

Evaluation of Early Learning and Child Care Centres



**ANNUAL REPORT
(2018-19)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building upon the Year 1 evaluation report (June 2018), this report presents the findings for both the Year 1 (2017/18) and Year 2 (2018/19) evaluation of the Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Centre pilot initiative. Year 1 includes data collected from 19 ELCC Centres and 21 comparison centres while Year 2 includes data collected from 50 ELCC Centres and 13 comparison centres.

Child Care Accessibility

The ELCC Centre initiative has increased child care accessibility in Alberta. In the two years of operation, 1,740 new licensed ELCC Centre child care spaces were created, including 664 new child care spaces in rural communities. ELCC Centre parents/caregivers are highly satisfied with centre hours of operation.

Child Care Affordability

ELCC Centre parents/caregivers spent fewer gross dollars than comparison centre parents/caregivers, leaving them more satisfied with fees. The uptake of child care subsidies was statistically equivalent across ELCC Centre and comparison centre parents/caregivers, suggesting that both centre types enrolled similar percentages of lower income families (ELCC Centres 35.1% and comparison centres 30.3%).

Child Care Quality

ELCC Centres were found to have fewer non-compliances associated with licensing regulations per year, on average, than other day care centres in Alberta. ELCC Centre supervisors reported improved staff retention and administrative data demonstrated that ELCC Centres had 8.6% more Child Development Supervisors (Level 3) compared to non-ELCC Centres.

ELCC Centre parents/caregivers are more likely than comparison centre parents/caregivers to indicate that they are very satisfied with quality of care and to agree that the educators at their child's centre are professionals.

All stakeholders noted enhancements in child care quality as a result of the implementation of the Flight Curriculum Framework and ASaP (Access, Support & Participation) Continuum Project. Challenges encountered during implementation of these initiatives included: level of educator understanding and insufficient contact between educators and quality initiative partners.

Impacts on Families and Child Well Being

The ELCC Centre initiative positively impacted family and child well-being in a number of ways including: labour force attachment; a reduction in stress and financial burden; and increased community involvement for families.

Increased labour force attachment for women was found to be greater among those with children in ELCC Centres. After accounting for differences in survey year, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, and the number of children in a respondent's care, female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers were more likely to return to work full-time than their comparison centre counterparts. Additionally, female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers were also more likely to:

- go back to school or take more classes;
- accept more responsibility at work; and
- report that sending their child to the ELCC Centre positively impacted their career.

In the focus groups, ELCC Centre parents/caregivers identified reduced stress, improved family relationships and positive impacts to their mental health as a result of sending their child to an ELCC Centre. ELCC Centre parents/caregivers were also statistically more likely than comparison centre parents/caregivers to report that they feel a part of the community and comfortable accessing community supports.

Unintended Outcomes and Unmet Need

The greatest unintended impact of the ELCC Centre initiative identified by stakeholders was the level of demand placed on ELCC Centres for child care spaces as partially evidenced through waitlists. Among families who were able to access an ELCC Centre for care, stakeholders noted increased use of child care in evenings, while on maternity leave and during summer months. For ELCC Centre educators, there was a positive shift as parents/caregivers began to view educators less as ‘babysitters’ and more as ‘child care professionals’.

A lack of qualified child care educators was commonly identified as the biggest gap in the ELCC Centre initiative. Similarly, gaps were noted in the initiative’s ability to adequately train a sufficient number of educators on Flight and ASaP.

Sustainability

In terms of Flight and ASaP, some ELCC Centre supervisors stated that, if the ELCC Centre initiative was to end, they would not lose the quality elements (e.g. Flight and ASaP) as those pieces were becoming, or had become, embedded into the centre as the ‘norm’. ELCC Centre supervisors also felt that, without ongoing support of the pedagogical partner and ASaP coach, their centre would not be able to continue build upon existing practices, to evolve and grow.

All community partners interviewed reported that they saw their organization’s partnership with the affiliated centre as sustainable.

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

Name	Acronym
Access, Support and Participation	ASaP
Children's Services	CS
Child Care Information System	CCIS
Early Childhood Development	ECD
Early Learning and Child Care	ELCC
Economic Impact Assessment	EIA
Getting Ready for Inclusion Today	GRIT
Government of Alberta	GoA
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act	PIPEDA
Play, Participation and Possibilities Curriculum Framework (renamed <i>Flight</i> in 2018)	Flight
Professional Development	PD
Social Return on Investment	SROI
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool	TPOT
The Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale	TPITOS

1. INTRODUCTION

In November 2016, the Government of Alberta (GoA) announced \$10 million in funding for the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre pilot initiative, to better support access to, and affordability of, quality child care spaces. Phase 1 resulted in 22 provincially-funded ELCC Centres. ELCC Centre funding for Phase 2 of the ELCC Centre initiative was made available through a three-year bilateral agreement between the Governments of Canada and Alberta. Phase 2 resulted in 100 federally-funded ELCC Centres.

All ELCC Centres are required to participate in an evaluation. In total, 21 centres participated in the evaluation as part of Phase 1 and 29 centres as part of Phase 2.

1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Assess program implementation, including fidelity to the ELCC Centre activities specified in the operating grant agreement;
- Determine the extent to which intended outcomes specified in the expression of interest and ELCC Centre grant agreement documents have been and will be achieved;
- Measure and assess the effectiveness of ELCC Centre activities at improving the accessibility, affordability and quality of early learning and child care in Alberta;
- Identify lessons learned/best practices that can be used to inform program design, delivery and effectiveness; and
- Demonstrate accountability for the effective and efficient use of program funding.

The Year 1 report (2017/18) was based on evaluation data for 19 ELCC Centres and 21 comparison centres. Year 2 data collection (2018/19) included 50 ELCC Centres and 13 comparison centres.¹ Table 1.2 provides the distribution of the ELCC Centres and comparison centres across the first two years of the evaluation.

Table 1.2: ELCC and Comparison Centres Included in Evaluation

Centre Type	2017/18	2018/19
ELCC Centres	19 (47.5%)	50 (79.4%)
Comparison Centres	21 (52.5%)	13 (20.6%)
Total centres included each year	40 (100.0%)	63 (100.0%)

¹ The number of comparison centres declined in part because some comparison centres from Year 1 became ELCC Centres in 2018/19. However, these centres were not included in the 2018/19 evaluation.

2. EVALUATION APPROACH

A rigorous methodological approach was designed to ensure that data for this evaluation was collected from a range of sources and at different points in time. The evaluation provides evidence-based findings that can help inform future decision-making regarding quality child care in Alberta.

Please see Appendix A for the evaluation logic model underpinning the ELCC Centre initiative evaluation and Appendix B for the associated evaluation matrix.

2.1 Data Collection Overview

The data sources used to conduct the evaluation include:

- A review of CS-provided administrative data (e.g. licensed child care spaces, child enrollments, staffing, etc.);
- Site visits to ELCC Centres, including interviews with ELCC Centre supervisors, ELCC Centre educators and focus groups with parents/caregivers;
- Interviews with ELCC Centre community partners;
- Interviews with ELCC quality initiative partners (pedagogical partners and ASaP coaches);
- Interviews with comparison centre supervisors;
- A survey of ELCC Centre supervisors;
- A survey of ELCC Centre educators (staff members); and
- A survey of parents/caregivers in ELCC and comparison centres.

Appendices C to K contain the evaluation data collection instruments. To optimize data collection and to follow-up on Year 1 findings, the data collection instruments were modified from Year 1 (2017/18) for use in Year 2 (2018/19).² Additional information can be found in the Early Learning and Child Care Centres Evaluation Phase 1, Year 2 (P1Y2) | Phase 2, Year 1 (P2Y1) (2018-19) Methodology Report.

2.2 Evaluation Data Collection Activities

Data collection in Year 1 and Year 2 of the evaluation took place between December 2017 and April 2019. Table 2.1 provides the number of completions for both 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Table 2.1: Number of Data Collection Activities Completed by Evaluation Year

Activity	Number of Completions	
	2017/18	2018/19
ELCC Centres		
Interviews with supervisors	18	46
Supervisor survey	N/A	47
Interviews with educators	45	136
Educator survey	198	430
Parent/Caregiver survey	294	688
Parent/Caregiver focus groups	15	48
Community partners		
Interviews with community partners	24	35

² Modified instruments are appended. Please see the Year 1 ELCC Centres initiative evaluation report for the original data collection instruments.

Activity	Number of Completions	
	2017/18	2018/19
Quality Initiative partners		
Interviews with pedagogical partners	15	24
Interviews with ASaP coaches	11	17
Comparison Centres		
Interviews with supervisors	20	13
Parent/Caregiver survey	227	155

2.3 Analysis

The analytical approaches used to develop the findings presented in this report include both qualitative (interview and focus group data) and quantitative (survey data) techniques.

2.3.1. Qualitative Analysis

Interview and focus group data was analyzed using first-level inductive analysis to identify the core concepts and themes emerging from the data. This analytical approach was applied separately to each respondent group (i.e., ELCC Centre supervisors, educators and community partners; pedagogical partners and ASaP coaches; parent/caregiver focus group participants; and comparison centre supervisors). Following an analysis of each respondent group, cross-group analysis was conducted to determine whether the answers provided had noteworthy differences or similarities.

As qualitative data tends to be descriptive in nature and does not yield discrete responses, this report refrains from quantifying the number of interviewees or focus group participants that provided a specific response.

2.3.2. Quantitative Analysis

For the parent/caregiver survey analyses, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and multiple regression analyses were employed.

- Inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests or difference of means tests (T-Tests), are reported when identifying if there is a statistically significant relationship between two variables.
- Multiple regression techniques, such as ordinary least squares and logistic regression, were used to account for (“control”) other variables (survey year, location of the centre and demographic characteristics)—based on social science research conventions and availability of measures—that might otherwise be associated with a parent-reported outcome. Inferential statistics and regression results are noted in the text and footnotes; where applicable, regression coefficients are reported in Appendix L.
- Statistical significance of findings is reported in the form of ‘p-values’. If a p-value is less than .05 it means that the result has only a 5% chance that any perceived statistically significant differences are due to sampling error.

Unless otherwise stated, the percentages provided in the report were out of the full base of eligible respondents over the two survey years for parents/caregivers (N=521 2017/18, N=843 2018/19) and ELCC Centre educators (staff members) (N=198 2017/18, N=430 2018/19). The ELCC Centre supervisor survey was new in 2018/19, with a total of 47 respondents.

2.4 Limitations and Mitigating Strategies

The primary limitations of this design include selection bias in those who partook in the evaluation and a non-experimental research design assessing differences between ELCC and comparison centres.

Selection Bias

There is the potential that the focus group findings may be subject to selection bias as the ELCC Centre supervisors were relied upon to recruit parents/caregivers to the focus groups. This may result in overly positive findings if supervisors only recruited individuals they knew were satisfied with the centre.

The parent/caregiver survey was based on self-reported data which may be subject to respondents providing overly positive/negative answers. Additionally, the survey findings may also be subject to selection bias as centre supervisors were relied upon to provide parents/caregivers the opportunity to participate in the survey. In quantitative analyses, selection bias can be reduced through multiple regression analyses. As described above, regressions can take into consideration—or control for—characteristics of respondents, such as where they live, their marital status and the presence of multiple children in their home, which could be linked to how they report information.

ELCC versus Comparison Centres

In an ideal experimental research design, parents/caregivers and their children would be randomly assigned to ELCC and comparison centres. Any differences in outcomes would then be attributable to the initiative. Since the ELCC Centre initiative was not designed as an experiment, this leads to uncertainties in assessing differences between responses of parents/caregivers in ELCC and comparison centres. Sensitivity analyses indicated that there were few statistical differences between respondents in ELCC and comparison centres so this issue may be mitigated to some extent.

2.5 Profile of Survey Respondents

Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 depict key characteristics of ELCC Centre supervisors, ELCC Centre educators and parents/caregivers who took part in 2017/18 and 2018/19 surveys.

Table 2.2: ELCC Centre Supervisor Profile

	2018/19
Average Number of Years of Work in Child Care	16.0 (8.8)
Average Number of Years Working at Current ELCC Centre	8.2 (7.1)
Worked at Other Day Care Centres	
Yes	76.6%
No	21.3%
Prefer Not to Answer	2.1%
Did you come to work here because this Centre received ELCC funding?	
Yes	4.3%
No	93.6%
Prefer Not to Answer	2.1%
N=	47

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Table 2.3: ELCC Centre Educator Profile

	2017/18	2018/19
Average Number of Years of Work in Child Care	8.1 (8.6)	8.0 (8.3)
Did you come to work here because this Centre received ELCC funding?		
Yes	12.6%	12.6%
No	79.8%	78.8%
Don't Know	6.1%	6.0%
Prefer Not to Answer	1.5%	2.6%
Age Group Cared for in the Centre (multiple responses allowed)		
0 to 12 Months	27.8%	21.2%
13 to 18 Months	38.4%	34.0%
19 Months to Less than 3 Years	53.0%	44.9%
3 Years to Less than 4.5 Years	54.0%	44.9%
4.5 Years and Older	34.3%	38.4%
Prefer Not to Answer	7.1%	5.8%
Current Level of Certification		
Child Development Assistant (Level 1)	33.8%	19.3%
Child Development Worker (Level 2)	13.1%	21.6%
Child Development Supervisor (Level 3)	42.9%	55.6%
Other	6.1%	1.9%
None	3.0%	1.2%
Prefer Not to Answer	1.0%	0.5%
N=	198	430

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Table 2.4: Parent/Caregiver Profile

	ELCC Centres		Comparison Centres	
	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19
Region of Child Care Centre				
Northwest	12.6%	14.1%	23.9%	9.7%
Northeast	3.7%	2.2%	6.6%	9.0%
Edmonton	8.8%	25.1%	30.1%	25.2%
Central	18.0%	10.6%	5.8%	18.7%
Calgary	29.3%	29.1%	14.6%	29.0%
South	4.1%	5.8%	6.2%	0%
North	23.5%	13.1%	12.8%	8.4%
Gender				
Female	83.0%	84.7%	82.8%	81.9%
Male	17.0%	13.8%	17.2%	17.4%
Marital Status				
Married	57.7%	71.6%	56.7%	77.3%
Not Married	42.3%	28.4%	43.3%	22.7%
Citizenship Status				
Citizen	92.1%	92.6%	92.5%	93.5%
Non-Citizen	7.9%	7.4%	7.5%	6.5%
Number of children in your care				
One	41.2%	43.5%	48.5%	44.5%
Multiple	58.8%	56.5%	51.5%	55.5%
N=	294	688	227	155

3. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from Years 1 (2017/18) and 2 (2018/19) of the ELCC Centre initiative evaluation. Evaluation questions are addressed under the headings of Relevance, Performance: Outcomes, Performance: Implementation and Sustainability.

3.1 Relevance

3.1.1 Demonstrated Need for Affordable, Quality Child Care

**SUMMARY RESPONSE TO EVALUATION QUESTION 1:
WHAT IS THE NATURE AND LEVEL OF CONTINUED NEED FOR THE ELCC CENTRE INITIATIVE AND ASSOCIATED
ELEMENTS?**

ELCC Centre supervisors, educators and community partners all noted there is an ongoing need for accessible, affordable, quality child care that helps facilitate labour force attachment. Despite gains in the number of child care spaces available through ELCC Centres, in 2019, only 17% of Albertans under the age of six have access to a licensed child care space.

In 2015, there were over 1,114,585 families living in Alberta³ who were responsible for approximately 320,658 children under age six.⁴ Of families with at least one child under the age of six, 19% had two parents/caregivers working full-time.⁵ Despite the variety of child care options available to Alberta's parents/caregivers, the number of child care spaces was lower than the number of children under age 6. Specifically, in 2015 it was estimated that only 15.5% of Albertans under the age of six had a child care space available to them.⁶

The introduction of the ELCC Centre initiative in 2017 resulted in an increase in the number of available child care spaces. From 2017 to 2019, ELCC Centres added an additional 1,740 child care spaces in Alberta. Based on the estimated number of children under six years old (320,658) and the total number of licensed child care spaces in 2019 (55,459), 17% of children under the age of six now have access to a licensed child care space.

While this is an improvement from the 2015 estimates noted above, the total number of child care spaces still does not match the number of children in Alberta, or the proportion of parents/caregivers with children under the age of six who work outside the home.

³ Statistics Canada. (2016) 'Census Profile: Alberta.' Available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=48&Geo2=&Code2=&Data=Count&SearchText=Alberta&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=48>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Statistics Canada. (2018) 'Results from the 2016 Census: Work activity of families with children in Canada.' Available at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2018001/article/54969-eng.htm>

⁶ Friendly, M., Grady, B. MacDonald, L. and B. Forer. (2015). Preliminary Data Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2014, p5.

3.2 Performance: Outcomes

**SUMMARY RESPONSE TO EVALUATION QUESTION 6:
WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS IMPROVED CHILD CARE ACCESSIBILITY IN ALBERTA?**

Administrative data from CS, interviews with ELCC Centre educators and supervisors and the parent/caregiver survey found that the ELCC Centre initiative has helped improve accessibility of child care in the following ways:

- Creating 1,740 new ELCC Centre child care spaces between December 2016 and March 2019;
- 2,416 new enrollments in ELCC Centres between December 2016 and March 2019; and
- Offering satisfactory hours and locations of ELCC Centres.

3.2.1 Child Care Accessibility

3.2.1.1 Parent Satisfaction with Centre Locations and Hours of Operation

Parent/caregiver survey data indicated that 96% of parents/caregivers in each survey year (2017/18 and 2018/19) and across ELCC and comparison centres were satisfied or very satisfied with their chosen location of child care. Furthermore, over 90% of parents/caregivers in ELCC and comparison centres were satisfied or very satisfied with the centre’s hours of operation (Figure 4.1, next page).⁷

Parents/caregivers in comparison centres, who were not married, were statistically less likely to be satisfied with the hours of operation than married individuals after taking into account any differences in survey year, region of the centre, citizenship, the number of children in their care and gender. In ELCC Centres, marital status was not associated with satisfaction of hours.⁸ This suggests that the initiative innovation to offer extended hours helps meet the needs of unmarried parents/caregivers.

Additional analyses of the ELCC Centre parent focus groups highlighted that the ELCC Centres are more convenient in terms of location and hours than the child care centre that parents/caregivers had previously enrolled their children in.

3.2.1.2 Educators’ Perceptions of Centre Accessibility

While almost all educators believed their centre’s hours of operation were accessible for parents/caregivers, some educators suggested that accessibility could be improved if the centre were to open at 6 a.m. and on weekends. At the same time, the majority of ELCC Centre educators suggested that their centres were not accessible due to long waitlists. A small minority of these educators voiced concerns about unequal access to the limited number of spots available, arguing that the neediest should have priority of access to the ELCC Centres.

⁷ This is based on a chi-square test whereby parent satisfaction with hours of operation and Centre type were independent ($p \geq 0.05$) for each year.

⁸ Significant differences ($p < .01$) for Comparison Centre parents, and no differences for ELCC Centre parents ($p \geq 0.05$), are based on logistic regressions predicting the odds of parents being satisfied or very satisfied with the centre’s hours at a centre based on marital status (not married versus married) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent’s care and gender. Regression coefficients are reported in Appendix L.

3.2.1.3 Spaces, Enrollments and Length of Time to Access Child Care

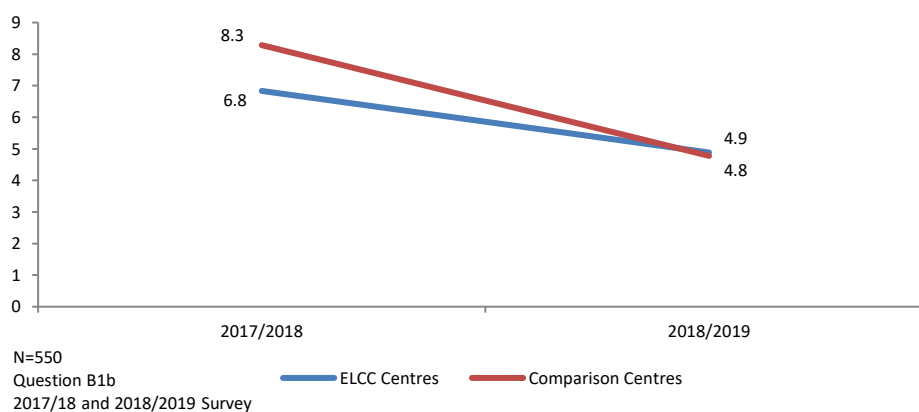
CS administrative data presented in Table 3.1 describes the net new spaces and enrollments in ELCC Centres compared to non-ELCC Centres. Between December 2016 and March 2019, ELCC Centres accounted for 17% of the growth in new day care spaces in Alberta yet comprised roughly 12% of all day care centres in Alberta.⁹

**Table 3.1: Net New Licensed Child Care Spaces in Alberta
December 2016 to March 2019**

	New Spaces
Existing Phase 1 ELCC Centres (December 2016-March 2019)	165
New Phase 1 ELCC Centres (December 2016-March 2019)	434
Existing Phase 2 ELCC Centres (December 2017-March 2019)	300
New Phase 2 ELCC Centres (December 2017-March 2019)	841
Total ELCC Centres (December 2016-March 2019)	1,740 (17%)
Total Non-ELCC Centres (December 2016-March 2019)	8,503 (83%)
Total All Day Care Centres in Alberta (December 2016-March 2019)	10,243

Analyses from the parent/caregiver survey data show that wait times were not statistically different for ELCC or comparison centres. (Figure 3.2).¹⁰ Results from the focus groups suggest that parents/caregivers in ELCC Centres either got on centre waitlists as the ELCC Centre initiative was rolled out or met specific criteria for fast track admission into the ELCC Centre, such as qualifying as a low-income household, being a single parent or having a child with special needs that could be accommodated specifically at the ELCC Centre.

