



THE EARLY YEARS REPORT

**Early Learning in PEI:
An Investment in the Island's Future**

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April 12, 2010

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT, METHODOLOGY

EARLY LEARNING IN PEI – AN INVESTMENT IN THE ISLAND’S FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

In December 2009, the PEI Government set out a plan to develop a vision and framework for early childhood development. The departments of Education and Early Childhood Development (lead); Community Services, Seniors, and Labour; Health and Wellness; and Executive Council Office jointly issued a request for proposals to early childhood consultants for the development of such a plan.

This report represents ideas, perspectives, and preferences of hundreds of Island parents of preschool children, along with their grandparents, family members and friends. Parents of preschool children participated in focus groups, and responded enthusiastically to an Island wide survey. Island professionals who work with young children participated in interviews or submitted their opinions in writing. National and international experts were interviewed for their advice in developing early childhood systems, and research from around the world was carefully reviewed and studied. All of this information was analyzed within the context of life in Prince Edward Island.

Clearly, there is not a “one size fits all” plan for PEI. For some, the recommendations in this report will not be enough – and for others, they will go too far. The analysis and presentation of recommendations, however, has been undertaken with an emphasis on the best interests of the children of PEI, an appreciation that their parents want the best for their children and should be the ones to make such decisions, a knowledge of “what works”, and an understanding that what is good for PEI’s children and families is good for the whole Island.

THE CONTEXT

The challenge to develop a vision and framework for early childhood in PEI comes at a time of significant changes for children, parents, early childhood educators, early childhood centres, and schools. In September 2010, PEI schools will open their doors to public kindergarten for the first time. The impact of this policy decision is expected to be significant for the early childhood sector. In *Every Child A Better Future – the Public Kindergarten Commissioner’s Report* (Mella, P., 2009) it was noted that “The move of kindergarten to the school system creates both the need and the opportunity for a comprehensive review of early learning in PEI that would result in a renewed and strengthened sector providing more access and higher quality early learning to Island children. The scope of this work, and the fact that the Commission received limited input from the early learning industry during the past year, call out for a separate initiative. The report recommended that:

“a comprehensive review of early learning in Prince Edward Island be carried out, leading to a plan for a sustainable, high quality, accessible early childhood system serving all Island children and their families.”

As five year old children move into the public school system, early childhood centres face new challenges, including loss of revenue, higher costs in delivering programs for younger children (due to requirement for additional staff for younger age groups), and difficulties in recruiting qualified early childhood educators for key staffing positions. A number of centres have suggested

they may no longer be able to provide services in their communities, and others are concerned about their financial viability and staffing shortages. Many centres have been part of the fabric of their communities for decades, and their futures will impact children and families as well as their partnerships with other community programs and services.

It would have been simple for the PEI government to “patch up” the early childhood sector by allocating replacement funds to licensed early childhood centres. Instead, the PEI government’s appreciation for the complexity of the early childhood education and care sector is held in high regard among national and international experts. Throughout the course of this work, there was very positive recognition of government’s approach in taking the time to analyze the compelling and exciting evidence about the long term impacts of early learning on children and families, and for giving careful consideration to how a high quality early childhood system may contribute to the success of Government’s broad public policy initiatives.

We must take action to grow our population – and we must invest in learning at all levels to give all Islanders the skills they need to benefit from the new and better opportunities ahead.

The goals and objectives of PEI’s *Island Prosperity Agenda* and the *Rural Action Plan* - both of which were built on the principle of *One Island Community, One*

Island Prosperity Strategy, 2009

Island Future – set forth an ambitious agenda to revitalize communities, build capacity in our population, and to move forward into the 21st century with strength and prosperity. At the same time, the PEI Population Secretariat is exploring initiatives to address its mandate to “retain youth, repatriate former Islanders, and attract and retain immigrants.” The Secretariat does this through a number of strategies, including the promotion of PEI as a province that “provides a healthy balance between work, family, and fun.”

These provincial goals are intended to achieve the vision of “A more prosperous and vibrant economy that is able to flexibly adapt to a changing world.” In the context of developing a Framework for Early Childhood Development” for PEI, these goals are relevant.

METHODOLOGY

In gathering evidence for analysis for the development of a Vision for Children, a Framework for Early Childhood, and a re-designed, re-vitalized early childhood education and care sector for PEI, efforts were made to consult with Islanders, experts in the early childhood field, and to review relevant and current research.

Over the course of the time frame for this project, the following activities were undertaken:

Early Childhood Education Survey

The ECE Survey was an on-line survey conducted in English and French. The survey was “live” for a two week period from February 8 until February 20, 2010. The survey was advertised in Island newspapers, and through distribution of business card sized invitations (bi-lingual) to parents to participate. The cards were distributed to parents through ECEC centres, family resource centres,

and public health nurses. CBC television and radio aired interviews with Minister Doug Currie and Kathleen Flanagan, lead consultant for the project. The link to the survey was hosted on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's website in both English and French.

A total of 785 respondents participated in the survey. Approximately 75% of these were parents of preschoolers, 15% were grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other family members/close friends of families with preschool children, and 10% were "other". Most of the "others" were early childhood educators and staff at family resource centres.¹ Key findings from the survey have been integrated within this report.

Parent Focus Groups and Interviews

Focus groups were held with parents in each county (in English); a focus group with francophone parents was held in Wellington. A total of 40 parents participated in these in-depth discussions of relevant topics. In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with 8 francophone parents from across PEI in order to gather perspectives from francophone parents in other parts of PEI. Parents who participated in focus groups are acknowledged in Appendix 1.

ECEC Sector and Related Focus Groups

A total of six focus group meetings were held with groups involved with issues related to the Early Childhood sector. These involved:

- Premier's Council on Healthy Child Development
- Chairpersons of Community Networks involved with the PEI Children's Secretariat
- Government representatives to the PEI Children's Secretariat
- PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Directors, Administrators and Managers of regulated/licensed ECEC programs
- Directors of Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) Family Resource Centres and Directors of Canada Prenatal Nutrition Programs (CPNP)

Written Submissions

A total of 22 Island organizations were invited to submit written briefs outlining their ideas and perspectives regarding the development of a Framework for Early Childhood for PEI. Four organizations submitted briefs. These organizations are acknowledged in Appendix 1.

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted with various experts from PEI, across Canada, and from other countries. A listing of all key informants is included in Appendix 1.

Literature Review

An extensive international literature review of relevant and current documents has been

¹ Given the number of early childhood educators (ECEs) who responded to the parent survey, the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI conducted a short survey among ECEs to gather their opinions on a number of relevant topics.

conducted. A bibliography of resources is included at the end of this report. Where relevant, quotations and references have been included throughout this document.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Two distinct committees have overseen the work of the Framework for Early Childhood project:

- Management Committee with administrative and decision making responsibilities, and representing the four government departments involved in the project (Education and Early Childhood Development; Community Services, Seniors, and Labour; Health and Wellness; and Executive Council Office
- Validation Committee, with responsibility for advice and feedback on project direction; membership includes members of the Management Committee along with additional key staff from the four departments, and community representation from the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI, La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, and the PEI Family Resource Centre Association.



SECTION 2

BENEFITS OF EARLY INVESTMENTS

BENEFITS OF EARLY INVESTMENTS

Internationally, there is a significant and growing body of evidence to document and quantitatively measure the human, social, educational, and economic benefits of investing in the early years. Examples of such evidence include:

Health Benefits

In The Early Years Study 2, (McCain, M., Mustard, F. and Shankar, S., 2007) Dr. Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain describe the long lasting implications of experiences in the early years due to the science of brain development. They report that:

- The findings from a Swedish longitudinal study show that children who experienced neglectful and abusive early environments have an increased risk in adult life for poor health.
- In studies of the Kaiser Permanente program in California, it was found that individuals who had been exposed to child neglect and abuse when young were at high risk for drug and alcohol addiction in adult life.

Educational Benefits

A recent and comprehensive meta-analysis, examining 123 studies over five decades that focused primarily on low-income children of lesser educated parents, found preschool to be associated with positive and relatively large effects on cognitive outcomes for children entering kindergarten. (Camilli, G., Vargas, S., Ryan, S., & Barnett, W. S., 2008)

Other examples include:

- Consistent evidence from a large body of international and New Zealand evidence found ECE participation is positively associated with gains in mathematics and literacy, school achievement, intelligence tests, and also school readiness, reduced grade retention, and reduced special education placement. (Mitchell, L., Wylie, C., and Carr, M., 2008)
- Investments in quality child care and early childhood education do more than pay significant returns to children—our future citizens. They also benefit taxpayers and enhance economic vitality. Economic research—by Nobel Prize-winners and Federal Reserve economists, in economic studies in dozens of states and counties, and in longitudinal studies spanning 40 years—demonstrate that the return on public investment in high quality early childhood education is substantial. (Calman, L, and Tarr-Whelan, L., 2005)

Literacy

In Canada, the National Strategy for Early Literacy's final report notes that the first three years of a child's life have enormous impact on the development of basic language and cognitive skills and lay the foundation for early literacy development. Many children enter Canada's school system lacking a solid foundation for acquiring strong literacy skills and this is a result of the combined impacts of insufficient early learning supports in the home due to low literacy skills of parents, highly variable community supports for early learning and the absence of universally-available, centre-based, high-quality early learning and care programs. (National Strategy for Early Literacy,

Other examples include:

- Attending high quality ECEC programs can improve children's language and literacy skills, readiness for school, and early school performance. Research shows that this is especially true for children from disadvantaged backgrounds who, following their attendance in quality ECEC programs, had higher educational and occupational outcomes, such as staying in school longer and earning higher salaries later in life. (Karoly and Bigelow, 2005)
“Encouraging early childhood literacy could turn out to be our most potent ‘immunizing’ agent. It confers a high degree of lifetime immunity against poverty, ignorance, educational failure, low self-esteem and poor health. Can you think of any vaccine that offers such a high level of lasting protection against so many serious human afflictions?”
- The immediate and the long-term effects of high-quality child care on cognitive and language development of children have been reported in numerous studies. (Barnett, 2001; Campbell, Pungello, Miller-Johnson, Burchinal, & Ramey, 2001; NICHD & Duncan, 2003; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 1999)
- The first, and by far the most efficient and cost-effective time to learn basic literacy skills is in early childhood. The child will depend on a combination of effective parenting and supportive community services to achieve her literacy potential. The rate of return from good quality investments in early childhood development can be \$8 for every dollar invested – or even higher. (Maxwell, J. and Taplova, T. 2007)
Dr. Richard Goldbloom, Honourary Chair of Read to Me!. Nova Scotia

Economic Benefits

High quality preschool programs in the United States (e.g., the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention, the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program, the Chicago Child-Parent Preschool Center Program, and Head Start) illustrate that the benefits of these programs significantly outweigh the costs. Returns to society from such programs have been estimated at between \$2.00 and \$8.74 per dollar invested (Nores, Belfield, Barnett, & Schweinhart, 2005). The short- and medium-term benefits of the USA Head Start program indicated that 40-60% of the total costs of the program were offset by these benefits alone (Nores et al., 2005).

Other examples include:

- Over 40% of the cost for early childhood programs in Quebec is paid for by the tax revenues obtained from mothers who could not work if affordable child care was not offered. (Lefebvre, P. and Merrigan, P., 2008)
- Economists from the University of Toronto estimated a \$2 return for every government dollar invested in high quality child care, reflecting reductions in costs for remedial education and provision of social services, and increased taxes paid by working parents. (Cleveland & Krashinsky, 1998).

- There is a strong consensus among the experts who have studied high-quality early childhood development (ECD) programs that these programs have substantial payoffs. Although the programs vary in whom they serve and in the services they provide, most ECD programs offer wide-ranging education services as well as health services (such as immunizations and health screenings) and nutrition services, typically for children younger than six. Many also provide adult education and parenting classes for the parents of young children. Investments in high-quality ECD programs consistently generate benefit-cost ratios exceeding 3-to-1 - or more than a \$3 return for every \$1 invested - well above the 1-to-1 ratio needed to justify such investments. Even economists who are particularly skeptical about government programs make an exception for high-quality ECD programs. (Lynch, R. 2004)

"Learning and motivation are dynamic, cumulative processes. Skill begets skill; learning begets learning. Early disadvantage, if left untouched, leads to academic and social difficulties later in life. Early advantages accumulate, just as early disadvantages do."

Dr. James Heckman, University of Chicago, Nobel Laureate Economics

In the United States, a number of states have completed an analysis of the impact of their early childhood education and care programs on the overall economics of the state. Traill and Wohl have reported that:

In **Massachusetts**, the early education industry:

- Includes over 12,000 establishments (small businesses)
- Employs 30,000
- Serves 245,000 children
- The industry generates \$1.5 billion in gross receipts (total amount of dollars flowing into the sector in the form of payments for care).
- The gross receipts are similar to these industries: data processing, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and research and development in the life sciences.
- The industry employs more people than telecommunications, computer manufacturing, or pharmaceutical manufacturing; the number employed is similar to those in legal services and securities and commodities investment services; it has four times the number employees as did Boston's major transportation project, the "Big Dig."

In **North Carolina**, the early education industry:

- Includes 9,200 regulated child care and early education establishments (small businesses)
- Employs 46,000 in regulated programs
- Serves 337,000 children
- Generates \$1.5 billion in gross receipts; Gross receipts are higher than those in these industries: wholesale leaf tobacco, scientific research and development, and cellular and wireless communications.
- The industry employs more people than public elementary school teaching, computer and electronic manufacturing, hotel accommodations and telecommunications; it is similar to all building construction in the state.

In a similar fashion, the New York State Child Care Coordinating Council (2004) reported that:

In **New York** state, the early education industry:

- Includes 22,000 regulated child care/ early education establishments (small businesses)
- Employs 119,000 in regulated programs
- Serves 623,000 children
- Produces \$4.7 billion in gross receipts (the total revenue received by child care providers)
- Serves 750,000 parents, who collectively earn over \$30 billion annually
- The industry employs more people than hotels and lodging, air transportation, public transportation and is almost as big as the banking industry.

(See Section 8 *CONCLUSION* for analysis of similar impacts in PEI)

Reciprocal benefits

There is also a considerable body of evidence that demonstrates that the above areas of impacts are inter-related. Developmental outcomes in one sphere can influence outcomes in another:

- From infancy onward, language and psychosocial and emotional development are interrelated. Communication begins in the very first days of life. Potential problems that begin in relationships with parents can ultimately spiral as children enter school and have difficulty learning and getting along with teachers and peers. Even mild language impairments can have an impact on the course of development. Outcomes are worsened by the presence of co-occurring environmental stresses. Because language competence is critical for both school readiness and psychosocial and emotional adjustment, problems with language and communication can set a child on a maladaptive trajectory throughout life. (Cohen,2001) Language problems can be subtle and may be overlooked in learning and therapeutic situations. Therefore, identification and assessment of language disorders, and intervention, are important in the early years, setting the stage for later competence in a broad range of areas. (Moffatt, 1993)

Targeted vs. Universal Programs

While the poor are more statistically likely to be vulnerable, the majority of vulnerable children in BC reside in the more populous middle-class. Early vulnerability is a middle-class problem.

Dr. Paul Kershaw, et al
August 2009

Given that the research is clear that the relationship between participation in high quality early learning and child care programs and improvements in children's language and literacy skills, readiness for school, and early school performance is especially true for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, it has been questioned as to whether investments in these types of programs should be targeted to disadvantaged children.

According to data from Canada's National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth (NLSCY), conditions of "risk" are not limited to children in families with low income. Although the **percentage** of children in low income families who demonstrate one or more types of difficulties is higher than

for children in families with middle or high incomes, the actual **number** of children in middle income families who demonstrate difficulty is higher.

Barnett (2004) economist and chair of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) claims that the cost of failing to serve children who could benefit is far higher than the cost saved by targeting. Using models developed in evaluating the 40th-year High Scope/Perry study, (but using far more conservative assumptions about what economic gains would be), Barnett has created an estimate of economic gain over a 40-year period derived from having children of all socioeconomic groups in quality preschool. Figure 1 describes Barnett's calculations of potential economic gain should the Perry Preschool Project have been a universal program.

Figure 1: Analysis of difference in economic gain if the Perry Preschool Project had been available to all children

Assume poor children create only 50 percent of the benefit realized by those in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, and assume that students above the poverty line create **only 10 percent** of the benefit realized in High/Scope Perry Preschool Project

Children Served	Universal Cost	Benefits	Economic Gain (billions)
50% below poverty	12.5	\$63.0	\$51.4
50% above poverty			
Universal	49.9	\$136.5	\$86.6

Assume poor children create only 50 percent of the benefit realized by those in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, and that students above the poverty line create only 25 percent of the benefit realized in High/Scope Perry Preschool Project

Children Served	Universal Cost	Benefits	Economic Gain (billions)
50% below poverty	12.5	\$63.0	\$51.4
50% above poverty			
Universal	49.9	\$213.2	\$163.3

In this figure, Barnett estimates potential economic gain if only 10 percent of students over the poverty line realized the same advantages from a high quality early childhood education and care experience. If up to 25% of all children benefited from the program, economic gains increase substantially. (Barnett, 2004)

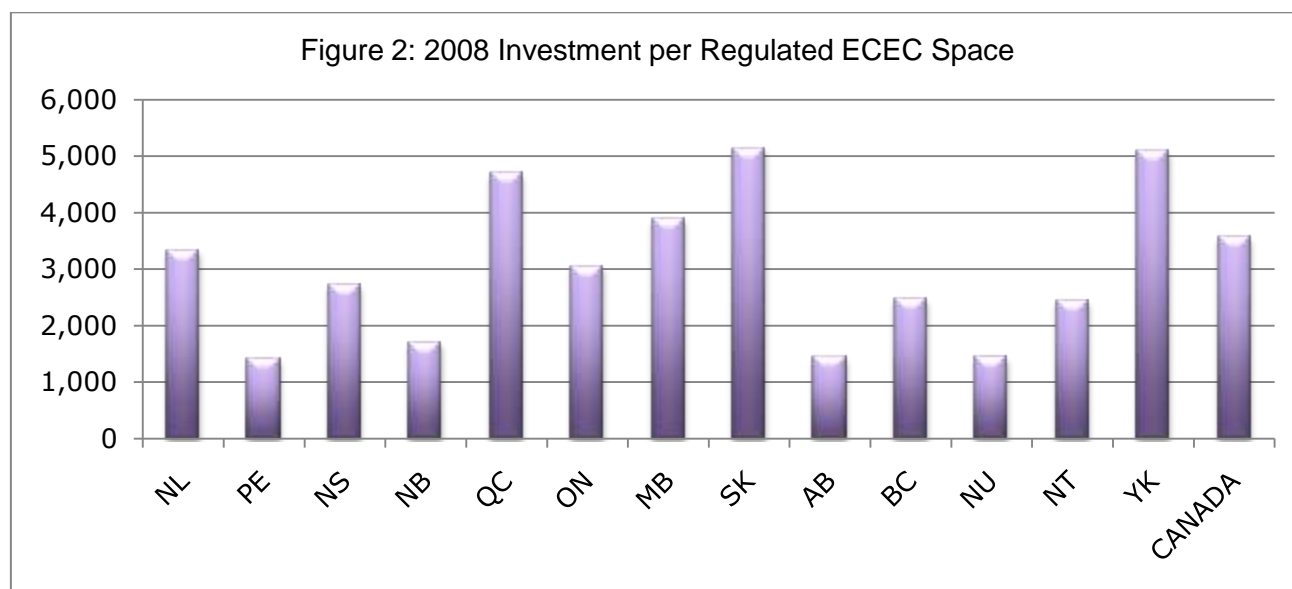
What does this mean for PEI?

The benefits from public investment in quality early learning initiatives link directly with the PEI government's broad goals and objectives as outlined in the Island Prosperity Agenda and the Rural Action Plan.

Maxwell and Taplova (2007) note that the immediate impacts of literacy and learning are knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes, but they in turn lead to four final outcomes that determine human well-being in a knowledge-based society:

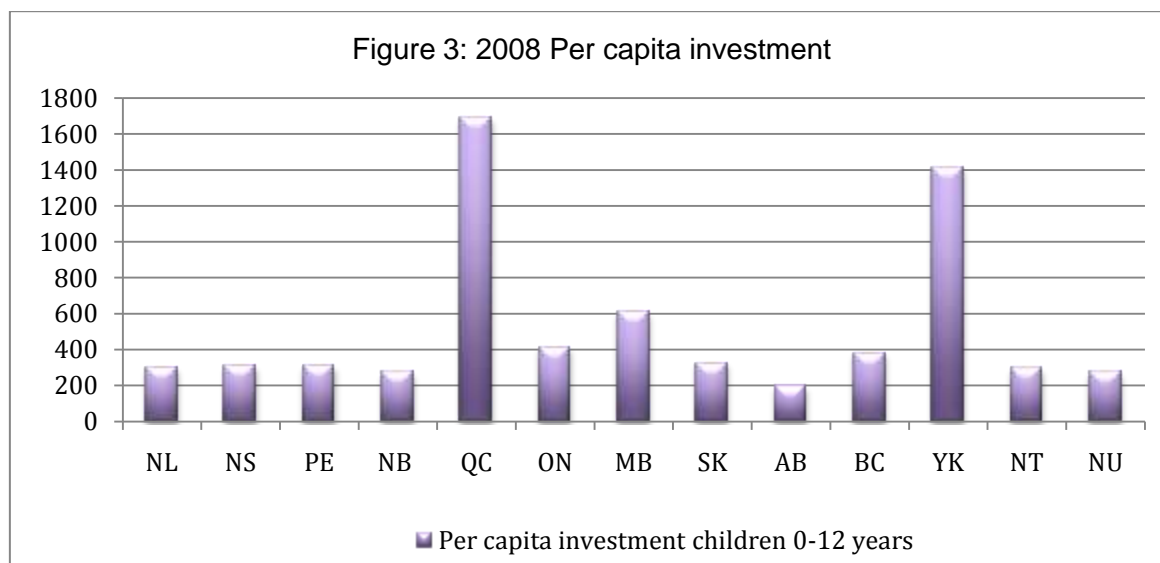
- Psychological well-being: self-respect, happiness, identity, decision-making;
- Economic well-being: financial support, productivity, wealth;
- Physical well-being: health, nutrition, safety;
- Social well-being: relations, friendships, empathy, civic involvement, democratic empowerment (Desjardins, 2004; Hartley & Horne, 2004).

While PEI is making considerable investments in moving kindergarten to the public school system, Figure 2 shows that its investment per regulated ECEC space is the lowest in Canada:



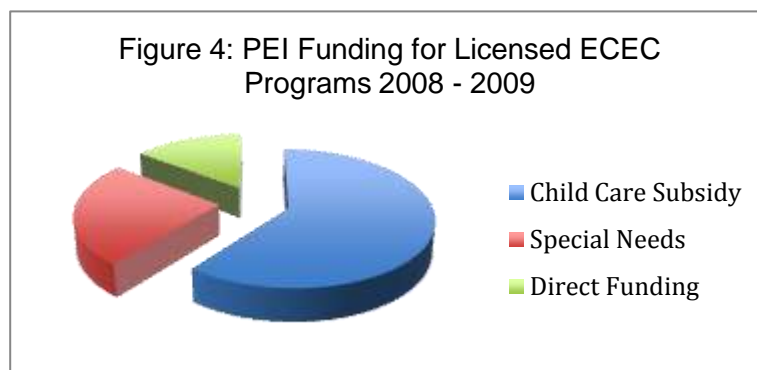
Source: Beach and Friendly, 2009

Figure 3 shows that when PEI's investment in ECEC is calculated on a per capita basis (considering all children in PEI in the 0-6 age group), PEI's investment is on par with investments of other Atlantic provinces. This discrepancy occurs because PEI has more availability of licensed spaces than any other province or territory for this age group, and so therefore the available funds are spread more thinly across all licensed spaces. However, the lower investment per space indicates that the current ECEC programs are not benefiting from government investments as much as ECEC programs in other jurisdictions – with negative impacts on program quality and ability to recruit and retain qualified staff, and resulting in higher fees for parents. (See Figure 13.)



Source: Beach and Friendly, 2009

PEI's investments in ECEC programs for preschool children (other than Kindergarten) are primarily targeted to low income children and their families, or to children with specific developmental challenges. Figure 4 shows the breakdown of current provincial investments outside of kindergarten funding. While kindergarten program funding was universal in nature, the Child Care Subsidy Program is targeted to low income families who meet specific eligibility criteria, and Special Needs funding is targeted to children with developmental/exceptional needs. Figure 3 shows that only a small portion of PEI government funding (direct grants to centres) provides benefits for all children:



Source: MRSB Consulting Services, 2009 – unpublished data

In order to achieve the broad based goals of the Island Prosperity Agenda, it will be necessary for the province to view investment in early childhood development as an investment in all children in the province, rather than to continue with such a targeted approach.

In the area of early child development, as in so many areas, Canada is a nation of anomalies. On the one hand we prize early child development and appoint commission after commission to report on its importance; yet as a percentage of our GDP, we spend less on early child development programs than any other developed nation.

Dr. Stuart Shanker



SECTION 3
A VISION FOR CHILDREN IN PEI and
A FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

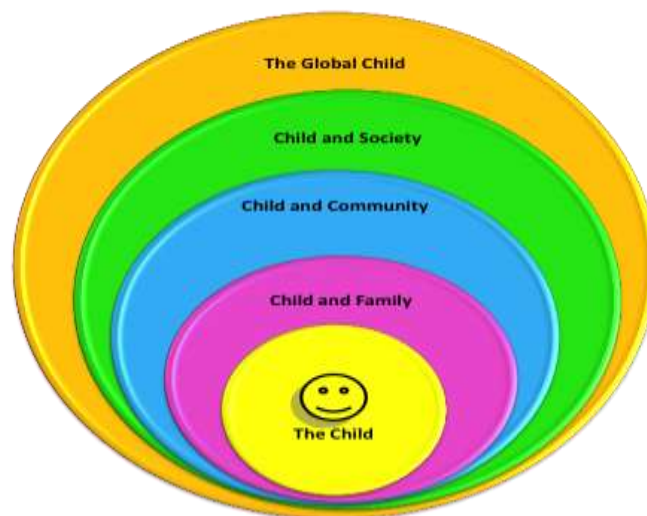
A VISION FOR CHILDREN IN PEI

The proposed Framework for Early Childhood, along with its five year action plan, must be based on a vision for children in order that subsequent policy and program decisions are guided by a collective philosophical perspective.

In November 2000, the PEI Government adopted a vision, values, and guiding principles for the five year Healthy Child Development Strategy. The vision statement was based on the vision of Canada's National Children's Agenda, with substantial input from Islanders following a province wide consultation process.²

At the University of Prince Edward Island's Centre for Education Research, researchers and academics have developed the RECD (Research in Early Childhood Development) framework.³ This model is based on Dr. Uri Bronfenbrenner's⁴ bio-ecological model of human development, and acknowledges that humans do not develop in isolation but in relation to their family and home, community, society and the world:

RECD Initiative- The toy- 2D-
By Gabriela Sanchez



The model developed at UPEI reflects a vision of childhood that recognizes that not only is the child impacted and influenced by his/her family, community, and society, but that the child's family, community, and society is also impacted by – and depends on – the child's optimal development.

