

From Reopening to Recovery

AECEO & OCBCC
June 2, 2020



Agenda

- Setting the context
- What we've done
- Discussion of report: *From Reopening to Recovery*
- Next steps



Context Setting

- The Ontario government has been slow to respond and has failed to address the concerns of the EYCC sector;
- Communication has been unclear and contradictory;
- Value of the early childhood workforce to children, families and communities has not been recognized;
- Have not extended \$4 per hour “pandemic pay” to educators working in emergency child care (ECC) and restricted use any provincial funds to top-up staff wages; and
- Provided no new provincial money in the “sustainability funding” for child care centres during the closure period.



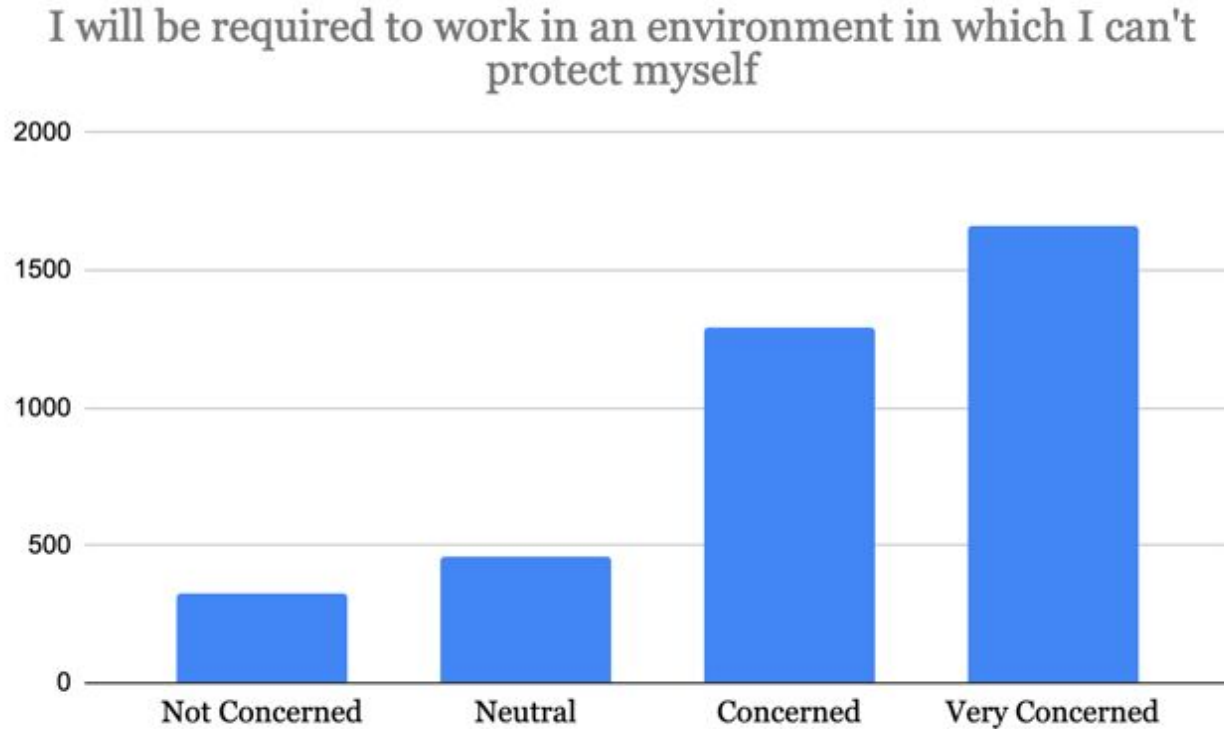
How have we responded?

Sector consultation and support through:

