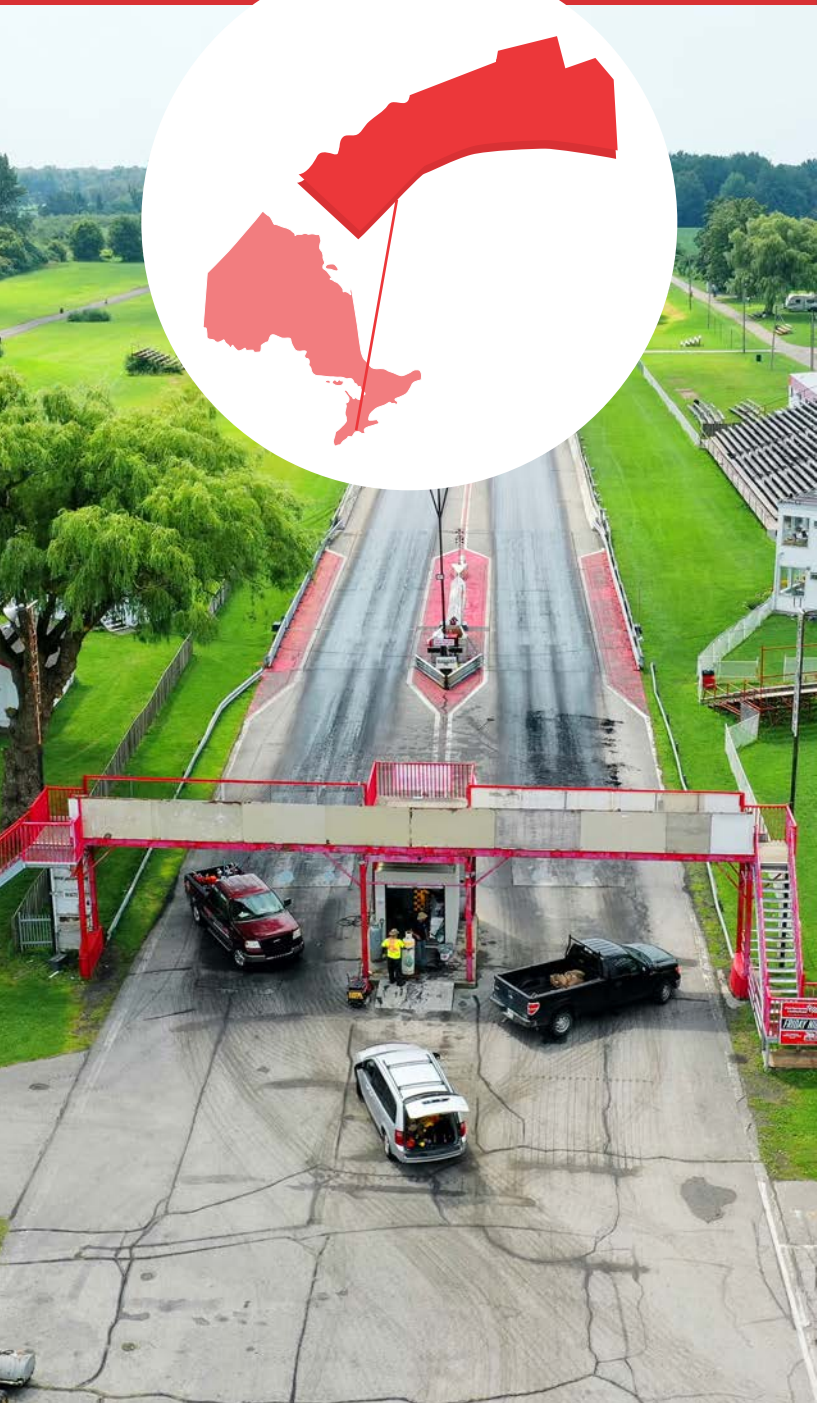


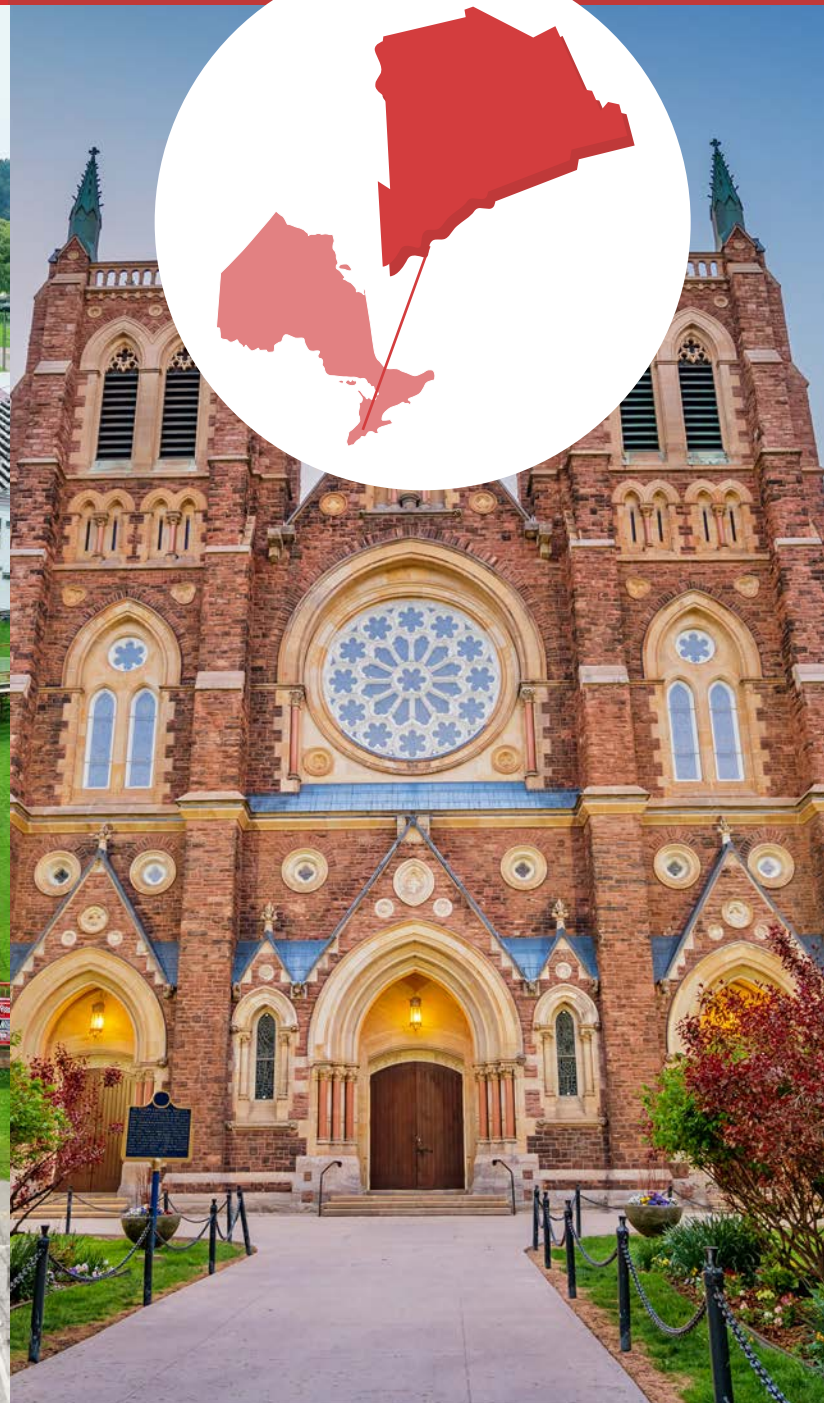
knowing u numbers

A community approach to
understanding the early
childhood education workforce

City of St. Thomas



City of London





City of St. Thomas

City of London

The regional data presented here are part of the larger provincial early childhood education workforce study **Knowing Our Numbers** (KON). The City of St. Thomas is one of 43 regional children's service districts that participated in the study. In total, they represent over 91% of all regions in Ontario. Details on the project, methodology, and province-wide results can be found [here](#). The City of London joined the study post hoc. The data from the two regions were merged in consultation with regional officials. In the **Executive Report**, the Cities of St. Thomas and London are part of the 'West' data region. Census data provided on the following pages allow 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*. City of Toronto.

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City of St. Thomas

Population and Family

Population		Average number of children per family	1.9
2021	94,752		
2016	88,978	One-parent families	15.2%
Change since 2016:	+6.50%		
Population density per sq km	50.4	Lone-parent families	
		Women	11.7%
Median age	43.2 years	Men	3.5%
Racialized population	4.6%	Marital status	
Multi-generational households	2.4%	Married or living common-law	60.9%
Immigrant population	11.7%	Not married or living common-law	39.1%
Indigenous identity	2.2%	Married or common-law with children	40.6%
Education		Language most often spoken at home	
No certificate, diploma, or degree	21.0%	English	94.0%
High school diploma or equivalent	31.5%	French	0.2%
Post secondary certificate, diploma or degree	47.4%	Other	4.8%
<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>	
Education obtained outside Canada	3.4%	Home ownership	
<i>*25-64 years old</i>		Owner	76.6%
		Renter	23.4%
		Spending more than 30% on shelter costs	16.5%

Employment and Income

Labour force participation rate		Commuting duration (mins)	Total %	% Men	% Women
Women	56.7%	Less than 15	39.5	34.8	45.5
