

What is an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) ?

- Educators of children in their early years (0-12 years old).
- Work mostly in, but are not limited to, preschools, registered day homes, out-of-school care programs, and facility-based child care centres.
- All ECEs must have an education to receive an early childhood certification from the Government of Alberta. Education ranges from orientation courses, to college certificates, diplomas, and university degrees.
- Plan for safe and nurturing environments.
- Provide play opportunities that build on children's learning while considering how to engage their curiosities.
- Document children's learning and development.
- Build relationships with one another, children, and families.
- ECEs are more than a "babysitter."

Some attributes of an ECE can include:

- Playfulness
- Effective communicators
- Caring/Nurturing
- High Energy
- Flexibility
- Passionate
- Curiosity
- Creativity

**We are Committed to
Quality Early Learning
& Child Care**
*Which can't be accomplished
without ECEs*

Why do Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) matter?

- ECEs support children's learning during the most vital time of their brain development, which occurs from birth to age 5.
- ECEs build relationships with children and families and can act as an additional piece of a family's trusted support system.
- ECEs provide a variety of settings and programs for early learning and child care based on the family's values, wants, needs, hopes, and desires.
- ECEs are an essential service in communities. Having reliable child care allows families, especially women, to go to work and boosts the economy.
- ECEs support children in learning social emotional, physical, cognitive, language skills & so much more.

What do educators need now?

- To be recognized as professionals working in a professional field.
- Improvement in working conditions: lower ratios, paid planning and documentation time, funding for back-up educators, professional learning days during regular work hours, recognition for the strengths they bring as individuals.
- Implementation of a wage grid that includes fair wages, takes cost of living into consideration and compensates educators for their years of experience and higher education. Many educators do not make a living wage and are forced to have a 2nd job.
- Comprehensive benefits, health spending account, pension, paid sick days and paid vacation days for all early learning programs and educators.
- Retention incentives to reduce staff turnover.
- Enhanced professional development and post-secondary learning opportunities that supports a better understanding of pedagogical leadership, management, and administration for educators who move into those critical roles.
- Mandatory ongoing professional learning for all ECEs to keep up to date on new learning and wise-practice.

