

Evaluation of Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy: Final Evaluation Benchmarking Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

British Columbia is making a \$136m investment in an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (ECL R&R Strategy) for the province’s Early Care and Learning sector. The ECL R&R Strategy is part of a larger ten-year plan (“Childcare BC”) to increase the quality, affordability and availability of child care spaces in British Columbia. The Strategy proposes to meet the following three overarching long-term goals:

- An adequate and stable workforce comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals
- Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career
- Appropriate compensation plans and human resource strategies.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST) has engaged with the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) to lead a Sector Labour Market Partnerships project with the goal to enable a mechanism for regular sector feedback on the overarching impacts of the ECL R&R Strategy on BC's child care workforce. ECEBC in turn has selected Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) as the subcontractor to produce and implement the sector-led impact assessment framework that will measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the Strategy on the sector. A Sector Steering Committee (SSC) with representation for 22 ECL organizations province-wide has been established and meets several times each year for the purpose of guiding the evaluation.

The benchmarking report reviews activities and presents data collected by SRDC since the project outset in mid-December 2018 through to December 31, 2019. It includes a description of successes and challenges encountered during the evaluation work, a detailed narrative of the evaluation results and a set of recommendations regarding next steps and useful considerations going forward.

EVALUATION STRATEGY

The evaluation design was finalized in SRDC’s Evaluation Strategy (2019) report in May 2019. An update on the implementation of the evaluation framework and methodology was included in the Interim Report in November 2019. The Evaluation Framework has remained largely intact and updates only concerned implementation of the methodology to build data for each line of evidence.

The overarching questions the evaluation aims to answer through the three-year period derive from the ECL R&R Strategy's goals and outcomes. They have been expressed as nested questions relating the expected three-year outcomes to longer-term goals, as follows:

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce?
 - b. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?
 - c. Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?
2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce?
3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?

The evaluation strategy calls for data from many methods and tools described below to answer these questions. These data contribute to measuring and furthering understanding of changes on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The baseline or benchmark evidence on each of these 13 indicators, covering the period from 2015 to 2019, appears in this report. Progress in collecting each of these different data sources is reviewed briefly below before the presentation of benchmark results.

Evaluation methods and tools

Theory of change consultations. The purpose of the Theory of Change within the Evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy was to make sure SRDC would be collecting information that would help improve understanding not just of whether the outcomes were achieved, but also the factors that led to success (or not), unexpected and unintended effects, external factors that influenced results and so on. SRDC interviewed a total of five developers of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics from the BC Ministry of Education (EDU), Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST), and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to learn the theory of change behind the Strategy’s “tactics.” The initial Theory was well received and endorsed, allowing SRDC to use it to inform other features of the evaluation framework such as the KPIs which in turn supported development of the methods and tools implemented in the evaluation.

Design and execution of the first of three annual cross-sectional surveys of the ECL workforce. Members of the SSC iteratively reviewed survey instrument drafts and supported design of a system to maximize survey participation over the evaluation period, including a two-stage round of cross-sectional surveys annually (in October-November 2019, 2020, and 2021) open to all members of the child care workforce, and incentivized with thank-you gifts. The first stage featured the collection of centre-specific information obtained through “employers” (including owner operators) who were also encouraged to forward invitations to their staff to support a nested survey of employees within each facility. The second stage featured an open invitation to capture the responses of people who were not reached in the first round or who did not respond for another reason. SRDC tasks included email reminders in the event of non-completion, social media and newsletter invitations and publicity. Usable survey responses were obtained from 2,516 people who were members of the child care workforce and 212 Early Childhood Educators no longer working in child care. The employer sample comprised 1,338 responses from managers of licensed care centres, pre-school, or after-school programs. According to current staff information provided by employers, we estimate the organizations reported in the survey included at least 8,495 ECL workers in BC.

Data assessment, scan, building and maintaining data systems. One of SRDC’s early tasks was setting up a comprehensive contact database of ECL providers and their employees. This work established scope (setting rules on the inclusion of licensed and unlicensed, registered, and unregistered carers), data assessment to determine available data sources and optimal means for keeping the database up to date. Administrative data were acquired through the summer of 2019 and will be updated using equivalent sources in 2020 and 2021 to monitor trends in program roll out, licensing and registrations, to the extent possible. The contact database formed the initial sample frame for cross-sectional surveys in October-November 2019.

SRDC also sought Administrative Outcomes Data as these provide a source of information for descriptive analysis of the pace and pattern of implementation of the strategy tactics as well as

enumeration of changes being brought about by the strategy in the number and characteristics of child care providers. This is the component of the evaluation on which SRDC has made least progress to date. SRDC has approached several Ministries and other organizations to obtain data, but the process of data acquisition is far from complete. Very recently, MCFD has become able to release aggregate data from the Child Care Operating Fund, Provider Profile, Startup Grant, Wage Enhancement and ECE Registry certifications to SRDC. Data from Child Care Resource & Referral, Prototype sites and training programs have also been requested by MCFD.

Census and Labour Force Survey Microdata. The evaluation began with detailed exploration of the composition of the BC ECL workforce using the 2016 Census microdata (analyzed as anonymized individual records) compared to earlier years going back to Census 2001. These data included family background and characteristics, income (from tax records), earnings, credentials, location, well-being of all people employed in child care in the province. More recent employment trends were captured using Labour Force Survey Data to 2018.

Media and social media analysis. SRDC sought a mechanism to systematically collect analytics and results from a daily review of BC-relevant child care-related posts and compilation of news article data for content analysis. This activity supports tracking of perceptions among thought leaders and mass media of employment in ECL as a career choice, and sentiments that ECL professionals implement high standards of care and education. SRDC has established media search strings and algorithms and uses TalkWalker software to locate each day's BC-relevant child care-related posts and news articles throughout the course of the project. While data capture is ongoing, systems for coding, content analysis and compilation are still under development.

Public opinion survey. This effort in 2019 and 2022 includes a sample representative of all adults aged 18+ years and a booster sample of 'emerging adults' aged 13 through 23 years to gauge any changes in career aspirations. The tasks included designing and testing the survey instruments to include selected existing and new questions related to perceptions of ECL careers and questions probing opinions on BC's ECL workforce. While SRDC designed the survey, cleans and analyzes the data, an external market research firm fields the survey to a representative sample of British Columbians.

Key informant interviews (KII) and case studies. In consultation with the SSC, a set of selection criteria and engagement strategies for case study sites and KII protocols were developed to collect in depth accounts to better understand the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics, especially successes and challenges in delivery. Interviewees included a diverse sample of providers, their staff, resource centres and advisors and government program managers. Interviewees also supported instrument validation. Starting in September 2019, SRDC visited six case study sites province wide for onsite fieldwork. Fieldwork with the same sites will be repeated in 2020 and 2021. The majority of KIIs take place either during these visits or

through engaging workers located in a range of types of sites not included in the case studies. Interviews are scheduled for data collection on an ongoing basis. Refer to Table 1 on page 24 for the schedule of different types of interview by year.

ANALYSIS OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

SRDC worked with the SSC to create an organizing structure for the evidence collected to answer the evaluation questions. This resulted in 13 KPIs. Collectively these can be used to assess the changes occurring from the ECL R&R Strategy and in various permutations shed light on specific questions. These KPIs provide the headings for the results below. They are expressed neutrally in that they do not describe a positive or negative expectation of change in themselves. It is the change in the KPI over time that describes the consequences and impact of the implementation tactics and the achievement of the Strategy's goals.

The initial evidence is presented below as benchmarks; data on KPIs from the period 2015-2019 captures the starting point for many of the changes the ECL R&R Strategy is expected to produce. Critically, it will be the task of later reports to compare the data on indicators from 2020 and 2021 to those of the same indicators reported here. That later comparison will determine **change** in the KPIs. It is the specific combination of changes across the KPIs that will signal success for the strategy in achieving its three-year outcomes.

The KPIs in the full report draw on multiple data sources: cycling through different data drawn from the set of available sources. Using multiple measures improves validity and also enables some level of continuity in annual reporting in a situation where not all data sources can report in every year following this current one. Several sources like the cross-sectional survey contribute to many KPIs. Others such as the public opinion survey feature less often. Also, for each KPI there are multiple data points per data source. There are several ways to present information on wages, for example. In this summary, for brevity, we concentrate on high-level "headline" findings from the benchmarking exercise, starting with the changing profile of BC's ECL workforce that emerges from the Census in 2016 and earlier. We then consider each KPI in turn, drawing out evidence on key findings related to each KPI.

Population profile from the Census

Within the Census data SRDC divided BC's ECL workforce into two broad groups:

- Workers whose occupations were categorized by Statistics Canada as Early Childhood Educator or Assistant were categorized ECE/A+. This includes most people working in child care centres and agencies, including those working as ECEs and ECEAs but also as "daycare helpers" such as responsible adults, who may not hold a post-secondary credential.

"ECE/A+" was thus somewhat broader than the definition SRDC applied to the majority of its cross-sectional survey respondents as Centre-based ECL workers.

- Similarly, the home child care provider (HCP+) category – defined in the Census analysis as workers who provide care primarily in their own homes or in the children's homes where they may also reside – holds a broader cross-section of people caring for children than HCPs in SRDC's cross-sectional survey. The latter include family child care providers, LNRs, RLNRs and nannies, but very few nannies responded to SRDC's survey. HCP+ also includes babysitters, live-in caregivers, and parents' helpers.

The Census provides the best estimates of how the size of British Columbia's ECL workforce has been changing over time. The number of ECE/A+ workers in BC increased steadily from 2000 to 2010 (21,055 workers in 2000, 21,790 workers in 2005, 22,610 workers in 2010), before decreasing in 2015 (20,530). The number of HCP+ workers was highest in 2000 (16,445 workers), before dropping significantly in 2005 (12,780). Since 2005, the number of HCP+ workers has increased (13,000 workers in 2010 and 15,180 workers in 2015), though not returned to levels seen in 2000. The total workforce of ECE/A+ and HCP+ together was slightly smaller in 2015 than in 2000: a period over which the BC population grew by 19 per cent.

As expected, the majority of the workforce were women (95 per cent in 2015). Compared to the non-ECL workforce, the ECL workforce was more likely to: be single (42 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 39 per cent of non-ECL workers); have children (45 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 39 per cent of non-ECL workers); have larger families with 3 or more children (9 per cent of ECL workers had 3 or more children, compared to 6 per cent of non-ECL workers); identify as Indigenous (7 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 5 per cent of non-ECL workers); be an established immigrant/newcomer/non-resident (39 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 31 per cent of non-ECL workers); and have an activity limitation (35 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 32 per cent of non-ECL workers).

KPI 1: ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation

The first KPI concerns ECL workers satisfaction with working conditions in general and the appropriateness of their compensation in particular. SRDC's cross-sectional survey respondents were most often satisfied with aspects of their employment such as their relationship with families they worked with, relationships with their co-workers and the philosophy of their workplace. Fewer, but still more than three in four were satisfied with their opportunities for advancement (79%) and overall workload (77%). Only about half of respondents were satisfied with their income (51%) while 58% were satisfied with their benefits. In general, Centre ECL workers had lower satisfaction rates than owner-operators.

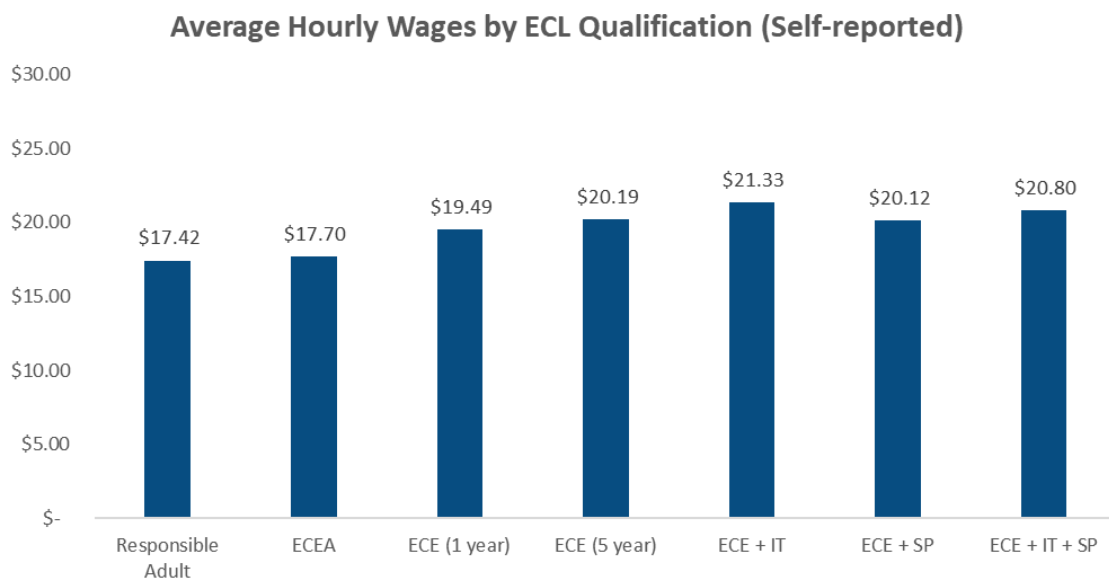
KPI 2

The second KPI is in two parts, including measures of income compensation in KPI 2A and benefits in KPI 2B.

KPI 2A: Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers

SRDC's cross-sectional survey collected reports of wages for 2019. The averages of workers' self-reported hourly wages are presented in Figure ES1. The average Centre ECL worker's hourly wage rate was \$20.07 and generally increased with higher qualifications and job responsibilities.

Figure ES1 Wage reports from cross-sectional survey



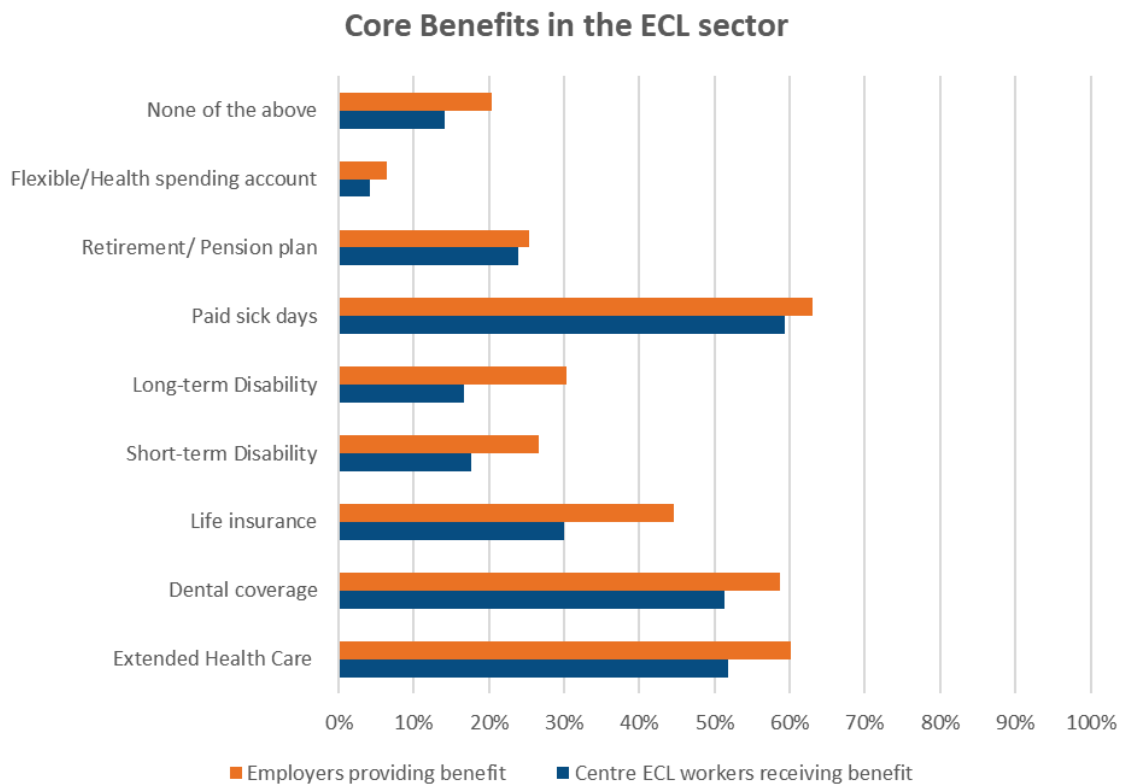
Over half (58 per cent) of the cross-sectional workforce survey respondents were receiving the wage enhancement, a tactic introduced as part of the ECL R&R Strategy. This proportion was highest among Centre ECL workers (72 per cent). It is not possible to provide an independent estimate of how many Centre ECL workers would have been eligible.

KPI 2B: ECL workers' benefits

SRDC's cross-sectional survey asked employers about the benefits they provided and employees about the benefits they received. The responses are not expected to match for several reasons,

primarily the variation in number of employees represented at different centres. As shown in Figure ES2, about half of respondents to the cross-sectional workforce survey reported receiving Extended Health Care (52 per cent) and Dental coverage (51 per cent). A fifth of employers reported not providing any core benefits.

Figure ES2 Benefits reported by cross-sectional survey respondents



Responses to the final open-ended question in the cross-sectional workforce survey included calls for in-work benefits to be available to all in the sector. Commenters stressed these benefits were needed because workers within the sector were experiencing burnout, as the job was physically and emotionally demanding. In-work benefits would be needed to help staff access the supports they needed as well as paid sick time and other leave. Many respondents wanted provincial help to access pensions as they were typically not provided by employers.

KPI 3: The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs

Work is still underway on the updated Sector Occupational Competencies. SRDC will begin to track the integration of these competencies through key informant interviews and document review, as soon as these are released.

KPI 4: Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs

An anticipated consequence of the ECL R&R Strategy is that more ECL workers would hold credentials relevant to the provision of child care and that meet specific ECL needs relevant to their position. Employer-reported data indicated most employees across all positions hold an ECE certificate or higher. Table ES1 shows the ratio of ECE certified to non-ECE certified by worker group. ECEs not working in child care have a largest ratio while HCPs have the lowest. Among Centre ECL workers, there are more than 3 ECE-certified workers for every non-certified worker. The ratio is lower among owner-operators among whom there are 2.8 ECE-certified respondents for every non-certified respondent.

Table ES1 Ratio of ECE certified to non-ECE certified ECL workers

Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care
2.8 : 1	3.1 : 1	0.6 : 1	5.1 : 1

Staffing needs were assessed through a set of questions asked to employers and staff. Employers were asked whether any child attending their program fell into a number of categories meant to capture children’s needs. The categories included: identified special needs; neither official language spoken at home; new immigrants and refugees; and Indigenous children. Three in five (60 per cent of) employers who reported having children with identified special needs attending their program also reported having staff with Special Needs certification. Three in ten (29 per cent of) employers had at least one staff who spoke the first non-English languages of children attending their programs.¹

¹ Unfortunately, it was not possible to collect data that allowed sufficient assessment of whether staff were qualified/trained in Indigenous programming.

The survey also probed staffing shortfalls. In the 12-month period preceding the survey:

- 43 per cent of employers were unable to fill at least one vacant position.
- Half had to fill at least one position with an individual with lower qualifications than they had wanted.
- A third had to refuse children due to not having staff with the right qualifications to accommodate the children's needs.

The top qualifications missing for these employers were ECE (63 per cent), Special needs (33 per cent), and Infant and Toddler certification (37 per cent). About 2 per cent cited they were not able to find staff with experience working with Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit children.

KPI 5: Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers

The Strategy intends to make a career in ECL more attractive to those considering their career options. SRDC's public opinion survey asked British Columbians for whom this was relevant – 13-23-year-olds and older adults contemplating a career change – about their interest in ECL. Close to a quarter of these respondents stated they were interested in ECL as a career. As Figure ES3 shows, opinions shift even more in favour of contemplating a career in ECL if health benefits were available or hours of work could be more flexible.

KPI 6: Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills

Survey respondents working in ECL rated their core skills quite highly in the cross-sectional workforce survey. As Figure ES4 shows, nearly all staff rated themselves as “above average” or “excellent” in communicating effectively with children and building caring relationships with children. Somewhat fewer (around three quarters) rated themselves as highly for demonstrating cultural sensitivity or making the environment inclusive for children with special needs. Their employers' opinions on their skills are reported in KPI 10.

Figure ES3 Responses of emerging adults and adults contemplating a career change on working in ECL (Public Opinion Survey)

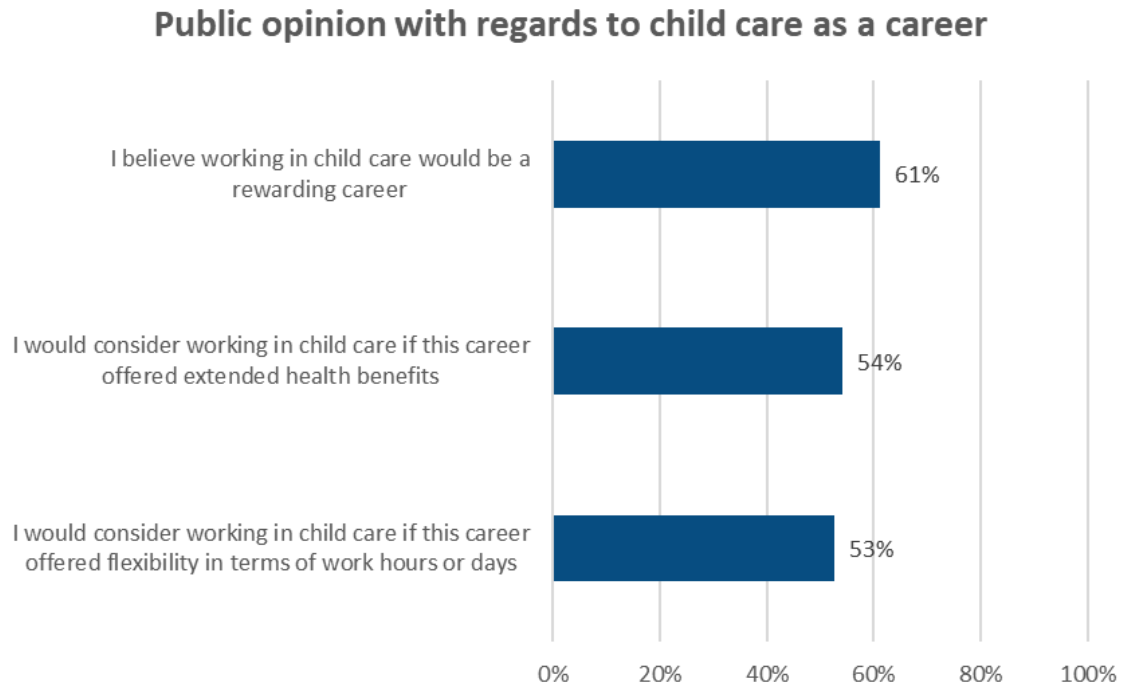
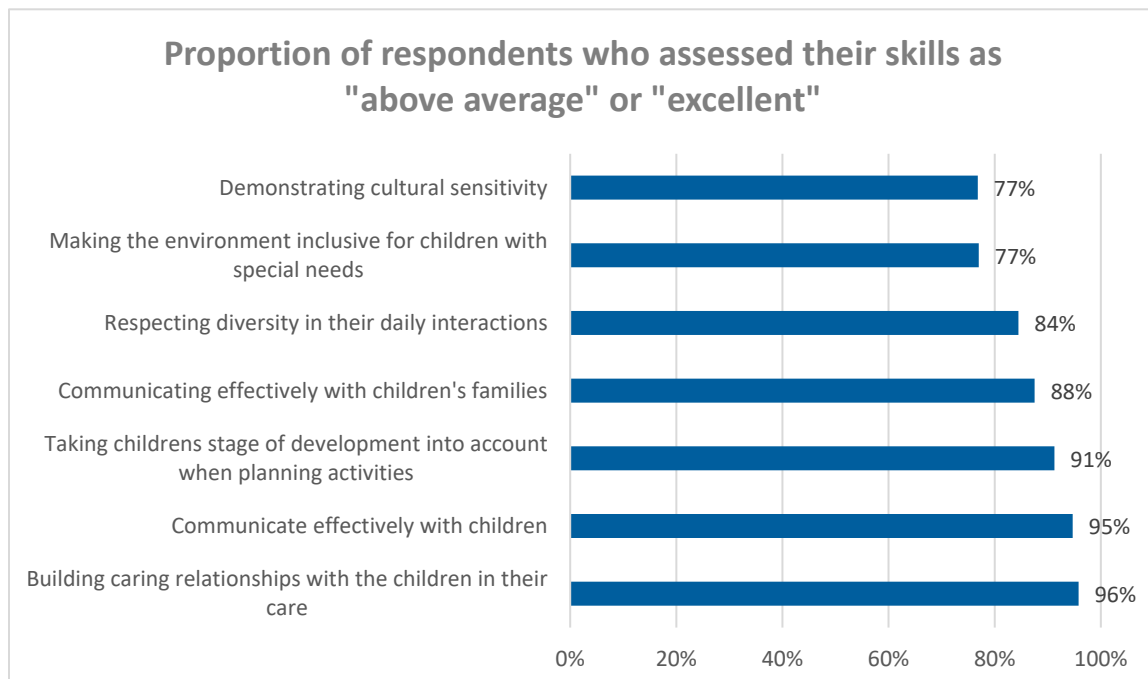


Figure ES4 Self-assessment of core skills by respondent group



KPI 7: Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities

Six in ten cross-sectional workforce survey respondents reported that they believed there were a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the ECL sector. In terms of provisions from employers, the most common, from about 66 per cent of employers, was an outline of career options within ECL provided to their staff. However, the majority of employers did not report engaging in other activities (like conducting performance reviews or recognizing staff with higher levels of education and experience with higher wages) that would promote staff's career advancement.

A key tactic to promote professional development is the ECE Workforce Development Fund. More than half (56 per cent of) cross-sectional survey respondents were aware of the ECE Workforce Development Fund: 17 per cent of those had applied and 27 per cent were planning to apply.

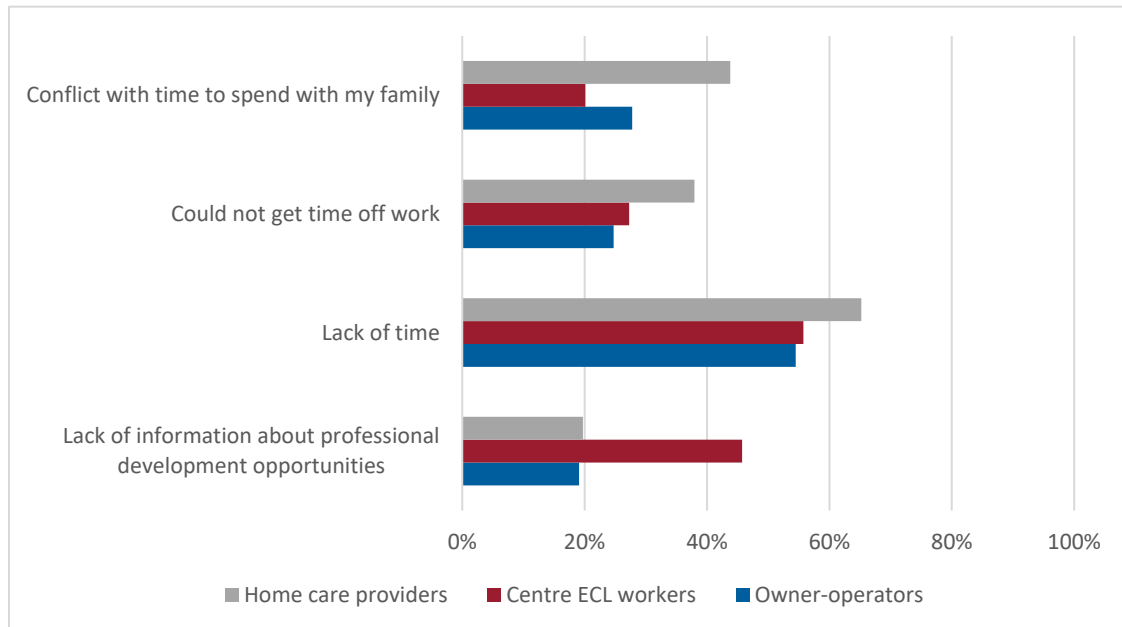
KPI 8: Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities

More than three quarters (78 per cent) of the cross-sectional workforce survey respondents reported participating in professional development activities in the 12 months preceding the survey. The most-commonly reported reason for not participating in professional development activities was lack of time (Figure ES5).

KPI 9: Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year

According to the cross-sectional workforce survey, respondents who participated in professional development activities completed an average of 27.3 hours of professional development over the 12-month period preceding the survey. Most respondents who participated in any professional development activity completed 25 or fewer hours (75 per cent). The mean is higher than 25 due to a number of respondents with very high levels of participation, which pulls the mean upwards.

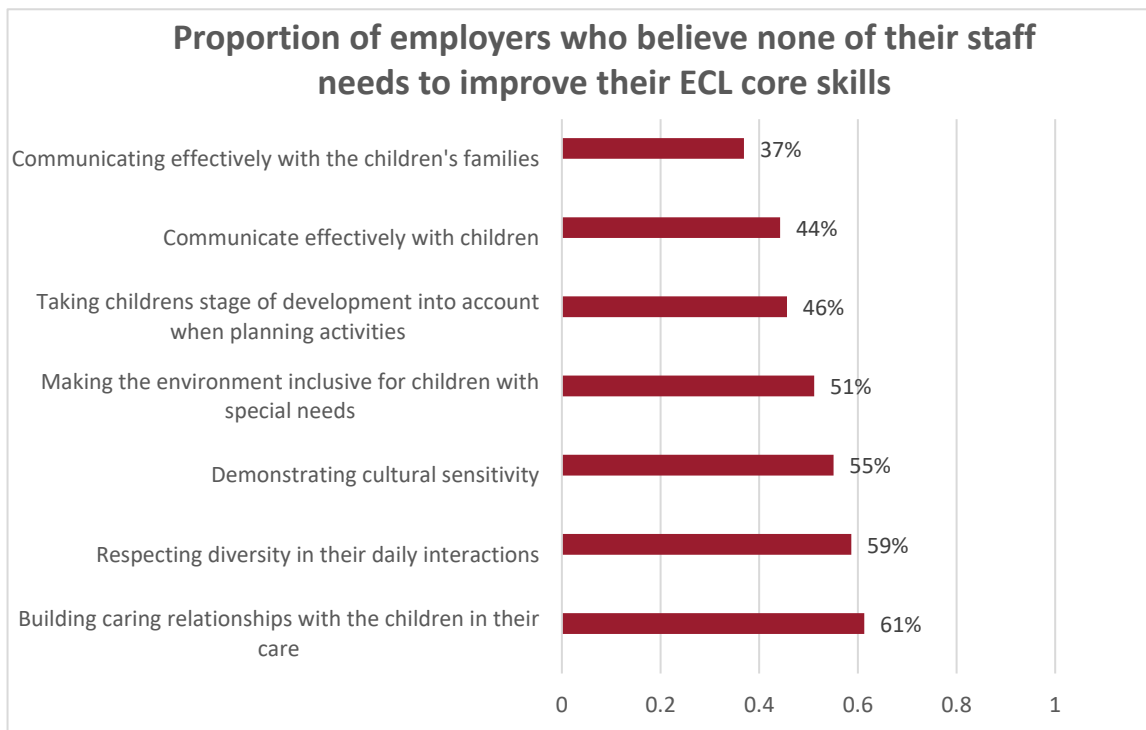
Figure ES5 Reasons for not participating in career development activities among cross-sectional survey respondent



KPI 10: Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills

As shown in Figure ES6, the majority of employers felt none of their staff needed to improve skills in competencies such as building caring relationships with the children in their care and respecting diversity in their daily interactions. More than half of employers believed at least some of their staff needed to improve their effective communication with children’s families and with the children they care for. Thus, employers had less confidence in workers skills communicating with children than workers had themselves (reported in KPI 6).

Figure ES6 Employers responding to the cross-sectional survey on prevalence of ECL core skills among their staff



KPI 11: Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits

Based on analysis of the Labour Force Survey, average job tenure (time with current employer) for ECE/A+ workers decreased markedly from 81 months in 2017 to 46 months in 2018. This could reflect more job turnover or an influx of relatively new employees to these positions. SRDC’s cross-sectional survey found Centre ECL workers reporting an average job tenure of 4.8 years with their current employers in 2019, roughly in line with the Census estimate for 2018.

According to employer responses to the cross-sectional workforce survey, on average, licensed centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs experienced a staff net loss in the 12 months preceding the survey. Whole sample level estimates (for 467 employers) also show an overall net-loss of staff, especially for full-time Centre ECL worker and supervisor positions.

About 9 per cent of those working in centres reported that they were currently looking for another job, but most cross-sectional workforce survey respondents expected to continue working in ECL for at least a year after completing the survey (89 per cent).

Among those in the survey who had left working in ECL (212 certified as Early Childhood Educators not working in the sector), the main reasons for leaving the sector were:

- Dissatisfaction with pay (57 per cent);
- Working conditions (36 per cent); and
- Dissatisfaction with benefits (33 per cent).

KP 12: Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector

Cross-sectional survey respondents were asked to rate their opinion on five statements regarding the public's perception of their work in child care. In general, the ratio of positive to negative opinions was highest for the statement *my work is valued by the families of the children I work with* (15:1). Owner-operators also had a high ratio for *my work is valued by the families of my child care organization* (14:1). In contrast, respondents were equally likely to have positive or negative opinions about the statement *child care is valued by the public*.

Workers were asked opinions related to how they would portray work in the sector in the cross-sectional survey. Results in Table ES2 reveal eight times as many respondents held positive views as negatives ones about their choice of child care as a profession. They were more likely to be comfortable with their own choice of child care as a profession than in recommending it to others.

KPI 13: Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents

A representative cross-section of adults in BC were also asked their opinions in the public opinion survey related to how they would portray work in the ECL sector. The majority of respondents held a positive view of child care workers. Nearly 80 per cent of respondents disagreed that working in child care doesn't require many skills. The majority of respondents disagreed that child care workers are less important than teachers (69.2 per cent) or equivalent to babysitters (65.6 per cent). The vast majority of respondents (83.9) agreed that child care workers contributed to the long-term development of children in BC, and 72.2 per cent agreed or strongly agreed child care workers were professionals.

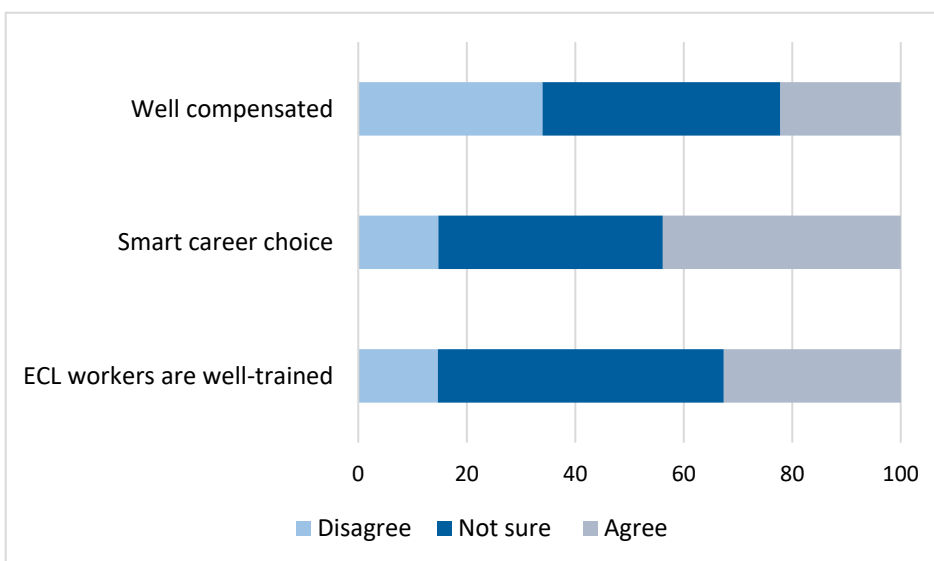
Nonetheless the results also revealed a high level of uncertainty regarding provincial child care workers' training and compensation (Figure ES7).

Table ES2 Ratio of positive to negative comments regarding ECL work

	Owner-operator	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Consider child care as chosen profession [agree: disagree]	8 : 1	8 : 1	9 : 1	9 : 1
My current job is stepping stone [disagree: agree]*	5 : 1	2 : 1	6 : 1	4 : 1
My current job is temporary [disagree: agree]*	10 : 1	4 : 1	8 : 1	6 : 1
Would recommend child care as a profession [agree: disagree]	3 : 1	2 : 1	4 : 1	3 : 1
I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care [agree: disagree]	11 : 1	6 : 1	14 : 1	9 : 1

* Responses to these statements were **reversed** to estimate ratio of positive to negative opinions.

Figure ES7 Public sentiment with respect to careers in the ECL sector: BC adults (Public Opinion Survey)



British Columbia adults reporting level of agreement to the following statements:

- Child care workers are compensated fairly given the skills and training they have.
- Working in child care is a smart career choice.
- In general, child care workers in BC are well-trained.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

This evaluation benchmarking report reports on progress to date with the Sector Led Evaluation of the ECL Recruitment and Retention Strategy in BC. In general, the evaluation has proceeded largely as planned, collecting data on different aspects of the employment, working conditions, education, and professional development of the 35,000 or so people who make up the province's ECL workforce.

- Census and Labour Force Survey data have been analyzed as planned to provide a relatively precise but high level overview of who is in the workforce and how this composition has changed from 2000 through 2015, including a snapshot on earnings in 2015. The Labour Force Survey captures job tenure up to 2018.
- SRDC conducted a cross-sectional survey of the workforce in late 2019 that provides data on a wide range of indicators, and also gave voice to child care workers to provide feedback on the key influences on recruitment and retention as they saw them.
- A more in-depth analysis of the influence of the Strategy's tactics on everyday child care operations and workplace experiences has been included from six case study sites and three (of the four completed) additional key informant interviews spanning different types of child care workplace.
- A province-wide survey of public opinions on child care careers and emerging adults' interests in working in the sector round out measures of the key outcomes the ECL R&R Strategy is intended to influence, as they stood in 2019.

This report cycles through these data sources to document the baseline position on many KPIs as well as reports and observations from workers in the sector that add meaning to these statistics. The full value of these data for the evaluation will be realized when the reports on evaluation results in 2020 and 2021 compare back to the statistics included here to determine the change that has occurred over the period the ECL R&R Strategy's tactics have been in force.

While another cycle of data collection is required before change under the ECL R&R Strategy can be mapped, there are nevertheless a few pointers to recommendations in the data collected to date with respect to policy and implementation. We recap below the main observations and policy implications emerging:

- From the Census data analysis, the most important finding is perhaps the relative decline in numbers of ECE/A+ workers in the sector from 2010 to 2015. Given increasing demand for early care and learning in the province, this decline alone provides strong justification for new approaches to promote recruitment and retention in the ECE/A+ workforce.

- For the most part, the cross-sectional survey and interviews confirm the challenging situation with respect to recruitment and retention that has prompted the ECL R&R Strategy. While the issues are not new to those working in the sector, the benchmarking exercise has quantified them:
 - Pay is lower than for equivalently qualified workers in other sectors.
 - Workers, especially if they have young families themselves, can struggle to make ends meet.
 - Benefits vary considerably and at least a fifth of employers offer none.
 - There were high levels of engagement in professional development in 2019 but several participants found it costly. Resulting promotion and recognition through wages was piecemeal. This weakens the financial incentive to pursue professional development.
- Members of the workforce tend to find their work physically and mentally demanding and yet also highly rewarding. They are proud of the contribution they make to the development of the province's next generations. Many more will speak positively than negatively about the work of ECE. But there is a net loss of workers from the sector. One in fourteen Centre ECL workers plan to leave within a year. More than half the ECEs surveyed who are no longer working in child care attributed their departure to dissatisfaction with pay and benefits and a quarter to poor career advancement opportunities.
- The ECL R&R Strategy tactics such as the wage enhancement and bursaries have been welcomed as much for signaling recognition of the above challenges as for the material benefit they have produced. Nearly three-quarters of Centre ECL workers had benefitted from the wage enhancement. At the same time, several seemed to have run foul of the education bursary's intermittent availability and/or the requirements to pay up front for their professional development prior to later reimbursement. These implementation challenges present opportunities to tailor and streamline the delivery of tactics in future.
- There were many more encouraging signals for recruitment from the public opinion survey. Up to a quarter of BC teenagers and adults contemplating a career change are willing to consider working in ECL. These proportions can be made even larger with improvements in ECL working conditions such as flexible working hours and benefits.
- While workers spoke of their hopes that people outside the profession would hold their role in higher esteem, SRDC's survey of public opinion found they were held in high regard already by many:

- Fully 72 per cent of the public agree child care workers are professionals.
- Only 13 per cent thought them less important to children’s development than elementary school teachers.
- Yet the majority of the public were not sure whether or not child care workers were well trained and 44 per cent could not venture an opinion on whether such workers were fairly compensated given their skills and training. The increased attention the ECL R&R Strategy focuses on the role of child care workers in the province may represent one way to help more of the public understand the conditions of those who work in the profession and to justify why new tactics are needed.

The report sets the stage for the many aspects of careers in ECL that the ECL R&R Strategy’s many tactics have been developed to change. In less than 12 months, we anticipate taking the first early look at how well the efforts are succeeding in moving the needle on the many challenges already known and now described and quantified in the benchmarking report.

INTRODUCTION

British Columbia is making a \$136m investment in an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (ECL R&R Strategy) for the province’s Early Care and Learning sector. The ECL R&R Strategy is part of a larger ten-year plan (“Childcare BC”) to increase the quality, affordability and availability of child care spaces in British Columbia. The Strategy proposes to meet the following three overarching long-term goals:

- An adequate and stable workforce comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals
- Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career
- Appropriate compensation plans and human resource strategies.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST) has engaged with the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) to lead a Sector Labour Market Partnerships project with the goal to enable a mechanism for regular sector feedback on the overarching impacts of the ECL R&R Strategy on BC's child care workforce. ECEBC in turn has selected Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) as the subcontractor to produce and implement the sector-led impact assessment framework that will measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the Strategy on the sector.

This benchmarking report reviews activities and presents data collected by SRDC since the project outset in mid-December 2018 through to December 31, 2019, including an updated project management work plan with a report on Sector Steering Committee activities, updates to the evaluation framework and methodology including a description of successes and challenges encountered during the evaluation work, a detailed narrative of the evaluation results and a set of recommendations regarding next steps and useful considerations going forward.

UPDATED PROJECT MANAGEMENT WORK PLAN

SRDC drafted its original description of project tasks and activities to include in the workplan in January 2019. Table 1 sets out the updated tasks and project activities using a Gantt chart format, with each year on a separate page. These charts illustrate the timeline for the principal tasks set out below and indicate when each type of activity will be most prevalent. The main categories of tasks are described again below, drawing attention to changes in the planned activities and timelines and their rationale:

PROJECT TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Project liaison, work plan development, coordination and consultation** including the Sector Steering Committee and the Government Working Group. SRDC and ECEBC have been collaborating in developing the workplan and scheduling the flow of evaluation activities, review of deliverables and meetings. The activities include engagement with the Government Working Group and Sector Steering Committee including in-person and virtual meetings. These meeting dates have been adjusted to better reflect the optimal timing for data collection, analysis, and synthesis in reports. SRDC is responsible for coordinating its own project team, including subcontractors engaged in the many other project activities included below.
- **Data assessment, scan, building and maintaining data systems** including setting up a comprehensive contact database of ECL providers and their employees. This work established scope (setting rules on the inclusion of licensed and unlicensed, registered, and unregistered carers), data assessment to determine available data sources and optimal means for keeping the database up to date. Administrative data were acquired through the summer of 2019 and will be updated using equivalent sources in 2020 and 2021 to monitor trends in program roll out, licensing and registrations, to the extent possible.

The contact database formed the initial sample frame for provider and employee surveys in October 2019. It is constructed also to allow assessment of the changing composition of the sector each time it is updated. The child care workforce surveys are fielded to an updated sample frame each year adopting a strictly cross-sectional design, even though many surveys will be completed by the previous years' contacts to allow a longitudinal analysis. SRDC plans to analyze the database to quantify provider entries and exits. At the same time, the survey will provide detail on who is entering and leaving the workforce. SRDC will link data from one survey wave to the next to permit longitudinal analysis on each provider's workforce and service development.

