



ECEBC | early childhood
educators of BC



For Public release on January 5, 2018

RE: The \$25anHour Strategy

Dear Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and friends,

The Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) continues to work toward fairly compensated ECEs who benefit from appropriate working conditions. As a result ECEBC staff and volunteers have developed the \$25anHour campaign. Building on recommendations in the \$10aDay Plan, The \$25anHour campaign calls for ECEs to receive an average of \$25/hour plus 20% in benefits. Our National Child Day campaign focused on children's rights to quality early care and learning and valuing the work we do with children and families every day.

As an ECE, your individual voice makes a difference! To maximize awareness of the issues, we are asking every member to take a few minutes to actively engage in dialogue using the easy campaign tools in January. Your visible support will help ECEBC raise awareness and demonstrate the importance of our work at the Provincial level and in media. This messaging is particularly important as BC moves toward budget announcements and to broaden the emphasis beyond a focus on spaces. Some provinces have already moved to increase wages and benefits.



In 2008, the \$20anHour strategy raised awareness. It provided a valuable tool for use by ECEs and Centres. As the minimum wage has increased and awareness of living wages has grown, wages for the ECEs are still not consistently adequate or fair across the sector given the specialized training and responsibility held by ECEs.

In fact, ECEBC's Sector Survey in 2016 showed that benefits for ECEs have remained stagnant.

The \$10aDay Plan calls for an average wage of \$25/hour plus 20% in benefits. In 2016 according to the ECEBC Sector Survey, 60% of our qualified ECEs earn \$21/hour or less. While the situation has improved since 2008, this is still not appropriate for college or university educated ECEs.

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While things have improved since the \$20anHour campaign, there is still much to do. Anecdotally we hear that:

- Some ECEs require maximum subsidy for own children's care in order to work
- Some ECEs use less expensive forms of professional development to meet certificate renewal requirements as they are not funded and cannot afford continuing education fees, plus travel and time off – even with permission to attend.
- Some ECEs have left the field for other higher paying work opportunities such as in trades.

If you are one of the ECEs who are fortunate to have seen increases in wages and benefits, please share your success strategies and advocate for those certified ECEs in the sector who have not yet been appropriately compensated.

In the attached sample template, we are asking you to share your story about what the \$25anHour campaign means to you. It only has to take a few minutes. If you are making \$25anHour plus benefits, you can share how that has impacted you as a show of support for those in our sector who are less fortunate and strategies for how you got there.

You may also find it helpful to have the following resources available:

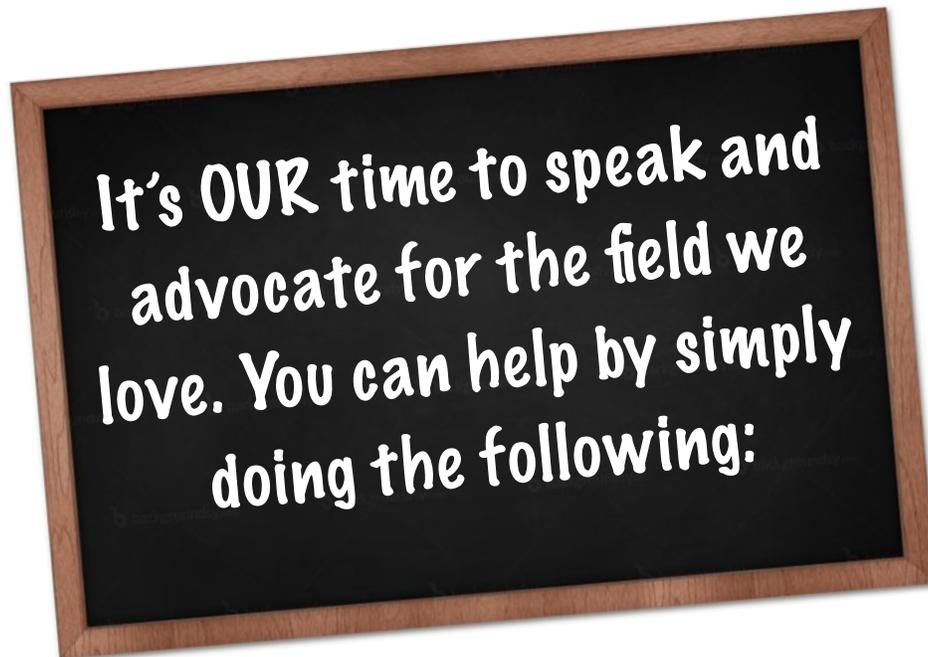
- **Fact Sheet 6**
- **Mythbusting # 3**
- **A recorded presentation about the \$25anHour Campaign is available**
- **National Child Day Materials**
- **Policy briefing notes**
 - **BC Budget 2018**
 - **Fee Subsidies**

In October, ECEBC began presenting recommendations to government for short-term steps toward implementation. We are still committed to the big picture. Please help by taking a few minute to use the attached tools to help raise awareness in January. ECEBC will re-survey the sector in 2018, participating in the survey will help ensure most accurate data that is reflective of the sector. Watch for more news from Provincial office and local ECEBC branches and share how you are creating readiness for change in your community.

