

Training and retention in the First Nations ECE sector: A report from the frontlines ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the executive summary:

Training and retention in the First Nations ECE sector: A report from the front lines is the result of research that gathered first-hand information from professionals working in the field of Aboriginal Early Childhood Education (ECE). The specific aim of this research was to assess aspects related to the training and retention of Early Childhood Educators in First Nations Communities across British Columbia. The research generated recommendations to guide strategic planning and policy changes to encourage new Aboriginal educators to join the field, to reduce barriers to training, and to retain qualified staff.

Our research found that:

- An overwhelming majority of the respondents were managers or supervisors of ECD programs (71%)
- The ECE workforce in First Nations communities is aging as 50% are over the age of 40
- There is a wide variation in wages in on reserve programs; and seniority, training, and education do not always translate into higher wages
- Large numbers of staff in child care programs have not completed ECE certification (35% in the interior and 85% in the North)

In this report BC ACCS recommends to the First Nations ECD Council that the council convene key stake holders at all levels of ECD to collaborate on:

- developing a strategic training plan to increase the number of qualified workers
- exploring the costs and benefits of implementing a living wage standard for First Nations ECE employees
- adapting existing human resource management "best practices" tool kit to provide guidelines and standards for First Nations licensed child care and Head Start employers
- exploring minimum standards for the "Aboriginal Perspective" designation given to ECE training institutions
- revising basic ECE training so that it includes instruction on working with exceptional children and on human resource management
- securing government funding that supports regional training opportunities for First Nations ECE staff

Finally, we recommend further study of on-reserve ECD programs be undertaken to obtain comprehensive data about wages, benefits, and staffing in this sector, focusing on front-line non-managerial staff.

Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: aboriginal ^[4]

staff ^[5]

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