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Workforce Survey Summary (2024)

Prepared by the City of Cornwall's Children's Services



In an effort to get more information from its diverse and dedicated workforce, the City of Cornwall's Children's Services department released its 2024 Workforce Survey.

This bilingual survey was made available to Early Years professionals on March 13, 2024, and closed on April 10, 2024. It was advertised on the City of Cornwall social media pages as well as in local Early Years and child care centres. Additionally, the survey was shared through networks by various local stakeholders and partners.

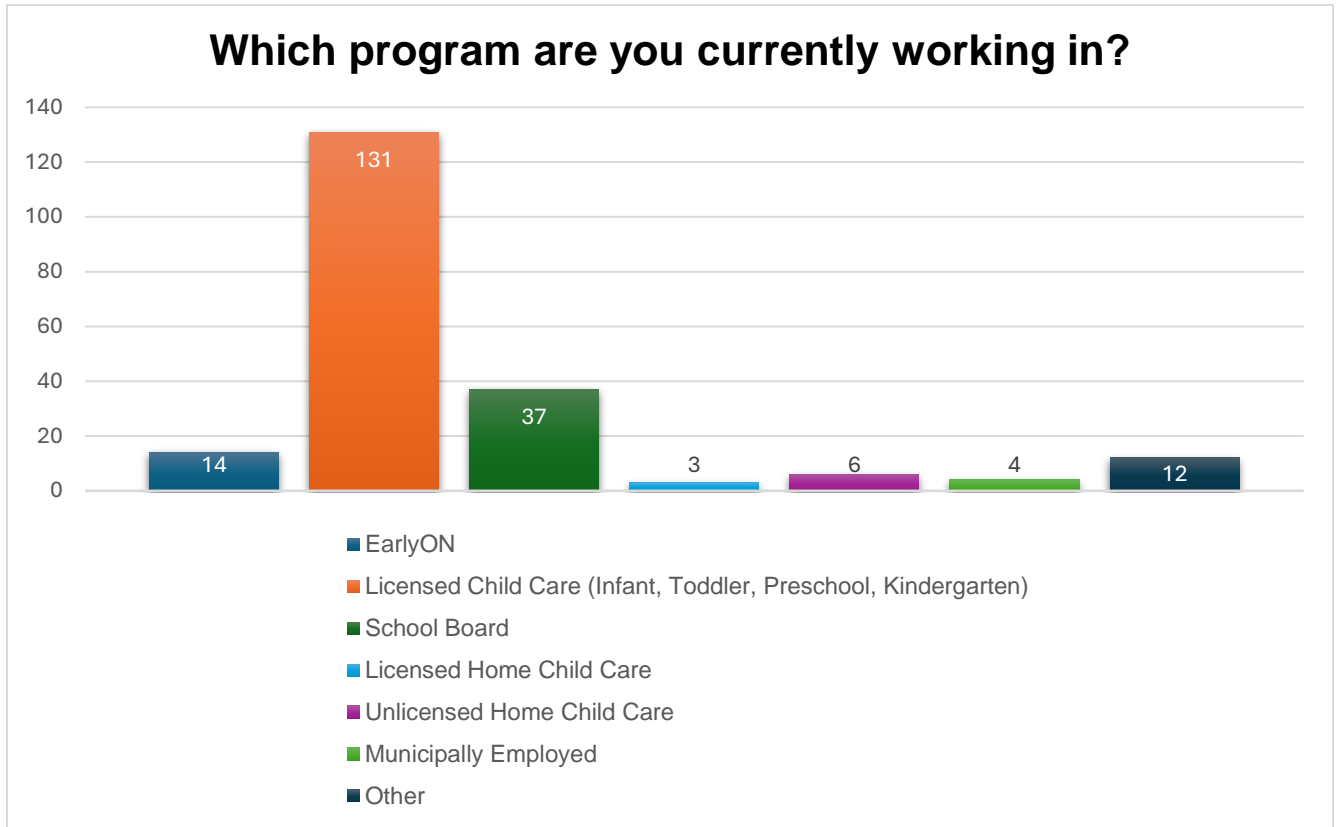
An impressive **207 responses** were received, which helped paint a thorough picture of the current state of the local Early Years workforce.

The below report was created using data compiled from the survey results. The information collected will be used to guide decision making by the Children's Services department. Additionally, it will assist the department in crafting its [Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan](#) for 2025-2029.

