

# 2014 Child Care Workforce Study



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

A baseline Kentucky Early Care and Education Workforce Study was conducted in 2012, with plans to conduct biannual surveys to provide longitudinal data to the Division of Child Care. This study data will provide information about the child care workforce in the Commonwealth, including wages and benefits, retention and professional development. Findings are designed to inform both policy and quality improvement efforts.

This report presents data from the Kentucky Early Care and Education Workforce study conducted in Fall of 2013, with data collection through February 2014. This survey targeted Directors of Licensed Type I and II child care centers, Family Child Care Home (FCC) providers, and teachers and teaching assistants, later exclusively referred to as teachers. The study focused on background, experience, education, professional development, wages, and benefits of the targeted participants.

Surveys were disseminated via email, based on availability of valid email address and were also available for completion via an anonymous on-line link. A total of 303 certified family child care home providers received the survey with 71 (23%) completed. Another 1,576 surveys were sent out to directors of licensed child care centers with 434 (28%) returning a valid survey. A workforce survey was also sent to 27,257 teachers and teacher assistants with 1,707 (8%) completing the survey.

### Respondent Characteristics

The respondents were largely female (more than 98%). For the respondents that provided level of education, these ranged from high school diploma or equivalent to PhD. Directors and teachers/teacher assistants were more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or higher (41% of directors; 42% of teachers). Twenty-three percent of certified family child care home providers reported having a Bachelor's degree or higher and another 9.7% reported having an Associate degree.

Directors reported a median of 15.75 years' experience in early care and education, and 7 years' experience in their current position. Teachers reported 9.46 years' experience in early care and education and 2.92 years' experience in their current position. Family child care home owners reported 15.00 years' experience in early care and education and 11.00 years' experience in their current position. Compared to the baseline study, family child care homes reported approximately 2 more years' experience, directors 1 more year and teachers less than 1 year, suggesting the turnover is greatest for the population of teachers.

### Wages and Benefits

This survey found wages for the child care work force in Kentucky are below the national average. The median annual salary was \$33,614 for directors, \$18,720 for teachers and \$24,089 for family certified home. Director's reported median salaries for new hires at \$28,000 for

directors, \$21,000 for teachers, and \$15,800 for teacher assistants. Compared to the baseline study, reported wages are higher but still below the average median nationwide salary of \$43,950 for Directors, \$27,130 for Teachers, and \$19,510 for Teachers Aides (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Directors and teachers in STAR-Rated child care facilities made more than those working in facilities that were not STAR-Rated. Directors with higher education made more than directors with lower education (\$9,268 difference in the median annual salary for directors with a master's degree over those with a high school diploma).

A small percent of teachers/teacher assistants and certified family child care providers reported supplementing their income through another job. This included 9% of family child care providers and 19% of teachers.

Access to health care was reported by 83% of directors, 78% of teachers and 71% of family child care homes. While majority of respondents reported having access to health coverage, the majority were covered by a spouse's health insurance, with only a third of directors (34%) reported being covered by an employer health insurance plan. More teachers and FCC providers reported having access to health care insurance as compared to baseline, an increase of 10.2% and 6.5% respectively.

Other than health insurance, respondents most frequently reported the following benefits: financial assistance for workshops, paid holidays, paid vacation, on-site workday training, and off-site workday training.

## **Retention**

Approximately three-quarters of teachers (76%) reported that if they could do it all over again, they would chose to stay in early care and education. When asked if they planned to stay in the field in the next three years, only 9% of directors, 22% of teachers and 2% of family child care homes said no, they would not. The national rate of turnover for teachers as cited by Porter (2012) is 30%. In general, directors spent more time in their current center and had more years of experience than teachers.

Most teachers reported being satisfied with their employment, with 62% reporting their position as a "career" rather than a "job", a 17.2% increase from the baseline study. Those who planned to leave the field stated the reasons as low pay and no benefits.

## **Professional Development**

When asked about the availability of professional development opportunities near their home or work, 67% of directors, 38% of teachers, and 68% of certified home providers indicated this was not a problem, an increase from the previous study. Respondents in the eastern area expressed more concern than those in other parts of the state. Approximately 62% of all respondents were able to find affordable professional development, with greater concern again in the east than in other parts of the state. Finally, 59% of directors, 58% of teachers, and 73% of family child care home providers reported access to high quality training opportunities, with directors in the eastern and northern areas most concerned about finding high quality opportunities. Two-thirds (66%) of teachers reported a sense of support from their director for professional development.

## Internet Access

Most directors (59.9%) reported accessing the internet at their center, while FCC providers (88.6%) and teachers (48.5%) reported accessing at home. An overwhelming number of directors (92.3%) indicated they access the internet daily.

## References

- Porter, N. (2012). [USA] High turnover among early childhood educators in the United States [Project Published Online]. Retrieved from [http://www.childresearch.net/projects/ecec/2012\\_04.html](http://www.childresearch.net/projects/ecec/2012_04.html).
- U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013). News release on occupational employment and wages—May 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.htm>.