

A child in a blue shirt and dark shorts is running across a grassy field. Several long, colorful streamers (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) are trailing behind them, suggesting a playful activity. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

A qualified and valued workforce is foundational

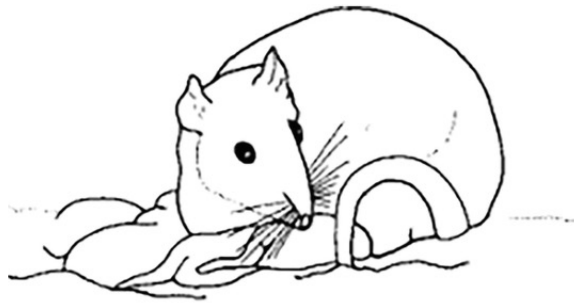
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Who am I?
I am not an ECE?
Why do I value ECEs?









Each person write down what alternative career you would have chosen if you did not become an ECE

I will randomly select people from the audience, and we will all together as a group say, '*What would you have done?*' and the selected person will respond and also tell us why.





the what

Educator value

Are educators valued?
How do we value the
work educators do?



the how

Advocate

How can you make
your voice heard?
Who needs to be at
the table?



the why

You matter!

Educators are foundational
to quality early learning
and child care.
What do educators do that
is so important for child
outcome?



the what

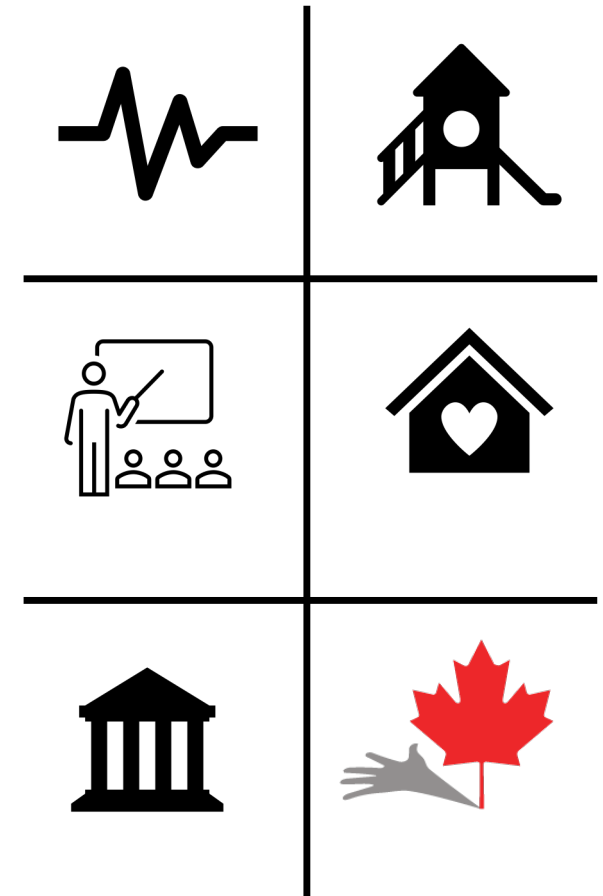
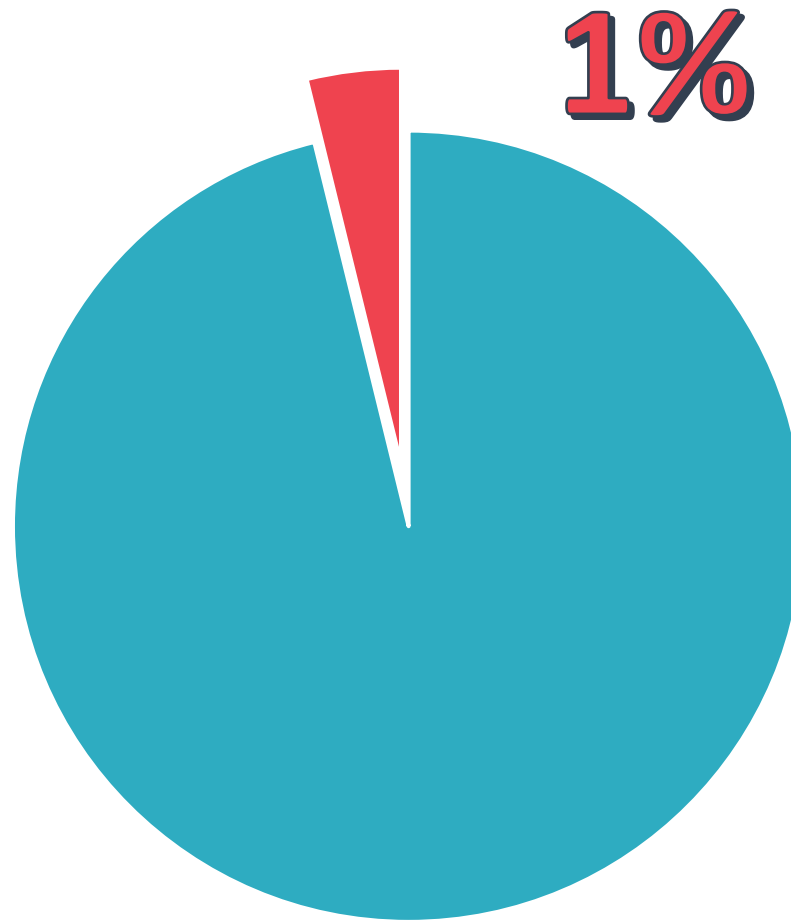
Educator value