- **Media and social media analysis** tasks included establishing appropriate media search strings, algorithms and provider scope, and desired formats for outputs. Work is continuous, collecting analytics and results from each day's BC-relevant child care-related posts and news articles throughout the course of the project. Regular monitoring and data capture will be supplemented annually in the run up to the production of evaluation reports by coding, content analysis and compilation of a standard report.
- **Key informant interviews (KII)** for implementation research/case studies including the development of the ECL R&R Strategy theory of change. A set of KII protocols were developed for the Evaluation Methods and Tools 2019 report alongside engagement strategies for case study sites. These will be tailored as required over the course of fieldwork to collect in depth accounts of the impact of the strategy and its tactics, and to support instrument validation. The protocols will be updated annually.

SRDC is conducting and analyzing 100-200 in-depth interviews over the course of the project to better understand the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics, especially successes and challenges in delivery, including a diverse sample of providers, their staff, resource centres and advisors, government program managers.² Interviews with the developers of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics took place in April and May 2019 to inform the development of the theory of change. Following consultation with the Sector Steering Committee on the best approach, SRDC selected in July 2019 six case study sites province wide for onsite fieldwork. Site visits took place in September and October. Fieldwork with the same sites will be repeated in 2020 and 2021. Key informant interviews engage workers located in a range of types of sites not included in the case studies. Interviews are scheduled for data collection on an ongoing basis. Refer to Table 1 on page 24 for the schedule of different types of interview by year.

- **Design and execution of annual provider and employee surveys** including loyalty systems, fielding and follow up. These tasks include Sector Steering Committee and Government Working Group review of survey instrument drafts as well as SRDC's co-design with ECEBC of a system to maximize survey participation over the evaluation period and beyond, including a staged approach for survey communications. The activities include a two-stage round of cross-sectional surveys annually (in October-November 2019, 2020, and 2021) of all members of the child care workforce. The first stage features the collection of centre-specific information obtained through "managers" (including owner operators) encouraged to forward invitations to their staff to support a nested survey of employees within each facility. The second stage features an open invitation to capture the responses of people who were not reached in the first round or who did not respond for another reason.

² See Table 1 for a summary of interview progress to date.

The tasks include email reminders in the event of non-completion, social media and newsletter invitations and publicity. A subcontractor is available to assist with additional requests for telephone completion of the survey.

- **Design and commissioning of public opinion survey questions.** This effort in 2019 and 2022 includes a sample representative of all adults aged 18+ years and a booster sample of ‘emerging adults’ aged 13 through 23 years to gauge any changes in career aspirations. The tasks include designing and testing the survey instruments to include selected existing and new questions related to perceptions of ECL careers and ECL workforce questions, commissioning an external market research firm to field the survey to a representative sample of British Columbians. SRDC supports and monitors fieldwork, receives and quality checks the survey data, then undertakes analysis.
- **Analysis** covers a broad range of SRDC tasks including planning for analysis, quantitative analysis of Census microdata, administrative data and the provider database, quantitative and qualitative analysis of social media, public opinion, provider and employee survey data and qualitative analysis of KIIs.

The evaluation began with detailed exploration of the composition of the BC ECL workforce using the 2016 Census microdata (analyzed as anonymized individual records). These data included family background and characteristics, income, earnings, credentials, location, well-being of all people employed in child care in the province. The data were accessed by SRDC’s staff who hold security clearance to work with individual level Census data in Statistics Canada’s Research Data Centres (RDCs). The report has been completed for inclusion in the Evaluation Benchmarking Report.

- **Report writing and presentations** including incorporation of feedback. Activities include production of 21 project deliverables from the project management work plan to the final report. This current report is #8. Reports to date have refined the evaluation strategy and developed tools for use during the 2019-20 project year. All are submitted for review first by ECEBC, then by the Sector Steering Committee and finally by the Government Working Group. Additional presentations have been prepared and delivered as required including the following two: to the Roundtable on Public Policy Strategies for a Professional ECE Workforce on 18 June 2019 at the Ontario Institute for the Study of Education, University of Toronto and on 10 March 2020 at the Learning Enrichment Foundation’s National Early Learning and Child Care Workforce Development Conference.

Table 1 **Planned key informant interviews: completion to date**

	Completed interviews		Data included in analysis to date	Interviews planned for later years	
	No.	% of target	No.	2020-21	2021-22
Theory of Change Interviews with developers of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics	5	100	5	As needed	
First interviews with ECL workers at case study sites ³	50	100	44	-	-
Follow up interviews with ECL workers at case study sites	-	-	-	50+	50+
First round KII interviews with ECL providers	4	25	3	12	-
Follow up KII interviews with ECL providers	-	-	-	16	16
Annual Total (N)	59			78	66
Project forecast total interviews > 200					

³ Six interviews were part of a focus group where not all participants completed consent forms, so the collected data could not be analyzed.

Chart 1 Updated project tasks and activities by year

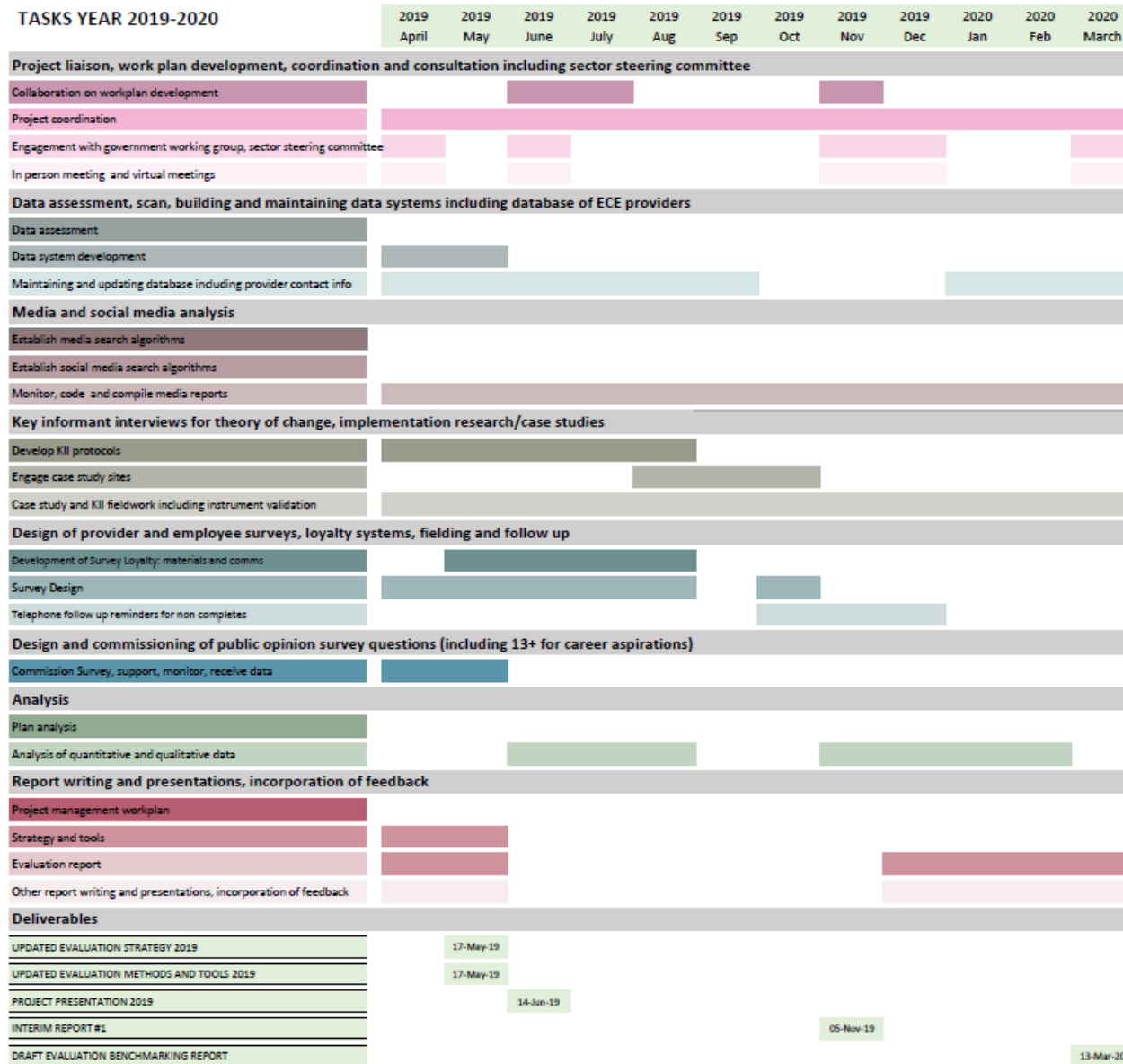


Chart 1 Updated project tasks and activities by year (continued)

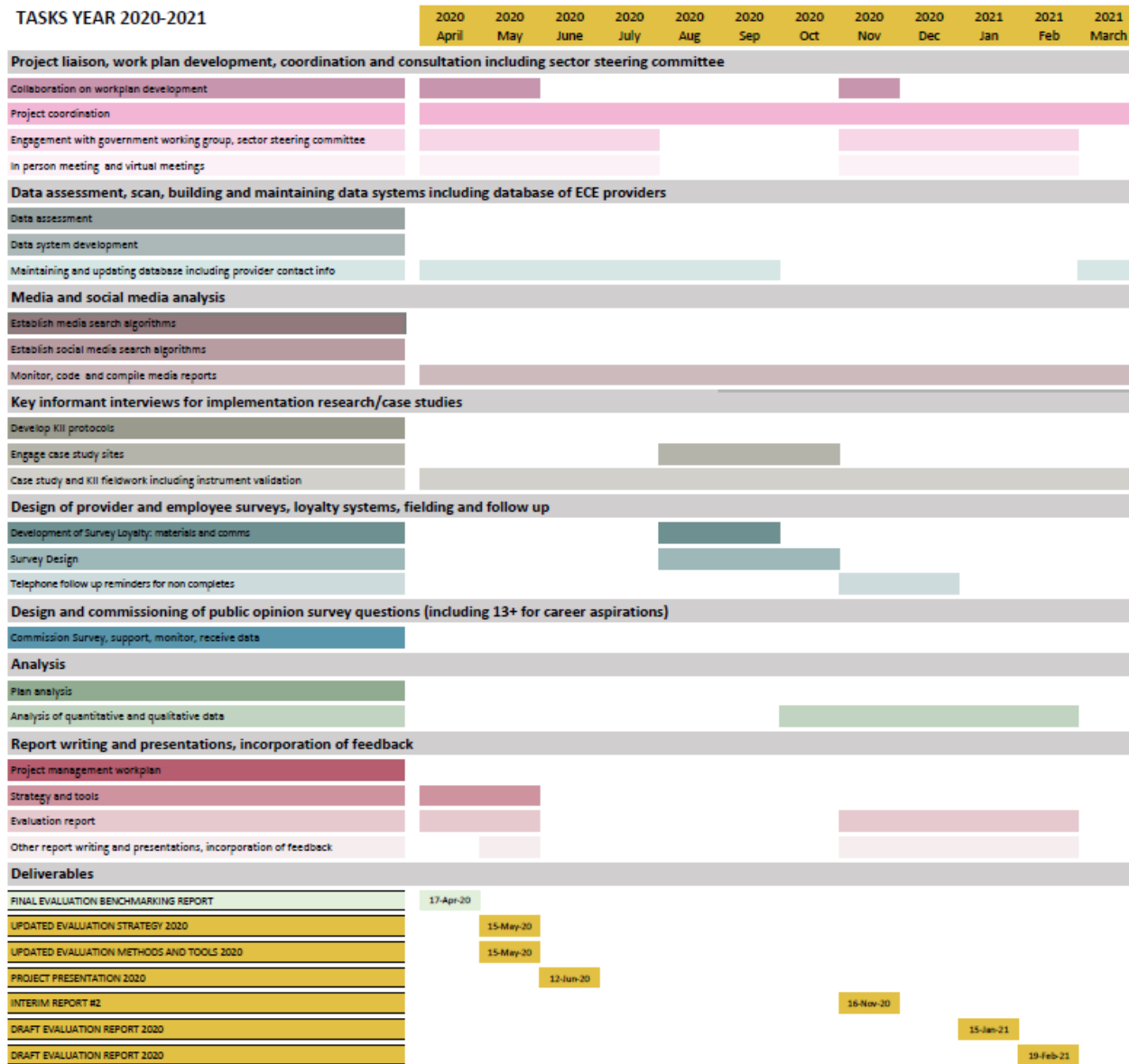


Chart 1 Updated project tasks and activities by year (continued)

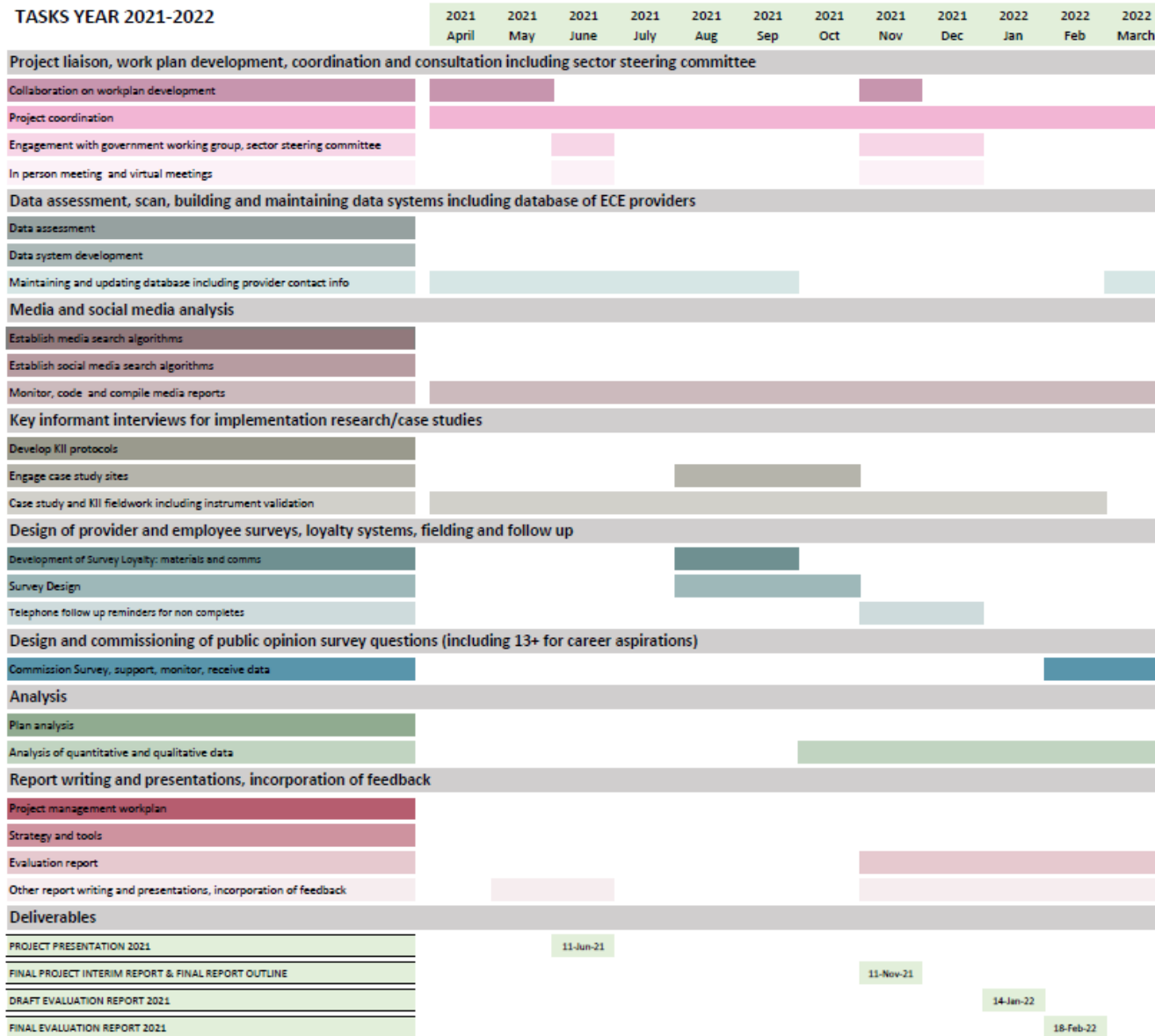


Chart 1 Updated project tasks and activities by year (continued)



SRDC STAFF RESPONSIBLE

As set out in the original Project Management Workplan, SRDC draws resources for this project from across its cadre of 45+ researchers and evaluators as required. Its staff possess a broad range of data collection and analytical skills, policy knowledge and disciplinary perspectives. The team has undergone some changes in recognition of the changing stage of the evaluation work involved, as well as due to SRDC experiencing the arrival of new suitable staff to SRDC and departures of existing team members.

The project lead remains Dr. Reuben Ford who acts as the principal point of contact for the project. Until November 2019, Dr. Ford shared project management and liaison duties with Dr. Karen Snyder. Dr. Snyder left SRDC in November 2019. Descriptions of the current staff and their roles in the project are included below.

Reuben Ford

Reuben Ford is a research director at SRDC and responsible for its program of work promoting access to skills development through advanced education and training. He is a Credentialed Evaluator as recognized by the Canadian Evaluation Society and has directed a wide range of evaluations. These have included determining the impacts of new grants in the form of Learning Accounts, evaluating student aid to Indigenous students and BC's Northern Skills Training Program. Dr. Ford has designed and evaluated career education workshops. Shortly after joining SRDC, he designed the evaluation for the Community Employment Innovation Project community evaluation study. This evaluated the impact of 295 locally-developed social employment projects across four communities over a 5-year period. He also led the final evaluation of the Self-Sufficiency Project. Prior to joining SRDC, he worked for the Policy Studies Institute in the UK where he authored several reports on the role of child care in the labour market and gave the keynote address to the UK Government Childcare Strategy conference in 1998.

Dr. Ford is the project lead at SRDC and principal point of contact for ECEBC, committee members and other stakeholders.

Barbara Dobson

Barbara Dobson is a principal research associate at SRDC. She has worked for SRDC in various capacities since 2005. She recently rejoined as a permanent employee and will be engaged in data collection and analysis on the evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy. She has over 20 years'

experience in research and evaluation, and has worked on a range of program evaluations within the social policy and public health arenas. A number of themes run through Barbara's career. Much of her work has involved issues around employment, health, low income, and social inequalities. In exploring these issues Barbara has worked with different groups of people including people with disabilities, seniors, those who have been unemployed for long periods of time, and families living on low incomes. Throughout her work she has tried to actively involve those who participate in her studies so that the research process is seen to be useful and interesting to all who participate in it. Barbara has designed and implemented both local and national evaluation studies, and her interest in behavioural insights lies in how to move beyond empirical findings to support positive changes in policy and practice. Barbara holds a PhD in Social Policy from the Loughborough University, UK.

Dr. Dobson will hold day-to-day management responsibility for work on the Key Informant Interviews & Case Studies.

Taylor Shek-wai Hui

Taylor Shek-wai Hui is SRDC's Chief Data Scientist in quantitative evaluation of social programs. His areas of interest and expertise include experimental and non-experimental methods of evaluation, human capital formation and utilization, social policies, cost-benefit analysis, as well as applied survey and statistical methodologies. Prior to SRDC, he was an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Winnipeg. He holds a Ph. D in Economics from the University of Western Ontario.

Dr. Hui is the chief advisor to other members of the team on the acquisition, development, analysis, and reporting of national and regional data sets.

Maria Montenegro

Maria Montenegro joined SRDC in June 2019 as a Researcher. She brings four years of experience researching settlement, gender, and other social issues. Most recently, she has been a Research Analyst of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, where she designed and conducted quantitative and qualitative research projects to support program planning. She also led program evaluation and outcomes measurement, including developing an evaluation framework to assess the impact of the program on several aspects of newcomers' lives including their essential skills, digital literacy, and social capital. She holds a Master of Science degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of Alberta. She completed fieldwork in the high Peruvian Andes for her thesis research which looked at the effect of land rights on women's empowerment.

Ms. Montenegro is a core member of the evaluation team designing evaluation tools and undertaking a wide range of analysis and reporting.

Xiaoyang Luo

Xiaoyang Luo joined SRDC in February 2019. She brings significant experience working with newcomers to BC and conducting and facilitating research to support their integration. Her research experience in the settlement sector supported service providers to develop and propose responsive and client-centred programs for immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver. She also delivered training to settlement staff to increase their research capacity and understanding of the impacts of immigration policies on their clients and their services. Outside of the settlement sector, Xiaoyang has research experience in the K-12 and higher education sectors. Her research interests include immigration and integration, supportive family policies, and intersectionality. She is passionate about improving the economic and social outcomes of individuals and communities experiencing marginalization.

Xiaoyang holds a Master of Public Policy from Simon Fraser University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from McGill University.

Ms. Luo holds project responsibilities including developing communications and systems for social and news media monitoring, content analysis and reporting.

Jennifer Rae

Jennifer Rae joined SRDC in February 2019 as a Research Associate. Her educational background is in the field of Community Psychology. Her areas of interest include community mental health, addiction, and homelessness. She has experience conducting applied research and evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative methods. She holds a PhD in Psychology from the University of Ottawa. Her thesis research focused on access to education for youth from low-income family backgrounds.

Dr. Rae supports qualitative design and analysis and reporting on administrative/survey data sets, including Census micro-data.

UPDATED SCHEDULE FOR DELIVERABLES

The Sector Steering Committee and SRDC agreed to a revised staging of evaluation tasks, outputs, and reports to better meet the needs of the evaluation, at two stages during 2019. Amendments to SRDC’s contract with ECEBC signed June 28, 2019 and (due) March 2020 adjusted the schedule of several deliverables in the project as shown in the following tables:

Table 2 Amendments to schedule of deliverables 2019-20

ORIGINAL PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY	Original DELIVERABLE DUE DATE	PROPOSED PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY TITLE	New DELIVERABLE DUE DATE
4. EVALUATION STRATEGY YEAR 2	16-Apr-19	4. UPDATED EVALUATION STRATEGY (2019)	17-May-19
5. DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 1: BENCHMARKING	15-May-19		
6. EVALUATION TOOLS YEAR 2	17-May-19	5. UPDATED EVALUATION METHODS AND TOOLS (2019)	17-May-19
7. FINAL EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 1: BENCHMARKING	29-May-19		
8. PROJECT PRESENTATION YEAR 1	19-Jun-19	6. PROJECT PRESENTATION 2019	14-Jun-19
9. INTERIM REPORT #1	05-Nov-19	7. INTERIM REPORT #1	05-Nov-19
		8. DRAFT EVALUATION BENCHMARKING REPORT	13-Mar-20
		9. FINAL EVALUATION BENCHMARKING REPORT	17-Apr-20

Table 3 Amendments to schedule of deliverables 2020-21

ORIGINAL PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY	Original DELIVERABLE DUE DATE	PROPOSED PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY TITLE	New DELIVERABLE DUE DATE
10. DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 2	15-May-20		
11. FINAL EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 2	14-Jun-20		
12. PROJECT PRESENTATION YEAR 2	26-Jun-20		
13. EVALUATION STRATEGY YEAR 3	15-Jul-20	10. UPDATED EVALUATION STRATEGY (2020)	15-May-20
14. EVALUATION TOOLS YEAR 3	14-Aug-20	11. UPDATED EVALUATION METHODS AND TOOLS (2020)	15-May-20
		12. PROJECT PRESENTATION 2020	12-Jun-20
15. INTERIM REPORT #2	16-Nov-20	13. INTERIM REPORT #2	16-Nov-20
		14. DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT (2020)	15-Jan-21
		15. FINAL EVALUATION REPORT (2020)	19-Feb-21

Table 4 Amendments to schedule of deliverables 2021-22

ORIGINAL PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY	Original DELIVERABLE DUE DATE	PROPOSED PROJECT DELIVERABLE/ACTIVITY TITLE	New DELIVERABLE DUE DATE
16. DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 3	13-May-21		
17. FINAL EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 3	15-Jun-21		
18. PROJECT PRESENTATION YEAR 3	25-Jun-21	16. PROJECT PRESENTATION 2021	11-Jun-21
19. FINAL PROJECT INTERIM REPORT & FINAL REPORT OUTLINE	11-Nov-21	17. FINAL PROJECT INTERIM REPORT & FINAL REPORT OUTLINE	11-Nov-21
		18. DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT (2021)	14-Jan-22
		19. FINAL EVALUATION REPORT (2021)	18-Feb-22
20. DRAFT FINAL PROJECT REPORT	16-Apr-22	20. DRAFT FINAL PROJECT REPORT	15-Apr-22
21. FINAL PROJECT REPORT	17-May-22	21. FINAL PROJECT REPORT	15-May-22

SECTOR STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Purpose

The Sector Steering Committee (SSC) is established for the purpose of guiding the sector-led evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy undertaken by Early Childhood Educators BC (ECEBC) with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. The SSC assists the Project Manager and ECEBC in its function of governance by providing quality control of the contract deliverables, and oversight of the contractors (SRDC) engaged to complete the project. The SSC approved Terms of Reference in March 2019 that guide their governance function with committee composition, roles and responsibilities, frequency, and confidentiality agreements.

Engagement

The SSC held its inaugural meeting on February 20, 2019 in Richmond, BC. Twenty organizations were invited to appoint representatives to participate as members. Representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training, Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Project Manager, and SRDC also attended the meeting as ex-officio members of the committee without voting rights.

Composition

The following organizations have appointed a representative to participate as a member of the Sector Steering Committee:

- Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC
- Aboriginal Supported Child Development
- BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
- BC Association of Child Development and Intervention
- BC Childcare Owners Association
- BC Family Child Care Association
- BC First Nations Head Start
- BC Government and Service Employees Union

- Canadian Childcare Federation
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- City of Surrey
- Coalition of Childcare Advocates of BC
- ECE Articulation Committee
- Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC)
- Métis Nation BC
- Multi-Age Childcare Association of British Columbia
- Pacific Immigrant Resources Society
- Provincial Child Care Council
- School Age Childcare Association of BC
- Supported Child Development
- UBC Childcare
- Vancouver Coastal Health

The May 2019 meeting of the Steering committee approved the inclusion of Métis Nation BC, which in turn accepted the invitation to join the committee on December 5, 2019. Earlier, the March 2019 meeting suggested that a member of the Provincial Child Care Council be invited to join the SSC and this was approved in time for a member of the Council to take on the role of representing it at the May 2019 meeting.

Activities

Through December 2019, the SSC has met twice in person (February and May 2019), and twice by phone (March and November 2019). Minutes from these meetings are available upon request. At the February 2019 meeting, the SSC reviewed and provided feedback on the proposed work plan and draft evaluation framework. The SSC also discussed definitions of the ECL workforce

population, additional ECL R&R Strategy stakeholders, and potential data collection methods.⁴ On the March 2019 call, the SSC approved the February meeting minutes, finalized the Terms of Reference, approved the Project Management Workplan and the Year 1 Evaluation Tools (with amendments). During the May 2019 meeting, the SSC approved the March meeting minutes, reviewed the revised deliverables and meeting schedule, and approved the updated evaluation strategy and methods and tools, after a discussion of the Theory of Change, Key Performance Indicators, and BC Child Care Workforce Survey.

The SSC provided two additional rounds of feedback on the BC Child Care Workforce Survey, primarily via email. Moreover, individual members of the SSC have been extremely helpful in providing input on specific aspects of the survey by email and by phone. For example, the BC Family Child Care Association representative helped improve questions about salary and wages for family child care owners.

The SSC also provided critical support for the case studies and key informant interviews. As described in the later section “Key informant interviews and case studies”, SSC members determined the criteria for the six case studies, and provided suggestions for specific child care programs that would be good candidates for the site visits and key informant interviews. Prior to engaging in communication with Indigenous ECL providers, SRDC consulted with the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society, Aboriginal Supported Child Development, Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC and BC First Nations Head Start. Individual SSC members also provided introductions to specific child care programs for the case study site visits.

SRDC met with the SSC on November 21st via a teleconference to review the project’s Interim Report #1. A teleconference will also be held to review this report, the draft Evaluation Benchmarking Report in March 2020. An in-person meeting on the updated Evaluation Strategy and Evaluation Methodology and Tools for 2020 is planned for June 2020.

⁴ As in the name of the ECL R&R Strategy, the project is focused on the province’s Early Care and Learning (ECL) workforce. In project communications that include the general public, and in interactions with members of the workforce, the more common term “child care” is also used to describe this workforce. The workforce includes many individuals in different roles with different credentials and certifications. Those working as Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are a subset of the ECL workforce, typically in possession of an ECE certification.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation Framework was finalized in SRDC’s Evaluation Strategy (2019) report in May 2019. An update on the implementation of the evaluation framework and methodology was included in the Interim Report in November 2019. The Evaluation Framework has remained largely intact and updates only concerned implementation of the methodology to build data for each line of evidence. In this section we describe the purpose of each line of evidence, describe the methodology with updates since November 2019 and offer a detailed description of successes and challenges encountered during the evaluation work through 2019.

THEORY OF CHANGE CONSULTATIONS

Purpose

A Theory of Change describes the hypothetical links between a program’s activities and the outcomes that the program is trying to achieve. The purpose of the Theory of Change within the Evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy was to make sure SRDC would be collecting information that will help improve understanding not just of whether the outcomes were achieved, but the factors that led to success (or not), the unexpected and unintended effects, external factors that influenced results and so on. In other words, the evaluation uses a Theory of Change to ensure it is collecting information that will be useful to stakeholders to better achieve the goals/outcomes.

Methodology

During April and May 2019, SRDC took the ECL R&R Strategy Goals, its 3 Year Outcomes and 10 Year Goals and its Tactics, and developed a Theory of Change. SRDC interviewed five developers of the strategy and its tactics from the BC Ministry of Education (EDU), Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST), and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for this activity. SRDC conducted these key informant interviews by phone during May 2019. The participants received emails inviting them to participate in short interviews on the theory of change behind the Strategy’s “tactics.” The Key Informants received draft copies of the Theory of Change and an interview protocol with consent information prior to the call. The Key Informants reviewed the interview protocol and consented to participate in the interviews. With their permission, SRDC took notes and recorded the phone interviews. Following the interview, the notes were transcribed and filled in with the voice recording. The

recordings were uploaded to the secure SRDC server. Per the consent form, the interviews will be deleted one year after the completion of the evaluation.

The resulting Theory of Change and causal pathways were reviewed by the Government Working Group and the Sector Steering Committee in their review of the Evaluation Strategy 2019. There were no further updates following the addition of causal pathways during 2019 but ongoing review and reflection on the Theory of Change is planned for 2020 and 2021 during presentations on evaluation strategy updates with the Sector Steering Committee and Government Working Group meetings.

Successes and challenges

The initial Theory was well received and endorsed, allowing SRDC to use it to inform other features of the evaluation framework such as the key performance indicators (KPIs) which in turn supported development of the methods and tools implemented in the evaluation. As a “living document,” the Theory of Change will be reviewed every year and adjusted as needed with increased information about the ECL R&R Strategy.

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY

Purpose

The cross-sectional survey represents one of the main evaluation activities. It seeks to measure the success of the ten-year goals, three-year outcomes by providing data on the majority of KPIs as well as document aspects of the implementation of wage enhancement, education and training, professional development and updated competencies and standards. The target sample for the survey includes operators, anyone working in child care (i.e., working directly with children or supervising staff who work directly with children), administrative staff who can provide centre staffing information, and registered ECEs/ECEAs not currently working in child care.

Methodology

The survey is implemented in two stages. In the first stage, SRDC uses a sample frame it has developed from public data on operators contact information to initiate a “nested” survey. It is nested in the sense that operators (child care centre directors, owners, managers and owner/operators) are asked not only to complete the survey themselves but to forward the survey invitation to their staff. The survey is constructed in such a way that the responses of

operators can be linked to the responses of their employees to build a comprehensive picture of the impact of the strategy on each participating child care workplace in BC. In the second stage, SRDC issues an open invitation to the survey, because: (a) not every operator will complete or forward the first stage invitation; (b) not every worker will complete the survey forwarded in the first stage by their employer; and (c) ECEs and ECEAs not working in child care cannot be reached by the first stage approach as MCFD cannot release their contact database for survey purposes.

The use of a sample frame in the first stage brings advantages in that SRDC can personalize invitations, provide survey links that are unique to each workplace simplifying response options, determine the characteristics of the operators who respond and who do not, and control for nonresponse using this information. SRDC also knows to whom to send reminders. The second stage comprises an open, public call for responses to capture those who have not been captured in Stage 1, without the advantages of a sample frame. However, the open call can have much wider circulation and does not require unique survey links. Thus, the invitation can be posted publicly and distributed in ways much more likely to reach members of the workforce who are not in publicly-available contact data, such as registered ECEs and ECEAs not currently working in child care.

SRDC completed a first draft of survey pre-notifications for ECEBC Facebook and Twitter, drafts of pre-notification emails to child care providers and child care workers, a draft of a promotional poster for the survey, and an email draft for stakeholders who could help share the survey with their network. The ECEBC communications team finalized the survey communications and poster. SRDC worked with ECEBC to draft answers to a set of Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs] to be posted on ECEBC's website page devoted to the survey. The GWG approved the FAQs on October 24, 2019.

Stage 1 of the survey was launched on October 24, 2019. SRDC sent out pre-notification and survey launch emails to child care providers whose emails were collected from open data from the Ministry of Children and Family Development's Child Care Map Data, BC Health Authorities Inspection Reports and other data provided by BC Health Authorities. Survey invitations were sent to owner operators or managers of 5,013 child care workplaces. A reminder was sent on October 31, 2019. The Stage 2 open invitation to the survey began November 6th. The Stage 2 emails to stakeholders were sent out by Sector Steering Committee members or by SRDC where appropriate. The total number of responses was 2,728 by the time the survey closed on November 18th. As outlined below, data on some 9,000 sector workers was collected from the respondents.

Successes and challenges

Instrument design

Given the diversity of facilities, working conditions, and positions across the child care sector, it was challenging to create a single survey instrument that was relevant for the entire workforce. To address these challenges SRDC consulted extensively with the SSC and two external experts.

SRDC included a first draft of the survey instrument as part of the Evaluation Methods and Tools deliverable. Between June and August 2019, SRDC received three rounds of feedback from SSC members and two rounds from two external experts on the cross-sectional workforce survey. The feedback highlighted a few issues including:

- Issues with terminology especially the description of employment positions within child care workplaces
- Relevance of questions for each different type of licensed and non-licensed facilities
- Relevance of questions for owner/operators
- The difficulties in design posed by inclusion of pathways for all people working in the child care sector.

To address the issues highlighted during rounds of feedback, the survey was modified considerably to include eight modules instead of only two. The modules to be completed are determined by each respondent's current role and type of child care workplace. SRDC also consulted with a member of the SSC to address specifically the appropriateness of questions for respondents working in licensed family child cares. The new structure of the survey was intended to ensure participants would only be asked questions relevant to their circumstances. The final version of the survey seeks the perspective of:

- Owner/operators, directors, or manager of each child care centre, preschool, or after school program
- Staff who work directly with children at a licensed child care centre, preschool, or after school program
- Providers working at the child's home
- Providers working in Family Care, RLNR (Registered License-Not-Required), or LNR (License-Not-Required)
- ECE/ECEAs not working in child care.

Terminology is explained in the Glossary (Appendix D). After the survey was programmed in the survey software Voxco in September 2019, SRDC provided “internal testing” instructions and links for survey completion and feedback to 13 SRDC staff unfamiliar with the project. This internal testing focused on the robustness of the survey programming and consistency in its many pathways. From mid-September 2019, the survey was pilot-tested externally by about 30 people during the case study visits as well as 7 other members of the child care workforce who helped to test pathways not captured during the case study visits. One of the major issues that arose from the pilot testing was that respondents faced difficulties navigating the format of survey questions developed to identify their employer. This issue was resolved for Phase 1 of the survey distribution by personalizing invitations to the survey so that the anticipated operator appeared as the default choice for employer. In Phase 2, the survey incorporates an additional question to help train the respondent to locate the name of their employer. In both phases, respondents have the option to select a different name of employer from those provided, in an open-ended response.

Thank you gifts

During Spring 2019, SRDC contacted eight potential sponsors to seek funding for thank you gifts to survey respondents. Based on their initial responses, SRDC submitted formal requests or proposals to five potential sponsors. This process was successful with one sponsor. Wintergreen Learning Materials agreed to provide three \$50 gift cards. These were gifted to randomly selected survey respondents upon their completion of the survey. Wintergreen also expressed interest in supporting future waves of the survey. SRDC made a single draw for another \$500 gift card with the recipient being given a choice of retailers. In addition to entry into the draw for these gift cards, respondents who completed the survey were provided with a choice between colourful and informative posters on ECE themes and three online professional development opportunities developed by ECEBC. These were made available to participants according to their choice within weeks of the close of the survey.

Contacting potential respondents

Since survey invitations could not be sent using contact information from the ECE Registry as initially intended, due to privacy concerns surrounding their release to SRDC, the Stage 1 distribution of the survey relied solely on SRDC’s compiled database of child care workplaces. Construction of this database was delayed as SRDC waited extended periods to receive these data from the Health Authorities. SRDC then made up for missing data not provided by the Health Authorities by gathering other publicly available information. Despite these efforts, SRDC was not able to obtain email contact information for roughly 300 child care workplaces.

Relying on SRDC's compiled database of child care workplaces for the Stage 1 distribution of the survey also impacted the survey's response rate since SRDC was only able to send the survey invitations to the individuals whose contact information was included in the database. While SRDC included messaging in the survey invitations to incentivize the distribution of the survey information and survey link across the organizations in the database, it is possible that some recipients did not follow these instructions.

Stage 2 of the distribution of the survey was essential to reach the final survey response rate. During this stage, several stages of invitation messages were sent to Steering Committee representatives and other key partners in the early care and learning sector. However, SRDC was not able to confirm whether these points of contact distributed the messages as was initially planned.

Analysis

SRDC also faced an issue during the survey data analysis stage. The employer-nested survey relied on SRDC being able to identify the child care facility or provider where each respondent worked. To facilitate this process, unique workplace identifiers were included in the survey links distributed to the Stage 1 contacts in SRDC's child care workforce cross-sectional database. However, Stage 2 distribution of the survey was an open call via public channels so SRDC could not know in advance each respondent's place of work. To address this issue, an auto-complete question was included in the Stage 2 version of the survey which included a list of all child care workplaces in SRDC's database. While this process passed SRDC's internal tests, it caused issues when the survey went live especially among respondents' accessing the survey from mobile devices. SRDC identified the issue and removed the question to reduce its impact on the surveys' response rate. This meant that the survey did not collect standardized and linkable names for respondents' workplace during the Stage 2 distribution. It relied on responses to a question requesting the typed name. As a result, SRDC's data analysis process required additional work to attempt to link information provided by respondents to the correct workplace identified in SRDC's existing database.

The results from the survey appear in several places. The next section profiles the respondents, to provide context for the later Evaluation Benchmark Results section organized by KPI. SRDC provided survey respondents with the opportunity to provide additional comments at the end of the survey. A total of 852 individuals responded to this question. SRDC systematically reviewed and coded all these comments thematically using NVivo. Three major themes emerged:

- Child care worker compensation
- Child care worker recognition
- The need for educational support and the role of the bursary.

These survey-based comments are included in the discussion of the relevant KPIs in the Evaluation Benchmark Results section.

Profile of respondents

Survey samples

We present the survey respondents in Table 5 broken down by two samples:

- **Sample A** includes individuals who completed sufficient questions to inform the evaluation's KPIs. This sample includes responses from individuals working in 1,578 different child care workplaces and 21 societies or associations, in-home providers (including workers from family child care, registered and unregistered license-not-required workplaces, and providers of care in the child's home), and ECE/ECEAs no longer working in the child care sector.
- **Sample B** ("Employer Sample") includes employer-level information provided by individuals who may or may not have provided enough individual information to be considered part of sample A. This sample includes licensed child care centres, pre-school or after-school programs only. Sample B includes employer-level reported data for 1,098 child care workplaces including child care societies or associations.

Terminology is also explained in the Glossary (Appendix D).

Given the very low participation of Registered Licence not Required, Unregistered Licence not Required and In-child's-own Home providers, these responses are reported grouped together with those of Licensed Family Child Care under the label *Home Child Care Providers (HCP)*. SRDC will consult the sector steering committee to find ways to increase representation of these providers in later data collection.

Sample A: Demographics

Table 6 displays demographic information for Sample A. Nearly all survey respondents were female (96 per cent). A small proportion of respondents identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit (5 per cent). Only 3 per cent of the sample reported having a disability.

The average age of respondents was 44.8 years and ranged from 20 to 80 years old. Relative to other workers, Centre ECL workers were younger with 9 per cent aged between 20 and 24 years and 29 per cent aged between 25 and 34 years.

Table 5 Number and percentage of survey respondents by sample and type of child care organization

	Sample A (Individual level)		Sample B (Employer level)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Licensed Child Care Centre, Pre-school, or After-school Programs ("Centre ECL")	2,078	76%	1,338	100%
Licensed Family Child Care	421	15%	-	-
Registered Licence Not Required	5	0%	-	-
Unregistered Licence Not Required	3	0%	-	-
In-child's-own Home	9	0%	-	-
ECEs not working in child care	212	8%	-	-
Total (N)	2,728	100%	1,338	100%

About 34 per cent of the entire sample was born outside Canada. This proportion was higher among HCPs (40 per cent) and lower among ECEs no longer working in child care (27 per cent). In general, those who were born outside Canada immigrated more than ten years ago (80 per cent). Relative to other workers, Centre ECL workers include the largest proportion of *new* immigrants (16 per cent entered Canada within the last five years).

On average, respondents who identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit were 3.2 years younger than non-Indigenous respondents. On the other hand, respondents who were born outside of Canada were older than those who were born in Canada (average ages 47 and 43.7, respectively). Both differences were statistically significant and may account for some of the differences in credentials obtained between the groups.

Table 6 Demographic characteristics

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care	Total
Female	95%	95%	97%	96%	96%
Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Experience Disability	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Born outside Canada	34%	34%	40%	27%	34%
Age					
20-24	1%	9%	0%	3%	4%
25-29	5%	16%	1%	5%	8%
30-34	8%	13%	8%	8%	10%
35-39	13%	13%	11%	16%	13%
40-44	15%	13%	16%	17%	14%
45-49	16%	11%	19%	10%	14%
50 or older	43%	26%	44%	41%	37%
Years since entry to Canada					
5 or fewer	2%	16%	2%	5%	7%
6-10	9%	16%	10%	16%	12%
11-20	41%	31%	33%	27%	35%
21 or more	48%	37%	54%	51%	45%

Sample A: Current work characteristics

Working conditions of Sample A respondents who work in licensed child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school care are summarized in Table 7. Nearly all respondents

report permanent positions (97 per cent). One in nine Centre ECL workers work as substitutes or casual workers (11 per cent) compared to 5 per cent of owner-operators.

A large proportion of respondents from both groups are involved in group care and pre-school programs. More than half of owner-operators represent private child-care businesses (60 per cent) while a smaller proportion works in not-for-profit organizations (35 per cent). The reverse is observed among Centre ECL workers, with only 35 per cent of respondents from private child-care workplaces and more than half from non-profit organizations (57 per cent). This may be due to the relative size of these different types of workplace.

Respondents who identified as owner-operators were equivalently involved in working directly with children (74 per cent), supervising or managing (71 per cent), and doing administrative duties (67 per cent). By contrast, Centre ECL workers report mainly working directly with children (98 per cent) and are less involved in supervising or managing (11 per cent) and doing administrative work (5 cent).

Centre ECL workers are also more likely to be unionized (21 per cent of child care providers compared to 5 per cent of owner operators).

Sample A: Experience in early care and learning

Experience in early care and learning varied across the respondent groups (Table 8). Owner-operators are the most experienced with an average of 16.7 years working in the sector. On the other hand, Centre ECL workers average 10.9 years of experience. The Centre ECL workers group reported a wider range of work experience than the other groups. For instance, 39 per cent of Centre ECL workers reported 5 or fewer years of experience in the ECL sector, at least 15 percentage points higher than all other groups. The proportion of workers with 16 or more years of experience was also significantly smaller among Centre ECL workers compared to other groups (23 per cent of Centre ECL workers compared to at least 40 per cent of participants in each of the other groups).

