

EYCC Workforce Fact Sheet 2024

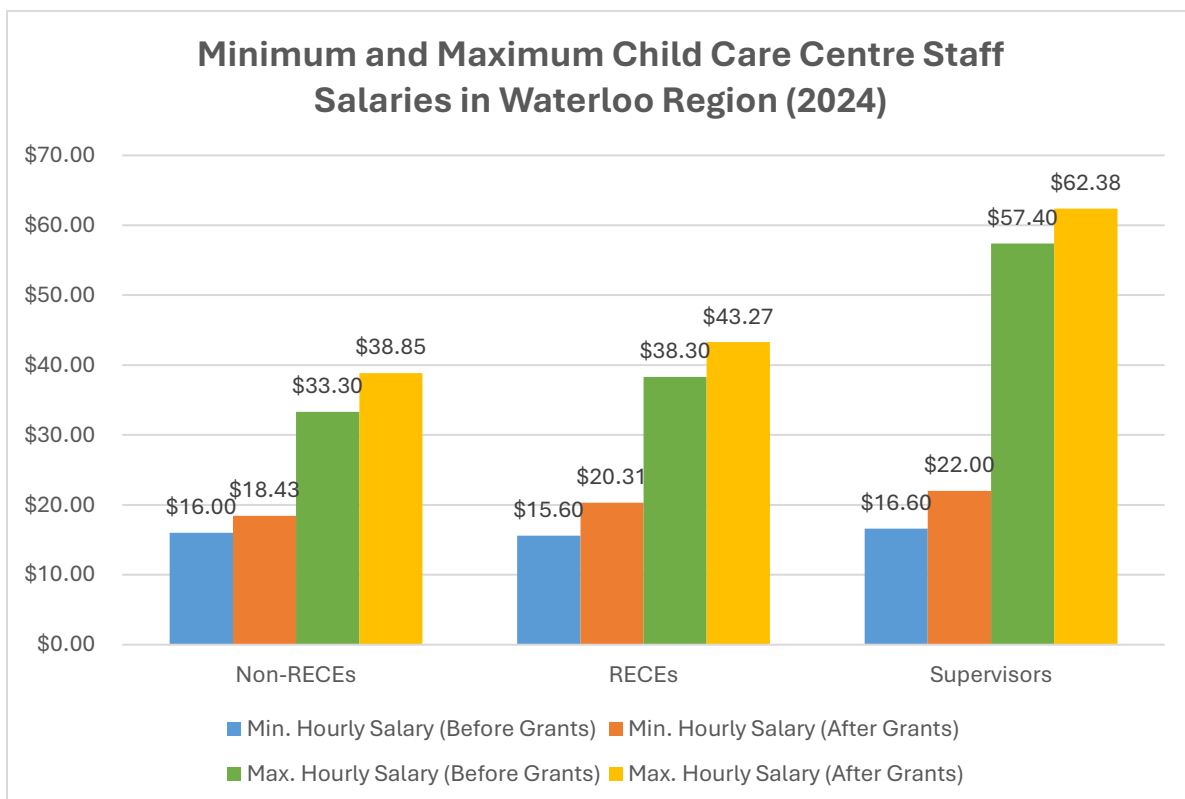
Child care in Waterloo Region would not be possible without the dedication and expertise of early years and child care professionals. In Waterloo Region in 2024, there were about 2,500 Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE). About 1,750 early years professionals were working in child care programs in December 2024.

Wage Enhancements:

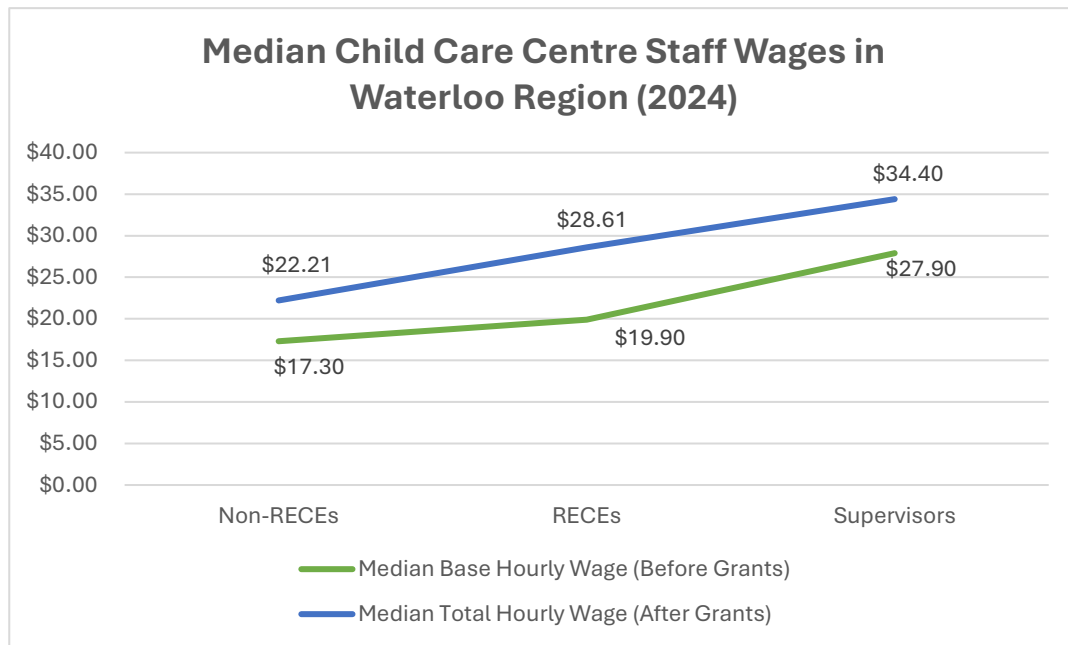
Since 2015, the Ontario government has made an ongoing funding commitment to support a wage enhancement for eligible child care professionals working in licensed child care settings. The Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) aims to retain RECEs and support access to stable, high-quality child care programs for children in Ontario. The wage enhancement also supports closing the wage gap between registered early childhood educators (RECEs) working in full-day kindergarten programs and RECEs/other child care program staff working in licensed child care settings.

The introduction of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system brought with it a new funding model for licensed child care in Ontario, including some new wage improvement funds for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) working in licensed child care programs that opt-in to CWELCC. These wage improvements come with a **wage floor increase** and an **annual increase** in salary, which is on top of the Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) previously established.

In 2024, the minimum and maximum wages of child care centre staff were as follows:



In 2024, the median wages of child care centre staff were as follows:



Workforce Strategy:

Wage enhancements is one important step in supporting the recruitment and retention of the early years workforce. Children’s Services is committed to investing in our region’s child care sector through a dedicated workforce strategy; In 2024, Children’s Services engaged in a range of workforce activities, which included the following notable successes:

- Nearly 1,500 educators participated in the sector-wide anti-bias training.
- Four workshops were offered through the Rainbow Families initiative to all early years staff, with books to be distributed the following year to centre-based and home-based child care programs and EarlyON sites.
- Over 1,600 early years professionals attended the 4th Fall Professional Learning Day, in addition to more targeted professional learning for Home Child Care and Indigenous programs.
- 295 educators/leaders completed the mentorship program training across the 10 sessions.
- Over 125 *Visionary Director* books have been distributed so far, with an accompanying Capacity Building Series and subsequent Community of Practice attended by nearly 100 participants.

Knowing Our Numbers (KON):

43 of 47 Ontario municipalities participated in the Knowing Our Numbers research project (led by the Atkinson Centre at the University of Toronto) to understand local realities of the ECE workforce. 222 respondents completed the survey in our region, which accounts for a 13% response rate of our active workforce. Phase 2 is underway as of mid-2025, and we are committed to engaging our EYCC community to increase the response rate and have a clearer understanding of our current workforce needs. We are acutely aware of the struggles of our workforce; less than half (43.7%) of respondents stated they would **recommend a career in the early years**, and 36% of respondents shared that they plan to **stay in the sector** for the next 5 years, while 39% are **uncertain**. The [full report](#) can be accessed on the [Children's Services website](#).