Are educators valued?

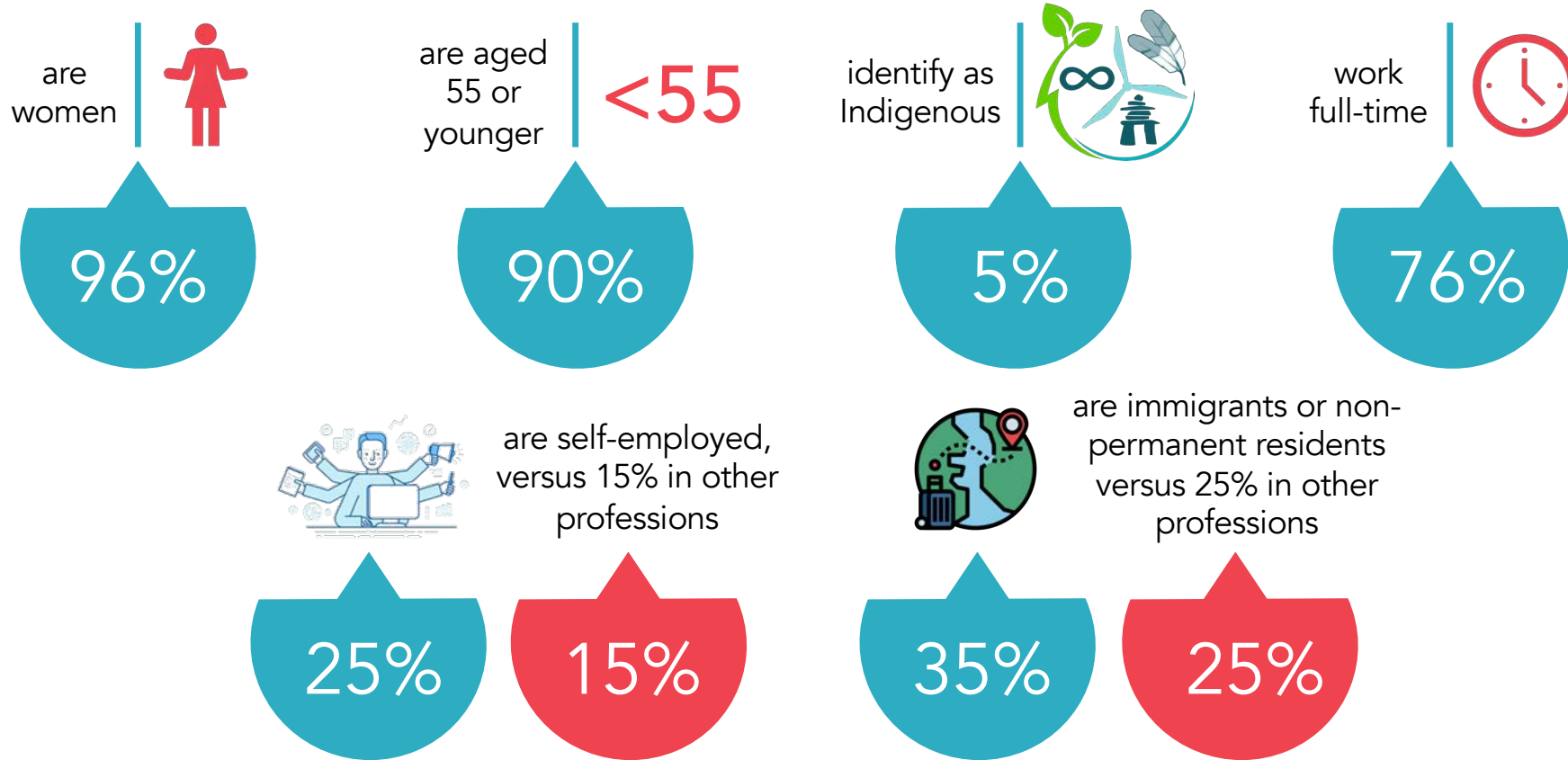
How do we value the
work educators do?