² See Appendix 2: Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles of the Healthy Child Development Strategy.

³ See Appendix 3: RECD Model

⁴ Uri Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) was one of the world's leading developmental psychologists and a co-founder of the U.S.A. Headstart program. His "Ecological Systems Theory" is considered a major contribution to the science of human development. His "bio-ecological" approach to human development broke down barriers among the social sciences and built bridges among the disciplines that have allowed findings to emerge about which key elements in the larger social structure and across societies are vital for optimum human development.

(<http://social.jrank.org/pages/113/Bronfenbrenner-Urie-1917.html>)

This approach and understanding is compatible with the concept of developing a framework for early childhood that reflects the goals and objectives of public policy initiatives such as the Island Prosperity Agenda and the Rural Action Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the RECD framework provide the first step for developing a vision for children, by putting the child in the context of his environments. The proposed vision for children builds on the child in the context of family, community, the Island, and the world. The specific vision of the child in this model reflects the thoughts of all who participated in the consultation process for this work, and builds on the successes and lessons learned during the implementation of the PEI's Healthy Child Development Strategy.

Proposed Vision for Children:

Children in PEI are healthy and happy, curious and creative, playful and joyous. They are loved and respected, and are safe and secure in their families, homes and communities. Children are our collective responsibility. They are valued for who they are today, and as the future parents and leaders of tomorrow.

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD FRAMEWORK FOR PEI

As noted in Section 1, the development of the Framework for Early Childhood has been undertaken within a broad consultative process. Parents participated in focus groups and interviews. Parents, grandparents, other family members and friends responded to a provincial survey, and shared their thoughts and hopes for PEI's children. Individuals who work with and on behalf of children – from community organizations and government departments – shared their thoughts about the work they do, and their hopes for the families they are involved with.

The proposed Framework for Early Childhood is intended to describe how the child – and his/her family – is supported throughout the early childhood years. The Framework is designed to present a continuum of programs and services that support children and their families. The Framework is built on a set of values and principles that have been clearly articulated throughout this project's consultation with parents and families; in meetings with professionals; during interviews with experts in PEI, across Canada, and internationally; and based on review and analysis of research and examples of exemplary practice from around the world. These values and principles include:

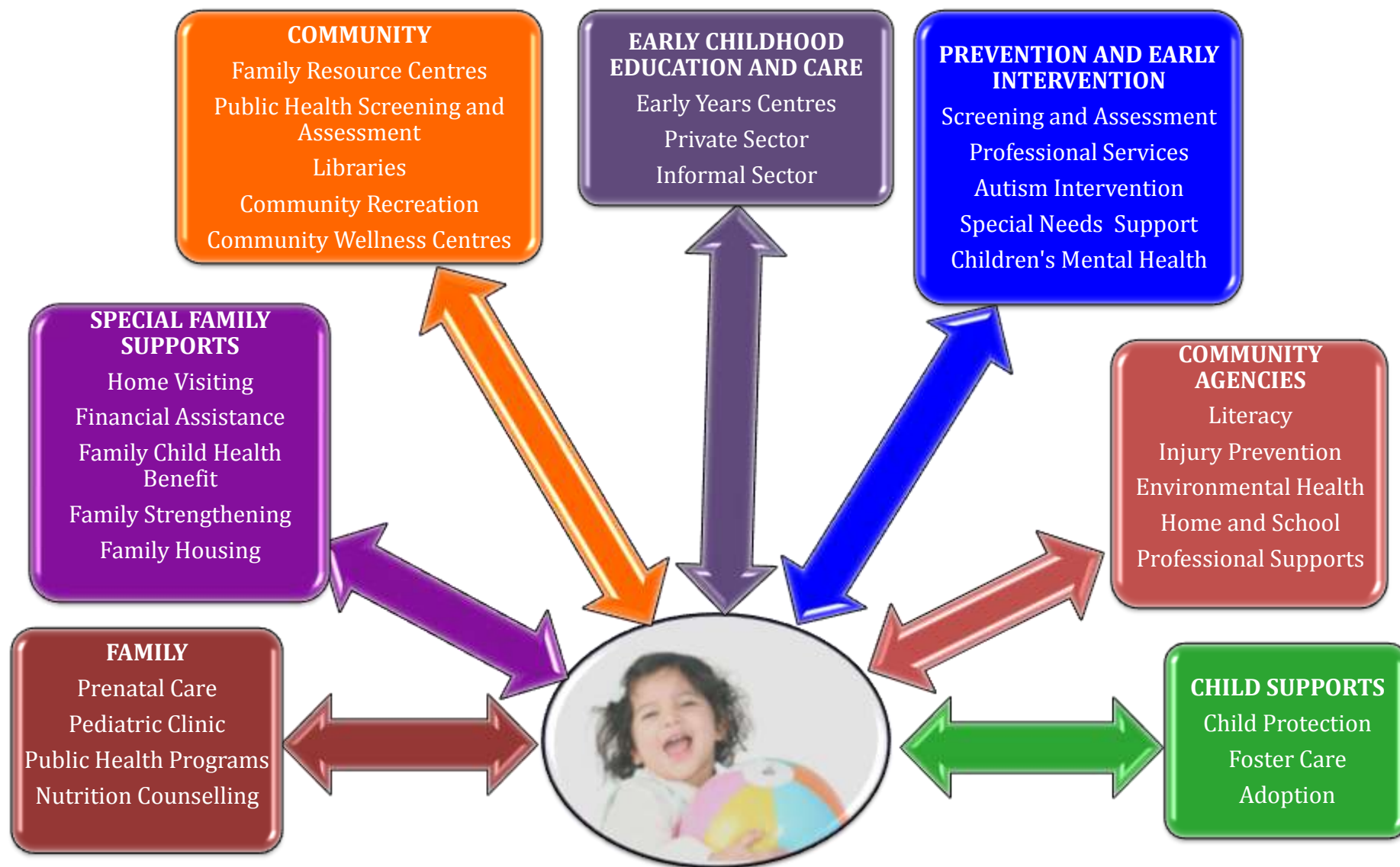
- The focus of the framework is on the rights and best interests of the child
- The Framework respects parental choice, since parents have responsibility for their children's well being, and are in the position to know what is best for each of their children.
- The Framework respects and accommodates cultural and linguistic diversity in families and professionals.
- The Framework values strong and resilient families and communities, and all those involved work toward this goal.
- The Framework values and encourages healthy relationships and partnerships between and among families and professionals.
- The Framework values decisions and policies that are guided by evidence of exemplary practice.
- The Framework values timely and appropriate screening, assessment, and when necessary, interventions for all children. Professionals working in relevant programs and services strive to achieve appropriate responses.
- The Framework values the concept of measuring and monitoring progress – in individual children, and in the programs and services that are part of the Early Childhood Framework.

Figure 5 provides a visual description of an Early Childhood Framework for PEI. Figure 6 provides a visual description of the types of programs and services in each of the components of the framework. Detailed discussion of the various components of the Framework follows the diagram.

Figure 5: An Early Childhood Framework for PEI



Figure 6: AN EARLY CHILDHOOD FRAMEWORK FOR PEI



An Early Childhood Framework for PEI

The Early Childhood Framework outlines the range of programs and services supporting children and their families from the prenatal period to school entry. It considers the various types of programs and services, including education, prevention, intervention, and remediation. The Framework does not include services that are considered to be acute care services of the health system. The Framework also recognizes the value of the work of community agencies in public education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and support to all who work directly with children.

One of the key principles underlying the Framework is a respect and accommodation for cultural and linguistic diversity. Therefore, it is intended that all families in PEI have access to the range and types of supports described in the Framework.

FAMILY

This component of the framework reflects population level supports to parents and families with particular emphasis on services for parents throughout the prenatal and post-natal periods.

Examples of programs include (but are not limited to):

- Prenatal classes sponsored by public health nursing
- Prenatal programs and supports sponsored by family resource programs through the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program
- Breastfeeding supports
- Nutrition counseling and support, especially through pregnancy
- Public education initiatives undertaken by pediatricians
- Services at the Pediatric Clinic, especially for children with developmental challenges

SPECIAL FAMILY SUPPORTS

Special family supports include targeted programs and services that are available to selected families based on screening and assessment of eligibility. These types of programs provide a more concentrated level of support and include (but are not limited to):

- Home visiting programs such as the Best Start program, with eligibility based on family screening completed by public health nurses
- Family strengthening supports provided by the Family Facility and various outreach programs across the province
- Financial assistance for eligible families, including child care subsidy
- Family Child Health Benefit for eligible families, to assist with the cost of health related expenses
- Family Housing supports

COMMUNITY

This component of the Framework includes all of the community based programs and resources that are available for all children and families. These programs are considered to be universal, in that they are available for all children, parents, and families. Even so, within that mandate some programs may provide extra supports (such as transportation, outreach) in order that all families may participate. Examples of community based programs include (but are not limited to):

- The network of Community Action Program for Children family resource centres and their various outreach programs across the Island, including:
 - Main Street Family Centre – Souris
 - Families First – Montague
 - CHANCES – Charlottetown
 - Mi'Kmaq Family Resource Centre – based in Charlottetown but with a mandate to provide services across PEI
 - Family Place – Summerside
 - Kids West – Alberton
 - Cap Enfants – based in Wellington but with a mandate to provide services across PEI
- Public health programs offered across the Island for parents and children, including immunization, well-baby clinics, newborn assessment for 18 month old assessment, 4 year old assessment
- Public health supports to early childhood education and care programs regarding health practices for groups of children
- Public libraries and their programs for children
- Community recreation programs including skating, swimming, soccer, hockey, figure skating, softball and baseball.
- Programs for children and families at community wellness centres or similar resources

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

The early childhood education and care component of this framework will be discussed with greater detail in Sections 4 – 8 of this report.

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The Prevention and Early Intervention component of the Framework encompasses a wide scope of areas of interest and perspective, including all areas of a child's development, e.g., physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and includes language and communication. This component of the Framework also includes a range of programs, services, individuals, and agencies that are involved in various aspects of prevention and early intervention. In recent months, a multi-partner inter-sectoral Early Intervention Working Group has spent a considerable amount of time in reviewing the current status of prevention and early intervention programs, and has developed recommendations for a vision, model, and strategy for PEI.

This component of the Framework includes:

- Screening and assessment, which may be completed to determine eligibility for services as well as to monitor children's progress and develop subsequent program plans
- Professional services, which include (but are not limited to) speech language pathologists, audiologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, preschool autism specialists, IBI workers, psychologists, counselors, play therapists, mental health specialists, and other professional and para-professional individuals who work with children and families. These services may be available through government funded agencies and departments, or may be available on a private basis in communities.

- Funding for children with special needs to support their participation in inclusive early childhood education and care programs is also considered a key element of prevention and early intervention.

COMMUNITY AGENCIES

The Framework for Early Childhood recognizes the valuable work of community agencies working on behalf of young children and their parents. These agencies stay abreast of emerging issues and trends, seek out and analyze new research, promote good practice and advocate for change, and provide professional support and resources to parents and those who work with young children. In some cases, community agencies also provide direct service and intervention for young children and/or their families.

The listing provided in the Framework is not intended to be an exhaustive or comprehensive list of agencies in PEI currently involved in the lives of young children and their families. The community networks who are members of the PEI Children's Secretariat maintain a listing of relevant agencies. As well, the Center for Education Research at UPEI has developed a comprehensive list of provincial agencies involved in early childhood development.

CHILD SUPPORTS

The Department of Community Services, Seniors, and Labour notes that in PEI "All members of our One Island Community are responsible for protecting children from abuse and neglect." The Child Supports component of the Framework acknowledges that there are times when more intensive interventions are required in order to protect the safety and well being of children. Individuals involved in ensuring that all children are safe and secure in their families, homes, and communities, in providing for children as foster parents, and in arranging for appropriate adoptions are key partners in a provincial framework for young children.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VISION AND FRAMEWORK

1. Vision

- It is recommended that a renewed vision for children be endorsed by all Islanders. The vision as outlined in this section builds on the dynamic model developed by the University of Prince Edward Island's Centre for Education Research, through the Research in Early Childhood Development project. Within this dynamic vision, it is proposed that that all Islanders reach consensus to support a vision for the child which sees:

Children are healthy and happy, curious and creative, playful and joyous. They are loved and respected, and are safe and secure in their families, homes and communities. Children are our collective responsibility. They are valued for who they are today, and as the future parents and leaders of tomorrow.

Lead: Executive Council Office – to coordinate the introduction of an all-party motion in the Legislature to endorse this vision, and to seek consensus from Islanders through the government website for the proposed vision.

2. Early Childhood Framework

- It is recommended that the proposed Early Childhood Framework be endorsed by the government departments and community networks of the Children's Secretariat.
- It is recommended that all government departments affirm their commitment to maintain coordinated and collaborative efforts for continuity of services for children and their families.

Lead: Executive Council Office



SECTION 4

THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM GOVERNANCE AND A PLANNED APPROACH

THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM

Within the Framework, in-depth study and analysis has been undertaken to re-design and re-vitalize early childhood education and care programs. As noted in “Section 1: Context” the recommendation for this work was included in the report of the PEI Kindergarten Commissioner “Every Child A Better Future”.

Since the announcement that kindergarten would no longer be provided through the provincially licensed early childhood education and care programs, there have been significant concerns expressed by parents, early childhood educators, businesses, and communities about the impact of this move on the rest of the regulated early childhood education and care system. The primary concerns include:

- The majority of the most experienced and qualified early childhood educators were eligible to apply for positions as kindergarten teachers in the public school system. In some centres, and in some communities, this may mean that the only qualified people available to work in ECEC programs with young children are leaving for positions (with significantly better wages and benefits) in the public school system. In all, the ECEC sector is expected to lose over 100 qualified and experienced educators in September 2010.
- Across all age groups, the participation rate in ECEC programs is highest for five-year-old children. Many centres are uncertain as to whether there will be enough younger children to fill the number of vacancies. Low enrolment presents a serious financial risk to the viability of an early childhood program, as centre operating expenses include fixed costs such as rent, heat, electricity, snow removal, etc. which are not proportioned according to the number of children enrolled. Financial projections suggest that a number of current centres may not be economically viable after September 2010.
- As per legislated staff:child ratios, there are more staff required for younger children; an enrollment of younger children requires additional staff to be employed, which therefore increases fees for parents
- Revenue for five-year-old children was proportionately higher than the revenue for children in younger age groups, due to the staff:child ratios of 12 children for each qualified staff person.

There have been many assumptions made about statements such as “the kindergarten funding subsidized the rest of the program” and why licensed ECEC centres have reported that they have been put in a position to increase fees for parents now that five-year-old children will no longer be part of the ECEC sector. These assumptions need to be clarified:

1. The term “subsidize” the rest of the program is a common term in early childhood literature. Most often, it is used with reference to low wages for early childhood educators – with phrases such as “early childhood educators subsidize the child care system by working for low wages”. It has always been the case that parent fees paid on behalf of older children have proportionately paid for more of the operating expenses of the centre (including wages). The explanation is simple. Legislated staff:child ratios require more staff for younger age groups. There is more revenue to pay for wages – which constitutes the largest portion of operating expenses – if there are more children enrolled in the higher age groupings. This is also the

reason why centres have higher rates for younger children, in order to mediate the financial impact of larger staff requirements. Even though current rates for infants in full time child care are often unaffordable for parents, the fees do not represent the true cost of infant care. In PEI, the following requirements are currently legislated:

- 1 early childhood educator for every 15 school age children
 - 1 early childhood educator for every 12 five year olds
 - 1 early childhood educator for every 10 three and four year olds
 - 1 early childhood educator for every 5 two year olds
 - 1 early childhood educator for every 3 children younger than 24⁵ months
- (Source: Regulations to the *Child Care Facilities Act*)

2. Between the years 1985 and 2000, the percentage of five year old children in PEI who participated in kindergarten programs – either half or full day – was consistently at about the 85 per cent range. After government introduced a universal community based kindergarten program in 2000, this percentage increased to over 98%. This stable enrolment of five year olds meant that centres were able to prepare annual financial projections based on a stable and predictable enrolment of five year old children. Stability of child enrolment is a key factor in predicting the financial viability of a centre.

RE-DESIGNING AND RE-VITALIZING THE EARLY YEARS SYSTEM

As noted in Section 1 of this report, it would have been easy for the PEI Government to merely re-invest funds into the early childhood education and care system in order to make up for the shortfall in funding caused by the five year old population moving to the public school system. Key informants interviewed for this report consistently were impressed that the PEI Government chose instead to examine emerging trends in ECEC both nationally and internationally, and to re-design the ECEC system so as to achieve broader goals outlined in public policy initiatives.

In the past ten years, strongly influenced by the results of the international Thematic Review of ECEC conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), there has been considerable attention given by governments to the policy directions that predict and support high quality ECEC systems. In its first comparative report on the international review, *Starting Strong* (OECD, 2001) the OECD identified eight key elements of successful ECEC policy that emerged after the review of the first twelve countries:⁶

- A systemic and integrated approach to ECEC policy
- A strong and equal partnership with the education system
- A universal approach to access, with particular attention to children in need of special support
- Substantial public investment in services and the infrastructure

⁵ The Child Care Facilities Board's policy will recognize children at 22 months as being eligible for consideration of the 2 year old (24 month) child staff ratio calculation.

⁶ Canada participated in the second phase of the OECD's Thematic Review, and Prince Edward Island was one of four jurisdictions to host the Expert Review Team. Policy recommendations were made at a national level, and are outlined in the OECD's Canada Country Note (2004).

- A participatory approach to quality improvement and assurance
- Appropriate training and working conditions for staff in all forms of provision
- Systematic attention to data collection and monitoring
- A stable framework and long-term agenda for research and evaluation

The work undertaken to re-design and re-vitalize the ECEC sector in PEI has focused on policy, governance, program, and funding within the context of three objectives: Quality, Access, and Sustainability. As with many reviews of this type, the recommendations presented are relevant to each of the three key objectives, and must be considered as an integrated plan, rather than as individual steps.

GOVERNANCE

A governance model for early childhood education and care includes the legislated provisions for licensing, monitoring, and overall policy responsibility for the operation of such programs. As well, a governance model includes the community infrastructure that supports those who operate, administer, and are employed in the provincial early childhood sector.

The organization of regulated early childhood education and care programs differs from country to country, and in Canada, differs from one province or territory to the other. While in Europe most ECEC services are publicly delivered, this is not the case in Canada, the United States, or in Australia. Table 1 describes PT responsibility for ECEC programs:

PT	Table 1: Ministries responsible for regulated ECEC programs in Canada
NL	Department of Child, Youth, and Family Services
NS	Department of Community Services
PE	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
NB	Department of Social Development
QC	Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés
ON	Ministry of Children and Youth Services
MB	Family Services and Community Affairs
SK	Department of Education
AB	Alberta Children's Services
BC	Ministry of Children and Family Development
YK	Department of Health and Social Services
NT	Education, Culture, and Employment
NU	Department of Education

Source: Flanagan and Beach, 2010 (a), in press.

All provinces and territories allow for both non-profit and privately operated ECEC programs to be licensed. In some jurisdictions, municipal governments (e.g., City of Toronto) operate a network of ECEC programs.⁷ Increasingly, school boards have begun to operate ECEC programs, but these tend to be half-day pre-kindergarten programs for four year olds. Table 2 describes initiatives undertaken by ministries of education for the delivery of early childhood programs for four-year old children:

PT	Table 2. Role of Ministries of Education in provision of early childhood education for 4-year old children as of 2009/10 ⁸
NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A
NS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Between 2005-2008 the province piloted full-day 4-year old kindergarten programs in 19 sites. The programs were staffed with Early Childhood Educators who had either a diploma or a degree. Maximum class size was 18. The pilot was cancelled after three years. ▪ In 2008 the Halifax Regional School Board launched the pilot Early Learning Opportunities (ELO) for 4-year olds at five schools. ELO employs Early Childhood educators and is funded through the school board budget. The program is based on the YMCA Playing to Learn Guide. The Nova Scotia Teachers' Union filed a grievance over the hiring of ECEs. ▪ The Department of Education continues to support an Early Learning Coordinator position.
PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A
NB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A
QC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Part-school-day programs in selected communities; expansion of the program ended with the implementation of the Family Policy in 1997; they operate between 332-412 hours/year, either 4- or 5-days/week. Some programs include parent participation. Most are located in low-income communities in Montreal ▪ Maximum class size is 18 ▪ If a 4-year old has an identified special need, they are entitled to participate in a kindergarten program at the request of the parent ▪ A number of English school boards are offering a half-day kindergarten program for 4-year olds on a pilot basis. In at least some boards, parents pay \$100 registration fee for the year.
ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Ontario government will begin to phase in a new full-day early learning program for 4- and 5-year olds over a 5-year period; 600 schools will offer the program in September 2010. ▪ Classrooms will be staffed by a team, including a certified teacher and a registered early childhood educator, with a maximum class size of 26. ▪ Participation will be voluntary and children may attend for a part-school day, full-school-day,

⁷ The City of Windsor (Ontario) has recently closed all of its municipally operated child care programs.

⁸ Sources: Beach, J.; Friendly, M.; Ferns; C.; Prabhu, N. & Forer, (2009) *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2008*. Childcare Resource and Research Unit, Toronto: ON; updated with information from provincial/Territorial Department/Ministries of Education websites

PT	Table 2. Role of Ministries of Education in provision of early childhood education for 4-year old children as of 2009/10⁸
	<p>or extended day (to meet the needs of working parents).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extended day component and summer programming will be staffed by early childhood educators and parents will be charged a “reasonable” fee; fee subsidies may be available for eligible families. ▪ The ECEs will be school board employees and will be organized by CUPE. ▪ In those schools not yet selected for phasing in the new program, junior kindergarten for four year olds will continue to be offered. Junior kindergarten is typically a part-school day program, although some boards offer full-school day programs (approximately 8% of 4-year olds attend full-day); the number of instructional hours are not specified ▪ Participation is voluntary ▪ Maximum class size is 23; 90.5% have 20 or fewer
MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Part-school-day in two school divisions (approximately 17.5% of 4-year olds attend) ▪ Participation is voluntary ▪ Average class size is 20, a classroom assistant may be provided to assist the qualified teacher
SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-kindergarten for 3- and 4-year olds in approximately 200 schools serving vulnerable populations; programs are at least 12 hrs/week, usually 3 hours/day, 4 days/week ▪ Parent participation in the program and in family education programs is encouraged ▪ Most programs include speech and language assessment, developmental assessment, technological supports and referral for psychological assessment as required ▪ Maximum class size is 16, with a teacher and an assistant ▪ The Early Learning and Child Care Branch is reviewing teacher requirement for pre-kindergarten and considering ECE qualifications in place of teacher qualifications.
AB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Part-school-day Early Childhood Services program is available for children who have a designated, mild to moderate special need, and those who do not have adequate English proficiency (or French if they are to attend a francophone program) to succeed in school. ▪ Several school authorities are establishing kindergarten programs for three and four year olds, using a variety of available funding streams. They are typically targeted to disadvantaged communities or specific children with identified special needs.
BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The recent Throne Speech outlined government’s intention to examine the feasibility of expanding school based services for 3 and 4 year old children.
YK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Part-school-day programs in eight rural communities, targeted to children considered to be at risk. Children attend mixed 4- and 5-year kindergartens
NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A
NU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A

Source: Flanagan and Beach,2010(a), in press.

Legislation

The first legislation to govern the operation of early childhood centres in PEI was enacted in 1974. Subsequently, regulations to the Child Care Facilities Act (current version: *Child Care Facilities Act, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap.C-5*) were introduced in 1978. These regulations introduced staff:child ratios, indoor and outdoor space requirements, first aid certification requirements, fire and health safety provisions, and general statements regarding program delivery and behaviour guidance. Since that time, amendments to the Act and revisions to the Regulations have introduced maximum centre size, types of early childhood programs, required qualifications/certification for early childhood educators, and appeal provisions.

The Act also establishes the Child Care Facilities Board, whose mandate is to:

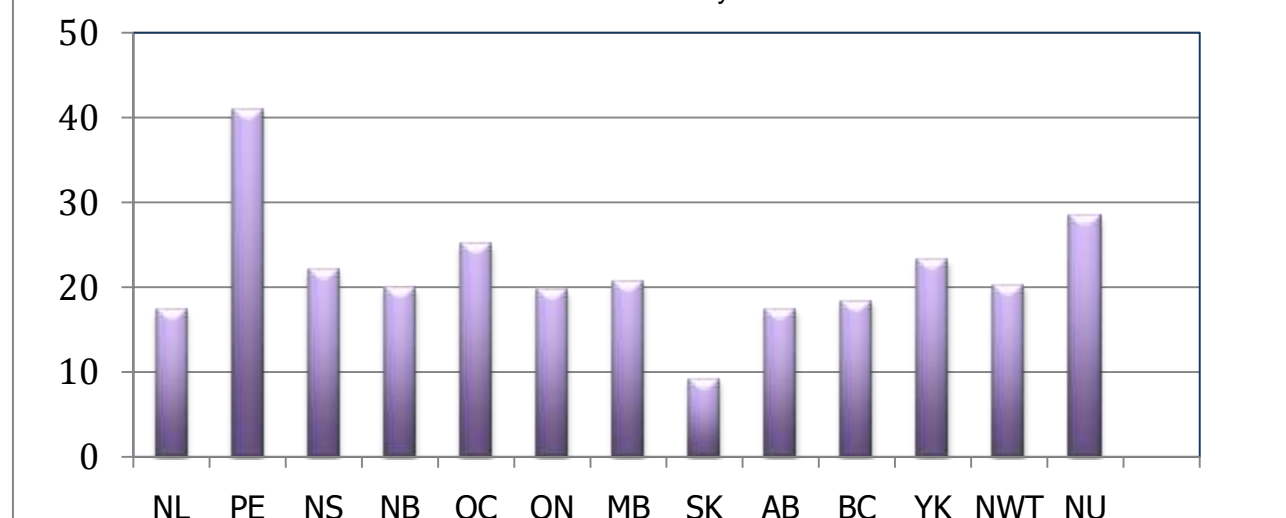
- License child care facilities and issue certificates to qualified persons
- Advise on standards for facilities and minimum qualifications for certification
- Monitor the operation of facilities and ensure adherence to prescribed standards
- Advise the Minister of regulatory issues in the field of early childhood development and child care. 1987,c.7, s.6.

In recent years, there has been considerable – and at times heated – discussion among parents and educators during provincial consultations regarding proposed amendments to the Child Care Facilities Act. One of the key issues debated concerned the question as to whether there should be discretion on the part of government (the Child Care Facilities Board) regarding issuance of licenses. Educators had concerns about the increasing number of centres opening when many centres had high vacancy rates. They also expressed concern that limited government funding was increasingly spread thin over the large number of programs, noting that PEI's financial support to licensed spaces was the lowest in Canada, and had been for the past number of years. Educators also argued that new centres or programs should be based on community need, rather than be seen as a business opportunity. On the other hand, parents expressed concerns that any such restrictions may diminish their opportunities to choose a high quality program for their children.