Table 7 Working conditions of respondents who work in licensed centres, preschools, and before-and-after school care

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	Total
Job Tenure			
Permanent	99%	96%	97%
Temporary	1%	4%	3%
Casual or substitute	5%	11%	8%
Unionized	5%	21%	12%
Count in staff-to-child ratio	94%	97%	96%
Type of program			
Group care, under 3 years old	33%	37%	35%
Group care, 2.5 years to school age	48%	35%	41%
Group care, school age (before-and-after school program)	33%	16%	24%
Preschool, 2.5 years to school age	31%	32%	31%
Multi-age	28%	12%	20%
Occasional care	3%	1%	2%
All of the above	2%	1%	2%
Other	5%	1%	3%
Type of organization			
Private business	60%	35%	48%
Not-for-profit	35%	57%	45%
Operated by school	5%	8%	6%
Operated by First Nations or Indigenous community or organ	3%	3%	3%
Other	4%	5%	4%

Sample A: Current work characteristics

Working conditions of Sample A respondents who work in licensed child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school care are summarized in Table 7. Nearly all respondents report permanent positions (97 per cent). One in nine Centre ECL workers work as substitutes or casual workers (11 per cent) compared to 5 per cent of owner-operators.

A large proportion of respondents from both groups are involved in group care and pre-school programs. More than half of owner-operators represent private child-care businesses (60 per cent) while a smaller proportion works in not-for-profit organizations (35 per cent). The reverse is observed among Centre ECL workers, with only 35 per cent of respondents from private child-care workplaces and more than half from non-profit organizations (57 per cent). This may be due to the relative size of these different types of workplace.

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Sample A: Experience in early care and learning

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Table 8 Proportion of respondents by years of experience in the early care and learning sector

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care	Total
Less than one year	2%	6%	1%	7%	4%
One to three years	5%	19%	9%	9%	11%
Four to five years	6%	14%	8%	6%	9%
Six to ten years	21%	25%	19%	18%	22%
Eleven to fifteen years	18%	13%	22%	21%	17%
Sixteen years or more	47%	23%	41%	40%	37%

In general, ECEs no longer working in child care reported considerable levels of experience with over half reporting more than 10 years of work experience in the field. The vast majority had been child care providers in licensed facilities (95 per cent) or held leadership positions such as program supervisor, supervisor, director, or manager or one or more workplaces (100 per cent). About 35 per cent were HCPs in the past and 10 per cent were owners of one or more workplaces.

Sample B

A total of 1,098 child care licensed centres, preschools, or before-and-after school programs provided employer-level information. Table 9 summarizes the types of programs and businesses captured in Sample B.

Employers in Sample B represent all health authorities in BC in similar proportions (Figure 1) to those observed in the child care workforce contact information database (Figure 3).

The employers represented a variety of centre sizes. According to current staff information provided by employers, we estimate the organizations reported in the survey included at least 8,495 ECL workers in BC (Table 10). Figure 2 shows the number of full-time and part-time staff reported by employers in Sample B in each health authority region.

Table 9 Employers' types of programs and businesses

	Sample B percentage
Type of program	
Group care, under 3 years old	33%
Group care, 2.5 years to school age	49%
Group care, school age (before-and-after school program)	32%
Preschool, 2.5 years to school age	30%
Multi-age	30%
Occasional care	4%
All of the above	2%
Other	6%
Type of organization	
Private business	57%
Not-for-profit	37%
Operated by school	5%
Operated by First Nations or Indigenous community or organ	3%
Other	5%

Figure 1 Employers in Sample B by health authority

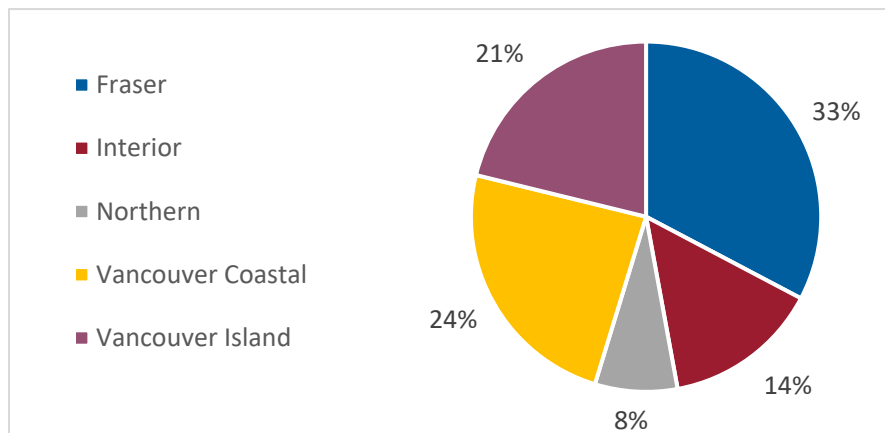
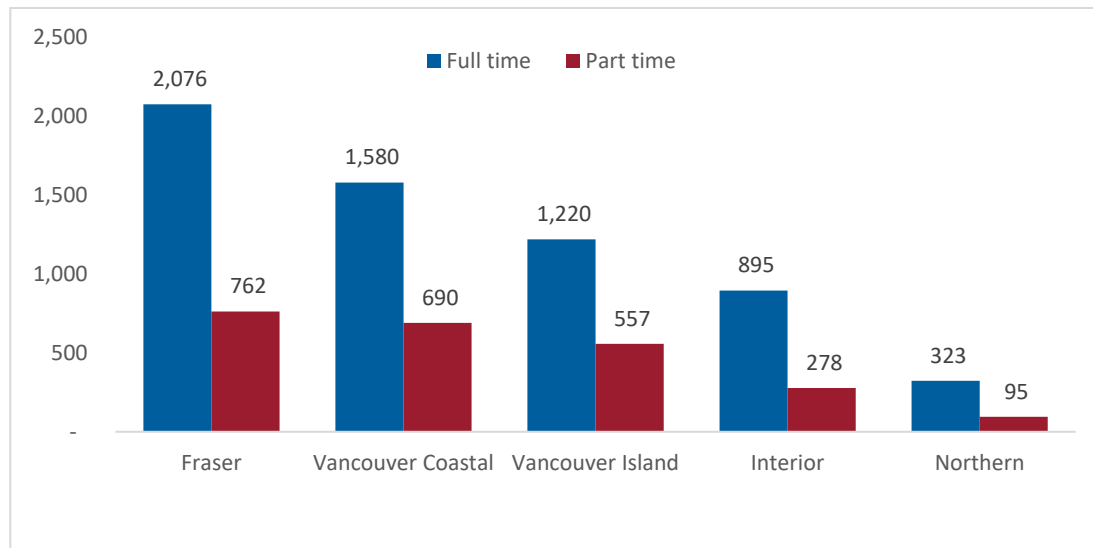


Table 10 Number of staff reported by employers in Sample B, by position

	Full-time		Part-time	
	Filled	Vacant	Filled	Vacant
ECL workers	3875	292	2041	240
Supervisor	886	29	174	9
Manager	901	9	105	7
Director	442	12	72	7
Total	6103	342	2392	263

Figure 2 Number of staff reported by employers in Sample B by health authority



CHILD CARE WORKFORCE CONTACT INFORMATION DATABASE

Purpose

The contact information database includes available points of contact for survey outreach and invitations for the cross-sectional workforce survey. It will also allow SRDC to assess the changing composition of the sector over time.

Methodology

Based on our previous assessment of the databases available, SRDC's planned database was to include the following:

- Licensed child care providers receiving the Child Care Operator Funding – Publicly available database
- Licensed child care providers not receiving the Child Care Operating Funding – Data held by Health Authorities (HA)
- ECE Registry – Held by MCFD
- Registered license-not-required (RLNR) child care providers who choose to register with their local BC Child Care Resource and Referral Centre.

Updating of the current database will occur using the equivalent channels as in 2019 and in the same months of 2020 and 2021.

Successes and challenges

SRDC did not receive all data requested from health authorities including no data from two health authorities. Missing contact information in data provided by other health authorities also impacted the comprehensiveness of SRDC's database.

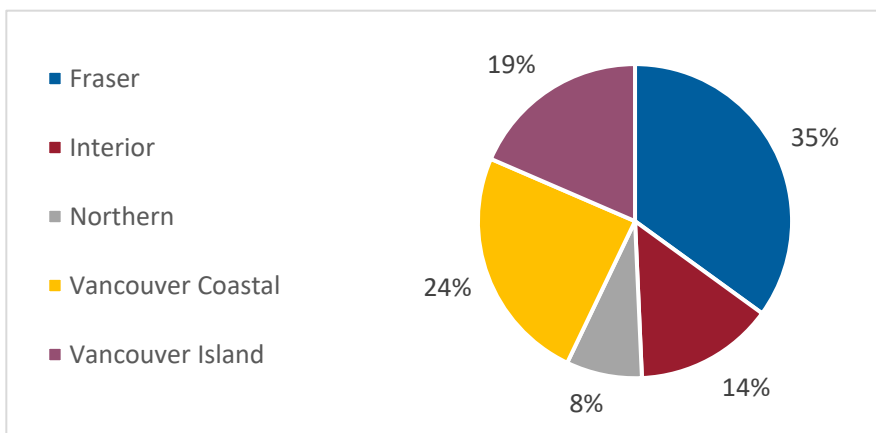
SRDC attempted to make up for the missing data using publicly available child care information from the inspection reports of both Fraser Health and Northern Health. When contact information was missing, SRDC conducted an extensive internet search to find contact information for each child care provider. Data requests for the ECE Registry were not approved due to privacy concerns with respect to sharing personal contact information without prior consent for this purpose. Not receiving access to contact data from the ECE Registry impacted the scope of the database. Finally, SRDC's data request from local BC Child Care Resource and Referral Centres regarding RLNR child care centres was not completed due to difficulties in providing these data.

Data inconsistencies were also evident between health authority databases and the Child Care Operating Funding database including differences in child care centre names and contact information. SRDC also found some contact information in these databases was not updated. Because of these problems, SRDC was not able to personalize some of the cross-sectional workforce survey invitations and, when the invitations were sent out, SRDC received numerous requests to update the information in the database.

Database summary

The final database used to distribute the 2019 child care workforce cross-sectional survey included 5,262 child care facilities and providers. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the child care facilities and providers in the database by health authority.

Figure 3 Database child care facilities by health authority



While the number of child care facilities and providers provide an overview of our database, type of child care and maximum capacity provide more detailed insights regarding the number of ECL workers that could be reached through the database.

Table 11 summarizes the database facilities and providers by type of child care and health authority. Almost 70 per cent of the database includes facility or centre-based child cares. However, the representation of these type of child cares is lower in Northern Health Authority (51 per cent) and Vancouver Island Health Authority (58 per cent). Since these authorities have a higher proportion of child care providers with lower staff numbers, the potential reach of ECL workers in the regions covered by these health authorities is lower.

Table 11 Database child care facilities by type of child care

	Fraser	Interior	Northern	Vancouver Coastal	Vancouver Island	Total	Percentage
Facility or centre-based	70%	68%	51%	76%	58%	3,560	68%
Group child care (under 36 months)	18%	16%	10%	16%	13%	833	12%
Group child care (30 months to school age)	29%	29%	18%	16%	30%	1314	19%
Preschool (30 months to school age)	21%	23%	22%	16%	18%	1034	15%
Group child care (school age)	27%	28%	19%	20%	25%	1277	19%
Occasional child care	0%	5%	0%	0%	2%	60	1%
Multi-age child care	16%	15%	14%	5%	9%	628	9%
Family child care	21%	25%	42%	19%	33%	1316	19%
In-home multi-age child care	8%	7%	7%	5%	8%	365	5%
Child-minding	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	21	0%

Staff numbers are a key determinant of maximum capacity as licensing requires that the specific child-to-staff ratios for each type of child care are followed. Given maximum capacity and child-to-staff ratios for each type of child care can be estimated, SRDC has calculated a crude estimate of the ECL workforce its database had the potential of reaching, conservatively. For this conservative estimate, SRDC assumed that all child care operators in the database are operating at maximum capacity. The database includes maximum capacity by workplace but not by type of license within the workplaces. Therefore, SRDC also had to assume child-to-staff ratios. The assumptions are critical for workplaces with multiple licenses with varying ratio requirements which are captured in Group C (Table 12). This group accounts for 46 per cent of the total maximum capacity across the database. If a ratio of 1 ECL worker per 8 children is chosen, based on the composition of licenses in this group (Table 13), then SRDC estimates its database to have a potential reach of 13,805 ECL workers in BC. Table 14 also shows the ECL workforce potential reach by health authority.

The 2019 child care workforce cross-sectional survey also gathered responses from facilities and providers not included in the initial database. The updated database includes 5,421 child care facilities and providers.

Table 12 **Estimated ECL workforce in the Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database by type of child care**

Type of license	Child-to-staff ratio	Total maximum capacity	Estimated ECL workforce
301 Group child care (under 36 months)	4:1	1,614	404
302 Group child care (30 months to school age)	8:1	6,125	766
303 Preschool (30 months to school age)	10:1	10,711	1,071
304 Family child care	7:1	9,088	1,298
305 Group child care (school age)	12:1	22,618	1,885
308 Occasional child care	4:1	495	124
310 Multi-age child care	8:1	3,822	478
311 In-home multi-age child care	8:1	2,929	366
Group A (301 and 310)	8:1	720	90
Group B (303 and 305)	11:1	5,129	466
Group C (remaining combinations of multiple licenses)	8:1	54,866	6,858
Total			13,805

Table 13 Type of child care licenses in Group C of the Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database

Type of license	Child-to-staff ratio	Number of license	Percentage
301 Group Child Care (Under 36 months)	4:1	800	28%
302 Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age)	8:1	1,006	35%
303 Preschool (30 Months to School Age)	10:1	387	14%
305 Group Child Care (School Age)	12:1	476	17%
308 Occasional Child Care	4:1	30	1%
310 Multi-Age Child Care	8:1	155	5%
Total		2,854	100%

Table 14 ECL workforce potential reach by health authority

Health authority	Estimated ECL workforce	Percentage
Fraser	4,994	36%
Interior	1,575	11%
Northern	830	6%
Vancouver Coastal	2,937	21%
Vancouver Island	3,470	25%

CENSUS AND LABOUR FORCE SURVEY MICRODATA

Purpose

SRDC set out to “benchmark” the current state of the ECL sector in BC. Benchmarking, or describing the current state, is useful because it sets the initial context against which the project’s lines of evidence can note system-wide changes that occur over the first three years of implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy. This benchmarking is based on an analysis of microdata from the Canadian Census and Labour Force Survey from 2000 to 2018. SRDC

describes BC’s ECL sector in terms of worker characteristics, worker education, and job tenure. SRDC includes relevant regional and national comparisons when possible.

Methodology

SRDC analysts applied to the Statistics Canada Research Data Centre at the University of Ottawa to analyze confidential micro-data from recent Canada Censuses, with a special focus on the 2016 Census and the Labour Force Survey. The application was accepted, and analysis took place during the spring of 2019.

To identify workers in the ECL workforce, SRDC considered industry, education, and occupation information from the 2016 Census of Canada microdata, the 2011 Classification of Instruction Programs, and the Government of Canada’s National Occupational Classification 2016 website. This process was described in more detail in the earlier Evaluation Methods and Tools 2019 deliverable.

A multi-step process ultimately led SRDC to identify two subgroups within the ECL workforce:

- Early Childhood Educator/Assistant+ (ECE/A+)
 - “Core ECE/A” workers whose occupations are categorized as Early Childhood Educator or Assistant
 - “Additional Core ECE/A” workers, who work in a relevant ECE industry and/or have a relevant ECE education, and whose occupation is categorized as either manager in social, community, and correctional services; social and community service worker; or elementary and secondary school teacher assistant
- Home Child Care Providers (HCP+)
 - Home child care providers have National Occupational Classification code 4411. They care for the well-being and physical and social development of children, assist parents with child care and may assist with household duties on an ongoing or short-term basis. They provide care primarily in their own homes or in the children's homes, where they may also reside. They are employed by private households and child-care agencies, or they may be self-employed. Illustrative example(s) include: babysitter; child care provider (private home), live-in caregiver, nanny and parent's helper.

Terminology is also explained in the Glossary (Appendix D). In the ultimately selected benchmarking exercise, SRDC’s definition of the ECL workforce did not include approximately

150 workers who had relevant ECE education and who were working in college and vocational instructor or social policy researcher, consultant, and program officer occupations.

SRDC produced a large number of analyses for inclusion in this report. Each analytical output (table or figure) was subject to vetting by an assigned Statistics Canada analyst to ensure no personally identifiable information left the Research Data Centre. SRDC developed its preliminary narrative and presentation of results over the summer of 2019.

Successes and challenges

Part of the classification process involved discriminating between kindergarten teachers and child care workers. The process involved scrutiny of the field of study of post-secondary programs to identify those most likely to be considered members of the ECL workforce. This approach may produce erroneous conclusions and cannot be applied in all cases. Notably, most Statistics Canada surveys (such as the Labour Force Survey) do not ask participants about their post-secondary field of study. Even surveys that ask for the field of study only capture information about the last post-secondary program the participant has undertaken. As a result, refinement of the sector identification was not possible beyond the ECL occupations identified using the Labour Force Survey. SRDC analyzed the content of the “Lead statement” and “Main duties” categories of each occupation and dropped those clearly irrelevant from further consideration in the Labour Force Survey.

It should be noted that kindergartens are usually grouped with elementary schools in terms of statistical classification and industry criterion. Likewise, kindergarten teachers are usually grouped with elementary school teachers. At face value, this is not problematic for the purposes of the benchmarking exercise, because kindergarten teachers are indeed distinct from early childhood educators in terms of professional development. However, kindergartens and elementary schools do employ ECL workers for various programs. As such, any identification based on industry criterion will misclassify a small number of sector members in the benchmarking exercise.

The restrictions on data release meant the workforce data was sub divided into just the two main categories defined above: ECE/A+ and HCP+. There are clearly overlaps with categories derived from the cross-sectional survey but the Census categories capture a broad range of workers with a wider range of duties. The SRDC survey has more finely tuned categories but only includes workers who felt a survey of the province’s *child care workforce* applied to them and chose to respond. One consequence, for example, is that the Census HCP+ category includes a much larger proportion of *employed* individuals (such as nannies) than the Survey HCP category. Another is that the Census ECE/A+ category includes people working in centres and agencies as

daycare helpers such as responsible adults, who may not hold a post-secondary credential. Terminology is also explained in the Glossary (Appendix D).

ADMINISTRATIVE OUTCOMES DATABASE

Purpose

Existing administrative data provide a source of information for descriptive analysis of the pace and pattern of implementation of the strategy tactics as well as enumeration of changes being brought about by the strategy in the number and characteristics of child care providers.

Methodology

SRDC has made initial requests to data-holding agencies including MCFD, the Ministry of Education, WorkBC, provincial health authorities, child care resource centres, and ECE BC.

Successes and challenges

This is the component of the evaluation data on which SRDC has made least progress to date. SRDC has approached several Ministries and other organizations to obtain data, but the process of data acquisition is far from complete. SRDC had prioritised obtaining the data required for the child care workforce contact information database (separate section above). SRDC will submit and re-submit requests to receive additional data sets. At meetings on March 18 and April 8, 2020, MCFD has agreed to release of aggregate data from the Child Care Operating Fund, Provider Profile, Startup Grant, Wage Enhancement and ECE Registry certifications to SRDC. Data from Child Care Resource & Referral, Prototype sites and training programs have also been requested by MCFD.

One of the advantages of administrative datasets is that they typically include archives or sets of historical records going back several years. Therefore, analysis of changes covering the entire project period can be contemplated using data obtained later during the project period. The following list of data sources to be included notes any specific challenges and next steps:

- BC linked Education Labour Market Platform – available as of December 2019. SRDC will submit an application for linked secondary/post-secondary records (including student loan applications, receipt and repayment) to employment and earnings information from tax records.

- Federal government Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements – awaiting updates from Statistics Canada on survey availability.
- ECE/training programs in BC – these data are now available via the BC linked Education Labour Market Platform and can be verified using education planner.
- ECE Bursary Program – available from ECEBC, not yet obtained.
- ECE Workforce Development Fund – available from ECEBC, not yet obtained.
- Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program – investigating available documentation on the successor Early Childhood Pedagogy Network with MCFD.
- Updated occupational competencies for training ECE and updated ECE standards of practice – obtained as and when they are released publicly.
- Child care workers qualified as responsible adults – SRDC is investigating available data.
- Registered License-Not-Required providers (RLNR) – may be enumerated through data held within Child Care Resource and Referral programs.
- Unregistered License-Not-Required providers – no reliable sources identified.
- Aboriginal Head Start preschools – programs documented on Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC website.
- Child Care Operating Fund Data – contact data obtained, additional data under investigation.
- Start-up grant data (expected shortly following meetings with MCFD March 18 and April 8, 2020).
- ECE Wage Enhancement (expected shortly following meetings with MCFD March 18 and April 8, 2020).
- Data on prototype sites (under investigation by MCFD, based on meetings with MCFD March 18 and April 8, 2020).
- Child Care job postings – under investigation.
- ECE Registry (under investigation by MCFD, based on meetings with MCFD March 18 and April 8, 2020).
- Child care centres investigation reports – downloaded from provincial health authority websites.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Purpose

A stated goal of the ECL R&R Strategy is “increasing public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of early care and learning professionals from rigorous standards and oversight”. SRDC has developed a survey instrument to measure changes over time in public opinion regarding the ECL profession, both from the perspective of the general public, and of people making decisions in regards to their own career. The first survey was fielded in 2019 and similar questions will be fielded again in 2022. Results from these surveys will help SRDC determine whether public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of ECL professionals is improving, and whether the value BC residents place on those engaged in ECL as a career and the viability and sustainability of the workforce is increasing over time. The surveys can also capture how aware the public is of the effect of other changes in public policy with respect to the ECL workforce, such as increased recruitment. Similarly, by comparing responses of successive cross-sections of emerging adults and others looking at a career change between survey waves, SRDC hopes to determine whether interest in a career in ECL is increasing over time.

Methodology

SRDC engaged Maru/Matchbox to manage all aspects of sample contact and survey management, including programming SRDC’s survey instrument, and data cleaning and processing. The final version of the survey instrument was included in the Evaluation Methods and Tools report in May 2019. The survey was provided to the Maru/Matchbox Canada-wide panel of respondents resident in British Columbia. Parents were asked to engage their children aged 13 and older in a separate version of the survey. By June 2019, SRDC had received anonymized data files that form the first wave of the survey. The survey will be repeated in Spring 2022 so that changes in opinions can be compared between survey waves.

Successes and challenges

The sample requested was achieved, with a reasonable match to the BC population, after taking into account the specific sample design. As shown in Table 15, a total of 2,105 respondents answered the public opinion survey fielded in May 2019. Forty-three per cent of respondents were male, and 57 per cent were female. [The 2016 Census reports 51.4 per cent of the BC population aged 15 and older to be female]. The survey deliberately oversampled teenagers and so the proportion of older participants was somewhat lower than in the general population. The largest group in the sample and in the population were those aged 55 years or older (26.6 per

cent). More than a quarter in the sample were aged between 18 and 23 years (26.1 per cent). Respondents aged 18 or older were asked if they were parents of co-resident dependent children (had children aged 0 to 17 who lived with them on a full-time or part-time basis or for whom they held responsibility), and the majority (70.1 per cent) were not parents meeting this definition. The majority of respondents were born in Canada (79.1 per cent compared to 72.2 per cent in the BC population), did not identify as Indigenous (91.4 per cent compared to 94.1 per cent in the BC population), and did not live in a rural community (73.4 per cent). Table 15 highlights respondents' demographics.

SOCIAL AND NEWS MEDIA MONITORING

Purpose

SRDC sought a mechanism to systematically collect analytics and results from a daily review of BC-relevant child care-related posts and compilation of news article data for content analysis. This activity supports tracking of perceptions among thought leaders and mass media of employment in ECL as a career choice, and sentiments that ECL professionals implement high standards of care and education. In turn, these contribute to measures for two key performance indicators:

- Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector, and
- Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents.

Along with data from the cross-sectional survey of the ECL workforce and public opinion survey, the primary goal for social and media monitoring was to answer the broader evaluation questions concerning the direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the strategy on public confidence in the sector and the preference among British Columbians to work in it. A secondary purpose is to help keep the evaluation team up to speed on developments and initiatives province-wide and how they are being communicated to the public.

Table 15 Public opinion survey respondent characteristics

Characteristics		Frequency	Share of Respondents (%)
Sex	Female	1198	56.9
	Male	907	43.1
Age	13-17	201	9.5
	18-24	584	27.7
	25-39	387	18.4
	40-54	373	17.7
	55+	560	26.6
Parents or not (if 18 or older)	Yes	398	20.1
	No	1475	77.5
	Prefer not to say	31	1.6
	Not asked (aged 17 or younger)	201	
Indigenous	Yes	137	6.5
	No	1923	91.4
	Prefer not to say	45	2.1
Rural communities	Yes	439	20.9
	No	1546	73.4
	Not sure	120	5.7
Born in Canada	Yes	1678	79.7
	No	423	20.1
	Not sure	4	0.2
Total		2105	100

There are typically two stages to the process. *Social monitoring* is the collection of social data. *Social listening* is the analysis of that data to identify trends and answer questions.

Methodology

SRDC worked with Hootsuite and TalkWalker to develop a Boolean search that captures news media and social media posts related to the child care workforce in BC. The contract with TalkWalker also includes access to two years of historical data from the present date (i.e., the earliest date accessible moves forward with the present date). Using the supplied TalkWalker software, SRDC has been downloading the historical data in monthly batches from the earliest

possible date of June 10, 2017. The historical data provides an extended benchmarking timeline for comparison of posts before and after the launch of the ECL R&R strategy.

The Boolean search is intentionally limited to English language content that was published in Canada. It includes multiple terms representing the child care workforce in order to capture all relevant content.

Successes and challenges

The social monitoring has continued through 2019. Due to privacy restrictions, data downloaded from TalkWalker do not include any (historic or current) Facebook or Instagram posts from pages for which the project does not have user rights. Therefore, the captured data is limited to posts from news media, blogs, forums, press releases, other websites, and Twitter.

Nevertheless, of the historical data downloaded to date, the number of monthly posts ranges from 200 to over 1,300. Manually cleaning these data and removing irrelevant posts is time consuming. As we discuss at some length below, the process can reduce the number of relevant, retained posts by roughly 50 per cent, varying by month. This has generated concerns about the limitations of analysis performed on what is being captured. We review the evidence and options for next steps below.

Relevance of captured posts

Using the original Boolean search, SRDC cleaned and coded three months of data from 2017 to determine the relevance of the posts the search picked up.⁵ Table 16 below shows the results of this activity for June, July, and October 2017.

This exercise illustrates how the search terms have been capturing a large proportion of irrelevant posts. The number of posts related to the KPIs were very low, but this may have been because the months examined preceded the launch of the ECL R&R strategy. A repeat of this activity with a month in 2018 found the number of KPI-related posts grew over time, as discussed further below. Examples of the resulting TalkWalker output are included in Box 1.

⁵ The original Boolean search includes the following terms: ("BC" OR "B.C." OR "British Columbia") AND (workers OR worker OR career OR wages OR wage OR pay OR salary OR salaries OR income OR quality OR standard OR standards OR money* OR benefits OR pension OR coverage) AND ((childcare~ OR "early care" OR "early learning" OR daycare OR dayhome OR "children aged 0 to 5" OR "0 to 5 year olds" OR "early childhood" OR "ECE" OR "childcare~ assistant" OR ("Provider child"~5 OR "Provider early"~5 OR "provider infant"~5 OR "provider toddler"~5) OR (multi-age AND childcare~) OR "license-not-required" OR "LNR" OR "before-school care" OR "before school care" OR "after school care" OR "after-school care" OR pre-school OR preschool OR "child's own home")) AND lang:en AND sourcegeo:ca

Table 16 Relevance of posts for selected months, 2017

Month	Total number of posts	Posts related to child care in BC	Posts related to ECL R&R Strategy	Posts related to KPIs
June	490	237 (48.4%)	106 (21.6%)	0 (0.0%)
July	266	95 (35.7%)	28 (10.5%)	1 (0.4%)
October	317	62 (24.3%)	26 (10.2%)	1 (0.4%)

Given the low relevance of results overall, SRDC has been investing time in refining the Boolean search while continuing its monitoring using the original search. SRDC used several means to improve the proportion of relevant posts captured relative to the original Boolean search:⁶

⁶ The Boolean capture component was revised as follows: ("BC" OR "B.C." OR "British Columbia" OR "Abbotsford" OR "Armstrong" OR "Burnaby" OR "Campbell River" OR "Castlegar" OR "Chilliwack" OR "Colwood" OR "Coquitlam" OR "Cranbrook" OR "Dawson Creek" OR "Delta" OR "Enderby" OR "Fernie" OR "Fort St. John" OR "Grand Forks" OR "Greenwood" OR "Kamloops" OR "Kelowna" OR "Langford" OR "Langley" OR "Maple Ridge" OR "Merritt" OR "Nanaimo" OR "New Westminster" OR "North Vancouver" OR "Parksville" OR "Penticton" OR "Pitt Meadows" OR "Port Alberni" OR "Port Coquitlam" OR "Port Moody" OR "Powell River" OR "Prince George" OR "Prince Rupert" OR "Quesnel" OR "Revelstoke" OR "Richmond" OR "Rossland" OR "Salmon Arm" OR "Surrey" OR "Terrace" OR "Vancouver" OR "West Kelowna" OR "White Rock" OR "Williams Lake" OR "100 Mile House" OR "Barriere" OR "Central Saanich" OR "Chetwynd" OR "Clearwater" OR "Coldstream" OR "Elkford" OR "Esquimalt" OR "Fort St. James" OR "Highlands" OR "Hudson's Hope" OR "Invermere" OR "Kitimat" OR "Lake Country" OR "Langley" OR "Lantzville" OR "Lillooet" OR "Logan Lake" OR "Metchosin" OR "New Hazelton" OR "North Cowichan" OR "North Saanich" OR "North Vancouver" OR "Northern Rockies" OR "Oak Bay" OR "Peachland" OR "Port Edward" OR "Port Hardy" OR "Saanich" OR "Sechelt" OR "Sicamous" OR "Sooke" OR "Spallumcheen" OR "Sparwood" OR "Squamish" OR "Stewart" OR "Summerland" OR "Tofino" OR "Tumbler Ridge" OR "Ucluelet" OR "Vanderhoof" OR "Wells" OR "West Vancouver" OR "Sechelt Indian Government District" OR "Bowen Island" OR "Jumbo Glacier" OR "Sun Peaks" OR "Whistler" OR "Comox" OR "Creston" OR "Gibsons" OR "Ladysmith" OR "Lake Cowichan" OR "Oliver" OR "Osoyoos" OR "Port McNeill" OR "Princeton" OR "Qualicum Beach" OR "Sidney" OR "Smithers" OR "View Royal" OR "Alert Bay" OR "Anmore" OR "Ashcroft" OR "Belcarra" OR "Burns Lake" OR "Cache Creek" OR "Canal Flats" OR "Cumberland" OR "Fraser Lake" OR "Fruitvale" OR "Gold River" OR "Granisle" OR "Harrison Hot Springs" OR "Hazelton" OR "Kaslo" OR "Keremeos" OR "Lions Bay" OR "Lumby" OR "Lytton" OR "Masset" OR "McBride" OR "Midway" OR "Montrose" OR "Nakusp" OR "New Denver" OR "Pemberton" OR "Port Alice" OR "Port Clements" OR "Pouce Coupe" OR "Queen Charlotte" OR "Radium Hot Springs" OR "Salmo" OR "Sayward" OR "Silverton" OR "Slocan" OR "Tahsis" OR "Telkwa" OR "Valemount" OR "Warfield" OR "Zeballos") AND (childcare~ OR "early care" OR "early learning" OR "early childhood" OR daycare OR dayhome OR "ECE" OR "childcare~ assistant" OR multi-age OR "license-not-required" OR "LNR" OR "before-school care" OR "before school care" OR "after school care" OR "after-school care" OR pre-school OR preschool OR "child's own home") NEAR (worker~ OR staff OR carer~ OR educator~ OR quality OR ECE OR career OR training OR provider~ OR standard~) lang:en AND sourcegeo:ca

Box 1 Examples of TalkWalker output

The screenshot displays the Hootsuite Analytics interface for a search query 'Workforce test XL'. The top navigation bar includes 'Social Research and De...', 'Analytics', and filter options like 'Open Filters' and 'Clear 1 Custom Filters X'. The main dashboard shows a 'RESULTS OVER TIME' line graph with a peak in late July. Below the graph, there are four social media posts:

- Post 1:** 'Early Childhood Education program expanded at North Island College' by Justin Goulet. Text: "More early childhood education training spaces at North Island College will open the doors to a rewarding career for more ... Education, Skills and Training, in a provincial release. Families deserve access to quality child care that they can...". Published on 10/07/18 at 13:30. Metrics: 3 Twitter Shares.
- Post 2:** 'Early Childhood Education program expanded at North Island College' by Justin Goulet. Text: "More early childhood education training spaces at North Island College will open the doors to a rewarding career for more ... Education, Skills and Training, in a provincial release. Families deserve access to quality child care that they can...". Published on 10/07/18 at 12:59. Metrics: 3 Twitter Shares, 30,000 Alexa pageviews, 24,999 Alexa Monthly Unique Visitors.
- Post 3:** 'Women's Centre of Calgary' shared an image. Text: "Great news out of B.C! Access to quality, affordable #childcare increases women's abilities to participate in the workforce, and in our general society. ow.ly/PtIL30kHmpp pic.twitter.com/RLjvPY2FhN". Published on 06/07/18 at 15:10. Metrics: 1 Retweets, 2 Twitter Likes, 1,252 Twitter Followers.
- Post 4:** 'BC Child Care Owners Association' shared an image. Text: "Did you know? Child care quality dramatically suffers during the transition to universal care. What steps can we take to make sure we don't make the same mistakes in BC? #ChildCare #BCPoli Source: cbc.ca/news/canada/br... pic.twitter.com/hlVLPnDHy". Published on 31/07/18 at 14:30. Metrics: 2 Retweets, 58 Twitter Followers.

- by removing search terms that were too broad;
- adding a “NEAR” operator to ensure that terms related to child care workers were within 15 words of ones related to child care;
- adding exclusions to remove posts related to obituaries, snow days, public health advisories, and other irrelevant topics that still contained words related to child care;
- add additional terms to capture posts where only the name of a town or municipality in BC was mentioned when the province was not named.

The new Boolean search also includes many exclusions intended to reduce the incidence of commonly mis-captured posts: reports on crime and legal activity, health care systems, food and restaurant reviews, environmental protest, and sports activities.

SRDC repeated a relevance assessment exercise against the original Boolean search for July 2018. The test included filtering the captured and exported posts within Excel to ensure the title and content snippet exported by TalkWalker contained key words related to the child care sector, child care workers, and BC place names. The filter sped up the manual validation process.

The results for July 2018 are displayed in Table 17 below.

Table 17 **Relevance of posts for July 2018**

Search	Total number of posts	Relevant posts (Excel filter)	Relevant posts (manual check)	Posts related to ECL R&R Strategy	Posts related to KPIs
Original	310	214 (69.0%)	172 (55.5%)	78 (25.2%)	16 (5.2%)
New	150	113 (75.3%)	102 (68.0%)	65 (43.3%)	13 (8.7%)

The new search resulted in a reduction in the total number of posts by over 50 per cent. Although a small number of relevant posts were lost, the new search produced higher proportions of relevant posts across all categories, including a yield of nine per cent related to the KPIs. Although the reduction in the number of posts and the improvement in relevance was promising, manually sorting through the posts in this way for every month in scope is not going to be possible given time constraints.

A key part of the social listening exercise is to classify what is being said about the recruitment and retention strategy. SRDC chose TalkWalker to help automate that process for the 50+ months to be monitored. As the next section outlines, specifically the intention was to

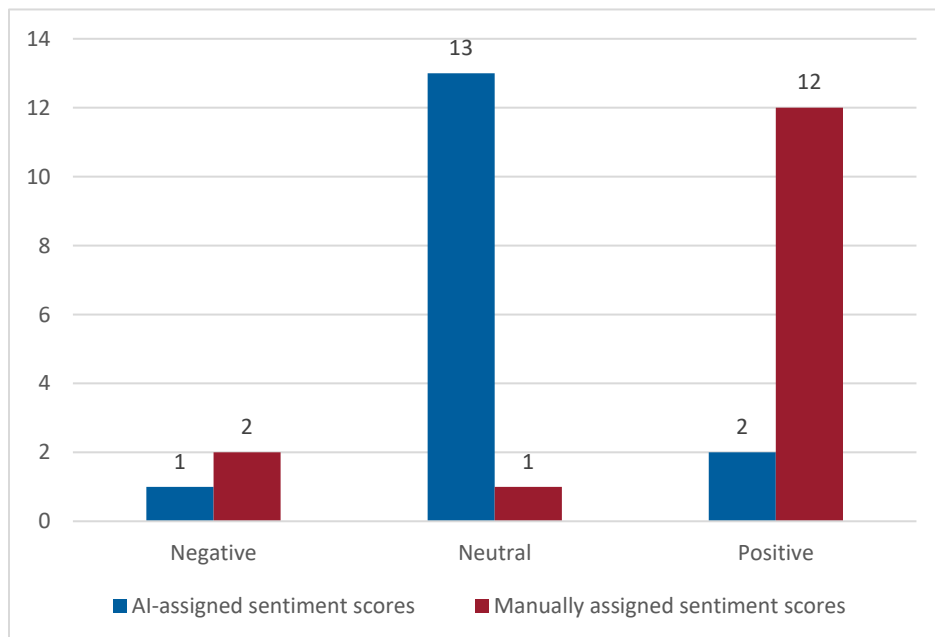
analyze article sentiment – answering the question of whether positive or negative opinions were being voiced about aspects of the strategy and how these change over time. But when our analysis suggests only 65 of every 150 posts actually concerns the strategy, the sentiment being analyzed would not relate directly to the KPIs, but rather to child care in BC more generally, which may be muddled by opinions on other child care issues such as cost and scarcity. This ‘needle in a haystack’ concern is not the only limitation affecting the sentiment analysis, as the next section describes.

Sentiment analysis

TalkWalker includes an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Engine that aims to detect sentiment within a post. The AI Engine automatically assigns a score to each post: 5 for positive; 0 for neutral; and -5 for negative. One limitation of the AI Engine is that it can only assign a sentiment score to an entire post, rather than to specific sentences or arguments. For the KPIs SRDC seeks to measure, one post could contain both positive and negative opinions with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of child care as a profession. Therefore, relying on the built-in AI sentiment score may not produce meaningful results to measure changes in sentiment across time.

To test this assumption, SRDC compared the AI-assigned sentiment scores for KPI-related posts in July 2018 to sentiment scores that were manually assigned.

Figure 4 Comparison of sentiment assignments to KPI-related posts for July 2018



As predicted, the AI-assigned scores differed considerably from the manually assigned scores. Due to the AI's inability to assign scores to specific arguments within a post, the AI engine is more likely to assign a neutral score to balance out the positive and negative sentiments in a post, whereas manually assigning a score can focus on the specific sentiment that is related to the KPIs. Although more accurate, manually assigning sentiment scores is considerably more time intensive.

In attempt to address this limitation, SRDC has been exploring the possibility of purchasing an add-on for the TalkWalker AI Engine which allows users to manually train the AI to recognize and attribute sentiment to the relevant components of posts. The add-on would allow for users to identify specific tags within a topic, in order to create subtopics and improve the relevance of tags, and would also allow for users to train the AI to identify sentiment in a way that better aligns with how the users would manually score the posts. SRDC undertook a training demonstration with TalkWalker and learned that users can only train the AI using a single model per topic, which would not meet project requirements since the evaluation KPIs contain multiple measures.

Next steps

Having identified the limitations of TalkWalker, SRDC has developed the following options for next steps:

- **Renew the TalkWalker contract and use TalkWalker only as a monitoring tool (to collect but not to analyze social and news media data).** Now that SRDC has refined the search terms, it may be possible to pair the data collected from TalkWalker with another tool for sentiment analysis. For example, Microsoft has developed a Text Analytics tool that can assign sentiment scores for individual sentences. SRDC will need to undertake additional research to determine whether this product or a similar one will meet the needs of the evaluation. Another option would be to develop a qualitative methodology using TalkWalker results by conducting a thematic analysis and sentiment analysis based on a smaller number of results. Since the data have been captured anyway, there is time to fine tune the methods before undertaking the analysis.
- **Renew the TalkWalker contract and develop a new methodology for social and news media monitoring.** A qualitative analysis as described above would not require the volume of posts that TalkWalker provides. A sample of posts from a pre-identified set of news media, blogs, forums, and social media may be sufficient to measure changes in sentiment over time, though in a less comprehensive way, since the entire world wide web will not be crawled. A problem with switching at this point is that the commentary posted from mid-

2017 up to March 2020 may be not all be accessible (even through the Wayback machine) and thus captured, rendering the retrospective analysis incomplete.

- **Rely on the other lines of evidence that measure the same KPIs.** The KPIs associated with social listening are also measured by other methodologies including the key informant interviews, cross-sectional survey, and public opinion survey. Abandoning social listening as a methodology will not leave any KPI without an alternative measurement tool and will mean more evaluation resources can be devoted to them.

To facilitate the first of these options (without preventing later adoption of the second or third if necessary), SRDC is continuing the collection of data for the full period of the evaluation and investigating new tools for analysis. The benchmark and measures later in time can be constructed retroactively and compared once the analytical method has been finalized. SRDC will consult with ECEBC and the SSC on the optimal way to move forward as part of discussions on the Updated Evaluation Strategy (2020) and Updated Evaluation Methods and Tools (2020).

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND CASE STUDIES

Purpose

To support implementation research, SRDC is conducting and analyzing 100-200 in-depth key informant interviews and undertaking six child care program case studies to better understand the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics. The purpose of conducting key informant interviews (KIIs) is to gather detailed, in-depth information about the first-hand experiences of diverse stakeholders, including those who are directly affected by the Strategy and those who are involved in its implementation and delivery. This may include government officials, Sector Steering Committee members, child care providers, child care workforce members, academic researchers, policy makers, and parents. In addition, six case study sites will provide a fulsome description of how the ECL R&R Strategy is working within the real-world contexts of six unique child care programs. The case study approach will offer insight into successes and challenges related to the delivery and impact of the Strategy and the key factors that facilitate or impede its overall effectiveness. The case study sites will also assist with initial validation of data collection instruments.

Methodology

Case studies

In May and June 2019, the SSC helped SRDC to establish criteria for identifying appropriate sites for the six child care program case studies. There were six primary factors for selecting the case studies:

- Regional Health Authority (one from each region)
- Geography (urban or rural)
- Indigenous focus (yes or no)
- Financial status (private or non-profit)
- Size of facility (less than 12 children to more than 25 children)
- Group Type (under 3 years old, 2.5 – school age, preschool, or school-age)

This exercise also raised additional criteria and so SRDC decided to identify up to 16 additional child care programs for annual 60-minute key informant interviews with ECL providers by phone. This will allow the evaluation to gather in-depth information from a broader range of providers while keeping the time and resource costs manageable for the evaluators and the evaluation participants. Interviews are scheduled for data collection on an ongoing basis. Refer to Table 1 on page 24 for the schedule of different types of interview by year.

In July, the SSC provided suggestions for over 30 child care programs across the province that would meet the various criteria. SRDC reviewed these suggestions and developed a matrix of potential case study participants to address all of the criteria. The initially proposed number for selection is included in Table 18. SRDC and some SSC members with personal contacts then reached out to specific programs with an invitation to participate in the evaluation as a case study site.

SRDC also consulted with SSC members representing Indigenous-focused child care organizations in order to help SRDC engage and learn from Indigenous-focused centres and their communities about the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy. SSC members provided detailed suggestions and personal contacts. Following their suggestions, SRDC invited an Indigenous child care expert to accompany SRDC on the site visit to an Indigenous-focused site.