The Early Childhood Workforce in Canada

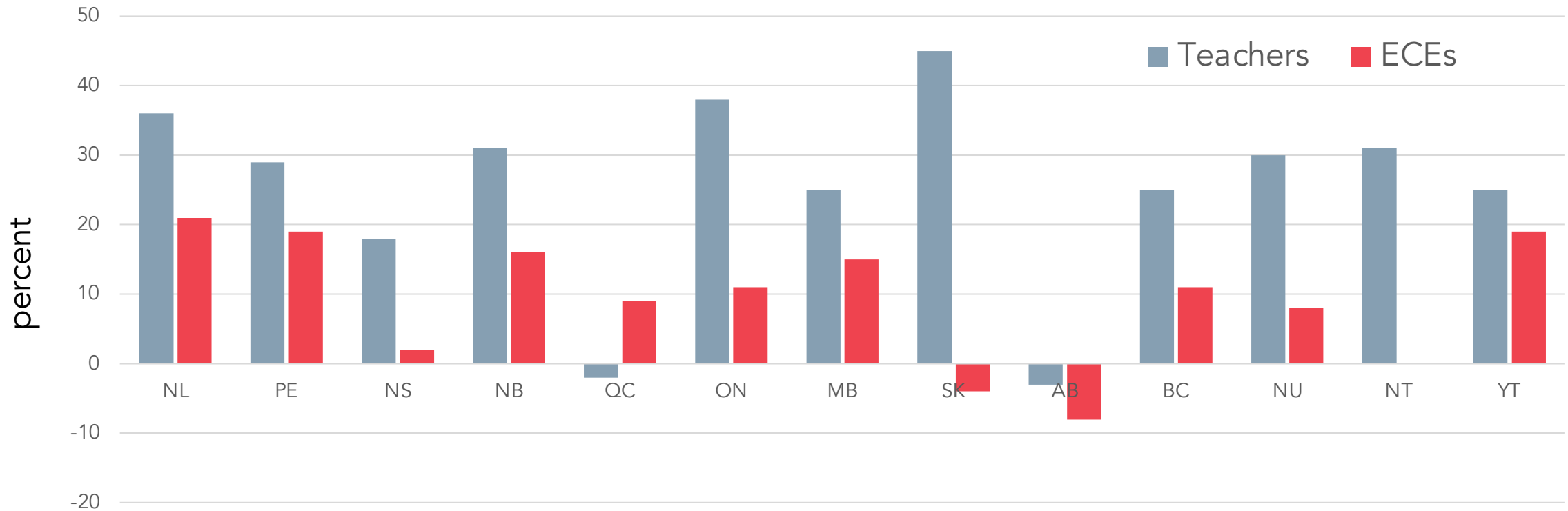
302,000+



What Does the Workforce Look Like?



Percent Change in Salary for Teachers and Early Childhood Educators by Province/Territory (2017-2020)





Growing inequities in the time of crisis

Educator burnout

Income loss

'she'session

Increases in child abuse and domestic violence

Education loss

Child/Educator

Politically convincing
Labour market
Labour force participation
Women's rights



Child/Educator

Politically convincing
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Educator Shortages

Burn out

Compensation = value

Decent work = value

Opportunities for career advancement = value



RECEs are filling in gaps in the system. There is no time for mentorship, collegial collaboration, excursions. Educators are often only able to provide basic care.

