

Our Child Care Workforce

FROM RECOGNITION TO REMUNERATION



MORE
THAN A
LABOUR
OF LOVE

INNOVATIVE TRAINING PROGRAMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION
SELECTED CASE STUDIES

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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Beach, Jane, 1951-

Our child care workforce: from recognition to remuneration: innovative training programs in early childhood care and education: selected case studies

Issued also in French under title: Le secteur de la garde à l'enfance.

ISBN 0-662-27190-4

Cat. No. MP43-387/1998E

1. Child care services—Canada. 2. Day care centres—Canada.
3. Child care workers—Canada. 4. Day care centres—Employees—Canada.
I. Bertrand, Jane, 1951- II. Canada. Human Resources Development Canada
III. Title

HQ778.1.C3B47 1998

362.71'2'0971

C98-980319-8

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Early Childhood Continuing Education, Distance Education.	3
Développement professionnel et gestion éducative	8
Consulting and Training Service.	12
Meadow Lake Tribal Council/School of Child and Youth Care, Child Care Education and Career Ladder Project.	16
Good Beginnings, Introductory Family Child Care Training Program.	22
Partners for Children	27
Conclusion	31

Introduction

In 1996, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) sponsored a Child Care Sector Study to examine the human resource issues and challenges facing those who earn their living caring for Canada's young children. The study was conducted over a two-year period by a team of researchers, working on behalf of a 36-person steering committee comprising representatives of the broader child care community across the country.

The study examined a range of human resource issues in the child care sector, including wages and working conditions; qualifications; training and education; career mobility and opportunities; and infrastructure supports. The human resource issues were analysed within an environmental context of social policy, legislation and demographics. The study involved examining and conducting further analysis of existing research and data sets, conducting key informant interviews with government officials and representatives of child care and related organizations, and holding focus groups with caregivers working in a range of settings across Canada. In addition, two surveys were undertaken, one of regulated home child care providers and one of postsecondary training institutions offering early childhood care and education programs. The final report, *Our Child Care Workforce: From Recognition to*

Remuneration, put forward a total of 23 recommendations to address the issues facing the sector.¹

Our Child Care Workforce estimates that there are approximately 300,000 caregivers in the child care workforce. The report highlights the research evidence showing that competent caregivers are a critical factor in the provision of quality child care, which has a long-term impact on child development. It notes the importance of caregiver education and training related to child development and early childhood education, yet the majority of caregivers working across child care settings do not have related training. The study notes that:

- there should be increased requirements for many caregivers;
- caregiver training should not focus solely on centre-based care;
- access to training is a barrier to the human resource development of the child care workforce; and
- innovative delivery models have the potential to reduce these barriers.

The final section of the report contains three objectives for the recommendations on training and education:

- a commitment to a trained and competent workforce;
- a commitment to make training and education more accessible; and
- a commitment to opportunities for career mobility.

As background to the Child Care Sector Study, six innovative training and development programs were examined and briefly summarized in the report. Among

¹ Beach, J., Bertrand, J. & Cleveland, G. (1998) *Our Child Care Workforce: From Recognition to Remuneration: More Than a Labour of Love*. Ottawa: Child Care Human Resources Steering Committee.

the criteria for selecting the programs was the potential to address some of the gaps in training and development identified through the study. The programs were selected in consultation with members of the Training and Human Resources Development Working Group of the Child Care Sector Study Steering Committee, who were all involved in the training field and familiar with the range of training programs across the country.

This case study report has been prepared as a supplementary paper to *Our Child Care Workforce*. It provides an update to and further development of the six innovative training programs briefly reflected in the report. The case studies describe a continuum of education, training and professional development programs across the country. They include centre-based early childhood education, family child care, and child care administration and management. The programs are provided through a variety of delivery models that seek to address, for particular populations, identified barriers to training and education, and gaps in program content.

The six programs discussed are:

- Early Childhood Continuing Education, Distance Education – College of the North Atlantic, St. John's, Newfoundland;
- Développement professionnel et gestion éducative – CÉGEP of Saint-Jérôme, Quebec;
- Consulting and Training Service – Manitoba Child Care Association, Winnipeg, Manitoba;
- Meadow Lake Tribal Council/School of Child and Youth Care, Child Care Education and Career Ladder Project – Meadow Lake Tribal Council,

Saskatchewan, and School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, British Columbia;

- Good Beginnings, Introductory Family Child Care Training Program – Western Canada Family Child Care Association, British Columbia, and Vancouver Community College; and
- Partners for Children - Yukon College.

The case studies were prepared based on key informant interviews with individuals involved in developing and/or delivering the programs, interviews with program participants, and a review of program materials and any evaluations conducted. The report does not attempt to evaluate the programs; it is beyond the scope of this project. It also recognizes that the programs are not necessarily representative of child care education and training programs across the country. Rather, the report contains descriptive accounts of the motivation and rationale for each program, its development, implementation, focus and current status.

Early Childhood Continuing Education, Distance Education

College of the North Atlantic
(formerly Cabot College),
St. John's, Newfoundland

The delivery of postsecondary education through distance education is increasing across Canada as the demand for accessible training and education opportunities continues to grow. Distance education is already a significant delivery model for early childhood education (ECE) programs. The Survey of Formal Training Institutions conducted for the Child Care Sector Study indicates that a number of ECE certificate, diploma or degree programs are offered through distance education delivery models. Distance education has the potential to make training opportunities available across the country and to bring together people sharing similar experiences in diverse locations.

Significant numbers of staff now working in regulated early childhood settings or providing home child care do not have ECE credentials. Distance education allows some students to acquire an ECE credential while

Early Childhood Continuing Education, Distance Education

Initial Sponsor: Cabot College (renamed College of the North Atlantic). The college offers a two-year diploma program in ECE.

Program: ECE diploma program delivered through distance education.

Funding: \$818,405 from CCIF for development and delivery 1991-94.

Current Status: Five students completed program in 1997; 62 currently enrolled in 241 courses; staffing reduced from 2.5 to .5 due to end of funding program; diploma transferable to third year of four-year degree program at Northern College in Aberdeen, Scotland; full-time distance education ECE certificate program developed for First Nations students in Conne River, Mic Mac Territory, Newfoundland.

maintaining employment in the field. However, distance education also poses significant challenges in delivering ECE programs that support field practice experiences, interpersonal communication and cooperative learning.

Program Background

In 1986, the first two-year diploma program in ECE was offered in St. John's and later in Corner Brook. At that time, with few legislated requirements for qualifications, the majority of people working in the child care field in Newfoundland had considerable experience, but little or no formal training. Due to the large number of rural and isolated communities in the province, access to training was extremely limited. The provincial child care association, the Association of Early

Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador (AECENL), provided some in-service workshops and conferences; formal training was limited to the two urban areas.

