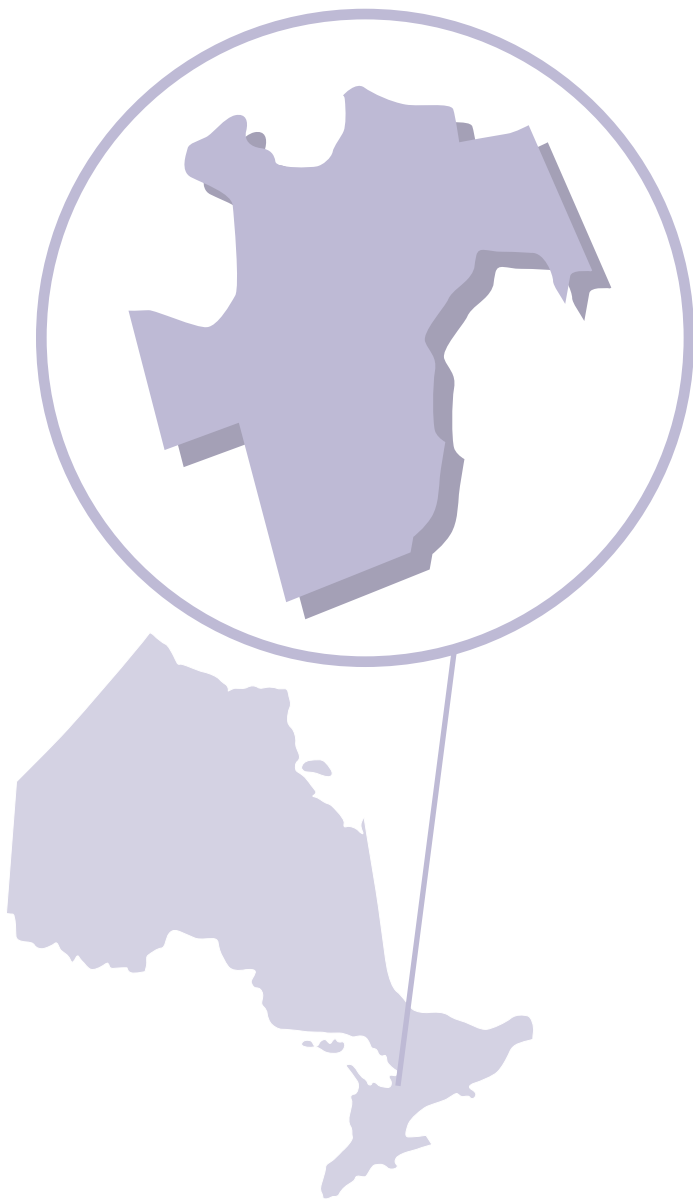


# knowing u numbers

A community approach to understanding  
the early childhood education workforce

## County of Simcoe





# County of Simcoe

The regional data presented here are part of the larger provincial early childhood education workforce study **Knowing Our Numbers** (KON). The County of Simcoe is one of 43 regional children's service districts that participated in the study representing over 91% of all regions in Ontario. Details on the project, methodology, and province-wide results can be found [here](#). In the **Executive Report**, the County of Simcoe is part of the 'Central West' data region. Census data provided on the following page allows readers to put the results into the context of regional demographics.

## **This report should be cited as:**

Akbari, E., McCuaig, K., Schurter, M. Varmuza, P., Akbari, S., Mudie, S. (2024). *Knowing Our Numbers: A Provincial Study with a Local Lens on the Early Childhood Education Workforce in Ontario. The County of Simcoe.*

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# County of Simcoe

## Population and Family

<b>Population</b>		<b>Average number of children per family</b>	1.8
2021	533,169		
2016	479,635	<b>One-parent families</b>	16.1%
<i>Change since 2016:</i>	<i>+11.20%</i>		
<b>Population density per sq km</b>	110.6	<b>Lone-parent families</b>	
		Women	12.3%
<b>Median age</b>	43.2 years	Men	3.8%
<b>Racialized population</b>	12.4%	<b>Marital status</b>	
<b>Multi-generational households</b>	4.2%	Married or living common-law	59.4%
<b>Immigrant population</b>	15.7%	Not married or living common-law	40.6%
<b>Indigenous identity</b>	4.7%	Married or common-law with children	42.3%
<b>Education</b>		<b>Language most often spoken at home</b>	
No certificate, diploma, or degree	16.5%	English	91.8%
High school diploma or equivalent	31.6%	French	0.5%
Post secondary certificate, diploma or degree	51.9%	Other	5.7%
<i>*15+ years old</i>		<i>*Estimates associated with Indigenous languages are more affected than most by the incomplete enumeration of certain reserves and settlements in the Census of Population.</i>	
<b>Education obtained outside Canada</b>	7.0%	<b>Home ownership</b>	
<i>*25-64 years old</i>		Owner	77.9%
		Renter	22.0%
		<b>Spending more than 30% on shelter costs</b>	22.9%

