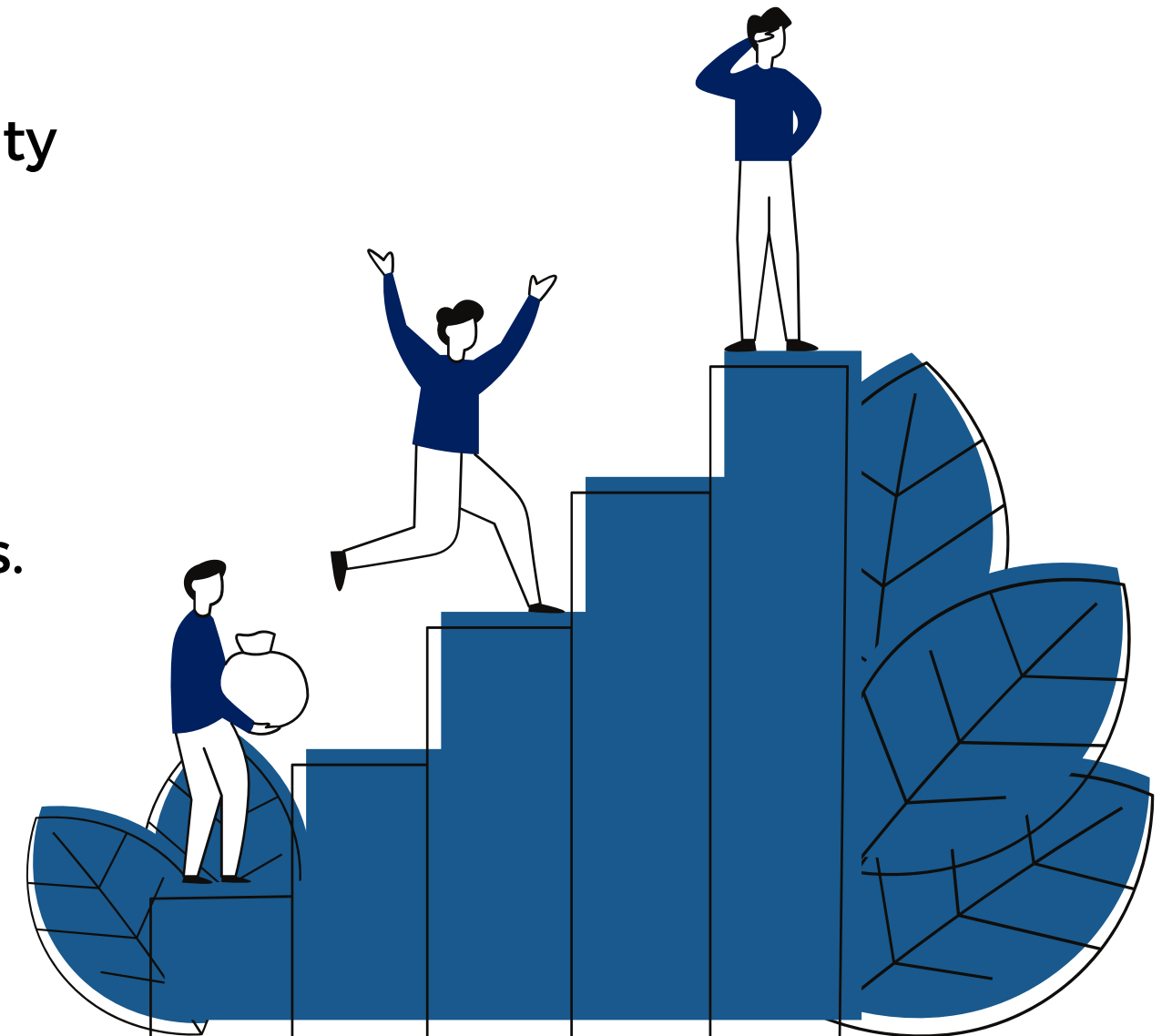


What does 'decent work' mean in ECE?

- Promote sector bargaining, pay equity, and better working conditions.
- Debates on ECE policies focus on waiting lists, the low-wage sector, and lack of parental choice.
- Define employment standards for ECE and develop platforms for robust stakeholder collaboration.
- Government's \$4/hour wage enhancement appreciated but muted by inflation (Source: ECEBC Report).

# Persistent Challenges

- Address wage disparities and solve the shortage of qualified professionals.
- Strategize against the negative impacts of for-profit entities on quality and accessibility (Source: Summer Institute 2024).
- Staff exits at the highest levels in 2022 (Source: ECEBC Report).
- Public education shapes supportive policies for ECE workforce rights.
- Increase in for-profit child care – impact on recruitment?



# Actionable Strategies



Advocate for standardized wage grids to ensure equitable pay.

Promote continuous professional development opportunities. Adapt successful policy frameworks from other care sectors.

Six jurisdictions have mandated wage grids (Source: ECE Report 2023).

Access to publicly funded pension plans.

Improvements in ECE salaries.

Improve wellness strategies.

# Future Policy Development

Explore federal legislative support for ECE workforce rights.

Apply lessons from healthcare and public education sectors.

Align national and provincial policies for consistent support and resources.

# Public Perception



**Positive public perception of early childhood educators.**

**Strong support for increased funding and better compensation.**

Ongoing policy support for ECE sector improvements.

# Discussion Questions

What are the three main challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified educators?

What are three factors that can contribute to long term growth and retention?

A Bill of Rights would guarantee several rights for educators. What are examples of rights that could function as an incentive for the ECE workforce?

# ECEBC Discussion Results

- Low wages /lack of benefits
- Working conditions
- Burn out
- **Lack of supervisor support**
- No supply staff
- Lack of advancement opportunities
- Lack of value
- Lack of support for working with children with disabilities
- Lack of professional development
- Mental health support
- **ECEs need more education**
- **Lack of public support**

## Challenges

- Salary enhancement
- Salary grids
- Career enhancement
- Support for the diverse needs of children
- **Recognize Indigenous Knowledge**
- Support for international students
- Tuition assistance for upgrading qualifications
- Mentorship for new grads
- **Improve certification standards**
- Funding should be attached to quality assurance measures
- Support for directors – HR, financial literacy
- Stable funding

## Growth

- The right to a living wage
- The right to benefits
- Right to decent work
- Right for paid professional development
- Right to safety
- Right to decent work – public pensions, health benefits, wage grids, mental health resources and support
- **Standardizing accreditation**
- Consistent and stable funding
- National training standards for Early Childhood Educators

## Rights



## Next Steps on ECE Workforce Rights



Review training and employment standards across the early childhood sector.



Advocate for better training requirements and compensation.



Compare standards for early childhood professional education and compensation across Canada.

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