The full-time ECE program at the College of the North Atlantic had an advisory committee that was aware of the difficulties faced by those in the field in accessing training. Initially, attempts were made to offer continuing education through part-time evening courses. These proved unsuccessful, in part, due to the college requirement that continuing education programs operate on a break-even basis, which put tuition costs out of reach of students. An advisory subcommittee was struck to consider alternatives, when the Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF) was announced and presented opportunities for funding.

In 1989, discussions began with the college, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education to develop goals for a distance education program. It was agreed that since licensing had been in place in the province for a considerable length of time before any training requirements were instituted, recognition had to be given for those with experience in the field, and that a prior learning assessment (PLA) would have to be developed. In 1991, the college received funding from CCIF for a three-year project to:

- develop a certification model and implementation strategy to outline training requirements and the process for meeting such requirements;
- develop a distance education methodology for the existing provincial

curriculum for the Diploma in Applied Arts in Early Childhood Education; and

- develop a mechanism to assess the knowledge and skills gained through previous work experience and learning which could be applied to give advanced standing in the diploma program.

A three-person team was hired to develop and implement each component of the program. During the development phase, the team travelled the province holding information sessions to explain the project. Red River College was instrumental in providing information on distance education and PLA. Students were first enrolled in June 1992 and began their course in portfolio development.

Program Description

The distance education model is an extension of the ECE program at the College of the North Atlantic. The existing provincial curriculum for the ECE diploma in Newfoundland was translated into competency-based, individualized modules for delivery in distance education format. The program includes self-directed course work, teleconference seminars with other students and faculty, and summer institutes at the college's demonstration child care centre. Instructors visited participants in their places of employment and assessed their performance, using the same requirements established for students in field placements as part of the regular full-time program. At the start of the course of study, an Individual Education Plan is developed, which provides students with an overall picture of the program, and identifies the individual courses and requirements for each student, based on their previous experience and training.

A variety of teaching tools and approaches is used in the program, including print materials, audio cassettes, video tapes and regular teleconference calls. A telemedicine teleconferencing service at the general hospital in St. John's provides access to audio conferencing for up to 15 students at a time. Each participant is assigned a tutor who is available for individual telephone consultation (students can call collect). Tutors also facilitate seminars with participants through teleconferences. Participants fax assignments to tutors who complete their evaluations and return feedback within two weeks. Supervised examinations are arranged at either schools or the college campus closest to the participant's place of residence. Participants are also assigned a student advisor who has a supportive role, separate from the academic tutors.

Participants are required to take part in three on-site summer institutes at the College of the North Atlantic in St. John's. Each three-week institute includes one week of seminars focussed on practical topics such as interpersonal communication and music workshops, and two weeks in the college's demonstration centre. Participants complete observations and work alongside the centre's staff members in developing and implementing the daily program. Instructors evaluate the participants' performance and provide specific feedback throughout the two-week period. Students must also have access to some form of child care program in their own community for observation and to implement program activities. A minimum of 500 placement hours in their own community is also required. Students with two or more years' experience in the field are required to attend two institutes.

During the course of study, faculty members also visit the students' child-related work setting in their home community to observe them interact with children, parents and peers, and to assess their ability to apply their knowledge in day-to-day experiences.

Program Participants

Prerequisites for enrolment in the distance education program include two years of related work experience, access to a child care centre, preschool or family child care home, high school completion or mature student status. Students in the program range in age from 20 to 59, with an average age of 36. The time it takes to complete the program varies, but the average is four to five years. As of June 1998, six students have graduated, and 62 students are enrolled in a total of 241 courses.

Overall, students were very positive about the program and their experience with it. Flexibility, the ability to remain employed while studying, superior instruction, accessibility of staff and networking opportunities with peers were all noted as strengths of the program. Students were also positive about the PLA process and the recognition they were given for the knowledge they gained in previous education and work experiences. They indicated that they would not have been able to participate in a full-time diploma program and this method allowed them to receive a recognized credential.

During the initial funding period, participants received considerable financial support to take part in the summer institutes. CCIF covered each participant's travel, provided an accommodation

allowance, child care costs and wage replacement. After the project funding was over, the college subsidized participants' costs but ended the practice in 1996. That summer, only five of the 12 students enrolled in the summer institute were able to attend because of the reduction in support. In 1997, HRDC provided student loans to part-time students. For the first time, students enrolled in the distance education program were able to get loans to cover wage loss, travel, child care expenses and some of the program costs. Four students were assisted.

Program Direction

Funding has been an ongoing concern since the end of the three-year support from CCIF. A major challenge has been the resulting reduction in staff and faculty time. In May 1997, staffing was reduced from 2.5 to .5. The reduction in student-staff contact has had an impact on students' ability to stay on track with the program.

In addition, there have been several new developments in the program.

- In 1997, college faculty entered into a contract with the Mic Mac community of Conne River to provide a full-time distance education certificate program to seven students. Funding for this program was secured through the Inuit and First Nations Initiative of HRDC. Teleconferences are held twice a week for three hours each. The approach is very similar to the original distance education program, but with a more defined schedule. The program started out as self-paced, but experience has suggested that students perform better with parameters, such as due dates for

assignments. Two three-week periods are spent at the college, and faculty also spend time in the Conne River community.

- In 1997, the Northern College in Scotland began accepting program graduates, from both the full-time and distance education programs, into their four-year degree program. Two years of credit are given toward a BA in Early Childhood Studies. Two graduates are currently enrolled.
- A multimedia pilot has begun to utilize new technology, developing a CD-ROM with links to a web site. E-mail with students is being introduced, which is found to be more efficient than the telephone and helps students communicate with each other as well as with faculty.
- There is an interest in developing a mentoring program for distance education students, developing mentoring relationships with people in the same communities as the students.

No formal, external review or evaluation of the curriculum content or its impact on participant performance has taken place. However, instructors at the college regularly review current developments in postsecondary ECE programs and are intending to update the curriculum content and related course materials. This has become increasingly difficult, however, due to cutbacks in funding and staffing. The distance education program in ECE does not appear to have affected the demand for the full-time ECE diploma program at the college.

The distance education initiative at the College of the North Atlantic provides a

comprehensive approach to developing and implementing educational strategies for individuals currently employed in child care settings. The program evaluation of the CCIF reports several respondents from non-governmental organizations indicated using modules from the distance education package developed at the College of the North Atlantic.

The ECE distance education program could be delivered from any college campus in Newfoundland, but is currently offered only at the St. John's campus. The campus in Corner Brook (formerly Westviking College) has the materials but does not deliver the diploma program through distance education. The modules may be used at the Corner Brook campus to support a student requiring additional study or an opportunity to complete an individual course, independent of the regular program.

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Développement professionnel et gestion éducative

CÉGEP of Saint-Jérôme, Quebec

There is general agreement in the child care field that it is important for child care directors and administrators to have administrative and management knowledge and skills. Although most directors and coordinators have ECE qualifications, the training they receive normally focusses on the knowledge and skills that are considered appropriate for working with young children. Most early childhood diploma programs have some content related to management and administration, but it is usually covered in a course that also includes legislative and regulatory information. These courses are usually taken years before an individual occupies an administrative or management position. As a result, child care administrators do not always feel they have the management skills they need.

