



Report on the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey:
Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and
Early Career Transition

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The College of Early Childhood Educators
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Executive Summary
Report on the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey:
Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition

Introduction

The report on the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey, *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, provides an overview of the purpose, design and implementation processes developed by the College to gather information from 2873 graduates of Ontario early childhood education (ECE) diploma and degree programs who successfully completed their programs in 2013.

The report provides an analysis and synthesis of the feedback provided by the 2013 graduates, compares the information gathered through a similar Registration and Member Services survey conducted in 2011 and highlights a number of areas for future consideration and/or action on the part of the College.

Purposes of the Survey

The purposes of the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey: *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition* included:

1. Continuing the College's ongoing efforts to understand and better serve the membership of the profession and the public.
2. Illustrating the College's service goals and ethics as it strives to promote an increased level of understanding and level of transparency regarding the College's registration processes and issues that affect the membership, the profession and the Ontario public.
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2013 cohort of Ontario early childhood education program graduates in order to gain insight into their perceptions and challenges related to the College's registration processes, obtaining employment in the early childhood education sector, entry to practise experiences, career transitions, levels of professional confidence and satisfaction.
4. Determining the self-reported level of knowledge and understanding of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* from 2013 graduates of Ontario approved early childhood education programs.
5. Eliciting an image of the future career aspirations of the 2013 cohort of Ontario graduates of approved early childhood education programs
6. Adding a second database of input from the 2013 graduate cohort to the one provided by the 2011 graduates, and in future investigations, using the data for comparative purposes about registration practices, human resource trends

and member perceptions and insights on the Ontario early childhood education sector.

Implementing the Survey

The College used its registration records to identify members who received a Certificate of Registration following their graduation from an early childhood education program offered through an approved Ontario post-secondary institution between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013. College registration records showed that 2747 graduates, who indicated their preferred language as English, and 126 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language as French, became registered members.

The survey was mailed to all English-speaking-and French-speaking 2013 program graduates on February 3, 2014. A stamped return envelope was included with each survey form. The deadline to return the survey was February 24, 2014.

The survey consisted of 16 items. Items ranged in nature and included closed-ended questions, yes/no responses, multiple-choice and rating-scale options as well as open-ended response options. Most questions also included opportunities for respondents to add open-ended comments.

On March 3, 2014 members were informed by e-mail that the survey cut-off date has been extended until March 10, 2014 and were provided with a survey link and the option to complete the survey online. Members were reminded that they could return the survey either in hard copy format or electronically. Another reminder email was sent on March 6, 2014.

Collating and Reviewing the Survey

The information provided by respondents was collated through the use of the software program SurveyMonkey. College staff entered information from members who returned surveys using traditional postal service in the SurveyMonkey database.. Online responses to the survey were collated directly by the SurveyMonkey software program.

Comments added by respondents were tabulated by SurveyMonkey on a question-by-question basis. The comments were reviewed using qualitative data analysis techniques to identify patterns, trends and insights that expanded on the information provided through available quantitative response data.

Response Rate

In total, 1305 English-language and 70 French-language survey responses were collated using the SurveyMonkey software. The English-speaking survey response rate was approximately 48%, and the French-speaking rate was approximately 56%.

Fifty-three English and four French surveys were returned to the College marked as “Undeliverable” by the postal service.

Question One asked respondents to answer “yes” or “no” to the following question: “Did you complete an early childhood education program at an approved post-secondary institution in Ontario between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013?”

If respondents answered “no”, they were not able to proceed to Question Two and were thanked for their willingness to contribute to the survey. “Yes” responses were given by 97.9% of English-speaking respondents and 98.6% of French respondents.

Respondent Feedback

Respondents indicated on a rating scale whether their experience in completing the College application process was “very easy”, “easy”, “somewhat challenging”, “challenging” or “frustrating”.

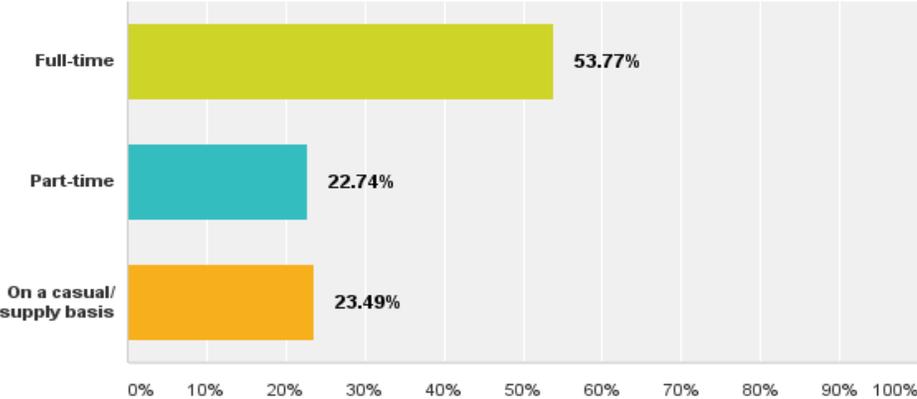
Of the members who completed this question, approximately 72% of English-speaking respondents and 84% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they found the process “very easy” or “easy”.

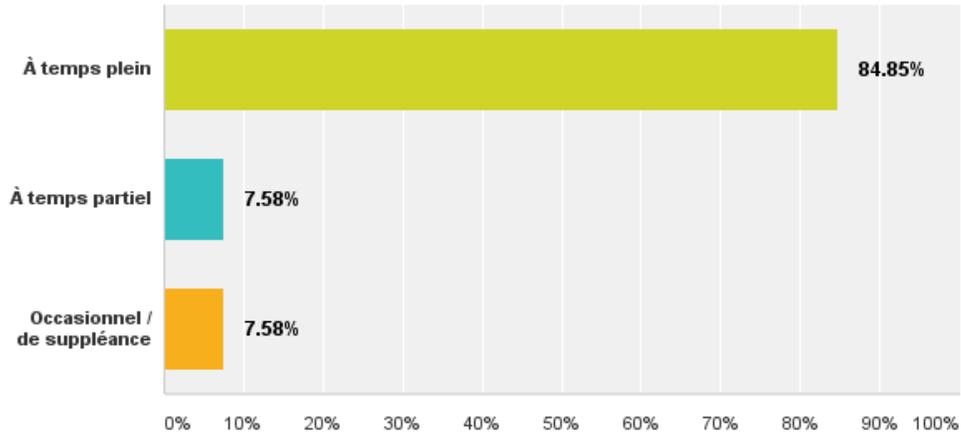
The newly registered members were asked if they were currently employed as an early childhood educator.

Approximately 86% of English-speaking respondents and 96% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they were employed in the sector.

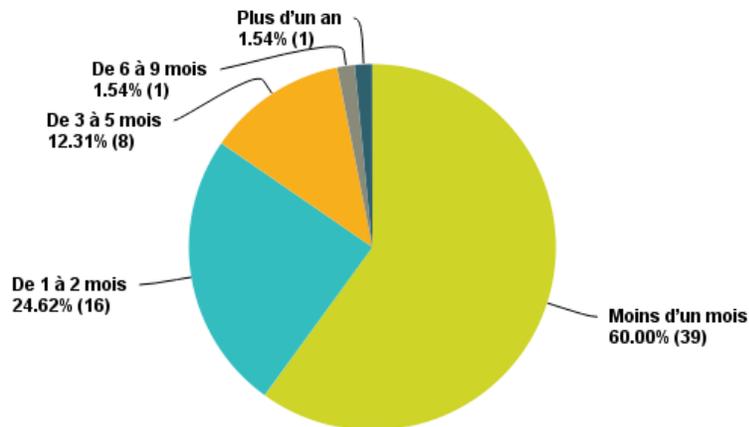
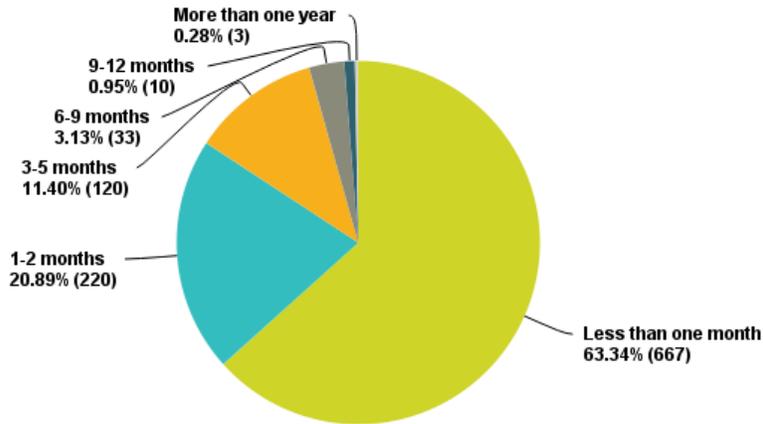
Approximately 54% of English-speaking respondents and 85% of French-speaking respondents were employed full-time. Approximately 23% of English-speaking respondents and 8% of French-speaking respondents were holding part-time positions. The remainder indicated that they worked on a casual/supply basis.

The following graphs illustrate the response rates for the distribution of full-time, part-time and casual/supply work amongst the survey participants.

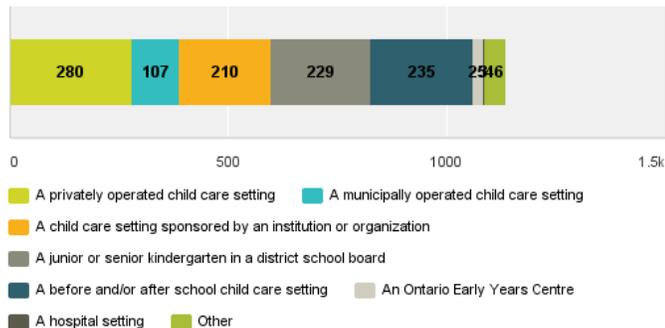




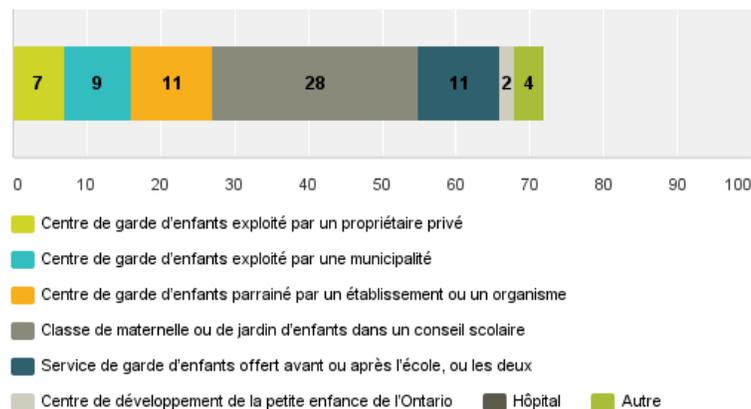
Of these employed members, approximately 84% of English-speaking and 85% of French-speaking members indicated that they had been able to obtain employment in two months or less.



Survey respondents were employed in various workplace environments as shown in the following illustrations.

