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A BULLETIN OF THE CHILD CARE  
HUMAN RESOURCES SECTOR COUNCIL

## OUR CHILD CARE WORKFORCE



### Inside

**Page 2:** What's in a Name?

- Labour market update a winner!
- Check it out! • The facts on the child care workforce

**Page 3:** On the Horizon • Where we'll be

**Page 4:** Management in child care project gains momentum • Child Care for a Change!

**Page 5:** Alberta: Accreditation stresses staff role in quality • Manitoba: MGEU postcard campaign • Communications and web site expansion project underway

**Page 6:** How to reach us

# Canada

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# Road map points the way to a quality workforce

The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council has put together a clear road map for building a quality child care workforce—an even more pressing need now that there is government commitment to a national child care system.

The road map is the council's recently developed labour market strategy, which grew out of two in-depth studies of the human resource issues in the child care sector—the 1998 sector study, *Our Child Care Workforce: From Recognition to Remuneration*, and the November 2004 Labour Market Update Study, *Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce*. *Working for Change* included recommendations aimed specifically at the elements needed for a plan to attract and retain skilled and qualified people into the workforce.

“With these two studies as our foundation, we now have a strategy that is grounded in the realities of the workforce and the sector, and will help us move forward on critical human resource issues,” said sector council executive director, Diana Carter.

The labour market strategy focuses on four key areas:

- Sector development to improve recruitment, retention, wages, benefits and working conditions.
- Research to increase the knowledge of labour market trends, human resource issues and the

role of the workforce.

- Communications strategies to promote increased awareness of the workforce.
- Outreach and partnership development to create dialogue and consensus among government decision makers, policy analysts and researchers, and the education and child care sectors.

Projects are being developed to improve training, develop a career awareness program, improve research on labour market information, and connect with the aboriginal child care sector about common human resource issues. The goal is to begin work on these projects in 2005. (See stories on page 3.)

#### SOLID WORK

“Our projects are very concrete,” said sector council chair Joanne Morris. “We’ve come a long way since the original sector study, when we didn’t even have a body like the sector council to promote the issues of the child care workforce.”

Morris said one of the most im-

Continued on page 2



## Labour market update a winner

As far as labour market studies go, it's been a runaway success. The launch in November 2004 of *Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce*, garnered widespread national and regional media attention. Through CBC radio interviews that were aired from coast to coast to coast, and national wire service stories that appeared in newspapers across Canada, the issue of recruitment and retention in child care was highlighted for the public. More than 14,000 copies of the report's executive summary have been distributed, and another print run of the main report will be needed to keep up with the steady demand.

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## What's in a Name?

How do you describe yourself to others? Are you an early childhood educator? A child care provider? A child care worker? An early learning and child care practitioner?

Across Canada, and internationally, one of the biggest debates in the early learning and child care sector is around a Name. As the two solitudes of education and care merge and as the sector evolves, it has become clear that those who care for and educate young children urgently need to identify a Name - one that represents everyone and one that we can all support.

The Canadian Child Care Federation has prepared a paper to help you facilitate this discussion, entitled *What's in a Name*. Visit CCCF's website ([www.cccf-fcsge.ca](http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca) <<http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca/>>) to download the paper and share it with your peers. Or contact CCCF for a copy: 1 800 858-1412 or [info@cccf-fcsge.ca](mailto:info@cccf-fcsge.ca)

## Check it out!

Check out [www.cccf-fcsge.ca](http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca) for copies of the labour market update reports, new backgrounders on workforce issues, and the latest news on the sector council.

## The facts on the child care workforce

About 75 per cent of centre-based early childhood educators and assistants have a post-secondary degree, diploma, or certificate. -*Working for Change* (2004)

## Road map points the way to a quality workforce

From page 1

portant parts of the strategy is outreach and partnership development. The sector council wants to find ways to ensure it is working with the field on an ongoing basis and that its research informs the work of child care organizations, employers, trainers, governments and policy makers.