## Employment and Income

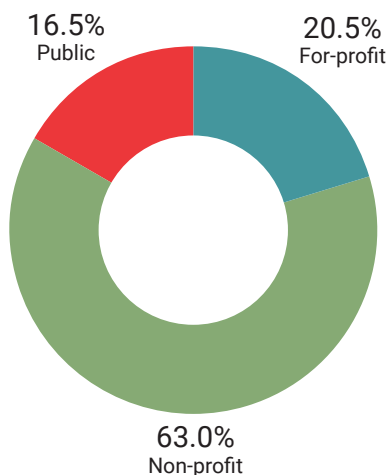
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>		<b>Commuting duration (mins)</b>	<b>Total %</b>	<b>% Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>
Women	58.6%	Less than 15	31.4	25.9	38.3
Men	67.4%	15 to 29	26.8	23.8	30.5
<b>Unemployment rate</b>		30 to 44	16.5	17.8	14.9
Women	13.7%	45 to 59	10.2	12.4	7.5
Men	10.2%	60 minutes and over	15.1	20.0	8.8
<b>Prevalence of low income (LIM)</b>		<b>Income distribution</b>	<b>Total %</b>	<b>% Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>
0-17	9.1%	In bottom half of the distribution	46.0	44.9	47.2
0-5	9.1%	In bottom decile	7.4	7.4	7.4
18-64	7.2%	In second decile	8.8	8.2	9.4
<i>*LIM: Low Income Measure reflects those whose incomes are below half of the median of the adjusted income distribution</i>		In third decile	9.5	9.1	9.8
		In fourth decile	10.0	9.9	10.2
<b>Median employment income</b>	\$36,800	In fifth decile	10.3	10.3	10.3
<b>Median employment income in 2020 for full-year full-time workers</b>	\$64,000	In top half of the distribution	54.0	55.1	52.8
<b>Median total income of household in 2020</b>	\$93,000	In sixth decile	10.9	11.0	10.8
<b>Median after-tax income of household in 2020</b>	\$82,000	In seventh decile	11.2	11.3	11.2
		In eighth decile	11.3	11.5	11.1
		In ninth decile	11.1	11.5	10.7
		In top decile	9.4	9.7	9.0

Reference: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=simcoe&DGUIDlist=2021A00033543&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=0>

# Sample Characteristics

A total of 129 individuals working in early years services in the County of Simcoe responded to the survey (referred to as the 'workforce survey'). Of these, 78% are RECEs and 22% are non-RECEs (referred as the 'workforce'). Most respondents are from non-profit programs (63%). Public program respondents are primarily from full-day Kindergarten (FDK). Additionally, 27 directors responded to the survey. As the number of respondents who are licensed home child care providers in the County is low (n=5), data are not presented here; these data are included in the [Executive Report](#).

Percentage Respondents by Auspice Workforce



## Simcoe County Workforce Totals (As of May 2023)

Number of educators working in licensed child care = 1,887<sup>a</sup>

Educators Special Needs Resourcing = 45<sup>b</sup>

Educators in EarlyON Child and Family Centres = 40<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Based on wage enhancement grant data.

<sup>b</sup> FTE

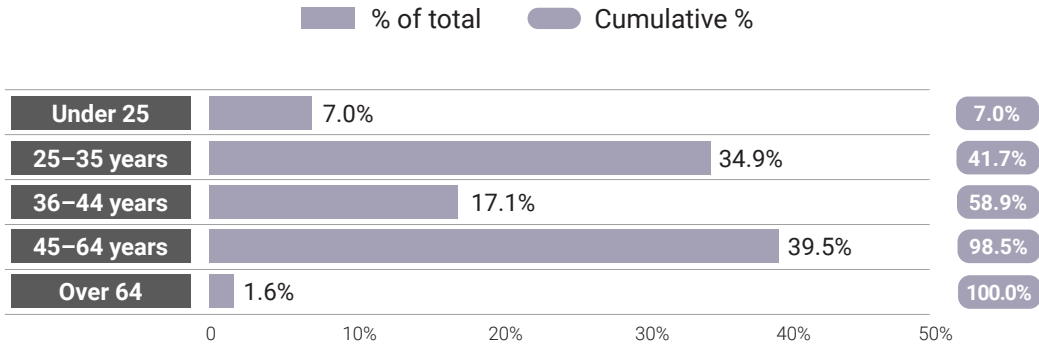
<sup>c</sup> FTE



## AGE

Approximately 59% of *workforce* respondents are under the age of 45. Director/supervisor respondents in Simcoe County are also younger than the provincial average sample. Across participating regions, 42.7% of director/supervisor participants are under the age of 45 years compared to 53.9% in Simcoe County.

