

Frequently Asked Questions

Leading in a Changing Environment: Promoting the voices of BC's Early Care and Learning Sector.

General program information:

Who is this program designed for?

Early Childhood Educators working in British Columbia.
Educators can apply on their own, apply with one other ECE, or apply as a team of three!

What is the Leading Change program?

The Leading Change program will bring together 36 Early Childhood Educators from across the province over an 18-month period. At the start of the program, each participant will be encouraged to identify and explore an “idea for change” that they are passionate about. Throughout the 18 months, participants will take this idea and turn it into a community change project that impacts the Early Care and Learning sector.

A monthly online community of practice session will focus on the skills and tools needed to influence and shape change. Between these sessions, participants will connect with a small cohort (2-3 participants) to reflect on their learning and to support one another to move forward in their change projects.

This program is an opportunity to uplift the sector with Early Childhood Educator voices at the forefront.

Will I receive a professional development certificate for participating?

Yes, you will receive Pro-D hours for every community of practice session that you attend. (Up to 48 hours over the 18-month project). A certificate will be issued at the end of the program.

Do I have to have a clear “change idea” to apply? What If I don't have an idea?

You do not have to have a clear change idea to apply!

The Leading Change program will help you discover and evolve an idea. That said, if you do have a starting idea already, we will support you to develop it further.

Below are some invitations and prompts to spark your thinking about change. Take a moment to reflect on the changes occurring in the Early Care and Learning sector in B.C. and explore:

- What do I care deeply about?
- What do I wish was different for our sector?
- What is a missed opportunity or a gap?
- What possibilities do I see for our future?
- What needs and concerns need attention? What creative solutions or ECE strengths might fulfill those needs?
- What conversations do I wish our sector was having and with whom?
- How might a cultural response uplift our sector?
- What could cultivate the well-being of the sector?
- Where are decisions being made that I wish I could bring an ECE voice to?
- Where do ECE voices need to be uplifted and heard?
- Who do I wish I could collaborate with? How?

Who is supporting this Leading Change program?

This initiative is a partnership between ECEBC and the non-profit Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. This project is federally funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, under the Feminist Response and Recovery funds.

The Leading Change initiative is also supported and guided by various advisors, comprised of The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, Metis Nation BC, and an ECEBC leadership alumni. The project manager and facilitator for the initiative is Tammy Dewar. Contact her directly at tdewar@ecebc.ca

What is the background behind this program? Why is this a focus now?

We are in unprecedented times in our sector, including federal and provincial commitments to system building, such as the move of child care to the Ministry of Education and a national \$10 a day plan. In addition, there have been undeniable changes occurring in our sector as a result of the pandemic and world realities. The funding for the Leading Change program has been provided by Women and Gender Equality Canada as part of a feminist response and recovery initiative to support the impacts of COVID-19, through systematic change.

In offering the Leading Change program, the hope is that Early Childhood Educators in BC will be empowered to add their voice, knowledge, and expertise to the “system-changing” conversations taking place in our province. ECEBC believes ECE voices are necessary in these changing times.

What are the goals of the Leading Change program?

At the end of this program, we hope Early Childhood Educators will walk away with:

- A renewed connection and commitment to ECE strengths, lived experience, and wisdom.
- Increased confidence in contributing ECE voices to help inform decision-making around our changing childcare landscape.
- Strengthened collaboration with networks/partners that open up possibilities for change in the sector.
- New skills for influencing change and practical tools that turn ideas into action.

What will I learn? What topics will the community of practice sessions cover?

That's up to the group! Together, we will co-develop the learning content based on the skills, interests, and topics that will support you in your change journey.

We will learn from one another as you are the experts about your community. Every person has knowledge, strengths, and expertise to share. We recognize there are multiple ways of knowing and sharing (storytelling, visual representations, oral histories, etc.) and welcome and respect different forms of expression.

We will also learn from guest speakers when relevant. This project will connect you with people in the province with specialized insight into a particular area. For example, if you are interested in learning about media and public communications, we can connect you with people experienced in media communications. If your project focuses on integrating practices and commitments from the BC Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we will connect you to people and resources in that area. Etc.

