

Investing In Quality

Early Learning and Child Care Peterborough



2011 Child Care Administration Survey Report



Administrative Survey Report January 2011

The Peterborough Child Care Administration Survey is a process that will become an annual event within our community. This survey offers the *Investing In Quality – Early Learning and Child Care Peterborough Committee* as well as the Municipality and other key stakeholders, a great deal of information regarding the professional needs of our child care program administrators.

The intent of the survey is to provide a detailed map, guiding the direction of professional education so that it addresses the specific needs of the variety of Early Learning Practitioners working in an Administrators role in Peterborough's early learning and child care environments.

The 2011 survey was first circulated through email to all Child Care Administrators. Thirteen questions were developed to gather information on who was completing the survey, how often do they attend professional events, what strengths and challenges could they identify within their role as administrator and how do they prefer to gather information. Thirty four surveys were sent out into the community with a total of thirteen returned, resulting in final result of 38% participation.

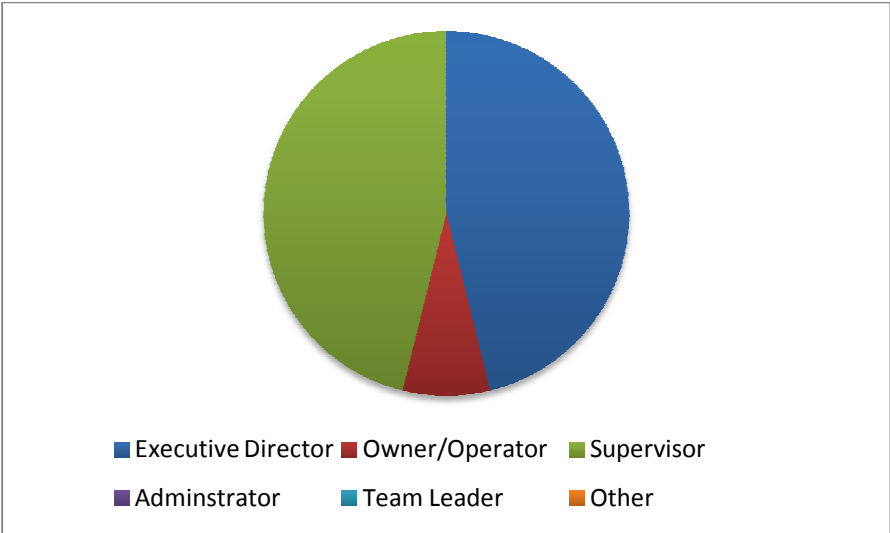
The following tables, graphs and charts summarize the comments and answers from the 2011 survey.

"I like the fact that I am in the office part time, because part of me misses being "hands-on" with the kids.....gives me the opportunity to get to know the children and vice versa."



