

A description of post-secondary early learning and child care programs in Alberta with strategies to advance the educational preparation of early childhood educators ^[1]

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EXCERPTS from the Introduction

Educated and well-supported early childhood educators provide the foundation for high-quality early learning and care. Researchers and professional staff working in the field agree on the vital roles early childhood educators play in young children's early learning and care. They further recognize the importance of staff's formal educational preparation in helping them support the high-quality early learning and care experiences that benefit young children and their families.

Across Canada, however, early learning and care workforces remain modestly prepared, and service providers report challenges in recruiting sufficient numbers of staff with post-secondary qualifications. Further, qualified early childhood educators often leave the field, some after relatively short periods of practice, given the combined impacts of limited career opportunities, challenging working environments and modest rates of remuneration.

Recognizing the above, a number of provincial governments (including those in Ontario and British Columbia) have recently explored ways in which they might increase the number of qualified early childhood educators. While this work remains preliminary, it sheds some light on the challenges governments face in increasing the capacity of early learning and care workforces, including the need to match increases in educational qualifications with better working conditions and improved remuneration for early childhood educators.

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Region: Alberta ^[3]

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