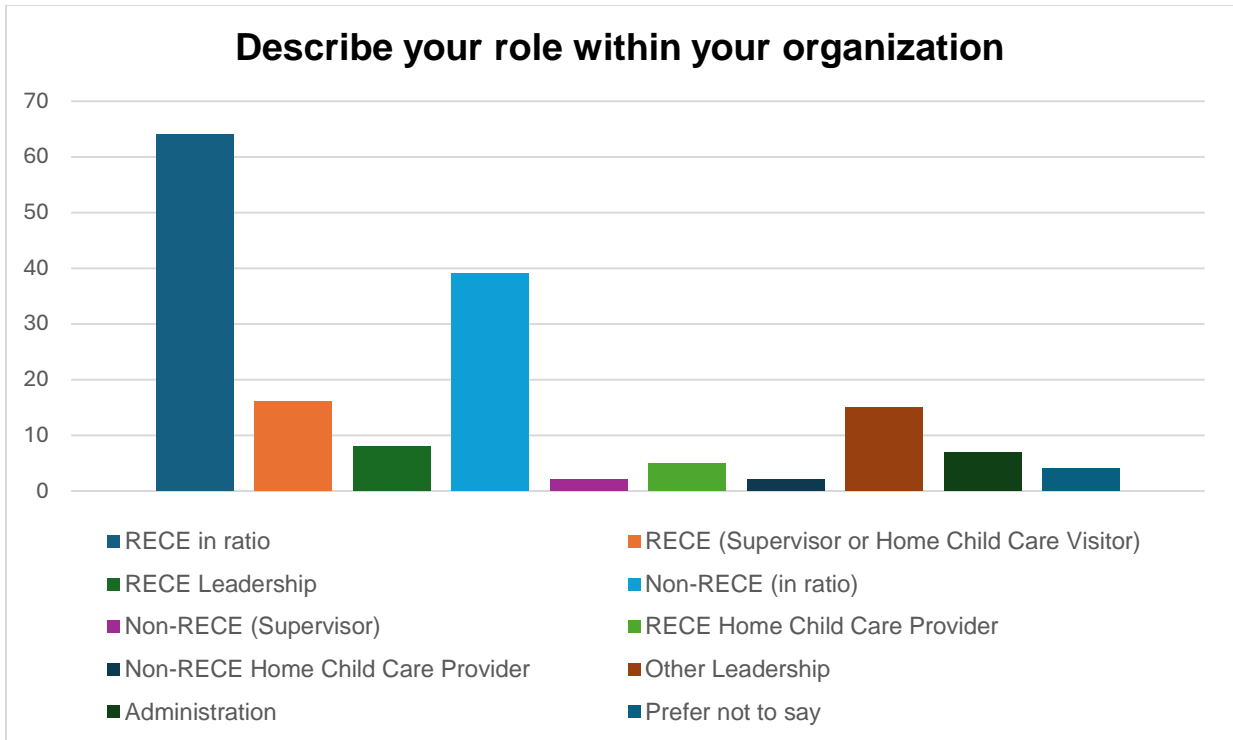
The Children's Services department would like to acknowledge and thank the many individuals, service providers and community agencies who contributed to making this survey a success.

1. Workforce environment

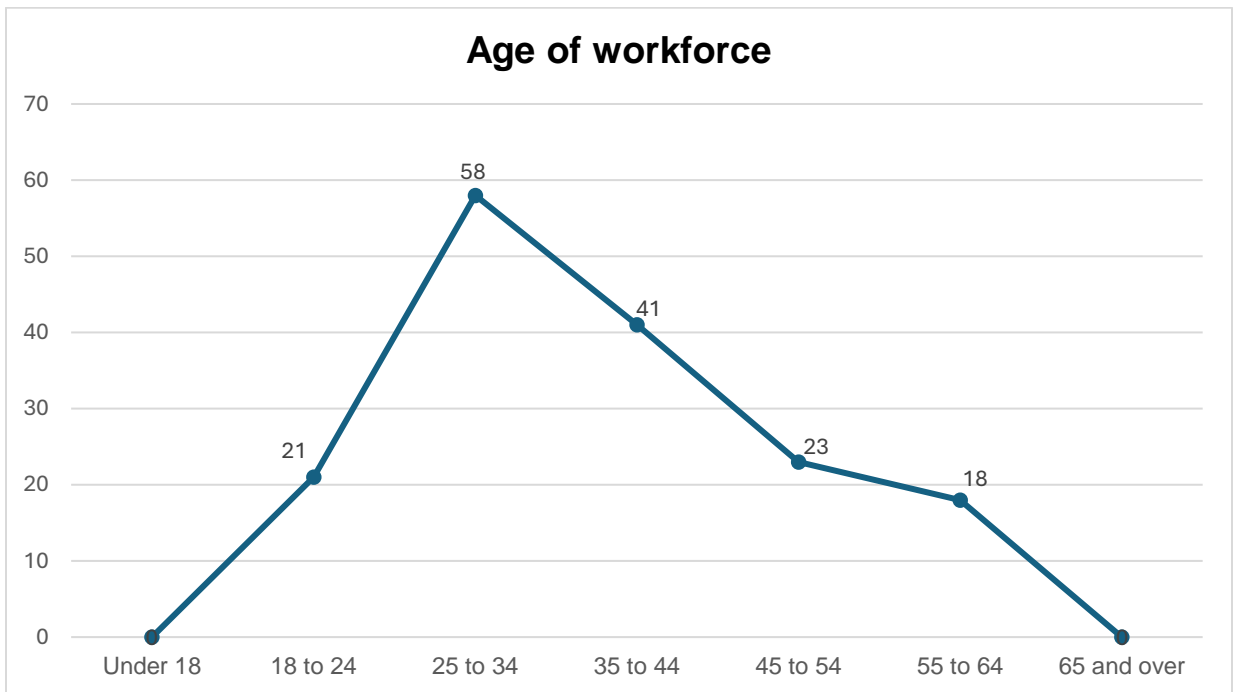
In order to ensure the responses were representative of the child care and EarlyON workforce in Cornwall and SD&G, the survey was designed to filter out any survey participants that were from outside our service area or working in a School Board setting. The remaining 170 survey responses were analyzed to help us understand our local workforce.