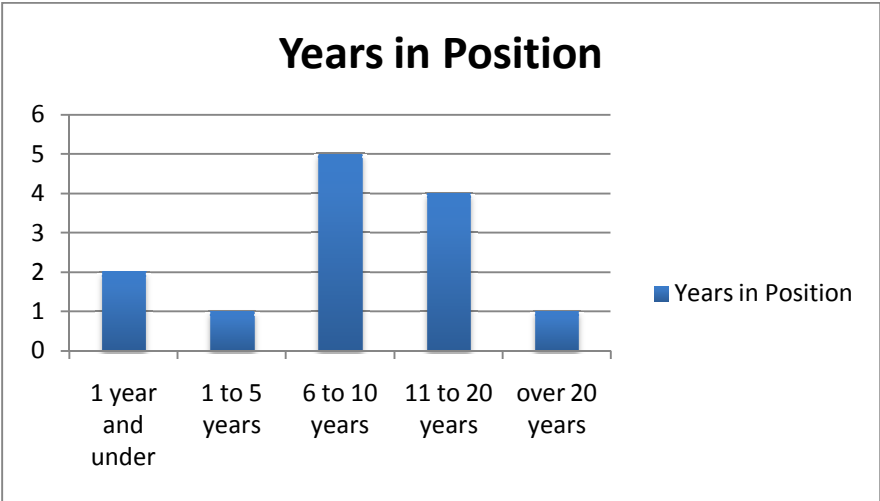
Position and Experience

1. What is your current position?

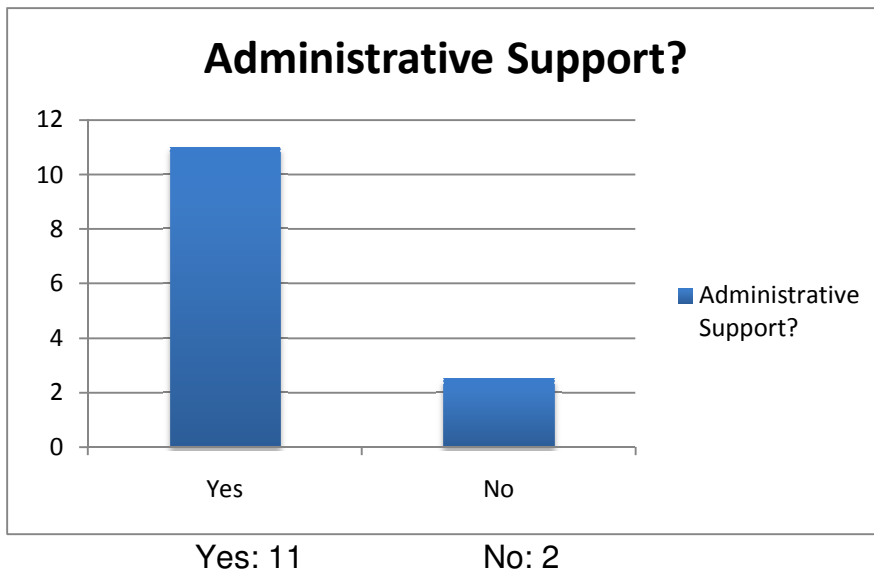


Executive Director: 6 Owner/Operator: 1 Supervisor: 6

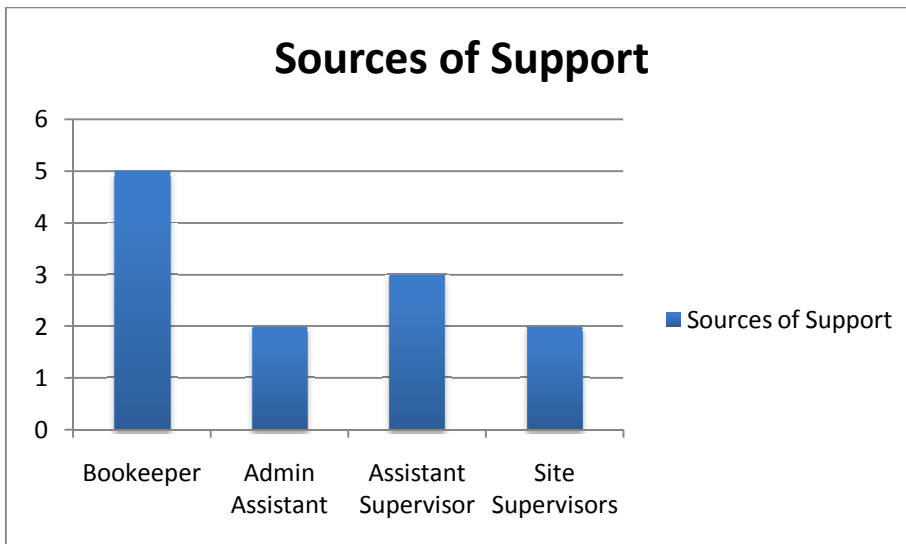
2. How many years have you been in your position?



