



Evaluation of Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Evaluation Report 2020

MAY 2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

British Columbia has made a \$136m investment in an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (ECL R&R Strategy) for the province's Early Care and Learning sector. The ECL R&R Strategy is part of a larger ten-year plan ("Childcare BC") to increase the quality, affordability, and availability of child care spaces in British Columbia. The ECL R&R Strategy proposes to meet the following three overarching long-term goals:

- An adequate and stable workforce comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals
- Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career
- Appropriate compensation plans and human resource strategies.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST) has engaged with the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) to lead a Sector Labour Market Partnerships project with the goal to enable a mechanism for regular sector feedback on the overarching impacts of the ECL R&R Strategy on B.C.'s child care workforce. ECEBC in turn has selected Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) as the subcontractor to produce and implement the sector-led impact assessment framework that will measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy on the sector.

This evaluation report 2020 includes project progress from the delivery of the final benchmarking report in early March 2020 through to the end of 2020, including the project management work plan, report on Sector Steering Committee activities and updates on implementation of the methodology. These were first laid out in reports finalized in July 2020 on Evaluation Strategy and Methods and Tools and updated in the Interim Report #2 in December 2020. This current report includes analysis of change in key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy on the sector, a detailed narrative of the evaluation results and a set of recommendations regarding next steps and useful considerations going forward.

EVALUATION STRATEGY

The evaluation design was finalized in the Evaluation Strategy (2019) report in May 2019. The overarching questions the evaluation aims to answer through the three-year period derive from the ECL R&R Strategy's goals and outcomes. They have been expressed as nested questions relating the expected three-year outcomes to the long-term goals above, as follows:

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce?
 - b. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?
 - c. Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?
2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce?
3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place?
 - a. Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?

The evaluation strategy calls for data from many methods and tools described below to answer these questions. These data contribute to measuring and furthering understanding of changes on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The baseline or benchmark evidence on each of these 13 indicators, covering the period from 2015 to 2019, appeared in the Evaluation Benchmarking Report released by ECEBC in 2020. Progress in collecting each of these different data sources is reviewed briefly below before the presentation of the results – documenting change on these indicators and their implications – for 2020.

Evaluation methods and tools

Theory of change consultations. The purpose of the Theory of Change within the Evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy was to make sure SRDC would be collecting information that would help

improve understanding not just of whether the outcomes were achieved, but also the factors that led to success (or not), unexpected and unintended effects, external factors that influenced results and so on. SRDC interviewed a total of five developers of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics from the BC Ministry of Education (EDU), Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST), and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) to learn the theory of change behind the Strategy’s “tactics.” The initial Theory was well received and endorsed, allowing SRDC to use it to inform other features of the evaluation framework such as the KPIs which in turn supported development of the methods and tools implemented in the evaluation.

Design and execution of annual employer and employee surveys including loyalty systems, fielding and follow up. These tasks include Sector Steering Committee and Government Working Group review of survey instrument drafts as well as SRDC’s co-design with ECEBC of a system to maximize survey participation over the evaluation period and beyond, including a staged approach for survey communications. The activities include a multi-stage round of cross-sectional surveys annually (in October-November 2019, 2020 and 2021) open to all members of the child care workforce and those with ECE certifications no longer working in child care. The first stage featured the collection of centre-specific information obtained through an “employer” survey (including owner operators). In 2020, the workforce survey was launched in a second stage. SRDC contacted employers again with a link to an individual-specific survey for both themselves and their employees. Employers were encouraged to forward invitations to their staff to support a nested survey of employees within each facility. Invitations were also sent to solo operators, survey respondents from 2019 who agreed to be invited to complete a follow up survey and ECL professionals who signed up online before and after an August 2020 webinar on evaluation benchmarking results. The final stage featured an open invitation to capture the responses of people who were not reached in the first round or who did not respond for another reason. The tasks included email reminders in the event of non-completion, social media and newsletter invitations and publicity. SRDC staffed a helpline and email support service to fulfill requests for telephone or paper completion of the survey.

Data assessment, scan, building and maintaining data systems including setting up a comprehensive contact database of child care providers and their employees. This work established scope (setting rules on the inclusion of licensed and unlicensed, registered and unregistered carers), data assessment to determine available data sources and optimal means for keeping the database up to date. Administrative data were acquired in 2019 and updated through 2020. They will be updated again using equivalent sources in 2021 to monitor trends in program roll out, licensing and registrations, to the extent possible.

SRDC developed a **contact database** to form the initial sample frame for employer and workforce surveys in October 2019 and updated it for the 2020 cross-sectional surveys. It was constructed to allow assessment of the changing composition of the sector each time it is updated. The workforce surveys are fielded to an updated sample frame each year adopting a

strictly cross-sectional design, even though many surveys will be completed by the previous years' contacts to allow a longitudinal analysis. SRDC will analyze the annual databases to quantify provider entries and exits. At the same time, the survey provides detail on who is entering and leaving the workforce. SRDC links data from one survey wave to the next to permit longitudinal analysis on each provider's workforce and service development.

Census and Labour Force Survey Microdata: The evaluation began with a detailed exploration of the composition of the B.C. ECL workforce using the 2016 Census microdata (analyzed as anonymized individual records) compared to earlier years going back to Census 2001. These data included family background and characteristics, income (from tax records), earnings, credentials, location, well-being of all people employed in child care in the province. More recent employment trends were captured using Labour Force Survey Data to 2018. No further data will be collected within the remainder of the current evaluation contract.

Media and social media analysis tasks included establishing appropriate media search strings, algorithms and provider scope, and desired formats for outputs. Work is continuous, collecting analytics and results from each day's B.C.-relevant childcare-related posts and news articles throughout the course of the project. Regular monitoring and data capture will be supplemented annually in anticipation of the production of a comprehensive analysis for the final evaluation reports.

Public opinion survey. This effort in 2019 and 2022 includes a sample representative of all adults aged 18+ years and a booster sample of 'emerging adults' aged 13 through 23 years to gauge any changes in career aspirations. The tasks include designing and testing the survey instruments to include selected existing and new questions related to perceptions of child care careers and child care workforce questions and commissioning an external market research firm to field the survey to a representative sample of British Columbians. SRDC supports and monitors fieldwork, receives and quality checks the survey data, then undertakes analysis. The external market research firm fielded two questions in a national omnibus poll in May 2020, at SRDC's request. The results are included in this report.

Key informant interviews (KII)s for implementation research/case studies including the development of the ECL R&R Strategy theory of change. A set of KII protocols were developed for the Evaluation Methods and Tools 2019 report alongside engagement strategies for case study sites. These were amended for 2020 to include the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fieldwork collects in-depth accounts of the impact of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics, and in 2019 also supported instrument validation.

SRDC is conducting and analyzing roughly 200 in-depth interviews over the course of the project, including a diverse sample of providers, their staff, resource centres and advisors, government program managers. Interviews with the developers of the ECL R&R Strategy and its

tactics took place in April and May 2019 to inform the development of the theory of change. Following consultation with the Sector Steering Committee on the best approach, SRDC selected in July 2019 six case study sites province wide for onsite fieldwork. Site visits took place in September and October 2019 and “virtual” visits took place September through December 2020. Fieldwork with the same sites will be repeated in 2021.

RESULTS

For the 2019 year, the project reported benchmarks (the Benchmarking Report was published in July 2020). Benchmarks are derived from data for the period 2015-2019 that captured the starting point for many of the changes the ECL R&R Strategy is expected to produce. Critically, later reports – starting with this one – compare the data on indicators from 2020 and 2021 to the benchmarking indicators reported for 2015-19. The comparison determines **change** in the KPIs. It is the specific combination of changes across the KPIs that can signal success or failure for the ECL R&R Strategy in achieving its three-year outcomes and indicate progress towards realizing the ten-year goals.

The KPIs in the full report draw on multiple data sources: cycling through different data drawn from the set of available sources. Using multiple measures improves validity and also enables some level of continuity in annual reporting in a situation where not all data sources can report in every year. Several sources like the cross-sectional survey contribute to many KPIs. Others, such as the public opinion survey, feature less often. Also, for each KPI there are multiple data points per data source. There are several ways to present information on wages, for example. In this summary, for brevity, we concentrate on high-level “headline” findings from the benchmarking exercise, starting with the context for the 2020 data collection and analysis set by the global COVID-19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020. We then consider each KPI in turn, drawing out evidence on key findings related to each KPI.

Context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Answers to questions posed in surveys to employers, other members of the workforce and the professionals working at case study sites revealed the high level of disruption due to the pandemic on stability of employment, pursuit of professional development, recruitment and hiring. The employer survey revealed 54 per cent of ECL workplaces closed at some point after March 11, 2020, three times the rate of closure found before that date. In the period after March 11, 10 per cent of the centres had to close their program a second time after it had re-opened. The median number of children served per ECL workplace dropped from 34 pre-pandemic to 25 at the time of the survey (October-November 2020).

Nearly all (96 per cent of) employers reported at least one support from the government (average of 1.8 and range of 1-5 supports). For three-quarters this included temporary emergency funding. The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy was drawn on by a quarter of employers and a fifth used Canada Emergency Business Account Funds.

The workforce survey found 60 per cent of the ECL workforce had experienced some kind of disruption in employment. No fewer than 40 per cent experienced a temporary layoff or furlough between March and November 2020, when only 9 per cent experienced such a disruption in the pre-pandemic November 2019 through March 2020 period. The median duration of the temporary layoff or furlough in the March to November 2020 period was 11-12 weeks.

As revealed by the data from questions specifically focused on the effects of COVID-19 included in case study interviews and the different surveys, 2020 was quite an exceptional year for the ECL workforce in B.C. Data reported for specific KPIs below highlights the impact of the pandemic in several other areas of operations. All these data were collected while the pandemic emergency was ongoing, and the presence of such disruptions means it will be difficult to draw conclusions from the collected data about the effectiveness of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics. However, the data do capture the state of workforce development towards the end of 2020 and thus documents the result of how the pandemic has added to the challenges that were being experienced by the workforce as documented in the Benchmarking Report. The data still have a role to play in guiding decisions about the forces acting on recruitment and retention and thus where policy may need to focus efforts to achieve further progress on ECL R&R Strategy three-year outcomes and ten-year goals.

Change on Key Performance Indicators

The results section of the report presents multi-year data from administrative sources, 2019 and 2020 cross-sectional survey data from employers and members of the workforce as well as interviews during the final third of 2020 at case study sites. These data document the province's position in 2020 on many of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the evaluation framework, changes relative to 2019 and earlier as well as observations from professionals working in the sector that add meaning to these statistics. These results are brought together in Figure ES1. This presents a summary of progress on KPIs and tactics from the launch of the ECL R&R Strategy until the end of 2020. An arrow symbol is used to signify whether the overall trend on each indicator is an improvement (large or small) [↑], a deterioration [↓] or a mixed result [↔]. Inevitably many nuances of findings are glossed over in such high-level summary and readers are encouraged to review the full results for each indicator in the main report sections.

Figure ES1 Summary of progress to 2020 on key performance indicators

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	ECL R&R Strategy Tactics	Progress on tactics
1	ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation	Compensation (e.g., wage enhancement)	Continuing appreciation of role of wage enhancement as symbol of recognition, if not adequately addressing compensation shortfalls.
	Satisfaction fell among HCPs with respect to hours and job security but increased for Centre ECL workers with respect to income and benefits. Motivating factors, while low, were more present for owner-operators and Centre ECL workers than in 2019. There was little change (remarkably) in indicators of burnout in 2020 compared to 2019.		
2A	Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers	Compensation (e.g., wage enhancement)	Two-thirds in receipt of wage enhancement and increasing. COVID-19 related hazard pay played a role in 2020.
	Wages increased roughly \$2 over 2019, but still relatively low and with very modest recognition for credentials and seniority. If anything, these differentials are narrowing over time. Wage increases have not impacted monthly incomes markedly, except for HCPs.		
2B	Benefits of ECL Workers	Compensation (e.g., wage enhancement)	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics. Requests for improved pension provision continued. Little change in financial assistance for PD.
	Benefit levels remaining stable with fluctuations, more often down than up.		
3	The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs	Industry Standards	Work is still underway on the updated Sector Occupational Competencies.
	The response and uptake will be assessed once they are introduced.		
4	Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs	All ¹	Increasing proportions of student bursaries issued. May take more time for new seats in ECE programs to alter workforce composition.
	PSE completion rates slightly higher: no change in PSE participation rates. No overall change in net levels of possession of ECL-related credentials among workforce from 2018 through 2020, although own-operators increasingly report holding ECE certifications. There is an apparent decline in specialty certifications such as Special Needs. A greater share of credentials held are from B.C. institutions.		

¹ The eight tactics included in the ECL R&R Strategy at the time of its announcement in 2018 were: Compensation; Post-Secondary; Bursaries; Professional Networks and Supports; Professional Development; Industry Standards; Work-based education and training; and Training Supports.

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	ECL R&R Strategy Tactics	Progress on tactics
5	Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers	All	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics.
	No data on perceptions of emerging adults available for 2020. Some signals from workforce data in 2020 that more are leaving the profession or intend to do so.		
6	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills	All	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021.
	Self-assessed skills of making the environment inclusive for children with special needs dropped from 2019 to 2020, especially for HCPs. More PD was sought by members of ECL workforce for many other low-assessed skills, although there was a decline in the proportion obtaining PD in relation to special needs.		
7	Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities.	Post-Secondary (e.g., new seats); Bursaries; Professional Networks and Supports; & Professional Development	Increasing proportions of student bursaries issued. May take more time for new seats in ECE programs to alter workforce composition. Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021.
	Fewer in the workforce believed that there were opportunities for career growth and development, even though employers reported providing career development information and opportunities slightly more often.		
8	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities	Professional Networks and Supports; Professional Development; Work-based education and training; & Training Supports (e.g., Workforce Development Bursary)	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Overall participation in PD declined, even while there were increases in most types of PD and the range of barriers declined.		

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	ECL R&R Strategy Tactics	Progress on tactics
9	Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year	Professional Networks and Supports; Professional Development; & Work-based education and training	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Hours of PD remained relatively stable, among those participating in PD.		
10	Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills	All	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Employers' assessment of their staff's core skills improved from 2019 to 2020, with the exception of communicating effectively with the children's families, also the lowest rated skill.		
11	Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits	Compensation; & Work-based education and training	Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	The proportion not expecting to work for their current employer in a year's time doubled from 3 to 6 per cent and the proportion of those not planning to stay who planned to leave work in ECL entirely increased threefold from 2 to 6 per cent. 44 per cent of employers reported experiencing staff net loss across all positions in the 12 months preceding the survey: a 10-percentage point increase compared to 2019. COVID-19 featured prominently among the reasons.		
12	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector	Compensation; Professional Networks and Supports; Professional Development; Industry Standards; Work-based education and training; & Training Supports	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Only 47 per cent agreed or strongly agreed child care is valued by the public in 2020, down from 51 per cent in 2019. But in general, more members of the ECL workforce held positive opinions about their work in 2020 than in 2019. This seemed especially the case for Indigenous centre ECL workers.		

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	ECL R&R Strategy Tactics	Progress on tactics
13	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents	Compensation; Post-Secondary; Bursaries; Industry Standards; & Training Supports	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics.
	 SRDC's opinion survey question asked of the general public in B.C. in 2020 found 28 per cent valuing the service provided by the ECL workforce more than before the pandemic, and 71 per cent valued it the same. Furthermore, 75 per cent of British Columbians agreed that the ECL workforce played a vital role in the economy while 70 per cent felt they played a vital role in children's learning. In the workforce survey, many working in child care acknowledged that the number of people valuing child care work had increased.		

SRDC has used the results on KPIs in the later section on considerations to provide very early answers to the evaluation questions. This is the very first report to be able to assess change over time, so these answers are presented tentatively. The uncertainty over causality has been increased given the considerable disruptive effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. So, in presenting these first provisional answers to the evaluation questions, it is rarely possible to attribute outcomes solely to the effects of the ECL R&R Strategy.

CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation framework uses the progress against KPIs to answer the evaluation questions over time. At this stage – analytically the halfway point of the project – we cannot draw conclusions on any of the three-year or ten-year outcomes. It is possible to note for the first time whether indicators point to the ECL R&R Strategy proceeding on track to achieve outcomes and goals set in 2018, at the project outset.

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals? [10-year goal]

While it is far too early to answer this question, the postsecondary qualifications of the current workforce appear to be increasing even while ECL-related certification of Centre ECL workers is either remaining stable or declining. There are still similar skills shortfalls to 2020 but workforce members have taken action by pursuing PD in many of the affected areas. Staffing problems remain both acute and persistent. This means that alongside short-term daily instability in service due to permanent and casual staff unavailability, exacerbated by COVID-19, staffing needs could not be met by providers over the longer term either. A net

loss of staff was reported by 44 per cent of employers in 2020 up from 34 per cent in 2019. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.

- **Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce? [3-year outcome]**
- This has not happened as of 2020.
- **Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector? [3-year outcome]**

This has not happened as of 2020. About 55 per cent of those currently working in the sector believed there were a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in B.C., but this was down from 60 per cent in 2019.

- **Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family? [3-year outcome]**

Opportunities have expanded since the launch of the ECL R&R Strategy and bursaries have reduced financial barriers for some. Improvements in employer- and self-assessed skills, knowledge and abilities are noted to some degree, for some but not all of the many areas demanding enhanced skills. In particular in 2020, there were drops in ECL workforce members' self-assessed skills to make the environment inclusive for children with special needs, even though employers considered these skills to need improving for somewhat fewer of their staff. Employers saw more falling short on communicating effectively with the children's families.

2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career? [10-year goal]

There are conflicting trends. SRDC probed centre-based ECL workers' current relationship with their work and found more positive support in 2020 than in 2019 for statements such as "I would recommend child care as a profession", "I consider child care as my chosen profession" and "I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care". But there were some signs more among the workforce surveyed was planning to leave ECL within one year in 2020 compared to 2019. Among Centre ECL workers, the increase was

incrementally small – from 0.8 to 2.3 per cent – and could represent sampling error. Over ten years, however, even a small percentage leaving annually would add up to a considerable loss of workers.

- **Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce? [3-year outcome]**

Public opinions that child care workers play a vital role in the economy and in children's learning exceed seven in ten in B.C. and have reportedly either remained stable or improved since the start of the pandemic. Even though ECL professionals are acknowledging this improvement, they seem less cognizant of the relatively high-level public confidence has reached. It appears that the COVID-19 pandemic itself accounts for a great deal of the 2020 increase.

3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place? [10-year goal]

There are conflicting trends. Wage enhancement is working in two ways. Wages are growing for those eligible. Among HCPs, incomes have been increasing. And the symbolic value is high as the enhancement send a powerful signal to ECL professionals that government has recognized the problem and values their work. However, differentials between certification levels appear to be diminishing, reducing the incentive to acquire advanced credentials and seek promotion. There is little sign yet of wage intervention leading to improved compensation and human resources strategies in other areas. The situation with respect to low pension and health plan coverage has not changed a great deal since the project began. Six percentage points more Centre ECL workers reported holding a pension, but seven percentage points fewer employers reported providing one.

- **Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession? [3-year outcome]**

The retention strategies such as enhancing wages and promoting access to professional development do appear to have the effect of increasing workforce engagement and persistence but to a very modest extent so far. While the pandemic has not helped the retention of professionals, those still in the workforce in late 2020 have relatively longer work histories in ECL. The group of ECEs not working in child care has by contrast less work experience in 2020 than 2019, suggesting more relatively newly-qualified ECEs have left child care work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the most part, the 2020 analysis of administrative data, cross-sectional survey and interviews has confirmed the challenging situation reported from the 2019 benchmarking report with respect to ECL workforce recruitment and retention. Thus, the same critical workforce development situation persists as originally prompted the ECL R&R Strategy.

This has been the first early look at how well ECL R&R Strategy efforts have succeeding in moving the needle on challenges already well known and recorded in the 2019 benchmarking report. But the confounding influence of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 means the evaluation is yielding only tentative answers at this point. Thus, recommendations with respect to policy and implementation must be similarly cautious.

- **Renewed effort is needed for the ECL R&R Strategy tactics to support employers' urgent needs to recruit, retain, and develop ECL professionals.** Shortages of qualified ECL professionals persisted into 2020, even with temporarily reduced demand for ECL. About forty per cent of employers reported they were unable to fill at least one vacant position in their centre. Employers indicated they were unable to fill 1.9 positions on average and that due to staff shortages, 44 per cent had to fill vacant positions with an individual with lower qualifications than they wanted. This practice occurred for 2 positions per organization on average.
- **Carefully-designed and targeted further wage enhancement** is likely to generate yet more incremental improvements. Wage enhancement appears to have been the most recognized and appreciated of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. While it does not fully solve the identified problems with compensation and benefits, it plays a role in improving incomes. This has clearly been appreciated by those working in the sector. It also acts as a potent symbol that the government recognizes the importance of adequate pay for the ECL workforce in B.C.
- **Intervention is needed on pensions and other benefits where ECL professionals' compensation packages are falling short.** While satisfaction with benefits increased a little by 2020, it remains the case that provision of key benefits is low across the sector. A fifth (21 per cent) of employers provide none – meaning no change on this indicator since 2019. The wage enhancement intervention provides a model in that it supports statutory benefits. This approach could be imitated to provide conditional funding to improve other workplace benefits such as pensions.
- **Raise the profile and sustainability of ECE professional development as well as the incentive to upskill.** If wage differentials can better recognize the acquisition of additional credentials and ability to take on increasing responsibility this will improve incentives for existing workforce members to upskill. Communicating the promise of bursaries such that

ECE tuition, PD courses and related costs are more often seen as affordable will likely help. Regulation to protect time off for study and increasing the proportion of financial assistance that is provided upfront to employers and employees to incentivize upskilling should be considered.

- **A program specifically to address incentivizing Special Needs certification may be justified.** Skills deficits in relation to children with special needs have become more acute in 2020, adding to an already-concerning situation in 2019 when a third of employers reported a shortfall in employees with special needs certification. In 2020, 46 per cent of employers who cared for children with special needs did not have staff in any position with a Special Needs certification. About 30 per cent of employers reported that they had to refuse children due to not having staff with the right qualifications to accommodate the children's needs and for a quarter of these the qualification missing was a Special Needs Certificate. The proportion of ECL professionals self-assessed as average or excellent in making the environment inclusive for children with special needs dropped by 10 percentage points.
- **More positive public declarations and depictions with respect to the role played by the ECL workforce – in children's development/learning and in contributing to economic and social progress more generally – can work to raise the public profile of ECL professionals and thus their sense of esteem and engagement.** The COVID-19 pandemic has raised the profile of ECL work in B.C. Impressively for such a traumatic year, members of the sector workforce have actually become somewhat *more* appreciative of the value of the work they do and have acknowledged that the opinions of others not working in the sector have shifted to the positive. This suggests that opportunities to reiterate and expand on such messaging should be sought more often going forward.
- **Regional disparities may call for regionally-focused solutions.** Northern Health Authority region reported the lowest proportion of ECL workers with an ECE certificate in 2019 and the biggest drop in the proportion of the workforce ECE certified to 2020. Senior staff were also least likely to be ECE-certified in Northern Health Authority region.
- **In combination, workforce supports that provide recognition and tangibly increased benefits are needed more than ever.** It should be noted that 2020 brought increased workforce departures and either little change or increase on already-high measures of burnout compared to 2019.
- **Finally, a more systemic approach to manage B.C.'s child care "system" may be required.** The compilation of this and previous reports has illuminated some of the difficulties the sector faces taking stock of its successes and challenges. The ECL R&R Strategy is being implemented by multiple Ministries. Each is at varying stages of roll out on its original tactics and updating those tactics. At the same time, new related initiatives are

launched by additional agencies overlapping in intent with the ECL R&R Strategy but outside it. There is no regional or central agency to collect and disseminate information on the ECL R&R Strategy tactics across the thousands of eligible workplaces and tens of thousands of members of the workforce. Some report being unaware of the tactics. This is likely to influence negatively take up and impact. Data are disparately available and absent in several areas.

The ECL R&R Strategy tactics have seemingly worked in tandem with the effects of the pandemic to influence some of the intended outcomes, while their respective effects have been at odds on others. In either case, and certainly in part due to the pandemic, it is too early to pass judgement on the overall effectiveness of the ECL R&R Strategy. What is perhaps clearer is that the kinds of tactics included within the ECL R&R Strategy and being implemented through 2019 and 2020 have acquired even more importance as policy responses. These approaches can help combat the well-established challenges faced in ECL workforce development in B.C. and some of the negative consequences that have arisen or been exacerbated in ECL due to the pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

British Columbia has made a \$136m investment in an Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy (ECL R&R Strategy) for the province's Early Care and Learning sector. The ECL R&R Strategy is part of a larger ten-year plan ("Childcare BC") to increase the quality, affordability, and availability of child care spaces in British Columbia. The ECL R&R Strategy proposes to meet the following three overarching long-term goals:

- An adequate and stable workforce comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals
- Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career
- Appropriate compensation plans and human resource strategies.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST) has engaged with the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) to lead a Sector Labour Market Partnerships project with the goal to enable a mechanism for regular sector feedback on the overarching impacts of the ECL R&R Strategy on B.C.'s child care workforce. ECEBC in turn has selected Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) as the subcontractor to produce and implement the sector-led impact assessment framework that will measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy on the sector.

This evaluation report 2020 includes project progress from the delivery of the final benchmarking report in early March 2020 through to the end of 2020, including the project management work plan, report on Sector Steering Committee activities and updates on implementation of the methodology. These were first laid out in reports finalized in July 2020 on evaluation strategy and methods and tools and updated in the interim report #2 in December 2020. This current report includes analysis of change in key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure these direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy on the sector, a detailed narrative of the evaluation results and a set of recommendations regarding next steps and useful considerations going forward.

UPDATED PROJECT MANAGEMENT WORK PLAN

PROJECT TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

SRDC drafted its original description of project tasks and activities to include in the workplan in January 2019. Box 1 sets out the updated tasks and project activities using a Gantt chart format, with each year on a separate page. These charts illustrate the timeline for the principal tasks set out below and indicate when each type of activity will be most prevalent. The main categories of tasks are described again below, drawing attention to changes in the planned activities and timelines and their rationale:

- **Project liaison, work plan development, coordination and consultation** including the Sector Steering Committee and the Government Working Group. SRDC and ECEBC have been collaborating in developing the workplan and scheduling the flow of evaluation activities, review of deliverables and meetings. The activities in this section include engagement with the Government Working Group and Sector Steering Committee including meetings. SRDC is responsible for coordinating its own project team, including subcontractors engaged in some of the project activities included below.
- **Data assessment, scan, building and maintaining data systems** including setting up a comprehensive contact database of child care providers and their employees. This work established scope (setting rules on the inclusion of licensed and unlicensed, registered and unregistered carers), data assessment to determine available data sources and optimal means for keeping the database up to date. Administrative data were acquired in 2019 and updated through 2020. They will be updated again using equivalent sources in 2021 to monitor trends in program roll out, licensing and registrations, to the extent possible.

SRDC developed a **contact database** to form the initial sample frame for employer and workforce surveys in October 2019 and again for the 2020 cross-sectional surveys. It is constructed also to allow assessment of the changing composition of the sector each time it is updated. The workforce surveys are fielded to an updated sample frame each year adopting a strictly cross-sectional design, even though many surveys will be completed by the previous years' contacts to allow a longitudinal analysis. SRDC will analyze the annual databases to quantify provider entries and exits. At the same time the survey provides detail on who is entering and leaving the workforce. SRDC links data from one survey wave to the next to permit longitudinal analysis on each provider's workforce and service development.

- **Media and social media analysis** tasks included establishing appropriate media search strings, algorithms and provider scope, and desired formats for outputs. Work is continuous, collecting analytics and results from each day's B.C.-relevant childcare-related posts and

news articles throughout the course of the project. Regular monitoring and data capture will be supplemented annually in anticipation of the production of a comprehensive analysis for the final evaluation reports.

- **Key informant interviews (KII^s) for implementation research/case studies** including the development of the ECL R&R Strategy theory of change. A set of KII protocols were developed for the Evaluation Methods and Tools 2019 report alongside engagement strategies for case study sites. These were amended for 2020 to include the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fieldwork collects in-depth accounts of the impact of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics, and in 2019 also supported instrument validation.

SRDC is conducting and analyzing roughly 200 in-depth interviews over the course of the project to better understand the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics, especially successes and challenges in delivery, including a diverse sample of providers, their staff, resource centres and advisors, government program managers. Interviews with the developers of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics took place in April and May 2019 to inform the development of the theory of change. Following consultation with the Sector Steering Committee on the best approach, SRDC selected in July 2019 six case study sites province wide for onsite fieldwork. Site visits took place in September and October 2019 and “virtual” visits took place September through December 2020. Fieldwork with the same sites will be repeated in 2021.

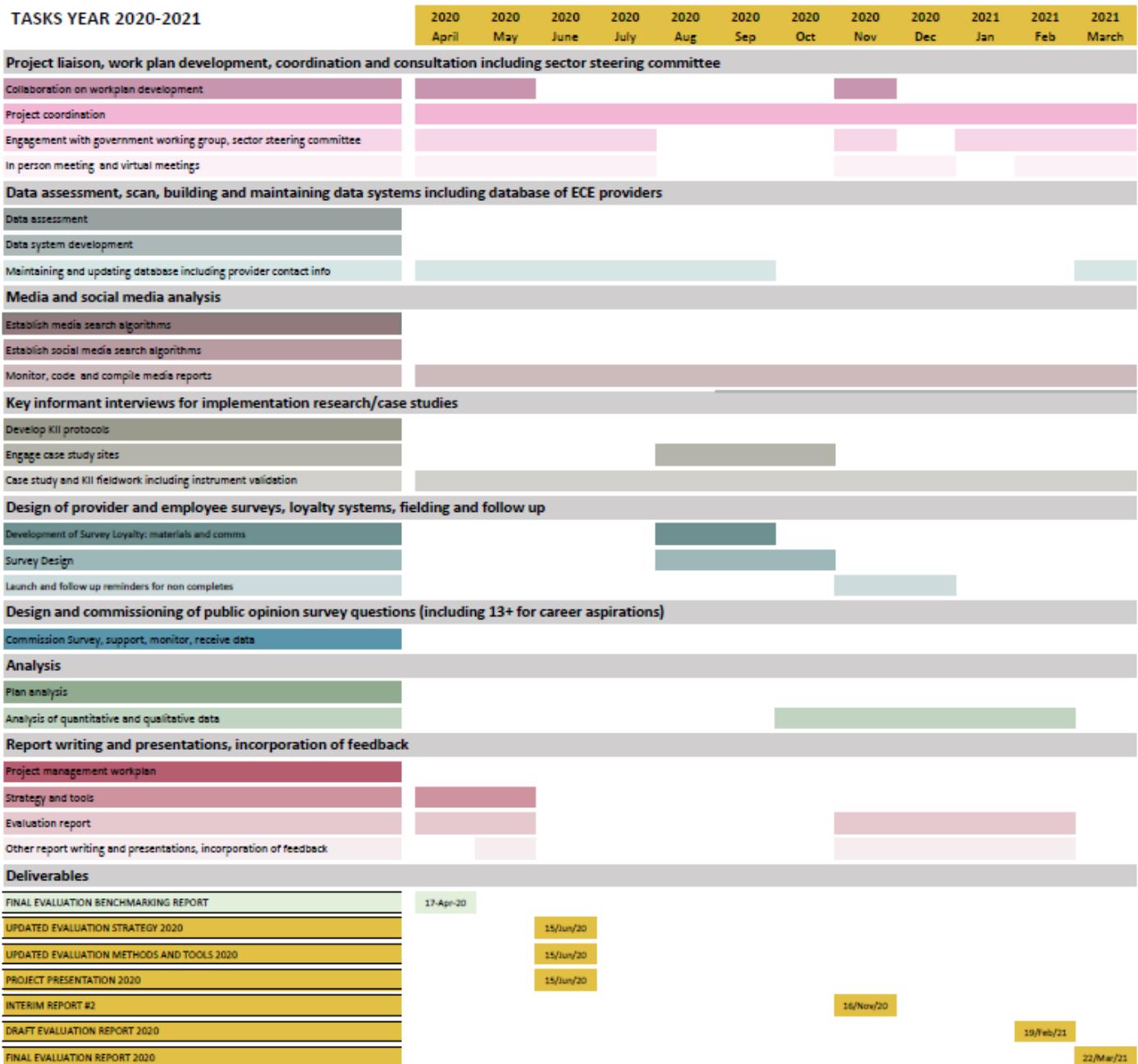
- **Design and execution of annual employer and employee surveys** including loyalty systems, fielding and follow up. These tasks include Sector Steering Committee and Government Working Group review of survey instrument drafts as well as SRDC's co-design with ECEBC of a system to maximize survey participation over the evaluation period and beyond, including a staged approach for survey communications. The activities include a multi-stage round of cross-sectional surveys annually (in October-November 2019, 2020 and 2021) open to all members of the child care workforce. The first stage features the collection of centre-specific information obtained through an “employer” survey (including owner operators). In 2020, the workforce survey was launched in a second stage. SRDC contacted employers again with a link to an individual-specific survey for both themselves and their employees. Employers were encouraged to forward invitations to their staff to support a nested survey of employees within each facility. Invitations were also sent to solo operators, survey respondents from 2019 who agreed to be invited to complete a follow up survey and ECL professionals who signed up online before and after an August 2020 webinar on evaluation benchmarking results (mentioned below). The final stage featured an open invitation to capture the responses of people who were not reached in the first round or who did not respond for another reason. The tasks included email reminders in the event of non-completion, social media and newsletter invitations and publicity. SRDC staffed a helpline and email support service to fulfill requests for telephone or paper completion of the survey.

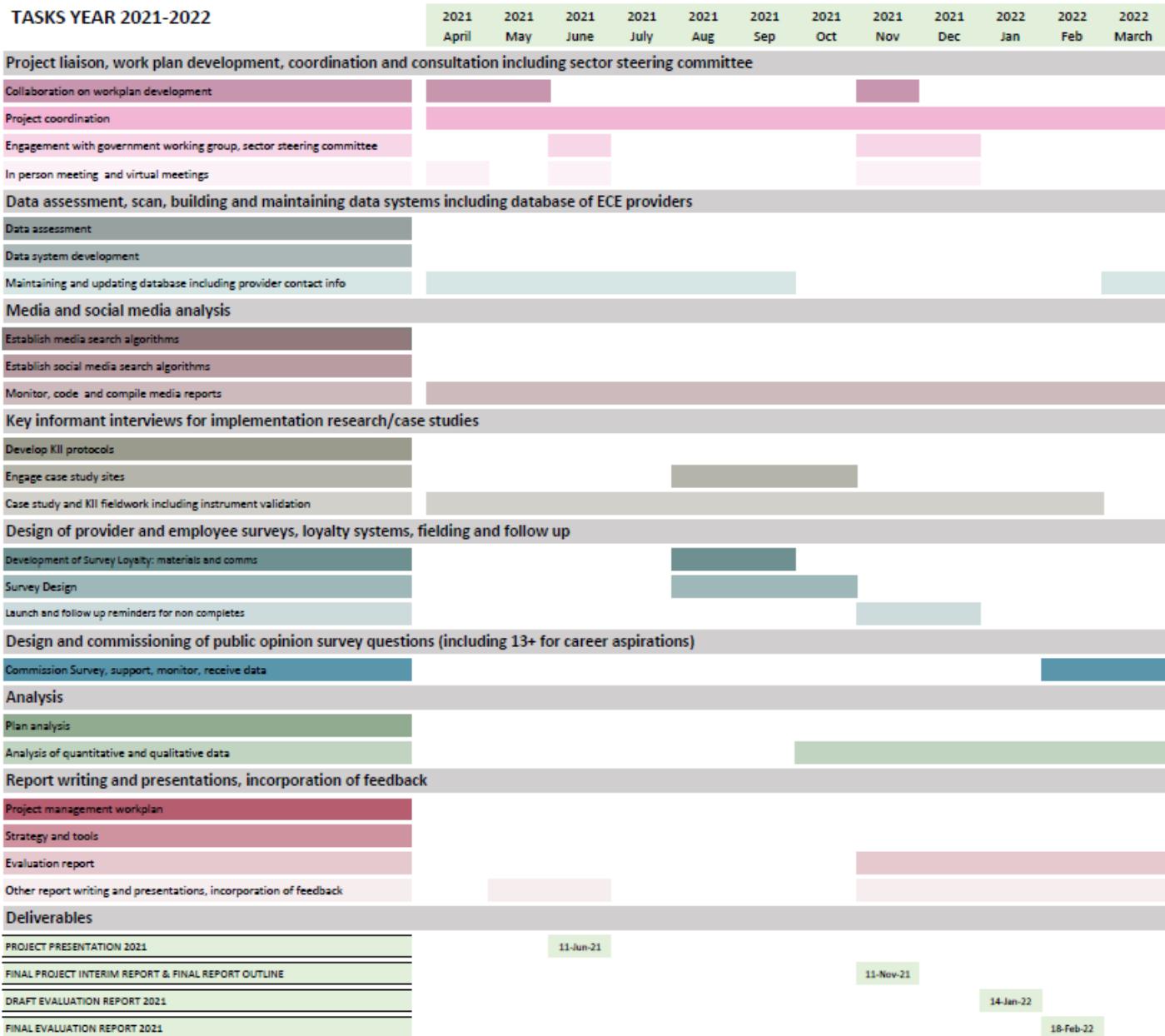
- **Design and commissioning of public opinion survey questions.** This effort in 2019 and 2022 includes a sample representative of all adults aged 18+ years and a booster sample of ‘emerging adults’ aged 13 through 23 years to gauge any changes in career aspirations. The tasks include designing and testing the survey instruments to include selected existing and new questions related to perceptions of child care careers and child care workforce questions and commissioning an external market research firm to field the survey to a representative sample of British Columbians. SRDC supports and monitors fieldwork, receives and quality checks the survey data, then undertakes analysis. The external market research firm fielded two questions in a national omnibus poll in May 2020, at SRDC’s request. The results are included in this report.
- **Analysis** covers a broad range of SRDC tasks including planning for analysis, quantitative analysis of Census microdata, administrative data and the provider database, quantitative and qualitative analysis of social media, public opinion, employer and workforce survey data and qualitative analysis of KIIs.

The evaluation began with detailed exploration of the composition of the B.C. early childhood educator (ECE) and child care workforce using the 2016 Census microdata (analyzed as anonymized individual records). SRDC used these data to create a profile of the workforce on characteristics such as family background, income, earnings, credentials, location, and well-being, reported in the 2019 evaluation benchmarking report.

- **Report writing and presentations including incorporation of feedback.** Activities include production of 21 project deliverables from the project management work plan to the final report. This current report is #14. Reports to date have refined the evaluation strategy and developed tools for use during the 2019 and 2020 project years. All are submitted for review first by ECEBC, then by the Sector Steering Committee and finally by the Government Working Group. Additional presentations are prepared as required and included, in 2020, a presentation to the National Early Learning & Child Care Workforce Development Conference in Toronto on March 10, 2020 and a presentation on August 19, 2020 of the benchmarking report findings in a Zoom webinar with invitations extended across the provincial workforce.

Box 1 Updated project tasks and activities by year



TASKS YEAR 2021-2022



SRDC STAFF RESPONSIBLE

As set out in the original Project Management Workplan, SRDC draws resources for this project from across its cadre of 45+ researchers and evaluators as required. Its staff possess a broad range of data collection and analytical skills, policy knowledge and disciplinary perspectives. The team has undergone some changes in recognition of the changing stage of the evaluation work involved, as well as due to SRDC experiencing the arrival of new suitable staff to SRDC and departures of existing team members.

The project lead is Dr. Reuben Ford who acts as the principal point of contact for project management and liaison with the project manager at ECEBC. Descriptions of the current staff and their roles in the project are included below.

Reuben Ford

Reuben Ford is a research director at SRDC and responsible for its program of work promoting access to skills development through advanced education and training. He is a Credentialed Evaluator as recognized by the Canadian Evaluation Society and has directed a wide range of evaluations. These have included determining the impacts of new grants in the form of Learning Accounts, evaluating student aid to Indigenous students and B.C.'s Northern Skills Training Program. Dr. Ford has designed and evaluated career education workshops. Shortly after joining SRDC, he designed the evaluation for the Community Employment Innovation Project community evaluation study. This evaluated the impact of 295 locally developed social employment projects across four communities over a 5-year period. He also led the final evaluation of the Self-Sufficiency Project. Prior to joining SRDC, he worked for the Policy Studies Institute in the UK where he authored several reports on the role of child care in the labour market and gave the keynote address to the UK Government Childcare Strategy conference in 1998.

Dr. Ford is the project lead at SRDC and principal point of contact for ECEBC, committee members and other stakeholders.

Barbara Dobson

Barbara Dobson is a principal research associate at SRDC. She has worked for SRDC in various capacities since 2005. She recently rejoined as a permanent employee and will be engaged in data collection and analysis on the evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy. She has over 20 years' experience in research & evaluation and has worked on a range of program evaluations within the social policy and public health arenas. Several themes run through Barbara's career. Much of

her work has involved issues around employment, health, low income, and social inequalities. In exploring these issues Barbara has worked with different groups of people including people with disabilities, seniors, those who have been unemployed for long periods of time, and families living on low incomes. Throughout her work she has tried to actively involve those who participate in her studies so that the research process is seen to be useful and interesting to all who participate in it. Barbara has designed and implemented both local and national evaluation studies, and her interest in behavioural insights lies in how to move beyond empirical findings to support positive changes in policy and practice. Barbara holds a PhD in Social Policy from the Loughborough University, UK.

Dr. Dobson will hold day-to-day management responsibility for work on the key informant interviews and case studies.

Taylor Shek-wai Hui

Taylor Shek-wai Hui is SRDC's Chief Data Scientist in quantitative evaluation of social programs. His areas of interest and expertise include experimental and non-experimental methods of evaluation, human capital formation and utilization, social policies, cost-benefit analysis, as well as applied survey and statistical methodologies. Prior to SRDC, he was an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Winnipeg. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Western Ontario.

Dr. Hui is the chief advisor to other members of the team on the acquisition, development, analysis, and reporting of national and regional data sets.

Xiaoyang Luo

Xiaoyang Luo joined SRDC in February 2019. She brings significant experience working with newcomers to B.C. and conducting and facilitating research to support their integration. Her research experience in the settlement sector supported service providers to develop and propose responsive and client-centred programs for immigrants and refugees in Metro Vancouver. She also delivered training to settlement staff to increase their research capacity and understanding of the impacts of immigration policies on their clients and their services. Outside of the settlement sector, Xiaoyang has research experience in the K-12 and higher education sectors. Her research interests include immigration and integration, supportive family policies, and intersectionality. She is passionate about improving the economic and social outcomes of individuals and communities experiencing marginalization.

Ms. Luo holds a Master of Public Policy from Simon Fraser University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from McGill University.

Ms. Luo holds project responsibilities including developing communications and systems for social and news media monitoring, content analysis and reporting.

[John Sergeant](#)

Mr. Sergeant comes to SRDC from the Education Policy Research Initiative at the University of Ottawa where he has worked since 2014. He holds a Bachelors degree (Honours) in Political Science from the University of Waterloo. He is coordinating the 2020 survey and administrative data collection and analysis.

[Krisha Lim](#)

Ms. Lim has more than five years of research and program evaluation experience including coordinating the implementation of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in partnership with non-profit organizations and post-secondary institutions. She has extensive experience implementing and supervising data collection activities and data analysis of projects across the fields of livelihood development, public health, values formation, education, and network analysis. She holds a Masters in Agriculture and Resource Economics from the University of Alberta and a B.A. in Economics and International Relations from UBC. Ms. Lim has undertaken the 2020 employer survey analysis.

[Henrietta Agyei Asiamah](#)

Ms. Asiamah is currently studying for a PhD in Economics at the University of Guelph. She has prior research experience working at the African Women's Development Fund, and KSAR & Associates. She holds a M.A in Economics from University of Manitoba and a B.A in Economics and Statistics from the University of Ghana. She has prior experience working as a research and teaching assistant at the University of Guelph, University of Manitoba and University of Ghana, and extensive teaching experience from the University of Guelph. She has additional research experience from single-authored peer-reviewed journal publications. Ms. Asiamah has contributed to the 2020 workforce survey analysis.

UPDATED SCHEDULE FOR DELIVERABLES

During the early stages of the project in 2019, the Sector Steering Committee and SRDC agreed to a revised staging of evaluation tasks, outputs, and reports to better meet the needs of the evaluation. The remaining deliverable dates are shown in the follow table:

Table 1 Remaining schedule of deliverables 2021-22

Proposed project deliverable / Activity title	Deliverable due date
14. Draft Evaluation Report (2020)	19-Feb-21
15. Final Evaluation Report (2020)	22-Mar-21
16. Project Presentation 2021	11-Jun-21
17. Final Project Interim Report & Final Report Outline	11-Nov-21
18. Draft Evaluation Report (2021)	14-Jan-22
19. Final Evaluation Report (2021)	18-Feb-22
20. Draft Final Project Report	15-Apr-22
21. Final Project Report	15-May-22

SECTOR STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Purpose

The Sector Steering Committee (SSC) is established for the purpose of guiding the sector-led evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy undertaken by Early Childhood Educators B.C. (ECEBC) with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training. The SSC assists the Project Manager and ECEBC in its function of governance by providing quality control of the contract deliverables, and oversight of the contractors (SRDC) engaged to complete the project. The SSC approved Terms of Reference in March 2019 that guide their governance function with committee composition, roles and responsibilities, frequency, and confidentiality agreements.

Engagement

The SSC held its inaugural meeting on February 20, 2019 in Richmond, B.C. Twenty organizations were invited to appoint representatives to participate as members. Representatives from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Project Manager, and SRDC also attended the meeting as ex-officio members of the committee without voting rights.

Composition

The following organizations have appointed a representative to participate as a member of the Sector Steering Committee:

- Aboriginal Head Start Association of B.C.
- Aboriginal Supported Child Development
- B.C. Aboriginal Child Care Society
- B.C. Association of Child Development and Intervention
- B.C. Family Child Care Association
- B.C. First Nations Head Start
- B.C. Government and Service Employees Union
- Canadian Childcare Federation
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Child Care Providers of B.C.²
- City of Surrey
- Coalition of Childcare Advocates of B.C.
- ECE Articulation Committee
- Early Childhood Educators of B.C. (ECEBC)

² Formerly the B.C. Child Care Owners Association.

- Métis Nation B.C.³
- Multi-Age Childcare Association of British Columbia
- Pacific Immigrant Resources Society
- Provincial Child Care Council
- School Age Childcare Association of B.C.
- Supported Child Development
- UBC Childcare
- Vancouver Coastal Health

Activities

To the present date, the SSC has met twice in person (February 2019 and May 2019), two times by phone (March and November 2019) and four times by Zoom (March, July, December 2020, and March 2021). The meeting in July 2020 was originally intended to be in person. It was convened via Zoom to respect recommendations to avoid in-person group events during the COVID-19 pandemic. Minutes from these meetings are available upon request. At the November 2019 meeting, the SSC reviewed and provided feedback on Interim Report #1. During the March 2020 meeting, the SSC reviewed and approved Final Benchmarking Report. During the July 2020 meeting, the SSC reviewed and approved the updated evaluation strategy and methods and tools for 2020, after a discussion of the implications of the COVID-19 global pandemic on the ECL R&R Strategy and for the evaluation.

During July and August 2020, the SSC provided two additional rounds of feedback on the 2020 Employer Survey and B.C. Child Care Workforce Survey, primarily via email. Moreover, individual members of the SSC have been extremely helpful in providing input on specific aspects of the survey by email and by phone. For example, several members assisted with pre-testing the online survey instrument and supported efforts to reach out to members of the B.C. ECL workforce during the November 2020 open invitation stage of fieldwork, to complete the survey.

At the December 2020 meeting, the SSC reviewed and provided feedback on Interim Report #2. On March 8, 2021, the committee provided feedback on an earlier draft of this report (Evaluation

³ Métis Nation BC accepted invitation to join the committee on December 5, 2019.

Report 2020). SRDC also sought to take on board several suggestions from early childhood experts Jane Beach and Dr. Barry Forer who reviewed the same earlier draft.

Next steps

SRDC anticipates finalizing the content of this report with the SSC in late March (via Zoom or a teleconference if needed). An in-person meeting on the project presentation is planned for June 2021 but will be held via Zoom if necessitated by the ongoing public health orders.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION

THEORY OF CHANGE CONSULTATIONS

Purpose

Theories of Change (ToC) help implementers and evaluators understand the implicit assumptions about causal pathways that lead to changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. According to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) staff, the goals, outcomes, and tactics of the ECL R&R Strategy are based on Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reports and other reviews of universal early care and learning systems, across Canada and in Europe (e.g., Schleicher, 2019; Productivity Commission, 2011; Watters Consulting, 2018).

While several documents set out the goals, outcomes, strategies, and tactics of the ECL R&R Strategy, less information has been released about the assumptions that guided this process. To understand the latter, SRDC undertook its initial ToC fieldwork. The theory of change included in the Interim Report #1 in 2019 was the result of key informant interviews with members of the project's government working group (GWG) and other stakeholders to capture the assumptions underlying and informing the development and implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. This information was used to confirm that the evaluation activities and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were targeted towards understanding the achievements and challenges of the ECL R&R Strategy.

SRDC previously considered this stage completed. Now, SRDC is prepared to resume efforts if needed to document new government interventions to support recruitment and retention in the COVID-19 era.⁴ If so, ToC fieldwork will use a similar protocol to the one used in 2019. The latest version was included in the evaluation methods and tools report for 2020. It will be revisited if the government introduces new measures intended to improve recruitment and retention for the ECL workforce before the final evaluation reporting in early 2022.

⁴ We use COVID-19 era to refer to the situation prevailing while the virus is still being transmitted actively in the community.

Methodology implementation

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are typically undertaken by phone. Remote data collection by phone or video conferencing would be used from 2020 onwards in accordance with pandemic-related physical distancing expectations. Potential interview participants would receive emails that invite them to participate in short interviews on the theory of change behind the new measures. The key informants would be sent copies of the existing theory of change and an interview protocol with consent information prior to the call.

The key informants would review the interview protocol and consent to participate in the interviews. With their permission, the interviews would be recorded, and notes taken. Following the interview, the notes would be transcribed and filled in with the voice recording. The recording would then be uploaded to the secure SRDC server. Per the consent form, all interviews will be deleted one year after the completion of the evaluation.

Information about the tactics, outcomes and goals would be used to update the theory of change, providing rich description to confirm or modify the theory and the assumptions about potential causal pathways. No personal information is included in the graphics or theory of change descriptions.

If the theory of change is updated, it will be included for analysis in the evaluation reports in January and April 2022 that report on changes in outcomes over time. The primary use is guiding the analysis necessary to help attribute changes occurring in KPIs to the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. As a “living document,” the theory of change will be reviewed every year and adjusted as needed with increased information about the ECL R&R Strategy and related government measures.

Next steps

SRDC awaits announcements of new government interventions to support recruitment and retention in the COVID-19 era to determine if revisiting the ToC is required.

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE CONTACT INFORMATION DATABASE

Purpose

A major component of the evaluation framework comprises repeat cross-sectional surveys of the ECL workforce in B.C. including an annual survey of “employers” combined with an annual nested survey of employees within each facility. These surveys require advance preparation of a

‘sample frame’ – a database including all the points of contact for survey outreach and invitations. This contact database is intended to perform two roles in the evaluation: it represents the sample frame for the cross-sectional surveys, and it has the potential to support comparison of the universe of operators between each year to assess the changing composition of the sector.

Methodology implementation

SRDC’s initial plan was to set up a comprehensive contact database of the child care sector workforce, including directors and operators. The database was going to be built from public and private sources and ongoing tracing of additional entries. Due to the unavailability of data sources, SRDC was only able to include child care providers from the following sources:

- Licensed child care providers receiving the Child Care Operator Funding (CCOF) – Publicly available database
- Licensed child care providers not receiving CCOF – Data held by health authorities.