Men	66.5%	15 to 29	29.2	29.4	29.1
Unemployment rate		30 to 44	19.6	21.5	17.1
Women	11.6%	45 to 59	6.9	7.9	5.7
Men	9.1%	60 minutes and over	4.7	6.5	2.4
Prevalence of low income (LIM)		Income distribution	Total %	% Men	% Women
0-17	10.5%	In bottom half of the distribution	53.1	51.8	54.4
0-5	11.8%	In bottom decile	8.0	7.7	8.3
18-64	8.3%	In second decile	10.4	9.7	11.0
<i>*LIM: Low Income Measure reflects those whose incomes are below half of the median of the adjusted income distribution</i>		In third decile	11.4	11.1	11.7
		In fourth decile	11.7	11.5	11.8
Median employment income	\$36,000	In fifth decile	11.6	11.7	11.5
Median employment income in 2020 for full-year full-time workers	\$57,600	In top half of the distribution	46.9	48.2	45.6
Median total income of household in 2020	\$83,000	In sixth decile	11.5	11.7	11.3
Median after-tax income of household in 2020	\$73,500	In seventh decile	10.8	11.1	10.5
		In eighth decile	9.8	10.1	9.5
		In ninth decile	8.9	9.3	8.6
		In top decile	5.9	6.1	5.7

Reference: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=elgin&DGUIDlist=2021A00033534&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1,4&HEADERlist=0>

County of Middlesex

Population and Family

Population		Average number of children per family	1.8
2021	500,563	One-parent families	17.6%
2016	455,526	Lone-parent families	
<i>Change since 2016:</i>	<i>+9.9%</i>	Women	14.0%
		Men	3.6%
Population density per sq km	150.9	Marital status	
Median age	39.6 years	Married or living common-law	55.0%
Racialized population	4.6%	Not married or living common-law	45.0%
Multi-generational households	2.3%	Married or common-law with children	41.9%
Immigrant population	22.5%	Language most often spoken at home	
Indigenous identity	2.6%	English	84.0%
Education		French	0.3%
No certificate, diploma, or degree	14.9%	Other	11.9%
High school diploma or equivalent	27.4%	<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>	
Post secondary certificate, diploma or degree	57.7%	Home ownership	
<i>*15+ years old</i>		Owner	61.8%
Education obtained outside Canada	12.8%	Renter	38.2%
<i>*25-64 years old</i>		Spending more than 30% on shelter costs	22.6%