3. Do you have administrative support?

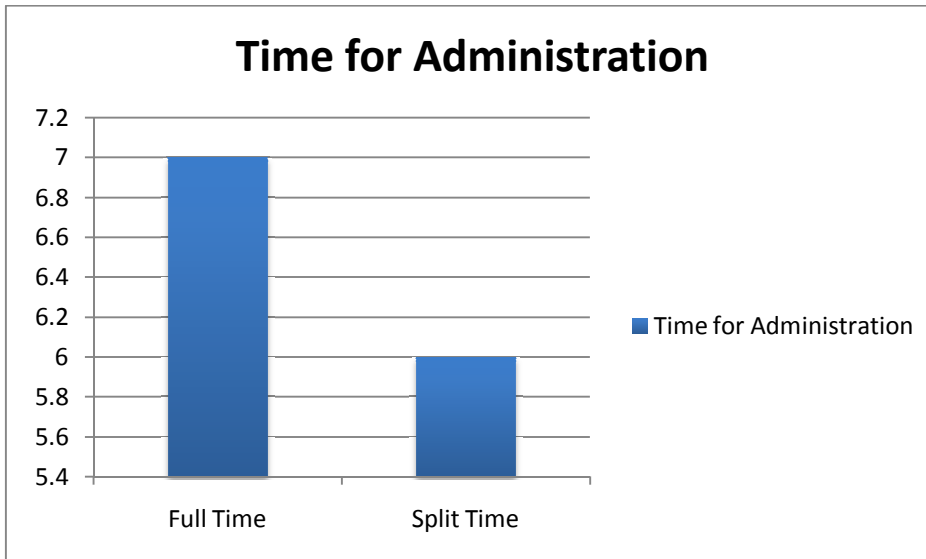


A. If yes, please identify the support you have.



Bookkeeper: 5 Admin Assist: 2 Assist. Super: 3 Site Super's: 2

4. Do you work full time in your administrative roll, or split your time between administration and program?



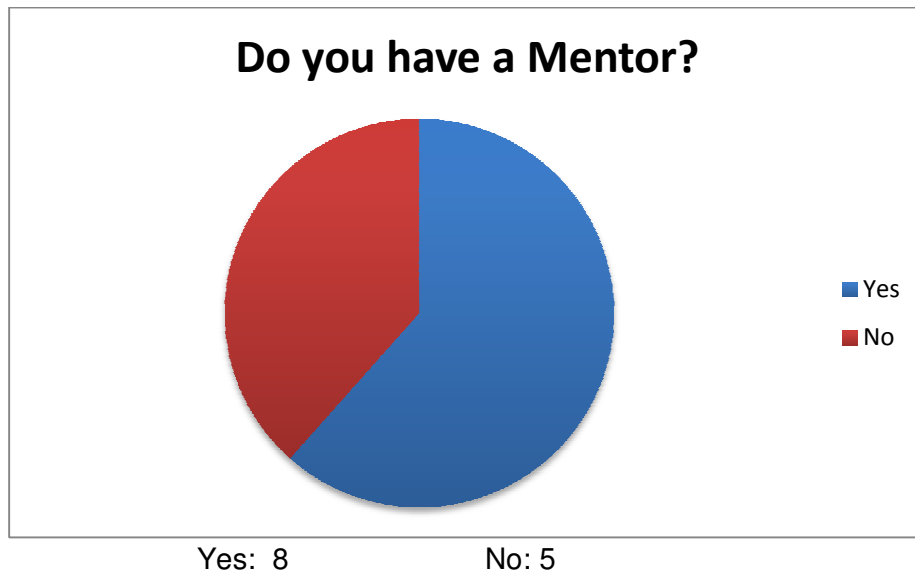
- A. If you split your time, what does that look like?

- Monday to Friday 9:00 to 11:00 in the office
- 4 hours or less, admin after hours
- prep before 9am, 3 hours in program, 1 hour clean up and lunch, 1 3/4 hours for office work and clean up
- 7-9, 11:30-2:30 Floor, 9-11:30, 2:30-3:30 Office
- 1hr 45min office time per day
- 2-3 hours per week in 1/2 hour allotments
- 2.5 hours per day in office
- Start with 1.5 hours on the floor, the rest of the day is office/admin

I like working with children, having control over my responsibilities and working with a great team of people.

Mentorship and Support

5. Do you have a colleague that you consider to be your mentor?



A. How often do you contact this colleague?

- Several times a month. She usually directs me to wherever or whoever it is I need to address.
- As needed. I also consider my Assistant Director as a colleague/mentor. We discuss issues as they arise and often look for support from each other.
- A few times per month
- There are 2 or 3 others and we call upon each other for assistance when needed (i.e. new forms, new ministry requirements).
- I always try to stay true to the mission/values of the founding board members of our agency. Always keeping in mind all of the hard work that others have done over the years.
- I say yes because there are a few colleagues that I can phone when I have a question to ask, or to run things off of. So I feel I do have a good support system within the ECE Community. Also the supervisor's Network has been a good resource for me. I have built some relationships from there - it is a good starting point.
- A couple - Daily by email or phone
- when questions, issues arise - as needed
- no mentor on site, but support from head office, we talk almost daily
- No
- In Mentoring pairs - monthly at least

Job Satisfaction

6. What do you like about your job? What do you dislike about your job?

The things I <i>like</i> about my job are:	The things I <i>dislike</i> about my job are:
<p>I like the fact that I am in the office part time because, part of me misses being “hands on” with the kids. This still gives me the opportunity to get to know the children and vice versa.</p> <p>I like that we are a small independent site, a small group of employees.</p> <p>I like that I can pick up the phone, or email either Trish from RTB, Michelle from Kinark, etc... if I have a question, concern, etc. And they are ready with an answer, suggestion, etc. This is very helpful to me, to us.</p> <p>I am a quick learner, very independent, organized, but I also love team work and lead by example. I am fair and try to treat people the way I would like to be treated.</p> <p>I had some training on the job, but not in the traditional sense; the liaison was on site for 1 day a week, every 2 weeks the first 6 months of my job. So I made this my own, and I worked very hard to accomplish where we are today.</p> <p>I like working closely with the governing board, the parents know me quite well, and trust me, as I have been with the daycare for almost 7 years. I have a good relationship with all of the above (parents, board members) I also worked hard to have a good relationship with the school principal.</p> <p>The fact that I am always looking, and open to new ideas, suggestions to “improve” myself or the daycare, etc.</p>	<p><i>The fact that I have no support or no one to go to (physically) in the area, as we are the only day care of this kind in the city, sometimes I feel like we are alienated from the rest, not only because of language barriers, but also because of the full day learning.</i></p> <p><i>The language also makes it difficult to find resources in the area without having to search the internet for literature for a parent for example, or contacting either the liaison in Toronto, or other French daycares out of the board. I have also went as far as translating some documents from English to French, but this is very time consuming as it's not something that can be done in a minute's time.</i></p> <p><i>This can also be a down side too, would have loved to have a mentor closer by. Although I know I have been doing quite well on my own, its always nice to have that.</i></p> <p><i>The fact that I sometimes feel like a pioneer!</i></p> <p><i>The fact that we are a small centre can also be a downfall. There is always that fine line of being friendly and being friends (either staff, or parent), it's a bit of a grey area sometimes, so we must remember to be professionals at all times.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Timelines/paper pushing Too much to do in too little time. Dealing with difficult employees or clients All the "red tape" Being at the whim of government (ie unstable funding) and being unprepared or unknowledgeable.</p>