Among the numerous difficulties that limit access to management training, one of the most important is that child care administrators often do not have time to follow traditional training programs. Furthermore, most administrative training programs are not designed or adapted for the management of child care services.

Développement professionnel et gestion éducative

Initial Sponsor: CÉGEP de Saint-Jérôme, Quebec. The CÉGEP offers certificate in early childhood education (AEC) and diploma (DEC) programs.

Funding: From CCIF to develop program from 1992-95.

Program: Self-study management training program for directors of child care centres, family child care agencies and school-age programs. Includes written resources, videos and group workshops.

Current Status: Rights for the program have transferred from the CÉGEP to the individual faculty that developed it. Consideration is being given to the creation of an institute to be responsible for the training package and to accredit graduates of the program.

Program Background

Since 1987, the two creators of this program, in cooperation with the Adult Education Department of the CÉGEP of Saint-Jérôme, have acquired extensive expertise in the development and delivery of training in the management of child care services. They have also acted as consultants to child care administrators for several years. Beginning in 1989, they worked on the development of a self-learning program based on a concept of management that is well suited for child care environments – one aimed at inspiring, guiding, supporting, listening to and encouraging people.

These two faculty members wanted to develop a new and innovative model of

training for child care directors that amalgamated several existing self-training and self-learning models within a framework of professional development and educational management. Funding was received from CCIF in 1992 for the research and development of the program. The program was first launched in the fall of 1996.

The project received the support of the provincial government which delegated a representative to the advisory committee of the project. Various experts in the fields of education and management participated on the advisory committee. Child care directors and representatives of child care organizations participated in surveys that were carried out to determine the learning and leadership profiles of child care administrators.

Eight child care directors participated in a pilot run of the program. As a result, plans were developed to facilitate and promote the creation of learning groups among program participants and to establish partnerships with child care organizations that promote training and offer professional development activities to their members. This is viewed as a way of breaking the isolation that child care administrators often experience and developing professional self-help groups in professional development and educational management.

Program Description

The program, Développement professionnel et gestion éducative, is founded on the principles of intelligent and enterprising organization, applied to the management of

educational environments. It was conceived with four main learning phases in mind: to become aware, to take stock, to conceptualize and to implement.

The program consists of three learning tools:

- a 48-minute video which presents the testimony of eight child care directors who participated in the pilot program. It also presents the philosophy of the program, the training process and the effects of the self-learning approach.
- a training manual, and an educational diary, which, through texts and exercises, guide individuals in the acquisition of knowledge and skills required to build competence and professionalism. The manual and diary present the concepts associated with professional development, educational management and the characteristics of a child-centred program. The educational diary completes the learning cycle by presenting activities that lead to the implementation of the knowledge acquired.

The program is designed for people to learn while working. The management model, the competency profile and all texts and exercises are designed to be adapted to the individual learning style of the person using the learning tools. There are no right or wrong answers in the program, no exams, no deadlines. In progressing through the program, participants assess the status of the organization and evaluate their competency level. Later, they work at their own pace and adapt the knowledge acquired to the needs of their own working environment.

During the self-learning process, students are invited to network with a small group of co-learners to share thoughts, problems and questions. They can also participate in six group sessions, of 12 to 18 people, where they meet with a facilitator/mentor who guides the group through a reflective process on content and attitudes.

The program takes approximately 10 months to complete. At this time, there has been no formal evaluation of the program and no credential is given. However, throughout the program, students are involved in assessing their progress and whether they are meeting the objectives they set for themselves. Comments of participants have been compiled and are being used to further inform the development of the project.

Program Participants

To be eligible to participate in the program, students must be currently working in a child care centre, a family child care agency or a school-age program, as a director, supervisor or coordinator. Most students enrol because of their own need to develop new skills and to build on their existing knowledge. A small proportion enrol because of a pressing need to acquire additional skills and are required by their workplace to do so. Of the 180 students who have enrolled to date, 140 have completed the program.

Students found the content relevant, noting that personal development, strategic planning, diagnosing problems, developing solutions and working effectively with boards of directors were particularly useful.

Program Developments

Little has changed in the content or delivery of the program. A new edition of the manual and tools is being planned.

A key change has been with the role of the CÉGEP itself. It recently transferred all the rights to the program directly to the faculty that developed it. The CÉGEP was not willing to invest additional resources into the project as it is a self-training program with no evaluation process, and it did not appear feasible or cost efficient to develop it into an accredited program with the limited number of potential students. In the view of the CÉGEP, the program was more appropriate as a one-year university certificate program. However, the universities approached thought the program too specific and costly given the limited number of potential students. One faculty member has established an informal, voluntary group of researchers, teachers and other stakeholders committed to the program to continue its development and promotion (the Research and Promotion Group in Professional Development and Educational Management).

The greatest strength of the program is perceived to be the approach itself – a way of looking at child care management that is comprehensive, dealing with attitudes and change. The approach aims at assisting directors in developing their competencies and skills to ensure quality care.

Since the program was launched on November 14, 1996, it has been recognized as a valuable professional development tool for child care managers and administrators. At present, the program

does not lead to a recognized credential. However, the Research and Promotion Group in Professional Development and Educational Management has submitted a research project to Child Care Visions to develop and test an accreditation program and to make recommendations on implementing and maintaining the program.

The work to date with this program suggests that the materials could be translated and adapted to other child care settings, both within and outside Quebec. The materials could also be used in other social and educational work environments. Plans are already under way to adapt the program to meet the needs of other teaching and social service institutions.

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Consulting and Training Service

Manitoba Child Care Association,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA), established in 1974, has a mandate to advocate for a quality system of child care, to provide services to its members and to advance child care as a profession. Approximately 350 of 500 licensed child care centres in the province are members, as well as about 2,100 individuals. During the 1980s, MCCA took a lead role in expanding ECE diploma training programs to increase the supply of qualified staff members. It also administered a program to relieve staff so they could participate in in-service training.

As the awareness of the importance of pre-service child care-specific training and education for caregivers grows, so too is the need for ongoing professional development and in-service training opportunities for those working in the field. Provincial child care associations and organizations play a major role in the development and delivery of professional development for the field. Given adequate resources, they have the capacity to reduce the existing barriers to participation of access and cost, and can ensure a coordinated, comprehensive approach to in-service training that is relevant to the changing needs of the child care workforce.

Consulting and Training Service

Initial Sponsor: Manitoba Child Care Association, which advocates for quality care and provides a range of services to members, including access to benefit packages, training and professional development and resource materials.

Program: Consulting service to child care centres and in-service and professional development for staff, including specific opportunities for centre administrators and directors.

Funding: Three-year funding from CCIF, from 1989-1992, on a declining basis, with a goal of self-sufficiency at the end of the funding period.

Current Status: With reductions in provincial program funding, and national child care initiatives not proceeding, the program was not able to operate as a self-sufficient service. It was integrated into the services of the MCCA, and focusses on training and resources.

