

Paving the Pathways to Quality: Washington's Early Learning Professional Development Landscape

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Policy Context

Research reveals that the quality of care depends heavily on the education, training, compensation, and stability of the workforce.

When teachers are suitably compensated and trained, they are more likely to form strong bonds with the children in their care leading to higher levels of teacher-child interaction.

Appropriate levels of training and compensation also discourage teachers from leaving the field in search of a living wage and disrupting the continuity and quality of care for children.

"The Costs of Not Providing Quality Early Childhood Programs" in Reaching the Full Cost of Quality in Early Childhood Programs, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Ellen Galinsky, p. 27; "Quality of Child Care: Perspectives of Research and Professional Practice" in Who Cares for America's Children?, p. 84-107; "Who Cares? Child Care Teachers and the Quality of Care in America" Executive Summary of the National Child Care Staffing Study", p. 12.

Report Context

The Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 925 partnered to investigate how Washington State invests in the quality of care through the early childhood education workforce.

This research project primarily focuses on the availability of programs and supports that enable Washington's early learning providers to engage in relevant professional development and advancement.

General Findings

- The early learning workforce is characterized by moderate levels of education, high rates of poverty, poor levels of compensation and benefits, and high rates of turnover.
- A wealth of formal and informal professional development opportunities exist across the state.
- A lack of coordination hinders the existing professional development opportunities.

Findings cont...

- The scarcity of financial incentives and supports deters the early learning workforce from pursuing training and education.
- There is strong desire and motivation for the creation of a coordinated and integrated statewide professional development system with robust linkages between professional development options and financial supports.

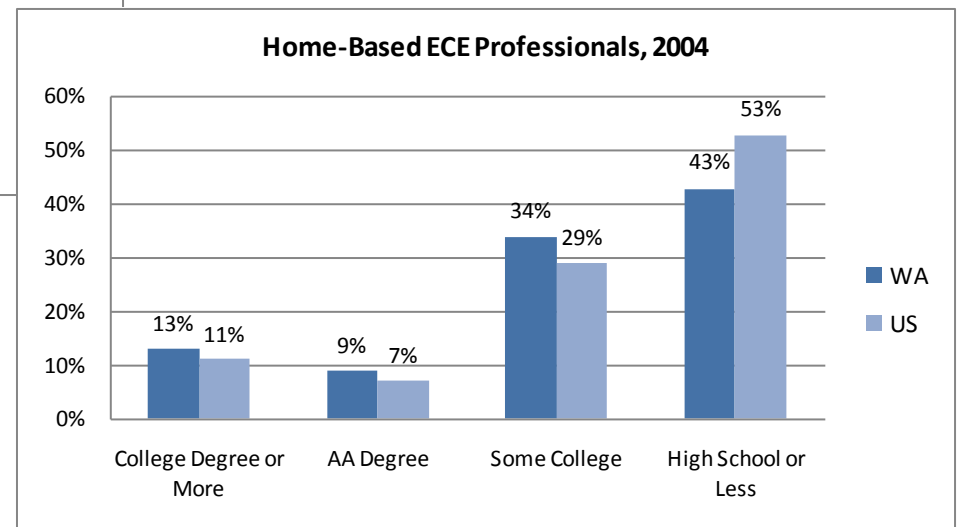
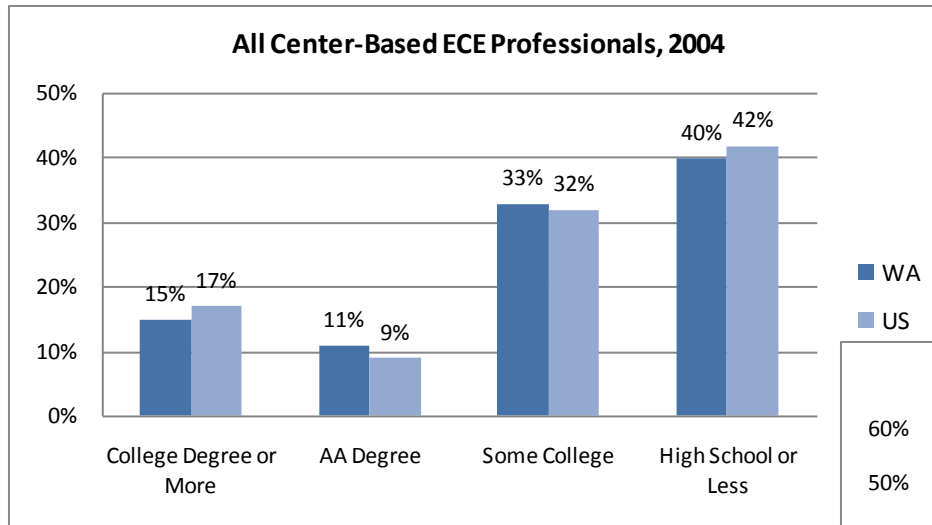
Early Learning Workforce Profile