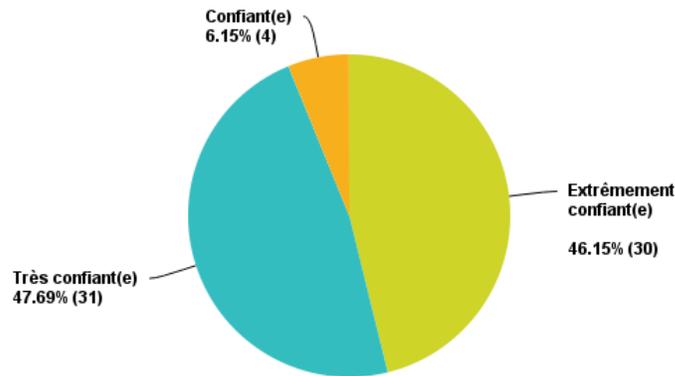
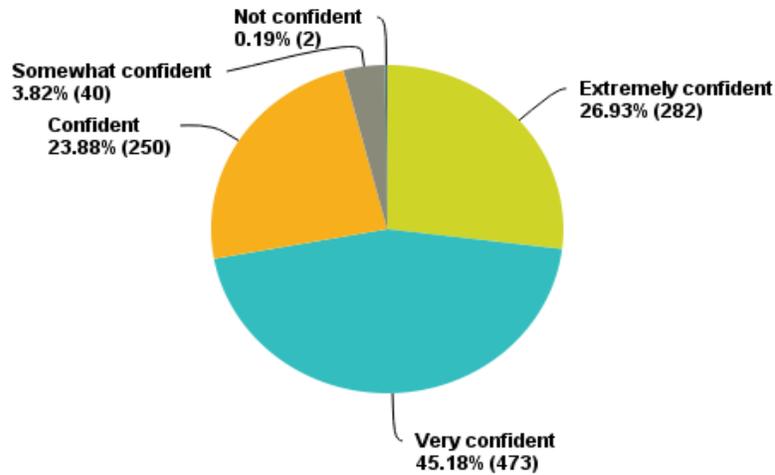


In addition to the list of choices provided in the survey, other placements were specified by respondents. Examples of workplaces included the Chinese Association of Mississauga, a First Nation Friendship Centre, church child care centres, a private Islamic school, an outreach centre,, the Kingston Military Family Resource Centre, the Oxford Learning Centre,, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Youville (a high school child care centre for student mothers), Montessori programs, a community shelter and YMCA-sponsored child care centres.



Most respondents indicated that they believed their early childhood education diploma or degree program prepared them well for their employment experiences. Seventy-four per cent of English-speaking members and 94% of French-speaking members felt their program prepared them “extremely well” or “very well”. In addition, approximately 18% of English-speaking and 6% of French-speaking members suggested their programs prepared them “quite well”.

Survey respondents were invited to describe their level of confidence in regards to their ability to meet the expectations of their current ECE role. Responses were received from 1047 English-speaking and 65 French-speaking members. A majority of both English-speaking(72% and French-speaking (94%) 2013 graduates who joined the College reported feeling “extremely confident” or “very confident”.



Of those survey respondents who self-reported a “level of satisfaction” in their current ECE role, approximately 63% of English and 80% of French-speaking respondents were “extremely satisfied” or “very satisfied” in their current role. In addition, approximately 30% of English respondents and 17% of French-speaking respondents noted that they were “satisfied”.

Almost all survey respondents reported some level of knowledge and understanding of the College’s *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Approximately 67% of English and 90% of French-speaking respondents felt that they had an intermediate or advanced level of knowledge and understanding. Thirty per cent of the English-speaking respondents and 10% of French-speaking respondents felt their knowledge and understanding was at the “basic level”.

Thirty-three English-speaking English graduates who answered the survey question about their employment status, indicated that they were working outside the ECE sector. Thirteen were currently seeking employment in the sector. Eleven indicated that they were pursuing further education.

Seven French-speaking respondents answered the same question. Three indicated that they were seeking employment outside the ECE sector; three members were still seeking employment in the sector ; one indicated that he/she was pursuing further education.

The final survey question asked respondents to describe their future career plan as it relates to the early childhood education sector. If respondents were not planning to remain in the sector, they were asked to indicate this.

Responses were received from 1078 English-speaking members and 51 French-speaking members.

Several recurring themes were evident in the English and French responses. Future career plan themes included:

- Applying for work as an RECE or trying to transition from casual, part-time or split-shift employment to full-time employment
- Working full time as an RECE
- Working or seeking employment in a full-day kindergarten (FDK) program in a district school board
- Engaging in programs to enhance educational qualifications
- Establishing a child care setting and
- Seeking employment as an administrator/supervisor/director.

Nineteen (1.7%) members stated that they did not intend to seek employment in the sector.

Summary

The information gathered through the survey demonstrates member willingness to provide feedback and the College's responsiveness to the needs of members. This information can be shared with members, stakeholder groups and the public.

By making this report available to others interested in the early childhood education sector, the College, as the self-regulatory body for the early childhood education profession, establishes itself as a current and reliable source of information about the issues and challenges in the sector.

The survey responses also demonstrate that some graduates recognize the value of the information sharing process and that the national/international profile of the College has grown since it surveyed the 2011 graduates of approved Ontario ECE programs.

A high percentage (72% English-speaking and 84% French-speaking) of respondents indicated that they found the registration process "very easy" or "easy".

Of special note was that the survey responses in English and French were received from all of the College's electoral districts.

A significantly high percentage (86% English-speaking and 96% French-speaking) of respondents reported that they were currently employed in some capacity in the ECE sector.

Of these employed respondents, 54% of English and 85% of French-speaking respondents were hired in the sector in two months or less.

Fifty-four per cent of English-speaking and 85% of French-speaking respondents indicated they were employed full time in the ECE sector.

Twenty-three per cent of English-speaking and 8% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they were working part-time or in a casual/supply capacity.

Many of the part-time and casual/supply RECEs indicated that they regretted not being able to participate in professional learning activities made available to full-time employees.

Some respondents commented that they felt their ECE program should have included more work on curriculum development, program planning and characteristics and methodology related to infant developmental stage. They also wanted to learn more about working with parents, working with children with exceptionalities, working with teachers in a FDK programs, completing documentations using technology to support early learning and care programming, managing finances, and current issues in early childhood education.

Approximately two-thirds of English-speaking respondents stated that they had been involved in a workplace orientation program.

A significantly high percentage of respondents indicated that their employers provided access to workshops and training.

Few respondents were engaged in mentoring relationships.

The majority of respondents reported feeling “very confident” or “confident”. A significantly higher percentage of French-speaking respondents rated their confidence level higher than their English-speaking counterparts .

Although more than half of the respondents indicated feeling “extremely satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their employment situation, a significant number suggested only feeling “satisfied”. Fifteen per cent of the comments received from respondents suggested that a low pay scale affected their level of job satisfaction.

Of the 52 respondents who indicated that they were not currently employed in the early childhood education sector or were expanding on their educational qualifications, approximately 20% stated that they were employed outside the ECE sector.

More than two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they had an advanced level or intermediate level of knowledge and understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

Recurring themes were evident in the responses to the survey item about future career aspirations. These included:

- Continuing to apply for work as an RECE or trying to transition from casual, part-time or split-shift employment to full-time employment
- Working full-time as an RECE
- Working or seeking employment in an FDK program in a district school board
- Enhancing educational qualifications
- Establishing a child care setting and
- Seeking employment as an administrator/supervisor/director.

Comparing Responses Provided by the 2011 Graduate Cohort and the 2013 Cohort

The information shared by the registered members of the College who had graduated in 2013 from approved Ontario post-secondary ECE programs were compared with the responses provided by the 2011 graduate cohort. The 2013 feedback indicated that:

- The 2013 response rates for the survey were significantly higher than those from 2011.
- The 2013 respondents were more consistent in their willingness to respond and comment extensively on all survey items.
- All electoral districts had both English-speaking and French-speaking members respond to the survey.
- A higher percentage of 2013 English-speaking and French graduates found the College application process “very easy” or “easy”. The increase was significant for French-speaking members.
- Some respondents found it frustrating to obtain the correct transcript showing graduation from their approved ECE post-secondary institution.
- Response rates from 2013 graduates regarding employment status in the ECE sector were consistent with those from 2011.
- In 2013, a somewhat higher percentage of English-speaking respondents and a significantly higher percentage of French-speaking respondents indicated that they had obtained a job in two months or less.
- Job offers were made and accepted by many respondents prior to completing their ECE program and receiving a College registration number.

- A significantly higher percentage of 2013 French-speaking respondents indicated that their diploma or degree program prepared them well for their ECE role (67% in 2011 and 94% in 2013). The response rate for 2013 English-speaking respondents remained consistent with those of 2011 respondents at 74%.
- Response rates for participant orientation programs, professional development initiatives or mentoring programs were consistent with 2011 rates.
- Comments provided by many 2013 respondents provided specific information about professional learning opportunities and included a few references to online learning.
- Comments from the 2013 survey suggested that RECEs employed in part-time or casual/supply positions were concerned about the lack of professional learning opportunities available to them.
- English-speaking respondents in the 2013 survey reported levels of confidence in their roles as RECEs consistent with those reported by 2011 respondents. Approximately 75 per cent of English-speaking respondents felt “extremely confident” or “very confident”. In comparison, the French-speaking respondent confidence level rate increased from the 2011 rate of 85% of feeling “extremely confident” or “very confident” to 94% in 2013.
- The 2013 English-speaking and French-speaking respondents’ level of confidence in their roles as RECEs were significantly higher than those of the 2011 the English-speaking and French-speaking respondents.
- Respondents’ level of satisfaction in their current role were significantly higher than those of respondents from 2011.
- When asked to describe their level of knowledge and understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, 2013 French-speaking respondents rated themselves significantly higher than those in the 2011 cohort. English-speaking response rates remained the same in 2011 and 2013.
- Fewer graduates in the 2013 group indicated that they were not working in the ECE sector compared to those in the 2011 group.
- Although the majority of the respondents in the 2013 survey indicated that they had obtained employment, many were trying to transition from part-time and/or casual work to full-time RECE positions.
- More 2013 cohort graduates were seeking full-time positions in FDK placements with district school boards (approximately 10%).

- The percentage of respondents who indicated they would be interested in working toward a management/ supervisory position increased slightly in 2013 (1.7 per cent) from 2011.
- The percentage of respondents indicating an interest in pursuing additional educational qualifications increased from 15% in 2011 to 20% in 2013.

Future Considerations

Based on feedback provided by the 2013 graduates of Ontario approved post-secondary early childhood education programs, who became members of the College and participated in the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey: *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, the College may consider to continue:

- Reviewing Registration and Member Services Department policies and processes.
- Developing communication initiatives for members, stakeholders, policy makers and the public.
- Developing a continuous professional learning program for College members.
- Tracking membership retention rates and early career transition trends.
- Ensuring that College applicants and post-secondary institutions recognize that transcripts showing successful completion of an early childhood education program must indicate graduation.
- Reviewing and revising survey questions to ensure language clarity.
- Engaging 2013 graduate cohort in a three-year, follow-up study.
- Identifying other member cohort groups that may provide comparative information such as internationally trained and out-of-province applicants.
- Illustrating the variety of employment opportunities in the sector for graduates of approved post-secondary early childhood education programs.
- Sharing respondent feedback regarding Ontario early childhood education programs.
- Sharing respondent feedback about their levels of confidence in ECE roles and their feelings related to job satisfaction.
- Continuing to develop communication strategies to facilitate member engagement.
- Acknowledging the commitment expressed by many respondents about their willingness to serve the early learning and care sector.
- Sharing respondent feedback regarding existing orientation and mentoring programs.
- Sharing respondent perceptions about existing ongoing professional learning.
- Reviewing respondent feedback and considering the implications for the College's design and development of a continuous professional learning program.
- Acknowledging and considering the the feedback that many respondents shared about their plans to enhance their educational qualifications and engage in specialized training.

- Sharing the concerns expressed by RECEs who are employed in part-time and/or casual supply positions about their perceived lack of professional learning opportunities.
- Sharing feedback from respondents about their desires and their commitment to remain in the profession, with members, stakeholders and policy makers.
- Sharing information with members, stakeholders and policy makers about respondent career aspirations and academic goals.
- Sharing respondent feedback about the importance of being able to engage in continuous professional learning.

