

Student Survey Report:

Prepared for the Training Strategy Project



**Child Care
Human Resources
Sector Council**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report is one of a number of background documents prepared for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council Training Strategy Project. It describes the findings from a survey of early childhood education students from eight post-secondary institutions across the country. The report is organized into four sections:

- An introduction to the Training Strategy Project and the 2006 student survey
- A profile of the students who participated in the survey
- A discussion of the notable trends by age and prior education of the students and by post-secondary institution
- Summary comments and conclusion

The Training Strategy Project

The Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC), with the support of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), conducted the Training Strategy Project (January 2006 – July 2007) to develop a sustainable and effective strategy to improve the quality and consistency of training for the early learning and child care sector in Canada.

The Training Strategy Project (TSP) built on the results and findings of two pan-Canadian child care sector studies: *Our Child Care Workforce: From Recognition to Remuneration* (1998) and the Labour Market Update *Working for Change: Canada's Child Care Workforce* (2004) as well as international and national research findings about the need for accessible and relevant post-secondary training and professional development opportunities for early childhood educators. The TSP aimed to better understand current ECE training and needs in each province and territory, identify innovative practices as well as gaps in training, and develop options to meet the current and future training needs of the child care workforce.

In order to contribute to the project's understanding about current needs and trends with respect to training, the TSP was interested in learning about the experiences and perspectives of students and faculty in Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs at selected post-secondary institutions. ECE program students, faculty – along with employers and other important stakeholders – all played key roles throughout the TSP by their participation in student and faculty surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. As well, the TSP conducted a review of current academic literature and reports in order to identify current trends and practices.

The 2006 Student Survey

The first activity of the Training Strategy Project was a survey of ECE students in selected post-secondary institutions across the country. This survey was first conducted three years ago as part of the Labour Market Update study, and at that time involved ECE students in 10 post-secondary institutions.

While the post-secondary institutions chosen for participation in the 2006 Student Survey were not intended to provide a representative sample of ECE Students and faculty from across Canada, they do portray a variety of programs and delivery models, including one-year certificate, two-year diploma and three-year DEC (Québec) programs; full time, part time and distance education; accelerated and intensive programs; and Attestation programs (Québec). As well, these post-secondary institutions provide services in both urban and rural areas, and in both English and French languages.

For the Training Strategy Project, students from eight post-secondary institutions were involved. For the most part, the post-secondary institutions for the 2006 Student Survey are located in provinces or territories that were not involved in the 2003 Student Survey. Even though Ontario and Québec were involved in the 2003 Student Survey, the project team and steering committee decided to include them again in the current survey, given the number of post-secondary institutions and ECE students in those provinces.

Colleges Participating in the 2006 Student Survey					
College	Number of Respondents	Number of Students by Type of Program			
		Regular Daytime	Continuing Education	Distance Ed	AEC (Québec)
Holland College, PE	21	21			
Institute for Human Services Education, NS	18	15	1	2	
Le Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick, NB	13	13			
CEGEP du Vieux Montréal QC	72	49	10	1	12
Algonquin College, ON	72	72			
Assiniboine College, MB	28	26	1	1	
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, SK	127	118	5	2	
Yukon College, YT	11	8		3	
Total Respondents	362	314	25	9	12

Note: Two students did not provide information about program type

The 2006 Student Survey included 37 questions designed to gather information about:

- Type of program
- Prior education and experience
- Decisions about enrollment
- Satisfaction with current ECE program, including practicum placements
- Finding work in ECE
- Plans for further education and work after graduating
- Peering into the Future – hopes and aspirations
- Demographic information about students

The project team worked with ECE program chairs at each post-secondary institution to coordinate the distribution of the survey. In March and April 2006, students who were nearing completion of courses and about to graduate from their program were invited to participate. For the most part, surveys were completed during class time, which made for a high response rate. Students sealed their completed surveys in envelopes – these were then forwarded to the project team by the ECE instructor.

The exceptions to this practice were with the distance education students and the full-time day students at Algonquin College in Ontario. In both cases surveys were mailed to individual students for completion and return. During the course of the 2006 Student Survey, post-secondary institutions in Ontario were involved in a province-wide strike. After the strike Algonquin students went straight into their practicum and did not return to the classroom, which meant surveys could not be distributed during class time.

The main objectives of this report are to:

- Examine the characteristics of ECE students, including their age, previous education, prior work experience and reasons for entering the program
- Better understand their views about their experience and plans for the future
- Examine notable trends by age, previous education, length of the program and post-secondary institution
- Identify areas for further exploration in focus groups and key informant interviews conducted in Phase II of the Training Strategy Project

The following two sections of the report provide an overall profile of the students and a discussion of the notable trends.

2. PROFILE OF ECE STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDENT SURVEY

Types of Programs

Of the 362 respondents to the survey, 27.5% were in a one-year certificate program, 48.3% were in a two-year diploma program, 10.6% were in a three-year Cégep program, and 13.6% were in other types of programs

Demographics of Respondents

- 98% were female
- Age:
 - 60% were under 25
 - 26% were 25 to 34
 - 14% were 35 or older
- Language while growing up
 - 69% English
 - 23% French
 - 9% other (Cree, Spanish most common)
- 89% born in Canada
- Most common other countries
 - Algeria
 - United States
 - India

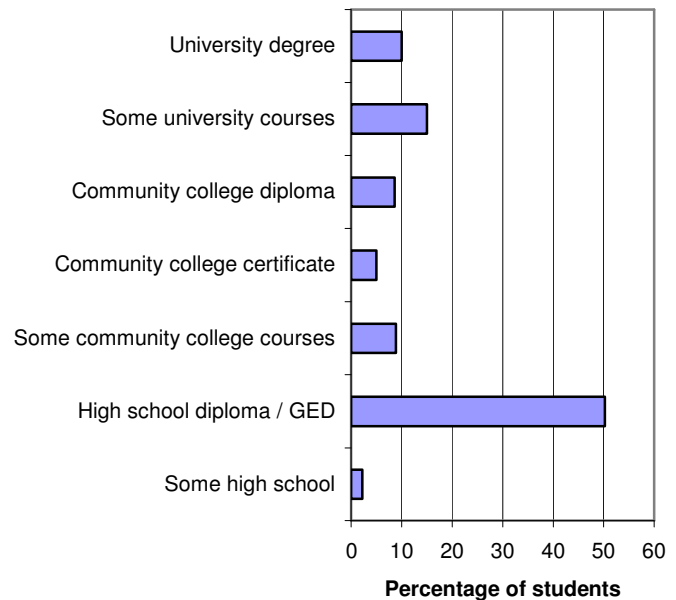
Prior volunteer and paid experience with children

- 92% had some volunteer experience with children
- 86% had some paid experience with children
- 21% had volunteered in a child care centre, vs. 26% with paid experience
- 10% had volunteered in a preschool or nursery school, vs. 9% with paid experience
- 21% had volunteered in a recreation program, and 20% in leadership work (e.g., coaching)
- 19% had worked in a recreation program, and 15% as nannies

Highest Level of Prior Education

- 53% of the ECE students had no previous college experience before beginning their current program, while 14% had a college certificate or diploma, and 10% already had a university degree
- For those with post-secondary credentials, the most common were in: human services, psychology, and ECE

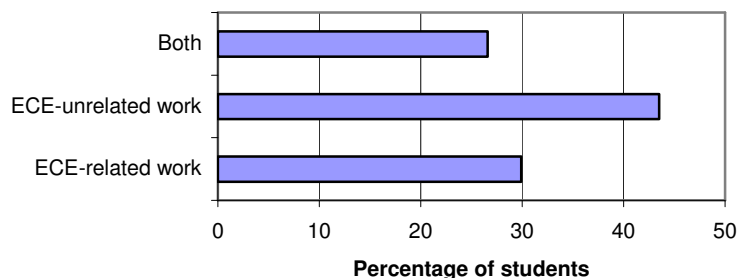
Highest Level of Prior Education



Working while attending school

- Half of the students were working while in school
- For those who were working, about 57% of students had a job related to ECE

Type of Work While Studying (for the 50% who were working)



Reasons for Deciding to Enroll in an ECE Program

- 86% - Always been interesting in working with children
- 31% - Other people's recommendation
- 26% - Good first step to a teaching degree
- 23% - To improve my employment choices
- 23% - Already working in ECE, and want further education
- 20% - Already working in other child-related work and want further education

Most important reason for deciding to enroll

- 69% - Always been interesting in working with children
- 8% - Good first step to a teaching degree
- 8% - Already working in ECE, and want further education

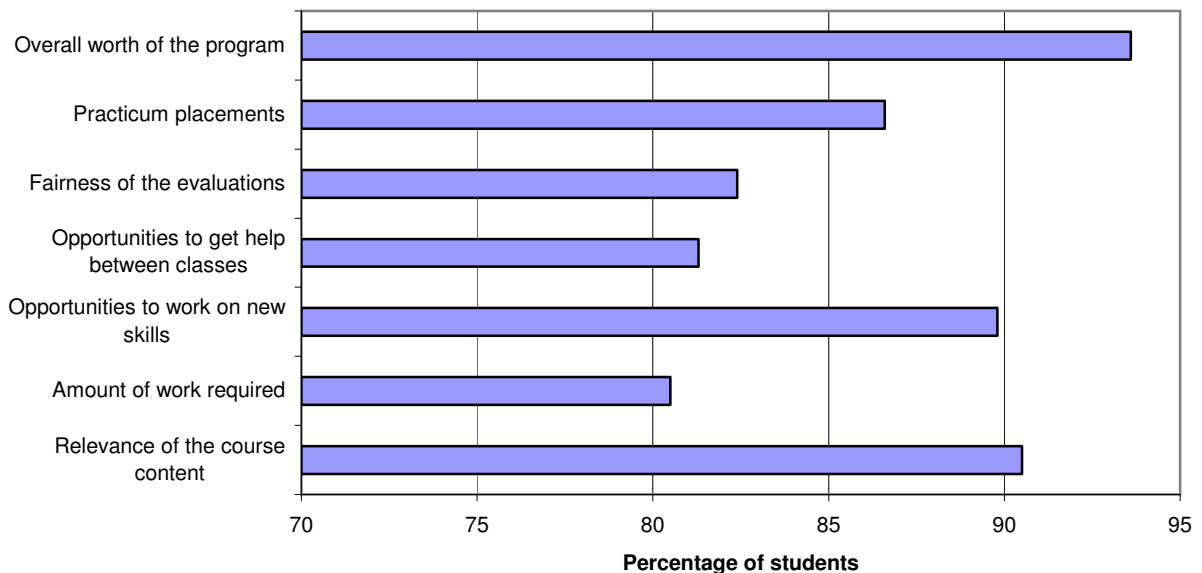
First Choice of Program

- ECE was the first program choice for 73% of all students
- For those with ECE as the first program choice, 15% also applied to other programs
- Of those with a different first choice, the most common choices of program (in order of frequency) were: education, social work, and nursing
- Top reasons for not enrolling in the non-ECE first choice:
 - Changed mind (33%)
 - Not accepted or waitlisted (24%)
 - Not eligible (12%)

Ratings of Different Program Aspects

- The highest percentage of "good"/"excellent" ratings were for the overall worth of the program, and the relevance of the course content
- The lowest percentage of "good"/"excellent" ratings were for the amount of work required and the opportunities to get help between classes