Employment and Income

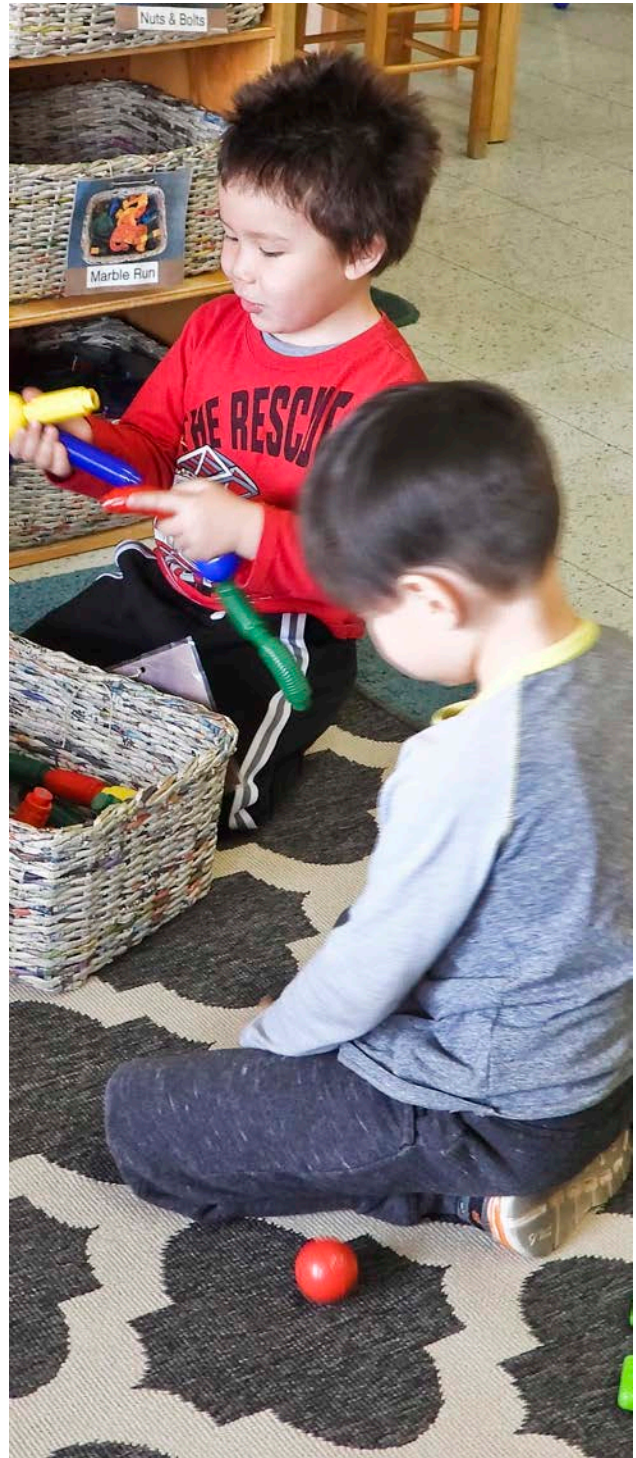
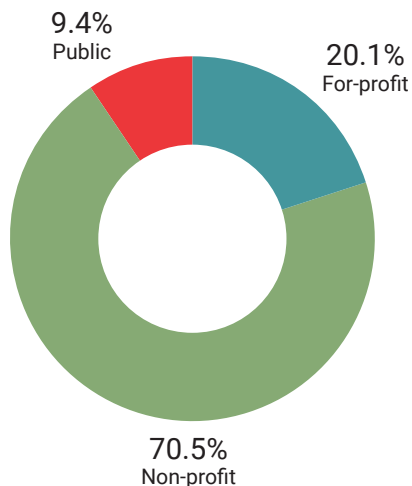
Labour force participation rate		Commuting duration (mins)	Total %	% Men	% Women
Women	58.0%	Less than 15	33.9	30.5	37.9
Men	67.1%	15 to 29	41.4	40.7	42.2
Unemployment rate		30 to 44	15.3	17.2	13.0
Women	13.5%	45 to 59	4.8	5.5	3.9
Men	11.4%	60 minutes and over	4.6	6.1	2.9
Prevalence of low income (LIM)		Income distribution	Total %	% Men	% Women
0-17	15.5%	In bottom half of the distribution	53.4	52.6	54.1
0-5	16.8%	In bottom decile	11.8	11.9	11.8
18-64	11.8%	In second decile	10.7	10.2	11.3
<i>*LIM: Low Income Measure reflects those whose incomes are below half of the median of the adjusted income distribution</i>		In third decile	10.5	10.3	10.6
Median employment income	\$35,600	In fourth decile	10.2	10.1	10.3
Median employment income in 2020 for full-year full-time workers	\$61,200	In fifth decile	10.1	10.1	10.1
Median total income of household in 2020	\$79,500	In top half of the distribution	46.6	47.4	45.9
Median after-tax income of household in 2020	\$71,000	In sixth decile	9.7	9.8	9.7
		In seventh decile	9.6	9.7	9.5
		In eighth decile	9.6	9.7	9.4
		In ninth decile	9.3	9.5	9.1
		In top decile	8.5	8.7	8.2

Reference: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?LANG=E&GENDERlist=1,2,3&STATISTIClist=1,4&DGUIDlist=2021A00033539&HEADERlist=0&SearchText=london>

Sample Characteristics

A total of 141 individuals working in early years services in the City of St. Thomas and the City of London 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 (70.5%). Additionally, 19 directors responded to the survey. As the number of respondents who are licensed home child care providers in the regions is low (n=12), data are not presented here; these data are included in the [Executive Report](#).