Program Background

Before 1989, the professional development committee organized workshops for MCCA members using volunteers. During the 1980s, MCCA took the lead in expanding ECE diploma training programs to increase the supply of qualified staff members. It also administered a program to relieve staff for in-service training.

In 1987, it implemented staff training for the unemployed, working with Red River College and the University of Winnipeg, to graduate ECE diploma students. Many were women on social assistance. Out of 90 students, 55 completed the program.

In 1988, MCCA realized that there were specific needs of the province's francophone

community and communities in rural and northern Manitoba. It partnered with Red River College to establish an ECE diploma distance education model. The approach is well regarded, and has received national awards for innovative curriculum delivery. The current Red River College distance education ECE courses evolved from this project.

At about the same time, MCCA recognized the increasing need for in-service training. When CCIF became available, MCCA submitted a proposal for training and consulting services. The initial vision was exciting, ambitious and called CATS (consulting and training services). The CATS program was initially funded as a separate and distinct entity. The rationale was based in part on the belief that advisors providing consultative services needed to ensure confidentiality. It had a separate advisory committee and executive director.

CATS attempted to establish a consulting service to child care centres. The services were structured to be offered by advisors approved by CATS. Those interested in becoming advisors were screened through an extensive process. However, the cost to centres was prohibitive and most of those approved by CATS did not get work. The provincial grants were being cut and centres had less money to spend on professional development. The priority shifted from consulting to training and the development of training workshops.

A second CCIF project attempted an employer day-care consulting service intended to assist small- to medium-sized businesses wanting to establish workplace child care programs. However, this was not

based on a solid marketing analysis; a number of assumptions were made about what employers would pay which were not borne out. In the final phase of the CCIF project (1992-93), CATS tried to establish employee assistance, and child care resource and referral programs. A needs analysis was completed which included a survey with the Chamber of Commerce. However, the programs were quite expensive and again employers were not willing to pay.

As CCIF funding ended, MCCA realized that CATS was not financially viable and revenues for services could not sustain it. The decision was made to absorb the training programs into MCCA, under its board of directors and executive director, and reduce some of the staff positions.

Project Description

MCCA's training services provide support and resources to those working in the child care sector, including specific professional development opportunities for child care centre administrators and managers. They contain detailed workshop training packages and resource materials related to human resource issues, financial management and boards of directors. MCCA has also established a consulting service for the child care sector.

The training services include the following components:

- **The Employment Aids Resource Binder**
Designed to assist administrators and managers, the materials include contracts for child care employees and directors, interview questions, an information package for hiring a director, a method for establishing salary scales, employee and

director job descriptions, performance appraisal tools and personnel policies. The binder is intended to support Manitoba child care operations and promote competent, consistent human resource management procedures in the child care sector. Front-line child care managers and staff worked with consultants to produce the binder materials. The binder is available to members of the Manitoba Child Care Association for \$100 and to non-members outside Manitoba for \$200. (It is not available for non-members in Manitoba.) Updates are automatically sent after purchase. The binder is often purchased and used by out-of-province and on-reserve First Nations groups. There is a First Nations self-government pilot in Manitoba, and child care programs are opening and seeking human resource packages on child care.

- **Child care management software**

MCCA developed an information management software package, which is marketed under the name "CentreManager" in a partnership with a computer consulting company, under the entity Centre Solutions Inc. Twenty-nine child care centres are currently using the software, aimed at making reporting easier, which is in a form that meets the requirements of provincial licensing officials. A full-time computer consultant is available to members who require technical support. Credit course electives on the software are available from the University of Manitoba's Certificate in Applied Management, Day Care Specialization, and from the Assiniboine Community College's Certificate in Applied Day Care Management.

- **Workshops**

MCCA developed several workshop series as part of ongoing professional development

for the field. In 1995-96, approximately 300 child care staff and board members participated in workshops put on by CATS. Between 1995 and 1997, there was a decline in workshop enrolment, with a corresponding increase in attendance at MCCA's annual conference. This was related to the higher fees needed for workshops to be provided on a cost-recovery basis, coupled with a decrease in funding for professional development. There is, however, an ongoing interest in on-site workshops for individual centres. Mediation and Team Building are the two most often requested.

In 1997, MCCA piloted low-cost workshops offered in the evenings and on Saturdays, held at MCCA, with no advance registration required. They are offered for \$5 and are popular networking opportunities for front-line staff. Upcoming workshops are advertised in *Bridges*, a publication of MCCA which goes to all members.

- **Annual Conference**

An annual provincial conference is the central professional development/training initiative carried out by MCCA at this time. It aims to attract front-line staff, family child care providers, centre directors and other child care and early childhood professionals, to keep cost low and to make the content exciting to each of the target groups. In 1998, more than 900 people attended 100 workshops at the conference. The cost to attend for the three-day event is \$150; this is where most centres put their professional development dollars. MCCA offers bulk registration, with a significant reduction for four or more staff to attend. Travel and

accommodation subsidies are also available to those from outside Winnipeg.

Project Participants

The training programs offered are aimed at staff working in the field, but an ECE credential is not a requirement. The services are provided as ongoing professional development, and students commented on the relevancy of the program content, the high quality of instruction and an affordable way to get professional development. For those living outside urban areas, the on-site workshops provide a way for participants to access in-service training.

Project Developments

In January 1998, MCCA amalgamated with the Family Day Care Association of Manitoba, which has brought together the resources of the two groups. The Family Day Care Association brought a video series, "Let Babies Be Babies," which MCCA continues to market. The series is aimed at caregiving training for children under age three and is based on Magda Gerber's approach of caring in child care settings. It includes a balance of examples in both family child care and centre settings. Manuals accompany the video, which are being purchased by associations, colleges and child care centres. MCCA continues to integrate resources from the Family Day Care Association.

The materials and resources produced through MCCA's training services can be purchased and adapted by other provincial organizations across Canada. As mentioned earlier, the *Employment Aids Resource*

Binder is available to groups outside Manitoba; and approximately 12 are purchased each year. The training workshop packages are also available.

Other provincial organizations, including the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Saskatchewan Child Care Association and Early Childhood Development in Prince Edward Island have consulted with MCCA for assistance and information in establishing administrative and management support services for child care programs. MCCA would be interested in negotiating arrangements for other provincial/territorial organizations that wish to adapt the binder or other resources to their particular context.

Professional organizations are possible providers of human resource development for managers and administrators in child care settings. MCCA's experience is instructive for other professional organizations contemplating or already offering management and administrative training for the child care sector.

MCCA's training services do not attempt to replace either regulation concerning qualifications for supervisors and directors of licensed child care programs, or for-credit programs through postsecondary institutions. Rather, the training and human resource development opportunities supplement the provincial requirements and existing management certificate programs.