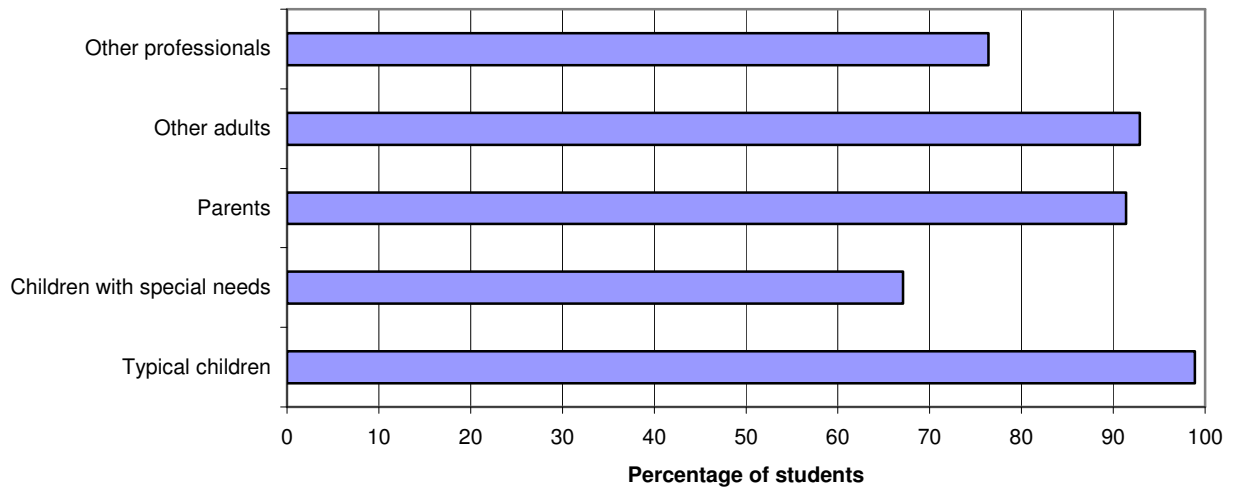
Percentage of Students Rating Various Program Aspects as "Good" or "Excellent"



Ratings of How Well Prepared Students Felt

- Almost all students felt well-prepared to work with typical children, and over 90% felt well-prepared to work with parents and other adults in their work environment
- Only about 2 out of 3 students felt well-prepared to work with children with special needs
- About half of the respondents indicated topics where additional training would be helpful
- The most commonly mentioned topics were: children with special needs (mentioned by almost half of those who mentioned any topic), behaviour management, sign language, working with infants, and administration

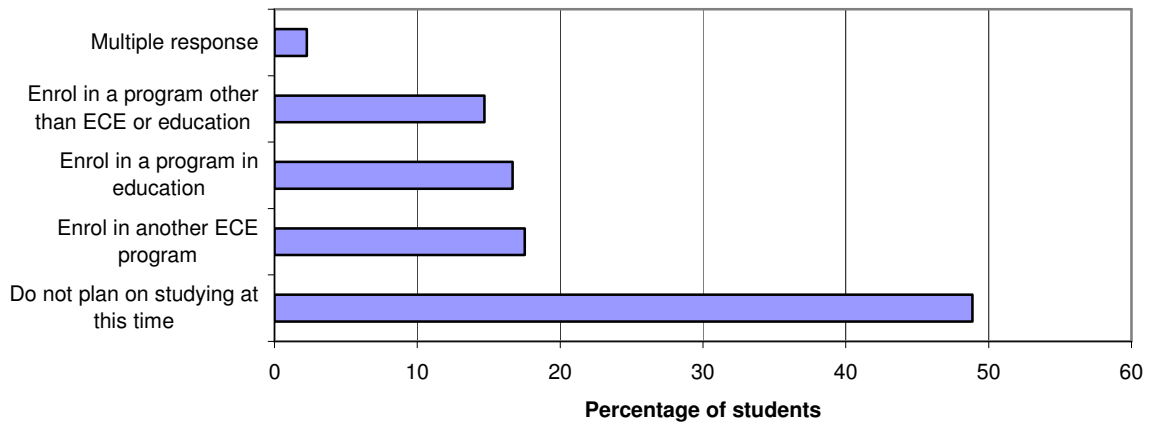
Percentage of Students Rating Program Preparation to Work with Various Groups as "Quite well" or "Very Well"



Plans for School after Program Finished

- About half of the students were not planning on continuing their education right away
- There was a relatively even split between those students planning on further education in ECE, education, or some other field of study
- The most common other intended future fields of study were: child studies and social work

Plans for School After Current Program Finished



**Most Common Plans for Work,
After Program**

- 48% - Working in a child care centre or CPE
- 12% - Variety of settings are possible
- 11% - Working as a classroom assistant in the school system
- 7% - Working in a related ECE program*
- 6% - Working as a regulated family child care provider

**Most Common Plans for Work,
in 5 Years**

- 25% - Working with children in a child care centre or CPE
- 15% - Teaching in the education system
- 10% - Working as a supervisor in a child care centre or CPE
- 10% - Variety of possibilities
- 8% - Working in a nursery school/ preschool
- 6% - Working as a classroom assistant in the school system
- 6% - Working as a regulated family child care provider

**Most Common Plans for Work,
After Program, Using Four Categories**

- 60% - Regulated ECE setting
- 26% - Other ECE-related setting
- 8% - ECE-unrelated setting
- 6% - Multiple response

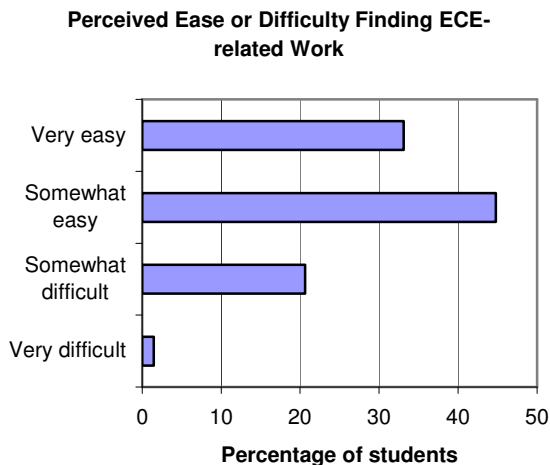
**Most Common Plans for Work,
in 5 Years, Using Five Categories**

- 50% - Regulated ECE setting
- 22% - Other ECE-related setting
- 15% - Teaching in the education system
- 6% - ECE-unrelated setting
- 8% - Multiple response

*In this report “related ECE programs” include those that provide services for young children and families, but do not fit in any of the other major categories. Such programs include family resource centres, early intervention, Aboriginal Head Start, family-life programs in a hospital setting, and nursery school/preschool programs in provinces/territories where they are not regulated.

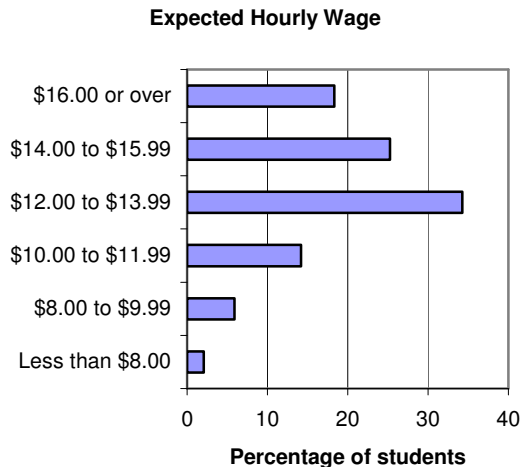
Students' Perceived Ease or Difficulty Finding ECE-related Work Upon Graduation

- Over three-quarters of students reported that it would be somewhat easy or very easy to find ECE-related work after graduating



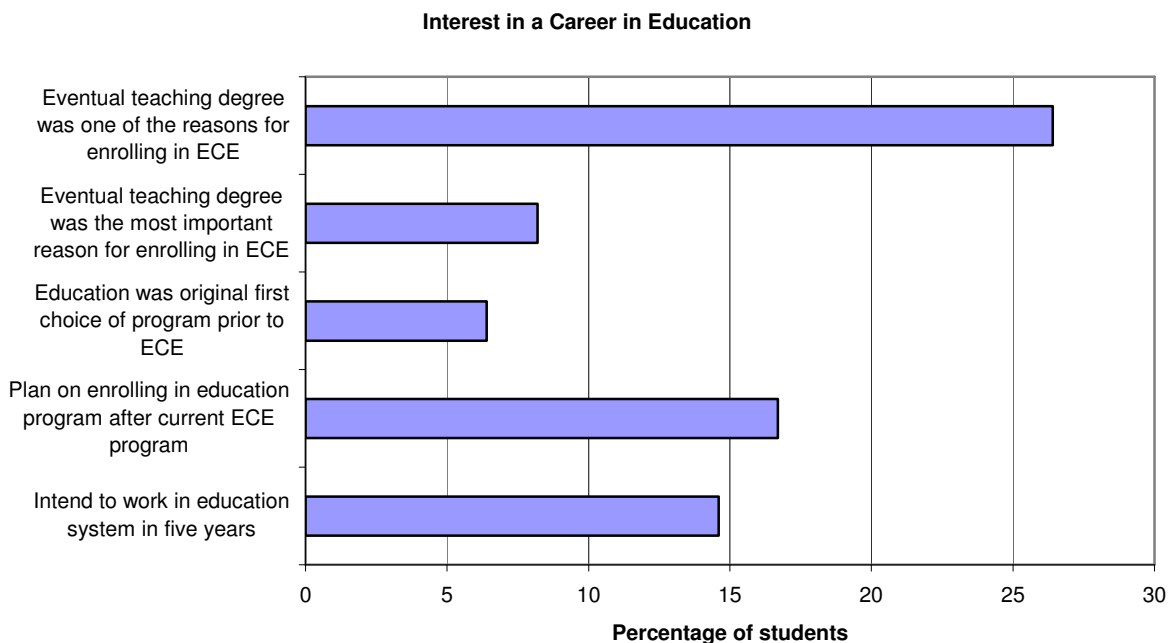
Student's Expected Hourly Earnings Upon Graduation

- The most common wage expectation was \$12 to \$14 per hour
- 8% of students still expected less than \$10 per hour



Students' Interest in a Career in Education

- More than one-quarter of ECE students enrolled in ECE at least partially for the reason of taking a step towards a teaching degree
- About 55% of these actually intend to work in the education system in the next five years



3. NOTABLE TRENDS

The profile in the previous section shows, for all 362 students, the overall results for many of the questions in the Training Strategy Student Survey. However, sometimes the pattern of results depended on a number of factors, such as the age and prior education of students, the length of the program, or the particular post-secondary institution attended. This section illustrates notable trends relating to these factors, for selected sections of the survey. A trend is defined as notable if there are substantial differences in the results when comparing different subgroups of students, such as age groups. A difference is defined as substantial for our analysis if there is at least a 9% gap between two of the subgroups.