Data requests for the ECE Registry were not approved due to privacy concerns with respect to sharing personal contact information without prior consent for this purpose. Not receiving access to contact data from the ECE Registry impacted the scope of the database. SRDC’s data request from local B.C. Child Care Resource and Referral Centres regarding Registered Licence-not-required (RLNR) child care centres was also not completed due to difficulties in providing these data. SRDC has continued to seek data sources that can make up for these gaps.

The database is still being updated. Requests to data suppliers such as health authorities were dispatched in the summer months of 2019 and 2020 in anticipation of data receipt for September of the same year. This was not fully successful in either year. Two health authorities in each year were either very late to deliver data or did not deliver it at all.

Data collection was intended to be intensive in the initial phase of the project, while updates would be continuous throughout the project. However, due to the delays in obtaining the data from the health authorities, the database is being updated only annually. Statistics on database contents and turnover will be released once a complete version of the database has been compiled. If this is not possible by the time of the final evaluation reports in 2022, SRDC will generate a database partially complete for some health authorities and use this for year over year comparisons of the ‘universe’ of operators, while noting shortfalls and disparities.

Challenges or limitations

The main limitation pertains to the scope of the database. Ideally, SRDC would have included the entirety of the ECL sector. Being exhaustive would have better allowed us to estimate the impact of the ECL R&R Strategy on the entirety of the sector. However, for reasons of feasibility, SRDC has had to restrict the scope of the survey sample frame to include only licensed child care providers.

Delays in obtaining data from health authorities have presented an ongoing challenge in updating the database. SRDC contacted the health authorities during the summer of 2020 to initiate the data request process. SRDC asked for data to be delivered starting September 2020 and accurate with respect to September 2020. But the time it took each health authority to complete SRDC's data request varied. Island health authority delivered contact data in November 2020, too late to influence the survey invitations, and one health authority has yet to provide any data to the project. This means that despite SRDC's efforts, data sources will not represent a snapshot of the sector at the exact same point in time each year.

Furthermore, data can only be as good as their sources. SRDC has no say in how the source databases are maintained and updated, so these contact data are only as accurate in coverage as the original providers' information. There are:

- Data inconsistencies in the way child care programs are recorded (as multiple records or same record);
- Data inconsistencies in the way child care centre names are written;
- There is a high potential for recent changes in the sector due to COVID-19 to not be reflected in the updated datasets;
- The data on maximum centre capacity will not reflect changes of staff resulting from COVID-19 mitigation strategies, such as when more staff is hired to allow staff to take sick days or because centres close more often temporarily, and so on.

Next steps

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have presented an additional challenge for the 2020 evaluation year. Four health authorities have supplied data files, with files arriving as late as mid-November 2020. SRDC has enlisted the support of MCFD to reach out to the fifth health authority but this authority has remained reluctant to share data. The information currently available on operators may be less up to date with respect to whether they are still operating in 2020 due to disruptions during the pandemic. Centres may be closing with minimal notice, re-

opening, or re-structuring rapidly as a consequence of responses to COVID-19. A best attempt to construct comparable annual databases will be undertaken during 2021 to support a final assessment of changes in operators through this tumultuous period. Any attempt at this point to compare 2019 and 2020 data is likely to generate spurious estimates of change due to data shortfalls.

ADMINISTRATIVE OUTCOMES DATABASE

Purpose

Existing administrative data provide a source of information for descriptive analysis of the pace and pattern of implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics as well as enumeration of changes being brought about by the ECL R&R Strategy in the number and characteristics of child care providers.

Methodology implementation

These (mostly) publicly compiled data cover aspects of tactic delivery, education pathways and additional means to take stock of the wide variety of operators and workers in the sector. SRDC's work with these data began when MCFD supplied data files starting in the second week of May 2020. The following data sources have been received by SRDC from different sources:

- Child Care Operating Fund Data – contact data obtained; additional data received from MCFD on May 11, 2020. These data form the bulk of the contact information database and annual provider survey data inform trends in remuneration and certifications. The provider profile survey instrument was supplied June 17, 2020.
- Start-up grant data – Aggregated data have been received from MCFD up to October 2020 including fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 year to date. The trend in start-up approvals was reported in the interim report #2 in 2020. The next dataset will be requested after the 2020/2021 fiscal year ends.
- ECE Wage Enhancement – received from MCFD on May 11, 2020. These are used to monitor implementation of this tactic. Aggregated data have been received from MCFD up to February 2020.
- Data on prototype sites – received from MCFD on June 4, 2020. These supplement CCOF data on certification for sites no longer included in CCOF.

- Child care job postings – WorkBC data from January 2017 to May 2020 was received on June 6, 2020. Vicinity Jobs provided data with job postings from multiple job boards from January 2018–April 2020 on June 2, 2020.⁵ These data are used to track changes in recruitment needs to the extent these are captured in advertised vacancies.
- ECE Registry aggregate data – received from MCFD on May 11, 2020. These data help to track changes in certifications over time.
- Aboriginal Head Start preschools – programs documented on Aboriginal Head Start Association of B.C. website. These data add to the contact information database.
- Child care centres investigation reports – downloaded from provincial health authority websites. These data are scraped to supplement the contact information database.
- ECE/training programs in B.C. – descriptive information on the programs being offered in 2020. This descriptive information is used to inform the data applications to Statistics Canada for longitudinal analysis of student transitions through ECE programming over the evaluation period.
- ECE Bursary Program – available from ECEBC. 2018, 2019, and 2020 data have been obtained. These are used to monitor implementation of this tactic.
- ECE Workforce Development Fund – available from ECEBC. 2018, 2019, and 2020 data have been obtained. These are used to monitor implementation of this tactic.
- Registered License-Not-Required providers (RLNR) – SRDC received a static snapshot from MCFD of the RLNR data the Ministry held of as of April 2020. The information did not contain email addresses making it difficult to use for the online survey invitations. As it was a one-time snapshot it is not yet possible to use it to track BC's RLNR numbers over time. An updated file from MCFD later in 2021 may permit a 2021 to 2020 comparison. In August 2020, SRDC sought to build data on from CCRR centres' counts of RLNR going back over time to 2018 and earlier. To obtain these data requires a freedom of information request. SRDC plans to submit this request towards the end of 2021 to cover the entire

⁵ Vicinity Jobs is a Canadian company based in Vancouver that undertakes big data analytics and internet search. Each week, data are collected from thousands of websites across Canada, yielding approximately 200,000 new, unique online job postings per month. Using a machine learning technique called natural language processing, Vicinity Jobs then extracts information about occupation, location, and work requirements (including skills) from each posting. Beginning in January 2018, Vicinity Jobs has collected online job postings daily, each uniquely identified on the day it is first observed. Every month, Vicinity Jobs cleans and structures this data, which includes removing duplications.

evaluation period and following the date of anticipated receipt of the final RLNR data from MCFD, when it is clearer what data gaps remain to be filled.

In addition, SRDC has requested additional administrative data sources related to new measures that may influence ECL recruitment and retention even though not formally part of the ECL R&R Strategy. These have been requested to ensure SRDC has a complete picture of the factors impacting retention and recruitment in the sector. The additional data sources received from MCFD include:

- New Spaces Fund data – This fund helps with the creation of 22,000 new child care spaces in B.C. MCFD has provided to SRDC aggregated data up to October 2020. It includes: application forms; Number of approved and non-approved/withdrawn applications; type of organization; health authority region; spaces created for each type of organization; spaces created for each age group. Type of care is not included because only licensed child cares that are public sector organizations, Indigenous governments, non-profits, or businesses and corporate companies (group licensed child care) are included. Data is reported in fiscal years so it can be asked again after the 2020/2021 fiscal year ends.

The following is a list of data sources not yet obtained by SRDC. It lists existing challenges and potential next steps:

- ECE/training programs in B.C. – take up, graduation and outcomes for different groups of students. As of December 2019, these data are now available via the Education Labour Market Longitudinal Platform linked to secondary/post-secondary records (including student loan applications, receipt, and repayment) while employment and earnings information of graduates can be linked from T1 family file (T1FF) tax records. SRDC is applying to Statistics Canada to analyze patterns of enrollment and completion alongside compositional changes in who enrolls in ECE over time and their labour market outcomes. The data are only available within a Statistics Canada Research Data Centre (RDC). SRDC has delayed this work in part because RDCs have experienced pandemic-related closures nationwide through much of 2020 due to COVID-19. Additionally, by delaying to 2021 it will be possible to report out in 2022 on trends in education participation and outcomes for the maximum period possible within the evaluation.
- Freedom of Information requests – SRDC is requesting from health authorities annual data on the number of staff covered by staffing exemption requests from licensed child care facilities granted by the authority under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, Section 16 covering child care operations broken down by staffing levels involved in the exemption, e.g., the number of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) replaced by ECE Assistants; the number of ECEs replaced by a Responsible Adult.

- The Statistics Canada Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements – also available subject to application and approval for SRDC to use an RDC. This work will be included in the application to work on ECE program participation and outcomes (above).
- Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program – investigating available documentation/evaluation from MCFD on the successor tactic: the Early Childhood Pedagogy Network.
- Updated occupational competencies for training ECE and updated ECE standards of practice – to be obtained as and when they are released publicly.
- Members of the child care workforce qualified as responsible adults – SRDC is still investigating available data.
- Unregistered License-Not-Required providers – no reliable sources identified.

With respect to additional administrative data sources related to new measures intended to influence ECL recruitment and retention in the COVID-19 era the additional data sources requested from MCFD include:

- Requests for child care spaces from essential workers – SRDC inquired about these data to Child Care Resource and Referral Programs who have redirected SRDC to MCFD.
- Temporary Emergency Fund-supported facilities and spaces April through August 2020.

Challenges or limitations

The first limitation relates to the availability of data. While SRDC recently received data requested from MCFD, other data requests have not been successful due to lack of data availability, non-response, privacy reviews and active decisions to delay analysis, depending on the request. SRDC continues to connect with the various agencies to try to secure responses from pending data requests.

A second limitation relates to quality and consistency of data. SRDC is not the primary holder of data, and as such, cannot perform checks on the quality of data released. SRDC does not control how source databases are maintained and updated by their current custodians. The quality of the data obtained relies on the quality control practices and mechanisms program managers and data custodians follow. Inconsistency in the upkeep of data sources over time especially poses challenges to SRDC's ability to track changes in KPIs. Inconsistent capture of data fields can also hamper SRDC's ability to link the different data sources by child care centre or provider. Some data can only be provided in an aggregated form, which prevents linkage reducing the utility of

the information for tracking the impact of specific tactics, and the use of the data in contribution analysis related to the theory of change.

Lastly, even for publicly available data, SRDC has not always been able to receive data from the data holder in a format friendly for data cleaning and manipulation, for example, in an Excel or CSV format. SRDC writes programs to transform these data files into useable analysis files.

Next steps

SRDC is revising its database to accommodate the received data. The aim, by the time of the final evaluation report for 2021, is for a common geographic and temporal framework across the datasets to allow SRDC to analyze changes in the composition of the sector through the full period covered by the evaluation for each health authority region. SRDC will seek to understand how these changes are driving participation in different programs and across different types of ECL provider. For instance, linking job postings to ECL providers allows SRDC to identify hiring and staffing changes across different categorizations of child care centres as well as through time. These data also provide insights on the distributional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the sector. As new data are received and the full range of eventual data becomes easier to define, SRDC is updating its analysis plan to use the supplied data to inform the ECL R&R Strategy KPIs. This plan is being implemented for the first time in analyzing KPIs using administrative data in this report. The full scope of analysis will only be possible with the full range of eventual data.

CHILD CARE WORKFORCE CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY

Purpose

The cross-sectional survey represents one of the main evaluation activities. It seeks to measure the success of the ECL R&R Strategy in making progress on its ten-year goals and three-year outcomes by providing data on the majority of the evaluation's KPIs. It also attempts to document aspects of implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. The target sample for the survey includes operators, anyone working in child care (i.e., working directly with children or supervising staff who work directly with children); administrative staff who can provide centre staffing information, and certified ECEs/ECEAs not currently working in child care.⁶

⁶ ECEs/ECEAs not currently working in child care includes those working outside the sector as well as those working with children in the school system and StrongStart.

Methodology implementation

In 2019, the survey was implemented in two stages. In the first stage, SRDC used a sample frame it developed from public data on operators' contact information to initiate a "nested" survey. It is nested in the sense that employers (child care centre directors, owners, managers, and owner/operators) were asked not only to complete the survey themselves but also to forward the survey invitation to members of their staff.⁷ The survey was constructed in such a way that the responses of operators could be linked to the responses of their employees to build a comprehensive picture of the impact of the ECL R&R Strategy on each participating child care workplace in B.C. In the second stage, SRDC issued an open invitation to the survey, because: (a) not every operator would complete or forward the first stage invitation; (b) not every staff member would complete the survey forwarded in the first stage by their employer; (c) not every operator was in the database; and (d) ECEs and ECEAs not working in child care could not be reached by the first stage approach as MCFD could not release ECE registry contact information for survey purposes. The open invitation was dispatched through at least 41 communications from 11 different child care organizations using social media and newsletters as well as email invitations and website publicity, including 15 Facebook and 4 Instagram posts, 9 Tweets, 11 e-blast emails, 2 newsletters, and a promotion as part of the vendors alley at an online child care conference.

The use of a sample frame in the survey's first stage brought advantages in that SRDC could personalize invitations, provide survey links unique to each workplace, determine the characteristics of the operators who responded and who did not, and control for nonresponse using this information. SRDC also knew to whom to send reminders. The second stage comprised an open, public call for responses to engage those eligible but not captured in Stage 1, without the advantages of a sample frame. However, the open call could have much wider circulation and was simpler to administer: it did not require customized operator-unique survey links. Thus, the second stage invitation could be posted publicly and distributed in ways that were likely to reach many more members of the province's ECL workforce.

The 2020 survey methodology resembles the approach in 2019. However, SRDC has included three major changes to improve data quality, respondent experience, and increase the survey's response rate:

- The data collection is broken down even more than in 2019, into two separate surveys. First, workplace-level data, previously collected from operators, is being collected through an "employer" survey. Each child care centre receives an online form that can be filled out by multiple staff within their organization as required in relation to aggregate (not personal)

⁷ The "employer" respondent was the person or people at each childcare workplace responsible for hiring and overall management of staff, the budget, setting of fees and so on.

data on those employed there. The form is designed to resemble reporting forms required by licensing and government programs so that centres can refer to already filled-out forms in their centres. With only one form per centre that all representatives can see, there should be less scope for duplication and inconsistency. The second “workforce” survey resembles the cross-sectional workforce survey implemented with the same methodology in 2019 but with an updated survey instrument and invitation process.

- The workforce survey invitation is first sent out to all participants in the 2019 cross-sectional workforce survey who agreed to be contacted in the future: 1,803 of 2,728 gave such consent. This process was intended to improve the survey’s response and allows SRDC to conduct longitudinal analysis that measures changes year-over-year.⁸ SRDC also sent the invitation to ECL professionals who volunteered their contact information online before and after an August 2020 webinar on evaluation benchmarking results. The invitation was also sent out to employers – inviting them to complete the survey and forward the invitation to their staff. Owner-operators of licenced workplaces are asked to complete the cross-sectional workforce survey (as well as the employer survey if they have employees), but only for themselves. Then finally, the open invitation is made available via project partners, sector stakeholders and social media.
- The final survey instruments included new sections of questions relating to the influences of the COVID-19 pandemic and responses to the pandemic. Data from the previous year’s responses were also embedded into the workforce survey when completed by the same respondents, to reduce their survey burden.

SRDC collected feedback on the survey instrument from the SSC committee through Google Sheets. This process reduced the need to merge different documents and simplified the process for all reviewers by making all reviewer comments visible, reducing the need for them to duplicate similar comments provided by earlier reviewers.

SRDC included a first draft of the 2020 Workforce and Employer surveys as part of the deliverable #11 Evaluation Methods and Tools report. In August 2020, SRDC received two rounds of feedback from SSC. Since the SSC was highly involved in the development of the survey in 2019, most of the feedback SRDC received involved the new COVID-19 questions and included:

⁸ Cross-sectional analysis most effectively takes the pulse of the sector as a whole in each year (while acknowledging sample exclusions). It provides a basis for considering the influence of the ECL R&R strategy on KPIs given its tactics are intended to change patterns of entry into and exit from the workforce (and thus the population from which the sample is drawn). Nonetheless, longitudinal analyses shed light on those entry and exit processes and individual's ongoing experiences. SRDC will include longitudinal analysis in the Final Project Interim Report in November 2021.

- Suggestions to better accommodate questions for centres that have closed multiple times due to COVID-19
- How to collect data to determine the impact of COVID-19 on home-based providers
- How to distinguish between hazard pay and the wage enhancement.

The wording in these questions was altered following suggestions from the SSC members.

The employer survey was pre-tested in mid-August by eight SRDC staff unfamiliar with the survey as well as the survey team. The workforce survey was pre-tested in mid-September by nine SRDC staff unfamiliar with the survey as well as the survey team. SRDC conducted simulation tests with both surveys to test the intended survey branching for different sample groups ahead of fielding them (testing 100 response paths per survey).

The fielded versions of the employer and workforce surveys are included as Appendices A and B, respectively. Each respondent was assured they could request assistance to complete the survey via a toll-free line and/or email to SRDC. They were permitted to complete the same survey via telephone or request a customized paper survey. The online instrument was designed fully accessible via smartphones and/or tablets. Respondents' progress with the survey was saved at each point to allow them to take a break and resume provided they returned using the same link they received earlier using the same device. Those sent a direct invitation by SRDC received reminder emails from SRDC if they had not started or only partially completed the survey.

SRDC implemented a survey communication plan it developed with ECEBC to increase survey engagement:

- SRDC sent two e-mails to employers (plus reminders) about the Employer Survey and about the Workforce Survey.
- ECEBC engaged SSC members to support communications efforts for both the employer and workforce survey.

For 2020, survey invitations were enhanced using best practices from behavioural insights to increase survey participation and response rates (see, for example, Stutter, 2019). The information was simplified to ensure it is easier to understand. Employers did not receive an incentive for participating in the survey. However, the employers' organizations that participated were each entered into a draw for a \$500 gift card for Wintergreens or Strong Nations.

Workforce survey participants including ECE/ECEAs not currently working in child care could choose one of five free professional development activities offered online. The survey was set up

so that participants were re-directed to the registration pages for these activities upon completing the survey.

By default, SRDC collects survey data using its Voxco system. To reduce the incidence of glitches and delays experienced by survey respondents in 2019, SRDC switched to a new survey platform: Qualtrics. This switch, specifically for this year's evaluation surveys for this project, appears to have reduced respondent complaints markedly. The final versions of the survey instruments are available as appendices A and B to this report.

The surveys closed on November 24, 2020. Since early December 2020, SRDC has been cleaning and tabulating the data to ensure data quality and integrity. This process includes the rigorous examination of any possible logical errors, measurement errors (validity and reliability) and sampling errors. SRDC has coded the open-ended and "other specify" questions to produce a sortable Excel file capturing all verbatim responses to the open-ended and "other specify" questions, along with key demographic information. This allows extraction of verbatim responses from specific demographic groups.

Labels have been added to each survey question/variable and the combined data has been thoroughly checked by running quality control and consistency checks. Only once SRDC was confident of the integrity of the data, did it begin to analyze and link to earlier surveys.

Not every questionnaire is completed without errors. Some responses to questions are missing, incomplete, or incorrect. While several automated verifications are built into the computer program, not all errors can be eliminated. Therefore, prior to analysis, checks to identify data anomalies – missing, outliers, duplicate, invalid, or inconsistent entries – are applied to the data. As needed, edits and or imputations have been made to the data and documented in data reports. At the completion of coding and data edits, the analysis file was created with assigned variable labels and variable value formats for easy use of the data. Where needed, variables have been derived for the analysis.

SRDC performs analysis on anonymized files (i.e., personal identifiers replaced with anonymous unique sample IDs) which in turn are used to generate results in aggregate form, consisting of frequency tables and/or crosstabulations on each of the KPI topics explored by the survey. KPIs are calculated as appropriate at the level of operator and employees. All analyses and reports using the collected data are rigorously reviewed and fact checked.

SRDC's analyses of each years' survey are released in the draft evaluation reports in the January following each survey wave. From this report onwards, evaluation reports include estimates of changes seen in the KPIs derived from the previous year's survey data.

Challenges or limitations

The scale of the survey inevitably presents challenges due to the large amount of activity required of those programming, implementing, and responding to it. A high volume of activity in a short time period can raise the chances that errors arise or go unnoticed. In particular, the survey's broad target population (anyone working in the ECL sector and ECEs/ECEAs not currently working in child care) posed several challenges to the production of a common instrument. Employment characteristics to be captured across the different types of child care centres vary significantly. SRDC consulted with stakeholders and engaged more than 20 survey testers to ensure that the different survey pathways were appropriate for each group. One programming error in 2020 resulted in new respondents being directed past questions on the duration of tenure in their current position. Since 2020 job tenure estimates are only available for 2019 respondents, 2020 estimates may be biased and are not included in this report. This will be remedied in the 2021 survey. Years of experience working in the ECL sector was still captured (Table 5 below).

Changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic presented another challenge for the 2020 surveys. The ECL R&R Strategy will likely seem less salient as a survey topic in 2020 than in 2019. SRDC has emphasized the survey's questions on the effects COVID-19 in an effort to increase the survey's relevance. This pandemic has had wide-reaching effects on many aspects of the target population including their employment, financial situation, emotional well-being, and health. The amount of information from news, social media, and government authorities, both specific to the ECL sector and in general, might also have the impact of overwhelming people making them less willing to participate in a survey. It is possible that adhering to new health guidelines and protocols present additional participation challenges due to changes in ECL professionals' workload, time availability and overall working conditions. Additionally, restrictions and physical distancing measures have brought an increased use of online platforms across all sectors. There may be survey fatigue due to COVID-19. Members of the ECL workforce under a lot of stress might have less time to participate in the survey.

SRDC did not receive additional data on licensed operators from two health authorities in time to update its contact database used for emailing survey invitations and did not receive data at all from one of them which could impact the scale of responses (addresses may be more outdated than usual in the COVID-19 era). A related challenge is that centres have closed at short notice or people have retired. If invitees are not working in the sector currently, they may think that they are not eligible to participate even though survey eligibility was defined in the invitations and instructions.

Profile of respondents

SRDC sent emails inviting 2,104 employers to complete the employer survey. The employer survey was fully completed by 434 employers with a further 42 answering at least 70 per cent of the questions. In total, SRDC considers 463 employer responses useable in the analysis (Table 2) of the 624 who initiated the survey. The workforce survey was completed by 2,674 respondents.⁹ However, there were a number of ineligible responses. SRDC considers 2,102 responses useable in the analysis, against a criterion of 70 per cent or more of the expected answers being completed. As a point of reference, in 2019 the survey link was followed 4,041 times but the total number of useable responses to the combined employer and workforce survey was 2,728 by the time the survey closed on November 18, 2019.

The workforce survey results are presented in this report for broad categories of worker. Managers and Directors of licensed centre-based care are reported as *Owner-operators* and other employees as *Centre ECL workers*. Given the very low participation of Registered Licence not Required, Unregistered Licence not Required and In-child's-own Home providers, these responses are reported grouped together with those of Licensed Family Child Care under the label *Home Child Care Providers (HCP)*. Certified ECE/ECEAs no longer working in the child care sector form their own category. A glossary of terms appears as Appendix C.

⁹ Emails were sent to 1,866 individual members of the workforce and 4,158 workplace contacts in the contact information data base asking the recipient to forward to employees (if any). Because the invitation was further dispatched via an open invitation using social media, a response rate cannot be estimated.

Table 2 Number and percentage of survey respondents by sample and type of child care organization 2020, including workforce survey percentages for 2019

	Workforce survey (Individual level)		Employer survey (Organization level)	
	2020 No.	2019 %	2020 No.	2019 %
Licensed Child Care Centre, Pre-school, or After-school Programs ("Centre ECL")	1,377	74%	76%	463 100%
Licensed Family Child Care	466	17%	15%	- -
Registered Licence Not Required	0	0%	0%	- -
Unregistered Licence Not Required	0	0%	0%	- -
In-child's-own Home	7	0%	0%	- -
ECEs not working in child care	252	9%	8%	- -
Total (N)	2,102	100%	100%	463 100%

Workforce characteristics

Broadly the survey sample characteristics in 2020 were very similar to those in 2019. In 2020, an identical proportion of the workforce respondents to the 2019 survey, 96 per cent, were female (Table 3). The age distribution was also the same to within two percentage points. However, both the 2019 and 2020 samples are older than the underlying population reported from the 2016 Census in the benchmarking report, where 38 per cent of ECE/A+s and 40.4 per cent of HCP+s were aged 45 or older.

A small proportion of respondents identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit (7 per cent) but this represented an increase over 2019's 5 per cent. Only 3 per cent of the sample in 2020 as in 2019 reported having a disability.

Slightly fewer in 2020 than in 2019 (31 versus 34 per cent of the sample) were born outside Canada. This proportion was again higher among HCPs (37 per cent). The proportion of ECEs no longer working in child care born outside Canada was much higher in 2020 (37 versus 27 per cent). This is the first of several differences that arise for this group maybe due to compositional changes in the population in scope during a disruptive year (i.e., possibly more immigrant ECEs left their work in child care over the year) and possibly due to differences in who chose to respondent to SRDC's survey.

Table 3 Demographic characteristics (workforce survey) including totals for 2019

	Owner-operators	2020			2019	
		Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care	Total	Total
Female	96%	95%	97%	96%	96%	96%
Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit	4%	6%	4%	8%	7%	5%
Experience disability	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Born outside Canada	31%	28%	37%	37%	31%	34%
Age						
20-24	0%	7%	1%	4%	4%	4%
25-29	2%	12%	2%	10%	8%	8%
30-34	8%	12%	6%	13%	10%	10%
35-39	13%	14%	9%	14%	13%	13%
40-44	16%	11%	15%	17%	14%	14%
45-49	19%	14%	21%	13%	16%	14%
50 or older	42%	29%	46%	28%	35%	37%

When it came to working conditions (Table 4) again, as for 2019, 96 per cent of respondents reported permanent positions. Similar proportions of Centre ECL workers in 2020 worked as substitutes or casual workers as in 2019, roughly three times the rate among owner-operators.¹⁰ Among Centre ECL workers, 21 per cent were unionized, an identical proportion to 2019. Compared to 2019, respondents in 2020 were somewhat less likely to report being engaged in different types of program. In other words, in 2019 workers often reported working in two or more different types of program, but in 2020 it was less common to report working in different program types and the share with experience in each program type dropped. Possibly this

¹⁰ Possibly, some owner-operators were interpreting the question to indicate that their work *directly with children* was on an on-call or substitute basis, not their employment contract per se.

reflects real changes in cross-program participation due to COVID restrictions, or it maybe simply reflect a change in respondents' willingness to select more than one option.

Table 5 indicates duration of experience in early care and learning varied across the respondent groups. Owner-operators were the most experienced with 53 per cent reporting 16 or more years experience working in the sector, up from 47 per cent in 2019. On the other hand, Centre ECL workers reported a wider range of work experience than the other groups: similar to their reported experience in 2019. For instance, 31 per cent of Centre ECL workers reported five or fewer years of experience in the ECL sector, at least 15 percentage points higher than other groups still in the ECL workforce. The experience of ECEs not working in childcare who responded to the 2020 survey shifted, with more – 25 per cent – with just one to five years experience and only 30 per cent with 16 or more years. The equivalent percentages in 2019 were 15 and 40 per cent. This is another indication that the composition of those in this group responding to the survey changed over the year.

Table 4 Selected employment characteristics of respondents who work in licensed centres, preschools, and before-and-after school care (workforce survey)

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	Total
Job tenure			
Permanent	98%	96%	96%
Temporary	0%	3%	2%
Casual or substitute	3%	9%	7%
Unionized	1%	21%	14%
Count in staff-to-child ratio	93%	95%	93%
Type of program			
Group care, under 3 years old	20%	28%	25%
Group care, 2.5 years to school age	31%	31%	31%
Group care, school age (before-and-after school program)	20%	15%	16%
Preschool, 2.5 years to school age	21%	24%	23%
Multi-age	15%	7%	10%
Occasional care	1%	0%	1%
Other	2%	3%	3%

Table 5 Proportion of respondents by years of experience in the early care and learning sector (workforce survey)

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	ECEs not working in child care	Total
Less than one year	1%	4%	0%	6%	3%
One to three years	4%	15%	8%	13%	11%
Four to five years	7%	12%	7%	12%	10%
Six to ten years	18%	23%	17%	23%	21%
Eleven to fifteen years	16%	16%	21%	15%	17%
Sixteen years or more	53%	30%	46%	30%	39%

Employer characteristics

Table 6 summarizes the types of programs and businesses captured in the employer survey. There is a drop in 2020 in the number of multi-age programs. This is in part by design as the 2020 employer survey did not target solo operators working from home, since they would have no employees, when these were included in the 2019 survey organization-level questions. The shares of private businesses among organization types was, however, little changed in 2020 compared to 2019. Employers responding in 2020 represented all health authorities in B.C. (Figure 1) in similar proportions (+/- 4 percentage points) to those observed in 2019.

The employers represented a variety of centre sizes. According to current staff information provided by employers, we estimate the organizations reported in the employer survey included at least 4,256 ECL professionals in B.C. (Table 7), in currently filled positions. The proportion of positions reported vacant has increased slightly since 2019 – up from 6.6 to 8.1 per cent. Among full-time positions vacancies increased from 5.3 to 7.4 per cent. Figure 2 shows the number of full-time and part-time staff reported by employers in each health authority region. The roles of staff used in the report were defined in the employer survey as follows:

- **ECL worker** – a person who has primary responsibility for a group of children. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE;
- **Supervisor** – a person who has responsibility for a group of children and also has supervisory responsibility for ECL workers. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE;

- **Manager** – a person with management duties (which can include hiring, payroll, performance reviews, compliance with licensing requirements, etc.). This person has administrative duties and child care duties;
- **Director/Administrative Director** – refers to a person who has management or administrative duties only.

Table 6 Employers' types of programs and businesses (employer survey)

Type of program	Percentage of organizations	
	2019	2020
Group care, under 3 years old	33%	31%
Group care, 2.5 years to school age	49%	54%
Group care, school age (before-and-after school program)	32%	38%
Preschool, 2.5 years to school age	30%	35%
Multi-age ¹¹	30%	13%
Occasional care	4%	2%
All of the above	2%	0%
Other	6%	0%
Type of organization		
Private business	57%	53%
Not-for-profit	37%	39%
Operated by school	5%	3%
Operated by First Nations or Indigenous community or organization	3%	2%
Other	5%	3%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

¹¹ In 2019, solo in-home operators were included in the cross-section survey questions for organizations. In 2020, SRDC split the cross-sectional survey into two surveys: employer and workforce. Solo operators were invited to complete the workforce survey but not the employer survey because they were not 'employers': they did not have employees.

Figure 1 Employers organizations by health authority region

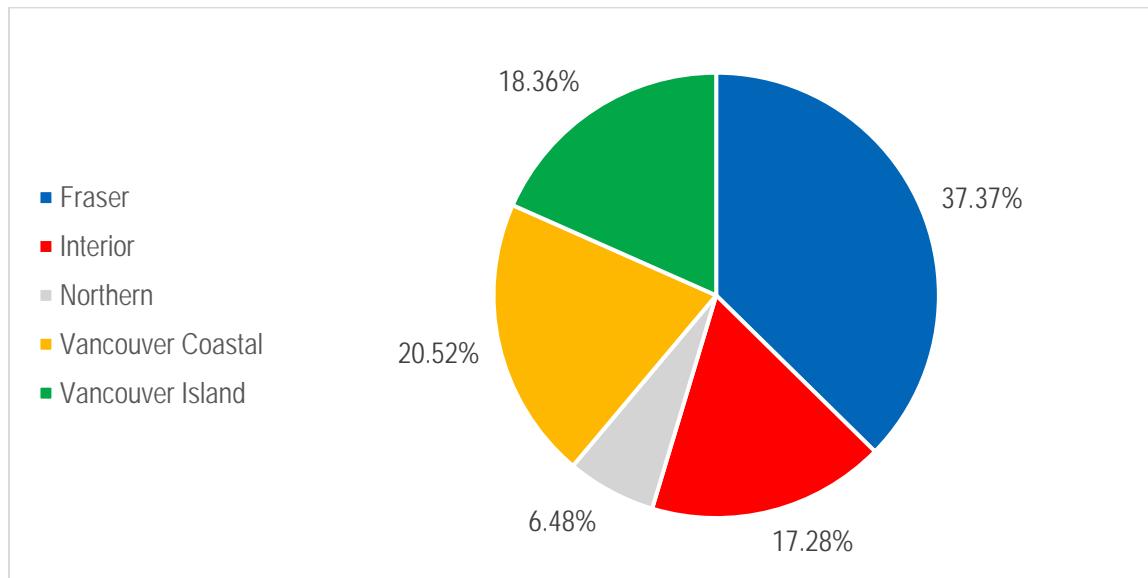
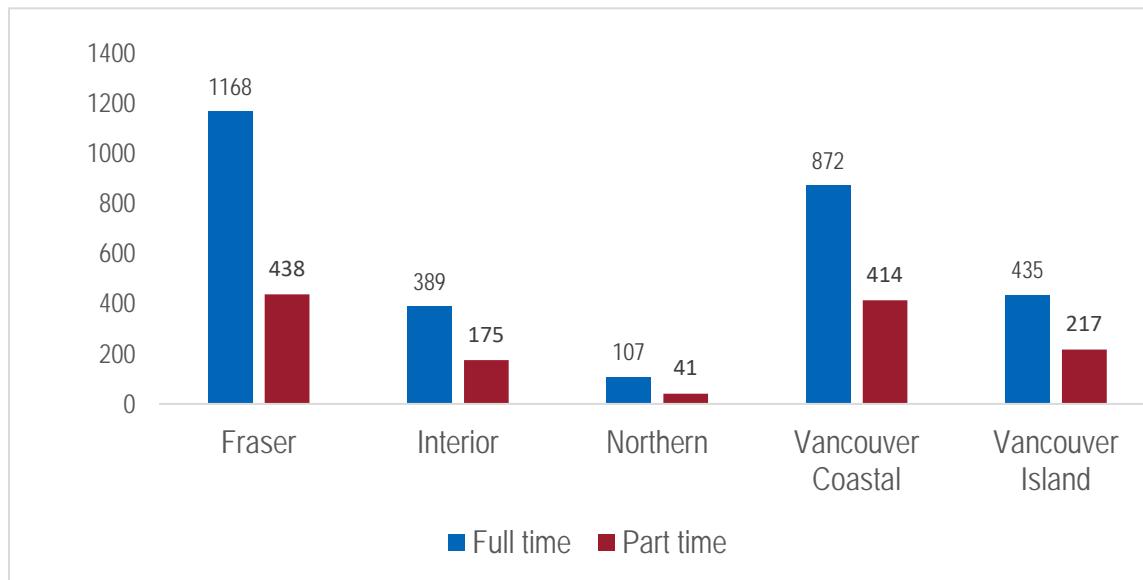


Table 7 Number of staff reported in employers survey, by position

	Full-time		Part-time	
	Filled	Vacant	Filled	Vacant
ECL workers	1882	202	1027	130
Supervisor	469	25	73	2
Manager	443	9	97	1
Director	177	3	88	2
Total	2971	239	1285	135

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Figure 2 Number of staff reported by employers in employer survey by health authority region



Source: SRDC employer survey.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Purpose

SRDC developed a survey instrument to measure whether public opinion regarding the ECL profession is changing over the duration of the evaluation period, both from the perspective of the general public, and of people making decisions with regard to their own career. Specifically, SRDC hopes to determine whether public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of ECL professionals is improving, and whether the value B.C. residents place on those engaged in ECL as a career and the viability and sustainability of the workforce ECL is increasing over time. The surveys are fielded in 2019 and 2022 to capture how aware the public is of the effect of other changes in public policy with respect to the ECL workforce, such as increased participation in ECL education and professional development. Similarly, by comparing responses of successive cross-sections of emerging adults and others looking at a career change between survey waves, SRDC hopes to determine whether interest in pursuing a career in ECL is increasing over time.

Methodology implementation

The target group for the public opinion survey is a general population sample of B.C. residents aged 18 and older. SRDC also developed an accompanying survey targeted to emerging adults (under 25 years old) and to adults 25 and over who are looking for a career change.

SRDC contracted Maru/Matchbox to implement the survey and commissioned a proprietary population-representative survey of British Columbians aged 13+ years. Maru/Matchbox is responsible for all aspects of data collection, including programming the survey, and data cleaning and processing. SRDC receives quality checks on the survey data, and receives anonymized data files after each wave, in SPSS or CSV format.

The first survey was undertaken in May 2019 to produce benchmark measures included in the Benchmarking Report. The next survey is currently scheduled for early 2022 and will be used to capture change over time. The far-reaching impacts of COVID-19 on public perceptions of work in ECL suggest that a mid-way survey in 2020 would have been a useful addition to the evaluation data collection. Unfortunately, there were insufficient resources for a full 2020 survey. Instead, SRDC asked Maru/Matchbox to include two questions specific to ECL work in a national survey conducted in May 2020.¹² The results of these questions are included in results section of this report for KPI 13. They provide context to the impact of COVID-19 on public

¹² SRDC was able to insert two questions on a Maru/Matchbox national panel survey that provide a preliminary take on how public perceptions of ECL work has changed. The survey fielded in May 2020 asked:

The pandemic has raised the profile of many types of workers. We are interested on your opinion of work in child care.

1. Please indicate how strongly you agree with the following statements:

Child care workers play a vital role in the economy because they support others to work.

Child care workers play a vital role in children's learning and development.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Not sure
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

2. Compared to before the pandemic, do you value the work done by child care workers...

- A lot more*
- A bit more*
- The same*
- A bit less*
- A lot less*

perceptions of ECL work. Moreover, the 2020 cross-sectional workforce survey also included a question that sought to measure the extent to which members of the ECL workforce believed public perception of ECL work has changed due to the pandemic. This is reported in the results for KPI 12.

SRDC hypothesizes that public confidence regarding ECL will improve as a result of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics intended to increase the percentage of the workforce holding certifications and enhanced competencies. In other words, after three years, SRDC expects more among the general public to consider ECL as a profession that is valued, viable and sustainable. Among those considering their career options, therefore, ECL is expected to be considered an appealing career more frequently in 2022 than in 2019. An analysis plan will be developed to be able to determine the level of baseline public confidence, and of the change that took place over time. The detailed plan will be described in the final project interim report and final report outline in 2021.

The results of the initial public opinion survey were included in the final benchmarking report released in 2020. However, the final opinion survey analysis will only be possible following the second survey in 2022 and thus will appear in the final evaluation report in 2022.

Challenges or limitations

As with any survey, there is a potential risk of selection bias, where the sample obtained is not representative of the general population. SRDC sought to mitigate this issue by using the services of Maru/Matchbox, who hold a panel sample representative of the population. In addition, the 13-17 years old sample can be surveyed via their parents. That is, Maru/Matchbox ask a parent who is part of the panel to pass the survey to their child aged 13-17. There is a small risk that the parent will either refuse to pass the survey to their child or fill the survey on their child's behalf. In addition, since the parent may have an influence on the child's choice of career, and the child's responses will not necessarily be hidden from the parent, there is a risk of social desirability bias on the part of the child. This means the child might answer questions based on what they think their parents want to hear, rather than based on their own opinions. The characteristics of respondents (reported in the final benchmarking report) appeared balanced, but ultimately such sources of bias in 2019 and 2022 responses cannot be ruled out.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses an additional challenge to the original plan for measuring changes in public perceptions of ECL work. Responses to COVID-19 have generated an unusually high level of coverage for issues related to ECL, not least B.C.'s designation of members of the ECL workforces as essential in some contexts. Plausibly the views of the public on what ECL professionals do and on the attractiveness of working in ECL has changed and it would be helpful to understand more broadly the extent to which the public considers different aspects of

ECL essential. As the influence of COVID-19 responses on these perspectives was not captured by a survey in 2020, it may be difficult to tease out by 2022 any residual influence of how COVID-19 responses shaped public opinions in 2020 from the influence of government tactics to make working in the sector more attractive. If there has been any decline in interest in ECL as a career, a survey in 2020 may also have been important for informing decisions on measures that might work best to improve the situation.

SRDC is aware of the challenges imposed by not implementing an additional wave of the survey in 2020 and will take into consideration these challenges when analyzing the results of the final survey wave. It will investigate the option of adding questions related to COVID-19 into the final survey.

SOCIAL AND NEWS MEDIA MONITORING

Purpose

SRDC sought a mechanism to systematically collect results and analytics from a daily review of B.C.-relevant child care-related posts and compilation of news article data for content analysis. This activity supports tracking of perceptions among thought leaders and mass media of employment in ECL as a career choice, and sentiments that ECL professionals implement high standards of care and education. In turn, these contribute to measures for two key performance indicators:

- Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector (KPI 12); and
- Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in the general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents (KPI 13).

Along with data from the cross-sectional survey of the ECL workforce and public opinion survey, the primary goal for social and media monitoring was to answer the broader evaluation questions concerning the direct and indirect effects of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy on public confidence in the sector and preferences among British Columbians to work in it. A secondary purpose is to help keep the evaluation team up to speed on developments and initiatives province-wide and how they are being communicated to the public.

There are typically two stages to the process. Social monitoring is the collection of social data. Social listening is the analysis of that data to identify trends and answer questions.

Methodology implementation

SRDC developed a Boolean search phrase containing key words and variants and entered this into the Talkwalker platform. Although Talkwalker has access to 10 social networks and 150 million websites, the extracted content is still limited by privacy restrictions. Data exported from Talkwalker do not contain any Facebook or Instagram posts and are limited to posts from news media, blogs, forums, press releases, other websites, and Twitter. Because Talkwalker does not export the entirety of the posts captured, SRDC separately scrapes the URLs that are identified by Talkwalker. Once the URLs are scraped, SRDC undertakes a content and sentiment analysis.

SRDC has added a second Boolean search to tag pandemic-related posts in order to identify any changes in sentiment that can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. This search phrase is similar to the original search phrase, but contains the additional terms shown at the base of Box 2.

The data collected from Talkwalker will be available to SRDC over three years and updated constantly. Information collected is public, by definition, so there are no privacy or confidentiality issues to address.

SRDC initially sub-contracted the University of Ottawa's Education Policy Research Initiative to assist with the web scraping process. John Sergeant has now more formally joined the SRDC evaluation team (see report section on SRDC staff responsible) and is using a Python program to copy the HTML code from each Talkwalker identified web page and extract the relevant text.

SRDC first scrapes all of the content from the URLs that TalkWalker compiles each month based on the Boolean search. In order to narrow down the posts collected to only those relevant to the KPIs, SRDC manually identifies common KPI-related words from the posts and create a filter in Excel to identify relevant posts.

The tools to support the “social listening” phase, when the collected media data will be analyzed to answer research questions, are well-established in social science research as they have been developed for content analysis and other types of qualitative data analysis. SRDC regularly uses software such as NVivo to code qualitative data. SRDC is working to develop an efficient model for the analysis, given the volume of social and news media being collected. This process is intended to include sentiment analysis, which will assign a sentiment score to each post, and it can include a qualitative analysis, if this can be done efficiently to highlight common themes that emerge from the data. The sentiment analysis AI in Talkwalker did not meet the needs of the project, since it assigns sentiment scores based on entire posts rather than specific sentences. SRDC continues to research other options for sentiment analysis, and it will undertake a qualitative content analysis if no suitable alternative is found.

SRDC has not yet reported analysis of social listening due to issues described in the benchmarking report that need to be resolved, including the existing BOOLEAN search capturing posts that are unrelated to the KPIs, and the limitations with TalkWalker's built-in AI sentiment analysis. SRDC is confident that solutions can be implemented but has postponed the work during 2020 to free up resources for additional development work with other evaluation tools necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It will return to solving the social listening challenges in 2021 when available software options are likely also to have improved and/or be available at lower cost.

Box 2: Current Boolean search terms for social and news media posts

("BC" OR "B.C." OR "British Columbia" OR "Abbotsford" OR "Armstrong" OR "Burnaby" OR "Campbell River" OR "Castlegar" OR "Chilliwack" OR "Colwood" OR "Coquitlam" OR "Cranbrook" OR "Dawson Creek" OR "Delta" OR "Enderby" OR "Fernie" OR "Fort St. John" OR "Grand Forks" OR "Greenwood" OR "Kamloops" OR "Kelowna" OR "Langford" OR "Langley" OR "Maple Ridge" OR "Merritt" OR "Nanaimo" OR "New Westminster" OR "North Vancouver" OR "Parksville" OR "Penticton" OR "Pitt Meadows" OR "Port Alberni" OR "Port Coquitlam" OR "Port Moody" OR "Powell River" OR "Prince George" OR "Prince Rupert" OR "Quesnel" OR "Revelstoke" OR "Richmond" OR "Rossland" OR "Salmon Arm" OR "Surrey" OR "Terrace" OR "Vancouver" OR "West Kelowna" OR "White Rock" OR "Williams Lake" OR "100 Mile House" OR "Barriere" OR "Central Saanich" OR "Chetwynd" OR "Clearwater" OR "Coldstream" OR "Elkford" OR "Esquimalt" OR "Fort St. James" OR "Highlands" OR "Hudson's Hope" OR "Invermere" OR "Kitimat" OR "Lake Country" OR "Langley" OR "Lantzville" OR "Lillooet" OR "Logan Lake" OR "Metchosin" OR "New Hazelton" OR "North Cowichan" OR "North Saanich" OR "North Vancouver" OR "Northern Rockies" OR "Oak Bay" OR "Peachland" OR "Port Edward" OR "Port Hardy" OR "Saanich" OR "Sechelt" OR "Sicamous" OR "Sooke" OR "Spallumcheen" OR "Sparwood" OR "Squamish" OR "Stewart" OR "Summerland" OR "Tofino" OR "Tumbler Ridge" OR "Ucluelet" OR "Vanderhoof" OR "Wells" OR "West Vancouver" OR "Sechelt Indian Government District" OR "Bowen Island" OR "Jumbo Glacier" OR "Sun Peaks" OR "Whistler" OR "Comox" OR "Creston" OR "Gibsons" OR "Ladysmith" OR "Lake Cowichan" OR "Oliver" OR "Osoyoos" OR "Port McNeill" OR "Princeton" OR "Qualicum Beach" OR "Sidney" OR "Smithers" OR "View Royal" OR "Alert Bay" OR "Ammore" OR "Ashcroft" OR "Belcarra" OR "Burns Lake" OR "Cache Creek" OR "Canal Flats" OR "Cumberland" OR "Fraser Lake" OR "Fruitvale" OR "Gold River" OR "Granisle" OR "Harrison Hot Springs" OR "Hazelton" OR "Kaslo" OR "Keremeos" OR "Lions Bay" OR "Lumby" OR "Lytton" OR "Masset" OR "McBride" OR "Midway" OR "Montrose" OR "Nakusp" OR "New Denver" OR "Pemberton" OR "Port Alice" OR "Port Clements" OR "Pouce Coupe" OR "Queen Charlotte" OR "Radium Hot Springs" OR "Salmo" OR "Sayward" OR "Silverton" OR "Slocan" OR "Tahsis" OR "Telkwa" OR "Valemount" OR "Warfield" OR "Zeballos") AND (childcare~ OR "early care" OR "early learning" OR "early childhood" OR daycare OR dayhome OR "ECE" OR "childcare~ assistant" OR multi-age OR "license-not-required" OR "LNR" OR "before-school care" OR "before school care" OR "after school care" OR "after-school care" OR pre-school OR preschool OR "child's own home") NEAR (worker~ OR staff OR carer~ OR educator~ OR quality OR ECE OR career OR training OR provider~ OR standard~) lang:en AND sourcegeo:ca¹³

¹³ It also includes the following exclusions, word permutation selected to minimize accidental inclusion of non-ECL workforce related posts: "is survived by" OR rent OR barking OR STEM OR obituary OR "bore witness" OR "has died" OR hospice OR salmonella OR cancer OR SARS OR hypertension OR osteoarthritis OR pneumon* OR staphylococcus OR difficile OR enterococci OR fasciitis OR tuberculosis OR "development application submitted" OR hospitalization OR criminalized OR "snow day" OR "snow days" OR ("Canucks" AND "Rogers") OR fermented OR charcoal OR ("BC Lions" AND CFL) OR ("B.C. Lions" AND CFL) OR "fashion show" OR panhandl* OR "safe drinking" OR "lead-tainted" OR "digital health solution" OR appurtenances OR laminat* OR vaxxer OR "foreign court" OR

Box 2 (cont'd)

Additional COVID-19 related search adds:

AND (COVID~ OR coronavirus~ OR pandemic OR essential)¹⁴

Since SRDC has already captured historical data covering the full period from before the ECL R&R Strategy was implemented, it will produce a baseline assessment for the sentiment and content analysis once the data and sentiment analysis issues have been resolved. SRDC plans to report on trends in these data to inform analysis of KPI 13 in the final evaluation report.

Challenges or limitations

The web scraping process has revealed some additional limitations. Some webpages have security features that are designed to prevent the data from being automatically scraped. Other barriers include paywalls or login screens that prevent the Python code from accessing the content of posts. The initial trial of 4,348 URLs from TalkWalker-identified posts between April 2018 and February 2020 found 1,018 URLs could not be scraped due to security features. An additional 46 URLs were not scraped due to reasons including server errors, dead links, or a site being blocked by a virus scanner. Twitter's terms of service prevent tweets from being scraped, so SRDC is relying on TalkWalker's exports of tweets for this content, which captures the initial tweet or retweet but not any replies. SRDC is also still refining the Python code that will be used to scrape each webpage to ensure that all relevant text is captured and unrelated text is minimized.

"foreign courts" OR holocaust OR "targeted shooting" OR morel OR hydrocarbon OR "fracking operation" OR "fossil fuels" OR "fossil-fuel" OR "firearms" OR quarantine OR CMHC OR "Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation" OR equalization OR overdos* OR syringe* OR liquefaction OR massacre OR "opioid addiction" OR "hot car" OR morphine OR "voting age" OR "sexual violence" OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual-violence" OR "sex assault" OR pipeline*.

¹⁴ The exclusions are also the same as for the original search phrase in the previous footnote, but do not contain the terms "quarantine" or "hospitalization."

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND CASE STUDIES

Purpose

The purpose of the **case studies** is to provide detailed understanding and rich information about each of the six centres that have agreed to participate in this component of the evaluation. The case studies provide insight into how the ECL R&R Strategy is working within real-world settings and examines the successes and challenges related to the delivery and impact of the ECL R&R Strategy and the key factors that facilitate or impede its overall effectiveness.

To achieve this, the case studies explore personal experiences and perceptions in relation to the ECL R&R Strategy. To account for context, the case studies involve a thorough description of each child care workplace, including its operations, management, staff, and the families and community it serves. The case studies offer a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy through the comparison and integration of data collected from multiple child care programs and multiple sources within these programs (i.e., owners/operators and managers, as well as staff members). The case studies are conducted annually, over the three years of the evaluation, and offer a longitudinal perspective. They explore how stakeholders experience the ECL R&R Strategy as it expands and rolls out over time and how various elements of the ECL R&R Strategy affect stakeholders from one year to the next.

The purpose of the **key informant interviews** (KII^s) is to gather detailed, in-depth information about the first-hand experiences of diverse stakeholders, including those who are directly affected by the ECL R&R Strategy and those who are involved in its implementation and delivery. These interviews are particularly important to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and effect of the ECL R&R Strategy and to understand the challenges that ECL operators and staff experience. Interviews with stakeholders, developers and implementers of the tactics began in 2019 to support development of the theory of change, but the bulk of interviews are with operators of child care workplaces in categories not included in the case study data collection. The KII^s with other child care centres provide a broader understanding of centre experiences with the ECL R&R Strategy in terms of implementation and consequences.

