Early Childhood Educators

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia

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Early Childhood Educators (NOC 4214)

Early childhood educators may also be called:
- early childhood assistant
- early childhood supervisor
- child-care worker,
- day care worker
- day-care supervisor / coordinator
- preschool teacher
- nursery school teacher
- infant and toddler educator

1. What Would I Do?

Early childhood educators plan and deliver programs for children between the ages of infancy and 12 years. You provide care for infants and preschool- to school-age children to ensure their security and well-being. You also lead activities that develop their intellectual, physical and emotional growth.
Your duties include:

- telling or reading stories
- teaching songs
- demonstrating the use of simple musical instruments
- preparing craft materials and demonstrating their use
- providing opportunities for creative expression through the media of art, dramatic play, music and physical fitness
- taking the children to local points of interest
- guiding and assisting children in the development of proper eating, dressing and toilet habits
- observe children for signs of learning disabilities or emotional problems and take appropriate action
- discuss progress or problems of children with parents and other staff members

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Early Childhood Educators**
  
2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Early childhood educators should:
- enjoy working with children
- have strong communication skills
- be patient and understanding
- be physically fit as you are required to stand, walk, bend and lift items throughout the work day

As an early childhood educator you may work varied hours. Preschool and school-based programs typically operate only during the school year, offering approximately nine months of work to both full- and part-time workers.

Daycare centres are generally open throughout the year and may have extended hours to accommodate the needs of working parents.

Although working with young children can be very rewarding, it can also be physically and emotionally tiring as working with children requires a great deal of patience.

Sources:
- WorkBC Career Profiles
- Career Cruising database (Profile for Early Childhood Educator).
  Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary is $31,409. Your hourly wages can range from $11 to $24.

In BC’s regions, you can expect to make:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cariboo Region</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kootenay Region</td>
<td>13.40</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Mainland - Southwest Region</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>24.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nechako Region</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>15.75</td>
<td>22.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Region</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thompson–Okanagan Region</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>21.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Island and Coast Region</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Your earnings can vary widely, depending on experience, level of education, type of employer, and geographic location. Some full-time early childhood educators receive benefits, such as sick days and extended health care coverage.

Depending on where you work, you may belong to a union. This means that your wage rates and benefits are negotiated on your behalf by union representatives.

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profiles and *Career Cruising*
4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

Some job openings will result from:

- economic growth
- replacing retiring workers
- high worker turnover (due to the low pay and the physically and emotionally challenging nature of the work)

Growth may be negatively affected by both a declining birth rate and a reduction in the number of women with pre-school-age children entering the workforce. However, an increasing number of single-parent families will continue to be an additional source of job growth.

A decrease in the number of people enrolling in recognized early childhood care programs in some areas of the province has led to increased demand for workers in these occupations. In particular, the more northern rural communities in B.C. are experiencing a shortage of qualified workers.
Employment Outlook

Chart from WorkBC

Sources:
- JobBank Canada http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/
5. How do I become an early childhood educator?

Minimum requirements usually include:

- completion of secondary school plus a diploma or degree in early childhood education
- a clear criminal record check
- current first aid and CPR certifications

Although certification as an early childhood educator is not required in BC, it can provide better employment opportunities.

In BC, certification as an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) or an Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) is available through the Early Childhood Educator Registry, administered by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/).

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Certificate Requirements

You may apply for three types of certificates:

- **One year ECE**: completion of an ECE program from a recognized educational institution
- **Five year ECE**: completion of an ECE program from a recognized educational institution **PLUS** 500 hours under the supervision of a certified early childhood educator
- **Infant & Toddler and/or Special Needs Educator**: completion of all requirements for ‘Five year ECE’ **PLUS** completion of an Infant & Toddler and/or Special Needs program from an approved educational institution
Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) Certificate Requirements

As a first time applicant you must have completed, within the previous five years:

- one course of a basic early childhood education program in either child development, child guidance or child health, safety and nutrition through a recognized educational institute

Renewal of the certificate is required every five years; at renewal, applicants must have completed 400 hours of relevant work experience.