Conclusions

The report highlights valuable feedback from a cohort of members who received a Certificate of Registration following successful completion of an approved program in early childhood education at a post-secondary institution in Ontario.

The information shared by the 1375 respondents provides new member insights about College registration processes and current issues and trends such as:

- Employment options within the early childhood education sector
- Program content of early childhood education post-secondary programs
- Professional learning needs and opportunities available to new members
- The importance of ensuring that high quality professional learning opportunities are available to all RECEs
- Perceived gaps in available professional learning opportunities for part-time and casually employed RECEs
- Job satisfaction and professional confidence levels
- Career and academic aspirations.

The College, stakeholders and policy makers may use feedback provided by survey respondents to assist them with program planning, decision-making and policy development.

Full Report

1. Introduction

The report on the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey, *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, provides an overview of the purpose, design and implementation processes developed by the College to gather information from 2873 graduates of Ontario early childhood education diploma and degree programs who successfully completed their programs in 2013.

The report provides an analysis and synthesis of the feedback provided by the graduates, compares the information gathered through a similar Registration and Member Services survey carried out in 2011 and highlights a number of areas for future consideration and/or action on the part of the College.

2. Background

The recruitment and retention of competent early childhood educators in the profession are critical factors in the provision of high quality early childhood education and care. A study *Supporting Employers in Canada's (ECEC) Sector* (2009) by the pan-Canadian organization, Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC), states that:

The most commonly noted human resource issue facing the sector was the difficulty that employers face recruiting and retaining qualified staff. It was apparent throughout the literature reviewed that recruitment and retention of staff was an issue that was intertwined with most, if not all, of the other issues facing the sector.

A supporting document to this report, *Provincial/Territorial Mapping of Human Resources Issues*, reveals that Ontario employers, who “were asked to describe the greatest challenge they faced in fulfilling the management role at their organization, listed the recruitment of qualified staff/lack of staff.” This study delineates six reasons on why recruiting is a challenge in Ontario. Prime among those reasons was the identified lack of qualified staff.

According to the report, , 54% of Ontario employers studied indicated that turnover/retention was a major issue. Employers noted that, on average, 35.2% of ECE staff chose to change occupations.

Another report by the CCHRSC, *Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators Project* (2009), indicated that:

A number of survey respondents commented that the societal attitude toward the role of the ECE is evolving. As we become more aware of the formative nature of the first years of a child's life, early childhood educators are being viewed as key players in the emotional, mental, and intellectual development of children, in addition to providing a nurturing and caring environment for the children under their care.

Survey participants also commented that:

...there has been an increase in the degree of responsibility that ECEs are given for the development of children, which has resulted from increased parental expectations. ECEs are now being viewed as an integral part of family life, as parents are increasingly busy with work activities.

In 2009, the CCHRSC released an additional Canada-wide report, *Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages*. This report confirmed that Ontario's early childhood education sector is experiencing a workforce shortage and provided an estimate of the economic costs for the province. The project also confirmed that staff turnover is a main problem when it comes to the sector's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff.

The November 2011 release of the *Early Years Study 3: Making Decisions, Taking Action* reaffirmed the influence that quality early childhood education programming has on young children, their families and Ontario society. The Ontario report highlights the need for an increase in qualified and competent early childhood educators, appropriate remuneration for these individuals and a commitment to the establishment of safe and satisfying professional workplace environments.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released a report in 2012, *Starting Strong III – A Quality Toolbox for Early Childhood and Care*, that identifies "improving qualifications, training and working conditions" as one of five key policy levers needed to be effective in encouraging quality in the early childhood education sector.

The report highlights common challenges that OECD participating countries face in encouraging a high quality workforce. These challenges include:

- Raising staff qualification levels
- Recruiting, retaining and diversifying a qualified workforce
- Continuously upskilling the workforce
- Ensuring the quality of the workforce in the private sector.

In 2006, the Scottish Government initiated a long-term plan to enhance the capacity of the child care workforce. Follow-up studies in 2012 and 2014 confirmed that the outcome of these initiatives have brought about "significant positive change in the expectations parents and the general public have of the skill and competence of early years workers' services" and "how it has positively and significantly affected individual worker's knowledge, confidence and leadership skills and his/her relationships with the other professionals in children's lives".

During a June 2014 keynote presentation, Dr. Jan Peeters, the coordinator of the Centre for Innovation in the Early Years at the University of Ghent in Belgium, shared his research and experiences on high quality ECE workforce.. He stated that there is

now “broad consensus among researchers and international organizations such as OECD, UNICEF and the European Union that the quality of early childhood education and ultimately the outcomes for children and families, and more specifically for the disadvantaged, depend on well-educated and experienced staff”. He also stressed the important role that continuous professional learning and enhanced leadership capacity play in ensuring that early childhood educators thrive in the ECE workplace.

Ontario’s full-day kindergarten (FDK) programs staffed by registered early childhood educators (RECEs) and Ontario certified teachers (OCTs) have magnified issues related to the recruitment, career transitions and retention of early childhood educators. . The implementation of these programs has provided new employment options for both recent ECE graduates and experienced members of the ECE profession.

With the introduction of FDK programs in Ontario schools, the demand for qualified and competent RECEs continue to grow. Parents and members of the public are increasingly aware of the importance of high quality early childhood education and care. The number of qualified and available Ontario early childhood educators depends, to a significant degree, on the number of new Ontario ECE graduates who choose to enter and remain in the workforce.

The College’s report on its 2011 Registration and Member Services Survey, *Early Childhood Education and Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, provided a baseline of information gathered from 586 respondents about the College’s registration processes and issues such as early childhood education sector employment options, early childhood education post-secondary program content, professional development needs and opportunities available to new members, job satisfaction and confidence levels and career and academic aspirations.

3. Purposes of the Survey

The purposes of the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey, *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, included:

1. Continuing the ongoing efforts of the College to understand and better serve the the profession and the public
2. Illustrating the College’s service goals and ethics as it strives to promote an increased level of understanding and level of transparency regarding its registration processes and the issues that affect its membership, the profession and the public
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2013 cohort of Ontario early childhood education program graduates in order to gain insight into their perceptions and challenges related to College registration, obtaining employment in the early childhood education sector, entry to practise experiences, career transitions, levels of professional confidence and satisfaction

4. Determining the self-reported level of knowledge and understanding of members who graduated from 2013 Ontario approved early childhood education programs regarding the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*
5. Eliciting an image of the future career aspirations of the 2013 cohort of graduates of Ontario's approved early childhood education programs
6. Providing a second database of input from the 2013 graduate cohort that can be used for comparative purposes with the input provided by the 2011 graduates. The data will be used in future studies about registration practices, human resource trends and member perceptions and insights in the Ontario early childhood education sector.

Information gathered through the survey will be shared with College stakeholders such as employers, post-secondary educational institutions, government policy makers and other organizations and associations serving the early childhood education sector.

The College anticipates that this current and relevant information will inform decision-making, policy development and the design and delivery of supportive programming on the part of individuals and groups with an interest in the sector.

The following questions guided the survey design:

1. How many 2013 Ontario ECE diploma/degree early childhood education graduates were issued a Certificate of Registration between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013?
2. How did the 2013 Ontario graduates perceive the Certificate of Registration application process?
3. What percentage of the 2013 graduates, who registered with the College, obtained Ontario ECE employment prior to April 1, 2014?
4. How many weeks/months did the newly registered members of the College seek employment prior to obtaining their first job?
5. In what ECE workplace environments did the ECE graduates enter the profession?
6. What support and/or professional development was made available to newly employed early childhood educators?
7. To what extent did their ECE education programs prepare the 2013 graduates for the realities of working in the ECE environment?
8. How confident and professionally satisfied do the 2013 graduates feel in their ECE roles?

9. To what extent are 2013 graduates aware of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*?
10. What ECE career aspirations are held by College members who have recently entered the profession?
11. What issues are identified through this study that may have an impact on ongoing career transitions and retention?

4. Implementing the Survey

The College used its registration records to identify members who received a Certificate of Registration following their graduation from an early childhood education program offered through an approved Ontario post-secondary institution between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013. College registration records indicated that 2747 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was English, and 126 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was French, became registered members.

The survey was distributed by mail to all English-speaking- and French-speaking 2013 program graduates on February 3, 2014. A stamped return envelope was included with each survey form. The deadline for the survey return was February 24, 2014.

The survey consisted of 16 items. Items ranged in nature and included closed-ended questions, yes/no responses, multiple-choice and rating-scale options as well as open-ended response options. Most questions also included opportunities for respondents to add open-ended comments.

On March 3, 2014 an e-mail was sent to the 2013 graduates of approved Ontario ECE diploma and degree programs advising them that the survey cut-off date had been extended until March 10, 2014. Members were provided with a survey link and the option to complete the survey online. Members were reminded that they could return the survey either in hard copy format or electronically. Another reminder email was sent on March 6, 2014.

5. Collating and Reviewing the Survey Responses

The information provided by respondents was collated through the use of the software program SurveyMonkey. College staff entered information from members who returned surveys using traditional postal service in the SurveyMonkey database.. Online responses to the survey were collated directly by the SurveyMonkey software program.

Comments added by respondents were tabulated by SurveyMonkey on a question-by-question basis. The comments were reviewed using qualitative data analysis techniques to identify patterns, trends and insights that expanded on the information provided through available quantitative response data.

5.1 Response Rate

In total, 1305 English-speaking and 70 French-speaking surveys were collated using the SurveyMonkey software. The English-speaking survey response rate was approximately 48%, and the French-speaking response rate was approximately 56%.

Fifty-three English and four French surveys were returned to College marked as “Undeliverable” by the postal service.

Question One asked respondents to answer “yes” or “no” to the following question: “Did you complete an early childhood education program at an approved post-secondary institution in Ontario between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013?”

If respondents answered “no” to Question One, they were not able to proceed to Question Two and were thanked for their willingness to contribute to the survey. “Yes” responses were registered by 97.9% of English-speaking respondents and 98.6% of French-speaking respondents.

5.2 Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate the first three digits of their home postal code in order to provide a basis for determining their College provincial electoral district. This information revealed that survey responses were received from all College electoral districts.