Student Characteristics

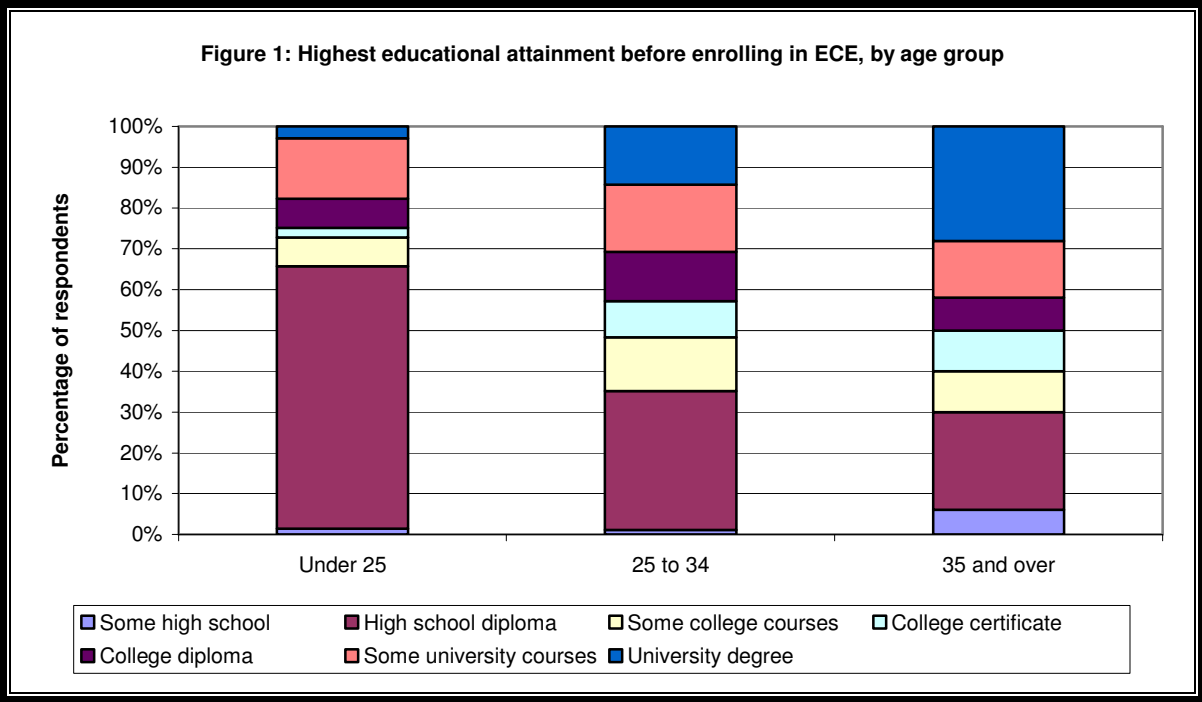
As the table below shows, each PSI has its own distinct set of student characteristics. For example, students at Le Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick tended to be relatively young, new to post-secondary education, but with a fair amount of prior volunteer and paid experience in child care centres. Students at Algonquin College in Ontario also tended to be younger, but were the most likely group to have had prior post-secondary education, and relatively few had volunteer and/or paid experience in child care centres. The one near constant across PSIs is the percentage of students who were female.

Student Characteristics, by College								
	College							
	HOLL	IHSE	CCNB	VMON	ALGO	ASSI	SIAS	YUKN
% female	90.5	100.0	100.0	97.1	97.1	96.3	100.0	100.0
% under age 25	52.4	50.0	76.9	59.4	71.0	59.3	59.2	18.2
% immigrants	14.3	11.0	0.0	26.1	15.9	3.7	0.8	18.2
% with prior post-secondary credential*	33.3	38.9	0.0	47.2	52.8	28.6	33.6	27.3
% with prior ECE or related courses	38.1	33.3	0.0	22.2	26.4	21.4	28.2	27.3
% with prior volunteer experience, child care centre	38.1	33.3	46.2	10.0	22.2	33.3	16.0	18.2
% with prior paid experience, child care centre	55.0	38.9	41.7	12.5	16.7	44.4	22.4	45.5
% ECE was first choice of program	95.2	61.1	69.2	69.0	86.1	71.4	66.7	63.6

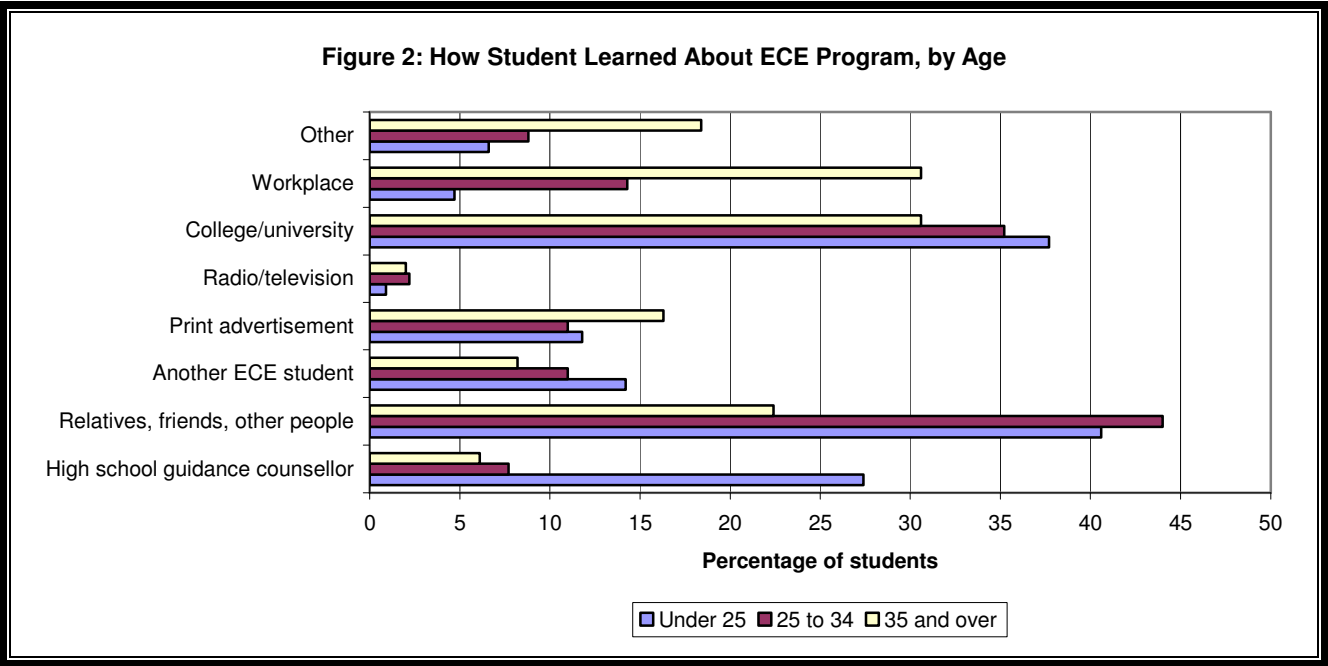
* certificate, diploma, or degree in any discipline.

Trends by Age

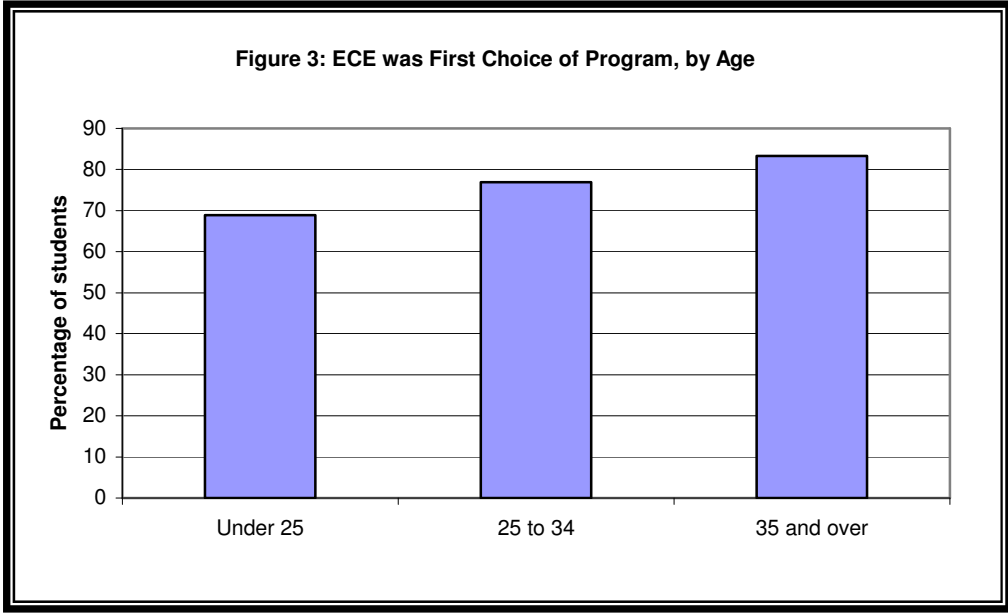
Older students were more likely to have more education prior to enrolling in their current ECE program - 70% of students 35 and over had some prior post-secondary experience, compared to 34% of students under 25.



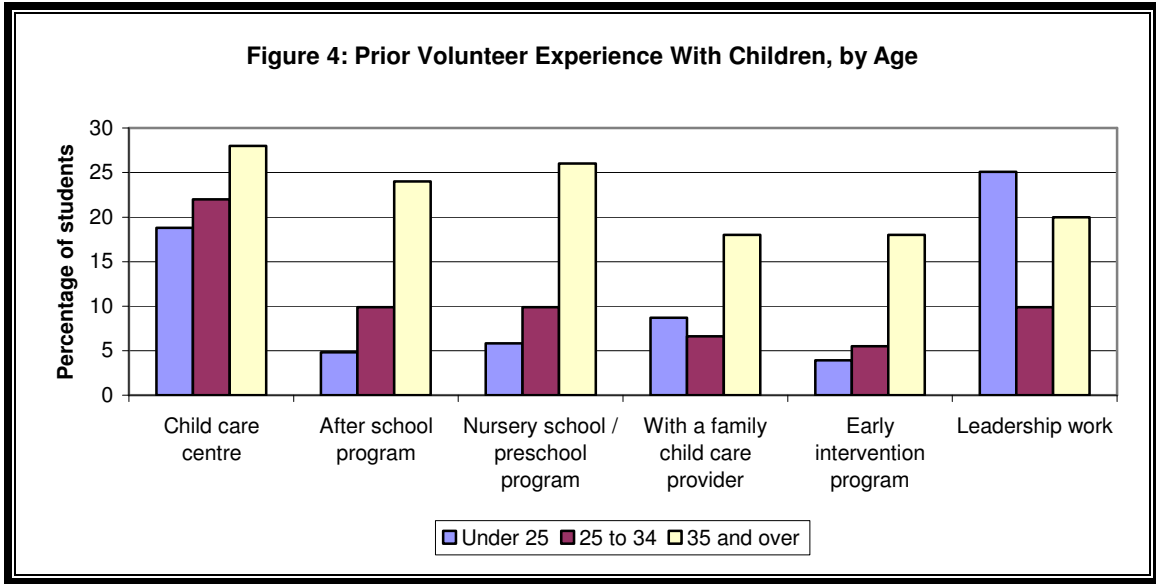
Students heard about the ECE program in several different ways. More than 30% of all students heard about the program from the college or university. The main way students over 35 learned about the program was from their workplace and the main way students under 35 learned about the program was from friends and relatives.

