



## CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies 2006

Children in high quality child care programs perform better in math, language, and reading and show fewer behavioral problems. Research overwhelmingly reports provider education, retention, and compensation as the best indicators for child care quality. A well-trained and educated child care workforce is needed to meet the increasing demand for high-quality child care in the United States to ensure that children start school ready to learn.

**Child care workers provide vital services to families with young children in a variety of settings, including public and private centers, pre-kindergarten programs, and home-based environments.**

- Approximately 2.3 million individuals earn a living caring for and educating children under age 5 in the United States, of which about 1.2 million are providing child care in formal settings, such as child care centers or family child care homes. The remaining 1.1 million caregivers are paid relatives, friends or neighbors. See table below.<sup>1</sup>

Provider Setting	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers
Center-based Staff	550,000	24%
Family Child Care Home Providers	650,000	28%
Paid Relatives	804,000	34%
Paid Non-Relatives	298,000	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,301,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were 1.3 million child care workers in 2004, of which 94.5 percent were women. These numbers do not include almost half the child care workforce, who work more informally in this field.<sup>2</sup>
- 18 percent of the formal child care workforce is Black or African-American and 16.5 percent are of Hispanic or Latino origin.<sup>3</sup>

**Children in early care and education are better prepared for school when their teachers have higher levels of education and specialized training.**

- The amount of formal education attained by a provider is the strongest predictor for the provider's ability to engage children in developmentally appropriate activities and positive interactions that better prepare them for school.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Center for the Child Care Workforce. *Estimating the Size and Components of the U.S. Child Care Workforce and Caregiving Population*. May 2002. (<http://www.ccw.org/pubs/workforceestimatereport.pdf>), 17.

<sup>2</sup> Estimate provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics based on 2004 Current Population Survey data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau..

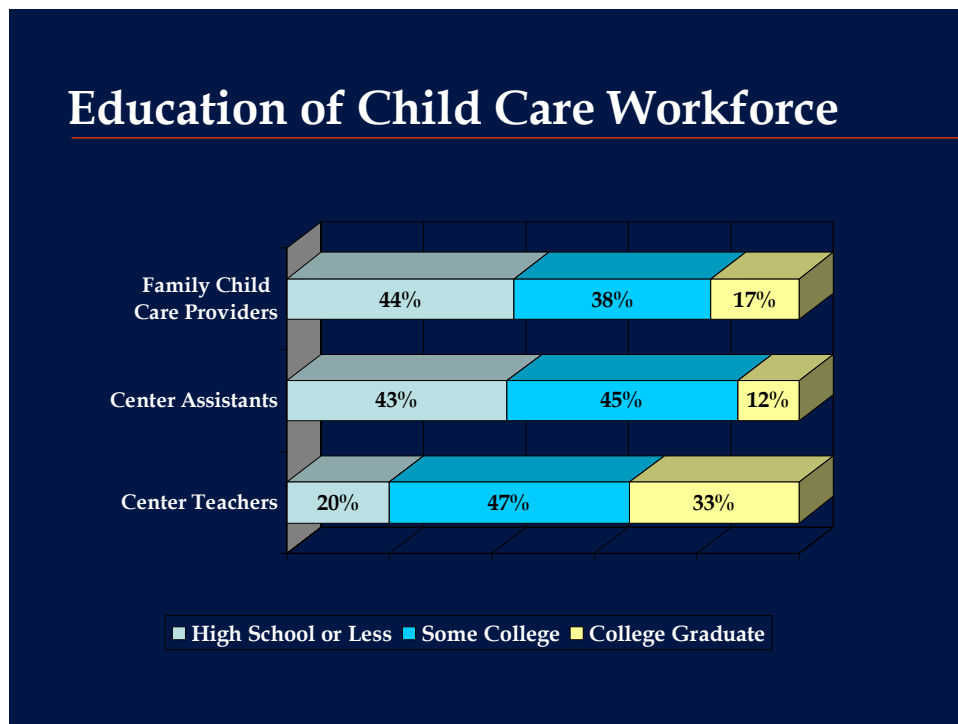
<sup>3</sup> Estimate provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics based on 2004 Current Population Survey data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau..