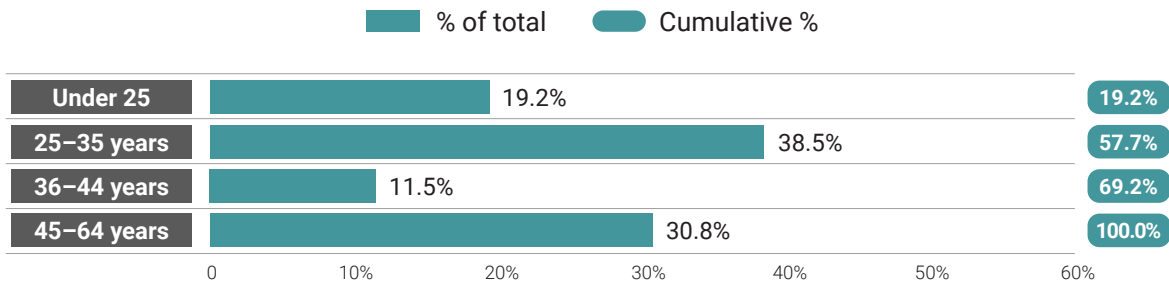
### Age Distribution of Respondents *Workforce*



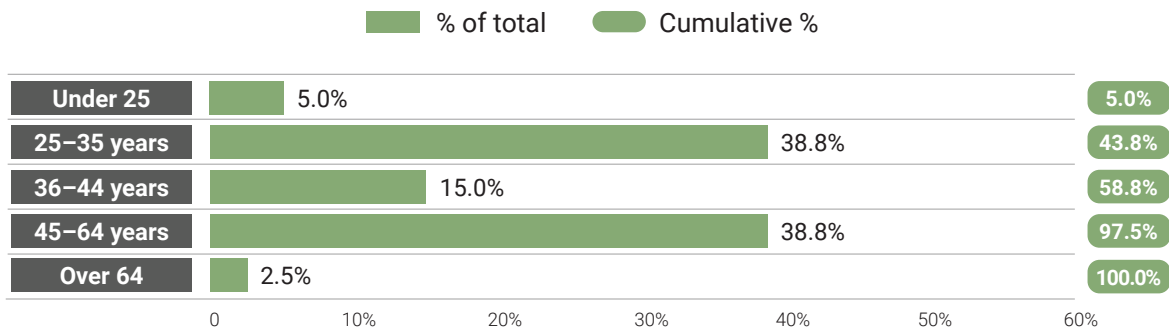
Respondents working in for-profit organizations are more likely to be younger. Approximately 69% of *workforce* participants from for-profit programs are under the age of 45 years. By comparison, about 59% and 48% are under 45 years of age in non-profit and public programs respectively.