A total of nine child care programs were invited to participate. One program declined explaining that they had very few staff and were in the middle of an organizational transition. Two other centres never responded to multiple requests for participation by email and phone message.

Six centres took part in the case study site visits in September and October 2019. Table 18 shows the distribution of the sites actually included following SSC members and Indigenous child care expert suggestions. SRDC visited one child care program from each health authority region as well as one on-reserve Indigenous child care centre. Three of the child care centres are in urban locations, and 3 are located in more rural areas of the province. One child care program has a specific Indigenous focus. Two of the centres are privately owned, and the other four have non-profit financial status. All six child care centres had 25 or more children. Smaller programs have fewer staff and would not provide as much opportunity to gather information about the ECL Recruitment and Retention Strategy implementation. Four of the programs have Infant/Toddler programs (Group Child Care birth to 36 months), all six have Group Care 2.5 years to school age, four centres have preschool programs (Group Care 2.5 years to school age), and two centres have Out of School programs (Group Care School Age).

The names and locations of the six case study sites are confidential. Only SRDC staff involved in this evaluation have this information. All case study sites were assured that their program name, as well as the names of any individuals associated with the sites would remain confidential. No identifying information will be shared in any reporting of the case study findings.

Being involved as a case study site requires a lot of time, energy and information sharing from the team at each site. In appreciation for their participation, SRDC offered the following to each participating child care centre:

- SRDC paid for a qualified substitute so that evaluators can meet with the manager/director and other child care workers in private interviews without disrupting the care of children or other activities. The centre was responsible for scheduling the substitute for the day of the visit.
- SRDC offered a \$500 “thank you” gift certificate to www.wintergreen.ca or www.strongnations.com to each participating site for the purchase of learning resources.
- SRDC offered funds for a staff lunch or other meal during the visit. The centre was responsible for making meal arrangements.

Each child care centre provided SRDC with a list of all staff who would be working on the day of the scheduled visit. SRDC reviewed the list and suggested up to eight potential participants to engage in individual interviews during the one day visit. These suggestions were made using a purposive stratified sampling approach so that a range of roles, certifications, and tenure at the site would be represented. SRDC also provided the owner/manager with a “one-pager”

describing the evaluation and the purpose for the site visit. It emphasized that participation in any interviews was voluntary, that everyone was free to decline to participate, and that all information would be kept anonymous and confidential.

Protocols for consent and interviews were approved by the SSC and the Province in August 2019. As four of the visits included pilot testing the BC Child Care Workforce Survey, a new consent form was prepared that included all of the information from the approved case study protocols as well as information about the survey testing activity.

About 50 people participated in the 2019 case study site visits. A total of 44 people signed consent forms and participated in interviews. At one site, a group of staff participated in a focused group discussion. While they were all willing to take part, not every member of the group was able to sign the consent form. Therefore, information that was collected during that session has not been used in the evaluation.

The case study interviews have been transcribed and combined with the handwritten notes in November 2019 and analysis has been underway since January 2020.

Table 18 Case study sites

	Fraser Health	Interior Health	Northern Health	Vancouver Coastal Health	Vancouver Island Health	On reserve	Initially proposed minimum number of sites	Actual number of sites
Geography								
Urban	X	X		X			3	3
Rural			X		X	X	2	3
Indigenous focus								
Yes						X	2	1
No	X	X	X	X	X		4	5
Financial status								
Private	X	X					2	2
Not for profit			X	X	X	X	3	4
Size of facility								
<=12 (max group size for 0-2.5 years)							1	0
12-25 (max group size for 2.5-school age)							3	0
>25 (will be >1 group)	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	6
Group type								
Group Child Care – under 3 years old	X	X		X		X	1	4
Group Child Care – 2.5 years to school age	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	6
Group Child Care – school age (before and after school)	X				X		2	2
Pre-school – 2.5 years to school age	X		X	X	X		1	4

Key informant interviews

As described above, SRDC planned to conduct key informant interviews annually with up to 16 additional ECL providers to gain insights into how the ECL R&R Strategy is impacting sites with additional distinctive features. The Sector Steering Committee has made over 30 suggestions for child care programs that meet other criteria including:

- Licensed family child care
- Multi-age child care
- In-home multi-age child care
- Registered license not required
- Child care in public school
- Multi-site single owner
- Unionized
- Focus on special needs
- Not receiving the Child Care Operating Fund

SRDC has sought 16 key informant interviews to date including representation from all of the above categories as well as with a Universal Child Care Prototype site in January and February 2020. Only four have been completed at the time of report compilation and three have been analyzed in time for this report. Interviews are continuing through March and later into 2020. Results will be appended in the interim report for 2020.

Successes and challenges

Scheduling the case study visits in September 2019 was challenging as September is a particularly busy time for child care centres. Planning and executing one day visits worked well to build relationships, however it meant that not all staff were invited to participate in the interviews. In addition, the focus on pilot testing the survey meant that more detailed information from qualitative interviews was not collected for four sites in 2019. However, the opportunity to pilot test the survey multiple times at multiple sites allowed for very important revisions that have resulted in a more user-friendly survey that is more likely to be completed by more child care workers across the province.

SRDC completed the data collection for the case studies during intensive one-day site visits in September and October 2019. A team of either two or three evaluators conducted each site visit. All of the SRDC evaluators had Criminal Record Checks and this information was available for review if needed. Four of the visits focused on pilot testing the BC Child Care Workforce Survey while two of the visits collected information on individual and organizational experiences with the ECL R&R Strategy.

SRDC researchers took detailed notes at each of 50 interviews across the sites. A total of 16 the interviews focused on information on individual and organizational experiences with the ECL R&R Strategy were recorded. All of these participants gave consent for the recording. As previously mentioned, at one site where not all members of a focused group discussion were able to sign a consent form in advance, the session could not be recorded. SRDC also did not use the recorder for some interviews at one site where other staff and some children were in the same room as pilot testing of the survey took place.

After the visits, SRDC staff completed personal observation notes, and each team conducted a systematic debrief of the visit, reflecting on logistics, relationships, data collection and consent tools, as well as context and preliminary findings.

Contribution to evaluation results

The interviews shed considerable light on how the sector is responding to recruitment and retention challenges and the opinions of the ECL workforce on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. Thus, they help set the context for interpreting the quantitative measurements of Key Performance Indicators in this Benchmarking and later reports and improve evaluators' ability to explain the quantitative findings. Delays to collection of data do not jeopardize this role. First-round interviews held in 2020 will be retrospective, building up understanding of how members of the workforce felt about changes from 2018 onwards. Newly-collected accounts will be added continually to the qualitative data base (coded using NVivo software) and analyzed to provide more complete explanations of findings in each subsequent report, as appropriate. Thus, interviews completed after March 2020 will first be used in analysis in Interim Report #2 due in November 2020. Just as later reports will compare quantitative KPI measures from 2020 and 2021 to 2019 benchmarking levels, data from interviews will aid understanding of those changes. Reports will present how members of the workforce felt about their differing situations between years and the changes they experienced in between.

The case studies provide a good understanding of some of the key issues currently experienced by child care providers and workers in BC.⁷ The overall impression that emerges from these data is that providing early childhood education within this sector is challenging. The child care providers who participated in these case studies have developed systems and procedures that enable them to operate successfully. However, early preliminary data from the key informant interviews echoes findings from several respondents to the cross-sectional survey that operating a child care centre can pose significant challenge to some providers, in ways that were not evident at case study sites. Therefore, the data generated by the case studies should be viewed using the lens of appreciative inquiry in that they highlight what is possible (but not what always happens) within the sector in terms of staff recruitment, retention and career advancement.

The data collected as part of the case studies were transcribed, analyzed thematically and the results are included in this report in later sections according to the key research questions. When quotes from participants have been included, they are annotated by the following anonymized convention: Site A through E and job position.⁸

By way of context, it should be noted that the majority of interviews conducted as part of the case studies were with individuals who had the ECE or ECEA professional designations and who worked in child care centres where most staff had similar designations. Within the case studies, there was also a high degree of consensus across many of the key issues including, staff recruitment, retention, job satisfaction, compensation, professional development, career advancement and the public perception of child care as a profession. This consensus exists regardless of the location and size of provider and across all levels of child care workers from managers, ECE trained staff to individuals who work as responsible adults.

To date the three key informant interviews have been analyzed, undertaken with ECL providers from:

- A for profit child care
- A home-based care provider (HCP)
- A unionized child care.

⁷ Harrison, Helena; Birks, Melanie; Franklin, Richard & Mills, Jane (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations [34 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung* / *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 18(1), Art. 19, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1701195>.

⁸ There are no quotes from the sixth case study site since the collection of informed consent was not adequate to support the transcription of the conducted focus group.

The data from these interviews must be viewed as preliminary and indicative rather than conclusive given the full first round of interviews has yet to be completed. Similar themes emerged in these interviews as in the case studies however, as mentioned above the providers found staff recruitment, retention, and career advancement more challenging than the case study sites. Their perspectives are included as appropriate to each KPI in the Evaluation Benchmark Results.

EVALUATION BENCHMARK RESULTS

PURPOSE OF BENCHMARKING

The overarching questions the evaluation aims to answer through the three-year period derive from the ECL R&R Strategy goals and outcomes. They have been expressed in previous reports as nested questions relating the expected three-year outcomes to longer-term goals, as follows:

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce?
 - b. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?
 - c. Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?
2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce?
3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?

The evaluation framework calls for data from the many methods and tools described in the preceding section to answer these questions. SRDC worked with the Sector Steering Committee

to create an organizing structure for the data collected by identifying 13 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Collectively these will assess the changes occurring from the ECL R&R Strategy and in various permutations shed light on specific questions. The permutations of KPIs are shown against each evaluation question in the Evaluation Framework (see Appendix A). Figure 5 presents these same KPIs alongside the ECL R&R Strategy Implementation Tactics, 3 Year Outcomes, and 10 Year Goals they will inform (Figure 6 has the codes for the tactics, outcomes, and goals in Figure 5). KPIs are “neutral,” that is, they do not describe a positive or negative change themselves. It is the change in the KPI over time that describes the consequences and impact of the implementation tactics and the achievement of the goals.

At this stage of the project, the project is reporting benchmarks: data from the period 2015-2019 that capture the starting point for many of the changes the strategy is expected to produce. Critically, it will be the task of later reports to compare the data on indicators from 2020 and 2021 to those of the same indicators reported here. That later comparison will determine **change** in the KPIs. It is the specific combination of changes across the KPIs that will signal success for the strategy in achieving its three-year outcomes, and indicate progress towards realizing its ten-year goals.

SRDC has sub-divided the second KPI to make explicit the consideration of benefits in fieldwork and analysis. This reflects that benefits are frequently bundled with salary and wages in consideration of employment compensation.

Figure 5 Key performance indicators

No.	KPI	Tactics	3 Year Outcomes	10 Year Goals
	Slide	5	6	4
1	ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation	1	II	A, B, C
2A 2B	Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers [Benefits of ECL Workers]	1	II	A, B, C
3	The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs	6	V	A
4	Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
5	Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
6	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
7	Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities	2,3,4,5	I, III	A, B
8	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities	4,5,7,8	II, III, IV	A
9	Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year	4,5,7	III, IV	A
10	Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills	1 to 8	I to V	A, C
11	Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits	1,7	II	A
12	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector	1,4,5,6,7,8	II, III, IV	B, C
13	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents	1,2,3,6,8	I, II, V	A, B, C

Figure 6 Codes for Tactics, 3 Year Outcomes, and 10 Year Goals

Tactic	Code
Compensation	1
Post-Secondary	2
Bursaries	3
Professional Networks and Supports	4
Professional Development	5
Industry Standards	6
Work-based education and training	7
Training Supports	8

Category (from Theory of Change)	Code
Wage Enhancement	a
Education and Training	b
Professional Development	c
Updated Competencies and Standards	d
3 Year Outcome	Code
Recruitment strategies will ensure an adequate supply of ECEs and other child care staff entering the workforce	I
Retention strategies will support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession	II
Career pathways will provide opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector	III
Education, training, and professional development will be reviewed, enhanced, and expanded to ensure a competent early care and learning workforce with the skills, knowledge and abilities required to provide quality services to children and families	IV
Public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of early care and learning professionals from rigorous standards and oversight	V
10 Year Goal	Code
An adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals	A
Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career	B
Appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies	C

A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF KPIS

In this first presentation of data across the KPIS, the following compendium of results may seem overwhelming and a little fragmented. This is in part because most KPIS draw on multiple data sources. So, as we report on each KPI in turn we cycle through different data drawn from the set of available sources. Several sources like the cross-sectional survey contribute to many KPIS. Others such as the public opinion survey feature less often. Also, for each KPI there are multiple data points per data source. [There are several ways to present information on wages, for example.]

Using multiple measures improves validity and also enables some level of continuity in annual reporting in a situation where not all data sources can report in every year following this current one. For example, the Census data included here provide a useful perspective on who makes up the sector and how the population has been changing since 2000 through 2015, as recorded in Censuses every five years from 2001 through 2016. But there can be no report on further change in the sector documented by the Census until the 2021 Census is completed and data are released in 2023. The benchmarking data from past Censuses are reported here so they are available for comparison in 2023 (and 2028 and so on) – a comparison that could be done by SRDC or another evaluator. The public opinion survey is currently planned for fielding one more time only, in 2021. Next year’s evaluation report for 2020 cannot document change in KPIS using data not collected in 2020, such as from the Census or the public opinion survey. This report must necessarily include all the baseline measures for the evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy but later reports will be more streamlined, and hopefully less overwhelming, in terms of the number of data sources contributing information on *changes* in KPIS over time.

Another potentially confusing factor is that data sources differ somewhat in the definitions of what is being measured. The Census identifies members of the child care workforce somewhat differently from the cross-sectional survey, and different again from the administrative data. So, each baseline KPI with more than one data source can have a slightly different value depending on the data source. However, later reports will compare change in KPIS over time within the same data sources, so when the emphasis switches to change in later reports, the presentation will hopefully seem less confusing.

The benchmarking results section starts with the profile of the ECL workforce drawn from the Census in 2016 and earlier. This sets the context for understanding the population to whom the later findings relate. The report then considers each KPI in turn and presents data from each data source on each KPI. The report concludes with a set of recommendations and considerations for the future. In future reports there will also likely be implications for policy, based on the patterns of change that are then being reported. There is little foundation for drawing many implications this year as SRDC reports the baseline situation for the most part.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BC ECL WORKFORCE

Overview of ECL workers and non-ECL workers

According to SRDC’s analysis of Census 2016 data, as of 2015, there were about 35,710 workers in the ECL workforce in BC, of which 20,530 could be classified as Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (ECE/A+) and 15,180 could be classified as Home Child Care Providers (HCP+). Among those workers classified within the ECE/A+ group, 87 per cent represented “Core ECE/A” early childhood educators and assistants (defined in the Methodology Implementation section above), while the remaining 13 per cent represent “Additional Core ECE/A” workers distributed across several relevant occupations and industries. Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix B present a selection of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of BC’s ECL workforce as a whole, as well as non-ECL workers, which are summarized and contrasted in several of the subsections below.

Selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of BC’s ECL workers are presented separately by subgroup – Early Childhood Educator (ECE/A+) or Home Child Care Provider (HCP+) – and wages are grouped by highest level of educational attainment, which is categorized as one of the following:

1. No high school certificate or diploma;
2. High school diploma;
3. Post-secondary education below the BA (Bachelor of Arts) level in a non-ECL related field;
4. Post-secondary education below the BA level in an ECL-related field;
5. Post-secondary education at the BA level or above in a non-ECL related field; or
6. Post-secondary education at the BA level or above in an ECL-related field.⁹

Demographic characteristics (Appendix B Table 1)

The majority of British Columbia’s ECL workers in 2015 were women (33,925 workers, or 95 per cent) between the ages of 25-54 (22,883 or 64 per cent). Compared to the non-ECL workforce, the ECL workforce was more likely to:

⁹ Because the subgroup of HCP workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above is very small, categories 5 and 6 have been combined for HCP workers.

- be single (42 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 39 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- have children (45 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 39 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- have larger families with 3 or more children (9 per cent of ECL workers had 3 or more children, compared to 6 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- identify as Indigenous (7 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 5 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- be an established immigrant/newcomer/non-resident (39 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 31 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- have an activity limitation (35 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 32 per cent of non-ECL workers)¹⁰

Socioeconomic characteristics (Appendix B Table 2)

The ECL sector was found unique in important ways. Compared to workers in other sectors, ECL workers were more likely to:

- work part-time hours (37 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 26 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- earn lower wages (86 per cent of ECL workers earned less than \$880 weekly, compared to 51 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- be self-employed (19 per cent of ECL workers, compared to 14 per cent of non-ECL workers)
- attend school (20 per cent of ECL workers attended school in the Census year, compared to 16 per cent of non-ECL workers)

¹⁰ In the Census, the person was reported sometimes, often or always to have at least one of the following: difficulty seeing (even when wearing glasses or contact lenses); difficulty hearing (even when using a hearing aid); difficulty walking, using stairs, using his/her hands or fingers or doing other physical activities; difficulty learning, remembering or concentrating; emotional, psychological or mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia, etc.); other health problem or long-term condition that has lasted or is expected to last six months or more.

- have higher job turnover (the average job tenure – time spent in the current position – was 62 months for ECL workers, compared to 98 months for non-ECL workers)¹¹

Regional and provincial variations

As of 2015, the regional distributions of ECL workers were similar to those of non-ECL workers, suggesting that demand for the sector was in-line with population and labour force sizes. Over 73 per cent of ECL workers were located in the Vancouver Island/Coast and Greater Vancouver regions.

BC and other Western Canadian provinces¹² have higher proportions of ECE/A+ workers who identify as Indigenous (8 per cent and 13 per cent respectively, compared to an average of 4 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in other provinces).

BC and Ontario had the highest proportions of ECE/A+ workers who were established immigrants/newcomers/non-residents (36 per cent and 32 per cent respectively, compared to an average of 20 per cent in other provinces). The proportions of HCP+ workers who were established immigrants/newcomers/non-residents was similarly high in BC and Ontario (52 per cent and 46 per cent respectively, compared to an average of 26 per cent in other provinces).

Ontario and BC also had the highest proportions of ECE/A+ workers with a post-secondary education in an ECL-related field (55 per cent and 52 per cent respectively, compared to an average of 41 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in other provinces).

HCP+ workers in BC were slightly less likely to report higher education than their counterparts in Quebec and Ontario – 48 per cent of HCP+ workers in BC had a post-secondary education, compared to 53 per cent in Quebec and 51 per cent in Ontario.

Changes in the sector over time

Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (Appendix B Tables 13, 14, and 15)

The number of ECE/A+ workers increased steadily from 2000 to 2010 (21,055 workers in 2000, 21,790 workers in 2005, 22,610 workers in 2010), before decreasing in 2015 (20,530).

¹¹ These figures were taken from the 2015 Labour Force Survey (and not the 2016 Census), and therefore do not appear in the data table in Appendix B. As of 2018, average job tenure was even shorter for ECL workers – 38 months – compared to non-ECL workers (94 months).

¹² The Western provinces excluding British Columbia (i.e., Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta).

Most demographic characteristics of ECE/A+ workers – including sex, age, marital status, and Indigenous identity – remained roughly the same between 2000 and 2015 (Appendix B Table 13). However, one notable difference was that more ECE/A+ workers were established immigrants in 2015 (27 per cent of ECE/A+ workers were established immigrants in 2015, compared to 19 per cent in 2000).

As Figure 7 shows, ECE/A+ workers have become more highly educated over time. By 2015, 84 per cent of ECE/A+ workers had some level of post-secondary education, compared to 65 per cent in 2000 (Appendix B Table 14).¹³ The biggest gains were seen among ECE/A+ workers with a post-secondary education in an ECL-related field below the BA level (50 per cent of ECE/A+ workers had a post-secondary education in an ECL-related field below the BA level in 2015, compared to 32 per cent in 2000). Only a small percentage (2 per cent) of ECE/A+ workers had a post-secondary education in an ECL-related field at the BA level or above, and this has remained constant since 2000.

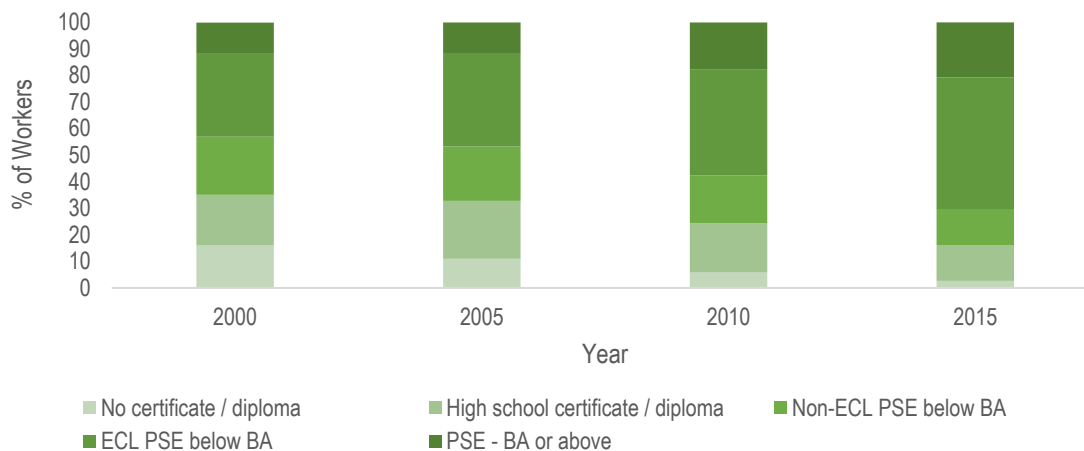
In terms of labour market characteristics, the proportion of full time ECE/A+ workers has steadily increased over time (67 per cent in 2015, compared to 60 per cent in 2000), while the proportion of ECE/A+ workers who were self-employed has decreased (12 per cent in 2015, compared to 30 per cent in 2000) (Appendix B Table 14).

More ECE/A+ workers reported activity limitations in 2015 than they had in previous years (34 per cent in 2015, compared to 15 per cent in 2010, 2005, and 2000).

Geographic distribution has changed as well. The proportion of ECE/A+ workers that were located in the Greater Vancouver area has increased since 2000 (55 per cent in 2015, compared to 47 per cent in 2000).

¹³ As mentioned in the methodology section, the definition of ECE/A workers for the Census and Labour Force Survey analysis is based on Statistics Canada's National Occupational Classification. These are national data but there is no national definition of a certified ECE/ECEA. Although the classification system takes into account the typical skills level required to do the work, it does not take into account the requirement for certification. So some individuals receive this occupational classification even in the absence of reporting participation in post-secondary education, such as responsible adults.

Figure 7 Education levels of ECE/A+ workers over time



Home Child Care Providers (Appendix B Tables 15, 16, and 17)

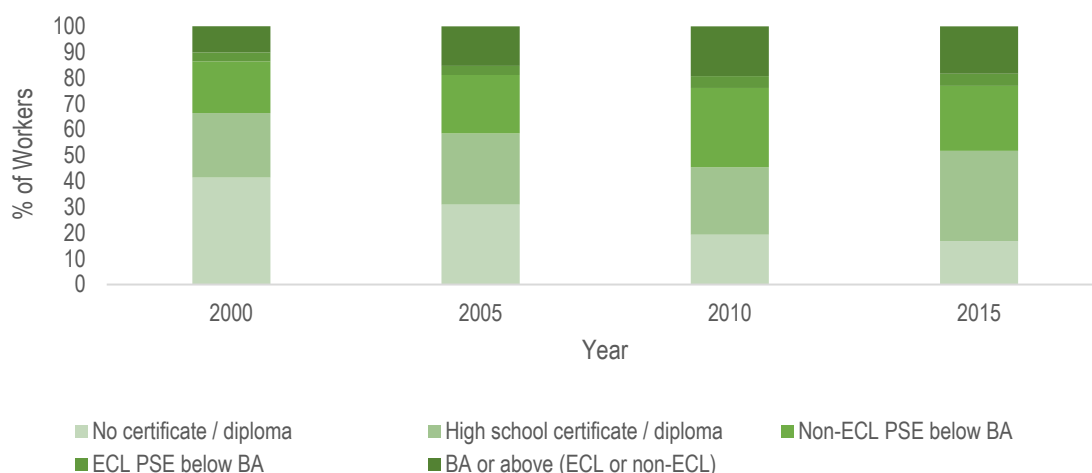
As described in the Methodology section, the home child care providers (HCP+s) category as defined by the Census analysis contains a broader cross-section of people caring for the well-being and physical and social development of children than SRDC’s cross-sectional survey. They provide care primarily in their own homes or in the children’s homes, where they may also reside. They are employed by private households and child-care agencies, or they may be self-employed. Illustrative examples include: babysitter; child care provider (private home), live-in caregiver, nanny and parent’s helper. The number of HCP+ workers meeting this definition in BC was highest in 2000 (16,445 workers), before dropping significantly in 2005 (12,780). Since 2005, the number of HCP+ workers has increased (13,000 workers in 2010 and 15,180 workers in 2015), though not returned to levels seen in 2000.¹⁴

Most demographic characteristics of HCP+ workers – including sex, Indigenous identity, and immigrant status – remained roughly the same between 2000 and 2015 (Appendix B Table 16). However, it was notable that from 2010 onwards, the sector included many more young adults (roughly 19 per cent of HCP+ workers were aged 15-24 in 2015 and 2010, compared to roughly 34 per cent in 2005 and 2000) and more older adults (roughly 37 per cent of HCP+ workers were older than 45 in 2015 and 2010, compared to 27 per cent in 2005 and 2000).

¹⁴ As licensing is not taken into account in Statistics Canada’s occupational coding for this sector, it is unclear whether changes in numbers relate to any licensing change. Readers should be cautioned about comparisons between 1995, 2000, and 2005 because Statistics Canada may have varied their coding of occupations and industries over the period. Statistics Canada first adopted the National Occupational Classification in 2000 but the coding scheme has been under regular revision since then.

As Figure 8 shows, HCP+ workers have become more highly educated (though only a small proportion of workers are educated in ECL-related fields). In 2000, 41 per cent of HCP+ workers had no diploma or certificate, while by 2015 this number had fallen to 17 per cent, with the biggest change having occurred between 2000 and 2005. Overall, education levels increased between 2000 and 2010 (from 27 per cent to 55 per cent of HCP+ workers having post-secondary education of some kind), and then decreased slightly in 2015 (48 per cent). The proportion of HCP+ workers attending school peaked at 28 per cent in 2005, but has since dropped to roughly 20 per cent in 2010 and 2015.

Figure 8 Education levels of HCP+ workers over time



In terms of labour market characteristics, as of 2010 there were more HCP+ workers employed full time (roughly 60 per cent of HCP+ workers were employed full time in 2015 and 2010, compared to 45 per cent in 2005 and 2000) (Appendix B Table 17). In 2015, more HCP+ workers were self-employed than in previous years (roughly 30 per cent in 2015, compared to an average of 18 per cent in 2010, 2005, and 2000).

Levels of employment have risen incrementally each year since 2000 – a high of 77 per cent of HCP+ workers were employed in the sector in 2015, compared to a low of 70 per cent in 2000. Similar to ECE/A+ workers, more HCP+ workers had activity limitations in 2015 than they had in previous years (36 per cent in 2015, compared to roughly 16 per cent in 2010, 2005, and 2000).

Also similar to ECE/A+ workers, the proportion of HCP+ workers that were located in the Greater Vancouver area also increased since 2000 (from 51 per cent in 2000 to 58 per cent in 2015).

KPI 1: ECL WORKER SATISFACTION AND PERCEPTION OF APPROPRIATENESS OF COMPENSATION

Cross-sectional survey

Worker satisfaction

The cross-sectional survey assessed work satisfaction through respondents' answers to questions with Likert-scale response items regarding various aspects of the respondents' employment position (Table 19). In general, respondents were most satisfied with the relationships they had built with families, with their co-workers and with the philosophy of their workplace. In contrast, they expressed the lowest rates of satisfaction with compensation, opportunities for advancement and overall workload.

Satisfaction with aspects of the job varied across the respondent groups. Satisfaction with nearly all aspects rated higher among owner-operators than among Centre ECL workers [from licensed facilities, preschools, and before-and-after school programs]. This is particularly pronounced in reported satisfaction in relation to *input for decision-making*, *philosophy of child care workplace*, *job security*, and *job overall*, where the proportion of owner-operator respondents who were *very satisfied* is about 20 percentage points higher.

In comparison to employees of larger facilities, HCPs were less satisfied with their hours of work and job security, perhaps reflecting the struggles of owning a small business. However, they were more likely to be *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their job overall than Centre ECL workers (94 per cent compared to 90 per cent of child care workers).

Table 19 Work satisfaction rates by respondent group

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Work satisfaction								
Hours of work	42%	43%	52%	38%	45%	35%	47%	40%
Physical indoor space of your child care workplace	41%	49%	55%	32%	-	-	48%	40%
Resources or equipment for the children	46%	42%	53%	29%	-	-	49%	36%
Opportunities for advancement available to you	50%	33%	56%	19%	51%	27%	53%	26%
Overall workload	49%	25%	59%	21%	-	-	54%	23%
Opportunities for input into decision-making	36%	56%	49%	32%	-	-	43%	45%
Opportunities for ongoing professional learning	42%	48%	48%	37%	-	-	45%	42%
Relationships with centre management	33%	61%	42%	45%	-	-	38%	52%
Relationships with your co-workers	36%	61%	46%	49%	-	-	41%	55%
Relationships with families you work with	31%	66%	50%	48%	-	-	40%	57%
Philosophy of child care workplace	27%	69%	47%	46%	-	-	37%	57%
Philosophy of child care organization	70%	1%	-	-	-	-	70%	1%
Job security	32%	59%	52%	39%	44%	43%	42%	49%
Job overall	40%	54%	57%	33%	47%	47%	48%	45%
Satisfaction with compensation								
Income	44%	14%	31%	7%	53%	9%	41%	10%
Benefits	43%	17%	45%	12%	-	-	44%	14%

Motivational factors

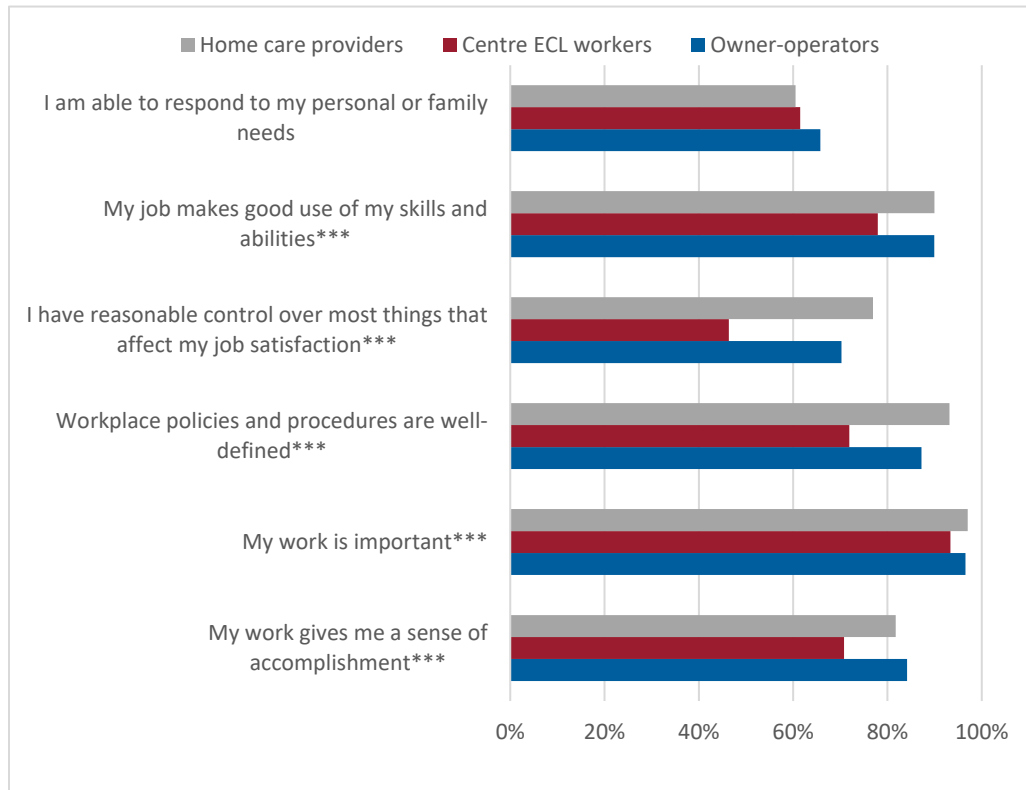
Survey respondents were asked to read ten statements and rate the extent to which they felt each described how they felt about their employment position. Results from factor analysis of the responses to these ten questions identified two main components measured through these statements: motivational factors and burnout.

Six statements most closely measured satisfaction with motivational factors (Figure 9). Motivational factors are conditions in the internal workplace environment that facilitate or hinder workers' motivation. The responses show that about six in ten respondents felt they could respond to their personal or family needs. In contrast, nearly all respondents believed their work was important (over 94 per cent across all groups).

In general, Centre ECL workers agreed less often the motivational factors were present in their work than the other respondent groups. For instance, less than half of Centre ECL workers felt they had reasonable control over most things that affected their job satisfaction (46 per cent) compared to 70 per cent of owner-operators and 77 per cent of HCPs. They were also less likely to *often* or *always* feel that their specific position made good use of their skills and abilities and that workplace policies and procedures were well defined.

Experiences of motivational factors differed for respondents who were born outside of Canada. Centre ECL workers who were born outside of Canada were less likely to report they felt their work gave them a sense of accomplishment often or always (63% compared to 73% of those who were born in Canada). They were also less likely to report their work as stimulating and challenging (53% compared to 71% of those born in Canada). However, they were more likely to feel they always have reasonable control over most aspects that affect their work satisfaction (12% compared to 6% of those born in Canada).

Figure 9 Proportion of respondents who *often* or *always* experienced different motivational factors



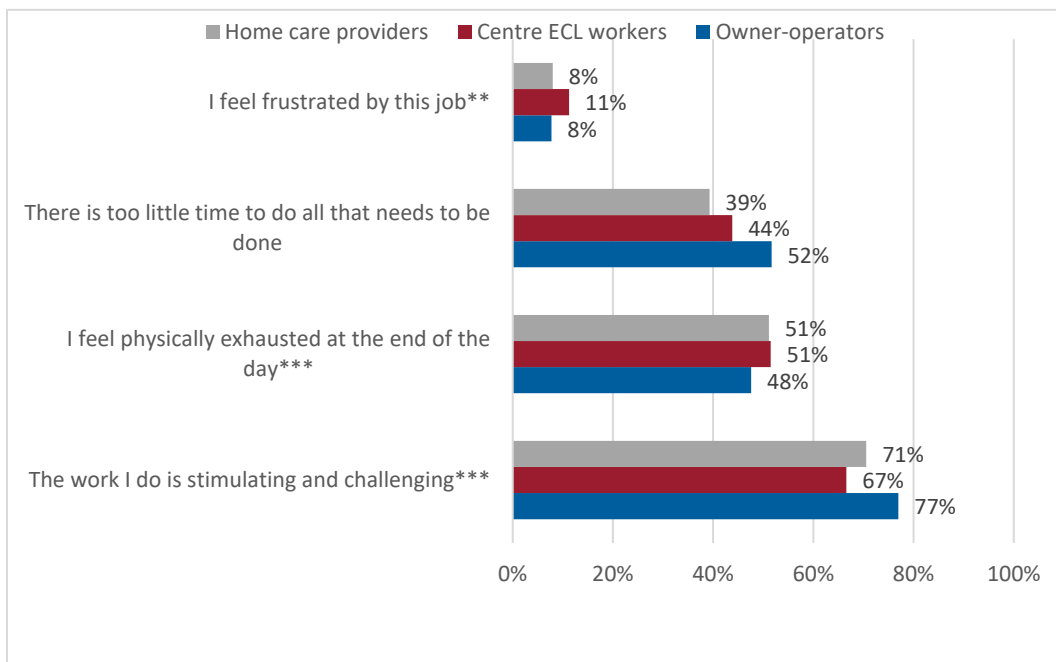
Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05.

Burnout

Burnout was captured through four statements depicted in Figure 10. On average, about one in ten respondents felt frustrated by their job. This proportion was slightly higher among Centre ECL workers (11 per cent). Almost half of all respondents *often* or *always* felt there was too little time to do all that needed to be done (46 per cent).

The proportion of respondents who *often* or *always* felt physically exhausted at the end of the day was higher among HCPs and Centre ECL workers (51 per cent compared to 48 per cent of owner-operators). Finally, about three-quarters of owner-operators felt the work they did was stimulating and challenging (77 per cent) compared to 71 per cent of HCPs and 67 per cent of Centre ECL workers.

Figure 10 Percentage of respondents who *often* or *always* experienced different burnout measures by respondent group



Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05.

There was only one significant difference in experience of burnout across demographic groups and only for one statement. Centre ECL workers in non-supervisor roles who were born outside of Canada were less likely to experience frustration over their job with 52% reporting *never* or rarely experiencing this compared to 40% of those born in Canada.

It may be worth drawing briefly on some findings from the case studies as explanation. In those interviews, both child care providers and their workers described working in the sector as physically and emotionally demanding and that it could be overwhelming when their centres were short staffed. Staff burnout was raised by operators at case study sites as an important issue for the long-term retention of staff. It is discussed again under KPI 2B.

Perception of appropriateness of compensation

As already reported in Table 19, about half of the respondents across all sub-groups reported being *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the income they received from their work in child care (51 per cent). This proportion was smaller among Centre ECL workers (38 per cent) and higher among HCPs (62 per cent).

A somewhat higher proportion of respondents were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the benefits they received from their work in child care (58 per cent). Satisfaction with benefits was not asked of HCPs who are typically self-employed and therefore receive no employer-paid benefits from their child care work. Among Centre ECL workers, satisfaction rates were significantly higher for respondents who identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit (81% compared to 56% for non-Indigenous respondents).

In interviews from case studies also, staff were very appreciative of the extended health benefits provided which they felt had enabled them to obtain support and treatment to continue working.

KPI 2A: AVERAGE REAL WAGES AND SALARIES OF ECL WORKERS

Highly robust estimates of earnings for 2015 come from the Census, since these data are linked to individual tax records. But wages cannot be calculated due to the absence of detailed data on hours of work (beyond full-time/part-time). Later in this section we report wage estimates from SRDC's cross-sectional survey that asked individuals and their employers for actual wage rates.

Census and Labour Force Survey microdata analysis

Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (Appendix B Tables 6 and 7)

Average weekly earnings

In the Census analysis for the 2015 tax year, ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education reported higher average weekly earnings than ECE/A+ workers with a high school education or less (Appendix B Table 6). Approximately 23 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with some post-secondary education¹⁵ earned \$880 or more weekly, compared to only 9 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with no post-secondary education. The average weekly employment income of ECE/A+

¹⁵ The Census highest level of educational attainment is categorized as one of the following:

1. no high school certificate or diploma
2. high school diploma
3. post-secondary education below the BA (Bachelor of Arts) level in a non-ECL related field
4. post-secondary education below the BA level in an ECL-related field
5. post-secondary education at the BA level or above in a non-ECL related field
6. post-secondary education at the BA level or above in an ECL-related field

"No post-secondary education" refers to the combination of educational attainment categories 1 and 2, while "some post-secondary education" refers to the remainder (i.e., categories 3-6).

workers with some post-secondary education was \$760, compared to \$533 for ECE/A+ workers with no post-secondary education.

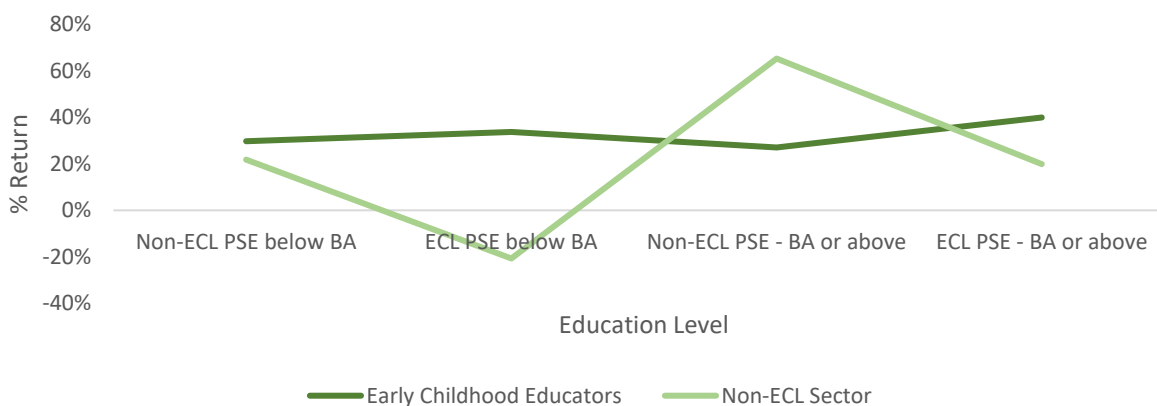
Field of study impacted earnings outcomes for ECE/A+ workers. Roughly 26 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with relevant post-secondary education in the ECL field earned \$880 or more weekly, compared to 20 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education in a different, non-ECL related field. The average weekly earnings of ECE/A+ workers with ECL-related post-secondary education was \$778, compared to \$710 for ECE/A+ workers with non-ECL-related post-secondary education.

With respect to earnings for ECE/A+ workers who had any type of post-secondary education at the BA level or above, relative to ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education below BA, a mixed picture emerged. On one hand, more ECE/A+ workers with a BA or above had average weekly earnings of \$880 or more (24 per cent), compared to those with post-secondary education below the BA level (21 per cent). However, average weekly earnings of ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education below the BA level were higher than for their BA-or-higher counterparts (\$768 versus \$721) suggesting higher proportion of the latter group also had quite low incomes.

Economic returns to education

For this analysis, we use a relatively simple proxy for the economic return to education, which is weekly employment income by education level. It finds ECE/A+ workers benefitted from a return on post-secondary education relative to having a high school diploma, with slight advantages found among those with post-secondary education in an ECL-related field (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Economic return to education: ECE/A+ workers and non-ECL sector workers



After controlling for the independent influence of region of residence in BC, potential work experience, activity limitations, sex, marital status, immigration status, and number of children, ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education below the BA level benefitted from a 34 per cent return to furthering their education if their education was in an ECL-related field, and a 30 per cent return if their education was in a non-ECL-related field. By comparison, the return on post-secondary education below the BA level outside of the ECL sector was 22 per cent (Appendix B Table 7).

Similarly, ECE/A+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above benefitted from a 40 per cent return if their education was in an ECL-related field and a 27 per cent return if their education was in a non-ECL-related field. However, the return on post-secondary education at the BA level or above outside the ECL sector was much higher, at 65 per cent.

The highest weekly employment income among ECE/A+ workers was observed in the Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast region (\$782), and the lowest in the Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast, and Squamish-Lillooet region (\$591). These differences appear to be the result of general labour market conditions, rather than variations in the characteristics of the ECE/A+ workforce.

Home Child Care Providers (Appendix B Tables 7 and 8)

Average weekly earnings

Most HCP+ workers earned less than \$660 per week, regardless of education level (Appendix B Table 8). Aside from a small proportion (5 per cent) of workers with no certificate/diploma, the proportion of HCP+ workers who earned more than \$600 per week ranged from 14 per cent to no higher than 20 per cent, depending on level of educational attainment (HCP+ workers with an ECL-related post-secondary education were the most likely to earn above \$600 – 20 per cent). HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above had the highest average weekly employment income (\$567), and HCP+ workers with no certificate or diploma had the lowest (\$159).¹⁶ Notably, there was no income pay-off for HCP+ workers with post-secondary education below the BA level (average weekly employment income of \$435) compared to HCP+ workers with a high school diploma (\$476).