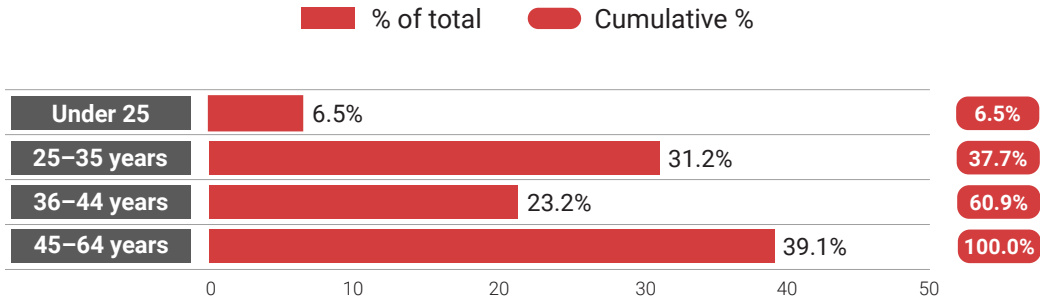
Percentage Respondents by Auspice Workforce



AGE

Approximately 61% of *workforce* respondents are under the age of 45. Director/supervisor respondents in St. Thomas and London are similar in age to the provincial average sample. Across participating regions, 42.7% of director/supervisor participants are under the age of 45 years compared to 38.9% in St. Thomas and London.

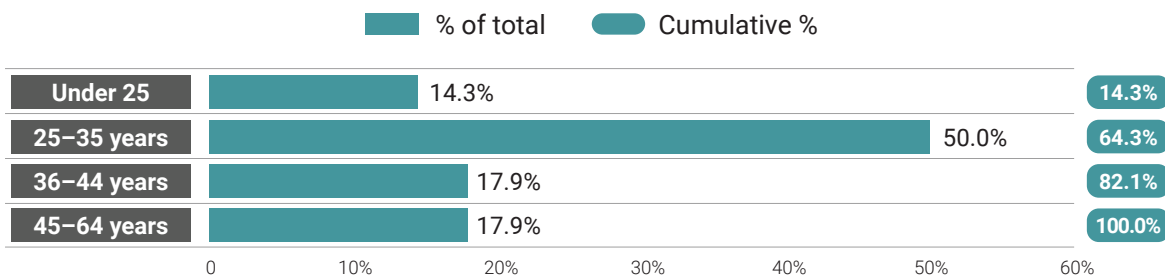
Age Distribution of Respondents *Workforce*



Respondents working in for-profit programs are more likely to be younger. About 82% of for-profit respondents are under the age of 45 years, while only 55.2% of respondents in non-profit programs are under 45 years. Age distribution data for respondents working in public auspices are not presented due to low sample size; these data are included in [provincial-level findings](#).

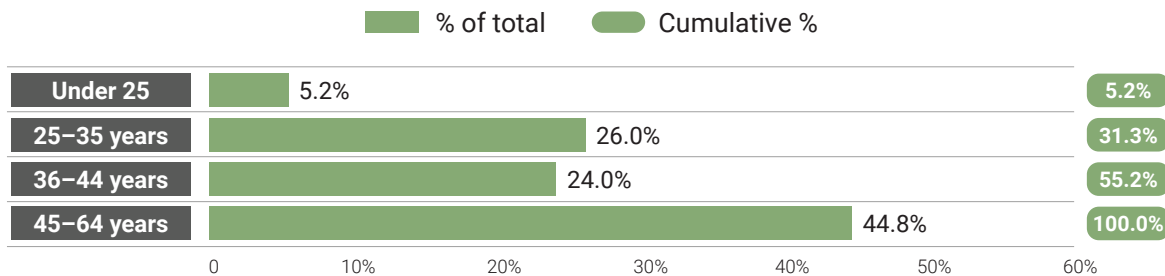
Age Distribution by Auspice Workforce

For-Profit



Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Non-Profit



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.

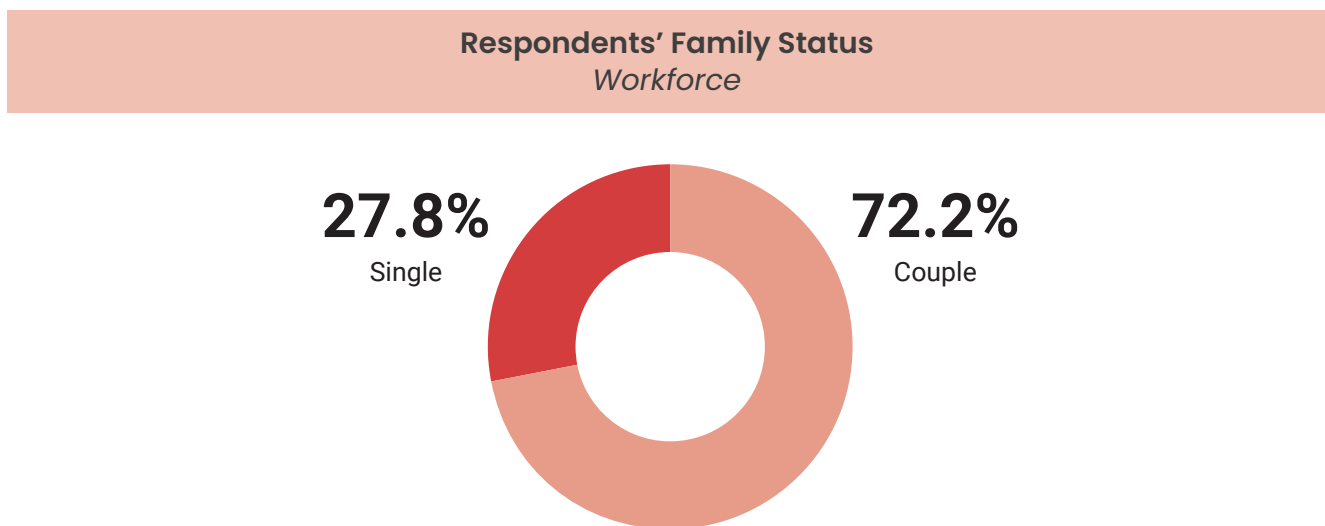
Years of Experience by Auspice <i>Workforce</i>						
Auspice	Mean	Minimum	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	Maximum
For-profit	10.8	0.0	3.5	7.0	14.5	35.0
Non-profit	13.8	0.0	4.0	11.5	24.0	40.0
Public*	16.9	0.0	11.0	15.0	26.0	30.0

*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

Of the 19 directors/supervisors who responded to the survey, 84.2% report they are RECEs compared to 94.7% across all 43 participating regions. Of those who are RECEs, 88.9% have been registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators for less than five years. Findings should be interpreted with caution due to a low sample size.