<p><i>Working with children. Having control over my duties and responsibilities. Working with a great team of people. Seeing and knowing that our child care program makes a difference in children/family's lives. The pride I feel in our reputation of high quality care.</i></p>	<p><i>Pieced together funding Uncertainly of the future</i></p>
<p>The level of responsibility and accountability. The variety of tasks and responsibilities My relationships with staff, board members and the community HR Functions Planning and Coordinating The families and their children and much more...</p>	<p>There never seems to be enough time to do what I want or that needs to be done I miss working with a larger staff I need more time to work on the computer.</p>
<p>The variety The children</p>	<p>No Support No Budget to work with No give with CEO on items I feel the centre needs i.e. Camera</p>
<p><i>The children, staff, people Implementing Ideas to create learning, giving, caring environments.</i></p>	<p><i>Feeling responsible for the happiness of staff</i></p>
<p>I think I do have some knowledge to share with the ECE students and this gives me the place to share it I like learning my role and the contacts that I have made in the process I do like the seminars that I have had the opportunity to attend I love the window in the office - and all the other windows in the center too</p>	<p>Lack of time/opportunity, sometimes lack of resources How disorganized I can be</p>
<p><i>The smile on little faces the difference I am making working with family/children (positive influence) I have awesome staff Never know what the day will bring Working with outside agencies - 5 counties, Kinark, CAS, Family Services</i></p>	<p>Financial outlook in childcare Staff Issues - that could be resolved without me the extra hours I put in to complete tasks Counselling families and staff when I don't feel I have been trained well to do that Some of the facilities stuff - maintaining older buildings and equipment, furnaces, roof etc.</p> <p><i>Long overtime hours due to lack of supply staff Not getting a daily break on a regular basis because of the time required to fulfill this role.</i></p>

<p>I love working with the families especially seeing those who are going back to school succeed.</p> <hr/> <p>Connection with families/children - making a difference (positive) Opportunities to learn and grow in knowledge and ability Hours and day I work Community outreach opportunities Administration jobs mostly - getting better at this</p> <hr/> <p><i>The children and their families</i> <i>The change - each day is never the same</i> <i>Seeing the growth in programs - staff development, child and family changes</i> <i>Mentoring staff and apprentices</i> <i>The people and the community we are in partnerships</i></p> <hr/> <p>The children and families are number one</p> <p>There is a lot of variety</p> <p>It is a real team atmosphere/environment</p> <p>Positive feel upon entrance and the anticipated joy on the faces of the team as well as the children</p> <p>Learning a lot about the supervisor role and what is required to lead a team where there are many responsibilities</p> <p>Connected with outside resources, such as Kinark, RTB, FCCC</p>	<p>Working alone</p> <p>Never having enough money for the centre</p> <p>Speaking to the staff about what they could improve in their job performance</p> <hr/> <p>Pay</p> <p>Time & Energy don't fit in a work week</p> <p>Balancing staff coaching & 'babysitting'</p> <p>Lack of professionalism in staff</p>
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*Professional and personal fulfillment
working with wonderful children
working with wonderful staff members
Independence
Making a difference
Expressing creativity, resourcefulness,
ethics
Intelligence
Sharing families lives
Being a positive influence
Learning from others
Collaborating
Cooperating
Humour and fun*