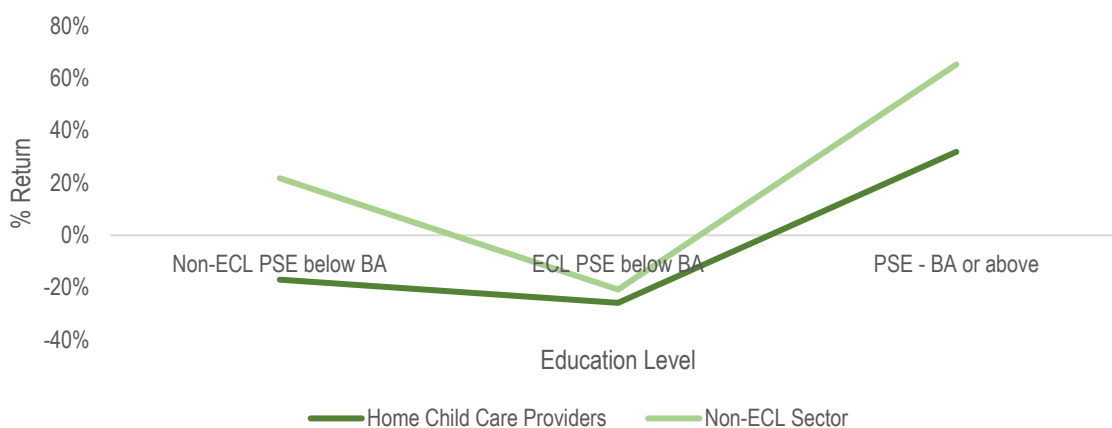
The highest weekly employment income was observed in the Greater Vancouver region (\$475), while the lowest was found in the Vancouver Island/Coast region (\$325). Also of note was that the Greater Vancouver region had a noticeably lower proportion of HCP+ workers who were self-employed (26 per cent, compared to an average of 35 per cent in other regions).

¹⁶ The Census HCP+ category can include nannies and babysitters.

Economic returns to education

Similar to ECE/A+ workers, HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above benefitted from a positive return to their post-secondary education (32 per cent), but a return that was lower than others with a BA or above realized outside the ECL sector (65 per cent) (Appendix B Table 7). However, HCP+ workers with post-secondary education below the BA level – including education in an ECL-related field – did not benefit from comparable returns on education. While post-secondary education below the BA level yielded a positive return (22 per cent) outside the ECL sector, HCP+ workers saw a negative return to their post-secondary education (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Return on education among HCP+ workers and non-ECL sector workers



Income differences between ECL workers in BC and those in the rest of Canada

Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (Appendix B Table 11)

ECE/A+ workers in BC had an average weekly employment income of \$722, which was less than their counterparts in Ontario (\$774) and other Western Canada (\$738) but more than their counterparts in Quebec (\$664) and Atlantic Canada (\$581). In part, this may be because a higher proportion of ECE/A+ workers in BC were working part-time (33 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in BC, compared to an average of 25 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in other provinces). Similarly, a higher proportion of ECE/A+ workers in BC were self-employed (12 per cent, compared to an average of 7 per cent in other provinces).

Home Child Care Providers (Appendix B Table 12)

HCP+ workers in BC were also more likely to be working part time (44 per cent, compared to an average of 32 per cent of workers in other provinces) and less likely to be self-employed (30 per cent, compared to an average of 39 per cent of workers in other provinces). Yet, HCP workers in BC were among the best paid in the country, with an average weekly employment income of \$428 (the same as their counterparts in the rest of Western Canada).

Cross-sectional survey

Self-reported hourly wages

SRDC's cross-sectional survey asked workers directly about their wages. Table 20 shows the self-reported average wages for Centre ECL workers (those who self-identified as working in a licensed facility, preschool or before-and after school program). Owner operators and HCPs were not asked for hourly wage rates because they are often salaried or have irregular earnings from their businesses.

The average Centre ECL worker's hourly wage rate was \$20.07. Hourly wages were also estimated by type of certification and position held. In general, Centre ECL workers' wage rates increases with higher certifications and qualifications. For instance, respondents with ECE certifications had higher average hourly wage rates than those with responsible adult or ECEA certification. Respondents with speciality certification (Infant Toddler or Special Needs) also had higher average wages than those with ECE certification only.

As expected, hourly wage rates are higher among Centre ECL workers in supervisor positions (this difference was statistically significant at the 1 per cent level). On average, Centre ECL workers in supervisor positions were compensated \$23.19 an hour compared to \$19.60 for those who were not supervisors. In both supervisor and non-supervisor positions, respondents with higher certifications and qualifications were compensated more.

Table 20 Self-reported hourly wage rates of ECL workers by certification

	<u>Certification</u>	<u>Hourly wage</u>	
		<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev</u>
ECL workers		\$20.07	3.05
	Responsible Adult	\$18.21	3.22
	ECEA	\$17.80	2.57
	ECE (1 year)	\$19.79	2.79
	ECE (5 year)	\$20.41	2.61
	ECE + IT	\$21.61	2.84
	ECE + SP	\$21.14	2.59
	ECE + IT + SP	\$21.32	2.63
ECL workers – Non-supervisors		\$19.70	2.80
	Responsible Adult	\$17.42	1.67
	ECEA	\$17.70	2.50
	ECE (1 year)	\$19.49	2.59
	ECE (5 year)	\$20.19	2.51
	ECE + IT	\$21.33	2.68
	ECE + SP	\$20.12	1.71
	ECE + IT + SP	\$20.80	2.19
ECL workers – Supervisors		\$23.19	3.21
	ECEA or RA	\$21.92	4.77
	ECE	\$22.52	2.71
	ECE + IT	\$23.26	3.29
	ECE + SP	\$23.63	2.79
	ECE + IT +SP	\$24.40	2.97

The average hourly wages of ECL workers who were not supervisors were also compared by union membership (Table 21). While, on average, unionized workers had higher average hourly wages than those who were not unionized (\$20.74 compared to \$19.66), this difference was only significantly different among workers with ECE (5 year) certification.

Table 21 Average hourly wage rates for Centre ECL workers in non-supervisor positions by union membership

	Non-unionized	Unionized
Mean***	\$ 19.66	\$ 20.74
(Std. Dev)	(0.12)	(0.25)
Responsible Adult	\$ 17.96	\$ 18.77
ECEA	\$ 17.75	\$ 18.67
ECE (1 year)	\$ 19.73	\$ 20.11
ECE (5 year) **	\$ 19.97	\$ 20.99
ECE+IT	\$ 21.20	\$ 21.39
ECE+SP	\$ 20.15	\$ 21.84
ECE+SP+IT	\$ 20.76	\$ 20.91

Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05.

Employer reported hourly wages

Table 22 includes weighted average hourly wage rates provided at the organization-level. We estimated weighted average hourly wage rates using the number of employees by type of certification.

The average hourly wage rates provided at the organization level are in line with the information collected at the individual level. ECL workers' hourly wage rates range from \$15.86 an hour for those that qualify as Responsible Adults to \$21.49 for those who hold an ECE certification. As expected, hourly wage rates are higher for more senior positions. On average, ECL supervisors are compensated between \$20.39 and \$23.25 an hour. ECL managers' average hourly rates range from \$20.90 for Responsible Adults to \$24.65 for ECEs. Finally, ECL directors' average hourly wage rates range from \$23.48 and \$26.47 for Responsible Adults to \$25.71 and \$27.58 for ECEs.

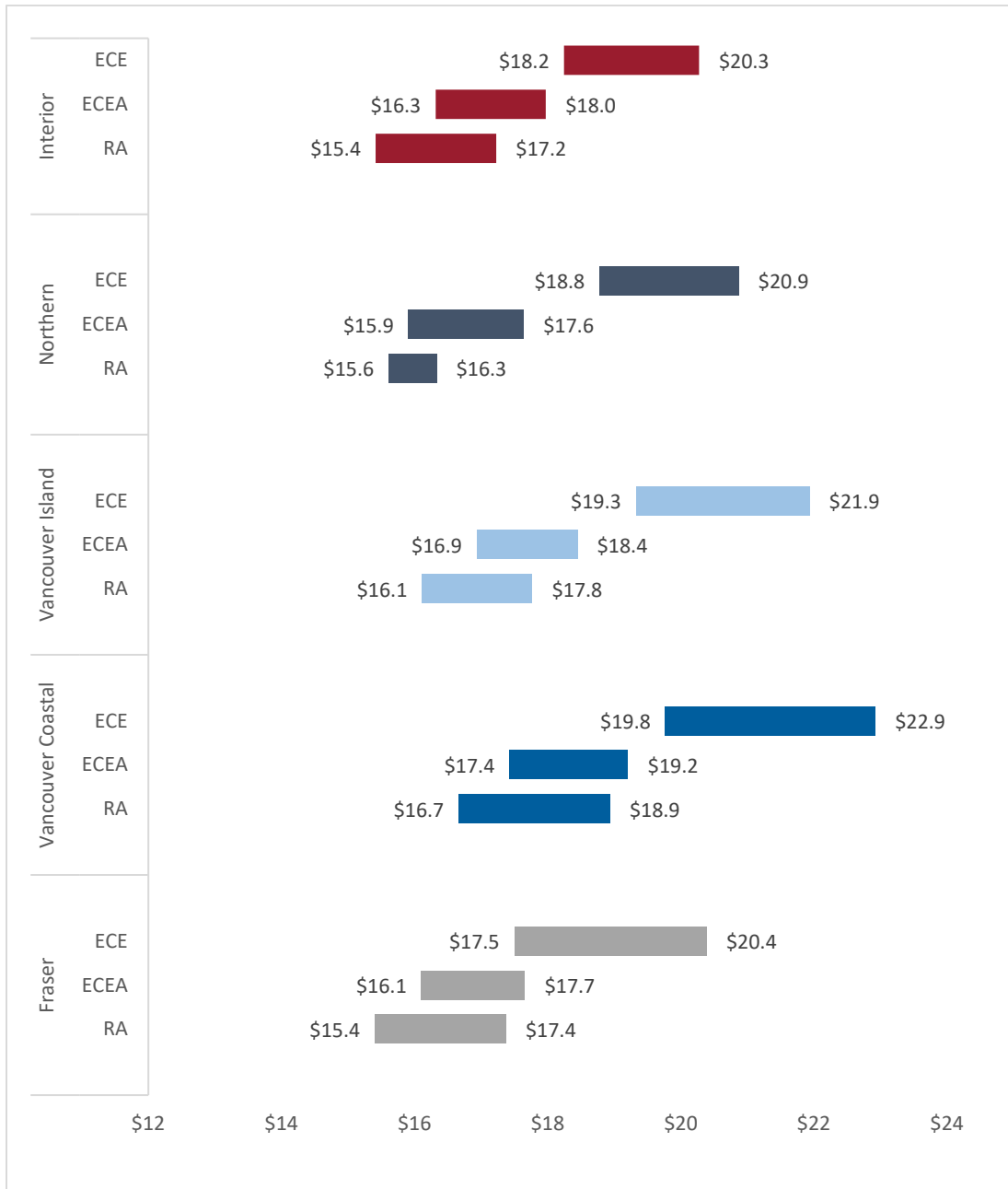
Table 22 **Lowest and highest weighted average wages of ECL workers by position and certification (Table B)**

	ECL Workers			ECL Supervisors		
	N	Lowest	Highest	N	Lowest	Highest
RA	338	\$15.86	\$17.69	100	\$20.39	\$22.88
ECEA	454	\$16.60	\$18.23	136	\$20.50	\$22.85
ECE	465	\$18.71	\$21.49	241	\$21.40	\$23.25
	ECL Managers			ECL Directors		
	N	Lowest	Highest	N	Lowest	Highest
RA	150	\$20.90	\$23.23	148	\$23.48	\$26.47
ECEA	198	\$22.08	\$23.43	82	\$22.83	\$26.15
ECE	361	\$23.24	\$24.65	142	\$25.71	\$27.58

Note: N represents the number of employers who provided wages data.

Figure 13 shows the employer-reported lowest and highest average hourly wages for ECL workers by health authority region. As expected, ECL workers' average hourly wages increase with higher certifications across all regions. However, differences in compensation across health authority regions are evident. Notably, the average lowest and highest wages for ECL workers with an ECE certificate are higher in Vancouver Coastal Health relative to other regions.

Figure 13 Employer-reported lowest and highest average hourly wages for ECL workers by health authority



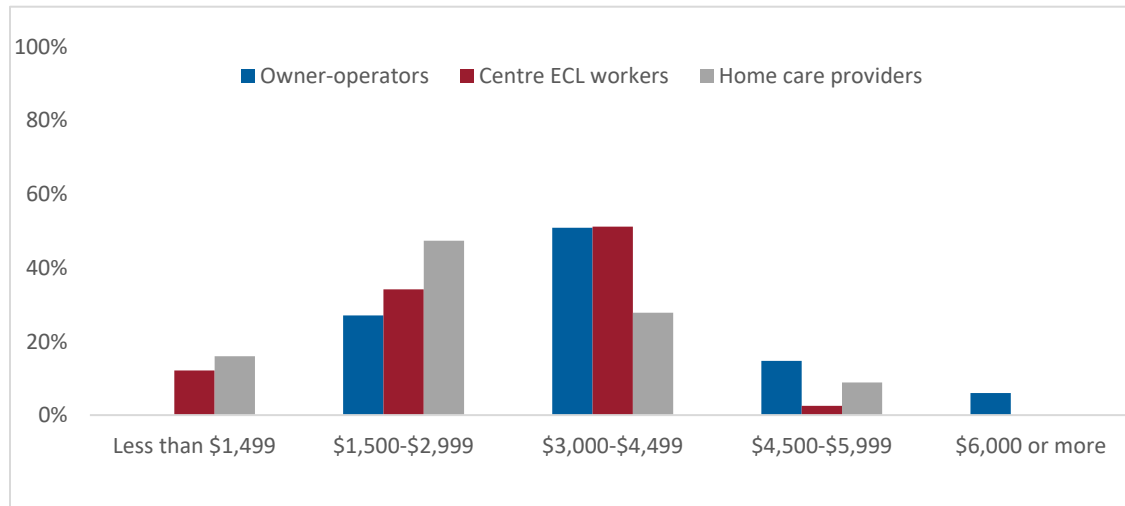
Monthly income from ECL employment

Table 23 shows the average monthly income for respondents to the cross-sectional survey. On average, owner-operators have the highest monthly income (\$3,805). Centre ECL workers' average monthly income is \$2,874 while HCPs make an average of \$2,671 a month.

Table 23 Monthly income by respondent group

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs
Mean	\$3,851.08	\$2,922.78	\$2,657.98
Std. Dev	1538.94	997.07	1168.92
Less than \$1,499	0%	12%	16%
\$1,500-\$2,999	27%	34%	47%
\$3,000-\$4,499	51%	51%	28%
\$4,500-\$5,999	15%	3%	9%
\$6,000 or more	6%	0%	0%

Figure 14 Monthly income by respondent sub-groups



Wage enhancement

Over half of the respondents in Sample A indicated they were receiving the ECL R&R Strategy tactic of wage enhancement (58 per cent), this proportion was highest among Centre ECL workers (72 per cent). It is not possible to provide an independent estimate of how many Centre ECL workers would have been eligible.

The majority of recipients reported first receiving the wage enhancement in 2019 (69 per cent), with almost half of all recipients recalling receiving it in the first four months of the year (48 per cent).

Table 24 Wage enhancement recipients by respondent group

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL ws.	HCPs	Total
Yes	55%	72%	30%	58%
Don't know	1%	6%	1%	3%

The majority of employers in Sample B reported they had applied for the wage enhancement (85 per cent or 655 organizations). Of these, 591 organizations accounted for 3,334 wage enhancement recipients.

Employers who reported they had not applied for the wage enhancement were asked to identify the main reasons for not applying. The most common answers were not being eligible (46 per cent) or having no staff that would qualify for the wage enhancement (49 per cent). A few employers also reported they have not applied because the process is complicated or takes too much time (17 per cent).

Qualitative data from the cross-sectional survey

The largest single source of comments (from over 23 per cent of the respondents) provided at the end of the cross-sectional survey related to child care worker compensation including the need for wage increases for child care workers and for in-work benefits. All staff, regardless of whether they have the ECE designation, or frontline workers or managers, wanted to see wage increases for those working in the sector. While the \$1 wage enhancement was welcomed, it was not enough to provide a “living wage.”

"[I] don't earn a living wage as an early childhood educator after [I] have done 2+ years of post secondary schooling. I could not support myself financially without my husband."

"If I applied for a unskilled labour job in my city tomorrow I'd be making 25 plus an hour to start with room for growth. With my university degree and ECE I make 16. It's gender-related, and it sucks."

"The main reason I left the field was because the pay was not enough to run a household on as the major breadwinner of the family. The benefits were minimal and the hours were long."

A number of comments from respondents suggested that low pay was seen as a systemic issue in the sector and several wanted to provide warnings to different levels of government, policy and decision makers along the lines that:

"You will not keep qualified educators who are passionate about pedagogy and practice if they can't afford to feed themselves."

Respondents saw a direct link between low pay and the lack of in-work benefits to staff shortages being experienced across the sector. Many respondents described the current situation as a "crisis" as child care centres were struggling to recruit experienced and trained staff. Respondents stated that some child care centres had closed because of a lack of staff thereby reducing the number of child care spaces available. Respondents also suggested that staff shortages were impacting the ability of child care centres to cover staff absences because of sickness or vacation leaving many feeling unable to take time off when needed.

"... not enough substitute teachers to cover. Our centre doesn't have any right now. Can't take a day off or get sick. Have had ads out looking to hire someone but no one has applied."

This in turn is seen to lead to:

"... [a] bad cycle of people overworking, high turnover rate, and change [in the] child care quality."

The advice in respondents' comments was to ensure there were enough trained and experienced staff first before creating more child care places. Otherwise, they argued there was the risk of the situation deteriorating further.

“The government is funding spaces for more child care facilities yet there are no staff to work there. Nobody wants to get work in the field”

Respondents suggest that more needs to be done to support existing staff so experienced workers remain in the sector.

“In my role..., I see first hand the shortage of qualified staff in the ECE field as well as the lack in quality of ECE staff. I would hope that a plan is in place to change this to better educate, support and retain those choosing the ECE field.”

Some respondents commented that unfair competition compounded problems due to staff shortages. They felt some centres were being allowed to raise child care fees while others were not because of contractual restrictions. In some areas, newer centres could thus ‘poach’ staff from others by offering higher pay, because they could charge higher fees. This left existing centres with chronic staff shortages.

“The new centres steal present staff, centres are downsizing or closing because of it, so you aren’t creating more spaces just different spaces!”

“1 dollar raise is a joke and month behind in paying. The province is opening new centers everywhere but can’t find teachers.”

One respondent summed up the situation as they saw it:

“Bottom line, ECE’s need to be appropriately and fairly compensated for [working in] this field.”

Key informant interviews and case studies

In the case studies, no data on wages were collected. But child care providers and workers talked about compensation and the wage enhancement, which they almost universally saw as important. Low wages were universally reported as a barrier for those wishing to stay in the early childhood education sector. A number of those interviewed suggest that a career in early childhood education was only viable for those who had a partner who earned more than the average worker in ECL. They suggested that after rent and bills were paid there was “nothing left” to repay student loans or for some to afford child care themselves.

Staff and providers across all sites stated that low wages were a key challenge to recruitment and deterred people from applying for jobs. Staff commented that while it was “not all about the money...but you have to make a living” (Site E: ECE) and added that “it’s a lot of work... for the money” (Site C: ECE). Some cited examples of jobs in retail, the food service industry and in the

hospitality sector, where it was possible to earn higher wages in jobs that required no training. Child care providers and workers stated that “in reality, you need a second earner to do this job” because they felt it was financially very difficult to support a family on current wage levels.

“We have one worker who is a single parent, I don’t know how she manages.”
Site B: Manager

Staff chose to work in the sector because they were passionate about early childhood education: they enjoyed the interaction with children and helping them to learn and develop. It appeared that these non-monetary aspects of the job had persuaded individuals to enter the sector despite the low wages. Child care providers were aware of the importance of non-monetary benefits when recruiting staff and highlight the whole benefits package, positive work environment and supports for career development. Those engaged in the case studies reported providing a range of health and other benefits to attract and retain child care workers including extended health benefits, sick days, vacation and support for training and development.

The wage enhancement is seen to be important to recruitment because it raises the basic wage of ECL staff especially for those entering the sector. Child care providers and staff were aware of the wage enhancement and across the case studies, eligible staff appeared to be receiving it. Providers saw themselves as competing for staff in a competitive market. They knew that prior to applying for a job, child care workers would “check-out” providers to establish if they offered rewarding places to work. They did this by talking to colleagues, reading comments on social media, reading reviews of child care centres and by visiting the centres. In this way taking up the wage enhancement was one key part of supporting recruitment.

All those who participated in the case studies were aware of the \$1 wage enhancement and all but one centre received it. This one centre was not eligible as staff received wages above the threshold. Those staff who did receive the wage enhancement were “very thankful” because it made a “real difference” to them financially. Staff speculated that the enhancement would help improve retention as it was a “good start” to addressing low wages but they felt it still had some “way to go”. Those who received the \$1 wage enhancement were concerned whether it would continue long term and, only a few were aware of the second \$1 wage enhancement scheduled for April 2020.

In key informant interviews, providers highlighted the two key related issues that negatively affected recruitment and retention were the high cost of living, especially housing, and low wages. There was concern that the situation was going to become even more challenging in the future:

“Recruitment and retention is going to take on a whole new light pretty soon because at \$20 an hour, with a 4-year degree, why would you stay? Even education assistants at schools are starting to give us competition – they start at \$35 an hour.” UCP:1

All three providers welcomed government support and recognition for the sector but they were concerned about the administration, implementation and longer-term implications of the recent initiatives. They welcomed the wage enhancement but reported that administering it – providing the information to the ministry and waiting for payments – was time consuming. One provider raised concerns that some unscrupulous child care providers might not be passing on the wage enhancement to their staff and suggested there should be more checks and balances. In general, they felt the enhancement needed better alignment with existing practices and requirements.

Child care providers and workers also reported that the wage enhancement was important to them because it signalled to them that they were being taken seriously by government, and that they were valued for the contribution they made to early childhood education. The general consensus across the case study sites was that the wage enhancement was a positive step forward and a good incentive.

“I think by the government backing us up and recognizing us as a professional person just like a teacher, just like anyone else, I think that will help.” SITE A: ECE

Some child care providers encountered challenges in administering the wage enhancement. The information required to apply for the enhancement also added to the workload. Some centres had experienced delays in receiving payments which meant staff did not receive the enhancement. Given these experiences, the wage enhancement system was seen as unreliable and cumbersome.

A recurring theme that emerged from the case studies was that those who entered and remained in early childhood education did so because they were passionate about children. They did not enter and remain in the sector because of the money. They knew they were not going to earn “big dollars” but they really enjoy working with young children and seeing them grow and develop. Child care workers describe their work as meaningful and, as more than, just work. When asked whether they would recommend their profession to others, most said they would if the individual is passionate about early childhood education, they have the ‘right mindset’ and are patient. Some staff qualified their recommendation because of the high cost of living and the relatively low incomes and suggest staff had to be able to afford to work in the sector, and for many that meant being part of a two income household.

KPI 2B: ECL WORKERS' BENEFITS

Cross-sectional survey

Self-reported benefits received

Table 25 includes the proportion of respondents who indicated receiving specific benefits from their employers. About half of owner-operators reported not receiving any benefits (51 per cent) compared to 14 per cent of Centre ECL workers. The most common benefits received by Centre ECL workers were extended health benefits (52 per cent), dental coverage (51 per cent), and paid sick days (59 per cent). On the other hand, receiving short-term disability (18 per cent), long-term disability (17 per cent), and flexible health spending accounts (4 per cent) were less common.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they received additional benefits from their employer. Less than three in ten Centre ECL workers reported receiving paid breaks, paid documentation time, or paid programming and preparation time. About 45 per cent received pay for overtime work while 24 per cent received time-off in lieu of overtime. However, more than half received paid time for staff meetings occurring outside work hours (61 per cent). In terms of benefits that supported professional development, one in five Centre ECL workers received financial support and paid release time for training and almost half received financial assistance for ECE-related training (22 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively).

In general, benefits received by the majority of respondents had stayed the same in the last 12 months. However, owner-operators were more likely to report having had increases or additions to their benefits especially for Extended Health Care (19 per cent compared to 13 per cent of Centre ECL workers), paid vacation of more than 2 weeks (21 per cent compared to 11 per cent of Centre ECL workers), and paid overtime (13 per cent compared to 5 per cent of Centre ECL workers).

Benefits information provided by employers

SRDC also collected organization-level data on benefits paid by the employer and provided to ECL workers. Benefits information was provided by 704 licensed child care centres, preschools, and before-and after school programs. Similar to the information collected at the individual level, the most commonly provided benefits were extended health care (60 per cent), dental coverage (59 per cent) and paid sick days (63 per cent).

Table 25 Benefits received by ECL workers and provided by ECL employers

	Benefits received – Sample A		Benefits provided – Sample B
	Owner-operators	ECL workers	Employers
Core Benefits			
Extended Health Care	23%	52%	60%
Dental coverage	23%	51%	59%
Life insurance	15%	30%	45%
Short-term Disability	12%	18%	27%
Long-term Disability	9%	17%	30%
Paid sick days	30%	59%	63%
Retirement/ Pension plan	15%	24%	25%
Flexible spending account/Health spending account	3%	4%	6%
None of the above	51%	14%	20%
I don't know	8%	15%	
	Owner-operators	ECL workers	Employers
Additional Benefits			
Paid breaks	26%	29%	44%
Paid overtime	26%	45%	53%
Time in lieu for overtime	14%	24%	37%
Paid staff meetings that occur outside regular work hours	28%	61%	67%
Financial assistance for ECE-related training	28%	48%	67%
Financial assistance for courses or post-ECE training	14%	21%	41%
Paid release time to for training	16%	22%	39%
Reduced child care fees	23%	22%	45%
Paid documentation time	11%	14%	30%
Paid programming and prep time	19%	27%	57%
None of the above	27%	6%	8%
I don't know	8%	5%	

One in every five employers indicated that they did not provide any benefits to their employees (20 per cent). However, in general a higher proportion of employers reported providing benefits than the proportion of individual ECL workers that reported receiving these benefits. These differences could be due to sampling differences between the two groups as well as possibly

some employees' lack of awareness of the benefits available to them (15 per cent of ECL workers from Sample A reported not knowing what benefits were provided to them).

The proportion of organizations that reported providing additional benefits to their employees was also larger than suggested by the individual level data. More than half of the organizations reported providing pay for staff meetings that occurred outside work hours (67 per cent), financial assistance for ECE-related training (67 per cent), paid programming and prep time (57 per cent) and paid over time (53 per cent). The benefits that employers were least likely to report they provided were paid documentation time (30 per cent) and time off in lieu for overtime (37 per cent).

Qualitative data from the cross-sectional survey and case studies

Respondents to the survey provided comments in the final open-ended question that called for in-work benefits to be available to all in the sector. Commenters stressed these benefits were needed because workers within the sector were experiencing burnout, as the job was physically and emotionally demanding. In-work benefits would be needed to help staff access the supports they needed as well as paid sick time and other leave. Many respondents wanted provincial help to access pensions as they were typically not provided by employers. This respondent drew parallels between support for pay and support for benefits:

"I feel we need help with benefit and pension plans. Also more than \$1 to attract people to this field. I have lost staff, in the past, to jobs in other fields that require less training and pay more."

To help child care workers care for their children some centres in the case studies provided rate reductions for staff but few provided staff with priority in relation to waitlists. This reportedly delayed some staff from returning to work. Some respondents also wanted to point out the irony that as ECL staff they were often left unable to access child care places because of a lack of availability of places and cost. The comments included ECL workers getting ready to return to work from maternity leave contemplating leaving the sector because of the cost and availability of child care.

KPI 3: THE EXTENT TO WHICH CURRENT SECTOR OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCIES ARE INTEGRATED INTO EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Work is still underway on the updated Sector Occupational Competencies. SRDC will begin to track the integration of these competencies through key informant interviews and document review as soon as they are released.

KPI 4: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKERS WITH CREDENTIALS RELEVANT TO PROVISION OF CHILD CARE FOR PROVINCIAL ECL NEEDS, INCLUDING REGIONAL AND INDIGENOUS ECL NEEDS

An anticipated consequence of the ECL R&R Strategy is that more ECL workers would hold credentials relevant to the provision of child care and that meet specific ECL needs relevant to their position. The 2016 Census provides general background information on educational status of BC's ECL workforce and this includes data on the relevance of credentials to the provision of child care. More specific data on educational credentials held in the context of specific workplace roles was sought by the cross-sectional survey.

Census and Labour Force Survey microdata analysis

The ECL workforce appears to be more educated than other sectors overall: as of 2015, 69 per cent of ECL workers had post-secondary education of some kind, compared to 61 per cent of workers in non-ECL sectors. Just under one third of the overall ECL workforce had post-secondary education in an ECL-related field (32 per cent), and another one third had post-secondary education, but in an unrelated field (37 per cent). The remaining one third had no post-secondary education of any kind (31 per cent) (Table 3 in Appendix B).

However, important differences exist between the two subgroups of ECL workers. Overall, ECE/A+ workers were more highly educated than HCP+ workers. As of 2015, the majority of ECE/A+ workers (84 per cent) had a post-secondary education of some kind, compared to only about half of HCP+ workers (48 per cent). The most drastic difference between the two groups pertains to the proportion of workers who had a post-secondary education that was directly related to the ECL field. While over half of ECE/A+ workers (52 per cent) had a relevant post-secondary education, only 5 per cent of HCP+ workers had the same.

Demographic characteristics and educational attainment¹⁷

Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (Appendix B Table 4)

ECE/A+ workers without post-secondary education were more likely to be young adults. A third (32 per cent) were aged 15-24. By contrast, only 8 per cent of those with some post-secondary

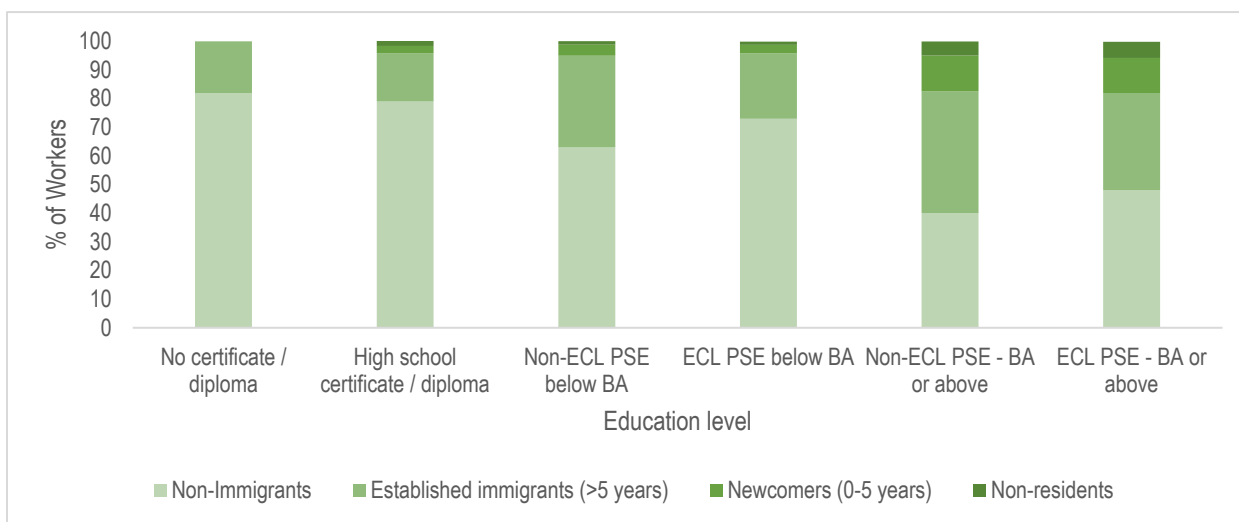
¹⁷ In this section, “no post-secondary education” refers to the combination of educational attainment categories 1 and 2, while “some post-secondary education” refers to the remainder (i.e., categories 3-6). The proportions cited in this section use an arithmetic average of the combined categories in order to present an overview of trends, while the associated tables in Appendix B display detailed proportions for each category.

education were young adults. Those without post-secondary education were also most likely to be single (52 per cent, compared to 33 per cent of those with some post-secondary education).

Indigenous ECE/A+ workers were more likely to have lower levels of education. While 8 per cent of all ECE/A+ workers were Indigenous, one-quarter of ECE/A+ workers with less than a high school certificate or diploma were Indigenous. Indigenous ECE/A+ workers were underrepresented among ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education at the BA level or above (3 per cent).

As shown in Figure 15, ECE/A+ workers who were either established immigrants, newcomers, or non-residents had higher levels of education – this group represented more than half (56 per cent) of ECE/A+ workers who had completed post-secondary education at the BA level or above. A third (32 per cent) of ECE/A+ workers who had post-secondary education below the BA level were established immigrants/newcomers/non-residents, as were 20 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with no post-secondary education.

Figure 15 Immigrant status of ECE/A+ workers by education level



Employment

ECE/A+ workers with an ECL-related post-secondary education were the most likely to be employed full time (72 per cent, compared to 37 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with a non-ECL related post-secondary education and 52 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with no post-secondary education) (Appendix B Table 6).

Rates of unemployment were more or less consistent across all education levels. However, ECE/A+ workers with less than a high school certificate/diploma were more likely to be out of the ECL labour force (25 per cent, compared to 7 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with a high school diploma or higher).

One group of ECE/A+ workers was notably less likely to be self-employed – only 4 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with an ECL-related post-secondary education at the BA level or above were self-employed, compared to roughly 10 per cent of ECE/A+ workers with other education levels.

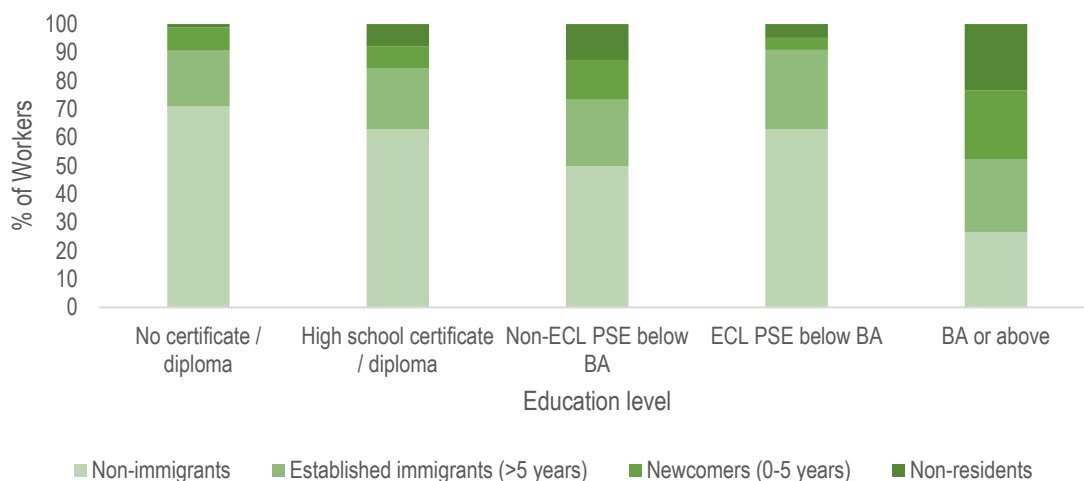
Home Child Care Providers (Appendix B Table 5)

Like ECE/A+ workers, HCP+ workers without post-secondary education were more likely to be young adults (31 per cent were aged 15-24, compared to 8 per cent of those with some post-secondary education) and single (57 per cent, compared to 41 per cent of those with some post-secondary education).

HCP+ workers who identified as Indigenous (6 per cent of all HCP+ workers) were more likely to have an ECL-related post-secondary education that was below the BA level (11 per cent of this group were Indigenous), or to have no high school certificate/diploma (10 per cent). They were less likely to have post-secondary education at the BA level or above (only 2 per cent of HCP+ workers with BA or above were Indigenous).

As with ECE/A+ workers, 73 per cent of HCP+ workers post-secondary education at the BA level or above were established immigrants, newcomers, or non-residents (see Figure 16).

Figure 16 Immigrant status of HCP+ workers by education level



HCP+ workers with a higher education were less likely to have an activity limitation. Activity limitations were highest among HCP+ workers with no certificate or diploma (45 per cent of these workers) and lowest among HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above (24 per cent).

Employment

HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education were more likely to be employed (85 per cent, compared to 58 per cent of HCP+ workers with no certificate or diploma, and 78 per cent of HCP+ workers with a high school education), with those with an ECL-related post-secondary education below the BA level most likely to be employed full-time (73 per cent, followed by 71 per cent of HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above) (Appendix B Table 8).

HCP+ workers with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above or an ECL-related post-secondary education below the BA level were the least likely to be out of the ECL labour force (2 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively), while HCP+ workers with no certificate or diploma were the most likely (36 per cent of these workers).

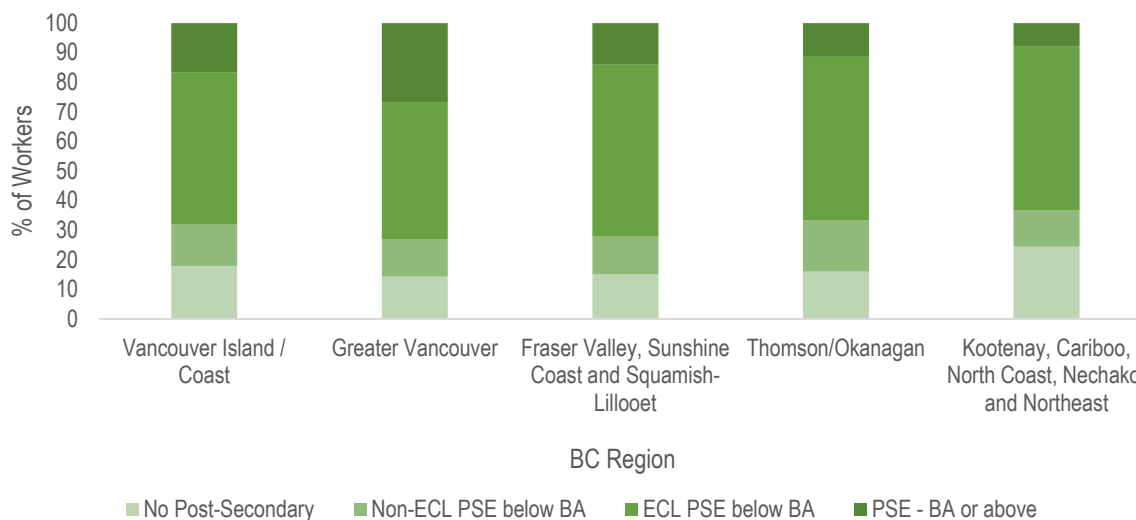
HCP+ workers with an ECL-related post-secondary education below the BA level were the most likely group to be self-employed (39 per cent were self-employed), while those with a post-secondary education at the BA level or above were the least likely (20 per cent).

Differences within BC

Early Childhood Educators/Assistants+ (Appendix B Table 9)

Across BC, educational attainment among ECE/A+ workers varies regionally. As Figure 17 shows, the Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast, and Squamish-Lillooet region had a higher proportion of ECE/A+ workers with post-secondary education in an ECL-related field below the BA level (58 per cent, compared to an average of 52 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in other regions).

Figure 17 Education levels of ECE/A+ workers in BC regions

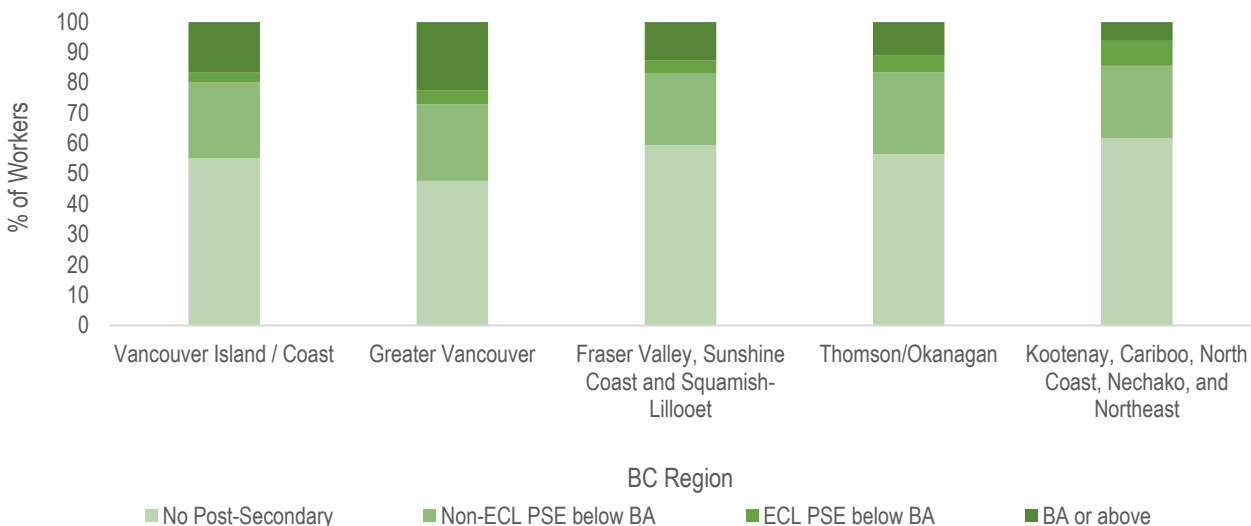


The Greater Vancouver region had a notably higher proportion of ECE/A+ workers with a post-secondary education in a non-ECL related field at the BA level or above (24 per cent, compared to an average of 10 per cent of ECE/A+ workers in other regions).

Home Child Care Providers (Appendix B Table 10)

Some regional differences in level of education were observed among HCP+ workers across BC as well. The Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast region had the highest proportion of HCP+ workers with no post-secondary education (62 per cent, compared to 55 per cent in other regions). The Greater Vancouver region had a notably higher proportion of HCP+ workers with post-secondary education at the BA level or above (22 per cent of HCP+ workers, compared to an average of 12 per cent in other regions). Figure 18 displays these differences.

Figure 18 Education level of HCP+ workers in BC regions



Cross-sectional survey

Education

About 88 per cent of the members of Sample A had completed post-secondary education. This proportion was lower among HCPs (at 75 per cent). In contrast, the highest proportion of respondents with post-secondary education and the highest proportion of respondents with a university degree were ECEs no longer working in child care (97 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively). The ratios of post-secondary educated to below post-secondary educated are provided in Table 26.

Respondents were also asked about their highest level of education completed in a program specific to child care (Figure 19). The proportion of respondents who completed a college, CEGEP, or non-university certificate or diploma in a program specific to child care was higher among Centre ECL workers (65 per cent). ECL-related university degrees or higher were completed by about 35 per cent of owner-operators, 32 per cent of Centre ECL workers, 21 per cent of HCPs, and 41 per cent of ECEs who no longer work in child care.

Figure 19 Highest level of education in a program specific to early care and learning by respondent group

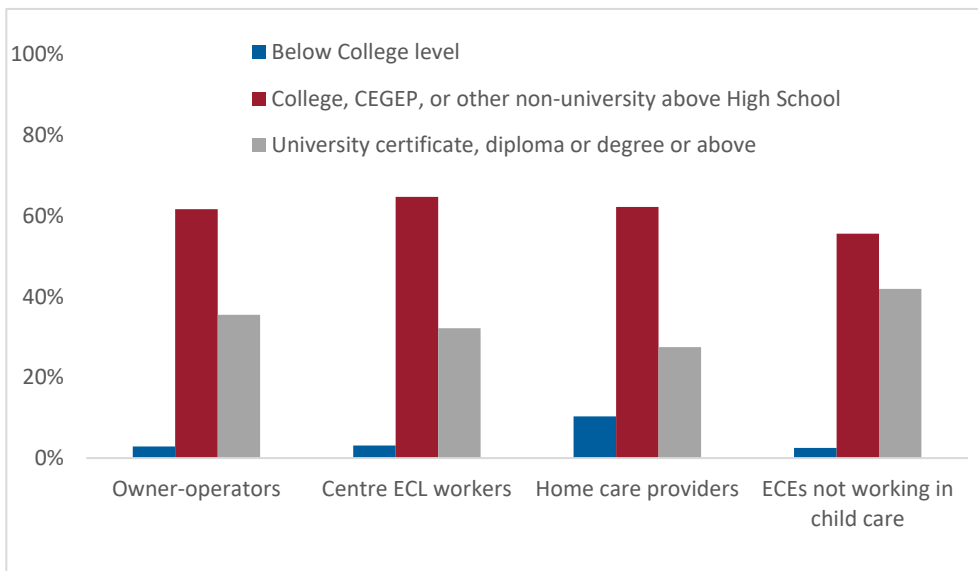


Table 26 Ratio of ECL workers with College, CEGEP, other non-University education or higher to ECL workers with education below College level

Owner-operator	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care
34 : 1	31 : 1	9 : 1	39 : 1

About 14 per cent of cross-sectional survey respondents reported they were currently taking a post-secondary education program. The proportion of respondents pursuing additional post-secondary education was higher among Centre ECL workers and ECEs not working in child care (21 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively). Most commonly, respondents were taking a diploma (34 per cent), followed by a certificate (28 per cent) and a university degree (23 per cent).

