

***Registration and Member Services 2014 Survey:
Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and
Early Career Transition***

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Full Report	
1. Introduction	17
2. Background.....	17
3. Purposes of the Survey	19
4. Implementing the Survey.....	21
5. Collating and Reviewing the Responses	21
5.1 Response Rate	21
5.2. Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents	22
5.3. Feedback on the College Application Process	23
5.4. Current Employment Status and Workplace Environments	26
5.5. Educational Program Preparation for Entry to Practise	31
5.6. Orientation Programs, Professional Development and Mentoring Initiatives.....	32
5.7. Member Confidence and Satisfaction.....	34
5.8. Knowledge and Understanding of <i>Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice</i>	37
5.9. Status of 2014 Graduates and College Members Currently Not Employed as RECEs	38
5.10. Future Career Aspirations	39
6. Summarizing 2014 Cohort Respondent Feedback	43
6.1. Serving the Membership and the Public	43
6.2. Level of Understanding and Transparency	44
6.3. Feedback Regarding Registration Processes, Obtaining Employment, Entry to Practise Experiences, Career Transitions and Levels of Confidence and Satisfaction	44
6.4. Knowledge and Understanding of <i>Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice</i>	46
6.5. Future Career Aspirations of the 2014 Cohort	46
6.6. Comparing Responses Provided by the 2013 Graduate Cohort and the 2014 Cohort	46
7. Limitations of the 2014 Survey	50
8. Future Considerations.....	51
8.1. Reviewing Registration and Membership Services Policy and Processes	51
8.2. Communication Initiatives	52
8.3. Continuous Professional Learning Program	52
8.4. Retention Rates and Early Career Transition to Practise Trends.....	53
8.5. Other Considerations	53
9. Conclusions	53
References	

Executive Summary

Introduction

The report, *Registration and Member Services 2014 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 of Early Childhood Educators (“the College”) to gather information from the 3,221 Ontario graduates of early childhood education diploma and degree programs who obtained their credentials in 2014.

The report analyzes and summarizes the feedback provided by the graduates and compares the information gathered through the 2013 and 2014 surveys. It also highlights a number of areas for future consideration and/or action by the College.

Purposes of the Survey

The purpose of the *Registration and Member Services 2014 Survey: Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition* include:

1. Continuing the ongoing efforts of the College to understand and better serve its membership along with the public.
2. Illustrating the College service goals and ethics as it strives to promote an increased level of understanding and level of transparency regarding the College registration processes and issues that affect the membership, the profession and the public.
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2014 cohort 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 level of knowledge and understanding of members regarding the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.
5. Eliciting an image of the future career aspirations of the 2014 cohort.
6. Providing a third database of input that can be used for comparative purposes with the input from the 2011 and 2013 graduates. It can also be used in future investigations for comparative purposes about registration practices, human resource trends and member perceptions and insights in Ontario’s early childhood education sector.

Implementing the Survey

The College used its registration records to identify members who received a Certificate of Registration following graduation from an early childhood education program offered through an approved Ontario post-secondary institution between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014. These records showed that 3,073 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was English, and 148 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was French, became registered members.

The survey was mailed to all English-speaking and French-speaking 2014 program graduates on April 1, 2015. A stamped return envelope was included with each survey form. The deadline for the survey to be returned was April 17, 2015 and later extended until May 13, 2015.

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

Collating and Reviewing the Survey Responses

The information provided by respondents was collated through the use of the software program SurveyMonkey. College staff entered the information in the SurveyMonkey database for the members who returned surveys using traditional postal service. Approximately 500 English-speaking and 50 French-speaking members returned their surveys using the stamped return envelopes provided by the College. 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

A total of 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking respondent surveys were returned to the College. The response rate of the English-speaking respondents was approximately 33% while the response rate of the French-speaking respondents was approximately 51%.

Making judgements about the acceptability of these response rates is somewhat challenging because recognized acceptable response rates vary by how a survey is administered. If a survey is administered by mail then a 50% return rate is considered adequate. If a survey is administered online 30% is considered average.

The 2014 survey was administered with provision for both mail and online access. Approximately half the English-speaking respondents and approximately two-thirds of the French-speaking respondents returned their surveys by mail.

Feedback on the College Application Process

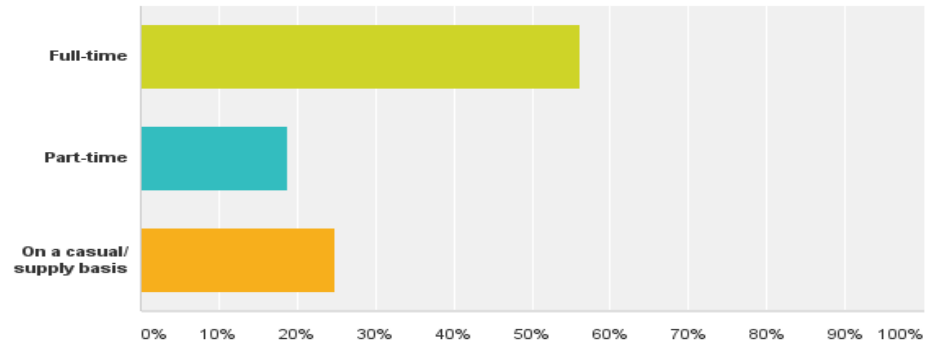
Respondents indicated on a rating scale whether their experience in completing the College application process was “very easy, easy, somewhat challenging, challenging or frustrating”.

Of the members who completed this question, approximately 71% of English respondents and 85% of French respondents indicated that they found the process “very easy” or “easy”.

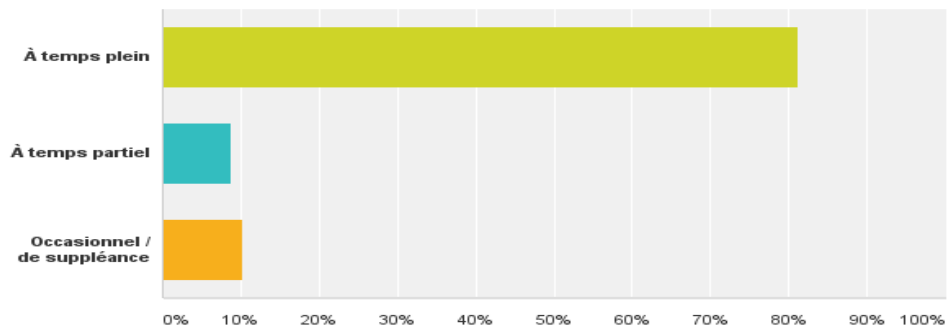
Approximately 56% of the English-speaking RECEs and 81% of the French-speaking RECEs were employed full-time. Approximately 19% of the English-speaking members and 9% of the French-speaking members held part-time positions. The remainder (25% English-speaking and 10% of the French-speaking respondents) 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.

please indicate if you are working

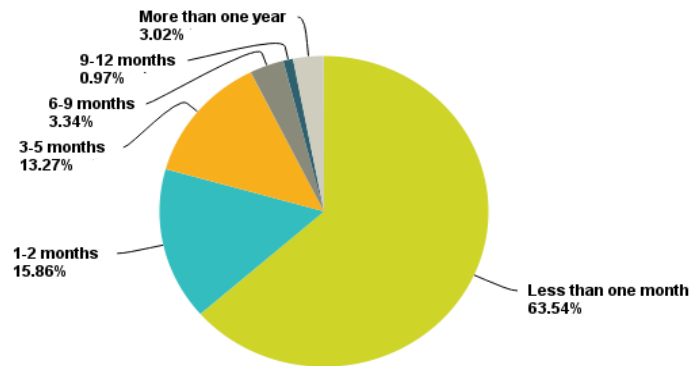


indiquez si vous occupez un poste :

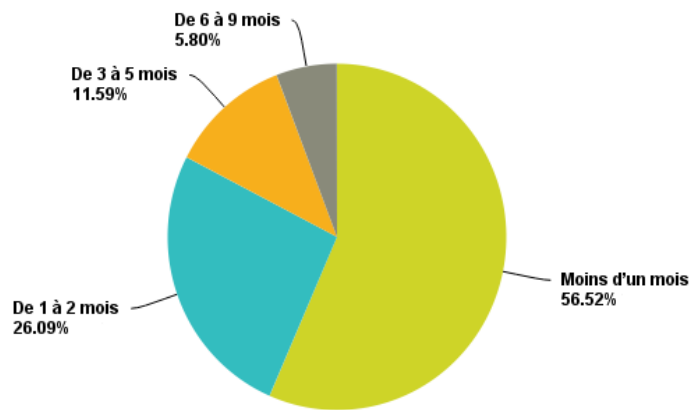


Of these employed members, approximately 79% of the English-speaking members and 83% of the French-speaking members indicated they had been able to obtain employment in two months or less.

Once you received your Certificate of Registration, how long did it take for you to find employment as an early childhood educator?



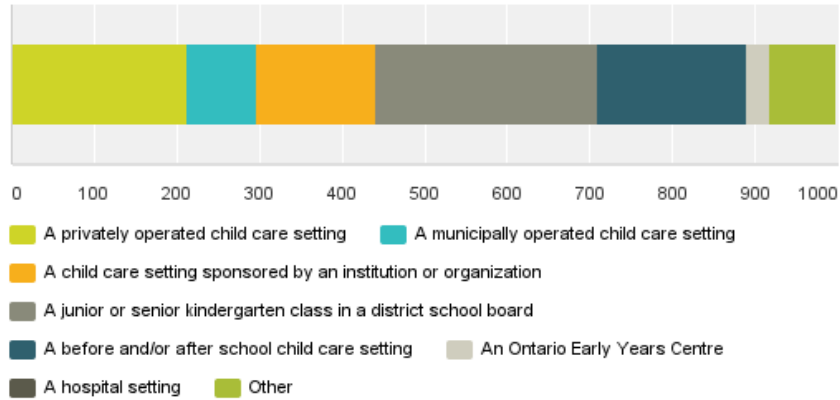
Après avoir reçu votre certificat d'inscription, combien de temps vous a-t-il fallu pour trouver un emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?



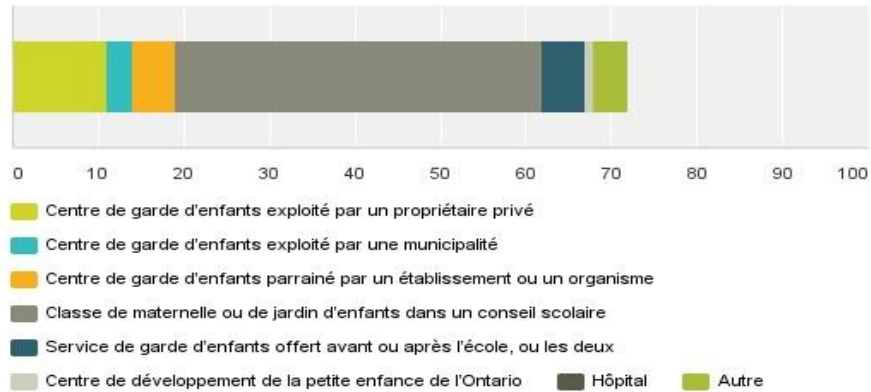
Survey respondents were employed in a range of workplace environments as shown in the following illustrations.