Staff turnover is high – this affects the quality of early education programs



the how

Advocate

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the table?

1. What are the top 3 important elements you require as an ECE to do your job effectively?

2. What are some key issues and challenges you face as an ECE?

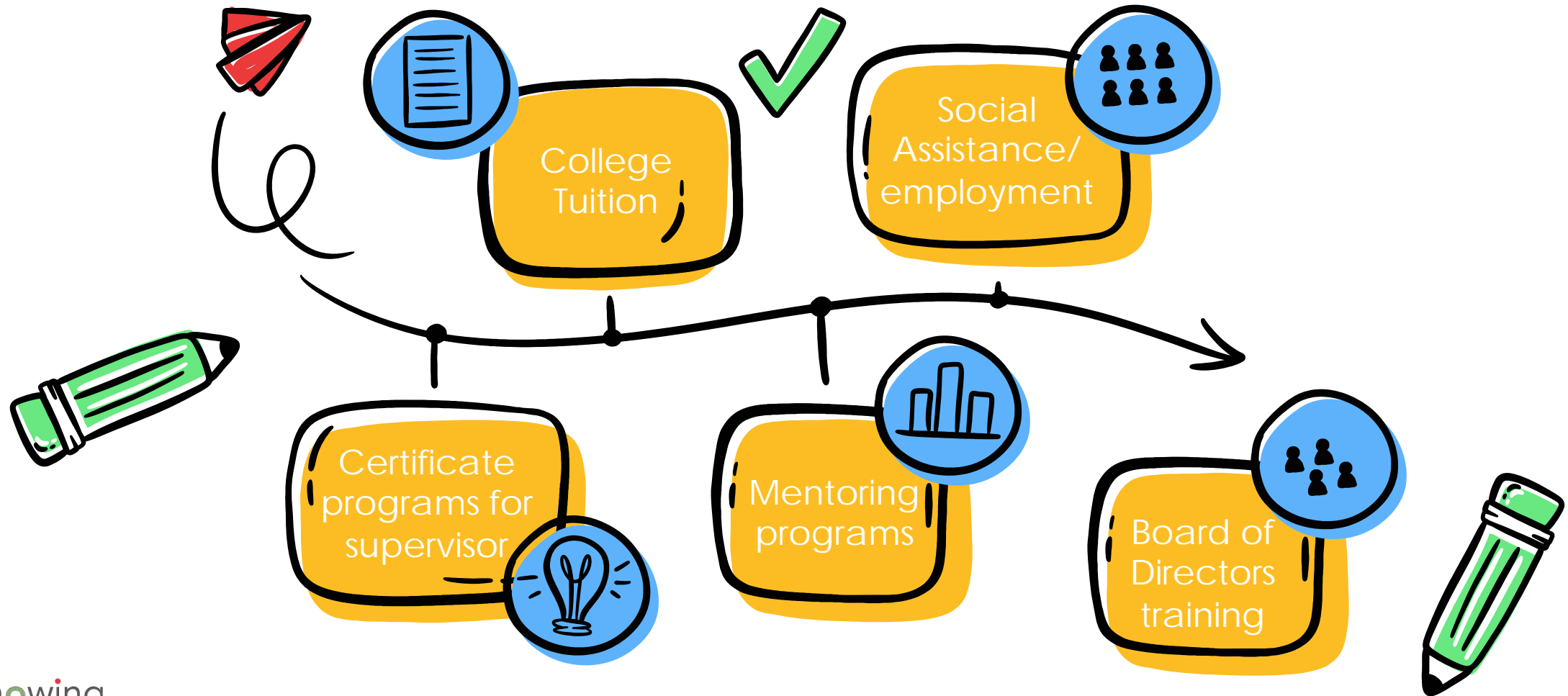
3. What are some of the benefits you would expect working as an ECE in a high quality ECE program?

4. How do you think parent / public perceptions of your role as an ECE will change with increased access and affordability?