Respondents were also asked to specify the type of program they were taking. A large proportion of respondents are in an early childhood education program (68 per cent). This proportion is significantly higher among HCPs (94 per cent) and Centre ECL workers (70 per cent).

ECL certifications

Table 27 shows the ratio of ECE certified to non-ECE certified by respondent group. Centre ECL workers have the highest ratio among those working in child care while HCPs have the lowest. Among Centre ECL workers, there are 3 ECE-certified workers for every non-certified worker. The ratio is lower among owner-operators who have 2.8 ECE-certified respondents for every non-certified respondent.

Table 27 Ratio of ECE certified to non-ECE certified ECL workers

Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs
2.8 : 1	3.1 : 1	0.6 : 1

Figure 20 shows the proportion of respondents from Sample A with certifications or combination of certifications by respondent group. In general, respondents were more likely to have an ECE (5 year) certification or higher.

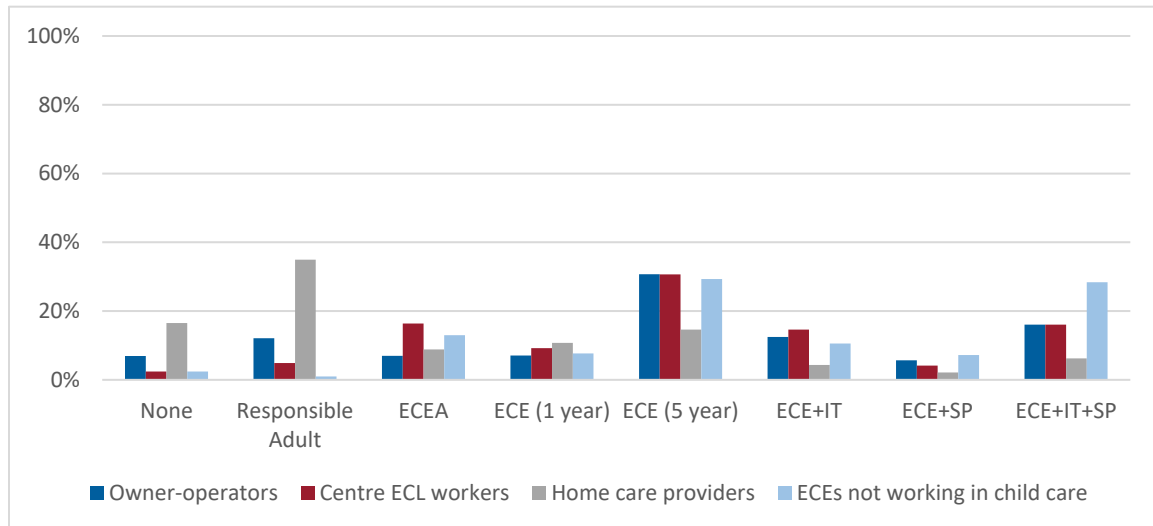
Home child care providers were the most likely group to report no certifications or qualifications in early childhood education (17 per cent) and included the highest proportion of responsible adults (35 per cent). A quarter of HCPs had an ECE certification (1 year or 5 year) and an additional 14 per cent had an ECE certification with at least one specialty.

About three in every four Centre ECL workers had an ECE certification or higher (75 per cent). Similar proportions held an Infant Toddler certification and an Infant Toddler certification with Special needs training (15 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively).

In general, owner-operators had less training than Centre ECL workers. About three quarters of owner-operators held an ECE certification or higher (72 per cent) and 34 per cent held at least one specialty certification on top of their ECE certification. Owner-operators included a higher proportion of respondents who had no certification (7 per cent compared to 2 per cent of Centre ECL workers) and who qualified as responsible adults (12 per cent compared to 5 per cent of Centre ECL workers).

The certifications by sub-group also show that ECEs no longer working in child care are more likely to have a ECE certification or higher (84 per cent) and at least one specialty certification (47 per cent).

Figure 20 Certification by respondent group (Sample A)



Over half of the respondents who were Responsible Adults completed their requirements for this credential (20 hours training) more than 5 years ago (57 per cent). In contrast, the majority of those who were certified as ECEAs were certified within the last 5 years (77 per cent).

One in four respondents who reported having an ECE (1 year) as their highest certification received their initial certification in the year preceding the survey (21 per cent). However, more than half received their initial certification 5 years ago or longer (61 per cent). Most of these respondents are currently working in administrative positions or as home care providers, where updating their certifications might not be necessary to comply with licensing requirements.

Most respondents with an ECE (5 year) certification received their initial certification more than 5 years ago (73 per cent). In contrast, only 3 per cent received their certification within the last year and 15 per cent between one and three years ago. Similarly, the majority of respondents who reported having an Infant Toddler or a Special Needs certification received their initial certification more than 5 years ago (61 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively).

Respondents were asked where they completed the training requirements for their ECL certifications. The vast majority of respondents completed their training in British Columbia (Table 28). Respondents who did not complete their training in British Columbia were more likely to have completed it in Alberta, Ontario, or outside Canada.

Table 28 Percentage of respondents by place where ECL certificate requirement was completed

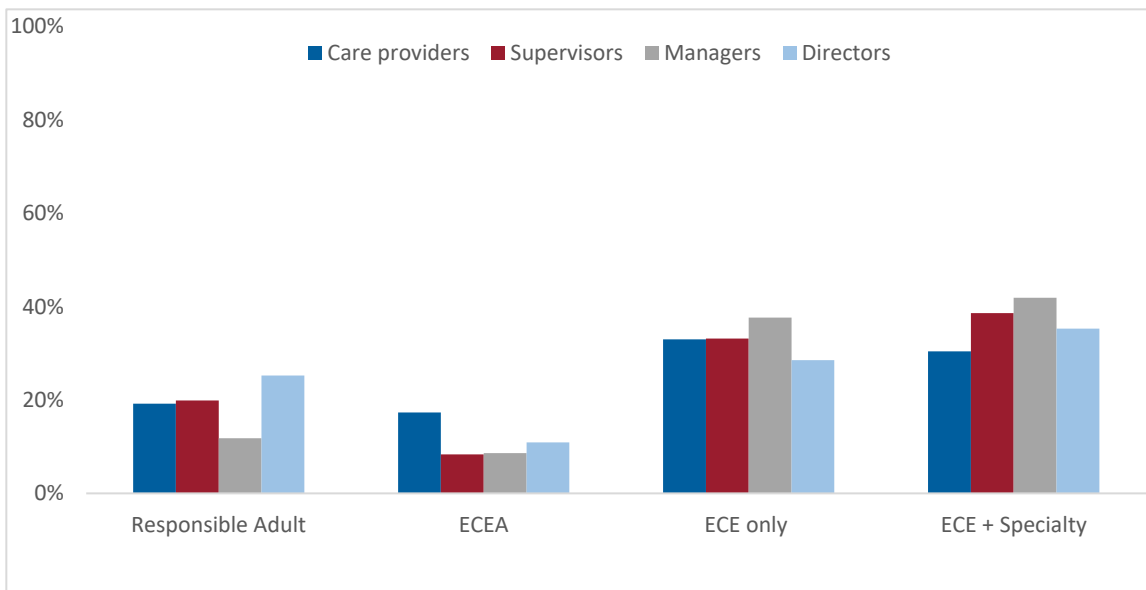
	Responsible Adult	ECEA	ECE (1 year)	ECE (5 year)	Special Needs	Infant and Toddler
British Columbia	98%	93%	91%	89%	89%	87%
Alberta	1%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Manitoba	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
New Brunswick	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Newfoundland and Labrador	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Northwest Territories	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nova Scotia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ontario	0%	2%	3%	3%	5%	7%
Prince Edward Island	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quebec	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Saskatchewan	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Yukon	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Outside of Canada	1%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%

About half of Centre ECL workers who did not have an ECE certification were planning to pursue certification (56 per cent) compared with 38 per cent of HCPs and 25 per cent of owner-operators.

ECL certifications by position at licensed child care centres

The survey also collected employer level data on staff certification and qualifications for 8,233 employees working in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs (Figure 21). The results indicate that ECL supervisors and managers were more likely to hold ECE certification or higher (72 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively). In contrast, directors included the largest proportion of responsible adults (25 per cent) and the same proportion of holding an ECE certification or higher as Centre ECL workers (64 per cent compared to 63 per cent of Centre ECL workers).

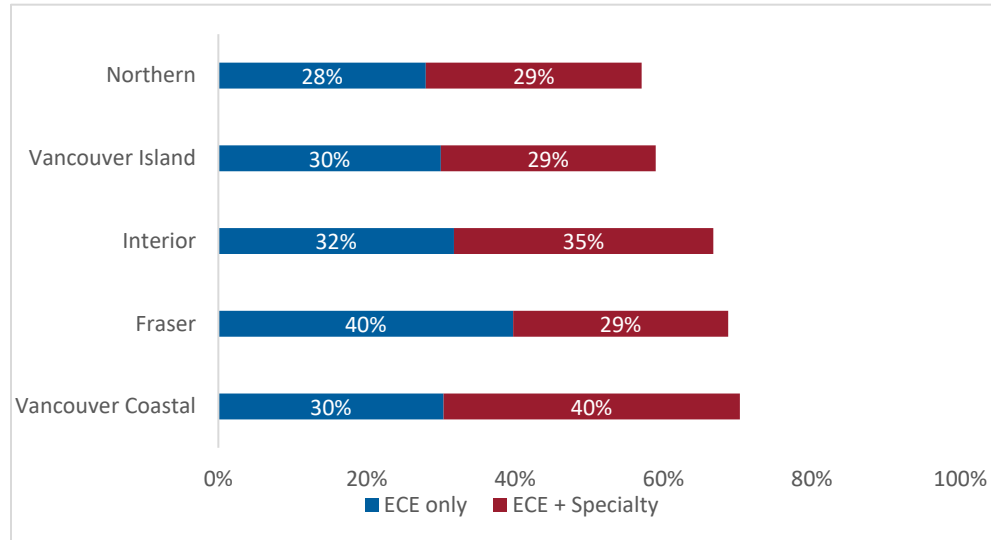
Figure 21 Certification by position of workers of licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs (Sample B)



ECL certification by health authority

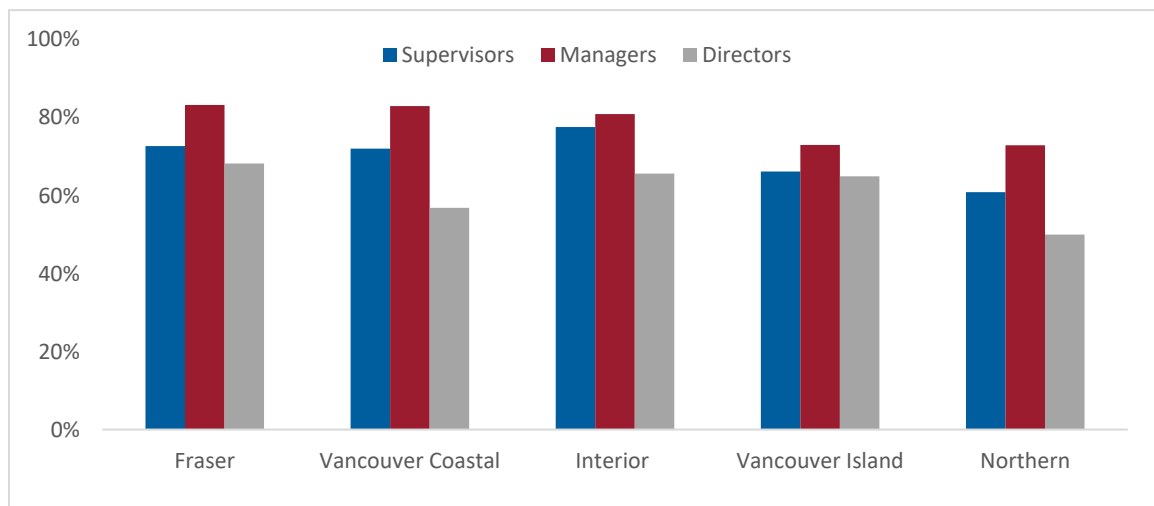
The proportion of workers in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs with ECL certifications differed across health authority regions (Figure 22). According to credential information provided by employers, Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health have the highest proportion of workers certified as an ECE (70 per cent and 69 per cent, respectively). In contrast, less than 60 per cent of workers in Vancouver Island Health and Interior Health have an ECE certificate. Vancouver Coastal Health also has the highest proportion of workers with a specialty certificate (Infant Toddler or Special Needs) across all regions (40 per cent).

Figure 22 Certification of workers in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs by health authority (Sample B)



These differences are also evident when looking at ECL credentials by position across health authority regions. In general, Vancouver Island Health and Northern Health have lower proportions of workers in senior positions who are ECE certified (Figure 23).

Figure 23 Proportion of workers in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs with ECE certification by health authority (Sample B)



Staffing needs

Staffing needs were assessed through a set of questions asked to samples A and B. Respondents in Sample A who worked directly with children were asked whether any children they worked with fell into a number of categories meant to capture children’s needs and experiences (Table 29). The categories included: identified special needs; neither official language spoken at home; new immigrants and refugees; and Indigenous children. Employers were asked a similar question about whether any child attending their program fell into these categories (Table 30).

Table 29 Proportion of respondents by children’s backgrounds and needs

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs
Identified special needs	59%	56%	12%
Neither English nor French spoken at home	36%	33%	10%
New immigrants or refugees	35%	25%	10%
Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit children	34%	29%	13%
None of the above	17%	18%	63%
I don’t know	3%	8%	4%

Note: Proportion includes individuals who reported working with at least one child who falls in each category.

Most Centre ECL workers reported working with children in at least one of the above categories (74 per cent). More than half worked with children with special needs (56 per cent) and one in three worked with children that speak neither English nor French at home (33 per cent). Similar proportions worked with new immigrant or refugee (25 per cent) and Indigenous, First Nations, Metis or Inuit (29 per cent) children. Home child care providers tended to work with fewer children in these categories, possibly due to the selection process for children or the overall lower number of children under their care. Only one in ten reported having children in each category.

Employer responses show that similar proportions worked with Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit children (40 per cent) as with new immigrant or refugees children (40 per cent).¹⁸ More

¹⁸ Unfortunately, it was not possible to collect data that allowed sufficient assessment of whether staff were qualified/trained in Indigenous programming.

than half of the organizations had children with identified special needs attending their programs (58 per cent). About four in ten have children with neither English nor French spoken at home.

Table 30 Proportion of employers by children’s backgrounds and needs

	Sample B
Identified special needs	58%
Neither English nor French spoken at home	40%
New immigrants or refugees	36%
Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit children	40%
None of the above	19%
I don't know	3%

Note: Proportion includes employers who reported having at least one child in their program who falls in each category.

Employers who reported having children with identified special needs attending their program were significantly more likely also to report a higher proportion of staff with Special Needs certification (60 per cent compared to 37 per cent of employers reporting not serving children with identified special needs, $p=0.000$). However, 212 employers in our sample reported having children with identified special needs and yet no staff in any position with this certification (40 per cent of employers who reported working with children with identified special needs).

Employers were also asked about the first languages of the children attending their centres as well as languages spoken by their staff (Table 31). Across all centres, the most common languages spoken at home other than English by at least one child were: French (10 per cent), Mandarin (9 per cent), Cantonese (8 per cent), and Spanish (7 per cent). Only 4 per cent of employers reported having only children who spoke only English. Similar proportions of organizations had at least one staff who spoke the most common languages other than English spoken by children.

Further analysis assessed staff languages relative to children’s languages at the organization level. About 29 per cent of organizations had at least one staff who spoke the first non-English languages of children attending their programs. However, half of the organizations served children whose first languages were not among the languages spoken by the organization’s staff (55 per cent). While most organizations lacked skills in one language (16 per cent of all

organizations), about 10 per cent were serving children speaking 5 or more first languages not currently spoken by any of their staff.

Table 31 Percentage of child care centres by children's top first languages and staff language skills, other than English

	Children's first language	Staff languages spoken
French	10%	11%
Cantonese	8%	7%
Hindi	6%	5%
Japanese	6%	4%
Mandarin	9%	8%
Punjabi	6%	5%
Spanish	7%	7%

Note: Percentage includes employers with at least one child or staff who speaks each language.

Staff shortages

Several questions were also asked at the organization level to identify staff shortages experienced in the 12 months preceding the survey. About 43 per cent of employers reported they were unable to fill at least one vacant position in their centres. On average, these centres with vacancies had 1.8 positions that employers were unable to fill. About half of all employers reported that they had resorted to filling at least one position with an individual with lower qualifications than they had wanted (53 per cent). The average number of positions per centre for which this occurred was 1.9. To provide some context on the recruitment process, Appendix C provides some background from the case study sites on typical recruitment practices at those sites.

Lastly, a third (32 per cent of) employers reported that they had had to refuse children due to not having staff with the right qualifications to accommodate the children's needs. The top qualifications missing for these employers were ECE (63 per cent), Special needs (33 per cent), and Infant and Toddler certification (37 per cent). About 2 per cent cited they were not able to find staff with experience working with Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit children.

Key informant interviews and case studies

The case study data suggests that recruitment of appropriately credentialed staff is an ongoing and challenging issue for all child care providers regardless of location (urban/rural) and whether they are a for-profit or not-for-profit centre. The case study child care centres all reported difficulties in recruiting well-trained and experienced staff who would be a “good fit” in their organizations. By good fit, supervisors and managers meant that prospective staff understood the organizational philosophy, had the skills and experience necessary for the position and would work well with the existing staff members. To provide some context on the recruitment process, Appendix C provides some background from the case study sites on typical recruitment practices at those sites.

The current staffing guidelines specify the ratio of certain categories of ECL workers to children. The challenge for providers is to find enough qualified staff. All providers agreed there is a lack of trained staff available across the province.

“And it’s kind of a catch-22 because there’s money available for child care spaces but there’s not the people. There’s grants – we have centres in our town who have taken the grant and they have the centres, but they don’t have the staffing. There’s a shortage of staff.” Site A: Manager/supervisor

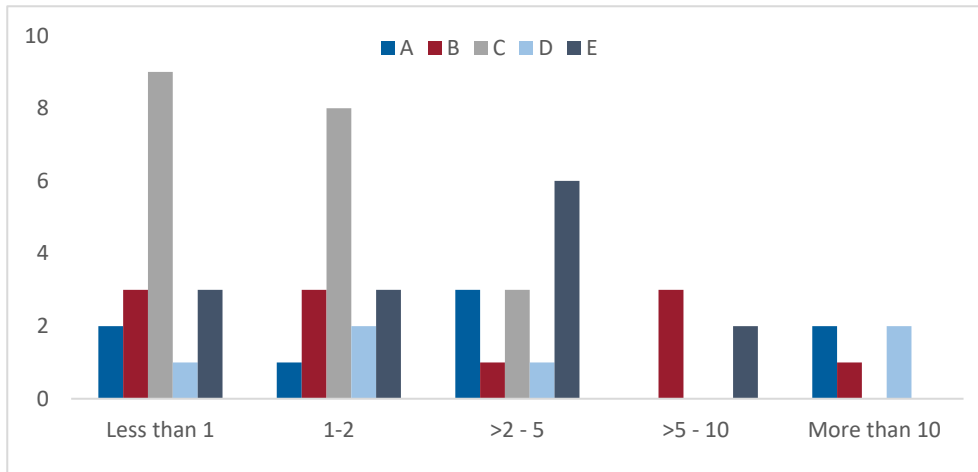
In key informant interviews, providers were concerned that some centres felt obliged to hire “*anyone with a certificate and a heartbeat.*” FPP:1 They were worried that the growth in the sector was not being probably managed and that good providers were struggling as a result. The in-home provider shared similar concerns about the future of the sector. While this provider did not hire full-time staff, they found it difficult to recruit part-time staff and relied heavily on students.

At case study sites also, both child care providers and workers reported a recent influx of newly trained staff. The implication for child care providers was that new child care workers needed mentoring and support to help them develop and deliver high quality early childhood education. For child care providers, mentoring required additional resources and support.

Figure 24 shows duration of employment for staff at each case study site, across the case study sites where data were available. There were 35 staff who had worked in the centre for two years or fewer. The interviews with child care providers suggested that many of these were also new to the sector.

... “we just know that when we’re hiring new students, that they need a lot of mentoring. And we’re willing to do that because they’re our future.” Site A: Manager

Figure 24 Number of years worked by staff at case study sites (where data were available)



KPI 5: PERCEPTIONS OF ECL CAREER AMONG THOSE MAKING DECISIONS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR OWN CAREERS

Public opinion survey

The public opinion survey included a career module directed to all respondents aged 24 years or younger, as well as adults considering a career change. In total, 1,017 respondents completed the career module. Respondents included 201 teenagers between the age of 13 and 17, 570 were aged 18 through 24 while 246 were adults older than 24 who were considering changing career.

The module asked respondents their opinion of child care as a career. As shown in Table 32, participants’ responses were generally balanced between favouring and not favouring child care as a career. Only three questions picked up clear majority opinions. The majority of respondents would consider working in child care if it offered flexibility or extended health benefits (52.7 and 54.2 per cent agreed or strongly agreed, respectively), pointing to the importance of benefits beyond pay for people making decision in respect to their own careers. In addition, 61.1 per cent of respondents indicated that working in child care would be a rewarding career.

One way to interpret the results is that nearly three quarters of respondents (73.8 per cent) either did not want a career in child care or were not sure. The survey asked these respondents why they were not interested in a career in child care. Qualitative analysis revealed that there were both internal factors and external factors related to respondents' reluctance to work in child care. Internal factors were personal to the respondents themselves. Many mentioned that they do not like children, do not have enough patience, or have other career interests.

"I just would not consider that as a career for myself because I don't like children. I don't have the patience required to work with and care for children. It just doesn't fit in with my career choices."

External factors were factors intrinsic to the profession that respondents didn't like. Many mentioned that the pay was too low, or that the work was "not skilled enough". Some indicated that a career in child care would offer no room for growth.

"I think this career doesn't provide enough monetary compensation and there are no really any higher steps to attain in this field."

"Because I worked as an Early Childhood Educator for 10 years and found it extremely detrimental to my health and the pay is not near as much as the effort most child care workers dedicate to their jobs."

Table 32 Career interest responses by age group

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
In my career, I would like to work with children					
13-17 years	14.9	18.9	33.3	25.4	7.5
18-24 years	14.0	20.7	27.5	27.7	10.0
25 and older	24.4	17.5	27.2	27.2	3.7
Before this survey, I knew that for me working in child care was a possible career choice					
13-17 years	16.4	30.3	17.4	30.3	5.5
18-24 years	20.0	23.0	16.5	31.1	9.5
25 and older	26.0	26.4	15.0	24.4	8.1
I would be interested in working in child care as a career					
13-17 years	21.4	29.4	25.4	19.9	4.0
18-24 years	22.1	23.9	25.8	21.4	6.8
25 and older	31.3	22.4	22.8	18.7	4.9

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
I would consider working in child care if the education and training was accessible (many seats, located in my community, online education, etc.)					
13-17 years	12.4	22.9	18.4	37.3	9.0
18-24 years	10.4	20.5	23.3	33.9	11.9
25 and older	17.1	20.7	16.7	33.7	11.8
I would consider working in child care if this career offered flexibility in terms of work hours or days					
13-17 years	11.9	19.4	18.4	37.3	12.9
18-24 years	9.5	16.5	19.8	39.8	14.4
25 and older	17.1	16.7	15.0	36.2	15.0
I would consider working in child care if this career offered a pension plan					
13-17 years	11.9	21.4	17.4	34.8	14.4
18-24 years	10.0	17.2	24.9	35.3	12.6
25 and older	16.3	18.7	16.3	32.5	16.3
I would consider working in child care if this career offered extended health benefits					
13-17 years	11.4	18.9	15.9	39.8	13.9
18-24 years	9.3	16.5	19.3	37.0	17.9
25 and older	15.9	17.9	13.4	37.0	15.9
I would consider working in child care if this career offered sick pay					
13-17 years	11.9	23.4	15.9	33.8	14.9
18-24 years	9.6	18.8	22.5	36.1	13.0
25 and older	17.1	17.1	19.5	35.4	11.0
I would consider working in child care if this career offered professional development funds					
13-17 years	10.9	20.9	22.9	35.3	10.0
18-24 years	9.8	17.2	28.8	35.3	8.9
25 and older	15.9	18.7	18.3	34.1	13.0
I would consider working in child care if the cost of training was affordable					
13-17 years	10.9	25.9	13.4	36.8	12.9
18-24 years	9.8	19.5	21.9	35.8	13.0
25 and older	15.9	20.7	17.9	32.9	12.6

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe working in child care would be a rewarding career					
13-17 years	13.4	10.4	22.4	37.8	15.9
18-24 years	6.3	8.1	20.7	44.4	20.5
25 and older	9.3	12.6	19.9	42.3	15.9
I would consider working in child care if I knew there were quality child care spaces in my community for everyone who wanted space					
13-17 years	11.9	21.9	25.4	32.3	8.5
18-24 years	9.6	16.5	25.3	36.0	12.6
25 and older	17.1	21.5	21.5	30.9	8.9

Some respondents hinted at the lack of respect of this profession, and others explicitly pointed to a gendered view of the profession.

“[I would not work in child care] because I am a man, and it’s a job for a woman, not a job for males.”

“I would be worried as a Male what people would think”

A more encouraging view of the same data is that close to a quarter of all age groups stated they were interested in working in child care as a career. This proportion was especially high among 18-24-year-olds. Of those who stated they were not interested in a career in child care, or were not sure, many pointed to personal factors that public policy might struggle to influence such as having other career interests or not liking children.

Nonetheless, when asked whether they would consider work in child care if certain conditions changed, around 45-50 per cent would consider the career if improvements took place in such external factors that policy can influence, such as low pay and poor prospects for career advancement.

The second wave of this survey, to be fielded in 2022 will identify whether there is a change in the perception of child care work as a career over the first three years of implementation of the Strategy.

KPI 6: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKFORCE WHO SELF-REPORT POSSESSION OF CORE SKILLS AND SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Cross-sectional survey

Skills self-assessment

Survey respondents were asked to self-assess (as: poor, weak, average, above average or excellent) seven of their skills relevant to early childhood education (Table 33). The skills with the highest ratings were *building caring relationships with the children* (96 per cent), *communicating effectively with children* (95 per cent) and *taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities* (91 per cent). On the other hand, the lowest rated skills by all respondent groups were *demonstrating cultural sensitivity* (77 per cent) and *making the environment inclusive for children with special needs* (77 per cent).

Centre ECL workers who were born outside of Canada ranked their skills significantly higher than those born in Canada in terms of demonstrating cultural sensitivity (80% compared to 72% of those born in Canada) and respecting diversity in their daily interactions (88% compared to 81%). However, they were less likely to rate highly their skills in creating environments that are inclusive for children with special needs as excellent (41% compared to 47% of those who were born in Canada).

Table 33 Self-assessment of core skills by respondent group

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Above Average	Excellent	Above Average	Excellent	Above Average	Excellent	Above Average	Excellent
Demonstrating cultural sensitivity***	30%	50%	34%	40%	29%	47%	32%	45%
Respecting diversity in their daily interactions***	28%	59%	31%	53%	22%	60%	28%	56%
Building caring relationships with the children in their care***	16%	81%	19%	75%	13%	85%	17%	79%
Communicate effectively with children***	23%	73%	29%	64%	19%	77%	25%	70%
Communicating effectively with children's families***	26%	67%	34%	47%	21%	71%	28%	59%
Taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities***	26%	69%	32%	56%	24%	70%	28%	63%
Making the environment inclusive for children with special needs***	28%	54%	31%	44%	24%	44%	29%	48%

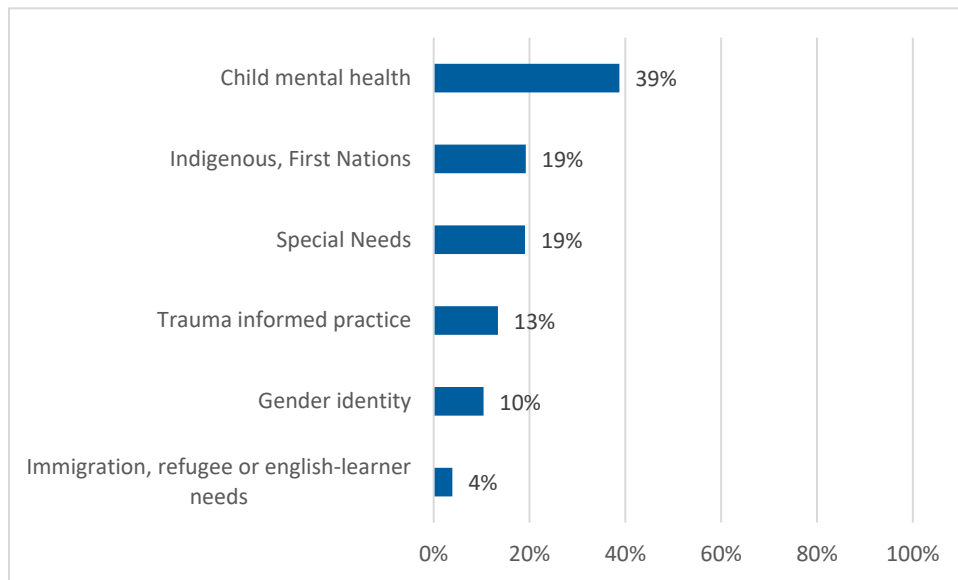
Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05.

Professional development

The survey also asked respondents to list the topics covered by the professional development activities they completed in the 12 months preceding the survey. The list is presented later under KPI 8 in Table 34. The most common professional development topics covered were *child growth and development* (54 per cent), *managing child behaviour* (48 per cent), *curriculum or program development* (40 per cent), *child mental health* (39 per cent) and *child health* (37 per cent).

Figure 25 shows the proportion of respondents – among the 89 per cent who participated in any professional development activities – who took part in those associated with cultural sensitivity and working with children with special needs, the two skills with the lowest ranking in the self-assessment question. While child mental health was among the top choices for professional development activities, the other topics were engaged in relatively rarely by respondents.

Figure 25 PD activities associated with cultural sensitivity and special needs completed in the past 12 months as a proportion of those taking any PD



KPI 7: AWARENESS OF ECL CAREER PATHWAY OPTIONS, HOW TO PURSUE THEM, AND EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR FEASIBILITY IN TERMS OF FINANCES AND AVAILABILITY OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

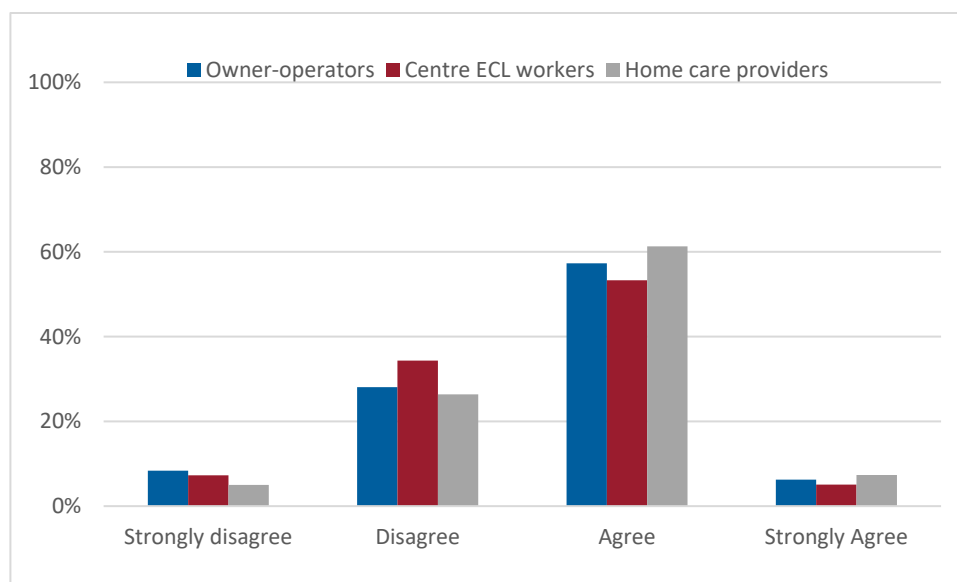
Cross-sectional survey

Perception of career pathway options

About six in ten respondents currently working in the sector believed there were a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in BC (62 per cent). The proportion agreeing with the statement “There are a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in BC” differed

significantly between respondent groups (statistical significance at the 1% level). As Figure 26 shows, about 69 per cent of HCPs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement compared to 59 per cent of Centre ECL workers.

Figure 26 Agreement with statement “There are a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in BC” by respondent group



ECE Workforce Development Bursary

The ECE Workforce Development Bursary, one of the components of the ECL R&R Strategy, is intended to support career advancement by providing financial support to child care workers with costs associated with continuing education and training. Just over half of the survey respondents were aware of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary (56 per cent). Centre ECL workers (55 per cent) and HCPs (46 per cent) were less likely to be aware of the bursary than owner-operators (62 per cent).

Among those who were aware, 17 per cent had applied for it and 27 per cent were planning to apply. The main reasons for not planning to apply for the bursary were *having all the qualifications needed* (52 per cent), *lack of time to update credentials* (26 per cent), and *lack of interest in updating credentials* (18 per cent).

Views on upgrading certifications

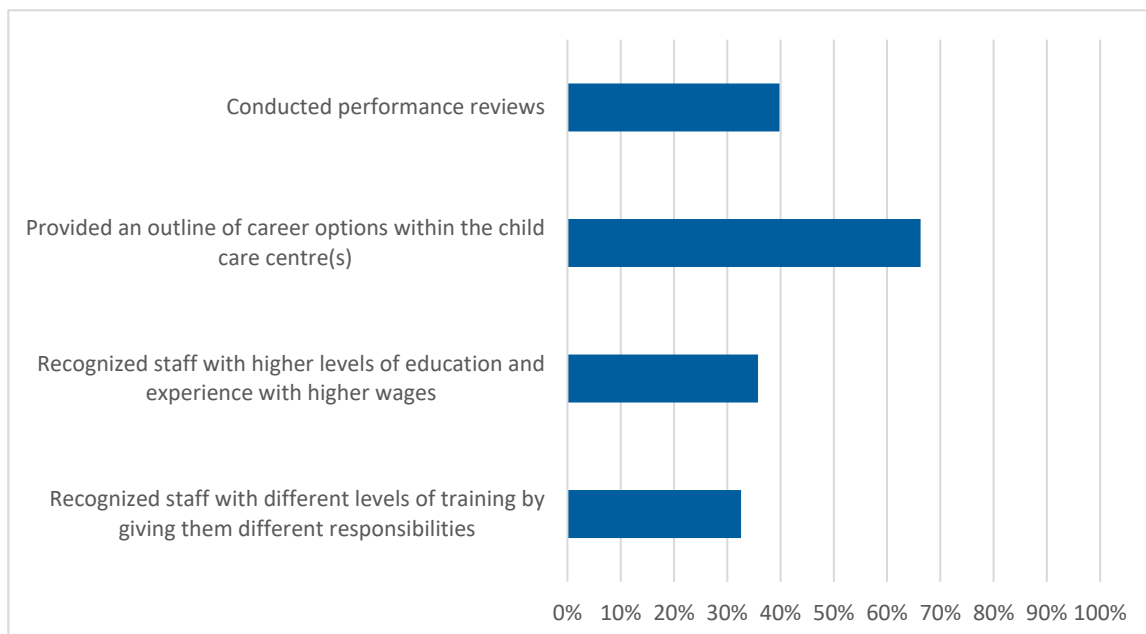
The main reasons for planning to become certified were *career advancement* (44 per cent), *having a more fulfilling job* (15 per cent) and *having higher pay* (9 per cent).

In contrast, the most common reason for not planning to become certified was that it was not required for the respondent's position (31 per cent). This response was provided by about half of owner-operators who were not planning to become certified (49 per cent). Not being able to take time off for the training was also a common response (25 per cent overall) especially among HCPs (45 per cent). Some thus appeared unaware that the bursary might cover their lost wages. About 18 per cent of respondents said their main reason for not planning to pursue certification was lack of interest.

Employer facilitation of career advancement opportunities

Employers were asked if they had engaged in four activities that promote staff's career advancement in the 12 months preceding the survey (Figure 27). Employers were most likely to have provided an outline of career options within the child care centre (66 per cent). Only four in ten employers had conducted performance reviews (40 per cent). Employers were least likely to have recognized staff earning higher qualifications with either different responsibilities or higher wages (33 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively).

Figure 27 Proportion of employers that have engaged in activities that promote staff's career advancement in the last 12 months



Experience in different ECL positions

Respondents in Sample A were asked about the different types of positions they have held in the ECL sector. Reports of past positions held revealed that it was common for HCPs to transition to positions in licensed centres (47 per cent of owner-operators and 31 per cent of Centre ECL workers reported being HCPs in the past). However, a similar transition from licensed facilities to in-home care is observed. About four in ten HCPs have held ECL worker positions in a licensed child care facility (40 per cent) while 30 per cent had held leadership positions in one or more child care workplace.

Qualitative data from the cross-sectional survey and case studies

Among respondents providing comments at the end of the cross-sectional survey: approximately one in ten identified the need for more educational support to enable individuals to enter or continue their training and development within the sector. There was an awareness of an increase in places for students on ECE and related courses. However, respondents wrote about not seeing the expected increase in the number of staff working in the sector. Some respondents speculated that graduating students were choosing to work in other sectors rather than remain in early childhood education.

“I think that it has helped some people to have had the opportunity to use the government money to go to school but we haven't really seen more ECE in the workplace because of it.”

Respondents were also concerned with the quality and consistency of ECE training. Examples were given of newly qualified ECE staff who had graduated but did not have basic skills or knowledge about the curriculum. The knock-on-effect for child care providers and existing staff was the time and effort needed to provide the level of ongoing support and training some new staff required.

“We had interviewed several ... for employment. TWO issues stand out: 1 – English is often so bad basic communication was impossible. How did they graduate? 2 – Several had a lack of sensitivity to children's needs. Do the schools not teach this?”

Child care providers and workers wanted assurance that graduates would receive high quality education. They suggested that there should be a review of ECE programs to ensure quality and consistency rather than just quantity because

“... they [ECE courses] are not all created equal. Definitely some are way better than others.”

Child care providers and those with ECE and ECEA credentials identified cost as a significant barrier to training.

"I feel that a lot of people don't get an education in child care because they can't afford to fork out \$25,000 (ish) for 2 years of education to make less than \$20/hour. You can make more as a manager at the local fast food chain ..."

Respondents ventured that potential students did not want to incur a large amount of student loan debt due to the prospect of low earnings and consequent difficulties they envisaged paying back their loan. For those already working in the sector and thinking about upgrading their education to obtain their ECE licenses, cost and perceived value for money were barriers. Respondents reported only relatively small differences between the wage levels of ECEAs and ECEs. Therefore, for many it simply did not make financial sense to upgrade to an ECE. In addition, course fees were a barrier and some respondents believed the practicum requirement would result in a loss of earnings, which they would be unable to afford.

"The cost of ECE education is too expensive for the wage we receive. It's a rewarding industry, but the whole reason people like myself don't have our full ECEs is because of the cost."

"I have completed the ECEA course but do not see the value in paying fees to be certified and registered as an ECEA when it doesn't change my work situation."

The practicum requirement of the ECE course was seen as important even though it created concerns and barriers.

"[We have] ECE staff unable to complete Special Needs and Infant Toddler practicums due to lack of Qualified ECE overseers and unable to take the time off without pay for practicum, if we could find an ECE overseer. As an Employer, we cannot afford to pay 6 weeks of wages for an ECE to fill in while our regular ECE does a practicum course. Most of our ECE's have completed the core courses via online/distance education for SN or IT certificate but cannot complete the practicums to obtain these higher-level certificates."

Respondents welcome the idea of the bursary to support ECE training. However, overall the comments were critical of the administration of the award. Some respondents encountered difficulties and or delays in applying for a bursary.

“I emailed for information and left a phone message and was never responded to. There isn't much point in getting a bursary running when people can't get information in response to inquiries. My colleague was taking her SNE and I was considering doing it – but it took her over 14 weeks to be reimbursed for her days off for practicum observations. I can't afford to wait over three months to be reimbursed for lost income. As a result, the ECEBC Bursary is totally ineffective: it is supposed to reduce financial barriers to taking further education, but it is terribly managed.”

For others, the requirement to pay for the course upfront and wait for reimbursement was a barrier, as they could not afford to do this. A small number of employers helped staff with these costs. Once in the sector, respondents stated that cost was also a barrier to accessing further training including attending workshops and conferences to help individuals maintain their skillset.

Most comments about the bursary centred on the fund running out of money. Some individuals awarded a bursary reported finding out later that they would not be receiving the financial support. Respondents were “shocked and dismayed” how the bursary was implemented and angry that students were not notified prior to the beginning of the semester that they had run out of money. They reported that, as a result, some students withdrew from programs due to financial concerns, while others continued and reluctantly incurred debts.

“With the ECE bursary running out of funds, this has impacted ECE students, some have dropped from the ECE basic program and some from our post basic Infant and Toddler program. They cannot afford to continue schooling without the bursaries. They do not get paid enough in the ECE field to pay back a student loan and live.”

“I registered to earn my infant/toddler diploma and began my course Sept 26, and submitted my bursary by September 30. I did not receive an email in regards to receiving a bursary. However, a fellow student who also submitted her bursary application on September 30 did receive funding. I will be dropping out of the program. I solely took this course with the understanding that the government was aiding students with a passion to continue their education and help with the infant toddler crisis that affects BC. I will now be out the tuition for the two courses and supplies. I'm extremely disappointed in not being able to continue however I would have never have enrolled having known this outcome/bursary “prioritizing”.

Some employers wrote that it left them without the qualified staff they had planned for and put their program at risk of reducing the number of child care places, or closing.

“The ECE Bursary for school courses has gotten 3 of my staff to continue their education to complete their ECE certification. It is a huge let down for them that the funding has ended effective Oct. 11. It has left them all with a half done certificate; we need that funding to be reopened so they can actually complete their ECE training.”

Respondents also commented about the availability of courses in some regions of the province and wished courses were available at different times. Staff reported evening courses were difficult to attend because of timing and coming at the end of a “long day.”

The final educational theme that emerged from the survey comments relates to the recognition of credentials from other provinces and of degrees in education by the ECE licensing authority. Respondents wrote suggesting there should be greater recognition for individuals who have trained and worked in early education child care and that licensing requirements should be adjusted. Some respondents also suggested that to increase the pool of substitute ECEs, staff who had retired or left the sector should be encouraged to return as substitute ECEs while the requirement for professional development hours to maintain an ECE license could be waived. Respondents hoped such measures would ease the pressure on existing staff and perhaps reduce burnout and allow staff to take time off without “feeling guilty” because colleagues would be left short staffed.

“We have a difficult time maintaining a substitute list. We have a number of people in our sphere that would be willing, appropriate candidates but have let their ECE expire. There should be an exemption for short term substitutes that have let their ECE expire (say in the last 5 years?)”

In key informant interviews, the different bursaries were welcomed but there was extensive discussion about their administration, with one provider describing it as a “gong show” as some students were over paid and some registered for courses only to receive emails revoking the bursaries as the fund was depleted. The providers wrote wanting to know next steps, with questions like: “do the enhancements and bursaries continue?”; “what happens to the providers and sector when staff are trained, will they stay in the sector with low pay or use it as a gateway to other professions?” The general sentiment was that these tactics needed to be better thought through.