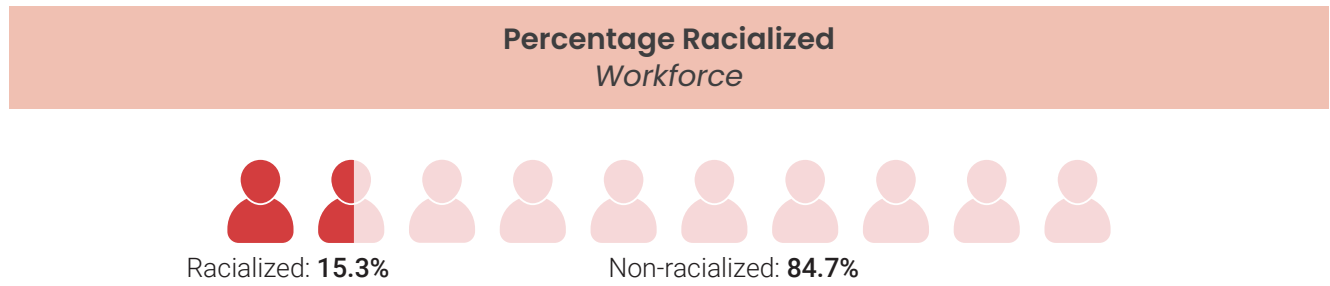
FAMILY STATUS

Approximately 28% of the *workforce* survey respondents are single.



RACIALIZATION

About 15% of the *workforce* sample identify as racialized.



Data for racialization by RECE status are not presented due to a low sample size. Provincial-level results show that non-RECEs are more likely to be racialized than their RECE counterparts. See the [Executive Report](#) for more details.



Compensation

WAGES

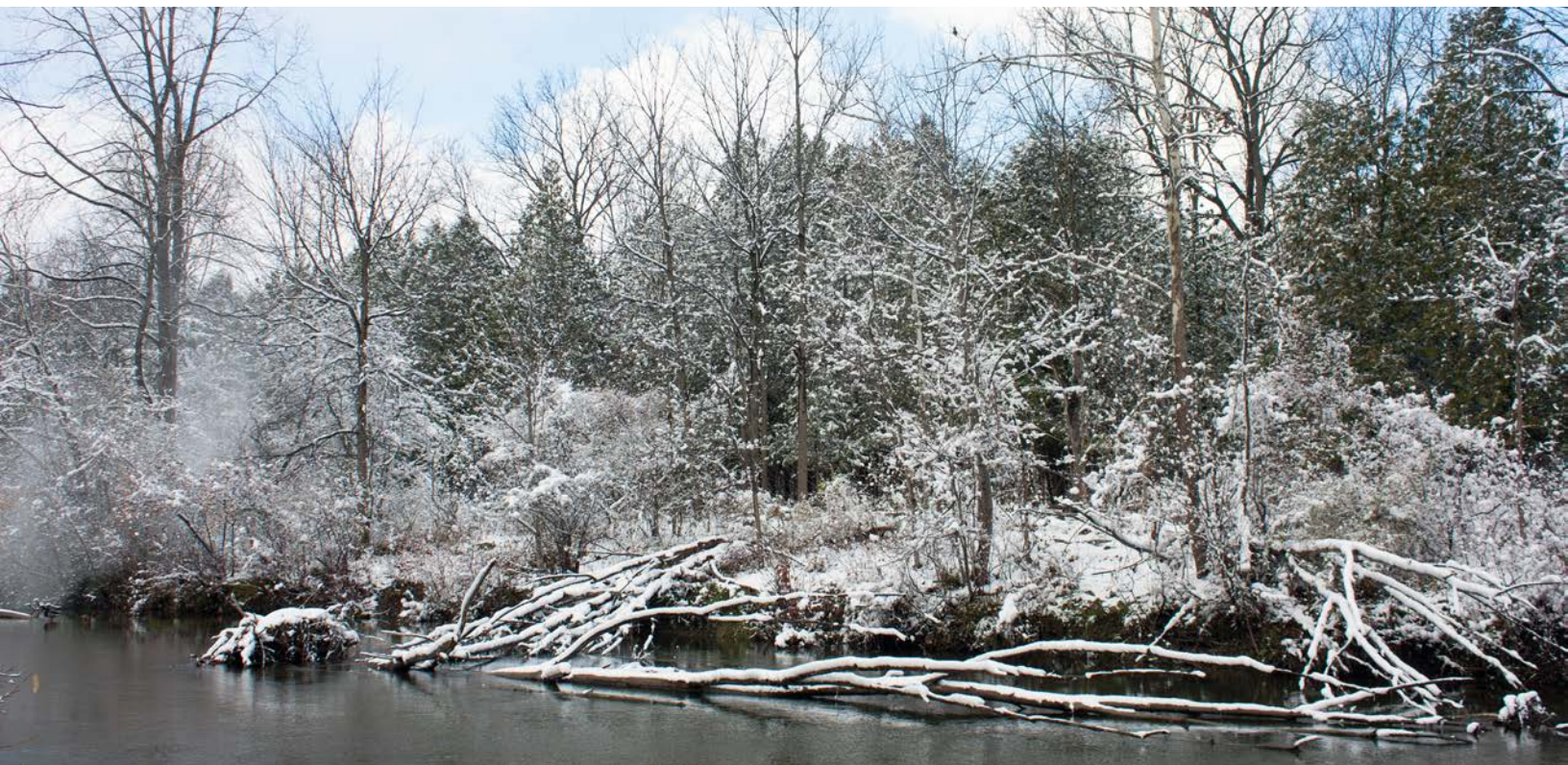
Wages of RECEs are higher than for non-RECEs. Wages in for-profit programs are lower than in non-profit programs. Approximately 21% of respondents report having additional employment to supplement their primary wages.