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Meadow Lake Tribal Council/School of Child and Youth Care, Child Care Education and Career Ladder Project

Meadow Lake Tribal Council,
Saskatchewan, and
School of Child and Youth Care,
University of Victoria, British Columbia

Core ECE programs prepare individuals to work with young children in child care settings, but the curriculum content tends to reflect mainstream cultural values and practices. There is a need to recognize, accept and integrate values, knowledge and practices from non-mainstream cultural contexts into the curriculum of ECE training programs.

First Nations students have often had to relocate to urban centres to pursue postsecondary studies. This often proved to be costly and difficult for students who may have been out of school for some time and were raising their own families. Without community support, students often found the experience difficult and returned to their communities before completing their studies; those who did leave often found reintegrating into their

Meadow Lake Child Care Education and Career Ladder Project

Sponsor: Meadow Lake Tribal Council and School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria.

Program: Bi-cultural generative curriculum model leading to two-year diploma in Child and Youth Care.

Funding: \$271,000 from CCIF in 1988 to conduct 14-month needs assessment; \$1 million from the Fund to develop and deliver the program from 1990-93.

Current Status: Program developed and delivered with six additional First Nations organizations, representing more than 25 communities

own communities a difficult experience and many ended up staying in the city, thus not contributing to their home community's development.

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council and the University of Victoria School of Child and Youth Care worked together between 1990 and 1995 to train First Nations child care workers. The resulting generative curriculum model is culturally sensitive and designed for Canada's First Nations communities. It is adaptable to each community's specific culture, beliefs and traditions.

Program Background

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council, which represents nine Cree and Dene First Nations in northwestern Saskatchewan, had embarked on an economic development strategy that made use of the area's natural

resources. However, Council members realized that successful economic and employment opportunities for people began with healthy child development. A variety of child care initiatives, followed by a community-developed health care model, have laid the basis for a renewed focus on economic development projects and initiatives that will yield results of self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

In 1988, CCIF provided funds to conduct a needs assessment. The results of the 14-month assessment found that the Meadow Lake communities needed 26 family child care homes and a child care centre. It identified the need for high quality child care programs that involved parents and elders, and reflected the traditions, cultures and values systems of each First Nations community. The assessment recommended a culturally specific training program offering nationally recognized qualifications to successful participants.

In 1988, the executive director of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council contacted the School of Child and Youth Care to begin discussions about the development of an appropriate bicultural curriculum reflective of the Meadow Lake Dene and Cree cultural values and practices. The School of Child and Youth Care agreed to work with Council members to design a culturally sensitive credit training program with opportunities for transferability of credits to other programs. Together, the two partners developed a training proposal for submission by the Meadow Lake Tribal Council to CCIF. The proposal was funded effective September 1990, for a three-year period of development and delivery.

Program Description

The approach to education that evolved from the partnership was later termed the "Generative Curriculum Model." It provided an "open architecture" that allowed both mainstream, Western understanding of appropriate child care and development, and community values and understanding of children's care and development, to engage each other in an interactive classroom environment.

The principles for the program were jointly developed and a curriculum was created that stood between the two cultures and communities. The Generative Curriculum Model incorporates curriculum equivalent to those of other college- or university-based early childhood or child and youth care programs, along with students' own knowledge and experience of First Nations theories and practices and teachings of community elders and respected others. Questions were developed for elders that related to course material, and their teachings provide the core of the community-specific material. The contributions of other community resource people enhance cultural awareness. The town of Meadow Lake has a variety of settings suitable for field placements, including kindergartens and preschools, hospitals and a child care centre.

The primary approaches used in the Generative Curriculum Model are:

- participatory learning, which involves the instructor as facilitator, helping

students integrate their existing knowledge and experience with new information;

- cooperative learning, where students work in learning groups; and
- community-based learning where community members come into the classroom and students go out into the communities.

The program courses are organized into four components, taught over five terms:

- Early Childhood Care and Education, and Child and Youth Care;
- Communications;
- Child and Youth Development; and
- Practica.

The resulting training curriculum is accredited as a two-year diploma program by the University of Victoria Child and Youth Care Program, and meets both British Columbia and Saskatchewan's educational standards and certification requirements for child care staff. The generative curriculum is an innovative model of collaboration and equal partnership between a formal training institution and First Nations communities. The diploma is fully transferable to the third year of the degree program at the School of Child and Youth Care.

Program Participants

Students are admitted to the program on a group basis. On the whole, they are admitted as mature students; usually about half have completed Grade 12 or equivalent. Most are women aged 25 to 30, with three or four children of their own. Most program participants take university preparation courses, ranging

from three months to a year prior to enrolling.

The community selects the program participants in consultation with the university. In the initial training program, 24 students expressed interest, 17 secured funding to attend and nine completed the two-year diploma. Now, for every 18 students entering the program, about 15 or 16 finish. All nine who graduated from the first Meadow Lake project are involved in the field; eight are employed in broader child and family services jobs and one is enrolled in a university degree program. In the second pilot project, approximately six students continued with degree studies.

Program participants were very positive about both their individual experiences in the program and the lasting impact of the program on their community. This included the positive impact of elder involvement, the heightened awareness of a community approach to development, and enhanced parenting skills. Students also commented on the importance of being able to relate to the province on a peer, rather than client basis, and the support of the university in recognizing the value of community-based knowledge.

In addition to the two-year diploma program, a family child care training program was also offered as part of the Meadow Lake child care project; 55 providers completed 45 to 60 hours of instruction. Family child care providers and parents in the Meadow Lake communities have access to a toy lending library and a family resource centre.

Program Developments

The first program using the Generative Curriculum Model was delivered in Meadow Lake, beginning in 1990. Since that time, similar programs have been developed for an additional six First Nations organizations. Each of these projects is typically offered on a one-time basis. The Meadow Lake project was offered a second time, but received funding for only one year.

The original program delivery was conceptualized as a cumulative "spiral" model, which was to incorporate and refine community-specific materials generated each time a program was delivered. However, as it became clear that most communities would be able to mount the program only once per four-year period, and that portability was important, a more generic, "circular" model replace the spiral model. Meadow Lake project representatives have been to numerous other communities to present findings on how to respond to First Nations training needs. The published program guide books include specific guidelines for program courses and a description of the process for developing a bicultural curriculum. They can be obtained from the School of Child and Youth Care.

The School of Child and Youth Care has worked with the Cowichan tribes on Vancouver Island, the Fraser Canyon Tribal Administration Group in Lytton, the Carrier Nation in northern interior British Columbia, Treaty 8 communities and the Onion Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan on similar projects using the curriculum

framework and processes first developed in partnership with Meadow Lake. The Mount Currie, Carrier and Treaty 8 groups, like Meadow Lake, entered into a two-way partnership with the School of Child and Youth Care at University of Victoria, while the other three groups included a local community college as a third partner. The population in each of these communities will not support an ongoing ECE training program but the Generative Curriculum Model in affiliation with the School of Child and Youth Care is able to meet the periodic need for trained ECE staff with one-time training.