103 respondents identified that they worked in the City of Cornwall, whereas 44 identified as working for the United Counties of SDG. 15 identified as working in both Cornwall and SDG and 8 identified as working in a different location.



When asked how old they are, several respondents indicated that they were between the age of 25 and 44, as seen below. No participant indicated being either under 18 or over 65 years of age.



The majority of respondents (**110**) indicated that they held a College diploma as their highest level of education, followed by **23** who shared that they had a high school diploma

or equivalent. This was followed by **14** that possessed a Bachelor’s Degree, **9** that possessed a trade certificate or diploma and **4** that indicated that they had a Master’s Degree. **3** preferred not to say.

When asked where they had received their diploma or degree from, the majority of RECEs answered St. Lawrence College, as seen below.

St. Lawrence College	54
Le Collège La Cité	14
Algonquin College	10
Vanier College	4
Loyalist College	3
Humber College	1
Canadore College	1
Mohawk College of Applied Arts	1
Concordia University	1

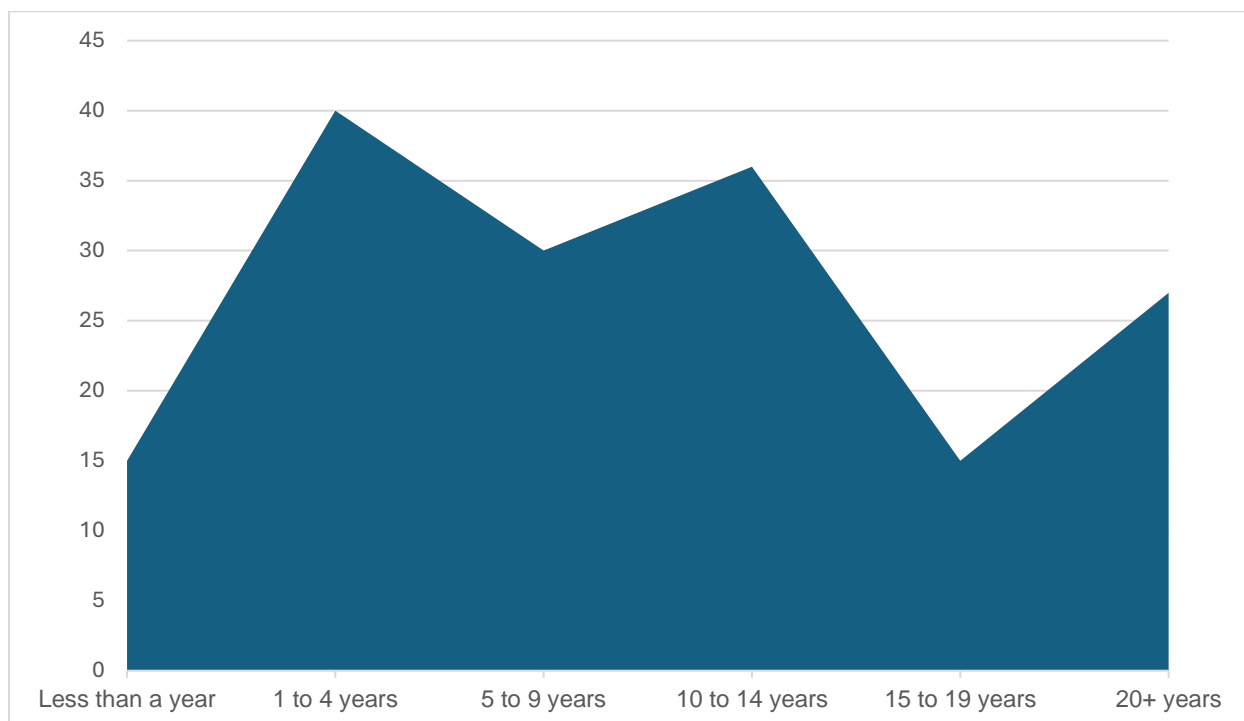
While **90%** of these respondents indicated that they believed that their education had prepared them adequately in the field of Early Childhood Education, we did receive some feedback from those who did not feel that their education adequately prepared them for working in the field:

Training showed picture perfect, unrealistic settings. The harsh reality is much more stressful. Even with placements you have an extra body in the space, since the student in not in ratio... Behaviours, limited resources, short staffing, no support, and unsupportive administration are far more realistic.
(RECE working in ratio)

While in school I did not learn strategies to help me when faced with children with needs. Would have also liked to learn more about ministry requirements.
(RECE, supervisor or home child care visitor)

Children currently have way more emotions and diagnoses than what was ever taught.
(RECE, supervisor or home child care visitor)

40 respondents indicated that they had been working in the field from 1 to 4 years, followed by 36 that indicated that they had been working in the field for the past 10 to 14 years. Interestingly 27 participants indicated that they had been working in the Early Years field for 20 years and over. The graph below shows that there are nearly twice as many Early Years workers with 20+ years of experience compared to those just entering the field.



Most of the participants in the survey (**98**) indicated that they worked 6 to 8 hours per day consecutively. This was followed by **28** that said they worked 9+ hours per day consecutively. **13** worked split shifts, followed by 10 that are supply staff, **4** that work 2 to 5 hours per day consecutively and **1** that works less than 3 hours per day consecutively. **9** participants indicated that they worked other amounts of time.

When asked if they would recommend the Early Years field to someone who may be interested, **80.3%** answered that they would, with the following reasons (below):

This is hard... yes and no. I would be very, very upfront with them. The pay is low, the stress is high, you give way more then you get back... BUT it is still very rewarding at times and there is nothing quite like it. **(RECE working in ratio)**

It's rewarding to see children learn and develop and know that you have played a role in their early stage of life! **(Non-RECE Supervisor)**

Early childhood education is a very rewarding field where you have the opportunity to make a significant impact on young children's lives and watch them develop. **(Non-RECE (in ratio))**

When asked why they wouldn't recommend the Early Years field to someone who may be interested, some of the participants indicated the following reasons:

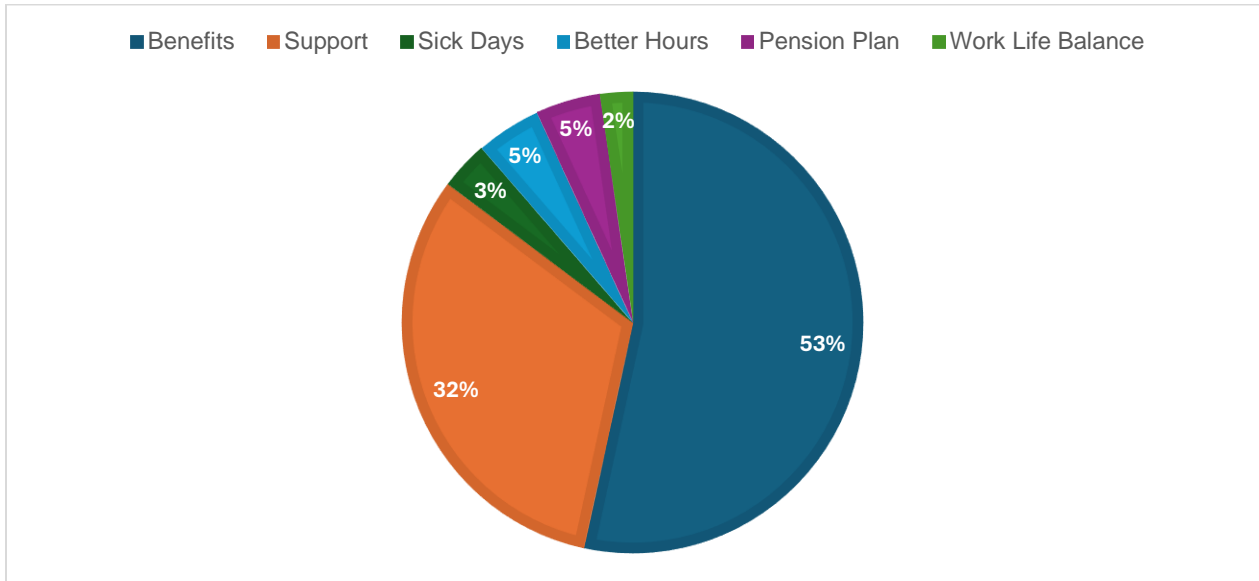
When asked why they wouldn't recommend the Early Years field to someone who may be interested, some of the participants indicated the **following reasons:**

As much as it's rewarding to see children grow, we don't get paid very well for all that we do. **(Registered Early Childhood Educator (in ratio))**

There are more and more children with behavioural issues that some of us with less experience know how to deal with and we can't do anything but get hit, spit on, etc... and there are no consequences for the children. **(Registered Early Childhood Educator (in ratio))**