## Age Distribution by Auspice *Workforce*

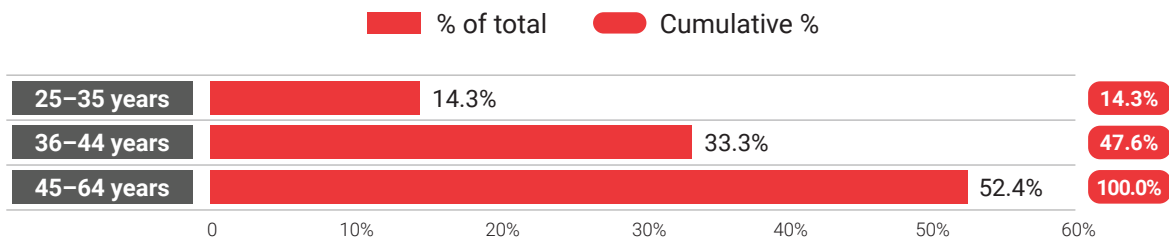
### For-Profit



### Non-Profit



### Public



## YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

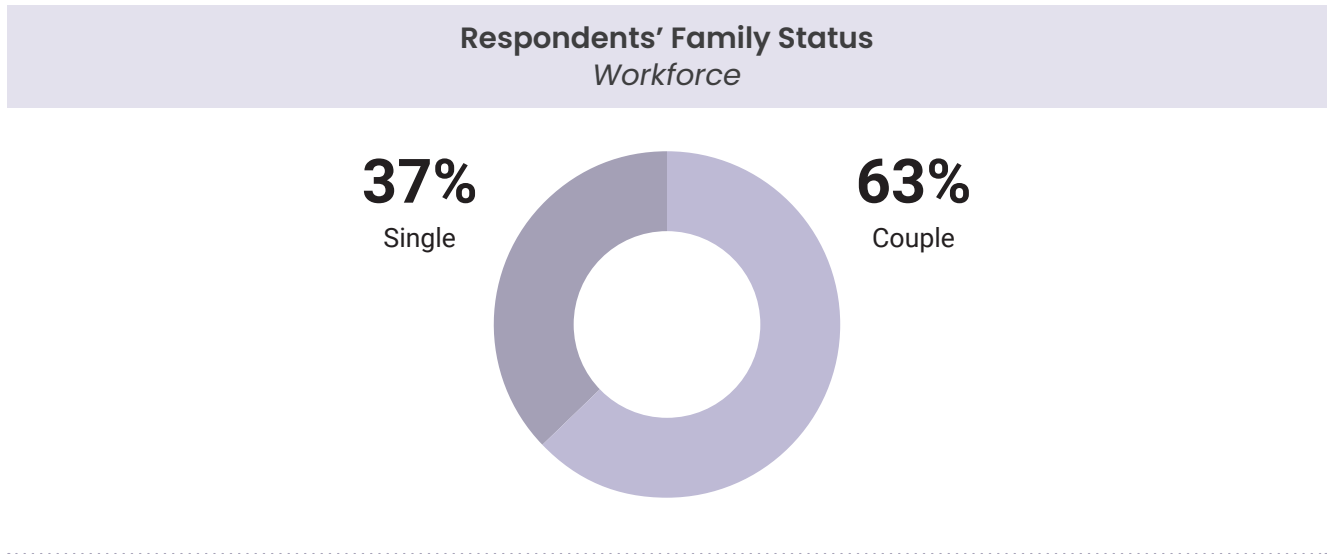
Participants who work in for-profit programs have the fewest median years of experience. In contrast, public programs tend to have more experienced educators.

Years of Experience by Auspice Workforce						
Auspice	Mean	Minimum	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	Maximum
For-profit	8.5	0.0	1.0	6.0	13.0	30.0
Non-profit	14.4	0.0	7.0	11.0	21.0	49.0
Public	21.8	2.0	20.0	23.0	26.0	34.0

Of the 27 directors/supervisors who responded to the survey, 81.8% reported they are RECEs compared to 94.7% across all 43 participating regions. Of those who are RECEs, 81.8% have been registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators for less than five years.

## FAMILY STATUS

Over one-third (37%) of the *workforce* survey respondents are single.

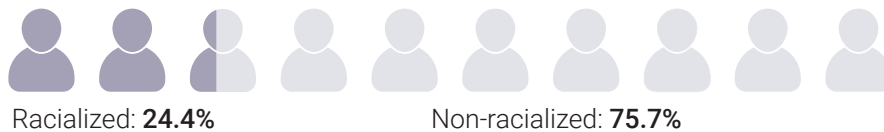




## RACIALIZATION

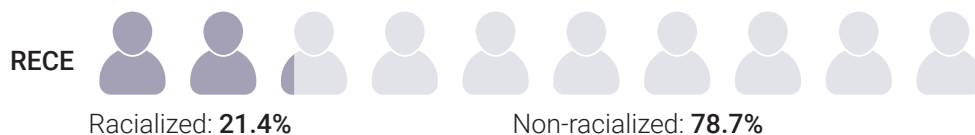
About one-quarter (24.4%) of the *workforce* sample identify as racialized.

### Percentage Racialized Workforce



Non-RECEs are more likely than RECEs to identify as racialized. This is similar to the province-wide findings.

### Percentage Racialized by RECE Status Workforce





# Compensation

## WAGES

Wages of RECEs are higher than for non-RECEs. Those working in for-profit programs have the lowest hourly wages. Approximately 28% of respondents report having additional employment to supplement their primary wages.

### Hourly Wages by Auspice and RECE Status Workforce

Auspice	RECE status	
	Non-RECE	RECE
For-profit	\$21.89	\$23.71
Non-profit	\$23.19	\$25.77
Public	N/A	\$26.71
<b>Average across auspice</b>	<b>\$22.72</b>	<b>\$25.61</b>

Reported director/supervisor wages in Simcoe Region are lower than for those in provincial participating regions. The median director/supervisor hourly wage in the overall provincial findings is \$30 per hour, with a minimum of \$18 per hour and a maximum of \$80 per hour.

### County of Simcoe Director/Supervisor Wage Range by Position

Position	Average	Minimum	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	Maximum
Director	\$27.35	\$19.00	\$25.00	\$28.00	\$30.00	\$34.00
Assistant Director*	\$27.00	\$26.00	\$26.00	\$27.00	\$28.00	\$28.00
<b>Average across position</b>	<b>\$27.32</b>	<b>\$19.00</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$28.00</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>	<b>\$34.00</b>

\*Assistant Directors should be interpreted with caution due to low sample size.

## BENEFITS

Over 88% of *workforce* respondents report having access to paid sick days. Fewer than half (46.7%) report having pensions or RRSP contributions through their employer. Just over half (56.7%) have paid professional learning opportunities. Pay increases for obtaining a new credential or degree in early education (20.8%) and tuition assistance (8.3%) are not very common.