Hourly Wages by Auspice and RECE Status *Workforce*

Auspice	RECE status	
	Non-RECE	RECE
For-profit	\$18.67	\$21.76
Non-profit	\$21.00	\$23.02
Public*	N/A	\$32.57
Average across auspice	\$20.11	\$23.55

*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

Note: Averages are weighted.



BENEFITS

Almost 81% of *workforce* respondents report having access to paid sick days. Just over one-third (36%) report having pensions or RRSP contributions through their employer. Approximately 62% have access to paid professional learning opportunities. Pay increases for obtaining a new credential or degree in early education are not common (11.5%). Tuition assistance is rare (5%).

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



80.6%

Paid sick days



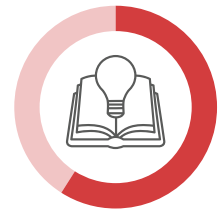
69.1%

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



64.8%

Paid bereavement leave



61.9%

Paid professional
development



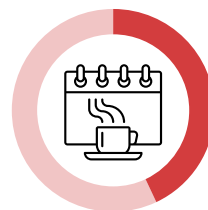
51.1%

Paid team meeting time
during the workday



44.6%

Paid programming time
during the workday



42.5%

Paid personal or
mental health days



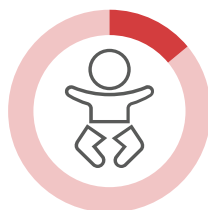
36.0%

Pension benefits or
contributions to an RRSP



22.3%

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



14.4%

Parental leave top-up



11.5%

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



5.0%

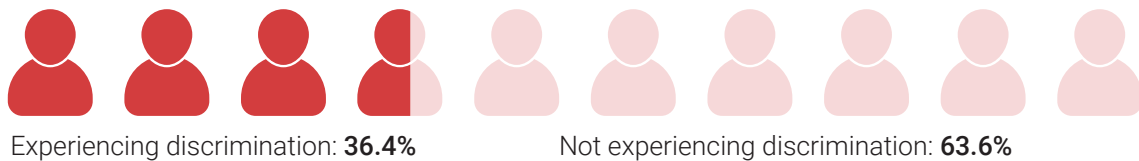
Tuition assistance

Workforce Stability, Stress, and Job Satisfaction

DISCRIMINATION

Approximately 36% of *workforce* respondents report having experienced workplace discrimination. The types of discrimination experienced vary, with bullying (57.7%) being the most common, followed by education/seniority (36.5%) and mental health (21.2%). 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*



Types of Discrimination *Workforce*

Bullying	57.7%
Education/seniority	36.5%
Mental Health	21.2%
Ageism	17.3%
Body prejudice	15.4%
Sexism	13.5%
Ableism	13.5%
Racism	11.5%
Other*	9.6%
Immigration status	7.7%

*Combined due to low sample size. Includes religious belief and homophobia.



JOB SATISFACTION

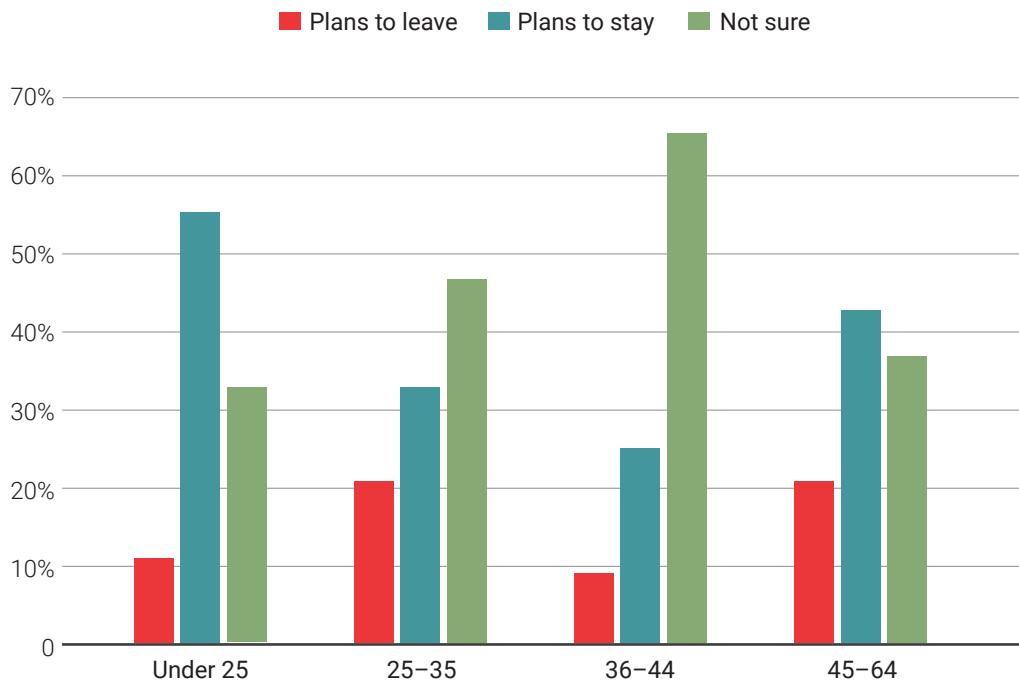
Across all auspices, only 35.5% of respondents from St. Thomas and London report plans to stay in the sector over the next five years, with an additional 46.8% reporting uncertainty in their plans. Those who work in for-profit programs are more likely to report plans to leave. Public auspice responses are not included due to a low sample size, but they are included in [provincial-level findings](#).