Across Canada, most provinces are eager to establish new centres and spaces. Quebec has launched a five-year strategy (2008-2012) to create 20,000 new spaces. Alberta has launched a strategy to create 3,500 new spaces. Manitoba's 5-year plan calls for the creation of 6,500 new spaces by 2013. Saskatchewan plans to create 1000 spaces in the next year.

PEI already has more than twice the Canadian average regarding number of licensed early childhood centre spaces for children from birth to five years of age. This figure does not represent the half day kindergarten programs, so as to be comparable to other jurisdictions. Availability of regulated/licensed ECEC will be discussed further in Section 6. However, it is interesting and relevant to the discussion about governance to see the availability of regulated ECEC spaces across Canada. Figure 7 shows the availability of licensed child care for children from birth to five years of age, based on the population of children in this age group in each province and territory:

Figure 7: Percentage of children 0-5 with regulated child care space by province and territory



Source: Beach and Friendly, 2009

In most European countries, decisions regarding expansion of ECEC programs and services are made at the local or municipal level. However, in most European countries (with the exception of Ireland and Netherlands) children from 3-5 years old have a “right” to ECEC programs. Most programs are publicly operated, although in some cases, (e.g., Finland) a municipality may contract with a private program.

In Canada, while there are no provinces or territories that limit access to a “license”, many limit access to funding as a means of managing a high quality system. For example,

- In Quebec, the C.P.E. (Centre de petite enfance) is a non-profit organization responsible (generally) for both centre based and family home child care. Decisions regarding new C.P.E. programs are based on need in the community, and availability of funds. If the province does not approve a budget increase for the new spaces, the centre is deemed “not viable”, and it is not opened.
- In Manitoba, centres may be licensed, but would not be funded until such time as it was determined that those particular spaces were necessary, and funds were available for the new centre.

On the other hand, in either of these provinces, an agency, organization, or individual may open a new centre, but would do so with the understanding that they were not part of the “funded system”. In Quebec, parents who attend any such private programs are not eligible for the subsidized child care rate of \$7/per day.

Infrastructure

A comprehensive governance structure includes the infrastructure necessary to support both parents of preschool children who send their children to ECEC programs, and to support the early childhood educators/professionals who staff these programs, and who are responsible for delivering high quality services to children and families.

Currently, there are three well-established provincial organizations involved in providing professional support to early childhood educators. These include the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI (ECDA), La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, and the Early Learning Operators of PEI (ELOPEI).

The PEI Home and School Federation represents the interests of parents of children in the PEI public school system. The Federation will be expanding its mandate in September, given that kindergarten children will be entering the schools for the first time. La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard represents the interests of francophone parents of children in all age groups. At the current time, there is no provincial organization that represents *all* parents of pre-school children⁹.

Data

Effective planning to manage and maintain an ECEC system for PEI will rely on good information to assess the benefits of initiatives, to inform the development of new policies and programs, and to support potential new investment. For example, without data on the numbers, ages, wages, education levels, or career aspirations of early childhood educators in PEI, it is not possible for any substantive planning to be done regarding the need for and access to training, increasing the number of spaces, recruitment and retention strategies, budget planning, and ongoing professional development. Similarly, without good program data it is not possible to conduct program evaluation in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of program efforts.

There are typically two types of data:

- **Administrative data** – such as the information that is collected on licensing application and inspection reports, applications for certification, kindergarten reports, applications for parent subsidies, subsidy billing forms, grant expenditure reports, etc. There are some advantages to using administrative data, including cost (since it is usually done as part of program management), possibility for more extensive analysis (depending on the sample size), and potential to collect data on the same program or set of conditions over a long period of time. Administrative data is useful for understanding program outcomes.
- **Survey data** – such as the data collected for the PEI ECE 2010 Parent Survey. Other types of survey data include national surveys such as census and labour force surveys, or surveys that are completed to produce program research data. Survey data is often used in research projects, and often results in one-time only sets of information about a particular type of sample. Survey data is generally more flexible, as new questions can be added from time to time. As well, survey data provides an opportunity to follow up with a particular segment of the sample population. Survey data collects the same information from a sample population at the same point in time. Sometimes it is possible to link survey data with administrative data for analysis purposes.

⁹ There are some smaller organizations that present parent viewpoints, such as Parents for Choice and Quality.

Over the past 20 years, there have been a number of efforts to gather human resource data on early childhood educators on a national basis. Some examples include:

- *Caring for a Living* (1991)
- *From Recognition To Remuneration – Child Care Sector Study* (1998)
- *You Bet I Care!* (2000)
- *Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce Labour Market Update* (2004)
- *People, Programs, and Practices* (2007)
- *Supporting Employers* (2008)

In 2002, the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI released “For Our Educators”, which described wages and benefits, and characteristics of the educators employed in regulated ELCC programs in PEI. The quantitative research data was collected through two written surveys; one directed toward early childhood educators (staff), and one directed toward early childhood centre owners/operators. The national survey, *You Bet I Care: A Canada Wide Survey of Wages, Working Conditions, and Practices in Child Care* was used as a basis to design the survey questionnaires. The survey samples included all staff (part-time and full-time), and owner/operators employed in early childhood centres across the Island.

In PEI, program data is generally collected on a regular basis if the program’s funding includes resources for program evaluation. For example, all family resource centres collect program data for the Community Action Program for Children and for the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program. CHANCES collects data for the Best Start home visiting program, and for the pilot Smart Start programs. The Child Care Facilities Board and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development collect administrative data for regulated early childhood education and care programs.

Both program and human resource data about the early childhood sector would be useful to government and community organizations who are involved in providing professional support, training, or who work with early childhood educators in various community roles. Such data would also be useful for UPEI, Holland College, and Collège Acadie to plan for training and recruitment of new students. In order for the data to be meaningful and useful, it must be:

- Able to answer specific policy questions
- Collected on a regular basis
- Analyzed on a regular basis – to establish trends and create value for the data
- Reported on publicly to generate buy-in and value for the data collection

Emerging Trends

A recent study (Flanagan and Beach, 2010 (a), in press) on emerging issues and trends in the early childhood education and care sector found that across Canada, early childhood educators, faculty in post-secondary ECE programs, employers, child care organizations, licensing officials, and ECEC experts agreed that the most important trend in Canada today is the growing involvement of the Education sector in early childhood education. In a national survey conducted for this study:

- 69% indicated that there had been discussions in their PT about the roles of teachers and ECEs in the classroom
- 46% indicated that some school boards in their community operate part-day nursery school programs, 40% indicated that some operate parent/child drop in programs and 34% indicated that some operate child care programs for children 0-5
- 50% indicated that more ECEs were moving to the education system than in the previous three years

For many years, ministries of social services have been responsible for policy and program development in this area. In recent years, however, there are more and more ministries of education, school boards, and individual school principals becoming more knowledgeable about the importance of early education, and familiar with the ECEC programs in their communities. Examples of involvement from the education sector in ECEC across Canada include:

- In Quebec, delivery of school age child care has always been the responsibility of the education system
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Department of Education has responsibility for Learning which includes the early years
- Ontario has a long-standing “school use policy” that allows ECEC programs to use any existing available school space
- Manitoba has a long-standing policy regarding the use of surplus school space for ECEC programs, and the requirement that new school construction include space for ECEC programs.
- Approximately 30% of ECEC programs in Saskatchewan are located in schools.
- In Alberta, government has funded school boards to purchase modular units to house child care programs on school property
- In British Columbia, over 600 early childhood programs are operating with support from the Ministry of Education, serving a range of age groups. The BC Ministry of Education has an Early Learning Division; this division had lead responsibility for the development of the BC Early Learning Framework.

In PEI, *Smart Start*, an initiative of the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation (MWMFF), is a partnership between CHANCES non-profit community agency and other community partners, e.g., Public Health Nursing and the Eastern School District. Services include a preschool program for children 3-4 years, an early development program for infants and toddlers, parent-child activities, nutrition counseling, pre- and post-natal support and parent resources and information. *Smart Start* is located in two schools in Charlottetown.

These trends are noticeable in other countries as well:

- In the United States, 39 of 50 states currently provide state funded pre-kindergarten programs for four year old children, with 33 of those states reporting increased enrollment during 2008. (Barnett, S., 2008)
- In Australia, the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* focuses on learning and development from birth to eight years. Early childhood educators collaborate with

families to achieve common outcomes for children. The Framework is intended for all professionals who work with children from birth to eight years including early childhood educators, school teachers, and health and social service sector professionals who work with children.

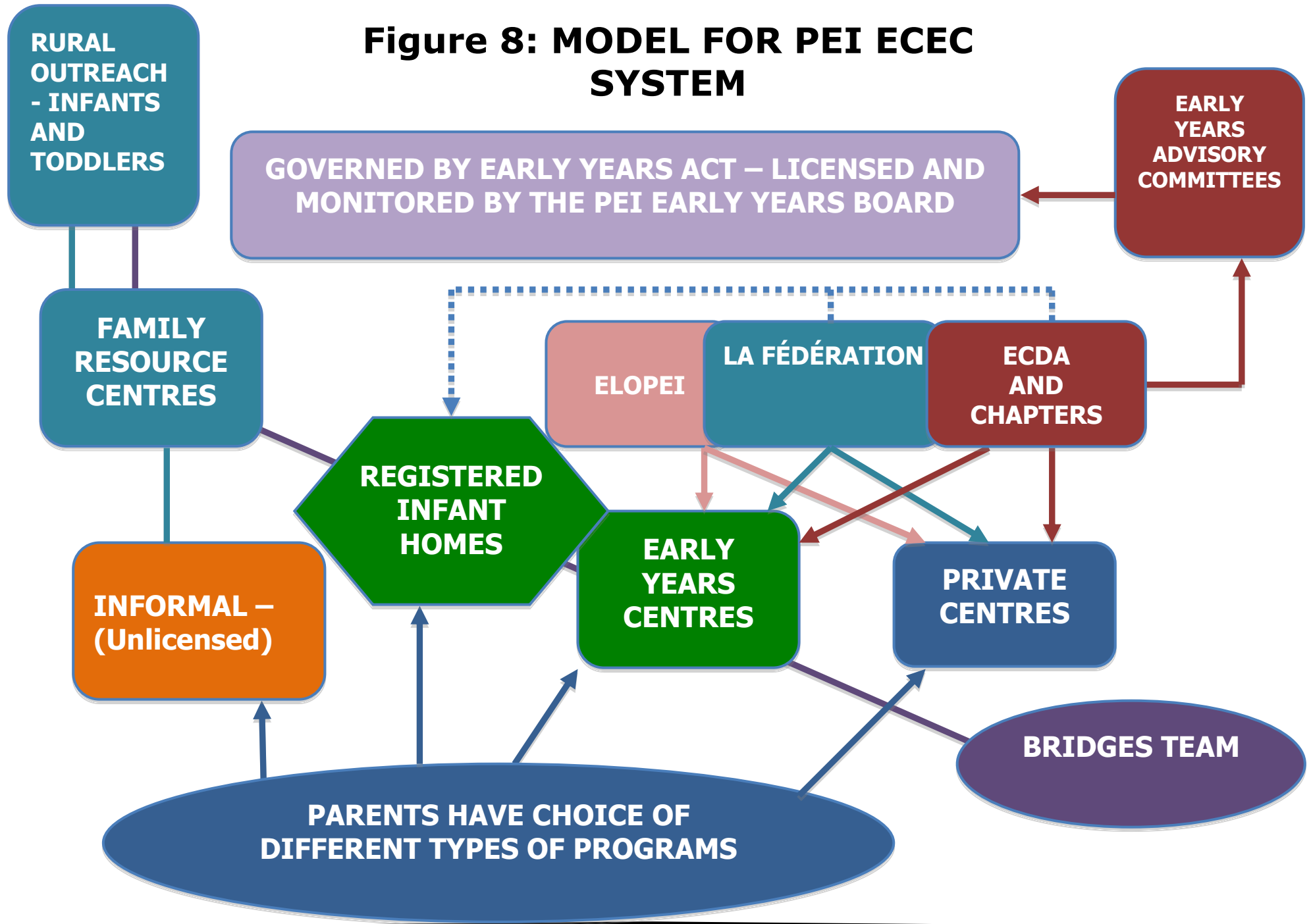
- In England, as of 2010 all three and four year old children are currently entitled to 15 hours of free early learning sessions each week, for 38 weeks of the year.

Analysis of these trends suggests that the primary focus of early childhood education and care programs has shifted from one that supports parents in balancing their work and family responsibilities to one of early years education. This perspective is supported by data regarding vulnerability levels of children; respects broad societal goals to improve literacy and create a skilled and qualified workforce; and will help society to benefit from economic gains and returns on its investments in the early years.

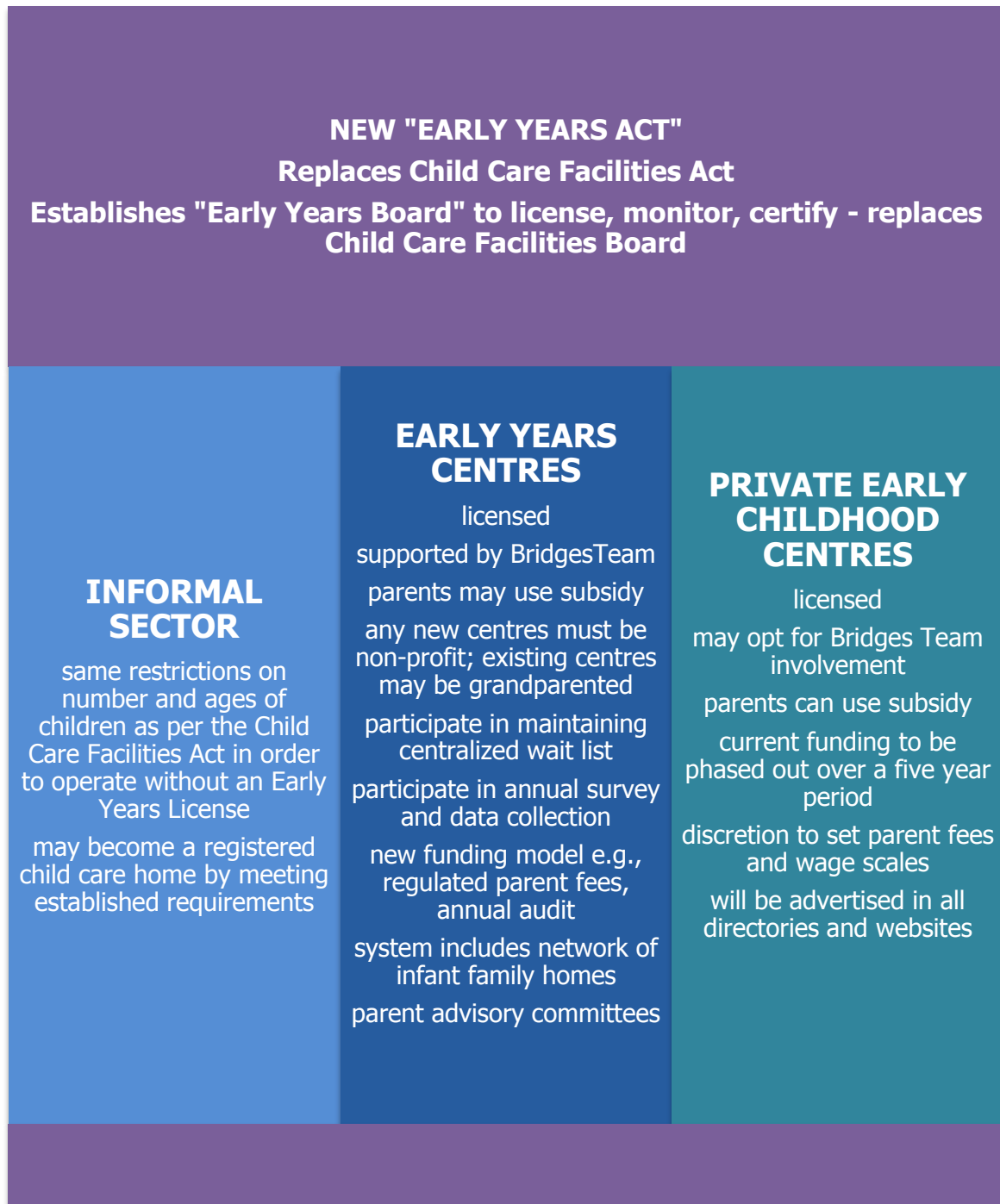
Across PEI, the question was asked in focus groups and of all key informants: Should the framework be concentrating on early years education, or on support for parental employment? In every instance – after considerable thought – respondents advised that they wanted to see the framework support early years education for all as a primary goal.

Figure 8 describes a model for a re-designed and re-vitalized early childhood education and care system. Figure 9 provides additional detail regarding options for parental choice for ECEC programs.

Figure 8: MODEL FOR PEI ECEC SYSTEM



**Figure 9:
OPTIONS FOR PARENT CHOICE WITHIN THE PROPOSED GOVERNANCE MODEL**



DISCUSSION

Early Years Act

New legislation is needed for a new system. The title « Early Years Act » sends the message that the focus of this program model is on early learning.

Early Years Board

The Early Years Board is intended to replace the current Child Care Facilities Board. The Board is intended to carry out the same functions as the current Child Care Facilities Board, i.e., licensing, monitoring, and certification. PEI is the only province in Canada with such a structure for licensing responsibility. This model has been in place for over 30 years, and has functioned well. Other jurisdictions are impressed with the ability to involve parents and the sector in the licensing process, rather than centralizing all responsibility on one person.

The Early Years Board, however, will be required to consult with the Early Years Advisory Committees regarding the community's determination about the need for additional centres or spaces. This will be more fully explained in the description of the role of the Early Years Advisory Committees.

Parent Choice

Feedback from parents in the ECE parent survey and in focus groups held across the Island confirmed that there is not a « one size fits all » type of early childhood program. Some parents prefer an unlicensed home arrangement; others prefer a program that is licensed, monitored, and assessed for quality. Many unlicensed child care providers are familiar with the current legislation and regulations, and care for small numbers of children in order that they do not violate the provisions of the Child Care Facilities Act. Many of these providers do not wish to become part of the licensed system. Some Directors of current licensed programs do not wish to become part of a more « systematic » approach to ECEC for PEI, and wish to continue to operate as a private centre/school. Others want to be part of a more coherent system.

All of the above preferences are valid, as each family – and each early childhood program – know best what situation meets their needs. Therefore, the re-designed system is flexible, and based on parental choice.

Three Choices for Parents

The new model recommends three options for parents for either non-parental child care or early learning opportunities:

- **The Informal Sector:** Parents will still have the option to have their children cared for in informal arrangements. This type of child care may be in someone else's home, or in the parent's own home. Parents have the right to decide if they are pleased with the arrangement, and are responsible to monitor their child's experiences. Policies regarding payment and details of service are arranged between the parent and the caregiver.

- **The Early Years System**

- **Early Years Centres:** Parents will also have the option to enrol their children in one of the new « Early Years Centres ». These centres will be licensed according to the regulations of the new Early Years Act. While there will be a more substantive discussion of the concept behind the creation of the early years centres in Section 6, some features of the new type of centre include:

- **Parent fees are regulated** – centres are not able to charge more than the regulated fee; those centres who wish to do so become « private centres »
- **Staff are paid wages according to an established wage scale based on their qualifications and length of service** – wage scale would be negotiated with the ECDA based on their draft 2010 wage scale
- **Centres would be funded according to a new “unit funding model”** - further discussion in Section 6.
- **Centres are supported by the Bridges Team**
- **Centres contribute data to a centralized wait list** – a centralized wait list allows for informed decisions to be made regarding assessment of need/demand and appropriate responses
- **Centres are required to follow a common curriculum** - See Section 5.
- **New centres must be non-profit** – although existing centres will be “grand-parented” and will continue to operate with their current structure

- **Registered Infant Homes :** While there will be a more substantive discussion of the concept behind the development of a network of registered infant homes in Section 6, some features include :

- **Registered Infant Homes will be licensed :** infant homes would be created across the Island to provide quality care for children younger than 2 years old
- **Homes will be supported by a new addition to the Bridges Team** – the infant toddler specialist.
- **Homes will also be supported by the local family resource centre** – for referrals, resources, space provided for meetings, staff training
- **Family resource centres would be supported by the Bridges Infant Toddler Specialist** – who would work with the Family Resource Centre to provide outreach to rural communities to bring information/resources/support to parents of infants and toddlers

- **Private Early Childhood Centres:** Given that there will be some centres not interested in participating as one of the new Early Years Centres, the new model provides for private early childhood centres. These centres will be:

- licensed according to the new Early Years Act

- may include both for- and non-profit centres
- able to establish their own parent fee schedule
- responsible to establish their own salary scales for staff
- able to request support from the Bridges Team
- able to receive subsidies on behalf of eligible parents
- required to demonstrate how their curriculum reflects the goals, objectives, and principles of the Early Years Curriculum
- able to continue to receive their current direct funding grants for 2010/2011, but funding will diminish gradually over the next five year period, at which time these centres will not receive any provincial operating funds.

Parent Representation

Parents of pre-school children do not have a provincial voice. La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard represents interests of Acadian and Francophone parents. Across the Island, parents may serve on committees and/or advisory boards at the centres where their children are enrolled, but on a province wide basis, there is no existing forum where parents can provide a collective voice. Given that none of the currently established organizations have a mandate to represent perspectives of parents of preschool children, this gap needs to be addressed in discussion with existing organizations.

Infrastructure Support to the ECEC System: Early Childhood Organizations

There are currently three organizations involved in representing the ECEC sector: the ECDA, La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, and the Early Learning Operators of PEI (ELOPEI).

The three provincial early childhood organizations are included in this model and are represented in an overlapping manner. It is not government's role to determine the mandate for these organizations. However, it is clear that there are overlapping and sometimes competing areas of responsibility and representation. These three organizations must ensure that their structure and work are organized efficiently and effectively in order to best represent the sector while maximizing their resources. At the current time, there is a perception of overlap and lack of clarity regarding representation of the francophone ECEC sector (i.e., between the francophone chapter of the ECDA and La Federation) and the roles of the ECDA and ELOPEI regarding human resources, administration and/or management issues in the ECEC sector.

The Early Childhood Development Association of PEI was established in 1974, and continues to represent the vast majority of licensed ECEC programs and early childhood educators in PEI. The ECDA has coordinated professional development opportunities for early childhood educators for more than 30 years. While specific in-service training for curriculum may be the responsibility of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the ECDA has a history of being able to engage, involve and support the ECEC sector not only in identifying training needs, but delivering professional development in a manner receptive to the sector. The ECDA's mandate to build an educated workforce that is dedicated to life-long learning supports a quality learning environment for children. Coordination of annual professional development should involve

consultation with La Fédération and ELOPEI. Delivery of such opportunities should consider options for participation outside of the Charlottetown area, and options for partnership with family resource centres.

Informed planning processes necessary to develop and sustain the new model for the PEI ECEC system will depend on regular and consistent collection of data/information about the sector. The organizations representing educators and centres are in an excellent position to play key roles in this activity. New activities include an annual survey of centres and staff¹⁰; maintenance of web based resource for parents to determine where spaces are available in different parts of the province¹¹; and maintenance of a centralized wait list, in order to inform plans for any expansion, and to inform decisions of the Early Years Advisory Committees about the need for new licenses/spaces for their communities.

All organizations will need to collaborate in determining the most effective way to support the newly established Registered Infant Homes. In addition, there will need to be strong partnerships with family resource programs, as Registered Homes are envisioned to have close ties with the local family resource centres.

And finally, it is envisioned that the ECDA and La Fédération will play key roles in working with the Early Years Advisory Committees for further development of Early Years Centres, and enhanced integration of ECEC programs with all community services for children and their families.

Early Years Advisory Committees

International research suggests that early years programs are more effective when they are responsive to and integrated within the communities in which they are located. As noted earlier in this section, there are numerous examples across Canada to demonstrate that early years programs that are linked to school based programs are highly effective in achieving greater coordination of available services, and in breaking down barriers between parents, families, and schools – all of which contribute to successful transitions to the public school system for children.

The proposed Early Years Advisory Committees are intended to:

- Be organized based on consideration of families of schools (e.g., several families of schools may form one advisory committee)
- Serve as advisors to the regional chapters of the ECDA
- Committees will include the following membership structure:
 - School principal or vice principal from each family of schools, with one to serve as Chair
 - Representative from municipality (town council, community council)
 - Chair of Regional Chapter of ECDA, or Chair of the ECDA Francophone Chapter, or representative of Directors of French early childhood programs
 - Chair of Board of Directors of local family resource centre

¹⁰ This survey is intended to provide data such as the number of centres and spaces with age breakdown; occupancy rates; ECE data re age, participation in professional development, career and retirement projections, and educational credentials.

¹¹ The ECDA has already begun to do some work in this area.

- Community Development Officer (Department of Fisheries Aquaculture, and Rural Development)
- Representative from the health sector, e.g., physician, public health nurse
- Representative from social service sector
- Representative from local police or RCMP
- Representative from local service organization, e.g., Lions Club, Kiwanis
- Representative from business community, e.g., member of Rotary
- Committees will perform the following roles :
 - Establish stronger linkages between early childhood services and other community initiatives and programs
 - Promote collaborative and integrated efforts to meet needs of children and families in the region
 - Be informed about evidence of local demand/need for additional ECEC spaces/services, either by gathering information locally or through centralized wait list
 - Advise local Early Years Centres about the need for additional or different types of programs; gather information on a regular basis regarding numbers of local families on the centralized wait list and about vacancies in the area
 - Provide support (if warranted) for any new applications for licenses based on evidence of need (new applicants will be required to include support from the Early Years Advisory Committee in order to substantiate the license application. Without documented evidence of the need, a license will not be issued).

Bridges Team

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI work collaboratively through the staff of the Bridges Program to offer seamless support to supervisors of Early Childhood Development Centres. The Bridges Resource Team supports curriculum development, program delivery and parent engagement. Staff of the Bridges Resource Team:

- support supervisors, administrators and owners of early childhood development centres to enhance learning environments and provide training and mentoring
- encourage increased quality in early learning programs
- enhance the level of integration of children with special needs
- encourage a community of learning within the early childhood sector.

The Bridges Team works with program supervisors using a strength-based approach to develop action plans to produce positive results. Supervisors participate in evaluations of their centres using standardized evaluation/assessment tools and identify areas where they would like program support.

As part of the model for the Early Years system, the Bridges Team will continue to do this work. In addition, however, it is envisioned that there will be additional staff assigned to the Bridges Team in the role of Infant/Toddler Specialist. This new staff member will provide the same types of supports outlined above to the home child care providers in the newly established network of Registered Infant Homes. As well, the Infant Toddler Specialist will work collaboratively with family resource centres to determine appropriate rural outreach sites, and will provide resources to those

communities for parents of infants and toddlers. As a member of the Bridges Team, the Infant Toddler specialist will be supported in his/her work through the collaboration and support of colleagues.