- 29,500 formal teachers and caregivers – 22,500 in centers and 7,000 in FCC homes (2006)
- Median Age: 38 for formal workforce(2006), 41 for FFN providers (2002)
- Gender: 95-99% women (various sources)
- Ethnicity: formal child care workforce slightly more diverse than US workforce as a whole (2005):

Ethnicity	Child Care Workforce	All Occupations
Hispanic	16.8%	14%
African American	16%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.7%	4.7%

Workforce Profile cont...

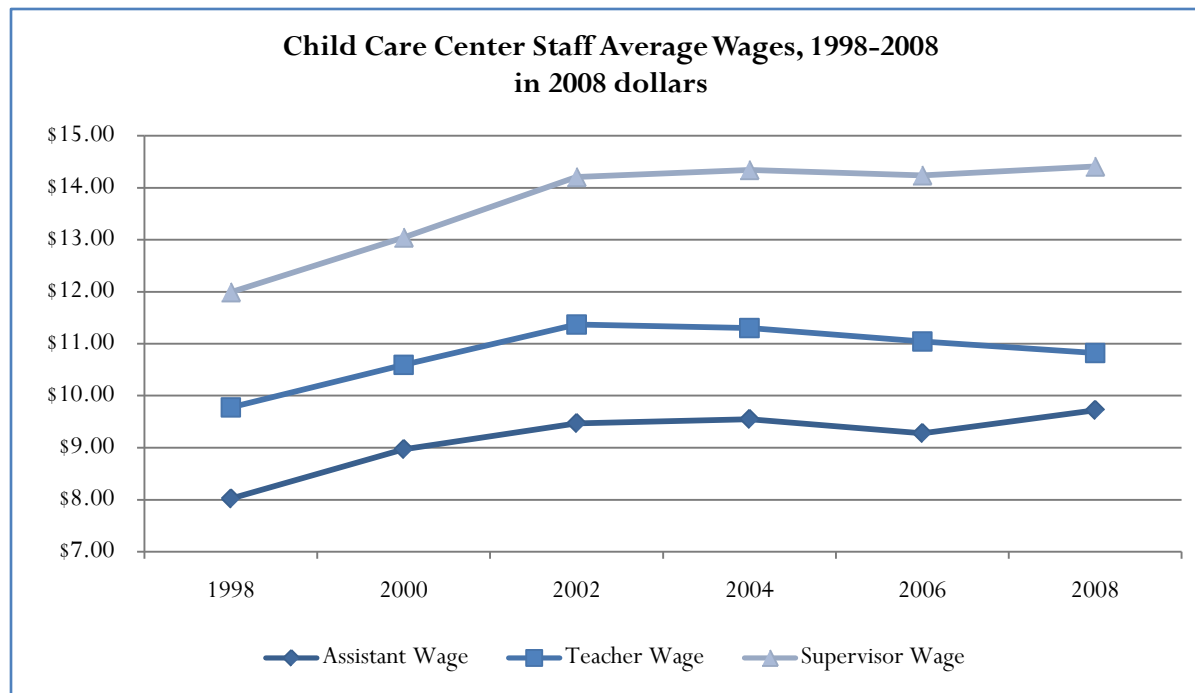
Education: 1 in 4 formal providers have obtained a 2- or 4-year degree, another 1 in 3 has taken some college coursework



Source: Herzenberger, S., Price, M., & Bradley, D. (2005).
Losing ground in early childhood education: Declining
workforce qualifications in an expanding industry, 1979-2004.
Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute. External data
tables 2 & 3.