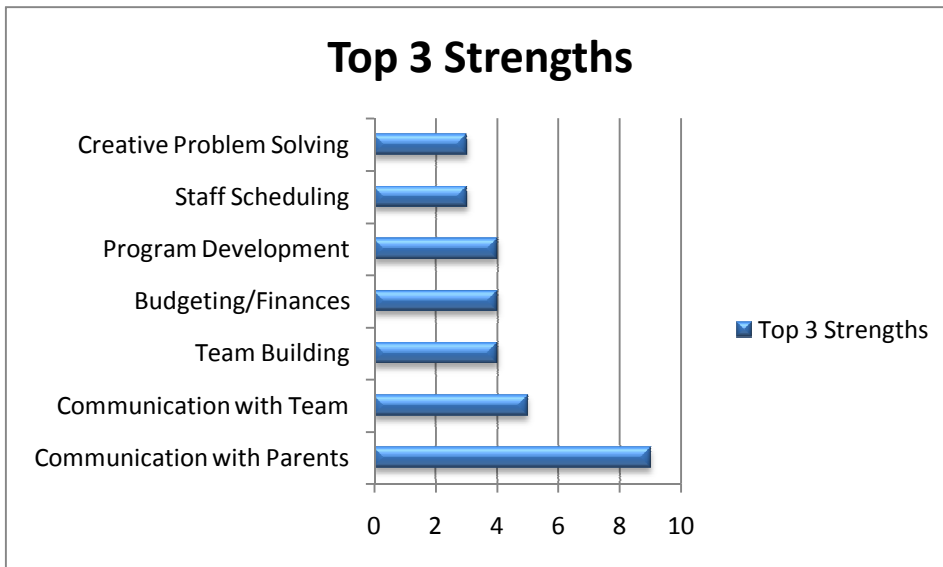
Variety, new challenges
Differences we can make for families
Flexibility
People interactions
Professional Development opportunities



Strengths and Challenges

7. What do you believe to be your top 5 strengths?

The data in the chart below is derived from combining the top three choices made by administrators. When looking at the data collected, a clear top five did not appear from the administrators. A formula of calculating the number of first, second and third choices was needed to provide a better understanding of the top strengths identified by the variety of Operators, Executive Directors and Supervisors. (i.e., communication with Parents had 6 #1's, Communication with Team had 3 #1's as well as 1 #2, 1 #3 for a total of 5)



Top 4th and 5th strengths:

The list below consists of the items chosen by administrators as their fourth and fifth choices.

Budgeting/finances (4 checks)
Technology (3 checks)
Staff Scheduling
Hiring Process
Team Building (2 checks)
Strategic Planning
Communication with team
Understanding Provincial Standards
Understanding the role of Board of Directors (1 check)
Advocacy for Child Care
Advocacy for Parents
Creative Problem Solving
Program Promotion and Public Relations.

8. What do you think are the top 5 things that challenge you the most?

The data in the chart below is derived from combining the top three choices made by administrators. When looking at the data collected, a clear top five did not appear from the administrators. A formula of calculating the number of first, second and third choices was needed to provide a better understanding of the top strengths identified by the variety of Operators, Executive Directors and Supervisors. (i.e., Promotion and Public Relations: 1 #1, 4 #3's for a total of 5, Strategic Planning: 2 #1's, 1 #2, 1 #3 for a total of 4)



Top 4th and 5th Challenges:

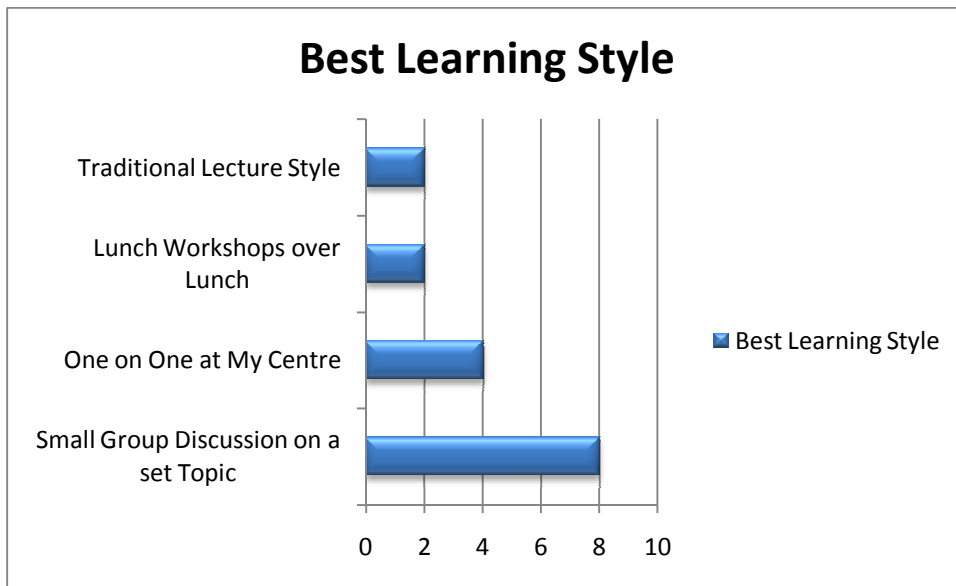
The list below consists of the items chosen by administrators as their fourth and fifth choices.

