Job fair aims to fill more than 120 vacant childcare jobs in Sarnia area [1]

Author: Morden, Paul
Source: The Observer
Format: Article
Publication Date: 13 May 2022

AVAILABILITY
Access online [2]

EXCERPTS

Childcare providers in the Sarnia area say they have more than 120 full- and part-time jobs they need to fill, a need expected to become more pressing after a recent deal between Ontario and Ottawa that could lead to even more openings in the coming years.

Advertisement 2

Article content

To fill this void, more than 15 licensed urban, rural and home-based childcare centres have come together with Lambton County's child services department to hold a job fair on May 18 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Quality Inn at 751 Christina Street North, Point Edward.

The jobs available include early childhood educators, assistants and support staff.

Just like other employers during the pandemic, "we've seen some of our educators exit our childcare programs," said Claire Giles of the North Lambton Childcare Centre.

At the same time, a deal bringing Ontario into the nationwide childcare program will see "considerable growth" in local licensed spaces, she said.

"We're definitely seeing that there is a need for new educators," Giles said.

Representatives of local childcare providers will be at the job fair to accept applications, discuss career opportunities and provide information about jobs in the sector.

There are currently 1,229 licensed daycare spots for infants through preschool in Lambton County.

It isn't known yet how many of the additional 86,000 spots across Ontario the new deal is expected to create will be in Lambton, but Melissa Fitzpatrick, the county's manager for children's services, estimates it could be another 1,000, based on the local population of children.

That could lead to more than 100 additional jobs in the coming years, Giles said.

Currently, there are more than 900 children on waitlists locally for infant to preschool spots, Fitzpatrick said.

Advertisement 3

Article content

"When we're talking about 120 vacancies in our workforce, that means we can't provide 100 per cent of our capacity," Giles said.

Giles said the two years of pandemic measures have been difficult for workers in childcare, leading some to leave those jobs. Plus, the sector's workforce is maturing and that has also led to "some exits," she said.

The pandemic has also impacted college programs, Giles said.

"We're not seeing as many early childhood educators coming out of post-secondary," she said. "Hopefully that will correct itself."

Also, the sector competes with school boards that hire early childhood educators and offer higher wages, Giles said.

"There are pros and cons of working in childcare versus school boards," she said. "We offer very rewarding careers."

Giles said local providers are hoping to attract workers to the job fair who may have left childcare to start families or for other reasons in past years.

"This is an opportunity for early childhood educators that haven't been in the field for a number of years to come in and look at what's

available," she said.

Fitzpatrick said that along with filling current openings, a goal of the job fair is to "make people aware this is a great career."

Organizers said they hope to attract as many qualified early childhood educators as possible, but added there are also opportunities for others interested in working in the sector.

Representatives of the WorkPlace Group will be at the job fair to provide employment-related support and information about potential free training opportunities.

Region: Ontario [3]

Tags: child care workforce [4]

recruitment and retention [5]

Canada-wide agreements [6]

Source URL (modified on 18 May 2022): https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/05/job-fair-aims-fill-more-120-vacant-childcare-jobs-sarnia-area

Links

[1] https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/05/job-fair-aims-fill-more-120-vacant-childcare-jobs-sarnia-area [2] https://www.theobserver.ca/news/local-news/job-fair-aims-to-fill-more-than-120-vacant-child-care-jobs-in-sarnia-area [3] https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856 [4] https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/child-care-workforce [5] https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8982 [6] https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9207