REPORT IN BRIEF:

Enhancing Career Pathways for the Childcare Sector

Building post-secondary training programs that allow low-skilled workers to advance in their careers
About the Study

Shortage in the Childcare Sector

Within the childcare sector, stable and meaningful employment opportunities with good salaries and benefits require an Early Childhood Education (ECE) diploma or degree. With the rapid growth in the early childhood education sector, there is increasing demand for qualified ECEs.

However, there are several critical challenges in building a sustainable, high-quality ECE workforce:

» Many individuals both inside and outside the sector are unaware of potential career paths and opportunities.

» In addition, most individuals working in low-paying occupations cannot always access post-secondary training options.

» Both employers and educators have identified gaps in capacity in the sector in areas like leadership and management, diversity and inclusion, and supporting families and parents.

This project aims to address present and anticipated demand for ECEs in Ontario by exploring the supports needed to help these individuals complete post-secondary training programs.

The design of an accelerated academic program is under development for currently working Early Childhood Assistants (ECAs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUICK FACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since 2003, the number of licensed childcare spaces in Ontario has more than doubled from 187,131 to 406,395.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67% of employers interviewed state they face insufficient number of applicants, 75% say applicants do not possess the right skills or attributes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The introduction of full-day kindergarten increased before and after school spaces by 93% from 116,103 to 224,069.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% of report respondents state becoming an ECE is an important goal for them. Employers interviewed (1400 ECAs collectively) felt 69% of ECAs employed would be good ECE candidates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Career Pathway Model

» Enhances learner pathways through accelerated or alternative training delivery options.

» Removes barriers to training opportunities through skills upgrading and wraparound supports.

» Supports individuals to effectively combine learning and working to increase their credentials.

About this Project

Recognizing the shortage of qualified ECEs and the potential of the untapped resource of ECAs, Learning Enrichment Foundation and Mothercraft College identified a Career Pathways Model as a promising solution to sector challenges.

Drawing on their research, Learning Enrichment Foundation and Mothercraft College have developed a prototype training model designed to support ECAs to upgrade their training through a combination of prior learning and experience assessment and an accelerated academic program.

In collaboration with other partners, Learning Enrichment Foundation and Mothercraft College are leading the continued development with a plan to test and implement this accelerated learning model.

While this project focused on the childcare sector, lessons learned are applicable to other industries, particularly industries with low-paying, entry-level occupations that experience a shortage of qualified candidates for occupations that require post-secondary completion.

Interested in learning more about Enhancing Career Pathways for the Childcare Sector?

Visit: OCWI-COIE.CA
The talent shortage in the childcare sector for individuals with certified Early Childhood Education (ECE) credentials provides an opportunity to test a Career Pathways model. The goal is to build a more consistent system-wide credential pathway that maps connections between multiple levels of training and aligns this training with progressive career opportunities. This project highlights there may be an opportunity to meet the demand for quality ECEs by providing the right supports and training for individuals to pursue their ECE credential.

The project partners worked collaboratively to design and execute the research agenda with Mothercraft College leading the design of the prototype ECE training model, Learning Enrichment Foundation leading employer consultations, and Blueprint-ADE providing research support.

Read the full report at: ocwi-coie.ca/project/enhancing-career-pathways-for-the-childcare-sector/

RESEARCH. EXCELLENCE.
INNOVATION. COLLABORATION.

That’s how we drive change in the Ontario employment and training sector.

We work with the agencies, and other partners, that build skills, provide training, and connect people looking for jobs with employers looking for workers. Together we improve outcomes for workers and employers across the province.

OCWI is a project of Ryerson University and funded by the Government of Ontario