Child care providers who participated in the case studies raised similar concerns. While child care providers were appreciative of the additional funding for training and child care places they were concerned about the lag between creating new spaces and having enough trained staff.

"I think too, you are going to hear this over and over again. The government released this initiative. They put the cart before the horse. There are not enough ECEs across this province to support this initiative. ... they created this great idea and I fully support having cheaper day care, so families can have a lifestyle or be in the workforce, but I really see the ramifications of what is going on right now." Site A: Manager

Key informant interviews and case studies

There was some confusion amongst child care providers and workers in their understanding of career pathways for early childhood educators. Both child care providers and workers described a hierarchical career progression for child care worker which were seen as stepping stones to more senior positions:

"So we have kind of steppingstones to get there. We have team leaders at some point may move into a supervisory position." Site E: Manager

To move from a responsible adult position to an ECEA and then to ECE requires additional education and training which is described as time consuming and expensive.

"It's very expensive to go to school ... I don't have the answer for how you do that, but schooling is expensive. It's hard to do." SITE A: ECE

In terms of career advancement, many child care workers had been promoted internally. The approach most child care providers adopted was to develop existing staff whenever possible. They recognized staff want career advancement and know if they do not provide them, then the likelihood was they would move to another child care centre.

"We're typically kind of grooming our staff or preparing them for that opportunity, so that when they apply they're able to do so. And so that's a bit of a process ... and that's also the world of child care and working in non-profit is that you're typically not wearing just one hat, right? You're doing a whole lot more." Site E: Manager

While all child care providers were aware of the bursaries for staff development, there was considerable confusion amongst child care workers regarding their availability, eligibility criteria, and level of funding. For example, some workers reported having been told they were "too late" as the funding had 'run out'. Others reported receiving some funding that ended leaving them unable to complete their training.

Workers cited a major barrier to applying for a bursary was the application process which required them to pay up front for the course and then claim back the cost of when they had successfully completed it. Some child care workers explained that they could not afford to do this

because of their relatively low wages, the cost of living and (for some) the remaining need to pay off student loans.

“I don’t want to rack up any more student loans, I have 20 grand in student loans already and I don’t want to do that anymore, so I can only afford one at a time so ... I have to take like way long to finish than if I could do it all at once. It’s a time thing too, because I’m a single mom so I can only do it on weekends, when my daughter goes with her dad, so I can do work on the weekends, but it’s money, it’s a big factor. It’s expensive.” Site A: ECE

We heard more on the challenge for single parents:

“Well, being a single mom of three kids, it’s a little difficult to have debt, more debt than I already have.” SITE C: ECEA

Two child care providers reportedly offered additional financial help to child care workers. One had paid for a worker’s course and then administered an agreed paycheck deduction. Another paid for the training with the proviso the individual remained with their existing employer for a specified amount of time. Child care providers saw this as an investment in their staff and an important part of staff development and retention. Both providers suggested they were unable to offer this support on a large scale.

An additional challenge was the availability and timing of courses. Most courses are offered in the evening (i.e., 7pm) or at weekends. The timing made it difficult for those with children to attend while balancing their own parenting responsibilities. Online courses were viewed as an alternative by child care workers as they could complete courses at their own pace.

“The cost and timing of training is a challenge and can be barriers to participation.” Site C: ECE

KPI 8: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKFORCE WHO SELF-REPORT PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Cross-sectional survey

The majority of respondents participated in a professional development (PD) activity in the 12 months preceding the survey. Centre ECL workers had the highest participation in PD activities (82 per cent), followed by owner-operators (79 per cent), and HCPs (64 per cent). Centre ECL workers who were born outside of Canada were less likely to participate in professional development activities (78% compared to 83% of those born in Canada).

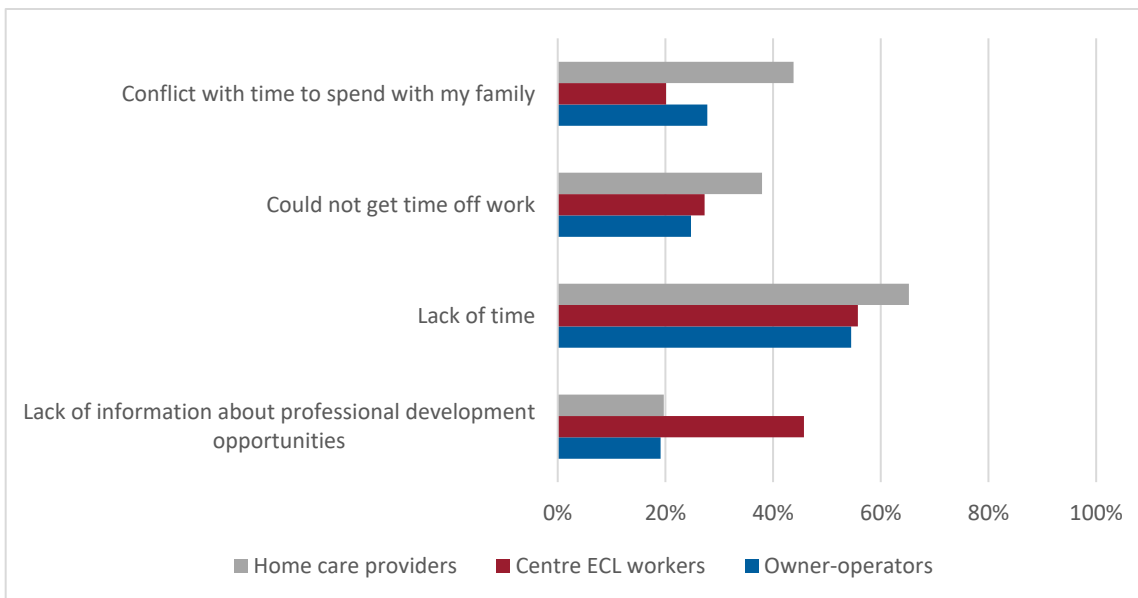
More than half of the PD activities respondents participated in were provided by Child Care Resource and Referral Centres (60 per cent). Other top providers of PD activities were respondents' employers (34 per cent) and ECEBC (18 per cent). The different PD activities participated in are listed in Table 34.

The top barriers to participation in PD for all sub-groups were related to time available to complete the activity (Figure 28). This was especially true for HCPs who were more likely to cite time constraints as the main reasons for not participating in PD. For Centre ECL workers, lack of information about PD opportunities was also a major barrier (46 per cent).

Table 34 Participation in professional development activities in the 12 months preceding the survey

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Participated in any professional development activity	80%	82%	64%	78%
Participation by topic				
Abuse, touching and bullying	12%	11%	7%	11%
Administration and business	15%	6%	8%	10%
Advocacy for children and families	21%	19%	12%	19%
Child care policy	15%	11%	12%	13%
Child growth and development	44%	41%	38%	42%
Child health	29%	25%	31%	28%
Child mental health	32%	30%	25%	30%
Curriculum or program development	32%	30%	26%	30%
Family support	16%	15%	12%	15%
Gender identity	7%	9%	6%	8%
Immigration, refugee or English-learner needs	3%	3%	2%	3%
Indigenous, First Nations, Metis or Inuit	16%	16%	9%	15%
Infant and Toddler care	12%	10%	14%	12%
Interpersonal communication	12%	14%	6%	11%
Leadership	18%	12%	5%	13%
Managing child behaviour	40%	37%	26%	36%
Personal stress management and work-life balance	14%	17%	11%	15%
Professional ethics and practice	12%	11%	6%	11%
Special Needs	15%	18%	7%	15%
Trauma informed practice	12%	11%	3%	10%
Other	7%	5%	5%	6%

Figure 28 Main reasons for not participating in professional development activities



Key informant interviews and case studies

In case study sites, child care providers all stated they would like to provide more PD opportunities but were limited by resources: providing training was expensive and time-consuming. Larger child care centres tended to offer more education and professional development opportunities for staff and were well connected to child care resource centres. In addition to third party education and training opportunities, these larger centres provided in-house training, offered attendance at workshops and conferences, and brought in external speakers. Child care workers appreciated in-house training as all staff received similar training and they did not have to rely on information disseminated by colleagues. In-house training and online training helped child care workers to achieve their required training to maintain their ECE credential.

“For professional development, we get provided with – people come in and talk to us about certain things. I think that’s why we’re lucky to be here, because I find that at a lot of centres you don’t get those opportunities. Like I know there’s the Child Care Resource Centre and they do workshops there so that’s kind of nice to have, but, I find that if I worked in a different centre, I think it would be hard to find places to get to those professional development activities.” Site A: Supervisor

Supervisors and managers were seen as reliable sources of information about training opportunities as were the ECEBC website and social media.

Child care providers identified gaps in training around supporting the language development of children. Some child care providers had brought in occupational therapists and speech pathologists to provide workshops and support staff. In addition, some child care providers noted that a small number of recent ECE graduates could benefit from further English training. A small number of child care workers also suggested there was a need for training in ‘soft skills’ to help staff learn how to interact positively with colleagues and manage workplace conflicts.

KPI 9: HOURS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PER ECL WORKFORCE MEMBER PER YEAR

Cross-sectional survey

Respondents who participated in professional development activities completed an average of 27.3 hours over the 12-month period preceding the survey (Table 35). As might be expected, the number of professional development hours was significantly higher among respondents who had completed their current ECL certification in 2019. On average, these respondents completed 54 professional development hours compared to 25 hours completed by others. About three in every four respondents who participated in any professional development activity completed 25 or fewer hours. The mean is higher than 25 due to a number of respondents with very high levels of participation, which pulls the mean upwards. The average for all respondents with ECL certification (counting as zero those who reported no professional development) was 22 hours but the median was 12 hours (so 50 per cent report fewer than 12 hours professional development over the year).

Table 35 Professional development hours completed in the 12-month period preceding the survey

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Hours of professional development				
0-25	73%	75%	79%	75%
26-50	19%	17%	14%	18%
51-100	5%	4%	4%	5%
101+	2%	3%	3%	3%
Mean	27.5	26.8	28.3	27.3
<i>(Standard Deviation)</i>	<i>(49.4)</i>	<i>(46.0)</i>	<i>(63.0)</i>	<i>(50.2)</i>

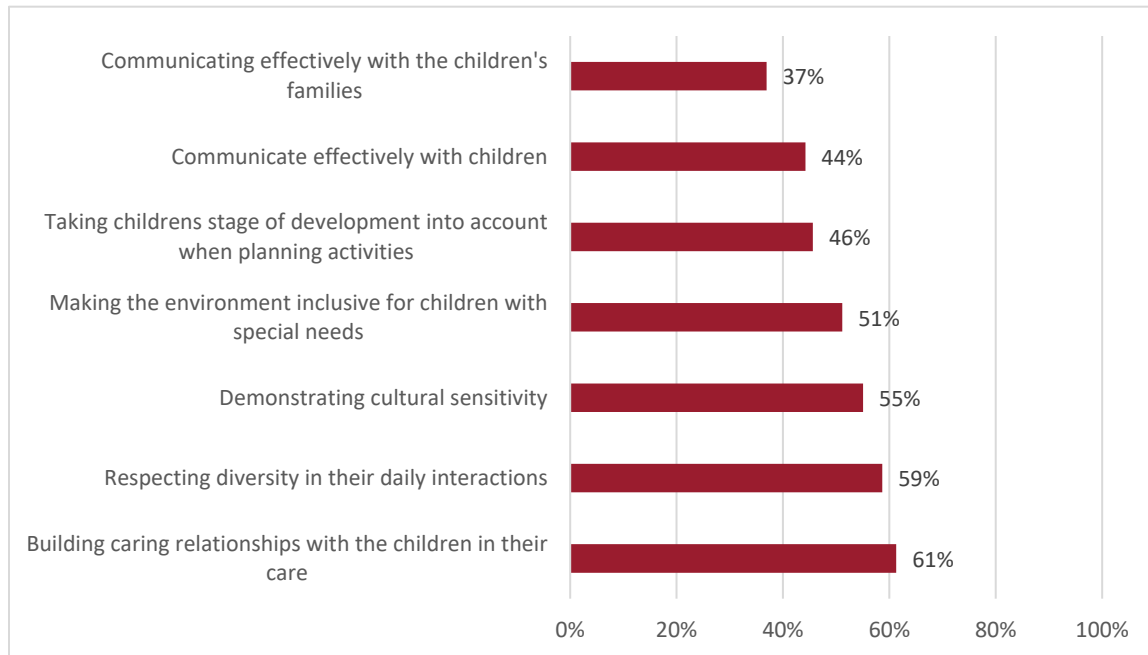
The means appear high when compared to the ECE/A renewal requirement for 40 hours of professional development completed within the last five years related to the field of early childhood education. It is possible the workforce is doing more than is expected of them to meet their certification requirements. It is also possible that the workforce is engaging in activities that they consider professional development but not eligible for certification purposes. The survey asked respondents who provided their professional development activity. About 22 per cent of respondents who completed professional development answered “other” and mentioned online courses, videos, libraries, carecourses.com (from the US), resources from other provinces. Respondents who selected “other” had a slightly higher average number of hours 29.5 compared to 26.7 of those who selected the other choices (professional development provided by employers, ECEBC, etc.).

KPI 10: EMPLOYERS REPORT OF THE SHARE OF THEIR ECL WORKFORCE POSSESSING CORE SKILLS AND POSSESSING SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Cross-sectional survey

Employers were asked about the proportion of their staff who needed to improve specific core skills (Figure 29). The response to this question will be a proxy measure of employer’s assessment of their ECL workforce’s skills. The most highly rated skills were *building caring relationships with children in their care* and *respecting diversity in their daily interactions* with about 60 per cent of organizations reporting none of their staff needed to improve these skills. On the other hand, more than half of employers believed at least some of their staff needed to improve their effective communication with the children’s families and with children they cared for.

Figure 29 Proportion of employers who indicated none of their staff needed to improve their ECL core skills



KPI 11: EMPLOYMENT STABILITY OF ECL WORKFORCE, INCLUDING VARIANCES FOR STAFFING FOR PROVIDERS, WORK HOURS, JOB TENURE, JOB EXITS

Census and Labour Force Survey microdata analysis

From the Labour Force Survey, it appears average job tenure – meaning the time spent with the current employer (they could have been employed for longer including time with another employer) – in 2018 was notably shorter for ECE/A+ workers compared to previous years. In 2017, the average number of months employed was 81 (Appendix B Table 15). By 2018 this average had dropped to 46 months (less than four years), the lowest it had been since 2004. Such a change would be compatible with a disproportionate share of people entering or exiting the workforce, or just changes of employer. The same trend was not observed among HCP workers (who are more likely to be self-employed and had very short job spells) or other workers in the province in the non-ECL sector (who had much longer job spells).

Cross-sectional survey

Job tenure

The cross-sectional survey asked for respondent's job tenure in a similar way: time with the current employer. The estimates varied across survey sub-groups. On average, HCPs had been working at their current child care workplace the longest (10.2 years on average), followed by owner-operators (9.4 years on average). On the other hand, Centre ECL workers had worked on average 4.8 years with their current employers. This latter estimate is comparable to the Labour Force Survey estimate for ECE/A+s in the previous section.

An alternative measure of job tenure is time in the current position (there could be several positions with the current employer). About 68 per cent of owner-operators and child care workers had not changed positions since starting with their employers. Owner-operators who had changed positions had worked in their current position for an average of 7.3 years while Centre ECL workers had worked in their current position for 3.9 years.

Job and sector retention

The cross-sectional survey sought to determine whether child care workers expected to be leaving their jobs soon. As seen in Table 36, most respondents expected to be working with their current employer one year after completing the survey (83 per cent of the total sample). This proportion was lower among Centre ECL workers (74 per cent). Respondents who were not expecting to continue in their current workplace were asked if they expected to work in the ECL sector one year after completing the survey. The proportion of Centre ECL workers not expecting to work in the ECL sector was 3 per cent but at least another one in eight (13 per cent) were not sure whether they would stay working in the sector.

About 9 per cent of owner-operators and Centre ECL workers reported that they were currently looking for a different job. When asked about their reasons for wanting another job the most common responses stated were: that they were looking for higher pay (73 per cent); career advancement (42 per cent); and better benefits (40 per cent). One in ten respondents reported that they were looking for a job in their current workplace. Similar proportions of Centre ECL workers were looking for positions in an education institution (41 per cent) and elsewhere (40 per cent) while more than half of owner-operators were looking for positions elsewhere (62 per cent).

ECEs no longer working in child care were asked about their reasons for leaving the sector. The most common answers were related to dissatisfaction with pay and benefits in child care (57 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively). Other common answers included dissatisfaction with work conditions (36 per cent) and career advancement opportunities (27 per cent).

Staff turnover

Employer-level data includes staff hiring and turn-over information provided by 673 employers (Table 37). About a third of these employers reported experiencing staff net-loss across all positions in the 12 months preceding the survey (34 per cent). A slightly smaller proportion experienced net-losses in ECL worker positions (32 per cent). Net-losses in ECL worker full-time and part-time positions were experienced by similar proportions of employers (24 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively).

Table 36 Job tenure and retention expectations by respondent group

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Years with current employer				
less than 1	24%	39%	21%	29%
1-3	11%	10%	9%	10%
4-5	20%	14%	20%	17%
6-10	15%	5%	16%	12%
11-15	21%	7%	25%	16%
16 or more	0%	0%	0%	0%
Mean	9.44	4.82	10.27	7.5
(Standard Deviation)	(8.83)	(6.39)	(8.97)	(8.2)
Years in current position				
less than 1	30%	42%	-	36%
1-3	12%	9%	-	10%
4-5	18%	10%	-	14%
6-10	12%	4%	-	9%
11-15	14%	5%	-	10%
16 or more	0%	0%	-	0%
Mean	7.3	3.91	-	5.54
(Standard Deviation)	(7.66)	(5.69)	-	(6.92)

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Expect to work with current employer after 1 year?				
Yes	87%	74%	91%	83%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%
No	8%	19%	6%	12%
Expect to work in ECL after 1 year?				
Yes	92%	85%	93%	89%
Don't know	6%	13%	5%	9%
No	2%	3%	2%	2%

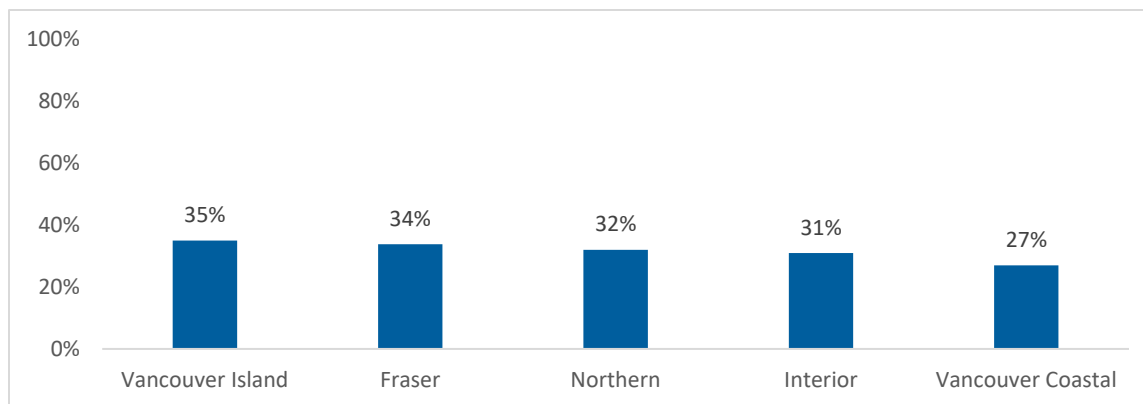
Table 37 Number and proportion of employers who experienced staff net loss

	Full Time		Part Time		Overall	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ECL worker	161	24%	135	20%	217	32%
Supervisor	34	5%	7	1%	40	6%
Manager	20	3%	0	0%	19	3%
Director	10	1%	2	0%	11	2%
All positions	180	27%	138	21%	228	34%

Note: N=673.

Staff net-losses were experienced by employers across all health authority regions (Figure 30). However, Vancouver Island Health and Fraser Health Authority had the highest proportion of employers who experienced overall staff net-losses (35 and 34 per cent, respectively).

Figure 30 Proportion of employers who experienced overall staff net-loss by health authority region



This information was also used to estimate staff turn-over and net-loss at the organization and sample level (Table 38 and Table 39). On average, licensed centres, preschools and before-and-after school programs experienced a staff net loss in the 12 months preceding the survey. The losses were particularly experienced in Centre ECL worker and supervisor positions.

Whole sample level estimates also show an overall net-loss of staff, especially for full-time Centre ECL worker and supervisor positions. In the 12 months preceding the survey, the 673 centres that provided information experienced a net loss of 55 Centre ECL workers, 23 supervisors, 7 managers, and 1 director working full-time. Net gains in part-time positions (5 Centre ECL workers and 5 managers) were not enough to offset the net losses in full-time positions.

Table 38 Centre level average staff turn-over and net loss

	Full Time				Part Time			
	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net loss	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net loss
ECL worker	0.52	1.49	1.76	-0.25	0.25	1.27	1.50	-0.01
Supervisor	0.08	0.27	0.28	-0.08	0.01	0.09	0.10	0.00
Manager	0.03	0.18	0.18	-0.03	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.02
Director	0.01	0.09	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00

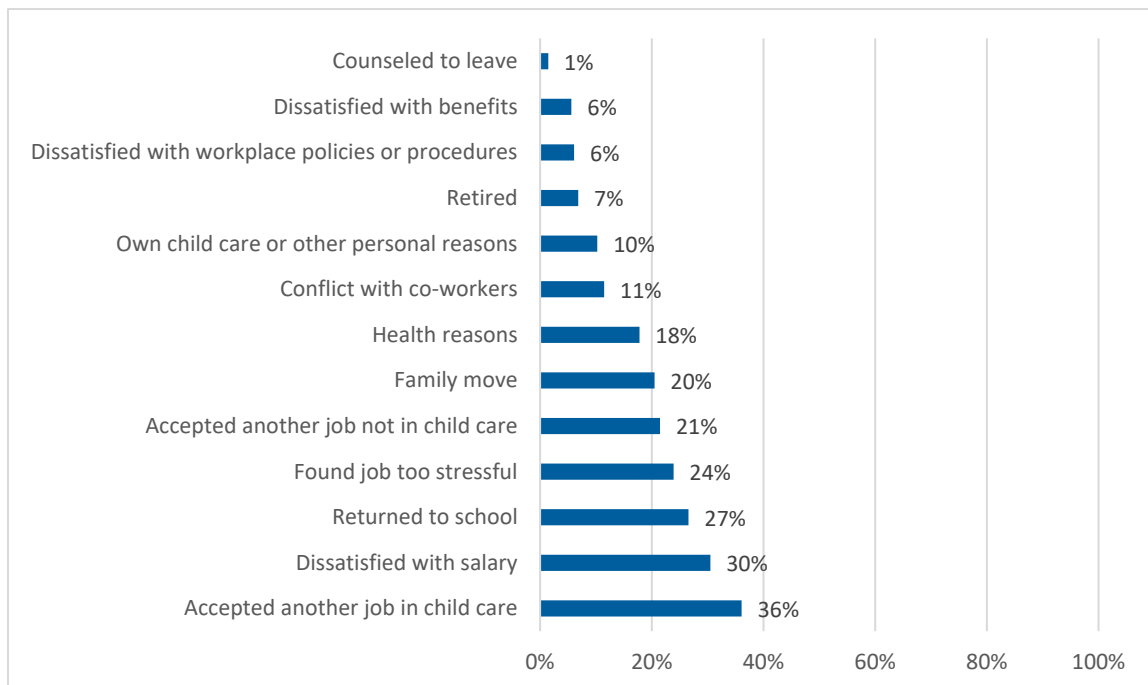
Table 39 Sector-level staff turnover and net loss

	Full Time				Part Time			
	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net loss	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net loss
ECL worker	191	689	824	-55	84	529	618	5
Supervisor	21	72	71	-23	3	23	26	-1
Manager	8	44	46	-7	0	4	9	5
Director	3	21	23	-1	0	4	4	0

Note: N=673.

Employers were also asked about the main reasons for employees leaving their centres (Figure 31). The top three reasons were accepting another job in a different child care centre (36 per cent), dissatisfaction with their salary (30 per cent) and returning to school (27 per cent).

Figure 31 Employers perspectives on the main reasons for employees leaving their child care centre, preschool or before and after school program



Key informant interviews and case studies

For the providers in the case studies, staff leaving was not a significant issue, but they did experience staff being promoted and moving to other programs. Some sites were expanding and hence had a need to recruit net new staff. For these providers, the issue was staff ‘churn’ rather than net attrition because they still had to recruit new staff to backfill positions. In some situations, managers and administrative staff with ECE credentials were called upon to work with children to meet mandated ratios.

“We’re pretty fortunate – our turnover of staff isn’t that high. Because we have a pretty good place to – we have a fabulous place to work.” Site A: Manager/supervisor

Providers welcomed the ECL R&R Strategy tactics increasing ECE program places and graduates. However, they interpreted differences in the knowledge and the practices of new staff as inconsistencies in the quality of ECE programs or courses.

Universally, all those interviewed acknowledged that staff retention was a significant issue for many providers in the sector, however, they did not report it as a major issue for their particular (case study) centre. This may represent some bias in SRDC’s case study selection criteria, favouring more viable centres. Those interviewed cited examples of other child care centres having to close or reduce the number of children attending due to staffing shortages, but the case study centres did not have to do this. Case study centres were generally perceived as being good places to work: they provided a high level of early education, had good benefit packages and treated staff well. All else equal, they lost fewer staff.

Those working at the case study child care sites felt they had created workplaces different to the majority of child care providers. They provided rationales that drew on the following rationales:

- **They paid competitive wages.** Across the case study sites, wages were reported as being good compared to the rest of the sector. However, staff stressed ECL remained a low-paying job.
- **They had extended health and dental benefits.** All case study sites offered some level of extended health benefits although these varied by provider. Two sites also provided pensions.

“The benefit package is awesome. Fantastic, the benefits here.” Site A: ECE

“We have extended health and dental.” Site C: ECE

- **They had paid leave and sick days.** Staff within the case study sites received paid annual leave and four provided paid sick days. A constant theme across providers was the difficulty

in covering for staff absences because staffing levels were tight. It was expensive and difficult to use substitutes. For annual leave, providers scheduled vacations and would bring in staff from other centres or use staff from a substitute list. However, covering sick days was more difficult given the short notice. Centres “scrambled” to find cover. Staff had to notify their supervisor by early morning if they were ill and the supervisor had to arrange cover. If necessary, non-frontline staff with an ECE designation would work in the required room. Staff were aware of the difficulty in finding cover:

“I feel guilty when I am sick, or I have a sick daughter at home, being a single parent, it makes it hard, adds more pressure, what to choose, if I don’t come to work then we’re super short staffed.” Site A: ECE

KPI 12: RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE OPINIONS (WITH RESPECT TO STANDARDS OF CARE, VIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE) AMONG THOSE ALREADY WORKING IN THE SECTOR

Cross-sectional survey

Cross-sectional survey respondents were asked to rate their opinion on five statements regarding the public’s perception of their work in child care. In general, the ratio of positive to negative opinions was highest for the statement *my work is valued by the families of the children I work with* (15:1). Owner-operators also had a high ratio for *my work is valued by the families of my child care organization* (14:1). In contrast, respondents were equally likely to have positive or negative opinions about the statement *child care is valued by the public*.

The statement with the lowest ratio was *I would recommend child care as a profession* which still had three positive statements for every negative statement (3:1). In contrast, *I consider child care as my chosen profession* and *I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care* had very high ratios (9:1).

Centre ECL workers’ ratio of positive to negative opinions was lower than for other categories of workers for all statements. This was especially the case for taking the negative view on the statement *my current job is temporary* meaning they planned to leave it (4:1 compared to 10:1 for owner-operators and 8:1 for HCPs) and on *I feel comfortable telling new people I work in child care* (6:1 compared to 12:1 for owner-operators and 14:1 for HCPs).

Opinions regarding public perspectives on child care work differed widely across the sub-groups. In general, child care workers’ ratios of positive to negative opinions were significantly lower

when compared to owner-operators and HCPs. The largest difference occurred for the statement *my work is valued by the families of the children I work with* which has a ratio of 10:1 among child care workers compared to 25:1 for owner-operators and 23:1 for HCPs. Child care workers were also less likely than other groups to state their work was valued by their family (6:1 ratio compared to 11:1 for owner-operators and 15:1 for HCPs) and were more likely to have negative opinions regarding the statement *child care is valued by the public*.

Ratio of positive to negative opinions among Centre ECL workers regarding their child care jobs varied across demographic groups (Table 41). Respondents who identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, and Inuit had a higher ratio of positive to negative opinions regarding recommending child care as a profession and feeling comfortable telling people they work in child care. Respondents who were born outside of Canada had larger ratios for the statements *I consider child care as my chosen profession* and *I would recommend child care as a profession*. However, they were also more likely to see their current job as a stepping stone or as a temporary job than respondents who were born in Canada.

Table 40 Ratio of positive to negative comments regarding ECL work

	Owner-operator	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Consider child care as chosen profession [agree: disagree]	8 : 1	8 : 1	9 : 1	9 : 1
My current job is stepping stone [disagree: agree]*	5 : 1	2 : 1	6 : 1	4 : 1
My current job is temporary [disagree: agree]*	10 : 1	4 : 1	8 : 1	6 : 1
Would recommend child care as a profession [agree: disagree]	3 : 1	2 : 1	4 : 1	3 : 1
I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care [agree: disagree]	11 : 1	6 : 1	14 : 1	9 : 1

* Responses to these statements were **reversed** to estimate ratio of positive to negative opinions.

Table 41 Ratio of positive to negative opinions of centre ECL workers regarding their work

	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Born in Canada	Born outside Canada
Consider child care as chosen profession [agree: disagree]	8:1	7:1	8:1***	10:1
My current job is stepping stone [disagree: agree]*	2:1	1:1	3:1***	2:1
My current job is temporary [disagree: agree]*	3:1	5:1	4:1**	3:1
Would recommend child care as a profession [agree: disagree]	2:1***	3:1	2:1**	3:1
I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care [agree: disagree]	6:1**	7:1	7:1	6:1

* Responses to these statements were **reversed** to estimate ratio of positive to negative opinions.

Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05.

Among Centre ECL workers, respondents who identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, or Inuit had larger ratios of positive to negative opinions about whether their families valued their work (11:1 compared to 6:1 for non-Indigenous respondents) and whether their friends valued their work (11:1 compared to 5:1 for non-Indigenous respondents). These difference were statistically significant. In contrast, respondents who were born outside of Canada were more likely to think that child care was valued by the public (49 per cent compared to 42 per cent of those born in Canada, p=0.009).

Qualitative data from the cross-sectional survey

More than one in every ten respondents providing comments at the end of the cross-sectional survey wanted to see greater recognition for the professionalism and contribution child care workers made to the growth and development of the children in their care. Respondents with an ECE designation or ECEA designation wrote that they felt frustrated and resented being equated to “only babysitters” and wanted greater public recognition for the work they did. Some hoped this would in turn lead to improved pay and conditions for those working in ECL.

“While parents at the facilities I worked in always appreciate the availability of care, as a profession ECE’s are not respected or given their due for the important work they do. It’s frustrating to see the same attitude prevailing year after year, after 10 years I left the field I loved, to improve standard of living and benefits. ... It is time to promote the importance of child care providers, make it a priority to get the right people into the ECE programs, the ones with passion and drive, and a love of children.”

The lack of recognition combined with the low pay meant that some child care workers left the sector.

“After working in child care for 16 years I made the heartbreaking decision to leave the field. The lack of pay, respect and over all working conditions had finally taken its toll.”

Some respondents also wanted recognition for increased qualifications. They suggested this should be reflected in greater wages differentials between ECEAs and ECEs. Other respondents wanted ECE workers to be treated as equivalent to teachers who were perceived as education professionals.

Respondents also pointed out that early childhood educators were often among the first professionals to identify learning and behavioural needs of children. They stressed their work could be complex involving engagement with, on occasion, occupational therapists, behavioural interventionists, and speech pathologists to meet children’s early educational needs. For these reasons, respondents felt there should be better recognition of early childhood education professionals.

Key informant interviews and case studies

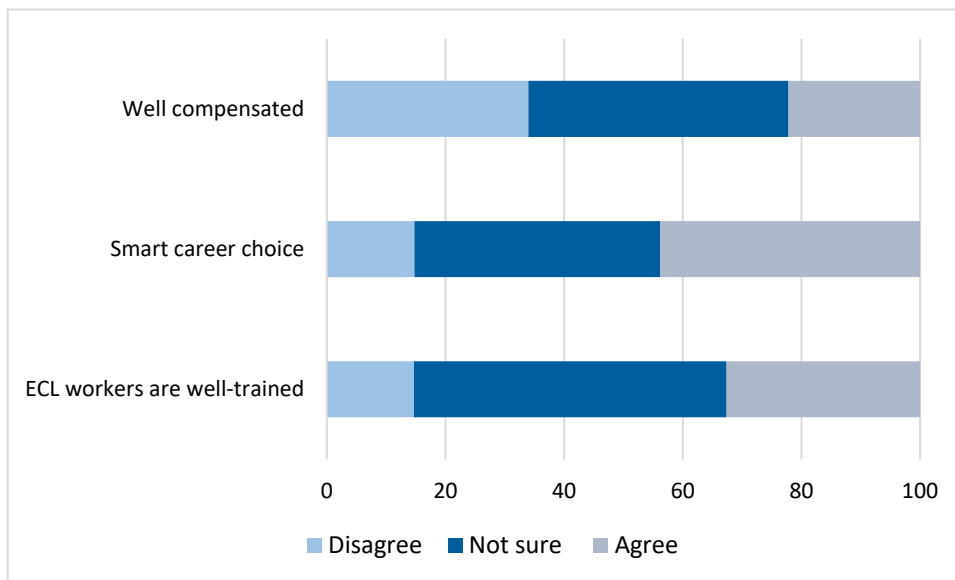
Across the case study sites, providers and workers were adamant that as early childhood educators, they were trained professionals. Almost 90 per cent of the staff held ECE credentials, with a further 8 per cent holding an ECEA designation. Those with an ECE designation saw themselves as professionals as they had studied, completed approved courses, and worked hard daily to deliver a high standard of early childhood education to the children in their care.

KPI 13: RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE OPINIONS (WITH RESPECT TO STANDARDS OF CARE, VIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE OF ECL WORK) IN GENERAL POPULATION, THOUGHT LEADERS, MASS MEDIA, YOUTH, AND PARENTS

Public opinion survey

In SRDC’s public opinion survey, a representative panel of BC adults were asked their level of agreement with statements regarding child care workers and child care as a career. Among the adults surveyed, there was a high level of uncertainty regarding provincial child care workers’ training and compensation, with 52.7 per cent and 43.9 per cent (respectively) indicating they were not sure whether child care workers were well trained or compensated. Similarly, 41 per cent of respondents were not sure whether working in child care represented a smart career choice. Figure 32 illustrates this level of uncertainty on some key measures. Table 42 provides the more complete set of results.

Figure 32 Public sentiment with respect to careers in ECL



British Columbia adults reporting level of agreement to the following statements:

- Child care workers are compensated fairly given the skills and training they have.
- Working in child care is a smart career choice.
- In general, child care workers in BC are well-trained.

The majority of respondents held a positive view of child care workers. Nearly 80 per cent of respondents disagreed that working in child care doesn't require many skills. The majority of respondents disagreed that child care workers are less important than teachers (69.2 per cent) or equivalent to babysitters (65.6 per cent). The vast majority of respondents (83.9) agreed that child care workers contributed to the long-term development of children in BC, and 72.2 per cent agreed or strongly agreed child care workers were professionals (Table 42).

Table 42 Perceptions of child care as a career

	Strongly disagree (per cent)	Disagree (per cent)	Not sure (per cent)	Agree (per cent)	Strongly agree (per cent)
In general, child care workers in BC are well-trained	2.0	12.7	52.7	29.6	3.0
Child care workers are compensated fairly given the skills and training they have	8.6	25.4	43.9	19.0	3.2
I consider child care workers professionals	2.1	9.3	16.5	52.7	19.4
Child care workers contribute to the long-term development of children in BC	2.0	2.9	11.3	55.2	28.7
Working in child care is equivalent to being a babysitter	17.7	47.9	13.5	18.2	2.7
Working in child care is a smart career choice	2.7	12.1	41.3	38.0	5.84
Working in child care doesn't require many skills	32.0	47.7	11.1	7.7	1.5
Child care workers are less important to children's development than elementary school teachers	21.7	47.5	17.6	11.5	1.8

These preliminary findings suggest that public opinions with respect to child care workers were relatively positive in 2019. Importantly though, many were unsure about the remuneration,

training and career prospects in the child care sector. Publicity and debates around the provincial ECL R&R Strategy thus provide an opportunity to inform the public about working conditions and thus improve understanding of the rationale for interventions to improve them given these are to be supported by public spending. The final evaluation report will compare results from 2019 with findings from the next opinion survey in 2021 to see how awareness improves over the three years of the evaluation and whether the ratio of those holding positive to negative opinions increases.

Social and news media monitoring

No social and news media monitoring results will be included in this report due to the limitations described in the Evaluation Framework and Methodology section. These data will be presented in the next report for which they are available.

Key informant interviews and case studies

Some parents reportedly saw ECE staff as ‘babysitters’. Child care operators stressed they regarded their staff as educators; they did their best to reinforce the professional designation within their centres and to communicate it to parents. However, despite these efforts, child care workers continued to feel that being an early educator was not ‘valued by the public’.

“... sometimes we are called “glorified nannies” I just heard that one time when I was in a restaurant, and I was like ahhg! We’re not. Something like that. I think the understanding from the public too, we can’t talk to every parent and tell them that this is not how we do it, it is not as simple as it sounds. It is not like that.” SITE A: ECE

Operators tried to educate parents about their programs and to reinforce the notion of early childhood education, not just ‘care’, being delivered by professionals.

“We are doing a lot of education for families and parents who come into a program who might have had their child in a child-minding program or in a, um, or maybe in a drop-in program. And they bring their child to a program that has a, um, a quite complex curriculum, and we have educators who really pride themselves on their training and on their professionalism and in working within this curriculum and this framework. And so I think they see themselves as educators. I think in our programs, we see our educators perceive themselves as just that, that they’re in an important role, and that, uh, and that they contribute a lot to, uh, to the field and to the families and the children that they serve.” Site E: Manager

When child care providers visited high school career fairs they heard comments from young people and parents that reinforced the perception that early childhood education represented a low-pay sector, not a viable and worthwhile career and that it was “*just daycare.*” *Site C: ECE.* However, there were some suggestions that this public perception was changing and becoming more positive. Interviewees recognized that this shift would take time. Several of those interviewed welcomed what they perceived as a changing attitude to early education:

“This has changed a lot – child care work is valued by the public. I find you get a lot more respect for it now than you did back a few years ago. I think I’m finding that – especially since I moved here – and in this centre, you have a lot of kids that are higher needs, so I think, and especially the younger crowd out here, when they have kids, they’re like wow I actually respect you for what you do. And you get a lot of that. So it’s – I guess as the generation grows older I think a lot of people start to realize that this is actually a harder job than they think it is. Because before they used to be like “oh you’re just a babysitter.” And I’m like, “no, I’m actually not, you should come try do my job, it’s not the easiest.”
SITE A: ECE

“... They’ve trained to work as educators and so we definitely use the term educator, because that’s what they’re doing, right?” Site E: Manager

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

This evaluation benchmarking report reports on progress to date with the Sector Led Evaluation of the ECL Recruitment and Retention Strategy in BC. In general, the evaluation has proceeded largely as planned, collecting data on different aspects of the employment, working conditions, education, and professional development of the 35,000 or so people who make up the province's ECL workforce.

- Census and Labour Force Survey data have been analyzed as planned to provide a relatively precise but high level overview of who is in the workforce and how this composition has changed from 2000 through 2015, including a snapshot on earnings in 2015. The Labour Force Survey captures job tenure up to 2018.
- SRDC has conducted its own survey of the workforce in late 2019 that provides data on a wide range of indicators, and also gave voice to child care workers to provide feedback on the key influences on recruitment and retention as they saw them.
- A more in-depth analysis of the influence of the Strategy's tactics on everyday child care operations and workplace experiences has been included from six case study sites and three (of the four completed) additional key informant interviews spanning different types of child care workplace.
- A province-wide survey of public opinions on child care careers and emerging adults' interests in working in the sector round out measures of the key outcomes the ECL R&R Strategy is intended to influence, as they stood in 2019.

This report cycles through these data sources to document the baseline position on many Key Performance Indicators as well as observations from workers in the sector that add meaning to these statistics. The full value of these data for the evaluation will be realized when the reports on evaluation results in 2020 and 2021 compare back to the statistics included here to determine the change that has occurred over the period the ECL R&R Strategy's tactics have been in force.

While another cycle of data collection is required before change under the ECL R&R Strategy can be mapped, there are nevertheless a few pointers to recommendations in the data collected to date with respect to policy and implementation. We recap below the main observations and policy implications emerging:

- From the Census data analysis, the most important finding is perhaps the relative decline in numbers of ECE/A+ workers in the sector from 2010 to 2015. Given increasing demand for

early care and learning in the province, this decline alone provides strong justification for new approaches to promote recruitment and retention in the ECE/A+ workforce.

- While the Census does not provide sufficient detail to draw firm conclusions about type of workplace, professionalization, and skills within the sector, it would appear to provide evidence supporting two professionalization trends. First, there has been a gradual increase in terms of the ratio of ECE/A+ to HCP+ workers. The former outnumbered the latter by 28 per cent in 2000, but by 35 per cent in 2015. And second, there has been dramatic growth in the share of both ECE/A+ and HCP+ workers with post-secondary credentials.
- Qualitative evidence presented here suggests also that workers identify with and support these trends. They voice some concern that the urgent need to expand the number of child care places and therefore workers does not come at the cost of watering down ECE programming, which might affect standards of care or public confidence in the sector.
- For the most part, the cross-sectional survey and interviews confirm the challenging situation with respect to recruitment and retention that has prompted the ECL R&R Strategy. While the issues are not new to those working in the sector, the benchmarking exercise has quantified them:
 - Pay is lower than for equivalently qualified workers in other sectors.
 - Workers, especially if they have young families themselves, can struggle to make ends meet.
 - Benefits vary considerably and at least a fifth of employers offer none.
 - There were high levels of engagement in professional development in 2019, but several participants found it costly. Resulting promotion and recognition through wages was piecemeal. This weakens the financial incentive to pursue professional development.
- Members of the workforce tend to find their work physically and mentally demanding and yet also highly rewarding. They are proud of the contribution they make to the development of the province's next generations. Many more will speak positively than negatively about the work of ECE. But there is a net loss of workers from the sector. One in fourteen Centre ECL workers plan to leave within a year. More than half the ECEs surveyed who are no longer working in child care attributed their departure to dissatisfaction with pay and benefits and a quarter to poor career advancement opportunities.
- The ECL R&R Strategy tactics such as the wage enhancement and bursaries have been welcomed as much for signaling recognition of the above challenges as for the material

benefit they have produced. Nearly three-quarters of Centre ECL workers had benefitted from the wage enhancement. Bursaries were enthusiastically welcomed by many. 15 per cent reported intentions to claim the workforce development bursary, while 10 per cent had already done so. At the same time, several seemed to have run foul of the education bursary's intermittent availability and/or the requirements to pay up front for their professional development prior to later reimbursement. These implementation challenges present opportunities to tailor and streamline the delivery of tactics in future.

- There were many more encouraging signals for recruitment from the public opinion survey. Up to a quarter of BC teenagers and adults contemplating a career change are willing to consider working in ECL. These proportions can be made even larger with improvements in ECL working conditions such as flexible working hours and benefits.
- While workers spoke of their hopes that people outside the profession would hold their role in higher esteem, SRDC's survey of public opinion found they were held in high regard already by many:
 - Fully 72 per cent of the public agree child care workers are professionals.
 - Only 13 per cent thought them less important to children's development than elementary school teachers.
- Yet the majority of the public were not sure whether or not child care workers were well trained and 44 per cent could not venture an opinion on whether such workers were fairly compensated given their skills and training. The increased attention the ECL R&R Strategy focuses on the role of child care workers in the province may represent one way to help more of the public understand the conditions of those who work in the profession and to justify why new tactics are needed.