Figure 3.3: Average Length of Wait Time (Months) To Get Child Enrolled in Centre



⁹ ELCC Centre child care space growth represents growth in licensed day care centres only and does not include new child care space growth in licensed group family child care, approved family day homes, licensed out-of-school care centres, licensed pre-schools and approved early childhood development programs.

¹⁰ Parents who reported not having to wait to enroll their children were excluded from these analyses. Not statistical differences ($p \geq 0.05$) are based on an ordinary least squares regression predicting the average wait time (transformed by the natural logarithm due to skewness of the distribution) for parents at a centre based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre (Northwest, Northeast, Edmonton, Central, Calgary, South and North), marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent's care and gender. Regression coefficients are reported in Appendix L.

Among the 53 ELCC Centres that intended to increase the number of child care spaces, 43% were able to meet their goal during the time period covered in the year two evaluation. CS administrative data (not presented) also demonstrated that all ten of the Phase 1 ELCC Centres that indicated they would support rural populations with access to child care had done so by March 2019; 94% (30/32) Phase 2 ELCC Centres achieved the same goal. In total, this translates into 664 additional child care spaces available in rural communities (155 in Phase 1; 509 in Phase 2).

Table 3.3: Number of ELCC Centres Able to Increase Child Care Spaces as Intended by March 2019 (CS Administrative Data)

Able to meet?	Number of Phase 1 ELCC Centres	Number of Phase 2 ELCC Centres
Yes	6 (33.3%)	17 (48.6%)
No	12 (66.7%)	18 (51.4%)
Total (that proposed increase in child care spaces)	18	35
Not applicable (increase in child care spaces not proposed)	4	63
Total (all ELCC Centres)	22	98

3.2.2 Child Care Affordability

SUMMARY RESPONSE TO EVALUATION QUESTION 7:

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS IMPROVED CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY IN ALBERTA?

The parent/caregiver surveys and focus groups, as well as interviews with ELCC Centre supervisors and community partners, all revealed that the ELCC Centre initiative was associated with more affordable child care.

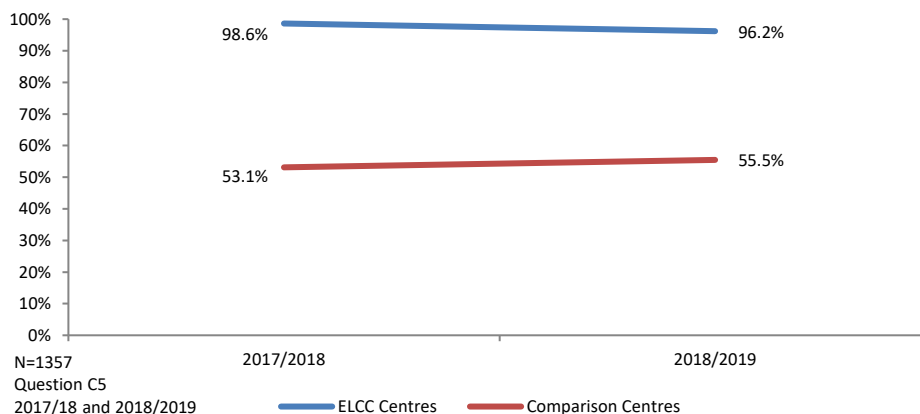
- Parents/caregivers at ELCC Centres were far more satisfied with fees than those at comparison centres;
- ELCC Centre supervisors and community partners agreed that ELCC Centres were affordable;
- ELCC and comparison centre parents/caregivers received child care subsidies in equal proportions each year.

3.2.2.1 Parent Satisfaction

Data from the parent/caregiver focus groups overwhelmingly suggested that parents/caregivers were satisfied with the affordability associated with the ELCC Centre initiative. The parent/caregiver survey data indicated statistically higher satisfaction with the cost of child care between ELCC Centres and comparison centres (see Figure 3.4, below).¹¹

¹¹ Significant differences ($p < .001$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of being satisfied/very satisfied with the cost of child care based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent's care and gender. Based on chi-square tests within each centre type, the year of survey and respondent satisfaction are independent of one another and thus, not statistically related ($p \geq 0.05$).

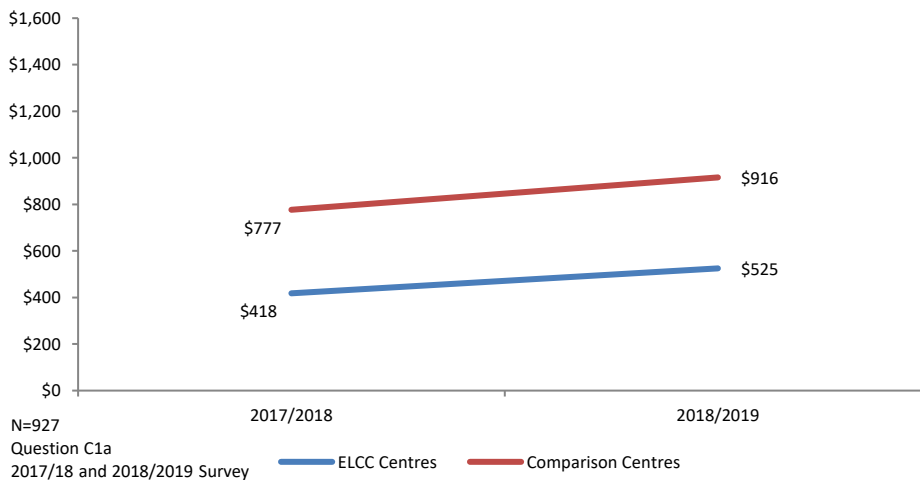
Figure 3.4: Percentage of Parents/Caregivers Satisfied/Very Satisfied with the Cost of Child Care at the Centre



3.2.2.2 Child Care Fees and Subsidies

Child care at ELCC Centres is, by design, less costly than child care at comparison centres (Figure 3.5). Parents at ELCC Centres reported spending, on average, \$391 less for their child to be enrolled each month.

Figure 3.5: Parent/Caregiver-Reported Average Cost to Have Children Enrolled at the Centre Per Month



CS administrative data show the differences in average monthly and daily fees, throughout Alberta, for parents/caregivers who do not receive child care subsidies and parents/caregivers who receive full or partial subsidy (Table 3.6). It should be noted that there was not a statistical difference in the percentage of parents receiving subsidy in either ELCC or comparison centres.

Table 3.6: Average Fees at ELCC and Non-ELCC, based on Subsidy Status, as of March 2019

Subsidy Status	ELCC Average Monthly Fees	Non-ELCC Average Monthly Fees	ELCC Average Daily Fees	Non-ELCC Average Daily Fees
Non-subsidized parents/caregivers	\$550	\$926	\$25	\$43
Parents/caregivers receiving subsidy (full or partial)	\$48	\$401	\$2	\$18
Source: Child Care Information System (CCIS) (March 2019 lockdown data). Note: There were 945 licensed day care programs in Alberta in March 2019. Fees are rounded to the nearest whole dollar. 21.75 days of child care are assumed per month. Average Program Fees are based on claims of those subsidized children. Some part-time children receiving subsidy might affect the overall average.				

3.2.2.3 ELCC Centre Partner Perceptions of Affordability

ELCC Centre supervisors and community partners explained that the ELCC Centre initiative had increased child care affordability for all families who were able to gain entry into these centres. Community partners largely felt that at \$25 per day was a valid price point for families in Alberta.

However, since all families—regardless of income—are eligible to send their children to ELCC Centres, supervisors and community partners also perceived the ELCC Centre initiative as a source of inequality. Some ELCC Centre supervisors claimed that a universal fee fails to prioritize those that need assistance, such as low-to-middle-income families, including single parent households.

3.2.3 Child Care Quality

As indicators of child care quality apply across a range of evaluation questions, this section has been presented by theme, as opposed to by evaluation question.

3.2.3.1 Quality Indicators at the Centre Level

Accreditation and Retention

CS administrative data from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 fiscal years show that, on average, ELCC Centres have fewer non-compliances per year than other day care centres in Alberta (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7: Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation Non-Compliances

Child Care Programs	2017/18 Fiscal Year		2018/19 Fiscal Year	
	Number of Centres Inspected	Average Number of Non-Compliances Issued	Number of Centres Inspected	Average Number of Non-Compliances Issued
ELCC Centres	18	1.11	120	1.25
Non-ELCC Centres	911	1.94	930	1.93
Source: CCIS (March 2018 and 2019 lockdown data).				

ELCC Centre supervisors had mixed opinions on whether staff turnover had impacted the roll out of ELCC Centre quality initiatives. Some ELCC Centre supervisors believed that centres had been adversely impacted because staff departure had required that new staff be trained and material had to be retaught to other staff, which had delayed the roll out of the quality initiatives.

ELCC Centre Improvements

ELCC Centre supervisors generally agreed their centre had succeeded in addressing ELCC Centre-mandated improvements noted in their individual grant agreements, including:

- Offering flexible child care;
- Supporting child care in rural communities;
- Collaborating with organizations to provide access to services in the same physical space (co-location);
- Collaborating with organizations that support cultural diversity;
- Collaborating with organizations to provide parenting supports and resources;
- Collaborating with organizations to support vulnerable families; and
- Supporting language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree).

Where ELCC Centre improvements had not been completed, centre supervisors stated that a lack of time was their most common challenge. However, other challenges were identified, such as a lack of clarity related to flexibility in spending underutilized grant funds; restrictive centre space; and finding appropriate staff to fulfill specific roles (such as fluent language speakers).

Table 3.8: Frequencies of ELCC Centre Supervisor Reported Status of Improvements

	Flexible Child Care	Support Rural Child Care	Collaborate With Organizations To Provide Access to Services in the Same Space	Collaborate With Organizations that Support Cultural Diversity	Collaborate With Organizations to Provide Parenting Supports and Resources	Collaborate With Organizations to Support Vulnerable Families	Support Acquisition of a Minority Language
Implemented As Intended	15	12	15	16	24	30	3
Implemented Not as Intended	0	0	1	2	4	3	2
Has Begun	1	0	3	7	1	1	0
Has Not Begun	4	0	1	2	0	1	2
Don't Know	5	1	4	5	2	4	0
Prefer Not to Answer	1	1	2	1	0	0	0
N=	26	14	26	33	31	39	7

Improving Parenting Skills

In addition to enhancing children’s learning experiences, the ELCC Centre initiative aimed to help increase parent/caregiver engagement. A majority of ELCC Centre initiative partners believed that they

had met this goal by hosting information-based sessions for parents/caregivers, such as seminars and workshops. Some centres were working on partnership goals related to improving parenting skills by planning and preparing for future events in the upcoming year.

3.2.3.2 Quality Indicators at the Staff Level

Staff Certification

CS administrative data show that, in 2018, there were nearly equal percentage distributions of Child Development Assistants (Level 1), Workers (Level 2) and Supervisors (Level 3) across all child care centres in Alberta, including ELCC Centres. In 2019, however, ELCC Centres were identified as having 8.6% more Child Development Supervisors (Level 3) than other child care centres in Alberta (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Number (Percentage) of Day Care Staff at Each Child Development Certification Level

Region	March 2018				March 2019			
	Assistant (Level 1)	Worker (Level 2)	Supervisor (Level 3)	Total	Assistant (Level 1)	Worker (Level 2)	Supervisor (Level 3)	Total
Alberta (Non-ELCC)	3,810 (39.1%)	1,615 (16.6%)	4,329 (44.4%)	9,755 (100%)	3,935 (42.8%)	1,469 (16.0%)	3,791 (41.2%)	9,195 (100%)
ELCC Centres	119 (39.9%)	50 (16.8%)	129 (43.3%)	298 (100%)	623 (33.7%)	304 (16.5%)	921 (49.8%)	1,848 (100%)

Source: CCIS (March 2018 and 2019 lockdown data).

Staff Professional Development (PD)

The ELCC Centre supervisor survey (2018/19) revealed ELCC Centres offer a number of supports to ensure that centre staff¹² access PD. The most commonly offered supports included: 1) paying staff while attending PD opportunities during work hours (91.5%); 2) informing staff about PD opportunities (89.4%); and 3) offering funds to cover PD registration fees (85.1%).

In 2017/18, 90.5% of staff members (non-supervisors) were either satisfied or very satisfied that PD offered by the centre enhanced their abilities to meet the care needs of children. Satisfaction was lower in 2018/19 (84.4%), although the difference between years is not statistical.

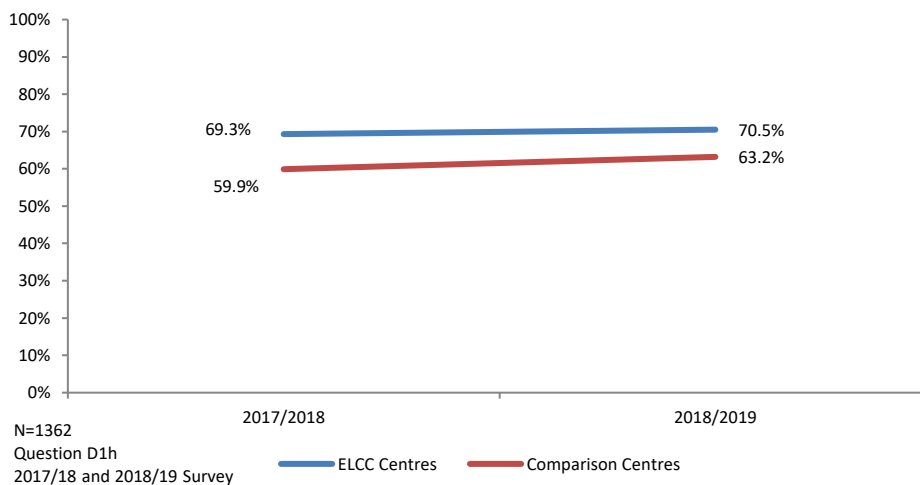
The ELCC Centre educator survey data showed that 98.4% of educators in 2017/18 and 96.8% of educators in 2018/19 said that they believed their work meaningfully contributed to the goals of the ELCC Centre. Of those who had worked at other child care centres (n=358), 94.9% in 2017/18 and 91.9% in 2018/19 said they were confident that the quality of child care at the ELCC Centre was better than at other places they had worked.

Based on analyses of interview data, most ELCC Centre supervisors perceived an increase of professionalism among staff due to their participation in the ELCC Centre Initiative. Increased professionalism appears to have stemmed from staff feeling recognized as educators, wage floors (increased wages), increased PD opportunities and parent/caregiver response to these changes.

¹² In this section, we refer to 'centre staff' as opposed to 'centre educators' as PD might be accessible to all staff within a Centre, not only the educators.

ELCC Centre parents/caregivers are also more likely to view centre educators as professionals. After accounting for parental differences in survey year, region, marital status, citizenship status, the presence of multiple children in the household and gender, data from the parent/caregiver survey indicate that parents view ELCC Centre educators as more professional than comparison centre educators (Figure 3.10).¹³

Figure 3.10: Percentage of Parents/Caregivers Who Strongly Agree that Centre Staff are Professionals



3.2.3.3 Quality Indicators: Quality Initiatives

This section presents an analysis of implementation of the two quality initiatives, Flight and ASaP:

- The purpose of this section is to provide an evidence-based understanding of how implementation of Flight and ASaP have enacted changes in quality within ELCC Centres.
- Data underpinning this section include key informant interviews with ELCC Centre supervisors, educators, pedagogical partners and ASaP coaches.
- Only data from Phase 1 ELCC Centres in their second year of implementation in 2018/19 were included in these analyses.¹⁴

This section is not an evaluation of the Flight Curriculum Framework or of the ASaP Continuum Project; such an evaluation falls outside of the scope of this project. The analyses provided below are not based upon, nor a description of, program implementation models.

The data presented below provide an evidence-based description of how participants (ELCC Centre supervisors, educators, pedagogical partners, ASaP coaches) experienced implementation of the quality initiatives in their local context and how they understood changes in quality to have occurred.

¹³ The statistical differences ($p < .01$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of parents that they strongly agree that centre staff are professionals, based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent's care and gender.

¹⁴ Phase 2 ELCC Centres will be included in the 2019/20 analysis if they are in their second year of Flight and/or ASaP implementation at that point.

The introduction of the two different quality initiatives – Flight: Alberta’s Early Learning and Care Framework (formerly known as *Play, Participation and Possibilities*) and ASaP – is one way that the ELCC Centre initiative aims to enhance quality child care in Alberta. The Flight program supports ELCC Centres through professional development and training of curriculum concepts to foster responsive care and holistic learning experiences for children. The ASaP project supports the professional development of inclusive practices, focused in the area of emotional and social development, to ensure educators and families have the skills and knowledge to promote meaningful participation and inclusion of all children. Both programs have worked to develop sustainable practices through training and onsite consultation supports with a core leadership team

ELCC Centre supervisors, educators and pedagogical partners reported that these quality initiatives were enhancing the quality of care provided at their centre. According to the survey data, ELCC Centre educators who had received training on Flight in 2017/18 (67%, N=133) identified increased staff competency (43.2%) and increased/improved interactions with parents/caregivers (34.1%) as two ways the training had impacted them. Educators who received training on Flight in 2018/19 (54%, N=232) identified becoming more child-centred and responsive in their daily practices (71.1%) and experiencing changes in the language they use (67.7%) as two ways that Flight training had an impact.

According to the 2017/18 survey data, ELCC Centre educators who had received ASaP training identified improved interactions with parents/caregivers (32.0%), followed by increased staff competency (29.3%) as two ways the training had impacted them. Among those educators who had received the ASaP training in 2018/19, improved educator interactions with children (63.5%) and changes in the language educators use (61.4%), were noted as two ways ASaP training had an impact.

3.2.3.4 *Implementing the Flight and ASaP Quality Initiatives*

Flight

Implementation of Flight is supported through three phases of development.

- Phase 1: Relationship development and knowledge building occurs between the pedagogical partner and core team. Pedagogical partners are allocated 4 hours a month to conduct site visits.
- Phase 2: A consolidating of understanding in practice occurs wherein the pedagogical partner facilitates conversations with course takers during site visits and coordinates monthly regional learning community sessions for the core teams.
- Phase 3: In the final year of the pilot process, the core team is supported to develop pedagogical leadership skills to support a culture of learning and professional development with all staff working within the centre.

ASaP

ASaP supports long-term (3 to 5 year) program-wide implementation of the evidence-based Teaching Pyramid Model (TPM) framework in ELCC Centre programs and moves through four stages of implementation.

- Phase 1: Skill development and relationship building occurs between the ASaP coach and leadership team, especially the site lead educator. Practice-based coaching occurs approximately twice per month.

- Phase 2: A consolidating of understanding in practices occurs wherein the leadership team engage in TPM professional development and engage in reflective pedagogical conversations with the ASaP coach.
- Phase 3: Centres have an established and internal leadership team¹⁵ and practices start to become embedded through program-wide implementation.
- Phase 4: In the final year of the program, the site lead educator has successfully met the criteria for implementing TPM practices with fidelity and the leadership team is actively implementing and supporting PWI and TPM practices with confidence. The centre transitions into a demonstration site.

Although ELCC Centres move through Flight and ASaP implementation processes in their own timeframe, interview participants from the Phase 1 ELCC Centres described a process whereby new concepts and practices are introduced, learned, developed, practiced, expanded and embedded, resulting in engaged children, educators and parents/caregivers.

The implementation of the quality initiative programs was concurrent. This resulted in some participants reporting a variety of challenges and resulting solutions, summarized below.

Educator Engagement and Openness to Change

In cases where educators either struggled to understand new concepts or were less open to change, participants reported a variety of strategies to foster understanding and engagement. Such strategies included:

Mentoring

Several participants reported the establishment of inter-educator mentoring to support the learning of educators who were less familiar or comfortable with the material. This strategy resulted in improved inter-educator relationships, leading to increased dialogue and teamwork, which supported ongoing quality improvement implementation.

Modelling

Participants described that having the site lead, other trained educators or the quality initiative partner modelling behaviours helped facilitate successful application of practices.

Ongoing quality partner engagement

Ongoing active engagement of the pedagogical partner was identified as being extremely valuable in promoting learning, engaging educators and keeping the centre's curriculum implementation on track. For instance, pedagogical partner participation in staff meetings to explain core concepts and answer questions meant that educators were equally supported in their learning and professional development. Having quality partners available to observe practice and provide feedback was considered to be of significant importance in promoting the quality initiatives throughout the centre.

