

The child care crisis is a workforce crisis ^[1]

Early childhood educator survey report

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Excerpt

The Jimmy Pratt Foundation, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour and the Workers' Action Network of NL teamed up to commission a survey of over 500 ECEs across the province. The results of the survey paint a concerning picture of working conditions for ECEs and what needs to change in the system to improve the lives of workers and the educational outcomes for children.

Through the survey, ECEs shared their thoughts on what needs to change in the sector. We learned that ECEs work under impossible conditions – most work year-round with young children without a full complement of benefits, retirement plans, paid vacations and sick days. 54% of respondents told us that if they could take stress leave due to their working conditions, they would.

While the challenges experienced by the ECE workforce are significant, what is also clear in the survey results is that ECEs are passionate about their work and committed to delivering the best quality childcare and early learning for children in Newfoundland and Labrador.

How can the sector move forward and address the issues outlined by ECEs? How can Newfoundland and Labrador retain and recruit ECEs? The solutions are clear: our province must provide ECEs with appropriate compensation and dignified working conditions. The province must step up and fund the cost of health and dental benefits, pensions, paid sick days, and paid vacations. ECEs play a critical role in our public education system and deserve to be compensated fairly and have access to benefits that allow them to live and retire with dignity. As long as these key issues remain unaddressed by the provincial government, our childcare crisis isn't going anywhere.

About the survey

This study was commissioned to explore four main questions:

1. Do ECEs feel appropriately compensated for their work?
2. Is the absence of a benefits package a deterrent to working in this career?
3. Are the working conditions conducive to employees staying in this career?
4. Do ECEs feel that they receive the professional recognition they deserve for the work that they do?

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