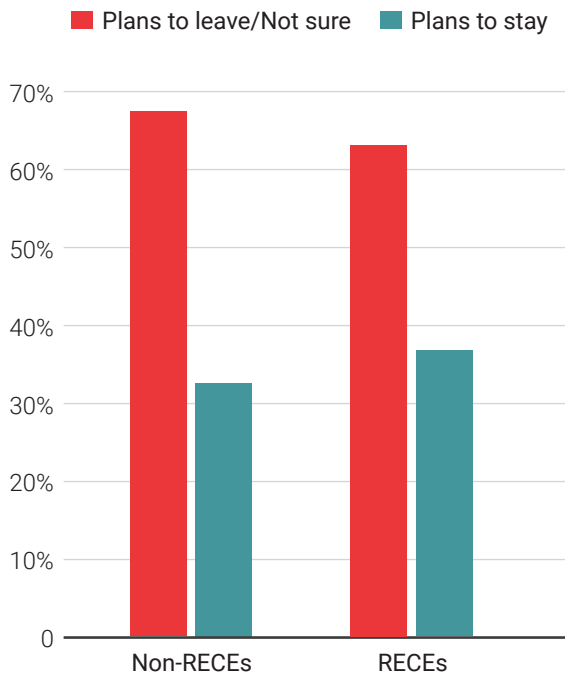
Respondents between the ages of 25 years and 35 years and those over the age of 45 years are more likely to report plans to leave the sector (20.9% and 20.4%, respectively). This has important implications for policy development and investment in retention strategies. Note that those 65+ are not included in these findings as plans for retirement would confound results.

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



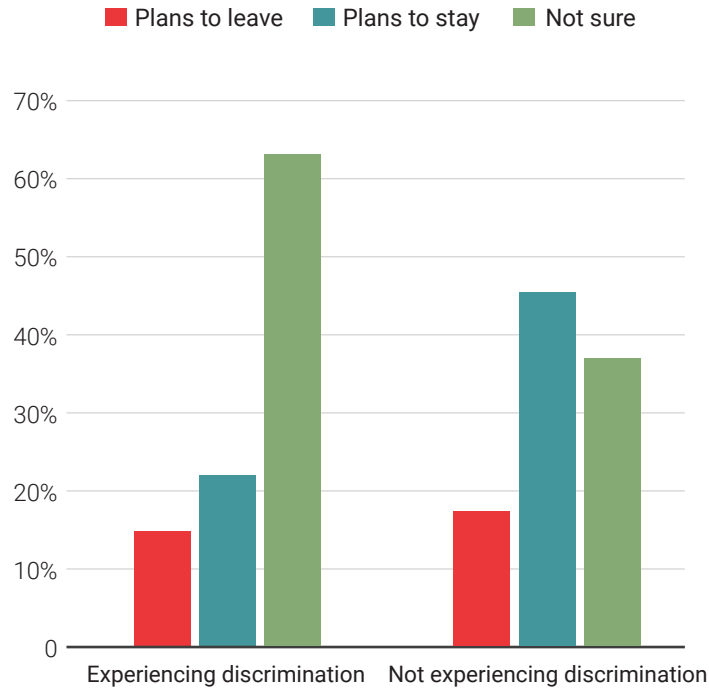
There are no significant differences in plans to leave the sector by RECE status.

Plans to Leave the Sector by RECE Status *Workforce*



Among RECEs, plans to leave the sector are associated with experiences of workplace discrimination. Those who experience discrimination are less likely to report plans to stay in the sector in the next five years. Uncertainty is also higher in this group. Further details on provincial level findings are available in the [Executive Report](#).

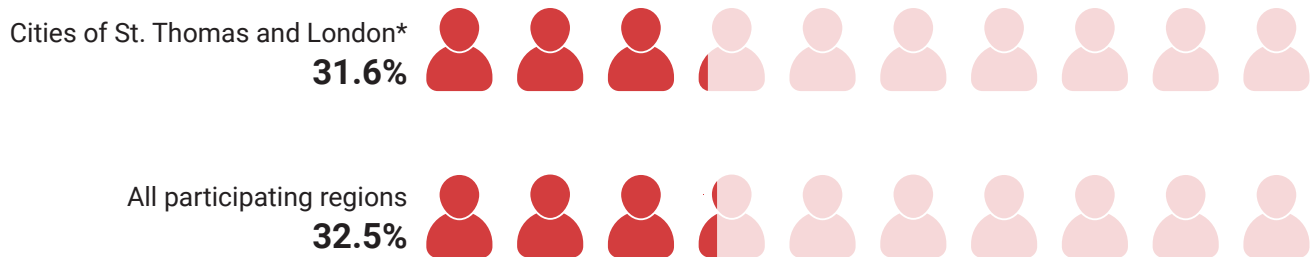
Plans to Leave the Sector by Those Who Experience Workplace Discrimination RECEs



Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

About 32% of director/supervisor respondents in the two regions report wanting to stay in the sector. This is similar to provincial-level findings (32.5%).

Percentage of Directors/Supervisors with Plans to Stay in the Sector City of St. Thomas and City of London Versus All Participating Regions



*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

WORKPLACE STRESS

There is no significant difference across auspices in the level of stress reported. RECEs report higher levels of stress compared to non-RECEs on a scale of 1 (low stress) to 5 (high stress). RECEs report slightly higher stress levels than non-RECEs (3.5 versus 3.2 out of 5). RECEs in for-profit programs report the highest levels of stress (3.7 out of 5).

