



Wisconsin's Early Childhood Workforce

Early childhood educators provide foundational early learning for our youngest children during their most critical developmental period. Their work also allows working parents and caregivers to seek and maintain employment, earning child care providers a title of the “workforce behind all other workforces.”

Yet, early educators earn poverty-level wages, many rely on some form of public assistance and they rarely have standard benefits. This leads to high turnover.

Educated, Dedicated & Experienced

- **82%** of early educators have some level of higher education
- **80%** say they work in early care and education because it is their chosen career or profession
- **5 years** average tenure at current program



Poverty-Level Wages & Benefits

- **\$11 to \$13/hour** (center-based teachers); **\$7.46/hour** equivalent (family providers)
- **12%** of center-based teachers do not have any health insurance coverage
- **17%** of center-based teachers receive publicly-funded health insurance (i.e. Medicaid or Medicare)
- **80%** of center-based teachers do not receive health insurance through their employer
- **27%** of center teachers and **20%** of family providers worry every month that their own family's food might run out
- **26%** of center providers and **34%** of family providers receive at least one form of public assistance

High Turnover: Planning to Leave the Field (in next 5 years)

- **66%** of center directors
- **50%** of center teachers
- **37%** of family providers



Sources: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
Institute for Research on Poverty (Studies of the Wisconsin Early Education Workforce).