Other workplaces listed by respondents included employment as a nanny in a private home setting, charitable organizations (not named) for children with special needs and infants requiring mental health care, a youth counsellor with Princess Cruise Lines, and with AFÉSEO.

If you are currently employed as an early childhood educator, which of these best describes your workplace environment?



Si vous occupez présentement un emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance, quelle réponse parmi les suivantes décrit le mieux votre milieu de travail?



Educational Program Preparation for Entry to Practise

Respondents were asked to indicate how their early childhood education diploma or degree program prepared them for their responsibilities related to their employment experience in early childhood education.

Approximately 73% of the English-speaking respondents and 86% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their program prepared them “extremely well” or “very well”. In addition, approximately 19% of the English speaking respondents felt they had been prepared “quite well” and approximately 9% of the French-speaking respondents felt they had been prepared “quite well”.

Orientation Programs, Professional Development and Mentoring Initiatives

Approximately 66% of the English-speaking respondents and 43% of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they had participated in workplace orientation programs. A review of the comments suggested that these orientation initiatives ranged widely in scope.

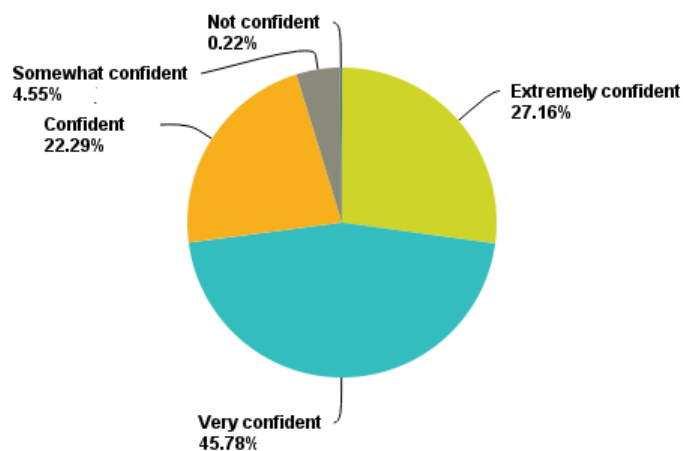
Eighty-three percent of the English-speaking and 78% of the French-speaking respondents stated that their employers provided ongoing professional development. Only 19% of the English-speaking and 6% of the French-speaking respondents indicated involvement in a mentoring program.

Member Confidence and Satisfaction

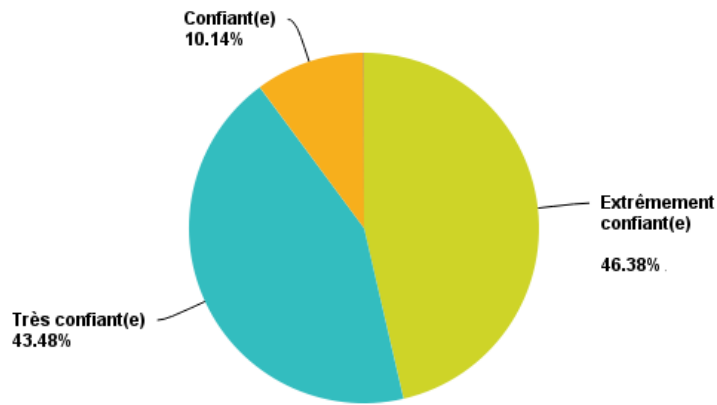
Survey respondents were asked to describe their level of confidence about their ability to meet the expectations of their current ECE role.

Most of the English-speaking (approximately 73%) and a larger majority (90%) of the French-speaking respondents described themselves as feeling “extremely confident” or “very confident”.

How would you describe your level of confidence with regard to your ability to meet the expectations of your current role as an early childhood educator?

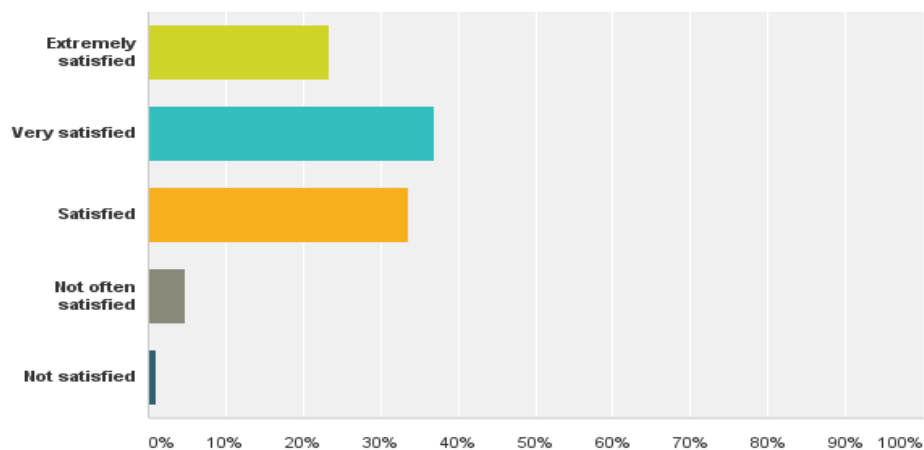


Vous sentez-vous confiant(e) d'avoir la capacité de satisfaire aux exigences de votre emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?

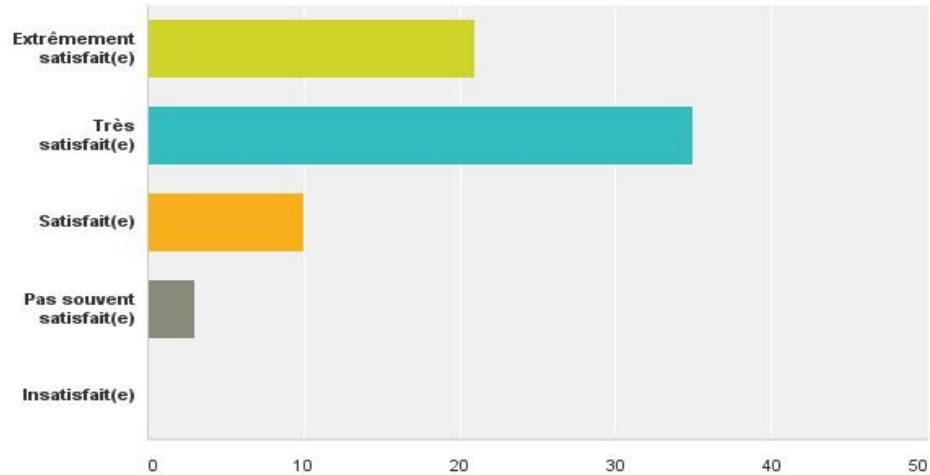


Approximately 61% of the English-speaking and 81% of the French-speaking respondents were “extremely satisfied” or “very satisfied” in their current role. Thirty-four percent English-speaking and 15% of the French-speaking respondents said they were satisfied.

What word(s) best describe your level of satisfaction in your current role as an early childhood educator?



Quelle réponse décrit le mieux le niveau de satisfaction que vous ressentez dans votre emploi actuel d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?



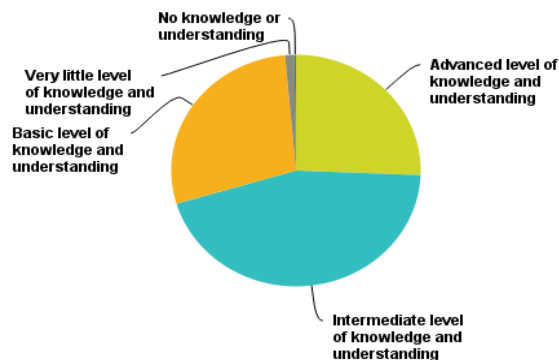
Some RECEs expressed concern over issues such as their difficulty in finding full-time employment (23), expressed a desire to acquire a position in full-day kindergarten (6) and expressed concern about the level of compensation (22)

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

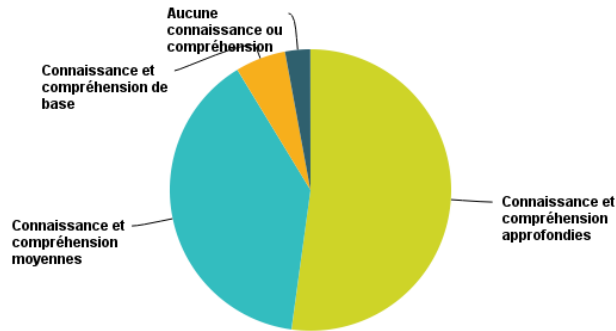
Almost 99% of the English-speaking respondents and over 97% of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they had a basic, intermediate or advanced level of understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

Seventy percent of the English-speaking and 91% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their level of understanding could best be described as either “advanced” or “intermediate”.

Please rate your knowledge and understanding of the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice:



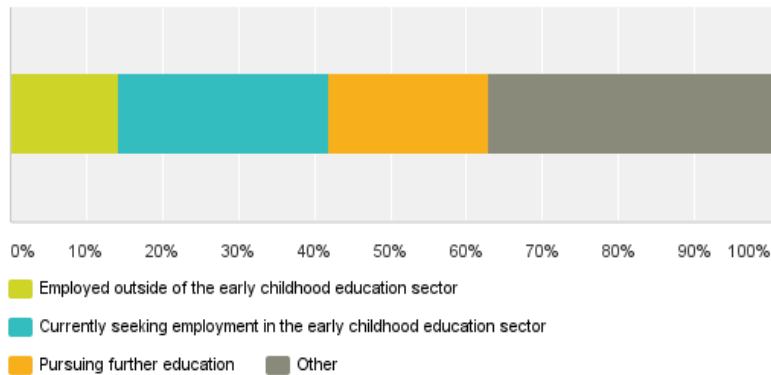
· Décrivez votre niveau de connaissance et de compréhension du code de déontologie et des normes d'exercice de l'Ordre des éducatrices et des éducateurs de la petite enfance.



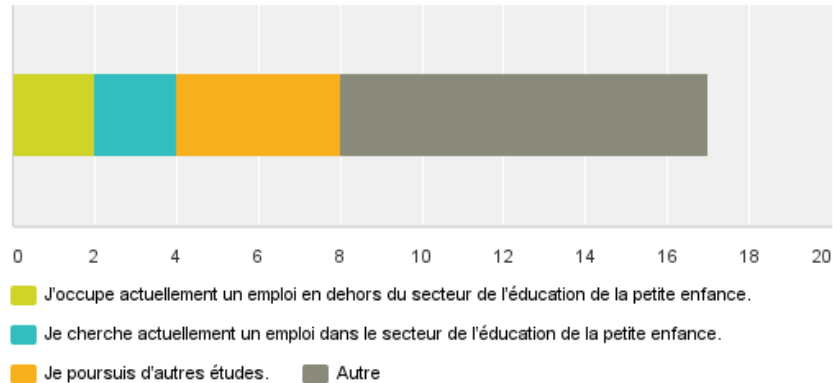
Status of the 2014 Graduates and College Members Currently Not Employed as RECEs

The distribution of responses is illustrated in the following graphs.

· If you are not currently employed as an early childhood educator, please select one of the following options that best describes your current status.