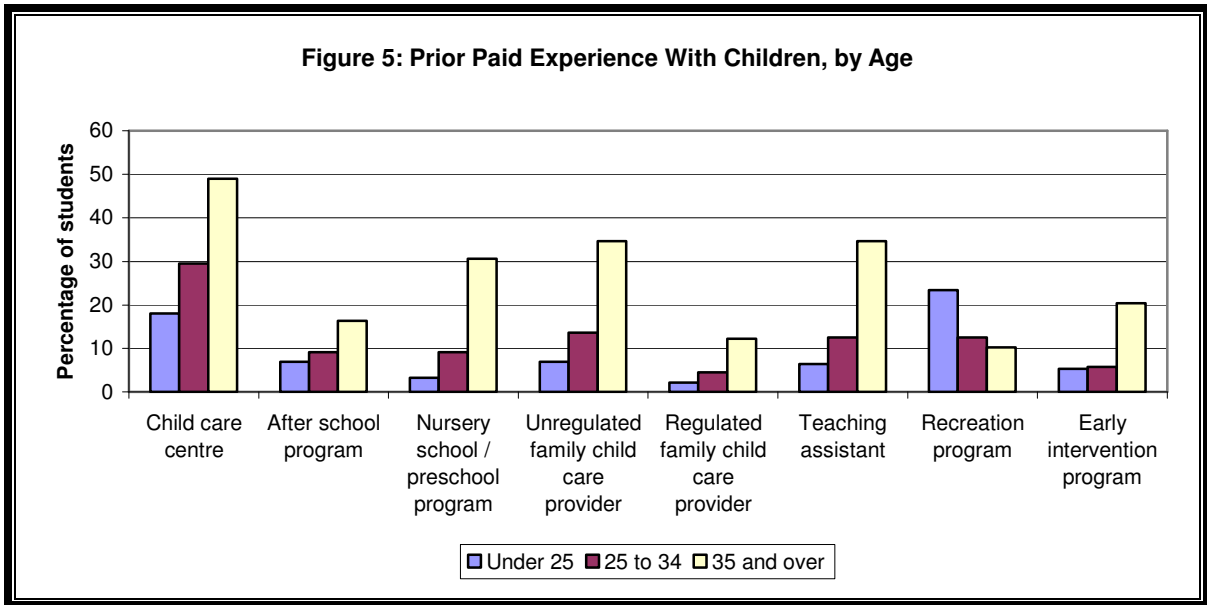


With increasing age, ECE was more often the first choice of post-secondary program.

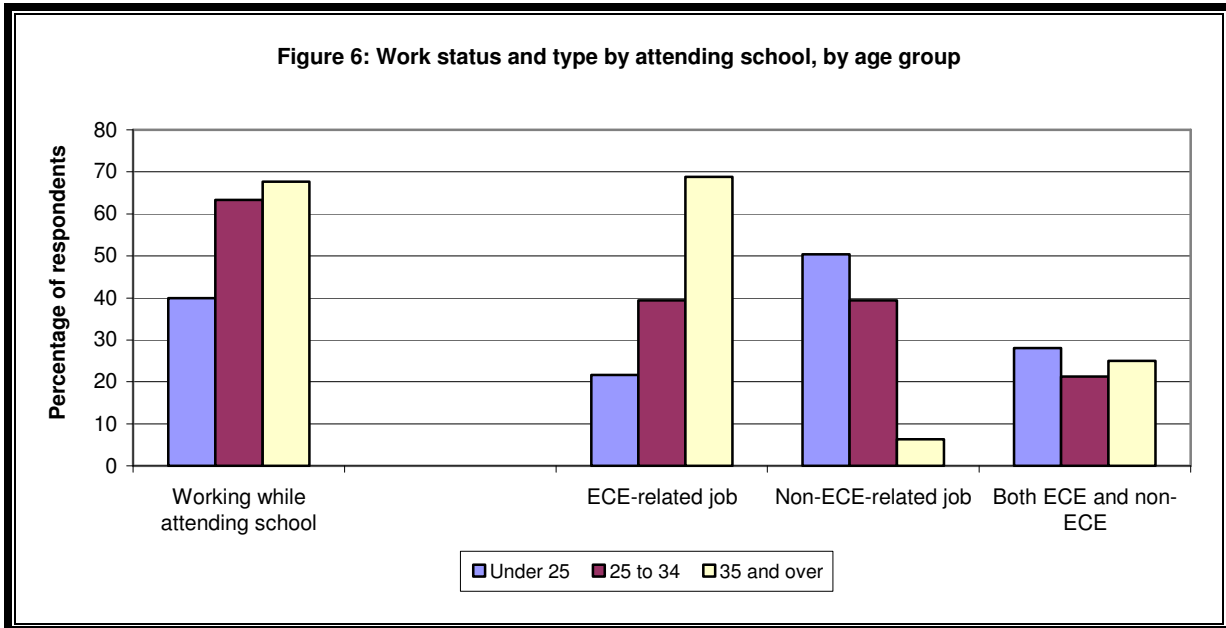


Prior experience with children, both on a volunteer basis and paid experience increased with age, in most areas of work. This was particularly true for child care specific work.

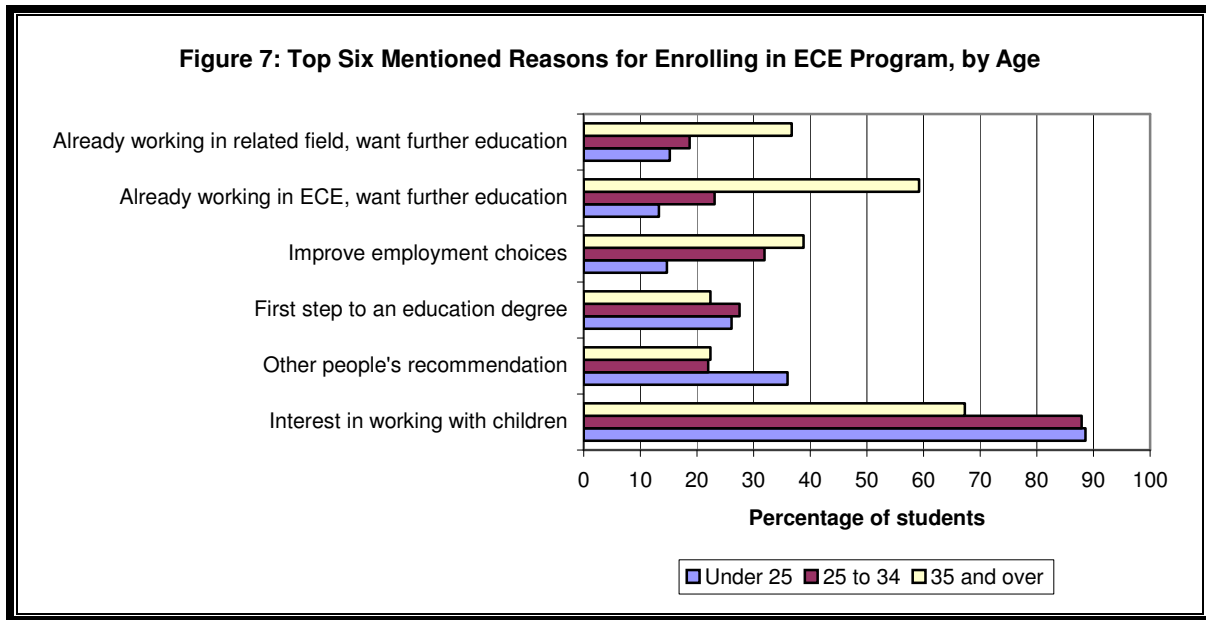




The percentage of students working while taking their ECE studies increased with age, as did the percentage of those working in an ECE-related job.

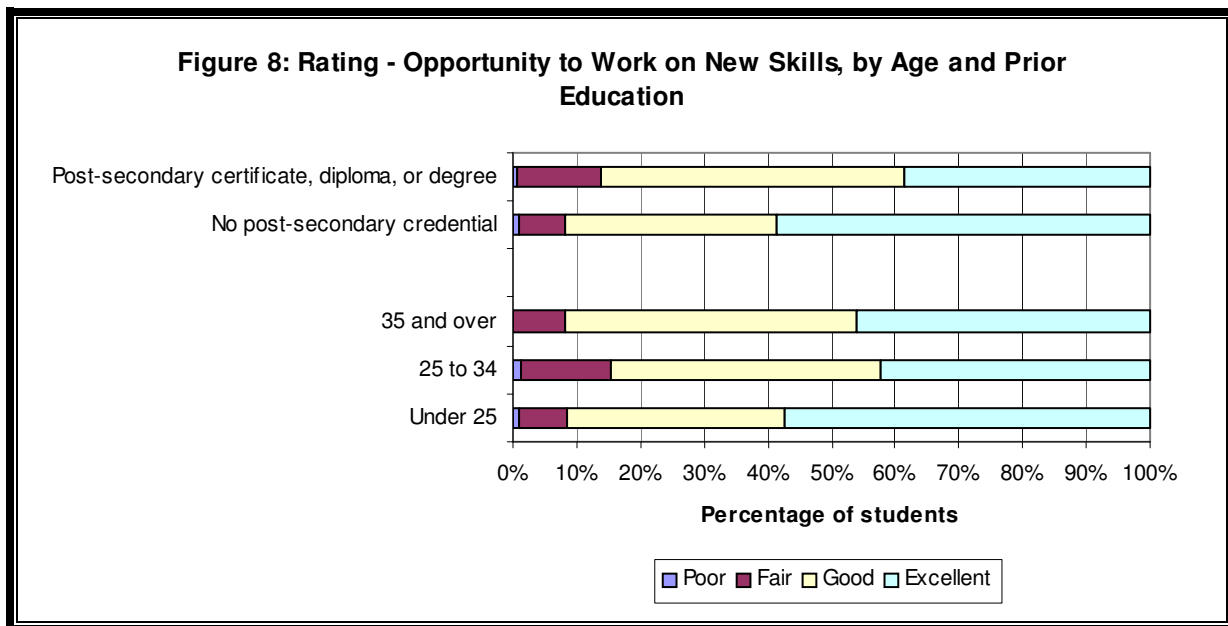


Students of all ages cited an interest in working with children as the main reason for enrolling in an ECE program, but the percentage decreased with age. Students over 35 were considerably more likely than younger students to indicate that they were already working in ECE or an ECE related field and wanted further education.

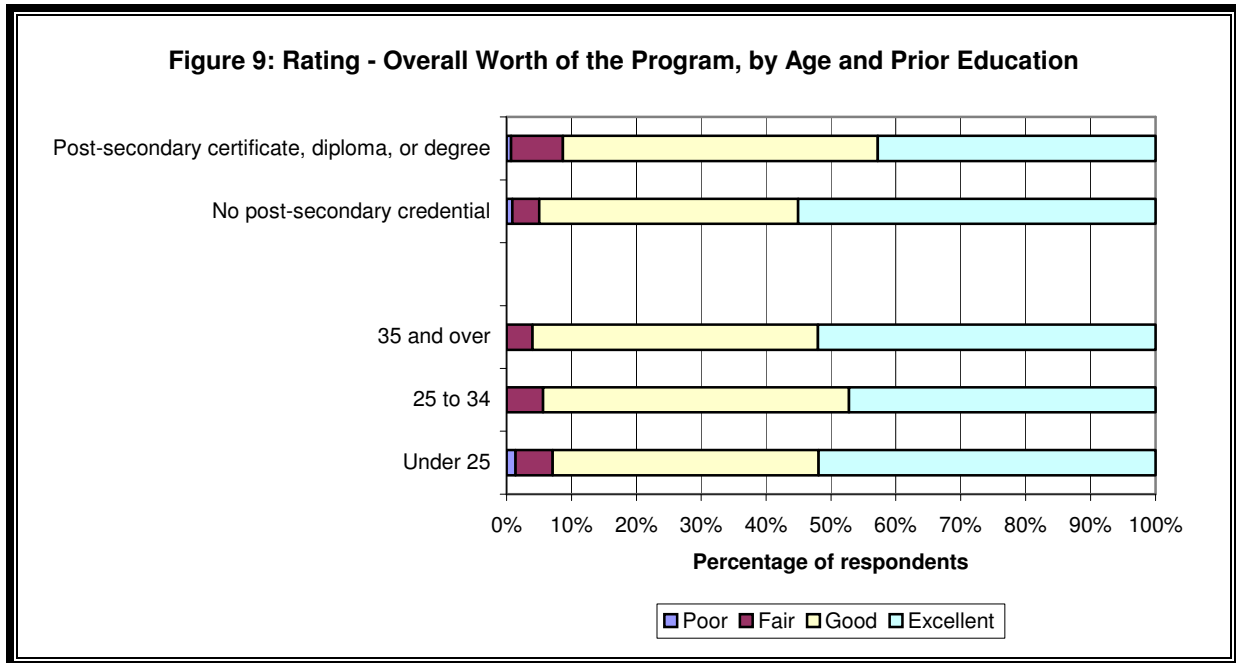


Satisfaction with the Program

With regard to the seven different program aspects that students were asked to rate, there were very few notable trends related to student age or prior education. Student who were under 25 years old, and those with no prior educational credentials were more likely to rate the opportunity to work on new skills as “excellent,” as shown below.