Number of respondents (N) = 1238 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking respondents

| Electoral District | Number English-speaking Respondents | Percentage English-speaking Respondents | Number French-speaking Respondents | Percentage French-speaking Respondents |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| District 1 North and North East Region | 18 | 1.5% | 2 | 2.9% |
| District 2 East Region | 85 | 6.9% | 32 | 46.4% |
| District 3 South East Region | 59 | 4.8% | 4 | 5.8% |
| District 4 Central East Region | 223 | 18% | 2 | 2.9% |

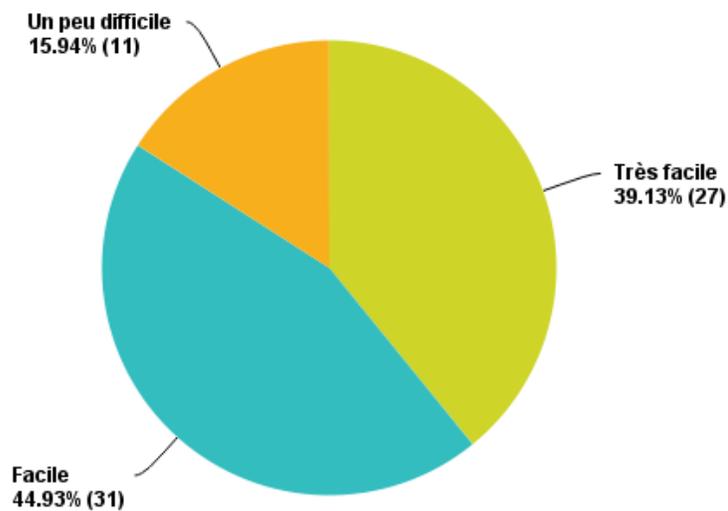
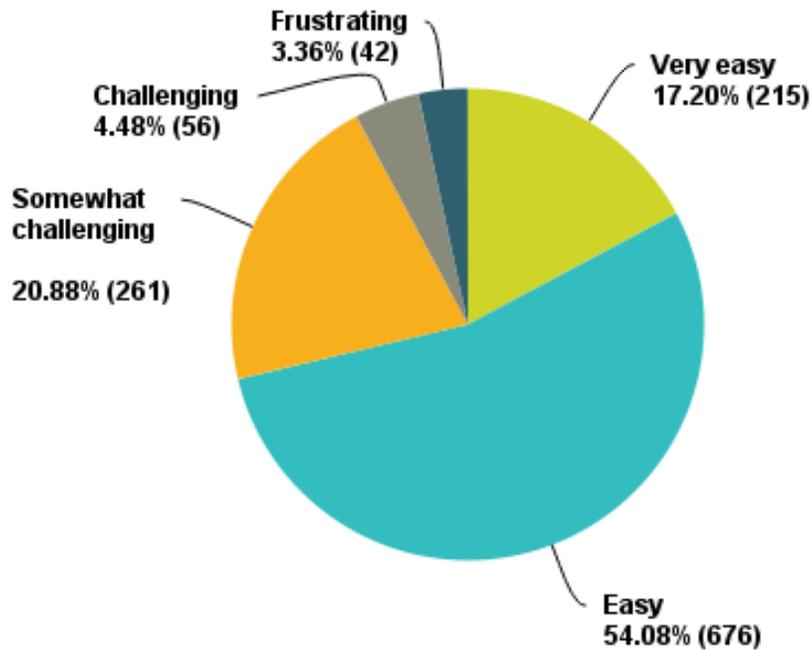
| Electoral District | Number English-speaking Respondents | Percentage English-speaking Respondents | Number French-speaking Respondents | Percentage French-speaking Respondents |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| District 5 Toronto Region | 274 | 22.1% | 14 | 20.3% |
| District 6 Central West Region | 305 | 24.6% | 9 | 13% |
| District 7 Hamilton-Niagara Region | 88 | 7.1% | 2 | 2.9% |
| District 8 South West Region | 143 | 11.6% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Other | 43 (4 out-of-province and 39 invalid postal codes) | 3.5% | 3 (2 out of province and 1 invalid postal code) | 4.3% |

5.3 Feedback on the College Application Process

Respondents indicated on a rating scale whether their experience in completing the College application process was “very easy”, “easy”, “somewhat challenging”, “challenging” or “frustrating”.

Number of responses =1250 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking respondents

Of the members who completed this question, approximately 72%of English-speaking respondents and 84% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they found the process “very easy” or “easy”.



Approximately 15% (291) of the 1319 respondents chose to add comments to this question. The majority of these comments could be grouped into six areas.

Fifty respondents chose to add positive feedback about their registration experience. Comments included:

I called CECE about one question, but I was helped quickly and the speaker was friendly and professional.

Excellent customer service and time of response.

It was fast and easy. Thank you.

Pour moi c'était très facile à faire la demande d'inscription.

Thirty-three comments referred to issues related to the submission of transcripts to the College by post-secondary institutions. The respondents indicated that some institutions were forwarding transcripts that did not indicate respondents' graduation from the program. Several respondents noted that they had to repeatedly request that a transcript noting graduation be forwarded to the College.

The process of the application was fairly easy and simple. The only issue I have was not getting my post-secondary College to send my final transcript to CECE. I had to request it like four times, since it didn't state my graduation status previously. My fellow graduates had the same problem.

Etant donné qu'au (name of College), on ne m'a pas donné la bonne démarche non plus fourni les bons documents pour pouvoir m'inscrire.

Twenty-five respondents indicated that they felt that the application process took too much time.

It was processed very slowly and delayed my promotion at my workplace.

The process takes too long. Luckily my employer held my position for two months while I awaited proof of registration.

Mais les 6 semaines pour l'avoir étaient longues.

Sixteen of the 291 respondents recounted difficulties experienced during their registration process.

It was very complicated.

Too much paperwork.

The application form was not always straightforward with its instructions.

Un peu difficile parce que les information en ligne semblent différentes aux exigences de l'Ordre.

Ten respondents suggested for the College to facilitate online registration.

It would be better if there was an option to do it completely online.

The College of ECE should create an easier way to receive payments (online secure payment method).

Six respondents indicated that they believed that the College fees were too high.

I had no difficulties filling the forms – just challenging to find the fees.

Would be nice if the fees were a bit less money!!

5.4 Current Employment Status and Workplace Environments

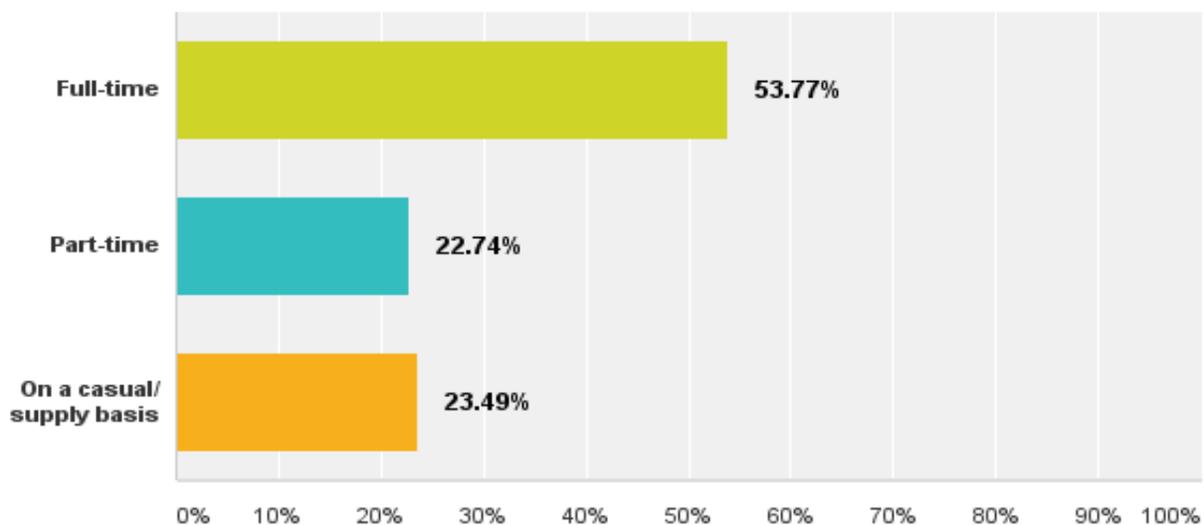
The newly registered members were asked if they were currently employed as an early childhood educator.

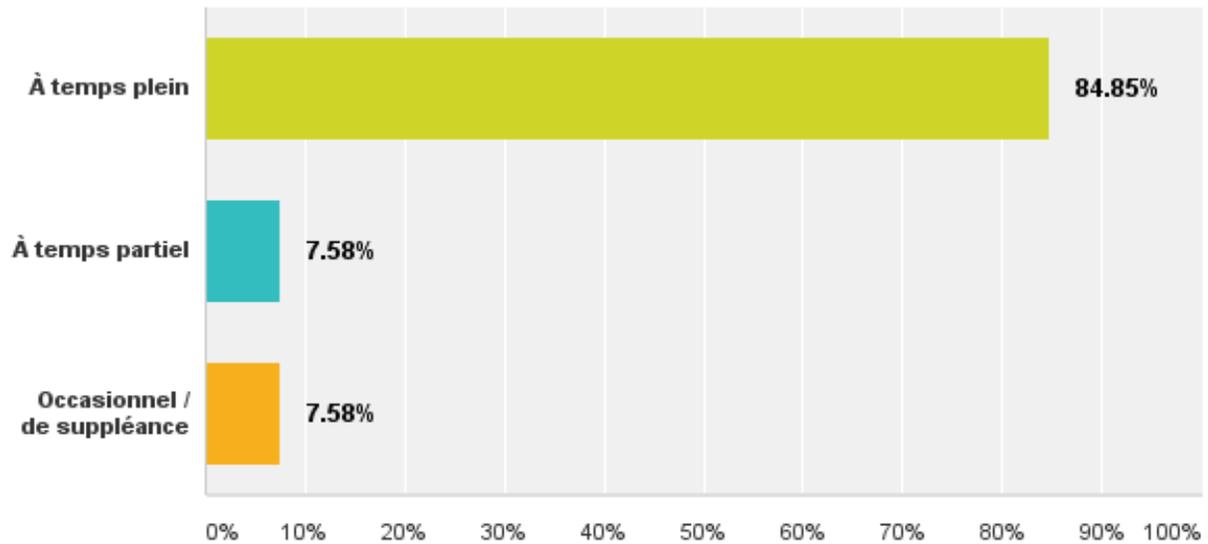
Number of responses = 1,238 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking respondents.

Approximately 86% of English-speaking and 96% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they were employed in the sector.

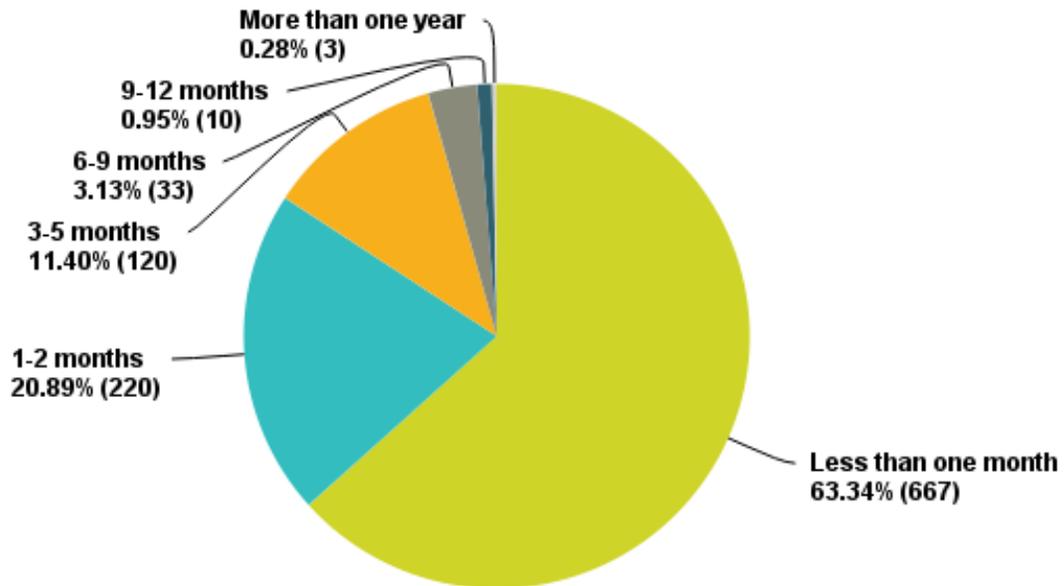
Approximately 54% of English-speaking RECEs and 85% of French-speaking RECEs were employed full-time. Approximately 23% of the English-speaking members and 8% of French-speaking members were holding part-time positions. The remainder of the respondents indicated that they worked on a casual/supply basis.