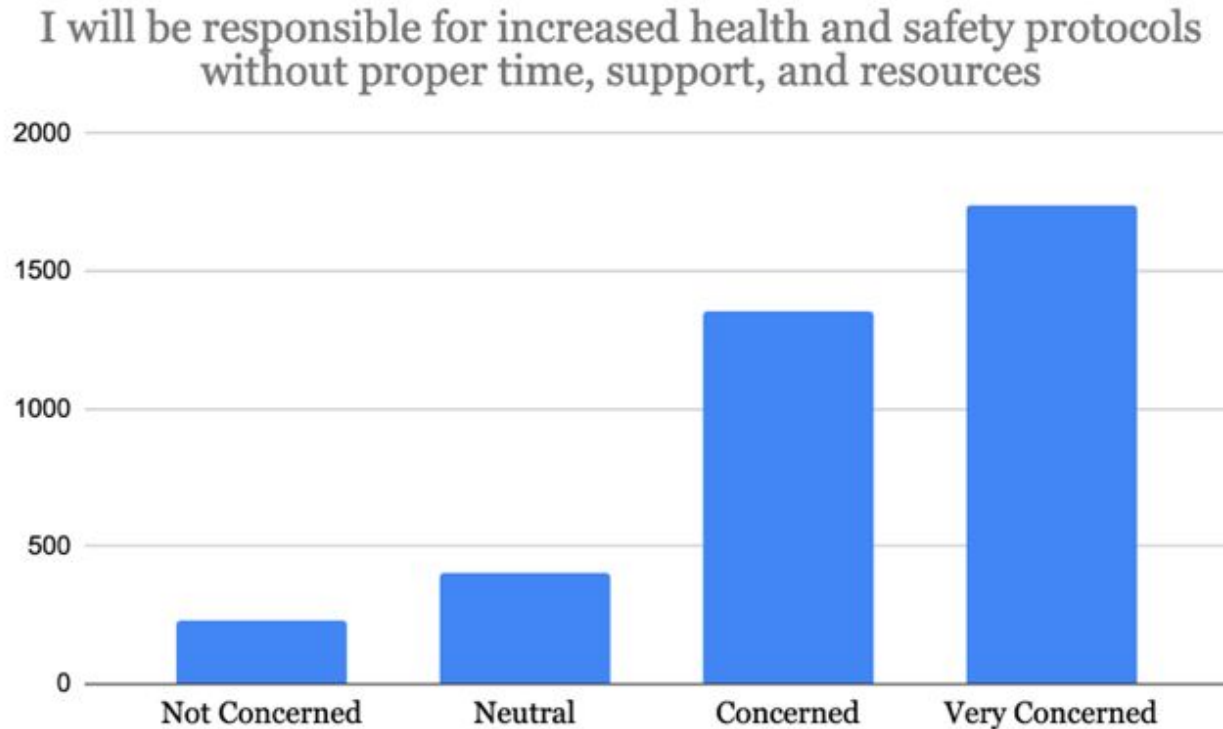
- Two province-wide webinars;
- Weekly local CoP calls with RECEs, early years staff, and operators;
- An online training series;
- An online survey of RECEs (almost 4,000 respondents!); and
- Direct conversations with our members, allies, emergency child care providers, and other sector stakeholders.
- Letter Campaign re: Pandemic Pay
- Letter Campaign re: Emergency Response Plan



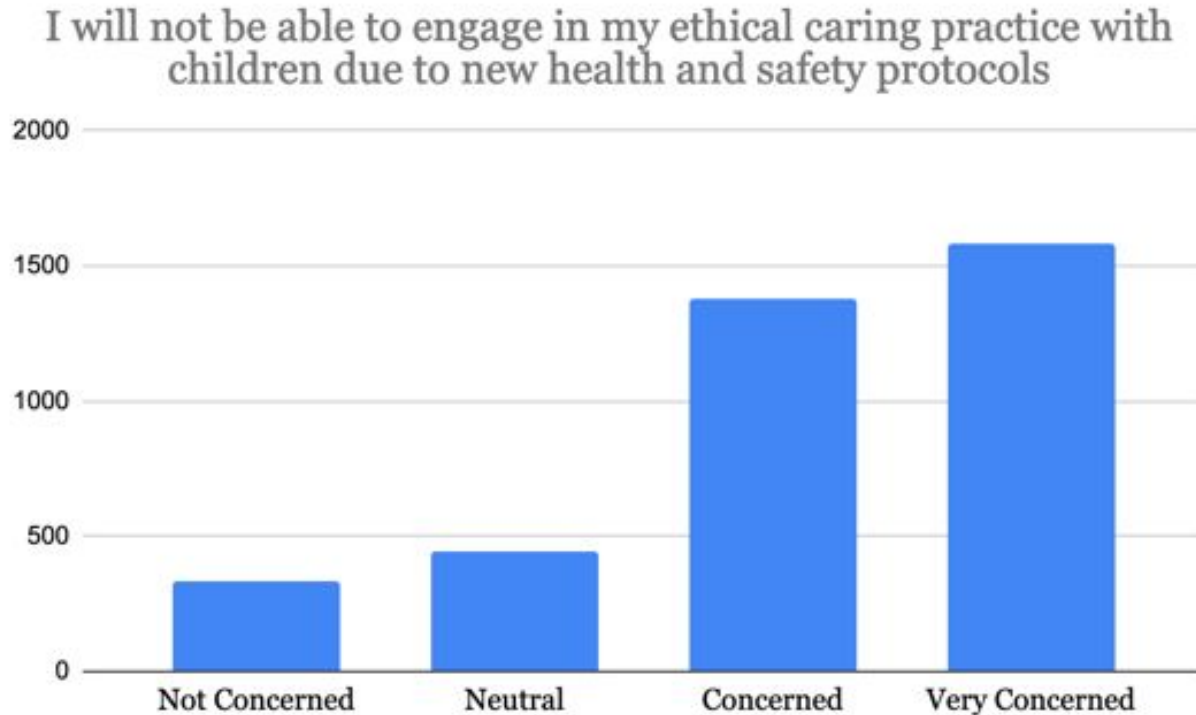
What did we hear?