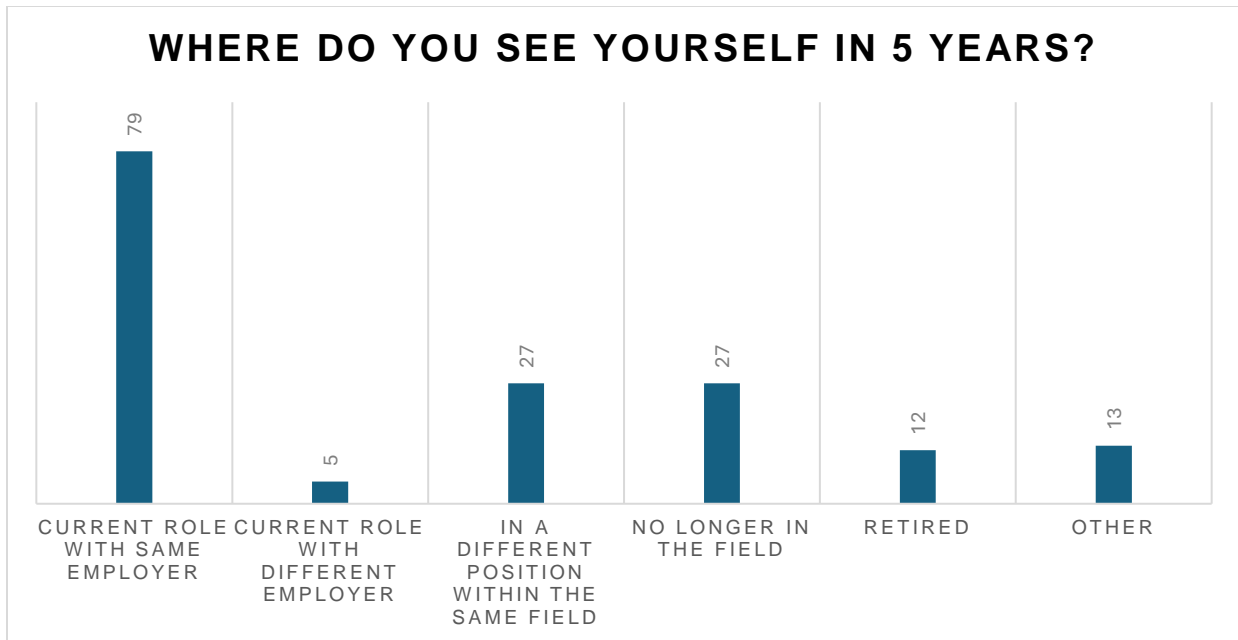
It is a lot of work, and the hours are all over the place, and I don't think we get paid as much as we should. ECEs can earn a lot more money working for the school board. The ratios are also disappointing, 24 preschoolers with 3 educators in a tiny room is a horrible idea. Those children deserve better. We also get juggled from room to room, so it feels like we're just being used as numbers instead of people. **(Registered Early Childhood Educator (in ratio))**

When asked what they thought could encourage someone to pursue a career or remain in the field of Early Years Education, several respondents answered benefits (**as seen below**)



2. The Future of the Workforce

When asked where they saw themselves in the next five years, several participants (**73**) answered in their current position within the same employer. Although most answered that they were hoping to stay in the field, 39 outlined that they would either retire or leave Early Years all together.



When asked to give a reason why they are planning on leaving the field, some of the participants indicated **the following**:

Because the amount of stress and other things early childhood educators deal with and the little thanks we get for what we go through in a day is taxing on us (mentally and physically) We need much more support in day to day happenings.
(RECE in ratio)

It's not the same anymore. We are not valued for what we do. Parents take advantage of us!
(RECE in ratio)

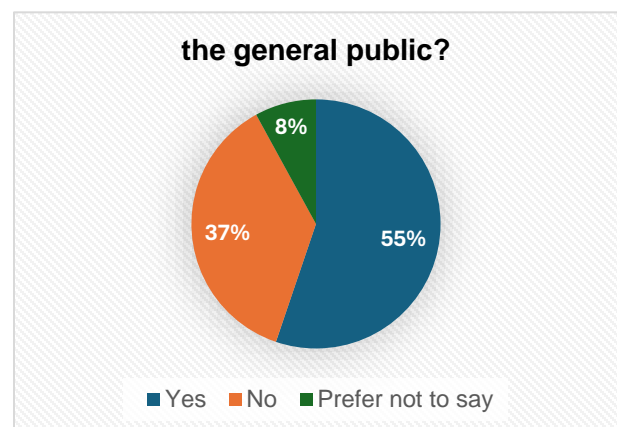
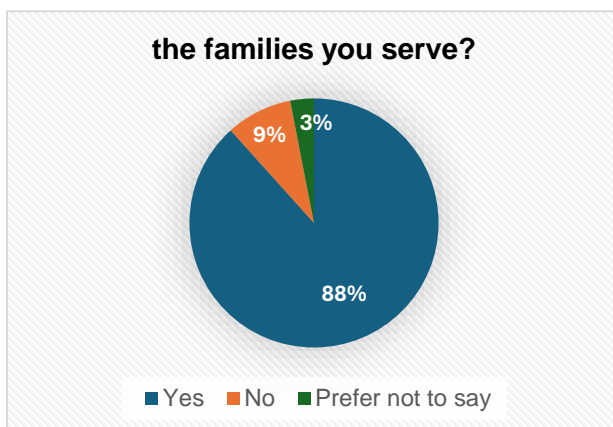
Not exactly what I went to school for and pay is not enough. **(Non-RECE (in ratio))**