The implementation of the Generative Curriculum Model in each community includes a review of the curriculum components and revisions to adapt it to individual community culture. The School's involvement ensures integrity of the approach and allows the program to be recognized as a two-year postsecondary diploma with full articulation to the degree program.

The Cowichan project has had an impact on both early childhood education training and on the community itself. An internal evaluation reported community changes, including more recognition of elders and a higher profile for children and their families. Malaspina College, which worked with the School of Child and Youth Care and the Cowichan tribes to deliver the program, has now instituted a permanent position of First Nations coordinator.

The student retention rates have improved as the Generative Curriculum Model for Early Childhood Education is adapted to

new groups. In the Lytton project, 16 students started the program and 14 completed it.

The high development costs incurred with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council project are not repeated in the delivery of the subsequent programs which have largely been funded through regular First Nations and provincial postsecondary funds. Overall, subsequent delivery of the Generative Curriculum Model is 10 to 15 percent higher than regular, full-time ECE diploma programs in community colleges. The additional costs cover the individual revision component and the inclusion of elders. However, as student retention rates increase, the actual costs per employed student must be included as part of cost-effectiveness.

The curriculum developed for Meadow Lake is used as a basis for subsequent programs, with the addition of a few additional courses. There must be community involvement and that of elders, and the courses are delivered in a manner consistent with the original principles. Each community locates the funding to deliver the program; there is an implicit process of adapting the principles to be community specific, but dollars are not sufficient for this process.

After the first program was delivered at Meadow Lake, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) became a partner. Initially, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) did not recognize all of the SIIT courses, even though the program was done in conjunction with the University of Victoria, but the problem was

resolved satisfactorily. Students from the Onion Lake project received diplomas from SIIT which are recognized by the University of Victoria. The graduates of the Onion Lake diploma program initiated a next phase to the Generative Curriculum Model, consisting of a community-based degree program in Child and Youth Care delivered in Onion Lake. This University of Victoria/Onion Lake partnership has led to the first bachelor degree graduates in the First Nations Generative Curriculum Model project.

Success has varied; some communities have a high student participation and graduate rate, but low elder involvement; in other communities, the "ripple" effect did not go as far as in others and the long-term impact has been less visible. The First Nations Partnership Program has recently received initial funding for an evaluation and documentation of the projects to date. This will include a cost-effectiveness study, community development assessment and graduate follow-up. In addition, instructors from each community have been brought together, and it is hoped that elders can be brought together in the future.

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council and School of Child and Youth Care partnership provides an exciting example for the development of a collaborative curriculum which accommodates both the requirements of formal postsecondary education and the need to build on cultural values and practices. The model itself is a guide to a process of generating culturally sensitive curriculum which is useful for First Nations communities and

has the potential for curriculum development in other communities.

The Generative Curriculum and its flexible, temporary, community-based training model helps address the shortage of First Nations people who are trained ECE staff. It also addresses concerns with ECE curriculum content that is not sensitive or inclusive of First Nations cultures.

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Good Beginnings, Introductory Family Child Care Training Program

Western Canada Family Child Care Association, British Columbia, and Vancouver Community College

The Western Canada Family Child Care Association (WCFCCA) was established in 1980 to promote, support and advocate for quality family child care. Operating on a voluntary basis, without paid staff, the organization has more than 450 individual members as well as a number of organizations.

Vancouver Community College, part of the publicly funded postsecondary education system in British Columbia, offers the Basic ECE Certificate program, a Post Basic Infant/Toddler Certificate, a School Age Child Care Certificate and an Administration Certificate.

For many years, the focus of early childhood training has been on centre-based care for preschool children, usually offered through community colleges and other formal training institutions. Many of these training programs have been established in response to the legislative requirements of

Good Beginnings

Initial Sponsor: Western Canada Family Child Care Association and Vancouver Community College.

Program: Forty-hour introductory family child care training program delivered by community colleges and community agencies; includes a six-part video series and accompanying print materials.

Funding: \$375,000 from CCIF for the research and development of audiovisual materials, 1991-94; \$93,000 from Ministry of Women's Equality to develop print materials and for promotion and marketing costs.

Current Status: The program has become the standard for introductory family child care training in British Columbia. Over 1,800 students have completed the program. It is increasingly being taken by parents, nannies and centre-based staff.

the particular province, but there are a considerable number that exceed those requirements.

No province or territory requires formal early childhood training for family day care providers, but a few jurisdictions now include some form of orientation or introductory training, either as a pre-service or in-service requirement. Over the last few years, several community colleges have begun to offer certificate programs and shorter courses that are specific to family day care. As the interest in and need for training of family day care providers has continued to grow, so too has the interest in a standardized, yet adaptable model.

Project Background

Good Beginnings evolved from WCFCCA and Vancouver Community College's (VCC) long-standing involvement with family child care training. In response to requests from the field, the program was developed, in part, to alleviate barriers of access to training for family child care providers.

There had been a long-standing frustration on the part of the family child care community that the focus of early childhood education was too centre-based. The training did not deal adequately with issues specific to family child care, such as managing a business, the impact of the program on your own family, working alone with mixed age groups and relating to parents. The few resource materials that did exist were American and not always applicable within the Canadian context.

In 1981, WCFCCA and VCC developed the first family day care training in British Columbia. Entitled "Introduction to Starting and Operating a Family Day Care," the 20-hour course was designed to meet the specific needs of family day care providers. As the popularity of the program grew over the next four years, the course began to be taught in several locations around the province. In 1985, in response to the increasing demand for additional training, VCC introduced a one-year family day care certificate program.

In 1990, as a result of this certificate program, the Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia extended associate membership in the organization to graduates of the certificate program, which

afforded a new level of professionalism to family day care providers.

The project began with a CCIF grant in 1991, for the research and the development of the audiovisual materials. The companion print materials, re-editing of the promotional video and costs associated with marketing and distribution were funded through a Quality Enhancement Grant from the Ministry of Women's Equality. Funding was received from the then Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, through VCC, for the distance education component. Additional funding from the Vancouver Foundation assisted with revisions to the original print materials.

Program Description

Good Beginnings is an introductory family child care training program that includes a promotional video on family child care, guided field observations, a six-part video/television series and accompanying print materials. It is based on the underlying principle that training is critical to the provision of quality child care and includes the following goals:

- to improve the image of family day care and ensure recognition of the role and value of care providers;
- to demonstrate the diversity of family child care arrangements, including diversity of caregivers, children, geography and programs; and
- to present theory, examples and practical opportunities for participants.

The video series uses a variety of family day care environments and available community supports as a basis for

discussion about philosophies and the delivery of high quality care. Four of the six videos cover “typical” ECE curriculum content, from a family day care perspective: child development, guiding behaviour, health, safety and nutrition, and program planning. The other two are specific to family day care—“An Introduction to Family Day Care” and “Managing a Family Day Care Business.”

The program is designed to be facilitated by individuals who have a strong knowledge base in family day care, and be delivered through or in collaboration with a recognized training institution or community agency.