¹⁵ Each ELCC Centre identified an internal leadership team comprised of a minimum of three individuals to support program adoption. One member who is at an administrative decision-making capacity, a front line educator, who is also the Site Lead and works with the ASaP coach, and a third member who is an educator or administrator. The intention of the internal leadership team is to create a central group who will complete training and build both capacity and sustainability of inclusivity practices within each centre.

Support from leadership

Quality partners identified the importance of core leadership support in promoting educator engagement. Having leadership engaged meant that they were willing to provide the resources required for educators to learn (e.g., time to discuss concepts, complete assignments, perform observations) and understand new curriculum practices. Leadership was seen to be in a strong position to model new concepts, such as the use of new language within the centre.

Active engagement

A few ELCC Centre supervisors stated that they deliberately selected educators who expressed resistance to take the training so that they could become actively embedded in the new practices; supervisors that reported employing this strategy noted that it had been successful.

Level of Contact between Educators and Quality Initiative Partners

The level of contact between pedagogical partners and educators was identified by participants as being a key challenge impacting implementation of the two quality initiatives within centres. Many of the quality partners reported frustration at their inability to provide support; they reported being hampered by a lack of time (worked with multiple sites), lack of proximity to their assigned sites, centre staffing issues and limited time per site. These frustrations were echoed by centre educators.

To mitigate this challenge, some quality partners ensured that they were available by telephone or video recording system so that they could provide support even if they were unable to attend the centre in person.

Educators and Quality Initiative Partners Recommendations

ELCC Centre supervisors and educators made suggestions for how the training implementation could be improved:

- Providing additional support in the earlier stages of the training implementation.
- Providing Flight training over a longer period of time. Educators would be able to gain a better grasp of the Framework material if it is presented in a slower and more digestible way.
- Ensuring that centres have a 'good team' that is well supported in their learning endeavours, including a stable workforce.
- Providing Flight and ASaP training to more individuals within the centre as it will help to alleviate stress among educators and to easier reach goals of program-wide implementation. Alternatively, the model for training allocation could be amended to offer training to a percentage of total Centre staff (e.g. 10% of all centre staff), as opposed to a 'flat rate' of staff regardless of centre size (e.g. up to four staff). This would enable larger ELCC Centres to send more of their staff for training.

3.2.3.5 Quality Indicators at the Parent/Caregiver Level

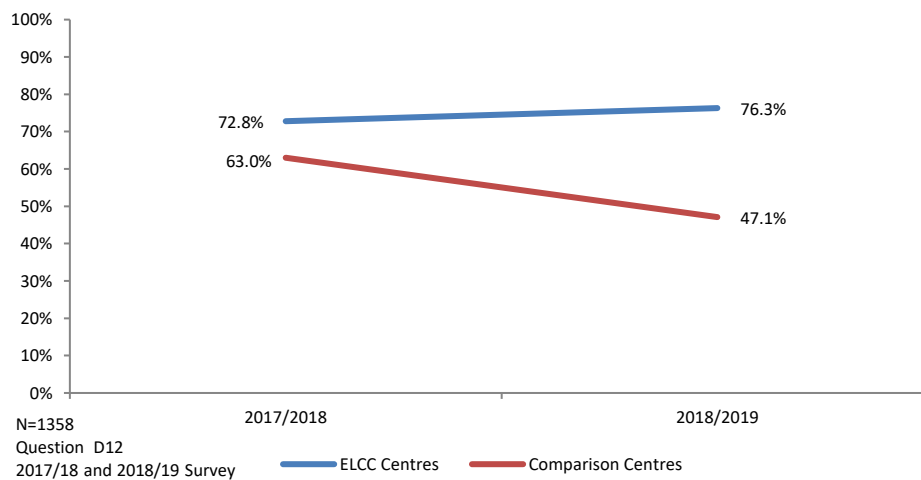
Quality Assurance Engagement

One of the key ways in which parents/caregivers were observed to be involved in the oversight of child care centre quality was through their involvement on a parent advisory board. In addition to parent advisory boards, the most common quality assurance activities available to parents/caregivers at ELCC Centres included written feedback in the form of surveys, a suggestion box, communication sheets, applications to provide feedback virtually (e.g., via the HiMama app) and general feedback forms.

Satisfaction with Quality

Parents/caregivers with children in ELCC Centres had statistically higher odds of reporting being very satisfied with the quality of care at their child(ren)'s centre than parents/caregivers with children in comparison centres over the two survey waves, even after factoring in differences in survey year, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent's care and gender (Figure 3.11).¹⁶ In each survey year, the percentage differences in reporting being very satisfied with the quality of care were statistical as well.¹⁷

Figure 3.11: Percentage of Parents/Caregivers Reporting That They Were Very Satisfied with the Quality of Care at the Centre



Diversity and Inclusion

All ELCC Centre educators stated that their ELCC Centre promoted cultural diversity to varying degrees. Many ELCC Centres incorporate cultural diversity through toys, books and by hosting cultural celebrations. Some educators mentioned that parents/caregivers could self-identify in their welcome packages, as part of the registration process, and the centre would acknowledge and celebrate their cultural background. Some centres bring in Indigenous elders to immerse children into Indigenous cultures through story, language and foods. That said, the celebration of multiculturalism and the practice of inclusivity were reported by comparison centre supervisors to the same extent as ELCC Centre supervisors.

¹⁶ Significant differences ($p < 0.001$) are based on logistic regression.

¹⁷ Results based on chi-square tests ($p < .05$ 2017/18, $p < .001$ 2018/19).

3.2.4 Impact on Family and Child Well-Being

SUMMARY RESPONSE TO EVALUATION QUESTION 13: HOW HAS THE ELCC CENTRE INITIATIVE IMPACTED FAMILY/CHILD WELL-BEING?

Interviews with ELCC Centre supervisors, educators, community partners; pedagogical partners and ASaP coaches; as well as parent/caregiver focus group and survey respondents, found that the ELCC Centre Initiative has impacted family and child well-being in the following ways:

- Increased labour force attachment (entering/re-entering the workforce);
- Reduced stress and increased peace of mind for families;
- Improved family relationships;
- Reduced financial burden for families;
- Reduced vulnerability for families; and
- Increased community involvement.

3.2.4.1 Labour Force Attachment

The percentages of ELCC and comparison centre parents/caregivers who returned to work full-time were statistically different in 2018/19 (72.7% ELCC Centre parents/caregivers, 58.3% comparison centre parents/caregivers).¹⁸ Over the two years of parent/caregiver survey data collection, there appears to be a statistically average ELCC Centre advantage: the odds of female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers returning to full-time work were 1.4 times those of their comparison centre counterparts after accounting for respondent differences in survey year, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, and the number of children in a respondent's care.¹⁹

There was also a statistically larger percentage of female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers (13.9%) who went back to school or take on more classes in 2018/19 compared to female comparison centre parents/caregivers (3.1%); this means that female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers have 4.2 times higher odds in 2018/19 of taking on more schooling than comparison centre parents/caregivers based on regression analyses.²⁰ This finding was supported by the parent focus group data as well.

For women who returned to work, over the two years of parent/caregiver survey data collection, there appears to be a statistically average ELCC Centre advantage: the odds of female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers accepting more work responsibility were 1.8 times those of their comparison centre counterparts after accounting for respondent differences in survey year, region of the centre, marital

¹⁸ Results based on chi-square tests.

¹⁹ Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of returning to work full-time versus all other outcomes, based on centre type (ELCC versus Comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status and multiple children in a respondent's care.

²⁰ Significant differences ($p < 0.01$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of taking on more schooling (returning full-time or part-time, or taking more classes) versus either working on not returning to work or school, based on centre type (ELCC versus Comparison) when controlling for region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status and multiple children in a respondent's care.

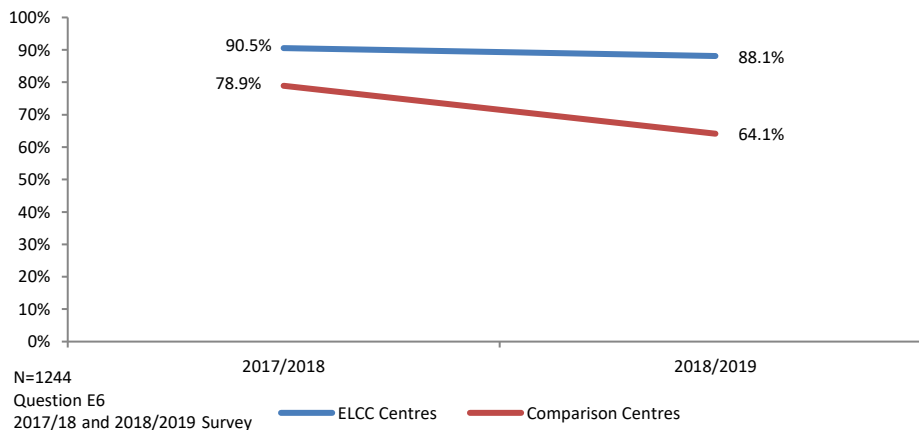
status, citizenship status, and the number of children in a respondent’s care.²¹ Further, in 2018/19, female ELCC Centre parents/caregivers had 2.1 times higher odds of reporting that sending their child to the ELCC Centre positively impacted their career compared to comparison centre parents/caregivers.²²

3.2.4.2 Parent Vulnerability, Stress and Community Engagement

In the focus groups, ELCC parents/caregivers identified overall relief, reduced stress and positive impacts to their mental health as a result of sending their child to an ELCC Centre. Parents’/caregivers’ relief stemmed from the increase in affordability in conjunction with issues in their personal lives. Many parents/caregivers also reported an overall decrease in the stress of their family unit because the ELCC Centre initiative allowed them to have their child(ren) in child care and know that their children were well-taken care of, as a result of the high ELCC Centre curriculum standards.

The parent/caregiver survey data indicated that ELCC Centre parents/caregivers were statistically more likely than comparison centre parents/caregivers to report that they feel a part of the community as a result of the child care centre (Figure 3.12).²³

Figure 3.12: Percentage of Parents/Caregivers Who Report That They Feel a Part of a Community as a Result of Their Child(ren) Attending the Centre



Many of the partnerships had been established to provide supports to families within ELCC Centres. Some examples of supports included: helping parents/caregivers fill out paperwork to access additional resources within the community (i.e. child care subsidy, housing); supporting parents/caregivers in their educational endeavours (i.e. providing high quality child care so that parents/caregivers can access education); and general parenting support (i.e. parenting workshops). Another common partnership

²¹ Significant differences ($p < 0.001$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of reporting being able to accept more work responsibility versus not, based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status and multiple children in a respondent’s care.

²² Significant differences ($p < 0.05$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of reporting that the centre positively impacted one’s career, based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status and multiple children in a respondent’s care. The question, E4a was new to parents in 2018/19.

²³ Significant differences ($p < .001$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of parents reporting that they feel a part of the community as a result of the child care centre based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent’s care and gender.

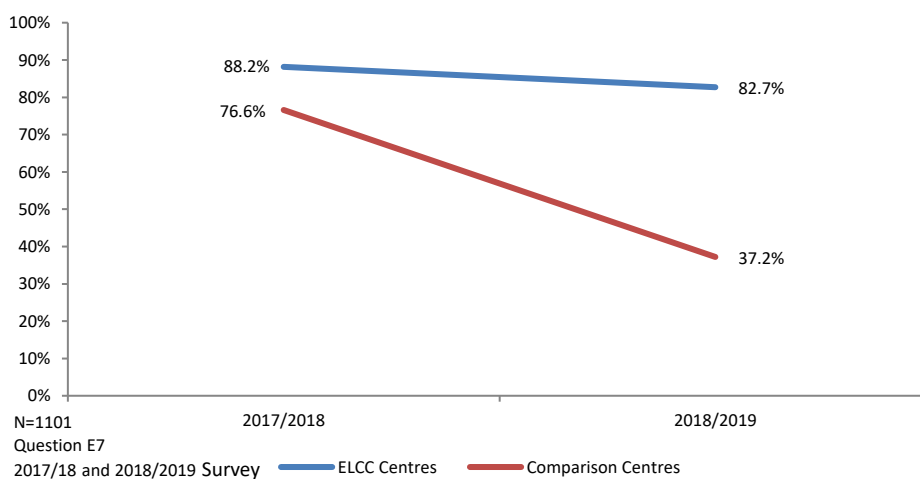
goal included providing supports directly to children enrolled in ELCC Centres (PUF Support, mental health therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy etc.) and indirectly (i.e. referral processes).

Aside from these partnership goals, partnerships generally had secondary goals of improving cultural diversity, supporting vulnerable families, and providing parenting supports. Many partners felt that there were no challenges in these areas. Other partners noted that in some instances it had been difficult to reach or engage families (possibly due to language barriers, attendance issues or parents were just generally unavailable or busy).

The majority of partners provided in-kind support to the ELCC Centres. Examples of in-kind supports included supports to educators and children (i.e. assessments, presentations, and professional development sessions), equipment (i.e. soft play equipment, toys, and books), materials (i.e. craft supplies) and physical space (i.e. gym space). Few partners provided any sort of financial supports to the ELCC Centres.

Parent/caregiver survey data indicated ELCC Centre parents/caregivers were statistically more likely than comparison centre parents/caregivers to report they feel more comfortable accessing community supports (such as the library, cultural centres or specialists such as speech and language therapists) as a result of their child attending their current child care centre (Figure 3.13).²⁴

Figure 3.13: Percentage of Parents/Caregivers Who Report That They Feel More Comfortable Accessing Community Supports as a Result of Their Child(ren) Attending the Centre



3.2.4.3 Positive Impacts on the Children and Family Relationships

The 2017/18 parent/caregiver survey data showed that 72.4% of ELCC Centre parents/caregivers reported they strongly agree that the quality of care at the centre has positively impacted their children,

²⁴ Significant differences ($p < .001$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of parents reporting that they feel more comfortable accessing community supports as a result of the child care centre based on centre type (ELCC versus comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent's care and gender.

compared to 60.4% of comparison centre parents/caregivers. In 2018/19, this gap expanded to 75.3% for ELCC Centre parents/caregivers and 56.8% for comparison centre parents/caregivers (Figure 4.23). When using regression analysis, parents/caregivers with children in ELCC Centres actually have twice the odds of strongly agreeing that the quality of care at the centre positively impacted their children, compared to parents/caregivers with children in comparison centres.²⁵

3.2.4.4 Choosing a Child Care Centre

The parent/caregiver survey and focus groups pointed towards quality as the top reason for why parents/caregivers chose the child care centre. Over the two survey years and across ELCC and Comparison Centres, affordability came second and accessibility came third (Table 4.24). Among parents/caregivers in Phase 2 ELCC Centres, quality was the most important reason, while affordability was most important for parents/caregivers with children in Phase 1 ELCC Centres.²⁶

Table 3.14: Parents’/Caregivers’ Top Reason for Choosing Their Child Care Centres

Reason For Choosing Centre	ELCC Centres		Comparison Centres	
	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19
Accessibility	21.2%	18.9%	29.2%	31.6%
Affordability	35.8%	28.2%	12.4%	16.1%
Quality	38.2%	42.5%	47.8%	43.9%

N=1359
Question E10a
2017/18 and 2018/2019 Survey

3.2.5 Unintended Outcomes

Wait lists

The most prevalent theme across the stakeholder groups was the unexpected speed with which ELCC Centres were filled to capacity and, subsequently, the extensive wait lists. Although several stakeholders stated that they had expected an increase in demand for a space at their centre, they had not expected the extent to which demand would escalate.

Some ELCC Centre supervisors perceived the waitlists to be problematic as they characterized waitlists as ‘spiraling out of control’ and having ‘zero movement’ following the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative. Centre supervisors felt ill-equipped to appropriately handle waitlists and the reaction from parents/caregivers. Given the level of stress surrounding waitlists, centre supervisors felt there should be a designated authority responsible for the management of a centralized waitlist for access to day care centres funded through the initiative.

Impacts on Educators

²⁵ Significant differences ($p < .001$) are based on a logistic regression predicting the odds of parents reporting that strongly agree that the quality of care at the Centre has positively impacted their child(ren) based on centre type (ELCC versus Comparison) when controlling for year of survey, region of the centre, marital status, citizenship status, multiple children in a respondent’s care and gender.

²⁶ For a definition of Phase 1 and Phase 2 ELCC Centres please see Table 1.1.

Interview participants reported a change in perception among parents, educators and partners relating to child care and child care providers. Interviewees stated that the ELCC Centre initiative was shifting how parents viewed educators: moving away from seeing staff as “babysitters” and towards seeing staff as “educators”.

One negative unintended outcome was that, as a result of dramatic growth seen across the majority of centres, it was difficult to find enough qualified educators to meet ratios. A further negative unintended outcome was that educators reported feeling increased stress due to multiple compounding factors, such as a dramatic increase in the number of children at the centre (often including many that had never been in child care before), learning and implementing a new curriculum framework, learning and implementing new inclusion practices and working with new colleagues. Many educators stated they had expected these changes, but had expected them to take place over a longer, more manageable time period; the speed with which everything seemed to change at once was both unexpected and overwhelming.

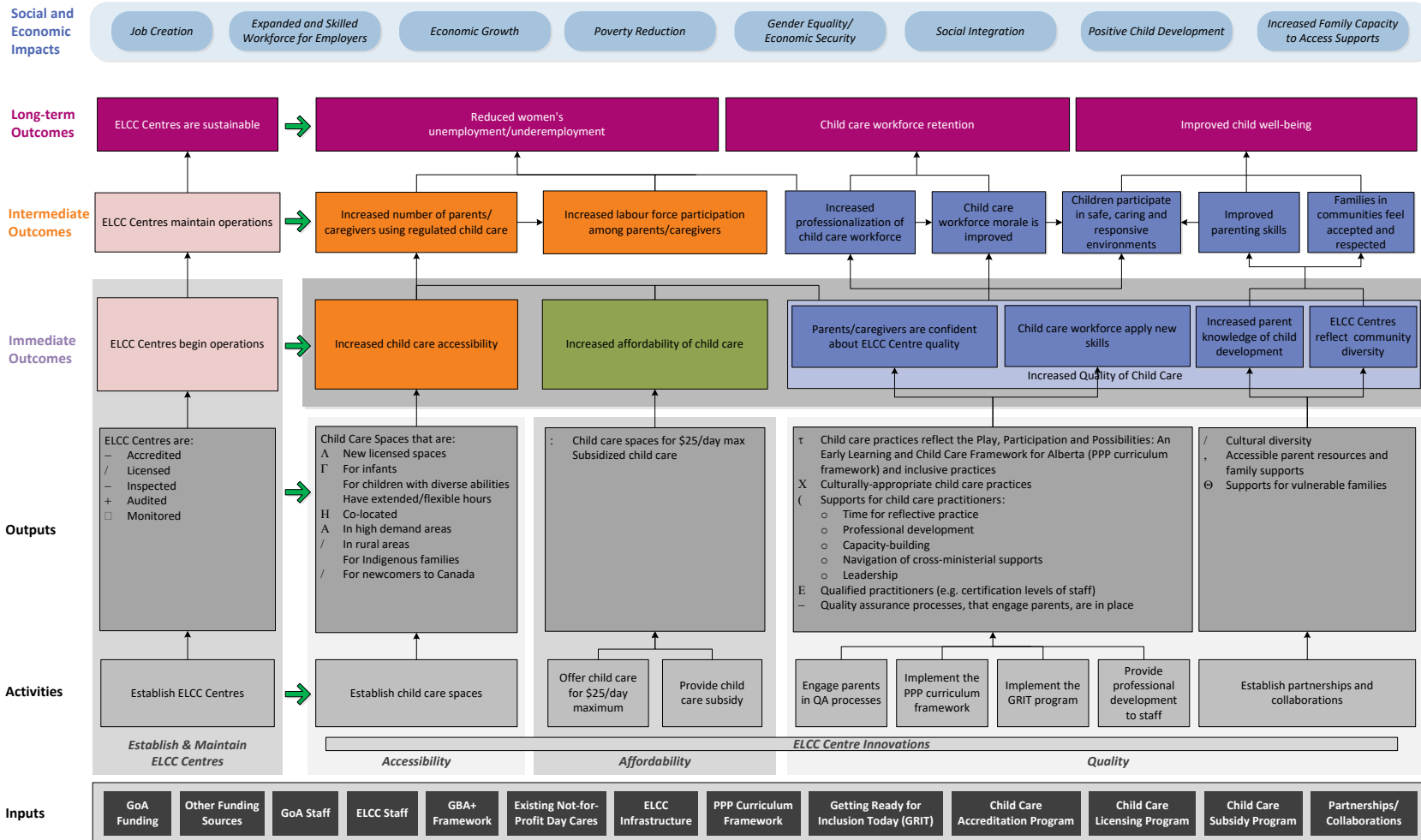
Inter-Centre Dynamics

Stakeholders identified increased communication and collaboration with other ELCC Centres in their area as a positive unintended outcome. Centre supervisors, in particular, noted the importance of these networks for providing support and guidance during ELCC Centre initiative implementation. A negative unintended outcome identified by a few of the stakeholders was the perception that the initiative had resulted in a ‘have and have not’ culture among Alberta child care providers, particularly in terms of access to the Flight and ASaP training. Some felt accessibility to quality supports should be standardized/ regulated.