The report thus sets the stage for the many aspects of careers in ECL that the ECL R&R Strategy's many tactics have been developed to change. In less than 12 months, we anticipate taking the first early look at how well the efforts are succeeding in moving the needle on the many challenges already known and now described and quantified in this benchmarking report.

APPENDIX A: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

SRDC developed the evaluation framework based on the Theory of Change and the potential impact pathways, which were also reviewed with the Sector Steering Committee. The evaluation framework follows careful consideration of the long-term goals of the strategy with respect to BC's child care workforce development, as well as the outcomes anticipated from implementation of its many tactics.

By considering each element of each goal and outcome separately, SRDC can hypothesize changes that could be expected as a consequence of successful implementation of the strategy's tactics. SRDC has further proposed lines of evidence (termed 'key performance indicators' or KPIs for short): data that can be collected systematically over time to determine whether the ECL R&R Strategy is on track to achieving each specific long-term goal as well as the expected outcomes over the next three years. Baseline measures of outcomes for the current evaluation (denoted by the term 'benchmark') serve double duty as baseline measures (benchmarks) for the evaluation of long-term (10 year) goals also.

The Evaluation Framework shows the five Key Evaluation Questions, the implementation tactics, Key Performance Indicators, and the data collection methods and time frames needed to address the Key Evaluation Questions.

The column headed Key Performance Indicators lists the actual measures that will be used to indicate change in the outcomes. Data collection instruments and later analysis generates evidence on the status of each of these indicators over time, from the outset of the evaluation to its completion. For example, the first KPI for the first Key Evaluation Question is the "Ratio of ECL workforce with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs." This requires data collection on the number of ECL workforce members with credentials such as ECE and ECEA as well as the overall needs for ECL workers in the province with disaggregation by region and Indigenous communities. KPIs are discussed further in the next section. Proposed data collection methods will require reviews of administrative databases such as the ECE registry and centre licensing, as well as a survey of operators about their employees and their unmet workforce needs. The final column describes the timing for data collection and reporting.

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>1. Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other child care staff entering the workforce?</p>	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions aiming to graduate 620 more ECEs Bursaries: Funding through the ECE Bursary Program is increased to \$500 per course, 60% of which is paid upon proof of registration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of ECL workforce with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	<p>Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout project</p>
			<p>Public Opinion Survey</p>	<p>Twice (2019 and 2022)</p>
			<p>Social and News Media Monitoring</p>	<p>Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project</p>

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>2. Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?</p>	<p>Compensation: At eligible facilities, a \$1/hr wage enhancement starting in early 2019, retroactive to Sept 1, 2018. A second increase of \$1/hr effective April 1, 2020</p> <p>Work-based Education and Training: A pilot project to provide more options and flexibility to workers who have considerable experience to upgrade their qualifications</p> <p>Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation ▪ Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers ▪ Ratio of ECL professional workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	<p>Census and LFS microdata analysis</p>	<p>Benchmark analysis in 2019, possible analysis of LFS in 2022</p>
			<p>Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout project</p>
			<p>Public Opinion Survey</p>	<p>Twice (2019 and 2022)</p>
			<p>Social and News Media Monitoring</p>	<p>Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project</p>

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>3. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?</p>	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions with the aim to graduate 620 more ECEs Professional Networks and Support: An expanded Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program to provide ECEs with more opportunities to share best practices Professional Development: \$6.3 million in federal funding to expand professional development offerings to the sector Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of ECL workforce with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Hours of formal and informal professional development per worker per year ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector 	Public Opinion Survey	Twice (2019 and 2022)
			Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce	Annually
			Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database	Annually
			Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project
			Social and News Media Monitoring	Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>4. Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?</p>	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions aiming to graduate a total of 620 more ECEs Professional Networks and Support: An expanded Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program to provide ECEs with more opportunities to share best practices Professional Development: \$6.3 million in federal funding to expand professional development offerings to the sector Work-based Education and Training: A pilot project to provide more options and flexibility to workers who have considerable experience to upgrade their qualifications Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of ECL workforce with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Proportion of ECL workers who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector 	<p>Administrative Outcomes Database</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database</p>	<p>Annually</p>
			<p>Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout project</p>

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>5. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of early care and learning professionals?</p>	<p>Industry Standards: Review and update of the Sector Occupational Competencies to ensure providers are delivering the highest standards of care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs ▪ Ratio of ECL workforce with credentials relevant to provision of child care to provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	<p>Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout project</p>
			<p>Public Opinion Survey</p>	<p>Twice (2019 and 2022)</p>
			<p>Social and News Media Monitoring</p>	<p>Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project</p>

APPENDIX B: CENSUS MICRODATA SUMMARY TABLES

Table 1 Demographic characteristics – ECL and non-ECL sectors in BC

	ECL Sector Sub-sectors			Non-ECL Sector
	Early Childhood Educators/A+	Home Child Care Providers+	Weighted Average (ECL sector)	
Sector Total	20,530	15,180	n/a	2,544,275
By Sex				
Women	95.0	94.8	94.9	47.6
Men	5.0	5.2	5.1	52.4
By Age Group				
15-24	12.6	17.6	14.7	13.7
25-34	25.2	20.5	23.2	20.4
35-44	24.3	21.5	23.1	19.4
45-54	19.7	17.0	18.5	21.9
55 and older	18.3	23.4	20.4	24.6
By Marital Status				
Married or common law	63.5	51.1	58.2	61.0
Single	36.5	48.9	41.8	39.0
By Indigenous Identity				
Indigenous	8.2	5.6	7.1	5.1
Not Indigenous	91.8	94.4	92.9	94.9
By Immigrant Status				
Non-immigrants	66.1	54.3	61.1	68.5
Established immigrants (>5 years)	27.0	22.7	25.2	24.8
Newcomers (0-5 years)	4.9	12.3	8.0	4.8
Non-residents	2.0	10.7	5.7	1.9
By Activity Limitation				

	ECL Sector Sub-sectors			Non-ECL Sector
	Early Childhood Educators/A+	Home Child Care Providers+	Weighted Average (ECL sector)	
Without any activity limitation	66.3	64.4	65.5	68.4
With activity limitation	33.7	35.6	34.5	31.6
By number of children				
None	50.4	62.3	55.5	61.2
1	19.6	15.4	17.8	16.3
2	21.1	14.1	18.1	16.8
3 or more	8.9	8.2	8.6	5.7

Source: SRDC's calculations using 2016 Canadian Census.

Table 2 Socioeconomic characteristics – ECL and non-ECL sectors in BC

	ECL Sector <u>Sub-sectors</u>			Non-ECL Sector
	Early Childhood Educators/ Assistant+	Home Child Care Providers+	Weighted Average (ECL sector)	
Sector Total	20,530	15,180	n/a	2,544,275
By full-time status				
Mostly full-time	67.2	56.4	62.6	74.2
Mostly part-time	32.8	43.6	37.4	25.8
By average weekly employment income (2018 dollars)				
Less than \$220.24	15.4	45.7	28.3	14.8
\$220.24 to \$440.48	18.4	21.8	19.8	11.8
\$440.48 to \$660.72	23.1	19.2	21.5	12.2
\$660.72 to \$880.96	23.5	6.5	16.3	11.9
\$880.96 and more	19.6	6.9	14.2	49.3
By class of workers				
Employees	88.4	70.5	80.8	86.0
Self-employed	11.6	29.5	19.2	14.0
By attendance of education program				
Not attending school	78.8	81.6	80.0	84.1
Attending school	21.2	18.4	20.0	15.9
By labour force status @ survey				
Employed	89.4	77.4	84.3	86.7
Unemployed	3.4	4.3	3.8	4.5
Not in the labour force	7.2	18.3	11.9	8.7

Source: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census.

Table 3 Level of educational attainment – ECL and non-ECL sectors in BC

	ECL Sector <u>Sub-sectors</u>			Non-ECL Sector
	Early Childhood Educators/A+	Home Child Care Providers+	Weighted Average (ECL sector)	
Sector Total	20,530	15,180	n/a	2,544,275
By highest level of educational attainment				
No certificate / diploma	2.7	16.8	8.7	9.7
High school certificate / diploma	13.5	35.0	22.6	29.2
Non-ECL PSE below BA	13.3	25.1	18.3	32.2
ECL PSE below BA	49.9	4.7	30.7	0.2
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	18.3	18.1	18.2	28.6
ECL PSE – BA or above	2.4	0.3	1.5	0.0

Source: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census.

Table 4 Demographic characteristics of ECE/A+s in BC, by levels of educational attainment

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	ECL PSE – BA or above
Sector Total	545	2,770	2,730	10,245	3,755	485
By Sex ***						
Women	87.3	87.4	94.7	98.4	92.7	96.2
Men	12.7	12.6	5.3	1.6	7.3	3.8
By Age Group ***						
15-24	33.6	30.2	11.5	9.1	7.7	2.8
25-34	11.8	21.9	23.3	26.7	25.8	28.3
35-44	12.7	16.4	24.7	25.6	28.1	24.5
45-54	17.3	15.5	17.8	20.4	20.9	32.1
55 and older	24.5	16.0	22.7	18.2	17.4	12.3
By Marital Status ***						
Married or common law	46.8	49.8	67.2	65.4	67.9	66.0
Single	53.2	50.2	32.8	34.6	32.1	34.0
By Indigenous Identity ***						
Indigenous	24.5	8.3	8.2	9.9	1.9	4.7
Not Indigenous	75.5	91.7	91.8	90.1	98.1	95.3
By Immigrant Status ***						
Non-immigrants	82.0	78.8	62.9	73.1	40.0	48.1
Established immigrants (>5 years)	18.0	16.9	32.0	22.9	42.6	34.0
Newcomers (0-5 years)		2.5	3.8	2.9	12.5	12.3
Non-residents	0.0	1.8	1.3	1.1	4.9	5.7
By Activity Limitation ***						
Without any activity limitation	61.8	68.6	60.9	64.4	73.7	68.6
With activity limitation	38.2	31.4	39.1	35.6	26.3	31.4
By number of children ***						

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	ECL PSE – BA or above
None	66.1	60.0	49.1	48.7	47.7	46.7
1	18.3	15.9	18.2	20.0	21.6	25.2
2	11.0	15.9	23.4	22.4	21.8	15.9
3 or more	4.6	8.3	9.3	8.9	8.9	12.1

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Percentages are rounded to the nearly decimal place or integer depending on the effect of Statistics Canada's rounding rules. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 5 Demographic characteristics of home child care providers in BC, by levels of educational attainment

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	BA or above
Sector Total	2,555	5,310	3,815	715	2,785
By Sex ***					
Women	91.8	95.9	94.6	100.0	94.1
Men	8.2	4.1	5.4		5.9
By Age Group ***					
15-24	39.9	22.3	5.5	9.9	7.2
25-34	9.4	18.9	22.3	26.1	29.9
35-44	9.4	18.8	28.5	29.6	26.3
45-54	10.2	16.0	20.2	16.9	20.3
55 and older	31.0	24.0	23.5	17.6	16.4
By Marital Status ***					
Married or common law	35.6	49.5	57.3	62.9	56.7
Single	64.4	50.5	42.7	37.1	43.3
By Indigenous Identity ***					
Indigenous	9.2	5.3	5.4	10.5	2.0
Not Indigenous	90.8	94.7	94.6	89.5	98.0
By Immigrant Status ***					
Non-immigrants	70.9	62.9	49.9	62.9	26.6
Established immigrants (>5 years)	19.7	21.5	23.4	28.0	25.5
Newcomers (0-5 years)		7.7	14.0	4.2	24.5
Non-residents	1.2	7.8	12.7	4.9	23.4
By Activity Limitation ***					
Without any activity limitation	54.8	62.7	64.0	66.7	76.5
With activity limitation	45.2	37.3	36.0	33.3	23.5
By number of children ***					

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	BA or above
None	72.0	63.8	54.1	49.0	65.4
1	12.5	14.4	18.0	22.4	14.5
2	8.2	13.6	17.3	19.6	14.5
3 or more	7.3	8.2	10.5	9.1	5.7

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Percentages are rounded to the nearly decimal place or integer depending on the effect of Statistics Canada's rounding rules. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Columns total 100%.

Table 6 Socioeconomic characteristics of ECE/A+s in BC, by levels of educational attainment

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	ECL PSE – BA or above
Sector Total	545	2,770	2,730	10,245	3,755	485
By full-time status ***						
Mostly full-time	49.5	54.4	62.5	74.1	63.1	70.8
Mostly part-time	50.5	45.6	37.5	25.9	36.9	29.2
By average weekly employment income (2018 dollars) ***						
Less than \$220.24	44.5	26.0	22.1	9.9	14.6	4.7
\$220.24 to \$440.48	20.9	26.5	19.9	14.8	20.4	17.8
\$440.48 to \$660.72	17.3	22.2	19.5	24.7	22.7	20.6
\$660.72 to \$880.96	9.1	15.2	18.8	27.5	22.7	29.0
\$880.96 and more	8.2	10.1	19.7	23.0	19.6	28.0
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)						
Mean (\$)	492	542	744	791	677	765
Standard error (\$)	120	(52)	(68)	(42)	(27)	52
By attendance of education program ***						
Not attending school	60.0	67.4	75.3	85.1	75.9	75.2
Attending school	40.0	32.6	24.7	14.9	24.1	24.8
By class of workers ***						
Employee or Unpaid family worker	85.5	87.7	85.0	88.9	89.5	96.2
Self-employed	14.5	12.3	15.0	11.1	10.5	3.8
By labour force status @ survey ***						
Employed	70.0	88.1	84.8	91.9	90.2	88.7
Unemployed	5.5	3.2	4.9	2.7	3.2	5.7
Not in the labour force	24.5	8.7	10.3	5.4	6.6	5.7

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Percentages are rounded to the nearly decimal place or integer depending on the effect of Statistics Canada's rounding rules. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 7 Average weekly employment income, by sector and by levels of educational attainment, for ECL and non-ECL sectors in BC

	ECL Sector		Non-ECL Sector	ECL Sector		Non-ECL Sector
	Sub-sectors			Sub-sectors		
	Early Childhood Educators/A+	Home Child Care Providers+		Early Childhood Educators/A+	Home Child Care Providers+	
	Average Weekly Employment Income (\$)			Return to Education (per cent)		
Without Regression Control						
No certificate / diploma	491.57	159.42	844.65	-9.3%	-66.5%	-16.0%
High school certificate / diploma	542.03	476.25	1,004.95			
Non-ECL PSE below BA	744.12	438.42	1,291.25	37.3%	-7.9%	28.5%
ECL PSE below BA	791.00	431.61	754.04	45.9%	-9.4%	-25.0%
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	677.35	566.90	1,551.87	25.0%	19.0%	54.4%
ECL PSE – BA or above	765.24		1,038.63	41.2%		3.4%
With Regression Adjustment						
No certificate / diploma	525.19	406.98	683.30	-8.1%	-28.9%	-17.7%
High school certificate / diploma	571.23	572.32	830.53			
Non-ECL PSE below BA	741.09	475.37	1,011.71	29.7%	-16.9%	21.8%
ECL PSE below BA	763.60	424.57	658.41	33.7%	-25.8%	-20.7%
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	725.66	754.66	1,372.61	27.0%	31.9%	65.3%
ECL PSE – BA or above	799.28		995.46	39.9%		19.9%

Note: The figures without regression control are raw averages. The figures with regression adjustments are the predicted values of real weekly employment income after controlling for potential work experience, potential work experience squared, sex, marital status, activity limitation, immigration status, region in BC, number of children, education level and sectors in a regression. The predicted values are calculated at the average characteristics of BC's labour force with the exception of sex at 94.9% women. Number of observations = 633,300; sum of weights = 3,868,485.

Table 8 Socioeconomic characteristics of home child care providers in BC, by levels of educational attainment

	No certificate / diploma	High school certificate / diploma	Non-ECL PSE below BA	ECL PSE below BA	BA or above
Sector Total	2,555	5,310	3,815	715	2,785
By full-time status ***					
Mostly full-time	30.9	52.5	65.2	72.7	70.9
Mostly part-time	69.1	47.5	34.8	27.3	29.1
By average weekly employment income (2018 dollars) ***					
Less than \$220.24	75.7	46.6	41.5	33.3	25.5
\$220.24 to \$440.48	13.9	23.2	22.0	26.4	24.8
\$440.48 to \$660.72	5.7	16.6	22.2	20.1	31.8
\$660.72 to \$880.96	2.0	7.1	6.8	8.3	9.0
\$880.96 and more	2.7	6.6	7.5	11.8	8.8
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)					
Mean (\$)	159	476	438	432	567
Standard error (\$)	13	49	37	34	58
By attendance of education program ***					
Not attending school	64.2	81.5	89.6	86.7	85.5
Attending school	35.8	18.5	10.4	13.3	14.5
By class of workers ***					
Employee or Unpaid family worker	70.6	68.9	67.8	61.5	79.7
Self-employed	29.4	31.1	32.2	38.5	20.3
By labour force status @ survey ***					
Employed	57.9	78.4	81.9	87.4	84.6
Unemployed	6.3	4.7	3.0	4.2	3.4
Not in the labour force	35.8	16.9	15.1	8.4	12.0

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 9 Socioeconomic characteristics of ECE/A+s in British Columbia, by region in BC

	Vancouver Island / Coast	Greater Vancouver	Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast and Squamish-Lillooet	Thomson/Okanagan	Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast
Sector Total	3,350	11,335	1,565	2,155	2,130
By professional education ***					
No certificate / diploma	3.3	2.0	2.6	2.1	6.1
High school certificate / diploma	14.6	12.3	12.5	13.9	18.3
Non-ECL PSE below BA	14.2	12.5	12.8	17.4	12.2
ECL PSE below BA	51.3	46.2	58.1	55.2	55.6
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	14.6	24.2	10.2	10.0	6.6
ECL PSE – BA or above	1.9	2.7	3.8	1.4	1.2
By attendance of education program					
Not attending school	80.1	77.9	79.2	80.7	79.6
Attending school	19.9	22.1	20.8	19.3	20.4
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)					
Mean (\$)	717	746	591	638	782
Standard error (\$)	(68)	(27)	(43)	(29)	(144)
By class of workers ***					
Employee or Unpaid family worker	86.5	89.1	88.5	87.7	88.0
Self-employed	13.5	10.9	11.5	12.3	12.0

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 10 Socioeconomic characteristics of home child care providers, by region in BC

	Vancouver Island / Coast	Greater Vancouver	Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast and Squamish- Lillooet	Thomson/Okanagan	Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast
Sector Total	2,480	8,860	1,065	1,565	1,215
By professional education ***					
No certificate / diploma	16.9	14.9	20.3	19.7	23.5
High school certificate / diploma	38.2	32.8	39.2	36.8	38.3
Non-ECL PSE below BA	24.9	25.3	23.6	27.0	23.9
ECL PSE below BA	3.2	4.6	4.2	5.4	8.2
BA or above	16.7	22.4	12.7	11.1	6.2
By attendance of education program **					
Not attending school	80.1	83.1	75.5	79.2	81.9
Attending school	19.9	16.9	24.5	20.8	18.1
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)					
Mean (\$)	325	475	430	390	344
Standard error (\$)	(30)	(33)	(117)	(40)	(39)
By class of workers ***					
Employee or Unpaid family worker	65.5	74.2	65.1	67.9	61.9
Self-employed	34.5	25.8	34.9	32.1	38.1

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 11 Selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of ECE/A+s in BC and across Canada

	Atlantic Canada	Quebec	Ontario	Other Western Canada	British Columbia
Sector Total	11,385	92,780	73,525	31,395	20,530
By professional education ***					
No certificate / diploma	4.3	8.1	3.3	5.6	2.7
High school certificate / diploma	19.0	15.7	12.9	20.2	13.5
Non-ECL PSE below BA	14.8	26.6	11.5	12.9	13.3
ECL PSE below BA	44.6	35.9	50.6	35.6	49.9
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	13.9	12.9	17.4	23.9	18.3
ECL PSE – BA or above	3.4	0.9	4.2	1.8	2.4
By attendance of education program ***					
Not attending school	82.7	84.3	82.3	79.4	78.8
Attending school	17.3	15.7	17.7	20.6	21.2
By Sex ***					
Women	93.8	96.0	96.6	95.9	95.0
Men	6.2	4.0	3.4	4.1	5.0
By Indigenous Identity ***					
Indigenous	6.9	2.9	3.2	12.9	8.2
Not Indigenous	93.1	97.1	96.8	87.1	91.8
By Immigrant Status ***					
Non-immigrants	93.8	77.2	68.3	70.3	66.1
Established immigrants (>5 years)	4.1	18.0	27.1	16.7	27.0
Newcomers (0-5 years)	1.6	4.3	3.7	11.4	4.9
Non-residents	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.6	2.0
By full-time status ***					
Mostly full-time	76.3	76.9	71.9	73.7	67.2
Mostly part-time	23.7	23.1	28.1	26.3	32.8
By class of workers ***					
Employee or Unpaid family worker	90.0	97.1	94.4	92.1	88.4
Self-employed	10.0	2.9	5.6	7.9	11.6

	Atlantic Canada	Quebec	Ontario	Other Western Canada	British Columbia
By labour force status @ survey ***					
Employed	85.2	91.3	90.0	87.8	89.5
Unemployed	6.4	2.4	3.6	4.5	3.3
Not in the labour force	8.4	6.3	6.4	7.7	7.2
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)					
Mean (\$)	581	664	774	738	722
Standard error (\$)	(11)	(7)	(9)	(15)	(24)

Notes: SRDC's calculations using the 2016 Canadian Census. Correlations of characteristics to the education level were tested by Chi-Squared tests. Level of statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: * = 10%, ** = 5%, *** = 1%.

Table 12 Selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of home child care providers in BC and across Canada

	Atlantic Canada	Quebec	Ontario	Other Western Canada	British Columbia
Sector Total	6,955	11,490	43,465	25,785	15,175
By professional education ***					
No certificate / diploma	20.0	21.0	17.3	15.6	16.8
High school certificate / diploma	38.1	25.8	31.3	36.3	35.0
Non-ECL PSE below BA	25.4	31.7	26.2	24.8	25.1
ECL PSE below BA	5.5	6.8	4.3	5.1	4.7
BA or above	11.0	14.6	20.9	18.2	18.4
By attendance of education program **					
Not attending school	84.6	83.4	83.7	84.2	81.6
Attending school	15.4	16.6	16.3	15.8	18.4
By Sex ***					
Women	96.8	93.6	95.3	95.8	94.8
Men	3.2	6.4	4.7	4.2	5.2
By Indigenous Identity ***					
Indigenous	4.7	2.5	2.1	7.4	5.6
Not Indigenous	95.3	97.5	97.9	92.6	94.4
By Immigrant Status ***					
Non-immigrants	93.4	64.2	47.9	63.2	54.4
Established immigrants (>5 years)	3.7	19.4	27.1	15.8	22.7
Newcomers (0-5 years)	1.6	9.9	15.2	11.7	12.3
Non-residents	1.4	6.4	9.8	9.3	10.6
By full-time status ***					
Mostly full-time	64.8	69.1	64.1	72.1	56.4
Mostly part-time	35.2	30.9	35.9	27.9	43.6
By class of workers ***					
Employee or Unpaid family worker	57.5	60.1	65.0	62.5	70.5
Self-employed	42.5	39.9	35.0	37.5	29.5
Weekly employment income (2018 dollars)					
Mean (\$)	302	419	415	428	428
Standard error (\$)	(17)	(17)	(11)	(14)	(22)

Table 13 Demographic characteristics of ECE/A+s in BC between years 2000 and 2015

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Sector Total	21,195	21,945	22,785	20,685
By Sex				
Women	94.0	94.8	95.9	95.0
Men	6.0	5.2	4.1	5.0
By Age Group				
15-24	14.3	13.7	11.9	12.6
25-34	27.8	26.3	25.7	25.2
35-44	29.9	24.8	25.7	24.3
45-54	18.3	21.4	21.7	19.7
55 and older	9.8	13.7	15.0	18.3
By Marital Status				
Married or common law	66.8	65.0	63.9	63.5
Single	33.2	35.0	36.1	36.5
By Indigenous Identity				
Indigenous	5.9	7.1	7.7	8.2
Not Indigenous	94.1	92.9	92.3	91.8
By Immigrant Status				
Non-immigrants	75.6	72.9	71.5	66.1
Established immigrants (>5 years)	19.3	21.3	22.4	27.0
Newcomers (0-5 years)	4.6	5.2	4.5	4.9
Non-residents	0.6	0.6	1.6	2.0
By Activity Limitation				
Without any activity limitation	85.9	84.3	83.4	66.3
With activity limitation	14.1	15.7	16.6	33.7
By number of children				
None	17.6	18.1	47.8	50.4
1	21.6	23.0	19.6	19.6
2	30.2	29.0	21.8	21.1
3 or more	30.6	30.0	10.8	8.9

Source: SRDC's calculations using 2016, 2006, and 2001 Canadian Census as well as 2011 National Household Survey.

Table 14 Socioeconomic characteristics of ECE/A+s in BC between years 2000 and 2015

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Sector Total	21,195	21,945	22,785	20,685
By professional education				
No certificate / diploma	16.0	11.0	5.8	2.7
High school certificate / diploma	19.1	21.8	18.6	13.5
Non-ECL PSE below BA	21.9	20.5	18.1	13.3
ECL PSE below BA	31.5	34.9	39.8	49.9
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	9.1	10.3	15.3	18.3
ECL PSE – BA or above	2.4	1.5	2.5	2.4
By full-time status				
Mostly full-time	59.5	61.5	63.6	67.2
Mostly part-time	40.5	38.5	36.4	32.8
By average weekly employment income (2018 dollars)				
Less than \$220.24	31.4	37.7	27.6	15.4
\$220.24 to \$440.48	23.1	21.5	20.1	18.4
\$440.48 to \$660.72	17.7	18.5	20.4	23.1
\$660.72 to \$880.96	14.8	12.6	17.0	23.5
\$880.96 and more	13.0	9.7	14.9	19.6
By class of workers				
Employees	69.9	75.3	76.6	88.4
Self-employed	30.1	24.7	23.4	11.6
By regional labour market @ survey				
Vancouver Island / Coast	20.0	18.1	19.5	16.3
Greater Vancouver	47.1	49.1	49.4	55.2
Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast and Squamish-Lillooet	8.4	8.7	7.8	7.6
Thompson/Okanagan	11.0	11.8	12.6	10.5
Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast	13.5	12.4	10.8	10.4
By attendance of education program				
Not attending school	78.8	78.3	79.2	78.8
Attending school	21.2	21.7	20.8	21.2
By labour force status @ survey				
Employed	85.8	85.9	86.6	89.4
Unemployed	3.8	3.3	4.0	3.4
Not in the labour force	10.4	10.8	9.5	7.2

Source: SRDC's calculations using 2016, 2006 and 2001 Canadian Census as well as 2011 National Household Survey.

Table 15 Job tenure for ECL and non-ECL sectors in BC between years 2000 and 2015

Year	Early Childhood Educators/A+		Home Child Care Providers+		Non-ECL Sector	
	% with two years or less tenure	Average number of months	% with two years or less tenure	Average number of months	% with two years or less tenure	Average number of months
2018	49.7	45.5	66.8	28.4	35.9	94.1
2017	30.9	80.8	76.3	17.4	34.0	98.8
2016	48.8	64.7	75.6	36.7	34.9	97.7
2015	36.6	79.6	40.4	38.7	35.4	98.2
2014	35.2	67.3	64.2	24.7	36.4	96.8
2013	34.9	76.3	61.7	33.0	34.8	97.3
2012	40.2	79.8	54.6	43.3	35.2	98.2
2011	50.4	51.3	54.0	33.2	35.3	97.4
2010	25.7	82.0	62.7	26.3	34.3	98.8
2009	44.8	56.6	89.8	11.5	34.9	95.2
2008	34.3	72.4	45.1	48.8	37.8	91.9
2007	36.3	55.4	67.9	42.2	37.4	91.1
2006	35.8	76.6	64.1	25.4	37.7	93.5
2005	51.8	58.0	60.6	30.3	36.0	93.1
2004	53.7	46.3	63.3	31.6	35.1	92.9
2003	31.7	75.9	61.0	32.7	36.4	95.3
2002	43.0	61.9	50.8	33.0	37.6	91.1
2001	39.7	57.6	65.8	43.5	38.3	90.6
2000	40.8	59.2	61.2	38.9	38.1	90.8

Table 16 Demographic characteristics of home child care providers in BC between years 2000 and 2015

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Sector Total	16,445	12,775	13,000	15,180
By Sex				
Women	94.0	92.1	92.0	94.8
Men	6.0	7.9	8.0	5.2
By Age Group				
15-24	34.5	32.5	21.1	17.6
25-34	21.9	21.8	26.2	20.5
35-44	18.1	16.9	20.2	21.5
45-54	10.7	12.1	15.9	17.0
55 and older	14.8	16.7	16.7	23.4
By Marital Status				
Married or common law	43.5	38.8	44.4	51.1
Single	56.5	61.2	55.6	48.9
By Indigenous Identity				
Indigenous	4.6	5.4	4.7	5.6
Not Indigenous	95.4	94.6	95.3	94.4
By Immigrant Status				
Non-immigrants	63.6	53.8	45.7	54.3
Established immigrants (>5 years)	17.7	19.8	18.4	22.7
Newcomers (0-5 years)	12.6	11.6	13.2	12.3
Non-residents	6.2	14.8	22.6	10.7
By Activity Limitation				
Without any activity limitation	84.2	82.4	84.2	64.4
With activity limitation	15.8	17.6	15.8	35.6
By number of children				
None	14.2	14.3	75.3	62.3
1	18.6	16.9	11.3	15.4
2	28.2	21.1	8.3	14.1
3 or more	39.1	47.8	5.1	8.2

Source: SRDC's calculations using 2016, 2006, and 2001 Canadian Census as well as 2011 National Household Survey.

Table 17 Socioeconomic characteristics of home child care providers in BC between years 2000 and 2015

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Sector Total	16,445	12,775	13,000	15,180
By professional education				
No certificate / diploma	41.4	31.0	19.3	16.8
High school certificate / diploma	25.0	27.6	26.1	35.0
Non-ECL PSE below BA	20.0	22.7	30.8	25.1
ECL PSE below BA	3.4	3.5	4.6	4.7
Non-ECL PSE – BA or above	9.8	15.3	19.0	18.1
ECL PSE – BA or above	0.3	0	0.3	0.3
By full-time status				
Mostly full-time	44.7	47.2	62.8	56.4
Mostly part-time	55.3	52.8	37.2	43.6
By average weekly employment income (2018 dollars)				
Less than \$220.24	51.0	50.7	36.4	45.7
\$220.24 to \$440.48	24.3	27.4	34.6	21.8
\$440.48 to \$660.72	11.9	11.7	13.8	19.2
\$660.72 to \$880.96	4.5	4.7	5.7	6.5
\$880.96 and more	8.3	5.4	9.5	6.9
By class of workers				
Employees	79.2	81.5	84.0	70.5
Self-employed	20.8	18.5	16.0	29.5
By regional labour market @ survey				
Vancouver Island / Coast	18.0	15.2	11.7	16.3
Greater Vancouver	51.0	59.1	65.3	58.4
Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast and Squamish-Lillooet	7.4	6.7	5.3	7.0
Thompson/Okanagan	10.2	8.8	9.4	10.3
Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast	13.4	10.3	8.3	8.0
By attendance of education program				
Not attending school	70.9	71.7	78.3	81.6
Attending school	29.1	28.3	21.7	18.4
By labour force status @ survey				
Employed	70.0	72.3	76.0	77.4
Unemployed	7.4	5.6	6.0	4.3
Not in the labour force	22.6	22.1	18.1	18.3

Source: SRDC's calculations using 2016, 2006 and 2001 Canadian Census as well as 2011 National Household Survey.

APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND EXAMPLE OF STAFF RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

To provide context for the benchmark evaluation results, we include information provided by case study sites on the typical recruitment processes they employed. The case study sites had similar recruitment strategies. These strategies had two components. The first consisted of advertising for positions on job websites, ECEBC’s website, social media page and on the child care centre’s own website. Staff also recommended potential candidates who they knew and would be happy to work with. The second component involved outreach to colleges offering ECE courses. The child care centres offered practicum placements to students and most had recruited these students once their placements were completed. Centres reported a preference for hiring practicum students as they were already known to be a good fit. Larger child care providers also attended career fairs for ECE students and career information sessions at local high schools. This type of outreach was seen to be part of a longer-term strategy to recruit appropriately-credentialed staff.

For the case study sites, the recruitment process generally consists of the following steps:

1. Applicants submit a resume which is used to screen for qualifications.
2. A short telephone interview is conducted with an applicant to explain the role and establish what the candidate is looking for.
3. A workplace interview is conducted in which the candidate attends the centre and works in the child care setting. Feedback is then sought from existing colleagues. This also enables the prospective candidate to ‘get a feel’ for the approach and philosophy of the centre.
4. A final interview is conducted with the manager, supervisor, and representatives of the HR department if there is one. This interview is the opportunity for the candidate to ask questions and for the child care provider to finalize employment decisions.

Overall, child care providers and workers appeared satisfied with this process as it allows both parties to see if they are a “good fit.” For child care providers this meant not only that the candidate was competent and understood their approach to early education, but that they worked well with existing staff. For candidates this was their opportunity to find out if the child care centre was somewhere they wanted to work. They got to see how staff worked and to get a “sense if they are happy and you know if it would be somewhere you want to work.”

Some child care workers described previous employers which they described as ‘not good’ – which included not providing benefits, having to find your own sick cover, not being able to leave on time, insufficient equipment and inadequate staffing. The workplace interview allowed candidates to “see for themselves how [the child care centre] is run.”

Providers told SRDC that the proximity of their child care centres to public transit had an impact on recruitment. Centres located near public transit tended to find it easier to attract staff. One provider explained:

“we tend to see quite a few applications. Uh, it’s in a great location. It’s accessible by transit. So, we don’t typically have too many issues staffing our permanent positions. We’re not in a situation, for example, right now where we’re short” Site E: Manager

For centres with limited access to public transit, recruitment was more challenging as many of centre staff relied on public transit to get to and from work. While accessibility could deter staff from applying for positions, once recruited staff accepted long commute times if they were satisfied with their work environment, the quality of early education they provided and the wages and benefits they received. For example, it was not unusual to find some staff who commuted for over an hour each way to and from work because they liked their work, the work environment and described their centre as a good employer. It was also somewhere they were proud to work.

In key informant interviews, two of the providers (the for-profit and unionized centres) have similar recruitment and retention strategies as outlined above. Both provide extensive benefit packages; they support training and development including paying for ECE training for staff and meeting the upfront costs of courses until students are reimbursed. Staff at these child care centres have vacation and paid sick leave. The centres also work hard to demonstrate their appreciation to staff including staff appreciation events, making the work environment as supportive as possible and providing professional development and self-care opportunities. The for-profit centre also offer staff reduced child care fees. However, despite these strategies both report that recruiting good staff is very challenging. Both knew centres that have closed because of staffing issues.

APPENDIX D: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Career-Related	Career Pathway	A progression of educational qualifications, credentials and training that build upon one another and enable members of the ECL workforce to advance in their careers. Career pathways can be flexible, with multiple entry and exit points, to allow the ECL workforce, made up of diverse learners and non-traditional students, to acquire the necessary career-related skills and knowledge.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Career-Related	Certification (Staff)	The process by which an individual or institution attests to or is shown to have met a prescribed standard or set of standards.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Career-Related	Credentials	Academic degrees, licenses or certificates awarded to individuals who successfully complete state or national requirements to enter specialized roles in the ECL workforce.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Career-Related	ECL workforce; Members of the ECL workforce	The broad range of individuals engaged in the care and education of young children. Members of the ECL workforce may include teachers, caregivers, and administrative staff, as well as consultants, learning specialists, and others that provide training and Technical Assistance to programs.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Career-Related	Professional Development (PD)	Refers to a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with, and on behalf of, young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. Professional development encompasses education, training, and Technical Assistance (TA), which leads to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of members of the ECL workforce.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Career-Related	Retention (Staff)	Refers to the ability of programs to retain their employees over time.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Before or After School Program	Licensed Care provided to school age (Kindergarten and up) children in a community-based facility or centre. Also applied to programs that are educational in nature and/or less than 2 hours in duration.	BC Government Website
Types of Child Care Programs	Centre-Based Child Care	Child care provided in non-residential group settings, such as within public or private schools, churches, preschools, day care centers, or nursery schools.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Types of Child Care Programs	Culturally-Based Care (see also: Indigenous early learning, child development and child care)	At its core, the child care program honours and promotes culture and language and connections to the child's origins.	Child Care BC Report
Types of Child Care Programs	Home-Based Child Care	Child care provided for one or more unrelated children in a provider's home setting/personal residence – may be licensed/license-not-required, paid/unpaid, listed / unlisted. In a licensed home-based child care centre, licensee is a responsible adult and personally provides care, within the licensee's personal residence, to no more than 7 children.	StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements; Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i> ; BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Child Care Programs	In-Child's-Own-Home	Unlicensed care when parents arrange for child care within their own home (e.g., nanny, babysitter). Children from other families cannot be included in this arrangement and the care provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home. There are no legal requirements for monitoring this type of care and no specific qualifications for the care provider are required.	BC Government Website
Types of Child Care Programs	Indigenous Early Learning, Child Development and Child Care (IEL/ CD/CC)	Supporting Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and governance; Indigenous communities and leaders determine how to deliver ECL in a way that meets the needs of Indigenous families; Indigenous communities develop high quality, culturally respectful, spiritually enriching, community ECL services that are based in the child's culture, language and history.	BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Informal Child Care	A term used to describe child care provided by relatives, friends, and neighbors in the child's own home or in another home, often in unregulated settings.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Types of Child Care Programs	License-not-Required Child Care (see also: Registered License-Not-Required Child Care; Unlicensed Child Care)	Providers can care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them. Can operate legally in BC. Not registered or licensed, thus not monitored or inspected, do not have to meet standards for health and safety.	BC Government Website
Types of Child Care Programs	Licensed Child Care	Child care programs operated in homes or in facilities that fall within the regulatory system and must comply with specific requirements for health and safety, staffing qualifications, record keeping, space and equipment, child-to-staff ratios, and programming. Monitored and regularly inspected by regional health authorities.	BC Government Website; StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements
Types of Child Care Programs	Non-traditional Hour Child Care	Child care provided during non-traditional work hours such as over weekends or before 6am or after 7pm, Monday-Friday.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Types of Child Care Programs	Occasional Child Care	A program that provides care on an occasional or short-term basis	BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Child Care Programs	On-Site Child Care	Child care programs that occur in facilities where parents/family members are on the premises, such as on school campuses or in employment/job settings.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i>
Types of Child Care Programs	Preschool	Licensed programs that provide early education and care to children before they enter kindergarten, typically from ages 2.5-5 years. Preschools may be publicly or privately operated and may receive public funds.	Child Care & Early Education <i>Research Connections</i> ; BC <i>Child Care Licensing Regulation</i>

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Registered License-Not-Required Child Care	Providers do not require a license but are registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre. 1 responsible adult per 2 children (or sibling group) who are not related to the provider. Setting is the child care provider's own home. To become licensed, operators must have completed criminal record checks, character references, home safety assessment, first aid training, child care training course or workshops.	BC Government Website
Types of Child Care Programs	Relative Child Care	Child care provided by extended family members either in the child's home or at a relative's home.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	School-Based Child Care	Child care programs that occur in school facilities.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	Unlicensed Child Care	Child care programs that have not been licensed by the regulator. The term often refers a program that can legally operate without a license as well as a program that illegally operates without a license.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Providers	Child Care Operator	The person running the child care facility	BC Government Website
Types of Providers	Child Care Provider	An organization or individual legally responsible for operating ECL services. The provider is the entity that applies for the licence(s) and/or funding for facilities.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Providers	Early Childhood Assistant	Graduates from an approved education program can work as an Early Childhood Assistant once they receive a certificate from the ECE Registry in the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Can then work with young children in an early childhood setting under the supervision of a qualified Early Childhood Educator.	University of BC

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Providers	Early Childhood Educator (ECE)	Other terms that have been used include employees, staff, child care workers, front-line ECEs – To be qualified to work as an early childhood educator (ECE) in BC, you are required to complete a basic early childhood education training program from an approved training institution. Graduates from an approved training program can work as an early childhood educator or assistant once they apply to receive a certificate from the provincial government.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Types of Providers	Licensee	A licensee is a person, an organization, a company, or a partnership that has applied for and been granted a license to operate a community care facility in BC. A license is not transferable from one person to another or one facility to another. Any changes to a licensed facility, such as moving to a new location, changing managers, or making physical renovations, must be discussed with a licensing officer.	BC Government Fact Sheet: BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Providers	Manager	Delegated full authority to operate the child care centre. Licensee must examine manager's work history and copies of diplomas, certificates, other evidence of training and skills. Manager must be physically and psychologically capable of working with children.	Interior Health
Types of Providers	Qualified Care Provider; Provider	The legal entity running the child care facility.	StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements; Child Care BC Report
Types of Providers	Responsible Adult	A responsible adult is a person who is at least 19 years of age, has completed at least 20 hours of training, has experience working with children, and can provide care and mature guidance to children.	BC Government Fact Sheet
Types of Providers	Centre ECL worker	A person who has primary responsibility for a group of children for child care provided in non-residential group settings, such as within public or private schools, churches, preschools, day care centers, or nursery schools. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA or ECE.	Report terminology

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Providers	Early Childhood Educator/Assistant+ (ECE/A+)	The Census and LFS ECE/A+ category includes workers whose occupations are categorized by Statistics Canada as Early Childhood Educator or Assistant. This includes most people working in child care centres and agencies, including those working as ECEs and ECEAs (above) but also as "daycare helpers" such as responsible adults, who may not hold a post-secondary credential. It includes those who work in a relevant ECE industry and/or have a relevant ECE education, whose occupation is categorized as a manager in social, community, and correctional services. This is thus somewhat broader than the SRDC cross-sectional survey definition of Centre ECL workers.	Report terminology
Types of Providers	Home Care Provider (HCP)	SRDC's cross-sectional survey definition of HCP, which denotes Home-Based Child Care (above). This group includes family child care providers, LNRs, RLNRs and nannies, but very few nannies responded to SRDC's survey.	Report terminology
Types of Providers	Home Care Provider+ (HCP+)	Census and LFS definition of home child care providers. They are defined as caring for the well-being and physical and social development of children, assist parents with child care and may assist with household duties on an ongoing or short-term basis. They provide care primarily in their own homes or in the children's homes, where they may also reside. They are employed by private households and child-care agencies, or they may be self-employed. Illustrative example(s) include: babysitter; child care provider (private home), live-in caregiver, nanny and parent's helper. This overlaps considerably with SRDC's cross-sectional survey definition of HCP, which denotes Home-Based Child Care (above). But the Census captures more employed members of this group such as nannies.	Report terminology
Types of Providers	Owner-operators	A person who is an owner-operator, director or manager of a child care centre, preschool or after school program. This person may or may not work directly with children.	Report terminology

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Type of certification	ECE (1 year)	Certification for early childhood educators without 500 hours of supervised work experience. Requires proof of graduation from a recognized basic and/or post-basic ECE program. The One-Year ECE Certificate allows a person to act in the position of a fully-certified ECE while working towards their 500 hours and it can only be renewed once.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of certification	ECE (5 year)	Certification for early childhood educator with proof of graduation from a basic ECE program recognized in B.C. and 500 hours of work experience under the supervision of a Canadian-certified ECE	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of certification	Infant Toddler Educator	Certification for early childhood educators with an ECE (5 year) certificate and proof of graduation from a recognized ECE program recognized in B.C. with Infant and Toddler specific courses.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of certification	Special Needs Educator	Certification for early childhood educators with an ECE (5 year) certificate and proof of graduation from a recognized ECE program recognized in B.C. with Special Needs specific courses.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of position	Child care worker	A person who has primary responsibility for a group of children. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA or ECE.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Supervisor	A person who has responsibility for a group of children and also has supervisory responsibility for child care workers. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Child care worker – Manager	A person with management duties (which can include hiring, payroll, performance reviews, compliance with licensing requirements, etc.). This person has administrative duties and may have child care duties.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Administrative – Director	Refers to a person who has administrative duties only.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition

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