

# Ongoing shortage of B.C. early childhood educators raises concerns <sup>[1]</sup>

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### EXCERPTS:

Despite millions of dollars in daycare investments from both the provincial and federal governments, concerns continue to mount over B.C.'s lack of qualified early childhood educators (ECE).

It's an issue that has dragged on for years. And with more daycares opening across the province, qualified workers are increasingly harder to come by.

"There's still quite a serious shortage, particularly in childcare across this province. We know that the pandemic has really not helped the situation as well. There was a crisis before, but this has really elevated the severity of the shortage," explained Emily Gawlick, executive director of Early Childhood Educators of BC.

"As the professional body, we really want to ensure that we have the best of the best. We don't want to just have people that come in and take one or two courses and go, 'well that's all I need.' I think it calls to question: What do we believe as a society? What do children deserve?"

Gawlick notes daycares need a minimum number of certified ECEs on staff to meet their license requirements.

She worries that the ongoing shortage could also have a knock-on effect on those who are trying to fill the gap.

"Say if you're sick or something, you can't find somebody to come and replace you. People are having troubles finding somebody to be a substitute, say if you want to take holidays. So people's holidays are being limited," Gawlick explained.

In Budget 2022, the province announced it was continuing its work to expand quality childcare options while lessening the cost on families. The B.C. government said it was putting money toward investments in the workforce, "ensuring people are well-trained and fairly compensated by training an additional 130 early childhood educators in each of the next three years."

In addition to this, the province said it was also looking to expand wages for thousands of ECEs.

Earlier this year, the Early Childhood Educators of BC penned a letter to the province saying the early learning and childcare sector was "blatantly neglected" by the government's COVID-19 support direction at the time.

"Once again, early childhood educators (ECEs) working in early learning and childcare settings are not being acknowledged, nor addressed," the letter, dated Jan. 1, 2022, reads in part.

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** early childhood education <sup>[4]</sup>

labour shortage <sup>[5]</sup>

access to child care <sup>[6]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 10 Aug 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/08/ongoing-shortage-bc-early-childhood-educators-raises-concerns>

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