### Percentage of Respondents with Access to Non-Mandatory Benefits *Workforce*



**88.3%**

Paid sick days



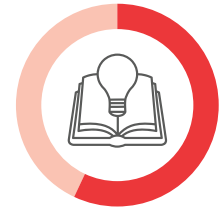
**77.5%**

Extended health benefits  
(e.g., dental, physiotherapy, etc.)



**68.0%**

Paid bereavement leave



**56.7%**

Paid professional development



**47.5%**

Paid team meeting time  
during the workday



**46.7%**

Pension benefits or  
contributions to an RRSP



**43.3%**

Paid personal or  
mental health days



**28.3%**

Paid programming time  
during the workday



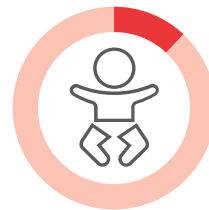
**23.3%**

Salary scale with regular  
guaranteed increases  
reflecting my qualifications,  
responsibilities, and seniority



**20.8%**

Pay increase for obtaining  
a new credential or degree  
in early childhood education



**11.7%**

Parental leave top-up



**8.3%**

Tuition assistance

# Workforce Stability, Stress, and Job Satisfaction

## DISCRIMINATION

Approximately 36% of *workforce* respondents report having experienced workplace discrimination. The types of discrimination experienced vary, with education/seniority (60%) being the most common, followed by bullying (51%), and mental health (26%). Note that bullying may involve, or be rooted in, other forms of discrimination (e.g., racism or ageism).

### Percentage of Respondents Reporting Experiences of Workplace Discrimination *Workforce*



Experiencing discrimination: **36.2%**

Not experiencing discrimination: **63.8%**

### Types of Discrimination *Workforce*

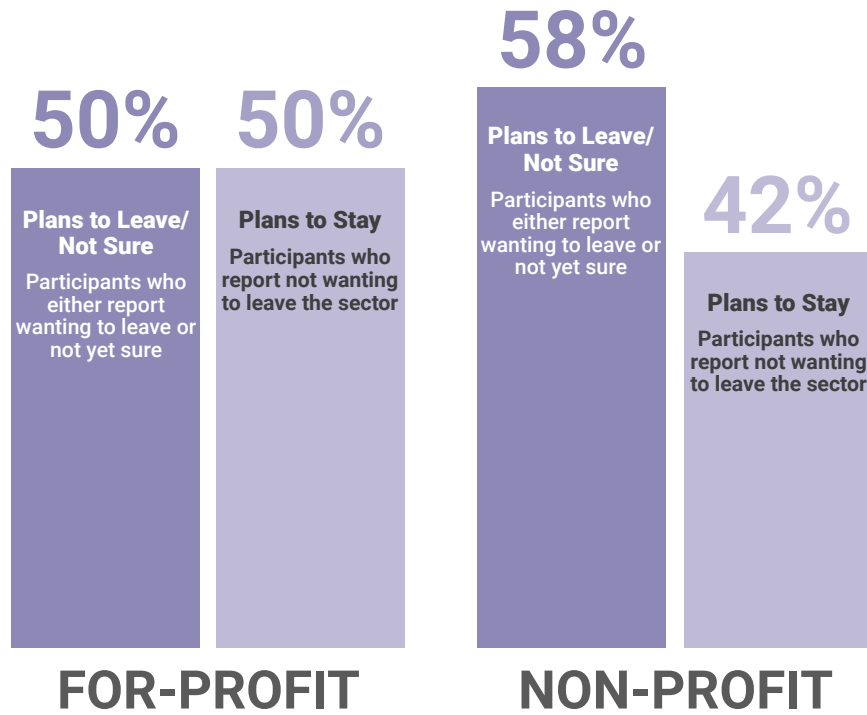
Education/seniority	60%
Bullying	51%
Mental health	26%
Ageism	21%
Racism	16%
Sexism	14%
Body prejudice	14%
Religious belief	14%
Ableism	7%
Immigration status	7%
Homophobia	2%



## JOB SATISFACTION

Across all auspices, only 39% of respondents from Simcoe report plans to stay in the sector over the next five years. Those who work in non-profit programs are more likely to report plans to leave, or say they are unsure. While the differences between for- and non-profit are trends, they do not reach statistical significance. Low responses prevent reporting on participants in public programs.

