

Catch up with the AECEO!

Seasonal Policy & Community Update (Summer 2025)



A SEASON OF COMMUNITY & CONNECTION WITH THE AECEO SUMMER CHALLENGE



July 2025 Early Years Meet-Up at Studio.89 in Mississauga

The first ever AECEO Summer Challenge was a hit! Our intention with the AECEO Summer Challenge was to create opportunities for the Ontario ECE community to engage in advocacy in ways that felt doable and fun! Using beautiful graphics – created by our very own Erin Filby – and interactive social media actions, we were able to reach thousands of ECEs and give away dozens of prizes to folks living all around the province. Whether you participated in the challenges, became an AECEO member, joined a virtual event or community meet-up, or simply shared our social media content, your support was key to making this campaign a success!

Get featured on our socials! If you were a challenge winner or if you purchased something from our [RedBubble shop](#), send a pic of you with your AECEO merch to info@aeceo.ca and your photo will be featured in our posts!



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF ECE HISTORY

The AECEO has been directly involved in important developments in early childhood education and care in Ontario since our foundation in November 1950, making the history of the AECEO and the history of ECE in Ontario closely intertwined. Generations of early childhood educators and advocates like you have been part of this history. Your dedication, care, and passion are what make early childhood education possible in our province. **Your stories are part of our history.**



You're invited to celebrate this important milestone!

- [Join/renew your membership, or make a donation to the AECEO](#)
- [Submit a written or artistic piece to the 75th anniversary issue of eceLINK](#)
- [Write a message on our virtual anniversary card](#)
- Join us at the first ever [AECEO Members' Retreat](#) at Bayview Wildwood Resort in May 2026

FEDERAL UPDATES

Public Support for Child Care Programs in Canada



OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE IN CANADA

A new report published by the Environics Institute, in partnership with YWCA Canada and the YMCA, shows that Canadians across generations support government investment in early learning and child care. The survey, conducted in early 2025, finds that **83% of Canadians agree that Canada should be a country where affordable, high-quality child care is available to all parents who need it.** 68% of respondents support the federal Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC) program, even among those without children.

[Click here to read the report.](#)

CUPE CALLS FOR A NATIONAL CHILD CARE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

CUPE's National Child Care Working Group, which AECEO Community Organizer Jess Tomas is a part of, went to Ottawa last month to meet with Minister of Jobs and Families, Patty Hajdu, and Secretary of State for Children, Anna Gainey. In the meeting, the group discussed the **urgent need to improve wages and working conditions** in order to recruit enough workers to deliver child care to every family who needs it, highlighting the negotiation of new agreements should be an opportunity for the federal government to compel AB, ON and SK to address the workforce crisis. In the meeting, the group also delivered thousands of petitions collected through CUPE's Shine a Light campaign.



Why this matters: the survey conducted by the Environics Institute, YWCA Canada and the YMCA, shows the majority of Canadians are in favour of making high-quality and affordable child care widely available across the country. However, **the lack of qualified workers continues to be the main barrier** to expanding CWELCC and ending waitlists, because child care *doesn't happen* without the people who provide it. Provinces and territories that have invested making child care jobs better jobs - with good wages, proper benefits, pension plans, etc - are experiencing greater success with the CWELCC program because **supporting the workforce is the only way to fix the recruitment and retention challenges** and deliver on the promise of affordable child care.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING: ONTARIO'S \$10ADAY AGREEMENT EXPIRES IN LESS THAN 6 MONTHS



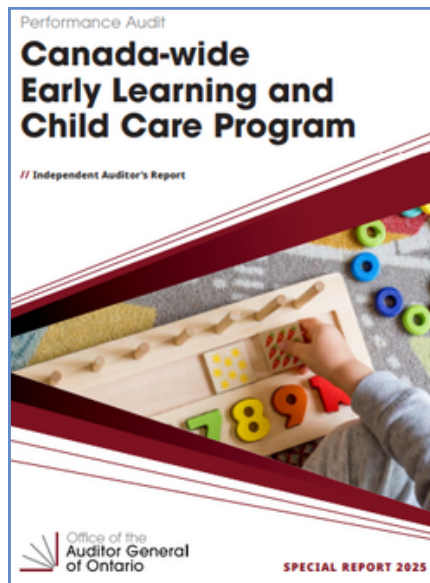
The first iteration of \$10aDay agreements, signed in 2021-22, are set to expire in March 2026. Ontario is *one of the only* provinces that hasn't signed an extension. Prior to the \$10aDay program, Ontario families paid the highest child care fees in the country, losing it would hurt communities across the province.

Tell your public representatives to sign a new agreement now!

PROVINCIAL UPDATES

RESPONSE TO BILL 33: SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS ACT

Bill 33: Supporting Children and Students Act, 2025 is being presented as a mechanism to improve transparency, accountability, and protecting public interest. However, communities and advocates have raised concerns over the potential for an inequitable balance between oversight and autonomy for individual institutions to respond to their communities' needs. The AECEO released a statement in response to Bill 33 in September 2025. We continue to monitor *Bill 33's* progress through the legislative process for any updates or amendments and will share relevant information as it becomes available. We invite the early years community to join the AECEO, the OCBCC and allies on **Monday, October 20th, 10AM-1PM at Queen's Park (South Lawn)** for an Ontario-wide press conference, rally, & teach-in, organized by Policing-Free Schools.



NEW REPORT FROM ONTARIO'S AUDITOR GENERAL

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario recently released the performance audit report on the implementation of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program in our province. Findings indicate that Ontario is falling short on reaching the goals stipulated in the agreement signed with the federal government in 2022.

