

Creating an anti-racist child care system in Ontario

Key recommendations for post-secondary, training, and professional practice organizations

Over the past year, the OCBC has been carrying out a project, “Centering the voices of racialized mothers and educators in child care policy”, to better understand barriers to access, inclusion and equity in our early learning and child care system. Systemic racism remains a problem across Canadian child-care settings in ways that impact racialized children, families and educators. As we work to expand access and raise the quality of child care we need to ensure we are actively working to create an anti-racist child-care system.

Anti-racism education and training

- Pre-service programs should demonstrate a commitment to decolonize the program and enact the principles of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action. This should be evidenced by:
 - A mandatory course on anti-racist pedagogy;
 - Representation of course instructors from Black, Indigenous and racialized communities across the program and at all levels, provided with coaching, mentoring, and opportunities for career advancement and research opportunities, as well as the delivery of courses;
 - Course outlines, course materials and resources that include Black, Indigenous and racialized scholars and theorists.
- Mandatory anti-racism training as part of membership in the College of ECE. This could use the same model as the current Sexual Abuse Prevention Program. Training could be offered by the CECE directly as well as through community partners.

Paid field placements

- Many of our project's participants identified that paid field placements would make training programs more accessible and demonstrate a commitment to decent work standards- that all labour should be compensated.
- Currently some programs have paid placements, but most are not paid. This will require change at multiple levels (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, College of ECE and employers). Support and advocacy from college/university ECE staff and leadership will be vital to making this change.
- Participants also called for honoraria and compensation for program ECEs who mentor students - operators could provide paid time for student mentorship, preparation, reading, evaluations, meetings etc.

Pathways to credentials

- Increase accessibility to preservice programs by recognizing a variety of pathways to credentials for international students, apprenticeship, and bridging. This information should be made easily accessible through a range of entry points.
- The College of ECE should recognize these pathways to allow individuals to be recognized as early childhood educators based on the CECE requirements, including recognition of paid placements.

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