Emily Mlieczko, ECE
Executive Director

cc: Suggestions for supporting \$25anHour Campaign
Customizable Bulletin Page
Fillable template

★ PLEASE SEE OUR LETTER ★



Please take a few minutes to share your story using the "My name is....."template. Post your story so it can initiate discussions with others. The personal connection will help people care about the issue. We've presented a few ideas below. You may have other ideas to share:

- 1** Have a conversation with program administrators, your employer or supervisor, director or the board of directors, regarding your work and how important the ECE field is.
- 2** Dedicate a staff meeting to this topic.
- 3** Involve parents in this dialogue
- 4** Educate your friends, especially those who are not working in the ECE field
- 5** Use Social media and/or add a photo or video to the template,
- 6** Share your stories with ECEBC. You can also share stories from ECEBC's social media.
- 7** Share the attached bulletin with parents and community
(feel free to use a local ECE or Centre photo with permission)
- 8** Let your elected officials know what a wage of \$25anHour means to you

We continue to work for you and with you. Please let us know if you need support in your community to meet with ECEs to discuss this strategy further. We look forward together to collectively raising awareness of the value of the work you do and the critical topic of fair compensation at this key time.

Emily Mliczko, ECE
Executive Director

WHY A \$25anHOUR WAGE FOR ECEs IS NECESSARY

Today, programs across BC that provide critically necessary child care services to their communities are faced with the increasingly challenging situation of recruitment and retention. Early childhood educators, with post secondary education and training, are saying:

“NO! I can no longer work in this profession unless I am adequately compensated for my work. My work is valuable and it is necessary. My work positively impacts the children and families with whom I work. It is no longer possible for me to subsidize the child care system on my low wage. Our stress level has gone beyond what we thought we could handle. It is time for change”.

The Early Childhood Educators of BC believes that the benchmark of an average \$25anHour is an appropriate average wage for early childhood educators. With support of ECEs, we can engage government to make \$25anHour possible.

For decades we have worked with families. The services we provide are vital to the health and well being of families and that our childcare system is in jeopardy if we do nothing to keep trained and qualified ECEs in the field. Therefore the Early Childhood Educators of BC is committed to waging a campaign in order to ensure \$25anHour becomes the benchmark for a fair average wage.

Without an early care and learning system (EC&L) in place, hardships have been felt by many of these families due to the high cost of child care and limited access.

At the same time it is recognized that the services provided by ECEs are vital to the well being of children and families and community both socially and economically.

Without a plan and commitment to address the concerns of the workforce we will continue to see many trained ECEs leave the field.

In 2011, **ECEBC** and CCCABC developed the **\$10aDay Plan** as a comprehensive framework to build an integrate publicly funding EC&L system.

Therefore the Early Childhood Educators of BC, through your support, is committed to educate and inform the public, families and all levels of government through the \$25anHour strategy.



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My name is: _____

I am an early childhood educator with _____ years of post secondary education and training at the college/ and or university level. I hold a **valid certificate to practice** with 3-5 year olds from the Early Childhood Registry in Victoria and a valid **first aid** certificate. I renew my license to practice every five years and I am required to complete 40 hours of professional development. I am trained and qualified to work with:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infants and Toddlers | <i>I also have training in:</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs children | <input type="checkbox"/> School aged children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous childcare |

I love my work and I can think of no other job I would rather be doing.

My biggest challenge is the low wages and benefits I receive.

While the provincial government does provide some direct funding to childcare and preschool programs, it is approximately 10 – 15% of our total budget. Parent fees make up the majority of our operating funds and this is simply wrong. I want to see a system developed in our country and our province that allows for parents to have access to quality early learning and care programs when their children need them, programs that are affordable for families and that pay the early childhood educator a fair wage. I want to be valued for my work and to earn a fair wage, a wage that is not predominately paid for from parent fees. The \$10aDay Plan provides for increased wages and benefits for ECEs without increasing fees.

I have been working as an early childhood educator since _____ and my current salary is \$_____ per hour. My benefits are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Service Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Short term disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid sick leave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended health | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RRSP contributions | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have benefits |

I know that quality early learning and care experiences make a life-long difference in the health and wellbeing of children. I want to see a society where our youngest children are valued and where programs like ours receive adequate resources through dedicated government funding.