The same education trend, but no age trend, was found for ratings of the overall worth of the program.



Before showing any trends in length of program, it must be mentioned that this factor is confounded with PSI. Three-year credentials in ECE only exist in Québec, represented by CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal in this study. Therefore, any interpretation about length of program trends must be made cautiously, as they may be partially attributable to PSI or province. As well, the three-year CEGEP program starts after grade 11, instead of after grade 12 as in the two-year diploma programs and the two are considered equivalent in many jurisdictions.

With this caveat, it did seem that length of program was a potential factor in students' ratings on many of the seven program aspects. Students in the three-year programs had the highest ratings (particularly for "excellent" ratings) for all aspects except for overall worth of the program, which trended in the opposite direction. The charts below show some of these trends.

Figure 10: Rating - Relevance of Course Content, by Length of Program

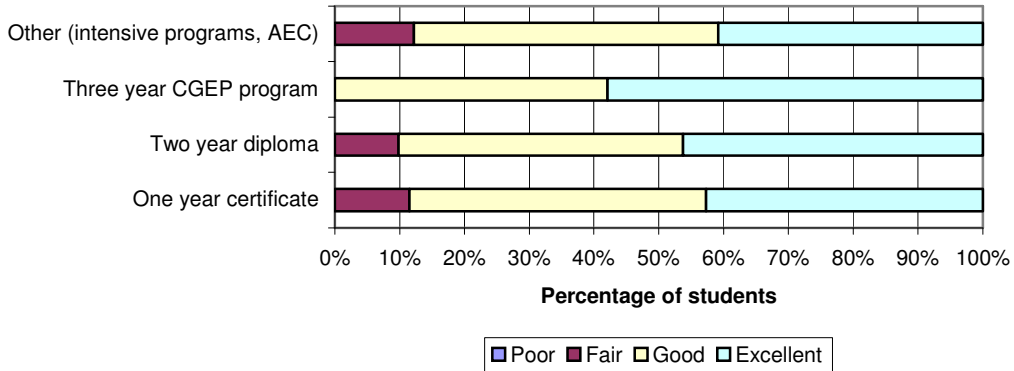


Figure 11: Rating - Opportunities to Get Help Between Classes, by Length of Program

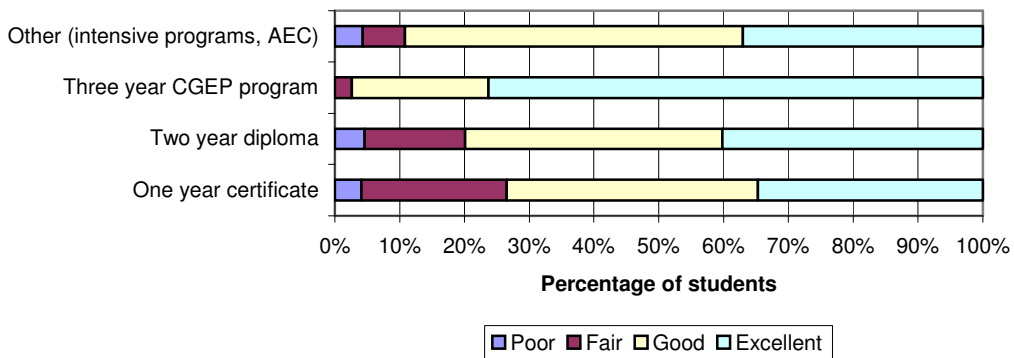
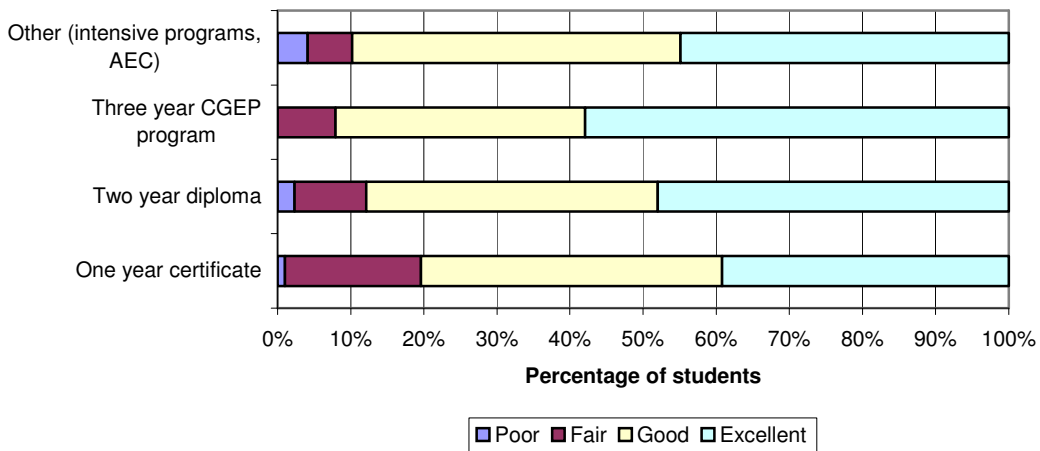
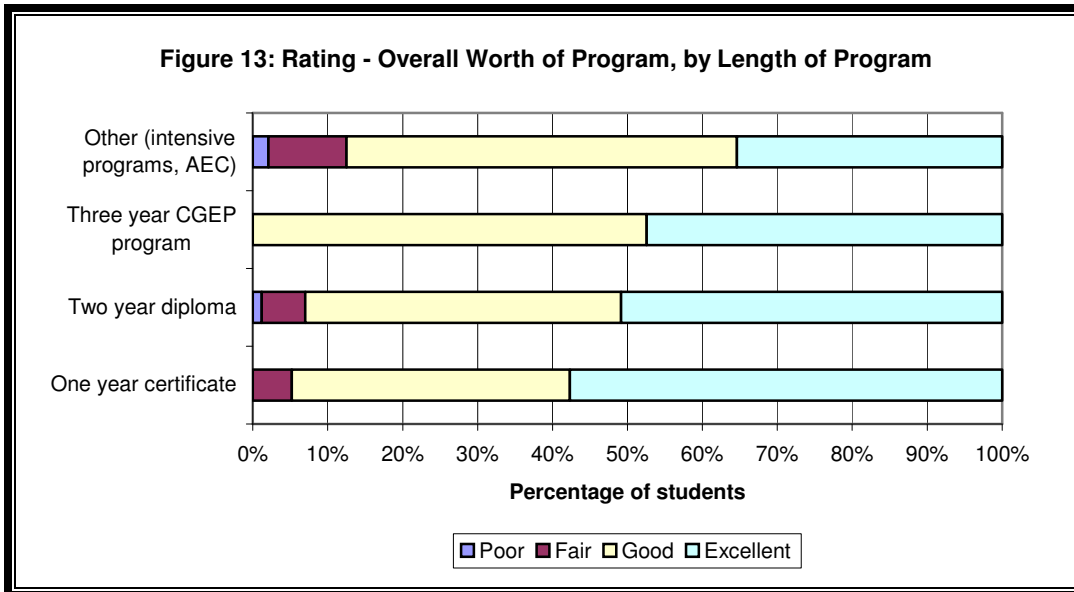
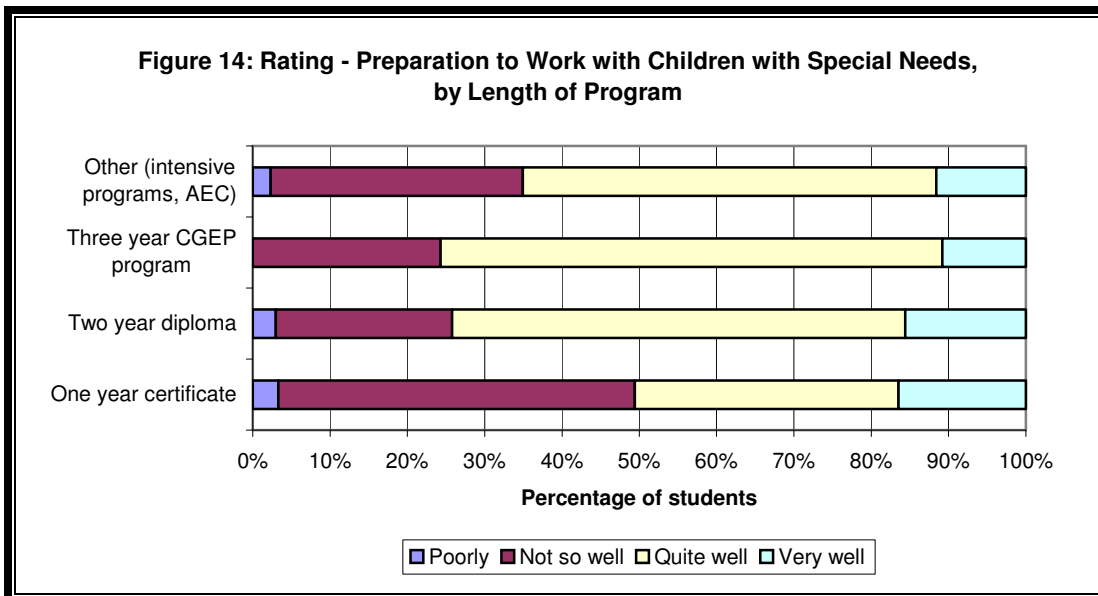


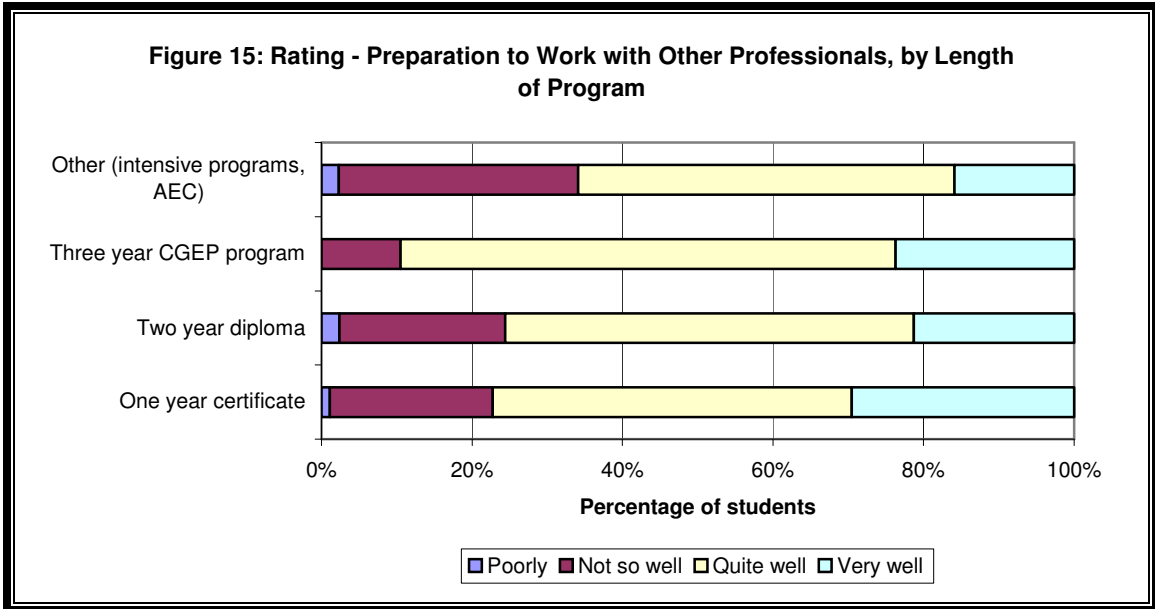
Figure 12: Rating - Practicum Placements, by Length of Program





The second aspect of program satisfaction was the ratings given by students regarding their preparation for working with five different job-related groups: typical children, children with special needs, parents, other adults in the work environment, and professionals. There were no notable trends reflecting differences by age or prior education. However, length of program seemed to be a factor in some instances. For example, students in one-year certificate programs were most likely to feel unprepared to work with children with special needs, and students in three-year CEGEP programs were most likely to feel quite well or very well prepared to work with professionals.