APPENDIX A: ELCC CENTRE INITIATIVE EVALUATION LOGIC MODEL

Logic Model: Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre Initiative

June 2017



APPENDIX B: ELCC CENTRE INITIATIVE EVALUATION MATRIX

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
What is the nature and level of continued need for the ELCC Centre Initiative Model and associated elements?	Available licensed day care spaces, enrollment and percent of children enrolled in Alberta pre and post ELCC Centre initiative (overall and by region)		x									
	Average daily cost of licensed day care for children in Alberta		x									
	Proportion of children in Alberta enrolled in child care who receive subsidies		x									
	Labour force participation rate of women with young children (aged in Alberta compared to national average (full time and part time)		x									
	Perceived need for the initiative	x	x								E1	
	Decreased staff turnover		x	C7		B3	D2a-b					
How is the initiative aligned with the Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement?	Alignment between ELCC Centre initiative and the Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and Action Plan	x										
Is the initiative being implemented as intended? What factors facilitated or hindered initiative implementation?	Centre staff perceptions of the initiative application, approval and funding process				B1a-b							
	Centres were able to implement the initiative within planned timeframes				B1a-b							
	Number of staff at each certification level		x									
	Centre staff perceptions of facilitators and barriers to implementation			F2 F3	B1a-b							
	Number of programs accredited		x									
	Percent of ELCC Centres that have completed the accreditation process (accredited vs. pre-accredited)		x									
	Improvements for each program (as specified in the individual grant			F1a-g								

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
	agreements, including partnerships) are implemented											
	Creation of jobs for early learning and child care providers		x									
Based on initiative implementation, what learnings can be used to improve program design, delivery, effectiveness and future investments going forward?	Perception of ways to support, increase or improve program design; efficiency; effectiveness; future investment				B1							
	Percent parents/caregivers indicating affordability, accessibility or quality as the driving factor in selecting ELCC Centre child care							E8 E10a	B2			
How do collaborations/ partnerships support initiative implementation?	Partnerships secured due to participation in initiative			B1a B1 b-p								
	Number of improvements delivered as a result of partnerships			F1-F3								
	Type of improvements delivered as a result of partnerships			G1-G2						B1		
	Perception of key stakeholders about successes/challenges of partnerships			B2 B3	E2, E3 E4					B2		
What level of progress has been made towards improved child care <u>accessibility</u> in Alberta (including new spaces, enrollment, co-location, flexibility, rural communities, etc.)	Spaces: o Change in the number of licensed ELCC and comparison centre spaces		x	E1a-c		D1						
	o Percent change in the number of regulated child care spaces in ELCC and comparison centres vs. provincial average (non-profit programs) over the same time period		x									
	o Percent of ELCC and comparison centers offering inclusive child care vs. provincial average		x									
	Enrollment: o Change in percent of children enrolled in ELCC Centres (spaces vs enrollment)		x	E2a-c								
	Location:		x									

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Percent of ELCC and comparison centers located within Parent Link Centre (PLC) or PLC outreach program ○ Percent of ELCC and comparison centers co-located with other child care programs ○ Percent of ELCC and comparison centers co-located with schools ○ Percent of ELCC and comparison centers located in rural areas 											
	Percent of ELCC and comparison centres offering variable or extended hours		x									
	Parent/caregiver perceptions of ELCC and comparison centre accessibility, including satisfaction								B1a-b B2a-b B2c B3a, B3c B4a-b			
	Partner and ELCC Centre staff perceptions of center accessibility											
What level of progress has been made towards improved child care <u>affordability</u> in Alberta?	Parents/caregivers do not pay more than \$25 a day		x						C1a C1a-d			
	ELCC Centres do not charge add-on fees (including fees for food/snacks, field trips)								B3b C3a-b			
	Percent of children enrolled receiving subsidy in ELCC Centres vs. provincial average (non-profit/profit/ all day care centres)		x						C2			
	Parents/caregiver perceptions of ELCC child care space affordability								C5			
	Partner and centre staff perceptions of ELCC child care space affordability				D1, D2 D3	D2, D3 D4						
How has the <u>quality</u> of child care improved in Alberta?	Non-compliances: average number of non-compliances issued by licensing staff by ELCC Centres vs. provincial average in day care programs		X									

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
	Percent of parents/caregivers who are satisfied with the quality of child care provided by centre staff								D1a-g D12	D2 D3 D4a-d D5		D1a-g D12
	Availability and type of support provided by centres to offer PD			C1 C2 C3 C5 C6			A4a,b				B1 B2	
How are parents/caregivers meaningfully engaged in quality assurance processes at ELCC Centre?	Quality assurance processes, in which parents/caregivers can engage, are in place at ELCC Centres			D7 D8	C5					C1i		
	Percent of parents/ caregivers who are aware of quality assurance opportunities at ELCC Centers								D2a1	C1i		
	Percent of parents/ caregivers who participate in quality assurance opportunities at ELCC Centres								D2a2			
	Percent of parents/ caregivers who feel their input in quality assurance processes are incorporated into the centres quality assurance practices									C1i		
How have the curriculum and inclusion resources and supports been adopted throughout the centres?	<i>Play, Participation and Possibilities: An early learning and child care curriculum framework for Alberta curriculum framework (ELCC Curriculum Framework) and the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project are implemented and demonstrated at ELCC Centres</i>			C4a-b	C1 C7		B2	B1- B12				B1-B6 B8-B12
	Percent of parents/ caregivers who are satisfied with the level of cultural diversity at ELCC Centres								D5 D1f			
	Percent of parents/ caregivers who are satisfied that their cultural background is reflected in the child care centre and/or incorporated into learning activities (SEI)								D7 E6			
	Children are not asked to leave ELCC Centres			D6a-b								

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
	Families are not being excluded			D5					D6, E6			B11a-b
	Child inclusiveness has increased				D6, D7a	C3			E6			
How have staff practices changed as a result of adopting curriculum supports and inclusion practices?	Staff reported changes in curriculum					C1, C2	B5	B4				B4
	Learning opportunities specific to the PPP curriculum framework and ASaP principles are available to centre staff			D1, D2 D3, D4	C1,C7			B1, B8				B1-B7 B8-B14
	Centre staff have gained additional knowledge on how to develop and deliver curriculum and include all children				C2, C3 C4, C5		B2, B5	B5, B10				B1-B7 B8-B14
What level of progress has been made towards implementation of improvements?: How have professional development (PD) opportunities improved staff skills, practices, and retention (other than curriculum and inclusion resources)?	ELCC Centre staff are satisfied with the availability of PD opportunities						D8a, D8c					
	ELCC Centre staff are satisfied with the quality of PD opportunities						A4ci-iii A5a_new A3a, c					
	Centre staff participate in PD opportunities		x			B1, B2	A4a					
	Centre staff actively use new skills in their child care practice and interactions with children						A4c B2, B5	B3, B9				B1-B7 B8-B14
	Number of centre staff at each certification level		X				A1e					
	Type of PD staff have participated in						A4a, A4b					
	Overall centre staff satisfaction with their employment at the centre						D1, D2a-b D8a-b					
	ELCC Centres staff retention		x	C7	C6, C11	B3	A1a, A1b_Ne w A1b A1b_Bac k D2a, D2b	B7, B12				B7, b14
	Parents/caregivers and ELCC management recognize centre staff as professionals					C12				D1h		

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
	Staff wages are higher than minimum wage		x									
What level of progress has been made towards implementation of improvements?: How have ELCC Centre partnerships and collaborations improved parenting skills and understanding of the community resources available for parents/caregivers?	Parents/caregivers are aware of how to access parenting resources and family supports from ELCC Centres			F1a-g F2, F3			C1a, B7a	B13c B14c	D9 E7	C1ii	C1c, C2	
	Parents/caregivers are accessing parenting resources and family supports from ELCC Centres						D10a-b, E7	C1ii	D10b			
	Parents/caregivers are implementing skills gained from ELCC parenting resources and family supports (self-reported)						D11a-b	C3	D11a-b	C3		
	Percent of ELCC programs that offer specific supports for vulnerable families: (i.e. low socio-economic status, lone parent families, parenting teens and women facing additional barriers)			F1a-g F2, F3	C13							
What level of progress has been made towards implementation of improvements?: How have ELCC Centre partnerships and collaborations with other service-providing organizations improved the centre's cultural diversity (in particular: Indigenous, immigrant, refugee)?	Number of partnerships/collaborations with Indigenous organizations		x								C1a	
	Number of partnerships/collaborations with immigrant-serving organizations		x								C1a	
	Number of partnerships/collaborations with refugee-serving organizations		x								C1a	
	Perceptions of key stakeholders around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased provision for cultural diversity (e.g. Centre staff that speak relevant languages) Collaborating with cultural leaders (e.g. community Elders) 			F1a-g F2, F3	E1, E2		B7b	B13a B14a			C1a, C2	
	Linguistic minorities (e.g. French, Cree) are served			B2, B3	E1-E4		B7b					
What level of progress has been made towards implementation of	Number of partnerships/collaborations with organizations that support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lone parents/caregivers 						B7c				C1b	

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
improvements?: How have ELCC Centre partnerships and collaborations increased support to vulnerable families?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Low socio-economic families o Teen parents 											
	Perceptions of key stakeholders about the degree to which partnerships and collaborations have increased support to vulnerable families			F1a-g F2, F3	E1, E2		B7a, B7d	B13b B14b			C1b C2	
How has child care accessibility, affordability, and quality impacted parents'/caregivers' labour force opportunities?	Percent of ELCC parents/caregivers in school or working as a result of child care (SEI)								E1, E1b, c E1d, E2a-c, E2d-e			
	Percent of ELCC parents/ caregivers taking promotion or new job opportunities as a result of child care (SEI)								E4a E4 E4iia E4biia			
	Percent of ELCC parents/caregivers with change in household income as a result of child care (SEI)								E3, E3a,d			
Do the programs adequately meet the child care accessibility, affordability and quality needs of the target group(s)? Are there groups whose needs remain unmet?	Perceptions of key stakeholders about the degree to which programs adequately meet the child care accessibility, affordability and quality needs of the target groups				C13	E1		C3				
	Percent of parents/caregivers who feel that their accessibility, affordability and quality expectations have been met								E9a, B4a B2a, C5 D12			
	Ongoing gaps in child care accessibility, affordability and quality				F1			C3	G1			
Have there been any unintended (positive or negative) outcomes?	Perceptions of unintended positive and negative outcomes (including additional improvements)				F4							C2

Issue/Question	Key Indicators	Document Review	Admin Data Review	Centre Supervisors			Centre Staff		Parents/Caregivers		Centre Partners	Quality Initiative
				Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (Comparison)	Survey (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Survey (ELCC & Comparison)	Focus Group (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)	Interview (ELCC)
How has the initiative impacted family/child well-being?	Ways in which the initiative has impacted family well-being (SEI) ²⁷							C1	E5 E9a-c	B1		C1
What factors support or hinder initiative sustainability?	Perceptions of factors that support initiative sustainability by key stakeholders					E3, E4					D1a D1b	C3
	Perceptions of factors that hinder initiative sustainability by key stakeholders				F1						D1a	C3
	Perceptions of ELCC Centre fee structure sustainability					E1, E2					D2	

²⁷ Key indicators marked “(SEI)” refer to indicators that may be used to speak to measures of Social and Economic Impacts, as identified in the logic model.

APPENDIX C: ELCC CENTRE SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name and Position/Role:

Date and Time:

Telephone:

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has contracted R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) to conduct an evaluation of Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative. The results of this evaluation will be used to determine areas for improvement and future direction of the ELCC Centre initiative.

As part of the evaluation, Malatest is conducting interviews with child care centre supervisors in order to understand the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative at each individual centre. The goal of this conversation is to learn about the impacts of the initiative on centre staff, parents/caregivers, children and the community. The interview is expected to take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any questions, you may skip any question that you cannot or do not wish to answer, and you may end the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

Malatest will adhere to the regulations set out in Part 1 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA). We are also compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta). The information gathered through this interview is considered confidential by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. Interview notes may be shared with the Alberta Children's Services for quality control purposes, but will not contain any personal information. For reporting purposes, your responses will be aggregated with information received from other key informants. With your permission, we would like to digitally record the interview to ensure the accuracy of our notes. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila Harper of Malatest at:

780-448-9042 (extension 224)

toll free: 1-877-665-6252

s.harper@malatest.com

Do you have any questions or require additional information before we begin?

Section A: Involvement

A1. Please tell me about your role here at the ELCC Centre, including how long you have been in this role.

Section B: Implementation

This section asks questions about the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative within your centre, which may involve the activities listed in the table below.

ELCC Centre Implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of new day care spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capping parent fees at \$25 per day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing <i>Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting on-site professional development that enables full participation of all children in the program including children with diverse needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging parents/caregivers in a quality assurance process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participating in the Child Care Accreditation program Demonstrating compliance with Alberta’s Child Care Licensing Act and Child Care Licensing Regulation;
Implementing one or more of the following improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer flexible child care to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside operations and/or who work on a part-time basis; Identify opportunities to collaborate with other service organizations for co- location delivering ELCC; Ensure collaboration with other service organizations that support knowledge about cultural learning as it relates to Indigenous, immigrant and refugee children; Ensure collaboration with other service organizations to support the provision of parenting supports to families attending the child care program; Collaborate to support vulnerable families (e.g. families with low socio-economic status, lone parent families, parenting teens, and women facing additional barriers); Support child care in rural communities; and/or Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree). 	

B1. [Ask only of Phase 2 Centres] When setting up your centre to meet the requirements of the ELCC Centre initiative:

a. What factors facilitated the establishment of your centre as an ELCC Centre?

Prompt: What lessons did your centre learn?

b. What challenges did your centre experience and how did you address them?

Prompt: How did your centre address these challenges?

Section C: Quality

The process of adapting child care practices as a result of exposure to the *Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta* (ELCC Curriculum Framework) may take considerable time. We would now like to discuss where your centre and staff are at in the process of adapting child care practices as a result of ELCC Curriculum framework.

- C1. Which of the following concepts/practices have you/the educator's engaged with to implement the ELCC Curriculum Framework?
- Responsive environments
 - Image of the child / children's dispositions to learn
 - The role of the educator as a co-learner, co-researcher and co-imaginer of possibilities
- C2. For each concept/practice that you/the educator's have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
- a) How has your understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?; and
b) How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program?
- Responsive environments (*Responsive environments might include concepts such as time, space and participation, or materials such as loose parts, natural items, neutral tones.*)
 - Recognizing children as mighty learners and citizens (*to be a mighty learner means to be powerful-robust, vigorous, loyal, reliable, hard-working and awe-inspiring*) and nurturing children's dispositions to learn (*dispositions is the manner in which a child approaches learning and includes meaning and value revealed through family social and cultural practices and traditions; the dispositions to learn considered in the ELCC Curriculum Framework are playing and playful, seeking, participating, persisting, and caring*).
 - Improving educators' understanding of their role as co-learners, co-researchers and co-imaginers of possibilities?
- C3. Please tell us how your/the educator's planning and curriculum decisions have been influenced as a result of training and support from the pedagogical partner?
- C4. How is your/the educator's work with the ELCC Curriculum Framework influencing documentation and information-sharing activities (*e.g. learning stories*) within the staffing unit? with parents/caregivers? and with other ELCC Centres?
- C5. Has your centre experienced any problems or successes with applying the ELCC Curriculum Framework into day-to-day care? *If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you done with the successes?*
- C6. Has implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on curriculum implementation within your program? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of curriculum implementation?

The next questions ask about how your centre is working towards providing high quality child care, utilizing the *Getting Ready for Inclusion Today* (GRIT) principles, which includes the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project.

- C7. Which of the following concepts/practices have you/the educator's engaged with to implement the ASaP Continuum Project?
- Universal supports for all children
 - Targeted social-emotional supports for children at-risk
 - Interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours
 - Connecting with families
- C8. For each concept/practice that you/the educator's have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
- a) How has your understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?; and
b) How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program?
- Providing universal supports for all children through positive relationships and high quality inclusive environments? (*e.g. building positive relationships with children, families and colleagues; joining in children's play; having extended conversations with children; providing positive descriptive feedback to children; using schedules, structured transitions, and/or visual cues*)
 - Providing targeted social-emotional supports to children at risk? (*Targeted social-emotional supports include identifying and expressing emotions, self-regulation, social problem solving, initiating and maintaining interactions, cooperative responding, strategies for handling disappointment and anger, and friendship skills (being helpful, taking turns, giving compliments)*)
 - Providing interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours? (*e.g. conducting functional assessments, developing individualized behavior support plans, monitoring implementation of the support plan*)
 - Connecting with families? (*e.g. involving families in preventing/addressing challenging behavior, working collaboratively with families to support their child*)
- C9. Thinking about the conversations with the ASaP coach, as you and the educators increase your knowledge and understanding of inclusive child care practices, how have the goals that are being worked on with the ASaP coach changed over time? What goals are you/educator's currently working on with the ASaP coach?
- C10. Has your centre experienced any problems or successes with applying the ASaP Continuum Project into day-to-day care? *If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you done with the successes?*
- C11. Has implementation of the ASaP Continuum Project been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on ASaP implementation within your program? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of ASaP implementation?

- C12. As a result of their participation in the ELCC Centre initiative, has there been an increase in professionalism (*by professionalism, we mean that staff have greater competency or skills to complete their job.*) among...
- Centre staff?
 - Centre management?

- C13. What target groups is this centre trying to reach? How successful has your centre been in reaching these groups?
Prompt: Are there any target groups that your centre would like to reach but are unable to? Please describe.

Section D: Affordability and Accessibility

This section asks about the affordability and accessibility of child care at your centre.

- D1. Do you think that the spaces in your centre are now more affordable for parents/caregivers than they used to be? Should parent fees be differentiated by income need or any other factor? *Why or why not? Has the change in affordability impacted different families in different ways?*
- D2. Has the centre had to change its operation(s) in order to continue to be able to provide child care at \$25 per day? *If yes, how? If no, how have you managed to offset costs?*
- D3. Prior to the ELCC Centre initiative did your centre regularly raise fees in order to cover expenses? Now that you cannot raise fees how will the centre cover expenses as they continue to increase annually?

Section E: Improvements

In the next section, I will ask you some questions about the improvements your centre is making, or has made, as stated in your grant agreement. ELCC Centre’s may have implemented one or more of the improvements:

Improvement
a. Offering flexible child care to support parents/caregivers who require child care outside of typical child care centre hours of operation.
b. Working to identify collaboration opportunities with other service organizations for co-location or new partnerships.
c. Collaborating with other service organizations to support cultural diversity as it relates to Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee children.
d. Collaborating with other service organizations to provide parenting supports and resources.
e. Collaborating with other service organizations to support vulnerable families.
f. Supporting child care in rural communities.
g. Supporting language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree)

[Ask the following two questions for each improvement listed in the Centre’s grant agreement]
 For each improvement that has been implemented to date, I will now ask two questions.

- E1. What partnerships is your centre using to implement its improvements (where applicable)?

- E2. What successes has your centre had in implementing the improvement? What has made your partnerships successful?
- E3. What challenges has your centre experienced in implementing the improvement? Have there been any challenges associated with your centre's engagement in partnerships? *If yes, please describe.*
- E4. What strategies have you used to address the challenges? *Prompt: How have these challenges been overcome?*

Section F: Sustainability

These questions ask about issues related to the sustainability of the child care within your centre.

- F1. Aside from the loss of funding, are there any factors that you think might hinder the sustainability to keep offering \$25 per day child care along with the quality elements and other improvements?
- F4. What unintended outcomes, if any, have resulted from the ELCC Centre initiative?
Prompt: These might be positive or negative.

Section G: Conclusion

- G1. Were there any lessons learned that can better support affordability, accessibility and quality?
- G2. Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the ELCC Centre initiative?

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX D: ELCC CENTRE SUPERVISOR SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

ELCC Centre Initiative Evaluation

PRESTRATE – set to 1=ELCC Centre

PHASE – 1 = Phase 1 ELCC Centres, 2 = Phase 2 ELCC Centres

REG

- 1 = Northwest**
- 2 = Northeast**
- 3 = Edmonton**
- 4 = Central**
- 5 = Calgary**
- 6 = South**
- 7 = North**

CENTRE_NEW

- 1 = New**
- 2 = Existing**

CENTRE_NAME

CENTRE_IMPROVE

- 1 = Offer flexible child care to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside of typical operational hours**
- 2 = Offer child care in rural communities**
- 3 = Collaborate with other organizations to provide families with access to multiple services in the same physical space**
- 4 = Collaborate with other organizations that support cultural diversity**
- 5 = Collaborate with other organizations that provide parenting resources**
- 6 = Collaborate with other organizations that support vulnerable families**
- 7 = Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree)**

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has implemented an initiative to offer accessible and affordable quality child care in Alberta. Malatest, an independent research firm, has been contracted by the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services to conduct an evaluation of the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative between 2018 and 2021. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting a survey with centre supervisors, to better understand the impacts of the initiative on child care providers, parents/caregivers and children. As an ELCC Centre supervisor, this is your opportunity to provide feedback that will help to improve the initiative.

