

**Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick/Soins et éducation à la petite
enfance du Nouveau Brunswick (ECCENB/SEPENB)
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Early Childhood Care and Education is a non-profit membership based organization committed to leading and supporting the child care sector with its provision of early childhood care and a dedication to the degree of quality and level of standards as determined by the parents and educators of New Brunswick. It is an affiliate of the Canadian Child Care Federation.

ECCENB/SEPENB's goals are:

- To educate parents, policy makers and the community of the high value of quality early childhood care and education and the contributions it makes to society
- To advocate for high quality early childhood care and education on behalf of children, families and communities in New Brunswick
- To establish the infrastructure for the coordination and administration on ECCENB/SEPENB activities
- To facilitate networking opportunities, research and development and partnership building with other organizations at the local, provincial and national level
- To promote a sense of pride for and to recognize the contributions made by early childhood educators
- To provide opportunities for professional development for ECCENB/SEPENB members.

Benefits of a Good Early Child Care System

*Good quality early childhood learning and child care can deliver important benefits to children, families and to society as a whole.*¹ Quality early childhood programs are valuable to children: as they provide long-lasting effects on all children's social, emotional and intellectual development; to families: as it allows them to work or study and to society: as it supports (1) future effects of enhanced child development including higher school performance, high school completion and income (2) families to become a part of the workforce, and (3) mothers' participation in the workforce.²

National Child Care Workforce Picture³

In 2001, there were approximately 137,000 early childhood educators and assistants. More than 96% of early childhood educators and assistants are women.

Income

- *Earned income was about half the national average for all occupations, and less than half as much as elementary and kindergarten teachers. The overall average annual income for full- and part-time educators and assistants in 2000 was \$16,167. Fulltime early childhood educators and assistants earned just over \$19,000. From 1997 to 2000, there was virtually no change in income for early childhood educators and assistants.*
- *Income was higher for those working outside their own homes – just over \$21,000 compared with \$15,000 for those working at home.*
- *Income was higher for early childhood educators and assistants working outside the home who had a certificate or diploma: \$22,000 compared to an average \$16,500 for those with no certificate or diploma.*
- *Interviews with members of the childcare workforce showed that compensation can vary widely (e.g. from just above minimum wage with no benefits to an annual salary of close to \$70,000 with full benefits and pension plan).*

Education

- *Early childhood educators and assistants have more education than the general public, but the level of education in the general public is growing at a faster rate. In 2001, 60% of early childhood educators and assistants had post secondary qualification (up from 54% in 1991), compared to 53% in the general working population (up from 43% in 1991).*

New Brunswick Child Care Workforce Picture

¹ Source: Financing Early Learning and Child Care in Canada by Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky

² Source: Briefing notes, Is Child care a good investment? Childcare Resource and Research Unit, University of Toronto

³ Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce, Labour Market Update Study, 2004

As is reported nationally, the majority of early childhood educators and assistants employed within the province of New Brunswick are women.

Economic Base

*The current child care system within our province is market based. Child Care centers in New Brunswick are the third most reliant in Canada on parent fees for their funding, with 68.7% of their revenue coming from parents.*⁴

The Province of New Brunswick, through its Quality Improvement Funding Support Initiative, has made an investment in the child care sector of our province. The QIFS provides some funds to qualifying child care centers based upon the hours of operation per week, days of operation per year and the total number of approved spaces. The funds allocated through the Q I F S Initiative has targeted three main areas: **staff wages and bonuses** (73% minimum of allocated funds), **professional development** (18% minimum of allocated funds and **materials and equipment** (9% maximum allocated funds).

Wages and Benefits

Prior to the investment of the Quality Improvement Funding Support Initiative, the average wage of a primary staff and primary staff/director in our province was \$7.04 per hour, \$14,643 annually. The average wage bonus equivalent since the province’s investment as reported in 2003 data is \$8.44 per hour for primary and primary/director, \$17,555 annually.

*In New Brunswick, the low income cut-off before taxes for the year 20000 is*⁵

<i>Area</i>	<i>Low Income Cut-off</i>
<i>Rural Areas</i>	<i>\$12,696</i>
<i>Urban: population less than 30,000</i>	<i>\$14,561</i>
<i>Urban: population more than 30,000</i>	<i>\$15,648</i>

The average income made by and early childhood educator **without** the investment of the Province of New Brunswick’s QI FS Initiative is **below or close to** the low income cut-off, depending if they live in an urban or rural area.

How does the Child Care Sector Support Higher Wages for Educators?

The Child Care sector cannot do this alone. Increased wages for educators will translate into either higher fees for parents, a larger financial commitment from government or a combination of both.

*Although the New Brunswick government subsidizes the cost of low income families, the fees remain outside the reach of many New Brunswick families. The after tax income for the average dual income two parent family is \$54,145/year.*⁶

⁴ Stafford, Janine. “A profile of the childcare services industry” Statistics Canada; 4th Quarter 2001, 27.

⁵ Income Trends in Canada, Statistics Canada

⁶ Source: Statistics Canada. **Family Income Division**. June 2003

The Median monthly parent fees for full-time center based care (September 2001)⁷

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Daily Fee</i>	<i>Monthly</i>
<i>Infants (0-17 months)</i>	<i>\$21.90</i>	<i>\$481.80</i>
<i>Toddlers (18 months-3 yrs)</i>	<i>\$19.00</i>	<i>\$418.00</i>
<i>Preschool (3-5 years)</i>	<i>\$19.00</i>	<i>\$418.00</i>
<i>School-age (5-12 years)</i>	<i>\$10.30</i>	<i>\$226.60</i>

Family with two children in child care services:

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Monthly fee</i>	<i>Yearly fee</i>	<i>% of disposable income spent on child care</i>
<i>Infant & toddler</i>	<i>\$900</i>	<i>\$10,800</i>	<i>21%</i>
<i>Two preschoolers</i>	<i>\$836</i>	<i>\$10,032</i>	<i>18%</i>
<i>Preschooler & after-school)</i>	<i>\$644</i>	<i>\$7,728</i>	<i>\$14%</i>
<i>Two after-school children</i>	<i>\$453.20</i>	<i>\$5,438</i>	<i>10%</i>

Because the public benefit from providing appropriate developmental care for our young children and positive supports to employment for young families, early learning and child care should be a publicly financed service. This financing must be provided in a way which supports services, is carefully monitored and publicly accountable, distributes equitably, and spends scarce public resources efficiently.⁸

*Until there is a change in social attitudes that produces substantial government funding into a regulated system, child care wages will remain low,⁹ as low wages reflect what the market is able to bear. **Without substantial government funding support increased wage expectations from the current parent fee economic base would cause a collapse of the New Brunswick child care sector.***

⁷ Source: Figures provided by the Department of Family and Community Service from information collected on center applications for Quality Improvement Funding

⁸ Source: Financing Early Learning and Child Care in Canada by Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky.

⁹ Source: The Role of Social Attitudes in Recruitment and Retention of Child Care Workers, Child Care Human Resources Sector Council