Promising Practices – Recruitment/Retention

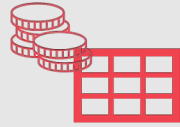


Promising Practices – Wages



Committed to Wage Grids

8 jurisdictions committed to develop wage grids or improve their existing grids



Wage Grids

6 of the 8 jurisdictions now have wage grids or guidelines



MBM

Only 4 provinces meet Market Basket Measures (MBM)



Supervisor Rate

PEI, NS, NL, MB have dedicated rates for supervisors



Rate Based on Centre Size

MB establish rates based on centre size & recognize assistant supervisors



Non-RECE Staff

Most compensation systems do not recognize non-RECE staff

Promising Practices – Benefits



Only QC
funds benefits
and only in
CPEs



Only PEI and
QC fund a
defined
benefit
pension plan
(QC only in
CPEs)



MB funds a
defined
contribution
plan



Only PEI and
NS have
committed to
establishing
benefit plans



the why

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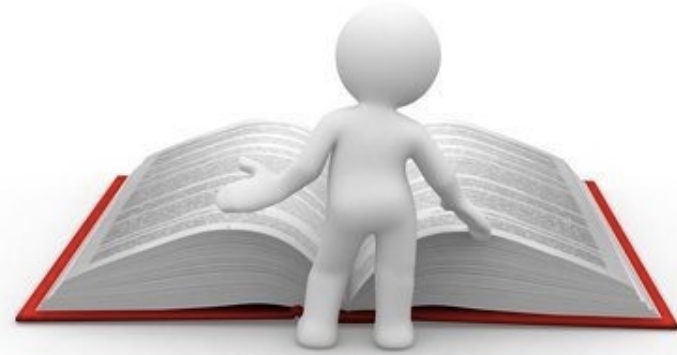
the why

Cognitive sensitivity refers to a person's ability to create a cognitively stimulating environment when interacting with a less experienced partner while being attuned to this partner's emotional state.

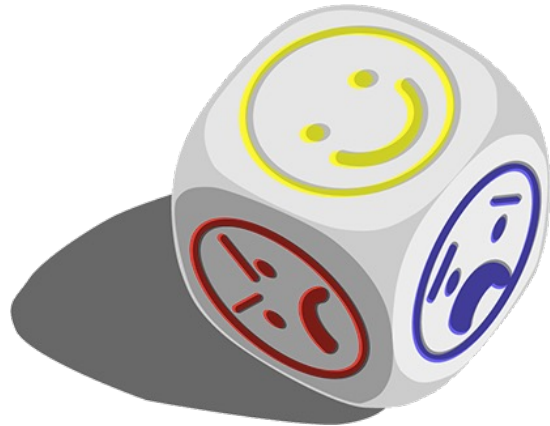
Research findings suggest that process quality indicators, and educator–child interactions in particular, are key drivers of children's outcomes in pre-kindergarten settings. Process quality indicators were shown to correlate with children's cognitive activity, cognitive and language outcomes and children's behavior and social skills.



You will be getting into groups (observers, actors)



I have several emotions written down and a sentence on the next slide



One person in a group will select a mood and read the sentence to the group, expressing the mood they've selected.



Observers will guess the mood.

