

Catch up with the AECEO!

Winter 2025 Policy & Community Update



A MILESTONE YEAR FOR THE AECEO



International Women's Day (IWD) Toronto, 2025

The Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO), originally named the Nursery Education Association of Ontario, was first established in November 1950. This means that 2025 is a very special year... **The AECEO's 75th anniversary!** Thanks to our members and generous supporters, we have had the privilege of serving Ontario's early childhood education (ECE) community for the past seven decades! Throughout our history, the AECEO has been directly involved in important developments in early childhood education and care, playing a key role in the areas of training, public awareness, certification, networking, & recognition for the ECE profession in Ontario.

Whether we are joining our community to rally at Queen's Park, meeting with government officials, hosting Professional Learning events, or providing support and care through big changes in the sector, **ECEs and child care workers continue to be our priority.** Throughout many policy changes, such as the introduction of the \$10aDay child care plan, our work has evolved to meet the current moment. Regardless of the context, **supporting ECEs remains the ultimate goal of our work.**

The introduction of the \$10aDay child care plan is the result of **decades of advocacy work** by women's groups, policy experts, and labour organizations who have been fighting for universal child care in Canada for over half a century. As one of many organizations participating in this work, we are proud to be a part of this legacy of solidarity and community.

As the professional association for ECEs in Ontario, **the AECEO advocates for systemic change** that will benefit the ECE profession. While there are challenges with the implementation of the \$10aDay program, we are confident that a publicly-funded system is how we will achieve decent work and pay for ECEs and child care workers.

This will be a big year for our community. This newsletter contains highlights of the policy & community work of the AECEO this winter and our plans for our 75th anniversary celebration!

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO BE THE FIRST TO KNOW!



Toronto IWD, 1983

Via Rise Up Feminist Archive

FEDERAL UPDATES



ECES ADDED TO PRIORITY LIST FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE

Great news: workers in the education sector, including early childhood educators, have been added to the list of occupations prioritized for permanent residence (PR) in 2025. Prior to this change, ECEs on work/study permits faced barriers qualifying for the Express Entry program in Ontario, with some being forced to move to other provinces or territories in order to obtain PR.

A significant number of early childhood educators and members of the ECE workforce are temporary residents and have consistently advocated for better pathways to PR for the sector. In the summer of 2023, a group of international students shared their experiences

navigating this system during a meeting with the **Student Early Childhood Educators of Ontario**, bringing this issue to the attention of the AECEO, allowing it to be included in our government relations work.

When you share your stories with the AECEO, you help us understand **what you need to do the work you love**. Our role as your professional association is to hear about your experiences at work, come up with policy solutions that support you in your role, and work with government and stakeholders to adopt our recommendations. You can share your experiences at work by participating in our 2025 research project or by joining a meeting with a CARE Collective.

A FEDERAL ELECTION IS UNDERWAY

In less than five years since the \$10aDay child care plan was first announced in 2021, more than one million families have gained access to affordable child care spaces across the country and many provinces and territories have made progress in improving wages, pensions, and benefits for educators.

In order to become the early learning & child care system Canadians deserve, with affordable and accessible spaces, where children receive inclusive high quality education and care provided by **professionals who are well compensated and have access to the supports that allow them to do this important work**, like health benefits, paid sick days, etc., the \$10aDay program needs time to be improved and expanded. The next few years will be decisive for the future of this life changing program.

On **Monday, April 28th**, Canadians will head to the polls to elect the next federal government. Prepare to vote in the upcoming federal election by visiting the Elections Canada website to learn about registration, eligibility, and more.



PROVINCIAL UPDATES

ONTARIO ELECTION RESULTS

In February, Premier Ford secured another term for his government and named Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Markham Stouffville Paul Calandra the new Minister of Education.

MPPs will return to Queen's Park in mid April, and in the meantime, the AECEO & allies urge the provincial government to officially sign on to the [\\$10aDay agreement extension offered by the federal government](#).

We will continue working on behalf of ECEs, advocating to the province for increased compensation through a [publicly funded salary scale](#) and better working conditions for the workforce.