The audit also revealed that **Ontario now faces a shortage of ten thousand Registered Early Childhood Educators**, a greater number than it was previously estimated in 2022. Among the contributing factors for this shortage are low wages, high attrition rates, and inconsistent access to paid professional learning, all issues that the AECEO and the OCBCC have consistently brought to the forefront of our advocacy and policy work. Find the full report here.

NEW PUBLICATION BY THE AECEO & THE OCBCC

Following extensive analysis of CWELCC implementation in Ontario and thorough consultation with our members, partners, and allies, the AECEO and the OCBCC are excited to share the second edition of the *Roadmap to Universal Child Care in Ontario*. The *Roadmap* evaluates the progress made in the last four years and offers **a community-led plan to tackling issues identified in the Auditor General's report**, like staffing shortages, stalled space creation, and access inequities.

The *Roadmap* sets out a hopeful vision: a system with affordable fees, decent work and pay for educators, and access for all. The *Roadmap* focuses on five key strategies to *transform* the Ontario ELCC sector and provides recommendations of policy interventions to make that vision a reality.

TELL YOUR PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES TO FOLLOW THE ROADMAP



Send a message to your provincial and federal officials, urging them to **follow the Roadmap** and work together to secure the future of affordable child care in Ontario! Click here to sign and share the e-action.



- *Roadmap to Universal Child Care in Ontario* • *Executive Summary* • *Our Shared Vision*

AECEO COMMUNITY UPDATES



THANK YOU FOR JOINING OUR ADVOCACY MEET-UPS IN THE GTA THIS SUMMER

Amazing things happen when ECEs get together! A heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us for our community events on July 31st in Mississauga and on August 14th in Scarborough. AECEO meet-ups are an opportunity for early years professionals to build relationships, find support, and grow their ECE community. We are honoured you chose to spend your time caring loudly with us! Want the AECEO to host an event in your community? Connect with us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to let us know!



COMMUNITY VISIT TO SAULT STE MARIE WITH THE OCBCC

OCBCC Membership & Administration Coordinator Kim Mantulak welcomed Amber, Erin and Patrícia from the AECEO to Sault Ste Marie in early October 2025. In addition to hosting a fantastic event with local educators at [Café 4 Good](#), we also had the opportunity to present about the AECEO and the OCBCC to ECE students and instructors at Sault College. Thanks to Kim's connections in the community, we were able to connect with educators working in child care programs, kindergarten, and family support services. [Join our mailing list to be the first to know about future community visits!](#)

AECEO UPDATES

BIG CHANGES TO THE AECEO TEAM

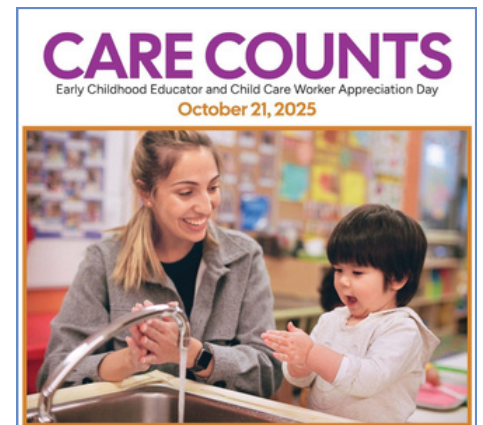
This summer we bid farewell to Alana Powell, who had been our executive director (previously coordinator) since 2019. Alana's vision made it possible for the AECEO team to more than double in size, and her leadership style and commitment to care ethics were key to making the AECEO team's unionization process uniquely collaborative. While saying goodbye was difficult, it is also incredibly exciting to have someone with her policy knowledge, strong understanding of ethics of care, and *real life ECE experience* in a senior policy advisor position with the federal government at this crucial moment for ELCC system-building.



The AECEO team was thrilled to learn that our Project Coordinator Amber Straker had been hired for the role of Executive Director. Amber has worked at the AECEO since 2021 and is deeply committed to empowering early childhood educators and ensuring that the needs of frontline ECEs are centred in the policy and advocacy work done by the AECEO. Amber looks forward to making new connections and strengthening relationships within the Ontario early years sector and beyond. Pictured on the left: new AECEO executive director Amber Straker and former executive director Alana Powell. Both are registered early childhood educators, caring leaders, strong advocates, and incredible mentors.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR AND CHILD CARE WORKER APPRECIATION DAY IS NEXT TUESDAY

Tuesday, October 21st, 2025 is the 25th annual Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. This year's theme is *Care Counts*, highlighting **the importance of care in early learning and child care**. This day is an opportunity to raise public awareness about the importance of ECE and to celebrate the people who make early learning and child care possible for our communities. Not sure how you can mark this day? Check out our celebration tips here. Keep an eye on the AECEO and the OCBCC social media accounts for a special giveaway!



STAY CONNECTED, GET INVOLVED & SUPPORT THE AECEO

- [Subscribe to our YouTube Channel](#)
- [Follow Circle Time on Spotify](#)
- [Shop AECEO merch on RedBubble!](#)
- [Follow the AECEO on Facebook](#)
- [Follow the AECEO on Instagram!](#)
- [Join an AECEO CARE Collective](#)
- [Sign up for AECEO emails](#)
- **[Become an AECEO member!](#)**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL MEMBERS' MEETING ON OUR THE DAY OF OUR 75TH ANNIVERSARY, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH