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	3.1	3.7	3.5
Non-profit	3.2	3.5	3.4
Public	3.3	3.6	3.5
Average across auspice	3.2	3.5	3.4

Note: Averages are weighted.

Participants in St. Thomas and London generally report a low level of job satisfaction. On a scale of 1 (low job satisfaction) to 5 (high job satisfaction), participants' level of satisfaction is 2.7 out of 5. Those working in for-profit programs have the lowest levels of job satisfaction (2.3 out of 5).

Average Level of Job Satisfaction by Auspice and RECE Status Workforce

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

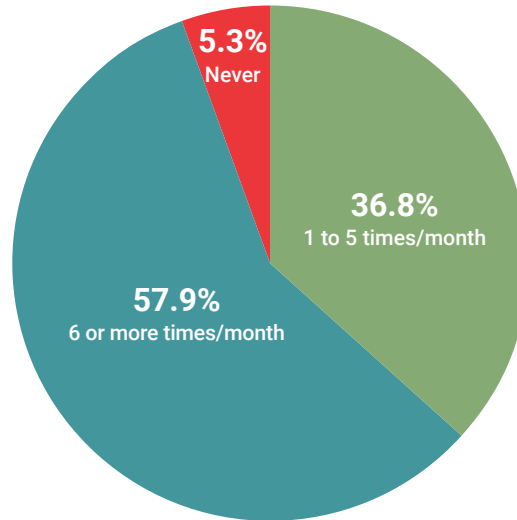
Auspice	RECE status		Average across RECE status
	Non-RECE	RECE	
For-profit	2.2	2.3	2.3
Non-profit	2.8	2.7	2.7
Public	2.0	2.9	2.9
Average across auspice	2.6	2.7	2.7

Note: Averages are weighted.

WORKPLACE STABILITY

Directors often stand in for absent staff by necessity, taking them away from their leadership and administrative duties. More than half of management staff (57.9%) report having to fill in six or more times per month to maintain ratios.

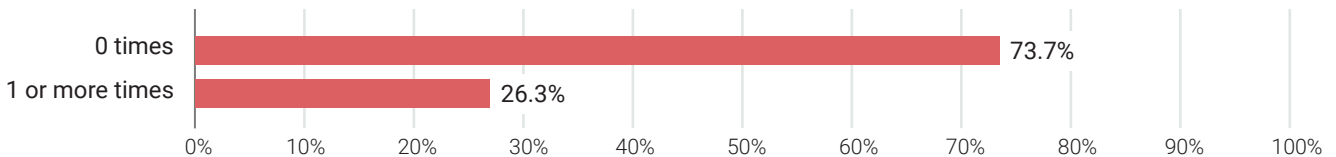
Number of Times per Month Directors/Supervisors Fill in Ratio



*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

Staff shortages also have deleterious effects on the inclusion of children with disabilities or varying needs. About 26% of director/supervisor respondents report they have had to send a child(ren) with a disability home due to staffing shortages. This is similar to the provincial sample average of 26.6%.

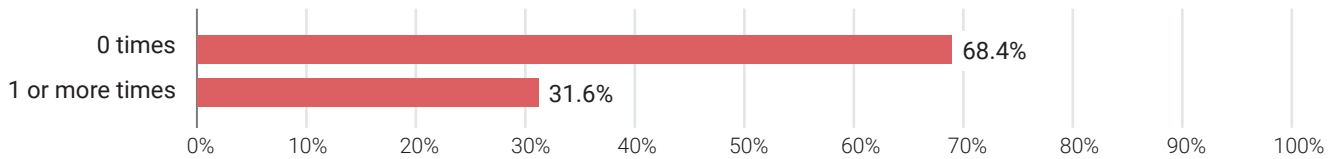
Percentage Reporting Frequency of Times in the Previous 12 Months Directors/Supervisors Sent Children with Disabilities Home Due to Staffing Shortages



*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

About 32% of St. Thomas and London director/supervisor respondents report they have de-enlisted 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%. However, results should be interpreted with caution due to a low sample size. Furthermore, 47.4% (compared to 27.3% in provincial findings) report they have refused admission to a child with a disability in the previous 12 months due to workforce shortages (data not shown).

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



*Interpret with caution due to low sample size.

Less than half (48.2%) of *workforce* respondents in St. Thomas and London state they would recommend a career in the early years to others who are interested. Another 26.2% report they are unsure if they would recommend this career to others.

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



Note: Numbers do not add to 100% due to rounding.

About 78% of respondents 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

St. Thomas and London respondents report that the most common form of professional learning in the previous 12 months was online delivery (79.4%), followed by performance reviews (63.8%). Only 16.3% 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 (14.2%), along with self-study (14.9%). Respondents prefer structured mentoring (36.9%), taking courses (33.3%), and attending conferences (31.9%), 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



CONTENT OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Respondents in St. Thomas and London generally report receiving low levels of training in equity, diversity, and inclusion in the previous 12 months. Less than half of respondents report receiving training in anti-bias/anti-racism (41.1%). Around one-third report having training in cultural diversity (35.5%) and supporting children with disabilities (38.3%) in the previous 12 months. Participants report the least amount of professional learning in the areas of incorporating Afrocentric ways of being (6.4%), incorporating land-based learning (11.4%), and supporting newcomer families (14.2%). Census data for the region help contextualize results.

The most wanted professional learning reported is centred around supporting vulnerable (49.7%) and newcomer families (45.4%). Participants also report wanting more professional learning in incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being/decolonization (45.5%), critical trauma-informed practice (44%), supporting children with disabilities (44.7%), incorporating Afrocentric ways of being (43.3%), incorporating land-based learning (42.6%), and supporting 2LSGBTQIA+ children and families (40.4%).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Learning of Respondents in the City of St. Thomas Workforce