**Si vous n'avez pas d'emploi
d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite
enfance en ce moment, quel énoncé parmi
les suivants décrit le mieux votre situation
actuelle?**



A review of the 55 comments added by respondents indicated that some had chosen to accept employment that was in some way related to ECE positions but did not require a registered early childhood educator. Examples include working as an ECE educational assistant, a district board educational assistant, a lunchroom supervisor or serving as an “on call” supply. Several indicated that they held part-time ECE roles while they continued their academic studies – or that they had decided to enrol in full-time educational programs. A few wrote that they were operating private daycares in their own home.

Future Career Aspirations

Role	Number of Reponses	Percentage
Seeking employment in full-day kindergarten	201	27%
Employed in an ECE setting and want to continue to do so.	143	19%
Enrolled in or planning to enrol in a graduate or post graduate university education program	138	18%
Planning to open their own child care facility	66	9%
Seeking full-time work in ECE sector	60	8%
Seeking a position of added responsibility in the ECE sector	52	7%

Planning for a new career	31	4%
Other	61	8%

Summarizing 2014 Cohort Respondent Feedback

Serving the Membership and the Public

An introductory letter and the survey were distributed to a targeted member group consisting of the 3,221 graduates of approved Ontario early childhood education diploma and degree programs successfully completing their programs in 2014.

A total of 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking respondents returned surveys to the College.

The information gathered through the survey will be used to support the College in making decisions related to Registration and Membership Services policies and procedures. The College may also determine that the information should be shared with members, stakeholders, policy-makers and the public.

Providing the survey results shows that the College is engaged in ongoing communication with its membership and through the follow-up reporting process reassures members, stakeholder institutions and organizations, and the public that the regulatory body strives for continuous quality improvement.

Disseminating the information gathered from the 2014 graduates also illustrates that the College honours its duty to be accountable and to act in the public interest.

Level of Understanding and Transparency

The information gathered through the survey demonstrates both member willingness to provide feedback and the College's ability and willingness to be responsive to the needs of these members.

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

The survey response rate and respondent comments demonstrate a significant number of these new members recognize that their input is part of an ongoing valuable information-sharing process and assists the College enhance its provincial, national and international profile.

Feedback Regarding Registration Process, Obtaining Employment, Entry to Practice Experiences Career Transition and Levels of Confidence and Satisfaction

The majority of respondents indicated that they found the registration process "very easy" or "easy".

A significant number of respondents commented that both College staff and professors from their post-secondary programs had been readily available to assist them if they needed help during the registration process.

Most English-speaking (91%) and French-speaking respondents (97%) from the 2014 cohort reported that they were currently employed in some capacity in the ECE sector.

A significantly high percentage of these employed English-speaking (79%) and French-speaking (83%) respondents found a job in the sector in two months or less.

The majority of these respondents (English-speaking 56% and French-speaking 82%) were working full-time in the sector.

The percentage of both English-speaking and French-speaking respondents who were employed in FDK classrooms increased in the 2014 survey.

Nineteen percent of the English and 9% of the French-speaking respondents indicated they were working in the sector part-time.

Comments added by respondents suggested that prior work in the sector such as an ECE assistant, educational assistant, school lunchroom supervisor, casual/supply staff, apprenticeship experience and field placements assisted them in finding employment.

Six percent of the RECE respondents indicated that they were unable to find work in the ECE sector.

Ninety-two percent of the English and 97% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their post-secondary early childhood education program prepared them “extremely, very or quite well” for their first ECE employment experience.

Almost one-half of the English-speaking and French-speaking respondents commented about the positive aspects of their program placement experiences and how these placements had assisted them in obtaining employment.

Less than 1% of the respondent comments expressed negative generalized concerns about their post-secondary program. One percent specified that they felt that the ECE programs did not adequately prepare them for FDK employment.

Two-thirds of the English-speaking respondents and 35% of the French-speaking respondents said that they had been involved in some form of workplace orientation program.

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

Few respondents (19% English-speaking and 6% French-speaking) were engaged in mentoring relationships.

The majority of 2014 cohort members (95% of the English-speaking and 99% of the French-speaking) who responded to the survey reported feeling “extremely confident, very confident, or confident” in their current roles as an early childhood educator.

The majority (94% of the English-speaking respondents and 96% of the French-speaking respondents) described themselves as “extremely satisfied, very satisfied or satisfied” in their employment situation.

A few respondents commented that the low pay scale had an impact on their level of job satisfaction.

Of those respondents who indicated that they were not currently employed in the early childhood education sector, a majority said that they were currently still seeking employment in the sector. Several RECEs in this respondent group indicated that they were currently upgrading educational qualifications or were employed in positions that did not require them to be RECEs – but involved working directly with children.

Future Considerations

Reviewing Registration and Membership Services Policy and Processes

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- Continue to monitor member response to the application and registration policy and processes
- Continue using College presentations to future ECE graduates to emphasize that College applicants must arrange for a transcript to be sent directly to the College and that this transcript must indicate that the applicant has successfully completed the ECE program and was awarded a diploma or degree
- Clarify survey Question 11 so that recent graduates understand that they are being asked if they participate in a mentoring program and being mentored by an experienced RECE
- Clarify survey Question 7 to indicate that respondents should select only one employment workplace category where they spend most of their employment time
- Engage members in the 2014 graduate cohort in a three-year follow-up study focusing on career transitions.

Communication Initiatives

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- Highlight the existence and variety of employment opportunities in the sector for graduates of approved post-secondary early childhood education programs
- Share respondent feedback regarding Ontario early childhood education programs
- Share respondent feedback about their confidence and their feelings related to job satisfaction
- Continue to develop communication strategies to facilitate new member College engagement
- Continue to acknowledge recent graduate and new member commitment to the early learning and care sector
- Highlight the respondents' acknowledgement about the extent to which the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* were emphasized in their post-secondary program and how competently they rated their understanding of the code and standards.

Continuous Professional Learning Program

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- Share respondent feedback regarding their perceived lack of access to effective workplace orientation and mentoring initiatives with RECE employers
- Encourage and support the development of workplace entry-to-practise orientation and mentoring initiatives

- Encourage workplace decision-makers to develop online and/or in-person professional learning opportunities for part-time and casual RECEs
- Encourage and support the development of online professional learning initiatives focusing on entry-to-practise issues and challenges
- Acknowledge and consider the implications of the fact that many respondents want to enhance their educational qualifications and specialized training
- Recognize and value the fact that the majority of the 2014 cohort respondents expressed clearly articulated career aspirations
- Highlight the increase in the percentage of respondents who expressed interest in moving into positions of added responsibility in the sector.

Retention Rates and Early Career Transition to Practise Trends

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- Share respondent feedback about their desire and commitment to remain in the profession with employers, stakeholders and policy-makers
- Encourage and support post-secondary institutions and other stakeholder organizations and professional learning providers to plan and implement professional learning initiatives focusing on children with special needs, diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and life experiences
- Encourage professional learning providers to develop resources and opportunities for RECEs transitioning into practise and promote ongoing professional learning
- Encourage professional learning providers to develop resources and programs for RECEs aspiring to positions of added responsibilities.

Other Considerations

- Undertake a review of the 16 survey questions prior to distributing future Entry to Practise and Career Transition Survey to ensure that the language used remains current
- Add a survey question designed to gain a better understanding about new member perceptions and willingness to use online entry-to-practise and career transition resources and workshops
- Explore the implications of the pay inequity and benefits for new RECEs and the impact of this perceived inequity for the ECE profession.

Conclusion

The report on the *Registration and Member Services 2014 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 a postsecondary institution in 2014. The information shared by the 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking respondents provides new insights about College registration processes and current issues and trends including:

- Employment options in the early childhood education sector
- 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
- Gaps in available professional learning opportunities for part-time and casually employed RECEs
- Job satisfaction and professional confidence levels
- Career and academic aspirations and
- Perceived compensation and benefits inequity in the ECE employment sector.

Feedback provided by respondents to the *Registration and Member Services 2014 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.

Full Report

1. Introduction

The report, *Registration and Member Services 2014 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 of Early Childhood Educators (the College) to gather information from the 3,221 graduates of Ontario early childhood education diploma and degree programs who obtained their credentials in 2014.

The report provides an analysis and synthesis of the feedback provided by the graduates and compares the information gathered through the 2013 and 2014 surveys. It also highlights a number of areas for future consideration and/or action on the part of the College.

2. Background

The recruitment and the retention of competent early childhood educators in the profession are critical factors related to the provision of high quality early childhood education and care. The study (2009) by the pan-Canadian organization, the 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 for the recruiting challenges in Ontario. Prime among these reasons was an identified lack of qualified staff.

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.

In 2009, the CCHRSC released a Canada-wide report, *Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages*. This report confirmed that Ontario’s early childhood education sector was experiencing a workforce shortage and provided an estimate of the economic costs of this shortage for the province. The project also confirmed that the main problems related to the sector’s ability to recruit and retain qualified staff are primarily caused by staff turnover.

The November 2011 release of the *Early Years Study 3: Making Decisions, Taking Action* reaffirmed the impact that quality early childhood education programming has on young children, their families and Ontario society. The report highlights the need for increased numbers of qualified and competent early childhood educators, appropriate remuneration for

these individuals and a commitment to the establishment of safe and satisfying professional workplace environments.

A report issued by the Organization for Economic and Co-operative Development (OECD) in 2012, *Starting Strong III – A Quality Toolbox for Early Childhood and Care*, 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.

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 outcomes 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 worker’s services” and highlighted “how it has positively and significantly affected individual workers knowledge, confidence and leadership skills and their relationships with the other professionals in children’s lives”.

During a keynote presentation in June 2014, 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 experience about “What Makes a High Quality Early Childhood 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”.

Issues related to the recruitment, career transitions and retention of early childhood educators have been magnified by the implementation of Ontario’s full-day kindergarten programs staffed by a registered early childhood educator and an Ontario certified teacher. The implementation of these full-day kindergarten programs has provided new employment options for both recent ECE graduates and experienced members of the ECE profession.

With the full-day kindergarten programs introduced in all Ontario schools and the expectations outlined in the 2013 Ministry of Education document, *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework*, and, more recently, in 2014 a supporting resource for the policy framework, *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years* the demand for qualified and competent registered early childhood educators continues to grow.

Parents and other 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 to remain in the workforce.

The Registration and Member Service survey reports for 2011 and 2013 Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition, provided valuable information about College registration processes and issues, such as early childhood education sector employment options, early childhood education post-secondary program experience, 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 2014 Survey: Early Childhood Educator Entry to Practise and Early Career Transition* include:

1. Continuing the ongoing efforts of the College to understand and better serve the profession and the public
2. Showing the College's service goals and ethics as it strives to promote an increased understanding and level of transparency regarding its registration processes and the issues that affect the membership, the profession and the public
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2014 cohort of Ontario early childhood education program graduates in order to gain insight into their perceptions and challenges related to registering in the College, 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 2014 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 2014 cohort of graduates
6. Providing a third database of input from the 2014 cohort to be used for comparative purposes with the input provided by the 2011 and 2013 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.

The 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 2011, 2013 and 2014 survey design.

