

"Unappreciated and underpaid": Early childhood educators in Nova Scotia ^[1]

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Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)

Format: Report

Publication Date: 1 Jan 2019

AVAILABILITY

Access full PDF online ^[2]

Excerpted from the executive summary

This report provides a snapshot of what it is like for Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to work in the Early Learning and Child Care sector in Nova Scotia. Understanding which factors contribute to employers' ability to recruit and retain highly-educated ECEs is critical to the provision of care that families depend on across our province. This is especially critical when we face a shortage of ECEs.¹ Indeed, 82% of the employers who answered our survey indicated that they had trouble recruiting and retaining qualified staff in the past year. It is thus imperative to carefully consider what ECEs shared about the reasons they resign from current positions and the factors that ECEs believe would improve their work experience and make working in the sector more satisfying. In their words, ECEs are feeling "unappreciated and underpaid." Inadequate supports to implement changes in the system and a lack of replacement workers making it hard to take time off, means that they are burning out. ECEs' working conditions are really our youngest children's learning and care conditions and can either hinder or enable the development of a high quality, sustainable early learning and child care system.

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