Family Resource Centres

The network of PEI's family resource programs represents key players within the broadened model for the re-designed and re-vitalized early years system. In some instances, family resource centres are also part of the system of licensed programs. However, since the majority of family resource centres focus on strengthening parent capacity through universally accessible community based programs for parents, this framework focuses on specific roles.

For many years, the family resource centres have provided resource materials and supports for informal (unlicensed) child care providers, and this model envisions that they will continue to provide that support. A new role is envisioned in relation to the network of Registered Infant Homes. It is suggested the staff of family resource programs provide a referral service for parents to the network of registered (licensed) infant homes, and provide resources and information regarding child development and program resources.

Since the Bridges Team will be supporting the Registered Infant Homes, the infant/toddler specialist with the Bridges Team will be available to work with staff of the family resource centre to plan for rural outreach activities with parents of infants and toddlers. Planning and decisions regarding outreach sites will be done in a collaborative manner, and will rely on the expertise of the family resource centre directors.

In subsequent sections of this report, further elaboration on the objectives of quality, access, and sustainability will provide greater detail about the re-designed and re-vitalized early years system.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE

3. Purpose

Define the primary purpose of the ECEC system as one of early learning. ECEC programs will be structured to support parents to balance work and family responsibilities.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

4. Legislation / Licensing And Monitoring

- Draft new legislation – **Early Years Act** – to replace Child Care Facilities Act and to support the new model. Draft new regulations to the Early Years Act to support recommendations regarding Quality, Access, and Sustainability.
- Create a new **Early Years Board** to replace the current Child Care Facilities Board. The Early Years Board will continue with the same mandate as the Child Care Facilities Board; however, the structure must be revised in order that the two representatives from the ECDA represent Early Years Centres and Independent ECEC Centres.

Lead: Government

5. Parent Representation

- Determine the most appropriate approach to develop a provincial voice for parents of preschool children.
- Conduct and report on a bi-annual survey of parents of preschool children.

Leads: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in partnership with existing organizations such as PEI Home and School Federation and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

6. Data

Work collaboratively with Departments of Health and Wellness; Community Services, Seniors, and Labour; Education and Early Childhood Development; Holland College; College Acadie; UPEI; the ECDA; ELOPEI; and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard:

- To develop an Early Childhood Data Strategy for PEI. Determine the policy questions to be addressed, nature of information required, who has the information, who should maintain the data, protocols for sharing data, and the most efficient manner of data collection.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

7. Local Management

- In collaboration with each of PEI's "family of schools", the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to support the development of **Early Years Advisory Committees**. Several families of schools will be represented on each advisory committee; there will be one committee representing French schools and French early childhood centres.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

8. Early Childhood Professional Infrastructure

- Clarify relationship between La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard and the Francophone chapter of the ECDA.
- Determine how to collaborate in supporting Registered Infant Homes.

Leads: ECDA, ELOPEI, and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

- Continue to support the ECDA in coordination of ECE professional development opportunities
- ECDA, La Fédération, and ELOPEI work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop a business plan to outline roles, responsibilities, and actions to determine how these organizations can best be involved in supporting the new model. It is also recommended that these discussions include an annual survey of centres and staff; maintenance of web based resource for parents to determine where spaces are available in different parts of the province; and maintenance of a centralized wait list, in order to inform plans for any expansion and to inform decisions of the Early Years Advisory Committees about the need for new licenses/spaces for their communities.

Lead: Collaborative effort between Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, ECDA, La Fédération, and ELOPEI

It is recommended that the Early Childhood Development Association and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard collaborate to provide support to newly established Registered Infant Homes, and work with all Early Years Advisory Committees for further development of Early Years Centres.

Leads: ECDA and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

9. Staffing

Create one new Infant Toddler Specialist position for the Bridges Team for every 25 Registered Infant Homes.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development



SECTION 5

QUALITY

QUALITY

It is widely accepted that the level of quality in early childhood education and care programs is the key variable that determines whether a child's experience in the program will have a positive or negative influence on later development. The positive impact of a child's experience in high quality early learning and child care lasts throughout a child's school years in areas such as social, language, and cognitive development. In fact, many of the well-designed longitudinal research studies on such programs as the Perry Preschool Project have demonstrated that these positive impacts last well into the child's adult years, with impacts on such measures as higher employment status, lower rates of prison confinement, and lower rates of dependence on welfare assistance.

What is quality?

Definitions of quality in early childhood education and care programs vary depending on who is answering the question. There are different interests and views of all who are involved in developing and managing programs, including parents, children, ECEs, and policy makers.

Our understanding of quality – and how it is to be measured in an early childhood program – will also depend on our particular understanding and beliefs about what childhood means, and our values as to what is important for children to develop. Perceptions of quality – and therefore approaches to measuring quality – are dependent on the view of the child, and of childhood itself. Since the proposed vision of the child for the PEI Framework on Early Childhood begins with the view of the child in relation to his/her family, community, society and the world (based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development), this would suggest that children are not only affected by their environments, but are also intentionally acting on those environments in order to make meaning of (and have some control over) their lives. For Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999), this is a concept that must be considered when talking about children's development. They see children not only as "social actors, participating in constructing and determining their own lives, but also the lives of those around them and the societies in which they live, and contributing to learning as agents building on experiential knowledge."

Understanding and beliefs about child development influence the design and implementation of an early childhood education and care program. An understanding of child development which views the child as an active participant in learning means that the child's program would be developed to build on the child's strengths and interests, and the role of the adult is one of facilitator. On the other hand, an understanding and belief that the child is a person who must be filled with knowledge would be interpreted in an early learning and child care program to mean that the adult must determine what it is that the child will learn – and will focus on meeting specific learning objectives. Each interpretation of childhood has an impact on how quality would be measured.

For example, in some curriculum approaches (i.e., Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf) value is placed on helping children realize their full potential as intelligent, creative, whole persons. In each approach, children are viewed as active authors of their own development, strongly influenced by natural forces within themselves opening the way toward growth and learning. Teachers adopt approaches that are consistent with these beliefs, and provide environments that serve as pedagogical tools and provide strong messages about respect for children. Children are evaluated

by means other than traditional tests and grades. Any attempt to measure quality would have to take into account such values, and such approaches.

A number of researchers have conceptualized quality as making distinctions between **structural factors** that help to produce or support quality, the ongoing or dynamic **process** of achieving quality, and the equating of quality with those factors that appear to produce successful **outcomes** for children. These three categories – structure, process, and outcomes – appear in much of the literature on quality. (Flanagan, 2006):

- **Structural factors** are related to the early learning and child care *system*. These may include such things as the level of public funding, and whether or not programs are available and affordable to parents. Structural factors also include regulatory provisions, such as required staff qualifications, group size and staff:child ratios, program or curriculum requirements, space and physical facilities, and working conditions for staff.
- **Process** factors relate to what happens in the early childhood program, such as the activities that are available for children, both indoor and outdoor; the interactions between children; and the interactions between children and adults.
- **Outcomes** for children would include such measures as cognitive and school readiness skills which children have achieved or parents' satisfaction with the service.

If the **Vision for Children** appreciates the dynamic nature of child development, then the task of defining “quality” becomes the responsibility of all – including parents, children, professionals, early childhood educators, and government policy makers. If we believe in the dynamic nature of child development, then we must appreciate that child development is happening wherever children are – not only in certain settings at certain times. Child development is happening at home, at the grocery store, at gatherings of family and friends, at the park, at the rink, in early childhood centres, at family resource centres – in short, it happens wherever children happen to be. For this reason, the proposed vision for children in PEI specifies: *Children are our collective responsibility*. (See Section 3: Vision)

Structural Elements of Quality

Across Canada, provinces and territories have legislation – and accompanying regulations – in place to set out requirements for licensed early childhood / child care programs. In each jurisdiction, responsibility for establishing these requirements and monitoring adherence to prescribed regulations sits with the provincial government.

Other countries have taken different approaches to regulatory requirements, often influenced by the governance structure of the country:

- France, New Zealand and the UK impose national regulations
- In Australia, Belgium, US, Germany, and Canada, regulations are put in place by state/provincial/territorial/regional governments¹².
- In Denmark and Sweden, local governments are responsible for regulating programs.

¹² In some jurisdictions, responsibility for licensing and monitoring has been delegated to municipalities.

- In Netherlands, national regulations are interpreted and implemented by local authorities.
- In Norway, regulation was centralized, but is now moving to local authorities. There is a national regulatory framework, but local authorities have considerable discretion and autonomy to adapt the regulations to meet local needs and conditions.

Staff:Child Ratios and Group Size

A review of a structural element such as child staff ratios shows fairly consistent practices across Canada, but wide variation among countries. Table 3 describes regulated staff:child ratios across Canada:

PT	Table 3: Regulated Staff:Child Ratios by Province and Territory		
	Age of Children	Staff:Child Ratios	Notes
NL	Birth – 2 years	1:3	Note: In mixed age group when children more than 12 months and less than 69 months of age are attending, age of youngest child determines staff:child ratio and maximum group size.
	3 year olds	1:5	
	4 and 5 year olds (37-69 months)	1:8	
	School Age (57-84 months)	1:12	
NS	0 – 17 months	1:4	Note: Youngest child drives the ratios and group size with mixed age groups; in part time pre-school programs, ratios for 5 year old children are 1:12 children
	18 months – 36 months	1:6	
	36 months – 5 years	1:8	
	5 – 12 years	1:15	
PE	0 – 2 years	1:3	Note: Ratios are reduced by 50% for outdoor play when in area that is part of the facility; for excursions away from the centre, full ratios apply. Mixed age group ratios are calculated based on ages of all children.
	2 – 3 years	1:5	
	3 – 5 years	1:10	
	5 – 7 years	1:12	
	7+ years	1:15	
NB	0 – 2 years	1:3	Note: Minister may alter ratio for children with special needs
	2 years	1:5	
	3 years	1:7	
	4 years	1:10	
	5 years	1:12	
	6 years	1:15	
	7 – 12 years	1:15	

	Table 3: Regulated Staff:Child Ratios by Province and Territory				
PT	Age of Children		Staff:Child Ratios	Notes	
QC	0 – 17 months		1:5	If mixed-age group, the ratio for younger aged applies	
	18 months – 4 years		1:8		
	4 years		1:10		
	5 years + (for children not attending preschool classes and not attending elementary school classes)		1:15		
	5 years + (for children attending preschool classes or elementary school)		1:20		
ON	0-18 months		3:10 (1:3.3)	At the beginning and the end of the day and at sleep time ratios may be 2/3 of staff requirement, Applies only to children over 18 months old. Supervisor may be included in ratio full time if fewer than 5 staff required in centre; if 5 or 6 staff, supervisor may be included in ratio for up to half the time, if 7 or more staff, supervisor not included.	
	18-30 months		1:5		
	30 months – 5 years		1:8		
	44 months – 67 months		1:10		
	56 months – 67 months		1:12		
	6 – 12 years		1:15		
MB	When in separate age groups:			When in mixed-age groups:	
	12 weeks – 1 year		1:3	12 weeks – 2 years	1:4
	1 – 2 years		1:4		1:8
	2 – 3 years		1:6	2 – 6 years	1:15
	3 – 4 years		1:8	6 – 12 years	
	4 – 5 years		1:9		
	5-6 yrs 1:10		1:10		
	6-12 yrs 1:15		1:15		
SK	6 weeks – 17 months		1:3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ratios have been developed for outdoor excursions, and for mixed age groups:▪ Supervisor may be included in ratios - no time limit▪ Minimum 2 adults (1 child care worker) in centre when children present If less than 9 children, (0 infants, and less than 2 toddlers) and adequate emergency provisions, only 1 child care worker required	
	18 – 29 months		1:5		
	30 mos-6 yrs		1:10		
	School age – 5 years+ and attends a school other than kindergarten		1:15		

PT	Table 3: Regulated Staff:Child Ratios by Province and Territory		
	Age of Children	Staff:Child Ratios	Notes
AB	0 – 12 months	1:3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxed ratios are in place for times when children are sleeping. Calculation of ratios for mixed-age groups specified. When 7 or more children in care, 2 adults (1 primary staff member) must be on site. Program Supervisor may be included in ratios. <p>Only certified staff (or exemptions) included in ratios).</p>
	12 – 18 months	1:4	
	19 months – 3 years	1:6	
	3 years – 4.5 years	1:8	
	4.5 years – 5 years	1:10	
BC	Under 36 months	1:4	Manager may be included in ratios.
	30 month to school entry	1:8	
	Preschool	1:15	
	Out of school care:		
	Kindergarten and Grade 1	1:10	
	Above Grade 1	1:15	
YK	0 –18 month	1:4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratios apply at all times. Ratios and group sizes for special needs are determined on individual basis. Youngest child drives the ratios and group size with mixed age groups. When more than 6 children in attendance there must be at least two staff members on duty. <p>Program Director may be included in ratios - no limit.</p>
	18 month – 3 yrs	1:6	
	3 yrs + school age	1:12	
NT	0 – 12 months	1:3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operators to ensure minimum of 2 staff persons when more than 6 children present; one of the staff persons to have no responsibilities but to provide care to children. <p>Volunteers may be included in ratio if approved by Director of Child Day Care Services.</p>
	13 months – 24 months	1:4	
	25 months – 35 months	1:6	
	3 years	1:8	
	4 years	1:9	
	5 years – 11 years	1:10	
	Mixed Age Groups:		
	12 weeks – 2 years	1:4	
	2 years – 5 years	1:8	
	5 years – 12 years	1:10	

PT	Table 3: Regulated Staff:Child Ratios by Province and Territory		
	Age of Children	Staff:Child Ratios	Notes
NU	0 – 12 months	1:3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 2 staff persons required when more than 6 children present; one must have no responsibilities but to provide care to children. Volunteers may be included in ratio if approved by the Director of Child Day Care Services.
	13 months – 24 months	1:4	
	25 months – 35 months	1:6	
	3 years	1:8	
	4 years	1:9	
	5 years – 11 years	1:10	
	Mixed Age Groups:		
	12 weeks – 2 years	1:4	
	2 years – 5 years	1:8	
	5 years – 12 years	1:10	

Staff:child ratios are similar in Australia, UK, US and New Zealand. In Nordic countries, however, the range is much higher (i.e., more children per staff person). In Belgium, staff child ratios may range from 1:13 to 1:21, in France, 1:27, and in Spain, 1:20. Germany has a range of 2 adults per 20 children to 1 adult for 20 to 25 children.

Mooney et al (2003) have suggested that in those countries where there are high standards and communities have come to expect that level of service, governments appear more able to devolve responsibility for quality assurance and have less need of a centralized approach. National frameworks often exist, but local authorities decide how to interpret these conditions. For example, legislation on quality in Sweden stipulates that staff must have sufficient training and experience, and the size and composition of the group should be suitable, taking into account factors such as the age of the children and the level of staff training. Local authorities then decide how to interpret these conditions.

These examples demonstrate that some structural requirements such as staff:child ratios, group size, centre size, etc. may be considered to be relative to a number of other variables – such as training, experience, and skill levels of the adults, ages of the children, children with special needs, type of pedagogical approach – and that there is not a magic number that will ensure quality. In fact, in some types of early learning and child care programs that have an emphasis on children being active agents in their environments and on children interacting with and learning from each other, too many adults in the room may be thought of as interfering with these processes. (Flanagan, 2005)

Group size refers to the size of the group in which the child spends the day, with one or several caregivers. Canada's Child Care Resource and Research Unit reports:

- Larger group sizes are associated with less responsive care; less individualizing, more restrictive caregivers; less cooperative, more hostile, more antisocial children who talk less, cry more, are more engaged in aimless wandering, and do more poorly on tests of social competency.

- Larger groups are associated with higher rates of infectious illness.

Group size is not regulated in PEI except for children younger than two years of age. In Canada, PEI and Quebec are the only two jurisdictions that do not regulate group size. Most provinces and territories regulate group size by doubling the calculation for the staff:child ratio, with the result that “groups” of children would typically include two staff.

The term “group size” appears to be more common in early childhood settings, while “class size” is generally the term used in kindergarten settings. Many studies have confirmed the links between group/class size and positive outcomes for children. Others have determined that while group size is important, it is not usually the most significant factor in determining quality. The *Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study* (Helburn et al., 1995) in the United States looked at structural predictors of quality in 401 child care settings. The final report concluded that while group size, staff wages, turnover and curriculum all played a role in determining quality, the staff:child ratio was the most significant factor. In Canada, using data from the You Bet I Care! Study, researchers found that the number of staff was a significant direct predictor of child care quality. (Doherty and Stuart, 1997; Goelman et al., 2006).

Friendly, Ferns, and Prabhu (2009) note that “while there is a general assumption that ‘smaller is always better’, ratios/class size cannot be considered independently from teacher qualifications, classroom structure and composition, group size and working conditions.” They cite research to suggest that classroom organization and staffing structure also make a difference in quality. A co-teacher structure is often associated with higher quality (Shim et al, 2004) as compared to a hierarchical structure or single teacher. Positive associations have also been made with child-to-child interaction in large classes; Blatchford, et al., (2007) explains that in some larger groups, the strategic organizing of smaller groups within the class may have a positive influence on outcomes.

Staff Qualifications

There is a consensus among researchers that the level of staff qualifications is the most important predictor of positive child outcomes in early childhood settings. Existing research suggests that in general, higher levels of teacher education are associated with higher overall classroom quality, more positive teacher behaviors in the classroom, and greater gains in cognitive and social development in children. However, with respect to the specific levels of education required (degree vs. diploma) to achieve these outcomes for children, findings from the existing research are less consistent. (Kelley and Camilli, 2007).

The Canadian Council on Learning reports that “Child-care providers with college diplomas or university degrees in early-childhood education are more responsive to the needs of the children in their care. Their training helps them to provide the children in

The level of ECE training is the most frequently identified predictor of quality level in both Canadian and U.S. research. Staff responsible for a group must have post-secondary ECE training.

Gillian Doherty, 2005

their care with activities that are both stimulating and appropriate to their levels of development; as a result, the children under their care score higher than others of the same age on standard tests of language development". (Canadian Council on Learning, 2006) Ontario's recent Expert Panel on Human Resources notes "the single most critical factor affecting the quality of early learning and care programs is the knowledge, skills, and stability of the early childhood workforce." (Government of Ontario, 2007)

In the United States, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) notes that "the knowledge and skill required of an effective preschool teacher have increased as science has revealed more about the capacities of young children, how they learn best, and the importance of early learning for later school success." (Barnett 2004) The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in describing the rationale for post-secondary standards for early childhood program accreditation notes that "Children benefit most when their teachers have high levels of formal education and specialized early childhood professional preparation. Teachers who have specific preparation, knowledge, and skills in child development and early childhood education are more likely to engage in warm, positive interactions with children, offer richer language experiences, and create more high-quality learning environments." (Standard 6: NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Teachers Standard)

In the United States, there is considerable debate about whether pre-kindergarten teachers should have bachelor or diploma degrees.¹³ The National Child Care Staffing Study (1992) looked at the impact of teacher qualifications on the level of quality and child outcomes. This study (reported in Whitebrook, 2003) found that children in programs with more sensitive teachers and more responsive caregiving received higher language scores, spent less time in aimless wandering, and exhibited a higher level of peer play. The study found that teachers with a bachelor's degree (with or without specialized training at the college level) were more sensitive, less harsh and less detached than teachers with no BA and either no training or only training at the vocational school level or lower.

Whitebrook reviewed numerous studies (all in the United States) regarding the relationship of staff qualifications to children's outcomes and to quality scores (generally measured by the ECERS-R instrument). All studies suggested that teachers with B.A. degrees and/or with two-year degrees in studies specific to early childhood education are consistently associated with higher quality measures and better outcomes for children, but that measures are better for teachers with degrees. Some researchers have questioned the inter-play of other factors, including program resources and other structural elements. It is generally agreed that post-secondary education in subject matter specific to early childhood education makes a significant difference to quality, but that the question of degree vs. diploma is a complex area that requires further study.

All provinces and the Yukon Territory require specific post-secondary credentials in early childhood education, or an approved equivalent, for a percentage of staff working with children in centre-

¹³ In the United States, Pre-Kindergarten programs are generally publicly funded (38 of 50 states). Qualifications for pre-kindergarten teachers vary from B.A. to A.A. (associated degree) with specific training in early childhood education. Child care is not regulated in the same way as pre-kindergarten; typically, there are very minimal requirements in place regarding post-secondary qualifications for staff in child care centres.

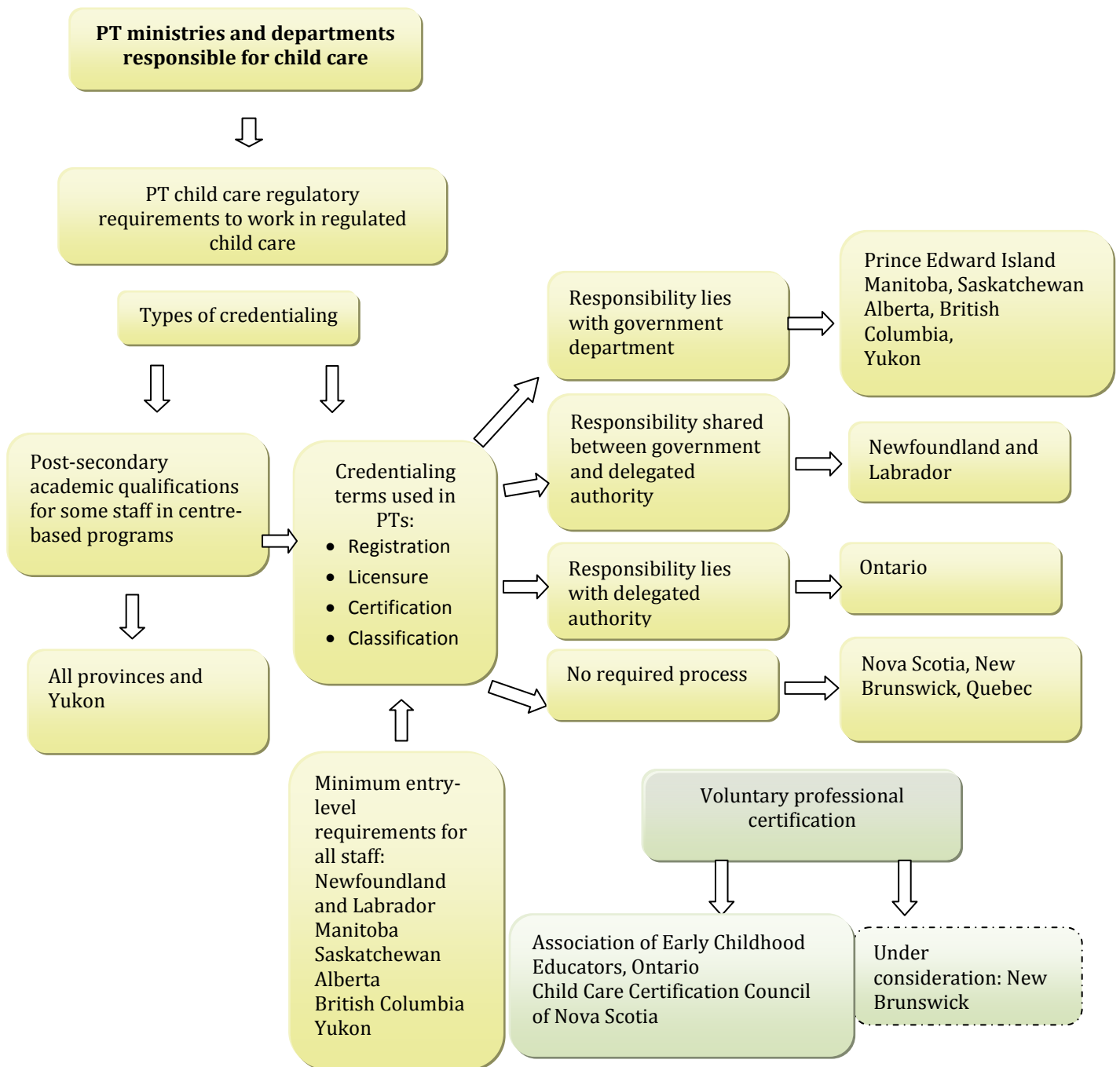
based early childhood education and care programs. In recent years, some jurisdictions (Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Yukon) have introduced new regulations requiring all staff to have some type of training, ranging from “entry level” to post-secondary credential. Only one province (Manitoba) has a specialized level of certification (with related requirements) for Directors.

The percentages of staff required to hold these credentials, and whether some of all of those staff require a one-year certificate or a two-year diploma vary by province and territory, but are contained in legislation in each jurisdiction. Qualifications vary by type of setting, such as centre based programs, family child care homes, and school age child care programs. Appendix 4 outlines current PT requirements for staff qualifications in each of the above types of settings.

Terminology varies from one jurisdiction to the other regarding titles and levels. As well, processes for determining equivalency and recognition of internationally earned qualifications are different from one jurisdiction to the other. Appendix 4 also includes information regarding PT terminology for different types of certification, and the corresponding educational requirements.

Figure 10 describes the complexity of current arrangements across Canada with respect to the types of credentialing used for regulated ECEC programs. The chart explains the different administrative approaches to the review and assessment of qualifications and certification renewal. It is noted that there are only two voluntary professional certification bodies for early childhood education in Canada.

Figure 10: Approaches to ECE Credentialing in Canada (Flanagan and Beach, 2010 (b) in press)



There is a considerable and growing body of research to demonstrate that the qualifications of the Director/Supervisor of the early childhood education and care centre have a significant impact on the quality of the program. Program directors are critical to the recruitment and retention of early childhood educators in child care centres. They are the key to quality programs and yet the gap between education requirements and job expectations is enormous for directors and supervisors who may be managing large programs, and who are accountable for providing pedagogical leadership and meeting higher fiscal, regulatory and reporting requirements (Best Start Expert Panel on Quality and Human Resources, 2007).

Child care program directors shape the working environment in child care centres. Quality environments are better working environments and more likely to attract and retain early childhood educators.

Despite the critical role of the program director, only one jurisdiction in Canada (Manitoba) requires any additional post-secondary education for ECE directors; however, this additional training may or may not focus on administration or leadership, as individuals have a choice of training options in order to qualify for the appropriate certification level.