- Budgeting/Finances (4 checks)
- Advocacy for Child Care
- Technology (2 checks)
- Strategic Planning
- Creative Problem Solving
- Promotion and Public Relations
- Understanding Provincial Standards (1 check)
- Program Development
- Communication with Parents
- Communication with Team
- Running a Meeting

Professional Development and Learning Styles

9. If a series of workshops were put together with a focus specific to administration, supervision and mentoring, what topics/concepts would you hope could be part of this series? (a break in bullets represents the transition to a new participant)
- I am open to any ideas, thoughts or topics. It's all important. I am always looking at fresh new ideas to bring to the table. (keep me from becoming stale, or getting stuck in a rut so to speak)
 - All of the above, and
 - How to keep the Director motivated. Developing solid team strategies that work. How to develop effective mentoring/coaching styles amongst staff.
 - Becoming a change agent
 - Understanding financial reporting process - city, province, federal
 - Any information on program models - emergent, play to learn...
 - Computer Support - Simply, Excel
 - I am doing forms and programs learning as necessary but never shown the proper or best way to do them.
 - Public speaking (although I do not want to do it)
 - Time Management
 - Computer - I need the time to learn what I need to work on
 - Time management
 - Guidelines for procedures: late payments, inappropriate language
 - Helpful hints to make job easier: Simple book keeping strategies, updates with DNA, How to simplify for staff (20% mixed re 2 hours after opening, before close)(4 toddlers, 3 preschool - how many staff needed with reduced ratios)
 - I have just completed the Mentoring Pairs Program and was thrilled with the whole process!
 - Continuing mentoring relationships after initial program ends - Inspired fuelling and how to keep that.
 - Occupational Standards
 - Budgeting, excel, hiring process, strategic planning and purchasing
 - Strategies for coping with ELP and how to adapt to survive
 - Giving performance reviews on staff members
 - Financial training

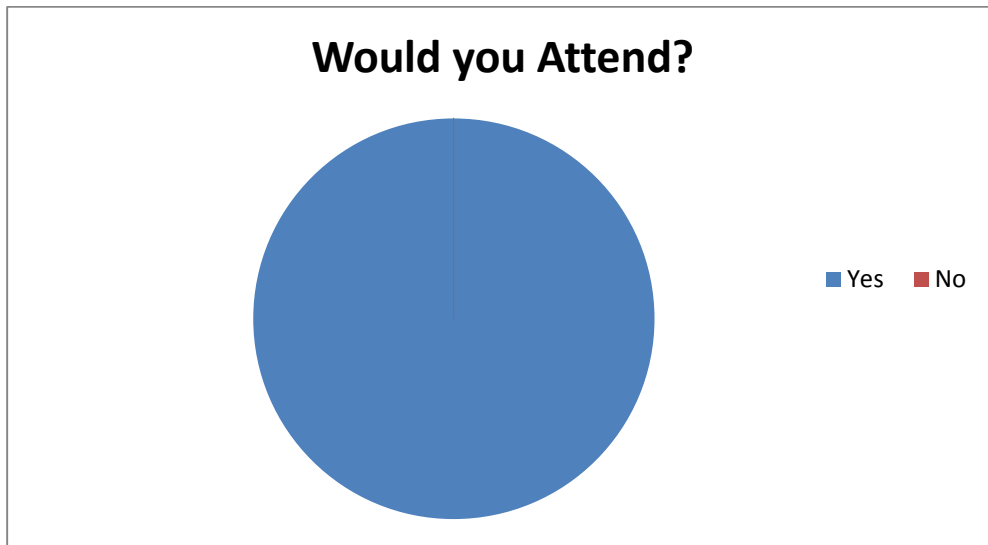
10. What is your preferred way to learn new information?



11. When is the best time for you to attend network meetings, professional development opportunities or forums?

<p>Mornings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mornings - 9:30-11 	<p>Daytime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the day, Tuesday or Thursday evenings Day Time/ Weekdays 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anytime, if the training is what I need or want. I would make the time available. Hard when working the floor and the office
<p>Afternoons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually the afternoon after lunch, but if known in advance, it is sometimes possible to make arrangements Usually Afternoons from 12:30 on is best afternoons - 2:30-4 2-3 pm for a couple of hours - easier to leave work early and still have attention ability Afternoons or evenings Late afternoon - not evenings 1:00pm or the occasional evening 	<p>Evenings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoons or evenings 1:00pm or the occasional evening During the day, Tuesday or Thursday evenings evenings 	

12. If workshops were interesting to you, offered at appropriate times/places, and were planned to meet your learning style, would you attend?



YES: 13

No: 0

a. If no, what would be the barriers?

- other commitments, financial resources, energy level
- Supply Staff if needed, paying the supply staff
- Scheduling
- Better to be motivational - very important in our work to help rejuvenate ourselves and knowledge
- Family time constraints, illness etc...