Methodology implementation

Case study visits

The selection of sites is described in Appendix E. During 2019, six case study site visits were conducted with child care centres across the province. The visits were completed over a two-day

period and involved at least two members of SRDC staff. Interviews were conducted with a range of staff within each centre, including managers, supervisors, ECE and ECEA and responsible adults. The feedback from the case study centres on the first-year visits was positive: centres enjoyed the visits; staff were happy to participate in interviews and, the procedures for arranging the site visits worked well. As a result, there were no significant changes proposed to the operations of the case studies in 2020.

Essentially, the process was repeated for 2020, while respecting restrictions imposed by the global pandemic. Initially, as a follow up to the visits in 2019, telephone interviews were conducted in April 2020 with each manager/owner of the case study sites. The purpose of these interviews was to continue to engage with sites and to explore their current operating status and procedures under the restrictions imposed by the federal and provincial responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. These interviews lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes and were recorded. Participants agreed to be contacted in the fall to plan for the site visits in 2020 and SRDC provided assurance that the visits would take the form required to comply with current health guidance. In 2020, all visits were virtual: either online using Zoom or by telephone.

The overarching objective for the case studies continues to be exploring the implementation, experience with and consequences of the ECL R&R Strategy. In addition, 2020 interviews explored changes that have occurred since 2019 and the reasons for these changes. Prior to each visit SRDC staff reviews the data from 2019 and during each interview, probes for the types of changes and the reasons for changes. Interviews also explored the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on operating status and workplace procedures. This information is vital to enable SRDC to disentangle changes that occurred because of the ECL R&R Strategy and those arising from the response to COVID-19. The interview and observation protocols were provided in interim report #2.

The original design of the case studies anticipated that staff who participated in 2019 interviews would be invited to participate in interviews in 2020. SRDC liaised with the six centres through summer and fall 2020 to obtain a current staff list and to identify those staff who were no longer employed. SRDC worked with the centres to identify members of staff to participate in the case study interviews. Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the case study interviews were conducted by telephone. SRDC arranged dates and times to interview staff. Centres were provided with copies of informed consents and the questions prior to the interviews. SRDC identified staff who have left the case study centres and is in the process of inviting them to participate in a telephone interview. The purpose of this interview is to explore reasons for leaving and the departing staff's current employment status.

The data sources for the case studies in 2020 were consistent with those of 2019. The data sources included:

- **In-depth, structured KIIs** with individual owner/operators, managers, and staff using pre-designed interview guides. Protocols were sent to participants in advance of an interview. Specific questions contained within each protocol were tailored to the individual being interviewed. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were recorded. Notes of the interviews were sent to participants for verification.
- **Phone calls** and emails before, after, and/or in-between visits to gather preliminary information, verify initial findings, and increase participant retention over time.
- **Informed consent** obtained from all participants for formal data collection and before including any informal conversation as “on the record” and adding to the data collection.
- **Review of supportive program documents** on an ad hoc basis. Documents of interest could include job postings and descriptions; number of children on waitlist; staff qualifications and credentials; adult/child ratios; history of reportable incidents and publicly available inspection reports; wages and rates of pay and new guidance related to COVID-19.
- **Contextual information**, both internal and external to the program. During ‘visits’, researchers investigate the internal context of the program, noting any changes to the program’s location and physical site; adult/child ratio; general atmosphere; and application of policies and practices, including human resource strategies. The purpose of observation is not to evaluate the individual child care program itself, but rather to gather insight into the context for recruitment and retention challenges in order to better understand the impact of the broader ECL R&R Strategy on the day-to-day experiences of stakeholders and the overall functioning of programs.¹⁵

SRDC completed telephone interviews at each case study site with individuals who had participated in 2019 by December 8, 2020. A total of 26 interviews were conducted across the six sites. The majority of these interviews for any given workplace were conducted in a single day. SRDC is also following up with participants who left their 2019 workplaces to interview them to ascertain whether they remain in or have left the sector and their motivations for doing so. A total of eight individuals left the case study sites. Most of these individuals reportedly moved to other child care centres with only one person leaving the sector. An additional four members of staff were on sick or other leave when the case study interviews were being conducted.

The themes anticipated during analysis of the data generated by the 2020 case study visits were similar to those from the previous year; however, the focus has been on changes that have

¹⁵ There was no attempt to link case study data to cross-sectional survey data from the same centres.

occurred and the reasons for these changes. An additional theme related to the COVID-19 pandemic has been included. The themes include:

- **Update and overview of centre and program.** What is the current operating capacity of the centre and programs? What are the main changes that have occurred from 2019 to 2020?
- **Changes made to centre and program due to consequences of COVID-19** including financial and staffing changes – How has COVID-19 affected the operations and procedures of the centre?
- **Recruitment and hiring.** How do owners/operators and/or managers approach recruitment and hiring of ECL professionals under the ECL R&R Strategy? What are the experiences of early childhood educators when searching for, applying to, and starting a new job? Have there been changes from 2019 to 2020?
- **Compensation and benefits.** What experiences do individual ECL professionals have of obtaining a wage increase as a result of the ECL R&R Strategy? How does the wage increase affect personal job satisfaction, tenure, and career pathways? How do owner/operators and/or managers address compensation and benefits for staff under the ECL R&R Strategy? Have there been changes from 2019 to 2020?
- **Training and development.** What are the first-hand experiences of ECL professionals in pursuing credentialing, training, and/or professional development under the ECL R&R Strategy? How do owner/operators and/or managers support the training and development of their staff under the ECL R&R Strategy? Have there been changes from 2019 to 2020?
- **Qualifications, skill levels, competencies of staff.** To what extent do ECL professionals consider themselves and their colleagues to be competent and sufficiently skilled to meet the demands of the job? Has this changed from 2019 to 2020?
- **Perceptions of early childhood education as a career.** What are the personal perspectives of ECL professionals about the future of their careers under the ECL R&R Strategy? Has this changed from 2019 to 2020?
- **Job satisfaction.** What factors influence personal job satisfaction among ECL professionals under the ECL R&R Strategy? What are the views of individual early childhood educators on the positive and negative aspects of work in the child care sector? Has this changed from 2019 to 2020?
- **Retention.** To what extent do the activities and tactics of the ECL R&R Strategy (to the extent these can be disentangled from closures/layoffs as a consequence of the response to

COVID-19) influence the decision-making of individual ECL professionals about whether to remain in their jobs? Has this changed from 2019 to 2020?

- **Career pathways.** To what extent are individual ECL professionals aware of their career options and how to pursue them under the ECL R&R Strategy? To what extent do ECL professionals consider various career pathways to be feasible? Has this changed from 2019 to 2020?
- **Standards and oversight.** How do individual owner/operators and managers respond to changes made to sector standards and oversights under the ECL R&R Strategy? What has changed from 2019 to 2020?

Key informant interviews

SRDC set the goal of conducting KII interviews with at least 16 child care providers, in addition to those working in the six case study sites. Selection criteria were set in discussion with the SSC in 2019 in recognition that six case study sites could not capture the diversity of ECL workforce experience in the province. A total of 14 useable KII interviews were completed with child care centre owners/managers and other child care professionals by the end of July 2020.¹⁶ Three additional interviews were conducted with stakeholders – those involved in the delivery of education/training of child care staff and licensing centres – for a total of 17 KIIs.

Earlier in 2020, KII participants asked to delay interviews until there was greater clarity around reopening and SRDC rescheduled interviews as required. With KIIs, the option remains for individuals to be interviewed more than once over the course of the evaluation if they have information about a topic of interest (such as occupational competencies) that is likely to evolve as the ECL R&R Strategy proceeds. SRDC also conducted additional interviews on the impact of COVID-19 with the six managers of case study sites (as mentioned in the preceding section).

Semi-structured interview protocols were sent to participants in advance of an interview. Informed consent was obtained before each interview and specific questions contained within each protocol are tailored to the individual being interviewed. The interviews lasted an average of 45 minutes and were recorded. Notes of the interviews were sent to participants for verification.

¹⁶ ECL providers included: Not for Profit Centres; Multi-aged Child Care Centres; Registered License Not Required; In-home child care; Universal Child Care Prototype Site; a Unionized Centre; a centre Not Receiving CCOF; and other key stakeholders including an Early Childhood Education educator and a Licensing Officer. Interview notes from one additional interview conducted were not approved for use by one provider.

Analysis of interviews

Similar to 2019, the data collected in 2020 from the case studies and KIIs is analyzed using a general inductive approach including thematic analysis with both pre-set and emergent codes (i.e., codes that are determined in advance and codes that arise from analysis of the data). SRDC uses NVivo software to assist in data analysis. For 2020, the analysis has also explored changes that have arisen in and between the sites from 2019 to 2020. The case study analysis began within an in-case analysis and then SRDC conducted across-case analysis.

High-level themes from the qualitative components of the evaluation are included in this report. Direct quotes from participants are shared anonymously by default. Quotes by name may be used with the participant's explicit permission, but not where this would reveal the identity of other respondents.

Challenges or limitations

The most significant challenge to the case studies and KIIs in 2020 derived from the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty this created for child care centres and others involved in the sector. Child care workplaces are establishing new operating plans and making changes to their physical space, staffing levels and program content. The interviews SRDC conducted with case study sites in April 2020 established that all child care workplaces involved in SRDC's fieldwork would be reopening. Five of the six case study sites either remained open or reopened within a couple of weeks of closing due to COVID-19 restrictions. One child care centre did not fully reopen until August 2020.

COVID-19 related uncertainty created two key challenges:

- First, it was important to determine the nature, scope and motivation for the changes implemented in B.C.'s workplaces to attribute appropriately changes made in response to COVID-19 and those made in relation to the ECL R&R Strategy.
- Second, the provincial recommendations on physical distancing and working from home when possible made it more difficult to contact participants initially. But as more centres resumed operations, staff availability increased. SRDC has respected the fact that researchers' on-site visits would prove either impossible to arrange or represent a major imposition in the COVID-19 era. Alternative communication channels have been sought in all instances.

SRDC has continued to emphasize its role as an external, arms-length evaluator throughout the process of recruitment and engagement with case study sites and key informants. SRDC has continued to assure participants that the purpose of the project is to evaluate the ECL R&R

Strategy itself and not to inspect or investigate individual child care programs, managers, or staff. Case study sites and KII participants are not identified in any public forums. Maintaining confidentiality in this way facilitates participant recruitment and encourages transparency and openness during data collection.

EVALUATION RESULTS FOR 2020

PURPOSE OF ESTIMATING CHANGE AGAINST BENCHMARKS

The overarching questions the evaluation aims to answer through the three-year period derive from the ECL R&R Strategy goals and outcomes. They have been expressed in previous reports as nested questions relating the expected three-year outcomes to longer-term goals, as follows:

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals?
 - Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce?
 - Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?
 - Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?
2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career?
 - Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce?
3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place?
 - Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?

The evaluation framework calls for data from the many methods and tools described in the preceding section to answer these questions. SRDC worked with the Sector Steering Committee to create an organizing structure for the data collected by identifying 13 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Collectively these assess the changes occurring from the ECL R&R Strategy and in various permutations shed light on specific questions. The permutations of KPIs are shown against each evaluation question in the Evaluation Framework (see Appendix D). Figure 4

presents these same KPIs alongside the ECL R&R Strategy Implementation Tactics, 3 Year Outcomes, and 10 Year Goals they will inform (Figure 3 has the codes for the tactics, outcomes, and goals in Figure 4). KPIs are “neutral,” that is, they do not describe a positive or negative change themselves. It is the change in the KPI over time that describes the consequences and impact of the implementation tactics and the achievement of the goals.

For the 2019 year, the project reported benchmarks (the benchmarking report was deliverable #9 published in July 2020). Benchmarks are derived from data from the period 2015-2019 that captured the starting point for many of the changes the ECL R&R Strategy is expected to produce. Critically, later reports – starting with this one – compare the data on indicators from 2020 and 2021 to the benchmarking indicators reported for 2015-19. The comparison determines **change** in the KPIs. It is the specific combination of changes across the KPIs that can signal success or failure for the ECL R&R Strategy in achieving its three-year outcomes and indicate progress towards realizing the ten-year goals.

SRDC has sub-divided the second KPI to make explicit the consideration of benefits – as distinct from wages – in fieldwork and analysis. This reflects that benefits are frequently bundled with salary and wages in consideration of employment compensation.

Figure 3 Codes for tactics, 3 Year Outcomes, and 10 Year Goals

Tactic	Code
Compensation	1
Post-Secondary	2
Bursaries	3
Professional Networks and Supports	4
Professional Development	5
Industry Standards	6
Work-based education and training	7
Training Supports	8

Category (from Theory of Change)	Code
Wage Enhancement	a
Education and Training	b
Professional Development	c
Updated Competencies and Standards	d
3 Year Outcome	Code
Recruitment strategies will ensure an adequate supply of ECEs and other child care staff entering the workforce	I
Retention strategies will support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession	II
Career pathways will provide opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector	III
Education, training, and professional development will be reviewed, enhanced, and expanded to ensure a competent early care and learning workforce with the skills, knowledge and abilities required to provide quality services to children and families	IV
Public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of early care and learning professionals from rigorous standards and oversight	V
10 Year Goal	Code
An adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals	A
Early care and learning as a viable, sustainable, and valued career	B
Appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies	C

Figure 4 Key performance indicators

No.	KPI	Tactics	3 Year Outcomes	10 Year Goals
		[see Figure 3]		
1	ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation	1	II	A, B, C
2A 2B	Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers [Benefits of ECL Workers]	1	II	A, B, C
3	The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs	6	V	A
4	Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
5	Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
6	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills	1 to 8	I-V	A, B, C
7	Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities	2,3,4,5	I, III	A, B
8	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities	4,5,7,8	II, III, IV	A
9	Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year	4,5,7	III, IV	A
10	Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills	1 to 8	I to V	A, C
11	Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits	1,7	II	A
12	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector	1,4,5,6,7,8	II, III, IV	B, C
13	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents	1,2,3,6,8	I, II, V	A, B, C

A NOTE ON THE PRESENTATION OF KPIs

Most KPIs draw on multiple data sources. So, as we report on each KPI in turn we cycle through different data drawn from the set of available sources. Several sources like the cross-sectional survey contribute to many KPIs. Others such as the public opinion survey feature less often. Also, for each KPI there are multiple data points per data source. [There are several ways to present information on wages, for example.]

Using multiple measures improves validity and also enables some level of continuity in annual reporting in a situation where not all data sources can report in every year following this current one. For example, the Census data included in the benchmarking report provided a useful perspective on who made up the sector and how the population had been changing since 2000 through 2015, as recorded in Censuses every five years from 2001 through 2016. But there can be no report on further change in the sector documented by the Census until the 2021 Census is completed and those data are released in 2023. So, this report contains no comparable data. The public opinion survey is currently planned for fielding one more time only, in early 2022. This report cannot document change in KPIs using data not collected in 2020, such as from the public opinion survey. This report must necessarily include some 2015-19 data only received in 2020 as well as measures for 2020 that permit calculation of *changes* in KPIs over time.

A potentially confusing factor is that data sources differ somewhat in the definitions of what is being measured. The job postings data identify members of the child care workforce somewhat differently from the cross-sectional survey, and different again from the administrative data. So, each baseline KPI with more than one data source can have a slightly different value depending on the data source. However, we compare change in KPIs over time only within the same data sources, to maximize internal validity in determining whether a change has occurred.

Sample related limitations of confidence in interpreting results

The report considers each KPI in turn and presents data from each data source on each and change in each KPI. Given the cross-sectional survey data is drawn from a sample of the workforce and employers, there is variation in estimates of means and proportions due to sampling from one set of observations to the next. It is important to note that increases or decreases in percentage estimates from 2019 to 2020 may be spurious where sampling error is large. We include measures of variation (standard deviations) and statistical tests of differences to help assess whether the changes observed are statistically significant. However, these are not included throughout to avoid over-complicating tables and figures. Consistency in repeated measures over time is one of the strongest indications of whether change over time is genuine or a consequence of sampling error. Hence, we use multiple measures where possible to estimate change over time and look forward to adding 2021 data in later reports to increase confidence that identified trends genuinely represent increase, decrease or stability over the duration of the evaluation.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations and considerations for the future. We draw out implications for policy, based on the patterns of change reported. The foundation for drawing implications this year is complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic that disrupted all aspects of life including the labour market in British Columbia in 2020 and this project's data collection. COVID-19 thus presents a confounding influence on KPIs over and above the impacts of the ECL R&R Strategy. Where possible, we seek to partition change that can be readily attributed to the pandemic to determine the net change that may be brought about the ECL R&R Strategy. With this in mind, we begin by drawing on data from the case study interviews and cross-sectional survey to further aid understanding of the experiences of ECL providers in the province during 2020, as context for understanding the KPI-related results later in this section.

CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FROM CASE STUDY DATA 2020

COVID-19 and the provincial public health restrictions associated with it affected all aspects of operations in the six case studies sites: from staffing to delivering their programs to children. All of those interviewed as part of the case studies in 2020 found working in the sector more stressful than the previous year because of the uncertainty and steep learning curve in adapting to new expectations and requirements associated with COVID-19.

During the initial weeks and months of COVID-19, five of the six case study sites remained open and provided child care for essential workers. Interviewees identified as key the provincial funding, which provided seven times the operating funding for those centres providing care to the children of essential workers during this period, in enabling these centres to operate as it helped to cover operating costs when operating below capacity. The seven times operating grant funding ended in August 2020 and, since then, all six centres have fully reopened. The centres stopped providing care exclusively to essential workers and their focus returned to existing families and registering new families.

Interviewees all agreed they were having to come to terms with operating in a new and even more uncertain environment than the previous year as their workplaces transitioned to being fully open. Managers and owners described their new context as a “teeter-totter” (Manager, Site A), with everything being “finely balanced” (Manager, Site B). They often use the word “lucky” to describe themselves as they were open and operating given the current situation and challenges they experienced. These challenges included:

- **Access to timely and accurate information** – Managers and owners initially found it very difficult to access information about how to implement COVID-19 guidelines and to safely operate. Managers and owners reported the flow of information from the federal and provincial governments as well as local health authorities improved with time, and this has

enabled them to develop COVID-19 safety plans and to reassure staff and parents that their centres are a safe environment. Managers and owners tried to be open and transparent by sharing information with staff and parents. Staff appreciated these efforts reporting the flow of information gave them confidence in the procedures. Managers and owners were very appreciative of their staff.

- **New operating procedures including drop-off, pick up and cleaning routines** – All the case studies sites had implemented new policies and procedures in response to COVID-19. These included new routines for drop-off and pick up which limited the number of parents entering the centres or required parents to drop off and pick up only at the entrances. As part of these new procedures, parents completed health declarations stating their child had not been in contact with anyone who had COVID-19, had not left the province, and did not have any symptoms. Centres implemented additional cleaning and sanitization routines especially for high touch surfaces, equipment, and toys. These new procedures took additional staff time and centres either contracted for additional time from custodians or allocated time to child care staff. Staff were also concerned about how parents would react to new operating procedures:

"I won't say that I didn't have any anxiety about it. I was a little bit worried, but I think I was more worried about the social aspects of it. What are parents going to think if we do this? I know that some parents were definitely more concerned than [others] and some parents are on the other end of the spectrum. They feel like we're doing too much." Site A: ECE

- **Staffing, recruitment and managing the need for substitution** – While interviews conducted in Year 1 highlighted the challenges centres experienced in recruiting trained staff, COVID-19 made "a difficult situation worse" (Manager, Site D). Managers described staffing as a "jigsaw" (Manager, Site A) that they had to piece together every day to ensure they had enough staff to meet licensing requirements. COVID-19 restrictions meant staff with any symptoms were not allowed to work and had to remain at home until they were no longer symptomatic. This also meant that if staff were off, they were off for longer periods. In addition, all centres reported it was more difficult to find casual or substitute staff. Those centres with multiple sites limited the movement of staff between sites to minimize the potential for transmission. Two case study sites had previously opted to have an extra staff member who floated between rooms and programs to cover for staff absences, which made operating under the current circumstances slightly easier, but increased operating costs. The other centres relied on managers and owners, most of whom were qualified ECE professionals, to fill in to maintain ratios. In general, the case study sites found it more challenging to recruit staff than the previous year. Most reported receiving few resumes in response to job postings. Centres used the same recruitment strategies including posting to job websites, relying on word of mouth, and recruiting from practicum students. COVID-19 had reduced the number of students completing practicums at the case study workplaces

which had a knock-on effect on recruitment. Managers also suggested school closures made it difficult for some women to work as they stayed at home with their own children.

- **Operating capacity and wait list** – By the time of interview, the six case study sites were operating at or around their pre-pandemic capacity. Managers reported that families gradually returned to the centres as schools reopened and parents went back to work. However, some families who had requested full-time spaces opted for part-time as some were working from home. This added an extra layer of uncertainty for centres. Managers and owners referred to the fine margins they operated under meaning that losing revenue was a constant worry. Managers reported that 2020 was the first year they had exhausted their waitlists by the end of September/October and still had open spots. As managers worked to fill the open spots, some staff had reduced hours until registration increased.

"Our enrollment is down some as well because of COVID. We've had quite a few cancellations when we sent our letter out in August saying, you know, we're starting up. This is what you've registered for. We understand if you're not comfortable bringing your child, please cancel so we could try to fill the spot. This is the first year in many years that we had exhausted our wait list by the end of September, because even lots of people that we were phoning for preschool weren't comfortable in coming. But, yeah, we totally we said, you know, we understand that."

Site A: Manager

On balance, one potentially positive consequence attributable to the pandemic was increased accessibility of staff training and development. During the early period of COVID-19 managers took the opportunity to encourage staff to participate in training being made available more often online. This increased availability of online courses and conferences presented a positive development as staff did not have to travel to training events and more could afford to attend.

CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FROM CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEYS

Employer survey

Employers were also asked questions in the employer survey related to the impacts of COVID-19 on their centre operations during 2020.

Out of the 463 employers that answered the questions, 9 centres (2 per cent) were not operating at the time they answered the survey (typically during October 2020) but were planning to reopen, and 3 centres (1 per cent) reported they were not planning to reopen anymore.

Out of the 448 employers who provided information about COVID-19 support they received, 96 per cent received at least one support from the government. On average, employers received

support from 1.8 sources, with a range of one source to five different sources of COVID-19 support.

Table 8 reports the type of COVID-19 related support received by the organizations represented. The majority of employers were able to receive temporary emergency funding with 77 per cent reporting they received monthly seven times their regular funding amount from the Child Care Operating Funding Program (CCOF) while they were open, and 46 per cent received monthly two times their regular funding amount from CCOF while closed. Just under a third, 31 per cent of the employers, reported they received both types of CCOF.

A quarter of the employers reported receiving support from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. Other responses included grants (i.e., Columbia Basin Trust Support, Community Foundations Canada Grant) or having their rent covered by the school district. It is also worth noting that 4 per cent of the employers in the sample reported they did not receive any COVID-19 related support for their child care centre.

Table 8 COVID-19 support received by child care centres (Did your child care program receive any of the following COVID-19 supports?)

	Number	Percentage
Temporary Emergency Funding (7 x CCOF reg payment monthly while open)	346	77%
Temporary Emergency Funding (2 x CCOF reg payment monthly while closed)	206	46%
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy	112	25%
Canada Emergency Business Account Funds	83	19%
Canada Emergency Fund for Rent Assistance Funds	9	2%
COVID-19 Emergency Funding for Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care	2	0%
None of the Above	19	4%
Other	11	2%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Almost half of the employers (47 per cent) in the sample reported they provided a hazard pay or wage top-up due to COVID-19. From the 204 employers that provided the top up and received some form of Temporary Emergency Funding (either the 7 x regular monthly payment while open or 2 x regular monthly payment while closed), 81 per cent of them said they were able to provide a wage top up due because of remaining funds from this support, which ended

August 31, 2020. However, at the time of the survey, only 18 per cent of the employers were still providing this wage supplement or top-up to their employees.

Employers were asked about their operations both before and after the World Health Organization declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Operations face closure even without a pandemic, so it was important to include the pre-pandemic period to see whether the pandemic altered rates of closure and other disruptions.

About 8 per cent of the centres in the sample reported they closed completely (not accepting children on or off site) at some point between November 2019 and March 11, 2020. The number of weeks these centres closed varied, but most closures were short-lived. Some 69 per cent closed for 0-2 weeks, for example and only 6 per cent closed for 11-12 weeks and 3 per cent for 18-20 weeks.

Table 9 Number of weeks child care programs closed between March 11 and October-November 2020

	Number	Percentage
0-2 weeks	26	11%
3-4 weeks	11	5%
5-6 weeks	10	4%
7-8 weeks	21	9%
9-10 weeks	45	19%
11-12 weeks	33	14%
13-14 weeks	15	6%
15-16 weeks	12	5%
17-18 weeks	5	2%
18-20 weeks	45	19%
My centre is still closed	10	4%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Before the pandemic, the average number of children attending the child care centres operated by the 440 organizations that provided information was 54 children, with a minimum of 2 children and a maximum of 1,100 children. The median number of children attending the centres in our sample was 34 children. Many months later, at the time of the survey, employers

reported they had on average 41 children attending their programs, with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 770 children. The median number of children attending centres managed by the organizations in our sample post-pandemic was 25 children.

Out of the 446 employers that provided information, 241 or 54 per cent said they closed their programs completely at some point in the eight or so months after March 11. This compares to the previously cited 8 per cent closing in the four months preceding March 11. The rate of closure post-pandemic thus increased more than threefold.

In the period after March 11, 10 per cent of the centres had to close their program a second time after it re-opened. Details about the duration of the closure were provided by 96 per cent of those centres (Table 9). More than half of the sample closed between 0-12 weeks (56 per cent). Almost a fifth of the employers in the sample closed for 18-20 weeks (19 per cent).

Reasons why employers had to close their program the first time after the pandemic started are provided in Table 10. Major reasons include the concern of the employers for the health and safety of children, family, and staff (70 per cent), lower enrollment (40 per cent), and staffing difficulties (30 per cent). On the other hand, major reasons why employers closed the second time after the pandemic were lower enrollment or fewer children (36 per cent), concern over the health and safety of children, family, and staff (30 per cent) and staffing difficulties such as rehiring, retaining, or attracting new staff (23 per cent) (Table 11).

Table 10 Reasons why employers closed their programs the first time after the pandemic

	Number	Percentage
The health and safety of children, family, and staff	167	70%
Lower enrollment/fewer children	97	40%
Staffing difficulties such as not enough staff willing and able to work	71	30%
The building was closed	53	22%
Higher costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements	24	10%
Lack of reserve funds	12	5%
Needed time to come up with a health plan	4	2%
Personal reasons not related to COVID-19	3	1%
Other	15	6%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

The province declared a state of emergency due to COVID-19 on March 18, 2020 which was renewed through to the time of the survey (and beyond). Employers were asked about the impact of declaring the COVID-19 state of emergency on their practices: 71 per cent of the employers said their program served children of essential workers only at some stage. The majority of the employers in the sample had also prioritized care for children of essential workers (91 per cent). During the period covered by the state of emergency, 43 per cent of the child care centres indicated that at some point they prioritized care for children with special needs.

In addition, 67 per cent of the employers surveyed reported they had to lay off staff, either temporarily or permanently, during the same period. Over 60 per cent reported that they had staff who chose not to work due to health and safety reasons or other personal reasons (62 per cent). Employers that had staff who chose not to work during the period, were asked how many of these staff were coded with lack of work, illness, voluntary termination, or leave on their record of employment. Of the 452 centres who provided information, there were a total of 800 staff who were coded a ‘Lack of Work’, 166 staff who were coded with ‘Illness’, 134 staff who were coded with ‘Voluntary Termination’, and 170 staff who were coded with ‘Leave’ on their Record of Employment.

Table 11 Reasons why employers closed their programs more than once

	Number	Percentage
Lower enrollment/fewer children	8	36%
The health and safety of children, family, and staff	8	36%
Staffing difficulties such as rehiring, retaining, or attracting new staff	5	23%
Higher costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements – ratios, distancing, cleaning	2	9%
The building was closed	1	5%
Personal reasons not related to COVID-19	1	5%
Lack of reserve fund	0	0%
Other	7	32%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Workforce survey

Similar to the employer survey, the workforce survey probed Centre ECL workers' experiences in the four-month pre-pandemic period up to March 11 and the eight-month period after the WHO declared the global pandemic, to provide some comparison for changing patterns of employment.

The experiences of keeping childcare workplaces opened are addressed in the preceding section. To learn about the experience of closure from the perspective of members of the workforce, Centre ECL workers were asked 'Did your childcare program close completely between November 2019 and March 11, 2020?'. The rate of complete closures reported by Centre ECL workers was 11 per cent.¹⁷ When asked about duration, the modal response was 0-2 weeks, for 21 per cent, but the median duration was 9-10 weeks.¹⁸ Centre ECL workers reported closures after March 11 at much higher rates. More than half reported their program closed (56 per cent) and of these one in every nine closed more than once. The modal and median closure duration was 11-12 weeks (for 19 per cent).¹⁹ Overwhelmingly, Centre ECL workers reported the closures were due to the COVID-19 pandemic (96 per cent).²⁰

Table 12 reveals that 17 per cent of Centre ECL workers experienced some kind of employment disruption prior to March 11, 2020. For more than half it was a temporary layoff.

Table 13 examines how long layoffs lasted, for those who experienced them, pre-pandemic. The modal and median duration was 7-8 weeks. 20 per cent of those laid off – and thus 2 per cent of all Centre ECL workers were laid off 13 weeks or more.

The same questions were asked about the eight months following the declaration of the global pandemic (Table 14). Four in ten (40 per cent) experienced temporary layoffs in this period, and 2 per cent permanently. Given the pre-pandemic observation period was half the length of the post, the rate of layoffs doubled during the pandemic. Another 16 per cent worked reduced hours in the pandemic era, more than three times the proportion doing so pre-pandemic. The temporary layoffs were also longer, with 35 per cent of layoffs of 13 weeks or more (Table 15). This represents 15 per cent of all Centre ECL workers with 3-month or longer layoffs, compared to 2 per cent before March 11, 2020.

¹⁷ HCPs were also asked the same question and reported similarly: 10 per cent of programs had closed in this period.

¹⁸ For HCPs the mode was 0-2 weeks for 29 per cent and the median was 7-8 weeks.

¹⁹ While HCPs were much less likely to report their programs closing after March 11, 2020 – only 32 per cent did so and only 2 per cent more than once – those that did close had a similar pattern of closure durations. The median closure duration was slightly shorter at 9-10 weeks. However, the mode was 18-20 weeks for 16 per cent.

²⁰ 97 per cent among HCPs.

Table 12 Proportion of Centre ECL workers who experienced any of the following between Nov 2019 and March 11, 2020

Centre ECL workers	
Temporary layoff or furlough	9%
Permanent layoff	1%
Worked reduced hours	5%
Left employment by choice	2%
None of the above	83%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Table 13 Centre ECL workers temporarily laid off: The number of weeks they were laid off between Nov 2019 and March 11, 2020

Number of weeks	Centre ECL workers temporarily laid off
0-2 weeks	11%
3-4 weeks	13%
5-6 weeks	12%
7-8 weeks	17%
9-10 weeks	10%
11-12 weeks	16%
13-14 weeks	5%
15-16 weeks	6%
17-18 weeks	9%
Still laid-off?	2%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Table 14 Proportion of Centre ECL workers who experienced any of the following employment disruptions between March 11 and November 2020

Centre ECL workers	
Temporary layoff or furlough	40%
Permanent layoff	2%
Worked reduced hours	16%
Left employment by choice	3%
None of the above	40%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Centre ECL workers who left employment by choice after March 11, 2020 were asked how their record of employment was coded. Half did not know (49 per cent) and the remainder divided almost equally between ‘Lack of work’ (17 per cent), ‘Voluntarily terminated’ (15 per cent) and ‘Leave’ (15 per cent). Just 5 per cent indicated their record of employment had been coded ‘Illness’.

Table 15 Centre ECL workers temporarily laid off: number of weeks laid off between March 11 and November 2020

Number of weeks	Centre ECL workers temporarily laid off
0-2 weeks	6%
3-4 weeks	5%
5-6 weeks	7%
7-8 weeks	12%
9-10 weeks	16%
11-12 weeks	17%
13-14 weeks	10%
15-16 weeks	8%
17-18 weeks	17%
Still laid-off?	2%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

As revealed by the data from questions specifically focused on the effects of COVID-19 in case study interviews and the different surveys, 2020 was a quite an exceptional year for the ECL workforce in B.C. Data reported for specific KPIs below will also highlight the impact of the pandemic in several other areas of operations. All these data were collected while the pandemic emergency was still ongoing and the presence of such disruptions means it will be difficult to draw conclusions from the collected data about the effectiveness of the ECL R&R Strategy and its tactics. However, the data do capture the state of workforce development towards the end of 2020 and thus document the result of how the pandemic has contributed to the challenges that were being experienced by the workforce up to the end of 2019 and documented in the evaluation benchmarking report. They do still have a role to play in guiding decisions about the forces acting on recruitment and retention and thus where policy may need to focus efforts if progress on ECL R&R Strategy 3-year outcomes and 10-year goals is to be achieved.

KPI 1: ECL WORKER SATISFACTION AND PERCEPTION OF APPROPRIATENESS OF COMPENSATION

Cross-sectional survey

Worker satisfaction

The cross-sectional workforce survey assessed work satisfaction through respondents' answers to questions with Likert-scale response items regarding various aspects of the respondents' employment position (Table 16).

In general, respondents were most satisfied with the relationships they had built with families, with their co-workers and with the philosophy of their workplace. In contrast, they expressed the lowest rates of satisfaction with compensation and overall workload. Table 17 reveals that these patterns were generally little changed from 2019. For owner-operators and HCPs there were changes in satisfaction with overall workload and relationship with co-workers and satisfaction with opportunities for advancement was substantially lower overall in 2020, a drop of 11 percentage points compared to 2019.

Satisfaction with aspects of the job varied across the respondent groups. Satisfaction with nearly all aspects rated higher among owner-operators than among Centre ECL workers [from licensed facilities, preschools, and before-and-after school programs]. This was particularly pronounced in reported satisfaction in relation to *input for decision-making, philosophy of child care workplace, job security, and job overall*, where the proportion of owner-operator respondents who were *very satisfied* was about 20 percentage points higher.

In comparison to employees of larger facilities, HCPs were less satisfied with their hours of work and job security, perhaps reflecting the struggles of owning a small business. They were almost as likely to be *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their job overall as Centre ECL workers and owner-operators (90 per cent compared to 91 and 95 per cent).

HCPs were much less likely to be very satisfied with job security and their job overall in 2020 than 2019 and owner operators' satisfaction with relationships with their staff and overall workload fell dramatically. These were the biggest year-on-year changes in satisfaction seen in Table 17.

Table 16 Work satisfaction rates by workforce survey respondent group 2020

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Work satisfaction								
Hours of work	48%	38%	52%	36%	52%	27%	51%	35%
Physical outdoor space of your child care workplace	36%	55%	43%	39%	-	-	41%	44%
Physical indoor space of your child care workplace	40%	54%	51%	36%	-	-	47%	43%
Resources or equipment for the children	43%	48%	53%	30%	-	-	50%	36%
Opportunities for advancement available to you	38%	28%	48%	21%	-	-	45%	23%
Overall workload	51%	23%	57%	19%	54%	18%	55%	20%
Opportunities for input into decision-making	32%	54%	47%	35%	-	-	42%	41%
Opportunities for ongoing professional learning	43%	45%	50%	35%	58%	17%	49%	34%
Relationships with centre management	23%	46%	41%	43%	-	-	35%	44%
Relationships with your co-workers	30%	58%	46%	47%	-	-	40%	51%
Relationships with families you work with	31%	64%	48%	48%	34%	60%	41%	55%
Philosophy of child care workplace	24%	72%	43%	48%	-	-	37%	56%
Job security	35%	49%	47%	42%	47%	27%	44%	41%
Job overall	40%	55%	55%	36%	54%	36%	51%	41%
Satisfaction with compensation								
Income	52%	9%	40%	8%	51%	6%	45%	8%
Benefits	N/A	N/A	52%	15%	N/A	N/A	52%	15%

Table 17 Change in work satisfaction rates by respondent group 2019-20

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Change in percentage points satisfied or very satisfied							
Work satisfaction	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Hours of work	+6	-5	0	-2	+7	-8	+4	-5
Physical indoor space of your child care workplace	-1	+5	-4	+4			-1	+3
Resources or equipment for the children	-3	+6	0	+1			+1	0
Opportunities for advancement available to you	-12	-5	-8	+2			-8	-3
Overall workload	+2	-2	-2	-2			+1	-3
Opportunities for input into decision-making	-4	-2	-2	+3			-1	-4
Opportunities for ongoing professional learning	+1	-3	+2	-2			+4	-8
Relationships with centre management	-10	-15	-1	-2			-3	-8
Relationships with your co-workers	-6	-3	0	-2			-1	-4
Relationships with families you work with	0	-2	-2	0			+1	-2
Philosophy of child-care workplace	-3	+3	-4	+2			0	-1
Job security	+3	-10	-5	+3	+3	-16	+2	-8
Job overall	0	+1	-2	+3	+7	-11	+3	-4
Satisfaction with compensation								
Income	+8	-5	+9	+1	-2	-3	+4	-2
Benefits			+7	+3				

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Satisfaction in relation to COVID-19 related issues

A new set of questions in 2020 asked workforce survey respondents their satisfaction with a range of workplace and employment conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 18 reports the levels of satisfaction reported, similar to the KPI-related questions in Tables 16 and 17. In general, the proportions ‘satisfied’ and ‘very satisfied’ with information they received about COVID-19 to support a return to work, employment options, PPE and safety guidelines were high. The proportions ‘very satisfied’ with health and safety guidelines provided by the Government of B.C. for the early-care program and training opportunities available about how to implement or follow COVID protocols were relatively lower, especially for HCPs.

Table 18 Satisfaction rates by workforce survey respondent group 2020

	Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfaction with COVID-19-related issues						
COVID information you received from your employer to decide whether to work/return to work?	43%	37%	-	-	43%	37%
COVID information you received from the B.C. government to decide whether to work/return to work?	-	-	57%	20%	57%	20%
Having the option to choose whether to work/return to work	40%	35%	-	-	40%	35%
Health and safety guidelines provided by your employer	43%	43%	-	-	43%	43%
Health and safety guidelines provided by the Government of B.C. for the early-care program	50%	21%	58%	18%	52%	20%
Training opportunities available to you about how to implement or follow COVID protocols	48%	18%	51%	12%	49%	16%
Personal protection equipment provided to you at work	44%	28%	-	-	44%	28%

Motivational factors

Survey respondents were asked to read ten statements and rate the extent to which they felt each described how they felt about their employment position. SRDC's confirmatory factor analysis of responses to these ten questions in 2019 confirmed that there were two main components measured through these statements: motivational factors and burnout. Figures 5 and 6 reflect these groupings.

Six statements most closely measured satisfaction with motivational factors (Figure 5). Motivational factors are conditions in the internal workplace environment that facilitate or hinder staff motivation.

In general, Centre ECL workers agreed less often than the other respondent groups that motivational factors were present in their work. For instance, only half of Centre ECL workers felt they had reasonable control over most things that affected their job satisfaction (51 per cent) compared to 78 per cent of owner-operators and 68 per cent of HCPs. They were also less likely to *often* or *always* feel that their specific position made good use of their skills and abilities and that workplace policies and procedures were well defined (not asked of HCPs).

Surprisingly, perhaps, for owner-operators and Centre ECL workers motivating factors were more prevalent in 2020 than 2019 (Figure 6). HCPs, however, were less likely to report motivational factors present in their work in 2020 than in 2019. In particular, HCPs were less likely to agree that they had reasonable control over most things that affected their job satisfaction in 2020.

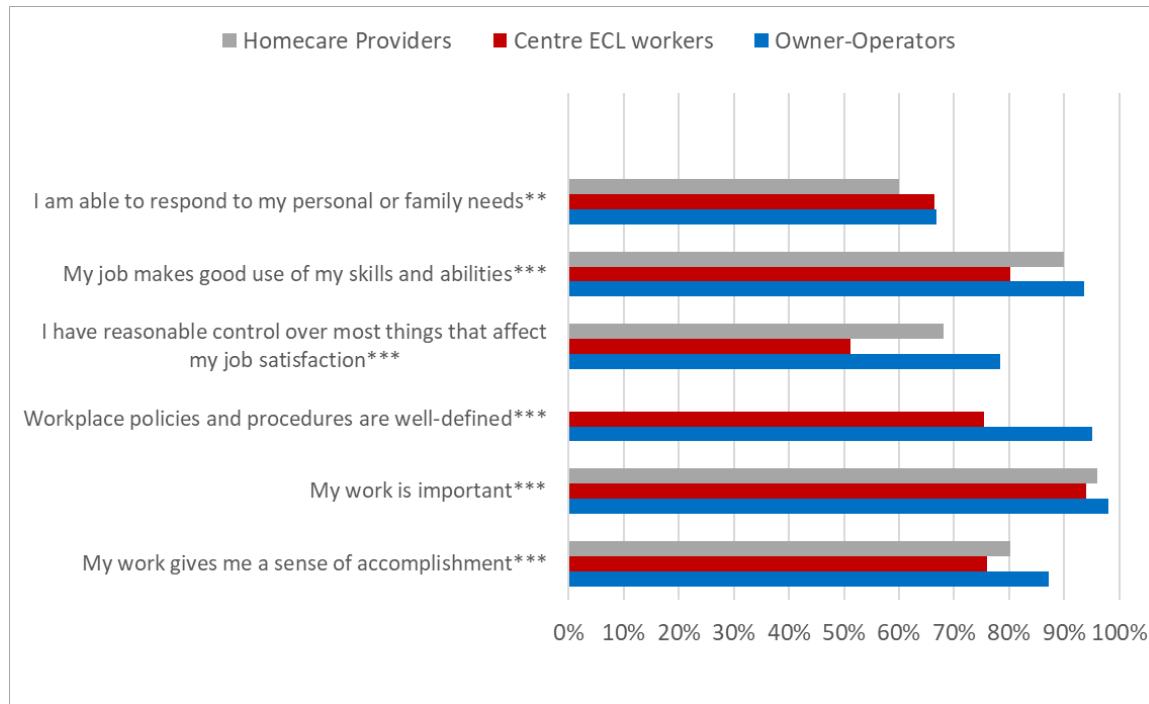
Burnout

Burnout was captured through four statements depicted in Figure 7. On average, about one in ten respondents felt frustrated by their job. This proportion was slightly higher among Centre ECL workers (13 per cent). Almost half of all respondents *often* or *always* felt there was too little time to do all that needed to be done.

The proportion of respondents who *often* or *always* felt physically exhausted at the end of the day was very similar across different groups of workers. Finally, almost four in five owner-operators felt the work they did was stimulating and challenging (79 per cent) compared to 67 per cent of HCPs and 72 per cent of Centre ECL workers.

Figure 8 reveals that there was remarkably little change in these indicators of burnout in 2020 compared to 2019. Among Centre ECL workers, for example, some small increases of 2-4 percentage points in negative indicators (such as having too little time) were accompanied by increases in positive indicators (finding work stimulating).

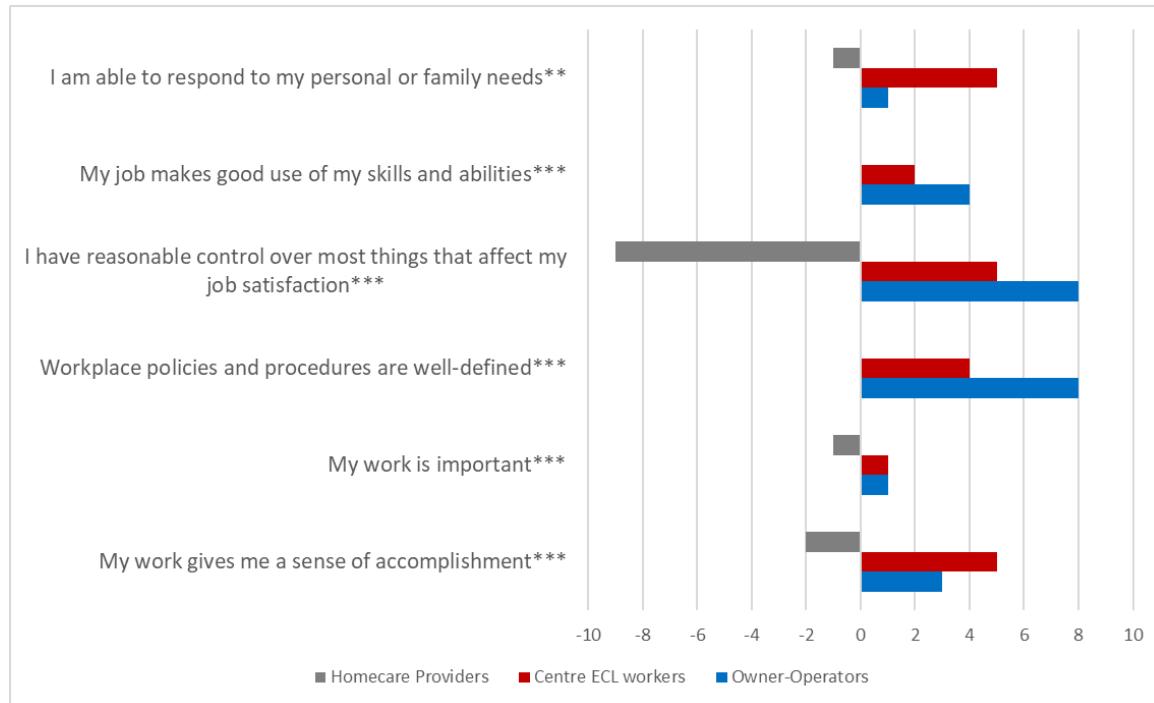
Figure 5 Proportion of respondents who *often* or *always* experienced different motivational factors in 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

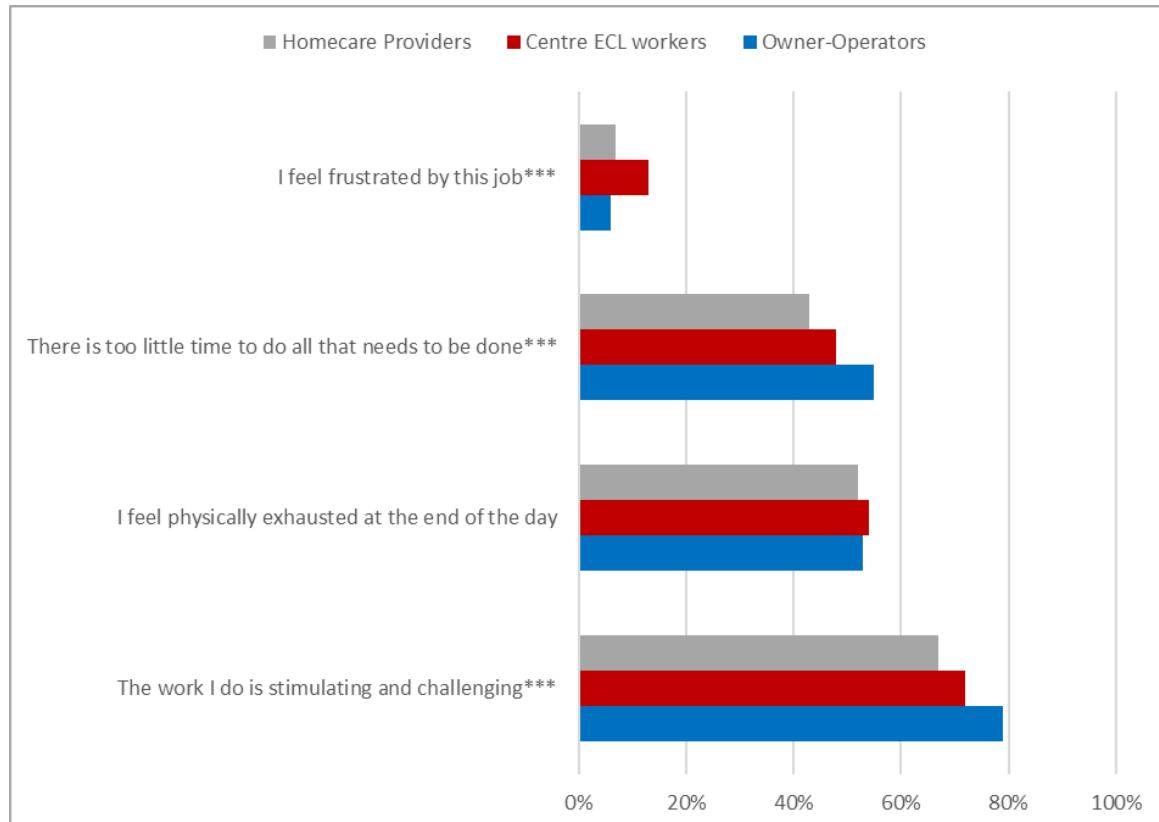
Note: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. This is a chi-square test. If the p-value is less than 0.05, we have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant association between the type of worker and the always/often responses they give to questions.

Figure 6 Change in proportion of respondents who *often* or *always* experienced different motivational factors 2019-20 (percentage points)



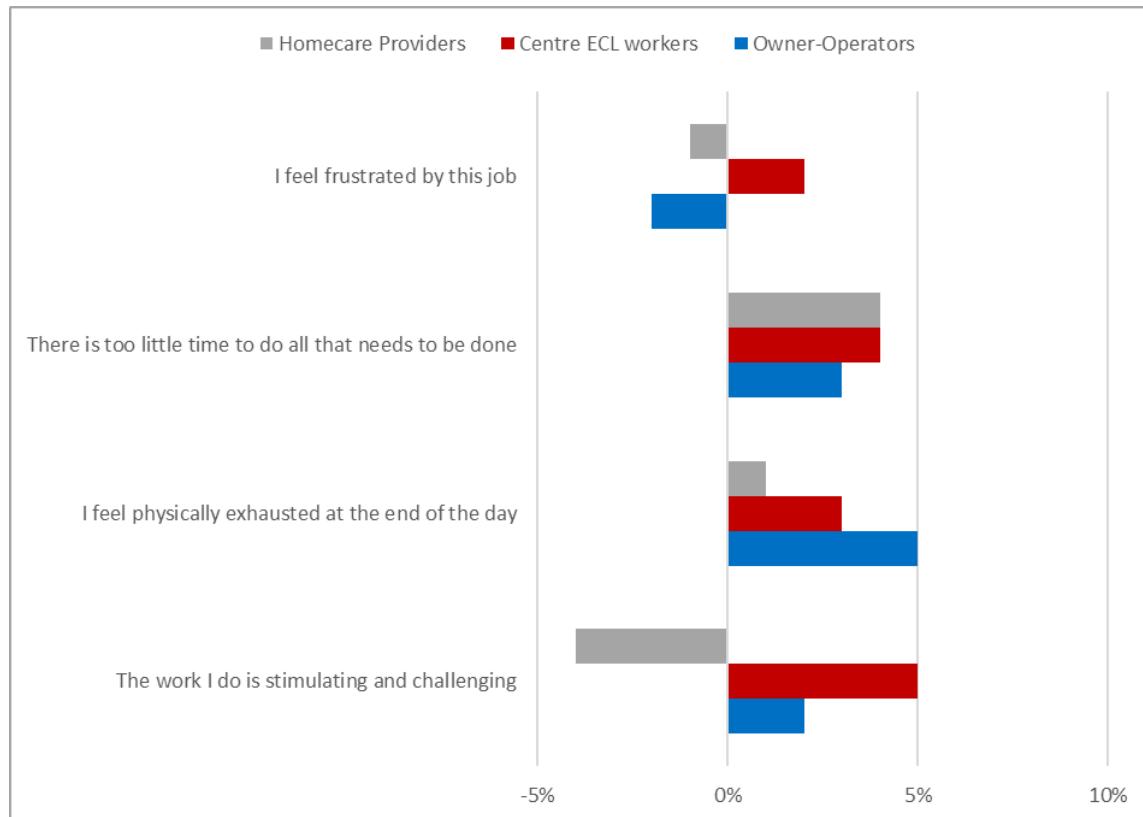
Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 7 Percentage of respondents who often or always experienced different burnout measures by respondent group in 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 8 Change in percentage points of respondents who often or always experienced different burnout measures by respondent group 2019-20



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Key informant interviews and case studies

It may be worth drawing briefly on some findings from the case studies to aid explanation for levels of satisfaction observed in 2020 and the link to the ECL R&R Strategy relative to the effects of COVID-19. In general, those interviewed in 2020 did not report significant changes in work satisfaction from 2019. Centre ECL workers continue to be passionate about the work they do and enjoy working with young children. Helping children to grow and develop remained one of the major drivers of worker satisfaction. Other factors also affected workplace satisfaction including feeling supported by managers and colleagues, and wages. In terms of supports, ECL professionals suggested that while,

"there are challenging days ... [I] just take it as it comes – I am treated well and supported well I love my job, very satisfied – no change since last year." (Site A: ECE)

However, ECL staff pointed out that COVID-19 had made their jobs more stressful. They were concerned about COVID-19 transmission, but most were confident in the measures their employers were taking to minimize the risk. Aspects of their jobs they had enjoyed last year, including their interactions with parents and discussions and updates on daily activities, for some had become stressful. The changes in routines which restricted parents from coming into the centre meant that ECL staff did not have the opportunity to talk to parents. Instead, staff occasionally found it more stressful dealing with parents:

".... [you] have to be more on top of telling the parents no – especially when they are not taking no for an answer – some kids have the same symptoms but are allowed to stay – babies who are teething might have fever and runny nose, but that won't apply to 2-year-olds – parents may find that hard to understand." (Site B: ECE)

One centre had introduced using an app to update parents about daily activities and to help ECL staff and parents communicate.