Plans for Further Education after Graduation

Plans for further education showed different patterns, depending on student age and prior education. Students under 25 years old were the least likely to plan to enroll in another ECE program, and more likely than those 35 and older to plan on enrolling in a program other than ECE or education. Students with a prior post-secondary credential were less likely than those without a credential to plan on going back to school. They were also less likely to enroll in another ECE program and more likely to enroll in an education program.

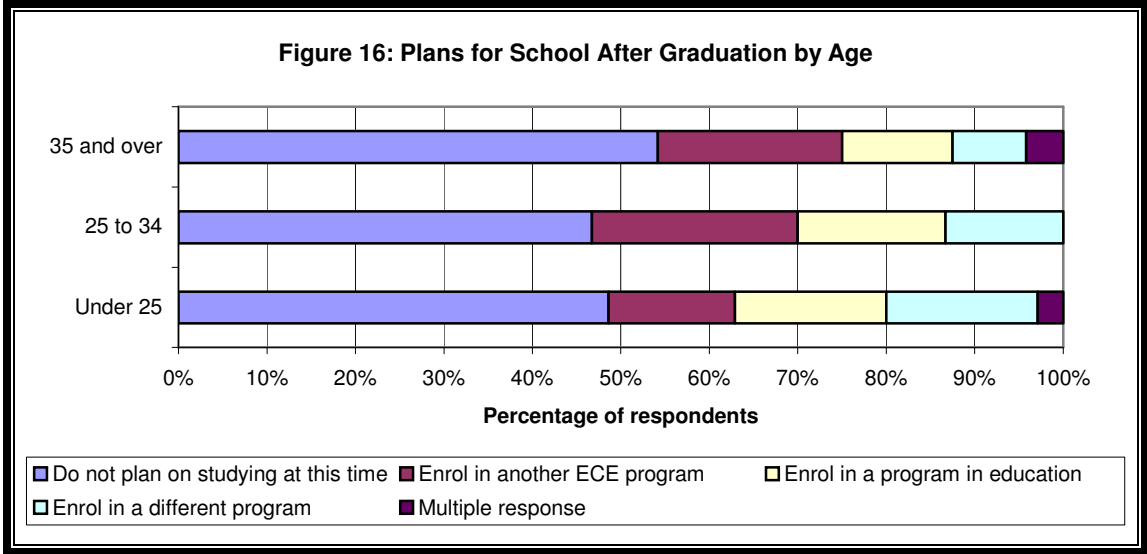
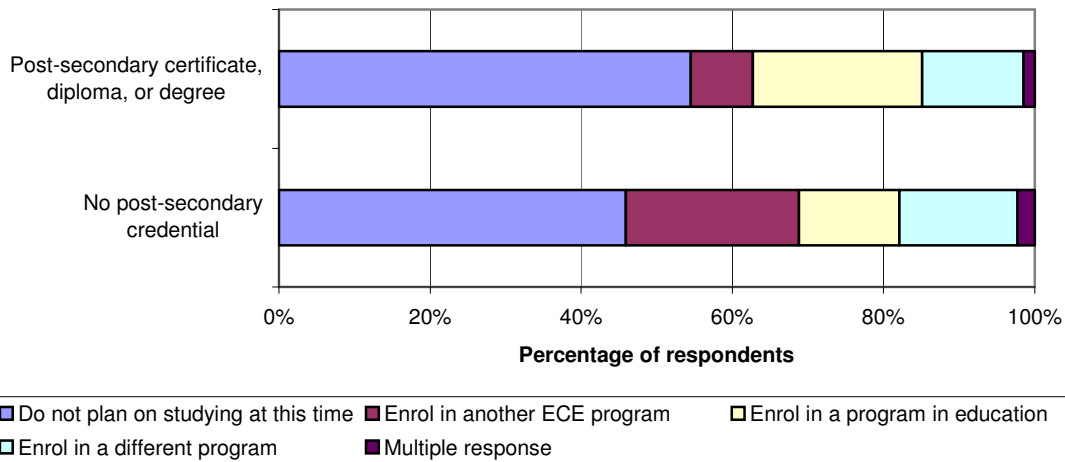
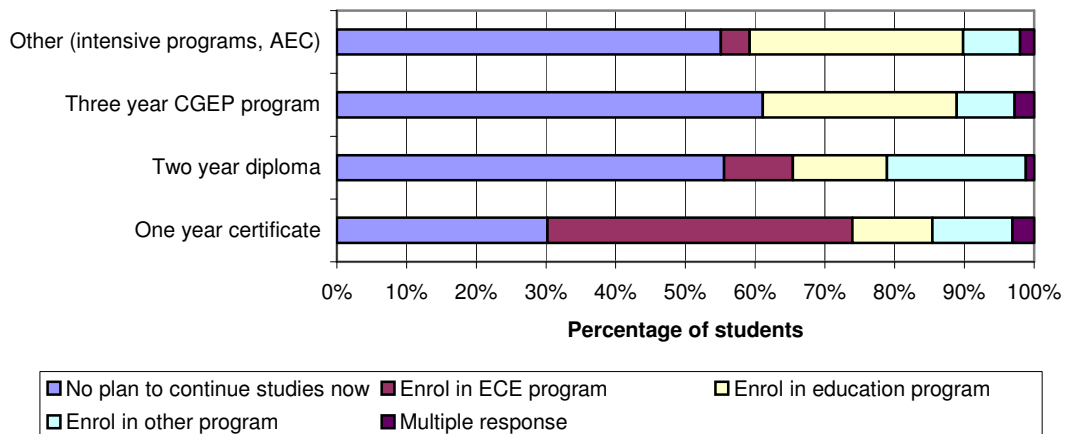


Figure 17: Plans for School After Graduation, by Prior Education



There were also a number of interesting trends relating to length of program. Students in one-year certificate programs were more likely than others to plan on continuing their education, and to continue that education in an ECE program. A higher proportion of students in three-year CEGEP programs as well as those in “other” programs (mostly intensive or accelerated programs) intended to enroll in an education program. Two-year diploma students were the most likely to plan on taking a program other than ECE or education.

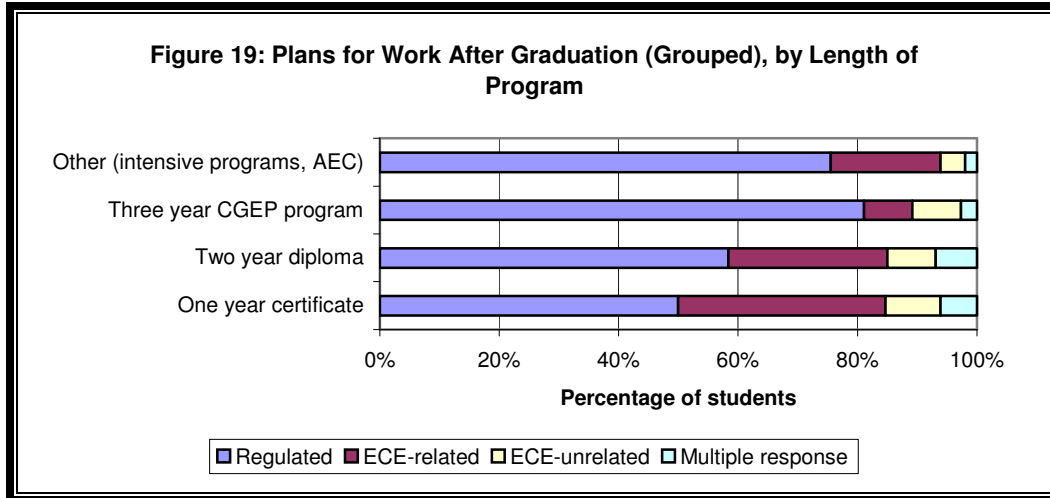
Figure 18: Plans for Further Education, by Length of Program



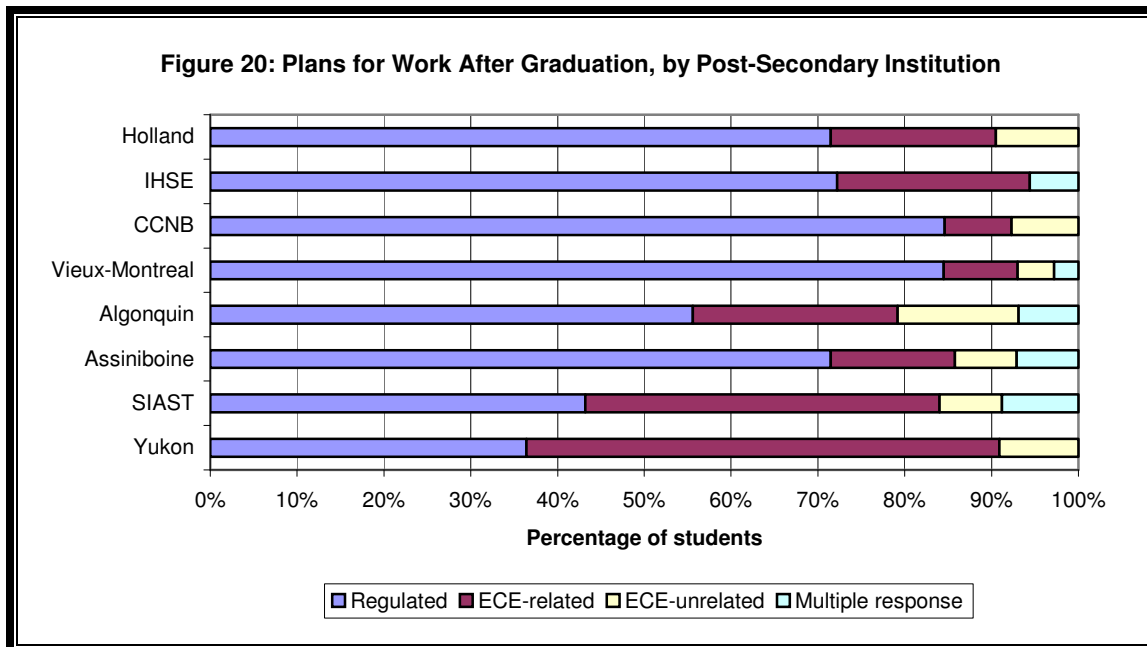
Immediate Plans for Work after Graduation

The responses to this survey item have been collapsed into four categories: regulated child care settings, other ECE-related settings, ECE-unrelated settings, and multiple responses (which reflects students who indicated more than one category of setting). There were no notable trends by age or prior education regarding immediate work plans. However, there were stronger

differences by program length and by individual PSI. As the chart below shows, those students in three-year CEGEP programs and in the intensive/accelerated programs were the students most likely to plan to work in regulated settings, while those graduating from one-year and two-year programs were the most likely to plan to work in other ECE-related settings. Relatively few students overall planned on working in ECE-unrelated jobs upon graduation.