The companion print materials for the program include a *Facilitator’s Program and Curriculum Guide* and a 12-lesson participant workbook, *Caregiving Skills for Family Child Care Providers*. Each of the lessons contains in-class and assignment exercises, which are submitted to the facilitator for assessment.

The program is delivered over approximately 40 hours, either in regularly scheduled sessions over a period of weeks, or in separate workshop sessions over a longer time period. In addition to community colleges and other training institutions, the program is also delivered through Child Care Resource and Referral Programs (formerly Child Care Support Programs) which help serve the needs of family child care providers across the province. The program can be delivered in a flexible manner, making necessary adaptations to specific local child care requirements and the needs of particular communities.

Program Participants

Good Beginnings was developed for prospective and experienced family child care providers as well as parents, nannies and early childhood educators. An estimated 1,800 have completed the course since its implementation. Students are encouraged to take the course at their local community college, in communities where it is offered. However, if there are barriers to taking instruction at the college, such as the cost, the time of day the course is offered, language or transportation, it may be accessible through a community Child Care Resource and Referral Program or a Neighbourhood House.

Students commented that in addition to the good preparation the course gave them for becoming a family child care provider, the emotional support provided by the instructors, the peer support and access to resource and reference materials were very helpful in a profession where one works alone and can feel isolated.

Program Developments

Good Beginnings has become a prerequisite for entry into the family day care certificate program. The participant workbook has been revised four times, and the instructor’s guide three times, to update information and reflect new policies. The last revision includes information about supported child care, British Columbia’s new direction for an inclusive delivery approach for children with special needs.

The workbook materials have been adapted by VCC, in close collaboration

with WCFCCA, to be suitable for distance education and used in conjunction with the video series: "Good Beginnings: An Introductory Family Day Care Distance Education Pilot Project." The distance education program is offered by VCC through the Continuing Education Department and is designed for adult learners for whom on-site study may be neither available nor accessible. While there has been no external evaluation of the program, the participants in the pilot-testing phase of the distance education model responded very favourably in the participant evaluation.

Good Beginnings is now a standard introductory family child care training program used throughout British Columbia. It is widely available in a variety of formats through both formal training institutions and community agencies. In addition to Child Care Resource and Referral Programs, courses are offered through community-based Neighbourhood Houses.

The original print materials, *Introduction to Family Child Care*, have been adapted for family child care providers who do not speak English as a first language. Through funding from the City of Vancouver Child Care Grant Program, to undertake translation and allow for consultation with members of the specific community to ensure culturally appropriate approaches, the Vancouver Child Care Support Program (operated by Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre) collaborated with VCC to develop the materials in Spanish (in 1992), Punjabi (1993) and Cantonese (1994). Instructors are screened by VCC and deliver the training under contract to Westcoast. Classes are held at Westcoast and local Neighbourhood Houses.

A statement of completion is issued through the training college or community agency, stating that the course has been completed in conjunction with WCFCCA. To date, more than 300 students have completed the First Language Program and some have continued with further early childhood education.

In partnership with the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society, the Surrey Resource and Referral Program adapted into Punjabi some of the materials of Great Beginnings and developed a basic three-day training program on health and safety, child development and first aid to support the provision of family child care to farm workers. Some of the participants of the three-day program later enrolled in the full 12-week course offered in Punjabi by the Surrey Resource and Referral Program.

The program is also being used outside British Columbia. Red River College in Manitoba uses Good Beginnings in its family day care course. Much of the material is applicable to any family child care situation. It was written for a B.C. audience, so it does contain specific information on the child care subsidy system and regulations. This can be easily tailored to other jurisdictions.

The creators of Good Beginnings would like to develop the course into modules that could be taught as separate components and a self-study distance education program with Child Care Resource and Referral Programs acting as tutors and supporting a mentoring

SELECTED CASE STUDIES

network, and to translate the videos. However, there is no ongoing source of funding to further develop the materials; revision efforts to date have been accomplished through volunteer efforts and fund raising.

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Partners for Children

Yukon College

Yukon College serves approximately 120 full- and part-time students through the one-year certificate and two-year diploma programs of the Early Childhood Development Program. Yukon College is a publicly funded postsecondary institution which offers an ECE Diploma Program as well as a 60-hour introductory course in early childhood development, required for Level I certification, the minimum requirement for at least 50 percent of child care centre staff.

Caregivers living in northern and isolated communities face particular challenges due to their geographic isolation and lack of access to resources, supports and training opportunities. Community-based approaches that maximize existing expertise and resources, and that are responsive to local need can be an important way of providing cost-effective and coordinated supports in a rural environment.

Program Background

Partners for Children was developed by Yukon College at the request of, and in consultation with, the Community Coalition for Yukon Children, a group of approximately 80 representatives from across the Yukon comprising child-serving agencies, other community-based programs, parents and trainers. For a two-year period, the college also delivered

Partners for Children

Initial Sponsor: Yukon College, a community college offering two-year diploma in Early Childhood Development and 60-hour orientation course.

Program: Continuum of community-based training and educational services for caregivers and parents. Courses and workshops are designed in response to annual community needs assessments. Participants have the option of undertaking additional assignments for some courses which lead to provincial Level I certification.

Funding: Part of overall CAP-C funding allocation for the Yukon, which has been reduced over the last two years. The program currently receives approximately \$125,000 per year for three years.

Current Status: Fewer workshops are now offered as a result of funding cuts. However, almost all of the regulated family child care providers and centre-based staff in Yukon have accessed training through this project.

the Child Care Training Project, a CCIF-funded program developed by Yukoners, which aimed to improve the quality of child care by increasing the availability of practical training, primarily to the licensed child care sector. More than 300 caregivers participated in over 100 workshops offered during the life of the project. As CCIF funding ended, an extensive evaluation of the Child Care Training Project indicated strong support for this type of training, and identified the need for continuing educational opportunities.

With the introduction of the Community Action Program for Children (CAP-C), the

Community Coalition for Yukon Children was formed to identify priority funding areas. As a result, four CAP-C projects were approved, including Partners for Children, which built on the strengths of the Child Care Training Project and was adapted in several ways to meet the criteria and focus of CAP-C.

Past efforts to enhance supports to parents and caregivers in Yukon met with limited success. As programs started and ended with short-term project-based funding, the knowledge and resources gained from various activities were often lost. This resulted in considerable inefficiency and a frustration for parents seeking support, who often discovered that a needed service was no longer available. In part, the impetus for Partners for Children was sparked by the end of CCIF funding for the Child Care Training Project, and a desire to continue to provide the type of training and support already in place, as well as to broaden the availability and accessibility of programs.

By enhancing the present education, training and resources available to caregivers in a coordinated and cost-efficient manner, Partners for Children aims to strengthen local community groups and develop local partnerships to ensure that the right training is identified and that the delivery plan is appropriate, in the belief that increasing the knowledge skills and supports to all caregivers will enhance the well-being of children.