Workforce Profile cont...

Compensation: Average real wages for child care center staff have plateaued since 2002, and declined for lead teachers. Child care center teachers in 2008 earned 50 cents an hour less than they did in 2002.



Source: WA child care market rate survey reports 1998-2008.

Workforce Profile cont...

Compensation:

According to the 2008 Employment Security Department annual wage survey, the average child care provider (both center and FCC-based) in Washington made \$10.25 an hour — (about \$21,000 per year).

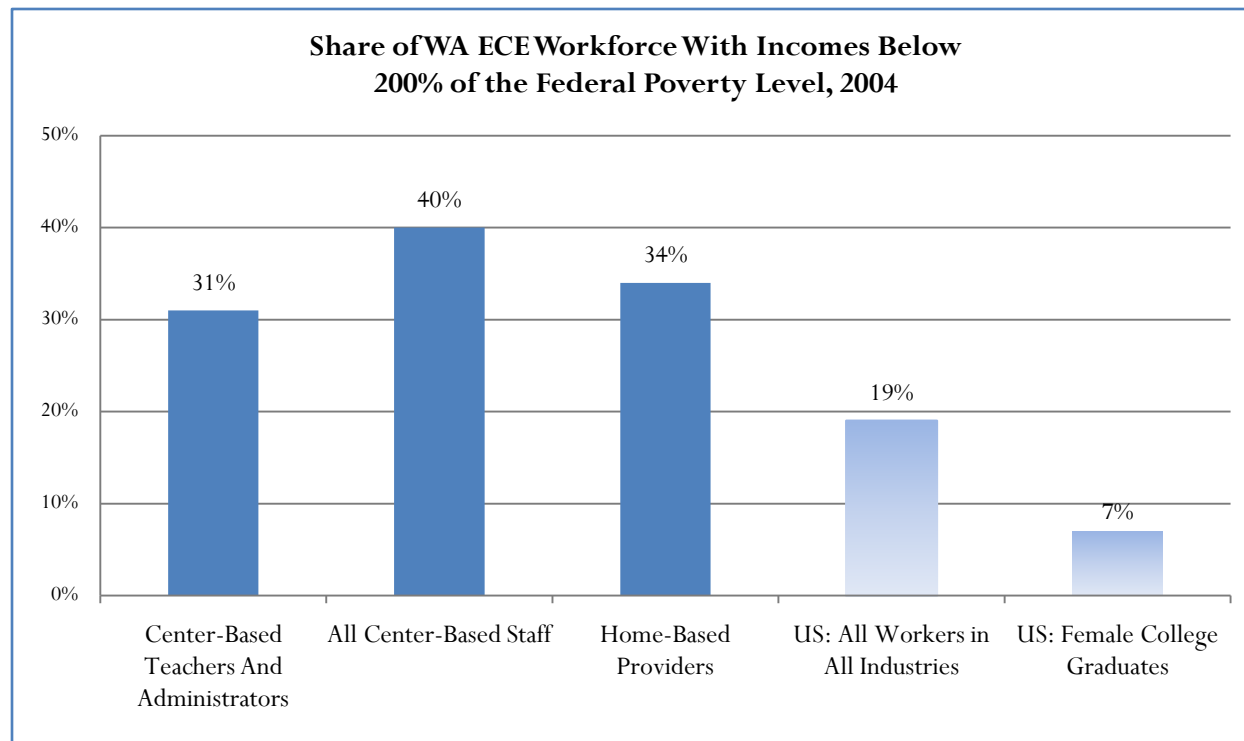
Comparison Wages:

- Kindergarten teachers (\$47,971 / year) and
- Crossing guards (\$15.34 / hour)

Source: Employment Security Department. (2008). *March 2008 occupational employment and wages estimates*. Olympia, WA; Author.