A survey of ECE faculty conducted in Canada for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (Forer, Flanagan, Beach, 2007) found that 69% of respondents thought the amount of training currently required by provinces and territories for directors was inadequate. Of those that provided comments on suggested length of training:

- 31.7% thought directors should have a related degree
- 68.3% thought directors should have a post-diploma credential

The most common suggested areas of additional training for directors include:

- Human resources management
- Financial management
- Pedagogy
- Administration

OECD societies are today moving away from traditional notions of “child care” toward more developmental ambitions for young children. They expect early childhood centres to be the foundation stage of lifelong learning, to deal sensitively with immigrant and cultural issues, to respond appropriately to special needs children and to provide individualized support to every child in moments of vulnerability or stress. ECEC professionals and teachers will also be expected to participate in the evaluation of achievement and learning. Increasingly, they will be trained to perceive the centre as a learning organization requiring intensive collective participation in strategic planning, self-evaluation and professional development planning. In sum, a new ECEC professional profile is emerging.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2004). *Early Childhood Education and Care Policy: Canada Country Note* (187). Paris: Author

The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council's Training Strategy Project also included focus groups with early childhood educators and with ECEC employers. Again, there was considerable support for increased training for those in Director/Supervisor positions:

- Front-line staff with ECE credentials were also supportive of additional requirements for directors. They indicated that the director sets the pace and tone for the program, and that the director's understanding of child development and curriculum approaches had an impact on how their own ideas and suggestions were received and acted on, and that this level of understanding contributed to problem solving approaches that were richer and more appropriate to the situations at hand.
- Employers generally agreed that "leadership" and "management" are two very different concepts, and that in the early childhood sector, a director needed to have an academic foundation in early childhood education and care in order to provide the pedagogical leadership that was required to supervise, mentor, and motivate ECEs in their practice. A majority agreed that there should be additional post-secondary/post-diploma programs for directors/administrators to help them to be capable and confident in carrying out their responsibilities. (Beach, Flanagan, and Forer, 2007)

Post-Secondary ECE Programs

Across Canada, post-secondary standards for ECE programs have been introduced in six provinces:

Newfoundland/Labrador: Early Childhood Care and Education Program Standards

The NL standards were revised in January 2008. They are based on the National Training Guidelines of the Canadian Child Care Federation, the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners, and reflect the principles and practices outlined in policy documents related to the Child Care Services Act (NL), Regulations, and policies. The ECCE Program Standards:

- are created for use in the development of one and two year ECE programs – all standards that apply to one year programs are also required for two year programs; there may be additional requirements articulated for two year programs
- require that ECE training programs make a full-time licensed child care program available to the students; the post-secondary program must hold the license for the child care program. The Standards outline specific requirements for the child care program, including requirements for being "on site", to surpass minimum standards for materials and furnishings, to have a fully functioning kitchen, provide access for students at times other than field placements, to provide for an observation room with microphones and two way mirrors, and other specifications regarding the program philosophy, design, delivery, and curriculum content.
- outline qualifications for instructional staff:
 - Instructors must hold Level IV Child Care Services Certification in accordance with CCS Act/Regulations; and a minimum of 3 years experience (2 years as part of the adult-child ratio in a licensed child care centre.)
 - Operators or staff of demonstration centres who reinforce instruction must have Level II Child Care Services Certification in Infant, Preschool, and School age care

and one year experience as part of the adult-child ratio in a licensed child care centre.

- prescribe the duration and structure of practicum placements; and
- outline admission requirements for new students.

In addition to an outline for required course content hours, the NL Standards describe specific examples of skills, abilities, and knowledge required of ECE graduates from either one or two year programs.

Nova Scotia: Standards for Full Time Early Childhood Education and Training Programs

The Early Childhood Development Services section of the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, under the authority of the *Day Care Act & Regulations* (1989), establishes policies and procedures for Early Childhood Education training in the Province of Nova Scotia and approves new Early Childhood Education training programs. These standards are intended to formalize the application and assessment process, to promote more consistency in programs across the province and in decision making. This document was produced by the Child Care Training and Education Program Approval Committee, with representation from the Nova Scotia Round Table on Day Care.

The NS standards were last revised in 2005. New programs, as of January 1, 1998, must meet these standards and cannot begin operation until they have the Department's approval. Early Childhood Education Training Programs, which receive initial approval and which subsequently make significant changes to their programs, program changes that are reflective of the items in the standards document, must seek approval for those changes in order to maintain their Approved Program status.

In addition to expectations regarding curriculum content, the NS ECE Standards require specific verification that post-secondary programs meet prescribed standards on regarding faculty qualifications, hiring practices, and opportunities for professional development.

Evidence is also required to describe program coordination, annual faculty review student services, and student recruitment strategies.

Québec: Techniques d'éducation à l'enfance

Program requirements in Quebec were approved in 2000, and modified in 2002. The standards describe the purpose of the program, which is "to train educators for child care services for children ages 0-12 years. The main function of the educators consists of creating an environment that favours physical, psychomotor, cognitive, language, and socio-affective skills, and morals while establishing a positive relationship with the children. They are also responsible for the conception, organization, animation and evaluation of activities that contribute globally to the development of the children that are left in their care."

The program competencies are targeted to those who will be employed as early childhood educators and assistants. The standards outline the minimum number of required course credit hours, although specific course titles are not identified. Rather, the standards identify 22 specific

competencies that are considered to be course objectives and standards, and focus on such areas as child development, child and family issues, educational approaches, the work environment, program design and implementation, and communication.

Ontario: Early Childhood Education Program Standard

The Ontario Program Standard is intended to guide post-secondary programs delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology. Program standards were first introduced in Ontario in 1993 in an effort to bring greater consistency to post-secondary programs. The Colleges Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities has responsibility for the development and approval of system wide program standards in all colleges of applied arts and technology in the province.

Program standards are developed through a broad consultation process involving employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools, and program graduates working in the field, as well as students, faculty, and administrators in the colleges themselves.

Each program standard is made up of three elements, which collectively outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate:

- Vocational Standard – vocationally specific learning outcomes – in this case, learning outcomes specifically related to early childhood education; 9 vocational learning outcomes are outlined which relate specifically to the work of early childhood educators; graduates must demonstrate skill in each of these areas.
- Generic Skills Standard – generic learning outcomes which apply to all programs of similar length
- General Education Standard – the requirement for general education courses that apply to all post-secondary programs, and which are intended to enable students to effectively meet the societal challenges they meet in their families, communities, and working life.

Individual colleges determine the specific program structure, delivery methods, and other curriculum matters. Individual colleges also determine whether additional learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs or interests. The Ministry has established a process to accredit college programs.

The vocational and generic skills components of program standards are expressed as Learning Outcomes, which in turn are defined by “elements of performance”. These elements are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the learning outcome. General education standards are expressed as a series of goals and objectives that address such things as aesthetic appreciation, civic life, cultural understanding, personal development, social understanding, understanding science and technology, and work and the economy.

British Columbia: Early Childhood Education Training Program Approval

Under the authority of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act (1979) and the Child Care Licensing Regulation, the Director of the Early Childhood Educator Registry sets standards for the certification of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) in British Columbia. Part of this process includes

the approval of post-secondary training programs that have been evaluated and found to provide students with the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be meet this standard. The standard for certification is based on the Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies that were established by BC's Multi-Lateral Task Force on Training, Career Pathing and Labour Mobility in 2000.

Post-secondary ECE programs applying for approval must satisfactorily describe the components of the program, including information about the purpose of the program, program administration policies (credit transfer, PLAR, academic approval, etc.), personnel and staffing policies, instructional methods, student evaluation, curriculum, and practicum requirements.

In addition to specifying post secondary standards on the above topics, these provinces also outline minimum hours of study in their regulated certification programs. There are a small number of provinces without post secondary standards where minimum hours of study are also required.

Provinces with provincial post-secondary standards for ECE programs report that the standards are extremely useful in determining equivalency, in establishing PLAR guidelines, and in assessing and recognizing international credentials.

There are many similarities and some distinct differences in how provinces have approached the development of standards for post-secondary ECE programs. (Flanagan, 2008) For example:

- Newfoundland/Labrador (NL) and Nova Scotia (NS) have outlined very specific requirements related to administration and program resources for post-secondary ECE programs, including (but not limited to) a description of acceptable academic credentials for ECE faculty; the need for access to an on-site regulated early childhood education program; requirements for an annual program review; requirements for an annual performance review for faculty; and an outline of admission requirements to the program.
- Ontario has deliberately left decisions regarding administration of programs to the individual colleges.
- Ontario does not require or provide for on-site early childhood education programs for student access – individual colleges must fund these lab programs, if they wish to have them as part of their programs, out of their operating budgets.
- NL and NS have cited the Canadian Child Care Federation's National Training Guidelines as contributing to the development of provincial standards; NL is the first jurisdiction to incorporate the Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners into their provincial standards for post-secondary ECE programs; BC has used their own 2002 BC Occupational Competencies; Ontario's standards are based on broad consultation with the ECE sector.
- Many jurisdictions have outlined the minimum number of instructional hours for each component of the provincial post-secondary ECE curriculum (NL, NS, BC, Quebec) while Ontario has left this decision to the post-secondary institution.
- Some jurisdictions (NL, NS, and BC) have specified the number of hours required for practicum placements. NL and NS have outlined specific standards in terms of the types of placements that are acceptable, and the nature of the supervision required during the work placement.
- NL, ON and QC describe their standards in terms of learning outcomes for the Early Childhood Educator; BC describes their standards in terms of "competencies"; NS describes their standards in terms of course content.

Early Learning Frameworks / Curricula

There are now six jurisdictions in Canada with formally developed early learning frameworks / curricula focused on the preschool population. In five of these provinces, the framework / curriculum was developed within the past five years. In the sixth (Quebec) the earlier (1997) curriculum was significantly modified three years ago. One jurisdiction (Manitoba) is currently in the pilot stage of development. Table 4 provides highlights of the 5 frameworks / curricula that have been formally launched:

PT	TABLE 4: HIGHLIGHTS OF EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORKS/CURRICULA
NB	The New Brunswick Department of Social Development has funded the University of New Brunswick and the Université de Moncton to develop English and French curricula for early childhood education. ECEC centres may choose which curriculum framework to follow. Implementation of one or the other curriculum frameworks is mandatory in all regulated ECEC programs.
QC	In 1997, Quebec introduced an educational framework for early childhood programs as part of their Family Policy. This curriculum framework was revised in 2007, following a two year consultative process with broad representation from the ECEC sector, including early childhood educators, universities, and the education sector.
ON	The 2006 <i>Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT): A Framework for Ontario's Early Childhood Settings</i> describes how young children learn and develop and provides a guide for curriculum in Ontario's early childhood settings, including child care centres, regulated home child care, nursery schools, kindergarten, Ontario Early Years Centres, family resource programs, parenting centres, readiness centres, family literacy, child development programs in CAPC, Healthy Babies Healthy Children and early intervention services. ELECT will integrate with Ontario's Kindergarten Curriculum for delivery in the province's planned full day early learning programs for four and five year olds.
SK	The <i>Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide</i> (2008) is intended to promote high quality, age-appropriate, play-based learning experiences for three-, four-, and five-year-old children in a variety of settings. <i>Play and Exploration</i> is not a formal curriculum; it is a guide to support early childhood educators, in all settings, to move towards higher quality practice.
BC	The <i>Early Learning Framework</i> describes the vision, pedagogical principles, and key areas of learning for children birth to five years (before school entry). The Framework was developed in partnership with the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Healthy Living and Sport, and Education. The document was designed to be applicable to all early learning environments, including child care, "Strong Start BC" programs, and any other pre-school and early childhood development or child health program. Implementation of the Early Learning Framework is mandatory in all Ministry of Education "Strong Start" programs, and voluntary in other regulated ECEC programs.

Source: Flanagan and Beach, 2010 (a), in press

In each province, the early learning framework/curriculum has supported consistency between and among regulated programs, and allowed early childhood educators to use a common language and reference point when discussing their programs with parents, with colleagues, and with the education system.

The emergence of these early learning frameworks/curricula has also meant that initiatives have been developed for in-service training and curriculum implementation and support. Some jurisdictions have created new positions for staff to support early childhood educators in the implementation of the new curriculum.

I think there should be a standardized curriculum for early childhood education centres. I think early childhood educators should be better paid. I think the government should subsidize more child care spots - and not just for low income families as this punishes those of us who are just above the income cut- offs and both work.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

Wages and Working Conditions

The 2000 *You Bet I Care! Study* in Canada highlighted the importance of human resource challenges in the early childhood sector, and documented the relationship between poor wages, working conditions, and staff turnover to measures of quality in ECEC programs.

The Child Care Sector Council's Labour Market Update Study found that for those working in the early childhood sector, "Earned income was about half the national average for all occupations, and less than half as much as elementary school and kindergarten teachers. The overall average annual income for full- and part-time early childhood educators and assistants in 2000 was \$16,167. Full-time 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." (Beach et al., 2004)

In 2002, the Early Childhood Development Association of PEI conducted a study of human resource issues among early childhood educators in this province. (McQuaid, Chaulk, and Smith, 2002) Survey findings included the following:

- **Low Wage Structure & Emerging Wage Disparity:** The median wage is \$10.00 per hour for certified early childhood educators who teach kindergarten compared to \$9.00 for special needs assistants and only \$8.00 for certified early childhood educators for other ages. For uncertified staff, the median is \$7.00 per hour. In addition, the traditional wage disparity between Early Childhood Educators (ECSs) who teach kindergarten, and those who teach children age 4 and under, is beginning to widen.
- **High Turnover of Experienced/Trained Staff:** Over half of Early Childhood Educators have been working in the field two years or less; 31% have worked less than one year. Sixty-three percent of Directors or owner/operators of centers indicated that it was difficult or very difficult to

find substitutes, and 61% indicated that it was difficult or very difficult to replace staff that left the Centre.

- **Ongoing Recruitment/Retention:** The recruitment, training and retention of qualified staff is the most critical issue for Centre Owner/operators; the low wages, minimal benefits, and long working hours are a huge disincentive to attract and retain qualified staff. In many instances, entry wage levels within the broader labour market are much more competitive; e.g. Watts Communications is paying \$10.00 per hour for entry-level jobs. The Child Care Facilities Board indicates that it routinely receives 2-3 requests per meeting to grant exemptions to Centres around the use/employment of untrained staff; “the exception has now become the norm”.

Low wages and poor working conditions contribute to high staff turnover, which then impacts the quality of the ECEC program. The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council reports that no single factor can explain the low compensation rates: “...the reasons stem from a complex relationship between four variables that—depending on the jurisdiction and particular circumstances—combine to influence compensation: revenue (parent fees, subsidies, and operating/recurring government grants); employment and labour issues; system design; and public policy. (CCHRSC, 2006)

In PEI, the introduction of “maintenance grants” in 1986 was an attempt to provide those working in regulated programs with wage enhancement. Depending on analysis of current wages paid to staff, centres were required to use 50 – 80 per cent of the grant toward wage enhancement. This had a small effect on wages, but the funding was not substantial enough to raise wages to a level comparable to other professions requiring a two-year post-secondary credential. Still, at the time, one educator remarked that it was enough that she was able to quit her second job (night) and stay home with her children.

A 2010 on-line survey conducted by the Early Childhood Development Association asked early childhood educators to rank, from a number of options, their top four issues/priorities to be addressed in a plan to re-design and re-vitalize the early childhood sector. A total of 95% of respondents chose “wages and working conditions” in their top four priorities.¹⁴ Of those who chose this as one of their top four, 85% chose this issue as their number one priority.

Parent Involvement

Researchers in Canada and other countries have documented the importance of parental involvement in their children’s learning. In the summary of evidence prepared for Dr. Charles Pascal’s recent report to the Premier of Ontario “With Our Best Future in Mind” (Government of Ontario, 2009), attention was given to the role of parents in early learning. Findings include:

- Parents and other family members are the dominant influence on young children’s early development and learning.
- Strong parent-child relationships and the quality of parenting are powerful influences on immediate and long-term development and learning and can act as an emotional buttress for

¹⁴ Personal correspondence with ECDA Executive Director.

young children.

- The family environment is the primary source of experience for children and mediates their contact with the broader environment.
- Parental sensitivity, responsiveness, warmth and consistency appear to be important across cultural contexts, but diverse childrearing practices, influenced by cultural contexts, are also associated with positive child outcomes.
- Parent involvement in early childhood settings multiplies children's opportunities for learning as parents bring skills and activities back into the home environment.
- Parents' involvement in early childhood settings is associated with being more supportive of children's learning and their children are more likely to have more positive experiences in formal schooling.

PROCESS ELEMENTS OF QUALITY

Researchers acknowledge that it is difficult to measure process elements of quality, as relationships, interactions, and nurturing conversations with children are difficult to observe on a daily basis. Even so, a number of assessment tools have been developed.

Measuring Quality

In PEI, the Harms and Clifford Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) has been used for a number of years to determine measures of quality at the classroom level. Developed by Dr. Thelma Harms and Dr. Frank Clifford of the University of North Carolina, the ECERS-R is one of a series of tools developed to measure different types of early childhood programs. In addition to the ECERS-R, there is the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS), the School Age Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS), and the Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale (FDCERS).

ECERS-R measures 43 items, which are organized into seven subscales:

- Space and furnishings
- Personal care routines
- Language – Reasoning
- Activities
- Interactions
- Program structure
- Parents and staff

ECERS-R has been used extensively in Canada. The *You Bet I Care!* Study used ECERS, along with the Caregiver Interaction Scale, to determine levels of quality in centres in six provinces. Each of the Atlantic Provinces uses ECERS-R as part of their initiatives to measure quality. Many licensing officers across Canada have been trained in the use of the series of ECERS type tools.

ECERS-R is also used throughout the United States, and is the basis for North Carolina's Start Smart program, which measures quality in centres and provides incentives for higher scores.

There has been some interest from some European countries in ECERS, although the members of the OECD's Expert Team visiting Canada felt that ECERS-R was not appropriate for use in some European countries, given the emphasis on aspects of the physical environment. The members of the OECD's team felt that centres would score in the highest level, given the quality of physical environments that are supported by public funding. (Author's personal notes)

Quebec felt that ECERS-R did not completely meet their needs, and has developed its own tool to measure quality. The new tool is designed for use in centre based programs, and is based on ECERS-R, following the same type of format, i.e., subscales with various items which are measured on a scale to indicate lower or higher levels of quality. Quebec has included a significant number of observational items to deal with interaction and communication between and among children and adults. This scale was the basis for Quebec's recent study "Grandir en qualité" (2003).

The City of Toronto operates an extensive network of regulated early childhood education and care programs. Over the past number of years, municipal child care officials have developed a set of Operating Criteria, which is used for monitoring and quality purposes. The City is currently involved in a research project to validate its Operating Criteria as a quality assessment tool.

Northern Ireland

Researchers in Northern Ireland have developed the Quality Learning Instrument (QLI), which was recently used as one of the instruments in Northern Ireland's Early Years Enriched Curriculum Evaluation Project. (Walsh and Gardner, 2005) This instrument, which will be further evaluated and refined as a result of the Curriculum Evaluation Project, is intended to provide an easy to use and comprehensive assessment schedule for external quality evaluation, as well as a means for early childhood teachers to assess the quality of their own practice and inform and develop their understanding of children's learning. The QLI evaluates early childhood classrooms from the perspective of the child's experience. The tool identifies nine key themes, such as motivation and independence, as representing significant aspects of a high quality environment for learning. In a complementary process, these themes are then assessed in relation to the child, the adult, and the physical environment.

"The positive relation between childcare quality and virtually every facet of children's development that has been studied is one of the most consistent findings in developmental science"

Shonkoff and Phillips, 2001

The Evaluation Project evaluated classrooms where either a traditional curriculum (Northern Ireland National Curriculum) was followed, or an Enriched Curriculum, where a more developmentally appropriate, play-based and child-centred approach was being piloted. The QLI was used to assess the quality of the learning experience in each class. Overall the Enriched Curriculum appears to be providing 4-5-year-old children in Northern Ireland with a higher-quality learning experience. The children are given more opportunities to act independently, are engaged

in more challenging activities and are more learning disposed, and they show higher levels of emotional, social and physical well-being. (Walsh et al., 2006)

Challenges

At the present time in PEI, there are serious and well-founded concerns about the ability to recruit and retain qualified individuals for the early childhood education and care sector. This looming shortage of qualified educators comes at a time when there are increasing challenges and demanding expectations on early childhood educators:

- Increased numbers of families are living under stress related to work demands, poverty, marital disruptions, isolation, immigration and living in a new culture (OECD, 2004).
- There are increased numbers of children with special needs participating in early childhood programs, and increased expectations from parents children with special needs and children from diverse cultural backgrounds are entitled to quality programs and experiences (OECD, 2004).
- There is a greater awareness among parents and members of the public about the importance of early development in setting a foundation for later learning, behaviour and health. This expectation translates into assumptions that early childhood educators have the knowledge and skills to observe children's behaviour, analyze their findings to assess a child's developmental level and convey that information to parents and other professionals
- There are increasing expectations that early childhood programs address early literacy and numeracy before school entry (OECD, 2004).
- There are increasing levels of accountability in early childhood programs. A vast majority of ECE Directors/Supervisors in PEI participate in the Bridges program, are involved in ECERS-R quality assessments in their centres.
- There is an increased interest in collaboration and integration with related programs, and early childhood educators (especially Directors and Supervisors) are increasingly invited and encouraged to participate as members of government committees and to be involved in related community projects.

Is Child Care Good For Children?

It depends. Research shows that while high quality child care positively influences children's development and learning, poor quality care is shown to have negative effects on children - regardless of social class. The effects of high or poor quality child care may be long lasting. Therefore, quality in child care matters very much - for children, their parents, our communities, and, perhaps most importantly, for our society as a whole.

Canadian Resource and Research Unit –
What does the research say?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUALITY

10. Certification

- Revise current regulations to allow for levels of certification, reflecting different levels of ECE credentials:
 - Level 1: one year ECE certificate
 - Level 2: two year ECE diploma
 - Level 3: Director – with post-diploma certificate in ECE Administration or equivalent
- Introduce requirements for **entry level** (ECE Assistant) – based on 60 hours of training specific to early childhood development; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to an ECE certificate or ECE diploma program.
- Introduce requirements for **school age child care provider** – based on 60 hours of training specific to the age group involved; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to a certificate or diploma program.
- Introduce requirements for **school age child care supervisor** – based on specific training in administration, supervision, and leadership (TBD).
- Introduce new type of certification for **Infant Home Care provider** – based on 90 hours of training specific to infant home child care; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to a certificate or diploma program.
- Introduce a requirement for educational qualifications for **special needs assistants**.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

See Appendix 5 for rationale for number of hours of training for each of the above new levels of certification.

11. Access to Post-Secondary Education Study in ECE

- Collaborate in development of a 60 hour course for school age child care providers.
- Collaborate in development of a 90 hour course for Infant Home child care providers. (See Section 6: ACCESS)
- Collaborate in development of a 60-hour entry-level course for Entry Level Early Childhood Assistants that articulates to the proposed one-year ECE certificate program.
- Explore feasibility of establishing an on-line distance education ECE diploma level course.
- Establish a one-year ECE Certificate program that articulates to the two year ECE diploma program.
- Establish a post-diploma certificate program for ECE Administrators and Directors. Develop PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) or RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) options for this program.
- Recommend to the Early Years Board a combination of courses appropriate for supervisors in school age child care programs.
- Explore feasibility of alternate / flexible delivery methods for the entry level, infant home, and school age courses.

- Collaborate with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to explore the feasibility of new “workplace training model”. This model allows educators to maintain their current employment, but work for three days and attend class for 2 days per week; provides funding to centres to pay for wages for substitutes; and could potentially have two cohorts so that substitute staff were able to work at more than one centre each week (2 days at each centre) thereby assisting with recruitment of substitute staff.
- In collaboration with key ECEC experts and college advisory committees, develop provincial standards for post-secondary ECEC programs.
- Collaborate in exploring opportunities in applied research in early childhood.

Leads: Holland College and Collège Acadie; Holland College, Collège Acadie, and UPEI for collaboration in exploring opportunities in applied research in early childhood.

12. Early Learning Frameworks/Curricula

- Begin development of an Early Years Curriculum for children from birth to school entry.
- Review existing early years curriculum frameworks in Canada with special attention to the New Brunswick and British Columbia documents.
- Curriculum should follow a social pedagogical approach, and be compatible with the PEI Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum.
- Develop a plan for piloting the new curriculum, and in-service training for early childhood educators.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

13. Parent Involvement

- Introduce a new regulation to require each Early Years Centre to establish a Parent Advisory Committee.

Lead: Government

14. Wages and Working Conditions

- Increase wage levels for early childhood educators and special needs assistants by including these employees in the calculation of staffing costs as per the unit funding model. (See Section 7: Sustainability)

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

15. Quality Measurement

- Continue to resource the Bridges Team to measure quality program indicators in early years centres.
- Support the Bridges Team to explore other quality assessment tools, and to arrange for training in the use of relevant tools.
- Expand the Bridges Team to include up to two Infant Toddler Specialists – with these positions to be introduced with each 25 new Registered Infant Homes.

- Begin to explore more in-depth considerations of quality and curriculum approaches that reflect the proposed Vision for the Child.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

16. Research

- Continue to provide funding resources to the Centre for Education Research at UPEI to continue their work on the Research in Early Childhood Development Initiative.
- Consider the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal study on children in PEI to measure the impacts and influences of a re-designed ECEC system.

Lead: Children's Secretariat

17. Parental Employment

- Re-visit the PEI Employment Standards to assess the impact on parents and children.

Lead: Executive Council Office



SECTION 6

ACCESS:

AVAILABILITY and AFFORDABILITY

ACCESS

Access to a high quality early childhood education and care program involves consideration of:

- Availability: if there are no programs that are established, it doesn't matter if you have enough money to pay for fees
- Affordability: if you don't have money to pay for the fees, it doesn't matter how many programs may be located in your community

Unlike the public school system, in PEI all regulated early childhood education and care programs are operated in the private sector. Some ECEC programs are operated by individuals, and some are operated by community organizations, boards of directors, or parent committees. Some are operated by church organizations. Since none of the ECEC programs in PEI are publicly operated, all must charge fees in order to cover their operating expenses.

At the current time, there is no formal planning process in PEI to determine where or how many or what type of regulated ECEC programs are needed in order to meet the needs of families and communities. Decisions about whether to open – or close – a program are made by the individual or the organization.

The legislation governing ECEC programs – the Child Care Facilities Act – stipulates that if the applicant demonstrates that they have met all of the prescribed standards and requirements for licensing, then the Child Care Facilities Board, on behalf of the Minister, “shall” issue a license. Theoretically, if 25 organizations submitted applications to open 25 new ECEC centres on the same street, the Board would be required to issue a license to each one, provided they each demonstrated that they met all of the prescribed regulations.

At the same time, there is currently no provision for government to determine that there is a need for an ECEC centre in a specific community, and to be able to open such a facility. The Board is only able to respond to applications for licensing. Therefore, the growth or expansion of the availability of ECEC centres is entirely dependent on the private (both individual operators and non-profit boards/committees) sector's interest in doing so.

Similarly, the current legislation does not allow the Child Care Facilities Board to stipulate that a new license must provide for a particular age group of children, or must provide a particular type of service, with hours to meet the community need. Theoretically, if those 25 new applicants decided to open those 25 new centres on the same street, and to open them from 10 until 3, from Tuesday to Friday, those 25 centres could do so. The fact that the centres do not meet parents' needs, or that there is an oversupply of spaces on one street is not relevant to the licensing decision.

AVAILABILITY

Finding safe, reliable child care is the one of the most difficult challenges that my husband and I have encountered on the Island. We are both professionals that left much higher paying jobs in another part of Canada to return to PEI to raise our young family. However, over the past six years we have encountered child care challenges over and over again (with both private home care and early childhood education centres).