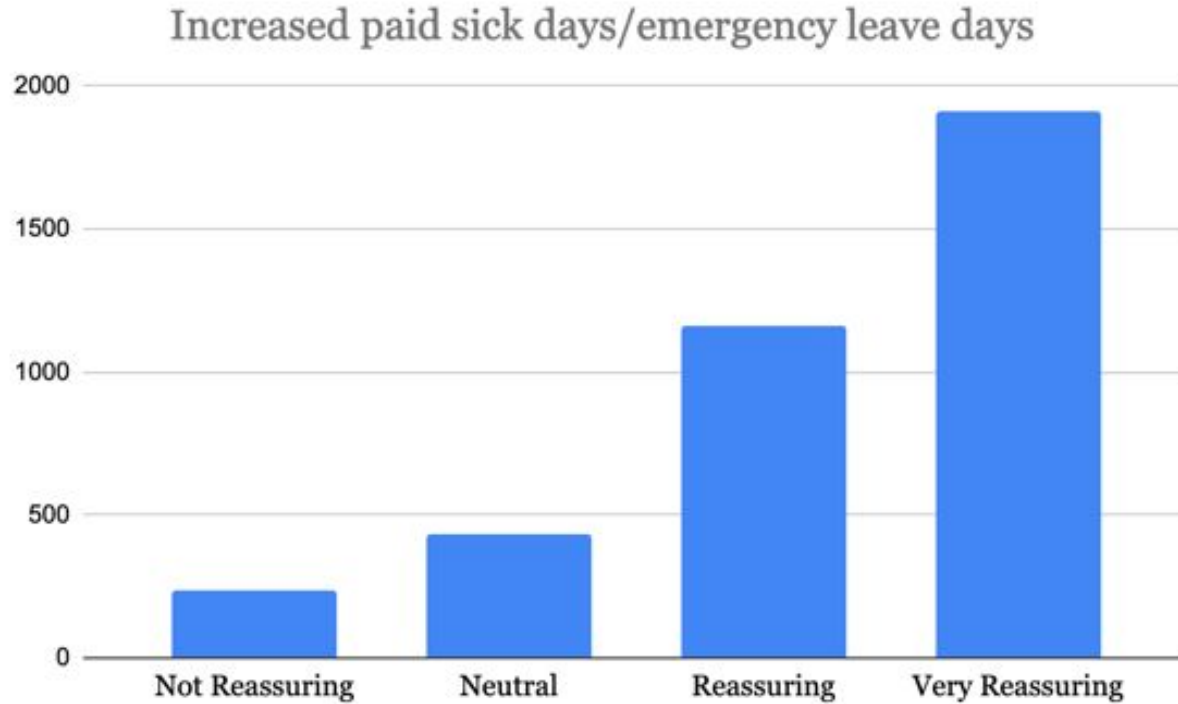
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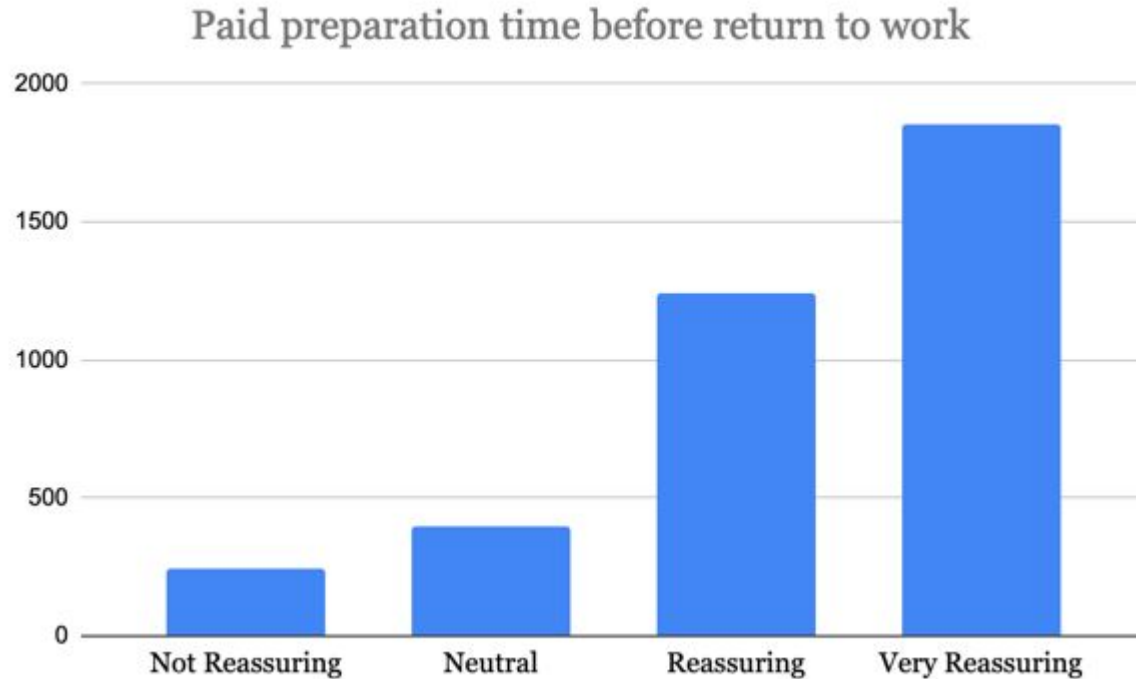
