

# Nova Scotia childcare workers deserve thanks <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

As 2021 recedes, I think it is important to recognize a group of unsung heroes among us. They are the women and men who work in the childcare settings in our province. These dedicated women and men have been pushed aside for many years by the government and many citizens of this province, seen only as glorified babysitters.

Recently, it started to come to light to many what an intricate part of the fabric of Nova Scotia they are. When COVID-19 first came to Nova Scotia and childcare centres were closed, along with other workplaces, it became apparent that without childcare, workplaces would not have the staff they needed to reopen. In some situations with essential services, it was a necessity to find childcare so the employees could go to work.

Many studies have shown how being with other children in a supported learning environment helps develop the social, mental and physical wellbeing of our young children.

The women and men who work in childcare were among the first to return to the workplace so that other places could start opening up again. They did so without having a priority to be vaccinated. They entered their centres short staffed (like many others), diligently disinfecting and doing their best to teach the children in their care as well as keep themselves and those children as safe as they could.

COVID-19 found its way into the centres but nobody ever heard about it. They continued showing up every day, sometimes being exposed to the virus themselves, either in their place of work or on the bus many take to commute. They quarantined, hoping for the best.

They were always there for children in their care, making the best of their educational time with them. In many centres, there are children aged from four months to 12 years. None were vaccinated until just recently; those under five, who are there all day long, are still not.

In a childcare setting, it is next to impossible to stay feet feet away from the children. It is an up close, dynamic learning environment.

They are the first teachers of your children outside your home. These women and men are continuing to put themselves and their families at risk every day. Although they have requested to have medical grade N-95 masks to give them added safety and security from the virus, the government, to date, has not provided them.

They continue to show up to keep the economy of Nova Scotia going. They continue to do their best to keep the children in their care in a safe learning environment. They are there for the Nova Scotians who need them.

Will the government of Nova Scotia do what is right by them?

*Naomi Stewart is CUPE's childcare co-ordinator in Nova Scotia*

**Region:** Nova Scotia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** workforce <sup>[4]</sup>

appreciation <sup>[5]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 12 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/01/nova-scotia-childcare-workers-deserve-thanks>  
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