1. How many Ontario ECE diploma/degree early childhood education graduates were issued a Certificate of Registration between January 1 and December 31 of a given year?
2. How did the Ontario graduates perceive the Certificate of Registration application process?
3. What percentage of the graduates who registered with the College obtained employment in early education sector in Ontario prior to April 1 of the year following their graduation?
4. How long did it take the newly registered members of the College to find their first job?
5. In what ECE workplace environments did these 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 do the graduates think that their ECE education programs prepared them for the realities of working in the ECE environment?
8. How confident and professionally satisfied do the graduates feel in their ECE roles?
9. To what extent are the graduates aware of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*?
10. What are ECE career aspirations of 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, 2014 and December 31, 2014. College registration records indicated that 3,073 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was English and 148 graduates, who indicated that their preferred language was French, became registered members.

The survey was mailed to all English and French-speaking 2014 program graduates on April 1, 2015. A stamped return envelope was included with each survey form. The deadline for the survey return was April 17, 2015 and later extended until May 13, 2015.

The survey consisted of 16 questions 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 the option for respondents to add comments.

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 the information in the SurveyMonkey database for the members who returned surveys using traditional postal service. Approximately 500 English-speaking and 50 French-speaking members returned their surveys using the stamped return envelopes provided by the College. 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, 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking respondent surveys were returned to the College. The response rate of the English-speaking respondents was approximately 33% while the response rate of the French-speaking respondents was approximately 51%.

Making judgements about the acceptability of these response rates is somewhat challenging because recognized acceptable response rates vary by how a survey is administered. If a survey is administered by mail then a 50% return rate is considered adequate. If a survey is administered online 30% is considered average.

The 2014 survey was administered with provision for both mail and online access. Approximately half the English-speaking respondents and approximately two-thirds of the French-speaking respondents returned their surveys by mail.

Survey 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, 2014 and December 31, 2014?”

Respondents answering “no” were not able to proceed to Question Two and were thanked for their willingness to contribute to the survey. At least 96% of respondents in both languages answered yes.

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) = 953 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking respondents (Question 3)

Electoral District	Number of English Respondents	Percentage of English Respondents	Number of French Respondents	Percentage of French Respondents
District 1 North and North East Region	53	5.6%	5	7.2%
District 2 East Region	80	8.4%	30	43.5%
District 3	29	3%	4	5.8%

South East Region				
District 4 Central East Region	81	8.5%	2	2.9%
District 5 Toronto Region	276	29%	6	8.7%
District 6 Central West Region	218	23%	9	13%
District 7 Hamilton-Niagara Region	67	7%	2	2.9%
District 8 South West Region	143	15%	8	11.6%
Other (Out of Province)	6	0.6%	3	4.3%

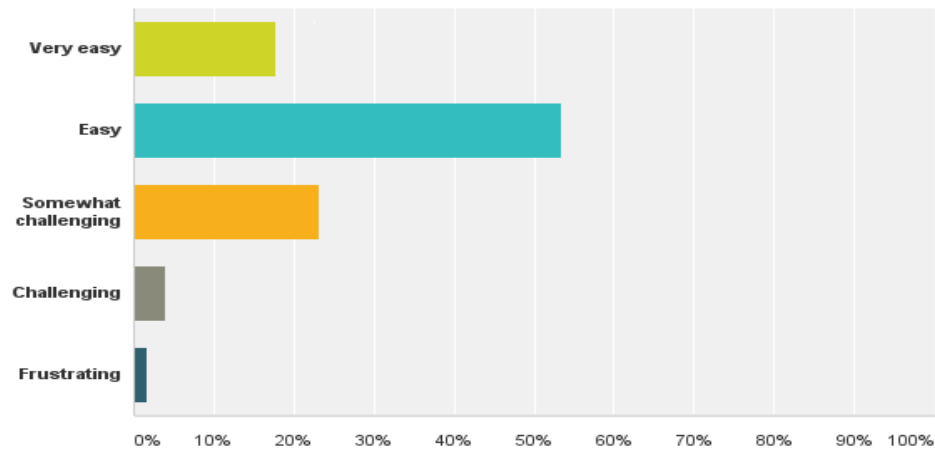
5.3 Feedback on the College's Membership Application Process

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

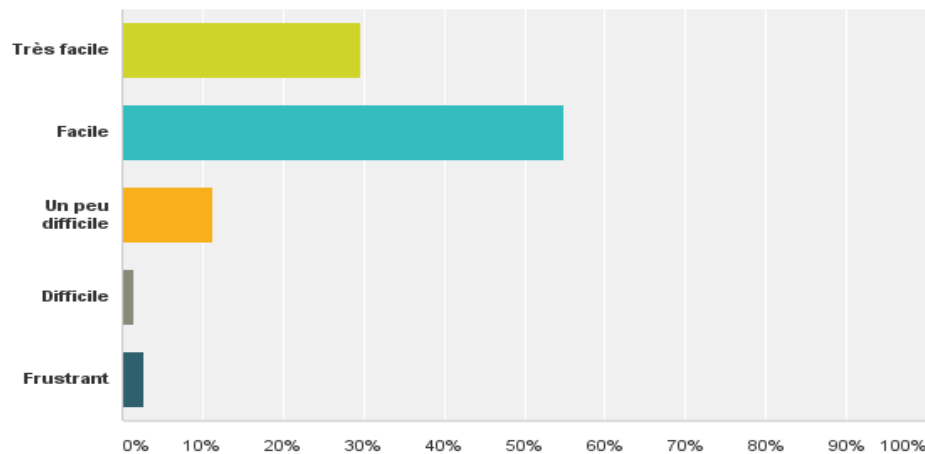
N = 968 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking respondents (Question 2)

Of the members who completed this question, approximately 71% of English respondents and 85% of French respondents indicated that they found the process “very easy” or “easy”.

What words best describe your experience in completing your application for your Certificate of Registration?



Quelle réponse décrit le mieux votre expérience du processus de demande d'inscription à l'Ordre?



Approximately 16% of the respondents chose to add comments to this question. The majority of these comments could be grouped into six themes.

Forty-five respondents chose to highlight the challenges they experienced while completing the application. Areas for concern included applicant perceptions that:

- The process was confusing
- Obtaining their Certificate of Registration took too long
- Facilitating the sending of their transcripts from the post-secondary institution to the College was “held-up”

- The registration fee is too high
- Some required documents were hard to obtain such as proof of name change/marriage certificate
- The difficulty experienced by applicants whose first language was not English

Sample participant responses include:

There were parts of the application that were confusing. Parts of Section 2 about Educational Qualifications were not very clear.

The process of receiving my information and my certificate took a long time to get mailed to me.

Some difficulties with transcripts and getting them sent in a timely fashion.

I didn't have the money to pay for my application or much family support which resulted in it being difficult for me to start working, so I applied to Ontario Works and they supported my start by paying for my application. I was then able to get a job in my field.

I had difficulty because I had to provide proof of name change, this slowed the process considerably.

It was somewhat challenging to complete application for my certificate because English is not my first language.

Twenty-five respondents chose to make positive comments on their registration experience.

I just followed the instructions which were very straightforward and clear.

It was clear what I needed to do to register and the CECE website was easy to navigate so I could find the forms I needed to fill out.

As soon as I had questions I called in and someone helped me out.

C'était facile je n'ai rencontré aucune difficulté.

Twenty-five respondents expressed appreciation regarding the help they had received with completing their application from their post-secondary professors, other RECEs and the College.

We were provided with training and assistance for the application in our course.

Representatives from the College were at our career fair, which made the process easy since I was able to ask them questions.

Ten respondents mentioned that the College presentations at their post-secondary institution had been very helpful.

I had a representative come to (post-secondary institution) and explain any further questions my class had.

It helped that we had representatives come to our school and explain the process.

Nine responses indicated a desire on the part of applicants to be able to complete their application online.

Wish it could all be done online.

Il suffit de connaître les étapes en ligne.

A review of the 168 comments also suggested that 16 respondents appeared to misunderstand the question. Their comments provided feedback including descriptions of their experiences in the early childhood education program rather than specific to the College's membership application process.

Examples include:

I enjoyed it very much, but after being out of school for so many years it was a bit of a challenge getting back into the swing of things.

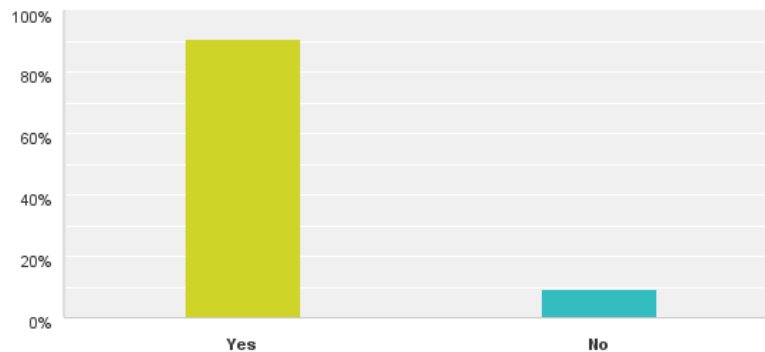
I enjoyed the program as it was challenging and stimulating as well as enjoyable.

5.4 Current Employment Status and Workplace Environments

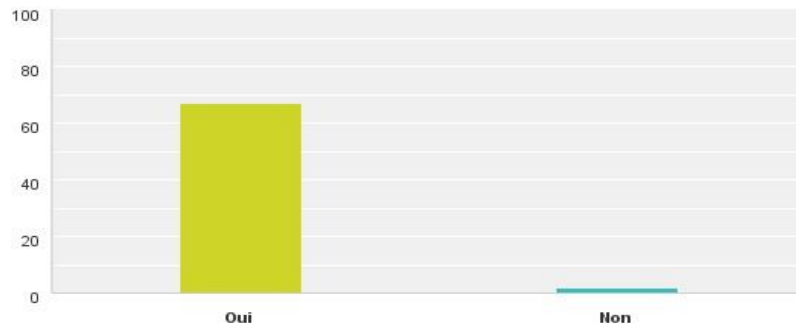
The newly registered members were asked if they were currently employed as an early childhood educator.

Number of respondents = 958 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 4)

Are you currently employed as an early childhood educator?



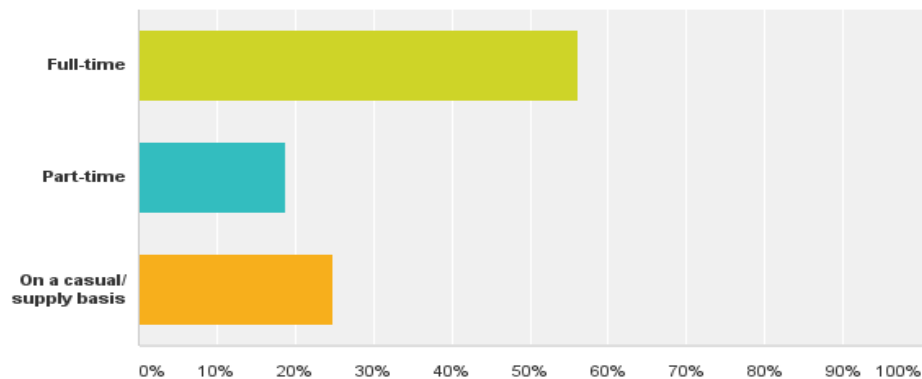
À l'heure actuelle, occupez-vous un emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?