This survey should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. If you need to complete the survey over multiple sessions, you can return to where you left off by clicking on the survey link in the invitation email you received; your previous answers will have been saved.

All findings from the survey will be kept private and confidential, meaning that no individual will be identified or linked to their responses. All information you provide will be protected under the provisions of the *Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Data collected through this survey will be included in evaluation reports prepared for the Initiative in 2019, 2020 and 2021. All data will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any further questions about the Initiative or the survey, please contact Sheila Harper at 780-448-9042 (toll free 1-877-665-6252) ext 224, or via email at s.harper@malatest.com. If you are having technical trouble accessing or working through the questionnaire, please call 780-702-1525 (1-866-247-6465) for technical support.

Would you like to continue with the survey now?

1. Yes
2. No, I would prefer to complete the survey later [Online, add text; telephone, read] Thank you for agreeing to complete the survey at a later date. We will send you reminder emails, that include the link to the survey, for your convenience.]
3. I would prefer not to participate. [Thank and end]

Section A: Introduction

In this section we will ask you some questions about your work experience. We are asking these questions so that we can develop a better understanding of the experiences of centre supervisors across child care centres.

A1. How long have you worked in child care?

1. Less than one month
2. _____ months
3. _____ years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A2. Aside from where you currently work (this Centre), have you worked at other child care centres?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A3. Now thinking about where you currently work, how long have you been working at this centre?

1. Less than one month
2. _____ months
3. _____ years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A4. Did you come to work here because this centre received ELCC funding?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Section B: Partnerships

This section asks questions about the organizations that your centre partners or collaborates with.

B1a. As a result of the ELCC Centre initiative, has your centre partnered with a Parent Link Centre?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

B1. As a result of the ELCC Centre initiative, has your centre partnered with another organization that provides...				
b. Parenting supports, workshops, classes or seminars (such as Made by Momma, Families First, Families Matter, Circle of Security)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
c. Early childhood supports (such as Early Childhood Development coalitions)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
d. Health supports and services (such as doctor, nurse, dentist, eye exams, nutritionist)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
e. Supports for children with special needs (such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy (OT), inclusive child care)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
f. Mental health supports (such as psychologist, psychiatrist, trauma counselor)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
g. Cultural supports or activities (such as Elders, Friendship Centres)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
h. Language supports	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
i. Literacy resources and supports (such as the library, literacy classes, literacy backpacks)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
j. Crisis and emergency supports (such as a women's shelter)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
l. Physical activities for children (such as gyms, swimming pools, skating rinks)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
m. Food supports to vulnerable families (such as the Food Bank, Cobb's bread)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
n. Facilities in which the centre operates (such as maintenance, subsidized rent)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
o. Professional development for ELCC Centre staff (such as workshops, seminars, classes)	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
p. Other supports, please specify:	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer

B2. [Ask for all B1 responses where B1=1] How effective is your collaboration with the organization(s) you partner with that provide...

[# rows to vary by Centre]	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Somewhat ineffective	Very ineffective	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
[recall B1]	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.

B3. [Ask if B1a-p=1] What, if anything, could make these partnerships more effective than they currently are?

1. _____
2. Nothing
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Section C: Staffing

This section asks questions about professional development opportunities available to your centre's staff, as well as staff retention.

C1. What support does the centre provide staff to access professional development? (Select all that apply)

1. Funds to cover professional development registration fees
2. Funds to cover travel and/or accommodation expenses
3. Wages paid while attending professional development opportunity during work hours
4. Wages paid while attending professional development opportunity outside of work hours
5. Time off in lieu
6. Shift coverage so that staff can attend professional development opportunities
7. In-house professional development provided during regular business hours (centre closed so that all staff can attend)
8. In-house professional development provided outside of regular business hours
9. Information about professional development opportunities posted or provided to staff
10. Time to complete coursework during work hours
11. Other, please specify: _____
12. My centre is unable to support staff to access professional development
13. None
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

C2. How does your centre encourage staff to participate in professional development opportunities?
(Select all that apply)

1. By making it mandatory
2. By offering time off in lieu
3. By paying for registration fees
4. By paying for expenses incurred (e.g. travel, accommodation)
5. By keeping staff informed about professional development opportunities
6. By offering in-house professional development opportunities
7. By offering other incentives, please describe: _____
8. My centre does not encourage staff to participate in professional development opportunities
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

C3. Has your centre's involvement in the ELCC Centre initiative improved its capacity to provide professional development to staff?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

C4. In the table below, please identify the professional development opportunities that have been made available to centre staff since this centre became involved in the ELCC Centre initiative.

Also, please indicate if these professional development opportunities were available prior to the centre receiving ELCC Centre initiative funding.

Professional Development opportunity	Available prior to ELCC Centre initiative funding	Available after ELCC Centre initiative funding	Not available to centre staff	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
a. Training on the Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework) supports and resources	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
b. Training on the Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT)/Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
d. Training in curriculum development or planning activities other than the ELCC Curriculum Framework	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
f. Training in early learning, child development or cognitive development	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
g. Training in managing child behaviours	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.

c. Training in children’s social or emotional development other than GRIT/ASaP	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
i. Training on ‘Triple P’ Parenting (Positive Parenting Program)	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
h. Training in working with families or family dynamics	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
e. Cultural sensitivity training	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
j. Training in interpersonal and communication skills	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
k. Teamwork training or development	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
l. Leadership or management training	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.
m. Other (please specify the content area):	1.	2.	77.	98.	99.

C5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your centre’s capacity to provide professional development to staff.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t know	Prefer not to answer
a. We do not have enough funds to pay for our staff to attend professional development opportunities.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
b. There is funding to cover registration fees for professional development opportunities, but we cannot afford to cover travel or accommodation costs.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
c. Staff shortages mean we cannot always cover shifts so that staff can attend professional development opportunities during the day.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
d. Staff are unwilling to participate in professional development opportunities that take place during the work day.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
e. Staff are unwilling to participate in professional development opportunities	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.

that take place outside of their scheduled shifts.							
f. Professional development opportunities are not available in our community.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.
g. The professional development opportunities available in Alberta are not relevant to our staff.	5.	4.	3.	2.	1.	98.	99.

C6. What other challenges, if any, does your centre face in providing professional development to staff?

1. _____
2. There are no other challenges
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

C7. How has your centre's staff retention changed since becoming an ELCC Centre?

1. It has increased (e.g. more staff are staying, staff are staying for longer period of time)
2. It has stayed the same (no change)
3. It has decreased (e.g. more staff are leaving, or are staying for shorter periods of time)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Section D: Quality

This section asks questions about the Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework) and Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT)/Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project supports and resources available to you and your staff, as well as quality assurance processes open to the parents/caregivers at your Centre.

D1. Have all centre staff been introduced to the ELCC Curriculum Framework?

1. Yes, all staff have been introduced to it
2. No, only the staff participating in the Grant MacEwan online training course have been introduced to it
3. No, the staff participating in the Grant MacEwan online training course as well as some others, but not all staff, have been introduced to it
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

D2. How have/will the centre staff who are not attending the Grant MacEwan online course be introduced to the ELCC Curriculum Framework? (Select all that apply)

1. We have/will be discussing it in team meetings
2. All staff have been/will be provided with a copy of the ELCC Curriculum Framework
3. By working with the on-site leadership team
4. Through word of mouth (staff talking to each other about it)
5. By talking to or working with the pedagogical partner when she is visiting the centre

- 6. We intend for all centre staff to participate in the training course
- 7. Other, please specify: _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D3. Have all centre staff been introduced to the ASaP Continuum Project?

- 1. Yes, all staff have been introduced to it
- 2. No, only those who attended the workshops or who are working with the GRIT coach have been introduced to it
- 3. No, the staff participating in the workshops or working with the GRIT coach as well as some others, but not all staff, have been introduced to it
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D4. How have/will the centre staff who are not attending the workshops or working with the GRIT coach be introduced to the ASaP Continuum Project? (Select all that apply)

- 1. We have/will be discussing it in team meetings
- 2. All staff have been/will be provided with the learnings from the workshop
- 3. By working with the on-site leadership team
- 4. Through word of mouth (staff talking to each other about it)
- 5. By talking to, or working with, the GRIT coach when she is visiting the centre
- 6. We intend for all centre staff to participate in the workshops
- 7. Other, please specify: _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D5. How does your centre meet the care requirements of children with diverse needs? (Select all that apply)

- 1. We welcome everyone
- 2. We do not discriminate against anyone (race, color, creed)
- 3. We include different cultures in daily activities (e.g. books and toys that reflect different cultures)
- 4. Our staff learn words from the different languages that children speak (e.g. asking parents to provide a list of words)
- 5. We accommodate special dietary requirements (e.g. no pork)
- 6. We use visual cues to manage children's behaviours
- 7. We use sensory activities with the children
- 8. Our centre has wide hallways, wheelchair accessible bathroom(s) and/or ramps
- 9. We bring in specialists or make referrals for children who have special needs (e.g. Inclusive Child Care workers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, dieticians, AHS, mental health)
- 10. We have team meetings with those who are involved in the child's care
- 11. We enlist the help of other organizations to hold professional development activities with staff
- 12. We have one-on-one conversations with parents/caregivers to make them comfortable accessing additional supports for their children

- 13. We talk with other family members who can translate (for example, if the parents do not speak English)
- 14. We ensure that parents/caregivers are aware of other child care options (daycare might not be for everyone)
- 15. Other, please specify: _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D6a. Since becoming an ELCC Centre, have you been unable to accept a child, or have you been required to ask a child to go to a different centre, because your centre was unable to meet that child's unique needs?

- 1. Yes [Go to D6b]
- 2. No [Go to D7]
- 98. Don't know [Go to D7]
- 99. Prefer not to answer [Go to D7]

D6b. Please describe how or why this occurred.

- 1. _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D7. What roles are available in your centre for parents/caregivers to provide feedback and participate in quality assurance? (Select all that apply)

- 1. Parent Advisory Board
- 2. Parent Committees
- 3. Regular parent meetings
- 4. Verbal communication with staff
- 5. Written communication with staff
- 6. Completing surveys
- 7. Parent programming
- 8. Other, please specify: _____
- 9. There are currently no formal mechanisms for parents to provide feedback or to participate in quality assurance
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D8. In general, how willing are the parents/caregivers at your centre to participate in quality assurance processes?

- 1. Very willing
- 2. Willing
- 3. Neither willing nor unwilling
- 4. Unwilling
- 5. Very unwilling
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

Section E: Accessibility

This section includes questions about the accessibility of child care at your centre.

E1a. As part of your ELCC Centre initiative application, did your centre identify that it would increase the number of child care spaces?

1. Yes [Go to E1b]
2. No [Go to E2a]
98. Don't know [Go to E2a]
99. Prefer not to answer [Go to E2a]

E1b. To date, has your centre been able to increase the number of child care spaces as proposed?

1. Yes, we have opened the number of spaces proposed [Go to E2a]
2. Yes, we have opened more spaces than originally proposed [Go to E2a]
3. No, we have not yet opened the number of spaces proposed [Go to E1c]

E1c. What factors have hindered your centre in opening the number of child care spaces proposed? (Select all that apply)

1. Lack of physical space
2. Lack of qualified staff
3. Lack of family enrollments
4. Delays in the centre's opening
5. Awaiting completion of renovations
6. Licensing
7. Delays/difficulties in obtaining permits
8. Other, please specify: _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2a. As part of your ELCC Centre initiative application, did your centre identify that it would increase the number of child care enrollments?

1. Yes [Go to E2b]
2. No [Go to F1]
98. Don't know [Go to F1]
99. Prefer not to answer [Go to F1]

E2b. To date, has your centre been able to increase the number of child care enrollments proposed?

1. Yes, we have increase enrollments as proposed [Go to F1]
2. Yes, we have achieved more enrollments than originally proposed [Go to F1]
3. No, we have not yet increased enrollments as proposed [Go to E2c]

E2c. What factors have hindered your centre in increasing child care enrollments as proposed? (Select all that apply)

1. Lack of child care spaces
2. Lack of qualified staff
3. Lack of family enrollments
4. Delays in the centre's opening

- 5. Awaiting completion of renovations
- 6. Licensing
- 7. Other, please specify: _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

Section F: Improvements

In order to qualify for ELCC Centre initiative funding, centres had to agree to implement, or to continue implementing, at least one of several improvements:

- Offer flexible child care, to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside of typical operational hours;
- Offer child care in rural communities;
- Collaborate with other organizations to provide families with access to multiple services in the same physical space (co-location);
- Collaborate with other organizations to:
 - support cultural diversity, particularly as it relates to Indigenous, immigrant and refugee children;
 - provide parenting resources; or
 - support vulnerable families (i.e. low socio-economic status, lone parent families, parenting teens, women facing additional barriers);
- Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree).

In the following section, we will be asking questions about the different improvement(s) included as part of your centre's grant agreement.

F1. This table lists the improvement(s) your centre agreed to implement as part of its grant agreement. For each improvement, please indicate which of the following best describes the status of its implementation.

	This improvement has been implemented as originally intended	This improvement has been implemented but not as originally intended	Implementation of this improvement has begun but is not yet completed	Implementation of this improvement has not yet begun	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
a. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=1]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.
b. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=2]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.
c. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=3]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.
d. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=4]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.
e. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=5]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.

f. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=6]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.
g. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=7]	1.	2.	3.	4.	98.	99.

F2. [Ask for all F1a-g where F1=2] Please describe the difference between how the improvement [insert improvement] was originally intended and how it was actually implemented.

1. _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F3. [Ask for all F1a-g where F1=4] Why has this improvement [insert improvement] not yet been implemented?

1. _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

Section G: Funding Sources

This section asks about the sources of funding for your centre.

G1. Do centre partners provide any financial or in-kind support that assist in delivering affordable child care? In-kind supports may include goods or services that are provided at no-cost (e.g. time, materials, equipment, etc). [programming: please format into a table]

- a. Subsidized or free use of centre space (including maintenance and upkeep)
- b. Shared amenities (i.e. kitchen staff, kitchen facilities, food)
- c. Use of other facilities in same building (e.g. gym) or in other buildings (e.g. community centre)
- e. Use of school playgrounds
- f. Free training for staff
- g. Free programming for children
- h. Free workshops for parents/caregivers
- i. Discounts (e.g. local grocery store gives the centre discounts on food, cleaning supplies)
- j. Donations (e.g. contractors donating their time to conduct repairs, local businesses donating merchandise)
- k. Other, please specify: _____
 1. Yes
 2. No
 98. Don't know
 99. Prefer not to answer

G2. Please identify the fundraising activities your centre participates in. (Select all that apply)

1. Barbeques
2. Family events (e.g. story night, silent auction, corn maze)
3. Selling edible items (e.g. cinnamon buns, Purdy's chocolates, tacos, beef jerky)
4. Selling non-edible items (e.g. potted plants, magazines, tuques, gift cards)
5. Bingos
6. Casinos

- 7. Raffles
- 8. Other, please specify: _____
- 9. None
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

Section H: Conclusion

H1. Please use this space to include any other thoughts or comments about the ELCC Centre initiative.

- 1. _____
- 99. Nothing further to add

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input will help to support the Government to improve the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care in Alberta.

APPENDIX E: ELCC CENTRE EDUCATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name and Position/Role:

Date and Time:

Telephone:

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has contracted R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) to conduct an evaluation of Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative. The results of this evaluation will be used to determine areas for improvement and future direction of child care in Alberta.

As part of the evaluation, Malatest is conducting interviews with centre staff in order to understand the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative at each individual centre. The goal of this conversation is to learn about the impacts of the initiative on child care providers, parents/caregivers, children and the community. The interview is expected to take approximately 45 to 60 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any questions, you may skip any question that you cannot or do not wish to answer, and you may end the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

Malatest will adhere to the regulations set out in Part 1 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*. We are also compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta). The information gathered through this interview is considered confidential by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. Interview notes may be shared with the Alberta Children's Services for quality control purposes, but will not contain any personal information. For reporting purposes, your responses will be aggregated with information received from other key informants. With your permission, we would like to digitally record the interview to ensure the accuracy of our notes. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila Harper of Malatest at:

780-448-9042 (extension 224)

toll free: 1-877-665-6252

s.harper@malatest.com

Do you have any questions or require any additional information before we begin?

Section A: Involvement

This section focuses on your role in the child care industry and at the ELCC Centre.

- A1. Please tell me how long you have been working in the child care industry.
- A2. How long have you been working at this centre? What ages are the children that you care for?
- A3. What is your level of certification? Are you working on increasing your certification level (if applicable)?

Section B: Implementation

This section asks questions about the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative at your centre.

- B1. What involvement have you had with the ELCC Curriculum Framework and the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project? What training have you received? Did you take (are you taking) the online Curriculum Framework course at MacEwan University? Have you taken any workshops?

Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework)

- B2. Which of the following concepts/practices have you/the educator's engaged with to implement the ELCC Curriculum Framework?
 - Responsive environments
 - Image of the child / children's dispositions to learn
 - The role of the educator as a co-learner, co-researcher and co-imaginer of possibilities
- B3. For each concept/practice that you/the educator's have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
 - a) How has your understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?; and
 - b) How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program?
 - Responsive environments (Responsive environments might include concepts such as time, space and participation, or materials such as loose parts, natural items, neutral tones.)
 - Recognizing children as mighty learners and citizens (to be a mighty learner means to be powerful-robust, vigorous, loyal, reliable, hard-working and awe-inspiring) and nurturing children's dispositions to learn (dispositions is the manner in which a child approaches learning and includes meaning and value revealed through family social and cultural practices and traditions; the dispositions to learn considered in the ELCC Curriculum Framework are playing and playful, seeking, participating, persisting, and caring).
 - Improving educators' understanding of their role as co-learners, co-researchers and co-imaginers of possibilities?
- B4. Please tell us how your/the educator's planning and curriculum decisions have been influenced as a result of training and support from the pedagogical partner?

- B5. How is your/the educator's work with the ELCC Curriculum Framework influencing documentation and information-sharing activities (e.g. learning stories) within the staffing unit? with parents/caregivers? and with other ELCC Centres?
- B6. Has your centre experienced any problems or successes with applying the ELCC Curriculum Framework into day-to-day care? If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you done with the successes?
- B7. Has implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on curriculum implementation within your program? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of curriculum implementation?

Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project

The next questions ask about how your centre is working towards providing high quality child care, utilizing the Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT) principles, which includes the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project.

- B8. Which of the following concepts/practices have you/the educator's engaged with to implement the ASaP Continuum Project?
- Universal supports for all children
 - Targeted social-emotional supports for children at-risk
 - Interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours
 - Connecting with families
- B9. For each concept/practice that you/the educator's have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
- a) How has your understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?; and
- b) How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program?
- Providing universal supports for all children through positive relationships and high quality inclusive environments? (e.g. building positive relationships with children, families and colleagues; joining in children's play; having extended conversations with children; providing positive descriptive feedback to children; using schedules, structured transitions, and/or visual cues)
 - Providing targeted social-emotional supports to children at risk? (Targeted social-emotional supports include identifying and expressing emotions, self-regulation, social problem solving, initiating and maintaining interactions, cooperative responding, strategies for handling disappointment and anger, and friendship skills (being helpful, taking turns, giving compliments))
 - Providing interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours? (e.g. conducting functional assessments, developing individualized behavior support plans, monitoring implementation of the support plan)
 - Connecting with families? (e.g. involving families in preventing/addressing challenging behavior, working collaboratively with families to support their child)

- B10. Thinking about the conversations with the ASaP coach, as you and the educators increase your knowledge and understanding of inclusive child care practices, how have the goals that are being worked on with the ASaP coach changed over time? What goals are you/educator's currently working on with the ASaP coach?
- B11. Has your centre experienced any problems or successes with applying the ASaP Continuum Project into day-to-day care? If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you done with the successes?
- B12. Has implementation of the ASaP Continuum Project been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on ASaP implementation within your program? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of ASaP implementation?

Partnerships and Collaborations

- B13. What does your centre do to:
- promote cultural diversity?
 - serve vulnerable families?
 - enhance parenting skills?
 - meet the needs of children with diverse needs?
- B14. Have there been any challenges in the areas we just discussed:
- promote cultural diversity?
 - serve vulnerable families?
 - enhance parenting skills?
 - meet the needs of children with diverse needs?

Section C: Impacts

These questions ask about the impact of the ELCC Centre initiative at your centre.