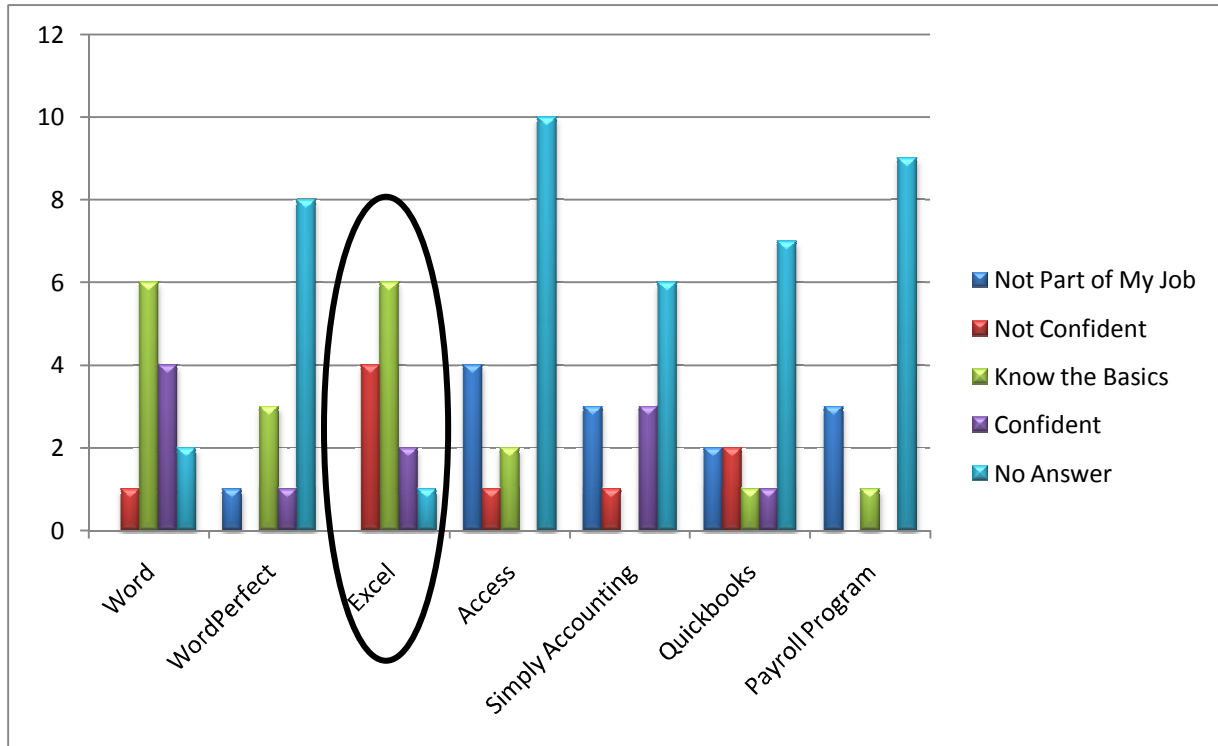
"I like the children, staff, and people. I like implementing new ideas to create learning, giving, and caring environments."

13. What was the last PD opportunity that got you excited and eager to use the information you gained? Why were you excited?

- Meeting Martin Liberio in November of 2010.
- Natural Play spaces with Rusty Keelor, Bucketfillers 101, Loved the information, dynamic speakers and it was relevant to my career, personal goals.
- I really enjoyed "A new way of Looking at PD" given by Lorrie Baird. It gave me ideas on how to encourage reflections in our work. I intend to further explore ideas from this workshop with my teams of supervisors and apply our knowledge in renewing our programs.
- e-DECA - because it will save a lot of time
- OELF - Because it aligns well with our own values and policies.
- ECERS -R Training - Because it looks at the whole program and will give you a picture of where your program stands; where are the areas to improve on etc. I will be doing the program assessment within the next two weeks
- Supervisor's Highway - learned a lot useful - how could have been expanded
- After DECA - what do I do now? The presenter was excited and really believed in her information
- Mentoring Pairs Program - Each month. Had a partner to help keep interest and focus. Partnering seemed to motivate me. I was more accountable (also \$ incentive).
- Mentoring Pairs in Child Care - the building relationships with colleagues was the best - time consuming but so worth it, learning from each other.
- DECA training, CPR and First Aid
- DECA - liked the material, liked the trainer, liked the location, liked the ongoing individualized support
- Management seminar delivered by *Career Tracks* speaking to working with/managing difficult staff. It was objective, prompted reflective thinking, and engaged the employee in the outcome.

Computer Programs and Skills

14. What Computer Software Programs are you currently using to administer your program?



In the above chart, the summative data coincides and supports the comments made by participants in question #8 (What do you think are your top 5 challenges?). Participants identified technology, especially Microsoft Excel as an ongoing challenge in their role as program administrator and also suggested more computer training when asked in question #9.

