

ETFO celebrates Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day

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TORONTO, ON – On this Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) celebrates the vital role designated early childhood educators (DECEs) play in supporting and inspiring our youngest learners.

“Each year, we celebrate the remarkable contributions of child care workers and DECEs across Ontario,” says ETFO President David Mastin. “This province-wide day of recognition is not only an expression of appreciation for the countless ways our DECE members support children and families, but it is also a reminder of their professional expertise and the essential role they play in early learning. Today, as always, we honour their work, raise awareness of the value they bring to Ontario’s child care and Kindergarten programs, and continue advocating for the decent wages and working conditions they deserve.”

Since the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten, DECEs have played a crucial role in ensuring children receive a strong foundation for lifelong learning. Kindergarten provides lasting benefits for children’s reading, writing, numeracy, self-regulation, and social skill development. This is, in large part, due to the play-based learning expertise and leadership of DECEs. Their commitment to nurturing curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in young learners has been instrumental in the success of the program.

Adds Mastin, “To sustain high-quality Kindergarten education, the province must ensure there is a teacher and a DECE in every Kindergarten classroom to keep play-based learning at the heart of the program, and cap Kindergarten classes at 26 students. These are essential steps to protect the integrity of Kindergarten and support the educators who make it work.”

[ETFO](#) represents approximately 84,000 members, including 80,000 public elementary teachers and occasional teachers, and 4,000 designated early childhood educators, education support personnel, and professional support personnel. Visit [BuildingBetterSchools.ca](https://www.buildingbetterschools.ca).

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