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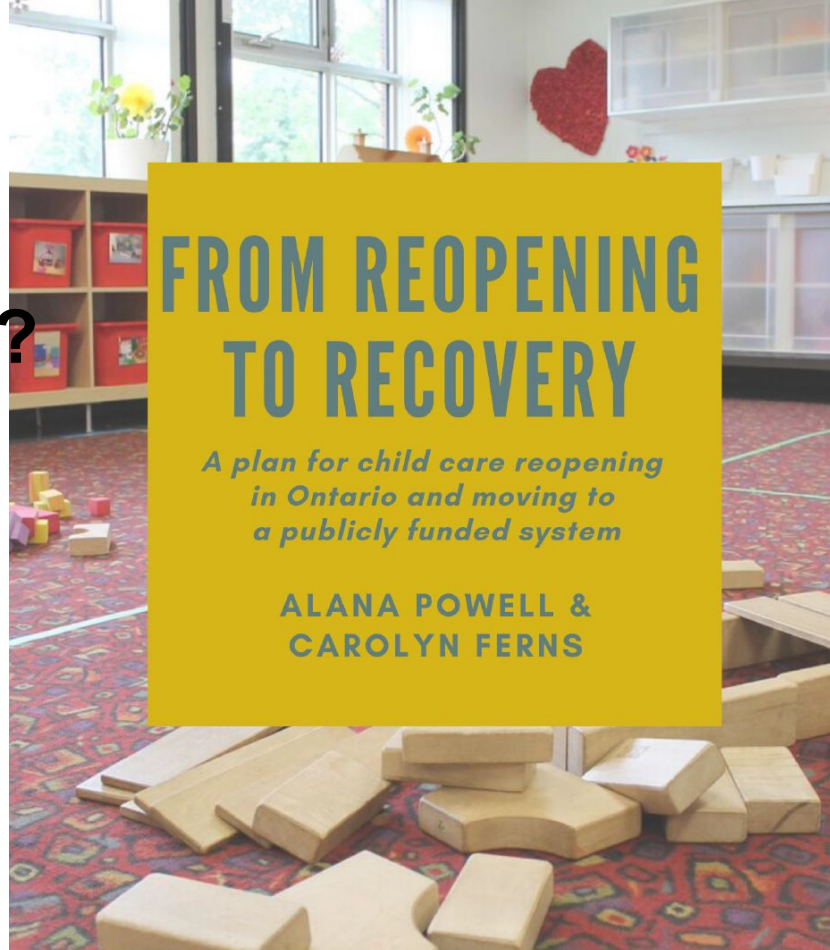
What did we hear?