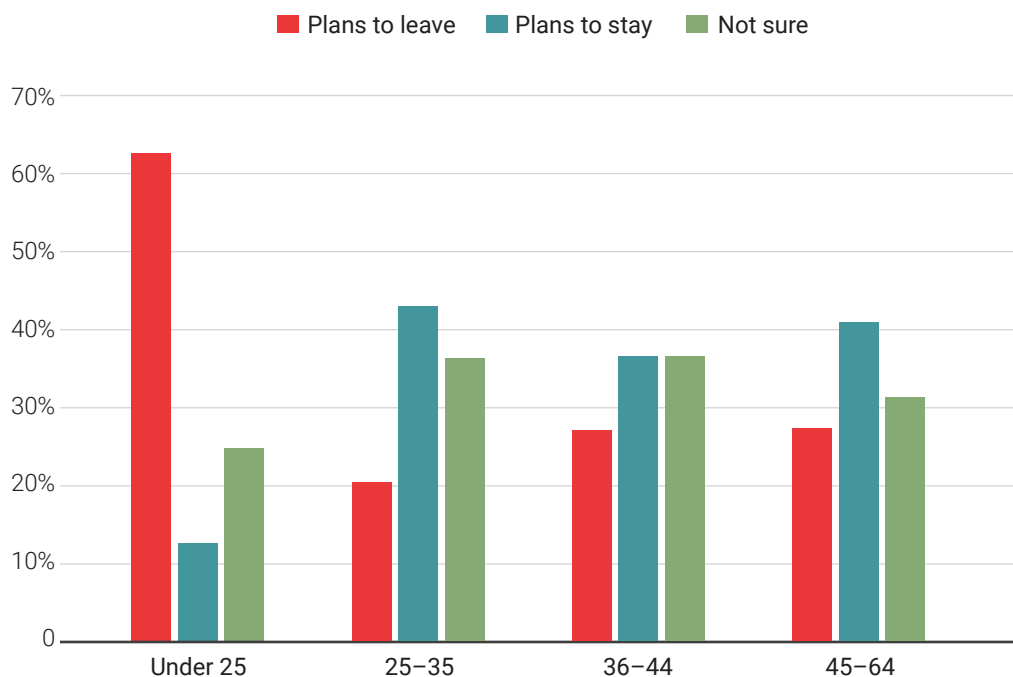
### Plans to Leave the Sector by Auspice *Workforce*





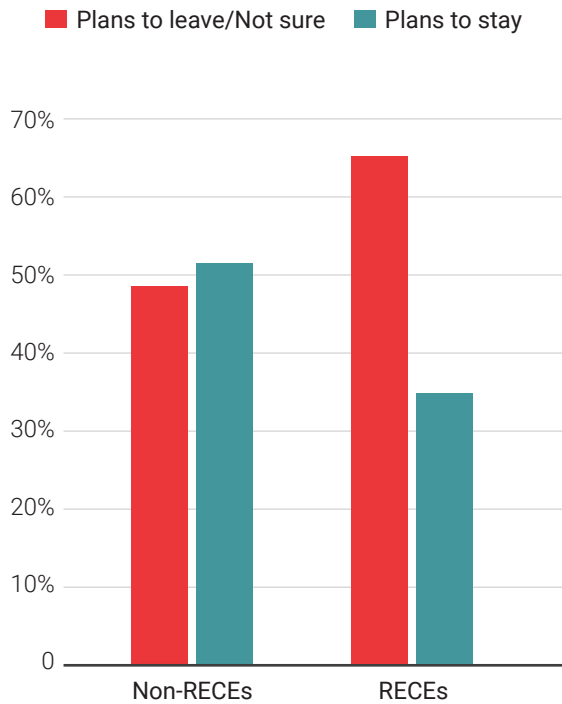
Those under the age of 25 years are much more likely to report plans to leave the sector (62.5%). Only 12.5% in this age group plan to stay, while another 25% report being unsure. This has important implications for policy development and investment in retention strategies. Note that those 65+ are not included in these findings as plans for retirement would confound results.

### Plans to Leave the Sector by Age of Respondent *Workforce*



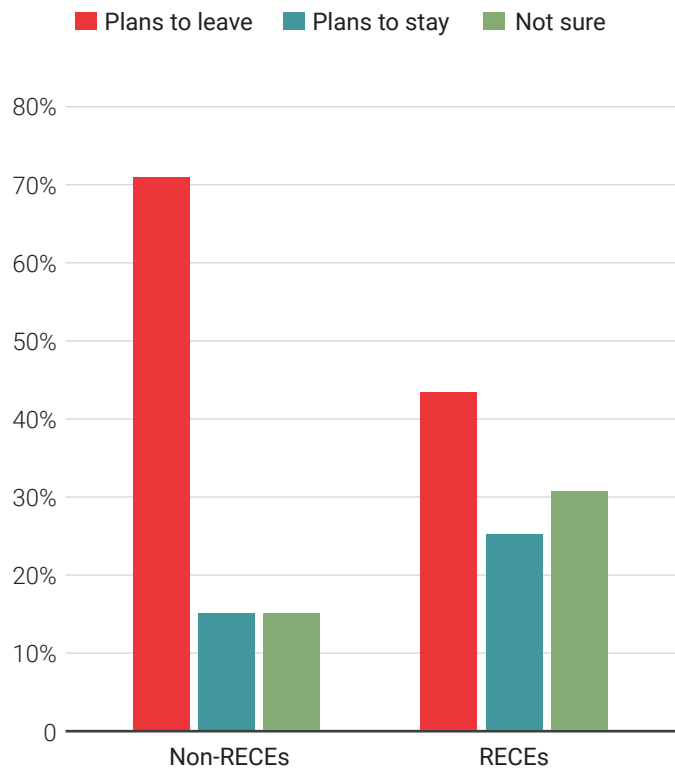
Overall, only 34.7% of RECE respondents report plans to stay in the sector with 65.4% either planning to leave or reporting they are unsure. Non-RECE respondents are more likely to report plans to stay in the sector (51.9%).