Overall, you can expect we will cover a multitude of topics that will help you move forward with your community change project.

Bonus offer: All 36 participants will be given FREE access to ECEBC's newly revamped *Best Choices: The Ethical Journey* course! Although your participation in this course is optional, it is an incredible resource that can support your 18-month Leading Change journey. Ethics and leadership go hand in hand.

Format, Timelines and Time Commitments

When does this program start and end?

The Leading Change program will cover an 18-month span.

The selected 36 participants will start in May of 2022 and the project will end in October 2023.

Sessions will NOT run in the summer months to honour the need for wellbeing and rejuvenation. This means participants will be actively committed for 14 months of sessions/activities over an 18-month period.

What exactly am I committing to be a part of? How much time will I be investing?

Participants are committing to be part of this program for 18 months in total. During that time, individuals will take part in the following:

- An initial orientation/launch session (virtually on zoom)
- An online monthly group zoom session (Community of Practice). Summer's off!
- Monthly reflection and action activities (with the option of discussions on the BC Early Years Professional Development Hub)
- Conversations and support time with a small group cohort (frequency decided by you)
- Implementation of a community change project
- A 1-2 day wrap up session to showcase your community change projects (in person)
- Evaluation (read more about evaluation in the FAQ-“evaluation” section).

When and how often will the group meet? What online platform will be used?

The 36 participants will meet once a month for three hours on zoom (note: no meetings during summer months). A meeting poll will be sent to the selected participants to find a consistent monthly date for our large group meetings. The poll will provide evening and weekend options in case that works best for the majority of participants.

There are two additional sessions for the large group to gather together:

- Orientation session: A tentative date has been set for Thursday, May 26, 2022, from 9:00-3:00 – to take place on zoom. There will be compensation for your time for attending this day. If May 26th does not work for the majority of participants, a backup alternative date is Saturday, June 4, 2022, from 9:00-3:00.
- Wrap up and Project Showcase: Tentative date of October 21/22, 2023 – this in-person session will focus on celebrating and sharing your local change action projects. Location TBD. Travel, food, and hotel reimbursements will be discussed at a later date.

Small group Cohorts: Why small groups? Who is in the small groups? How often does the small group meet?

There are proven benefits to peer mentoring relationships. Each participant in the Leading Change program will be teamed up with 1-2 other participants to share experiences, encourage action, and reflect and think together.

If you apply to the Leading Change program with one or two other ECEs, this would be your small group cohort/team.

If you apply to the Leading Change program on your own, we will help match you with a small cohort group.

How often the small cohorts meet will depend entirely on each group. Each group will find the time that works in everyone's schedule and preferred methods of communication.

How much time will I need to invest in my community change project?

The amount of time it will take to envision, plan, and implement your change project is individual.

What is the showcase mentioned for October 2023?

This is an in-person celebration and wrap-up of the 18-month journey together. Each participant will showcase their local project and we will learn from the insights gathered along the way.

What if I can't join now? Will you offer this program again?

That will depend on future funding and what we learn about the impact of this program from our evaluation. Our hope is that this type of program will be offered continuously and in expansive ways.

The Application and Selection Process:

Do I apply on my own or with other ECEs? What if I have a colleague (or two) who wants to join forces and collaborate on a change idea?

You can apply on your own, sign up with one other ECE, or as a small team of three.

Each person is required to submit an individual application (there is a question on the application to ask if you are planning to work with other ECEs on a change project).

Does it matter where I live or where I work?

All ECEs working in BC are welcome to apply. It doesn't matter if you live in an urban, rural, or remote setting. As long as you can access the internet! (And if you can't please let us know, we may be able to help).

How many early childhood educators will be selected to participate?

Space is limited. 36 participants will be chosen in total.

When does my application need to be submitted?

Your application must be submitted by April 29th at 5:00 pm.

How do I submit my application?

Once you have completed your application, download/save or print/scan it. Please submit your completed application form by email to leadingchange@ecebc.ca.

