

ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAM REPORT

2024



TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD® AND CHILD CARE WAGES®

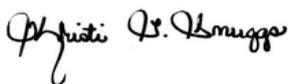
A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

This has been an incredible year for Early Years! On May 18, 2024, we celebrated our 50th anniversary with more than 200 supporters, reaffirming our vision for a transformed early care and education system—one that uplifts educators and ensures every child and family can thrive. Our new name and logo were introduced but our commitment to supporting early educators goes beyond celebration—it drives our ongoing efforts to strengthen and sustain the workforce. Our dedication to the early childhood workforce and our partners has never wavered, even in the face of evolving challenges.

From navigating the lasting effects of COVID-19 to adapting to shifts in federal policies, the early childhood field has faced significant challenges. Yet, through it all, the TEACH National Center’s Annual Report and the collection of personal impact stories from TEACH Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® participants serve as powerful reminders of resilience, progress and achievement. These resources highlight measurable outcomes and real-life testimonies demonstrating the ongoing impact of increased education, compensation and workforce retention in early care and education.

Nationally, ECE Workforce Advocates employed various efforts to advance the education, compensation and retention of early educators in their communities by maximizing the use of workforce stabilization funding. In particular, Early Years provided leadership and expertise alongside its national partners to raise awareness about its longstanding, effective ECE workforce strategies. Meanwhile the TEACH National Center directly supported a historic number of states in their development and implementation of enhanced, more substantial scholarship models and in some cases, the administration of a salary supplement program pilot. Advocating for the ECE workforce continues to be a long-term commitment, not a short-term solution. However, the success of hundreds of thousands of program participants proves that sustained investments lead to meaningful change. We invite you to read the following pages and learn how we’re supporting the ECE workforce. We look forward to working with you to ensure that this vital workforce is educated and paid in a manner that reflects their importance to us all.

With gratitude and respect,



Kristi L. Snuggs





TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD[®] NATIONAL CENTER

WHAT WE DO

Provide leadership in the creation of programs and policies that promote and support equity toward an educated, well- paid and stable early childhood workforce. Thus ensuring the long-term success of our nation's children in school and in life.

HOW WE DO IT

The TEACH Early Childhood[®] National Center, a division of Early Years, works across states, providing accountable workforce development strategies that lead to measurable education and compensation gains and real career mobility and stability for the early childhood education workforce. In the past year, Center staff have worked diligently, bringing to life a new program, new resources, events, publications, and direct support to TEACH Early Childhood[®] and Child Care WAGES[®] state program staff.

FUNDING STATEMENT

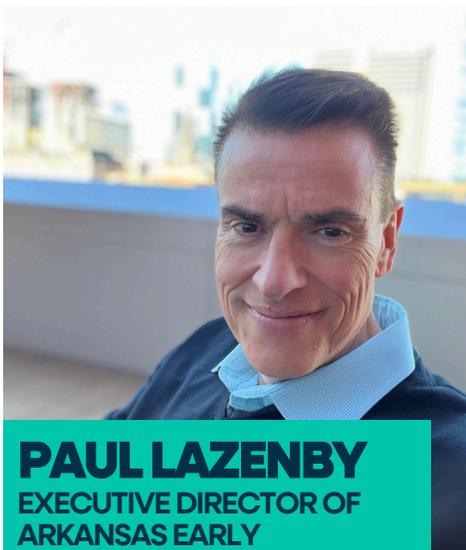
Our work is funded in part by the Alliance for Early Success, the W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation, the Stranahan Foundation, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS), the National Early Care & Education Workforce Center and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of these organizations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD®

The TEACH Early Childhood® Initiative is an evidence-based model providing debt-free college education with comprehensive support for the early childhood education workforce. It provides the structure for a comprehensive, sequenced program of early childhood higher education opportunities that recognizes the varied educational backgrounds of early childhood educators. TEACH targets increased education leading to credentials and degrees, increased compensation and job and career retention. Employer and employee dollars are partnered with public or private funds in each state to support their early childhood workforce. Within states, as a large buyer of education, TEACH can leverage a more accessible, responsive higher education system to support education and career pathways.

RECIPIENT TESTIMONIALS



PAUL LAZENBY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
ARKANSAS EARLY
CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

The TEACH Early Childhood® Scholarship Program has been instrumental in helping create work-friendly pathways for early childhood educators to pursue their degree, while also opening doors to greater opportunities. By providing comprehensive financial support and emphasizing the healthy balance of work, school and life for our scholars, TEACH strengthens the quality of early care and education, enhances workforce wellness and stability, and promotes equal access to resources for a diverse range of educators. This program empowers our workforce to provide the best possible care and education to young children, building a brighter future for families and communities.