Workforce Profile cont...

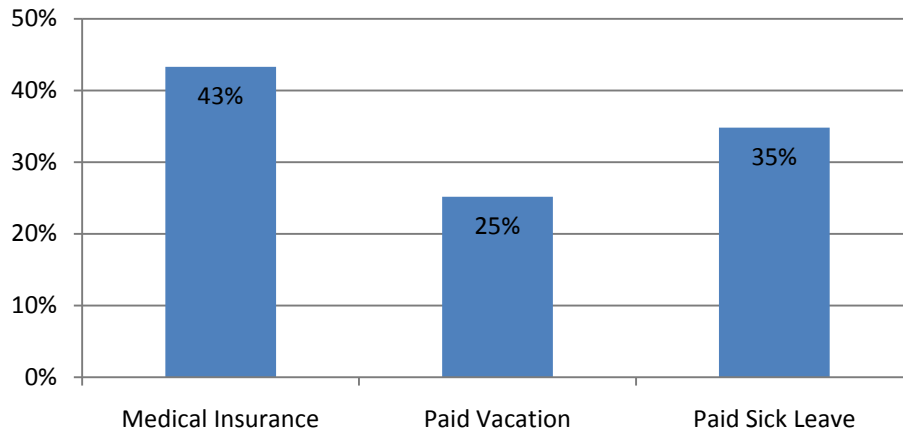
Poverty: The child care workforce is far more likely to earn an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level than are workers in other industries or college-educated women across the nation.



Source: Herzenberger, S., Price, M., & Bradley, D. (2005). *Losing ground in early childhood education: Declining workforce qualifications in an expanding industry, 1979-2004, Summary*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute. Summary tables 1-3, p.9.

Benefits and Turnover :

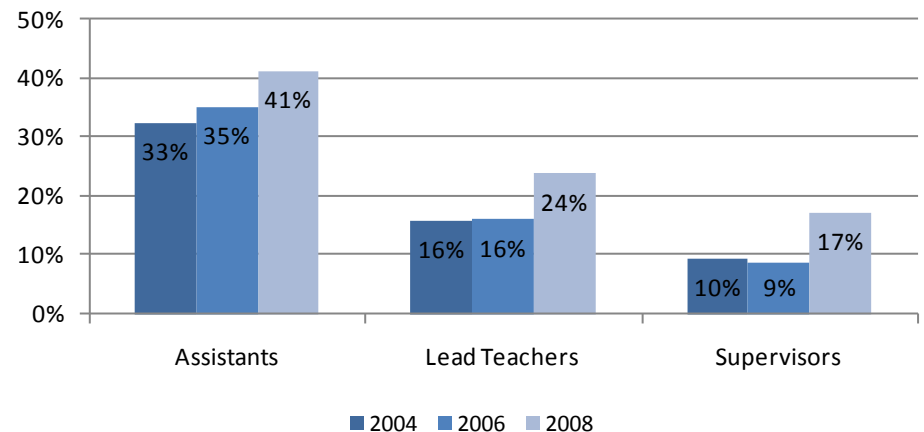
Benefits: Portion of Lead Teachers Without Access to Benefits, Statewide 2008



More than 40% of lead teachers statewide do not receive health insurance, 25% get no paid vacation, and 35% do not have paid sick leave.

The center-based child care field experiences high and increasing rates of turnover, especially among assistants and lead teachers.

Turnover: Statewide Percentage of Center Staff Hired Within the Previous Year, 2004-2008



Washington's Professional Development Programs

- Early Childhood Education Career and Wage Ladder
- Washington Scholarships
- State Registry and Training System (STARS)
- Resource and Referral Agencies
- Early Care and Education Apprenticeship Program
- Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- Collective Bargaining

Professional Development cont...

