

The educational preparation and professional development of Alberta's early learning and care workforce ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full discussion paper PDF ^[2]

Summary report PDF ^[3]

Description:

The Muttart Foundation has prepared the current summary paper (as well as the larger discussion paper on which it is based) to begin the process of rethinking how the Alberta early childhood education and care workforce might best be developed to meet the needs of children and their families. The paper considers the knowledge, skills and competencies early childhood educators (including certificated teachers) require to deliver high-quality learning and care for children below the mandatory school age, as well as the educational preparation and professional learning requirements that supports these bodies of knowledge, skills and competencies.

Dr. Rachel Langford, Director of the School of Early Childhood Studies, at Ryerson University served as the lead researcher and writer for the longer discussion paper on which the current summary paper is based.

Introduction:

The importance of the early years and the increasing number of young children who participate in non-parental care outside of the family home highlight the need to ensure that all children have access to high-quality early childhood education and care. Researchers, policy makers and practitioners agree that well-prepared early childhood educators are central to the high-quality environments and experiences that shape children's early learning. And yet despite this agreement, many of the staff who work in early learning and care settings are still only modestly prepared and poorly paid in comparison to educators who work with older children.

In 2001, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), mindful of the growing gap between the educational and social demands placed on early childhood educators and their ability to respond to these demands, advised its member countries, including Canada, to develop strategies to recruit and retain a qualified and well-supported early childhood education and care workforce.

The Government of Alberta recognized this challenge in its Together We Raise Tomorrow: An Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development platform (Government of Alberta, 2013), released in June 2013. The platform, which outlines how the province might best advance the early childhood development of its youngest citizens, highlights the need for workforce planning as one of the key enablers required for change to occur.

Consistent with this focus, the Muttart Foundation has prepared the current summary paper (as well as the larger discussion paper on which it is based) to begin the process of rethinking how the Alberta early learning and care workforce might best be developed to meet the needs of children and their families. The paper considers the knowledge, skills and competencies early childhood educators (including certificated teachers) require to deliver high-quality learning and care for children below the mandatory school age, as well as the educational preparation and professional learning requirements that supports these bodies of knowledge, skills and competencies.

The ideas the paper presents are best considered as starting points for further discussions on how to advance the education and professional learning for the early learning and care workforce in Alberta.

Region: Alberta ^[4]

Tags: staff ^[5]

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