- C1. How do you think the ELCC Centre initiative impacts the well-being of families/children in your Centre?
- C2. What unintended outcomes, if any, have resulted from the ELCC Centre initiative? Prompt: These might be positive or negative.
- C3. Based on the day-to-day care centre staff provide, do you think there are any ongoing gaps in the accessibility, affordability or quality of child care? If yes, are there processes or protocols in place within the centre, that allow centre staff to discuss these gaps with centre management?

Section D: Conclusion

- D1. Were there any lessons learned, that can support child care affordability, accessibility and quality?

D2. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX F: ELCC CENTRE EDUCATOR SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

ELCC Centre Initiative Evaluation

PRESTRATE – set to 1=ELCC Centre

PHASE – 1= Phase 1 Centres, 2 = Phase 2 Centres

REG

1 = Northwest

2 = Northeast

3 = Edmonton

4 = Central

5 = Calgary

6 = South

7 = North

CENTRE_NAME

CENTRE_OPENDATE

CENTRE_IMPROVE

1 = Offer flexible child care to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside of typical operational hours

2 = Offer child care in rural communities

3 = Collaborate with other organizations to provide families with access to multiple services in the same physical space

4 = Collaborate with other organizations that support cultural diversity

5 = Collaborate with other organizations that provide parenting resources

6 = Collaborate with other organizations that support vulnerable families

7 = Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree)

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has implemented an initiative to offer accessible and affordable quality child care in Alberta. Malatest, an independent research firm, has been contracted by the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services to conduct an evaluation of the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative between 2018 and 2021. As part of this evaluation, we are conducting a survey with centre staff, to better understand the impacts of the initiative on child care providers, parents/caregivers and children. As an ELCC Centre staff member, this is your opportunity to provide feedback that will help to improve the initiative.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes of your time. If you need to complete the survey over multiple sessions, you can return to where you left off by clicking on the survey link in the invitation email you received; your previous answers will have been saved.

As you work through the questionnaire, you will see words or phrases in green and underlined. When you hover the cursor over this text, you will see a definition or example that we have provided to help clarify the question being asked.

All findings from the survey will be kept private and confidential, meaning that no individual will be identified or linked to their responses. All information you provide will be protected under the provisions of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Data collected through this survey will be included in evaluation reports prepared for the initiative in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. All data will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any further questions about the initiative or the survey, please contact Sheila Harper at 780-448-9042 (toll free 1-877-665-6252) ext 224, or via email at s.harper@malatest.com. If you are having technical trouble accessing or working through the questionnaire, please call 780-702-1525 (1-866-247-6465) for technical support.

Would you like to continue with the survey now?

1. Yes
2. No, I would prefer to complete the survey later [Online, add text] Thank you for agreeing to complete the survey at a later date. We will send you reminder emails, that include the link to the survey, for your convenience.]
3. I would prefer not to participate. [Thank and end]

SECTION A: Work Experience and Training

In this section, we will ask you some questions about your work experience and training. We are asking these questions so that we can develop a better understanding of the experiences and training needs of centre staff across child care centres.

A1a. How long have you worked in child care?

1. Less than one month
2. _____ months
3. _____ years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A1b_NEW. Aside from where you currently work (this centre), have you worked at other child care centres?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A1b. Now thinking about where you currently work, how long have you been working at this centre?

1. Less than one month
2. _____ months
3. _____ years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A1b_BACK. Did you come to work here because this centre received ELCC funding?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A1d. What age group do you care for in the centre? (Select all that apply)

1. 0 to 12 months
2. 13 to 18 months
3. 19 months to less than three years
4. Three years to less than four and a half years
5. Four and a half years and older
99. Prefer not to answer

A1c. [ELCC Centres that opened before April 1, 2017] What was your level of certification in April 2017?
[ELCC Centres that opened April 1, 2018 or later] What was your level of certification in April 2018?

1. Child Development Assistant (formerly Level One)
2. Child Development Worker (formerly Level Two)
3. Child Development Supervisor (formerly Level Three)
4. Other, please specify: _____
5. None
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A1e. What is your current level of certification (as of today)?

1. Child Development Assistant (formerly Level One)
2. Child Development Worker (formerly Level Two)
3. Child Development Supervisor (formerly Level Three)
4. Other, please specify: _____
5. None
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A3. The following questions pertain to the professional development opportunities being offered through this ELCC Centre. [mouseover - By 'professional development' we mean opportunities for education and training to improve the capabilities and skills of centre staff.]

a. Professional development opportunities are offered... (Select one response only)

1. During work time [Go to A3c]
2. During personal time [Go to A3c]
3. During a combination of work and personal time [Go to A3c]
4. Professional development opportunities are not offered [Go to A4b]
99. Prefer not to answer [Go to A4b]

c. [Ask if A3a=1,2,3] Professional development fees are paid... (Select all that apply)

1. Entirely by the centre
2. Entirely by me

3. Partly the centre, partly by me
4. Through an accreditation professional development grant
5. Other, please specify: _____

A4a. [Ask if A3a=1,2,3] How many professional development opportunities have you participated in since this centre opened or began receiving ELCC funding? [mouseover - By 'professional development' we mean opportunities for education and training to improve the capabilities and skills of centre staff.]

1. _____ opportunities
99. Prefer not to answer

A4b. [ELCC Centres that opened before April 1, 2018] Since April 2018, which of the following professional development opportunities have you participated in? [ELCC Centres that opened April 1, 2018 or later] Please identify the professional development opportunities you have participated in since this centre opened or began receiving ELCC funding. (Select all that apply)

1. Training on the Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework) supports and resources
2. Training on Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT)/Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project supports and resources
3. Training in curriculum development or planning activities other than the ELCC Curriculum Framework
4. Training in early learning, child development or cognitive development
5. Training in managing child behaviours
6. Training in children's social or emotional development other than GRIT/ASaP
7. Training in 'Triple P' Parenting (Positive Parenting Program)
8. Training in working with families or family dynamics
9. Cultural sensitivity training
10. Training in interpersonal and communication skills
11. Teamwork training or development
12. Leadership or management training
13. Other (please specify the content area): _____
14. None
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

A4c. For each of the following, please indicate to what extent your professional development opportunities:

	Greatly	Somewhat	Not At All	Don't know	Prefer not to say
i. resulted in a credit	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
ii. were relevant to your work	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
iii. contributed to increasing your certification	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
iv. were mandatory	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.

A5a_NEW. [Ask if A4b=1-13] How satisfied are you that the professional development opportunities offered by the centre have enhanced your ability to meet the care needs of the children at the centre?

1. Very satisfied

- 2. Satisfied
- 3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- 4. Unsatisfied
- 5. Very unsatisfied
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION B: Programming

[Include if A4b=1,2] Now we are going to ask you about curriculum and inclusion training and supports.

B2. [Ask if A4b=1] How has the Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework) training you received changed the way you interact with the children and parents/caregivers? (Select all that apply)

- 1. Increased my competency
- 2. Made me more child centered and responsive
- 3. Increased how much I reflect on my practices
- 4. Improved my interactions with parents
- 5. Improved my interactions with the children
- 6. Improved my interactions with other staff
- 7. Changed the way I use language
- 8. Changed the way I document my child care practices
- 9. Changed the way I see the child
- 10. Improved my ability to plan/scaffold or build on the children's interests
- 11. Improved my ability to provide responsive and interesting activities to the children
- 12. Increased my understanding of the importance of play
- 13. Improved my ability to provide responsive and interesting environments for the children
- 14. Other, please specify: _____
- 15. It has not changed my interactions
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

B5. [Ask if A4b=2] How has the inclusion training you received, such as the Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT) program and the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project, changed the way you interact with the children and parents/caregivers? (Select all that apply)

- 1. Increased my competency
- 2. Made me more child centred and responsive
- 3. Increased how much I reflect on my practices
- 4. Improved my interactions with parents
- 5. Improved my interactions with the children
- 6. Improved my interactions with other staff
- 7. Changed the way I use language
- 8. Changed the way I document my child care practices
- 9. Changed the way I see the child
- 10. Changed the way I develop programming and activities
- 11. Improved my ability to plan/scaffold or build on the children's interests

- 12. Improved my ability to provide responsive and interesting activities to the children
- 13. Increased my understanding of the importance of play
- 14. Improved my ability to provide responsive and interesting environments for the children
- 15. Improved my ability to respond to children’s behaviour
- 16. Other, please specify: _____
- 17. It has not changed my interactions
- 98. Don’t know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

As part of the ELCC Centre initiative, each centre that received funding is implementing one or more of the following improvements:

- Offer flexible child care, to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside of typical operational hours;
- Offer child care in rural communities;
- Collaborate with other organizations to provide families with access to multiple services in the same physical space;
- Collaborate with other organizations that:
 - support cultural diversity, particularly as it relates to Indigenous, immigrant and refugee children;
 - provide parenting resources; or
 - support vulnerable families (i.e. low socio-economic status, lone parent families, parenting teens, and women facing additional barriers).
- Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree).

You will now be asked about the improvements that your centre is implementing.

B7. To what extent do you think the improvement(s) that your centre has implemented helped centre staff meet the needs of children and families?

Has the improvement [insert improvement] helped the centre....

	Has helped a lot	Has helped somewhat	Has not helped at all	Don’t know	Prefer not to answer
a. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=5,4,6, 3] Support parents/caregivers in the development of their child(ren).	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
b. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=4,7,3] Create a more culturally-inclusive learning environment.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
c. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=4,6,7,3] Create a learning environment that recognizes different family types.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>

	Has helped a lot	Has helped somewhat	Has not helped at all	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
d. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=1,3] Support parents/caregivers who work or study outside of typical business hours.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
e. [Ask if CENTRE_IMPROVE=2,3] Provide families with quality care in their community.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION C: Referral and Resources

In this section, we will ask you about other resources available to families enrolled at the centre.

C1a. Does your centre make families aware of other community resources to help meet their needs? [mouseover - By 'community resources' we mean food baskets, parent support groups, children's play groups.]

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION D: Centre Staff Perceptions

In the following section, we will ask you some questions about your work environment. We are asking these questions so that we can develop an understanding of workplace satisfaction among centre staff. All findings from the survey will be kept private and confidential, and will only be reported in combination with other responses. This means that you will not be identified, nor will you be linked to your responses.

D1. Do you feel that your work meaningfully contributes to the goals of the centre?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D2a. Do you intend to stay at this centre over the next 12 months?

- 1. Definitely will stay
- 2. Probably will stay
- 3. Might stay
- 4. Probably will not stay
- 5. Definitely will not stay
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D2b. [If D2a=4,5] Why not? (Select all that apply)

- 1. The compensation is too low

- 2. My position is part time or casual
- 3. It is a difficult work environment
- 4. ELCC Centre work demands are too great
- 5. Other, please specify: _____
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D8. [Ask if A1b_NEW=1] Compared to other child care centres you have worked at, do you feel that, at your current centre:

	Yes	No	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
a. You have more opportunity for professional development.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
b. You have more input in the quality of the centre.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
c. You have more room for personal growth.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
d. You have more confidence in the quality of child care provided at the centre.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>

D9. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this centre's implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative?

- 1. _____
- 99. Nothing further to add

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input will help to support the Government to improve the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care in Alberta.

APPENDIX G: ELCC CENTRE PARENTS/CAREGIVERS FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR'S GUIDE

Early Learning and Child Care Centres Evaluation
Alberta Children's Services
Parent/Caregiver Focus Group Guide Draft

Welcome

Welcome! My name is <<name>>, and I am an <<position>> with R.A. Malatest & Associates (Malatest). Thank you for agreeing to take part in this focus group discussion today.

The Government of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services has contracted Malatest, an independent research firm, to conduct an evaluation of the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative in Alberta. As part of this evaluation, we are interested in your views and experiences of this child care centre.

Our discussion today will take **about an hour**.

The discussion will be audio recorded to make sure that we get an accurate picture of all of the information you give us today. The information gathered through this discussion is considered confidential by Malatest. Summary notes from the discussion may be shared with Alberta Children's Services for quality control purposes, but will not contain any personal information. For reporting purposes, responses provided in this session will be aggregated with information received from other focus groups. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2020), at which point it will be destroyed.

Remember, there are **no right or wrong answers**. I'd like everyone to have a chance to talk and make any comments that you think are important to the discussion. Some of you might think that you have a comment that you may think doesn't really matter or isn't appropriate – and I want you to know that I need to hear those kinds of things too. I'd just like to ask that you **talk one at a time**, and please **try not to interrupt anyone** when they are speaking - this also makes it easier for me to follow the discussion now and on the video tape afterwards.

My main role is to keep the discussion going. **Are there any questions before we start?**

Note: Italics indicate prompt questions and moderator notes.

Introductions

Let's start with some introductions.

Starting at this end of the table, please introduce yourself with your first name and how long you have had (a) child(ren) enrolled at this centre.

Part A: Participation

A1. Why did you choose to enroll your child(ren) at this centre?

Part B: Dotmocracy

B1. What has enrollment of your children in the ELCC Centre initiative meant for you and your family? (SROI)

Prompt: Have there been any changes to your involvement in work or school? For example, have you entered (for the first time) or returned the workforce following maternity or paternity leave?

Prompt: Do you feel more confident about the care your child(ren) is/are receiving (compared to what they may have received at another centre or from another care provider)?

Prompt: Do you feel more integrated into the community (reduced social isolation)?

Prompt: How has the introduction of \$25 a day parent fees impacted you and your family?

Prompt: Any other impacts? (financial stress, work-life balance, family relationships, amount of quality time that you can spend together as a family, mental health, physical health, well-being)

B2. There are a number of key elements of early learning child care that this initiative is trying to address. These include [access, affordability, quality – ready points on sheets and provide definitions]. Each of you have three dots: a red one, a blue one and a yellow one. What I would like you to do is place **the red dot next to what you consider to be the main reason** that you enrolled your child(ren) in this child care centre. Place **the blue dot next to what you consider to be the second-most important reason** that you enrolled your child(ren) here, and place **the yellow dot next to what you consider to be the third-most important reason** that you enrolled your child(ren) here. Remember: there are no right or wrong answers: everyone's reasons for enrolling their child(ren) may be different but equally important.

Why did you rank the three reasons in the way that you did?

Accessibility (opening and closing time, extended hours, centre layout, location, transportation options, co-located with other services)

Affordability (fees, subsidies, additional fees – food, field trips, % of overall income)

Quality (inclusiveness, diversity, connection to other services, curriculum, professional, feedback, parent advisory board)

Were any of the reasons not an important reason for your decision to enroll your child(ren) in this centre?

Part C: Parent/Caregiver Engagement and Learning

We are now going to spend some time talking about parent /caregiver engagement in the centre. This will help us to understand if and how the centre supports and encourages parents/caregivers to be involved, and what impact this involvement has on families.

C1. Do you feel like you have been offered:

i) Opportunities to take part in quality assurance?

Prompt: What made these opportunities meaningful to you? If no, what could the centre do to make parent/caregiver involvement in the centre more meaningful?

Prompt: Do you think your involvement in these activities has helped improve the quality of care at the centre? Why/why not?

ii) Access to parenting supports?

Prompt: How have centre staff tried to engage you in activities? (e.g. they welcome you, they personally invite you, they explain the benefits of participation to you)

Prompt: Are there any other types of centre activities that parents/caregivers should be provided the opportunity to participate in?

- C3. Have you learned anything from your use of parenting supports? (e.g. new parenting skills, what your child(ren) did during the day, new skills that your child(ren) learned, how the centre operates, etc.) *If yes, what have you done with that knowledge? If no, what sorts of things would you like to be able to learn? (SROI)*

Part D: Overall Perceptions of the Centre

- D1. Do you plan to keep your child(ren) enrolled in this particular centre? If yes, what makes you want keep your child(ren) enrolled here? If no, why do you want to leave this centre?

Prompt: What might cause you to move your child(ren) to a different centre?

Prompt: What other care arrangements would you consider making for your child(ren)?

- D2. Overall, how comfortable are you with the care being provided at this centre?

Prompt: What is it about this centre that makes you feel comfortable/uncomfortable with the care they provide?

- D3. In your opinion, what does quality child care include?

- D4. Does quality child care include...

- a. inclusive child care?
- b. activities directed by children's interests and desire to learn?
- c. educated and qualified staff?
- d. natural and open environments (natural colors, natural toys)
- e. communication with parents (e.g. learning stories)

- D5. Is there anything else quality child care includes?

- D6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your or your child(ren)'s experience at this centre?

Thank you for joining us in the focus group!

**APPENDIX H: ELCC AND COMPARISON CENTRE PARENTS/CAREGIVERS SURVEY
QUESTIONNAIRE**

ELCC Centre Initiative Evaluation

PRESTRATE – set to 1=ELCC Centre and 2=Comparison Centre

PHASE – 1=Phase 1 Centres, 2 = Phase 2 Centres

REG

1 = Northwest

2 = Northeast

3 = Edmonton

4 = Central

5 = Calgary

6 = South

7 = North

CENTRE_NAME

INTRODUCTION

Online

The Government of Alberta has implemented an initiative to offer accessible and affordable quality child care in Alberta. Malatest, an independent research firm, has been contracted by the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services to conduct a survey with parents/caregivers who have children enrolled in licensed child care.

The government wishes to better understand the impacts of the initiative on child care providers, parents/caregivers and children. As a parent/caregiver who has at least one child enrolled in a licensed care centre, your feedback is critical to the success of this evaluation.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes of your time. If you need to complete the survey over multiple sessions, you can return to where you left off by clicking on the survey link in the invitation email you received; your previous answers will have been saved.

As you work through the questionnaire, you will see words or phrases in green and underlined. When you hover the cursor over this text, you will see a definition or example that we have provided to help clarify the question being asked.

All findings from the survey will be kept private and confidential, meaning that no individual will be identified or linked to their responses. All information you provide will be protected under the provisions of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Data collected through this survey will be included in evaluation reports prepared for the initiative in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. All data will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

To thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey, you will receive a \$5 e-gift card to Starbucks. At the end of the survey, by clicking 'Submit Survey' you will automatically receive an email with a link to your Starbucks e-gift card. You should receive this email from Malatest within one week of submitting your survey responses.

If you have any further questions about the initiative or the survey, please contact Sheila Harper at 780-448-9042 (toll free 1-877-665-6252) ext 224, or via email at s.harper@malatest.com. If you are having technical trouble accessing the survey or working through the questionnaire, please call 780-702-1525 (1-866-247-6465) for technical support.

Would you like to continue with the survey now?

1. Yes
2. No, I would prefer to complete the survey later [Online, add text; telephone, read] Thank you for agreeing to complete the survey at a later date. We will send you reminder emails, that include the link to the survey, for your convenience.]
3. I would prefer not to participate. [Thank and end]

Telephone

Hello, my name is . I am calling from Malatest, an independent research firm. We have been contracted by the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services to conduct a survey with parents/caregivers who have children enrolled in licensed child care. May I please speak to <consent form name>?

YES: Go to INTRODUCTION

NO: When would be a better time to call back to reach <consent form name>?

RECORD INFORMATION.

THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL.

INTRODUCTION

You recently completed a consent form at your child care centre indicating that you would participate in a survey about your experiences with child care in Alberta. Do you recall completing this consent form?

YES: Go to CONSENT

NO: This form would have been provided to you at your child's care centre and collected by the centre staff. It referred to an initiative started by the Government of Alberta to offer accessible and affordable quality child care in Alberta and invited you to participate in a survey about child care. Did you complete this consent form?

YES: Go to CONSENT

NO: THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL. CODE AS NON-QUALIFIER.

CONSENT

We are calling to complete the survey with you. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

All findings from the survey will be kept private and confidential, meaning that no individual will be identified or linked to their responses. All information you provide will be protected under the provisions of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Data collected through this survey will be included in evaluation reports prepared for the initiative in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. All data will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

To thank you for taking the time to participate in the survey, you will receive a \$5 e-gift card to Starbucks. At the end of the survey you will be asked to provide your email address. This will be used solely for the purposes of this evaluation and to provide the e-gift card to you. It will not be added to any other database, nor will it be provided to any other party.

Would you be able to complete the survey now?

YES: Go to SURVEY

NO: When would be a better time to call back to complete the survey?

RECORD APPOINTMENT TIME IF PROVIDED. THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL.

IF NO TIME IS OFFERED: Would you prefer to complete the survey online?

YES: If you provide me with your email address, I can email you a link to the survey?

RESPONDENT PROVIDES EMAIL: RECORD EMAIL ADDRESS AND SEND LINK TO SURVEY. THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL.

RESPONDENT DOES NOT PROVIDE EMAIL: I can provide you with the web address. You will need an access code to enter the survey. PROVIDE URL AND RESPONDENT ACCESS CODE. THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL.

NO: THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE CALL.

SECTION A: Family Profile

In order to develop an understanding of who accesses child care, we would like to start by asking you some questions about your family. The information you provide will be grouped with other responses and will not be reported individually.

A1a. In total, how many children do you have in your care [mouse over – By “in your care” we mean children for whom you have primary or shared custody.]?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four
5. Five
6. Six
7. More than six
99. Prefer not to answer

A1b. How many of the children you have in your care are under the age of 5 years? [condition: the number reported in A1b should be equal to or less than the number reported in A1a]

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four
5. Five
6. Six
7. More than six
99. Prefer not to answer

For the two following questions, we will only be asking about your children, under the age of 5, who are attending a licensed child care centre.