It is really raining hard today;
I hope my basement doesn't flood

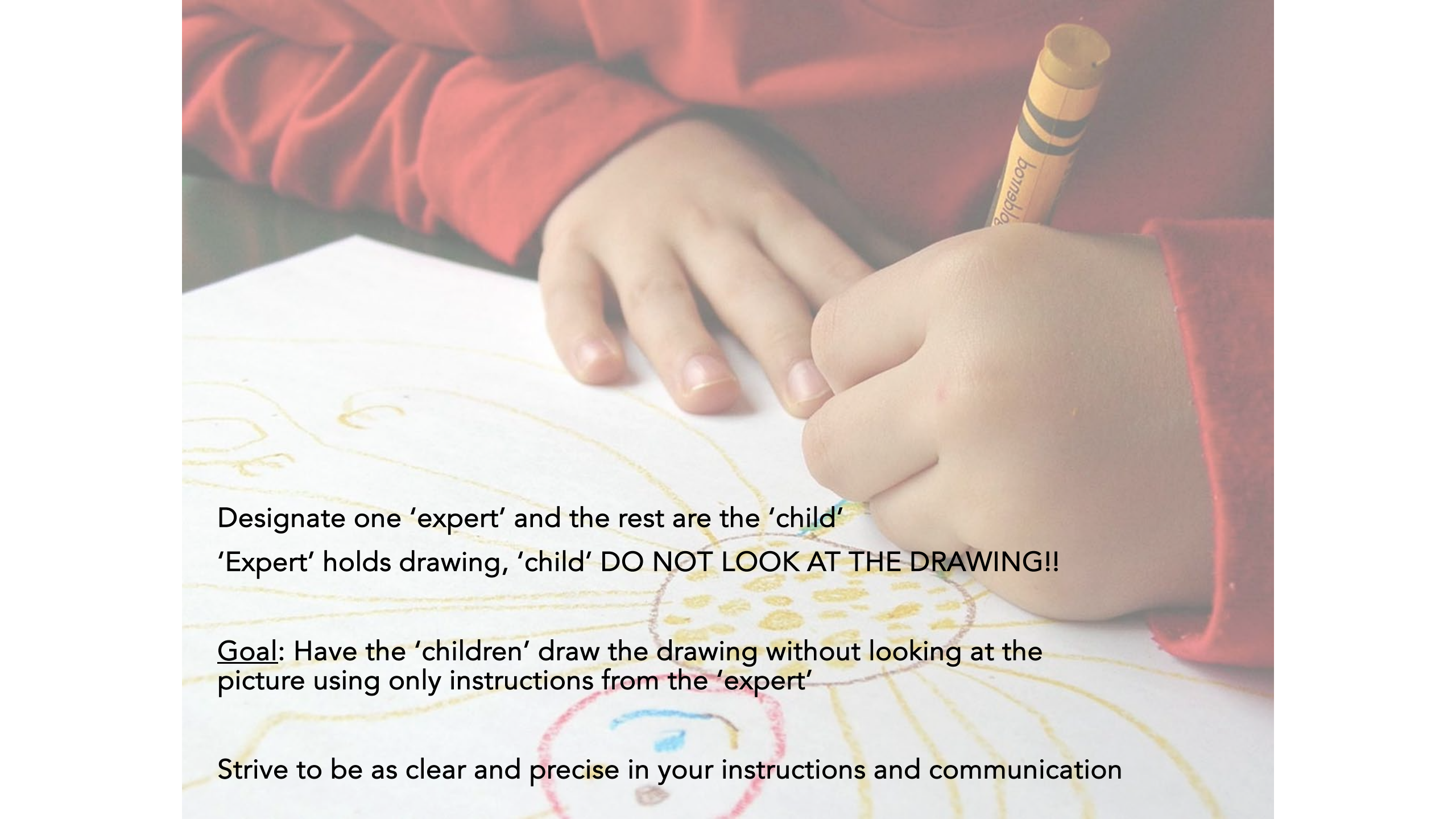
Observers - what aspects of the person were you paying attention to when trying to guess the mood?



Actors - what was the experience like for you?

Particularly when the group could not guess your mood?





Designate one 'expert' and the rest are the 'child'
'Expert' holds drawing, 'child' DO NOT LOOK AT THE DRAWING!!

Goal: Have the 'children' draw the drawing without looking at the picture using only instructions from the 'expert'

Strive to be as clear and precise in your instructions and communication

'Child'

What was this experience like for you?

What did the 'expert' do that was helpful?

What would have been more helpful?



Major barrier to
cognitive sensitivity....



staff turnover – revolving door

What do we Know?

Quality Early Childhood Education Has Been Shown To:

Diverse population

Positive benefits seen with low and middle SES environments. Stronger benefits with low SES, dual language learners, and new comer families

Socio-emotional

Important long term benefits including reduced substance abuse, high school drop outs, juvenile and adult criminality and higher levels of employment and income

Literacy and numeracy

High quality ECE enhances child language and numeracy with economically disadvantaged children benefiting most - thus reducing socio-economic related disparity



Economic benefits

Benefits outweigh the costs through decreases in spending on special education, family transfers, social assistance – and increasing economic production

