

Solutions urgently needed to solve Canada's child care labour shortage ^[1]

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Source: Child Care Human Resources Sector Council

Format: Press release

Publication Date: 26 Oct 2004

AVAILABILITY

See text of press release below.

Text of press release:

A recommendation by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that Canada needs to improve training and recruitment of child care staff underscores the critical need to solve longstanding problems plaguing the early learning and care workforce, says the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC).

"The need for training, recruitment and retention strategies to address the critical labour shortage in Canada's child care workforce is something we've been saying for years," said Joanne Morris, CCHRSC chair. The sector council is a pan-Canadian organization with a mandate to promote the development of a skilled, respected and valued early learning and care workforce. "We're in full agreement with the recommendation contained in the OECD child care report," said Morris.

The OECD report criticized Canada for its lack of investment in a quality early learning and care system and recommended increased funding, integration of kindergarten and child care, and improved training and recruitment of staff.

Morris said that with federal/provincial/territorial talks on a national early learning and care system scheduled for the beginning of November, it is becoming even more urgent to find ways to guarantee a skilled, sustainable workforce that can provide high quality child care services.

She said that making inroads on human resource issues in child care requires comprehensive policies and adequate funding for better training and education, and improvements to wages, benefits and working conditions. These measures are necessary to improve the skills and qualifications of the workforce, make child care an attractive and viable career choice, and in turn improve the quality of early learning and care that children experience.

"Governments hold the key," she said. "They must put in place comprehensive child care policies and provide sufficient funding to the sector in order for Canada to have a quality system for children."

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