A3. How many of your children attending this centre have special needs? [mouseover – By ‘special needs’ we mean particular educational or care requirements resulting from learning difficulties, physical disabilities or emotional and behavioral difficulties.] [condition: the number reported in A3 should be equal to or less than the number reported in A1b]

1. None
2. One
3. Two
4. Three
5. Four or more
98. Don’t know
99. Prefer not to answer

A4. Prior to enrollment, who provided care for the children currently attending this centre? Please select the single best response. If the children's care was split 50% of the time between two options, please select those two options.

1. Stay-at-home parent/caregiver
2. Extended family
3. Friends/neighbours
4. Day home
5. Different child care centre
6. Other, please specify: _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E8. What is the main reason you chose this child care centre, rather than a different one? Please select only one.

1. Location (close to home or work, school, etc.)
2. Affordable cost
3. Hours of operation
4. Care by someone trustworthy (family member, friend)
5. My other children go (have gone) there
6. Was recommended by someone
7. It is safe
8. Only option available
9. Learning program
10. For the child's socialization
11. Low child-adult ratio/more employees/one-on-one time
12. Other, please specify: _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION B: Accessibility

[Display if A3=1 or 99] In this section, you will be asked some questions about child care accessibility. Unless otherwise indicated, please answer the following questions based on the last child, under the age of 5, who you enrolled in child care. [mouseover: For example, if you enrolled a child two years ago, and you enrolled a different child one year ago, please report on the child you enrolled one year ago.]

[Display if A3=2, 3, 4 or 5] In this section, you will be asked some questions about child care accessibility. Unless otherwise indicated, please answer the following questions based on the last child you enrolled in child care who is under the age of 5 and who has special needs. [mouseover: For example, if you enrolled a child with special needs two years ago, and you enrolled a different child with special needs one year ago, please report on the child you enrolled one year ago.]

B1a. Was there a space available for your child on the date you wanted them to begin attending the centre?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B1b. [Ask if B1a=2] How many months or weeks did you have to wait before your child could begin attending the centre?

1. Weeks: _____

2. Months: _____

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B2a. How satisfied are you with the location of this centre?

1. Very satisfied

2. Satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied

4. Unsatisfied

5. Very unsatisfied

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B2b. [Ask if B2a=4 or 5] Why are you unsatisfied? (Select all that apply)

1. Too far from work or home

2. It is in a high traffic area

3. It is in a residential area

4. Too far from local transit

5. Other, please specify:

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B2c. [Ask if A3= 2, 3, 4 or 5] In terms of the centre's layout, does it meet the physical needs of your child? [mouseover text: For example, if your child has limited mobility, she or he can still access all areas of the Centre.]

1. Yes

2. No

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B3a. Does this Centre provide child care outside of the normal business hours of 6am to 6pm?

1. Yes

2. No

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

B3b. [Ask if B3a=1] Are there additional fees to have your child in care during extended hours?

1. Yes

2. No

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C1b. What is your family's total cost for child care? Please include all forms of child care that you access for all of your children. Please report the cost by either day or month.

\$ per day OR \$ per month

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C1c. In order to understand how much you spend on child care in a month in relation to your income, please tell us what your monthly household income is after taxes:

Household income after taxes \$ _____ per month

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C1d. [Ask if C1b or C1c=98,99] Please tell us approximately what percentage of your monthly household income is used to cover child care costs for all of your children.

1. % per month

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C2. Do you receive child care subsidies to help pay for your child's enrollment at this centre?

1. Yes

2. No

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C3. At this Centre are you charged additional fees for any of the following?

a. Meals

b. Snacks

c. Field trips with additional charges (e.g. busing to a pool, attending facilities with entrance fees)

1. Yes

2. No

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

C5. Overall, how satisfied are you with the cost of child care at this centre?

1. Very satisfied

2. Satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied

4. Unsatisfied

5. Very unsatisfied

98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION D: Quality and Programming

[Display if A3=1, 98 or 99] In this section, you will be asked some questions about child care quality. Unless otherwise indicated, please answer the following questions based on the last child, under the age of 5, who you enrolled in child care. [mouseover: For example, if you enrolled a child two years ago, and you enrolled a different child one year ago, please report on the child you enrolled one year ago.]

[Display if A3=2, 3, 4 or 5] In this section, you will be asked some questions about child care quality. Unless otherwise indicated, please answer the following questions based on the last child you enrolled in child care who is under the age of 5 and who has special needs. [mouseover: For example, if you enrolled a child with special needs two years ago, and you enrolled a different child with special needs one year ago, please report on the child you enrolled one year ago.]

D1. How much do you agree with the following statements:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
a. Centre staff encourage my child to participate in activities.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Child care centre activities help my child understand other cultures.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
c. Child care centre activities evolve out of the interest of my child.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
d. My child is provided with opportunities to play and explore.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Centre staff change activities in response to the needs of my child.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
f. Child care centre activities help connect my child to our family.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
j. Child care centre activities help connect my child to our community.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>

D1. How much do you agree with the following statements:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
g. Centre staff regularly communicate with me about my child's day so that I can incorporate my child's interests into activities at home.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>
h. I consider the staff at this centre to be professionals.	1. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	98. <input type="checkbox"/>	99. <input type="checkbox"/>

The next set of questions asks about how the centre includes parent/caregiver input in its operations and recognizes diverse cultures.

QD2a_1 Does this centre have opportunities for parents to participate in...?				
a) Parent Advisory Board	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
b) Parent Committees	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
c) Regular parent meetings	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
d) Verbal communication with staff	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
e) Written communication with staff	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
f) Parent programming	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer

QD2A_2 [Ask if QD2a_1a-f=1] Have you participated in...				
a) Parent Advisory Board	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
b) Parent Committees	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
c) Regular parent meetings	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
d) Verbal communication with staff	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer

e) Written communication with staff	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
f) Parent programming	1. Yes	2. No	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer

D5. How satisfied are you that this centre reflects the diversity of the community in which it is located?

- 1. Very satisfied
- 2. Satisfied
- 3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- 4. Unsatisfied
- 5. Very unsatisfied
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D6. To what extent do you agree that the staff at this centre make you, as a parent/caregiver, feel welcome and accepted?

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D7. Does this centre provide your children with food/snacks that accommodate your family's dietary preferences or restrictions? [mouseover: Examples include halal or kosher food, vegetarian food, food that omits allergens such as nuts or shellfish, etc.]

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

You will now be asked about parenting supports that may be available to you through this centre. 'Parenting supports' might include educational materials, resources or referrals to other community organizations that help you to care for your child(ren).

D9. Are you aware of any parenting supports available through this centre? [mouseover: Examples include reading materials on child behaviour, access to other community resources such as Parent Link Centres or visits to the centre by a community nurse.]

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D10a. [Ask if D9=1] Have you ever accessed any of the parenting supports available through the centre? [mouseover: Examples include reading materials on child behaviour, access to other community resources such as Parent Link Centres or visits to the centre by a community nurse.]

- 1. Yes

- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D10b. [Ask if D10a=1] What parenting supports have you accessed through the Centre? [mouseover: Examples include reading materials on child behaviour, access to other community resources, such as Parent Link Centres or visits to the centre by a community nurse.] (Select all that apply)

- 1. Parent Link Centre
- 2. Parenting workshops, classes or seminars (such as Triple P parenting, Families First, Families Matter, Circle of Security)
- 3. Early childhood supports (such as information and workshops about child development and behaviour)
- 4. Health supports and services (such as doctor, nurse, dentist, eye exams, nutritionist)
- 5. Special needs supports (such as speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy (OT), inclusive child care)
- 6. Mental health supports (such as psychologist, psychiatrist, trauma counselor)
- 7. Cultural supports (such as Elders, Friendship Centres, Immigrant Centres)
- 8. Literacy supports (such as the library, literacy classes, literacy backpacks)
- 9. School supports (such as a local school, school board)
- 10. Physical activities (such as swimming lessons, recreation centre)
- 11. Financial supports (such as child care subsidy)
- 12. Food supports (such as the Food Bank, Cobb's bread)
- 13. Crisis and emergency supports (such as a women's shelter)
- 14. Other supports, please specify: _____
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D11a. [Ask if D10a=1] Have any of the parenting supports provided to you by the centre increased your parenting skills (for example, broadened your understanding of your child(ren)'s development, provided you with new parenting techniques or strategies)? [mouseover: Examples include reading materials on child behaviour, access to other community resources such as Parent Link Centres or visits to the centre by a community nurse.]

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D11b. [Ask if D11a=1] How have these parenting supports increased your skills? (Select all that apply)

- 1. Allowed me to better support my child emotionally
- 2. Increased my understanding of my child's emotions and emotional responses
- 3. Increased my understanding of my child's behaviour
- 4. Increased my understanding of child development
- 5. Improved my understanding of nutrition
- 6. Helped me develop patience and/or coping strategies
- 7. Helped me develop communication techniques and skills
- 8. Taught me new or different parenting techniques
- 9. Other, please specify: _____

- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

D12. Overall, how satisfied are you with...? [programming: provide scale for both a and b in a table]

- a. The quality of care provided at this centre.
- b. The degree to which your child is meaningfully engaged in centre activities.
 - 1. Very satisfied
 - 2. Satisfied
 - 3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
 - 4. Unsatisfied
 - 5. Very unsatisfied
 - 98. Don't know
 - 99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION E: Benefits of Child Care

In this section, you will be asked some questions about how you feel child care has benefited you, your child(ren) and/or your household.

E1. Has your child(ren)'s enrollment at this centre enabled you to return to work or school? (Select all that apply)

- 1. Yes, I have returned to work full time
- 2. Yes, I have returned to work part time
- 3. Yes, I have returned to school full time
- 4. Yes, I have returned to school part time
- 5. Yes, I was in school but now I can take more classes
- 6. No
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

E1b. [Ask if QE1=1, 2, 3, 4, or 5] Were you returning to work or school after a maternity or paternity leave?

- 1. Yes, after maternity leave
- 2. Yes, after paternity leave
- 3. No, not returning after maternity or paternity leave
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

E1c. [Ask if E1=3, 4, 5] What type of education are you pursuing?

- 1. High school diploma or equivalency
- 2. Commercial, technical or vocational college or trade certificate
- 3. Undergraduate university degree
- 4. Postgraduate university degree
- 98. Don't know
- 99. Prefer not to answer

E1d. [Ask if E1=3, 4, 5] From today, how long do you think it will take you to complete your education?

1. Less than one year
2. One year
3. Two years
4. Three years
5. Four years
6. More than four years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2a. Has your child(ren)'s enrollment in this centre enabled someone else in your household (e.g. another family member) to return to work or school?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable – there is no other adult in my household
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2b. [Ask if E2a=1] Did this individual provide child care duties for your child(en) prior to their enrollment in the centre?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2bi. [Ask if E2a=1] What is this person's gender?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Other, please specify: _____
99. Prefer not to answer

E2bii. [Ask if E2a=1] Did this person return to school or work after a maternity or paternity leave?

1. Yes, after maternity leave
2. Yes, after paternity leave
3. No, not returning after maternity or paternity leave
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2c. [Ask if E2b=1] How has your child(ren)'s enrollment in this centre enabled this individual to return to work or school? (Select all that apply)

1. They have returned to work full time
2. They have returned to work part time
3. They have returned to school full time
4. They have returned to school part time
5. They were in school but they can now take more classes
6. There has been no impact for them
98. Don't know

99. Prefer not to answer

E2d. [Ask if E2c=3, 4 or 5] What type of education are they pursuing?

1. High school diploma or equivalency
2. Commercial, technical or vocational college or trade certificate
3. Undergraduate university degree
4. Postgraduate university degree
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E2e. [Ask if E2c=3, 4 or 5] From today, how long do you think it will take them to complete their education?

1. Less than one year
2. One year
3. Two years
4. Three years
5. Four years
6. More than four years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E3. Has your household income changed since your child(ren) started attending this centre?

1. Yes, it has increased
2. Yes, it has decreased
3. No, it has stayed the same
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E3a. [Ask if E3=1] How much has your household income increased?

1. By less than \$10,000 per year
2. By between \$10,000 and \$29,999 per year
3. By between \$30,000 and \$49,999 per year
4. By between \$50,000 and \$74,999 per year
5. By more than \$75,000 per year
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E3d. [Ask if E3=2] How much has your household income decreased?

1. By less than \$10,000 per year
2. By between \$10,000 and \$29,999 per year
3. By between \$30,000 and \$49,999 per year
4. By between \$50,000 and \$74,999 per year
5. By more than \$75,000 per year
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E3. Has your child(ren)'s enrollment in this centre enabled your family to no longer need to receive:

Child care subsidy?	1. Yes, my family no longer requires the support	2. No, my family still requires the support	3. No, my family never received the support	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer
Social assistance or income support?	Yes, my family no longer requires the support	2. No, my family still requires the support	3. No, my family never received the support	98. Don't know	99. Prefer not to answer

E4a. What impact has your child's enrollment in this centre had on your career?

1. Positive impact
2. No impact
3. Negative impact
4. Not applicable – I am not currently employed
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E4. [Display if E1=1,2 or E2c=1,2] Has your child(ren)'s enrollment at this centre had any of the following impacts:

[Ask if E1=1,2] a. Your career?	Yes	No	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
i. It has enabled me to focus more on work	1.	2.	98.	99.
ii. It has enabled me to work more hours	1.	2.	98.	99.
iii. It has enabled me to work less hours	1.	2.	98.	99.
iv. It has enabled me to work fewer jobs (i.e. I had two jobs and now I have one job)	1.	2.	98.	99.
v. It has enabled me to accept more work responsibility	1.	2.	98.	99.
vi. It has enabled me to accept a promotion	1.	2.	98.	99.
vii. It has enabled me to switch to a new job	1.	2.	98.	99.
viii. It has enabled me to study more for a better position or job	1.	2.	98.	99.
xi. It has enabled me to pursue self-employment or open a new business	1.	2.	98.	99.
xii. It has enabled me to have fewer absences from work	1.	2.	98.	99.

[Ask if E2c=1,2]. The career of any other adult in your household?	Yes	No	No other adult in my household	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
i. It has enabled them to focus more on work	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.

[Ask if E2c=1,2]. The career of any other adult in your household?	Yes	No	No other adult in my household	Don't know	Prefer not to answer
ii. It has enabled them to work more hours	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
iii. It has enabled them to work less hours	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
iv. It has enabled them to work fewer jobs (i.e. they had two jobs and now they have one job)	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
v. It has enabled them to accept more work responsibility	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
vi. It has enabled them to accept a promotion	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
vii. It has enabled them to switch to a new job	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
viii. It has enabled them to study more for a better position or job	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
xi. It has enabled them to pursue self-employment or open a new business	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.
xii. It has enabled them to have fewer absences from work	1.	2.	3.	98.	99.

E4iia. [Ask if E4ii=1] On average, as a result of your child(ren) attending this centre, how much more are YOU working per week?

1. Up to half a day per week (1 to 4 hours per week)
2. About 1 day per week (5 to 8 hours per week)
3. About 2 days per week (9 to 16 hours per week)
4. About 3 days per week (17 to 24 hours per week)
5. 4 or 5 days per week (25 to 40 hours per week)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E4biia. [Ask if E4b_ii=1] On average, as a result of your child(ren) attending this centre, how much more is THE OTHER PERSON working per week?

1. Up to half a day per week (1 to 4 hours per week)
2. About 1 day per week (5 to 8 hours per week)
3. About 2 days per week (9 to 16 hours per week)
4. About 3 days per week (17 to 24 hours per week)
5. 4 or 5 days per week (25 to 40 hours per week)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E5. Overall, to what extent do you agree that the quality of care provided at this centre has positively impacted your child(ren)?

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E6. As a result of your child(ren) attending this centre, do you feel a part of a community? [mouseover: Feeling part of a community might be very specific, such as feeling part of the community of parents/caregivers who have children enrolled at this centre, or more general, such as feeling part of the broader community in which this centre is located.]

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E7. As a result of your child(ren) attending this centre, do you feel more comfortable accessing community supports for your child(ren)? [mouseover: Community supports can include other organizations or services, within the community, that provide support to your family generally or to your child specifically. Examples include reading programs through the library, cultural centres, or specialists such as a speech and language therapist.]

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E10a. Throughout this questionnaire, you have been asked questions about the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care at this centre.

When you made the decision to enroll your child(ren) at this centre, which of the three – accessibility, affordability or quality – was the most important factor in your decision? Or, was there another factor that was the most important factor?

1. Accessibility (for example, location, opening hours)
2. Affordability (for example, low parent fees, minimal additional supports)
3. Quality (for example, inclusive activities, partnerships with other community organizations)
4. Other, please specify: _____
5. None of these factors informed my decision
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E9a. What impact has enrolling your child(ren) in this centre had on your family? (Select all that apply)

1. A parent/caregiver has been able to go or return to work
2. A parent/caregiver is better able to focus on their career
3. A parent/caregiver has been able to attend school or upgrade their education
4. A parent/caregiver has been able to complete their education

5. A parent/caregiver can now take maternity/paternity leave to spend with a younger child while an older sibling attends daycare
6. Increased peace of mind for the family
7. Increased community connections for the family
8. Parents/caregivers can change the hours they work
9. Overall improvement in the family's quality of life
10. Confident we have reliable child care
11. Improved our child's skill, abilities, confidence or socialization
12. Better off financially
13. Increased the amount of quality family time
14. Increased opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities
15. Increased disposable income
16. Other, please specify: _____
98. No impact
99. Prefer not to answer

E9b. [Ask if QE9a=1-16] Thinking about the impact(s) you described, what was the main cause that allowed this to occur?

1. The affordability of the child care at this centre
2. The accessibility of the child care at this centre
3. The quality of the child care at this centre
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

E9c. As a result of your child(ren)'s enrollment in this centre, to what extent has it... [programming: please format as a table]

- i. Reduced the amount of financial stress that your family faces?
 - ii. Improved your family's work-life balance?
 - iii. Improved your family's relationships?
 - iv. Increased the amount of quality time that your family can spend together?
 - v. Improved your family's mental health?
 - vi. Improved your family's physical health?
 - vii. Increased your family's well-being?
 - viii. Reduced your family's social isolation?
1. Greatly
 2. Somewhat
 3. Not at all
 98. Don't know
 99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION F: Demographics

In this final section, you will be asked some questions about yourself and your family. The reason we are asking these questions is so that we can begin to understand how the topics discussed in this questionnaire affect different groups of people (for example, lone parents/caregivers, women, ethnic minorities, etc.). As we mentioned at the beginning of the survey, the information you provide will be

kept confidential, meaning it will be grouped with other responses and will not be reported individually. We will only be using this information for analysis purposes.

F1. What is your gender?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Other, please specify: _____
99. Prefer not to answer

F1a. What is your age?

1. 17 or younger
2. 18-24
3. 25-34
4. 35-44
5. 45-54
6. 55-64
7. 65-74
8. 75 or older
99. Prefer not to answer

F2. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

1. Less than high school
2. Graduated high school
3. Some commercial, technical or vocational college or trade certificate
4. Graduated commercial, technical or vocational college or trade certificate
5. Some university
6. Completed university
7. Postgraduate
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F4a. Do you identify as an Indigenous/Aboriginal person?

1. Yes [Go to F4b]
2. No [Go to F3]
98. Don't know [Go to F3]
99. Prefer not to answer [Go to F3]

F4b. [If F4a=1] Do you identify as:

1. First Nations [Go to F5a]
2. Métis [Go to F5a]
3. Inuk [Go to F5a]
4. Other, please specify: _____ [Go to F5a]
99. Prefer not to answer [Go to F5a]

F3. [Skip if F4a=1] What is your ethnic/culture background?

1. White
2. South Asian (for example, East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)

3. Chinese
4. Black
5. Filipino
6. Latin American
7. Arab
8. Southeast Asian (for example, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, etc.)
9. West Asian (for example, Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
10. Korean
11. Japanese
12. Other, please specify: _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F5a. Are you a Canadian citizen?

1. Yes, born in Canada
2. Yes, naturalized citizen
3. No
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F5b. [Ask if F5a=2, 3] Did you enter Canada as a:

1. Refugee
2. Permanent resident
3. Temporary foreign worker
4. Other, please specify: _____
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F5c. [Ask if F5a=2 or 3] How long have you lived in Canada?

1. Less than 1 year
2. 1 to 2 years
3. 3 to 5 years
4. 6 to 10 years
5. More than 10 years
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F6a. What is your marital status?

1. Married
2. Common-law
3. Separated
4. Divorced
5. Widowed
6. Single (never married)
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F8. What is your annual household income?

1. Under \$50,000
2. \$50,000 to \$80,000
3. \$80,001 to \$120,000
4. Over \$120,000
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F9. What was your main activity prior to enrolling your child in this centre?