TABREE FORT
CCH EDUCATOR AND
OWNER WITH B.S. IN
EDUCATIONAL STUDIES,
WITH A FOCUS IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

If not for TEACH, there was no way I was going to be able to operate my family child care home business and pay for school. With the help of the TEACH program, I graduated this past week with my B.S. in Educational Studies, with a focus in Early Childhood. The knowledge I gained through my higher education and my experience in ECE have also helped me to obtain the Gold Seal Quality Care Program designation for my business with one of the country's largest, nationally recognized family child care home accrediting agencies. I can't wait to continue my journey towards my Master's degree next fall!"

Tabree Fort is a FCCH Educator and Owner who received her B.S. in Educational Studies, with a Focus in Early Childhood Education from St. Petersburg College, FL in May 2024.



SELENA MILLER
TEACH ASSOCIATE
GRADUATE INDIANA

In 2022, at 56, I became a college student for the first time. I was unsure of myself but knew it was something I needed to do. NAEYC and the TEACH scholarship were the best parts of my journey. I didn't have to worry about how I would pay for my education and the process was easy. The difficult part was trying to balance everything - work, classes, homework and family. But, I made it, graduating with a 3.77 GPA! Now that I know what I am capable of, I am on to Ball State to receive my Bachelor's degree, and who knows what's next? My goal is to take over the position of Director eventually. I am grateful for the TEACH scholarship and those who helped me navigate these past few years.

TEACH NATIONAL DATA

Funding and Support

- \$64.3 million funded TEACH Programs in 22 states
- 17,296 TEACH scholarship recipients were supported
- 640,193 children benefited

Higher Education

- 121,890 credit hours completed
- 563 participating higher education institutions, including 326 community colleges and 237 universities provided college courses and benefitted from enrollment

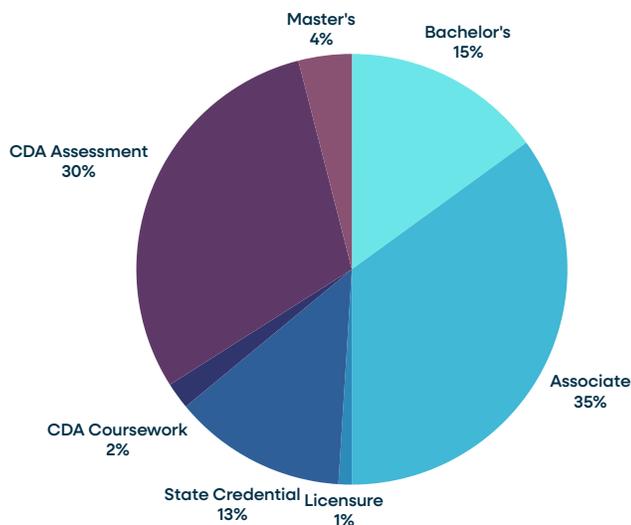
Average Annual Credit Hours Completed

- 15.27 – Associate degree scholarships
- 17.93 – Bachelor's degree scholarships

Average Annual Recipient Grade Point Average

- 3.38 – Associate degree scholarships
- 3.50 – Bachelor's degree scholarships

What are recipients working toward?



Participating Programs

TEACH Sponsoring Employers

- 8,535 employers sponsored a recipient on a TEACH scholarship
- 10.2% were family child care home practitioners
- 32.2% of recipients worked with children in publicly funded pre-K programs
- 14.5% of recipients worked in Head Start programs

TEACH Scholarship Recipients

- 47.7% were people of color or Latinx
- 53.5% were the first generation in their immediate family to acquire a higher education degree

Scholarship and Degree Completion

- Associate Recipients of color and/or Latinx 42%
- Associate Graduates of color and/or Latinx 40%
- Bachelor's Recipients of color and/or Latinx 41%
- Bachelor's Graduates of color and/or Latinx 41%

Increased Compensation Average Wage Increase

- 13% – Associate degree scholarships
- 13% – Bachelor's degree scholarships

Stabilized Workforce

- 95% retention rate for Associate degree recipients
- 96% retention rate for Bachelor's degree recipients

TEACH NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM NETWORK

The TEACH Early Childhood® National Center supports states through the National Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Network as an industry intermediary to develop registered apprenticeship models that work in coordination with existing scholarships to build the workforce. As an industry intermediary the National Center provides individualized technical assistance to states to develop, recruit and implement early childhood apprenticeship using the approved U.S. Department of Labor registered model.

Apprenticeships provide a unique opportunity to support skill development in the high demand field of early childhood education. Utilizing the unique

structure of this model, a participant will be able to gain employment and attend institutions of higher education to work toward industry-recognized credentials and degrees. Registered apprenticeship programs have five main components: paid job, on-the-job training, related-technical instruction, mentorship and credentials. Blending these key components together is what makes the model a unique opportunity to meet participants where they are and support them in earning credentials and degrees.