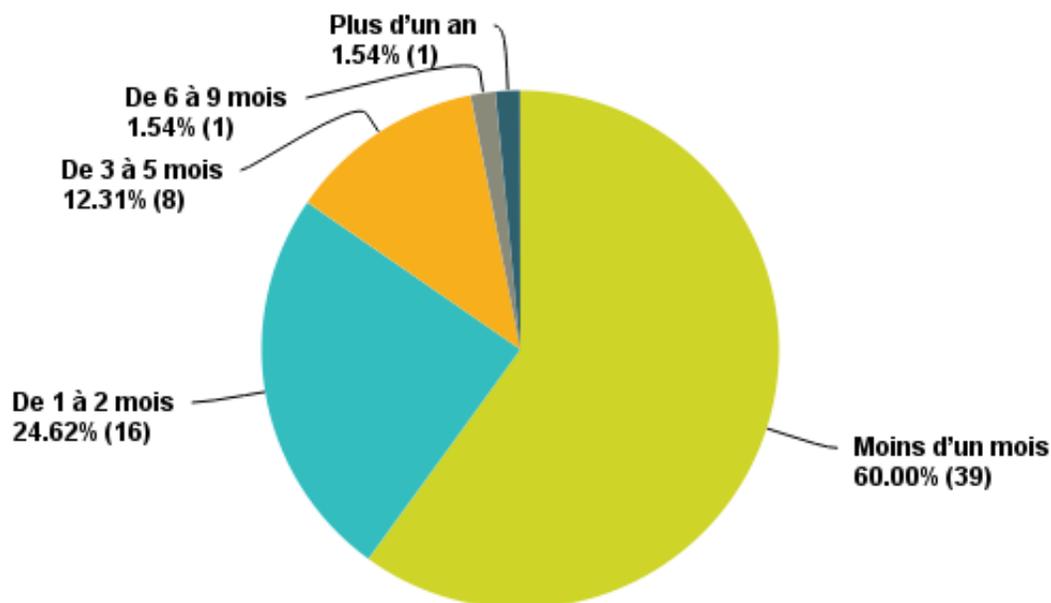
The following graphs illustrate the response rates for the distribution of full-time, part-time and casual/supply work.





Of these employed members, approximately 84% of the English-speaking members and 85% of the French-speaking members indicated that they had been able to obtain employment in two months or less.





Nearly 400 respondents chose to supply an additional comment for this survey item. Approximately one-third of the English-speaking and half of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they had accepted a job offer even before receiving their Certificate of Registration. A significant number of these members indicated that they had started their employment prior to receiving a College registration number.

Approximately 15% of both English-speaking and French-speaking comments indicated that the members had been working as early childhood assistants or worked in some other capacity in the sector and were offered positions as RECEs where they had been working.

Fourteen respondents indicated that they engaged in an apprenticeship and continued with their employer after receiving their Certificate of Registration.

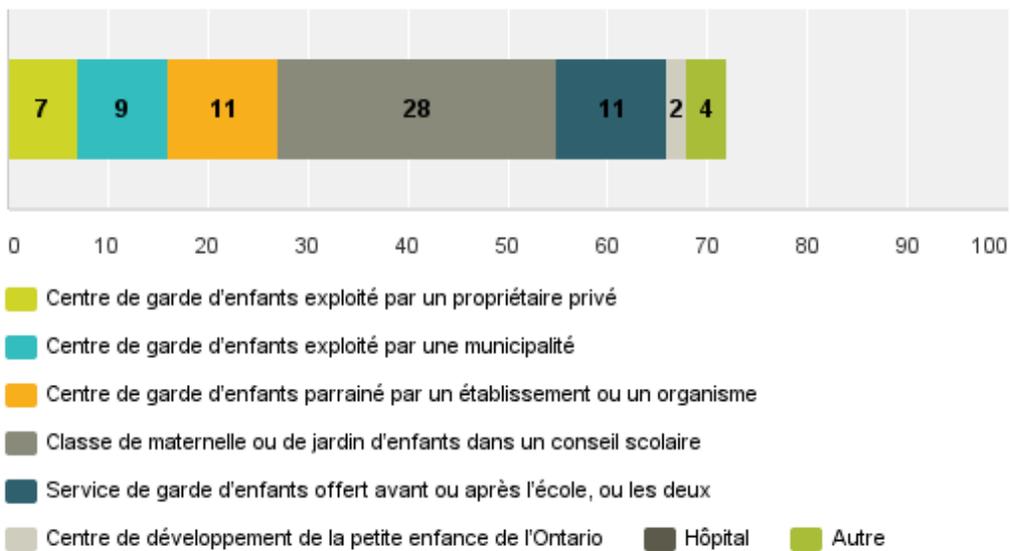
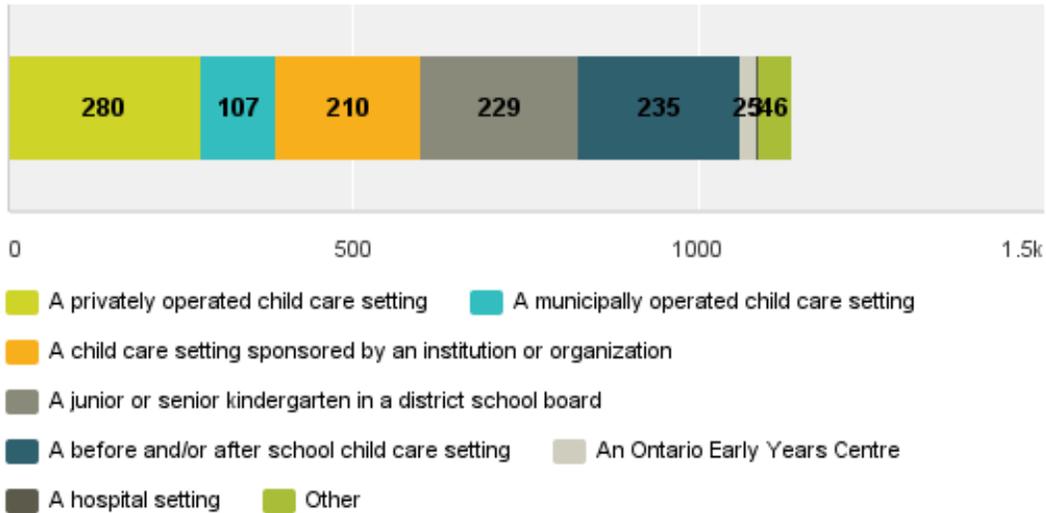
Twenty-seven respondents indicated that they had been hired by an employer where they had completed a placement during their ECE post-secondary program.

Approximately 10% indicated that they were working on a part-time basis or were providing supply coverage in early learning and care centres.

A few respondents indicated that they were self-employed providing home-based child care or that they had decided to continue their academic studies in an early child education degree program.

Survey respondents were employed in a range of workplace environments as shown in the following illustrations.

Number of responses = 1026 English-speaking and 65 French-speaking respondents



In addition to the list of choices provided in the survey, many alternate placements were specified by respondents. Examples of these workplaces included the Chinese Association of Mississauga, a First Nation Friendship Centre, church child care centres, a private Islamic school, an Outreach Centre, , the Kingston Military Family Resource Centre, the Oxford Learning Centre, , Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Youville (a high school child care centre for student mothers), Montessori programs, a community shelter and YMCA-sponsored child care centres.

5.5 Educational Program Preparation for Entry to Practise

Number of responses = 1051 English-speaking and 55 French-speaking respondents

Most respondents indicated that they believed their early childhood education diploma or degree program prepared them well for their employment experiences. Seventy-four per cent of the English-speaking members and 94% of the French-speaking members felt that their program prepared them “extremely well” or “very well”. In addition, approximately 18% of the English-speaking members and 6% of the French-speaking members suggested that their programs prepared them “quite well”.

Two hundred and twenty-six respondents added comments. Nearly 40% of the respondents who chose to add comments wrote positively about their early childhood education program. A significant number of these comments also conveyed that respondents perceived their placement experience to be very positive and that their placement success helped them to obtain employment. Eleven responses (approximately 5%) of the 226 could be described as negative.

The college I attended was excellent! It provided me with valuable, informative information about the early years settings.

Le programme collegiale m’a beaucoup aide pour assumis les responsabilites de mes fonctions.

The program I attended was not the best. I felt as if I knew most of what was being taught or it was a little on the irrelevant side. Students from other colleges whom I had spoken to were very much more confident about their program.

Sixteen respondents (7%) who indicated that they had been hired as RECEs in a full day kindergarten setting, commented that they perceived that their ECE program could have prepared them better for this position and for the challenges of working with members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

FDK was not covered much if at all in my program. They revised it while I was attending but I didn’t get moved into the revised program.

Other comments suggested that ECE programs should include additional program content related to such as areas as curriculum development and program planning, working with children with exceptionalities, programming related to infant care, behaviour management, documentation and paperwork, resumes and interview skills, working with parents, using technology in the early learning and care setting, financial management and contemporary issues in the ECE sector.

I felt that there were major gaps in my education and what was required of the job. In particular, working with and dealing with exceptionalities and some very difficult and sometimes destructive (whether physical or emotional) behaviours from the school children.

I would have liked to learn about more resources, websites, how to use a smart board, technology and documentation etc.

My education provided great knowledge for my understanding of child development. I'd love to see more practical teaching of program planning and contemporary issues involving ECEs.

Wish I was taught more about program planning for infants and I would like to learn more about FDK in the future.

Not enough preparation with child behaviour training and how to work with parents.

5.6 Orientation Programs, Professional Development and Mentoring Initiatives

Nearly 70% of English-speaking respondents and 60% of French-speaking respondents indicated that they were involved in workplace orientation sessions.

One hundred and seventy-two members chose to add comments regarding their orientation experiences. Orientation programs described by respondents ranged from an introductory "walk-through" of the early learning and care facility to an intensive two-week program. A few respondents indicated that their orientation had consisted of a period of job shadowing an experienced RECE. Several respondents who had been hired for FDK positions commented on the fact that the school board provided their orientation programs.

Some members indicated that they had only been given a policy and procedure manual to read. If an orientation program was offered, typical content listed by respondents included an outline of RECE expectations and responsibilities, safety requirements, working with young children with exceptionalities, CPR workshops and EpiPen training,

A high percentage of College members who received their Certificate of Registration in 2013 and who answered this survey item (1049) stated that their employers provided ongoing professional development opportunities (83% English-speaking and also 83 % of the French-speaking members).

Comments added by respondents indicated that some employers specify a certain number of hours per year ranging from eight to 20 or a specific number of workshops. The content of sessions described by members included topics such as ELECT workshops, CPR training, behaviour management, working with children with autism and food handling.

Larger employers or professional learning providers such as the YMCA, Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC), the Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY) and the Canadian Association for Community Living were acknowledged several times for the programs offered to members.

A few respondents indicated that they had accessed online professional development programs and/or webinars.

Several RECEs who worked in a casual/supply capacity or who had been hired for before and after school programs expressed concern that they did not have access to professional learning workshops.

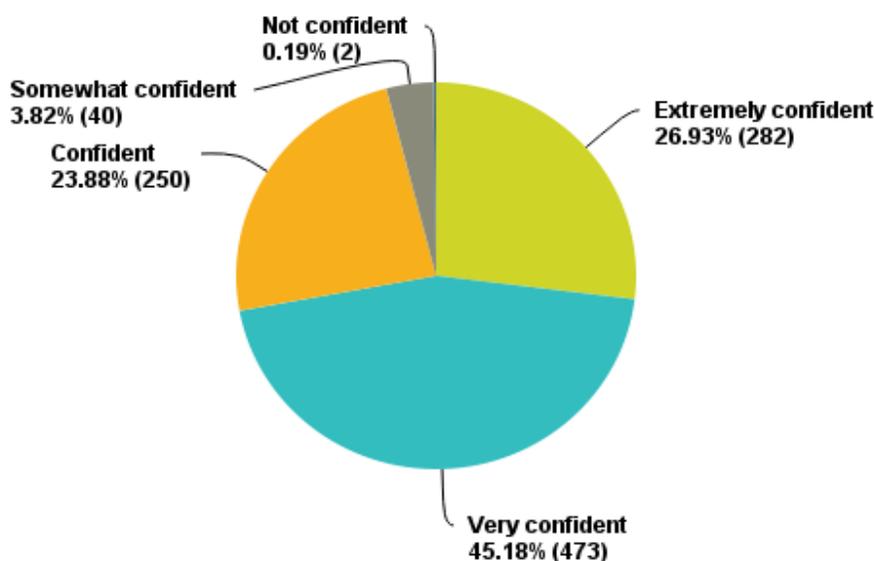
Few respondents reported involvement in mentoring programs (approximately 15 per cent of English-speaking and approximately six per cent of the French-speaking respondents).