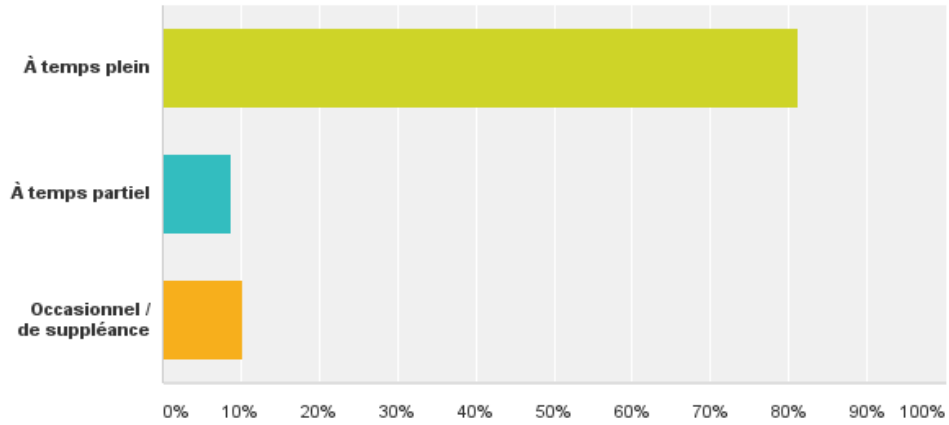
Approximately 56% of the English-speaking respondents and 81% of the French-speaking respondents were employed full-time. Approximately 19% of the English-speaking members and 9% of the French-speaking members were holding part-time positions. The remainder (25% English-speaking and 10% of the French-speaking 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.

please indicate if you are working

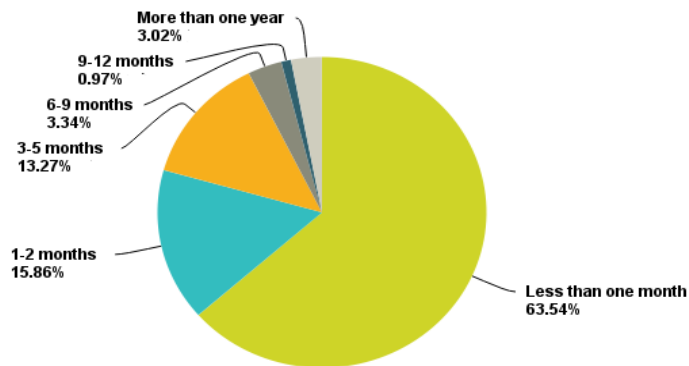


indiquez si vous occupez un poste :

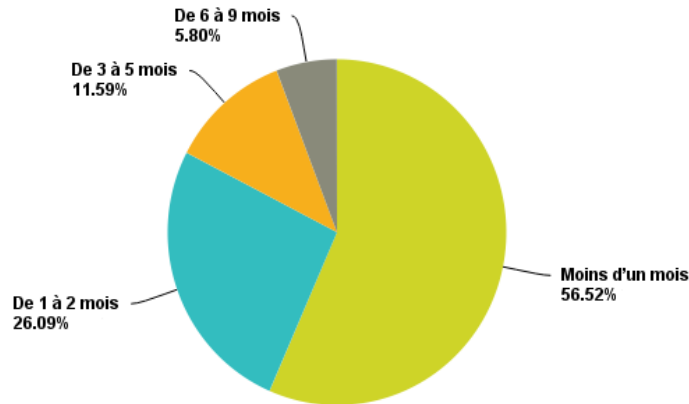


Of these employed members, approximately 79% of the English-speaking members and 83% of the French-speaking members indicated they were able to obtain employment in two months or less.

Once you received your Certificate of Registration, how long did it take for you to find employment as an early childhood educator?



**Après avoir reçu votre certificat
d'inscription, combien de temps vous a-t-il
fallu pour trouver un emploi d'éducatrice ou
d'éducateur de la petite enfance?**



Nearly 300 English-speaking respondents and 20 French-speaking respondents chose to provide additional comments. Approximately two-thirds of the English-speaking respondents and three quarter of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they obtained a position prior to receiving their Certificate of Registration or immediately following its receipt. A significant number of these RECEs stated that they had previously been employed as early childhood education assistants, before and after school care providers, lunchroom supervisors, classroom teacher assistants or had completed an apprenticeship program while working.

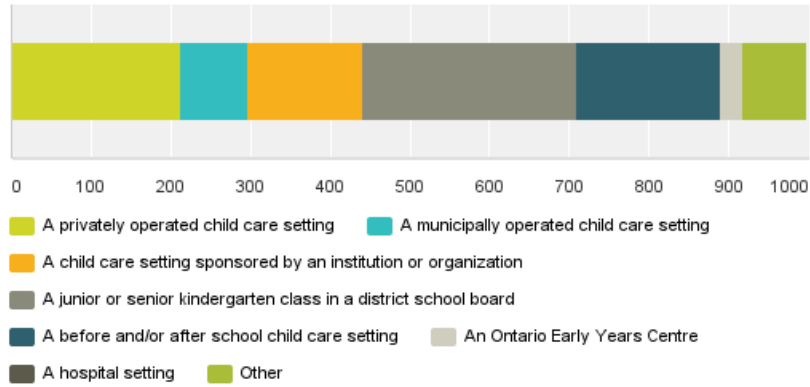
A few survey participants delayed their job searches because they took a vacation, wanted to spend more time with family or were on maternity leave. Comments from six RECEs revealed that they had decided to continue university-level degree programs.

Six percent of the RECEs who added comments stated that they had been unable to find employment.

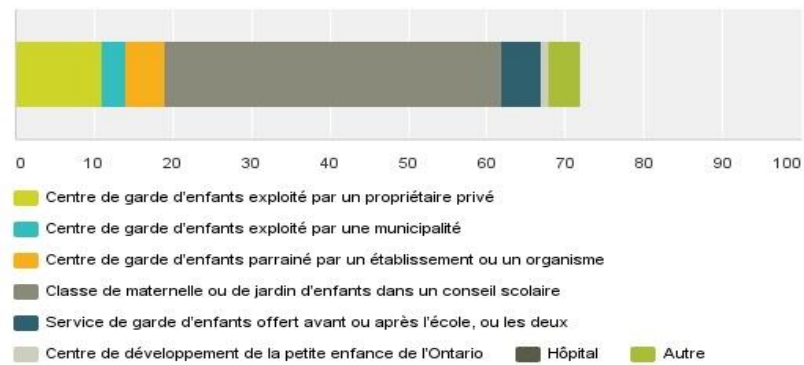
Survey respondents were employed in a range of workplace environments as shown in the following illustrations.

Number of respondents = 905 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 7)

If you are currently employed as an early childhood educator, which of these best describes your workplace environment?



Si vous occupez présentement un emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance, quelle réponse parmi les suivantes décrit le mieux votre milieu de travail?



Alternate workplaces listed by respondents included employment as a nanny in a private home setting, charitable organizations (unnamed) for children with special needs and infants requiring mental health care, a youth counsellor with Princess Cruise Lines, and with AFÉSEO.

5.5 Educational Program Preparation for Entry to Practise

Survey Question 8 invited respondents to indicate to what extent they believed their early childhood education diploma or degree program prepared them for their responsibilities related to their early childhood education employment experience.

Number of respondents = 931 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 8)

Approximately 73% of the English-speaking respondents and 86% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their program prepared them “extremely well” or “very well”. In addition, approximately 19% of the English-speaking respondents felt they had been prepared “quite well” and approximately 9% of the French-speaking respondents felt they had been prepared “quite well”.

One hundred and eighty-two respondents provided comments. Approximately 44% of the English comments and 47% of the French comments were positive in nature. A significant number of these comments conveyed that the respondents found their placement experiences to be very positive and helped them to obtain employment.

These comments included:

(Post-secondary institution) provided me a great balance of theory and application which was very helpful to my employment.

The program prepared me to demonstrate a professional attitude and ability to work cooperatively, collaboratively in partnership with the team members, staff members and children and their families on a daily basis. The program also assisted me in gaining more knowledge.

Les notions de guises dans le programme nous permet d’assumer nos responsabilités avec efficacité.

I had six field placements which gave me lots of hands-on experience. My teachers were also AMAZING!

I was happy I was able to choose the placement. I purposely picked a school with kindergarten that I knew had many children with special needs. This gave me super training that otherwise I might not have had.

C’était la bonne formation.

Six respondents (less than 1%) expressed negative concerns about their program.

Sample comments include:

I think there need to be more real life experiences – maybe more placements or assignment-related placements. I feel I was not 100% prepared to actually work in real life. I know the basics but don’t feel I had the tools to actually work in real-life situations. I also think it should be more about school-agers. They are a lot different than early years.

I previously had a social work/university degree so my ECE schooling was extremely redundant.

La préparation pour assumer les responsabilités est très différente de la réalité sur terrain. Je rencontre beaucoup d’épreuves/difficultés en rapport avec le fonctionnement/système dans le milieu dans lequel je travaille. Non seulement, je m’adapte/ajuste à ces défis, je me sens abandonnée parce qu’il n’y a pas d’appui au niveau syndical qui existe pour nous, les éducatrices de la petite enfance.

One percent of the respondents highlighted their belief that more emphasis is needed to be placed on preparing graduates for full-time kindergarten placements.

Sample comments included:

(Post-secondary institution) needed more classes specific to FDK – school board model. College was very “daycare” based.

Not enough emphasis on FDK curriculum and teaching partner relationships.

Twenty-three respondents offered suggestions for program improvement. These suggestions included providing more information and experience related to:

- focusing on activities and games to enhance academics such as literacy and numeracy
- working with children with special needs
- assisting high risk families
- supporting infant programming
- increasing the emphasis on working with multicultural communities
- enhancing information about implementing the ELECT document
- developing behavioural management strategies
- creating experiences for the outdoor world
- handling serious occurrences (such as serious injuries) and
- communicating with parents.

5.6 Orientation Programs, Professional Development and Mentoring Initiatives

Number of respondents = 922 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 9)

Approximately 66% of the English-speaking respondents and 43% of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they had participated in workplace orientation programs.

One hundred and fifty-three members chose to add comments regarding their orientation experiences. A review of these comments suggested that these orientation initiatives ranged widely in scope:

- tour of the facility only/introduction to management
- request that they read the establishment’s policy and procedures manual
- one-hour session with Human Resources staff
- two to five hours of organized orientation activities
- Board of Education orientation day
- series of workshops
- job-shadowing opportunities
- training related to anaphylactic shock, CPR and WHMIS.

A few comments suggested that the RECEs had no orientation experiences but would have appreciated the opportunity. Five respondents shared that they had been working in early years programs with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) for several years already and did not require an orientation.

Number of respondents = 924 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 10)

Eighty-three percent of the English-speaking and 78% of the French-speaking respondents who answered this survey question stated that their employers provided ongoing professional development.

Comments added by respondents indicated that some employers did not provide any opportunities for ongoing learning while other employers viewed ongoing learning as essential for RECEs in the workplace. Many RECEs, who added comments, suggested that these sessions were very helpful and appreciated.