NATIONAL STATE DATA

36

Apprentices

36 years

Average age of participants

530

College credit hours taken

3.57

Average GPA

23,877

On-the-job training hours

STATE HIGHLIGHTS

ARKANSAS

Arkansas Early Childhood Association held the first Apprentice Retreat for 10 apprentices in Hot Springs. The goal of the retreat was to build a system of support. Through storytelling and games the struggles scholars faced were explored, including the balancing act of school and family responsibilities and feelings of depression. Apprentices shared their thoughts on the retreat:

“Overall it was a great weekend . Being able to organize and figure out what works for me will help me succeed in school because everything we discussed can pertain to work, school and home life.”

“Balance! You gave us great tips and advice on how to find balance.”



COLORADO

As the **Early Childhood Council Alliance** worked across the early childhood apprenticeship landscape in the state they actively worked to identify gaps in opportunity within the early childhood workforce. One of the gaps identified was the need to support leadership development within the early childhood workforce. The CO team worked to develop an early childhood director apprenticeship that would support early childhood educators looking to move into leadership roles within the field. The first apprentice enrolled in the program summer of 2024.

OHIO

Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association worked with a stakeholder team to support the development and registration of a state registered apprenticeship program. The stakeholder team worked closely with the Ohio Department of Labor to get an Early Childhood Educator apprenticeship model registered.

MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Apprenticeship Program through **Child Care Aware of Minnesota**® supported Katelyn Sakar with the final coursework needed to complete her Associate Degree in Early Childhood.

“The TEACH Apprenticeship Program provided me with the opportunity to grow my skills and knowledge within a field that is very close to my heart. With this program I was able to make a bridge between my work and schooling. This helped me transfer what I learned into actions within my classroom. Being able to work with a mentor allowed me to challenge and push myself to be a better teacher. I am very thankful for this program and encourage everyone I meet to join it.”



PENNSYLVANIA

Statewide Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship programs take time to develop. Every detail is essential to the program's success and sustainability. Pennsylvania never wavered from this commitment and chose upfront strong collaborative partnerships. **Pennsylvania Child Care Association** and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry have enthusiastically joined forces to work side by side to meet the demands of robust and exhaustive paperwork processes. Although the application process, competency-based work process checklist and approved related technical instruction has taken some time to develop, Pennsylvania once approved, will be foundationally ready to take on the 3,038 open early educator vacant positions.

NEBRASKA

While most of the states in the national apprenticeship network are in year two of development, **Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children** completed its first year. In the first year Nebraska was able to develop a robust statewide stakeholder team that supported the development of the first early childhood apprenticeship program in the state. In the fall of 2024 Nebraska was able to begin recruitment for the first cohort of 10 apprentices.

NORTH CAROLINA

As the newest state partner in the National Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Network, Early Years registered the first statewide **Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Apprenticeship Program** in North Carolina on October 31, 2024. With the support of collaborating partners, [NC Business Committee for Education \(Building Bright Futures\)](#), and [ApprenticeshipNC](#), the statewide program will focus on developing a seamless pathway into early education careers. With the first participating employer confirmed, NC expects to launch their initial ECE Apprenticeship cohort in January of 2025.

FIVE YEAR IMPACT

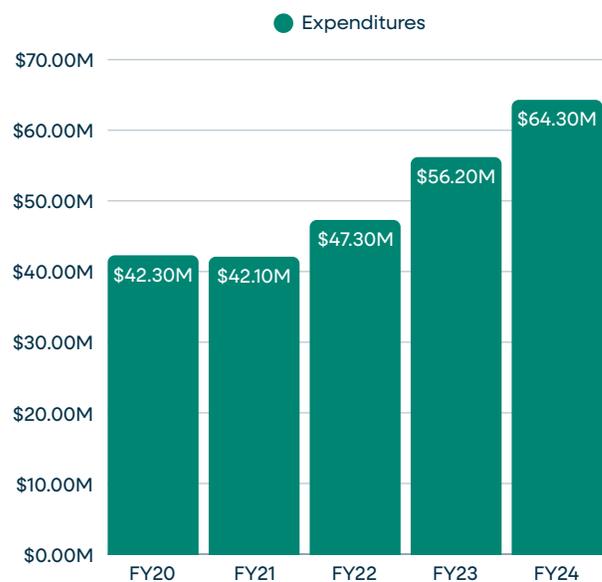
Average Wage for Teachers



Over the past five years, wages for early childhood educators have steadily increased, reflecting progress in strengthening and supporting the workforce that shapes young children's futures. While this growth is promising, continued investment is crucial to ensuring fair compensation for educators' expertise and dedication. Programs like TEACH Early Childhood® are instrumental in this effort, providing scholarships and comprehensive support that help educators earn higher credentials, advance their careers and increase their earning potential.