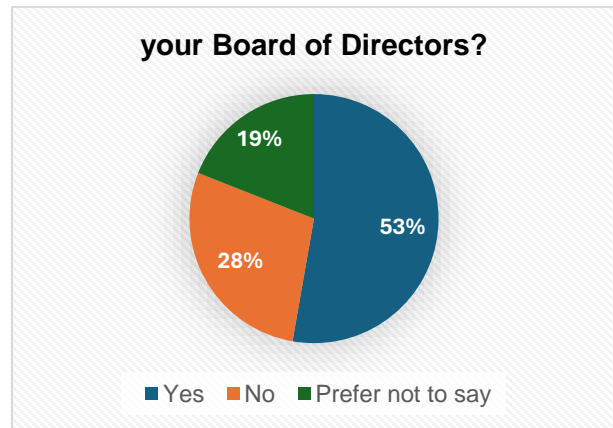
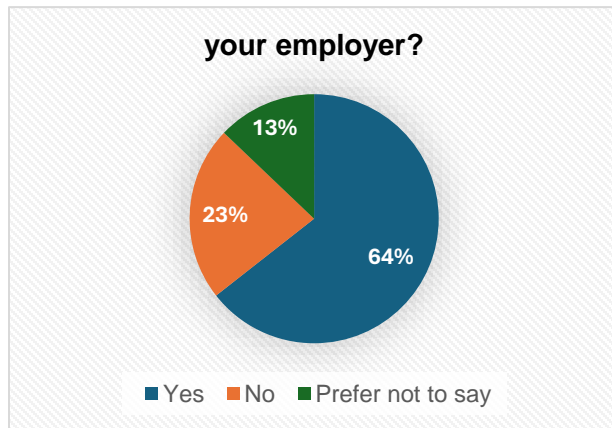
While at work... we are their moms, their support, their friend and their teacher. We wear many hats, and the majority of the time these things go unnoticed., whether it be recognized with words, compensation etc...

I'm tired, I just want to be happy and not stressed everyday. (Registered Early Childhood Educator **(Supervisor or Home Child Care Visitor)**)

Survey participants outlined that they felt valued within their workplace — either by the families they serve, management, the public or their Board of Directors. The degree by which they felt valued did differ by category, as seen below:

Do you feel valued by...



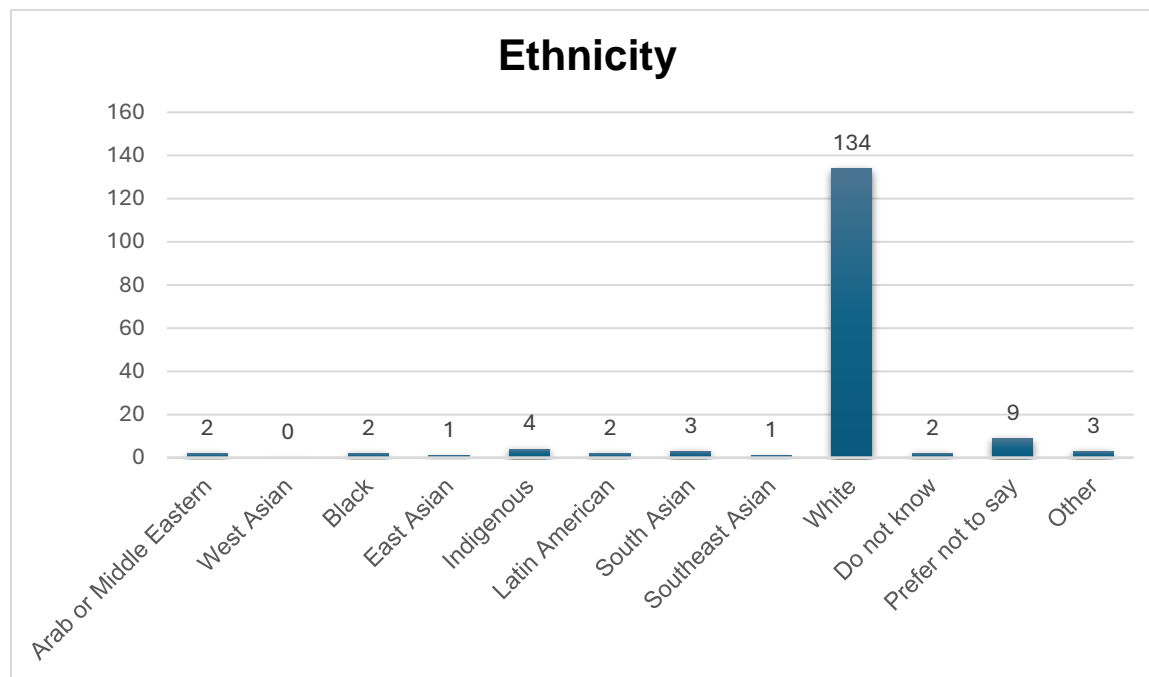


When asked if they felt comfortable being themselves at work, the majority of respondents (88%) answered yes, followed by 9% who answered no and 3% who preferred not to say.

3. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

To further understand the local Early Years workforce, the Children’s Services department asked participants to provide details on their background, such as ethnicity, gender and disabilities.

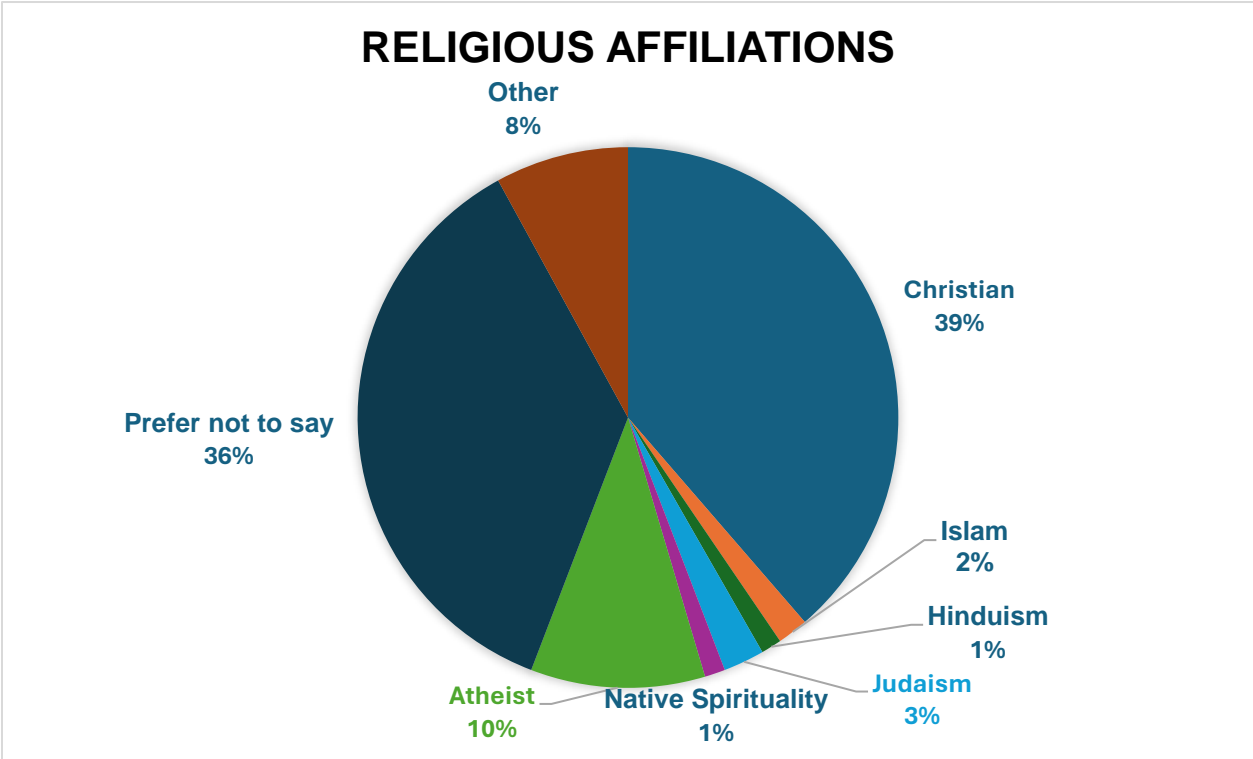
Although the majority of participants indicated that they were white, other ethnicities were represented, as is seen below.



The overwhelming majority of survey participants (**93%**) also indicated that they had been born in Canada.

Furthermore, **36%** of the Early Years professionals that took the survey indicated that they were Francophones.

