

Early care and learning recruitment and retention strategy ^[1]

Investing in our Early Childhood Educators

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AVAILABILITY

PDF online ^[2]

Additional Resources ^[3]

Attachment	Size
 Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy ^[4]	2.1 MB

As part of the province's \$136 million investment to support quality child care, the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development released the Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (September 5). The strategy will help support ECEs by providing wage enhancements, on-the-job training opportunities and other measures designed to support professionals at the centre of B.C.'s child care system.

EXCERPTS

As part of the Childcare BC Plan, the B.C. Government is investing \$136 million, supplemented by another \$16.3 million in federal dollars, over three years to enhance the quality of child care, including substantial investments in the child care workforce through this Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

A qualified workforce is the critical foundation to the success of all components of the Childcare BC Plan. Early Childhood Educators and other Early Care and Learning professionals are the heart of the child care sector. Analysis indicates the existing workforce must expand in order to ensure programs are operating within legislated requirements, and there is a sufficient supply of qualified professionals to work in all programs, whether existing or new. In addition, research indicates qualified Early Care and Learning professionals, with their requisite knowledge, skills and abilities, are key to creating a quality child care system.

Government is investing in the diverse array of providers who comprise the Early Care and Learning workforce as pivotal professionals who are valued and needed to ensure that quality programs are available across the province for children and families. We know the Childcare BC Plan will not succeed without them.

There have been many challenges and issues facing the workforce over the last several years. Compensation has been identified as a critical issue and a significant barrier to recruitment and retention across the sector.

In addition to compensation, post-secondary ECE programs can be difficult for students to access, either due to costs or the availability of seats in a program. Accessibility is particularly challenging for prospective students living in rural or remote areas of the province. Completing on-site practicum placements can also be challenging, especially for students who are already participating in the workforce and cannot afford to take time away from work to complete these important requirements. More flexibility is, therefore, needed to support students in achieving their goals and pursuing their certification.

Under the Child Care Licensing Regulation, ECEs are required to complete ongoing professional development to maintain their certification, and these requirements can be challenging to complete due to the quality and availability of opportunities across the province. We know that accessing professional development is particularly difficult for ECEs living in rural and remote communities and that there is not always a good selection of quality online or distance education courses. Additionally, more in-depth, reflective, and advanced professional development can often be challenging to find, and to access due to high demand. Government is working to make courses more accessible and affordable so that post-secondary students can complete their education wherever they are in the province.

Related link: [Thousands of early childhood educators to benefit from new supports and wage boosts](#) ^[5]

Region: British Columbia ^[6]

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/6337_earlycareandlearningrecruitment_andretentionstrategy_report_web.pdf [3]
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