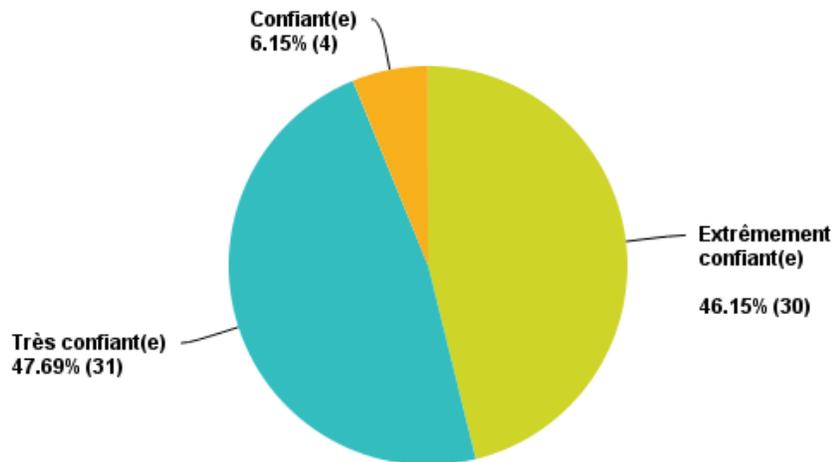
Most RECE comments focused on four themes. Some of the 101 respondents suggested that they were part of either a formal or informal mentoring partnership. Some respondents stated that they were not involved in a mentoring relationship but would really like to participate in a mentoring program. A few stated that they were unsure of what a mentoring program was. Several RECEs responded that they were serving as mentors to high school students in co-operative education programs or were working with placement students from post-secondary institutions.

5.7 Member Confidence and Satisfaction

Survey respondents were invited to describe their level of confidence with regard to their ability to meet the expectations of their current ECE role. The responses to this survey item included 1047 English-speaking and 65 French-speaking members.

A majority of both the English-speaking (72%) and the French-speaking (94 %) of the 2013 graduates who joined the College reported feeling “extremely confident” or “very confident”.





Analysis of the 110 comments added to this survey item reveals that most of the RECEs felt confident about their abilities in the early learning and care environment. Several respondents suggested that, although they did feel confident at present, they also realized that growing confidence would come with more experience.

Areas that seemed to be of concern for some RECEs included adjusting to their role as an RECE in a FDK classroom, program planning, working with children with exceptionalities and placement in before and after school programs with older children.

Several respondents identified sources of positive support in their new employment setting. These included the parents and children with whom they worked, other colleagues and mentors in the employment setting.

Each day is a growing and changing experience. I'm constantly aware of things I need/might improve on and only time will allow me to improve.

Confident in all areas except program planning.

With the older children and being new it is hard to have a lot of confidence for me.

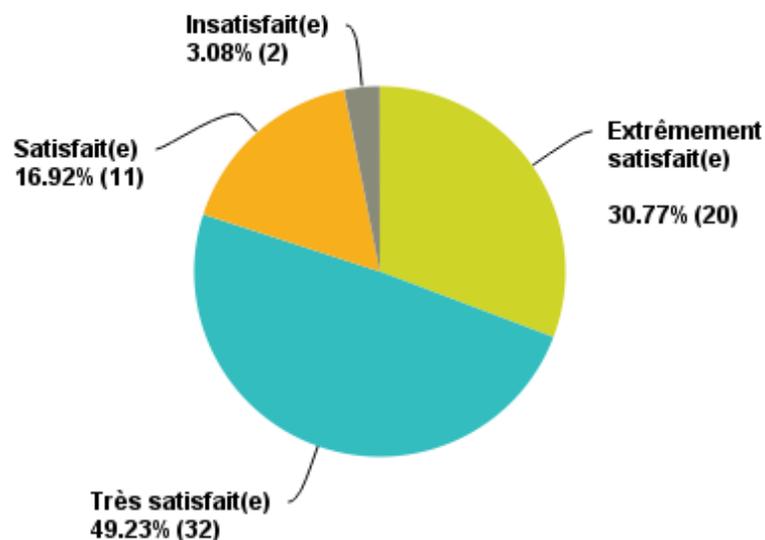
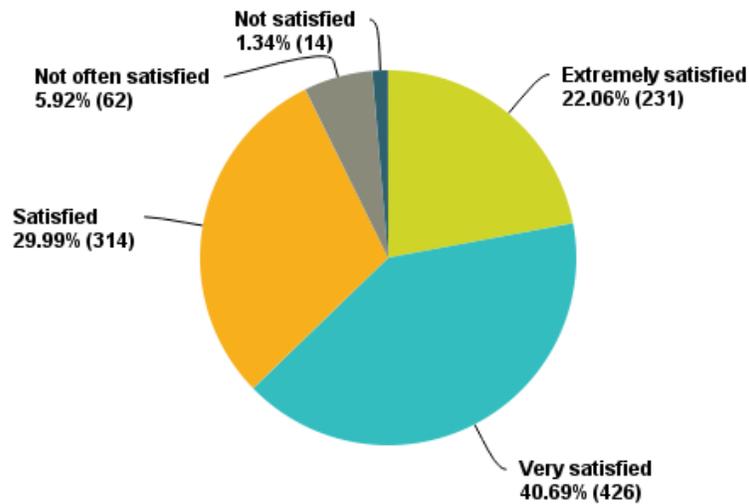
I feel very confident in this role and am learning a lot. I do however wish my program had offered me more practical experience working with children with special needs.

Going into the job I felt confident, however my confidence decreased as a result of my interactions with the full day kindergarten team.

Grâce à ma formation collégiale et aux formations que je suis dans mon milieu de travail, je suis extrêmement confiante aux exigences de mon emploi.

Car pour moi observer les jeunes enfants c'est vouloir comprendre ce qu'ils ressentent avec intérêt, avec bienveillance, pour entendre les messages qu'ils envoient à traves leurs déplacements, leur jeux, leurs vocalises, les paroles.

The response distribution regarding the 2013 English-speaking and French-speaking graduate self-reported "level of satisfaction" in their current ECE role indicated that approximately 63% of the English-speaking and 80% of the French-speaking respondents were "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" in their current role. In addition, approximately 30% of the English-speaking respondents and 17% of the French-speaking respondents said that they were "satisfied".



Many of the 206 comments indicated that these members felt satisfied in their current role.

There are definitely difficulties as with any career, but ultimately being an educator is incredibly satisfying and humbling.

It is a challenging yet rewarding position. I enjoy each day that I go to work with the children.

I have been working in the education field as an educational assistant for over 12 years so this new position was a great transition. I enjoy making a difference in the lives of children.

Je suis très satisfait de mon emploi car celui-ci m'aide à avoir plus d'expérience.

Approximately 15 % of both the English-speaking and French-speaking comments revealed concerns about the poor pay scale available to RECEs.

Being an ECE is not an easy job and we work long hours but still many of the ECEs are not being paid what they deserve.

Once my workday hours request was fulfilled, I as a RECE still make less than I would have as a retail clerk. This is very discouraging since I invested several thousands of dollars to obtain my credentials.

Ma relation avec les enfants est très bonne et je travaille très fort mais le salaire est bas.

My relationship with the kids is great and I work very hard, but the salary is low.

A significant number of respondents stated that although they felt "satisfied" working in casual/supply situations or in part-time positions what they really wanted was to be hired full time work as an RECE.

I would say extremely satisfied if I was full time.

Seeking full time employment, love the job, do not love part-time split shift work.

On ne tient pas compte de ma disponibilité pour m'appeler. À cause de cela, je n'ai pas la chance de travailler beaucoup d'heures. Quand je suis libre, on ne m'appelle pas.

My availability is not taken into consideration when I am called in. Because of that, I don't have the chance or opportunity to work many hours. When I am free, I am not called in.

A significant number of respondents indicated that they hoped to obtain employment in an FDK setting or described their experience as an RECE working with a kindergarten teacher.

I am very satisfied with my role. I feel I provide professionalism with up-to-date ideas. Teachers in the FDK wing are currently asking if they can see my textbooks. I am helping design a new playground.

FDK is in early stages and not all teachers/principals are as receptive or supportive as they could be.

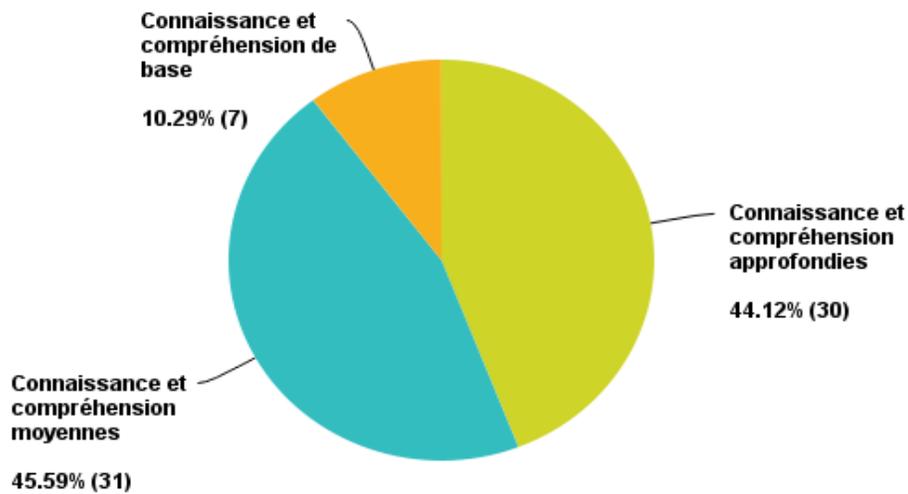
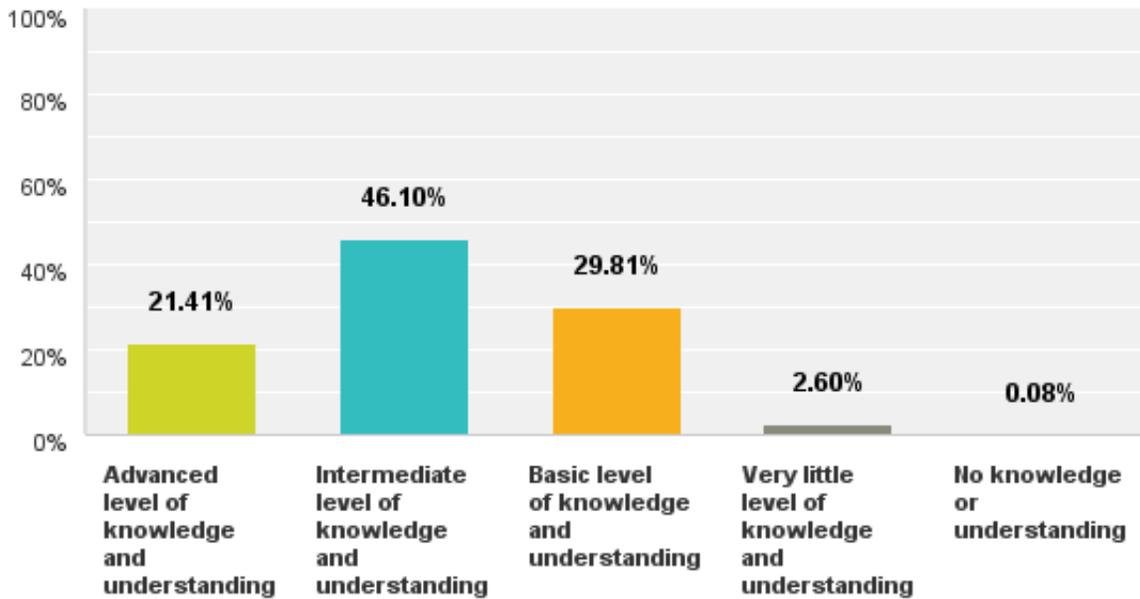
I love my job. However, because I am working within the school board there are a lot of things that run differently than a daycare. Sometimes I feel like I am not actually using all my skills and that what I have learned from the ECE program does not apply for the school board position. It is difficult for the principal and teachers to see us as professionals and to take our expertise into consideration (for example, play based learning).