Funding for the TEACH Early Childhood® program has grown significantly over the past five years, reflecting a strong commitment to strengthening the early childhood education workforce. This increased investment has expanded scholarship opportunities, professional development and financial support for educators pursuing higher education and credentials. As TEACH continues to receive critical funding, more early childhood professionals can access the resources needed to advance their careers—ultimately enhancing the quality of care and education for young children nationwide.

TEACH Funding





CHILD CARE WAGES®

WHAT WE DO

The Child Care WAGE\$® Program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth to five in participating counties.

HOW WE DO IT

The Child Care WAGE\$® Initiative was created in response to research-based evidence showing that the quality of care children receive is lowered by high turnover rates and inadequate teacher education. To help stem the tide of turnover and increase teacher continuity, Child Care WAGE\$® awards education-based salary supplements to early childhood professionals to address the key issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover in the early childhood workforce. Supplement awards are based on education and the continuity of care provided.

FUNDING STATEMENT

The Child Care WAGE\$® Program is offered throughout North Carolina as a collaboration between local Smart Start partnerships, the North Carolina Partnership for Children and the Division of Child Development and Early Education.



RECIPIENT TESTIMONIAL



**AMANDA
WEMHOFF**
WAGES PARTICIPANT
NEBRASKA

Child Care WAGE\$® Nebraska has helped me in more ways than one. I am a home child care provider. I rely solely on myself to keep my business going. The rising costs of everything have made it hard to not raise my rates. I do not want to raise them and put that cost onto the families in my program. They are also struggling with the rising costs of living. Things such as food, insurance, property taxes, cleaning supplies, and utilities have gone up. The funds I receive from WAGE\$ have been a blessing to help with these financial challenges. We all know it's a passion that drives most of us providers and definitely not the pay. While this may be true, we still need to be able to afford the cost of living. We have such an important career helping educate, raise, and teach little ones in their first five years of life. The

funds have been a confidence boost, especially knowing others see that our jobs are crucial and recognize there is a significant pay gap compared to where it should be. Helping to bridge that gap, Child Care WAGE\$ gives me a renewed sense of pride and appreciation in my career.

While I am able to make ends meet with budgeting, etc., it can be hard in the early childhood field. There are a lot of unknowns. Some of these are that families move or change careers unexpectedly. Children also grow up and age out of your program. These changes in child capacity can sometimes create a lapse in income while you fill the open child care spot. These funds help eliminate that as well. I am grateful for the help I receive from this program. From my program to yours, thank you for helping strengthen our community. It takes a village they say. I'm proud to be a Nebraskan child care provider.

WAGE\$ DATA FROM LICENSED STATES

Funding and Support

- More than \$26 million funded WAGE\$ Programs in five states
- 10,683 WAGE\$ supplement recipients were paid
- 216,799 children benefitted

Higher Education

- 62% of active WAGE\$ participants either have an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Early Childhood Education, it's equivalent or higher, or submitted documentation that they had completed additional coursework during the year

Participating Programs

- 93% of active participants worked in early childhood education centers
- 7% of active participants worked in family child care homes
- 51% identify as Latinx or person of color
- 99% are female

Increased Compensation

- Average six -month supplement - \$1,312

Stabilized Early Childhood Education Workforce for Children and their Families

- 15% turnover rate

Financial Stress

- 96% of WAGE\$ participants nationally indicated WAGE\$ supplements helped ease financial stress



LICENSED STATES

Currently, TEACH and WAGE\$ programs are housed in a group of statewide organizations serving the early childhood community. In FY2023-2024, 23 states were licensed.

Alabama

[Alabama Partnership for Children](#)

Arkansas

[Arkansas Early Childhood Association](#)

Colorado

[Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance](#)

Florida*

[The Children's Forum](#)

Indiana

[Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Iowa*

[Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Maine

[Maine Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Michigan

[Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Minnesota

[Child Care Aware® of Minnesota](#)

Missouri

[Child Care Aware® of Missouri](#)

Nebraska*

[Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Nevada

[Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

New Hampshire

[Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties](#)

North Carolina*

[Early Years](#)

Ohio

[Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association](#)

Pennsylvania

[Pennsylvania Child Care Association](#)

Rhode Island

[Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

South Carolina

[SC Endeavors](#)

Tennessee+

[Signal Centers](#)

Texas

[Texas Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Utah

[Utah Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Vermont

[Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

Wisconsin

[Wisconsin Early Childhood Association](#)

*Denotes both TEACH and WAGE\$ Programs operating in the state.

+Denotes only a WAGE\$ Program operating in the state.

FY 2023-2024 TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD AND CHILD CARE WAGES NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Toshiba Adams
University of Wisconsin –
Milwaukee

Marica Cox Mitchell
Bainum Family
Foundation

John Cregg
Nevada Association for
the Education of Young
Children

Ana De Hoyos O'Connor
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Lauren Hogan
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Kelsey Laird
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THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKFORCE CONVENING SPONSORS