Managers were aware of the additional stress staff experienced because of COVID-19 and they took time to 'check-in' with their staff to see how they were doing, to reassure them and to listen to their concerns. Managers were aware the new operating procedures and general anxiety around COVID-19 increased anxiety levels for some staff. Managers noticed that,

"smaller things that normally they would pass off or we figure out a way to work it out quite quickly seem like such bigger things. And I think that's how the anxiety is manifesting itself for a lot of the people that I work with. Is that OK? Yeah, I'm doing OK. I'm doing OK. But don't set a trigger off!" (Site A: Manager)

While most ECL professionals loved working with children, most continued to be dissatisfied with wages. Similar to last year, most ECL staff continued to believe the compensation they received was inadequate for the work they did. When asked whether they would recommend a career in ECL to family or friends, most thought they would but added that low wages were problematic and dissuaded people from entering the sector. Comments relating to compensation included:

"I love my job; I wish it paid more!" (Site F: ECE)

"I'm not sure [if would recommend to someone else] – because the wages are low and the job is very demanding and important, ... I don't think the compensation is good enough for all the work you have to do – you have to give your whole self to your work." (Site E: ECE)
"Benefits need to be better – because I rely on my husband's benefits." (Site E: ECE)

Some ECL professionals were concerned the low wages made it difficult to raise a family on the income and that, because the centres were short of substitutes to maintain ratios, it could be difficult to take paid time off to care for their family which left them feeling "trapped." (Site D: ECE)

Those interviewed, both managers and staff, suggested the problem of low wages remained a sector wide issue. Most thought their employers paid reasonable salaries for the industry, but wages were low across the board. Only staff at one centre, which was unionized, reported their wages were above average for the sector.

Some managers were concerned the passion and enjoyment ECL staff reported would not be enough to keep people working in the sector especially as they began to have families themselves. The concern was that it would not remain financially viable to work and in becoming new parents they would leave the sector.

A small number of ECL professionals reported being less satisfied with their career because of the additional responsibility they had related to COVID-19. These respondents reported they were expected to do more but added their compensation remained unchanged.

Finally, most ECL staff commented on tight staffing levels which they found stressful. Some suggested having more floating staff who could relieve staff for breaks or having lower staff to child ratios would lead to higher levels of staff satisfaction.

KPI 2A: AVERAGE REAL WAGES AND SALARIES OF ECL WORKERS

Highly robust estimates of total earnings for 2015 came from the Census, since those data were linked to individual tax records. But wages cannot be calculated from the Census due to the absence of detailed data on hours of work (beyond full-time/part-time). Census income includes wages from other sources of employment and is available only once every five years. To examine changes in wages over time we rely instead on administrative data and surveys. Later in this section we report wage estimates from SRDC's cross-sectional survey that asked individuals and their employers for actual wage rates. First, we report long-term trend data that became available to SRDC for the first time in 2020.

Administrative data

Reported wages

Data from the Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) Provider Profile maintained by the Ministry of Children and Family Development permit an examination of trends in wages among the workforce in licensed facilities according to the annual survey. We report in Figure 9 median wages for all child care staff including those who reported to have basic early childhood educator

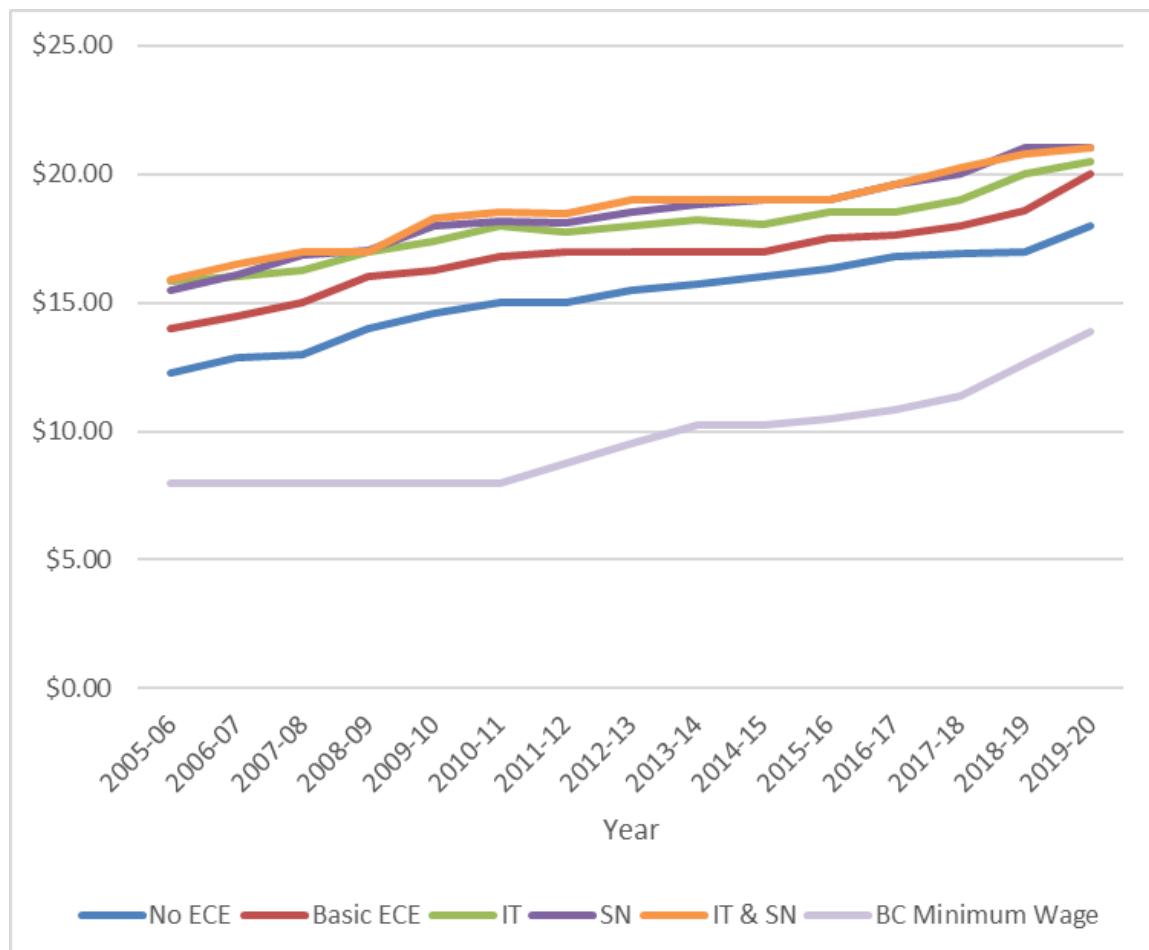
certification or training in Post Basic Infant/Toddler or Post Basic Special Needs, broken down by this reported early childhood educator education level.²¹

Figure 9 makes no allowance for wage inflation but appears to show fairly consistent increases in wages over the period 2005-06 to 2019-20. There is barely a one-dollar-per-hour premium associated with possession of a basic ECE certification over no ECE certificate in 2016-17 and 2017-18. The premium grows quite rapidly to roughly \$2 per hour by 2019-20 [prior to the second wage enhancement in April 2020]. Those with Infant and Toddler and Special Needs certification consistently earn \$3 more per hour than those without ECE certification, but there is no obvious relative increase for the 2019-20 year for those with ECE certification over those without.

Figure 10 adjusts the wage rates using the Bank of Canada Consumer Price Index to real 2020 dollars. This reveals that relatively the wages of those with no ECE certification and to a lesser degree Basic ECE have risen over the period in real terms (by 17.6 [from \$17.48 to \$20.50] and 14.4 per cent [from \$15.30 to \$18.00] respectively). The wages of those with Infant and Toddler and Special Needs certifications have risen somewhat over this period in real terms (by 3.5 and 8.5 per cent, respectively), but less than half as quickly as wages of those with no ECE credential.

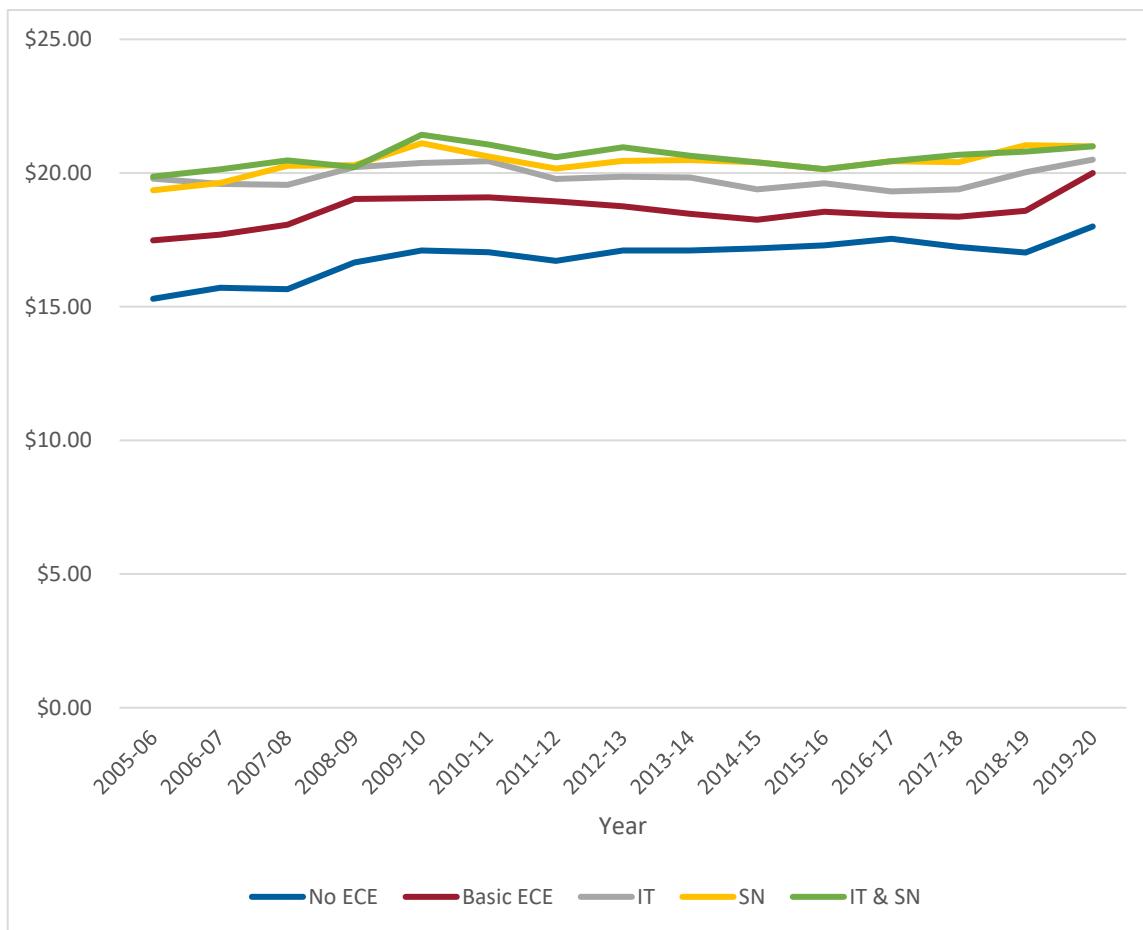
²¹ The data were supplied aggregated and breakdowns included by education level and by position but, unfortunately, not by both. Medians were provided so means cannot be shown for these data. Also, no data showing the distribution of wages (high and low bounds) were supplied. See SRDC's survey data later in the section.

Figure 9 Median wages of B.C.'s child care workforce [CCOF Provider profile]



Sources: British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development; minimum wage data compiled by Employment and Social Development Canada.

Figure 10 Median wages of B.C.'s child care workforce [CCOF Provider profile] – Real 2020 dollars (adjusted for inflation)



Source: SRDC calculations based on data from British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Wage enhancement

The ECE wage enhancement program introduced a \$1 enhancement in 2019 with an additional \$1 included in 2020. In addition, the program provides funding for statutory benefits (additional costs of paying employees more) at a rate of 18.37 per cent. The program is only available for frontline ECEs working in licensed child care centres receiving the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative.

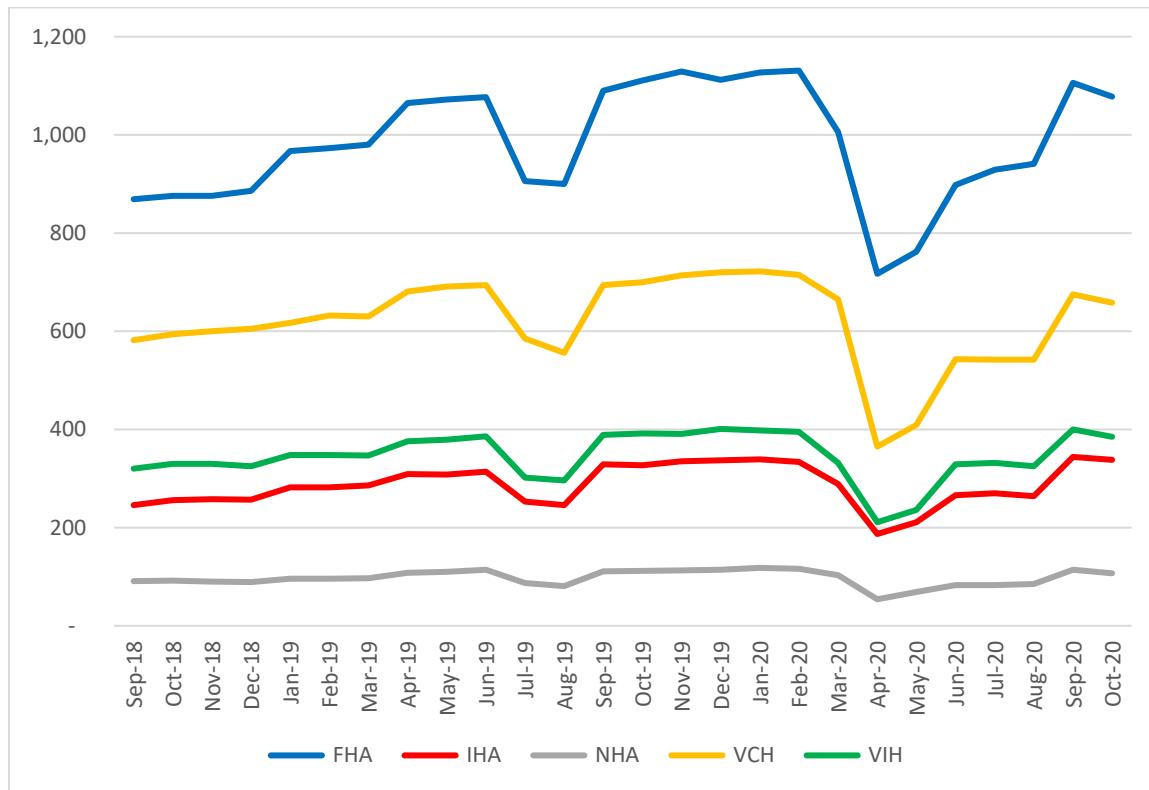
The data reveal a high take up by facilities (Figure 11) and by educators (Figure 12) that suggest roughly 2 in every 3 front-line ECEs were in receipt of the wage enhancement. This is roughly

equivalent to the 58 per cent proportion reported from the 2019 cross-sectional survey in the benchmarking report for 2019.

The number in receipt of wage enhancement appear to be increasing gradually over the period since introduction. However, there is some apparent decline in receipt in the summer months and again towards the end of the 2019-20 year.

From March to April 2020 there was a sudden drop in both the number of facilities and educators claiming wage enhancements across all regions, coinciding with the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the closing of programs. However, by September 2020 take up had returned to pre-pandemic levels, with the reopening of programs. In addition to COVID-19, this period also included the April 2020 increase in the enhancement amount to \$2 per hour.

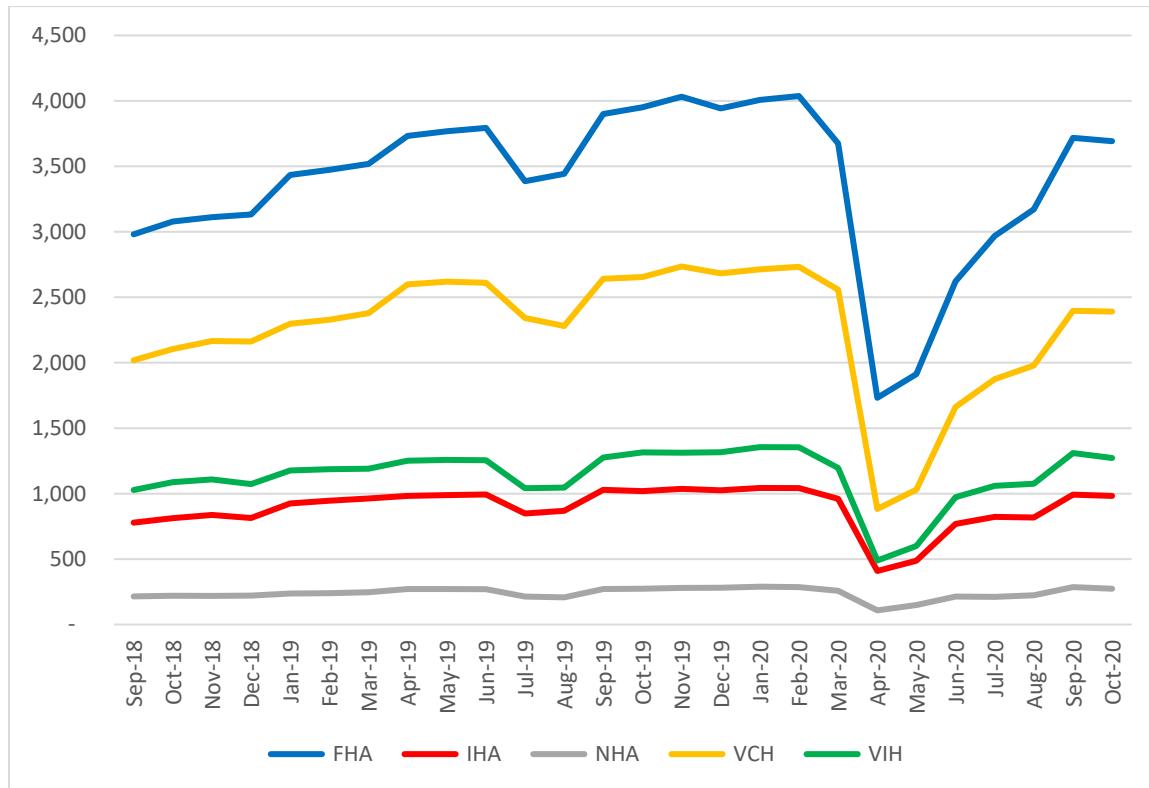
Figure 11 Facilities with wage enhancement claims by region by month



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development [FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region].

Note: Summertime closures of preschool and out-of-school programs can account for temporary drops in receipt.

Figure 12 Early childhood educators with wage enhancement claims by month



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development [FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region].

Note: Summertime closures of preschool and out-of-school programs can account for temporary drops in receipt.

Cross-sectional survey

Self-reported hourly wages

SRDC's cross-sectional survey asked members of the ECL workforce directly about their wages. Table 19 shows the self-reported average wages for Centre ECL workers (those who self-identified as working in a licensed facility, preschool or before-and after school program). Owner operators and HCPs were not asked for hourly wage rates because they are often salaried or have irregular earnings from their businesses.

The average Centre ECL worker's hourly wage rate reported in the 2020 survey was \$22.11 – roughly two dollars higher than the equivalent estimate from the 2019 survey.

Table 19 Self-reported hourly wage rates of ECL workers by certification and change since 2019

	<u>Qualification/ Certification</u>	Hourly wage		Change from 2019	
		<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Dev</u>
ECL workers		\$22.11	3.95	+\$2.04	+0.9
	Responsible Adult	\$20.99	5.01	+\$2.78	+1.79
	ECEA	\$19.76	3.61	+\$1.96	+1.04
	ECE (1 year)	\$22.45	3.69	+\$2.66	+0.9
	ECE (5 year)	\$22.84	3.37	+\$2.43	+0.76
	ECE + IT	\$23.37	3.25	+\$1.76	+0.41
	ECE + SP	\$23.72	3.61	+\$2.58	+1.02
	ECE + IT + SP	\$23.71	3.55	+\$2.39	+0.92
ECL workers – Non-supervisors		\$20.92	3.16	+\$1.22	+0.36
	Responsible Adult	\$18.36	2.69	+\$0.94	+1.02
	ECEA	\$19.16	3.28	+\$1.46	+0.78
	ECE (1 year)	\$21.91	3.16	+\$2.42	+0.57
	ECE (5 year)	\$21.81	2.56	+\$1.62	+0.05
	ECE + IT	\$22.33	2.46	+\$1.00	-0.22
	ECE + SP	\$22.39	2.65	+\$2.27	+0.94
	ECE + IT + SP	\$22.52	2.62	+\$1.72	+0.43
ECL workers – Supervisors		\$24.78	4.25	+\$1.59	+1.04
	ECEA or RA ²²	\$23.56	4.72	+\$1.64	-0.05
	ECE	\$24.89	3.93	+\$2.37	+1.22
	ECE + IT	\$25.49	3.63	+\$2.23	+0.34
	ECE + SP	\$26.04	3.89	+\$2.41	+1.1
	ECE + IT +SP	\$26.14	3.96	+\$1.74	+0.99

Source: SRDC employer survey, answers include hazard pay.

²² These certifications are combined for supervisors to match the 2019 benchmark. The 2019 benchmark combined them because the sample sizes were too small for a reliable estimate for each separately.

Hourly wages were also estimated by type of certification and position held. In general, Centre ECL workers' wage rates increased with higher certifications and qualifications. For instance, respondents with ECE certifications had higher average hourly wage rates than those qualified as responsible adults or holding a ECEA certification. Respondents with speciality certification (Infant Toddler or Special Needs) also had higher average wages than those with ECE certification only.

As expected, hourly wage rates are higher among Centre ECL workers in supervisor positions. On average, Centre ECL workers in supervisor positions were compensated \$24.78 an hour compared to \$20.92 for those who were not supervisors. In both supervisor and non-supervisor positions, wages had increased by between one and a little over two dollars since 2019. Some of this increase is likely due to the wage enhancement tactic of the ECL R&R Strategy. Respondents with higher certifications and qualifications were compensated also more.

The average hourly wages of Centre ECL workers who are not supervisors was compared by membership in a union (Table 20). While, on average, unionized workers had higher average hourly wages than those who were not unionized (\$22.93 compared to \$20.61), this difference was only significantly different among Centre ECL workers with ECE certifications. The level of wage increase from 2019 to 2020 was especially high for unionized workers. A possible outlier is the substantial increase in wages for those with a 1-year ECE certification. This may possibly signal some form of entry premium in a difficult recruitment year.²³

The average hourly wages of Centre ECL workers who are not supervisors was also compared by organization status or *auspice* (Appendix F: Table 47). On average, Centre ECL workers working for not-for-profit, Indigenous, and education-run centres had significantly higher average hourly wages than those working for private businesses. There were no significant differences by auspice with respect to ECE certifications, other than ECE (5 year) certification. The level of wage increase from 2019 to 2020 was especially high for those with special needs certification working for not-for-profit and other organizations. Of course, higher wage rates per hour do not necessarily translate to higher earnings and incomes given variations in hours worked. Income is considered in the monthly income section (following the data from employer survey reports on wages).

²³ The BC ECE Registry certificates are valid for 1 year and 5 years. Anyone who graduates from an approved ECE program can apply for either certificate. But the 1 year tend to be held more often by those who are recent graduates because it can be difficult for them to accumulate the required work hours to apply for the 5-year. The 1-year certificate can be renewed once only.

Employer reported hourly wages

Table 21 reports from the employer survey the weighted average hourly wage rates provided at the organization-level for 2019 and 2020. The weighted average hourly rate is estimated using the number of employees by type of certification.

The average hourly wage rates provided at the organization level are in line with the information collected at the individual level. The hourly wage rates for ECL professionals ranged from \$16.50 an hour for those that qualify as a Responsible Adult to \$21.93 for those that hold an ECE certification. ECL supervisors were compensated \$21.43 an hour for Responsible Adults to \$24.02 an hour for ECE certificate holders. The hourly wage rates for ECL Managers ranged from \$22.16 an hour for Responsible Adults to \$25.19 an hour for ECE certificate holders. The hourly wage rates for ECL Directors ranged from \$26.21 an hour for Responsible Adults to \$28.94 an hour for ECE certificate holders.

Table 20 Average hourly wage rates for Centre ECL workers in non-supervisor positions by membership in a union and change since 2019

	Non-unionized	Change from 2019	Unionized	Change from 2019
Mean***	\$20.61	+\$0.95	\$22.93	+\$2.19
(Std. Dev)	2.97	+\$2.85	3.02	+\$2.77
Responsible Adult	\$18.09	+\$0.13	\$18.89	+\$0.12
ECEA	\$19.23	+\$1.48	\$20.61	+\$1.94
ECE (1 year)***	\$21.32	+\$1.59	\$24.47	+\$4.36
ECE (5 year) ***	\$21.52	+\$1.55	\$23.63	+\$2.64
ECE+IT ***	\$21.91	+\$0.71	\$23.97	+\$2.58
ECE+SP ***	\$21.95	+\$1.80	\$24.11	+\$2.27
ECE+SP+IT ***	\$22.05	+\$1.29	\$24.14	+\$3.23

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Notes: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. They represent the test to compare means of hourly wage between unionized and non-unionized workers for the different categories e.g., whether the hourly wage between unionized and non-unionized members are different for ECEAs, etc.

Consistent with 2019 findings, wage rates in 2020 were higher for more senior positions and for those with certificates. From 2019 to 2020, the average lowest hourly rate increased for all positions with the exception of the lowest paid ECEA-certified managers. ECL Directors qualified as a Responsible Adults saw the greatest increase over the year at \$2.73 an hour.²⁴ The highest hourly rate increased for all positions except for ECL supervisors who qualified as Responsible Adults and those with an ECEA certificate.

Table 21 Lowest and highest weighted average wages of ECL workers by position and certification 2019 and 2020

ECL Workers				ECL Supervisors		
	N	Lowest	Highest	N	Lowest	Highest
RA 2019	338	\$15.86	\$17.69	100	\$20.39	\$22.88
RA 2020	226	\$16.50	\$18.60	41	\$21.43	\$22.71
ECEA 2019	454	\$16.60	\$18.23	136	\$20.50	\$22.85
ECEA 2020	248	\$17.35	\$19.35	66	\$20.51	\$21.49
ECE 2019	465	\$18.71	\$21.49	241	\$21.40	\$23.25
ECE 2020	334	\$19.67	\$21.93	160	\$22.05	\$24.02
ECL Managers				ECL Directors		
	N	Lowest	Highest	N	Lowest	Highest
RA 2019	150	\$20.90	\$23.23	148	\$23.48	\$26.47
RA 2020	76	\$22.16	\$24.79	51	\$26.21	\$27.44
ECEA 2019	198	\$22.08	\$23.43	82	\$22.83	\$26.15
ECEA 2020	88	\$21.90	\$23.78	53	\$23.57	\$26.40
ECE 2019	361	\$23.24	\$24.65	142	\$25.71	\$27.58
ECE 2020	216	\$23.80	\$25.19	87	\$26.07	\$28.94

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: N represents the number of employers who provided wages data.

²⁴ The number of such individuals in the survey also dropped the most from 148 to 51, which may make this statistic less reliable. If this reflects a genuine drop in the proportion of RA-qualified directors, the apparent wage increase for the lowest paid could be simply due to the lowest paid RA-qualified directors being disproportionately more likely to move out of this position.

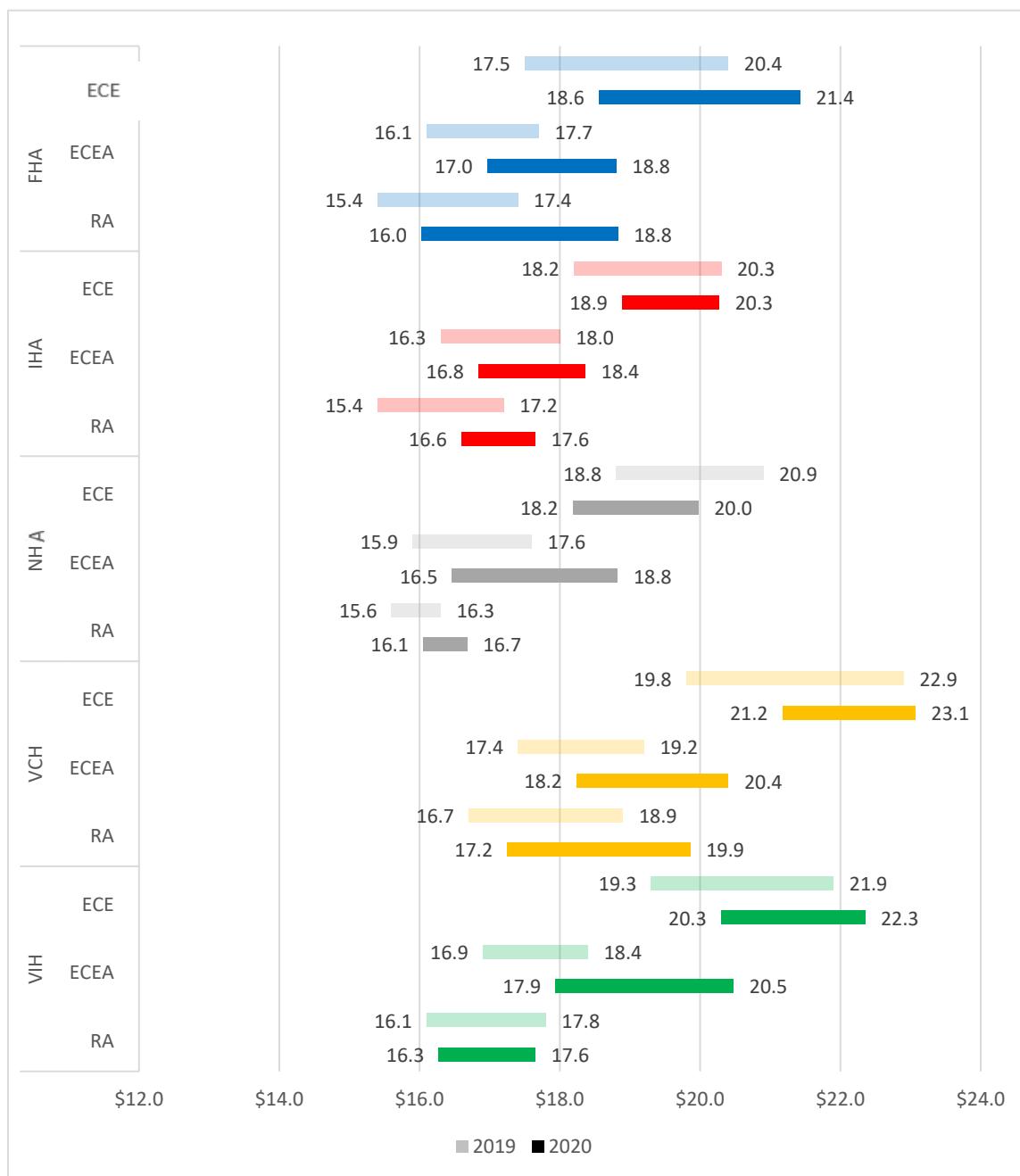
Figure 13 shows the employer-reported lowest and highest average hourly wages for ECL professionals by health authority region. The lighter bars represent 2019 data while the darker bars present 2020 data. In general, average hourly wage rates increased across all positions in all health authorities from 2019 to 2020. However, the variation in compensation across health authorities remained evident. The lowest hourly rate for Responsible Adult ranged from \$16.00 (FHA) to \$17.20 (VCH), while the highest hourly rate ranged from \$16.70 (NHA) to \$19.90 (VCH). For ECEA-certified professionals, the lowest hourly rate ranged from \$16.50 (NHA) to \$18.20 (VCH), and the highest wage rates ranged from \$18.40 (IHA) to \$20.50 (VIH). The lowest hourly rate of staff who held an ECE-certification ranged from \$18.20 (NHA) to \$21.20 (VCH), and the highest hourly rate ranged from \$20.00 (NHA) to \$23.10 (VCH).

The lowest and highest hourly wage rates for Responsible Adults and ECE certificate holders were higher in Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region than other regions. This was the same in 2019 as 2020. While the lowest and highest hourly rates for ECE holders increased from 2019 to 2020 in most health authority regions, members of the ECL workforce in the Northern Health Authority region experienced a slight decrease. The biggest jump in hourly average wage (\$2.90 an hour) across the different health regions was for ECEA certificate holders in the VIH authority region.

Monthly income from ECL employment

Earnings and thus monthly income from child care work depend on wage rates and hours worked. Table 22 shows the average monthly income for all respondents to the cross-sectional sectional survey. This includes all income sources related to ECL employment and includes those in full-time or part-time employment. On average, owner-operators have the highest monthly income (\$3,794), little changed from 2019. Centre ECL workers' average monthly income was \$3,052, also little changed. The HCP respondents in 2020 reported higher incomes than in 2019, up from \$2,658 to \$3,402, reflected in many more earning \$3,000-\$4,499 per month in 2020 when the modal income band in 2019 had been \$1,500-\$2,999. It is hard to know whether this is a compositional shift in who among HCPs responded to the survey or a real increase in incomes across the HCP population, possibly related to pandemic-related shifts in parents' choices of, and ability to use different types of ECL. If lower-income HCPs ceased operations more than higher-income HCPs, this would have the effect of raising income levels for the remaining HCP population.

Figure 13 Employer-reported lowest and highest average hourly wages for ECL professionals by health authority 2019 and 2020



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

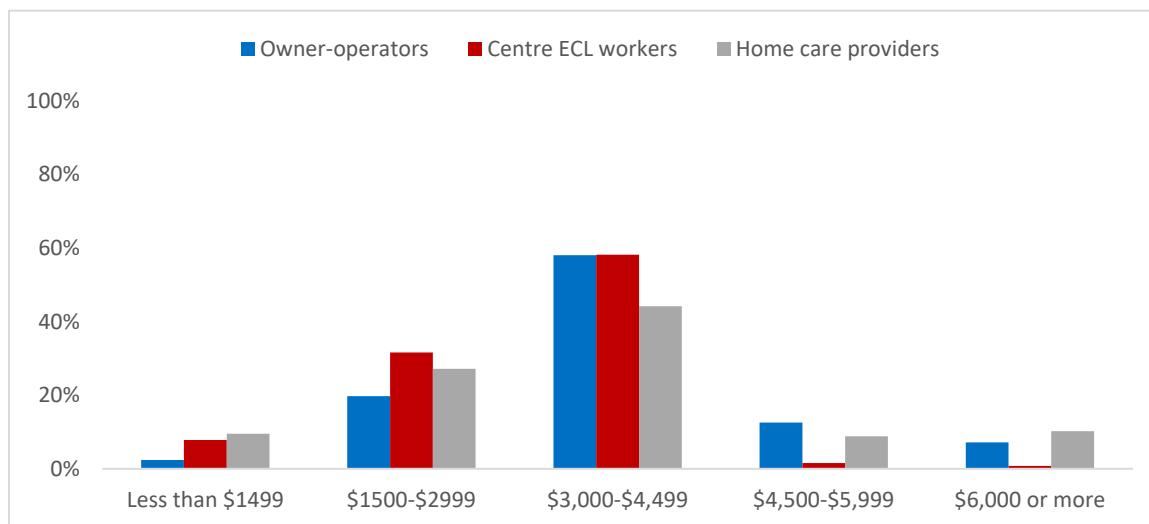
Monthly income is broken down further by organization type or *auspice* in Appendix F (Table 48). The level and pattern of incomes among Centre ECL workers were similar whether they worked for a private businesses or not for profit & other organizations. Similarly, average incomes increased from 2019 to 2020 roughly \$200 per month for Centre ECL workers regardless of whether they worked for private businesses or not for profit & other organizations. The average monthly income of owner-operators of private businesses declined slightly between 2019 and 2020.

Figure 14 presents the distributions of 2020 monthly income from the lower section of Table 22, emphasizing how few Centre ECL workers take home more than \$4,499 per month. Figure 15 presents the percentage point change for each group relative to 2019, again revealing the relatively large upward shift in HCP incomes alongside changes for other groups that are much smaller in magnitude.

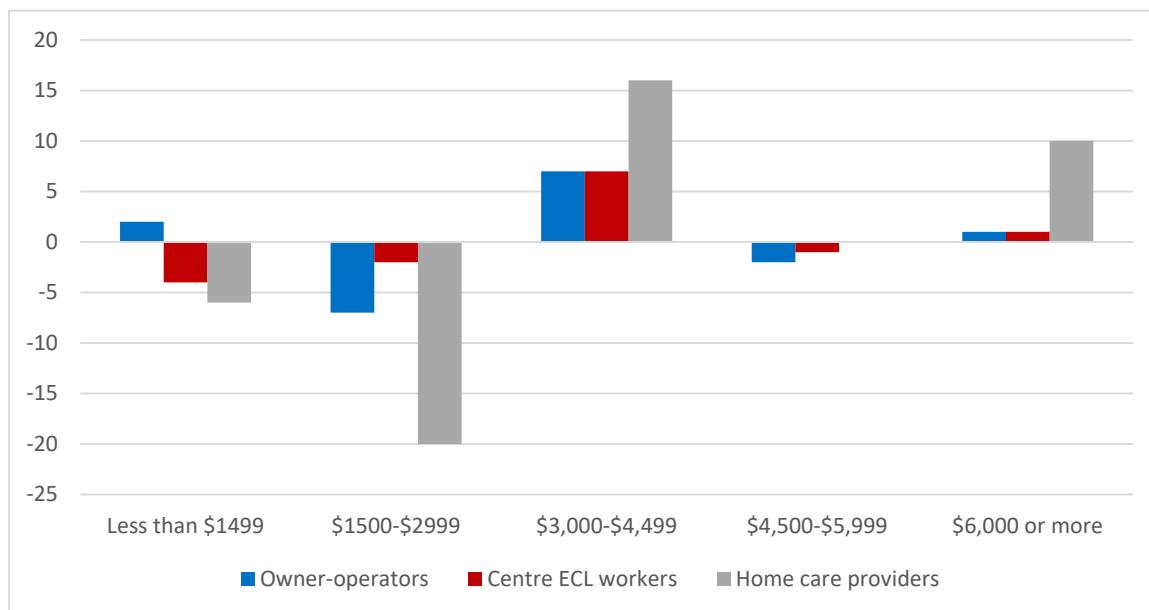
Table 22 Monthly income by respondent group 2019 and 2020

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Mean	\$3,851.08	\$3,794.25	\$2,922.78	\$3,051.82	\$2,657.98	\$3,401.91
Std. Dev	1538.94	1274.91	997.07	1145.57	1168.92	1585.49
Less than \$1,499	0%	2%	12%	8%	16%	10%
\$1,500-\$2,999	27%	20%	34%	32%	47%	27%
\$3,000-\$4,499	51%	58%	51%	58%	28%	44%
\$4,500-\$5,999	15%	13%	3%	2%	9%	9%
\$6,000 or more	6%	7%	0%	1%	0%	10%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 14 Monthly income (all sources) by respondent sub-groups

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 15 Percentage point change in 2020 relative to 2019 monthly income by respondent sub-groups

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Wage enhancement

When asked whether they were receiving the ECL R&R Strategy tactic of wage enhancement, two thirds (67 per cent) of respondents said yes. This proportion was highest among Centre ECL workers (69 per cent). Table 23 reveals that owner-operators were more likely to be receiving the wage enhancement in 2020 than 2019. It is not possible to provide an independent estimate of how many of these people would have been eligible. There were fewer respondents who did not know whether they got the enhancement in 2020, suggesting overall awareness of the tactic is growing. However, the question was not asked of HCPs in 2020.

Table 23 Wage enhancement recipients by respondent group

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Yes	55%	63%	72%	69%	30%	N/A	58%	67%
Don't know	1%	0%	6%	3%	1%	N/A	3%	2%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

The majority of employers in the employer survey reported they had applied for the wage enhancement (87.5 per cent or 385 organizations). Employers who reported they had not applied for the wage enhancement were asked to identify the main reasons for not applying. The most common answers was not having staff that would qualify for the wage enhancement (47 per cent) followed by their workplace was not eligible (27 per cent). Nine per cent of the organizations also reported that they did not apply because the information about who would be eligible was not clear. Another 9 per cent of organizations reported they did not apply because the process was too complicated or takes too much time, which is an 8-percentage point decrease from 2019 when 17 per cent gave this reason for not applying for the wage enhancement.

A new form of wage enhancement in 2020 was hazard pay – a wage top-up due to COVID-19. Table 24 presents the proportions of Centre ECL workers reporting receipt of hazard pay. Three in ten had received hazard pay at some time in the year. And of these, 8 per cent were still receiving it at the time of the survey.

Table 24 Did you receive hazard pay (top-up due to COVID) at any point since March 2020?

Centre ECL workers	
Yes	29%
No	59%
I don't know	8%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Key informant interviews and case studies

The case studies did not collect information on the wages and salaries of those interviewed. In the interviews, however, respondents talked wage levels both in the case study workplaces and across the sector as a whole. Except for the one unionized site in which staff wages exceeded the threshold for the wage enhancement, the consensus amongst all those interviewed was that wages in the sector were low, too low to allow staff to support a family on their own.

"... wages are key. We've always had low wages [as a sector]." (Site F: Manager)

While ECL staff thought wages should be higher for the type of work and level of responsibility they had, they appreciated that the wages they earned personally were at the middle to upper end of the wage spectrum for the sector. Managers and owners explained increasing wages for ECL staff would necessitate an increase in fees for parents which could make centres less competitive and result in lower enrollments. Providing competitive salaries for ECL staff was important but this had to be balanced within their current financial reality; ECL facilities operated on tight margins and there was no room to increase wages.

"I think the wages have to go up for sure. You know, some people like, well, I have to go find a second job you know, you're not making as much as you think you should be like even assistant directors, really. You're only making, what, a buck, a buck and a half more than an ECE for all the headache that we put up with and stuff like that, I just think wages all across the board need to be increased."
 (Site C: Manager)

Managers and owners stated other factors including a range of in-work benefits were important to ECL staff and were part of the decision to stay or remain in the sector.

"When I get to the question of: 'let's talk about wages'. We're actually you know, a lot of them actually are taking pay cuts when they come to [name of centre]. So, we're not on the highest end, we're not. We're sort of in the middle and some of

them are coming to us where they are making more money and are happy enough to take a lower wage for whatever reason. Everybody's reasons are different."
(Site C: Manager)

The case study sites provided a range of health benefits and supports for training with some centres covering the costs for some ECEA courses and ECE courses needed for their staff to complete their programs.

The wage enhancement continued to be important to those in the sector both for the additional money it provided to eligible ECL staff and because it signified the recognition from the government that the sector is important. In April 2020, when the wage enhancement increased to \$2, the increase was welcomed and made a significant difference to those ECL staff who received it. For some ECL staff it raised their salaries by two to three hundred dollars per month which was "much needed" and "appreciated" and for some it meant they did not have to worry about "paying bills at the end of the month."

"Nice to be earn more than minimum wage, nice to be paid beyond that ... makes me feel more validated for going to school." (Site D: ECE)

"I mean, it's like it's two dollars is a lot. But I don't think that's like the only way you're going to be able to solve things. It just seems like even with two dollars, people are making very little money, especially in the lower mainland where the cost of living is way higher than it is here. So, I'm just not sure how people are kind of getting by." (Site B: ECE)

Those interviewed hoped the \$2 wage enhancement would help with recruitment and retention of staff as the additional two dollars made ECE salaries more competitive. There was some concern the \$2 enhancement, while appreciated and much needed, was not enough to make a difference in the longer term. ECL staff hoped the enhancement would continue. Some were concerned about the negative message that would be heard by those in the sector if the government withdrew it alongside the real financial hardship it would cause to staff.

For most of those interviewed it was difficult to speculate on the longer-term impact of the wage enhancement. All agreed it was a "step in the right direction" but suggested COVID-19 had caused so much disruption to everyday life, that it would take time to establish how effective the wage enhancement had been.

Within the case study sites there was a discussion about the eligibility criteria for the wage enhancement. Some suggested the enhancement should be available to all members of the ECL workforce and not just those with an ECE designation. Their rationale was that ECEAs and ECEs essentially did the same job and should be entitled to the wage enhancement. They suggested that experienced ECEAs had similar responsibilities as newly qualified ECE staff, and this experience should be recognized. Others saw the enhancement as a recognition for the time these individuals spent in college. When asked if the enhancement was an incentive to encourage

ECEAs to complete the ECE training, most thought it was not and cited other reasons for ECEAs not completing training including the time and cost of training.

In 2019, some case study sites commented on some challenges they experienced in administrating the wage enhancement. This year, these had mostly been rectified. While managers reported that the enhancement was an additional administrative task that they were not compensated for, they did the extra work because it benefitted their staff. These managers noted they had good accounting systems in place to process the wage enhancement.

KPI 2B: ECL WORKERS' BENEFITS

Cross-sectional survey

Self-reported benefits received

Table 25 includes in the first two columns the proportion of respondents who indicated receiving specific benefits from their employers in 2019 and 2020. In 2020, about 17 per cent of Centre ECL workers reported not receiving any benefits. The most common benefits received by Centre ECL workers were extended health benefits (52 per cent), dental coverage (54 per cent), and paid sick days (61 per cent). On the other hand, receiving short-term disability (21 per cent), long-term disability (22 per cent), and flexible health spending accounts (5 per cent) were less common. In general, very little changed from the proportions reporting these benefits in 2019 except that there were fewer who didn't know about their benefits, and pension and life insurance benefits were more often reported.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they received any additional benefits from their employer. Roughly a third of Centre ECL workers reported receiving paid breaks, one in seven reported paid documentation time, and two in seven reported paid programming and preparation time. While 41 per cent received pay for overtime work 29 per cent received time-off in lieu of overtime. However, more than half received paid time for staff meetings occurring outside work hours (59 per cent). In terms of benefits that supported professional development, a quarter of Centre ECL workers received financial assistance for 'courses or post-ECE training support' and paid release time for training and just over half received financial assistance for 'ECE-related training' (25 per cent and 52 per cent, respectively).

In general, the level of benefits reported by the majority of respondents were very similar in 2020 as in 2019.

Table 25 Benefits received by ECL workers and provided by ECL employers

	Benefits provided to Centre ECL workers			
	Centre ECL worker responses in workforce survey		Employers responses in employers survey	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Core benefits				
Extended Health Care	52%	52%	60%	51%
Dental coverage	51%	54%	59%	49%
Life insurance	30%	35%	45%	38%
Short-term Disability	18%	21%	27%	19%
Long-term Disability	17%	22%	30%	23%
Paid sick days	59%	61%	63%	58%
Retirement/ Pension plan	24%	30%	25%	18%
Flexible spending account/Health spending account	4%	5%	6%	11%
Vacation	N/A	N/A	N/A	7%
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	6%
None of the above	14%	17%	20%	21%
I don't know	15%	8%	0%	1%
Additional benefits				
	Centre ECL workers		Employers	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Paid breaks	29%	32%	44%	41%
Paid overtime	45%	41%	53%	54%
Time in lieu for overtime	24%	29%	37%	27%
Paid staff meetings that occur outside regular work hours	61%	59%	67%	67%
Financial assistance for ECE-related training	48%	52%	67%	67%
Financial assistance for courses or post-ECE training	21%	25%	41%	41%
Paid release time for training	22%	26%	39%	33%
Reduced child care fees	22%	22%	45%	48%
Paid documentation time	14%	14%	30%	26%
Paid programming and prep time	27%	28%	57%	51%
None of the above	6%	5%	8%	1%
I don't know	5%	4%	N/A	5%

Benefits information provided by employers

SRDC also collected organization-level data on benefits paid by the employer and provided to their ECL professional staff (right hand columns of Table 25). Benefits information was provided by 454 employers (or 98 per cent of the sample). The most commonly reported benefits were paid sick days (58 per cent), extended health care coverage (51 per cent), and dental coverage (49 per cent). These benefits were also the three most common benefits reported in 2019, although there was a decrease in the proportion of organizations reporting providing these three benefits for their staff (-9 percentage points for paid sick days, -10 percentage points for dental coverage, and -9 percentage points for extended health care). The proportion of employers who provided flexible spending/health spending accounts increased from 2019 to 2020. Employers were in general more likely than Centre ECL workers to report that additional benefits were provided. Similar to the results reported in 2019, approximately one in every five employers indicated that they did not provide any core benefits to their staff (21 per cent).

The three most common additional benefits provided were paid staff meetings that occurred outside regular work hours (67 per cent), financial assistance for ECE-related training (67 per cent), and paid overtime (54 per cent). The proportion of employers who provided these three additional benefits did not change from 2019 to 2020, and the proportion of employers who provided other additional benefits listed in Table 25 remained relatively similar as well.

Further analysis found that 75 per cent of the employers in the sample provided at least one core benefit *and* one additional benefit to their staff. Employers who provided benefits to their staff offered eight benefits (either core or additional) on average.

In general, benefit coverage has not been growing between 2019 and 2020, although possibly awareness has. A similar proportion of employers reported providing each type of benefit as the proportion of individual members of the workforce who reported receiving the same benefits. The discrepancies between sources that remained could be due to sampling differences between the two groups as well as possibly some employees' lack of awareness of the benefits available to them (8 per cent of Centre ECL workers in 2020 reported not knowing what benefits were provided to them, down from 15 per cent in 2019).

Key informant interviews and case studies

The range and types of benefits provided by employers to their staff at case study sites did not change. All six case study sites continued to provide a range of extended benefits to ECL staff with five providing extended health benefits. One site opted to provide ECL staff with a health spending account largely because of the flexibility it offered staff alongside the cost of employer-provided health benefits. All sites provided staff with annual leave and paid sick leave. ECL staff appreciated the health benefits they received, especially the paid sick leave. ECL staff and

managers were concerned about an increase in staff absences because of COVID-19 regulations as staff were not allowed to come to work if they were ill and could not return until they had no symptoms. Most ECL staff did not have a work-based pension and saw this as a gap.