“Considering the educators who work tirelessly to care for everyone else's children, especially in a time when there is so much uncertainty, please think about raising the pay of early childhood educators who are so desperately needed to care for children and teach them.”

“I would ask our government to recognize RECEs for the professionals we are and pay us accordingly.”

“Do you finally recognize how important child care is in our world. And are you willing to pay registered early childhood educators what they are worth?”

Why this report?



ONTARIO COALITION FOR
Better Child Care



Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario

Based on consultation, we recommend:

1) A minimum of **three weeks' notice** before reopening, prior to which the sector must already have had access to sector-specific reopening guidelines, which specify new operating regulations and funding plans.

Guidelines should be informed by an expert committee comprising both community and government, including public health;

- 2)** A phased reopening modelled on best practices in funding and operation of Emergency Child Care (ECC).
- a) **Reduced groups sizes and enhanced ratios and keep groups separate** at all times;
 - b) **Full base funding**, including:
 - i) funding for additional staff and consistent staff teams.
 - ii) funding and support to LHCC Agencies to ensure full compensation for licensed home child care providers who maintain smaller group sizes.
 - c) **Provincial guidelines on eligibility** and priority of families;

Health and Safety

- 3) **Approval by licensing and public health** that programs have met a threshold of health and safety and decent work practices before reopening, with a plan approved that includes use of physical space;
- 4) **Repurposing available public space** to accommodate the increased need for physical space as a result of reducing group sizes and enhancing ratios;
- 6) **Clear health and safety guidelines** for both centres and home child care providers.

Health and Safety

7) Training by local public health on Personal Protective Equipment, screening, and health and safety procedures for staff, families, boards and operators;

8) Clear Covid-19 testing policy;

9) Funding for and organized access to Personal Protective Equipment, and health and safety supplies. This should be provincially funded and efficient distribution should be organized through CMSM/DSSABs and licensed home child care agencies;

Health and safety

14) Clear rules for families on: health screening, including requirements to disclose any symptoms and medication; emergency pick-up in case of illness; when and on what conditions children can return to program after illness;

15) Additional and dedicated support from local public health support authorities;



Support for ECEs and early years staff

5) Paid time for staff to return to **prepare programs and to undertake training** on sector- specific public health guidelines.

10) Immediately **increase paid sick and emergency leave days** for all RECEs and early years staff to at least 21 days;

11) Immediate extension of **pandemic pay** to all program staff, and funding to ensure a **\$25 minimum wage** for all RECEs;



Support for ECEs and early years staff

12) Pedagogical support, including training on trauma-informed practice;

13) Clear provincial directives, guided by public health, on eligibility of vulnerable staff and providers to access adapted work or refuse to work, and ensure they continue to be paid;



Funding

- Tripling the child care budget.
- Federal and provincial governments must work together.
- With this plan, Ontario will:
 - Gain a **real child care system** that will support children, parents and educators;.
 - It will be a system that is **prepared and nimble** to control outbreaks, respond to a second wave of Covid-19, and grow to meet demand
 - Put child care at the **core of social and economic recovery**.



What we need - next steps for advocacy

Online action - send a letter to MP and MPP

Share the report and letter with 2 friends

Join a local Community of Practice

Set up a virtual **meeting with your MPP**

-> Join us Wednesday June 10 @ 1pm for a webinar: How to Meet Your MPP featuring Olivia Chow

-> *Review the Campaign Tool-Kit*

Why membership matters

The AECEO and OCBCCC are membership-based organizations - we are only as strong as our memberships. Strong membership means a louder collective voice, and more power in the process of change.

We know that for many this is an impossible time - but we hope that you consider donations or memberships when able. Our work has never been more needed, and we can't do this work without you.

<https://www.aeceo.ca/membership>

<https://www.childcareontario.org/membership>

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