We have PLCs – Professional Learning Communities – throughout the year. These are half days when two or three schools meet together with a couple of members of the board for training. We also have various PA day activities.

Many proposed opportunities are always available for ECEs and for teachers so we can get together. Learn together as a team. Key to Learn with TDSB has many resources and opportunities.

Almost every month each RECE gets to go to a workshop based on the age group they work with.

On participe aux formations.

A few respondents indicated that online workshops were available to them. Eight RECEs who work on a casual/supply basis indicated that employers only provided professional learning opportunities to full-time employees.

Number of respondents = 924 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 11)

Approximately 19% of the English-speaking and 6% of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they were involved in a mentoring program. Several RECEs expressed an interest in becoming involved in a mentor relationship. A review of the comments for question 11 indicates that a significant number of respondents thought that the survey question was asking whether they were currently serving as a mentor for another RECE.

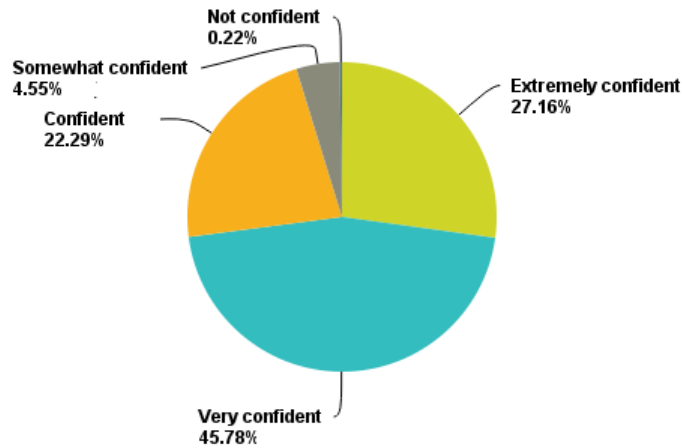
5.7 Member Confidence and Satisfaction

Number of responses = 924 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 12)

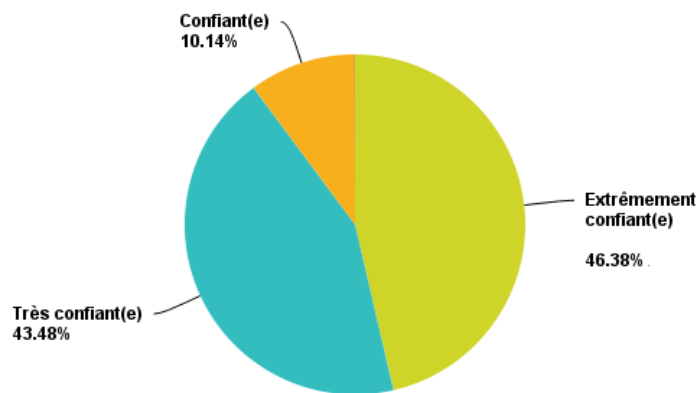
Survey respondents were invited to describe their level of confidence about their ability to meet the expectations of their current ECE role.

A majority of both the English-speaking (approximately 73%) and a larger majority (90%) of the French-speaking respondents described themselves as feeling “extremely confident” or “very confident”.

How would you describe your level of confidence with regard to your ability to meet the expectations of your current role as an early childhood educator?



Vous sentez-vous confiant(e) d'avoir la capacité de satisfaire aux exigences de votre emploi d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?



An analysis of the 83 comments added to this survey indicated that almost 40% of those RECEs adding comments described themselves as feeling very confident in their abilities.

I am extremely confident because I work to the best of my ability to meet the needs of all the children regardless of their different abilities. I also use the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice to guide me.

Have had positive feedback from parents about the growth in their children.

Je sais ce quoi faire. C'est pourquoi mon employeur m'apprécie beaucoup.

Thirty-one comments suggested that respondents felt confident in their role – but that they still recognized that they would grow in confidence with more experience.

I am learning every day.

The more experience I get the more my confidence grows.

Six respondents, who had been employed in FDK settings, expressed concern that their post-secondary institution had not prepared them for the FDK curriculum.

I follow the FDK school board kindergarten document. I wish I had this in college instead of using "ELECT" document. Knowing this before would have had me "on par" with the teachers already at the board.

Nine comments highlighted what respondents considered as major challenges in their ECE roles. Examples include:

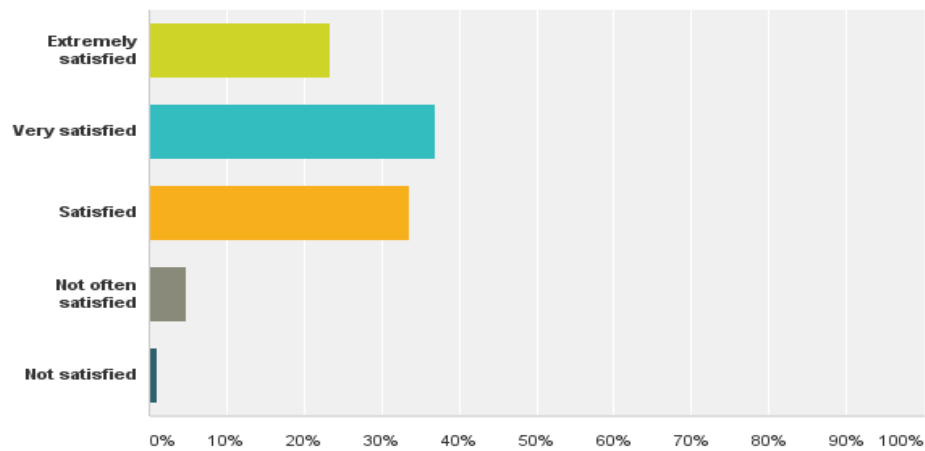
Not all school boards have the same expectations for ECEs –mixed/inconsistent expectations daily as I travel between schools on call.

Struggling with my teaching partner but working on it.

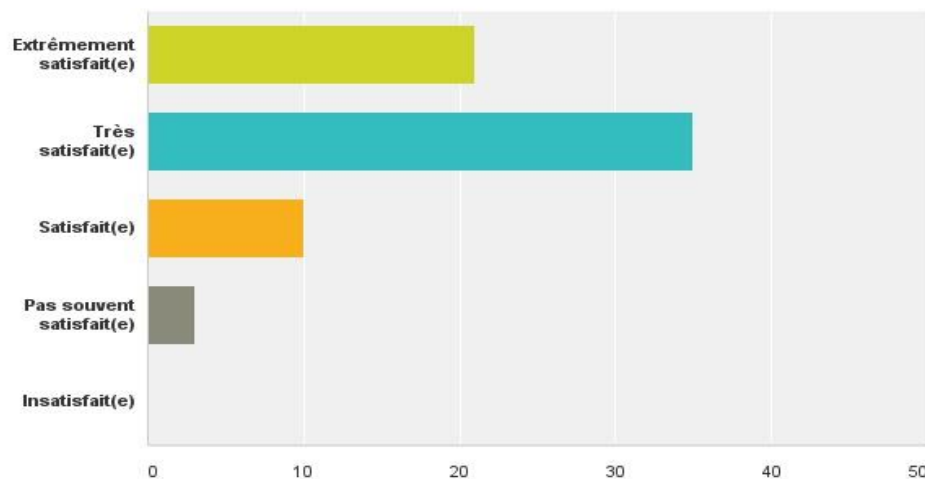
Number of responses = 921 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 13)

Approximately 61% of the English-speaking and 81% of the French-speaking respondents reported being "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" in their current role. Thirty-four percent English-speaking and 15% of the French-speaking respondents said they were satisfied.

What word(s) best describe your level of satisfaction in your current role as an early childhood educator?



Quelle réponse décrit le mieux le niveau de satisfaction que vous ressentez dans votre emploi actuel d'éducatrice ou d'éducateur de la petite enfance?



Many of the 167 respondents chose to elaborate using the comment section.

I am very confident and feel very lucky to have such a fulfilling career at this point in my life.

J'aime mon travail.

Twenty-three RECEs expressed concern over issues such as their difficulty in finding full-time employment, six expressed a desire to acquire a position in FDK and twenty-two expressed concern about the level of financial compensation.

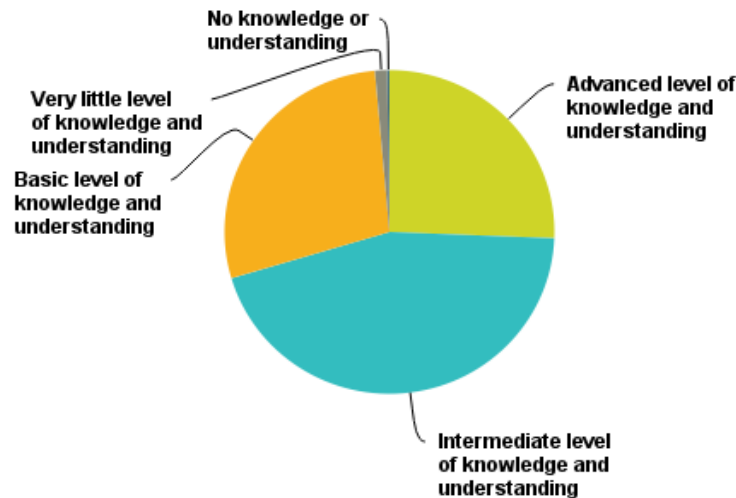
5.8 Knowledge and Understanding of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*

Number of responses = 929 English-speaking and 69 French-speaking (Question 14)

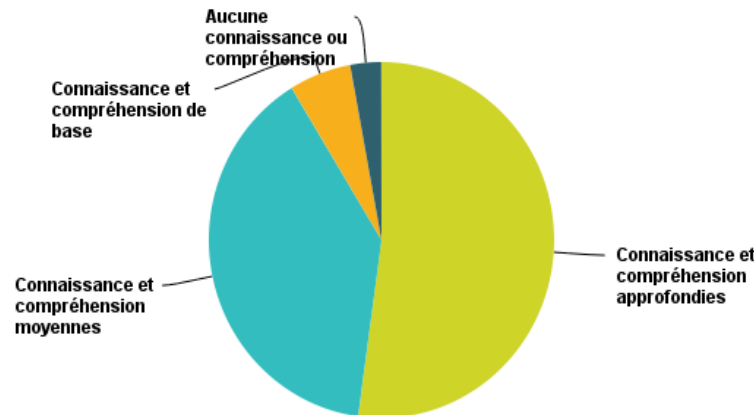
Almost 99% of the English-speaking respondents and over 97% of the French-speaking respondents indicated that they had a basic, intermediate or advanced level of understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

Seventy percent of the English-speaking and 91% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their level of understanding could best be described as either “advanced” or “intermediate”.

Please rate your knowledge and understanding of the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice:



**Décrivez votre niveau de connaissance
et de compréhension du code de
déontologie et des normes d'exercice de
l'Ordre des éducatrices et des éducateurs
de la petite enfance.**



Of the 69 respondents who chose to add comments, one-third believed that they had received excellent training at their post-secondary institution prior to graduating. Over 20% shared the fact that they were integrating the *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice* into their daily practice in the employment setting. Twenty-five percent felt they were continuing to learn more about the standards as they got more experience on the job.