For example, Morris and sector council vice-chair, Gyda Chud, are working through the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) to set up a network for individuals of the college community to share ideas and improve coordinated actions around labour market initiatives in the child care

sector. The ACCC will provide the hosting for this listserv, known as an affinity group.

"This is a great way to share what the sector council is doing around our training project and discuss what some of the priorities are for colleges," said Morris.

"Finding ways to reach out to all stakeholders in the child care sector remains a priority for us and is critically important to our work," she said. "It's a way to ensure we stay plugged in and that we influence real and positive change on the ground where it counts for the workforce."

# On the horizon

The sector council  
will be launching  
four new projects in 2005

**T**he **Training Strategy project** arises out of the need to dramatically increase the number of qualified and trained personnel in child care, as identified in the *Working for Change* reports and the labour market strategy. This two-phase research project has three key elements:

- surveys/focus groups with students, faculty, and employers to correlate training with retention;
- developing a research paper examining existing research on child care training; and
- developing an options paper on ways to move forward.

These activities will lead to the development of a training strategy designed to increase the capacity of the child care workforce in Phase 2 of the project.

The *Working for Change* reports identify an urgent need to increase awareness and understanding of the value of child care as a career. The **Career Awareness project – Phase 1** will lay the foundation for an outreach project designed to do just that. Phase I will be research driven, evaluating existing career promotion strategies and materials to identify areas for development at the provincial, territorial and pan-Canadian levels. From there, a pan-Canadian career awareness strategy will be developed. Phase 2 will focus on putting the strategy into action using a variety outreach

tools and activities.

**Connecting with the Aboriginal Child Care Sector – Phase 1** will enable the sector council to get to know and better understand the aboriginal child care sector. Throughout Phase 1, the sector council will share and gather information and participate in discussions with key aboriginal stakeholders, groups and organizations. These activities will allow the sector council to find new and complimentary ways to work with the aboriginal child care sector on human resources issues.

The **Labour Market Information Research Agenda Project (LMI) – Phase 1** will examine the way labour market information on the child care sector is collected, with the goal of improving the consistency of the information available. An expert panel will be established in the first phase of this two-phase project. Bringing together labour market specialists, economists, and other experts, the panel will work to ensure a coordinated approach to child care research across Canada. The sector council will also explore new data collection methods with Statistics Canada and work with Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) on national occupational classifications for child care. A research agenda will be created in Phase 2 of the project.

## Where we'll be

**Event: Manitoba Child Care Association conference, “Child Care...A Magical Journey, A Mystical Adventure”**

*Sector council activity:* Workshop

*When:* May 28, 2005

*Where:* Winnipeg, Manitoba

*Info:* [www.mccahouse.org](http://www.mccahouse.org)

**Event: Early Childhood Educators of BC conference, “Caring Together : Strength in Partnership”**

*Sector Council Activity:* Workshop

*When:* May 27 – 28, 2005

*Where:* Vancouver, BC

*Info:* [www.cfc-efc.ca/ecebc/](http://www.cfc-efc.ca/ecebc/)

**Event: Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario conference**

*Sector council activity:* Workshop and panel presentation

*When:* June 2 – 5, 2005

*Where:* Ottawa, Ontario

*Info:* [www.cfc-efc.ca/aeceo/](http://www.cfc-efc.ca/aeceo/)

**Event: CCCF and Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association conference, “Plan-It Quality: Environments in Early Learning and Child Care – Linking Research, Policy and Practice”**

*Sector council activity:* Workshop

*When:* June 2 – 4, 2005

*Where:* Regina, Saskatchewan

*Info:* [www.cccf-fcsge.ca](http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca)

## Management in child care project gains momentum

The *Supporting Administration and Management (SAM) in Child Care Project* is well underway. The project seeks to ensure that supervisors and administrators have access to the skills and resources they need to carry out their roles effectively.