Centres continued to provide staff with support for training and development. Some centres paid for staff to complete ECE courses. Centres also paid for new staff to complete the courses needed to be an ECEA. Managers and owners viewed this as an investment in staff and the future of their centres.

KPI 3: THE EXTENT TO WHICH CURRENT SECTOR OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCIES ARE INTEGRATED INTO EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Work is still underway on the updated Sector Occupational Competencies. SRDC will begin to track the integration of these competencies through key informant interviews and document review as soon as they are released.

KPI 4: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKERS WITH CREDENTIALS RELEVANT TO PROVISION OF CHILD CARE FOR PROVINCIAL ECL NEEDS, INCLUDING REGIONAL AND INDIGENOUS ECL NEEDS

An anticipated consequence of the ECL R&R Strategy is that more members of the ECL workforce would hold credentials relevant to the provision of child care and that meet specific ECL needs relevant to their position. Data on educational credentials held in the context of specific workplace roles was obtained from Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) provider profile surveys and SRDC's cross-sectional survey.

Administrative data

Numbers of certified professionals

New data from the CCOF provider profile maintained by MCFD permit an examination of trends in certifications and training through the workforce in licensed centres in receipt of the funding, according to the annual provider survey. The ECE numbers in Table 26 count up currently paid child care staff in each reporting facility. Staff are allowed to select multiple certifications with respect to ECE but are counted only once in the ECE+ row and total staff row.

Table 26 Prevalence of staff with Early Childhood Education (ECE) certification/training [data from CCOF Provider profile]

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
No ECE	2,864	2,947	2,908	2,944	3,131	3,045	3,392
Some ECE	2,541	2,577	2,808	2,807	3,250	3,313	3,675
Basic ECE	7,792	8,140	8,329	8,483	9,309	8,733	8,357
Post-basic IT ECE	2,493	2,745	2,844	3,178	3,540	3,533	3,408
Post-basic SN ECE	1,588	1,635	1,648	1,676	1,847	1,788	1,731
ECE+ [Basic ECE, IT ECE, SN ECE (not Bachelors)]	8,705	9,153	9,599	9,654	10,674	10,411	10,057
Bachelors of ECE	127	153	152	210	200	177	247
Related courses	3,948	4,227	4,394	4,352	4,608	412	
Bachelor Ed	675	699	717	725	794	728	
Other University Degree ²⁵	2,087	2,263	2,429	2,551	3,040	2,221	
Total staff reported	16,215	14,668	15,279	15,405	17,024	16,784	17,124

Source: British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development.

While there has been an overall increase in staff over the period since 2013, numbers fluctuate by year and show virtually no change from the 2017-18 year, before the launch of the ECL R&R Strategy, to 2019-20, the latest year for which data have been provided. There was a steady increase in the proportion of the workforce with ECE credentials from 2013-4 through 2017-18 but an apparent decline since then. Between 2018-19 when the ECL R&R Strategy was launched and 2019-20 nearly all the growth has been in the number of staff with no ECE credentials or some ECE.

However, SRDC has also received data on employment at Universal Child Care Prototype Sites. Since 2018, B.C. has converted around 2,500 licensed child care spaces into low-cost spaces at existing child care facilities. At these Prototype sites, families pay no more than \$200 a month per child for full-time enrolment during regular business hours, regardless of the care type. A total of 51 prototype sites were approved in November and December 2018 and are substantially

²⁵ In 2018-19 Survey, entries to "Other University Degree" were affected due to the addition of other categories such as Master's degree, Bachelor of Social Sciences.

subsidized by the provincial government until at least March 31, 2021. These prototype sites thus ceased to receive CCOF funding in late 2018. They accounted for 426.8 full-time equivalent credentialed ECEs in 2019-20.²⁶

Although the data only cover the early period of the ECL R&R Strategy, these trends suggest very little early effect of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics on net ECE certifications held by those *working in the sector*. Data were also received from the ECE Registry, although these are not shown in the table. The registry includes all people holding current ECE and ECEA certifications not all of whom are working in child care.

Registry data suggest that new certifications have been somewhat increasing. The number of new ECE certifications granted increased from 5,301 in 2017-18 through to 5,582 in 2018-19 to 6,306 in 2019-20: an increase of more than a thousand in two years. These registry data show active (new plus existing valid) ECE certifications rose from 18,157 through 19,298 to 20,049 through the same three time periods. The discrepancy in trends between the registry data and Table 2626 may be due to a higher proportion of those with ECE certifications (and thus in the registry) no longer working in the sector (and thus not in the CCOF provider profile data).

There are very few data available on those trained to become Responsible Adults. Table 27 presents data on Responsible Adult courses compiled and newly provided to SRDC by Child Care Resource & Referral Centres. The number of participants who completed these courses increased from 2018 to 2019 in three health authority regions, and remained constant in the Vancouver Island Health authority region, but dropped noticeably in the Vancouver Coastal Health authority region. In 2020, likely as a result of COVID-19, the number of participants completing a Responsible Adult courses declined substantially in all regions.

Cross-sectional survey

Education

About 92 per cent of workforce survey respondents had completed post-secondary education, up from 88 per cent in 2019.²⁷ The proportion was lower among HCPs (at 83 per cent). In contrast, the highest proportion of respondents with post-secondary education were ECEs no longer working in child care (95 per cent). In general, education levels were slightly higher in 2020.

²⁶ Prototype sites may employ other staff as well. The MCFD data report only certified ECEs.

²⁷ Any PSE, not necessarily related to ECL.

Table 27 Participants who completed responsible adult courses, by Health Authority Region

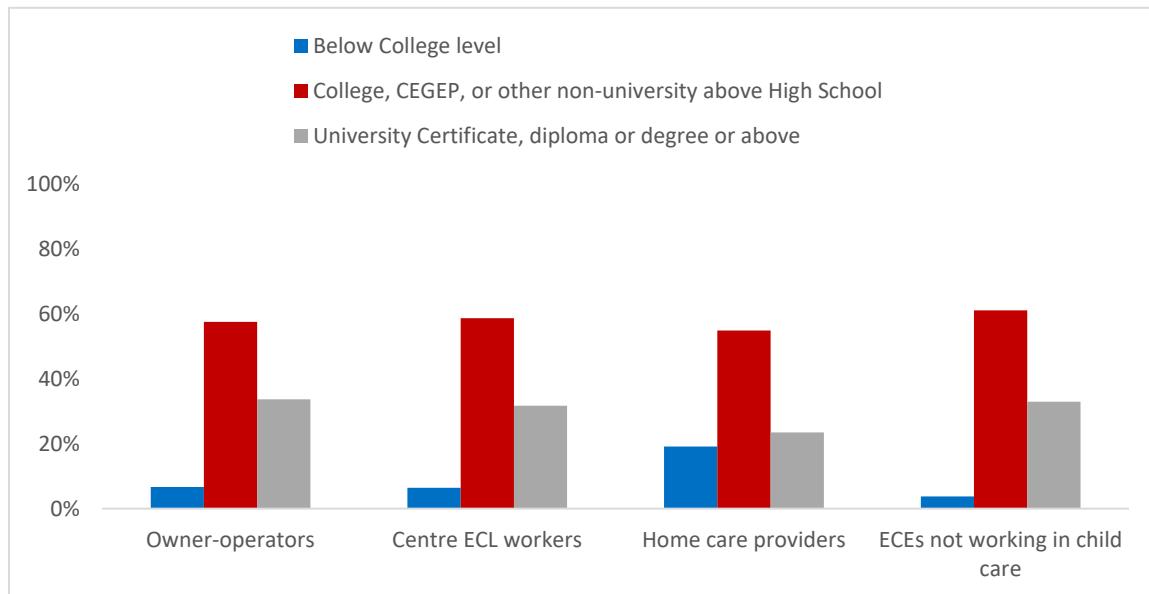
	2018	2019	2020
Fraser Health Authority Region	112	151	94
Interior Health Authority Region	86	154	96
Northern Health Authority Region	68	77	62
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority Region	271	225	159
Vancouver Island Health Authority Region	39	39	19
TOTAL	576	646	430

Source: Child Care Resource and Referral Centres compilation.

Respondents were also asked about their highest level of education completed in a program specific to child care (Figure 16). The proportion of respondents who completed a college, CEGEP, or non-university certificate or diploma in a program specific to child care was high (at about 60 per cent) across all groups of workers (Centre ECL workers, Owner operators, HCPs and ECEs not working in childcare). ECL-related university degrees or higher were completed by about 34 per cent of owner-operators, 32 per cent of Centre ECL workers, 23 per cent of HCPs, and 33 per cent of ECEs who no longer work in child care. Figure 17 reveals the changes in credentials since 2019. In general, these were not substantial. There was a notable increase in the proportion of HCPs whose highest credential was below college level and a drop in the proportion of university credentials held by ECEs not working in child care.

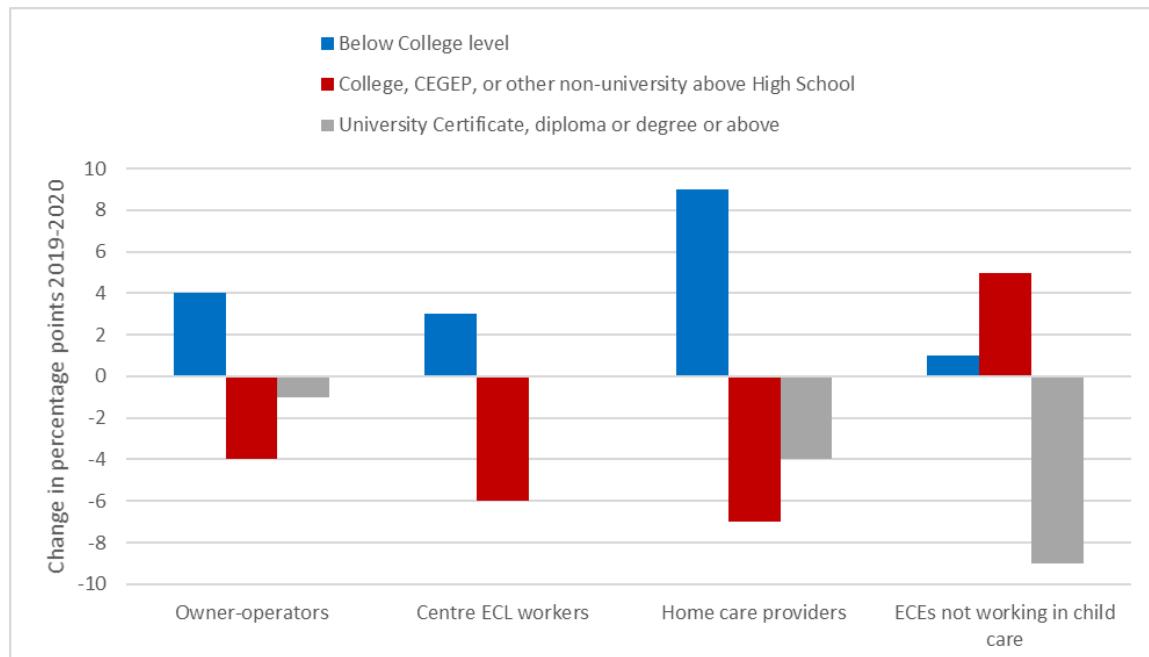
About 14 per cent of workforce survey respondents in 2020 reported they were currently pursuing a post-secondary education program. This was identical to the proportion in 2019. Respondents currently studying were also asked to specify the type of program they were taking. A large proportion (61.5 per cent) were in an early childhood education program.

Figure 16 Highest level of education in a program specific to early care and learning by respondent group 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 17 Highest level of education in a program specific to early care and learning by respondent group – change since 2019



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

ECL certifications

Table 28 shows the ratio of ECE-certified (ECE including specialty) to non-ECE certified (ECEA, RA and uncertified) members of each respondent group. Owner-operators had the highest ratio in 2020 while HCPs had the lowest. While the situation of owner-operators represents an improvement over 2019, among Centre ECL workers there are still 3 ECE-certified workers for every non-certified worker.

Table 28 Ratio of ECE-certified to non-ECE certified ECL workers

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs
2019	2.8 : 1	3.1 : 1	0.6 : 1
2020	3.6 : 1	3.0 : 1	1.0 : 1

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 18 shows the proportion of respondents from the workforce survey with certifications or combination of certifications by respondent group. In general, respondents were more likely to have an ECE (5 year) certification or higher.

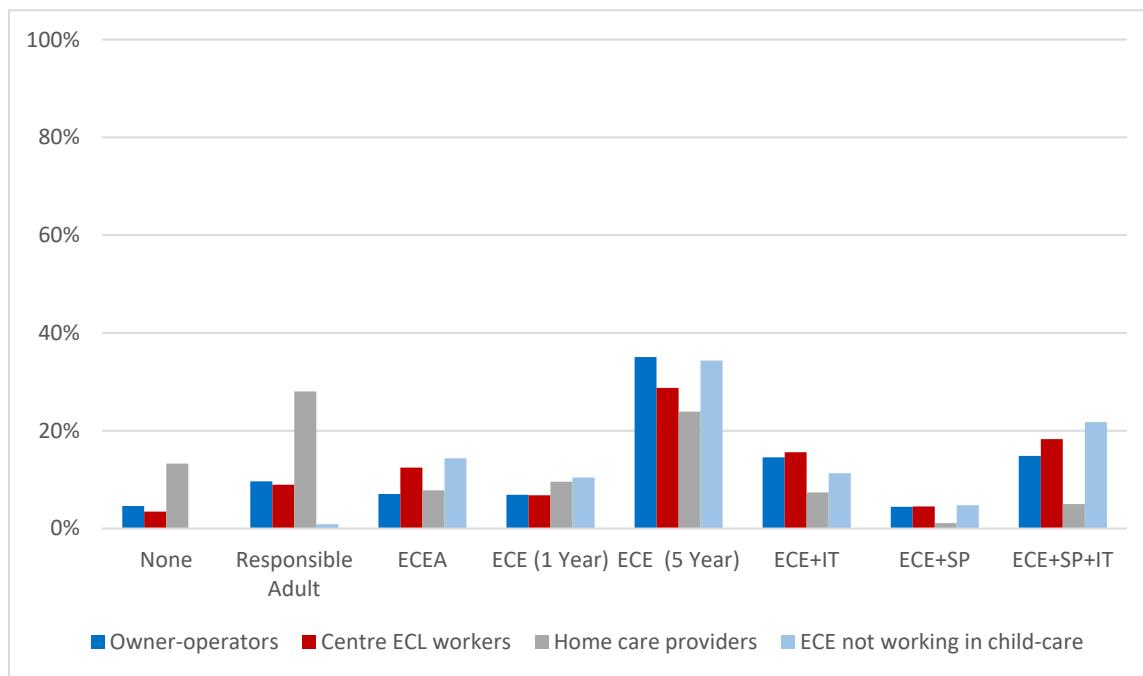
Home child care providers were the most likely group to report no certifications or qualifications (no ECE, ECEA, RA) in early childhood education (13 per cent, down from 17 per cent in 2019) and included the highest proportion of Responsible Adults (28 per cent, down from 35 per cent in 2019). A third of HCPs had a Basic ECE certification and an additional 13 per cent had an ECE certification with at least one specialty. In total, 47 per cent of HCPs held an ECE certification in 2020, up from 39 per cent in 2019 [hence the 1:1 ratio in Table 28].

By contrast, more than three in every four Centre ECL workers had an ECE certification or higher (78 per cent, up from 75 per cent in 2019). Similar proportions held an Infant Toddler certification and an Infant Toddler certification with Special needs training (15 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively).

Overall, owner-operators had less ECL-related education than Centre ECL workers. About three quarters of owner-operators held an ECE certification or higher (72 per cent) and 34 per cent held at least one specialty certification on top of their ECE certification. Owner-operators included a higher proportion of respondents who had no certification (7 per cent compared to 2 per cent of Centre ECL workers) and who qualified as responsible adults (16 per cent compared to 18 per cent of Centre ECL workers).

The certifications by sub-group also show that ECEs no longer working in child care were more likely to have an ECE certification or higher (82 per cent similar to 2019's 84 per cent) and at least one specialty certification (38 per cent). So, the respondent group with the highest level of specialty certification was the group who had ceased working in the sector. Figure 19 suggests that the share of this group holding specialty certifications was lower in 2020 than 2019. Similar proportions in 2020 (14 per cent) as in 2019 (13 per cent) held ECEA certifications.

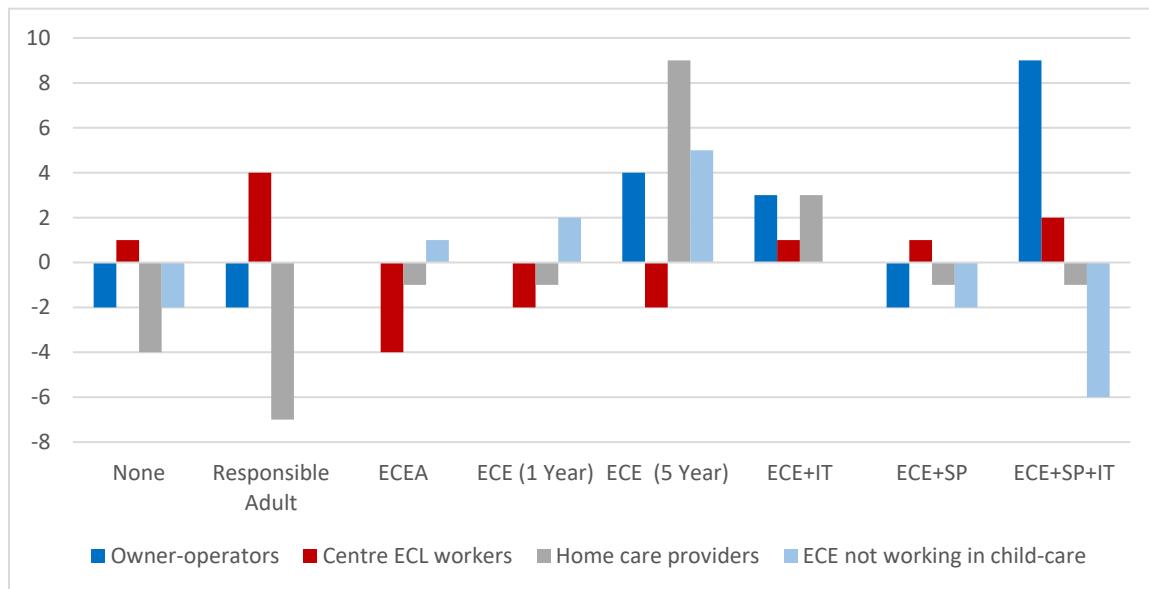
Figure 18 Certification and training by respondent group 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 19 plots the changes in certifications since 2019. For the most part these are fairly small. There is a noticeable shift among owner-operators and HCPs to holding ECE certifications and the proportion of early childhood educators holding specialty ECE certifications has declined. A small percentage of this group identifies their highest credential as ECEA certification, and this grew slightly. Possibly, these differences reflect compositional changes in the population – for example more 1-year ECEs may have become 5-year ECEs, or more 1 year ECEs and ECEAs may have left the childcare workforce due to reasons related to COVID-19 hence the somewhat less advanced credential profile of this group in 2020 – but the changes could also be due simply to differences in who chose to complete the survey in 2020.

Figure 19 Certification and training by respondent group – change in percentage points since 2019



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Respondents were asked where they completed the training requirements for their ECL certifications. The vast majority of respondents completed their training in British Columbia (Table 29). Respondents who did not complete their training in British Columbia were more likely to have completed it in Alberta, Ontario, or outside Canada. There was relatively little change in the origin of credentials in 2020 compared to 2019.

Table 29 Percentage of respondents by place where training was obtained for their ECL certification 2020

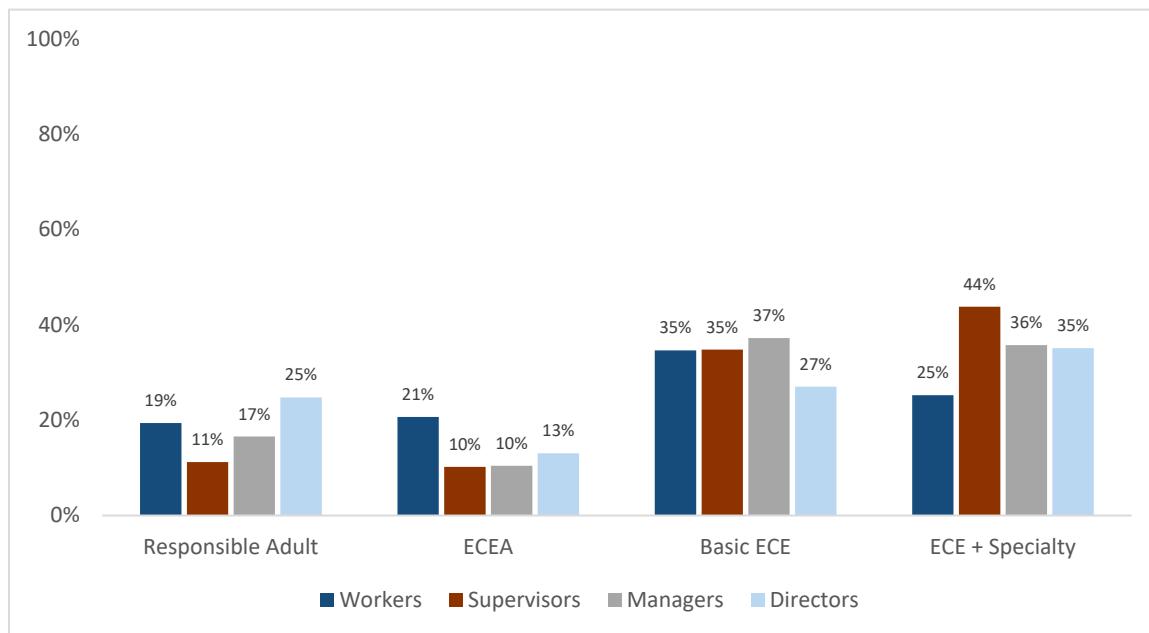
	ECEA	ECE (1 year)	ECE (5 year)	Special Needs	Infant and Toddler
British Columbia (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	95% +2	90% -1	90% +1	89% 0	92% +5
Alberta (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	3% -1	5% +2	3% 0	3% +1	2% -1
Manitoba (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	1% +1	0% 0	0% 0	1% 0	1% 0
New Brunswick (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Newfoundland and Labrador (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Northwest Territories (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Nova Scotia (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Ontario (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	1% -1	2% -1	3% 0	4% -1	3% -4
Prince Edward Island (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Quebec (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	1% +1	1% +1	0% -1	0% 0
Saskatchewan (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	1% +1	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Yukon (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0
Outside of Canada (change since 2019 in percentage points +/-)	0% -1	2% 0	2% -1	2% -1	2% -1

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

ECL certifications by position at licensed child care centres

The employer survey also collected employer level data on staff certification and qualifications for 4,256 employees working in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs (Figure 20). The results show that ECL supervisors, managers, and directors were more likely to hold ECE certification and at least one of infant toddler or special needs certification.

Figure 20 Certification or training by position of ECL professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs, 2020

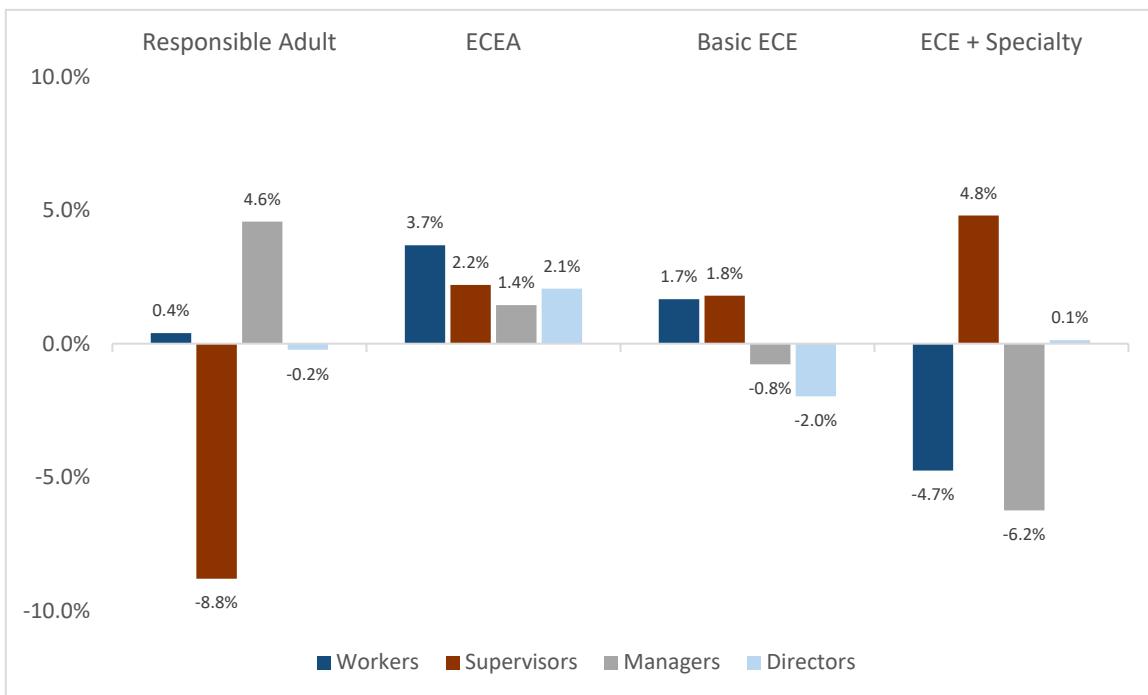


Source: SRDC employer survey.

Figure 21 shows the percentage point change in ECL certifications by position from 2019 to 2020. The proportion of supervisors with a highest ECL related qualification as Responsible Adult decreased by 8.8 percentage points while the proportion of managers for whom Responsible Adult was the highest ECL-related qualification increased by 4.6 percentage points. The change in proportion of ECL workers and directors whose highest qualification was Responsible Adult was negligible (0.4 and -0.2 percentage points, respectively). In contrast, the proportion of employees with ECEA certifications increased in all positions. The proportions of both ECL workers and supervisors with Basic ECE certifications increased compared to 2019, but this proportion decreased for managers and directors. Among all positions, the proportion holding an ECE plus specialty certificate increased only for supervisors (either Infant Toddler or Special Needs).

The same data as for Figures 20 and 21 are broken down further by organization status or *auspice* in Appendix F (Figures 39 and 40). These reveal broadly similar patterns of certifications for private businesses as for not-for-profit and other organizations (where the latter includes Indigenous and public-sector organizations). Change since 2019 reveals a decline in specialty certifications across both types of organization. Although the percentage point drops seem especially large for more senior positions at not-for-profit organizations, there are small numbers represented in these categories, making these measures of change vulnerable to sampling variation.

Figure 21 Change in certification or training by position of professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs since 2019, in percentage points



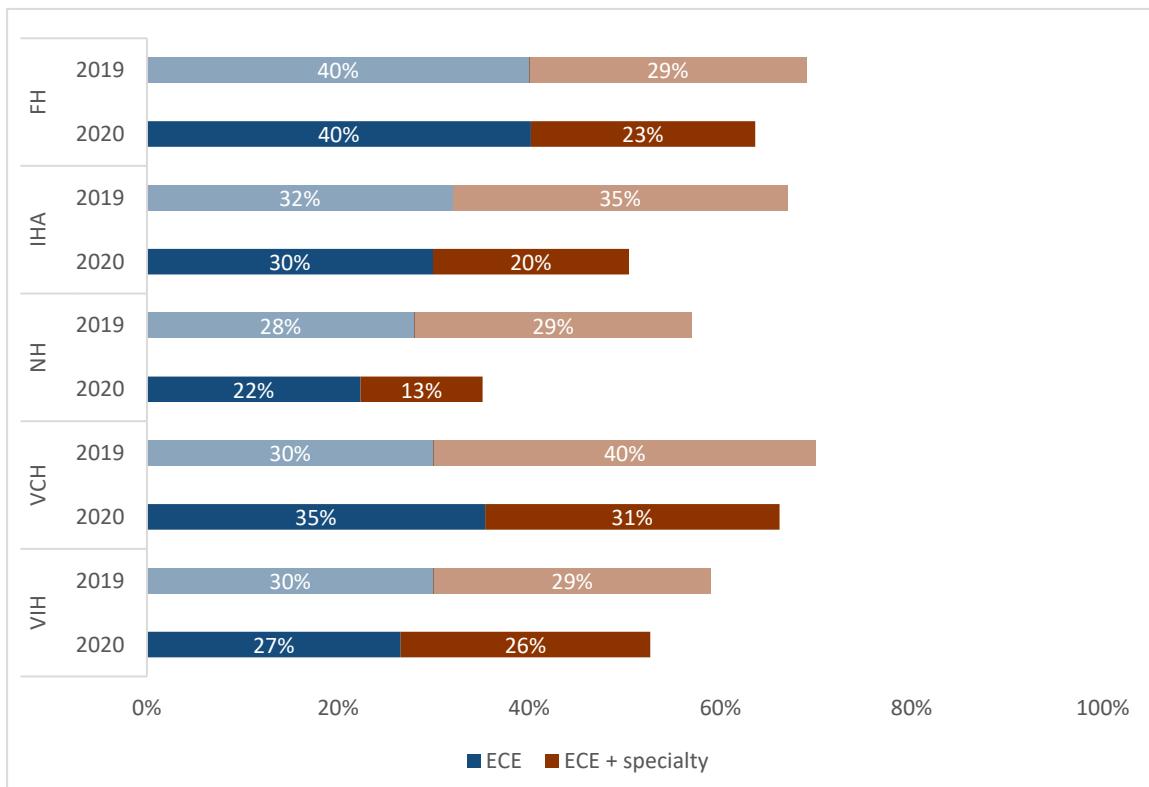
Source: SRDC employer survey.

ECE certification by health authority

The share of professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs with ECE certifications differed across health authority regions (Figure 22). Similar to 2019, employers in VCH and FHA regions reported the highest proportion of professionals certified as an ECE (66 per cent and 63 per cent, respectively). In contrast, employers in NHA region reported only 35 per cent of their employees had an ECE certificate. While the highest

proportion of employees with a Basic ECE certification (40 per cent) was in FHA region, employers in VCH region reported the highest proportion with an ECE and specialty certificate (Infant Toddler or Special Needs) relative to other regions (31 per cent).

Figure 22 Certification of professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs by health authority (employer survey) 2019 and 2020

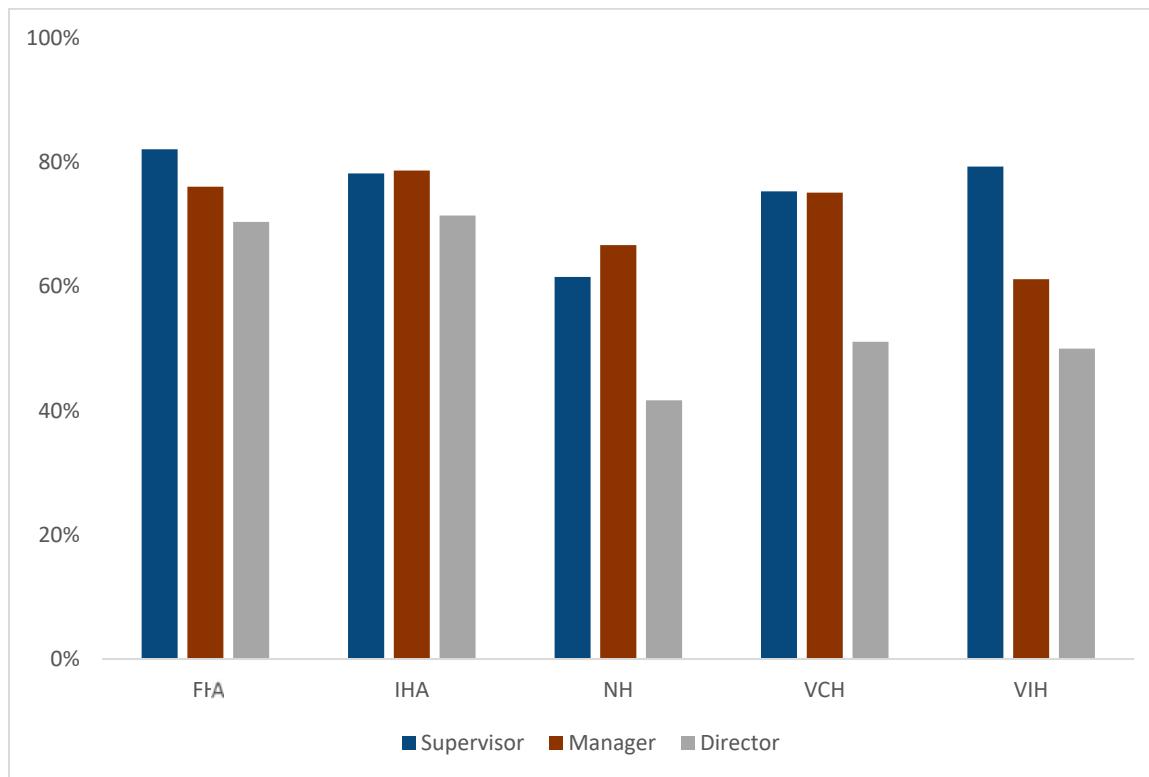


Source: SRDC employer survey [FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region].

These differences were also evident when looking at credentials of supervisors, managers, and directors across health authority regions (Figure 23). In general, Northern Health, Vancouver Island Health and Vancouver Coastal Health regions had the lowest proportions of workers in senior positions ECE-certified.²⁸ Fraser Health had the highest proportion of supervisors ECE-certified (82 per cent), and Island Health Authority had the highest proportion of managers and directors ECE-certified (79 and 71 per cent, respectively).

²⁸ Note ECE-certified does not include ECEAs.

Figure 23 Proportion of senior staff in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs with ECE certification by health authority (employer survey) 2020

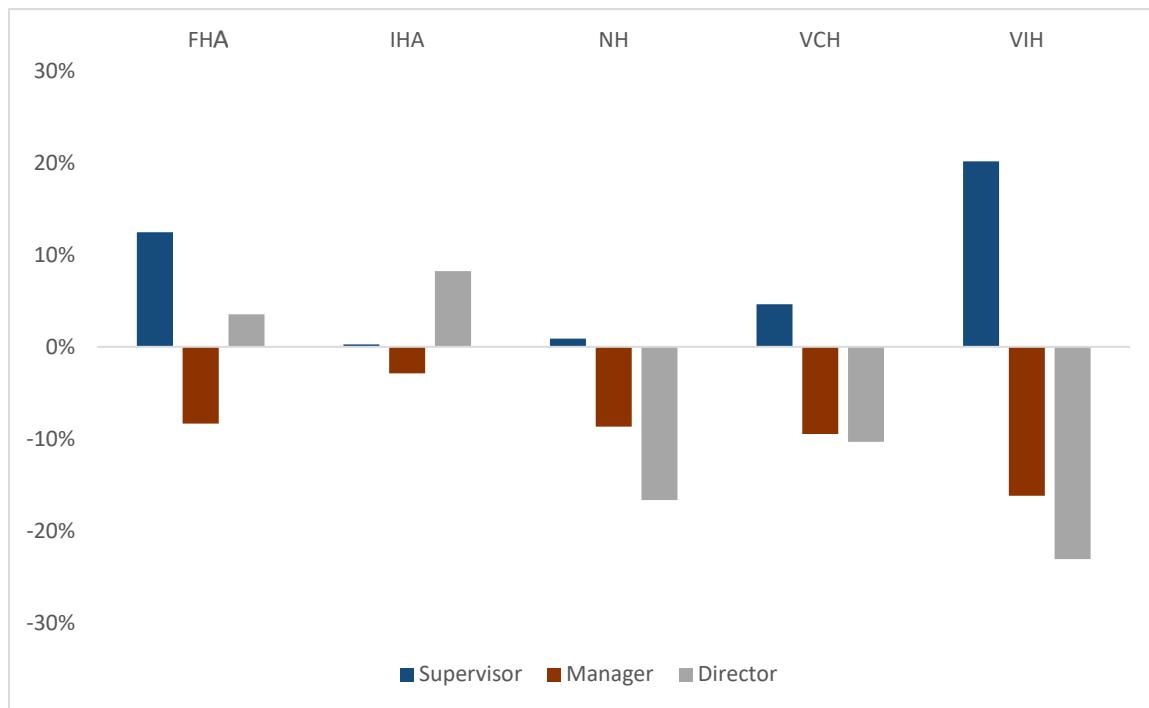


Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Compared to 2019, the proportion of supervisors who were ECE-certified increased in almost all health authority regions, although the change varied across regions, as can be seen in Figure 24. In contrast, the proportion of ECE-certified managers decreased in all regions; the drop was greatest in VIH (-16 percentage points). Only FHA and IHA showed an increase in proportion of directors who had completed their ECE certification.

Figure 24 Change in proportion of senior staff in licensed child care centres, preschools or before and after school programs with ECE certification by health authority (employer survey) since 2019



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Staffing needs

Staffing needs were assessed through a set of questions asked in both the workforce and employer surveys. Respondents to the workforce survey who worked directly with children were asked whether any children they worked with fell into a number of categories meant to capture children's needs and experiences (Table 30). The categories included: identified special needs; neither official language spoken at home; new immigrants and refugees; and Indigenous children. Employers were asked a similar question about whether any child attending their program fell into these categories (Table 31).

The majority of respondents in the workforce (82 per cent of owner-operators; 77 per cent of Centre ECL workers) and employers survey (83 per cent) reported that they have children attending their programs that fall into at least one of these categories. Compared to 2019, the results revealed an increase in proportion of employers who work with children that have

identified special needs (7 percentage point increase) and children who have neither English nor French spoken at home (4 percentage point increase). Employers tended to report more children with these needs and experiences, but this may be because they were reporting across entire organizations not just the centres, they worked in.

Table 30 Proportion of workforce survey respondents reporting children's backgrounds and needs 2020

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers
Identified special needs	43%	46%
Neither English nor French spoken at home	26%	25%
New immigrants or refugees	19%	16%
Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit children	21%	27%
None of the above	16%	18%
I don't know	2%	5%

Note: Proportion includes individuals who reported working with at least one child who falls in each category.

Table 31 Proportion of employers by children's backgrounds and needs 2020

	2019	2020
Identified special needs	58%	65%
Neither English nor French spoken at home	40%	44%
New immigrants or refugees	36%	34%
Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit children	40%	41%
None of the above	19%	16%
I don't know	3%	1%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: Proportion includes employers who reported having at least one child in their program who falls in each category.

Similar to the 2019 findings, employers who reported having children with identified special needs attending their program were significantly more likely also to report a higher proportion of staff with Special Needs certification (53 per cent compared to 27 per cent of employers

reporting not serving children with identified special needs). Out of the 281 employers who work with children with special needs, 132 (46 per cent) of them did not have staff in any position with a Special Needs certification, which is a 6-percentage point increase over 2019.

Employers were also asked about the languages other than English that children attending their centres spoke at home and the languages spoken by staff who worked with children (Table 32). In the 2020 sample, the most common languages spoken at home other than English by at least one child were Mandarin (42 per cent) and Cantonese (35 per cent).

Further questions asked employers to report on staff ability to speak languages relative to children's languages at the organization level. About 37 per cent of organizations had at least one staff who spoke the non-English languages of children attending their programs listed in Table 32. In general, there was a slight decrease from 2019 to 2020 in the proportion of organizations with staff able to speak the most common languages children speak at home.

Table 32 Percentage of organizations by children's languages spoken at home and staff language skills, other than English, 2019 and 2020

Language	Children's languages spoken at home		Staff's ability to speak the language of the children in centres where children speak language at home other than English	
	2019	2020	2019	2020
Mandarin	32%	42%	49%	52%
Cantonese	22%	35%	59%	46%
French	35%	33%	50%	48%
Spanish	25%	33%	43%	37%
Punjabi	22%	30%	36%	35%
Farsi	17%	21%	43%	40%
An Indigenous language	12%	13%	35%	34%
Korean	6%	7%	20%	31%
Russian	15%	5%	1%	8%

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: Percentage includes employers with at least one child or staff who speaks each language. For comparability 2019 percentages were recalculated to reflect a change in the calculation of this indicator. The third and fourth columns report whether at least one staff can speak the non-English language of the children attending programs of the named organization.

Staff shortages

Several questions were also asked at the organization level to identify staff shortages experienced in the 12 months preceding the survey. About forty per cent of employers reported they were unable to fill at least one vacant position in their centres (39.8 per cent), which is 3 percentage points lower compared to the finding in 2019. Employers indicated they were unable to fill 1.9 positions on average, with a range of 1 to 24. Due to staff shortages, 43.5 per cent of employers reported that they had to fill vacant positions with an individual with lower qualifications than they wanted. This practice occurred for 2 positions per organization on average.

About 30 per cent of the employers also reported that they had to refuse children due to not having staff with the right qualifications to accommodate the children's needs (30 per cent). Similar to last year's finding, the top qualifications missing were ECE certification (66 per cent), Infant and Toddler Certificate (35 per cent), and Special Needs Certificate (26 per cent). Other reasons cited by employers as reasons to refuse a child registration include staffing issues (4 per cent), ability to speak a specific language (3 per cent), ECEA certificate (2 per cent), Responsible Adult (2 per cent), and lack of experience working with Indigenous cultures (1 per cent).

Administrative data

Job postings

There is scant administrative data on ECL provider recruitment efforts, and virtually none on their success in hiring. However, as a proxy for labour demand, it is possible to obtain some reasonably reliable estimates of online job postings. SRDC is using data from the same source as the Labour Market Information Council to gauge trends in online job postings in ECL occupations in B.C.²⁹ As explained in the methodology implementation section, these data are compiled by an independent vendor named Vicinity Jobs. SRDC receives data from Vicinity Jobs on job postings by quarter for the two main National Occupation Classification categories for those working in ECL:

- **Early Childhood Educator or Assistant** (National Occupational Classification 4214). This includes most people working in child care centres and agencies, including those working as ECEs and ECEAs but also as responsible adults, who may not hold a post-secondary

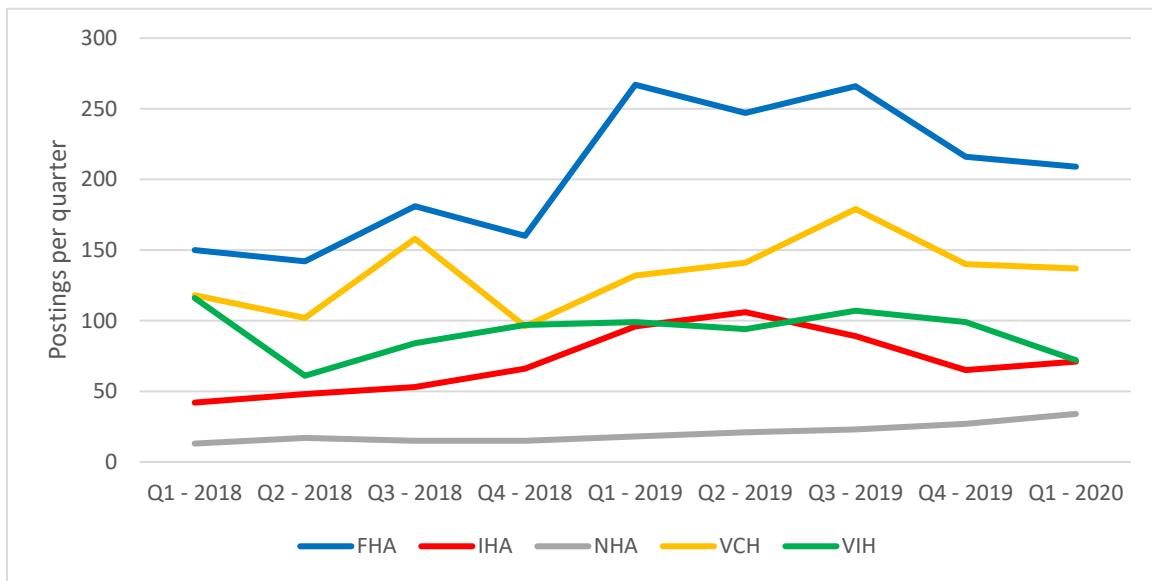
²⁹ The Labour Market Information Council is a federally-funded agency with the mandate to improve the timeliness, reliability and accessibility of labour market information to facilitate decision-making by employers, workers, job seekers, academics, policy makers, educators, career practitioners, students, parents and under-represented populations.

credential. It includes those who plan, organize, and implement programs for children between the ages of infancy and 12 years. They are employed in child-care centres, daycare centres, kindergartens, agencies for exceptional children and other settings where early childhood education services are provided. Supervisors of early childhood educators and early childhood educator assistants are included in this unit group.

- **Home child care providers** (National Occupational Classification 4411). This group are defined as caring for the well-being and physical and social development of children. They assist parents with child care and may assist with household duties on an ongoing or short-term basis. They provide care primarily in their own homes or in the children's homes, where they may also reside. They are employed by private households and child-care agencies, or they may be self-employed. Examples include: babysitter; child care provider (private home), live-in caregiver, nanny and parent's helper.

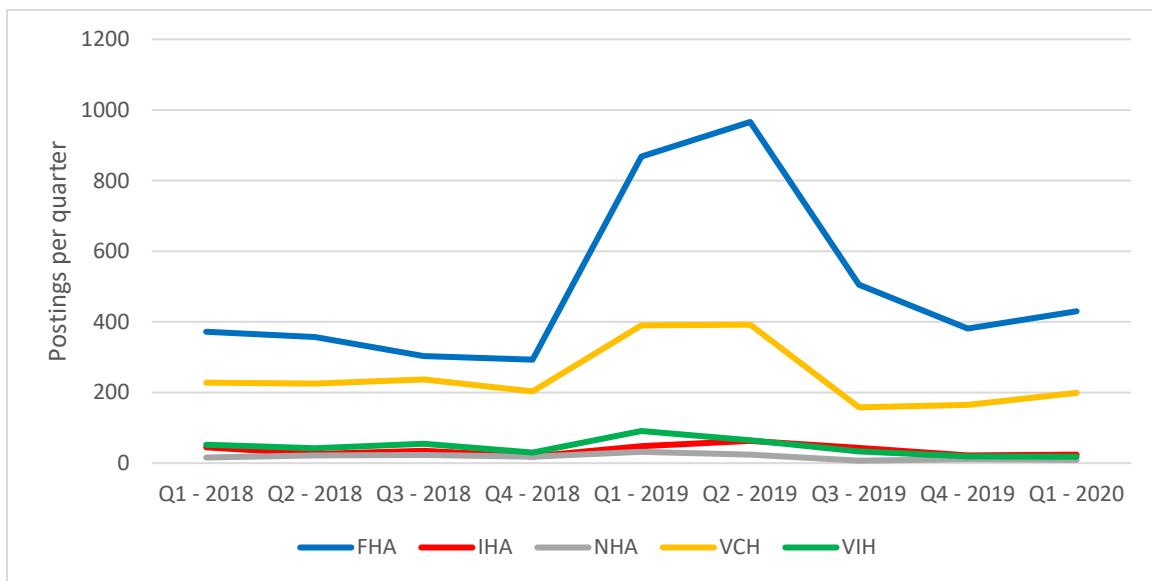
These data are useful for examining trends in demand for different members of the ECL workforce but do not precisely represent job vacancies. Whereas job vacancies refer to the number of available job openings that an employer wants to fill, employers may seek to fill multiple vacancies via a single job posting. Also, not all vacancies are posted online.

The patterns of Early Childhood Educator or Assistant postings in Figure 25 suggest an increase in postings over the period in most regions of the province from the beginning of 2018 to the first quarter of 2020. Only Island Health Authority region saw a decline over this time period. The data also indicate a spike in postings for the Fraser region in the first three quarters of 2019. Figure 26 on home child care providers shows the spike in Fraser region was not isolated to positions that might have been eligible to benefit from ECL R&R Strategy tactics so these seem unlikely to have stimulated this increase in postings for ECEs in 2019.

Figure 25 Job postings for ECEs and ECEAs in B.C. Health Authority Regions

Source: Vicinity Jobs.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Figure 26 Job postings for home child care providers in B.C. Health Authority Regions

Source: Vicinity Jobs.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Figure 26 indicates that online postings for home child care providers run at two to three times the rate of the ECE and ECEA postings in Figure 25. This is perhaps not surprising since the category would capture postings for care to be provided in the child's own home such as from nannies and even babysitters where there can be very high turnover. While there has been little overall increase in such home child care provider postings over the period, there was a major spike in demand in the first half of 2019 in Fraser region, and to a lesser degree in Vancouver Coastal region. While the reasons for these 2019 spikes are elusive, it suggests the corresponding spike in the same period for Figure 25 is unrelated to the ECL R&R Strategy tactics just beginning to take effect at that time.

Key informant interviews and case studies

Respondents at case study sites reported continuing to find it very challenging to recruit "qualified" staff, typically meaning staff with their ECE certification. Five of the six centres also reported it was even more difficult to recruit staff who had their infant toddler or special needs certificate: one suggested that finding someone with their infant toddler qualification was "like winning the lottery." When asked what they look for when they are recruiting, managers and owners said they looked for individuals who had the necessary qualifications and that were a good "fit" for their organization. "Fit" implied alignment with the philosophy of the ECL centre and complementarity with their team.

"Well, they have to have their credentials, so they have to have their I.T. certificates here in B.C. And that, you know, that in itself is challenging because right now we're looking outside of Canada to bring in staff, because there's just nobody here. Trying to find an IT or a new ECE here in B.C. it's practically impossible." (Site B: Manager)

Case study sites also noted that recruiting to cover maternity or sick leave was even more challenging as those individuals who were qualified wanted permanent positions. One case study site had contemplated closure of a program because they could not replace their staff member who was going on maternity leave. Case study sites estimated it could take up to two or three months to recruit for these positions. This meant that licensing variances were needed and appreciated but because they were only typically granted for 30 days duration did not recognize the reality of recruiting.

Managers and owners were concerned the lack of staff with special needs training would result in some children being excluded from ECL centres and that families would be left isolated at a time when they need support the most. This was identified as being an important issue for the sector to address. More training and support for staff was important:

"provide the training for the ECEs that are currently there. I don't know, it's tricky. ... I know that the majority of ECEs are doing the best they can, but when faced with kids that have significant behavioural or complex needs, it is hard on them. And it's and it also creates burnout, like I think I mean, they're trying to juggle 50 balls at once." (Site A: Manager)

While managers and owners were appreciative of the funding for new spaces, they highlighted the irony in the current situation suggesting that spaces are being lost because of a lack of trained staff. New centres try to “poach” or “entice” staff for the new centres, leaving existing centres struggling to replace staff.

"The pressures to have all these spaces created and to fully staff them and to staff them with people that are trained as well as having that support component in there. The way the model is set up right now is not necessarily going to achieve that." (Site B: Manager)

The one case study centre who did not find it challenging to recruit, did nothing different to the other case study sites and suggested their recruitment success was a “combination of luck, geography and timing.”

Most respondents reported COVID-19 made a difficult recruiting situation worse as there were fewer students graduating from college as there were delays in completing practicums, potential workers were staying at home to look after their own children as schools were closed and also because of health concerns with some individuals choosing not to work because they were caring for vulnerable individuals. All these factors made it more difficult to recruit.

"The pool seems to be smaller for sure. And I think it's because some of those ECEs also have families themselves. So, they may be making the choice not to, you know, come back to work or even venture into it. I think there's a level of if I don't have to, I won't. You know, right now, just for just for some, not all our staff, I mean, the majority – our regular long-term staff didn't waver at all." (Site A: Manager)

In addition to the challenges of recruiting trained permanent staff, this year the case study sites found it very difficult to find casual and substitute staff to fill in when needed. Before COVID-19 most of the case study sites had a pool of substitutes they could access at short notice to cover staff absences. Covering staff absences was more challenging, this year. It was described as “one of the things that keeps me up at night.” (Site A: Manager). Managers had fewer options to move staff between centres to meet ratios because they wanted to limit potential COVID-19 transmission. Inevitably, managers who held a ECE certification filled in for staff but while this was a quick fix, it was not sustainable as managers still had their own work to do. The case study sites that paid for an additional member of staff who was a “floater” were able to provide cover for staff absences.