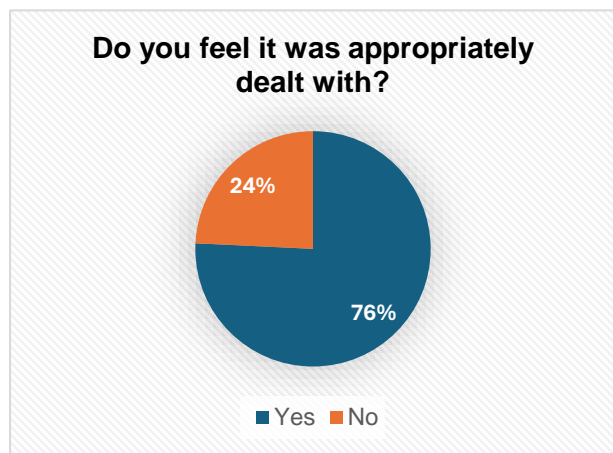
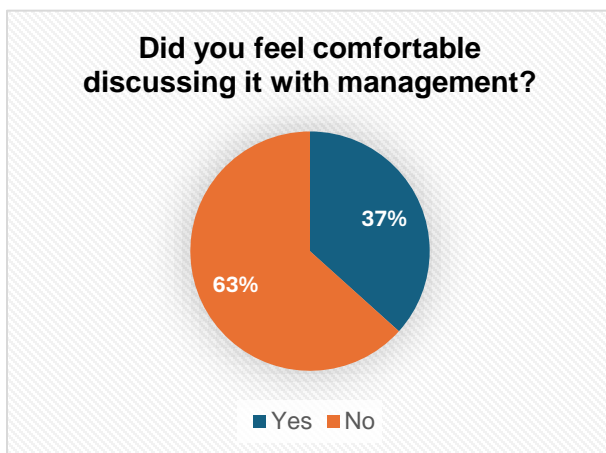
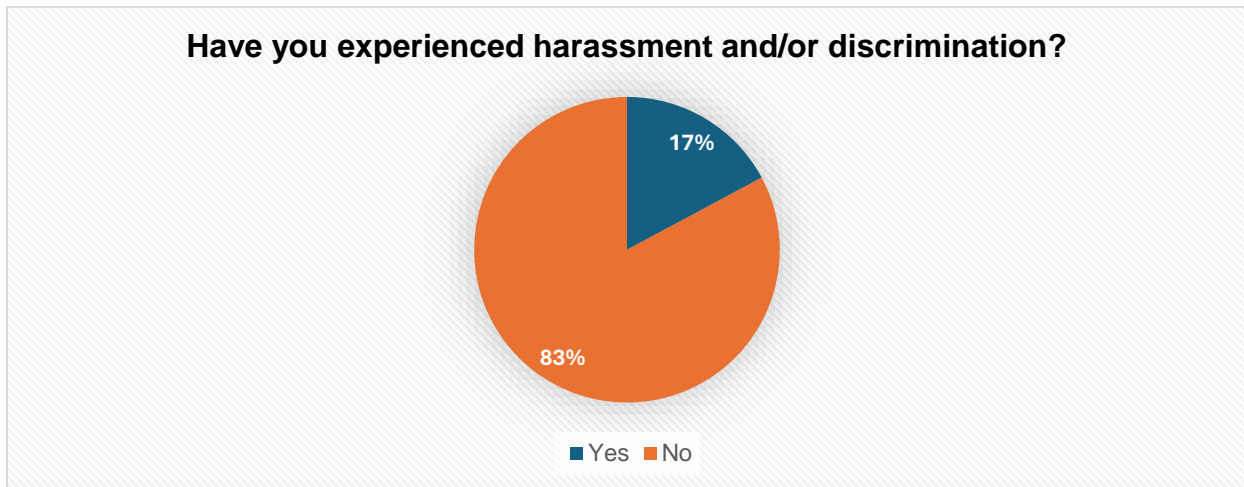
When asked what their religious/spiritual affiliations was, respondents, for the most part, answered either Christian Faith or preferred not to share. That being said, several other religions were also identified, as seen below:



When asked about their gender, the overwhelming majority of participants (**97%**) indicated that they were Women. **3** participants shared that they were Men, whereas one participant identified as Genderqueer or Genderfluid.

Most participants (**88%**) also indicated that they felt as though their current employer was committed to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Despite this, when asked if this same employer had an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy/strategy, **58%** indicated that they didn't know. That's compared to **35%** that answered yes and **7%** that indicated no.

Some participants also indicated that they had experienced incidents of harassment and/or discrimination in their workplace, **as seen below**.



When asked if they had any additional comments they would like to share, participants included the following:

I love being an ECE. There is something about working with children and seeing a change in them through relationships being built. I think we need more quality ECEs to do this job, but what is given in return isn't enough. (RECE in ratio)

Not having benefits, and paid programming and planning time and not being offered WSIB coverage makes this field less appealing for educators and their families going into the future, I know not every centre is like this, but to my knowledge, there is not too many centres that offer these Benefits to their employees. (RECE in ratio)

We need more support in our roles as RECE's from our management and the community. We need more RECE's in the field and less people just working because they need a job. The children are struggling because of lack of support. (Registered Early Childhood Educator (**in ratio**))

I love my place of employment and all my coworkers, but we definitely need a pay raise. We work tirelessly with children who make us sick and then we can't work. We need more. (Registered Early Childhood Educator (**Supervisor or Home Child Care Visitor**))

I have seen discrimination from families and children towards staff. Not acceptable and dealt with immediately. Zero tolerance for that

I enjoy my place of work very much and value my organization a lot. I have a great co-worker and together we have developed our own philosophy that has worked very well for us for almost 2 years. The families and children are happy, and that is our goal every day.