Raising the Bar

15. Are you participating in Raising the Bar?

Yes: 13

No: 0

16. If so, what support would you like from the coordinator?

- Whatever is available
- Calls or drop-ins from time to time, so coordinator becomes familiar with staff. Connects with staff to personally survey them and build exciting relations. That way, staff are more apt to go to networks, lectures, workshops. etc.
- Continued support as in the past to achieve silver and gold levels. I enjoy the discussions we have on quality ELC environments and sharing ideas.
- I have all the support I need. Trish always tries to help when and where she can, and tries to fit in when needed. Sometimes it is as simple as a phone call or other times I need a little more and a visit is needed. I always feel I can phone when I need something and sometimes that fixes the problem right there. Just knowing someone is there of it she cannot help Trish will find someone that can.
- I find Trish very helpful, and continues to be supportive. I find helpful network meetings & 1 on 1 at the centre.
- I like that we can have 1 on 1 meetings to gauge our progress.
- She already supports me and the executive director whenever and however we need her to.
- To keep up the good work and keep coming to meet with us - it has been great.
- e-DECA help
- She is very supportive. I couldn't imagine what more she could do to help.
- She's doing a great job of keeping us up to date, being available and always supporting us.



Summary of Findings

The data collected through the Child Care Administrator Survey provides insight into the needs of the centre Operators, Executive Directors, and Supervisors in our community. The result of the survey verifies the importance of ongoing support, mentoring and access to a variety of professional development opportunities for the various levels of experience and interests, as well as a variety of delivery methods.

The suggestions presented below are linked to the survey responses and are designed to both sustain and enhance improved quality to date as well as establish a system of continued support and mentorship.

Specific Areas for Potential Continued Professional Education

Technology:

“I am learning by doing – as I am not familiar with programs such as excel – I am learning as I go.”

“A course with peers on a relevant program and report would be helpful”

From the comments generated from the survey, some organized computer training with colleagues on selected reports and programs that administrators are using would be helpful.

Other comments suggested some further training on designing eye-catching newsletters, bulletins and marketing tools for child care programs.

Advocacy and Public Relations:

“Super important, but lack of time and understanding of what is happening in the country as well as the province is a challenge.”

“I am just too shy in a crowd. At home I have too many opinions and everyone hears about them, but I am quieter at work.”

“I usually feel that someone else has more knowledge than I do so I let them take the lead.”

Survey participants acknowledge the importance of advocacy and public relations, however comfort level with speaking in public and with authority have stopped them from becoming more involved.

Other comments suggest that time constraints also play a role in making advocacy for child care a challenge.

Teambuilding/Communication/Meetings:

“Positive communication I find easy. The challenge is trying to make changes without offending, hurting feelings etc.”

“Projecting confidence with material and being judged. How to be effective and cover everything you want.”

Survey comments from participants outlined their challenges with working with a number of personalities – some more challenging than others - and how to navigate through conflicts with a solution-based focus.



Strategic Planning/Program Development:

“It’s challenging that we don’t have any clarity for our future.”

They don’t teach this in the ECE program at college. It takes time, experience and opportunities to practice.”

“I know what I want to see, but my challenge is sharing my vision and influencing change.”

Surveyed participants felt that ongoing professional education on developing, monitoring and evaluating a strategic plan would be helpful while the child care sector moves through this precarious transition.

Additional Areas for Consideration

While compiling the comments regarding the strengths and challenges of administrating child care programs, some common threads appeared that will contribute to the planning of future professional education in the Peterborough community.

Experience

From those participating in the survey, we found that a significant majority of child care program administrators have held their position for at least 6 to 20 years. The Owners/Operators, Executive Directors and Supervisors in the Peterborough area have many years of experience in the child care sector. They all come with many strengths, skills and gifts to share.

Learning Styles

Many participants preferred discussing relevant and important topics through small group discussion. Several administrators have identified that they have a mentor or a small group of peers that they connect with on a regular basis, or as the need arises. They have also commented that when attending professional education opportunities, it was the sessions that were ongoing where relationships could be built that proved to be the most effective and motivational.





Planning for the Future in Uncertain Times

A common thread throughout this survey was the concern for the future of child care. Many survey participants are frustrated about not knowing what the future holds and being at the mercy of bureaucrats and ministries.

Closing Remarks

Considerations of the strengths and concerns of those involved in the survey, will guide the direction the *Investing In Quality* Committee intends to take over the next year.

Based on the survey comments these topics would include, but not limited to, such areas as *technology, advocacy and public relations, strategic planning, and teambuilding, communication and staff meetings*. A focus on professional development that includes small group discussions on relevant topics – taking into consideration the level of experience of its participants – will take precedence when planning.

It is our hope that with this plan in place, the needs of the administrators in our child care programs will be addressed and satisfied.