

Quebec daycare workers union calls for college education to be valued ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) is taking advantage of the upcoming Early Childhood Education Services Week to call out the lack of daycare spaces and the major workforce shortage in the network.

The CSQ is also criticizing the Legault government for multiplying short training initiatives to alleviate the shortage instead of promoting college training and multiplying the gateways leading to technical training.

Aware that the lack of educators in the network leads to a preference for accelerated training, the DEC in Early Childhood Education must remain the reference, according to CSQ vice-president Line Camerlain.

"It is the training that we consider the most complete to ensure quality service. (...) When an educator arrives and is not perfectly qualified, it leads to an overload for those who are already in the field," she said in an interview.

Camerlain would like to see more bridges to the degree so that accelerated educators can earn a college degree.

The degree program could also be enhanced by offering the possibility of alternating studies and work in early childhood centers (CPEs), which would also help meet immediate labour needs, the union leader said.

Early Childhood Education graduates have decreased by a third since 2016, according to the CSQ. Barely one in two students completes her degree in five years, according to its data.

For her part, Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec (FIPEQ-CSQ) president Valérie Grenon points out that under the decrees put in place as part of the health emergency, CPE workers must deal with a reduced number of qualified educators on the floor.

The pandemic has also reportedly exacerbated the exodus of Family Educational Service Managers (FESMs), according to the union.

"The lack of succession for the network is glaring and is causing increased pressure on existing workers in all job categories," said Grenon, in a statement issued Sunday. "We must act quickly to weather the storm in the short term, but we must think now about promoting the profession to high school students for the future of our profession in the coming years."

Camerlain said family educational services should be more at the heart of Family Minister Mathieu Lacombe's strategy to quickly meet the needs of Quebec families.

"Opening a family environment requires a much faster training program, and it opens much faster than building a CPE. Minister Lacombe dropped the \$3,500 incentive for the coming year that encouraged those who had a family environment to operate at full capacity with six children. We don't understand why," she said.

The Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec (FIPEQ-CSQ) represents nearly 13,000 members across Quebec who work in daycare centres or as educational service providers (ESRs) in regulated and subsidized family settings.

Early Childhood Education Services Week runs from May 29 to June 4.

Region: Quebec ^[3]

Tags: early childhood education and care workforce ^[4]

workforce ^[5]

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<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/workforce> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9199>