"And we just take the cost of having a fifth staff on ... when you don't really need her. But it just helps make everything a lot easier." (Site B: Manager)

Occasionally, it proved impossible to meet staffing ratios, and some centres took to phoning parents to confirm whether they were sending their child to the centre that day. One manager explained that parents knew that when they get a call at 7am in the morning it is because their child care site is struggling with staffing. One manager stated that to date things had “worked out” and they had not had to close the program for the day.

One manager described a staffing “crisis” in the sector and suggested a potential strategy to ease it would be to review the employment of foreign-trained workers. They reported wanting to hire ECL professionals with foreign credentials but explained the provincial nominee program did not typically assign sufficient points to ECL professionals while the Labour Market Impact Assessment process was expensive and cumbersome. They also reported feeling frustrated with the amount of time it took to achieve professionals’ certification through the ECE Registry.

KPI 5: PERCEPTIONS OF ECL CAREER AMONG THOSE MAKING DECISIONS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR OWN CAREERS

There are no new data for this KPI in 2020. The public opinion survey in 2019 included a career module directed to all respondents aged 24 years or younger, as well as adults considering a career change and asked respondents their opinion of child care as a career. The second wave of this survey, to be fielded in early 2022 will identify whether there is a change in the perception of child care work as a career over the first three years of implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy.

KPI 6: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKFORCE WHO SELF-REPORT POSSESSION OF CORE SKILLS AND SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Cross-sectional survey

Skills self-assessment

Survey respondents were asked to self-assess (as: poor, weak, average, above average or excellent) seven of their skills relevant to early childhood education (Table 33). The skills with the highest ratings were building caring relationships with the children (95 per cent), communicating effectively with children (92 per cent) and taking children’s stage of development into account when planning activities (88 per cent). On the other hand, the lowest

rated skills by all respondent groups were demonstrating cultural sensitivity (74 per cent) and making the environment inclusive for children with special needs (66 per cent).

Table 33 Self-assessment of core skills by respondent group 2020

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Above average	Excellent	Above average	Excellent	Above average	Excellent	Above average	Excellent
Demonstrating cultural sensitivity*	34%	43%	37%	36%	31%	40%	35%	39%
Respecting diversity in their daily interactions*	32%	57%	38%	47%	29%	56%	34%	51%
Building caring relationships with the children in their care***	22%	75%	27%	68%	20%	76%	24%	71%
Communicate effectively with children***	31%	66%	34%	56%	25%	68%	31%	61%
Communicating effectively with children's families***	30%	65%	34%	44%	26%	62%	31%	52%
Taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities***	32%	62%	37%	48%	34%	57%	35%	53%
Making the environment inclusive for children with special needs***	30%	44%	35%	35%	22%	26%	31%	35%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Note: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. This is a chi-square test. If the p-value is less than 0.05/0.01/0.1, we have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant association between the type of worker and the above average/excellent responses they give to the questions.

The ratings overall did not change a great deal from 2019 (Table 34). However, there was a dramatic drop in how many HCPs rated their skills making the environment inclusive for children with special needs. Those rating the skill as excellent fell from 44 per cent (already their lowest self-rated skill) in 2019 to 26 per cent in 2020. And those rating themselves above average fell from 24 to 22 per cent. Although not as dramatic, 2020 also saw the largest drop for owner-operators self reported rating of this skill and one of the largest for Centre ECL workers. Possibly, self assessment of skills in this one area genuinely declined or the population responding to the survey was dramatically different from the respondents of 2019 on this

one skill in 2020. More likely, ECL professionals were recognizing some shortcomings in ECL for children with special needs that may have arisen during the pandemic period.

Table 34 Self-assessment of core skills by respondent group: change since 2019

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Change in percentage saying Above Average or Excellent				
Demonstrating cultural sensitivity*	-3	-1	-5	-3
Respecting diversity in their daily interactions*	+2	+1	+3	+1
Building caring relationships with the children in their care***	0	+1	-2	-1
Communicate effectively with children***	+1	-3	-3	-3
Communicating effectively with children's families**	+2	-3	-4	-4
Taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities***	-1	-3	-3	-3
Making the environment inclusive for children with special needs***	-8	-5	-20	-11

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

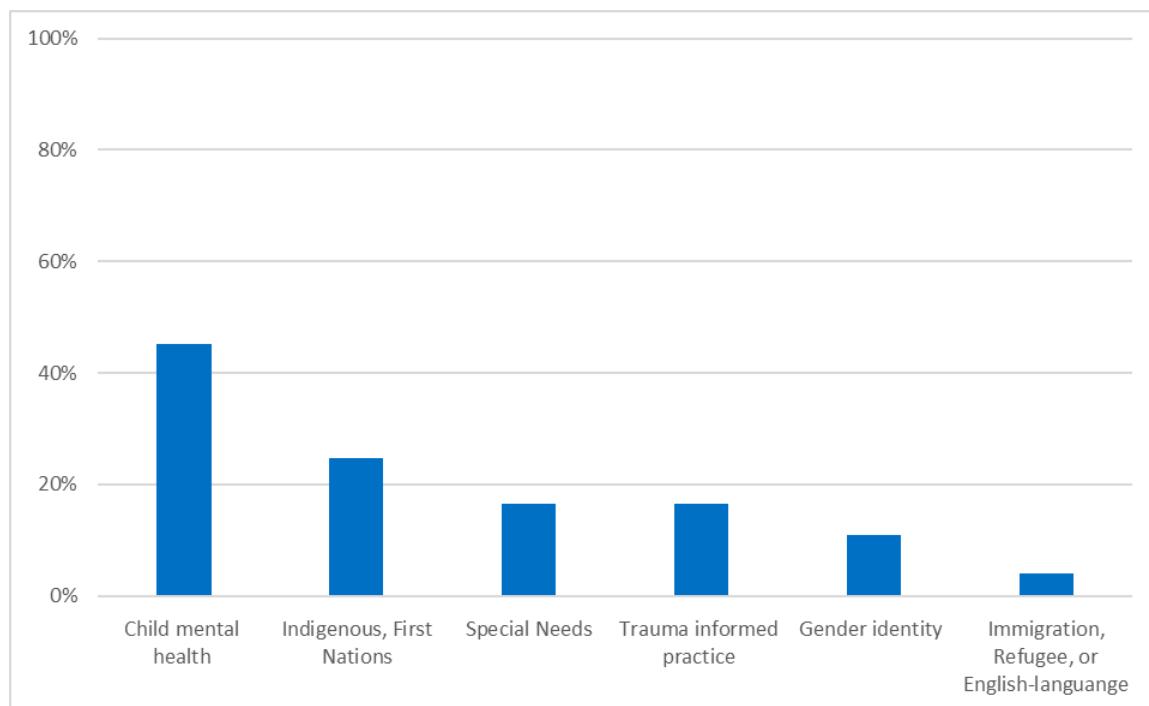
Note: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. This is a chi-square test. If the p-value is less than 0.05/0.01/0.1, we have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant association between the type of worker and the above average/excellent responses they give to the questions.

Professional development

The survey also asked respondents to list the topics covered by the professional development activities they completed in the 12 months preceding the survey. The list is presented later under KPI 8 in Table 36. The most common professional development topics covered were *child growth and development* (49 per cent), *curriculum or program development* (35 per cent), *managing child behaviour* (34 per cent), *child mental health* (33 per cent) and *COVID-19 health and safety for children* (32 per cent). The top four were little changed from 2019, although COVID-19 related professional development was, of course, a new addition.

Figure 27 shows the proportion of respondents – among the 73 per cent who participated in any professional development activities – who took part in those associated with cultural sensitivity and working with children with special needs, the two skills with the lowest rankings in the skills self-assessment questions asked in 2019 and 2020.

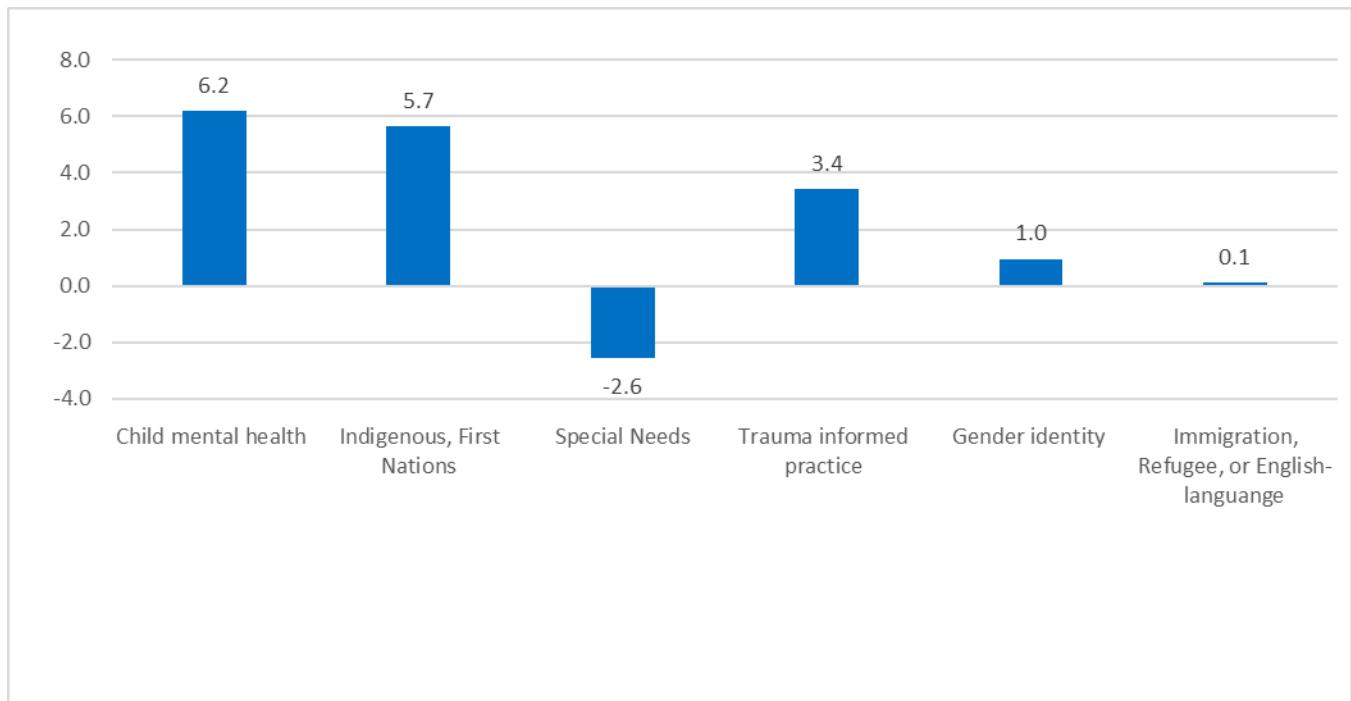
Figure 27 PD activities associated with cultural sensitivity and special needs completed in the past 12 months as a proportion of those taking any PD 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

While child mental health was among the top choices for professional development activities, the other topics were engaged in less often by respondents. This was the same pattern seen in 2019. However, staff reported that their PD was related to child mental health and trauma informed practice more often in 2020. PD related to supporting Indigenous, First Nations, Métis or Inuit children was also more prevalent. Thus, it seems that members of the ECL workforce recognized skills shortfalls and were able to take action to remedy them. However, there was a decline in the proportion obtaining PD in relation to special needs: members of the workforce were unable or unwilling to engage in PD to remedy these shortfalls, where the discrepancy grew in 2020 (Table 34).

Figure 28 PD activities associated with cultural sensitivity and special needs completed in the past 12 months as a proportion of those taking any PD: change in percentage points since 2019



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

KPI 7: AWARENESS OF ECL CAREER PATHWAY OPTIONS, HOW TO PURSUE THEM, AND EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR FEASIBILITY IN TERMS OF FINANCES AND AVAILABILITY OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

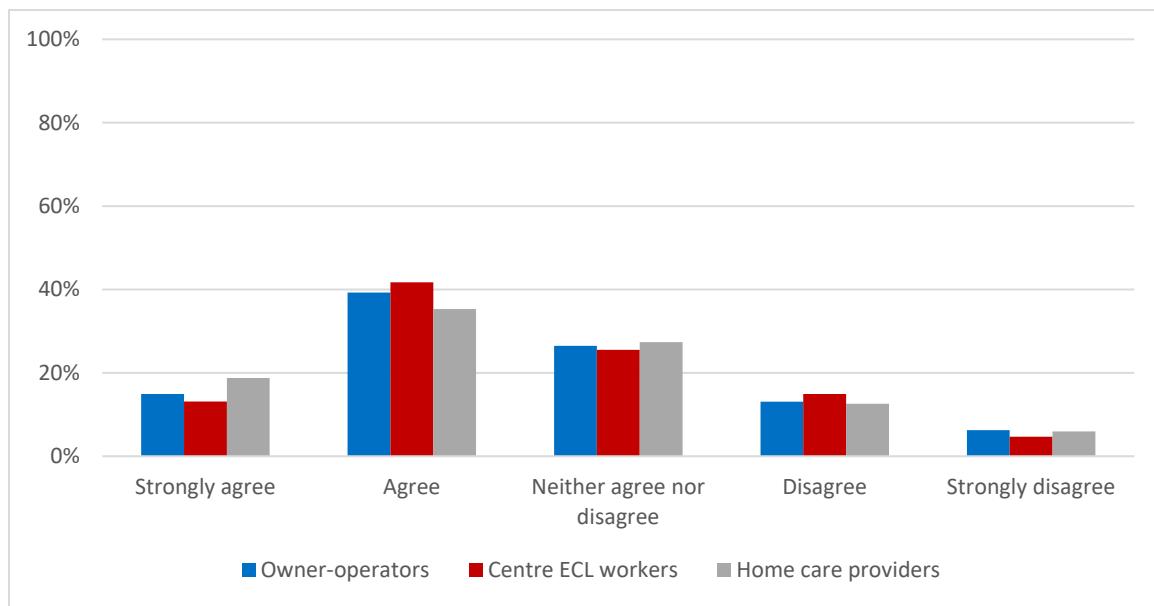
Cross-sectional survey

Perception of career pathway options

About 55 per cent of respondents currently working in the sector believed there were a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in B.C. (down from 60 per cent in 2019). The proportion agreeing with the statement “There are a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in B.C.” was quite similar between respondent groups. As Figure 29 shows, about 54 per

cent of HCPs agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and about 54 per cent of owner-operators as well as 55 per cent of Centre ECL workers.

Figure 29 Agreement with statement “There are a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in B.C.” by respondent group 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

ECE Workforce Development Bursary

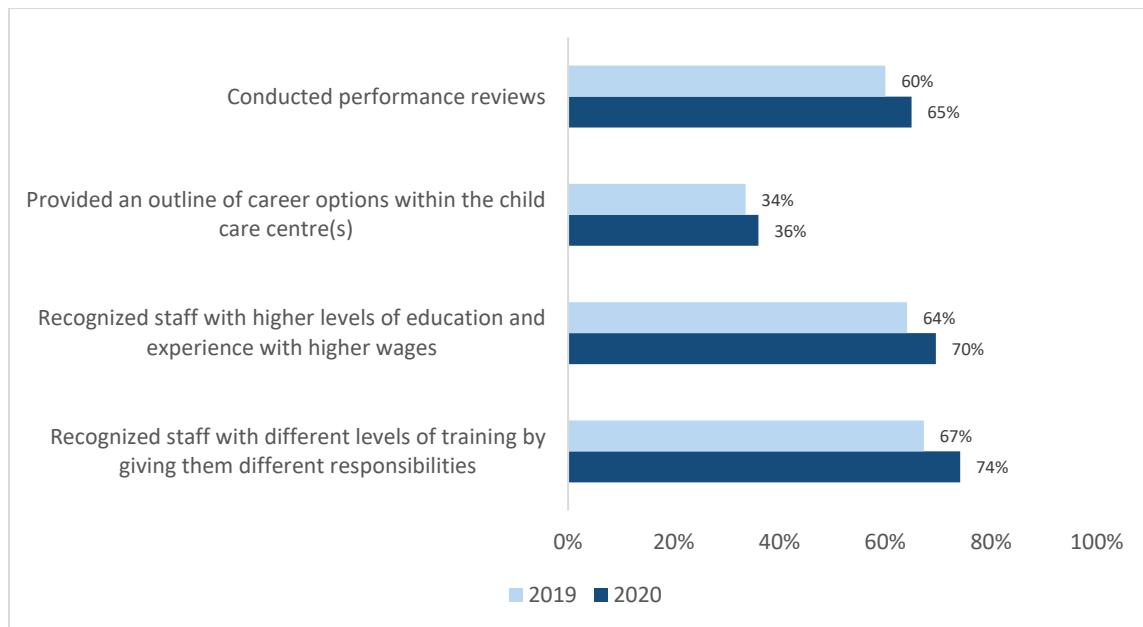
The ECE Workforce Development Bursary, one of the components of the ECL R&R Strategy, is intended to support career advancement by providing financial support to members of the ECL workforce with costs associated with continuing education and training. Just over 51 per cent of the survey respondents were aware of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary, fewer than in 2019.

Employer facilitation of career advancement opportunities

Employers were asked if they had engaged in four activities that promote staff’s career advancement in the 12 months preceding the survey (Figure 30). The results revealed an improvement in 2020 in employers’ level of facilitation of all four career advancement opportunities relative to 2019. Similarly to 2019, employers were most likely to recognize staff with different levels of training by giving them different responsibilities (74 per cent). Employers

were also likely to recognize staff higher levels of education and experience with higher wages (70 per cent) and conducted performance reviews (65 per cent). However, only 36 per cent of the employers provided an outline of career opportunities within the child care centre. This activity also showed the smallest change from 2019 compared to the other activities (just a 2-percentage point increase).

Figure 30 Proportion of employers that have engaged in activities that promote staff's career advancement in the last 12 months 2020 and change since 2019



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: 2019 numbers were updated due to a coding error.

Administrative data

Bursaries for education and professional development

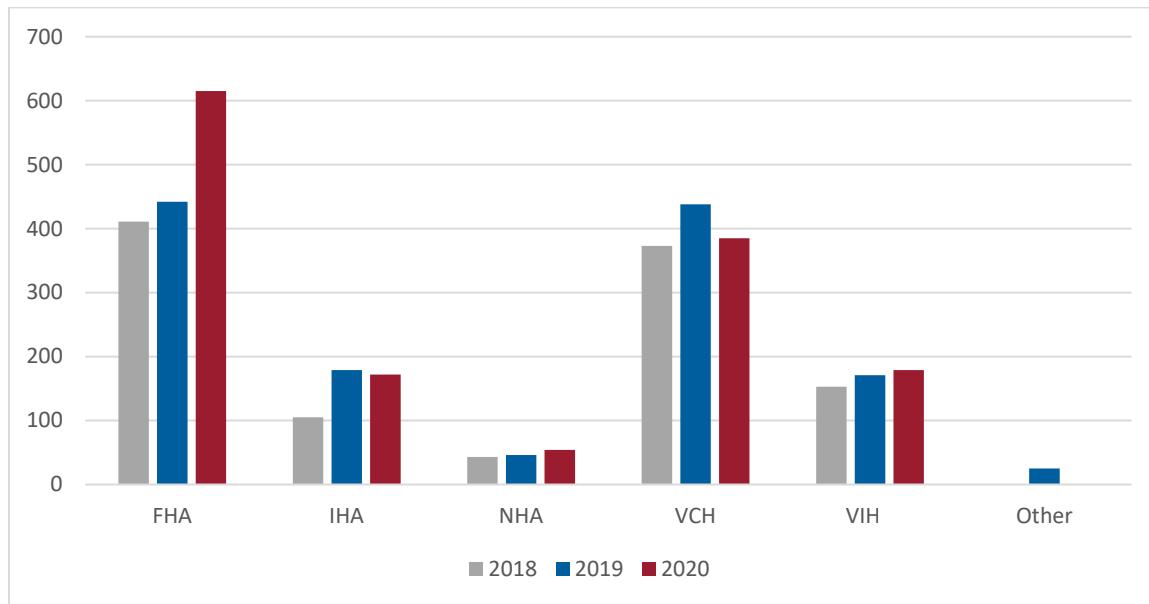
Early Childhood Educators of B.C. has been administering two types of bursary:

- A **student bursary** to support students studying in an ECE program at a recognized post-secondary institution. Eligible applicants can apply for up to \$500 per course, to a maximum of 8 courses, for a total of \$4,000 per semester to assist with tuition and living expenses while studying. Awarded amounts are dependent on the number of completed courses.

- A **workforce bursary** to support ECEs, ECE Assistants, Responsible Adults and StrongStart BC Facilitators currently working in the ECE field to upgrade their credentials. Applicants have to demonstrate active employment within a licensed child care facility (with the exception of StrongStart BC facilitators). Awards range up to \$5,000 per semester and are intended to assist with tuition and other expenses such as loss of wages or travel.

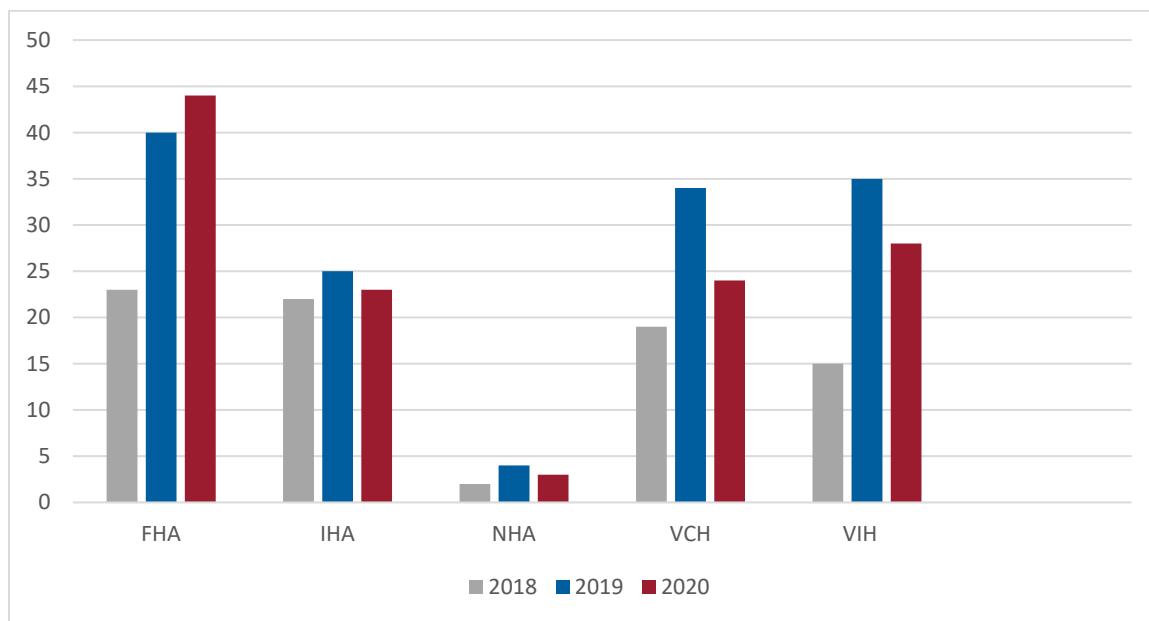
Figure 31 indicates the numbers of student bursaries approved in 2018, 2019, and 2020 (to date). In general, the numbers approved increase from 1,085 overall in 2018 to 1,301 in 2019 and 1,405 in 2020. The variation by region matches roughly the 2019 distribution of the ECL workforce in licensed facilities by health authority region according to SRDC's contact database (reported in the evaluation benchmarking report), although Vancouver Island Health Authority region is somewhat underrepresented and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region is somewhat over represented. Students in the Fraser Health Authority region were somewhat more likely to receive bursaries in 2020 than 2019. Of course, there is no overriding reason to expect a strong correlation between student numbers and workforce numbers in every region.

Figure 32 indicates that 341 workforce bursaries have been approved to date, increasing from 81 in 2018 to 138 in 2019 and remaining fairly stable at 122 in 2020. The regional patterns are somewhat similar to those for distribution of the workforce. The numbers are too small to consider the proportionality of distribution by size of region. On average, only one workforce bursary was approved for every ten student bursaries. The small numbers mean the overall impact of workforce bursaries on upgrading credentials in some regions – such as Northern where only seven have been approved over the two-year period – is likely to have been small.

Figure 31 Student bursaries by health authority region 2018-20

Source: Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Figure 32 Workforce bursaries by health authority region 2018-20

Source: Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

Key informant interviews and case studies

Centre ECL workers in the case study sites were aware of the potential career pathways. For those with an ECE designation, progress remained the same. Career advancement was dependent on experience with a move to a supervisor or leader position then to a manager role. The opportunities for this type of advancement depended on there being open positions within the organizations. Managers and owners tried to encourage existing staff to apply for promotions,

"I can see some people are ready to move up in positions so I encourage them to apply for more senior positions." (Site E: Manager)

However, not all ECL staff wanted the additional responsibility. Their reluctance was related to wanting to stay working directly with children and not wanting to undertake the administrative and management tasks that would be required. Some ECL professionals pointed out that career advancement came with relatively little financial rewards for more responsibility.

"I really hesitated to apply for program lead the first time, I wanted to have a challenge and didn't feel quite ready." (Site E: ECE)

An alternative career pathway was to complete additional qualifications such as the special needs or infant toddler courses. Staff who opted to follow this route were given more responsibility and their salaries increased (in contrast to the picture portrayed more generally for the workforce in Table 19). This route required both a significant financial and time commitment from ECL professionals. The cost of additional training was a disincentive for most ECL professionals with many being reluctant to incur more debt in a sector where wages did not justify the financial outlay.

"School costs money too, not everyone is eligible for the bursary, and you have to pay for your course first before the bursary – if you don't have the funds to pay for it first, you're kind of out of luck." (Site C: ECE)

ECL professionals also reported the increased uncertainty due to COVID-19 made them reluctant to commit to further training. Individuals were unsure about their family commitments and worried if they would have enough time to complete course work if schools closed. Others were concerned about whether their centres would close if the COVID-19 case numbers increased, leaving them unable to afford their course.

There was less discussion this year about the availability of bursaries to help meet the cost of training. ECL professionals referred to the challenges they encountered last year including the fund running out of money, the application process and the funds being available when the course was complete meaning students had to cover the initial cost which was a barrier. This year, most ECL professionals had not applied for a bursary and assumed they were not available

because of COVID-19 and also because most college courses had switched most college courses to online rather than in person.

Managers and owners continued to be the main source of information about training opportunities. They circulated information about training opportunities to staff and encouraged them to participate. Managers reported they had not seen any information about the bursaries for this year, which they described as “a pity.”

ECL professionals were concerned about the completion of practicums for existing students because of the COVID-19 restrictions, as these students were a key source of staffing for the centres.

KPI 8: PROPORTION OF ECL WORKFORCE WHO SELF-REPORT PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Cross-sectional survey

The majority of respondents participated in a professional development (PD) activity in the 12 months preceding the survey. Owner-operators had the highest participation in PD activities (76 per cent), followed by Centre ECL workers (74 per cent) with HCPs less likely to report participation in PD (64 per cent). With the exception of HCPs, PD was somewhat less often undertaken in 2020 than 2019 (Table 36).

Questions about COVID-19 related training and PD related to taking ECL outdoors were newly asked in 2020. Between a quarter and a third of the workforce survey respondents had engaged in PD on these new topics. Relative to the topics specifically probed in 2019, the areas of growth in PD were child care policy and child growth and development (Table 36) with the growth greatest among owner-operators (from 15 to 25 per cent) for the former and HCPs (from 38 to 50 per cent) for the latter.

Members of sub-groups not participating in PD were asked the top barriers to participation in PD. Responses related to time available to complete the activity were most common (Figure 33). This was especially true for HCPs who were more likely to cite time constraints as the main reasons for not participating in PD. For Centre ECL workers, lack of information about PD opportunities and cost were also major barriers (27 and 26 per cent, respectively). Respondents were less likely to give multiple reasons in 2020 – which could be seen as a positive development in that the proportion reporting multiple barriers is decreasing – and as a result the share citing different reasons dropped (Figure 34). The proportion of owner-operators not participating in PD citing reasons related to information available increased somewhat.

Overall, 2020 seems to have seen a polarization in training, with more different types of PD being undertaken by the groups pursuing PD to set against an overall decline in the proportion undertaking PD. At the same time fewer faced multiple barriers. Thus, to the extent that lack of time (and to a lesser degree, lack of information and cost) were cited as the dominant reasons for not participating, these point to areas where effective policy might expect to generate increases in PD if single barriers could be overcome.

Table 35 Participation in professional development activities in the 12 months preceding the survey 2020 (workforce survey)

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Participated in any professional development activity	76%	74%	64%	73%
Participation by topic				
Abuse, touching and bullying	10%	9%	9%	9%
Administration and business	21%	10%	13%	14%
Advocacy for children and families	19%	23%	17%	21%
Child care policy	25%	18%	21%	21%
Child growth and development	46%	49%	50%	49%
Child health	32%	27%	37%	30%
Child mental health	34%	34%	30%	33%
COVID-19 and personal health protection	26%	26%	24%	26%
COVID-19 health and safety for children	37%	30%	31%	32%
Curriculum or program development	31%	38%	29%	35%
Family support	12%	17%	14%	15%
Gender identity	7%	8%	7%	8%
Immigration, refugee, or English-learner needs	1%	3%	2%	3%
Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit	13%	22%	15%	18%
Infant and Toddler care	9%	12%	12%	11%
Interpersonal communication	12%	13%	8%	12%

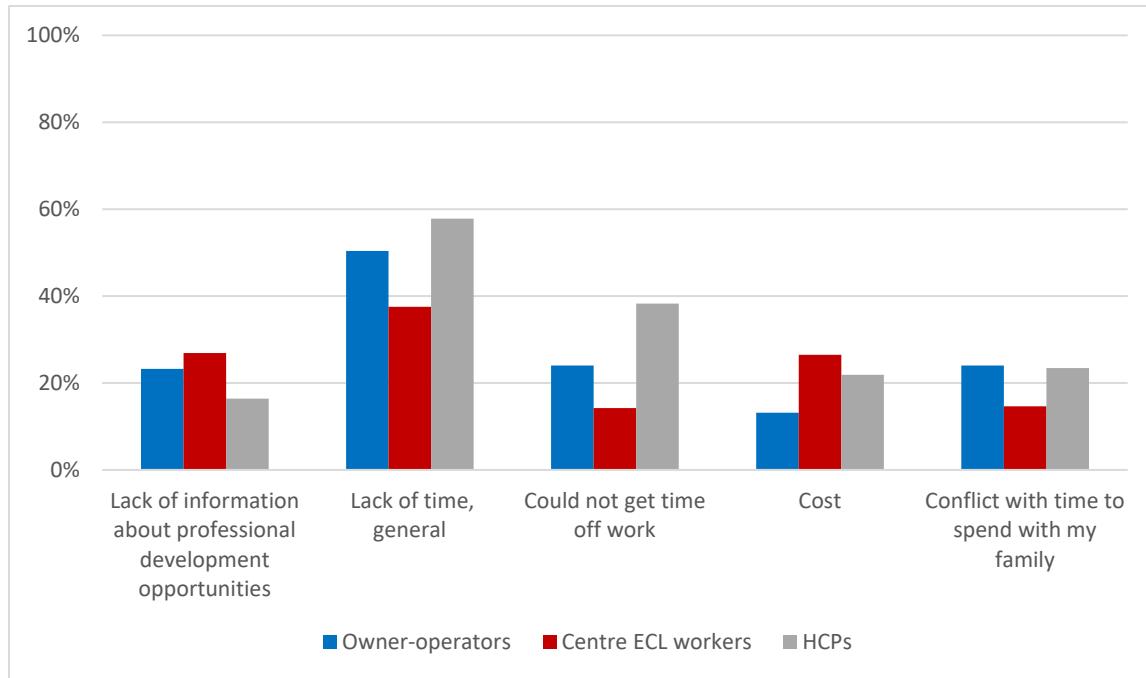
	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Leadership	18%	14%	5%	14%
Managing child behaviour	34%	34%	33%	34%
Outdoor play: Nature as a teacher	27%	26%	24%	26%
Outdoor play: Planning and benefits of outdoor activities	26%	24%	28%	25%
Personal stress management and work-life balance	14%	18%	13%	16%
Professional ethics and practice	10%	13%	5%	11%
Special Needs	11%	14%	5%	12%
Trauma informed practice	10%	14%	8%	12%
Other	9%	10%	11%	10%

Table 36 Participation in professional development activities in the 12 months preceding the survey percentage points change since 2019

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Participated in any professional development activity	-4	-8	+0	-5
Participation by topic				
Abuse, touching and bullying	-2	-2	+2	-2
Administration and business	+6	+4	+5	+4
Advocacy for children and families	-2	+4	+5	+2
Child care policy	+10	+7	+9	+8
Child growth and development	+2	+8	+12	+7
Child health	+3	+2	+6	+2
Child mental health	+2	+4	+5	+3
COVID-19 and personal health protection	NA	NA	NA	NA

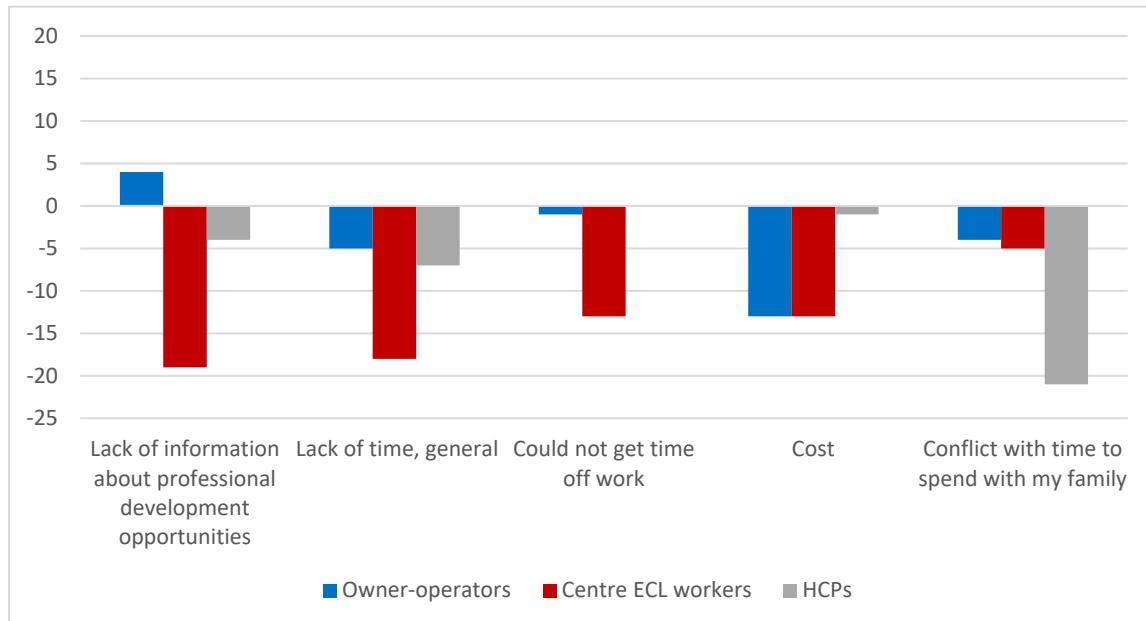
	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
COVID-19 health and safety for children	NA	NA	NA	NA
Curriculum or program development	-1	+8	+3	+5
Family support	-4	+2	+2	0
Gender identity	0	-1	+1	0
Immigration, refugee, or English-learner needs	-2	0	0	0
Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit	-3	+6	+6	+3
Infant and Toddler care	-3	+2	-2	-1
Interpersonal communication	+0	-1	+2	+1
Leadership	+0	+2	0	+1
Managing child behaviour	-6	-3	+7	-2
Outdoor play: Nature as a teacher	NA	NA	NA	NA
Outdoor play: Planning and benefits of outdoor activities	NA	NA	NA	NA
Personal stress management and work-life balance	0	+1	+2	+1
Professional ethics and practice	-2	+2	-1	0
Special Needs	-4	-4	-2	-3
Trauma informed practice	-2	+3	+5	+2
Other	-2	+5	+6	+4

Figure 33 Main reasons for not participating in professional development activities 2020



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 34 Main reasons for not participating in professional development activities: change in percentage points since 2019



Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Key informant interviews and case studies

All six case study sites reported that they continued to support professional development activities although this year their focus has changed because of COVID-19. The case study centres that had previously paid for training courses for individual professionals, brought in speakers to provide centre wide training and paid for some staff to attend in person conferences and workshops. In response to COVID-19 most training had moved online and, while some conferences became virtual, reportedly fewer staff attended. Managers suggested the initial response to online training had been positive but that as the case study centres fully reopened, staff were participating in fewer online training sessions. They speculated this was because of time and fatigue, being tired at the end of a working day but also a general level of weariness around COVID-19 and online videoconference platforms.

KPI 9: HOURS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PER ECL WORKFORCE MEMBER PER YEAR

Cross-sectional survey

Respondents who participated in professional development activities completed an average of 28 hours over the 12-month period preceding the survey (Table 37). About three in every four respondents who participated in any professional development activity completed 25 or fewer hours. The situation reported was similar in 2019 except that more were completing PD in that year. The mean is higher than 25 due to a number of respondents with very high levels of participation, which pulls the mean upwards.

The means appear high when compared to the ECE/A renewal requirement for 40 hours of professional development related to the field of early childhood education completed within the last five years. It is possible the workforce is doing more than is expected of them to meet their certification requirements. It is also possible that the workforce is engaging in activities that they consider professional development but that are not eligible for certification purposes.

Table 37 Professional development hours completed in the 12-month period preceding the survey 2019 and 2020

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Hours of professional development							
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
0.1-25	73%	71%	75%	74%	79%	74%	75%	73%
26-50	19%	21%	17%	18%	14%	15%	18%	18%
51-100	5%	6%	4%	5%	4%	6%	5%	5%
101+	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Mean	27.5	25.3	26.8	28.4	28.3	31.3	27.3	28.0
(Standard Deviation)	(49.4)	(32.2)	(46.0)	(44.4)	(63.0)	(56.7)	(50.2)	(43.7)

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Just over half (53 per cent) of those who undertook professional development in 2020 included some hours related to COVID-19 health and safety protocols, but the hours were not extensive, as shown in Table 38. The average number of hours among those taking some PD of any type ranged from 3.3 for Centre ECL workers to 3.5 for owner operators and 4.9 for HCPs. Among those taking training related to COVID-19 health and safety protocols and guidelines, the average hours of such training ranged from 6.3 for owner operators and 6.6 for Centre ECL workers to 9.1 for HCPs.

Table 38 Professional development hours completed that are related to COVID-19 health and safety protocols and guidelines

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
	Hours of professional development related to COVID-19							
	2020		2020		2020		2020	
0	43%		50%		46%		47%	
0.1-25	55%		49%		52%		51%	
26-50	1%		1%		2%		1%	
51+	0%		0%		0%		0%	

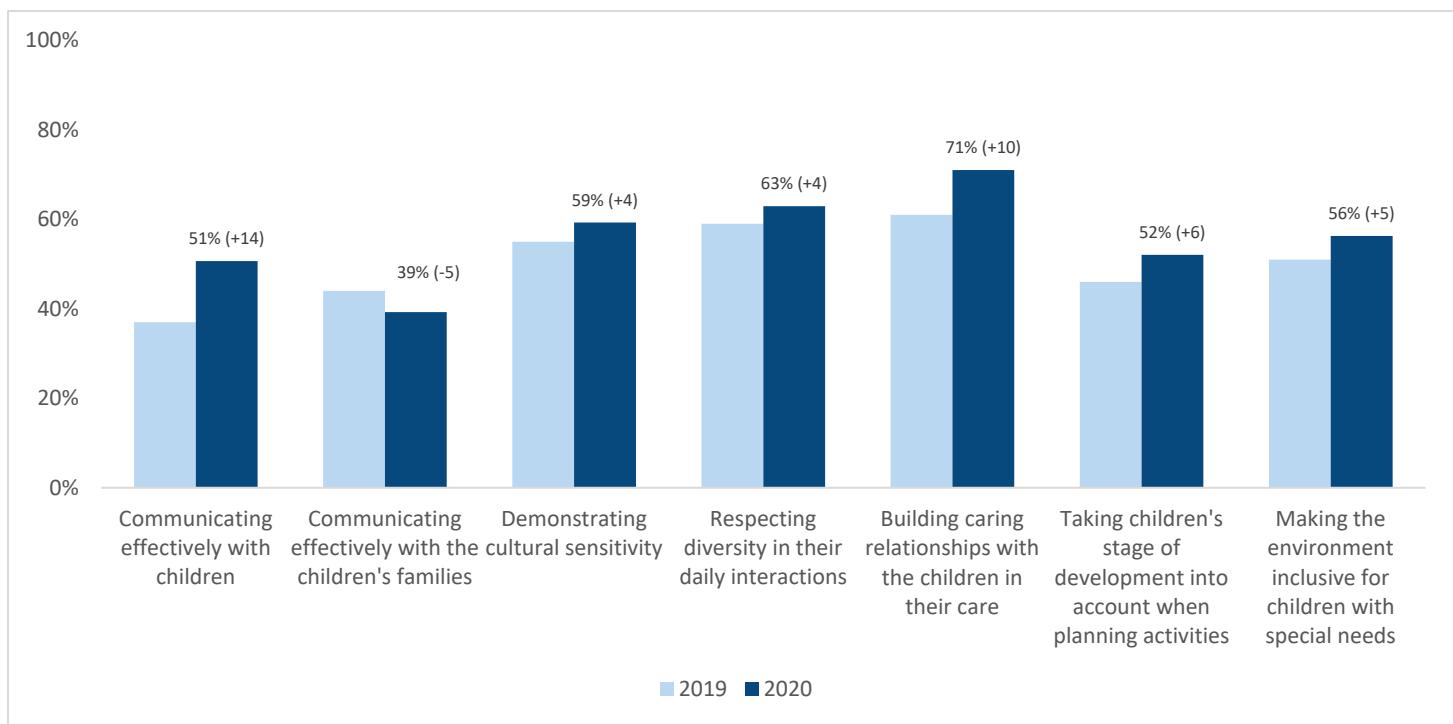
Source: SRDC workforce survey.

KPI 10: EMPLOYERS REPORT OF THE SHARE OF THEIR ECL WORKFORCE POSSESSING CORE SKILLS AND POSSESSING SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Cross-sectional survey

Employers were asked about the proportion of their staff who needed to improve specific core skills. Figure 35 shows employer survey respondents' responses in 2019 and 2020. The numbers inside the parentheses indicate the percentage point change between these two years. The response to this question serves as a proxy measure of employer's assessment of the skills of their workforce.

Figure 35 Proportion of employers who indicated none of their staff needed to improve ECL core skills



Source: SRDC employer survey.

The results showed that employers' assessment of core skills improved from 2019 to 2020, with the exception of communicating effectively with the children's families (which decreased by 5 percentage points). Of course, COVID-19 protocols may have had a detrimental effect on the ECL workforce's ability to communicate with families and/or caused an additional burden as the

quantity of information being shared increased. The most highly rated skills were building caring relationships with the children in their care (71 per cent), respecting diversity in their daily interactions (63 per cent) and demonstrating cultural sensitivity (59 per cent). The skill that needed the most improvement was the ability to communicate effectively with the children's families (39 per cent). For each of these skills, between 6 and 7 per cent of employers reported that more than 75 per cent of their staff who directly work with children needed to improve their skills in one or more of these areas.

KPI 11: EMPLOYMENT STABILITY OF ECL WORKFORCE, INCLUDING VARIANCES FOR STAFFING FOR PROVIDERS, WORK HOURS, JOB TENURE, JOB EXITS

Cross-sectional survey

Job and sector retention

The cross-sectional survey sought to determine whether members of the ECL workforce expected to be leaving their jobs soon. As seen in Table 39, most respondents expected to be working with their current employer one year after completing the survey (81 per cent of the total sample). This proportion was lower among Centre ECL workers (74 per cent). Respondents who were not expecting to continue in their current workplace (or were not sure) were asked if they expected to work in the ECL sector one year after completing the survey. The proportion of Centre ECL workers not expecting to continue with their current employer who were not expecting to work in the ECL sector at all was 9 per cent (up from just 3 per cent in 2019). But at least another three in ten (30 per cent) were not sure whether they would stay working in the sector.

About 2 per cent of all owner-operators and 2 per cent of all HCPs reported that they were expecting to leave their current employment. HCPs were nonetheless more committed to remaining working in the sector than were Centre ECL workers. Readers may recall from Table 5 that typically Centre ECL workers had worked in the sector the least time. The answers in Table 39, if borne out in 2021 could lead to even more turnover in this population.

That said, percentage differences are small and could arise by chance from year to year. Taking both answers together, in 2019 only 0.3 per cent of the workforce surveyed was planning to leave ECL within one year. In 2020 this percentage had increased to 1.1 per cent. Among Centre ECL workers, the equivalent increase was from 0.8 to 2.3 per cent. If this is an accurate reflection of the level of intent to leave the sector and such intentions persist in later years, even such a small percentage could compound over several future years to generate a major outflow of professionals.

Table 39 Job retention expectations by respondent group 2020

	Owner-operators		Centre ECL workers		HCPs		Total	
Expect to work with current employer after 1 year?								
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Yes	87%	90%	74%	74%	91%	89%	83%	81%
Don't know	8%	7%	19%	16%	6%	7%	12%	12%
No	4%	2%	8%	8%	3%	2%	3%	6%
Expect to work in ECL after 1 year?								
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Yes	92%	72%	85%	60%	93%	88%	89%	73%
Don't know	6%	18%	13%	30%	5%	8%	9%	19%
No	2%	6%	3%	9%	2%	2%	2%	6%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Note: 2019 proportions for 'No' and 'Don't know' in relation to 'Expect to work with current employer after 1 year' were updated due to a coding error.

ECEs no longer working in child care were asked about their reasons for leaving the sector. The most common answers were related to dissatisfaction with pay and benefits in child care (33 per cent and 16 per cent, respectively). Other common answers included dissatisfaction with work conditions (22 per cent) and career advancement opportunities (17 per cent). However, the share giving these reasons was much lower in 2020 than in 2019, when 57 per cent reported dissatisfaction with pay and 36 per cent were dissatisfied with work conditions. By 2020, one in eight (12 per cent) had left in 2020 due to health reasons related to COVID-19 (Table 40). SRDC examined these reasons by duration of experience working in ECL. Those with less than five years experience were slightly more likely than those with more ECL experience to report having left due to being dissatisfied with pay (20 versus 14 per cent) and due to working conditions (25 versus 20 per cent), but they were equally likely to cite health reasons due to COVID-19.

SRDC reviewed the current job titles reported by ECEs no longer working in child care. There were no dominant destinations. Many reported working in fields connected to ECL – such as for Child Care Resource and Referral centres, in supported child development, in K-12 education or ECE program instruction, licensing. Others worked in family services or consulting. Only a few had left the care and education sectors defined broadly for other employment, such as for retail. Three had become home-based, six reported being unemployed and one retired.

Staff turnover

There were 452 employers who provided staff hiring and turn-over information (Table 41). The numbers in parentheses in the percentage column represent the change in percentage points from 2019.

Forty-four per cent of the employers reported experiencing staff net loss across all positions in the 12 months preceding the survey, which is a 10-percentage point increase compared to 2019. In both full time and part time positions, employers experienced the greatest staff loss from Centre ECL workers (94 per cent of the losses for full time positions and 96 per cent of the losses for part time positions were Centre ECL workers). The change in staff net loss for supervisor, manager, and director positions was only around 1 percentage point.

Table 40 Main reasons why ECEs are not working in child care

ECEs not working in child care	
Not able to find a job in child care	2%
Health reasons related to COVID-19	12%
Health reasons NOT related to COVID-19	4%
Taking a break to further studies	10%
Other personal reasons	13%
Dissatisfied with pay in child care	33%
Dissatisfied with benefits in child care	16%
Dissatisfied with career advancement opportunities in child care	17%
Dissatisfied with working conditions in child care	22%
Preference for other occupation	11%
Other	37%

Source: SRDC workforce survey: survey respondents no longer working in the sector.

The increase in the proportion of employers who experienced staff net loss varied by health authority region (Figure 36). The lighter bars represent the proportion of employers who reported experiencing overall staff net loss in 2019 while the darker bars represent the proportion of employers in 2020. Employers in Fraser Health Authority region experienced the smallest change in proportion relative to 2019 (+9 percentage points), and employers in

Vancouver Island Health Authority region experienced the greatest change in proportion (+15 percentage points) relative to 2019.

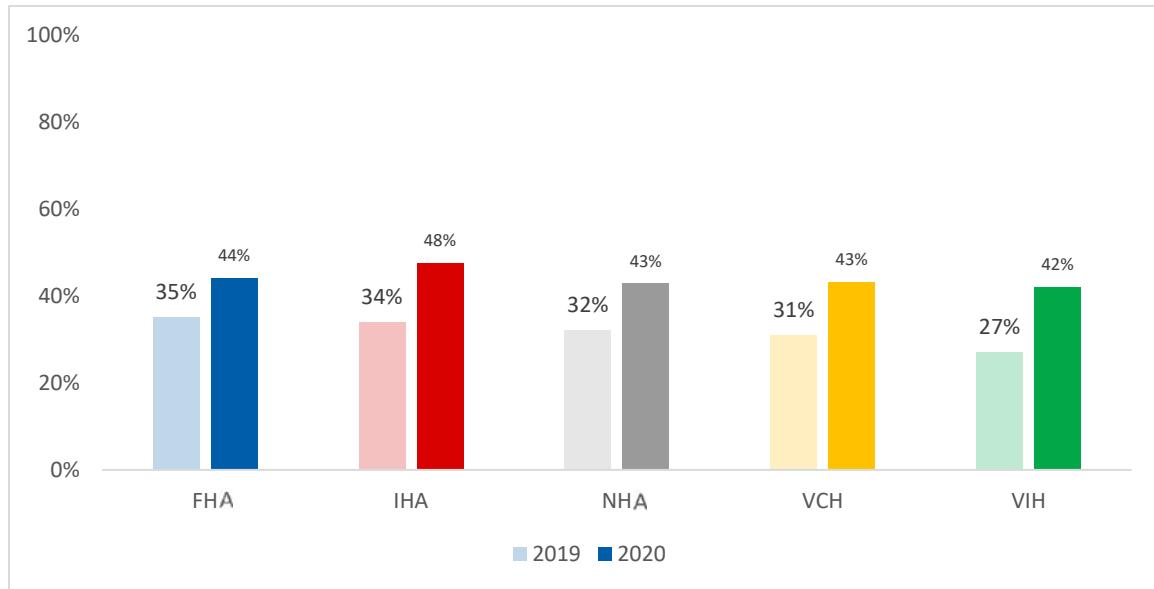
Table 41 Number and proportion of employers who experienced staff net loss 2020 and change since 2019

	Full Time		Part Time		Overall	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
ECL worker	138	31% (+7)	110	24% (+4)	187	41% (+9)
Supervisor	27	6% (+1)	9	2% (+1)	33	7% (+1)
Manager	18	4% (+1)	4	1% (+1)	20	4% (+1)
Director	5	1% (0)	0	0% (0)	5	1% (-1)
All positions	150	33% (+6)	115	25% (+4)	199	44% (+10)

Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: N=452.

Figure 36 Proportion of employers who experienced overall staff net loss by health authority region 2020 compared to 2019



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: FHA: Fraser Health Authority region; IHA: Interior Health Authority region; NHA: Northern Health Authority region; VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region; VIH: Vancouver Island Health Authority region.