Program Description

Partners for Children is a continuum of training and educational services for caregivers and parents of high-risk children

age 0 to 6. Partners for Children sets out to address situations that place children at risk, such as inexperience of parents, poor health and nutrition, lack of access to early educational services and lack of community support for families and caregivers. For the purposes of this project, the term "caregiver" was expanded to include all individuals who care for young children, "professional" caregivers as well as parents.

As well as providing information and outreach activities, Partners for Children conducts regular needs assessments of parents, caregivers and communities to help the community both identify the most needed training and determine the best delivery method. Once training and education needs have been identified, sessions are designed specific to that community.

To maximize existing resources and knowledge, the project utilizes the expertise of many workers in community agencies or government. Where necessary, facilitator training is provided to ensure that the workshop or other activity is designed to meet the specific needs of a particular community. As needed, outside experts are brought into Whitehorse to broaden the knowledge base of the trainers.

To be responsive to individual communities, the psychological, as well as physical barriers to training, are considered. Disabilities, learning styles and literacy levels of program participants are taken into account as activities are designed. The project staff also ensure that programs are sensitive to cultural differences within the territory.

Professional caregivers who participate in training activities receive funding for daytime substitutes to facilitate their participation, and all participants receive reimbursement for their direct child care costs. There is no cost to participants for any of the training activities.

In addition to community-directed training, Partners for Children offers a more structured form of training delivered at the college: "Special Topics in Early Childhood Education." Students select four workshops from several that are offered in areas such as child development, guiding behaviour and facilitating the inclusion of children with special needs. Upon successful completion of the 60-hour training, and three follow-up assignments, students are granted a Level I status by the Yukon Territorial Government Child Care Services Unit. They may then submit the credentials to the college and are granted four credits toward an Early Childhood Development certificate or diploma. Students who wish may also take any of the workshops on an audit basis. The program is offered throughout Yukon and two of the workshops are now available through distance education.

Yukon College provides administrative services and support to the project. The project is overseen by a Steering Committee made up of representatives of the college, the Child Care Services Unit of the Yukon government, the Yukon Child Care Association, the Yukon Advisory Council on First Nations Child Welfare, as well as a number of community-based organizations and members of the child care community.

In 1996, the second full year of the project, 10 of the 14 communities in Yukon participated in educational activities coordinated by Partners for Children. A total of 90 workshops and related activities were identified and requested, and 40 were delivered in the 1996-97 fiscal year.

Activities ranged from ongoing training in sexual abuse counselling, to workshops in stress management, child development, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, balancing work and family, and guiding children's behavior, to funding for local parent support groups and providing child development videos free at local video outlets. In addition, the project developed and distributed a regular newsletter that provides resource information for parents and caregivers, and co-hosted a weekly radio show, "The Family Show," which aired Yukon-wide and covered a wide range of topics.

Program Participants

To date, 750 participants have attended Partners for Children workshops. All workshops are offered free of charge to participants and child care staff replacement costs are sometimes covered.

Community facilitators who have delivered training have indicated that the process has enhanced their capacity to do their jobs. They believe that delivering training that has been requested specifically by their local community has helped them gain a better understanding of its needs.

CAP-C requires regular third-party evaluations of all funded projects. The first, recently completed evaluation, suggests a high level of satisfaction from the program participants, many of whom perceive this to

be the only support available to them, either in their role as child care providers in rural communities or as parents. There has also been strong support from the trainers from both government and community agencies, which feel that they are now perceived in a more positive light by their communities.

Program Developments

The program is now operating on a reduced budget and has had to limit the number of workshops it can provide. However, as a result of the reduced funding, some partnerships have been developed with the departments of Education, and Health and Social Services, as well as the Women's Directorate, which have been positive.

The weekly radio program is no longer aired, but consideration is being given to 30-second public broadcasting spots to advertise the program.

A needs assessment is conducted annually to determine the training needs of the communities across Yukon. A list of priorities is sent to the Steering Committee which, in turn, develops a workplan based on the available budget. The training requirements vary according to the number of new child care programs that have recently opened. Otherwise, the need is more for ongoing professional development. Many of the more recent participants are parents.

Thought has been given to develop the four basic courses for delivery by distance education. However, barriers of literacy and language have deemed this approach not practical at this time.

The project has allowed many centres in rural and remote parts of Yukon to remain

open by providing ongoing opportunities to training and professional development. Almost every child care and regulated family child care home in Yukon has accessed the opportunities available through Partners for Children.

The results to date suggest that this coordinated approach to providing a continuum of educational and training supports that have been identified by the community are easily adapted to any northern community. This approach does challenge the more traditional approach to training, which is usually based on an established curriculum deemed to contain the elements necessary to meet the needs of a particular job, rather than ongoing program design and development, according to changing needs of communities.

Future evaluations of the project will determine the degree to which there have been positive outcomes for children. Funding remains a challenge; administrative support has been eliminated; the newsletter has been reduced to three times per year; and curriculum development has been reduced, as has dedicated staff time.

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Conclusion

Our *Child Care Workforce: From Recognition to Remuneration* indicates that the demand for caregivers will continue to increase, both for traditional child care settings and for broader early childhood-related programs. There is an increasing awareness of the important role that early childhood experiences have on the development of young children and the impact that the relationship between child and caregiver plays in shaping that experience. Research consistently shows that caregiver training and education are critical elements in providing quality care.

To date, the majority of caregivers in the child care workforce are not required to have postsecondary training in early childhood education or related training. Child care legislation in most provinces requires some caregivers in centre-based training to have some formal training, but family child care providers and in-home caregivers have few or no requirements. Few provinces have requirements for ongoing professional development.

At the same time, focus groups conducted for the Child Care Sector Study indicated that caregivers across settings recognize the importance of training, education and professional development and the role they play in the provision of quality care. The study notes the need for a continuum of accessible training opportunities that link informal and credit training; to develop mechanisms that recognize and bring untrained, yet experienced, caregivers into

the formal training process; and to become more inclusive of workers that represent the Canadian multicultural context.

Each of the programs described in this report has attempted to reduce barriers to training and development for particular populations in the child care workforce, and could likely be replicated in other parts of the country. However, no quantitative evaluations of any of the programs have been conducted. While comprehensive qualitative evaluations of the programs have also not been completed, student satisfaction appears to be high. Many indicated that they would not have been able to access more traditional types of training due to geography, employment or cost.

Each of these training programs was developed and implemented initially with funding from CCIF, and one with subsequent funding from CAP-C. Without CCIF, it is unlikely that any of these innovative approaches would have come to fruition. The programs face an uncertain future as resources for postsecondary institutions are decreasing, and as professional development dollars for child care programs become less available.

The Child Care Sector Study found that child care associations cannot be maintained through membership fees as caregiver wages are too low, nor can caregivers afford costly training programs on their own. As the Steering Committee for the sector study looks at ways of addressing the recommendations contained in the report, it will need to address how to ensure adequate training for the early childhood workforce in cost-effective and innovative ways.