Early Childhood Education Career and Wage Ladder

- Public-private partnership between the state and participating centers
- Wage increments for steps in education, responsibility, and longevity
- Statistically significant improvements in quality of care
- 70 participating centers (approx. 7,000 children and 700 teacher)

Washington Scholarships Program

- Scholarships for higher education and CDA fees
- Tuition, books, release time, travel, and completion bonuses
- Operated by R&R Network
- Publicly and privately funded
- 700 recipients in 2007

Professional Development cont...

State Training and Registry System (STARS)

- Database of approved trainings, trainers, and training organizations
- Administered by WAEYC
- Scholarships for training
- 6,561 scholarships in 2007

WA Child Care Resource and Referral Network

- 11 regional R&R agencies covering all counties in the state
- Provider of local child care referral, on-site technical assistance, professional development opportunities, scholarships for educational advancement, and other resources
- Largest provider of STARS training in the state

Professional Development cont...

Early Care and Education Apprenticeship Program

- Joint education and on-the job training program
- Operated by Clover Park Technical College
- 3 levels of apprenticeship
- 4 participating CTCs give 50% tuition break to apprentices
- 30 current apprentices in 14 child care centers

Quality Rating and Improvement System

- Voluntary rating scale of child care settings based on quality factors, such as environment and staff qualifications
- System developed in 6 sites across the state
- Suspended in December 2008

Professional Development cont...

Collective Bargaining

- FCC providers won right to collectively bargain with the state. SEIU Local 925 bargained a two-year contract covering subsidy increases, training funds, health care.
- In particular, the negotiated contract secured:
 - 10% subsidy increase for FCC and license-exempt/FFN teachers and caregivers, with parity for child care centers. (6,000 license-exempt providers receive childcare subsidies in Washington)
 - The first ever training program for license-exempt providers, including scholarships and an incentive bonus
 - Health insurance for 700 providers.

Professional Development cont...

Current Status:

- Wage Ladder: Recommended suspension of all funds in state budget (\$3 million)
- Resource and Referral: Recommended suspension of all state funds to Network (\$1.7 million + loss of \$2.3 million in federal funding = 41% cut to R&R system)
- QRIS: Suspension of 2009 state funds, recommended \$1 million to Thrive by Five WA for continued work on pilots
- Collective Bargaining: Current FCC contract ends in June of 2009, 2009-2011 bargained contract not included in Governor's budget

Collaborative Efforts in Professional Development

Convener	Collaboration	Goal
Department of Early Learning	Professional Development Consortium	Comprehensive and integrated statewide professional development system
Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network	Early Learning Academy	A framework, sequence, and process to guide providers through R&R-provided trainings
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges	Pathways Committee	Common models for the articulation of community-based training into credit-bearing coursework in the state's CTCs

These groups are made up of a representatives from a wide variety of organizations, including: Department of Health, Early Learning Advisory Council, EOI, OSPI, Schools Out Washington, SEIU, The Apprenticeship Program, Thrive by Five Washington, WAEYC, Washington Early Childhood Education Teacher Preparation Council, Washington State Association for Head Start and ECEAP, Washington State Family Child Care Association, Washington Educators in Early Learning (WEEL/AFT/WEA), among others

Comparison of Current Training and Education Requirements

Setting	Minimum Training Req.	Ongoing Training Req.
Lead Teacher (ECEAP)	AA with at least 30 credits in ECE or ECE-endorsed teaching certificate	15 clock hours per year
Lead Teacher (Head Start)	In 2013: At least 50% of lead Head Start teachers must have: BA in ECE or a BA in a related subject plus experience	15 clock hours per year
Lead Teacher (Centers and School-Age)	20 STARS clock hours or 2 college quarter credits (CDA or AA)	10 clock hours per year
FCC Licensee	20 STARS clock hours or 2 college quarter credits.	10 clock hours per year