For further information, see:

- Early Childhood Educator Registry, BC Ministry of Children & Family Development
  [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/)

- For information on evaluation of ECE education received outside Canada:
  [http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/out_of_country_applicants.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/out_of_country_applicants.htm)
6. How Do I Find A Job?

**Where would I work?**

*Early childhood educators* work in a variety of settings including:

- licensed daycare centres
- infant and toddler centres
- before- and after-school programs
- nursery schools and preschool facilities
- community centres
- recreational facilities

**Finding Advertised Jobs**

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

**Local Newspapers**

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

**Online Job Postings**

- **BC Aboriginal Child Care Society**  
  [http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/job-postings.php](http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/job-postings.php)
- **Early Childhood Educators of BC - ECEBC**  
  [http://www.ecebc.ca/jobs.html](http://www.ecebc.ca/jobs.html)
- **Vancouver Society of Children’s Centres**  
  [http://www.vsocc.org/vsocc_careers_topnav.html](http://www.vsocc.org/vsocc_careers_topnav.html)
- **Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre**  
  [http://wstcoast.mrhost.ca/](http://wstcoast.mrhost.ca/)
• YMCA of Greater Vancouver
  provider of daycare, preschool & after school care in Metro Vancouver region
  http://www.vanymca.org/jobs/
• Council of Parent Participation Preschools of BC
  http://www.cpppreschools.bc.ca/jobs.php
• Indeed.com
  http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search

Finding “Hidden Jobs”
Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you with finding jobs in this “hidden” job market.

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers
You can use company directories to produce lists of employers who employ early childhood educators in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they’re hiring.

• Child Care Programs Map – BC Ministry of Children & Family Development
  http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare programas_map.htm?WT.svl=Body
  regional map with contact information for child care centres; search by city and by age of children in care
• Vancouver Society of Children’s Centres
  http://www.vsoccc.org/vsoccc_locations_onpnav.html
• Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre
  http://www.wstcoast.org/parents/lists.html
  list of childcare centres for City of Vancouver
• YMCA of Greater Vancouver
  http://www.vanymca.org/childcare/earlychildhood.html - child care centres
  http://www.vanymca.org/childcare/parttimepreschool.html - preschools
**Reference Canada**

http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada

Click on “Start Search” beside Canadian Businesses, then select the “Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter “Child care service”** and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

**You can also try entering “Preschools” to find more company names.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

**NOTE:** You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).

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**Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies**

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

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**Networking and the Hidden Job Market:**

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain “Canadian experience.” They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.
Volunteer opportunities

- **Volunteer BC**
  [http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/](http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/)

- **GoVolunteer.ca**
  [http://govolunteer.ca/](http://govolunteer.ca/)

- **YMCA of Greater Vancouver**
  Volunteer opportunities may be available in child care centres (50 locations), family programs and community services
  [http://www.vanymca.org/giving/volunteerwithus.html](http://www.vanymca.org/giving/volunteerwithus.html)

- **YWCA of Metro Vancouver**
  Volunteer opportunities may be available in the YWCA’s Family Services programs and their four licensed child care centres
  [http://www.ywcavan.org/help/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.ywcavan.org/help/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities)

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**
  Go to [http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca](http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca)
  [Search Networking for Employment]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
  Go to [http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca](http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca)
  [Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/ to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

For more information see:

- Writing Resumes and Cover Letters
  Go to http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca [Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With training and formal education, early childhood educators can take on the management of several programs within an agency or advance to the position of executive director of an agency. Early childhood educator assistants can become early childhood educators.

With experience you may progress to senior positions such as:

- infant development consultant
- supported child development coordinator
- daycare supervisor
- administrator for early childhood education centres
- ECE instructor

You may also become a private daycare operator.

- Early Childhood Educators of BC
  [http://www.ecebc.ca/](http://www.ecebc.ca/)
- BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
  [http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/](http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/)
- BC Family Child Care Association
  [http://www.bcfcca.ca/](http://www.bcfcca.ca/)
- Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre
- Learn More About Working in BC and Canada
  Go to [http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca](http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca)
  [Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at [http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/](http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/).