### Plans to Leave the Sector by RECE Status *Workforce*



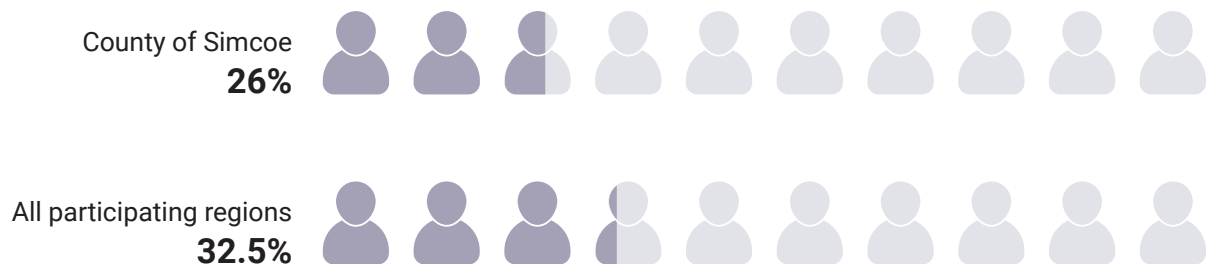
Plans to leave the sector are associated with experiences of workplace discrimination. Those who experience discrimination are more likely to report plans to leave the sector in the next five years. Of these, non-RECEs are more likely to report plans to leave compared to RECEs. This has implications for professional learning and human resource management. More detailed discussion can be found in the [Executive Report](#).

**Plans to Leave by Those Who Experience Workplace Discrimination by RECE Status**  
*Workforce*



Only 26% of director/supervisor respondents in Simcoe report wanting to stay in the sector compared with 32.5% across all participating regions.

**Percentage of Directors/Supervisors with Plans to Stay in the Sector**  
**County of Simcoe Versus All Participating Regions**



## WORKPLACE STRESS

Those who work within public auspices (primarily FDK) report the highest levels of stress on a scale of 1 (low stress) to 5 (high stress). In addition, RECEs report higher stress levels than non-RECEs.

### Average Level of Stress by Auspice Workforce

(1=low stress; 5=high stress)

Auspice	RECE status		Average across RECE status
	Non-RECE	RECE	
For-profit	3.3	3.5	3.4
Non-profit	2.9	3.5	3.3
Public	N/A	3.6	3.6
<b>Average across auspice</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>

Participants in the County generally report a low level of job satisfaction. On a scale of 1 (low job satisfaction) to 5 (high job satisfaction), study participants' level of satisfaction is 2.6 out of 5.

### Average Level of Job Satisfaction by Auspice and RECE Status Workforce

(1=low job satisfaction; 5=high job satisfaction)

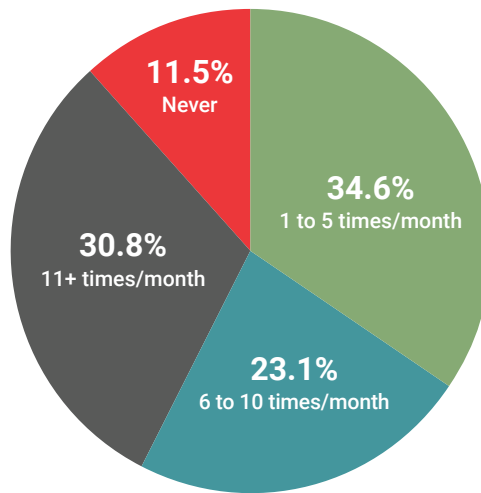
Auspice	RECE status		Average across RECE status
	Non-RECE	RECE	
For-profit	2.5	2.6	2.6
Non-profit	2.8	2.6	2.7
Public (FDK)	N/A	2.3	2.3
<b>Average across auspice</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>