How will you select the 36 participants? What are the criteria for participation?

While this application is open broadly to any Early Childhood Educator, we are looking to amplify and honour the diversity of voices that reflect our sector. The following criteria will be used:

- Diverse geographic and cultural representation
- A certain number of spaces will be held for Indigenous participants (up to 20%)
- A range of community change ideas – creating ripples in different ways
- A mix of workplaces and programming that reflect a broad Early Care and Learning sector (e.g. Licensed Child Care, Child Care Resource and Referral, StrongStart, Family Support, etc.)
- Length of time in the field - new and seasoned ECEs are welcome

Note: Participants who meet these criteria, may be shortlisted, and invited to take part in an interview conversation.

I've never done anything like this before, should I apply?

YES, please apply!

ECEBC believes everyone is a leader and every ECE can contribute to elevating our profession in their own unique way. ECEs have many talents and gifts to share. Whether you have been in the field for thirty years or one month, we all have existing and emerging leadership potential. You do not have to be in a leadership position or role to be considered a leader. Every ECE leads every day.

Costs, Pro. D certificates, and accessibility:

Is the Leading Change program free? Is there any compensation for my time?

Yes, the Leading Change project is free right now thanks to federal funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada. Not only is it free, but Early Childhood Educators will also receive compensation for their time participating in the monthly community of practice sessions.

Will I receive funds to put my local community systems plan into action?

There is a small budget to support the implementation of community change projects. This will be discussed with participants in the orientation session.

What equipment will I need? What if I have issues accessing the internet? Do I have to have a camera?

You will need a computer with internet access for taking part in the zoom sessions.

In addition, one of the methods being used during the evaluation of the Leading Change program is Photovoice. Using photos and stories, participants will share their perspectives during the project. This means you will need a camera to take photos throughout the 18-month journey.

If these equipment requirements pose a challenge, please consider applying anyway and letting us know any relevant details. We will help brainstorm solutions to help you find the equipment/access needed to take part in this program.

Will time spent in cohort learning or in the community change project be counted for professional development hours?

The hours spent in those activities will not be counted towards professional development hours. This is your personal contribution to the work.

Evaluation:

Who is doing the evaluation and how will I be involved?

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, a non-profit and partner on the Leading in Change program, will be conducting an evaluation. They will be using quantitative and qualitative data collection through short surveys and photovoice. The short surveys will occur at program start and at 6-, 12- and 18-month timeframes.

Why am I being evaluated?

You are not being evaluated, our program and its role in helping to influence change is! The evaluation is being carried out to capture the learnings from our journey together. The findings will be used to report on the short-term and long-term impact the Leading Change program has

made on educators' practice across BC. It will also be used to improve the program if it is offered again in the future.

Will my information be shared?

Each time SRDC collects data it provides an informed consent process. This process describes what data will be collected, and how it will be collected, stored, and used. The information you provide will be kept confidential. We will not share any information that contains your name or could otherwise identify you to anyone without your informed consent. Any quotes used will identify the speaker as a "participant". Quotes will not be used if they could identify you or other participants. The reports from the evaluation will present only aggregate data and the general opinions of all participants over the duration of the study. These reports will share the impact of the project with our funders and others who are interested. A picture tells a thousand words! So, the reports may also include photos that you have given us (but we will only include them with your permission).

How will my information be stored?

SRDC handles and stores participant data appropriately and securely within Canada. Only authorized SRDC staff have permission to access individual files on a need-to-know basis. The survey platforms being used for this project (Voxco and Qualtrics) are compliant with all privacy protection legislations in Canada.

SRDC's practices comply with privacy principles and requirements of federal and provincial legislation and Treasury Board policies. It holds Facility Security Clearance at the Secret level and Document Safeguarding Capability up to the Protected B level. SRDC's clearance was renewed indefinitely in 2009. SRDC has been subject to several external data and security audits over the years and met requirements on each occasion.

Applications will be received by ECEBC. ECEBC abides by the security requirements set in the Canadian Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) regarding the collection and storage of personal information.