Our key concern is safety, followed by ensuring our children are being nurtured and cared for in the right environment. There seems to be a great deal of inconsistency within the early childhood education centres and between the early childhood teachers themselves in terms of quality and programs. I deeply appreciate the role early childhood educators play in our son and daughter's development and often ask their guidance in explaining developmental issues and stages.

I wonder sometimes if finding early childhood care is this difficult for a young professional couple with resources and a support network (family nearby, etc), what is it like for families that do not have resources/options?

More has to be done.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

The availability of regulated early childhood education and care programs is generally measured by calculating the percentage of children (in a particular age group) in a province or territory for whom there is a regulated space. This measure is not perfect, as there may be two or more children who share a space and so therefore the number of children who technically are served by the number of spaces could be somewhat higher.

The availability rate for preschool children from birth to age 5 is slightly more than twice the national average¹⁵. On the other hand, many parents who responded to the PEI ECE Survey (February 2010) indicated that they were having great difficulty in finding a quality, regulated program for their children. These parents tended to have children who were younger than two years old, and who worked on shift hour schedules, or who working hours were outside of the typical 9-5, Monday to Friday schedule. One parent commented:

I am unhappy with my current arrangements because I feel my children are bounced around between my parents, in-laws, and babysitter and sometimes just at home with my husband. There is no real structure or reliability in their lives. I would like to be able to send my children to a certified day care center to learn both social and emotional development but I am unable to afford full time enrollment and part time is not available where we live. I believe that my child, who is 3 now, will suffer when put into full day kindergarten in the schools, without any prior programming. I feel that there is going to be a need for a children's 4 year old program

¹⁵ See Figure 6, page 34

just to get ready for the transition to kindergarten. I don't think that this should be a full day program, but I do think a few hours a day will make a huge difference. Even just three of four times a week could be beneficial.

Another had similar experience:

As of right now I work shift work and arrange my schedule to work only evening and night shifts. This way I can have my sister (16 yrs old) babysit after school, or the children sleep at my parents' house when I do a full night. When I need to sleep during the day I have random family members babysit the children usually in our home. My husband works out west and watches them when he is home.

Some parents voiced their concerns about how their children were missing out on experiences that would enhance their development. Another parent wrote:

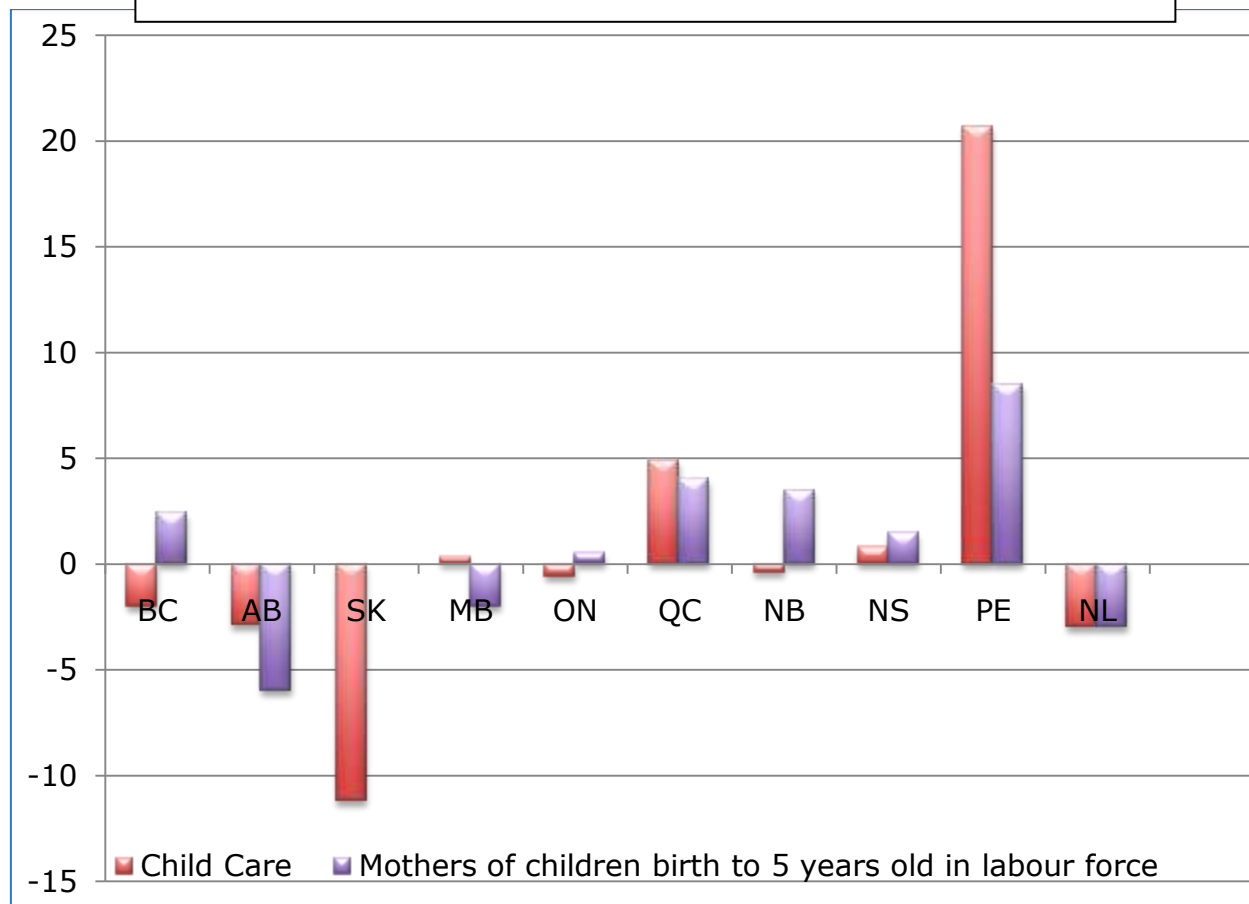
I also think that my 2 year old could benefit from being in a daycare from this early age. He needs to learn to play with others his age besides his sister without hurting them. He needs to learn about cause and effect from other adults. I believe that daycare should be more affordable but understand that the workers in these centers are not making much for the quality of service they provide, thus leaving me to settle for a babysitter, who takes excellent care of my children but is not progressing their social or intellectual growth.

And another:

I am scared from the meeting at my ...daycare that it will be closed. If it does I don't know how I can continue to work with no place to take my child as a daycare. Our daycares need help a large amount of our funding is being lost that filtered down through the daycares to all the children now that the kindergarten children will be moved into the schools next year. It's a shame because all the rest of the children will lose also.

The availability of regulated ECEC programs is often described as a support to women's ability to be employed or study. Figure 11 looks at female labour force participation rates for mothers with children between birth and 5 years old and looks at how the relationship between these rates and the availability of regulated ECEC programs. The middle line (at "0") indicates the Canadian average for both labour force participation rates for women with children from birth to five years old, and the Canadian average for availability of regulated ECEC spaces for this same age group. Bars above the line indicate availability above the Canadian average:

Figure 11: Child Care availability and Labour Force Participation for Mothers of Children 0-5 years as compared to the Canadian average



Source: Flanagan, 2010 - Using data from Beach and Friendly, 2009

Data from a financial impact study commissioned by the PEI Government (MRSB Consulting Services, 2009 unpublished data) indicates that in PEI, there are 131 licenses issued to 111 providers.¹⁶ In addition to the number of programs noted in this report, there are also five licensed family child care homes.

In total, the number of licensed programs in PEI includes:

- 48 centres providing both ECEC and Kindergarten
- 36 centres providing ECEC only 12 centres for Kindergarten and nursery school only
- 24 centres for Kindergarten only
- 11 centres for before and after school age child care
- 5 family child care homes

¹⁶ Given that the number of new license applications continues to grow in PEI, these numbers are accurate only as of the date the information was collected – in this case, Fall 2009. Current numbers of centres must be verified with the PEI Child Care Facilities Board.

Of the estimated 2948 full time equivalent spaces across the province, only 192 full time equivalent spaces are available for children younger than two years of age. (MRSB, 2009 unpublished data) The reason that only 6.5% of licensed spaces are designated for this young age group is that the required staff:child ratio of 1 adult for three infants (children from birth to two years of age) is 1:3 – which means that infant child care is a very expensive program to operate.

Despite the expense, some programs do offer infant spaces, off-setting the cost by balancing revenue with spaces for older children. Parents pay higher fees for children younger than two years old, although the higher fees in PEI seem low in comparison to average infant child care fees in other provinces. As of April 2010, infant fees in regulated centres in Vancouver are as high as \$1500 per week.

When I searched for a sitter I easily called 50 people before I finally found someone to take my child. It was highly stressful. I know of people in Charlottetown who went through the same ordeal. We need some sort of registered list of babysitters to make it easier to find someone. Most daycares don't take children until they are 2 which leaves most people looking for private sitters.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

Acadian and Francophone Programs

...if I had the choice between a Francophone who could only care for my child until 3:00 and an Anglophone who could do it until 5:30, I'd do whatever I could to re-arrange my work hours; French is absolutely essential for us as a family.

Parent at Francophone Focus Group

Across PEI there are six French first language ECEC programs, all of whom hold combined kindergarten and child care licenses. One also holds a school age child care license. All of these programs are non-profit, and are located in community complexes or French first language only schools. In addition, there are three French Immersion programs (in Prince County).

Francophone parents who participated during the consultation phase of this project (focus group, survey, telephone interview) indicated that it is difficult to find the types of ECEC programs they want for their children. Primarily, parents have this difficulty because their preference is to find a quality program that provides their children with the opportunity to be part of a program in French.

The establishment of new francophone ECEC programs is further challenged by the difficulty in recruiting qualified early childhood educators to staff new centres. As the Collège Acadie program continues to train new educators, this recruitment issue may be alleviated.

However, ongoing systemic barriers regarding wages and benefits may impede any progress with recruitment and retention efforts in the Francophone community just as it has in other communities across PEI.

Francophone parents also struggle to find parent/child friendly activities in their communities. Within the network of PEI family resource centres, there is one that is focused on Acadian and Francophone families. This program, based in Wellington, has a mandate to provide resources, programs, and services for families from Wellington to Souris. Many parents – in focus groups, interviews, and the survey – described how they struggled to find appropriate activities and French resources for their children.

Before my girl started at (centre), I knew people who had their kids in home-based care; it cost much more than it costs at the daycare, plus, there was no tax receipt issued. BUT, that particular home care person didn't even have any spaces. Her service was full. Even though she charged more AND didn't offer a tax receipt... because there are so few options in French. We do what we have to.

Parent at Francophone Focus Group

I was living in Ontario when they opened the school in Souris. I always said, "If they ever open a French school, I will come back." I still remember the day my mother-in-law called to tell me it was opening. We came back to PEI. I am SO happy to be able to have French educational services for my children – I wouldn't be here without it. And if it closes, I'm gone.

PEI parent, telephone interview

Before and After School Programs

In PEI focus groups with parents in all counties, parents expressed concerns about the logistics of finding and using 'before and after school child care' for their kindergarten age children. Many parents – especially those in rural areas – noted the difficulty in getting to and from their place of employment when school hours started later and ended earlier than working hours.

In all provinces except Quebec, school age child care is part of the ECEC sector. In Quebec, the administration and delivery of school age child care is the responsibility of school boards. In Ontario, the newly designed 'full day early learning program' to be phased in over the next five year period will, by 2015, actually eliminate the need for school age child care programs, since these services will be available to all parents within the child's school.

In focus groups with parents, the option of having 'before and after school age child care' available within the child's school was greeted with unanimous positive reaction. Parents

agreed that this type of an option would eliminate considerable stress associated with their child's transition to kindergarten. Parents of older children did not participate in the preschool focus groups. However, it could be assumed that such an option would also be well received with this group of parents.

Under-served and Over-served Communities

Despite the relatively high coverage in PEI for regulated/licensed ECEC spaces for preschool children, there are some areas of the province with absolutely no provision of regulated/licensed ECEC services – of any type – for the children and families of those communities.

This difficult situation has been either caused or highlighted by the impacts of the decision to move all five-year-old children to the public school system. In some cases, the fact that five-year-old children are no longer part of the ECEC system has been compounded by the move of the only qualified early childhood educators in the community to the public school system in the role of kindergarten teachers.

Paradoxically, there are also communities in PEI that have more regulated spaces than are needed, with centres reporting vacancies. When a community has an excess of regulated spaces available to families, it places a strain on the availability of qualified early childhood educators to staff all programs, increases the vacancy rate in all centres, and makes it more difficult for all centres to maintain a quality program.

30% of parent respondents to the PEI ECE Survey 2010 said that at some point in their lives, they had to either not accept or leave a job – or had to leave school or not start a course – because of lack of child care. Most common barriers were cost, transportation, hours, and availability.

The issue of access is one of the key issues for decision in creating a sustainable ECEC system. It is impossible to manage – from a system perspective – a “system” or sector that shrinks and expands without any systematic approach to planning, or objective consideration of need. Market demand may drive the expansion of coffee shops, hardware stores, or garden centres, but when public funds are required to support the operation of ECEC centres, the desired number (availability) of those centres must be planned for and managed with careful consideration to availability of both financial and human resources.

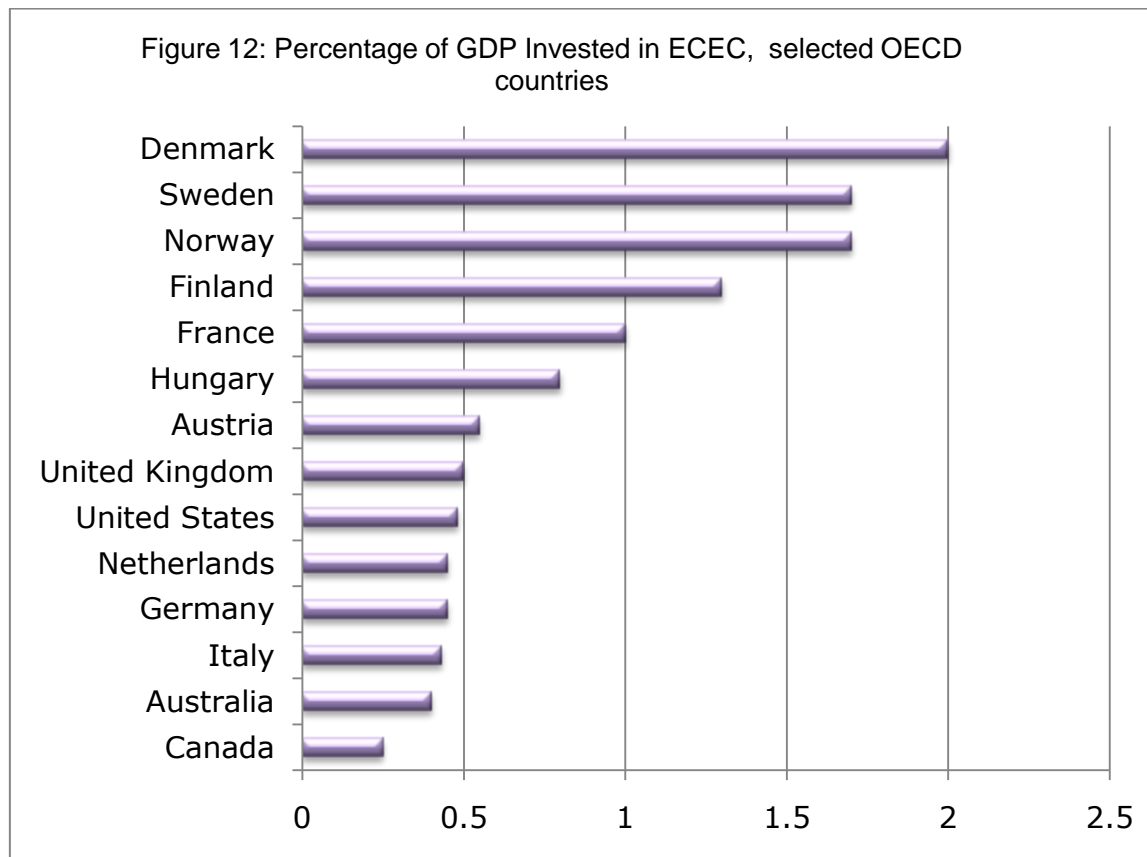
AFFORDABILITY

In North America, the cost for parents for fees at regulated ECEC centres is a significant challenge. Typically, young families have monthly costs with rent, new mortgages, student loan re-payment, car loans, and are at the early years in their careers. Child care costs, especially for infants, takes up a major portion of their earnings.

This is not, however, the case in European countries, where access to early childhood education and care is most often considered a “right”. The OECD (2006) reports: *In Europe, the concept of universal access for 3- to 6-year-olds is generally accepted. Most countries provide*

all children with at least two years of free, publicly-funded provision before they begin primary schooling. In fact, with the exception of Ireland and the Netherlands, such access is generally a statutory right from the age of 3 years, and in a handful of countries from an earlier age.

Figure 12 shows the specific investments in ECEC from selected OECD countries. Investments are reported as percentages of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).



Source: OECD, 2006

It is not helpful to compare the actual cost of full day participation in ECEC programs in PEI with costs in provinces and territories across Canada without doing analysis on average wages, cost of living, etc. in those jurisdictions. As well, cost to parents is strongly impacted by the amount of government funding provided to the ECEC programs to assist with operating expenses, including wages. The full cost of providing an ECEC program is based on revenue from parents, government funding, and other sources such as fund raising, loans, private investment, or grants. The only way to reduce fees for parents is to increase government funding, or increase revenue from other sources. According to the *Canada Background Report* (Social Development Canada, 2003), on average, in Canada

In focus groups, parents were asked “If the cost of child care was not such a burden to you, how would that change your life?”

Majority of parents responded: “I would have more children.”

approximately 50% of child care centres' revenues come from fees paid by all parents (subsidized and non-subsidized) and in some instances, parent fees may represent as much as 80% of child care centres' revenues.

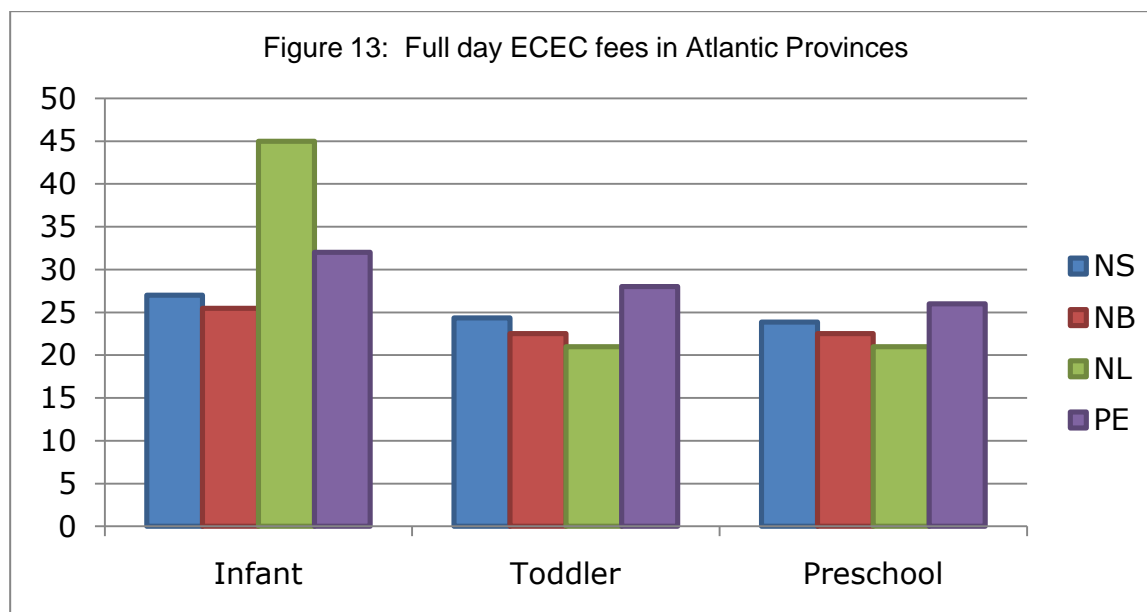
Based on data provided by the PEI Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Table 5 shows the range of parent fees charged for full day ECEC programs, as well as the median fee for each age group:

Table 5: Full Day ECEC Fees in PEI (as of March 2009)		
Age Group	Range for full day fees	Median full day fee
Infants (under 2 years old)	\$27 - \$46 per day	\$32
Toddlers (2 year olds)	\$18 - \$32 per day	\$28
Preschool (3-5 year olds)	\$20 - \$30 per day	\$26

The range in fees charged reflects the range of different arrangements for ECEC programs. For example,

- Some programs operate in school buildings or in space donated by community groups.
- Some programs are sponsored by community organizations and are able to use space that may receive funding from other sources for rent, heat, etc.
- There are variations from centre to centre in wages and benefits paid to staff.
- Some programs have been able to secure funding from other types of grant programs.
- Some new programs have been established with funding from HRSDC as part of employment programs, and therefore wages are subsidized for at least the first year of operation.

Figure 13 shows that full day fees in PEI are highest among the Atlantic Provinces, with the exception of infant fees in Newfoundland and Labrador. However, government investment per licensed space is also lowest in PEI when compared to the other Atlantic Provinces and also to the rest of Canada. (See Section 2, Figure 2.)



Analysis of the impact of the cost of child care for families shows some interesting results. Table 6 shows the results of calculations using the March 2009 median child care fees (for PEI) for each age group, and using 2009/2010 full time tuition fees at UPEI (\$5586 – for 2 semesters). Results show that the cost of full time child care over the four years prior to school entry (assuming one year of maternity/parental leave) is more expensive than tuition costs for four years at UPEI. Given that median fees were used for these calculations, for some parents the cost is even higher.

Table 6: Comparison of full time child care and full time attendance at UPEI

Four years of full time child care – one child:	\$28,000
Four years of full time university study (UPEI) – one child	\$23,344

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCESS (Availability and Affordability)

18. Early Childhood in the Schools Policy

- Introduce an “Early Childhood in the Schools” policy to allow appropriate surplus space in schools to be used for Early Years Centres. “Appropriate” means that such space is not in a basement, has ample natural lighting, is close to school washrooms, provides easy access to outdoor play space, and provides enough room/space for play based curriculum activities.
- Provide for space in all new school construction/expansion for an early years centre provided the Early Years Advisory Committee is able to verify that there is a need in the community by either documenting unmet need, or verifying that an existing program is located in a poor physical environment.
- Ensure that once an early years centre is located in a school, it will not be forced to leave should the school eventually need more classroom space.

Leads: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and School Boards

19. Before and After School Child Care

Provide access in all elementary schools for provision of space for before and after school child care for children in kindergarten through Grade 3:

- First preference for use of space should be given to organizations/individuals that currently provide school age child care in the community.
- Letters of intent outlining plans for the before and after school child care program should describe qualifications of staff, and a program description including anticipated number of children, expectations of use of school space/resources, and a planned fee structure for parents which must take into consideration that the program will not be responsible for operating costs.
- Work with relevant unions to ensure that school age child care is able to be open during school closures such as PD days, March Break, summer months.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and School Boards

20. Infant Child Care

- Develop a network of Registered Infant Homes in all rural regions of PEI. Homes must be licensed; providers must be certified as Infant Home Child Care Providers. (See Section 5: Recommendations on Quality).
- Infant Homes will be supported by the Infant Toddler Specialist on the Bridges Team, and will develop partnerships with the local family resource centre.
- Each home must comply with the regulations of the new Early Years Act regarding staff:child ratios and consideration of the provider’s own preschool children. Children who are registered must be younger than two years old.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Family Resource Centres

21. Structured Planning for New Licenses and Spaces

- Work with Early Years Advisory Committees to plan for creation of required (based on parent demand) new spaces in communities that have no reasonable access to licensed Early Years Centres or Registered Infant Homes by providing developmental funds to the community.
- Expand the maximum centre size to 80 spaces, with a limit of one license per physical facility. The exception to this would be if there was an Early Years Centre in a public school building, and there was a separate before and after school child care license for the school.
- Limit the number of licenses to be held by any individual or organization to 5. If necessary, individuals or organizations may need to be grand-parented for this recommendation. If so, the license holders may continue to operate those programs, but would not be able to expand to the new 80 space regulation.
- Given that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a 24 hour facility, explore the feasibility of establishing a licensed Early Years Centre at the QEH that would specialize in providing child care for parents in the Charlottetown area who work shift and extended hours. If successful, expand the concept to other regions of the province.

Lead: Government; Department of Health and Wellness

22. New Funding Model

- Introduce a “unit funding model” for all Early Years Centres and Registered Infant Homes (see also: Sustainability).
- Establish and regulate one fee for all ages of children, including children younger than two years old, in Early Years Centres.
- Establish one fee for all infants in Registered Infant Homes.
- In future years, consider the feasibility of establishing categories of parent fees depending on urban or rural locations, with lower parent fees in rural areas to acknowledge the need to drive further distances to a licensed ECEC program, seasonal nature of employment, lower average wages, and to encourage families to live in rural communities.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

23. Pre-Kindergarten

- Within the next five years, consider feasibility of introducing a universally funded half day Early Years Pre-Kindergarten program for four-year old children to be delivered in Early Years Centres. Phase-in this additional support for four-year old children to attend five half days per week during their pre-kindergarten year by adjusting fees for four year olds.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

24. Child Care Subsidy Program

- In keeping with an early years education philosophy, allow children eligible for subsidy to be able to participate in a regulated ECEC program for up to 5 half days or two full days, regardless of parental employment or participation in training programs.
- Review the Child Care Subsidy Program with specific attention to:
 - calculation of income for child care subsidy
 - income thresholds for the Child Care Subsidy Program
 - calculation of parent shares, to alleviate concerns that the current formula discriminates against parents who want to use part time spaces.

Lead: Department of Community Services, Seniors, and Labour



SECTION 7

SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability

There is a long history of early childhood education and care in Prince Edward Island. The Development Plan in the 1960s and 1970s recognized, even at that time, the considerable value and social impacts of quality early childhood experiences. The Development Plan funded six ECEC centres in PEI. These centres were publicly funded and universal to all in the selected communities. (Souris, Morell, Charlottetown (2 centres), Summerside, Inverness). In the late 1970s, government made a decision to phase out funding to those six centres, and to introduce a child care subsidy program, so as to be able to support families from across PEI with the cost of child care. Some of the original six programs are still operating, even though their original funding base was completely changed.

The early childhood sector in PEI has seen many changes over the past decades. The first legislation was introduced in the mid-1970s, creating the Child Care Facilities Board – and encouraging the small early childhood community to formally establish the Early Childhood Development Association in 1974. Regulations were first introduced in 1977-1978, amidst heated debate as to their value and purpose – and amidst fears that the early childhood sector would collapse. In the mid-1980s, requirements for staff qualifications were introduced, along with the first type of public/government funding (1986) to centres to assist in the delivery of programs for children and families. Many educators spent long hours travelling to evening classes and studying in order to obtain their post-secondary credentials.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, approximately 85% of five year old children participated in licensed early childhood programs during the year before they entered school for Grade 1. In 2000, government introduced a universal funding plan for five year olds for half day kindergarten, as well as a new kindergarten curriculum. Early childhood educators adapted to this change, and embraced the new curriculum by participating in pilot groups and in-service training. Program resources and support through the MIKE (Measuring and Improving Kids' Environments) Program, Kindergarten Mentors, and the Bridges Program were welcomed in centres across the Island.