Comparison of Accreditation Training and Education Requirements

Accrediting Body	Lead Teachers/Licensee
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – 113 in WA	By 2020 in centers with 4 or more teachers or classes: all teachers must have at least an AA in ECE and at least 75% of teachers must have at least a BA in ECE or related field
National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) – 21 in WA	High school diploma or GED and (1) at least 90 clock hours of FCC-related training, or (2) current FCC CDA credential
American Montessori Society (AMS) – 12 in WA	Age-appropriate Montessori certification
National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) – 6 in WA	AA in ECE or related field; CDA and 2 years of experience; Progress towards an AA in ECE; or Combination of experience and training meeting performance standards

Higher Education Training Programs

Community Colleges – 30 of 34 offer programs related to ECE

- 29 offer AA degrees (2-year professional/technical or transfer degrees)
- 26 award Certificates of Proficiency (typically 1 year)
- Other options: Short-term/specialized certificates, CDA training courses, STARS courses
 - Short-term certificate topics available across the state: early childhood, child care, birth to five, infant/toddler, pre-school, school-age, special needs children, curriculum development, family child care, child care management, family services advocate.

Higher Education cont...

- Community colleges charged with creating curriculum and course options in response to community and job market demands.
- Credit requirements and ECE content of degrees varies across the state, depending on the type of credential and community needs.
- Multiple class formats used: day, evening, weekend, online, hybrid (online and on-site).

Higher Education cont...

Colleges and Universities – 15 BA programs in 10 institutions

- 5 are elementary education degrees with ECE or ECE special education endorsement
- 3 are bachelor's degrees in early childhood education
- 7 BAs related to ECE – child development, children's studies, family studies...
- Additional BA programs at other institutions under discussion.

Financial Aid for Training and Education

Assistance for ECE training in Washington:

- Washington Scholarships
 - Tuition, books, fees, release time, travel, and bonus
 - 729 scholarships in 2007
- STARS Scholarships
 - Reimbursement for training fees
 - 6,500 scholarships in 2007
- Building Bridges
 - Subsidized tuition for specific courses at CTCs
 - 700 recipients in 2007

Financial Aid cont...

- Opportunity Grants (up to 200% of FPL, high-demand jobs)
 - Tuition, books, supplies (up to 45 credits)
 - 121 ECE students in 2007
- WorkFirst Financial Aid (TANF recipients and 175% FPL)
 - Tuition, books, planning, job placement
- Food Stamp Education and Training Program (food stamp recipients)
 - Financial aid for basic education and vocational training
- Integrated Basic Education And Skills Training (I-BEST)
 - Tuition for combined ESL, adult basic education, and professional/technical courses

Workforce Assistance Programs

Substitute Pools:

Different models used across the country

- For-profit, non-profit, publicly funded
- Free, subscription service
- Online, phone referral, contact list
- Employed by agency, independent substitute
- Base wages set by agency, wage paid for position
- Substitutes screened and/or trained by agency

Workforce Assistance cont...

Substitute Pools:

Until state funding was cut in 2002, the R&R Network operated a substitute bank out of 5 regional R&R agencies.

Pierce County's R&R is in the process of restarting a limited substitute bank after the issue was identified as a critical factor in professional development and child care quality in the Pierce County Early Learning Initiative's county-wide needs assessment. Includes the following features: free training, base wage for substitutes, and sliding scale subscription service.

Ongoing Research Questions

- How to assist providers in navigating the current training and education terrain in order to take advantage of the resources and opportunities that are available (ex. mentoring, coaching, counseling, web-based tools, and organized resources)
- What supports in addition to financial incentives do providers need in order to engage in relevant professional development activities (ex. substitutes and transportation)
- Ways to link early learning providers with the K-12 system in order to improve the continuity of education across settings (ex. Bremerton school districts initiatives to connect providers with elementary school teachers)

More Research Questions

- How to recruit new teachers into the profession (ex. apprenticeships and hiring halls)
- How to build the capacity of current child care settings to address the increasing trend of high-quality pre-kindergarten programs occurring in mixed-delivery settings.

Paving the Pathways to Quality

This report is a joint project of the Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 925. Additional copies of this report can be obtained by visiting :



www.eoionline.org

or

www.seiu925.org