- Providers with specialized training are more likely to be nurturing, reinforce early literacy skills, and challenge and enhance children’s learning.<sup>5</sup>
- Children in centers with inadequately prepared teachers spend more of their day in aimless activity (not interacting with activities, peers or teachers) and show delays in language and social development.<sup>6</sup>

**Many child care providers lack the education and training necessary to provide high quality child care.**

- 36 states do not require child care providers to complete any specialized training before beginning work.<sup>7</sup>
- Only 55 percent of family child care providers and 57 percent of center assistants have at least some college education.<sup>8</sup> Center teachers fare better with 80 percent having some college education, however, center-based staff account for only 24 percent of all child care providers.<sup>9</sup>



**Low compensation and high job turnover adversely affect the quality of care that child care workers are able to provide.**

<sup>4</sup> Center for the Child Care Workforce. *Who Cares? Child Care Teachers and Quality of Care in America*. 1990. (<http://www.ccw.org/pubs/whocares.pdf>), 9.  
<sup>5</sup> National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. *Building a National Community-Based Training System for Child Care Resource and Referral*. 2005, 7.  
<sup>6</sup> National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. *Building a National Community-Based Training System for Child Care Resource and Referral*. 2005, 7.  
<sup>7</sup> National Child Care Information Center. *Center Child Care Licensing Requirements*. August 2004. (<http://nccic.org/pubs/cclicensingreq/cclr-teachers.pdf>).  
<sup>8</sup> Center for the Child Care Workforce. *Estimating the Size and Components of the U.S. Child Care Workforce and Caregiving Population*. May 2002. (<http://www.ccw.org/pubs/workforceestimatereport.pdf>), 24.  
<sup>9</sup> Center for the Child Care Workforce. *Estimating the Size and Components of the U.S. Child Care Workforce and Caregiving Population*. May 2002. (<http://www.ccw.org/pubs/workforceestimatereport.pdf>), 17.



- Despite the important role they play in child development, child care workers are among the lowest paid workers in the United States. Only 18 of 770 occupations reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics have lower average wages than child care workers.<sup>10</sup>
- Child care providers earn an average wage of only \$8.68 an hour. With average salaries of \$18,060 a year for child care workers,<sup>11</sup> many individuals holding these jobs do not earn very much above the 2004 federal poverty line of \$15,670 annually for a family of three.<sup>12</sup>
- Benefits for child care workers are minimal and inconsistent. A 2002 Study of the Kansas workforce showed that only 41 percent of center staff received partially or fully paid health benefits.<sup>13</sup> Family child care providers invariably have fewer benefits.
- In a field where continuity is of primary importance, the child care workforce experiences an annual job turnover rate between 25 and 40 percent.<sup>14</sup> High turnover often means that experienced teachers are replaced by novice teachers, who may not share the educational qualifications of their predecessors.<sup>15</sup>
- State compensation programs have shown promise for improving provider education levels. North Carolina's Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) initiative provides scholarships to child care providers pursuing a credential or advanced degree. Teachers participating in the associate degree scholarship program improved their education level and left their child care centers at a rate of less than 9 percent per year.<sup>16</sup> 23 states have since adopted the program.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> American Federation of Teachers. "Profile of the Early Childhood Education Workforce."

<sup>11</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.t01.htm>

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. *The 2004 HHS Poverty Guidelines*. (<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/04poverty.shtml>).

<sup>13</sup> Professional Development Initiative for Early Care and Education in Kansas. "Who Cares for Kansas Children? Early Education Workforce Study." April 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Center for the Child Care Workforce. *Current Data on the Salaries and Benefits of the U.S. Early Childhood Education Workforce*. June 2004. (<http://www.ccw.org/pubs/2004Compendium.pdf>), 5.

<sup>15</sup> Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership. *Trends Over Time: Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce*. Madison: University of Wisconsin-Extension, November 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Child Care Services Association. "T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project."

(<http://www.childcareservices.org/teach/project.html#benefits/results>).

<sup>17</sup> The Urban Institute. "Looking Beyond Government: The Transfer of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Model Across States." January 2004. ([http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/310926\\_ChartingCivilSociety\\_15.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/310926_ChartingCivilSociety_15.pdf)).