Ten years after the sector adapted to the new universally funded, community based kindergarten program and new expectations on centres, five year old children will be moving from the community based system to the public schools. Change is imminent, and the early childhood sector is anxious to see where the next stage of development will lead. As in the past, some will embrace change, and others will not.

The recommendations outlined in Sections 3 – 6 are intended to work together in an integrated fashion to create a high quality, accessible (affordable and available), and sustainable early childhood system for PEI. Taken as a whole, is it too much of a change? Perhaps. Given national and international trends in early childhood education and care – and the evidence that shows the tremendous social and economic benefits to society from investments in the early years – could the recommendations have been stronger? Most likely.

Sustainability has been defined as “a means of configuring ... human activity so that society, its members and its economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving, planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals in the very long term.”¹⁷ To that end, the recommendations in this report are intended to sustain the early childhood sector and the people who believe in and have devoted their lives to children and families, while at the same time moving the sector forward to reflect the lessons learned in the past number of years, and to translate “what we know” into “what we do”.

Specifically, the recommendations contained in this report are intended to:

1. Introduce a new model for organizing the delivery of early childhood services in PEI that will re-design and re-vitalize the early childhood education and care sector, and move it toward developing a high quality system of early childhood.
2. Recognize that child development, by its very nature, is complex and must be viewed in terms of the child’s interactions with his/her friends, family, community, society, and the world they live in. We have a collective responsibility for children.
3. Acknowledge that the days of thinking that any one sector (either government or community) has all the answers or all of the responsibility for designing and delivering programs and services is over. There is no one individual, or one organization, or department of government that can – or should – be designated to provide all that children and families need. The Framework for Early Childhood is intended to show that while programs may go by different names - or be located in different agencies, departments, or sectors – all have the same focus. It only makes sense to develop relationships and partnerships and to work together.
4. Realize that there is not a “one size fits all” approach or solution. Families are different. Their values, principles, and beliefs are different, and so parents need to know that in PEI, there are options for them to choose that will best suit their family, and their children’s needs.
5. Propose a new funding model for Early Years Centres that supports parents to be able to afford the cost of such programs, and that provides wages and benefits for early childhood educators that are consistent with their level of education, and the scope of their responsibilities. The funding model is intended to stabilize the operation of these centres.
6. Establish a systematic and coordinated approach to developing new programs and services based on documented community need, rather than personal preference. A centralized wait list will provide concrete data for planning any future expansion of available centres/spaces. The proposed changes to legislation to define how and when licenses may be issued will help to stabilize the current network of centres.

¹⁷ (<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/sustainability>)

7. Create a more visible role in Island communities for the importance of the early years. The establishment of Early Years Advisory Committees will provide important linkages to schools, municipalities, business, and other health and social service professionals in local areas. The Advisory Committees will be expected to advise regional chapters of the ECDA in order that ECEs will be better integrated with other community programs and services, and be better positioned to respond to community needs, preferences, and expectations.
8. Promote an ongoing culture of learning through support for continuous quality measurement, ongoing research, and the development of a longitudinal study of children in PEI.
9. Support families, in order that some of the daily stress of balancing work and family responsibilities can be reduced, and that opportunities are in place for parents to engage with their children in activities that support the parent-child relationship, while encouraging children to be happy and healthy, curious and creative, playful and joyous.

And finally, while the recommendations are intended to sustain the new early childhood system, they are also intended to sustain Prince Edward Island as the province moves forward as “One Island Community” with its Island Prosperity Agenda.



SECTION 8

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

This report is intended to stimulate new thinking and move the agenda forward in consideration of an early childhood framework for Prince Edward Island. The report suggests a new vision for children – one that recognizes that children are part of families, communities, their province, and their world. Children are learning and developing every minute of the day – not just in organized programs, but wherever they are, whomever they are with, and whatever they are doing. And as any parent knows, children shape their families and because of that, they shape their communities and society. The proposed vision for the child recognizes this, and envisions that within that dynamic **“Children in PEI are healthy and happy, curious and creative, playful and joyous. They are loved and respected, and are safe and secure in their families, homes and communities. Children are our collective responsibility. They are valued for who they are today, and as the future parents and leaders of tomorrow.”**

The proposed *Early Childhood Framework* illustrates that while programs and services may appear to be distinct, all have a common focus – the child. A common focus is what links these programs, services, and the people who are involved in their design and delivery. While the scope of the project called for an in-depth analysis of the early childhood education and care sector, this does not suggest that other components of the early childhood framework are any less important within its structure and no less deserving of review. In fact, any changes to the regulated ECEC sector will – by the very nature of this framework – have an impact on other programs and services for children and families.

In PEI, there is a strong history of and value for partnership between PEI’s government and community sectors, and among the players within those sectors. PEI’s integrated and collaborative approach to early childhood development was specifically highlighted by the OECD following their international policy review of 23 countries – and was the only example highlighted for Canada (OECD, 2006). However, good relationships – while a critical aspect of good partnerships – cannot on their own support a sustainable early childhood framework. These types of partnerships and integrated approaches need to be entrenched in public policy.

The original suggestion for a review of this type was made by Pat Mella, PEI’s Public Kindergarten Commissioner. She foresaw that the policy decision to move kindergarten to the public school system would create uncertainty and instability in the early childhood education and care sector. Throughout the process of this review, early childhood educators and parents have consistently emphasized that there needs to be a sound and reasonable analysis given to a re-design and re-vitalization of the ECEC sector.

“It will be a miracle if anyone can come up with a plan for all of this.”

PEI Parent, ECE Survey, 2010

In 1983 parents of children in regulated/licensed ECEC programs were surveyed to give them an opportunity (for the first time in PEI) to indicate what they liked or didn't like, and to share the thought processes they used to make decisions about their children's participation in these types of programs. At that time, parents were asked to rank a number of indicators about what was most important factor to influence their decision regarding choice of a program. Of the more than 800

I just want to continue to urge the Government to do something for these families/children and the Educators who work with them each day. As a parent I need to feel confident in the childcare I choose for my children. I need to be able to ensure that each day my children are being engaged and given many opportunities to be the best he/she can be to reach their full potential.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

parents who completed those "paper and pen" surveys, 100% said that the staff was the most important factor in making their choice.

More than 25 years later, there is still considerable support among parents for these early childhood educators, and for the sector itself. In the ECE Survey 2010, parents were asked about their arrangements for non-parental care for their children. The majority of parents who responded indicated they used regulated/licensed ECEC programs, and 94% of these parents indicated they were satisfied with the program.¹⁸ When asked what aspects of the program they were most satisfied with, the overwhelming response from parents was "my child is happy there".

Are PEI's ECEC programs perfect? No. Educators, directors, owners, members of boards of directors and parent committees shared thoughtful visions of how they would like to see their programs improve. The challenge is to do this while depending, for the most part, on fees from parents – when parents are struggling to keep up with the cost. Canada as a whole contributes the least of its GDP toward ECEC, and PEI's financial investment per regulated space is the lowest in Canada.

As an immigrant to Canada and a new parent I am shocked at the low expectations that PEI has of students at all ages, including preschool, compared to much of the rest of Canada and many other countries.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

Earlier in this report, examples of economic research about the scope of ECEC systems in Massachusetts, New York, and North Carolina were presented. These examples described how the scope of ECEC compared to other sectors within those state economies. In considering the impact of the ECEC sector in PEI, Figure 14 shows some similar types of comparisons:

¹⁸ The 6% of parents who were not satisfied explained their reasons, which focused on logistical issues (e.g., one child was too young, and so needed to go somewhere else, etc.) rather than quality issues with the ECEC centre itself.

Figure 14: ECEC sector in PEI compared to other provincial sectors

As of March 2009: (using MRSB 2009 data)

- There were 131 licensed ECEC programs (small businesses)
- There are 592 individuals employed in these programs.
- There are 4,569 children involved in these programs.
- The total revenue generated in these programs was \$17.5M

The number of individuals employed in ECEC programs was equal to or greater than:

- Total number of physicians and specialist physicians in PEI
- Total number of licensed practical nurses in PEI
- Total combined number of dentists, dental hygienists, chiropractors, optometrists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists

Revenue generated was higher than:

- Revenue generated by PEI Housing Corporation
- All household user fees to Island Waste Management Corporation
- Budget for Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Rural Development

This report suggests that there needs to be a fundamental shift in how ECEC programs are perceived. Given the compelling research about the potential gains for children, families, and our province, participation in ECEC programs can no longer be thought of as something for children to do while their parents are at work. If the primary purpose of ECEC provision is to give all children access to early years learning opportunities, then the discussion must become focused on the curriculum/early learning approaches and how the system is organized.

At the same time, the reality for the vast majority of parents in this province is that they are employed outside of the home, and so these programs need to be organized in such a way as to support children and families to cope with hours of work, and the need for children to be safe and secure during those hours.

Access to early years learning has the potential to move the entire province forward. A substantial investment is required to re-design and re-vitalize the current ECEC sector to become a high quality, accessible and sustainable ECEC system. This investment will be on behalf of all children – in all types of family situations. Therefore, this report recommends that incremental steps be taken toward that goal. Even so, the beginning steps will require the PEI government to consider a sizeable financial commitment to begin the process.

Our children are very important no matter where they are being raised, rural, urban; they all deserve to have the many opportunities that everyone else has. They have the right to a good solid education as well as many options to further learning in all areas.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

As noted in the Island Prosperity Agenda, *“Our province’s destiny will be determined by the choices we make today. We simply must take advantage of our place in the world in a way that will propel us forward to a new position on the national and global stages.”* Parents in PEI seem to agree. The final word in this report goes to a parent who contributed the following thoughts as to what was needed in PEI:

PEI has an opportunity to develop an early childhood development plan that the rest of Canada would envy. Our small size and population, for this type of initiative, is an asset. ECEC has been studied to death and it is now time to take the findings of all these studies and take action. Government has access to many knowledgeable individuals in this area of education. Let’s draw on their expertise and do something wonderful for our children, their families, our communities, and our future. Investing in children is an investment in our future.

PEI Parent, ECE Survey 2010

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APPENDIX 1

PARENT PARTICIPANTS

The following parents participated in focus groups and/or telephone interviews, or sent written letters. Their thoughtful perspectives presented the reality of juggling the competing demands of work, school, and young families. These parents shared their stories, their hopes for their children and their families, and their ideas as to what would make things better. They – and the parents who responded to the ECE Parent Survey – strongly influenced the development of many of the recommendations contained in this report. The contributions of these parents were indispensable to this work, and are sincerely appreciated.

Erin Acorn	Marie-Josiane Lavergne
Debralee Acorn-MacDonald	Ashley MacDonald
Amy Arsenault	Shelly MacDonald-Manning
Kim Arsenault	Crystal MacIntyre
Nadine Arsenault-Samson	Amy MacLean
Francine Bernard	Tammy MacKinnon
Laurie Brehault	Tara MacPhee
Eileen Brown	Tina McInnis
Jenna Campbell	Faith McIntyre
Marise Chapman	Stacey Newell
Kathy Charron	Michelle Ollerhead
Eva Collins	Colleen Richard
Jolene Connick	Linda Richards
Paula Dingwell	Yanick Richards
Krystal Dionne	Anne-Marie Rioux
Claire Doucette	Patricia Roy
Lynne Faubert	Julie Savaria
Josina Frizzell	Shelley Scott-Baier
Janine Gallant	Tammy Shields
Melanie Gallant	Sheila Stretch
Naomi Harvey	Shelley Tamtom
Kathleen Hryckiw	Marie-France Thériault
Annie Jolicoeur	Tina White

KEY INFORMANTS

Susan Ashley: Holland College ECE Program

Dr. John Bennett: Director of OECD's International Thematic Review of ECEC; Co-Author of OECD's Starting Strong I and II; International ECEC consultant

Jane Bertrand: George Brown College; member of research team for Dr. Charles Pascal; consultant to the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation

Verna Bruce: Chair, CHANCES Board of Directors

Sonya Corrigan: Executive Director, Early Childhood Development Association of PEI

Stacey Delaney: PEI Representative to CUPE National Child Care Committee

Dr. Ray Doiron: Director of the Centre for Education Research, University of Prince Edward Island

Margaret Ferniuk: Assistant Director, Child Care Program, Department of Family Services and Consumer Affairs, Government of Manitoba

Yvonne Gallant: Enseignante du programme Services à l'enfance et Intervenant en services à la personne, Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.

Laura Graham: Executive Director: Family Place; Co-Chair: PEI Association of Family Resource Centres

Carolyn Henson: Director, Early Learning - Partnerships and Planning Division, Ministry of Education, Government of British Columbia

Lynn Hogan: President, Early Learning Operators of PEI

Barb Lundrigan: Executive Director: Main Street Family Resource Centre; Co-Chair: PEI Association of Family Resource Centres

Wendy MacDonald: Senior Policy Analyst, Executive Council Office

Craig Mackie: Executive Director, PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada

Julie Mathien: Director, Early Learning and Child Development Branch, Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Government of Ontario

Kerry McCuaig: Public Policy consultant and advisor to Premier Dalton McGuinty; Member of research team for Dr. Charles Pascal; consultant to the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation

Anne Miller: PEI Fellow to Council of Early Childhood Development

Holly Moses: Holland College ECE Program

Lisa Murphy: Executive Director, PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Ann Robertson: Executive Director, Chances Family Resource Centre

Alice Taylor: President, Early Childhood Development Association of PEI

Bill Whelan: President, PEI Home and School Association

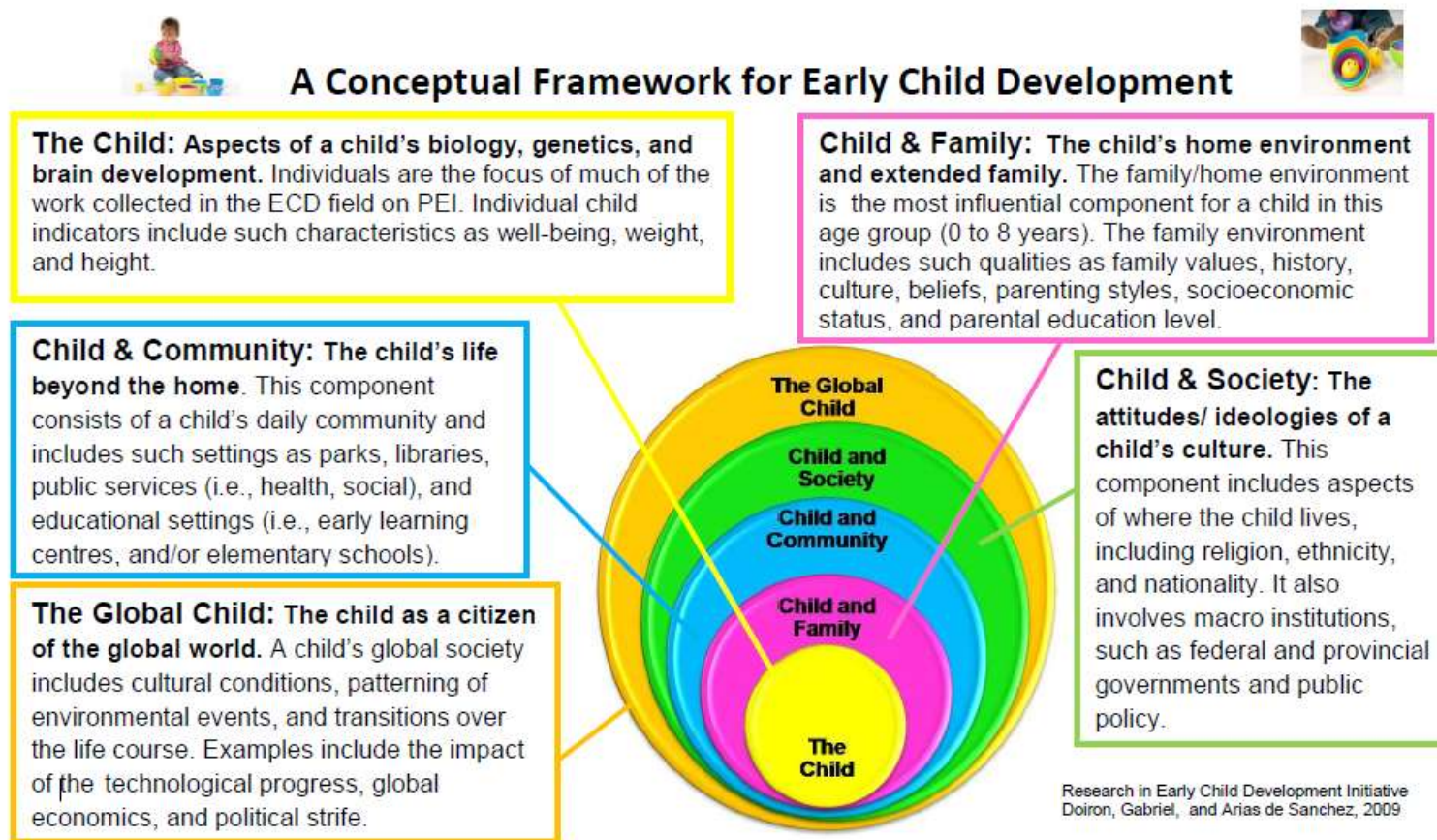
Written Submissions were received from:

Joan Chapman
Speech Language Pathologist
PEI Speech and Hearing Association

Pat Ellis
Audiologist
PEI Speech and Hearing Association

Crystal-Lynn O'Meara
Executive Director
PEI Health Sector Council

Dr Jennifer Taylor
President, PEI Healthy Eating Alliance
Associate Professor, Department of Family & Nutritional Sciences
University of Prince Edward Island.
Chairperson, Children's Secretariat Healthy Lifestyles Network



The Research in Early Child Development (RECD) Initiative has refined a conceptual framework for Early Child Development in Prince Edward Island (PEI). The goal of the framework is to spark discussion and highlight connections within and across sectors while setting a theoretical grounding for future research. Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development proposes that humans do not develop in isolation but in relation to family and home, school, community, society and indeed the global world. He maintains that each of these changing and multilevel environments, as well as the interactions among these environments, are key to healthy human development (2004,2001,1998

)“Child development takes place through processes of progressively more complex interaction between an active child and the persons, objects and symbols in his/her immediate environment” (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The RECD model strongly reflects the belief that not only does the environment affect the child, but the child also affects his/her environment.

APPENDIX 3

Healthy Child Development Strategy

Vision:

Children in Prince Edward Island will thrive in an atmosphere of love, care and understanding. They will be valued as individuals in childhood and will be given a sense of hope, pride in themselves and our Island, as well as opportunities to reach their full potential as adults. Respected and protected, Island children will respect and protect the rights of others. Valued, nurtured and loved, they will grow up able to contribute to a society that appreciates literacy, diversity, supports the less able, and shares its resources.

Given the opportunity to develop their physical, creative, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual capacities to the fullest, children in Prince Edward island will become tomorrow's successful and enthusiastic parents, care givers, workers and citizens.

Values:

- We believe the needs of Island children should be our first priority. We can foster the healthy development of Island children by supporting and respecting parents and families. We believe that children grow up best within homes that are able to provide security, nurturance, respect and love.
- We respect and listen to the voices of all children and recognize their inherent worth. We value children for who they are now, as much as who they will become.
- We believe that protecting the interests of children is a basic social responsibility.
- We believe in reflecting the diversity of families in Prince Edward Island. Our goals celebrate the richness and diversity of Island languages, cultures, and the unique needs of each child.
- We believe that communities have a significant role in the development of our children. We understand the value of working together. We believe that educators, coaches, care givers and other mentors make powerful contributions to children's growth and well being. We value people who love, care for, and teach our children.

Guiding Principles:

The PEI Strategy on Healthy Child Development will:

- focus on children and their families from prenatal to early school years
- be developed in partnership with community organizations and groups
- be based on current research and focused on positive child outcomes
- have an evaluation component
- provide a systematic mix of interdepartmental and community programs with a priority on prevention and early intervention
- be resourced through federal, provincial, private sector and community partnerships
- build on existing programs, services and community supports.

APPENDIX 4

The following tables outline current PT requirements for staff qualifications in:

- regulated centre based (Table 4.1)
- family child care (Table 4.2)
- school age child care programs (Table 4.3)

Reference for all tables in Appendix 4:

Flanagan, K., and Beach, J. (2010) Pathways to ECE Credentialing in Canada. Ottawa: Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (in press)

PT	TABLE 4.1 : Provincial territorial certification and educational requirements ¹ for regulated group (centre based) programs
NL	<p>All staff working with children in a regulated child care centre and who are considered in the child:staff ratio must be certified. There are five levels of certification. The first four levels (Entry, Level 1, 2, and 3) of certification are also classified depending on either the delivery method or the ages of the children in the program; Level 4 is the same for all age groups. An ECE certificate typically involves one year of post-secondary study; an ECE diploma typically involves two years of post-secondary study.</p> <p>Preschool: To work in a regulated child care centre with preschool children 2-6 years, who are not attending school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entry level: Preschool Orientation Course ▪ Level 1: Completion of provincially approved one-year ECE Certificate program ▪ Level 2: Completion of a provincially approved two-year ECE Diploma program ▪ Level 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 2 certification, plus a post-diploma ECE certificate or specialization or ○ a university degree plus a provincially-recognized certificate in ECE (or equivalent) ▪ Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a university degree in early childhood education or ○ a university degree plus a provincially recognized ECE diploma <p>School Age: To work in a regulated child care centre with children 4-12 years who also attend school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entry level: School Age Orientation Course ▪ Level 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ECE certificate plus School Age Orientation Course or ○ related post-secondary certificate plus School Age Orientation Course ▪ Level 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ECE diploma plus School Age Orientation Course or ○ related post-secondary diploma plus School Age Orientation Course ▪ Level 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ preschool or school age Level 2 plus post-diploma school age child care specialization or ○ an Education degree plus school age child care orientation course or ○ related university degree plus School Age Orientation Course ▪ Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ university degree in early childhood education or

¹ In addition, criminal records checks, first aid certificates and medical examinations may be required.

PT	TABLE 4.1 : Provincial territorial certification and educational requirements ¹ for regulated group (centre based) programs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a university degree plus an ECE diploma <p>Infant: To work in a regulated child care centre with children 0-23 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ no entry level available – all ECEs working with infants must have level 1 Preschool as a minimum qualification ▪ Level 1: ECE certificate plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course ▪ Level 2: ECE diploma plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course ▪ Level 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ECE diploma plus post-diploma infant-toddler specialization or ○ related university degree plus ECE certificate plus Infant Child Care Orientation Course ▪ Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a university degree in early childhood education or ○ a university degree plus an ECE diploma <p>See <information on orientation course> <http://www.aecenl.ca/images/pdfs/ocinfoaug2008.pdf></p> <p>Individuals may have more than one level of certification and classification. See <initial application form> <http://www.aecenl.ca/images/pdfs/ini_app_2009.pdf></p> <p>Centre based programs: An operator or head of a centre is required to have at least Level 2 certification, hold the classifications for the age groups of children the centre is licensed for, and have at least two years experience in a licensed child care centre. The lead staff in a room is required to have at least Level 1 certification in the classification that covers the age group of the children in the room. All other staff are required to have at least Entry Level certification.</p> <p>Other: ECE instructors and program consultants are required to have Level Four certification. Program consultants must also have at least three years experience in a child care setting.</p>
NS	<p>In Nova Scotia, "training in early childhood education" refers to the successful completion of a post-secondary ECE program from a list of specific programs, or the equivalent.</p> <p>Completion of the training program or its equivalent is required for 2/3 of staff – the position of Director is included in this number. The chief administrative officer of a facility must have completed a training program in early childhood education or its equivalent.</p>
PE	<p>Child care staff are certified according to the requirements of the license by facility type. An early childhood centre requires a Type I License; a family child care home or school age child care centre requires a Type II license.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Type I centres, the centre supervisor and one full-time staff member require at least a one- year Early Childhood Development diploma or equivalent. Depending on education and experience, an individual may be certified as an Early Childhood Program Staff or as an Early Childhood Supervisor. The centre supervisor is required to hold an EC Supervisor certificate. <p>In Type II centres the supervisor and 1 staff person require successful completion of one unit of continuing education (defined as a 1 semester relevant university/college course) and provide two supporting letters of reference.</p>

PT	TABLE 4.1 : Provincial territorial certification and educational requirements ¹ for regulated group (centre based) programs
NB	<p>Requirements for staff qualifications in regulated early childhood education and care programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The director, or his/her designate, or one in four staff in a child care centre is required to have a one-year ECE certificate or equivalent. There are no entry requirements to work in a child care centre. <p>Currently, these requirements do not apply to staff working in stand alone school age programs.</p>
PQ	<p>In Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs), two-thirds of staff working directly with children will require a three-year <i>Diplôme d'études collégiales</i> (DEC) or a one-year <i>Attestation</i> and three years experience. The experience may be gained before, during, or after the period of study. In garderies, the requirement for two-thirds of staff to meet these qualifications will become effective in 2011. Currently, one-third of staff in garderies must meet these qualifications. In addition, the holder of a licence of a centre must have a person employed who is responsible for management of the centre, for planning, for organization of direction, control and evaluation of programs and means of the centre. This person acts under the authority of the board committee which is predominantly composed of parents.</p> <p>There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in a child care centre in Québec.</p> <p>The Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA) is responsible for regulated child care in Québec.</p>
ON	<p>One staff person per group of children is required to have a two-year diploma in Early Childhood Education from an approved Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology (OCAAT) or the equivalent. Centre supervisors must the same education and have at least two years experience. There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in a child care centre in Ontario.</p> <p>The College of Early Childhood Educators, established in Ontario in 2007 is a professional self regulatory organization for early childhood educators. The college regulates the practice of early childhood education, establishes and maintain qualifications for membership and issues certificates of registration. It also has responsibility to enforce professional and ethical standards, investigate complaints against members and deal with issues of discipline.</p> <p>All individuals using the term “early childhood educator” or “registered early childhood educator,” or who have an ECE diploma or equivalent and are working as a supervisor, staff or resource teacher in a child care centre, within the scope of practice as defined in the Early Childhood Educators Act <link> are required to join the College, and, effective February 14, 2009, must have applied to the College for registration. See <membership requirements><http://collegeofece.on.ca/userfiles/file/2009-notices/CECE-TC-008-membershiprequirements.pdf></p> <p>There is one general certificate of registration for the title of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Registered Early Childhood Educator or ▪ Éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrit(e)
MB	<p>All staff working with children in child care centres, nursery schools and school age child care centres must be classified.² Parent volunteers counted in ratio in nursery schools must also be classified. There are three levels of classification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Care Assistant (CCA): no post-secondary credentials are required. The CCA must

² Manitoba uses the term classification; however, to be consistent with other jurisdictions, the term certification will be used interchangeably