This information was also used to estimate staff turnover and net change (typically also net loss) at the organization and worker level (Tables 42 and 43). Similar to 2019, net loss was more pronounced for full time staff than part time staff, and it was again among ECL workers that employers experienced the greatest net loss. The change in average net loss of ECL workers from 2019 to 2020 was considerable at -0.35 positions (meaning the average loss per centre was just over a third of a worker) for full time workers and -0.28 for part time workers. For full time ECL workers, the increase in net loss was largely driven by the reduction in new hires (-0.45 [each centre hired an average of half a worker less in 2020] compared to 2019). For part time ECL workers, the increase in net loss was also largely driven by the reduction in new hires (-0.41 compared to 2019).

Employers were also asked to provide their perspectives on the top 3 reasons why their employees left their centres voluntarily (Figure 37). The lighter bars are 2019 responses, and darker bars are 2020 responses. More answer options were included in the 2020 survey, so some options do not have a 2019 comparison. COVID-19 related questions were also not included in the 2019 survey.

Table 42 Centre level average staff turn-over and net change 2020

	Full Time					Part Time					Change from 2019
	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net change	Change from 2019	Dismissed	Left voluntarily	Hired	Net change		
ECL worker	0.29	0.91	0.77	-0.43	-0.35	0.15	0.63	0.50	-0.27	-0.28	
Supervisor	0.02	0.12	0.08	-0.07	-0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	
Manager	0.02	0.06	0.06	-0.02	-0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	-0.01	-0.02	
Director	0.00	0.02	0.02	-0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	+0.01	

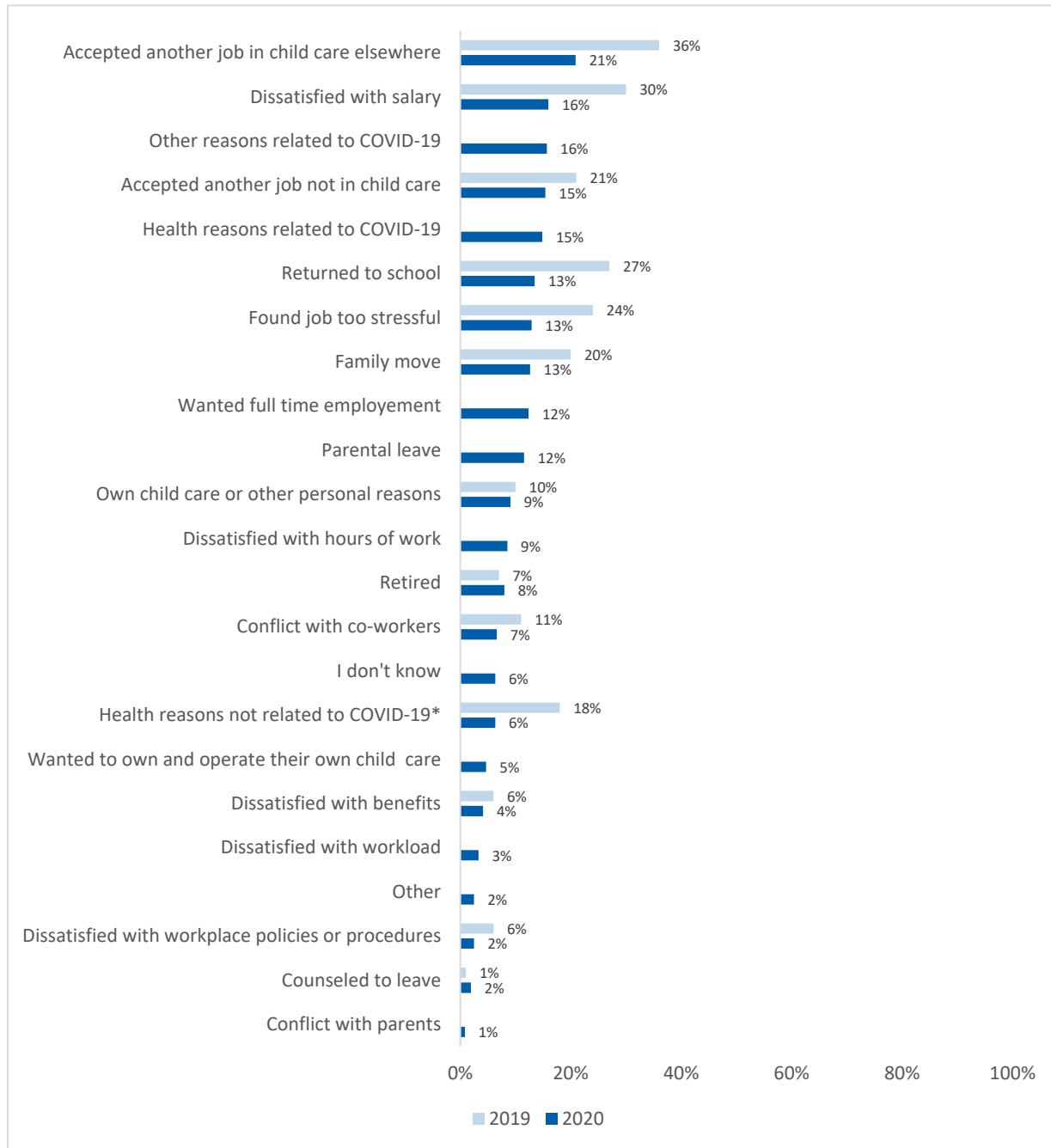
Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: N=452. [Net change = Hired minus Dismissed minus Left Voluntarily: all figures rounded to two decimal places] 2019 numbers were adjusted to account for a coding error.

Consistent with 2019 findings, accepting another job in a different child care (21 per cent) and dissatisfaction with salary (16 per cent) remained as the top two reasons why employers thought their employees voluntarily left their organization, although the percentage of employers who indicated these two reasons dropped by 15 and 14 percentage points, respectively. In 2020, the third major reason was non-health reasons related to COVID-19 (16 per cent), which, of course, did not arise in 2019. Compared to 2019, the percentage of employers who believed their staff

left because they returned to school dropped by 14 percentage points (27 per cent to 13 per cent). Leaving because the job was too stressful also dropped by 14 percentage points. Health reasons (not related to COVID-19) also dropped by 12 percentage points, but this drop may be balanced by the inclusion of health reasons related to COVID-19 as a reason for voluntarily leaving the child care centre (15 per cent).

Figure 37 Employers' perspectives on the main reasons for employees leaving their child care centre, preschool or before and after school program 2020 and change since 2019



Source: SRDC employer survey.

* Was asked as 'Health reasons' in 2019. 'Health reasons related to COVID-19' was not asked in 2019.

Key informant interviews and case studies

Within the case study sites staff, leaving was not reported as a major problem although managers and owners stated that “staffing is my biggest concern.” Their explanation for taking this perspective was the challenge of finding substitute staff to cover staff absences and of maintaining staff to children ratios. The interviews with ECL staff, managers and owners all emphasized the relatively high levels of staff satisfaction at the case study sites. They provided what was regarded as a good compensation package and most staff expressed no desire to leave in the short to medium term. Two case study sites planned to expand in 2020 and 2021 and were planning to recruit new staff.

In 2019, churn rather than staff leaving was identified as an issue within the case study sites. Churn was when staff moved into another position or centre within the organization. While churn continued in 2020, it was less of an issue as there was less staff movement because of COVID-19. Since the centres were just returning to capacity, there were fewer staff being promoted in the months leading up to the interviews.

ECL professionals suggested one of the effects of COVID-19 was to increase *uncertainty* within the whole ECL sector as well as in their own case study workplace. As families tried to work out whether they actually needed child care, managers and owners found they had exhausted their waitlists by September and were working hard to fill existing places. Some parents asked to be kept on the waitlist even though they were currently working from home or had been furloughed and did not know what their child care needs would be going forward. The effect of this change on ECL professionals was that some had their hours reduced and some were allocated different roles, and this gave rise to a feeling of uncertainty amongst ECL staff.

For the case study sites, tight staffing margins added to the sense of instability and uncertainty. All the case study sites had developed a COVID-19 safety plan, but ECL professionals were worried what would happen if a staff member or child had a positive diagnosis for COVID-19 and what this would mean for the centres. Managers and owners were aware of child care centres that had not reopened in their areas because of COVID-19 and identified the role played by challenges with staffing. ECL professionals interviewed expressed concerns about the future, but the overriding impression was that they were pleased their workplaces were open and they were working.

KPI 12: RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE OPINIONS (WITH RESPECT TO STANDARDS OF CARE, VIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND VALUE) AMONG THOSE ALREADY WORKING IN THE SECTOR

Cross-sectional survey

Cross-sectional survey respondents were asked to rate their opinion on four statements regarding the others' perception of child care work. In general, the ratio of positive to negative opinions was highest for the statement *My work is valued by the families of the children I work with* (14:1 in 2020, similar to the result of 15:1 in 2019). This ratio was high also for *My work in child care is valued by my family* (9:1) and *My work in child care is valued by my friends* (7:1). In contrast, in 2020 as in 2019 respondents were similarly likely to have positive or negative opinions about the statement *Child care is valued by the public*. Only 47 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in 2020, down from 51 per cent in 2019.

Five statements more directly probed their current relationship with their work (Table 43). The statement with the lowest ratio was *I would recommend child care as a profession* which still had three positive statements for every negative statement (3:1). In contrast, *I consider child care as my chosen profession* (11:1) and *I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care* had very high ratios (8:1).

Centre ECL workers' ratio of positive to negative opinions was often lower than for other categories of workers for these statements. This was the case for taking the negative view more often on the statement *My current job is temporary* meaning more of them planned to leave it (5:1 compared to 14:1 for owner-operators) and on *My current job is a stepping stone* (3:1 compared to 7:1 for owner-operators and 4:1 for HCPs).

In general, positive opinions were more often voiced in 2020 than 2019. There was a negative shift in the proportion who felt comfortable telling people that they worked in child care. But plausibly this is a temporary side effect of concerns around employment involving human contact and interactions due to COVID-19. Interestingly, HCPs were more likely to report their jobs were temporary in 2020 than 2019.

Ratio of positive to negative opinions among Centre ECL workers regarding their child care jobs varied across demographic groups (Table 44). Respondents who identified as Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit had a much higher ratio of positive to negative opinions (16:1) regarding considering child care as their chosen profession and considering their job as temporary. Respondents who were born outside of Canada had larger ratios for the statements *I consider child care as my chosen profession* as well, and there were significantly more who *would recommend child care as a profession* than among those born in Canada. However, they

were also more likely to see their current job as a stepping stone or as a temporary job than respondents who were born in Canada.

Table 43 Ratio of positive to negative comments regarding ECL work 2019 and 2020

	Survey year	Owner-operator	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
Consider child care as chosen profession [agree: disagree]	2019	8 : 1	8 : 1	9 : 1	9 : 1
	2020	13 : 1	9 : 1	12 : 1	11 : 1
My current job is stepping stone [disagree: agree]*	2019	5 : 1	2 : 1	6 : 1	4 : 1
	2020	7 : 1	3 : 1	4 : 1	4 : 1
My current job is temporary [disagree: agree]*	2019	10 : 1	4 : 1	8 : 1	6 : 1
	2020	14 : 1	5 : 1	5 : 1	6 : 1
Would recommend child care as a profession [agree: disagree]	2019	3 : 1	2 : 1	4 : 1	3 : 1
	2020	3 : 1	3 : 1	3 : 1	3 : 1
I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care [agree: disagree]	2019	11 : 1	6 : 1	14 : 1	9 : 1
	2020	9 : 1	8 : 1	8 : 1	8 : 1

* Responses to these statements were reversed to estimate ratio of positive to negative opinions.

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

The patterns in Table 44 point to Indigenous and newcomer Centre ECL workers being no less comfortable in 2020 in their child care work and increasingly more encouraging to others about the profession, across several of the dimensions probed.

Table 44 Ratio of positive to negative opinions of Centre ECL workers regarding their work 2019 and 2020

	Survey year	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Born in Canada	Born outside Canada
Consider child care as chosen profession [agree: disagree]	2019	8 : 1	7 : 1	8 : 1***	10 : 1
	2020	9 : 1	16 : 1	9 : 1*	14 : 1
My current job is stepping stone [disagree: agree]*	2019	2 : 1	1 : 1	3 : 1***	2 : 1
	2020	3 : 1	3 : 1	3 : 1**	2 : 1
My current job is temporary [disagree: agree]*	2019	3 : 1	5 : 1	4 : 1**	3 : 1
	2020	5 : 1**	16 : 1	6 : 1***	3 : 1
Would recommend child care as a profession [agree: disagree]	2019	2 : 1***	3 : 1	2 : 1**	3 : 1
	2020	2 : 1**	6 : 1	2 : 1***	4 : 1
I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care [agree: disagree]	2019	6 : 1**	7 : 1	7 : 1	6 : 1
	2020	7 : 1	10 : 1	8 : 1	7 : 1

* Responses to these statements were reversed to estimate ratio of positive to negative opinions.

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Note: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. This is a t test. If the p-value is less than 0.05/0.10/0.10, we have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant association between the responses given by the two groups being compared.

Key informant interviews and case studies

Across all the case study sites, ECL professionals were confident they were providing a high level of care and education to children. The majority of ECL professionals held ECE credentials and they saw their work as a profession that provided care for and support for the development of children. ECL professionals reported they were often the first professional to recognize developmental issues in a child and worked with parents to obtain appropriate supports.

In regard to ECEA training, some ECL workers and managers questioned if ECEAs should be required to complete courses that provided more of an overall understanding of the care and development of young children such as courses on guiding and caring rather than (for example) nutrition. Some suggested that the latter course was more important with respect to meeting

licensing requirements rather than with ensure staffing had adequate training across necessary responsibilities.

During the case study interviews with ECL professionals there was consider discussion about the government decision not to designate ECL professionals as essential workers during the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic. All ECL professionals saw themselves as essential workers because they continued to work and provide care for the children of other essential workers at a time when other professions such as teachers did not have to return to their workplaces. ECL professionals said that during the early weeks of the pandemic, when there was a lack of evidence about routes of transmission, they continued to work in an environment where it was not possible to physically distance from the children in their care and they continued to provide a high level of care to the children in a professional manner.

In the case study sites, managers and owners recognized the toll COVID-19 was taking on their staff and were concerned about the long-term impact of the pandemic protocols on staff health and wellbeing. Managers and owners reported trying to support staff by checking-in with them more frequently and listening to their concerns.

"I think we had all been feeling really burned out by that point. So just to get a chance to have like a breather and remember why you were passionate about it and the impact that we have on the children, that was good ... kind of embracing those small moments that you have with children almost every day. They can be very small interactions, but they can be very powerful." (Site A: Manager)

Five of the six case study sites paid ECL professionals some type of hazard pay or a bonus for working through the pandemic. Managers and owners reported that it was important to recognize the critical role ECL professionals play and to send them a message they were valued for providing essential services to families in the province.

KPI 13: RATIO OF POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE OPINIONS (WITH RESPECT TO STANDARDS OF CARE, VIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND VALUE OF ECL WORK) IN GENERAL POPULATION, THOUGHT LEADERS, MASS MEDIA, YOUTH, AND PARENTS

Public opinion survey

The public opinion survey in 2019 asked a representative panel of B.C. adults their level of agreement with statements regarding work in ECL and child care as a career. The survey was not fielded in 2020. The second wave of this survey, to be fielded in early 2022 will identify whether there is a change in the perception of the public with respect to those statements.

However, SRDC is also seeking to take stock of the effect that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on public opinion of work in child care in B.C. in 2020, so as to distinguish this effect from the impact of the ECL R&R Strategy over the entire 2018-21 period. In the absence of a scheduled public opinion survey for 2020, SRDC requested Maru-Matchbox include two questions in its representative panel survey of 1,511 Canadians undertaken during the third week of May 2020.

The survey responses were as follows:

- 77 per cent agreed that the ECL workforce played a vital role in the economy. The figure was 75 per cent in B.C.
- 73 per cent of Canadian adults agreed that the ECL workforce played a vital role in children's learning. The figure was 70 per cent in B.C.
- 97 per cent (98 per cent in B.C.) valued the service provided by the ECL workforce the same amount (63 per cent nationally but 71 per cent in B.C.) or more (34 per cent nationally and 28 per cent in B.C.) in May 2020 compared to before the pandemic. This change was on a par with the change in valuation for teachers (where the percentage saying 'more' was 30 per cent).

Positive sentiments tended to be higher among women, those aged 55+ years, parents, and higher income earners.

While these data have limitations as measures of change over time, they imply a considerable increase in the value placed by the general public on work in ECL as a result of the pandemic. It will be important in SRDC's final analysis to recognize that the pandemic may have contributed positively to the direction of movement of some KPIs while also contributing negatively to the direction of movement of others.

Cross-sectional survey

The workforce survey included a question to capture the opinions of members of ECL workforce on the influence of the pandemic on public opinions. The proportion who felt that compared to before the pandemic, the number of people who value the work done by child care workers had increased was considerably higher than the proportion who felt it had decreased. Nonetheless, the modal response was that the numbers valuing the work had stayed the same.

Table 45 Compared to before the pandemic, do you think the number of people who value the work done by child care workers ...

	Owner-operators	Centre ECL workers	HCPs	Total
...increased?	48%	47%	41%	46%
...stayed the same?	47%	49%	53%	49%
...decreased?	5%	4%	7%	5%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

While the results in Table 45 suggest many working in child care saw public opinion shifting positively with respect to child care work, it is worth recalling the earlier question asking the same workforce survey respondents their level of agreement with the statement that child care work was valued by the public. About half agreed and half disagreed in both 2019 and 2020, with no shift evident to more positive public perceptions. One way to interpret these responses seemingly at variance is that although there was an increase in the proportion of the public valuing work in child care, this was adding support to a low base meaning the numbers valuing child care in late 2020 were still not sufficiently high to tip the balance and acknowledge that in general child care work was valued by the public.

Given that the opinion question asked of the general public in 2020 found 75 per cent of British Columbians agreeing that the ECL workforce played a vital role in the economy and 70 per cent agreeing that the workforce played a vital role in children's learning, there likely remains a substantial gap between the perceptions of members of the ECL workforce of public opinions and where those opinions actually lie.

Key informant interviews and case studies

"COVID changed perceptions in positive way – if we weren't at work, they wouldn't have anyone to go to." (Site C: ECEA)

In 2019, ECL professionals reported that most of the public regarded them as 'babysitters' rather than early childhood educators. As the quote above indicates, some felt COVID-19 changed that perception for some, if not all of the general public. While there continued to be some parents who said,

"... oh, well, you just play with kids all day long. It's great. ... [ECL professionals said] it really drives me bonkers." (Site C: Manager)

ECL professionals reported that throughout the pandemic more of the general public appreciated them continuing to work and to provide care for essential workers. ECL professionals said that when they told parents, family, and friends, they were not considered as essential workers they were shocked. ECL professionals were disappointed at not being designated essential workers and managers and owners saw this as a missed opportunity to send a message to the public about the importance of the sector to the health and wellbeing of families as well as the economy.

Social and news media monitoring

No social and news media monitoring results will be included in this report due to the limitations described in the Evaluation Framework and Methodology section. These data will be presented in the next report for which they are available.

CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report documents progress to date with the Sector-led Evaluation of the ECL R&R Strategy in B.C. In general, the evaluation has proceeded largely as planned, collecting data on different aspects of the employment, working conditions, education, and professional development of the 35,000 or so people who make up the province's ECL workforce.

- SRDC has conducted its own survey of the workforce and ECL employers in late 2020 that provided data on a wide range of indicators, allowing these to be compared to response data from a similar survey in 2019 and also gave voice to the ECL workforce to provide feedback on the key influences on recruitment and retention as they saw them.
- A more in-depth analysis of the influence of the ECL R&R Strategy's tactics on everyday child care operations and workplace experiences has been included from six case study sites including 26 interviews spanning different types of child care workplaces.
- Administrative data shed light on implementation of the different tactics that are part of the ECL R&R Strategy and reveal trends in the experiences of ECL professionals in the labour market. Most of these data have reached SRDC only during 2020: some supplied fully as requested but other components are still missing. These data sometimes helpfully include earlier years necessary to show trends from before the launch of the ECL R&R Strategy. A sufficiently rich set of administrative data is anticipated to be available, received and analyzed to cover the 2018 to 2021 period by the time of the final evaluation reports for 2021.

The results section in this report has cycled through these data sources to document the position in 2020 on many of the Key Performance Indicators in the evaluation framework, changes relative to 2019 and earlier as well as observations from professionals working in the sector that add meaning to these statistics. These results are brought together in Figure 38. This presents a summary of progress on KPIs and tactics from the launch of the ECL R&R strategy until the end of 2020. An arrow symbol is used to signify whether the overall trend on each indicator is an improvement (large or small) [↑], a deterioration [↓] or a mixed result [↔]. Inevitably many nuances of findings are lost in such high-level summary and readers are encouraged to review the full results for each indicator in the preceding sections.

The results on KPIs will be used to provide answers to the evaluation questions over the course of the evaluation. This is the very first report to be able to assess change over time, so these answers are presented tentatively in the section that follows. The uncertainty over causality has been further unexpectedly increased for 2020 given the considerable disruptive effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. So, in presenting these first provisional answers to the evaluation questions, it is rarely possible to attribute outcomes solely to the effects of the ECL R&R Strategy.

Figure 38 Summary of progress to 2020 on key performance indicators

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	Tactics (see Fig. 3)	Progress on tactics
1	ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation	1	Continuing appreciation of role of wage enhancement as symbol of recognition, if not adequately addressing compensation shortfalls.
	 Satisfaction fell among HCPs with respect to hours and job security but increased for Centre ECL workers with respect to income and benefits. Motivating factors, while low, were more present for owner-operators and Centre ECL workers than in 2019. There was little change (remarkably) in indicators of burnout in 2020 compared to 2019.		
2A	Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers	1	Two-thirds in receipt of wage enhancement and increasing. COVID-19 related hazard pay played a role in 2020.
	 Wages increased roughly \$2 over 2019, but still relatively low and with very modest recognition for credentials and seniority. If anything, these differentials are narrowing over time. Wage increases have not impacted monthly incomes markedly, except for HCPs.		
2B	Benefits of ECL Workers	1	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics. Requests for improved pension provision continued. Little change in financial assistance for PD.
	 Benefit levels remaining stable with fluctuations, more often down than up.		
3	The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs	6	Work is still underway on the updated Sector Occupational Competencies.
	The response and uptake will be assessed once they are introduced.		
4	Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs	1 to 8	Increasing proportions of student bursaries issued. May take more time for new seats in ECE programs to alter workforce composition.
	 PSE completion rates slightly higher: no change in PSE participation rates. No overall change in net levels of possession of ECL-related credentials among workforce from 2018 through 2020, although own-operators increasingly report holding ECE certifications. There is an apparent decline in specialty certifications such as Special Needs. A greater share of credentials held are from B.C. institutions.		

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	Tactics (see Fig. 3)	Progress on tactics
5	Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers	1 to 8	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics.
	No data on perceptions of emerging adults available for 2020. Some signals from workforce data in 2020 that more are leaving the profession or intend to do so.		
6	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills	1 to 8	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021.
	Self-assessed skills of making the environment inclusive for children with special needs dropped from 2019 to 2020, especially for HCPs. More PD was sought by members of ECL workforce for many other low-assessed skills, although there was a decline in the proportion obtaining PD in relation to special needs.		
7	Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities.	2,3,4,5	Increasing proportions of student bursaries issued. May take more time for new seats in ECE programs to alter workforce composition. Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021.
	Fewer in the workforce believed that there were opportunities for career growth and development, even though employers reported providing career development information and opportunities slightly more often.		
8	Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities	4,5,7,8	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Overall participation in PD declined, even while there were increases in most types of PD and the range of barriers declined.		
9	Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year	4,5,7	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Hours of PD remained relatively stable, among those participating in PD.		

KPI #	Progress on KPI to 2020	Tactics (see Fig. 3)	Progress on tactics
10	Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills	1 to 8	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Employers' assessment of their staff's core skills improved from 2019 to 2020, with the exception of communicating effectively with the children's families, also the lowest rated skill.		
11	Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits	1,7	Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	The proportion not expecting to work for their current employer in a year's time doubled from 3 to 6 per cent and the proportion of those not planning to stay who planned to leave work in ECL entirely increased threefold from 2 to 6 per cent. 44 per cent of employers reported experiencing staff net loss across all positions in the 12 months preceding the survey: a 10-percentage point increase compared to 2019. COVID-19 featured prominently among the reasons.		
12	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector	1,4,5, 6,7,8	Professional networks and PD Supports launched during 2020. User data anticipated in 2021. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.
	Only 47 per cent agreed or strongly agreed child care is valued by the public in 2020, down from 51 per cent in 2019. But in general, more members of the ECL workforce held positive opinions about their work in 2020 than in 2019. This seemed especially the case for Indigenous centre ECL workers.		
13	Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents	1,2,3, 6,8	No direct ECL R&R Strategy tactics.
	SRDC's opinion survey question asked of the general public in B.C. in 2020 found 28 per cent valuing the service provided by the ECL workforce more than before the pandemic, and 71 per cent valued it the same. Furthermore, 75 per cent of British Columbians agreed that the ECL workforce played a vital role in the economy while 70 per cent felt they played a vital role in children's learning. In the workforce survey, many working in child care acknowledged that the number of people valuing child care work had increased.		

PROVISIONAL EARLY ANSWERS TO EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation framework uses the progress against KPIs to answer the evaluation questions over time. At this stage – analytically the halfway point of the project – we cannot draw conclusions on any of the three-year or ten-year outcomes. It is possible to note for the first time whether indicators point to the ECL R&R Strategy proceeding on track to achieve outcomes and goals set in 2018, at the project outset.

1. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of an adequate and stable workforce, comprised of qualified and skilled early care and learning professionals? [10-year goal]

While it is far too early to answer this question, the postsecondary qualifications of the current workforce appear to be increasing even while ECL-related certification of Centre ECL workers is either remaining stable or declining. There are still similar skills shortfalls to 2020 but workforce members have taken action by pursuing PD in many of the affected areas. Staffing problems remain both acute and persistent. This means that alongside short-term daily instability in service due to permanent and casual staff unavailability, exacerbated by COVID-19, staffing needs could not be met by providers over the longer term either. A net loss of staff was reported by 44 per cent of employers in 2020 up from 34 per cent in 2019. Awareness of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary declined, as did the number of bursaries granted.

- Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other ECL workers entering the workforce? [3-year outcome]

This has not happened as of 2020.

- Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector? [3-year outcome]

This has not happened as of 2020. About 55 per cent of those currently working in the sector believed there were a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in B.C., but this was down from 60 per cent in 2019.

- Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded (or barriers reduced) so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family? [3-year outcome]

Opportunities have expanded since the launch of the ECL R&R Strategy and bursaries have reduced financial barriers for some. Improvements in employer- and self-assessed skills, knowledge and abilities are noted to some degree, for some but not all of the many areas demanding enhanced skills. In particular in 2020, there were drops in ECL workforce members' self-assessed skills to make the environment inclusive for children with special needs, even though employers considered these skills to need improving for somewhat fewer of their staff. Employers saw more falling short on communicating effectively with the children's families.

2. Does the ECL R&R Strategy result in the long-term goal of ECL being viewed as a viable, sustainable, and valued career? [10-year goal]

There are conflicting trends. SRDC probed centre-based ECL workers' current relationship with their work and found more positive support in 2020 than in 2019 for statements such as "I would recommend child care as a profession", "I consider child care as my chosen profession" and "I feel comfortable telling new people that I work in child care". But there were some signs more among the workforce surveyed was planning to leave ECL within one year in 2020 compared to 2019. Among Centre ECL workers, the increase was incrementally small – from 0.8 to 2.3 per cent – and could represent sampling error. Over ten years, however, even a small percentage leaving annually would add up to a considerable loss of workers.

- Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the ECL workforce? [3-year outcome]

Public opinions that child care workers play a vital role in the economy and in children's learning exceed seven in ten in B.C. and have reportedly either remained stable or improved since the start of the pandemic. Even though ECL professionals are acknowledging this improvement, they seem less cognizant of the relatively high-level public confidence has reached. It appears that the COVID-19 pandemic itself accounts for a great deal of the 2020 increase.

3. Does the ECL R&R Strategy promote the long-term goal of appropriate compensation plans and human resources strategies to be put in place? [10-year goal]

There are conflicting trends. Wage enhancement is working in two ways. Wages are growing for those eligible. Among HCPs, incomes have been increasing. And the symbolic value is high as the enhancement send a powerful signal to ECL professionals that government has recognized the problem and values their work. However, differentials between certification levels appear to be diminishing, reducing the incentive to acquire advanced credentials and seek promotion. There is little sign yet of wage intervention leading to improved compensation and human resources strategies in other areas. The situation with respect to

low pension and health plan coverage has not changed a great deal since the project began. Six percentage points more Centre ECL workers reported holding a pension, but 7 percentage points fewer employers reported providing one.

- Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession? [3-year outcome]

The retention strategies such as enhancing wages and promoting access to professional development do appear to have the effect of increasing workforce engagement and persistence but to a very modest extent so far. While the pandemic has not helped the retention of professionals, those still in the workforce in late 2020 have relatively longer work histories in ECL. The group of ECEs not working in child care has by contrast less work experience in 2020 than 2019, suggesting more relatively newly-qualified ECEs have left child care work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the most part, the 2020 analysis of administrative data, cross-sectional survey and interviews has confirmed the challenging situation reported from the 2019 benchmarking report with respect to ECL workforce recruitment and retention. Thus, the same critical workforce development situation persists as originally prompted the ECL R&R Strategy.

This has been the first early look at how well ECL R&R Strategy efforts have succeeding in moving the needle on challenges already well known and recorded in the 2019 benchmarking report. But the confounding influence of the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 means the evaluation is yielding only tentative answers at this point. Thus, recommendations with respect to policy and implementation must be similarly cautious.

- **Renewed effort is needed for the ECL R&R Strategy tactics to support employers' urgent needs to recruit, retain and develop ECL professionals.** Shortages of qualified ECL professionals persisted into 2020, even with temporarily reduced demand for ECL. About forty per cent of employers reported they were unable to fill at least one vacant position in their centre. Employers indicated they were unable to fill 1.9 positions on average and that due to staff shortages, 44 per cent had to fill vacant positions with an individual with lower qualifications than they wanted. This practice occurred for 2 positions per organization on average.
- **Carefully-designed and targeted further wage enhancement** is likely to generate yet more incremental improvements. Wage enhancement appears to have been the most recognized and appreciated of the ECL R&R Strategy tactics. While it does not fully solve the identified

problems with compensation and benefits, it plays a role in improving incomes. This has clearly been appreciated by those working in the sector. It also acts as a potent symbol that the government recognizes the importance of adequate pay for the ECL workforce in B.C.

- **Intervention is needed on pensions and other benefits where ECL professionals' compensation packages are falling short.** While satisfaction with benefits increased a little by 2020, it remains the case that provision of key benefits is low across the sector. A fifth (21 per cent) of employers provide none – meaning no change on this indicator since 2019. The wage enhancement intervention provides a model in that it supports statutory benefits. This approach could be imitated to provide conditional funding to improve other workplace benefits such as pensions.
- **Raise the profile and sustainability of ECE professional development as well as the incentive to upskill.** If wage differentials can better recognize the acquisition of additional credentials and ability to take on increasing responsibility this will improve incentives for existing workforce members to upskill. Communicating the promise of bursaries such that ECE tuition, PD courses and related costs are more often seen as affordable will likely help. Regulation to protect time off for study and increasing the proportion of financial assistance that is provided upfront to employers and employees to incentivize upskilling should be considered.
- **A program specifically to address incentivizing Special Needs certification may be justified.** Skills deficits in relation to children with special needs have become more acute in 2020, adding to an already-concerning situation in 2019 when a third of employers reported a shortfall in employees with special needs certification. In 2020, 46 per cent of employers who cared for children with special needs did not have staff in any position with a Special Needs certification. About 30 per cent of employers reported that they had to refuse children due to not having staff with the right qualifications to accommodate the children's needs and for a quarter of these the qualification missing was a Special Needs Certificate. The proportion of ECL professionals self-assessed as average or excellent in making the environment inclusive for children with special needs dropped by 10 percentage points.
- **More positive public declarations and depictions with respect to the role played by the ECL workforce – in children's development/learning and in contributing to economic and social progress more generally – can work to raise the public profile of ECL professionals and thus their sense of esteem and engagement.** The COVID-19 pandemic has raised the profile of ECL work in B.C. Impressively for such a traumatic year, members of the sector workforce have actually become somewhat *more* appreciative of the value of the work they do and have acknowledged that the opinions of others not working in the sector have shifted to the positive. This suggests that opportunities to reiterate and expand on such messaging should be sought more often going forward.

- **Regional disparities may call for regionally-focused solutions.** Northern Health Authority region reported the lowest proportion of ECL workers with an ECE certificate in 2019 and the biggest drop in the proportion of the workforce ECE certified to 2020. Senior staff were also least likely to be ECE-certified in Northern Health Authority region.
- **In combination, workforce supports that provide recognition and tangibly increased benefits are needed more than ever.** It should be noted that 2020 brought increased workforce departures and either little change or increase on already-high measures of burnout compared to 2019.
- **Finally, a more systemic approach to manage B.C.'s child care "system" may be required.** The compilation of this and previous reports has illuminated some of the difficulties the sector faces taking stock of its successes and challenges. The ECL R&R Strategy is being implemented by multiple Ministries. Each is at varying stages of roll out on its original tactics, and updating those tactics. At the same time, new related initiatives are launched by additional agencies overlapping in intent with the ECL R&R Strategy but outside it.³⁰ There is no regional or central agency to collect and disseminate information on the ECL R&R Strategy tactics across the thousands of eligible workplaces and tens of thousands of members of the workforce. Some report being unaware of the tactics. This is likely to influence negatively take up and impact. Data are disparately available and absent in several areas.

The ECL R&R Strategy tactics have seemingly worked in tandem with the effects of the pandemic to influence some of the intended outcomes, while their respective effects have been at odds on others. In either case, and certainly in part due to the pandemic, it is too early to pass judgement on the overall effectiveness of the ECL R&R Strategy. What is perhaps clearer is that the kinds of tactics included within the ECL R&R Strategy and being implemented through 2019 and 2020 have acquired even more importance as policy responses. These approaches can help combat the well-established challenges faced in ECL workforce development in B.C. and some of the negative consequences that have arisen or been exacerbated in ECL due to the pandemic.

³⁰ For example, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction is fully funding places for some unemployed and underemployed individuals in ECE programming, including a living allowance. The government announced in January 2021 that it was investing \$1.26 million to add 108 ECE seats at public post-secondary institutions throughout the province (effectively adding to the existing ECL R&R Strategy tactic to increase the numbers of seats in ECE programs).

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APPENDIX A: B.C. CHILD CARE EMPLOYER SURVEY (FINAL UPDATED DRAFT)

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
INTRO	<p>Instructions</p> <p>Submit one survey for [Piped text: Name of workplace]. It is estimated that this survey will take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete. You will need staffing information including training, hourly wage, and benefits to complete the survey. Referring to your last Provider Profile Survey responses or Licensing Template might be helpful.</p> <p>If you do not have all the information being asked, you can forward the invitation email that contained the survey link to anyone in your management team. They can complete any section by choosing that section in the Table of Contents at the beginning of the survey.</p> <p>To return to the survey at a later time after partial completion please save the invitation email you received with your unique survey link. Your responses are saved after completing each page.</p> <p>The "Back" button allows you to go back and change your answers. You can also visit previous sections using the Table of Contents menu at any point.</p> <p>About the BC Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>This survey will inform the sector-led evaluation of the British Columbia government 'Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention (ECL R&R) Strategy'. Your answers will help compile information on those working in the sector that can be used to track recruitment and retention experienced by employers and provide feedback to the province.</p> <p>Your answers will be treated in confidence. The identity of your organization and workforce will not be revealed in any reports SRDC produces. If you need additional support to complete this survey, you can contact SRDC at 778-589-8603 or bcchildcaresurvey@srdc.org.</p> <p>As a thank you for your time, your organization will be entered in a draw for a \$500 gift card.</p>			
C00	Is your child care currently operating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No but we are planning to re-open • No and we are not planning to re-open 		If "No and we are not planning to re-open" Branch to: COVID-19

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
TOC	<p>Start the survey by selecting "Next" or go to a specific section by clicking on the section title below.</p> <p>Child Care Employer Survey - Table of Contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About your organization Staff skills Staff by position and qualifications Compensation of benefits Staff turnover and hiring Wage enhancement Career advancement COVID-19 Additional comments 			Each title takes participants to relevant section
INTRO	About [Piped text: Name of Child Care]			
8	How many facilities in BC are part of this organization?	Drop down (1 to 50 or more)	Show if: Society=1 (Data drawn from our database)	
18	Which program(s) are offered at [Q7A]? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group care, under 3 years old • Group care 2.5 years old to school age • Group care- school age (before-and-after school program) • Preschool - 2.5 years old to school age • Multi-age • Occasional care • All of the above • Other (please specify) • I don't know 		

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
19	Which of the following describe this child care workplace? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private business (home-based or not) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A not-for-profit • Operated directly by a school, municipal, post-secondary institution, • Operated by a provincial or federal agency • Operated directly by a First Nations or Indigenous community or organization (e.g., Aboriginal Head Start) • Other (please specify) • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		Branch To :Q15 = 1 Branch To Q46
INTRO	Staff skills			
23	What languages are currently spoken by staff who work directly with children at [Q7A]? Please include languages spoken by staff not only at work but in general. (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, Inuit) language • Cantonese • Mandarin • Punjabi • Farsi • French • Spanish • Other: _____ • I don't know 		Branch To :Q1 = 2 Branch To INTRO3

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
24	<p>Thinking about staff who work directly with children, what proportion need to improve their skills in each of the following areas?</p> <p>Please remember your answers are confidential and will not be used to identify your workplace or organization.</p>	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating effectively with children • Communicating effectively with the children's families • Demonstrating cultural sensitivity • Respecting diversity in their daily interactions • Building caring relationships with the children in their care • Taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities • Making the environment inclusive for children with special needs <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • Less than a quarter • Between a quarter and up to a half • More than a half up to three quarters • All • Not applicable 		
INTRO	Staff by position and qualification			

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
DESC8	<p>The following questions will ask about the program staff at [Piped text: name of workplace]. An employee or staffing plan might be helpful to complete the rest of this section.</p> <p>Different child care workplaces use different terms to describe positions in child care. Please read the following definitions. We use these terms to describe workplace roles in this section.</p> <p>CHILD CARE WORKER - a person who has primary responsibility for a group of children. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE.</p> <p>SUPERVISOR -a person who has responsibility for a group of children and also has supervisory responsibility for child care workers. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE.</p> <p>CHILD CARE WORKER-MANAGER - a person with management duties (which can include hiring, payroll, performance reviews, compliance with licensing requirements, etc.). This person has administrative duties and may have child care duties.</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE-DIRECTOR - refers to a person who has management or administrative duties only.</p>			
26	<p>How many paid child care staff members do you have? Include yourself if you fit in any of these categories.</p>	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Child care worker •Supervisor •Child care worker- Manager •Administrative-Director <p>Columns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Full-time •Part-time 		<p>Compute Variable : CHILDCAREWORKERS = Q26_A1+Q26_C1</p> <p>Compute Variable :SUPERVISORS = Q26_A2+Q26_C2</p> <p>Compute Variable : CHIDCAREDIRECTOR = Q26_A3+Q26_C3</p> <p>Compute Variable :ADMINDIRECTOR = Q26_A4+Q26_C4</p>

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
27A	Of the [CHILDCAREWORKERS] child care workers, how many have the following certifications or training?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible adult •ECEA •ECE, no additional certifications •ECE with Infant Toddler •ECE Special Needs •ECE with Infant Toddler and Special Needs Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number 	Show If :(CHILDCAREWORKERS > 0)	
27B	Of the [SUPERVISORS] supervisors, how many have the following certifications or training?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible adult •ECEA •ECE, no additional certifications •ECE with Infant Toddler •ECE Special Needs •ECE with Infant Toddler and Special Needs Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number 	Show If :(SUPERVISORS > 0)	

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
27C	Of the [CHILDCAREDIRECTOR] child care worker-manager(s), how many have the following certifications or training?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible adult •ECEA •ECE, no additional certifications •ECE with Infant Toddler •ECE Special Needs •ECE with Infant Toddler and Special Needs Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number 	Show If :(CHILDCAREDIRECTOR > 0)	
27D	Of the [ADMINDIRECTOR] administrative - director(s), how many have the following certifications or training?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible adult •ECEA •ECE, no additional certifications •ECE with Infant Toddler •ECE Special Needs •ECE with Infant Toddler and Special Needs Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Number 	Show If :(ADMINDIRECTOR > 0)	
Q27E	How many vacant positions do you have?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Child care worker •Supervisor •Child care worker- Manager •Administrative-Director Columns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Full-time •Part-time 		

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
32	Within the past 12 months, has your workplace had to refuse children because it did not have enough staff with the required qualifications or specific skills to accommodate these children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		
33	What qualifications or specific skills were not available? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE certificate • Special Needs certificate • Infant & Toddler certificate • Experience with Indigenous cultures • Specific language • Other (please specify) 	Show If :(Q32 = 1)	
INTRO	Compensation and Benefits			
DESC	The following questions will ask about compensation at [Piped text: Name of workplace] for each staff position. Please complete the section Staff by position and qualifications before starting this section. You can go back to the previous section by clicking on the Table of Contents menu.			
28A	<p>What is the hourly wage of full-time staff with ECEA certifications?</p> <p>If there is only one staff, write the same wage in both columns.</p>	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker • Supervisor • Child care worker - Manager • Administrative Director Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest • Highest 		

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
28A	<p>What is the hourly wage of full-time staff with ECE certifications?</p> <p>If there is only one staff, write the same wage in both columns.</p>	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker • Supervisor • Child care worker - Manager • Administrative Director Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest • Highest 		
28B	<p>What is the hourly wage of full-time staff without ECEA or ECE certifications?</p> <p>If there is only one staff, write the same wage in both columns.</p>	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker • Supervisor • Child care worker - Manager • Administrative Director Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest • Highest 		
29	Which of the following benefits are paid by [Q7] [Q7A] (at least in part) for staff who work directly with children? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Health Care (Coverage for expenses and services not covered by the BC government plan) • Dental coverage • Life insurance • Short-term Disability (payment for illness, accident for first 17 weeks) • Long-term Disability (payment for illness, accident after 17 weeks) • Paid sick days • Retirement/ Pension plan • Flexible spending account/Health spending account • Other (please specify) • None of the above • I don't know 		

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
30	Which of the following additional benefits are available through [Q7A] for staff who work directly with children? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid breaks • Paid overtime • Time in lieu for overtime • Paid staff meetings that occur outside regular work hours • Financial assistance for ECE-related training, conferences or workshops • Financial assistance for courses or post-basic training • Paid release time to for training, conferences or workshops • Reduced child care fees • Paid documentation time • Paid programming and prep time • Other (please specify) • I don't know • None of the above 		
31	Workplace benefits can change over time. Please indicate whether and how the benefits provided to staff who work directly with children at [Q7A] have changed within the past 12 months. Don't include changes in benefits that were only due to staff changing their level of seniority.	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended health care (medications, vision, medical supplies) • Dental care • Paid sick leave more than 6 days/year • Paid vacation of more than 2 weeks/ year • Pension or RRSP contributions • Paid overtime • Free professional development <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not provided • Removed or decreased • Stayed the same • Added or increased • I don't know 		

2020 Child Care Employer Survey				
For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
INTRO	Staff turnover and hiring			
34	Within the past 12 months, have you had at least one vacant position that you were unable to fill and remains vacant today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • No vacant positions in the past 12 months 		
35	How many positions were you unable to fill?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of positions 	Show If :(Q34 = 1)	
36	Within the past 12 months, have you had to fill any vacant positions with an individual who had lower qualifications than you wanted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		
37	For how many vacant positions did this happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of positions 	Show If :(Q36 = 1)	
38	<p>We are interested in learning more about staff turnover. Turnover refers to any time an individual either joins or leaves your staff.</p> <p>How many staff have been dismissed, left voluntarily or were hired in the past 12 months? Do not include new positions created at your child care workplace (e.g. changes in your license or by adding new programs). Do not include staff on temporary leave (sick or parental leave), we are only interested in position changes due to staff turnover. Enter 0 if there were no changes.</p> <p>Full-time staff</p>	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker • Supervisor • Child care worker - Manager • Administrative Director <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time staff • Dismissed • Left voluntarily • Hired 		

2020 Child Care Employer Survey For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
39	Part-time staff	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care worker • Supervisor • Child care worker - Manager • Administrative Director Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time staff • Dismissed • Left voluntarily • Hired 		

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
40	Please select up to three main reasons given by employees for leaving your child care workplace voluntarily?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfied with salary • Dissatisfied with benefits • Dissatisfied with workplace policies or procedures • Dissatisfied with hours of work • Dissatisfied with workload • Wanted full-time employment • Counseled to leave • Conflict with co-workers • Conflict with parents • Found job too stressful • Health reasons related to COVID-19 • Health reasons not related to COVID-19 • Other reasons related to COVID-19 • Parental leave • Family move • Own child care or other personal reasons • Accepted another job in child care elsewhere • Accepted another job not in child care • Wanted to own and operate their own child care • Returned to school • Retired • I don't know (exclusive) • Other, please specify: 		
INTRO	Wage Enhancement			
90	Has [Q7A] applied for this wage enhancement ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (Go to Q7g) • No (Go to next question) • I don't know (Go to Q7h) • Prefer not to answer (Go to Q7h) 		

2020 Child Care Employer Survey				
For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
91	Why have you not applied for the wage enhancement? [Allow multiple responses, except last item]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My workplace is not eligible • The information about who is eligible is not clear • The information on how to apply is not clear • The process is too complicated or takes too much time • There are no staff here who would qualify for the wage enhancement • I don't know [single response] • Prefer not to answer [single response] 	Show If :Q90 = 0	
92	How many staff in [Q7A] (including yourself) are currently receiving this wage enhancement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number 	Show If :Q90 = 1	
INTRO	Career Advancement			
107	In the past 12 months, has your child care workplace(s) engaged in the following:	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized staff with different levels of training by giving them different responsibilities • Recognized staff with higher levels of education and experience with higher wages • Provided an outline of career options within the child care centre (s) to its employees • Conducted performance reviews <p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know 		
INTRO	COVID-19			
DESC	The next set of questions will ask about how the pandemic impacted your operations and staff.			

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
C01	Did your child care program receive any of the following COVID-19 supports? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Temporary Emergency Funding (2 X CCOF while closed) •Temporary Emergency Funding (7 X CCOF while open) •Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy •Canada Emergency Business Account funds •Canada Emergency Fund for Rent Assistance funds •Other (please specify) 		
C02	Did any of your staff receive a hazard pay or wage top-up due to COVID-19?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No (skip to C05) 		
C03	Did you have remaining Temporary Emergency Funding funds that made this supplement possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 	Show if C01=1 or 2 & C02=1	
C04	Are they still receiving this wage supplement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
DESC	The following questions ask about your operations before the COVID-19 pandemic .			
C05	Did your child care program close completely (not accepting children on site or off site) at any point between November 2019 and March 11, 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
C06	In total, how long was your child care program closed between November 2019 and March 11, 2020?	Drop down (2 week intervals + still closed)	Show if: C05=1	
C23	On average, how many children were attending your program before the COVID-19 pandemic?	Write number here		
DESC	We would now like to know about your operations after the COVID-19 pandemic started . COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020.			

