

Early Childhood Educators

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Early Childhood Educators [NOC 2021: 22212 / NOC 2016: 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 helper / supervisor
- infant and toddler educator

1. What Would I Do?

Early childhood educators work with young children from birth to age 5. You provide care to ensure their security and well-being and lead activities that develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth.

Early childhood educator assistants provide care for children, with guidance from early childhood educators.

Early childhood educators' duties include:

- lead activities through stories, music, play, field trips and provide opportunities to express creativity through art, drama and movement
- protect children's health and safety
- assess the abilities, interests and needs of children and discuss progress or problems with parents and other staff members
- deal with signs of learning, development and behavioural issues
- guide and assist children in the development of proper eating, dressing and toilet habits
- respect the culture of all children
- develop and evaluate teaching aids and projects
- do paperwork and keep records

Early childhood educator assistants' duties include:

- support early childhood educators in carrying out programs that promote the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of children
- engage children in activities by telling stories, teaching songs and preparing crafts
- prepare snacks and arrange rooms or furniture for lunch and rest periods
- assist with proper eating, dressing and toilet habits
- maintain daycare equipment and assist in housekeeping and cooking duties

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Early Childhood Educators and Assistants**
<https://www.workbc.ca/plan-career/explore-careers>
- **Career Cruising – Profile for Early Childhood Educator**
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

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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. You may be exposed to illness by sick children, as well as to challenging issues in the classroom.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary is \$39,501. Your hourly wages can range from \$15.65 to \$27.

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

Community/Area	Low (\$/hour)	Median (\$/hour)	High (\$/hour)
British Columbia	15.65	19.96	27.00
Cariboo Region	15.65	18.50	23.94
Kootenay Region	15.65	19.96	27.00
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	15.65	20.00	27.00
Northeast Region	15.65	19.96	27.00
Thompson–Okanagan Region	16.40	18.94	24.04
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	16.00	20.00	26.00

Chart from Job Bank, Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

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 Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

The employment outlook is good for early childhood educators and assistants in British Columbia for the 2022-2024 period.

Many job openings will result from high worker turnover (due to the low pay and the physically and emotionally challenging nature of the work). In addition, the B.C. government has committed to significantly increase the number of child-care spaces across the province. As a result, 8,600 more early childhood educators will likely be needed over the next decade.

Rural areas continue to have a shortage of qualified workers. You will be especially high demand if you are certified to work with children with special needs, infants or toddlers.

Employment Outlook



Sources:

WorkBC & Job Bank Canada <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-job-outlooks>

5. How do I become an early childhood educator?

To work as an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) or Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ACEA) in a licensed child care facility in B.C. you must be certified by the **Early Childhood Educator Registry**, administered by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Certificate Requirements

Three main types of certificates are available:

- **ECE 5 Year Certificate:** you are able to work alone and/or as the primary educator in licensed child care programs for children 3 to 5 years of age and may work alongside an Infant Toddler Educator in licensed programs for children under 36-months. You require **at least one** of the following
 - successful completion of a basic early childhood education training program recognized by the ECE Registry
 - successful completion of a training program deemed equivalent by the ECE Registry
 - valid certification or registration in another Canadian province or territory

And

 - have 500 hours of work experience under the supervision of a Canadian certified ECE
 - good character reference

- **ECE 1 Year Certificate** for early childhood educator **without 500 hours of supervised work experience**
 - requirements: graduation from a recognized basic and/or post-basic ECE program
 - allows you to act in the position of a fully-certified ECE while working towards your 500 hours – can only be renewed once within 1 year if you have not completed the required 500 hours
 - good character reference

- **Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) Certificate:** to work alongside ECEs and/or Infant Toddler Educators, you require **at least one** of the following:
 - successful completion of at least one early childhood education course in child guidance; child health, safety, and nutrition; or child development, completed within the last 5 years at a program recognized by the ECE Registry
 - successful completion of one course within the last 5 years that is deemed equivalent by the ECE Registry
 - valid certification or registration in another Canadian province or territory

And

- good character reference

If you qualify for an ECE Five Year Certificate, you may also be eligible to apply for one or both of the specialized certificates:

- **Infant & Toddler Educator**
- **Special Needs Early Childhood Educator**

More information:

- **Become an Early Childhood Educator**
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/training-and-professional-development/become-an-early-childhood-educator>
- **ECE Education Support Fund**
<https://www.ecebc.ca/ece-education-support-fund>
BC government program that provides funding to support individuals who are entering or graduating from recognized ECE post-secondary programs.

Internationally Trained Early Childhood Educators & Assistants:

For information on evaluation of ECE education received outside Canada:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/training-and-professional-development/become-an-early-childhood-educator/pathways/international>

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**
<https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/services/job-postings/>
- **Early Childhood Educators of BC - ECEBC**
https://www.ecebc.ca/job_postings/search
- **Vancouver Society of Children's Centres**
<https://vsocc.org/working-with-vsocc/>
- **Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre**
https://www.wstcoast.org/job_postings/search
- **YMCA of Greater Vancouver**
provider of daycare, preschool & after school care in Metro Vancouver region
<https://www.gv.ymca.ca/join-our-team>

- **Council of Parent Participation Preschools of BC**
<https://cpppreschools.bc.ca/job-postings/>
- **Indeed.com**
https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
- **BC JobConnect**
<https://www.bcjobconnect.ca> **must have permanent resident number**
newcomers can post their skills, education and work experience to BC employers looking for workers

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 Map – BC Ministry of Children & Family Development**
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/how-to-access-child-care/search-for-child-care>
- **Vancouver Society of Children's Centres**
<https://vsocc.org/about-vsocc/locations/>
- **Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre**
<https://www.wstcoast.org/choosing-child-care/search>
- **YMCA of Greater Vancouver**
https://onehsn.com/ymcagv/ux_2_0/Landing/FindChildCare
- **Reference Canada**
<https://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"

and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

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).

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.

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**

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

- **GoVolunteer.ca**

<https://govolunteer.ca/>

- **YMCA of Greater Vancouver**

Volunteer opportunities may be available in child care centres (50 locations), family programs and community services

<https://www.gv.ymca.ca/volunteer>

- **Family Services of Greater Vancouver**
<https://fsgv.ca/volunteer/>
- **YWCA of Metro Vancouver**
<https://ywcavan.org/help/volunteer>
Volunteer opportunities in the YWCA's Family Services programs and licensed child care centres
- **Public Recreation Centres and Parks**
<https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/municipalities>
go to your local city/town website and search for 'parks' or 'recreation' or 'community centre'; when you locate your local recreation centre, search for 'volunteer'
- **School Districts/Boards:**
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/apps/imcl/imclWeb/Home.do>
go to your local school district website and search for 'volunteer'

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/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, <https://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**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/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

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Early Childhood Educators of BC**
<https://www.ecebc.ca/>
- **BC Aboriginal Child Care Society**
<https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/>
- **BC Family Child Care Association**
<https://bcfcc.ca/>
- **Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre**
<https://www.wstcoast.org/>
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/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 <https://www.vpl.ca/siic/>