PT	TABLE 4.1 : Provincial territorial certification and educational requirements ¹ for regulated group (centre based) programs
	<p>complete 40 hours of ECE course work (or a related course that in the opinion of the Director of Manitoba Child Care Program is relevant to ECE) within the first year of employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECE II: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ completion of a two-year ECE diploma from a post-secondary institution whose program has been approved by the Child Care Education Program Approval Committee (CCEPAC) of the Manitoba Department of Advanced Education and Literacy or ○ completion of one of five competency-based assessment programs offered by the Manitoba Child Care Program. ▪ ECE III: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ completion of an ECE II program, and completion of a post-diploma specialization or degree recognized by CCEPAC, including leadership, administration, infant care, aboriginal child care and special needs child care or ○ a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Developmental Studies: Stream C – Child Development and Child Care.
SK	<p>All staff employed for 65 hours/month or more as a child care worker in a licensed child care centre are required to meet or exceed the qualifications for certification set in the Child Care Regulations (LINK) There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE I: requires 120-hour orientation course or equivalent • ECE II: requires a one-year early ECE certificate or equivalent • ECE II: requires a two-year ECE diploma or equivalent <p>Centre directors hired after 2001 must meet the requirements for an ECE III. All child care staff working 65 hours or more in a child care centre must meet the requirements for an ECE I, 30% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE II, and in addition, a further 20% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE III.</p>
AB	<p>All staff working with children must be certified within six months of employment. There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <Child Development Assistant><http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification >: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ completion of a 58-hour government sponsored orientation program delivered through classroom, distance or online , the required Career and Technology Studies credit courses which focus on early learning and child care offered through Alberta high schools or ○ a 45 hour (3-credit) college-level course in child development. ▪ <Child Development Worker> <http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification >: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ completion of a one-year ECE certificate from an approved public college, an approved private vocational school with at least one college-level English/French course or ○ equivalent educational programs with at least one college-level English/French course. ▪ <Child Development Supervisor><http://www.child.alberta.ca/certification>: requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ completion of a two-year ECE diploma from an approved public college, an approved private vocational school with at least one college-level English/French course or ○ equivalent educational programs with at least one college-level English/French course. <p>The Program Supervisor in a licensed day care program must hold a Child Development Supervisor certificate. At least one in every four staff working directly with children between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. must hold at least a Child Development Worker</p>

PT	TABLE 4.1 : Provincial territorial certification and educational requirements¹ for regulated group (centre based) programs
	<p>certificate. All other staff must hold at least a Child Development Assistant certificate.</p> <p>All staff working directly with children in a licensed preschool (nursery school) program or out-of-school care program must hold at least a Child Development Assistant certificate. Staff have six months to obtain certification but may not have unsupervised access to the children prior to certification.</p> <p>Note: Prior to November 2008, Alberta certified staff as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3. The earlier classifications remain valid and are equivalent to certification as a Child Development Assistant, Child Development Worker, and Child Development Supervisor, respectively.</p>
BC	<p>All staff working with children in a child care centre or preschool program must have a Licence to Practice.³ There are three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECE Assistant: requires one post-secondary course from an approved list and a character reference. ▪ ECE: requires a basic certificate from an approved BC post-secondary ECE program. There is a one-year ECE, which requires a character reference, and a five-year ECE, which requires 500 hours of supervised work in an ECE setting and a competency based reference. ▪ ECE Infant/Toddler and ECE Special Needs: requires post-basic certificate or diploma in one of the specialized areas.
YK	<p>All staff who are working in centre based programs and who are included in the child:staff ratio must hold some type of Child Care Worker certification. There are 3 levels of certification outlined in the Yukon Child Care Act, with an additional two levels of certification described in policy. Each level also describes the number of hours of study that must be completed in various “streams”, which include Health, Child Development, Self-Esteem, Methods, Field Placement, and Electives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Care Worker I: a person who has successfully completed a 60 hour introduction to early childhood development course or equivalent. If two 30 hour courses are used, they must be from different streams. ▪ Child Care Worker IA (in policy): a person with Child Care Worker I certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed one full year of training ▪ Child Care Worker II: a person who has successfully completed one year of training in early childhood development or equivalent ▪ Child Care Worker IIA (in policy): a person with Child Care Worker II certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed two full years of training ▪ Child Care Worker III: means a person who has successfully completed two or more years of training in early childhood development or equivalent <p>In centre based programs, 20% of staff must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker III qualifications, an additional 30% must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker II qualifications and the rest must meet or exceed Child Care Worker I qualifications.</p>
NT	None specified.
NU	None specified.

³ BC uses the term Licence to Practice; however, to be consistent with other jurisdictions, the term certification will be used interchangeably

PT	Table 4.2: Provincial/territorial certification and educational training, and related requirements for regulated family child care		
	Minimum Age	ECE Training or Orientation	Other Requirements
NL	18	30-60-hour course; must have entry level certification with family child care classification. 30 hours professional development every three years.	Valid first aid certificate. Certificate of conduct and child protection record check for all residents of the home. Home visitors in a family child care agency: Level 2 certification with family child care classification and at least two years experience in a family child care setting.
NS	18	Level 1 of the Canadian Child Care Federation Family Home Day Care Training. Ongoing professional development training	Valid first aid and infant CPR certificate Criminal reference check and child abuse registry check
PE	18	30-hour course; must be certified as either a family child care home supervisor or a family child care home program staff. 30 hours of professional development every three years.	Two positive references from community members. Valid first aid certificate.
NB	19	None.	Must have completed first aid course. Prior contact and criminal record check.
QC	Not specified	45-hour course. Six hours of professional development every year. Providers supervised by a family child care coordinating office.	Valid first aid certificate. Two positive references from community members, and medical, physical and mental health certificates. Criminal reference and child care abuse registry checks for all family members over 14 years old. Evaluation every year by the coordinating office staff.
ON	18	None; however, many agencies provide training.	Home visitors must have a post-secondary credential in child development and family studies, at least two years of experience working with children and be approved by a director. Home visitors are not required to be registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators but qualified individuals may do so.
MB	18	Approved 40-hr course from community college in family child care or early childhood education	Providers assessed by Manitoba Child Care Program for suitability to provide care based on

PT	Table 4.2: Provincial/territorial certification and educational training, and related requirements for regulated family child care		
	Minimum Age	ECE Training or Orientation	Other Requirements
		<p>within first year of operating. Relevant course work completed in the previous eight years is considered valid.</p> <p>Classification is not required. Requirements are the same for providers in group family child care.</p>	<p>recognized family child care competencies.</p> <p>First-aid certificate with CPR training relevant to the age group being cared for.</p> <p>All adults in the family must have clear criminal record check.</p>
SK	18	<p>40- hour introductory course in ECE or equivalent within one year of becoming licensed.</p> <p>120-hour ECE course for licensees in group family child care within three years of being licensed. The licensee must meet or exceed the qualifications for an ECE I.</p> <p>Six hours of professional development annually.</p>	<p>First aid and CPR training.</p> <p>An orientation session with a program consultant.</p> <p>Criminal records search for all adults who reside in the home.</p>
AB	18	<p>Contracted family day home agencies required to develop appropriate training in accordance with Part1: Standard 5 and 5A under the Family Day Home Standards Manual.</p> <p>The licence holder and each additional provider in a licensed group family child care home must be certified at a minimum of a child development assistant.</p>	<p>Completion of first aid course.</p> <p>Criminal records check, including a vulnerable sector search.</p> <p>By September 1, 2012, the licence holder or an additional care provider must be certified at minimum as a child development worker.</p>
BC	19	<p>20 hours course work in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition.</p> <p>A licence to practice is not required.</p>	<p>First aid certificate.</p> <p>Criminal records check for any person over the age of 12 ordinarily present at the facility.</p>
YK	18	<p>60-hour course or equivalent; required to have a Level 1 certification.</p>	<p>First aid certificate.</p> <p>Criminal records check.</p>
NT	19	<p>None.</p>	<p>Clear criminal record with regard to offences regarding a child.</p>
NU	19	<p>None.</p>	<p>Clear criminal record with regard to offences regarding a child.</p>

PT	Table 4.3 Provincial/territorial certification and educational requirements ⁴ for regulated school-age programs
NL	<p>Entry level: School age orientation course.</p> <p>Level 1: ECE certificate plus school-age orientation course or related post-secondary certificate plus school-age orientation course.</p> <p>Level 2: ECE diploma plus school-age orientation course or related post-secondary diploma plus a school-age orientation course.</p> <p>Level 3: preschool or school-age Level 2 plus post-diploma school-age child care specialization, or an education degree plus school-age child care orientation course, or related university degree plus preschool orientation course and school-age orientation course.</p> <p>Level 4: university degree in early childhood education or a university degree plus an ECE diploma.</p> <p>An operator or head of a centre is required to have at least Level 2 certification, hold the classifications for the age groups of children the centre is licensed for, and have at least two years experience in a licensed child care centre. The lead staff in a room is required to have at least Level 1 certification in the classification that covers the age group of the children in the room. All other staff are required to have at least entry Level certification.</p>
NS	<p>“Training in early childhood education” refers to the successful completion of a post-secondary ECE program, from a list of specific programs, or its equivalent. Completion of the training program or its equivalent is required for 2/3 of staff working directly with children – the position of Director is included in this number. The chief administrative officer of a facility must have completed a training program in early childhood education or its equivalent. “Equivalent” is further defined in regulation. Individuals will be considered to have the equivalent of early childhood education if they comply with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ successful completion of Grade XII or the equivalent through the General Education Development program of the Department of Education; and ▪ a minimum of two years’ experience in a licensed day care facility; and ▪ successful completion of a full credit course of two semesters in a post-secondary education program in at least one of the following areas, and successful completion of 25 hours in training programs, seminars or workshops in the other area not completed by way of post- secondary education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ human growth and development with an emphasis on the young child ○ curriculum development and implementation of programs for young children in day care facilities
PE	<p>The supervisor and one additional staff person in a school-age program are required to be certified as a Type II school age supervisor or Type II school age program staff, respectively. Certification in this category requires completion of a 30-hour post-secondary course in a subject relevant to the age group of children involved, and two supporting letters of reference.</p>
NB	<p>The current standards for staff qualifications are not applicable to those employed in stand-alone school-age programs.</p>

⁴ In addition, criminal records checks, first-aid certificates and medical examinations may be required.

PT	Table 4.3 Provincial/territorial certification and educational requirements ⁴ for regulated school-age programs
QC	<p>There are no educational requirements for staff working in school-age child care programs outlined at the provincial level; however, school boards may require the lead staff to have an early childhood education diploma.</p> <p>School-age child care programs are administered by the Ministry of Education.</p>
ON	<p>One staff person per group of children is required to have a two-year diploma in early childhood education from an approved Ontario college of applied arts and technology (OCAAT) or the equivalent. Centre supervisors must have the same education and have at least two years experience.</p> <p>There are no educational requirements for other staff to work in school-age child care in Ontario.</p> <p>All individuals using the term “early childhood educator” or “registered early childhood educator,” or who have an ECE diploma or equivalent and are working as a supervisor, staff or resource teacher in a child care centre, within the scope of practice as defined in the Early Childhood Educators Act are required to join the College.</p>
MB	<p>A child care centre director of a school-age child care centre, shall meet the requirements of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an ECE II and have at least one year’s experience working with children in child care or in a related setting; or ▪ an ECE III. <p>One half of all staff who care for children in a school-age child care centre and who are included in the staff-to-child ratio shall meet the requirements of a ECE II or III. At least one staff person per group of children in a school-age child care centre shall meet the requirements of an ECE II or III.</p>
SK	<p>All staff employed for 65 hours/month or more in a licensed school-age centre are required to meet or exceed the qualifications for certification set in the Child Care Regulations There are three levels of certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ECE I requires 120-hour orientation course or equivalent. ▪ ECE II requires a one-year early ECE certificate or equivalent. ▪ ECE II requires a two-year ECE diploma or equivalent. <p>Centre directors hired after 2001 must meet the requirements for an ECE III. All child care staff working 65 hours or more in a child care centre must meet the requirements for an ECE I; 30% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE II; and in addition, a further 20% of staff must meet the requirements for an ECE III.</p>
AB	<p>Each staff member must be certified at minimum as a child development assistant.</p>
BC	<p>In school-age child care programs, the centre director and staff are required to be “responsible adults”. The number of adults required to be working with children depends on the ages and numbers of the children involved.</p> <p>Staff in school-age programs are not required to have a Licence to Practice.</p>
YK	<p>School-age child care programs require specified numbers of staff to be certified in the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child care worker I: a person who has successfully completed a 60-hour introduction to early childhood development course or equivalent. If two 30-hour courses are used, they must be from

PT	Table 4.3 Provincial/territorial certification and educational requirements ⁴ for regulated school-age programs
	<p>different streams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child care worker IA (in policy): a person with child care worker I certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed one full year of training. ▪ Child care worker II: a person who has successfully completed one year of training in early childhood development or equivalent. ▪ Child care worker IIA (in policy): a person with child care worker II certification who has also completed additional course work in each of the streams described above, but has not yet completed two full years of training. ▪ Child care worker III: a person who has successfully completed two or more years of training in early childhood development or equivalent. <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker I qualifications. ▪ 30% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker II qualifications. ▪ An additional 20% of staff must meet or exceed, and continue to meet or exceed, child care worker III qualifications.
NT	None specified.
NU	None specified.

APPENDIX 5

Rationale for the number of hours for school age child care providers, entry level, and infant home care providers includes:

- **School age providers:** There are increasing calls across Canada for changes to how school age child care is structured and managed. A clear majority of experts are calling for revised qualifications for those who work in school age child care programs, citing the mis-match between the content of early childhood education programs and the reality of working with school age children. Experts are calling for a new program of study. The rationale for 60 hours is based on the fact that the current requirements in PEI call for 30 hours of study. Anything more than twice that amount may be perceived to be onerous for a sector that is currently anxious about staff recruitment and retention.
- **Infant Home Care providers:** There is not a comparable type of certification level in the current PEI certification schedule. A review of requirements for infant child care providers was completed among jurisdictions across Canada. This review found:
 - Newfoundland and Labrador: requires successful completion of one year ECE certificate plus Infant Child Care Orientation course
 - British Columbia: successful completion of one year ECE certificate plus post-basic Infant Toddler Specialty

Given that the Infant Home Child Care Providers would be comparable to family home child care providers (currently requiring 30 hours of ECE training) and given that unlike school age or entry level students, home child care providers are not likely to continue with their post secondary education in the likelihood of obtaining more advanced level certification within the same type of employment, it was decided that training should be more extensive than the current certification requirements, but more than what would be required of school age or entry level early childhood educators. The fact that these providers would be working on their own without the benefit of mentoring or supervision from more qualified and/or experienced early childhood educators was also taken into consideration.

- **Entry Level – Early Childhood Assistants:** There is not a comparable type of certification level in the current PEI certification schedule. A review of requirements for entry-level positions was completed among jurisdictions across Canada. This review found:
 - In recent years, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon have introduced new legislated requirements that everyone working in a regulated ECEC program must hold some level of certification, and have successfully completed a basic level of training in early childhood development. At the current time, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are reviewing recommended changes to their requirements for staff qualifications; both provinces are considering entry-level certification.

- In these jurisdictions, requirements for study for entry-level certification or classification range from one post-secondary course to 40 – 120 hours of study.

Given the current challenge that by September 2010 there will not be enough people working in the early childhood sector to meet current certification requirements, it was felt that anything more than 60 hours of study would be considered too onerous. However, it was also felt that it was necessary to introduce an enhanced training requirement in order to meet parental expectations and concerns that “anyone can do this job”, and to reinforce that specific post-secondary education in early childhood development is a key indicator of quality which has been shown to contribute to better child outcomes.

APPENDIX 6

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VISION AND FRAMEWORK

1. VISION

- It is recommended that a renewed vision for children be endorsed by all Islanders. The vision as outlined in this section builds on the dynamic model developed by the University of Prince Edward Island's Centre for Education Research, through the Research in Early Childhood Development project. Within this dynamic vision, it is proposed that that all Islanders reach consensus to support a vision for the child which sees that:

Children are healthy and happy, curious and creative, playful and joyous. They are loved and respected, and are safe and secure in their families, homes and communities. Children are our collective responsibility. They are valued for who they are today, and as the future parents and leaders of tomorrow.

Lead: Executive Council Office – to coordinate the introduction of an all-party motion in the Legislature to endorse this vision, and to seek consensus from Islanders through the government website for the proposed vision.

2. EARLY CHILDHOOD FRAMEWORK

- It is recommended that the proposed Early Childhood Framework be endorsed by the government departments and community networks of the Children's Secretariat.
- It is recommended that all government departments affirm their commitment to maintain coordinated and collaborative efforts for continuity of services for children and their families.

Lead: Executive Council Office

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE

3. PURPOSE

- Define the primary purpose of the ECEC system as one of early learning. ECEC programs will be structured to support parents to balance work and family responsibilities.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

4. LEGISLATION / Licensing and Monitoring

- Draft new legislation – **Early Years Act** – to replace Child Care Facilities Act and to support the new model. Draft new regulations to the Early Years Act to support recommendations regarding Quality, Access, and Sustainability.
- Create a new **Early Years Board** to replace the current Child Care Facilities Board. The Early Years Board will continue with the same mandate as the Child Care Facilities Board; however,

the structure must be revised in order that the two representatives from the ECDA represent Early Years Centres and Independent ECEC Centres.

Lead: Government

5. PARENT REPRESENTATION

- Determine the most appropriate approach to develop a provincial voice for parents of preschool children.
- Conduct and report on a bi-annual survey of parents of preschool children.

Leads: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in partnership with existing organizations such as PEI Home and School Federation and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

6. DATA

- Work collaboratively with Departments of Health and Wellness; Community Services, Seniors, and Labour; Education and Early Childhood Development; Holland College; College Acadie; UPEI; the ECDA; ELOPEI; and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard: To develop an Early Childhood Data Strategy for PEI. Determine the policy questions to be addressed, nature of information required, who has the information, who should maintain the data, protocols for sharing data, and the most efficient manner of data collection.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

7. Local Management

- In collaboration with each of PEI's "family of schools", the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to support the development of **Early Years Advisory Committees**. Several families of schools will be represented on each advisory committee; there will be one committee representing French schools and French early childhood centres.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

8. Early Childhood Professional Infrastructure

- Clarify relationship between La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard and the Francophone chapter of the ECDA.
- Determine how to collaborate in supporting Registered Infant Homes.

Leads: ECDA and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

- Continue to support the ECDA in coordination of ECE professional development opportunities
- ECDA, La Fédération, and ELOPEI work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop a business plan to outline roles, responsibilities, and actions to determine how these organizations can best be involved in supporting the new model. It is also recommended that these discussions include the following topics:
 - an annual survey of centres and staff

- maintenance of web based resource for parents to determine where spaces are available in different parts of the province
- maintenance of a centralized wait list, in order to inform plans for any expansion, and to inform decisions of the Early Years Advisory Committees about the need for new licenses/spaces for their communities.

Lead: Collaborative effort between Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, ECDA, La Fédération, and ELOPEI

- It is recommended that the Early Childhood Development Association and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard collaborate to provide support to newly established Registered Infant Homes, and work with all Early Years Advisory Committees for further development of Early Years Centres.

Leads: ECDA and La Fédération des parents de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

9. Staffing

Create one new Infant Toddler Specialist position for the Bridges Team for every 25 Registered Infant Homes.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUALITY

10. Certification

- Revise current regulations to allow for levels of certification, reflecting different levels of ECE credentials
 - Level 1: one year ECE certificate
 - Level 2: two year ECE diploma
 - Level 3: Director – with post-diploma certificate in ECE Administration or equivalent
- Introduce requirements for **entry level** (ECE Assistant) – based on 60 hours of training specific to early childhood development; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to an ECE certificate or ECE diploma program.
- Introduce requirements for **school age child care provider** – based on 60 hours of training specific to the age group involved; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to a certificate or diploma program.
- Introduce requirements for **school age child care supervisor** – based on specific training in administration, supervision, and leadership. (TBD)
- Introduce new type of certification for **Infant Home Care provider** – based on 90 hours of training specific to infant home child care; these courses would enable an individual to articulate to a certificate or diploma program.
- Introduce a requirement for educational qualifications for **special needs assistants**.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

See Appendix 5 for rationale for number of hours of training for each of the above new levels of certification.

11. Access to Post-Secondary Education Study in ECE

- Collaborate in development of a 60 hour course for school age child care providers.
- Collaborate in development of a 90 hour course for Infant Home child care providers.
- Collaborate in development of a 60-hour entry-level course for Entry Level Early Childhood Assistants that articulates to the proposed one-year ECE certificate program.
- Explore feasibility of establishing an on-line distance education ECE diploma level course.
- Establish a one-year ECE Certificate program that articulates to the two year ECE diploma program.
- Establish a post-diploma certificate program for ECE Administrators and Directors. Develop PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) or RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) options for this program.
- Recommend to the Early Years Board a combination of courses appropriate for supervisors in school age child care programs.
- Explore feasibility of alternate / flexible delivery methods for the entry level, infant home, and school age courses.
- Collaborate with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to explore the feasibility of new “workplace training model”. This model allows educators to maintain their current employment, but work for three days and attend class for 2 days per week; provides funding to centres to pay for wages for substitutes; and could potentially have two cohorts so that substitute staff were able to work at more than one centre each week (2 days at each centre) thereby assisting with recruitment of substitute staff.
- In collaboration with key ECEC experts and college advisory committees, develop provincial standards for post-secondary ECEC programs.
- Collaborate in exploring opportunities in applied research in early childhood.

Leads: Holland College and Collège Acadie; Holland College, Collège Acadie, and UPEI for collaboration in exploring opportunities in applied research in early childhood.

12. Early Learning Frameworks/Curricula

- Begin development of an Early Years Curriculum for children from birth to school entry.
- Review existing early years curriculum frameworks in Canada with special attention to the New Brunswick and British Columbia documents.
- Curriculum should follow a social pedagogical approach, and be compatible with the PEI Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum.
- Pilot the new curriculum, and provide in-service training for early childhood educators.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

13. Parent Involvement

- Introduce a new regulation to require each Early Years Centre to establish a Parent Advisory Committee.

Lead: Government

14. Wages and Working Conditions

- Increase wage levels for early childhood educators and special needs assistants by including these employees in the calculation of staffing costs as per the unit funding model.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

15. Quality Measurement

- Continue to resource the Bridges Team to measure quality program indicators in early years centres.
- Support the Bridges Team to explore other quality assessment tools, and to arrange for training in the use of relevant tools.
- Expand the Bridges Team to include up to two Infant Toddler Specialists – with these positions to be introduced with each 25 new Registered Infant Homes.
- Begin to explore more in-depth considerations of quality and curriculum approaches that reflect the proposed Vision for the Child.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

16. Research

- Continue to provide funding resources to the Centre for Education Research at UPEI to continue their work on the Research in Early Childhood Development Initiative.
- Consider the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal study on children in PEI to measure the impacts and influences of a re-designed ECEC system.

Lead: Children's Secretariat

17. Parental Employment

- Re-visit the PEI Employment Standards to assess the impact on parents and children.

Lead: Executive Council Office

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCESS (Availability and Affordability)

18. Early Childhood in the Schools Policy

- Introduce an “Early Childhood in the Schools” policy to allow appropriate surplus space in schools to be used for Early Years Centres. “Appropriate” means that such space is not in a basement, has ample natural lighting, is close to school washrooms, provides easy access to outdoor play space, and provides enough room/space for play based curriculum activities.
- Provide for space in all new school construction/expansion for an early years centre provided the Early Years Advisory Committee is able to verify that there is a need in the community by either documenting unmet need, or verifying that an existing program is located in a poor physical environment.

- Ensure that once an early years centre is located in a school, it will not be forced to leave should the school eventually need more classroom space.

Leads: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and School Boards

19. Before and After School Child Care

- Provide access in all elementary schools for provision of space for before and after school child care for children in kindergarten through Grade 3:
- First preference for use of space should be given to organizations/individuals that currently provide school age child care in the community.
- Letters of intent outlining plans for the before and after school child care program should describe qualifications of staff, and a program description including anticipated number of children, expectations of use of school space/resources, and a planned fee structure for parents which must take into consideration that the program will not be responsible for operating costs.
- Work with relevant unions to ensure that school age child care is able to be open during school closures such as PD days, March Break, summer months.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and School Boards

20. Infant Child Care

- Develop a network of Registered Infant Homes in all rural regions of PEI. Homes must be licensed; providers must be certified as Infant Home Child Care Providers. (See Recommendations on Quality).
- Infant Homes will be supported by the Infant Toddler Specialist on the Bridges Team, and will develop partnerships with the local family resource centre.
- Each home must comply with the regulations of the new Early Years Act regarding staff:child ratios and consideration of the provider's own preschool children. Children who are registered must be younger than two years old.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Family Resource Centres

21. Structured Planning for New Licenses and Spaces

- Work with Early Years Advisory Committees to plan for creation of required (based on parent demand) new spaces in communities that have no reasonable access to licensed Early Years Centres or Registered Infant Homes by providing developmental funds to the community.
- Expand the maximum centre size to 80 spaces, with a limit of one license per physical facility. The exception to this would be if there was an Early Years Centre in a public school building, and there was a separate before and after school child care license for the school.
- Limit the number of licenses to be held by any individual or organization to 5. If necessary, individuals or organizations may need to be grand-parented for this recommendation. If so, the license holders may continue to operate those programs, but would not be able to expand to the new 80 space regulation.

- Given that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a 24 hour facility, explore the feasibility of establishing a licensed Early Years Centre at the QEH that would specialize in providing child care for parents in the Charlottetown area who work shift and extended hours. If successful, expand the concept to other regions of the province.

Lead: Government; Department of Health and Wellness

22. New Funding Model

- Introduce a “unit funding model” for all Early Years Centres and Registered Infant Homes.
- Establish and regulate one fee for all ages of children, including children younger than two years old, in Early Years Centres.
- Establish one fee for all infants in Registered Infant Homes.
- In future years, consider the feasibility of establishing categories of parent fees depending on urban or rural locations, with lower parent fees in rural areas to acknowledge the need to drive further distances to a licensed ECEC program, seasonal nature of employment, lower average wages, and to encourage families to live in rural communities.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

23. Pre-Kindergarten

- Within the next five years, consider feasibility of introducing a universally funded half day Early Years Pre-Kindergarten program for four-year old children to be delivered in Early Years Centres. Phase in this additional support for four-year old children to attend five half days per week during their pre-kindergarten year by adjusting fees for four year olds.

Lead: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

24. Child Care Subsidy Program

- In keeping with an early years education philosophy, allow children eligible for subsidy to be able to participate in a regulated ECEC program for up to 5 half days or two full days, regardless of parental employment or participation in training programs.
- Review the Child Care Subsidy Program with specific attention to:
 - calculation of income for child care subsidy.
 - income thresholds for the Child Care Subsidy Program.
 - calculation of parent shares, to alleviate concerns that the current formula discriminates against parents who want to use part time spaces.

Lead: Department of Community Services, Seniors, and Labour