This spring, workshops will be conducted across Canada with supervisors, administrators, trainers and others working in the sector. The sector council will use these sessions to develop draft occupational standards. These standards will then be validated through broad-based discussions and consultations with the field and available by Spring 2006.

The SAM project represents an important step in

meeting the need for appropriate training programs and supports to assist child care managers and administrators. Ensuring trained and skilled leadership will help address recruitment and retention problems in the field, while enhancing the quality of child care programs. Future phases of the SAM project include identifying training and curriculum gaps and establishing resources and tools to address these gaps.

## Child Care for a Change!

The sector council was active at last November's pan-Canadian *Child Care for a Change* conference in Winnipeg. The conference provided a great opportunity to share information and connect with hundreds of people working in the child care sector across Canada.

Sector council events and activities included:

- *"The early learning and child care workforce: The heart of the matter."* Embraced by a high number of enthusiastic participants, this **workshop** explored the findings of the *Working for Change* labour market update study reports. The workshop was presented by board members Jamie Kass and Raymonde LeBlanc, lead researcher Jane Beach, and moderated by sector council chair Joanne Morris.
- The *"Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce"* **poster session** was up for the

duration of the conference. Visitors to the display could learn about the findings of the labour market update study and interact with sector council board members and staff from across the country. Everyone who dropped by received an executive summary and CD-Rom of the study—more than 800 were distributed!

- The sector council co-hosted a **reception** with partner organizations, the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and the Canadian Child Care Federation. The Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Confédération des syndicats nationaux, and the

Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union also contributed to the event, sponsoring refreshments. The event was an excellent way to share our cooperative and collective work on child care human resources issues.

- The sector council met with the provincial/territorial directors of child care and the Association of Community Colleges—a great opportunity to explore areas of common interest and ways to collaborate in future.

Thanks to all who took the time to join us!

## Alberta Accreditation stresses staff role in quality

Alberta's child care accreditation system—the first of its kind in Canada—is up and running, with 178 child care centres and family child care agencies out of 587 working to meet the program's requirements.

**T**he system, established in 2004, aims to improve quality through a self-study process that involves administrators, staff and families. Centres and agencies applying for accreditation must complete a self-assessment tool and develop a work plan for areas needing improvement. The role of staff and providers in program quality is a key element of the assessment.

“When the tool was developed we found that the most important piece in the quality of care that a centre provides is child-adult interaction,” said Sandra Beckman, Executive Director of the newly formed Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services (AELCS). Child-adult interaction counts for 60% of the self-study tool, which can take up to one year to complete.

Once granted accreditation, programs can use an official symbol and the message “Recognizing excellence in child care in Alberta.” Accreditation is granted for three years, and then can be renewed for an annual fee provided the program continues to meet the province's licensing standards.

## Manitoba MGEU postcard campaign

*“I believe that investing in kids means investing in the people who care for kids!”*

— MGEU postcard message

The Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU/NUPGE) winter postcard campaign was a huge success, engaging thousands of participants.

**T**he campaign focused government attention on the issues facing Manitoba's early childhood educators (ECEs) with the goal of bringing change to the current child care system. The MGEU proposed a progressive plan of action, identifying fair and appropriate compensation for child care providers as central to ensuring Manitoba's early childhood education system can meet the needs of families and children.

“Ensuring that children get the education and care they need in their most formative years is a goal I know all Manitobans share. We must address the ongoing workforce issues faced by ECEs,” says MGEU president Peter Olfert.

## Communications and ~~web site~~ expansion project underway

**The sector council's Communications and Web Site Expansion project will ensure that all CCHRSC communication and outreach activities are consistent and designed with key audiences, like the workforce, in mind.**

**The web site redesign and expansion will provide the sector council with an up-to-date, user-friendly way to share information on child care**

**human resources issues and sector news and events. The development of areas like *career/training resources* and *workforce conferencing* will create new ways to engage and support the child care workforce.**

**Visit the site regularly over the next 18 months to check out the new developments: [www.cccs-cssge.ca](http://www.cccs-cssge.ca).**



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