Il ya beaucoup des désaccords sur le façon de travailler/faire entrer l'educatrice et l'enseignante dans les écoles qui offrent le programme PAJE. Ceux-ci créent la frustration de voir que l'enseignante ne comprend toujours pas les atteintes de PAJE.

There is a lot of disagreement between the early childhood education educator and the teacher on the way the work should be done in the schools offering FDK programs. It is frustrating to see that the teacher does not always understands the objectives of the FDK program.s

5.8 Knowledge and Understanding of *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*

Almost all survey respondents reported some level of knowledge and understanding of the College *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Approximately 67 % of the English-speaking and 90 % of the French-speaking respondents felt that they had an intermediate or advanced level of knowledge and understanding. Thirty % of the English-speaking respondents and 10 %of the French-speaking respondents felt that their knowledge and understanding was at the “basic level”.



Eighty-five respondents chose to insert additional comments. Many of these respondents acknowledge that their ECE program had provided sessions and assignments related to the ethical and professional standards. Many respondents also acknowledged that the ethical and professional standards were integrated into their practice in the workplace.

I think as time passes it becomes less of something I can verbalize and more of something I just use in my practice.

The professors were very good at informing us and having us do assignments on the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

The *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* is very helpful. Whenever there's a problem at workplace I always go back to at the code of ethics and I get the right answers from it.

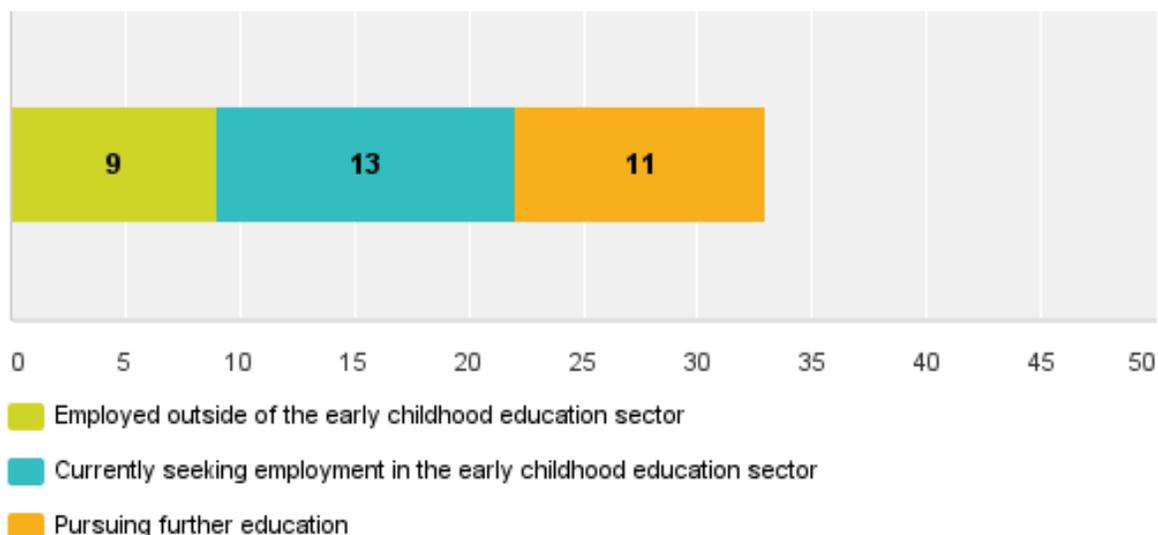
I practise this every day!

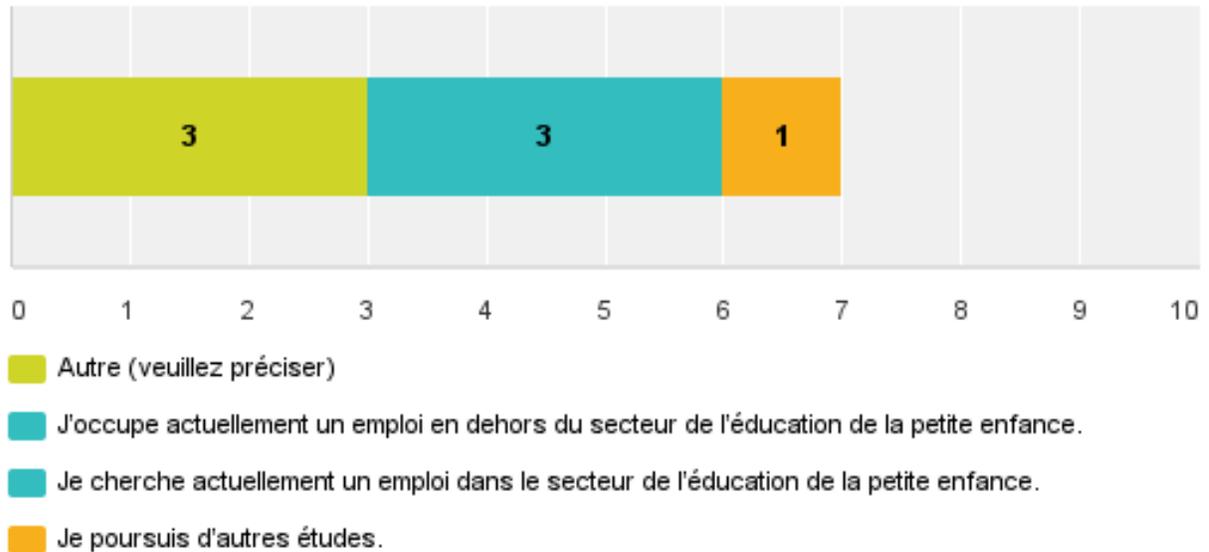
A ma connaissance, le code de déontologie et normes d'exercice me guide et m'aide dans ma profession.

To my knowledge, the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* guide me and help me in my profession.

5.9 Status of 2013 Graduates and College Members Currently Not Employed as RECEs

Thirty-three English-speaking and seven French-speaking–speaking members answered question 15. This question asked 2013 program graduates to describe their current status if they were not currently working as an early childhood educator.





Nine English-speaking respondents who answered this question said that they were employed outside the ECE sector. Thirteen were currently seeking employment in the ECE sector. Eleven indicated that they were pursuing further education.

Seven French-speaking respondents answered this question. Three stated that they were no longer seeking employment in the ECE sector, three members were seeking employment in the ECE sector and one indicated that he/she was pursuing further education.

Few respondents chose to add comments to this question. Two English-speaking respondents stated that they had been accepted into a Bachelor of Education program and one had begun post graduate studies.

5.10 Future Career Aspirations

Survey question 16 invited respondents to describe their future career plan as it related to the early childhood education sector. If respondents were not planning to remain in the sector they were asked to indicate this.

Responses for question 16 were received from 1078 English-speaking members and 51 French-speaking members.

Several recurring themes were evident in the English and French responses. The future career plan themes included:

- Applying for work as an RECE or trying to transition from casual, part-time or split- shift employment to full-time employment
- Working full time as an RECE

- Working or seeking employment in a full-day kindergarten in a district school board
- Engaging in programs to enhance educational qualifications
- Establishing own child care setting and
- Seeking employment as an administrator/supervisor/director.

Nineteen (1.7 %) members stated that they did not intend to seek employment in the sector.

A review of the responses was undertaken in order to obtain information about the frequency with which respondents highlighted each of the six “future career plan” themes.

Approximately 30 % of the respondents felt that they would continue to seek full time employment in an early learning and care centre or were already satisfied with the position that currently held as a RECE in a centre.

I hope to get a full-time position. I am currently working two part-time positions until June and then I will have one part-time position.

I am currently working in India as a teacher and trying to use my knowledge in this field. ECE is helping me to make changes in the settings here and getting positive results.

J'aimerais continuer à travailler dans le secteur de la petite enfance et y progresser.

I would like to continue working and progressing in the ECE sector.

Approximately 42 % of the 1129 respondents were working in or seeking a full-day kindergarten position within a district school board.

I will continue working with the school board because I am happy. I receive benefits and I enjoy seeing how teachers plan their curriculum.

I plan on continuing my career with the school board. An ECE is a very valued member of the staff of the JK/SK students and it is imperative that ECEs are there for them. I will be that ECE. I love it.

J'espère de travailler pour le conseil scolaire.

I hope to work for the school board.

A significant number of respondents (approximately 20%) were enrolled in or planning to enrol in further education programs in the field of early childhood education or related fields such as social work, pediatric nursing, occupational therapy, speech pathology, teaching in an ECE related post-secondary institution or engaging in courses that would lead to a position with the Ministry of Education or the College of Early Childhood Educators.

I am completing a post-graduate certificate in Corporate Communications and Public Relations and my career goal is to combine Early Childhood with Communications.

I am currently a student at in an Early Childhood Leadership degree program aiming to attain a Master's degree. I am not clear about my exact role, but I am interested in pursuing advocacy, supporting community hubs and counseling.

J'aimerais continuer mes études pour devenir enseignante.

I am currently a supervisor and hope to get the opportunity to advance.

Almost 6% of the respondents were planning to open their own early learning and care centre.

I hope to expand this child care centre into a real commercial business. The dream is to find a great building and renovate it into a wonderful centre. I have so many ideas and believe my child care centre would be a success.

Nineteen (1.7%) respondents suggested that they were planning to work toward an administrative/supervisory/director position within the ECE sector.

I hope to rise to the management level.

I would like to be a supervisor in a daycare centre or work with the Ministry or even the CECE. I think this would enable me to give back whatever skills and knowledge I have gained in my studies and experience.

Je suis presentement educatrice en chef et j'espere avoir des chances d'avancement.

6. Summarizing 2013 Cohort Respondent Feedback

The feedback was summarized using the purposes of the survey as a framework.

The stated purposes of the Registration and Membership Services 2013 Survey: *Early Career Transition and Entry to Practise* included:

1. Continuing the ongoing efforts of the College to understand and better serve the membership of the profession and the public
2. Illustrating the College's service goals and ethics as it strives to increase levels of understanding and transparency regarding the College registration processes and issues that affect the membership, the profession and the Ontario public
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2013 cohort of Ontario early childhood education program graduates in order to gain insight into the perceptions and challenges related to College registration, obtaining employment in the early

- childhood education sector, entry to practise experiences, career transitions, levels of professional confidence and satisfaction
4. Determining the self-reported level of knowledge and understanding of members who graduated from 2013 Ontario approved early childhood education programs regarding the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*
 5. Eliciting an image of the future career aspirations of the 2013 cohort of graduates of Ontario's approved early childhood education programs
 6. Providing a database of input from the 2013 graduate cohort that can be used for comparative purposes with the previous survey and with future investigations.

6.1 Serving the Membership and the Public

An introductory letter and the survey were distributed to the targeted member group consisting of the 2873 new members who had indicated that they were 2013 graduates of an approved Ontario early childhood education program.