One of the ways the **AECEO supports our members is by providing ECE-focused policy information**. Thank you to all everyone who joined us for the provincial election debrief on March 18th. [Join or renew your membership](#) to join us on future members-only sessions.



AECEO UPDATES



Jess in an official Circle Time long sleeve shirt. [More AECEO merch available on RedBubble!](#)

CIRCLE TIME WITH THE AECEO

Learn about your professional association! On episodes 2 and 3 of Circle Time, AECEO Membership Coordinator & Policy Analyst Rachel is joined by our Executive Director, Alana Powell, for a deep dive about the history of the AECEO, how we function, what it means for the AECEO to represent ECEs, and more.

On Episode 4: A love letter to ECEs, the AECEO team shares stories of joy and love from their experiences with educators, families, and children in the ECE sector. More episodes coming soon!

[Find out how to listen to Circle Time with the AECEO here!](#)

AECEO 2025 RESEARCH PROJECT

In order to amplify the voices of Ontario ECEs in our work, the AECEO periodically consults with the community to learn more about your needs and experiences. Our [current research study](#) will help inform the recommendations the AECEO will bring to government consultations, regulation change proposals, and other policy developments that directly shape the work of ECEs. **Your voice is incredibly important** and we hope you will include your perspective by completing the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is completely anonymous. **Survey closing date: April 11th.**

[CLICK HERE TO PARTICIPATE!](#)

New AECEO research project!



What is it like to be an ECE & child care worker?



AECEO UPDATES

ADVOCACY MEET-UP IN KITCHENER-WATERLOO

In the first week of March, the AECEO team travelled to Kitchener-Waterloo for a community visit. Along with Waterloo region educators, we hosted an ECE social with fun activities and yummy treats for members of the local ECE community to connect, learn about the AECEO, and get involved in advocacy.

Attendees discussed issues like:

- lack of appropriate programming space/time,
- lack of support for student mentorship,
- low wages and,
- high ratios as some of the biggest challenges currently impacting them.



We had the best time collaborating in group activities, hearing about what people love about their work, and their hopes they have for their careers. Shout out to organizers and to Whoopsie Daisy in Kitchener for having us. Big thanks to everyone who came out and made this event a success!

CONNECTING WITH THE KITCHENER-WATERLOO COMMUNITY



While in the area, Amber (Project Coordinator) and Patrícia (Communications Coordinator) delivered a class chat to ECE students at Conestoga College, met with Waterloo Region DECE Local president (and long time AECEO member) Jenn Wallage, and connected with CARE Collective leads Bre and Fred (EYALondon) and Lori (EYCWR). Thank you for having us and for the wonderful visit! Stay tuned: the AECEO team will be in **Peterborough for a community visit in late May**, details coming soon

SIGN UP FOR AECEO EMAILS TO LEARN ABOUT FUTURE COMMUNITY VISITS!

AECEO UPDATES

THE AECEO IS TURNING 75!

This coming Fall the AECEO will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of our foundation. We're planning lots of ways to **honour the history, stories, and future of the AECEO and the Ontario ECE community**. Stay tuned for exciting updates, including a total makeover of the AECEO website, new membership perks and a members' retreat!



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Talking Child Care: Authentic Conversations for ECE Advocacy & Leadership, new AECEO workshop on **Monday, April 7th**, at 7PM. [Register here!](#)
- EYALondon Guest Speaker Series 2 with Carolyn Ferns on **Tuesday, April 8th**, at 7PM. [Register here!](#)
- The upcoming federal election & what it means for ECEs, *members-only session* on **Tuesday, April 15th**. [Join or renew your AECEO membership to register!](#)

STAY CONNECTED, GET INVOLVED & SUPPORT THE AECEO

CONTRIBUTE TO ECELINK

The AECEO is currently searching for contributions to General Articles and the ECE Voices sections of our publication, eceLINK. ECEs, child care workers, early childhood students, faculty & researchers, you're invited to share your insights, experiences, expertise & connect with the ECE community! **Deadline for submissions is April 30th.** [Learn more about sharing your work on eceLINK here.](#)



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