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Self-employed
4. In-school/training
5. Unemployed
6. Retired
7. Stay at home parent/caregiver
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

F10. What is your current main activity?

1. Employed full-time
2. Employed part-time
3. Self-employed
4. In-school/training
5. Unemployed
6. Retired
7. Stay at home parent/caregiver
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

SECTION G: Conclusion

G1. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the quality, affordability or accessibility of care at this centre?

1. _____
99. Nothing further to add

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input will help to support the Government to improve the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care in Alberta.

[Online: add text] By clicking 'Submit Survey' you will automatically receive an email with a link to your Starbucks e-gift card. You should receive this email from Malatest within one week of submitting your survey responses.

[Telephone] To thank you for participating in this survey, we would like to offer give you a \$5 e-gift card to Starbucks. In order to give you the e-gift card, we need your email address. This is only so that we can

send you the link you need to redeem your gift card online; we will not use your email address for any purpose outside the scope of this evaluation.

E. Would you like to receive the \$5 e-gift card?

1. Yes [telephone survey: record email address, and explain that email will be sent within one week. Thank again and end call]
2. No [telephone survey: add text for surveyor Thank again and end call]

APPENDIX I: ELCC CENTRE COMMUNITY PARTNER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name and Position/Role:

Date and Time:

Telephone:

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has contracted R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) to conduct an evaluation of Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative. The results of this evaluation will be used to determine areas for improvement and future direction of ELCC Centre initiative.

As part of the evaluation, Malatest is conducting interviews with community partners and stakeholders in order to glean their perspective. The goal of this conversation is to better understand the impacts of the initiative on child care providers, parents/caregivers, children and the community. The interview is expected to take approximately 30 to 45 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any questions, you may skip any question that you cannot or do not wish to answer, and you may end the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

Malatest will adhere to the regulations set out in Part 1 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*. We are also compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta). The information gathered through this interview is considered confidential by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. Interview notes may be shared with the Alberta Children's Services for quality control purposes, but will not contain any personal information. For reporting purposes, your responses will be aggregated with information received from other key informants. With your permission, we would like to digitally record the interview to ensure the accuracy of our notes. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila Harper of Malatest at:

780-448-9042 (extension 224)

toll free: 1-877-665-6252

s.harper@malatest.com

Do you have any questions or require additional information before we begin?

Section A: Involvement

This section focuses on your organization's role in collaborating with the ELCC Centre.

- A1. Please tell us what the goal of your partnership is?
- a. How long have you been partners with the ELCC Centre or was the partnership established as a result of their involvement in the initiative?

Section B: Implementation

This section asks questions about the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative at the centre you are collaborating with.

- B1. Does your organization provide financial and/or in-kind supports to the centre you collaborate with? In-kind supports may include goods or services that are provided at no-cost (e.g. time, materials, equipment, etc). *If yes, what types of in-kind support does your organization provide?*
- B2. What has made your partnership with the centre successful?

Section C: Quality

The following questions focus on how the quality of child care at the ELCC Centre has been impacted as a result of your collaboration.

- C1. Has the partnership reached its goals (where applicable) with respect to:
- a. Improving cultural diversity?
- b. Supporting vulnerable families?
- c. Increasing parenting skills?
- C2. Has your organization experienced any challenges in promoting cultural diversity / working with vulnerable families / providing parenting supports within the centre? *If yes, how have these challenges been overcome?*
- C3. What unintended outcomes, if any, have resulted from the partnership? *Prompt: These might be positive or negative.*

Section D: Sustainability

These questions ask about issues related to the sustainability of the ELCC Centre initiative within the centre you have collaborated with.

- D1a. Is the partnership sustainable? *Prompt: What are your best practices?*
- D1b. If not how can the partnership be supported to ensure sustainability?

- D2. Does the capped fee of \$25 per day represent a valid cost point threshold for families in Alberta?
If no, would amending the capped fee (either by decreasing or increasing it) make it more appropriate?

Section E: Conclusion

- E1. In your opinion, is there an ongoing need for the ELCC Centre initiative?
- E2. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX J: QUALITY INITIATIVE PARTNER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name and Position/Role:

Date and Time:

Telephone:

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has contracted R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) to conduct an evaluation of Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative. The results of this evaluation will be used to determine areas for improvement and future direction of ELCC Centre initiative.

As part of the evaluation, Malatest is conducting interviews with pedagogical partners and *Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project* coaches who are supporting child care providers to implement *Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta* (ELCC Curriculum Framework) and promote inclusive child care practices. The goal of this conversation is to better understand how the curriculum and inclusion supports and resources contribute to improved child care quality within ELCC Centres. The interview is expected to take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any questions, you may skip any question that you cannot or do not wish to answer, and you may end the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

Malatest will adhere to the regulations set out in Part 1 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*. We are also compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta). The information gathered through this interview is considered confidential by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. For reporting purposes, your responses will be aggregated with information received from other key informants. With your permission, we would like to digitally record the interview to ensure the accuracy of our notes. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila Harper of Malatest at:

780-448-9042 (extension 224)

toll free: 1-877-665-6252

s.harper@malatest.com

Do you have any questions or require additional information before we begin?

Section A: Involvement

- A1. Please tell me your history in the early learning and child care industry generally.
- A2. What involvement have you had with *Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta* (ELCC Curriculum Framework); the *Getting Ready for Inclusion Today* (GRIT) Program; and/or the Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) Continuum Project?
- How many ELCC Centres have you worked with? In which areas of the province are these centres located? How long have you been working with these centres?
 - Have you been involved in online training, on-site coaching (including observations and supports), and/or Community of Learning (CoL) groups?

Section B: Implementation

For this section, you will only be asked questions related to the training/supports with which you have been involved.

Play, Participation, and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta (ELCC Curriculum Framework)

The process of adapting child care practices as a result of exposure to the ELCC Curriculum Framework may take considerable time. We would now like to discuss where ELCC Centres and ELCC educators are at in the process of adapting child care practices as a result of the ELCC Curriculum Framework.

- B1. What learning opportunities specific to the ELCC Curriculum Framework have been offered to/completed by centre staff?
Prompt: Have educators completed the online training? How many CoL groups have been held? How many site visits/observations have been completed? What coaching/training supports have educators received?
- B2. Which of the following concepts/practices have educators engaged with to implement the ELCC Curriculum Framework?
- Responsive environments
 - Image of the child / children's dispositions to learn
 - The role of the educator as a co-learner, co-researcher and co-imaginer of possibilities
 - Other
- B3. For each concept/practice that educators have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
- How have educators' understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?; and
 - How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program in the ELCC Centre?
- Responsive environments (*Responsive environments might include concepts such as time, space and participation, or materials such as loose parts, natural items, neutral tones.*)

- Recognizing children as mighty learners and citizens (*to be a mighty learner means to be powerful-robust, vigorous, loyal, reliable, hard-working and awe-inspiring*) and nurturing children's dispositions to learn (*dispositions is the manner in which a child approaches learning and includes meaning and value revealed through family social and cultural practices and traditions; the dispositions to learn considered in the ELCC Curriculum Framework are playing and playful, seeking, participating, persisting, and caring*).
 - Improving educators' understanding of their role as co-learners, co-researchers and co-imaginings of possibilities?
 - Other?
- B4. Please tell us how educators' planning and curriculum decisions have been influenced as a result of training and support you have provided?
- B5. How is the educators' work with the ELCC Curriculum Framework influencing documentation and information-sharing activities (*e.g. learning stories*) within the staffing unit? with parents/caregivers? and with other ELCC Centres?
- B6. Have educators experienced any problems or successes applying the ELCC Curriculum Framework into day-to-day care? *If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you/educators done with the successes?*
- B7. Has implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework in the ELCC Centre been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on curriculum implementation within the ELCC Centre? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you/the ELCC Centre developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of curriculum implementation?

Inclusive Child Care Practices (GRIT / ASaP)

The next questions ask about how ELCC Centres are working toward using inclusive child care practices.

- B8. What learning opportunities, specific to inclusive child care practices, have been offered to/completed by centre staff?
- B9. Which of the following concepts/practices have educators engaged with to implement the ASaP Continuum Project?
- Universal supports for all children
 - Targeted social-emotional supports for children at-risk
 - Interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours
 - Connecting with families
 - Other
- B10. For each concept/practice that educators have engaged with, and thinking of the past year:
- a) How have educators' understanding and implementation of the concept/practice changed?;
 - and
 - b) How has implementation of the concept/practice influenced the quality of the program in the ELCC Centre?

- Providing universal supports for all children through positive relationships and high quality inclusive environments? (e.g. building positive relationships with children, families and colleagues; joining in children's play; having extended conversations with children; providing positive descriptive feedback to children; using schedules, structured transitions, and/or visual cues)
- Providing targeted social-emotional supports to children at risk? (Targeted social-emotional supports include identifying and expressing emotions, self-regulation, social problem solving, initiating and maintaining interactions, cooperative responding, strategies for handling disappointment and anger, and friendship skills (being helpful, taking turns, giving compliments))
- Providing interventions for children with persistent challenging behaviours? (e.g. conducting functional assessments, developing individualized behavior support plans, monitoring implementation of the support plan)
- Connecting with families? (e.g. involving families in preventing/addressing challenging behavior, working collaboratively with families to support their child)
- Other?

- B11. Overall, based on your observations and interactions with staff that you have been working with...
- a. How are ELCC Centres creating inclusive environments?
 - b. How are ELCC Centres meeting the care requirements of children with diverse needs?
- B12. As educators increase their knowledge and understanding of inclusive child care practices, how have the goals that you are working on with them changed over time? What goals are you currently working on with the educators?
- B13. Have educators experienced any problems or successes with applying the ASaP Continuum Project into day-to-day care? *If yes, what are some of the problems/successes that have been encountered? How have these problems been overcome? What have you/educators done with the successes?*
- B14. Has implementation of the ASaP Continuum Project been affected by staff turnover? If so, what impact has this had on ASaP implementation within the ELCC Centre? As a result of, or in anticipation of, staff turnover, have you/the ELCC Centre developed any strategies or processes to ensure the sustainability of ASaP implementation?

Section C: Impact on Quality of Child Care

The following questions focus on how the quality of child care at ELCC Centres has been impacted as a result of the implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework and inclusive child care practices.

- C1. How do you think the implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework and inclusive child care practices impacts the well-being of families/children?
- C2. What unintended outcomes, if any, have resulted from the implementation of the ELCC Curriculum Framework and inclusive child care practices?
Prompt: These might be positive or negative.

- C3. In your opinion, what factors may facilitate or hinder the sustainability of ELCC Curriculum Framework and inclusion practices in ELCC Centres?

Section D: Conclusion

- D1. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX K: COMPARISON CENTRE SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name and Position/Role:

Date and Time:

Telephone:

Introduction

The Government of Alberta has contracted R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) to conduct an evaluation of Alberta's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centre initiative. The results of this evaluation will be used to determine areas for improvement and future direction of the ELCC Centre initiative.

As part of the evaluation, Malatest is conducting interviews with child care centre supervisors in order to understand the implementation of the ELCC Centre initiative at each individual centre. The goal of this conversation is to learn about the impacts of the initiative on centre staff, parents/caregivers, children and the community. The interview is expected to take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

To thank you for taking the time to participate, you will receive an honorarium of \$50.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any questions, you may skip any question that you cannot or do not wish to answer, and you may end the interview at any point without any negative consequences.

Malatest will adhere to the regulations set out in Part 1 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA). We are also compliant with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Alberta). The information gathered through this interview is considered confidential by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. Interview notes may be shared with the Alberta Children's Services for quality control purposes, but will not contain any personal information. For reporting purposes, your responses will be aggregated with information received from other key informants. With your permission, we would like to digitally record the interview to ensure the accuracy of our notes. All data collected as part of this evaluation will be securely stored for three (3) years following the end of this evaluation (estimated end date: June 2021), at which point it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila Harper of Malatest at:

780-448-9042 (extension 224)

toll free: 1-877-665-6252

s.harper@malatest.com

Do you have any questions or require additional information before we begin?

Section A: Involvement

- A1. Please tell me a bit about the centre.
Prompt: How long has the centre been operating? How many child care spaces does the centre have? Are there specific target groups the centre reaches out to?
- A2. Please tell me about your role here at the centre, including how long you have been in this role.

Section B: Staffing

This section of the interview collects information about the centre's approaches to providing professional development to centre staff.

- B1. What support does the centre provide centre staff to access professional development?
- B2. What challenges, if any, does the centre face in providing professional development to staff?
- B3. Have you experienced any challenges in retaining centre staff?

Section C: Quality

This section asks about the factors that support the quality of care provided at your centre.

- C1. What resources are available to support centre staff in the development of learning activities?
- C2. What challenges do centre staff experience when developing learning activities?
- C3. What is your centre doing to create inclusive environments? Inclusive meaning all children are welcome and able to have the unique needs met.
- C4. How does your centre meet the care requirements of children with diverse needs? Diverse meaning a wide variety of needs.
- C5. What roles are available in your centre for parents/caregivers to provide feedback and quality assurance? For example, verbal and written communication with staff, a parent survey, feedback forms, annual general meetings, a parent board or parent committees or parent programs.

Section D: Affordability and Accessibility

This section asks about the affordability and accessibility of child care at your centre.

- D1. Since 2017, has your centre increased the number of child care spaces it has available?
- When was the expansion undertaken? What facilitated or hindered the expansion? (e.g. space renovations, staff, licensing)
 - Do you have any future plans to increase spaces?
 - Were the spaces added for a specific target or age group?
 - Does your centre have a waiting list?

e. Did the expansion of the number of spaces reduce the amount of time families spend on the waiting list (if applicable)?

D2. Do you think that the spaces in your centre are affordable for parents/caregivers? *Why or why not? Prompt: What is the centre's current fee structure?*

D3. Has the centre ever had to change its operation(s) in order to ensure affordability? *If yes, how?*

D4. In your community do people still have trouble with child care accessibility or affordability? *Prompt: If yes, how are these gaps going to be addressed?*

Section E: Sustainability

These questions ask about issues related to the sustainability of your centre.

E1. Do you have any community partners that provide your centre with financial and/or in-kind supports? In-kind supports may include goods or services that are provided at no-cost (e.g. time, materials, equipment, etc). *If yes, what supports do they provide?*

E2. What fund-raising activities is your centre engaging in?

E3. What factors support the sustainability of your centre?

E4. What factors hinder the sustainability of your centre?

Section F: Conclusion

F1. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation in this interview!

APPENDIX L: KEY ORDINARY LEAST SQUARES AND LOGISTIC REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Footnote	Regression Method	Survey Years	Key Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Coefficient	Odds Ratio	Statistical Significance
12	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	Not Married (compared to Married) within Comparison Centres	Parents/Caregivers Very Satisfied with Hours of Child Care Centre Operation		0.26	**
12	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	Not Married (compared to Married) within ELCC Centres	Parents/Caregivers Very Satisfied with Hours of Child Care Centre Operation		0.725	NS
13	Ordinary Least Squares	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Length of Wait Time (Months, natural logarithm) To Get Child Enrolled in Centre	-0.16		NS
14	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Satisfied/Very Satisfied with the Cost of Child Care at the Centre		34.28	***
16	Logistic	2017/18	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Report Receiving Child Care Subsidies		0.80	NS
16	Logistic	2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Report Receiving Child Care Subsidies		0.68	NS
17	Ordinary Least Squares	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Percentage of Monthly Income Used to Cover Child Care Costs for All Children	-6.02		***
22	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Strongly Agree that Centre Staff Are Professionals		1.38	*
28	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Reporting That They Were Very Satisfied with the Quality of Care at the Centre		2.64	***
30	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Were Very Satisfied That the Centre Reflects the Diversity of the Community		2.01	***
33	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Female Parents/Caregivers Returning to Work Full-Time Due to Children's Enrollment in the Centre		1.42	*
35	Logistic	2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Female Parents/Caregivers Returning to School or Taking More Classes Due to Children's Enrollment in the Centre		4.20	**
36	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Female Parents/Caregivers Could Take on More Work Responsibility Due to Children's Enrollment in the Centre		1.77	***
37	Logistic	2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Female Parents/Caregivers Who Report Their Career Was Positively Impacted by Sending Their Child to the Centre		3.11	***
38	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Report That They Feel a Part of a Community as a Result of Their Children Attending the Centre		3.96	***
39	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC	Parents/Caregivers Who Report that They Feel		5.44	***

Footnote	Regression Method	Survey Years	Key Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Coefficient	Odds Ratio	Statistical Significance
			(relative to Comparison)	More Comfortable Accessing Community Supports as a Result of Their Children Attending the Centre			
40	Logistic	2017/18 2018/19	ELCC (relative to Comparison)	Parents/Caregivers Who Strongly Agree That the Quality of Care at the Centre Has Positively Impacted Their Children		2.11	***

**APPENDIX M: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK AND THE ELCC
CENTRE INITIATIVE GRANT**

Goals of the Multilateral Framework ²⁸	Terms of Alberta's ELCC Centre Initiative Grant Agreement	Aligned?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides rich early learning experiences and environments and views children as capable, competent learners who are full of potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with the ELCC supports (MacEwan University and Mount Royal University pedagogical partners) to develop practices to explore the implementation of the <i>Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta</i>. 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>The ELCC Curriculum Framework is being implemented at ELCC Centres. The ELCC Centre Curriculum Framework is designed to provide children with rich early learning experiences and environments and view children as capable competent learners who are full of potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values the importance of building strong, responsive and respectful relationships in which purposeful interactions support optimal learning for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure parents are involved and engaged in their children's learning and development. Engage parents/caregivers in quality assurance processes. 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>By providing quality child care practices (e.g. ELCC Curriculum Framework and inclusive child care practices), collaborating with other service organizations and involving parents/caregivers in quality assurance practices, the ELCC Centre initiative strives to build responsive and respectful interactions between ELCC educators, parents/caregivers and children.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality early learning and child care should be flexible and broadly available to respond to the varying needs of children and families to promote early childhood development. Accessible, affordable and flexible early learning and child care also supports families participating in employment, education or training, and harder-to-serve populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer parent/caregiver fees at no higher than \$25 a day. Increase enrollment and/or spaces. Offer flexible child care to support parents/caregivers who are working or attending school outside of typical child care operations and/or who work on a part-time basis. Identify opportunities to collaborate with other service organizations for co-location or new partnerships in delivering ELCC. Ensure collaboration with other service organizations that support knowledge about cultural diversity and learning as it relates to Indigenous, immigrant and refugee children. Ensure collaboration with other service organizations to support the provision of parenting resources and supports to families attending the child care program. 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>The ELCC Centre initiative is designed to better support access to, and affordability of, quality child care spaces in Alberta. ELCC Centres are providing high quality and flexible early learning and child care by implementing the ELCC Curriculum Framework, inclusive child care practices and one or more of the seven improvements included in the expression of interest (e.g. flexible child care, co-location, cultural learning, parenting supports, supporting vulnerable families and/or supporting child care in rural communities). Additionally, the ELCC Centre initiative improved the accessibility of child care by creating additional child</p>

²⁸ Government of Canada. (2017). 'Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework.' Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2017-multilateral-framework.html> [Accessed 21 February]

Goals of the Multilateral Framework ²⁸	Terms of Alberta's ELCC Centre Initiative Grant Agreement	Aligned?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate to support vulnerable families (i.e. low socio-economic status, lone parent families, parenting teens and women facing additional barriers). • Support language acquisition of a minority language (i.e. French, Cree) • Support child care in rural communities. 	<p>care spaces and providing flexible child care arrangements. It also improved the affordability of child care by setting parent/caregiver fees at a maximum of \$25 per day.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive early learning and child care systems respect and value diversity, which could include but is not limited to: children and families who are experiencing vulnerability; and children with varying abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT Edmonton) to enable the full participation of all children in the program, including children with diverse learning needs. 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>ELCC Centres are providing inclusive early learning and child care systems by implementing the ASaP Continuum Project and partnering with other service organizations that support knowledge about cultural learning and/or that support vulnerable families.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes the importance of qualifications and training for the early childhood work force. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that program leaders and ELCC educators are provided with support and release time to attend professional learning activities. • Develop onsite pedagogical leadership to support ELCC educators in their exploration of curriculum concepts and resources. • Identifying staff member as Site Leads to participate in all training, onsite coaching, modeling of professional practices and mentoring of other ELCC educators in their use of new practices. • Establishing a leadership team that meets on a regular basis for the purpose of developing program level goals and communication with staff on varied topics such as: responding to challenging behavior, activities for family engagement, meaningful inclusion, accessing supports, policy development, etc. 	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>The ELCC Centre initiative and ELCC Centres recognize the importance of qualifications and training for the early childhood work force by supporting professional development and providing mentoring and coaching to implement the ELCC Curriculum Framework and the ASaP Continuum Project.</p> <p>In Alberta, licensing requirements stipulate that all staff must be certified based on education and/or equivalencies.</p> <p>All ELCC centres must participate in accreditation. Accreditation grant funding provides up to \$1,000/year in professional development for each eligible educator.</p>