It is a required knowledge for me to work as an ECE so I keep a file for this information in my work binder every day.

Becoming familiar with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice document was a very prevalent component of my college training.

C'est très important de savoir les normes et le code. On ne peut pas travailler sans ces deux documents.

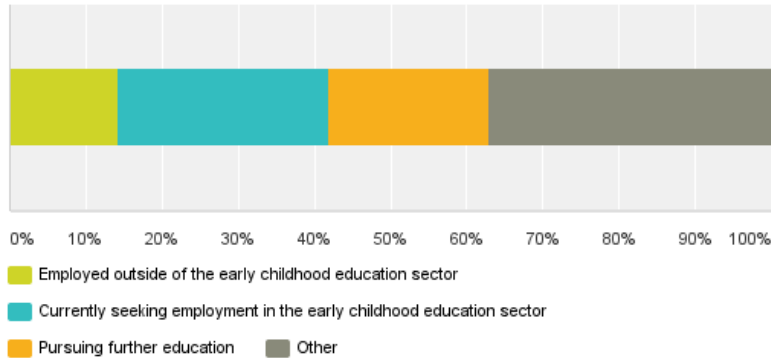
I am continuing to learn more about the Standards as I go along.

5.9 Status of the 2014 Graduates and College Members Currently Not Employed as RECEs

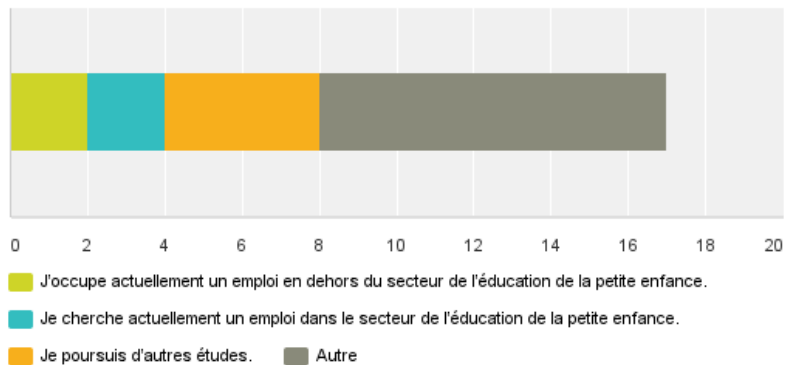
Number of responses = 148 English-speaking plus 17 French-speaking (Question 15)

The distribution of responses is illustrated in the following graphs.

If you are not currently employed as an early childhood educator, please select one of the following options that best describes your current status.



Si vous n’avez pas d’emploi d’éducatrice ou d’éducateur de la petite enfance en ce moment, quel énoncé parmi les suivants décrit le mieux votre situation actuelle?



A review of the 55 comments added by respondents indicated that some had chosen to accept employment situations that were in some way related to ECE positions but did not require a registered early childhood educator. Examples include working as an ECE educational assistant, a district board educational assistant, a lunchroom supervisor or serving as an “on call” supply. Several indicated that they held part-time ECE roles while they continued their academic studies – or that they had decided to enrol in full-time educational programs. A few indicated that they were operating child care centres in their homes.

5.10 Future Career Aspirations

Survey Question 16 asked respondents to describe their future career plan as it related to the early childhood education sector. Respondents not planning to remain in the sector were asked to indicate this intent.

Number of responses = 704 English and 48 French-speaking (Question 16)

The 752 English and French-speaking responses were reviewed and grouped into seven recurring themes. The 61 comments that did not fit into the seven themes were grouped under the heading “other”.

The following chart lists the themes, response distribution, percentage rate for each grouping and sample responses.

Theme	Number of Responses	Percentage	Sample Responses
Seeking employment in a full-day Kindergarten	201	27%	<i>... a dream job for me would be working as an RECE in (district school board) in FDK program. This is my goal.</i>
Employed in and wanting to remain working with children in an ECE setting	143	19%	<i>I have been fortunate enough to receive a fabulous, well-paying job with the county that has surpassed all dreams. I honestly plan on staying with the county till I retire in 25 years. I love my new job! I will continue to take as many professional development courses as possible and continue my growth as an ECE.</i> <i>Continuer dans le cadre d'une spécialisation dans la petite enfance.</i>
Enrolled in or planning to enrol in graduate or post graduate university education program	138	18%	<i>In September I am going back to school to get my Honours Bachelor of Psychology. With this degree and my ECE diploma I am hoping to work at an infant development centre.</i>

			<p><i>Really enjoy working as an ECE within the school board. Once I am done my university program, I will assess if I am still enjoying my position. I still have goals of achieving my OCT and continuing my ECE education towards a Masters/PhD.</i></p> <p><i>J'aimerais rentrer à l'université dans 3 ans et faire un baccalauréat en éducation élémentaire.</i></p>
Plan to open their own child care facility	66	9%	<p><i>I would one day like to open my own preschool or daycare centre.</i></p> <p><i>I would like to continue working in a childcare setting to gain experience. To work in a full day kindergarten classroom would be great as well. My ideal career would be to open my own child care centre.</i></p> <p><i>Mon projet de carrière c'est d'acquérir plus d'expérience dans le domaine de la petite enfance et ouvrir ma propre garderie.</i></p>
Seeking full-time work in ECE sector	60	8%	<p><i>I plan to continue in a career as an ECE. I would love to be working full-time and hope that opportunity will come along sooner than later.</i></p> <p><i>Hope to move from on-call classroom ECE to full-time permanent work.</i></p>
Seeking a position of added responsibility in the ECE sector	52	7%	<p><i>I plan on continuing my education in special needs and resources and eventually become a supervisor.</i></p>

			<p><i>My plan is to get practical experience in the field for a few years and then pursue a degree in the field five years down the road. My future plan is to become a professor at a college and teach ECE program.</i></p> <p><i>J'aimerais occupé un poste de gestion éventuellement.</i></p>
Planning for new career	31	4%	<p><i>Despite the fact that I love my job and am proud of my acquired knowledge about early years education, I don't intend to be in the profession for long because of low wages and job/career prestige.</i></p> <p><i>Since I have my Bachelor of Education I am hoping to obtain a teaching position in the future.</i></p> <p><i>I plan to use my ECE knowledge as a background to pursue a Master of Social Work. I feel my ECE background will prepare me well to work with children in a social work role.</i></p>
Other	61	8%	<p><i>N/A</i> <i>Undecided</i> <i>No plans</i> <i>I don't do career plans.</i></p>

6. Summarizing 2014 Cohort Respondent Feedback

Membership feedback was summarized using the framework of the stated purpose of the 2014 survey.

The purpose of the survey *Registration and Membership Services 2014 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 profession and the public
2. Showing the College's service goals and ethics as it strives to promote an increased understanding and level of transparency regarding its registration processes and the issues that affect the membership, the profession and the public
3. Obtaining feedback from the 2014 cohort of Ontario early childhood education program graduates in order to gain insight into their perceptions and challenges related to registering in the College, obtaining employment in the early childhood education sector, entry to practise experiences, career transitions, levels of professional confidence and satisfaction
4. Determining the level of knowledge and understanding of members who graduated from Ontario approved early childhood education programs in 2014 regarding the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*
5. Eliciting an image of the future career aspirations of the 2014 cohort of graduates.
6. Providing a third database of input from the 2014 cohort to be used for comparative purposes with the input provided by the 2011 and 2013 graduates. The data will be used in future studies about registration practices, human resource trends and member perceptions and insights into the Ontario early childhood education sector.

6.1 Serving the Membership and the Public

An introductory letter and the survey were distributed to a targeted member group of the 3,221 graduates of approved Ontario early childhood education diploma and degree programs who successfully completed their programs in 2014.

In total, 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking respondents returned surveys to the College. Many of these respondents not only completed the "check-off" boxes associated with most questions but also added comments.

The information gathered through the survey will be used to inform College decision-making specific to Registration and Membership Services policies and procedures. The College may also determine that the information should be shared with members, College stakeholder groups, policy-makers and the public using a range of College communication initiatives.

Sharing the results of the survey in this way illustrates that the College is engaged in ongoing communication with its membership and, through the follow-up reporting process, reassures members, stakeholder institutions and organizations, and the public that the regulatory body strives for continuous quality improvement.

Disseminating the information gathered from the 2014 graduating cohort also shows that the College honours its duty to be accountable and to act in the public interest.

6.2 Level of Understanding and Transparency

The information gathered through the survey demonstrates willingness from members to provide feedback and the College's ability and willingness to be responsive to the needs of these members. The information gathered through the survey can be shared with members, stakeholder institutions and organizations and the public.

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

The survey response rate and selected comments added by respondents demonstrate a significant number of these new members recognize that their input is part of an ongoing information-sharing process and assists the College enhance its provincial, national and international profile.

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

The majority of respondents indicated that they found the registration process "very easy" or "easy".

A significant number of respondents commented that both College staff and professors from their post-secondary programs had been readily available to assist them if they needed help during the registration process.

Most English-speaking (91%) and French-speaking respondents (97%) from the 2014 cohort reported that they were currently employed in some capacity in the ECE sector.

A significantly high percentage of these employed English-speaking (79%) and French-speaking (83%) respondents found a job in the sector in two months or less.

The majority of these respondents (English-speaking 56% and French-speaking 82%) were working full-time in the sector.

The percentage of both English-speaking and French-speaking respondents who were employed in FDK classrooms increased in the 2014 survey.

Nineteen percent of the English and 9% of the French-speaking respondents indicated they were working in the sector part-time.

Comments added by respondents suggested that prior work in the sector such as an ECE assistant, educational assistant, school lunchroom supervisor, casual/supply staff, apprenticeship experience and field placements assisted them in finding employment.

Six percent of the RECE respondents indicated that they were unable to find work in the ECE sector.

Ninety-two percent of the English-speaking and 97% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their post-secondary early childhood education program prepared them "extremely, very or quite well" for their first ECE employment experience.

Almost one-half of the English-speaking and French-speaking respondents commented about the positive aspects of their program placement experiences and how these placements had assisted them in obtaining employment.

Less than 1% of the respondent comments expressed negative generalized concerns about their post-secondary program. One percent specified that they felt that the ECE programs did not adequately prepare them for FDK employment.

About two-thirds of the English-speaking respondents and 35% of the French-speaking respondents said that they had been involved in a workplace orientation program. Comments suggested that these orientation programs ranged from a site tour and introductions to a full-day program or series of workshops.

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

Few respondents (19% English-speaking and 6% French-speaking) were engaged in mentoring relationships.

The majority of 2014 cohort members (95% of the English-speaking and 99% of the French-speaking) who responded to the survey reported feeling “extremely confident, very confident, or confident” in their current roles as an early childhood educator.

The majority (94% of the English-speaking respondents and 96% of the French-speaking respondents) described themselves as “extremely satisfied, very satisfied or satisfied” in their employment situation.

A few respondents commented that the low pay scale had an impact on their level of job satisfaction.

Of those respondents who indicated that they were not currently employed in the early childhood education sector, a majority said that they were currently still seeking employment in the sector. Several RECEs in this respondent group indicated that they were currently upgrading their educational qualifications or were employed in positions that did not require them to be RECEs – but involved working directly with children.