In total, 1375 of these members responded to the survey. Almost all of these respondents were consistent in responding to all 16 survey items. Many of the respondents also chose to add comments.

The survey response rates (approximately 48 % English-speaking and 56 % French-speaking) are considered adequate for "mail out" surveys. The information gathered through the survey will be used to inform College decision making pertaining to Registration and Membership Services policies and procedures. The College may also decide that the information should be shared with members, stakeholder groups, policy-makers and the Public.

Sharing the results of the survey in this way will demonstrate that the College is engaged in ongoing communication with its membership. The follow-up reporting process will reassure members and the public that the regulatory body strives for continuous quality improvement.

6.1 Level of Understanding and Transparency

The information gathered from the survey demonstrates both member willingness to provide feedback and the College's responsiveness to the needs of these members. The information gathered through the survey can be shared with members, stakeholder groups and the public.

By making this information available to others interested in the early childhood education sector, the College establishes itself as a current and reliable source of information about the issues and challenges in the sector.

The survey responses also demonstrate to what extent some graduates recognize the valuable information sharing process and national/international profile of the College

that has been enhanced since the 2011 survey of graduates from approved Ontario ECE programs.

6.3 Feedback Regarding Registration Processes, Obtaining Employment, Entry to Practise Experiences, Career Transition and Levels of Confidence and Satisfaction

72 % English-speaking and 84 % French-speaking of the respondents indicated that they found the registration process “very easy” or “easy”.

Of special note for the 2013 cohort was the fact that that both English and French responses were received from all electoral districts.

86 % of English-speaking and 96 % of French-speaking respondents reported that they were currently employed in some capacity in the ECE sector.

A significantly high percentage of these employed respondents (54 % of English-speaking and 85 % of French-speaking respondents) were hired in the sector in two months or less.

54 % of English-speaking 85% of French –speaking respondents indicated they were employed full time in the ECE sector.

23 % of the English-speaking and eight % of the French -speaking respondents indicated that they were working part-time or in casual/supply work.

Many of the part-time and casual/supply RECEs indicated that they regretted not being able to participate in professional learning activities made available to full-time employees.

Comments added by respondents suggested that prior work in the sector (i.e., as an ECE assistant or supply staff), their apprenticeship experience and/or field placements assisted them in finding work.

Respondents also provided a range of employment opportunities not listed as options in the College survey (i.e., community shelters, extended school day programs, home-based child care, First Nation Friendship Centres, Islamic schools, Military Family Resources Centres, Montessori programs, YMCAs and Parenting and Family Literacy Centres and programs offered to new immigrants as well as other culturally specific organizations).

The majority of respondents felt that their post-secondary early childhood education program prepared them well for their first ECE employment experience. The percentage of respondents who provided positive feedback was significantly higher for French -speaking respondents than for English-speaking respondents.

Some respondents commented that they felt their ECE program should have included more work on curriculum development, program planning, the characteristics and methodology related to the infant developmental stage, working with parents, working with children with exceptionalities, preparing to work in an FDK classroom as a team

with an OCT member, documentation and “paperwork”, using technology to support early learning and care programming, financial management, and current issues in early childhood education.

Approximately two-thirds of the English-speaking respondents stated that they had been involved in a workplace orientation program. However, comments added by respondents suggested that, in most cases, the orientation was very basic (i.e., tour and introductions). Numerous FDK newly hired employees indicated that professional learning programs had been offered through the district school board rather than the individual school where they were employed.

A significantly high percentage of respondents indicated that their employers provided access to workshops and training.

Few respondents were engaged in mentoring relationships.

The majority of respondents in the 2013 cohort reported feeling “very confident” or “confident”. A significantly higher percentage of the French-speaking respondents rated their confidence level higher than their English-speaking colleagues.

Although more than half of the respondents indicated that they felt “extremely satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their employment situation, a significant number suggested only feeling “satisfied”.

15% of the comments added by respondents suggested that for many survey participants the low pay scale had an impact on their level of job satisfaction.

Of the fifty-two respondents who indicated that they were not currently employed in the early childhood education sector or were expanding on their educational qualifications, approximately 20 % of the 52 respondents stated that they were employed outside the ECE sector.

6.4 Knowledge and Understanding of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*

More than two thirds of the respondents indicated that they had an advanced level or intermediate level of knowledge and understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

6.5 Future Career Aspirations of the 2013 Cohort

Recurring themes were evident in the responses. These themes included:

- Continuing to apply for work as a RECE or trying to transition from casual, part-time or split-shift employment to full-time employment
- Working full time as an RECE
- Working or seeking employment in a full-day kindergarten in a district school board
- Enhancing educational qualifications

- Establishing own child care setting and
- Seeking employment as an administrator/supervisor/director.

6.6 Comparing Responses Provided by the 2011 Graduate Cohort and the 2013 Cohort

The information shared by the registered members of the College who had graduated in 2013 from approved Ontario post-secondary ECE programs can be compared with the responses provided by the 2011 graduate cohort.

The 2013 response rates for the survey were significantly higher than in 2011.

The 2013 respondents were significantly more consistent in their willingness to respond to and comment extensively on all survey items.

All electoral districts had both English-speaking and French-speaking members respond to the survey.

A higher percentage of both English-speaking and French-speaking respondents found the College application process “very easy” or “easy”. The increase was significant for French-speaking members.

Issues with obtaining the correct transcript showing graduation from the approved ECE post-secondary institution were a source of frustration for some respondents.

Response rates indicating employment status in the ECE sector were consistent with 2011 rates.

In 2013, a somewhat higher percentage of English-speaking respondents and a significantly higher response rate of French-speaking respondents indicated that they had obtained a job in two months or less.

Job offers were made and accepted by many respondents prior to completing their ECE program and receiving a College registration number.

A significantly higher percentage of 2013 French-speaking respondents indicated that their diploma or degree program prepared them well for their ECE role (67 % in 2011 and 94 % in 2013). The response rate for English-speaking respondents was consistent at 74 %.

Response rates for participant orientation programs, professional development initiatives or mentoring programs were consistent with 2011 rates.

Comments provided by many 2013 respondents provided specific information about professional learning opportunities and included a few references to online learning.

Comments added to the 2013 survey suggested that RECEs who were employed in a part-time or casual/supply positions were concerned about the lack of professional learning opportunities available to them.

The 2013 English-speaking respondent self-reported levels of confidence in their roles as RECEs remained consistent with the 2011 response rates with approximately 75 % feeling “Extremely Confident” or “Very Confident”. The French-speaking respondent rate increased from the 2011 rate of 85 % feeling “Extremely Confident” or “Very Confident” to 94 % in 2013.

The 2013 self-rated levels of confidence in their roles as RECEs were significantly higher than the 2011 response rates for the English-speaking and French –speaking respondents.

Respondent self-rated levels of satisfaction in the current role was significantly higher than the 2011 response rates for both English-speaking and French-speaking respondents.

When asked to describe their level of knowledge and understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, 2013 French–speaking respondents rated themselves significantly higher than those in the 2011 cohort. English -speaking responses rates were consistent in 2011 and 2013.

Fewer graduates in the 2013 response group indicated that they were not working in the ECE sector.

Although the majority of the respondents to the 2013 survey indicated that they had obtained employment, many were trying to transition from part-time and/or casual work to full-time RECE positions.

More 2013 cohort graduates were seeking full-time positions in FDK placements with district school boards (approximately 10 per cent).

The percentage of respondents who indicated they would be interested in working toward a management/ supervisory position increased slightly in 2013 (1.7%).

The percentage of respondents indicating an interest in pursuing additional educational qualifications increased from 15 % in 2011 to 20 per cent in 2013.

7. Limitations of the 2013 Survey

The response rate for the average of the English-speaking and the French –speaking respondents is considered adequate for a mail-out survey. However, these results should not be generalized over the entire population of 2013 early childhood education program graduates.

The nature of the respondents to the survey who chose to reply to the questionnaire may be a source of bias. Their survey responses may have been influenced by the fact

that a high percentage had already secured employment in the early childhood education sector. Their responses and perspective may, as a result, be more positive than other members of the 2013 graduating cohort who did not find employment as quickly. Other College members who had not obtained a job placement may also have been less inclined to respond to the College questionnaire.

8. Future Considerations

Based on the feedback provided by the 2013 graduates from the Ontario approved post-secondary early childhood education programs, who became members of the College and participated in the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey: *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition*, the College may choose to consider to continue:

1. Reviewing Registration and Membership Services Department policies and processes
2. Developing communications initiatives targeting members, stakeholders, policy makers and the public
3. Developing a continuous professional learning program for College members
4. Tracking membership retention rates and early career transition trends.

8.1 Reviewing Registration and Membership Services Policy and Processes

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.1(a) Continue to monitor member response to application and registration policies and processes
- 8.1(b) Ensure that College applicants and post-secondary institutions recognize that the transcript showing successful completion of their early childhood education program must indicate that the applicant had graduated
- 8.1(c) Revise question 11 of the survey to ensure that the participants are asked if they participate in the mentoring program as mentees
- 8.1(d) Engage the 2013 graduate cohort in a three year follow-up study
- 8.1(e) Identify other member cohort groups that may provide comparative information (i.e., internationally trained and out-of-province applicants).

8.2 Communication Initiatives

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.2(a) Demonstrate the variety of employment opportunities in the sector for graduates of approved post-secondary early childhood education programs
- 8.2(b) Share respondent feedback regarding Ontario early childhood education programs
- 8.2(c) Share respondent feedback about their self-rated levels of confidence in their ECE roles and their feelings related to job satisfaction
- 8.2(d) Continue to develop communication strategies to facilitate member engagement
- 8.2(e) Acknowledge the commitment expressed by many respondents about their willingness to serve the early learning and care sector.

8.3 Continuous Professional Learning Program

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.3(a) Share respondent feedback regarding existing orientation and mentoring programs
- 8.3(b) Share respondent perceptions about existing ongoing professional learning
- 8.3(c) Review respondent feedback and consider the implications for the College's design and development of a continuous professional learning program
- 8.3(d) Acknowledge and consider the implication of the feedback that many respondents shared about their plans to enhance their educational qualifications and specialized training
- 8.3(e) Share the concerns expressed by RECEs who are employed in part-time and/or casual supply positions about their perceived lack of professional learning opportunities.

8.4 Retention Rates and Early Career Transition to Practise Trends

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.4(a) Share feedback from respondents about member desire and commitment to remain in the profession with members, stakeholders and policy-makers
- 8.4(b) Share information with members, stakeholders and policy-makers about respondent career aspirations and academic goals

- 8.4(c) Share respondent feedback about the importance of being able to engage in continuous professional learning.

8.5. Other Considerations

The College may choose to review:

- 8.5(a) The 16 survey questions prior to distributing a future Registration and Membership Services survey related to entry to practise and career transition to ensure that the wording of each item remains current
- 8.5(b) The terms and/or language used in each item to identify language that may need to be accompanied by a definition in order to ensure clarity.

9. Conclusions

The report on the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey: *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition* highlights valuable feedback from a cohort of members who received a Certificate of Registration following successful completion of an approved program in early childhood education at post-secondary institution.

The information shared by the 1375 respondents provides new member insights about College registration processes and current issues and trends such as:

- Early childhood education sector employment options
- Early childhood education post-secondary program content
- Professional learning needs and opportunities available to new members
- The importance of ensuring that high quality professional learning opportunities are available to all RECEs
- Perceived gaps in available professional learning opportunities for part-time and casually employed RECEs
- Job satisfaction and professional confidence levels
- Career and academic aspirations.

Feedback provided by respondents to the Registration and Member Services 2013 Survey: *Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition* may be used by the College, stakeholders and policy makers to assist with program planning, decision-making and policy development.

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