2020 Child Care Employer Survey				
For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
C07	Did your child care program close completely (not accepting children on site or off site) at any point after March 11, 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
C08	If your program re-opened, did it ever close again?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 	Show if C07=Yes Hide if: Q06 =still closed	
C09	In total, how long was your child care program closed at after March 11, 2020?	Drop down (2 week intervals + still closed)	Show if: C07=Yes	
C10	During the COVID-19 state of emergency... was your program serving children of essential workers (as defined by the provincial guidelines) only?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
C11	did your program prioritize care for children of essential workers ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
C12	did your program prioritize care for children with special needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes •No 		
C13	Why did you close your program the first time after the pandemic started? (Select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staffing difficulties such as not having enough staff willing and able to work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements e.g., ratios, distancing, cleaning • Lower enrolment/fewer children • Lack of reserve funds • The health and safety of children, families, and staff • Personal reasons not related to COVID-19 • Other (please specify) 	Show if: C07=Yes	

<p>2020 Child Care Employer Survey</p> <p>For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)</p>				
#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
C15	Why did your program close again after re-opening the first time? (Select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing difficulties such as rehiring, retaining, or attracting new staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements e.g., ratios, distancing, cleaning • Lower enrolment/fewer children • Lack of reserve funds • The health and safety of children, families, and staff • Personal reasons not related to COVID-19 • Other (please specify) 	Show if: C08=Yes	
C17	Did you have to lay off staff (temporarily or permanently) during the COVID-19 state of emergency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 		
C18	Did you have any staff who chose not to work during the COVID-19 state of emergency (due to health and safety concerns or other personal reasons)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 		
C19	How many of these staff were coded with each of the following on their Record of Employment (ROE)?	<p>Rows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A -Lack of Work • D -Illness • E -Voluntary termination • N -Leave <p>Column:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff 	Show if: C17 or C18 = Yes	

2020 Child Care Employer Survey		
For owner/operators of child care centres, preschools, and before-and-after school programs (Pathway B in 2019 Workforce Survey)		

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Post Answer Actions
C20	Which of the following problems are you currently facing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing difficulties such as not rehiring, retaining, or attracting new staff • Higher costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements e.g., maintaining ratios, distancing, cleaning • Lower enrolment/fewer children • Return to pre-COVID funding • Lack of reserve funds • Other (please specify) 	Hide if: Child care is closed	
C21	How many children are attending your program now?	Write number here	Hide if: Child care is closed	
C22	Please describe any changes that were implemented in your child care program to support staff since the COVID-19 pandemic started? Changes could include: flexible work hours, allowing remote work, increasing benefits/sick leave, etc.	Open Ended	Hide if: Child care is closed and not planning to re-open	
C23	Why is your child care program not re-opening?	Open Ended	Show if: Child care is closed and not planning to re-open	
C24	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS Thank you for participating in this survey.			
C25	If you have any questions, concerns or additional points you would like to raise, please write them below:	Open Ended		

APPENDIX B: B.C. CHILD CARE WORKFORCE SURVEY (FINAL UPDATED DRAFT)

Key

A	Individuals working directly with children not in the child's home
B	Individuals with supervisor roles in child care centres, preschool, or after school programs
C	Individuals working as substitutes or casuals
D	Individuals working at the child's home
E	ECE/ECEAs not working in child care
F	Family care, RLNR, NLNR
G	Owner operators of child care centre, preschool or after school programs

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
1	Which best describes your current work situation?	(1) I work in a licensed child care centre, preschool or after school program [Go to Q9] (2) I provide child care in my home [Go to Q2] [Determines Pathway F] (3) I provide child care in the child's home [Determines Pathway D] (4) I am a certified Early Childhood Educator or Early Childhood Educator Assistant not currently working in a workplace that provides child care services [Determines Pathway E] (5) None of the above [Terminate Survey with expression of thanks]		A B C D E F G
2	Which best describes your family child care workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensed family child care • Registered license not required • Non-registered license not required 	Show If :Q1 = 2	F
Q194	Are you still working at [2019EMP]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Show to 2019 respondents only	A B F G
Q10	Is [ORG] where you work the most hours per week?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Show only if ORG is not empty (ORG=uniqueID sent to employers)	A B F G
DESC2	[If Q3>1] We would like to hear about your experience in the child care workplace where you work the most hours per week.		Show If :(Q9 != 1 and Q1 != 0) or Q6 = 2) Hide If :Q1 = 0	A B C

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
COMPL	What is the name of the child care workplace where you work? Start typing and child care names will show up. If the name of your workplace does not appear below, please type and select "Other".	Auto complete: Child Cares	Hide If :Q6 = 1	
12	What is the name of your child care?	Text - Equivalent to Q7	Show If :Q1 = 2	F
DESC3	The rest of the questions ask about [Piped text] and your work there.			A B C F G
14	In your current position, which of the following apply to you? (select all that apply)	(1) I work directly with children (3) I supervise or manage staff who work directly with children (6) I am an owner, operator, or director (5) I have regular administrative duties in my program (such as hiring, payroll, licensee applications, etc.) (7) None of the above apply to me [Terminate Survey with expression of thanks]	Show if Q1=1	A B C G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
15	[Only if working with children] Is your current main work as either on-call substitute or as casual staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes [Determines Pathway C] • No • Prefer not to answer 	Show if Q14=1	A B C
	As far as you are aware..			F
20	are there children attending your child care workplace that fall into any of the following categories? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an identified special need • Have neither English nor French spoken at home • Are new immigrants or refugees • Are Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit or Metis • None of the children attending into any of these categories • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :(Q1 = 0 or Q14 != 1)	F

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
21	What languages (other than English) do the children attending your child care use at home? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French • Malayalam • Indigenous language • Mandarin • American sign language • Polish • Afrikaans • Arabic • Punjabi • Cantonese • Russian • Dutch • Somali • Farsi • Spanish • German • Tagalog • Hindi • Urdu • Italian • Vietnamese • Japanese • All children speak only English • Other: • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :(Q1 = 0 or Q14 != 1)	F
NTRO3	About [Piped Text: Name of Workplace]			A B C F G
17	Which program(s) do you work in at [Q7A]? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group care, under 3 years old • Group care 2.5 years old to school age • Group care- school age (before-and-after school program) • Preschool - 2.5 years old to school age • Multi-age • Occasional care • All of the above • Other (please specify) • I don't know 	Show if Q14=1 (work directly with children)	A B C G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
19	Which of the following describe this child care workplace? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private business (home-based or not) • A not-for-profit • Operated directly by a school, municipal, post-secondary institution, • Operated by a provincial or federal agency • Operated directly by a First Nations or Indigenous community or organization (e.g., Aboriginal Head Start) • Other (please specify) • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show if Q1=1	A B C G
Q195	Has your job position at [Piped] changed since November 2019?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Show to 2019 respondents only	
INTEO	About Your Job at [Q7A] The next set of questions ask about your current position.		BLOCK SKIP PATTERN: Hide If: Q4=1	A B C F G
41	In what year did you start working for pay in your current workplace?	Years		A B F G
42	What is your current job title?	Text		A B E G
43	In what year did you start working as a [Q42] at [Q7A]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Years 		A B G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
44	Is your current job permanent or temporary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent • Temporary (e.g., leave replacement) • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B G
45	In your current job, are you a member of a union?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B G
46	Does your work with children usually count in the staff-to-child ratio for your workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, usually • Yes, some of the time • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Q14=1	A B C F G
47	As far as you are aware, do any of the children you work with directly fall into the following categories? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an identified special need • Have neither English nor French spoken at home • Are new immigrants or refugees • Are First Nations, Inuit or Metis • None of the children I work with fall into any of these categories • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :(Q14 = 1) work directly with children	A B C G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C07	Now, we would like to know about your employment before the COVID-19 pandemic. Did you experience any of the following between November 2019 and March 11th, 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Temporary layoff or furlough •Permanent layoff •Worked reduced hours •Left employment by choice •None of the above 		A B C
DESC	During this period, for how many weeks were you:		Show if: C07=1 or 3	A B C
C07A	Temporarily laid-off or furloughed? (select all that apply)	Drop down: 2 weeks interval	Show if C07=1	A B C
C07B	Working reduced hours?	Drop down: 2 weeks interval	Show if C07=3	A B C
C08	Now, we would like to ask about your employment in the COVID-19 era. Did you experience any of the following after March 11th, 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Temporary layoff or furlough •Permanent layoff •Worked reduced hours •Left employment by choice •None of the above 		A B C
DESC	During this period, for how many weeks were you:		Show if: C07=1 or 3	A B C

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C08A	Temporarily laid-off or furloughed? (select all that apply)	Drop down: 2 weeks interval	Show if C07=1	A B C
C08B	Working reduced hours?	Drop down: 2 weeks interval	Show if C07=3	A B C
C09	How was your Record of Employment Coded when you left your employment by choice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A- Lack of work • D- Illness • E -Voluntary termination • N- Leave • I don't know 	Show if C08=4 (Left employment by choice)	A B C
DESC	COVID19 The next set of questions will ask about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted your workplace.		Skip if owner operator	
C01	Did your child care program close completely (not accepting children on site or off site) at any point before the COVID-19 pandemic (between November 2019 and March 11 2020)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Skip if owner operator	A B C F

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C02	In total, for how long was your child care program closed during this period?	Drop down (2 week intervals + still closed)	Skip if owner operator	A B C F
C03	Did your child care program close completely (not accepting children on site or off site) at any point after March 11, 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Skip if owner operator	A B C F
C04	If your program re-opened, did it ever closed again?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Skip if owner operator	A B C F
C05	In total, for how long was your child care program closed after March 11, 2020?	Drop down (2 week intervals + still closed)	Skip if owner operator	A B C F
C06	Were any of these closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Skip if owner operator	A B C F

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C16	How satisfied were you with the following during the COVID-19 state of emergency?	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Only for non-operators in licensed workplaces)The information you received from your employer to decide whether you should continue working or return to work • (Owner-operators and home-based providers)The information you received from the Government of BC to decide whether you should continue operating or resume operations •(Only for non-operators in licensed workplaces) Having the option to choose whether to work or return to work • (Only for non-operators in licensed workplaces) The health and safety guidelines provided by your employer • The health and safety guidelines provided by the Government of BC for the early care and learning sector • The training opportunities available to you about how to implement or follow COVID-19 health and safety protocols • (Only for non-operators in licensed workplaces) The personal protection equipment provided to you at work <p>Columns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very dissatisfied • Dissatisfied • Satisfied • Very satisfied • N/A 		A B D F

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C13	How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your child care work this year?	Open ended		A B C D F
NTRO4	Job Satisfaction The next set of questions are about your satisfaction with your job or employment situation. Please remember your answers are confidential.		Block skip pattern: Hide If: Q4= 1	A B C D E F G
48	Please select up to three main reasons why you are not working in child care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not able to find a job in child care • Health reasons related to COVID-19 • Health reasons not related to COVID-19 • Other reasons related to COVID-19 • Taking a break to further studies • Other personal reasons • Dissatisfied with pay in child care • Dissatisfied with benefits in child care • Dissatisfied with career advancement opportunities in child care • Dissatisfied with working conditions in child care • Preference for other occupation • Other (please specify) • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q1 = 4	E
50	What is the main reason you are working as a substitute or casual employee?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want time flexibility • Enjoy working in different workplaces • Could not find permanent employment • Other (please specify) 	Show If :(Q15 = 1 and Q1 = 1)	C

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C14	Compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, did the amount of hours you work each month...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Stayed the same Decreased 		C
C15	Please explain why the amount of hours you work each month has changed.	Open Ended	Show if amount of hours worked increased or decreased	C
51	How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your child care workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical indoor space Physical outdoor space Resources or equipment for children Philosophy of child care workplace Philosophy of organization 		A B G
51	How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours of work Opportunities for advancement available to you Overall workload Opportunities for input into decision-making Opportunities for ongoing professional learning Relationships with centre management Relationships with your co-workers Relationships with families you work with Job security Job overall 		A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
52	Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement(s) about your current compensation and benefits in child care	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am satisfied with the income that I receive for my work • [Hide for owner-operators] I am satisfied with the benefits I receive <p>Columns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly disagree • Disagree • Agree • Strongly Agree • Does not apply 		A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
53	How often do the following statements reflect how you feel about your work?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work I do is stimulating and challenging • I feel physically exhausted at the end of the day • My work gives me a sense of accomplishment • There is too little time to do all that needs to be done • My work is important • Workplace policies and procedures are well-defined (not for family, LNR, etc) • I feel frustrated by this job • I have reasonable control over most things that affect my job satisfaction • My job makes good use of my skills and abilities • I am able to respond to my personal or family needs Columns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Rarely • Sometimes • Often • Always 		A B C D F G
54	Are you currently looking for a job?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	Show If :Q1 = 4	D E

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
55	Are you currently looking for a different job, at your current workplace or elsewhere?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes [Go to Q46] • No [Go to Q49] • I don't know [Go to Q49] • Prefer not to answer [Go to Q49] 		A B C F G
56	Please select up to three reasons why you are looking for a job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career advancement • Looking for higher pay • Looking for better benefits • Planning to move somewhere else • Want to work with a different age group • Dissatisfied with the current work environment • [Show only for A, B, C, G] Want an early childhood education related job that is not in centre-based child care • [Show only for F and D] Want an early childhood education related job that is not home-based • Want a job that is not related to early childhood education • Want to work more hours • Termination or layoff • Other. (please specify): • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q55 = 1	A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
57	What type of job are you looking for? (select all that apply)	(only for those who are permanent, not for E) A similar job (only for those who are not permanent, not for E) A similar job that is permanent (only for those in E) A job in child care A child care job with higher seniority I plan to open my own child care workplace A non-child care job in an education institution (school, university, etc.) A non-child care job elsewhere Other (please specify) I don't know Prefer not to answer	Show If :(Q55 = 1 or Q54 = 1)	A B C D E F G
58	Are you looking for a job in your current workplace or elsewhere? (select all that apply)	My current workplace Elsewhere, in an education institution Somewhere else I don't know Prefer not to answer	Show If :((Q57 = 1 or (Q57 = 2 or Q57 = 4)) and Q1 != 2)	A B C D G
NTRO5	About your Wages and Benefits at [Q7A] The following questions are about your wages and benefits. Your answers are confidential and will not be used to identify you or your workplace. They help us understand changes in how the child care workforce is compensated across the province.			A B C D F G
C17	Did you receive hazard pay (top-up due to COVID-19) at any point since March 2020?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show if Q1=1 & Q14!=owner operator	A B

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C18	Are you still receiving this hazard pay?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B
C19	Do you have a fixed salary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B G
59	On average, how many regular hours do you work each week in your job at [Q7A]? Do not include overtime.	Number of hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Skip if salaried	A B
62	What is your hourly wage rate, before deductions and taxes? Include wage enhancements if applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Skip if salaried	A B C
64	We would like to know your income from your work in child care before deductions and taxes. Which would be easier for you to report?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly income • Annual income • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show if salaried	A B

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
66	We would like to know your income (after deducting expenses associated with running your child care) from your work in child care before deductions and taxes. Which would be easier for you to report?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly income • Annual income • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show to owner operators, F, and D	D F G
67	What is your [Q66] before deductions and taxes?	Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show if (Q1=2 or 3)	D F
68	Which of the following benefits are paid by [Q7A] (at least in part) in your current job? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended Health Care (Coverage for expenses and services not covered by the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP)) • Dental coverage • Life insurance • Short-term Disability (payment for illness, accident for first 17 weeks) • Long-term Disability (payment for illness, accident after 17 weeks) • Paid sick days • Retirement/ Pension plan • Flexible spending account/Health spending account • None of the above • I don't know 	Show if Q1=1 & Q14!=4	A B

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
69	Which of the following additional benefits are available through [Q7A] in your current job? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid breaks • Paid overtime • Time in lieu for overtime • Paid staff meetings that occur outside regular work hours • Financial assistance for ECE-related training, conferences or workshops • Financial assistance for courses or post-basic training • Paid release time to for training, conferences or workshops • Reduced child care fees • Paid documentation time • Paid programming and prep time • Other (please specify) • I don't know • None of the above 	Show if Q1=1 & Q14!=4	A B

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
70	Please indicate whether the benefits you receive have changed within the past 12 months. Don't include changes in benefits that were due to changes in your level of seniority.	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended health care (medications, vision, medical supplies) • Dental care • Paid sick leave more than 6 days per year • Paid vacation of more than 2 weeks per year • Pension or RRSP contributions • Paid overtime • Free professional development Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not provided to me • Removed or decreased • Stayed the same • Added or increased • I don't know 	Show if Q1=1& Q14!=4	A B
NTRO6	About Your Education and Credentials The next set of questions will ask you about your education and credentials related to child care.			A B C D E F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
71	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than high school • High school • Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma • College, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma • University certificate, diploma or degree • Masters or PhD • I don't know • I prefer not to answer 		A B C D E F G
72	Is your highest level of completed education from a program that prepares individuals to provide child care services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • I prefer not to answer 		A B C D E F G
73	What is your highest level of completed education for any program that prepares individuals to provide child care services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate or diploma • University certificate, diploma or degree or above • Neither of the above • I don't know • I prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q72 != 1	A B C D E F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
74	Which early childhood certification do you have? (please select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Educator Assistant [Go to Q65] • Early Childhood Educator (1 year) [Go to Q65] • Early Childhood Educator (5 year) [Go to Q65] • Infant and Toddler Educator [Go to Q65] • Special Needs Educator [Go to Q65] • I do not have certification but am qualified as a Responsible Adult [Go to Q66] • None of the above [Go to Q66] • I don't know [Go to Q66] • I prefer not to answer [Go to Q66] 		A B C D E F G
75	Please provide the year when you initially became certified and the place where you obtained training for this certification. (ask for each certification from previous question)	Year of initial certification Place where requirements were completed (drop down list: British Columbia Alberta Manitoba New Brunswick Newfoundland and Labrador Northwest Territories Nova Scotia Nunavut Ontario Prince Edward Island Quebec Saskatchewan Yukon Other, please specify)	Show If :Q74 != 7	A B C D E F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
76	Are you currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Prefer not to answer 		A B C D E F G
77	What post-secondary credential are you working towards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate • Diploma • Post-basic certificate • Degree • Other (please specify) • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q76 = 1	A B C D E F G
78	What is the field of study?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Educator (ECE) • Other (please specify) • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q76 = 1	A B C D E F G
79	[Only ask if not certified] Do you plan on becoming a certified Early Childhood Educator (ECE)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes [Go to Q71] • No [Go to Q70] • I don't know [Go to Q70] • Prefer not to answer [Go to Q70] 	Show If :((Q74 != 1 and Q74 != 2) and Q74 != 3) Hide If :Q1 = 4	A B C D F G
80	What is the main reasons why you do not plan to become a certified ECE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not interested • I cannot take time off work for the training • I plan to not work in child care anymore • Tuition is too expensive • Classes are not available in my community • It is not required for my job • My wages would not change • Other (please specify) <p>[Go to About your Career and Skills section]</p>	Show If :Q79 = 0 Hide If :Q1 = 4	A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
81	What is the main reason you plan to become a certified ECE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career advancement • To have a higher pay • It is required for my job • It is required for a job in another workplace I am interested in • I will have a more fulfilling job • Other (please specify) 	Show If :Q79 = 1 Hide If :Q1 = 4	A B C D F G
INTRO7	About Your Career and Skills The next set of questions will ask you about your career and skills specific to child care.			A B C D E F G
82	How many years have you worked for pay in child care (in Canada or elsewhere)? Please only count years in workplaces that provide child care services.	Number of years	Skip if 2019 respondent	A B C D E F G
84	Do you expect to be working in your current position at [Q7A] 1 year from now? (Examples of positions include child care worker assistant, child care worker, supervisor, manager or director).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show if Q1=1 & not substitutes OR Q2=1	A B F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
85	Do you expect to be working in child care 1 year from now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q84 != 1	A B C D E F G
86	Please rate your agreement with the following statements about your child care work.	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I consider working in child care as my chosen profession • My current job is a step on my way to work in another field • I think of the job I am doing now as a temporary job until I find something better <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly disagree • Disagree • Agree • Strongly agree 		A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
87	[Only ask of those who work directly with children] How would you rate your skills in the following areas? Please remember your answers are confidential and will not be used to identify you or your workplace.	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrating cultural sensitivity in your daily interactions • respecting diversity in your daily interactions • developing caring relationships with the children in your care • communicating effectively with children • communicating effectively with children's families • taking children's stage of development into account when planning activities • creating environments that are inclusive for children with special needs Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor • Weak • Average • Above Average • Excellent • Not applicable 	Show If :(Q14 = 1 or (Q1 = 2 and Q2 = 1))	A B C D F G
NTRO8	Perception of Early Childhood Education			A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
88	Please rate your agreement with the following statements.	<p>Rows in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would recommend working in child care as a good career option to someone making a career choice • My work in child care is valued by my family • [Hide if Q7=Not empty] My work in child care is valued by the families of children at my child care workplace • [Hide if Q7=Empty] My work in child care is valued by the families of children at my child care organization • My work in child care is valued by my friends • Child care work is valued by the public • I feel comfortable telling new people I meet that I work in child care <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly disagree • Disagree • Agree • Strongly agree 		A B C D F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
C20	To what extent do you agree with the following statements of how public perceptions of child care work have changed over the past year?	Rows in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public are now more aware of the role child care workers play in the economy The public are now more aware of the role child care workers play in children's development Columns in table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree 		A B C D F G
C21	Compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, do you think the number of people who value the work done by child care workers...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Is the same Decreased 		A B C D F G
NTRO9	Wage enhancement In 2019, the BC government introduced a wage enhancement of \$1 per hour for early childhood educators (ECEs) working directly with children in eligible licensed child care workplaces. An additional \$1 per hour was implemented in April 1st, 2020.			A B C F G
89	Before being involved in this survey, were you aware of this wage enhancement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No I don't know Prefer not to answer 		A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
93	Are you currently receiving this wage enhancement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (Go to Q 79d) • No (Go to Q79h) • I don't know (Go to Q79h) • Prefer not to answer (Go to Q79h) 		A B C F G
95	Please rate your agreement with the following statements about the wage enhancement program.	<p>Rows in table: (Hide if not G) It helps my workplace attract ECEs (Hide if not G) It helps my workplace retain ECEs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The eligibility criteria are fair • The dollar amount to date is a good start • The dollar amount to date is not enough • It will encourage people to choose a career in child care • It helps child care workers feel valued <p>Columns in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly disagree • Disagree • Agree • Strongly agree • I don't know 		A B C F G
NTRO10	<p>Workforce Development Bursaries</p> <p>In 2019, the BC government introduced the ECE Workforce Development Bursary which provides funding of up to \$5,000 per semester to help existing child care workers with costs associated with continuing education and training.</p>			A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
96	Before this survey, were you aware of the ECE Workforce Development Bursary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B C F G
97	In the past 12 months, have you applied for the ECE Workforce Development Bursary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Not yet, but I plan to in the future • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B C F G
98	Why have you not applied for the bursary? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was not aware of it • I already have all the qualifications I need • I am not interested in updating my credentials • I don't have the time to upgrade my credentials at this time • The courses I need to upgrade my credentials are not available to me • I do not qualify • Other (please specify) • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q97 = 0	A B C F G
NTRO1	<p>Professional development</p> <p>The Government of BC is investing \$6.3 million to create a professional development fund to expand opportunities for child care workers. The next set of questions will ask you about your professional development activities. Professional development includes training or educational activities intended to expand your knowledge and skills in child care. Your answers help us understand the professional development needs in child care.</p>			A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
99	In the past 12 months, have you engaged in any professional development activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 		A B C F G
100	Please tell us the approximate number of hours of these activities in the past 12 months.	Number of hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G
C22	How many of these hours were for activities related to COVID-19 health and safety protocols and guidelines?	Number of hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G
101	Did you receive any subsidy, financial support or grant to take part in any professional development within the past 12 months? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, from my employer • Yes, I received the Professional Development Bursary from ECEBC/the provincial government • Yes, it was subsidized by other organizations (please specify) • The event was free • No, I had to pay for it • I don't know • Prefer not to answer <p>[Go to Q88]</p>	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
102	Select up to three main reasons why you have not attended any professional development activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information about professional development opportunities • Lack of time, general • Could not get time off work • Not interested in what was offered • Cost • Conflict with time to spend with my family • Lack of transportation • Lack of opportunities where I live • I don't need any professional development • I don't plan to continue working in child care • I was registered in an activity that was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic • Other: •I don't know •Prefer not to answer <p>[Go to Tactic: Career Pathway section]</p>	Show If :Q99 = 0	A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
103	Who provided the professional development activity that you took in the past 12 months?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My employer • Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) • ECEBC • The Canadian Child Care Federation • BC Aboriginal Child Care Society • A post-secondary institution • A school-district • Learn Now BC • Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program • Other (please specify) _____ • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G
104	How did you participate in this professional development? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person • Online • Other (please specify) • I don't know • Prefer not to answer 	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
105	What topics did the development activities that you attended within the past 12 months address? Please select all that apply. [allow multiple responses]	Abuse, touching and bullying Administration & business Advocacy for children and families Child care policy Child growth & development Child health, safety & nutrition Child mental health Covid-19 and personal health protection Covid-19 health and safety for children and families Curriculum or program development Family support Gender identity Immigration, Refugee, or English-language learner needs Indigenous, First Nations Infant/toddler care Interpersonal communication Leadership Managing child behaviour Outdoor play: Nature as a teacher Outdoor play: Planning and benefits of outdoor activities Personal stress management & work-life balance Professional ethics & practice Special Needs Trauma informed practice • Other: _____ • I don't know • Prefer not to answer	Show If :Q99 = 1	A B C F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
NTRO1	Career pathway The following section asks about career growth opportunities in child care.			A B C F G
106	Please rate your agreement with the following statement	There are a variety of opportunities for career growth and development within the early care and learning sector in British Columbia	Hide If :Q4 = 1	A B C F G
NTRO1	About You You are nearly finished! This last handful of questions tell us whom we have heard from in this survey.			A B C D E F G
108	What is your year of birth?	[Choice from auto-calendar]		A B C D E F G
Q16_2	Where in BC do you live? Start typing and select the actual or closest municipality or town from the list of names that will appear below. If you can't find your municipality please type and select "Other".	Autocomplete: Municipalities	Show If :(Q16 Is Empty and Q16_3 Is Empty)	

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
109	What is your gender identity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman • Man • Non-binary • Prefer to self-identify: • Prefer not to answer 		A B C D E F G
110	Do any of the following apply to you? (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I identify as Indigenous, First Nation, Metis or Inuit • I was born outside of Canada • I identified as a person with a disability • None of the above • Prefer not to answer 		A B C D E F G
112	If you have any questions, concerns or additional points you would like to raise, please write them below:	Text		A B C D E F G
	EXIT			

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
1	Thank you for participating! Your responses are very important to this evaluation. SRDC would like to get in touch one or two more times over the next three years to see how things are changing for you. Would you like to receive a direct invitation from SRDC in the future?	(1) Yes (2) No		A B C D E F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
PD_GR	We appreciate and value the time you have spent answering this survey. As a symbol of our appreciation, we have made a number of professional development activities free for survey respondents. You are welcome to select one. Note: All webinars will be held from 7-8:30pm on the date listed.	<p>Option 1: Live Zoom webinar "Moving beyond 'tolerance and inclusion' to 'anti biased and anti racist' approaches in early years" offered by Anna Valle Rivera, November 26th 2020.</p> <p>Option2: Live Zoom webinar "Perspectives of COVID19 -Partnerships with Families" offered by Charlene Gray (Senior Manager of the Comox Valley Children' Day Care Society) and Jacky Hughes (Manager of Child Care Services at Britannia Community Child Care Services), January 14th 2021.</p> <p>Option 3: Live Zoom webinar "Going beyond four walls" offered by Enid Elliot, Instructor at Camosun College, January 13th, 2020.</p> <p>Option 4: Live Zoom webinar "Collaborating with Infants and Toddlers" offered by Enid Elliot, Instructor at Camosun College, December 9th 2020.</p> <p>Option 5: Online self-paced program 'Your words matter. Building children's resilience and perseverance through growth mindset language'</p> <p>I do not want a thank you gift</p>	Show If :GIFTS= 2	A B C D E F G
EMAIL	Would you also like to be entered into a draw for a \$500 Wintergreen Learning Materials gift card?	Yes No		A B C D E F G

2020 BC Child Care Workforce Survey

For anyone working in early care and learning in BC and ECEs/ECEAs no longer working in child care

#	Question	Options	Skip Pattern	Respondent Group
PHONE	Please enter your e- mail address. SRDC will only use your e- mail to make sure you receive your thank you gift and for the purposes you have consented to in this survey.	Email	Show only if agreed to future contact or selected a thank you gift	A B C D E F G
THANKS	You will now be redirected to the registration page for your webinar		Show only if selected a thank you gift	

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Career-Related	Career Pathway	A progression of educational qualifications, credentials and training that build upon one another and enable members of the ECL workforce to advance in their careers. Career pathways can be flexible, with multiple entry and exit points, to allow the ECL workforce, made up of diverse learners and non-traditional students, to acquire the necessary career-related skills and knowledge.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Career-Related	Certification (Staff)	The process by which an individual or institution attests to or is shown to have met a prescribed standard or set of standards.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Career-Related	Credentials	Academic degrees, licenses or certificates awarded to individuals who successfully complete state or national requirements to enter specialized roles in the ECL workforce.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Career-Related	ECL workforce; Members of the ECL workforce	The broad range of individuals engaged in the care and education of young children. Members of the ECL workforce may include teachers, caregivers, and administrative staff, as well as consultants, learning specialists, and others that provide training and Technical Assistance to programs.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Career-Related	Professional Development (PD)	Refers to a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with, and on behalf of, young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. Professional development encompasses education, training, and Technical Assistance (TA), which leads to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of members of the ECL workforce.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Career-Related	Retention (Staff)	Refers to the ability of programs to retain their employees over time.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Before or After School Program	Licensed Care provided to school age (Kindergarten and up) children in a community-based facility or centre. Also applied to programs that are educational in nature and/or less than 2 hours in duration.	BC Government Website ³¹
Types of Child Care Programs	Centre-Based Child Care	Child care provided in non-residential group settings, such as within public or private schools, churches, preschools, day care centers, or nursery schools.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	Culturally-Based Care (see also: Indigenous early learning, child development and child care)	At its core, the child care program honours and promotes culture and language and connections to the child's origins.	Child Care BC Report
Types of Child Care Programs	Home-Based Child Care	Child care provided for one or more unrelated children in a provider's home setting/personal residence – may be licensed/license-not-required, paid/unpaid, listed / unlisted. In a licensed home-based child care centre, licensee is a responsible adult and personally provides care, within the licensee's personal residence, to no more than 7 children.	StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements; Child Care & Early Education Research Connections; BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Child Care Programs	In-Child's-Own-Home	Unlicensed care when parents arrange for child care within their own home (e.g., nanny, babysitter). Children from other families cannot be included in this arrangement and the care provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home. There are no legal requirements for monitoring this type of care and no specific qualifications for the care provider are required.	BC Government Website ³²

³¹ [Understand the Different Types of Child Care in B.C. – Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

³² [Understand the Different Types of Child Care in B.C. – Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Indigenous Early Learning, Child Development and Child Care (IEL/ CD/CC)	Supporting Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and governance; Indigenous communities and leaders determine how to deliver ECL in a way that meets the needs of Indigenous families; Indigenous communities develop high quality, culturally respectful, spiritually enriching, community ECL services that are based in the child's culture, language and history.	BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
Types of Child Care Programs	Informal Child Care	A term used to describe child care provided by relatives, friends, and neighbors in the child's own home or in another home, often in unregulated settings.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	License-not-Required Child Care (see also: Registered License-Not-Required Child Care; Unlicensed Child Care)	Providers can care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them. Can operate legally in BC. Not registered or licensed, thus not monitored or inspected, do not have to meet standards for health and safety.	BC Government Website ³³
Types of Child Care Programs	Licensed Child Care	Child care programs operated in homes or in facilities that fall within the regulatory system and must comply with specific requirements for health and safety, staffing qualifications, record keeping, space and equipment, child-to-staff ratios, and programming. Monitored and regularly inspected by regional health authorities.	BC Government Website; StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements
Types of Child Care Programs	Non-traditional Hour Child Care	Child care provided during non-traditional work hours such as over weekends or before 6am or after 7pm, Monday-Friday.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	Occasional Child Care	A program that provides care on an occasional or short-term basis	BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Child Care Programs	On-Site Child Care	Child care programs that occur in facilities where parents/family members are on the premises, such as on school campuses or in employment/job settings.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections

³³ [Understand the Different Types of Child Care in B.C. – Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Child Care Programs	Preschool	Licensed programs that provide early education and care to children before they enter kindergarten, typically from ages 2.5-5 years. Preschools may be publicly or privately operated and may receive public funds.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections; BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Child Care Programs	Registered License-Not-Required Child Care	Providers do not require a license but are registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre. 1 responsible adult per 2 children (or sibling group) who are not related to the provider. Setting is the child care provider's own home. To become licensed, operators must have completed criminal record checks, character references, home safety assessment, first aid training, child care training course or workshops.	BC Government Website
Types of Child Care Programs	Relative Child Care	Child care provided by extended family members either in the child's home or at a relative's home.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	School-Based Child Care	Child care programs that occur in school facilities.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Child Care Programs	Unlicensed Child Care	Child care programs that have not been licensed by the regulator. The term often refers a program that can legally operate without a license as well as a program that illegally operates without a license.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Types of Providers	Child Care Operator	The person running the child care facility. In Centre-based care this role can be termed a director and in some circumstances (such as for-profit centres) is also the owner.	BC Government Website
Types of Providers	Child Care Provider	An organization or individual legally responsible for operating ECL services. The provider is the entity that applies for the licence(s) and/or funding for facilities.	Child Care & Early Education Research Connections

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Providers	Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA)	Graduates from an approved education program can work as an Early Childhood Assistant once they receive a certificate from the ECE Registry in the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Can then work with young children in an early childhood setting under the supervision of a qualified Early Childhood Educator.	University of BC
Types of Providers	Early Childhood Educator (ECE)	Often used in the literature interchangeably with employees, staff, child care workers, front-line ECEs. But to be qualified to work as an early childhood educator (ECE) in BC, you are required to complete a basic early childhood education training program from an approved training institution. Graduates from an approved training program can work as an early childhood educator or assistant once they apply to receive a certificate from the provincial government (see ECE certification below).	BC Government Website – Education/training
Types of Providers	Licensee	A licensee is a person, an organization, a company, or a partnership that has applied for and been granted a license to operate a community care facility in BC. A license is not transferable from one person to another or one facility to another. Any changes to a licensed facility, such as moving to a new location, changing managers, or making physical renovations, must be discussed with a licensing officer.	BC Government Fact Sheet; BC Child Care Licensing Regulation
Types of Providers	Manager	Delegated full authority to operate the child care centre. Licensee must examine manager's work history and copies of diplomas, certificates, other evidence of training and skills. Manager must be physically and psychologically capable of working with children.	Interior Health
Types of Providers	Qualified Care Provider; Provider	The legal entity running the child care facility. See also Child Care Operator above.	StatsCan Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements; Child Care BC Report
Types of Providers	Responsible Adult	A responsible adult is a person who is at least 19 years of age, has completed at least 20 hours of training, has experience working with children, and can provide care and mature guidance to children.	BC Government Fact Sheet

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Types of Providers	Centre ECL worker	A person who has primary responsibility for a group of children for child care provided in non-residential group settings, such as within public or private schools, churches, preschools, day care centers, or nursery schools. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA or ECE.	Report terminology
Types of Providers	Home Care Provider (HCP)	SRDC's cross-sectional survey definition of HCP, which denotes Home-Based Child Care (above). This group includes family child care providers, LNRs, RLNRs and nannies, but very few nannies responded to SRDC's survey.	Report terminology
Types of Providers	Owner-operators	A person who is an owner-operator, director or manager of a licensed child care centre, preschool or after school program. This person may or may not work directly with children.	Report terminology
Type of ECE certification	ECE (1 year)	Certification for early childhood educators without 500 hours of supervised work experience. Requires proof of graduation from a recognized basic and/or post-basic ECE program. The One-Year ECE Certificate allows a person to act in the position of a fully-certified ECE while working towards their 500 hours and it can only be renewed once.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of ECE certification	ECE (5 year)	Certification for early childhood educator with proof of graduation from a basic ECE program recognized in B.C. and 500 hours of work experience under the supervision of a Canadian-certified ECE	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of ECE certification	Infant Toddler Educator	Certification for early childhood educators with an ECE (5 year) certificate and proof of graduation from a recognized ECE program recognized in B.C. with Infant and Toddler specific courses.	BC Government Website – Education/training
Type of ECE certification	Special Needs Educator	Certification for early childhood educators with an ECE (5 year) certificate and proof of graduation from a recognized ECE program recognized in B.C. with Special Needs specific courses.	BC Government Website – Education/training

Category	Term	Definition	Source
Type of position	Child care or ECL worker	A person who has primary responsibility for a group of children in a centre. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA or ECE. Not a supervisor, manager, or director.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Supervisor	A person who has responsibility for a group of children and also has supervisory responsibility for child care workers. This person can be a Responsible Adult, ECEA, or ECE.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Child care worker – Manager	A person with management duties (which can include hiring, payroll, performance reviews, compliance with licensing requirements, etc.). This person has administrative duties and may have child care duties.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition
Type of position	Administrative – Director	Refers to a person who has administrative duties only.	Child care workforce cross-sectional survey definition

APPENDIX D: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

SRDC developed the evaluation framework based on the Theory of Change and the potential impact pathways, which were also reviewed with the Sector Steering Committee. The evaluation framework follows careful consideration of the long-term goals of the ECL R&R Strategy with respect to BC's child care workforce development, as well as the outcomes anticipated from implementation of its many tactics.

By considering each element of each goal and outcome separately, SRDC can hypothesize changes that could be expected as a consequence of successful implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy's tactics. SRDC has further proposed lines of evidence (termed 'key performance indicators' or KPIs for short): data that can be collected systematically over time to determine whether the ECL R&R Strategy is on track to achieving each specific long-term goal as well as the expected outcomes over the next three years. Baseline measures of outcomes for the current evaluation (denoted by the term 'benchmark') serve double duty as baseline measures (benchmarks) for the evaluation of long-term (10 year) goals also.

The Evaluation Framework shows the five Key Evaluation Questions, the implementation tactics, Key Performance Indicators, and the data collection methods and time frames needed to address the Key Evaluation Questions.

The column headed Key Performance Indicators lists the actual measures that will be used to indicate change in the outcomes. Data collection instruments and later analysis generates evidence on the status of each of these indicators over time, from the outset of the evaluation to its completion. For example, the first KPI for the first Key Evaluation Question is the "Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs" This requires data collection on the number of ECL workforce members with credentials such as ECE and ECEA as well as the overall needs for ECL workers in the province with disaggregation by region and Indigenous communities. Proposed data collection methods require reviews of administrative databases such as the ECE registry and centre licensing, as well as a survey of operators about their employees and their unmet workforce needs. The final column describes the timing for data collection and reporting.

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
1. Over the three years of the evaluation, do recruitment strategies achieve the outcome of an adequate supply of ECEs and other child care staff entering the workforce?	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions aiming to graduate 620 more ECEs</p> <p>Bursaries: Funding through the ECE Bursary Program is increased to \$500 per course, 60% of which is paid upon proof of registration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce	Annually
	Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database	Annually		
	Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project		
	Public Opinion Survey	Twice (2019 and 2022)		
	Social and News Media Monitoring	Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project		

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>2. Over the three years of the evaluation, do retention strategies support the long-term engagement of ECEs and others in the workforce, to help keep them in the profession?</p>	<p>Compensation: At eligible facilities, a \$1/hr wage enhancement starting in early 2019, retroactive to Sept 1, 2018. A second increase of \$1/hr effective April 1, 2020</p> <p>Work-based Education and Training: A pilot project to provide more options and flexibility to workers who have considerable experience to upgrade their qualifications</p> <p>Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECL worker satisfaction and perception of appropriateness of compensation ▪ Average real wages and salaries of ECL workers ▪ Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Employment stability of ECL workforce, including variances for staffing for providers, work hours, job tenure, job exits ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	Census and LFS microdata analysis	Benchmark analysis in 2019, possible analysis of LFS in 2022
	Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce	Annually		
	Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database	Annually		
	Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project		
	Public Opinion Survey	Twice (2019 and 2022)		
	Social and News Media Monitoring	Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project		

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>3. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the implementation of career pathways provide opportunities for career growth and development in the early care and learning sector?</p>	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions with the aim to graduate 620 more ECEs</p> <p>Professional Networks and Support: An expanded Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program to provide ECEs with more opportunities to share best practices</p> <p>Professional Development: \$6.3 million in federal funding to expand professional development offerings to the sector</p> <p>Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Awareness of ECL career pathway options, how to pursue them, and expectations of their feasibility in terms of finances and availability of training opportunities ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Hours of formal and informal professional development per worker per year ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector 	Public Opinion Survey	Twice (2019 and 2022)
			Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce	Annually
			Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database	Annually
			Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project
			Social and News Media Monitoring	Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
<p>4. Over the three years of the evaluation, are education, training, and professional development opportunities expanded so that the ECL workforce has the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to provide quality services to children and family?</p>	<p>Post-Secondary: \$7.4 million over three years to increase the number of spaces in ECE programs at public post-secondary institutions aiming to graduate a total of 620 more ECEs</p> <p>Professional Networks and Support: An expanded Community Early Childhood Facilitators Program to provide ECEs with more opportunities to share best practices</p> <p>Professional Development: \$6.3 million in federal funding to expand professional development offerings to the sector</p> <p>Work-based Education and Training: A pilot project to provide more options and flexibility to workers who have considerable experience to upgrade their qualifications</p> <p>Training Supports: Funding to help ECL workers and employers with costs associated with continuing education and training, such as travel and paid time off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ▪ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ▪ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ▪ Proportion of ECL workers who self-report participation in professional development activities ▪ Hours of professional development per ECL workforce member per year ▪ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ▪ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value) among those already working in the sector 	Administrative Outcomes Database	Annually
	Cross-Sectional Survey of ECL workforce	Annually		
	Child Care Workforce Contact Information Database	Annually		
	Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project		

Key question	Implementation tactics	Key performance indicators	Data collection methods	Data collection and reporting timing
5. Over the three years of the evaluation, does the strategy promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of early care and learning professionals?	Industry Standards: Review and update of the Sector Occupational Competencies to ensure providers are delivering the highest standards of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The extent to which current Sector Occupational Competencies are integrated into education and training programs ■ Proportion of ECL workers with credentials relevant to provision of child care for provincial ECL needs, including regional and Indigenous ECL needs ■ Perceptions of ECL career among those making decisions with respect to their own careers ■ Proportion of ECL workforce who self-report possession of core skills and supplementary skills ■ Employers report of the share of their ECL workforce possessing core skills and possessing supplementary skills ■ Ratio of positive to negative opinions (with respect to standards of care, viability, sustainability, and value of ECL work) in general population, thought leaders, mass media, youth, and parents 	Key Informant Interviews and Case Studies	Ongoing throughout project
		Public Opinion Survey	Twice (2019 and 2022)	
		Social and News Media Monitoring	Retroactive to 2016, then ongoing throughout project	

APPENDIX E: CASE STUDY SITE CRITERIA

In May and June 2019, the SSC helped SRDC to establish criteria for identifying appropriate sites for the six child care program case studies. There were six primary factors for selecting the case studies:

- Regional Health Authority (one from each region)
- Geography (urban or rural)
- Indigenous focus (yes or no)
- Financial status (private or non-profit)
- Size of facility (less than 12 children to more than 25 children)
- Group Type (under 3 years old, 2.5 – school age, preschool, or school-age)

In July, the SSC provided suggestions for over 30 child care programs across the province that would meet the various criteria. SRDC reviewed these suggestions and developed a matrix of potential case study participants to address all of the criteria. The initially proposed number for selection is included in Table 46. SRDC and some SSC members with personal contacts then reached out to specific programs with an invitation to participate in the evaluation as a case study site.

SRDC also consulted with SSC members representing Indigenous-focused child care organizations in order to help SRDC engage and learn from Indigenous-focused centres and their communities about the implementation of the ECL R&R Strategy. SSC members provided detailed suggestions and personal contacts. Following their suggestions, SRDC invited an Indigenous child care expert to accompany SRDC on the site visit to an Indigenous-focused site.

A total of nine child care programs were invited to participate. One program declined explaining that they had very few staff and were in the middle of an organizational transition. Two other centres never responded to multiple requests for participation by email and phone message.

Six centres took part in the case study site visits in September-October 2019 and September-December 2020. Table 46 shows the distribution of the sites included fol. SRDC visited one child care program from each health authority region as well as one on-reserve Indigenous child care centre. Three of the child care centres are in urban locations, and 3 are located in more rural areas of the province. One child care program has a specific Indigenous focus. Two of the centres are privately owned, and the other four have non-profit financial status. All six child care centres

had 25 or more children. Smaller programs have fewer staff and would not provide as much opportunity to gather information about the ECL Recruitment and Retention Strategy implementation. Four of the programs have Infant/Toddler programs (Group Child Care birth to 36 months), all six have Group Care 2.5 years to school age, four centres have preschool programs (Group Care 2.5 years to school age), and two centres have Out of School programs (Group Care School Age).

The names and locations of the six case study sites are confidential. Only SRDC staff involved in this evaluation have this information. All case study sites were assured that their program name, as well as the names of any individuals associated with the sites would remain confidential. No identifying information will be shared in any reporting of the case study findings.

Being involved as a case study site requires a lot of time, energy and information sharing from the team at each site. In appreciation for their participation, SRDC offered the following to each participating child care centre:

- SRDC paid for a qualified substitute so that evaluators can meet with the manager/director and other child care workers in private interviews without disrupting the care of children or other activities. The centre was responsible for scheduling the substitute for the day of the visit.
- SRDC offered a \$500 “thank you” gift certificate to www.wintergreen.ca or www.strongnations.com to each participating site for the purchase of learning resources.
- In 2019, SRDC offered funds for a staff lunch or other meal during the visit. The centre was responsible for making meal arrangements.

Each child care centre provided SRDC with a list of all staff who would be working on the day of the scheduled (in-person or virtual) visit. SRDC reviewed the list and suggested up to eight potential participants to engage in individual interviews during the one day visit. These suggestions were made using a purposive stratified sampling approach so that a range of roles, certifications, and tenure at the site would be represented. SRDC also provided the owner/manager with a “one-pager” describing the evaluation and the purpose for the site visit. It emphasized that participation in any interviews was voluntary, that everyone was free to decline to participate, and that all information would be kept anonymous and confidential.

Table 46 Case study sites

	Fraser Health	Interior Health	Northern Health	Vancouver Coastal Health	Vancouver Island Health	On reserve	Initially proposed minimum number of sites	Actual number of sites
Geography								
Urban	X	X		X			3	3
Rural			X		X	X	2	3
Indigenous focus								
Yes						X	2	1
No	X	X	X	X	X		4	5
Financial status								
Private	X	X					2	2
Not for profit			X	X	X	X	3	4
Size of facility								
<=12 (max group size for 0-2.5 years)							1	0
12-25 (max group size for 2.5-school age)							3	0
>25 (will be >1 group)	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	6
Group type								
Group Child Care – under 3 years old	X	X		X		X	1	4
Group Child Care – 2.5 years to school age	X	X	X	X	X	X	1	6
Group Child Care – school age (before and after school)	X				X		2	2
Pre-school – 2.5 years to school age	X		X	X	X		1	4

APPENDIX F: SUPPLEMENTARY ANALYSES

Table 47 Average hourly wage rates for Centre ECL workers in non-supervisor positions by organization status, and change since 2019

	Private business	Change from 2019	Not for profit & others	Change from 2019
Mean***	\$20.69	+\$1.39	\$22.96	+\$3.07
(Std. Dev)	2.99	+\$0.40	3.88	+\$0.99
Responsible Adult	\$19.84	+\$2.72	\$20.56	+\$3.05
ECEA	\$17.92	+\$0.34	\$20.07	+\$2.30
ECE (1 year)	\$21.92	+\$3.12	\$22.76	+\$3.00
ECE (5 year) **	\$20.80	+\$1.00	\$22.44	+\$1.95
ECE+IT	\$21.93	+\$1.12	\$23.34	+\$1.75
ECE+SP	\$21.50	+\$1.73	\$24.92	+\$4.17
ECE+SP+IT	\$22.28	+\$1.74	\$24.40	+\$3.53

Source: SRDC workforce survey. 'Others' includes operated by Indigenous or public sector organization.

Note: Statistical significance is denoted by asterisks: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. They represent the test to compare means of hourly wage between private businesses and not-for profit & others for the different categories e.g., whether the hourly wage between private business and not for profit & others are different for ECEAs, ECE (1 year), etc.

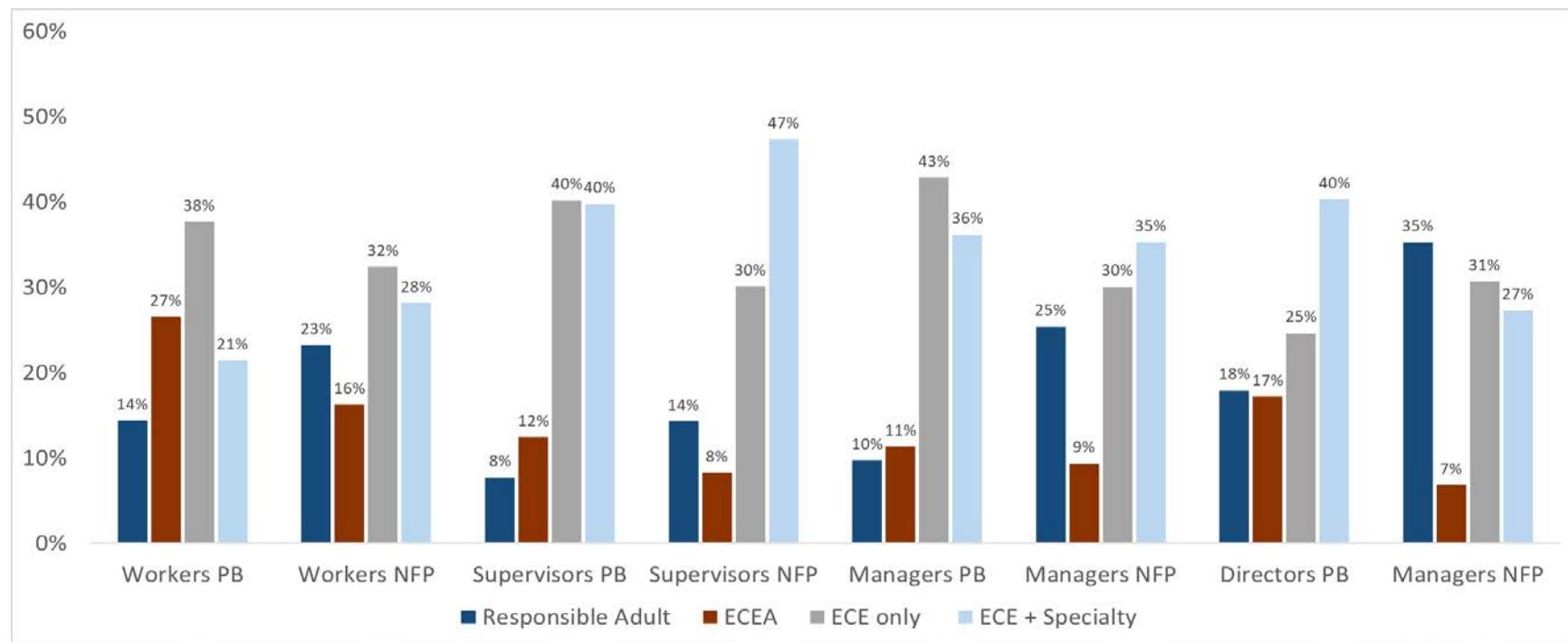
Table 48 Monthly income by respondent group and organization status 2019 and 2020

		Owner-operators				Centre ECL workers			
		Private business		Not for profit & others		Private business		Not for profit & others	
		2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Mean		\$3758.66	\$3716.72	\$3850.33	\$3961.03	\$2907.91	\$3113.77	\$2818.32	\$3033.68
Std. Dev		1647.13	1256.14	1306.66	1310.86	962.05	945.92	1009.45	1199.31
Less than \$1,499		0%	1%	0%	6%	11%	7%	13%	8%
\$1,500-\$2,999		30%	23%	24%	13%	32%	29%	36%	32%
\$3,000-\$4,499		50%	53%	52%	49%	56%	55%	50%	52%
\$4,500-\$5,999		12%	16%	17%	26%	1%	9%	2%	7%
\$6,000 or more		9%	8%	6%	6%	0%	0%	0%	1%

Source: SRDC workforce survey.

Figure 39

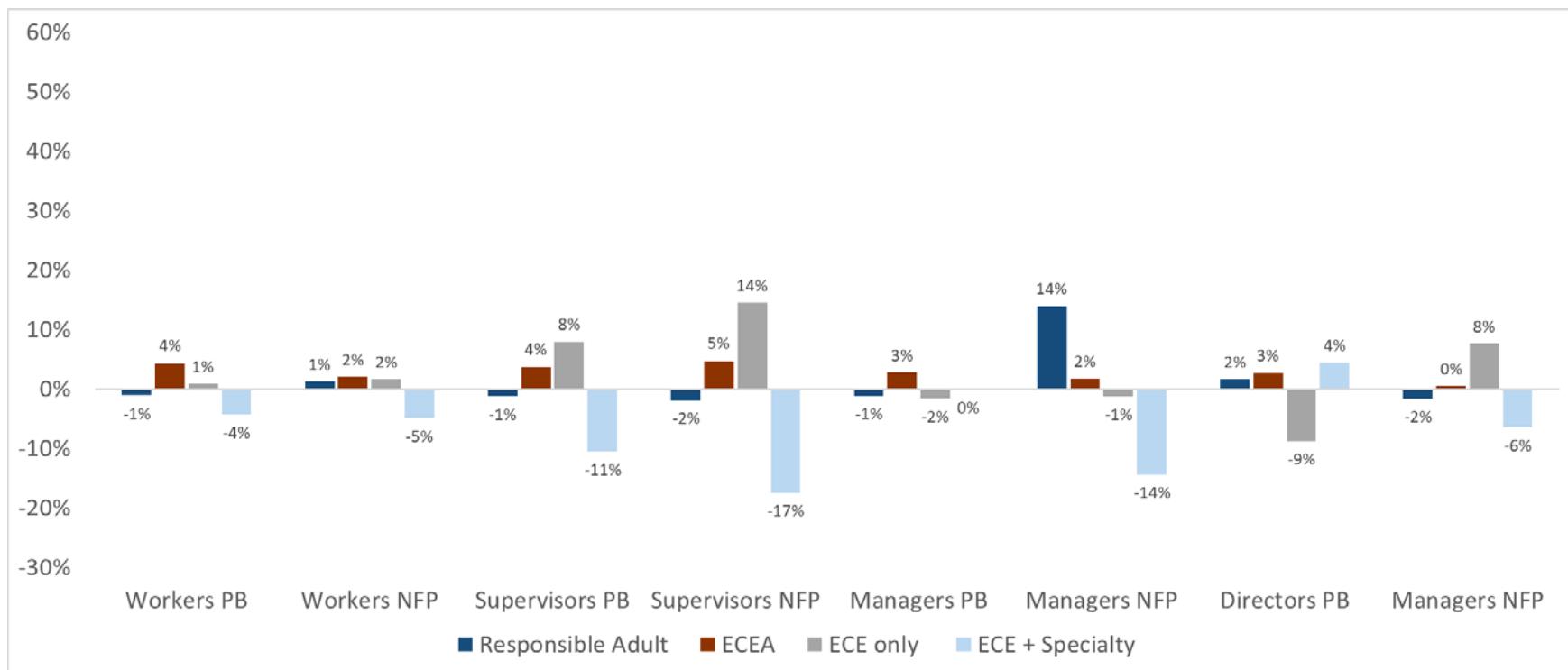
Certification or training by position of ECL professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs by organization status, 2020



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: PB – private business; NFP – not for profit and/or operated by Indigenous or public sector organization.

Figure 40 Change in certification or training by position of ECL professionals in licensed child care centres, preschools, or before and after school programs by organization status, since 2019 (in percentage points)



Source: SRDC employer survey.

Note: PB – private business; NFP – not for profit and/or operated by Indigenous or public sector organization.