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

Ninety-nine percent of the English-speaking and 97% of the French-speaking respondents felt that their level of knowledge and understanding about the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* was basic, intermediate or advanced.

A significant number of respondents added comments indicating that they had received excellent training in the *Code of Ethics and Standards* during their post-secondary ECE program.

6.5 Future Career Aspirations

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents wanted to obtain a full-time job in an FDK classroom. Nineteen percent felt that they wanted to remain in an ECE setting working directly with children. Eight percent were employed but looking for full-time work. Eighteen percent were enrolled or planning to enrol in graduate or post-graduate education programs. Nine percent hoped to eventually open their own child care facility. Seven percent planned to prepare for and

seek a position of added responsibility in the ECE sector. Four percent planned to leave the ECE sector and work in another career. The remaining respondents indicated they did not have any career plans at this time.

6.6 Comparing Responses Provided by the 2013 Graduate Cohort and the 2014 Graduate Cohort

The following chart compares the responses provided by the 2013 graduate cohort with the survey feedback provided by the 2014 graduate cohort.

Survey Characteristic	2013 English-speaking responses	2013 French-speaking responses	2014 English-speaking responses	2014 French-speaking responses
Survey response rate	48%	56%	33%	51%
Registration process described as very easy or easy	72%	84%	71%	85%
Currently employed in ECE sector as an RECE full-time	54%	85%	56%	81%
Working part-time or casual/supply in ECE sector as an RECE	46%	16%	44%	19%
Hired as an RECE in two months or less	84%	85%	79%	83%
Workplace Setting	27% private child care	11% private child care	23% private child care	16% private child care
Note: Some respondents may have selected more than one workplace setting	10% municipal child care	14% municipal child care	9% municipal child care	4% municipal child care
	20% organizational or institutional child care	17% organizational or institutional child care	16% organizational or institutional child care	7% organizational or institutional child care

	<p>22% JK or SK FDK in school board</p> <p>23% before and/or after school child care</p> <p>2% Ontario Early Years Centre</p> <p>0% hospital setting</p> <p>4% other</p>	<p>43% JK or SK FDK in school board</p> <p>17% before and/or after school child care</p> <p>3% Ontario Early Years Centre</p> <p>0% hospital setting</p> <p>6% other</p>	<p>30% JK or SK FDK in school board</p> <p>20% before and/or after school child care</p> <p>3% Ontario Early Years Centre</p> <p>.01% hospital setting</p> <p>9% other</p>	<p>62% JK or SK FDK in school board</p> <p>7% before and/or after school child care</p> <p>1% Ontario Early Years Centre</p> <p>0% hospital setting</p> <p>6% other</p>
ECE post-secondary program preparation described as preparing graduates extremely or very well	74%	94%	73%	86%
Access to workplace orientation program	70%	60%	66%	43%
Access to workplace ongoing professional learning	83%	83%	83%	78%
Employment provided access to workplace mentoring program	15%	6%	19%	6%

Graduate level of confidence in employment setting described as extremely or very confident	72%	94%	73%	90%
Graduate level of satisfaction with employment experience was described as “extremely” or “very” satisfied	63%	80%	61%	81%
Knowledge and understanding of the <i>Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice</i> described as advanced, intermediate or basic	97%	100%	99%	97%
Status of graduates not currently employed in ECE sector	Number of responses =33 9 employed outside ECE sector 13 seeking employment as RECEs 11 pursuing additional education	Number of responses=7 3 employed outside ECE sector 3 seeking employment as RECEs 1 pursuing additional education	Number of responses =148 14% employed outside the ECE sector 28% seeking employment as RECEs 21% pursuing additional education 37% Other	Number of responses = 17 12% employed outside the sector 12% seeking employment as RECEs 24% pursuing additional education 53% Other
Future career aspirations	N = 1129 English-speaking and French-speaking ECE graduates	30% expressed a desire to continue to be employed as RECE or plan to continue seeking full-time employment	N = 752 English-speaking and French-speaking ECE graduates	35% expressed a desire to continue to be employed as RECE or still to continue seeking full-time employment

		42% working in or seeking work in FDK classrooms		27% working in or seeking work in FDK classrooms
		20% pursuing further education		18% pursuing further education
		6% plan to establish own child care facility		9% plan to establish own child care facility
		1.7% seeking position of added responsibility in ECE sector		7% seeking position of added responsibility in ECE sector
		1.7% seeking new career		4% seeking new career

A review of the feedback provided by respondents from the 2013 cohort and the 2014 cohort indicates:

- The survey response rates are lower in 2014 than in 2013.
- The majority of respondents in both 2013 and 2014 described their experience with the registration process as “very easy” or “easy”.
- The majority of respondents in 2013 and 2014 were hired in two months or less.
- The percentage of respondents in 2013 and 2014 who were employed part-time or casual/supply remained fairly consistent.
- The majority of respondents in 2013 and 2014 described their post-secondary program as preparing them “extremely well” or “very well”.
- Fewer respondents in the 2014 survey indicated that they had participated in a workplace orientation program.
- The majority of respondents in 2013 and in 2014 reported having access to ongoing professional learning.
- The percentage of respondents participating in mentoring programs was consistently low in both 2013 and 2014.
- Most respondents in 2013 and 2014 described themselves feeling confident in their workplace setting.
- Many of the respondents from both the 2013 and 2014 cohorts suggested that they felt satisfied in their current workplace.
- A greater percentage of the respondents in the 2014 cohort referenced attaining a position of added responsibility as a career aspiration.

7. Limitations of the 2014 Survey

The response rate for the English-speaking and French-speaking respondents is considered adequate for a mail-out/online survey. However, these results should not be generalized over the entire population of 2014 early childhood education graduates.

The nature of the respondents to the survey who chose to reply to the survey may be a source of bias. Some graduates may have just felt more comfortable with surveys than others.

The survey responses rate may have been influenced by the fact that some graduates were already employed in the sector and, as a result, felt more inclined to engage in the survey. Other graduates who have not yet been successful in finding employment may have felt discouraged and/or reluctant to share information.

Survey feedback rate in 2014 may also have been influenced by the fact that a large group of TDSB employees, who had been working in placements that in previous years had not required them to hold certification as an RECE, were involved in a program offered by Humber College to be able upgrade their qualifications to RECE status. Through a joint agreement with the Ministry of Education, CUPE Local 4400 and Humber College, these individuals could engage in a two-year retraining program and remain working during this period in full-time educational assistant roles in full-day kindergarten classes. Although the College does not know how many TDSB employees were actually involved in the retraining program at Humber, their presence was evident through the analysis of comments added by survey respondents to several survey questions.

Analysis of the survey comment responses indicated that these TDSB employees felt very positively about this opportunity and were dedicated to answering survey questions. Since they were already working in secure employment situations such as educational assistants, their feedback to survey questions may have varied from program graduates looking for their “first-time” employment in the sector.

8. Future Considerations

Based on the feedback provided by the 2014 graduates of the Ontario approved post-secondary early childhood education programs who registered as members of the College and participated in the survey, the College may choose to continue to:

1. Review Registration and Membership Services Department policies and processes.
2. Develop or enhance communications initiatives targeting members, stakeholders, policy-makers and the public.
3. Develop resources targeting new members entering the profession and engaging in the Continuous Professional Learning program.
4. Track post-secondary cohort 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 the application and registration policies and processes
- 8.1(b) Continue using College presentations to future ECE graduates to emphasize that applicants must arrange for a transcript to be sent directly to the College and that this transcript must indicate that the applicant has successfully completed the ECE program was awarded a diploma or degree

- 8.1(c) Clarify survey Question 11 so that recent graduates understand that they are being asked if they participate in a mentoring program and being mentored by an experienced RECE
- 8.1 (d) Clarify survey Question 7 to indicate that respondents should select only one employment workplace category where they spend most of their employment time
- 8.1(e) Engage members in the 2014 graduate cohort in a three-year follow-up study focusing on career transitions.

8.2 Communication Initiatives

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.2(a) Highlight the existence and 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 levels of confidence and their feelings related to job satisfaction.
- 8.2(d) Continue to develop communication strategies to facilitate engagement with new members.
- 8.2(e) Continue to acknowledge commitment to the early learning and care sector by recent graduates and new members.
- 8.2(f) Highlight the cohort acknowledgement about the extent to which the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* were emphasized in their post-secondary program and how competently they rated their understanding of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

8.3 Continuous Professional Learning Program

The College may consider developing strategies to:

- 8.3(a) Share respondent feedback regarding their perceived lack of access to effective workplace orientation and mentoring initiatives with employers in the ECE sector.
- 8.3(b) Encourage and support the development of workplace entry-to-practise orientation and mentoring initiatives.
- 8.3(c) Encourage workplace decision-makers to develop online and/or in-person professional learning opportunities for part-time and casual RECEs.
- 8.3(d) Encourage and support the development of online professional learning initiatives focusing on entry-to-practise issues and challenges.

- 8.3(e) Acknowledge and consider the implications of the fact that many respondents want to enhance their educational qualifications and specialized training.
- 8.3(f) Recognize and value the fact that the majority of the 2014 cohort respondents clearly expressed their career aspirations.
- 8.3 (g) Highlight the increase in the percentage of respondents who expressed interest in moving into positions of added responsibility in the sector.

8.4 Retention Rates and Early Career Transition to Practise Trends

The College may choose to consider developing strategies to:

- 8.4(a) Share respondent feedback about their desire and commitment to remain in the profession with employers, stakeholders and policy-makers.
- 8.4 (b) Encourage and support post-secondary institutions, other stakeholder organizations and professional learning providers to plan and implement professional learning initiatives focusing on children with special needs, diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and life experiences.
- 8.4 (c) Encourage professional learning providers to develop resources and opportunities for RECEs transitioning into practise to have ready access to ongoing professional learning.
- 8.4 (d) Encourage professional learning providers to develop resources and programs for RECEs aspiring to positions of added responsibilities.

8.5 Other Considerations

- 8.5 (a) Review the 16 survey questions prior to distributing future Entry to Practise and Career Transition Survey in order to ensure that the language used remains current.
- 8.5 (b) Add a survey question designed to gain a better understanding about new member perceptions and willingness to access online entry-to-practise and career transition resources and workshops.
- 8.5 (c) Explore the implications of the pay inequity and benefits in the variety of workplace roles now available to entry-to-practise RECEs and the impact of this perceived inequity for the ECE profession.

9. Conclusion

The report on the *Registration and Member Services 2014 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 a postsecondary institution in 2014.

The information shared by the 1,027 English-speaking and 75 French-speaking 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 and
- Perceived inequities in compensation and benefits existing in the ECE employment sector.

Feedback provided by respondents to the *Registration and Member Services 2014 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.

The feedback provided by respondents in 2014, included comments leading to new insights. Signs of change are evident in the survey responses. The language used to describe their commitment as RECEs to the profession was stronger. The respondents highlighted the enhanced level of assistance from post-secondary professors to help with their College application process. Respondents appreciated the College response to their inquiries about the membership application process. They commended their post-secondary institutions for providing a solid background in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* and acknowledged the fundamental importance of the Code and *Standards*. More respondents expressed an interest about aspiring to supervisory, management and leadership roles.

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