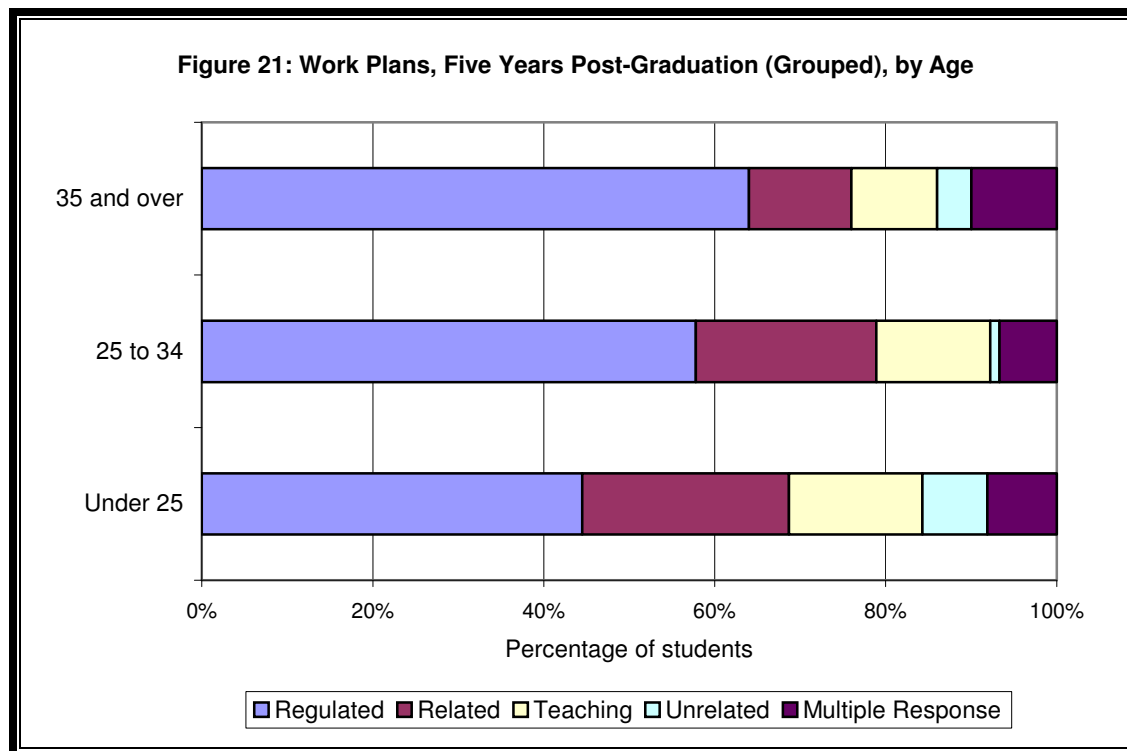
Plans for work after graduation differed markedly for students at different PSIs. Over 80% of students at Le Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick and CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal were planning on working in a regulated setting, about twice the proportion of students at SIAST or Yukon College, whose students were more likely to plan for work in ECE-related jobs.



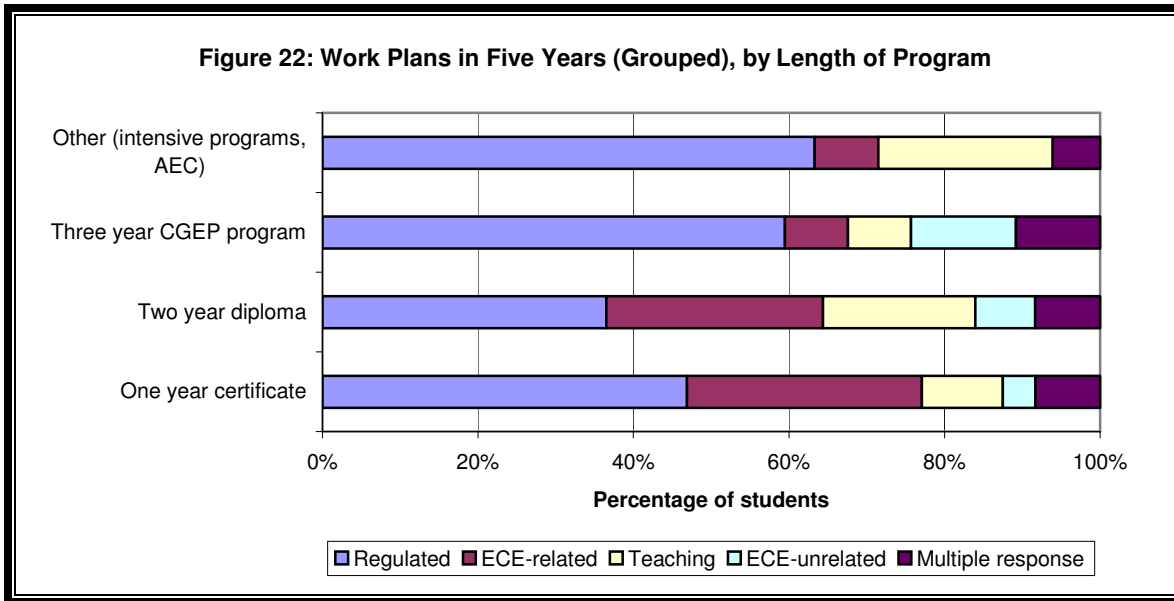
Plans for Five Years after Graduation

The responses to this survey item have been collapsed into the same four categories as for immediate work plans, but with the addition of a fifth category – teaching in the education system.

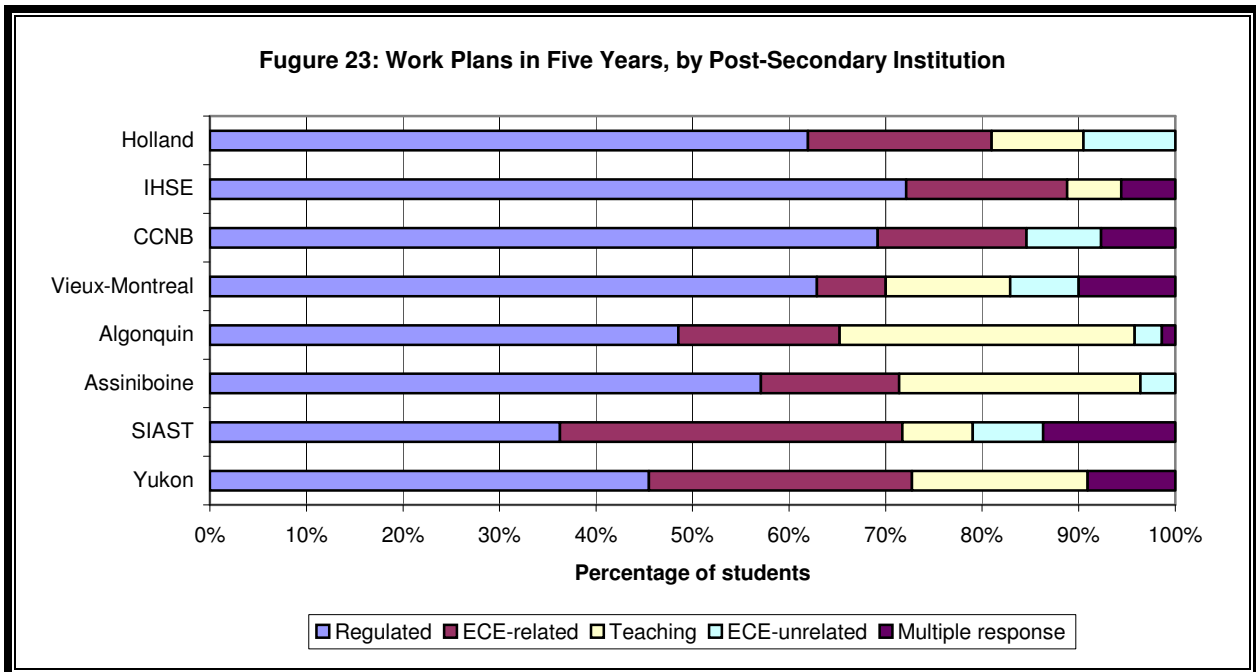
Students with and without prior educational credentials did not have any notable differences in their five-year plans. There were some differences, however, by student age. Students under 25 years old were least likely to plan to work in a regulated child care setting. Those over 35 years old were less likely to plan to work in another ECE-related setting. There were no strong age trends regarding plans to be a teacher.



There were some trends in five-year plans, depending on the length of the program. Students in intensive/accelerated programs and three-year CEGEP programs were more likely than those in one-year certificate programs and two-year diploma programs to plan to work in a regulated child care setting. Students in one- and two-year programs were the most likely than those in other programs to plan to work in another ECE-related setting. Students in intensive/accelerated programs were more likely than those in three-year CEGEP programs to plan on teaching in the education system.



As was the case for immediate work plans, there was quite a lot of diversity of five-year plans at the level of individual PSIs. Plans to teach in the public school system were most common for students at Algonquin and Assiniboine (one-quarter of students or more), and only IHSE had no students with such plans. The percentage of students planning on working in regulated care ranged from 36% at SIAST to 72% at IHSE. SIAST and Yukon College had the highest proportion of students planning to work in other ECE-related settings.



4. SUMMARY COMMENTS AND CONCLUSION

Student Comments

At the end of the questionnaire students were given an opportunity to add further comments about their experience. While an overwhelming majority of all students rated their overall satisfaction and worth of the program and course content as good or excellent in earlier questions, there were some themes among the comments that are noteworthy.

As might be expected a number of students expressed concern about the low wages they would be making, and indicated that the wages should reflect the importance and value of the work. These comments were made by students regardless of the wages they expected to earn after graduating. Some also mentioned the financial challenges in getting their education, with comments such as:

- *I believe that early childhood educators should be getting paid government wages. We are just like other teachers and work just as hard. I believe going to school for two years should get you more than \$9/hr. Governments should start paying up more money. We are the stepping stones for these children before they get to Kindergarten*
- *If at the start I'd known that I would get only \$8-\$9 per hour, I would have never taken a loan of \$10,500 for a course*
- *I would attend the second year for my diploma if more financial assistance opportunities were made available to me, such as realistic scholarships. I am not a minority, nor have dependents*
- *I believe there should be an easier way for parents to get a better education, to further themselves without having to take out a student loan. It is hard enough for families to make it*

Other comments of note have been included only when made by students from more than one PSI. They fall into three main categories. A few examples of comments in each category are included below.

1. Concern about the repetitive nature of some of the course content

- *I feel that the first year of ECE was excellent but the second had a lot of repetitions. We had a big emphasis on "environment" and how it affects children (two courses) but not enough training in behaviour guidance and project development*
- *Although the content is relevant and important, it is very repetitive and we learned quite a few things in many classes that we had already learned*
- *Many of the courses in this program were redundant. Courses need to be evaluated based on relevance and introduction of new material. Too many students are being "pushed" through the program, which leads to the "unprofessional" reputation of ECEs*

2. Concern about the quality of the practicum placements

- *I would have liked to see qualified and trained child care worker assistants when doing my practicum. Many students (including myself) found themselves doing their practicum in places where the staff was hardly competent*
- *During my time in my three field practicums I realized we need more teachers/educators who want to be where they are. My first two placements were terrible. They didn't seem to enjoy being with the children or seem interested in having a student.*
- *I think the course needs more structure. Also most of the teachers use the same notes as the year before and don't change anything. The teachers also need to meet every month including placement because placement this term has been horrible*

3. Suggestions that a different program be available for students with prior child care experience than for those with no experience. For example, comments such as the following were made by experienced students who were in the same class as those with no experience.