Parent engagement

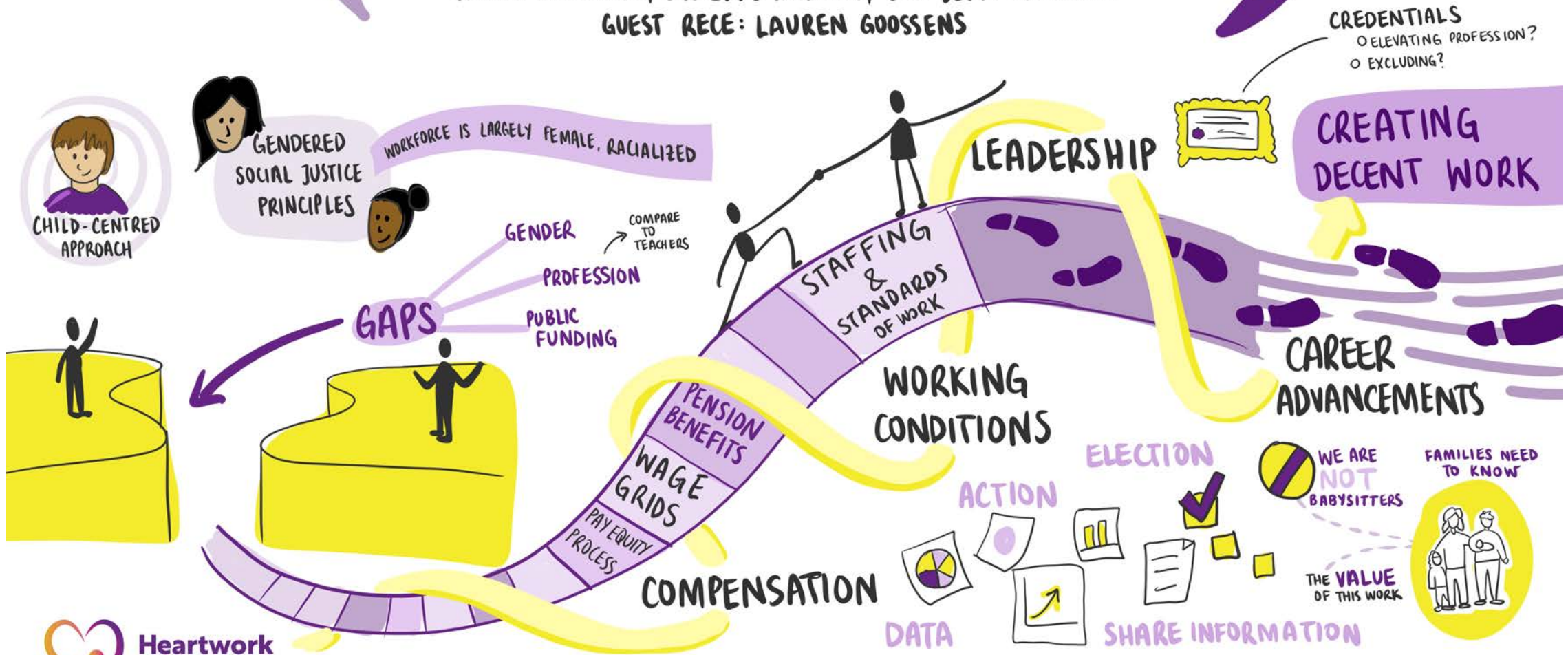
Those with the greatest benefits also incorporate a parenting component to optimize child-parent interactions

Educator practice

Positive impacts more likely to endure when incorporating rich, warm, and stimulating educator interactions

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE 'SO MUCH MORE'

KERRY McCUAIG, DR. EMIS AKBARI, DR. JEAN CLINTON
GUEST REECE: LAUREN GOOSSENS



Leading from where you stand...

"Part of being a professional is being recognized for what we actually do and the expertise that comes with that work versus a weak interpretation of what we do. It is up to us, those expert professionals, to educate others in the correct terminology, in standing up for our work, in showing our work ethic in all that we do" (Winick, 2020).

The language we use IS relevant and it DOES matter! Lead from where you stand!




Words matter. If we wish to present an image of professionalism, we need to talk the walk, not just walk the talk. This is an example of advocacy, leadership, and being an agent of change.

We look after and educate children, **not** days. We work in a **sector**, learn in a specific field. We work in **direct contact** with children not literally on the floor (well, sometimes 😊). We are **educators** not workers and we are educated and experts in our craft. We need to be proud of what we do and who we are, and let that pride show visibly.

Advocacy is...

- ...taking a stance
- ...being a risk taker (even if just a teeny-weeny risk)
- ...being an agent of change
- ...knowing change takes time, effort, and intentionality
- ...using your voice to go beyond making noise, and to include creating understanding, and movement toward a better/stronger outcome



And remember, there are others that are taking a stand with you!

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