## WORKPLACE STABILITY

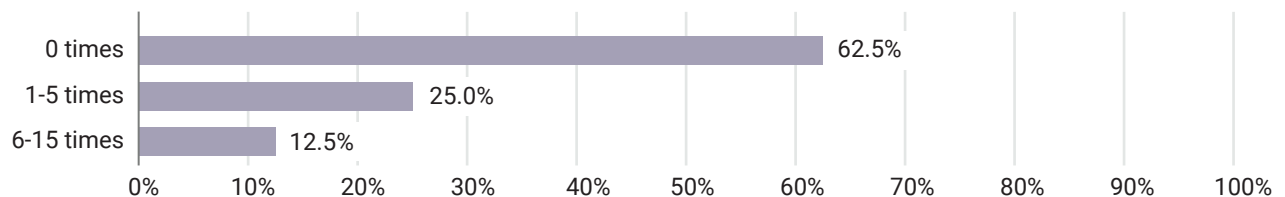
Directors often stand in for absent staff by necessity, taking them away from their leadership and administrative duties. More than half (53.9%) of management staff report having to fill in more than six times per month to maintain ratios, with 30.8% reporting this occurs more than 11 times per month. This is on par with the overall provincial findings.

### Number of Times per Month Directors/Supervisors Fill in Ratio



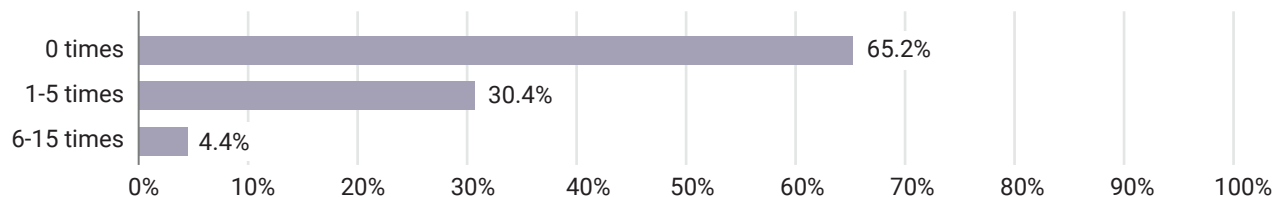
Staff shortages also have deleterious effects on the inclusion of children with disabilities or varying needs. About 37% of director/supervisor respondents report they have had to send a child(ren) with a disability home due to staffing shortages. This is higher than the provincial sample average of 26.6%.

### Percentage Reporting Frequency of Times in the Previous 12 Months Directors/Supervisors Sent Children with Disabilities Home Due to Staffing Shortages



Almost 35% of Simcoe County director/supervisor respondents report they have had to de-enlist at least one child with a disability from their program in the previous 12 months due to staffing shortages. This is higher than the provincial sample average of 16.5%. Furthermore, 42.3% (compared to 27.3% in provincial findings) report they have had to refuse admission to a child with a disability in the previous 12 months due to workforce shortages. Almost 4% of respondents have had to deny admission 6 to 15 times in the previous 12 months (data not shown).

**Percentage Reporting Frequency of Times in the Previous 12 Months  
Directors/Supervisors De-enlisted Children with Disabilities Due to Staffing Shortages**



Less than half (46.5%) of *workforce* respondents in Simcoe County report they would recommend a career in the early years to others who are interested.

**Percentage of *Workforce* Respondents Who Recommend a Career in the Early Years**



Just over two-thirds of *workforce* respondents (68.8%) state they would recommend their program to a family member or friend looking for child care.

**Percentage of *Workforce* Respondents Who Recommend Their Early Years Program to a Family Member or Friend**



Note: Totals do not add up to 100 due to missing data

# Professional Development

## FORMS OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Simcoe County respondents report that the most common form of professional learning in the previous 12 months was online delivery (83%), followed by performance reviews (64.3%). Only 17.1% of respondents report having taken a course in the previous 12 months.

Although online delivery is the most common form of professional learning received in the previous 12 months, respondents report it is among the least desired format (17.1%) second only to performance reviews (12.4%). Respondents prefer in-person workshops (32.3%), attending conferences (31.8%), and taking courses for their continued learning (32.6%), all of which are forms of collective learning.

**Forms of Professional Learning Received by Region in the Previous 12 Months and Desired Forms of Professional Learning**  
*Workforce*



## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONTENT

Just under half of respondents report receiving training in cultural diversity (41.9%), supporting children with disabilities (41.1%), and anti-bias/anti-racism (45.7%) in the previous 12 months. In contrast, participants report the least amount of professional learning in the areas of incorporating Afrocentric ways of being (7%), supporting 2LSGBTQIA+ children and families (17.1%), and incorporating land-based learning (17.1%). Census data for the region help contextualize results.

The most wanted professional learning reported is centred around supporting vulnerable families (53.5%) and critical trauma-informed practice (47.3%). About 40% of participants also report wanting more professional learning centred around supporting newcomer families (43.4%), Indigenous ways of knowing and being/decolonization (41.1%), supporting 2LSGBTQIA+ children and families (40.3%), and incorporating land-based learning (39.5%) and Afrocentric ways of being (39.5%).

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Learning of Respondents in Simcoe County Workforce

In the previous 12 months