- *I believe the education I received here is geared more towards people with no experience with children. With the regulations of training for ECE changing, adaptations need to be made for people who are already in the field*

Students in a program geared to them made different comments.

- *I have very much enjoyed the intensive ECE program and feel it has complemented my knowledge of children and added to it*

Conclusion

Even though neither this survey of students for the Training Strategy Project, nor the student survey of the Labour Market Update were conducted to provide representative samples, three important common themes emerged.

- At graduation students felt less prepared to work with children with special needs than with typical children and with adults. In the TSP survey, working with children with special needs was identified as the first area students felt they needed more preparation 40 times more often than the next most frequently mentioned areas.
- Many students were not planning to work in regulated child care after graduating. In the TSP survey, overall 60% of students who responded indicated that they planned on working in a regulated child care setting, with four-fifths of these planning to work in a child care centre or CPE. After five years, the percentage intending to work in a regulated child care setting dropped to 50%, with three-fifths of these intending to work in a child care centre or CPE (either directly with children or as a supervisor). Six percent of respondents indicated that their plans were to be a regulated family child care. This percentage was the same for immediate and five-year plans.
- A significant minority of ECE students plan on an eventual career in the education system. In the TSP survey 26% said one of the reasons they enrolled in ECE was as a first step to an education degree, with 8% citing it as the main reason; 11% indicated that they planned to work as a classroom assistant immediately following graduation, and after five years 21% planned on working in the education system – 15% as teachers and 6% as classroom assistants

These themes, the noteworthy student comments and the notable trends provided useful information that was further explored in TSP focus groups, and in key informant interviews. Perceptions and opinions shared by students across the country were a valuable contribution to the development of the Training Strategy.

Appendix 1: 2006 ECE Student Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of the Training Strategy Project being undertaken for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC) and is being funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Human Resources Partnerships. The CCHRSC is an 18-member, formalized mechanism through which child care organizations, labour organizations and constituents of the child care workforce address the human resource issues through sectoral perspectives and analyses. The CCHRSC also establishes reference or working groups to draw on expertise from women's, teaching, academic, advocacy, human resource or other organizations as appropriate.

Your participation in this survey is extremely valuable. We are conducting a survey of ECE students in selected colleges across the country to gather information on who is involved in ECE training, what attracted them to the field, and what their future plans are. The information you provide will assist the CCHRSC to understand the human resources issues in the early childhood education and care sector, particularly issues related to recruitment and retention.

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. We ask you at the end of the survey to consider providing your name, address, and e-mail address so that you can be contacted in approximately two years year to take part in a follow up study of career patterns. This is also entirely voluntary.

It should take you about 15 minutes to complete the survey. The individual questionnaires will only be made available to the project researchers and your responses remain confidential. College faculty will not be made aware of any of your responses. All of the responses will only be reported as group data.

ECE Student Questionnaire

Instructions: In this questionnaire, please mark all appropriate circles by filling them in, or by marking with a ✓ or an ✕. Where there are lines, write in the information as appropriate.

Your Program

1. What is the name of your college or university?

2. Are you taking this ECE program through:

- distance education?
- continuing education?
- a regular daytime program?

3. Are you enrolled in a:

- one-year certificate program?
- two-year diploma program?
- three-year CGEP program?
- Other (please specify)

4. Are you taking your program:

- full-time? part-time?
- Other (please specify _____)

Prior Education

5. What is the HIGHEST level of education you achieved before enrolling in this ECE program?

- Some high school
- High school diploma / GED
- Some community college courses
- Community college certificate (program: _____)
- Community college diploma (program: _____)
- Some university courses
- University degree (program: _____)

6. Before enrolling in this ECE program, have you taken other ECE or related courses? (check all that apply)

- No ECE or related courses —————> *Skip to 10*
- ECE college credit courses
- Non-credit ECE courses (workshops, seminars)
- University courses in education
- University courses in human services (e.g., child and youth care)
- Family child care training
- Other (please specify)

Transfer of ECE Credits

7. Did you take those ECE or related courses outside of your current province or territory?

No → *Skip to 10*

Yes → 8. Where? _____

9. Did your current ECE program give you credit for those earlier courses?

None Some All

Prior Volunteer Experience With Children

10. Before enrolling in your current ECE program, did you have any unpaid or volunteer experience working with children? (check all that apply)

- No unpaid/volunteer experience working with children
 - In a child care centre
 - In an after-school program
 - In a nursery school / preschool program
 - In a family resource program
 - With a family child care provider
 - In a recreation program / camp counselor
 - In an early intervention program (e.g., programs for children with special needs or children at risk)
 - In leadership work with children (e.g., coaching, Brownies, Cubs)
 - Caring for siblings
 - Caring for own children
 - Caring for other children related to you
 - Babysitting for children unrelated to you
 - Other (please specify)
- _____

Prior Paid Experience With Children and Current Work

11. Before enrolling in your current ECE program, did you have any paid experience working with children? (check all that apply)

- No paid experience working with children
 - In a child care centre
 - In an after-school program
 - In a nursery school / preschool program
 - Caring for children in my home as an unregulated family child care provider
 - Caring for children in my home as a regulated family child care provider
 - In a family resource program
 - With/as a family child care provider
 - As a nanny
 - As a teaching assistant
 - As a teacher
 - In a recreation program / camp counselor
 - In an early intervention program (e.g., programs for children with special needs or children at risk)
 - Other (please specify)
- _____

12. Are you currently working while attending school?

- No
- Yes → 13. In which of the following types of work?

- An early childhood education-related field
- Work not related to early childhood education
- Both ECE-related and not ECE-related work

The Decision to Enrol in an ECE Program

14. How did you learn about this ECE program?
(check all that apply)

- My high school guidance counselor
 - Relatives, friends, or people I've met
 - From another student in an ECE program
 - From a print advertisement (e.g., newspaper, brochure)
 - From a radio or television advertisement
 - From the college or university (e.g., website, calendar, staff, faculty)
 - At my workplace
 - Other (please specify)
- _____

15. Why did you decide to enrol in an ECE program?
(check all that apply)

- I have always been interested in working with children.
- My high school guidance counselor recommended it.
- Recommendation from other people.
- I was already working in child care and wanted further education.
- I was working in other child-related work and wanted further education.
- I thought it would improve my employment choices.
- I thought it would be a good first step towards a teaching degree.
- My employer required it.
- As preparation for being a parent.
- I was not accepted in my first choice of program.
- Not sure.

16. From the items you checked above, which was the **most** important in making your decision to enrol?

The Decision to Enrol in an ECE Program (cont.)

17. Was ECE your first choice of program?

No → 18. What was your first choice of program?

Yes

19. Why did you not enroll in your first choice?
(check all that apply)

- I did not meet the eligibility requirements.
 - I was not accepted into the program, or was wait-listed.
 - The program was too expensive.
 - The course of study was too long.
 - My first choice was not available.
 - I changed my mind.
 - Other (please specify)
- _____

20. Did you apply to any other programs?

No

Yes → 21. Which program(s)?

university: _____

college: _____

Satisfaction With Your Current ECE Program

21. For each of the following aspects of your ECE program, please choose the appropriate rating.

	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
A. The relevance of the course content.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B. The amount of work required.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C. The opportunities to work on new skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D. The opportunities to get help between classes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E. The fairness of the evaluations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F. Practicum placements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G. The overall worth of the program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. How well do you feel your ECE training has prepared you for work with the following groups?

	<i>Poorly</i>	<i>Not So Well</i>	<i>Quite Well</i>	<i>Very Well</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
A. With typical children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B. With children with special needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C. With parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D. With other adults in your work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E. In partnership with other social service and educational professionals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Are there areas where you would like to have had additional training to feel better prepared to work in early childhood care and education?

Practicum Placements

24. Where have you done practicum placements during this ECE program?
(check all that apply)

- I have done no practicums.
- A child care centre
- A family child care home
- A family resource program
- A classroom in a school
- An early intervention program
- Other ECE-related program or organization.
(please specify)

- Other (please specify)

Finding Work in ECE

25. How easy or difficult do you think it will be for you to find a job in the ECE or ECE-related field after graduating?

- Very difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Very easy
- Doesn't apply to me.

Plans for Further Education and Work After Graduating

26. What are your plans for further post-secondary studies after this program is finished? (choose one of the following)

- I do not plan to continue my studies at this time
- Enrol in another program in ECE
- Enrol in a program in education
- Enrol in a program in _____

27. What are your preferred plans for work after this program is finished? (choose one of the following)

- I do not plan to work
- Work in a child care centre
- Provide family child care as an unregulated caregiver
- Provide family child care as a regulated caregiver
- Work in a family child care agency / resource and referral program
- Work as a classroom assistant in the school system
- Work in a family resource program
- Work specifically with children with special needs
- Work in a related ECE program (please specify)

- Other (please specify)

If you are NOT planning on working with children, please skip to question 30.

28. If you had your choice, what age group would you prefer to work with? (choose one only)

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Preschool age children
- School age children
- Mixed age groupings
- Specifically with children with special needs
- I have no preference

29. How much do you expect to earn when you graduate?

- Less than \$8.00 / hour
- \$8.00 to \$9.99 / hour
- \$10.00 to \$11.99 / hour
- \$12.00 to \$13.99 / hour
- \$14.00 to \$15.99 / hour
- \$16.00 / hour or over
- Not planning on working with children right away
- Not sure

Peering Into The Future

30. What do you hope to be doing five years from now? (choose one of the following)

- Working directly with children in a child care centre
- Working as a supervisor in a child care centre
- Working in a nursery school / preschool centre
- Working as an unregulated family child care provider
- Working as a regulated family child care provider
- Working in a family resource program / resource and referral agency
- Working as a classroom assistant in the school system
- Teaching in the education system
- Working in a field unrelated to early childhood education
- Staying at home with my children
- Studying at a post-secondary institution
- Other (please specify)

Some Final Questions About You

31. Are you: Female Male

32. What age category do you fit in?

- Under 20
- 20 to 24
- 25 to 29
- 30 to 34
- 35 to 39
- 40 or over

33. When you were growing up, what language was most commonly spoken in your home?

- English
- French
- Other (please specify)

34. Were you born in Canada?

- No
- Yes

35. In which country were you born?

36. What year did you come to Canada to live?

37. What is the main way you have financed your education?
(choose one of the following)

- My parents
- My parents and I together
- My spouse
- I have used my savings and wages
- Student loans
- My employer
- My employer and I together
- Grants and bursaries
- Government sponsorship
- Other (please specify)

Do you have any other comments you wish to add?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please put the completed questionnaire in the enclosed self addressed stamped envelope and mail.

The Training Strategy Project will help our sector better understand the delivery of training in each province and territory, identify gaps in training and develop options to meet the current and future training needs of the child care workforce. It will also help develop a long-term training strategy to improve the quality and consistency of training across the country. Early Childhood Education graduates are critical to the future of child care and other early child development programs. It would help the Sector Council to be able to find out what kinds of jobs you have after you graduate, and any insights you may have on your employment. If you would be willing to have the Sector Council contact you for a brief follow-up survey in about two years to help track the career patterns of ECE graduates, please complete the information requested below. Participation is completely voluntary. Your name and address will be kept confidential to the Sector Council researchers and will only be used to contact you for a follow up survey in the future.

THANK YOU

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____