

weca | Wisconsin Early
Childhood Association
Because small lives get bigger



Child Care Matters

2016 Annual Report



LETTER FROM RUTH SCHMIDT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Child care matters to me. A lot. Across the state, there are over 250,000 reasons why child care matters; they are our children who spend hours, days, weeks, months and years in a variety of child care

settings. They are the most important reason why child care matters.

In the pages that follow, leaders from health care, agriculture, philanthropy, law enforcement, human services, research, and education speak out on why child care matters to them. All were part of a WECA social media campaign last spring that brought fresh perspectives and new urgency to making affordable, high quality child care available to all children who need it.

As the professional association for the teachers working with young children, we know that quality care requires that we have well-educated and compensated teachers serving our children and families. Through research and other market monitoring we keep a pulse on the state of early education in Wisconsin and in 2016 we released our newest report: “Wisconsin’s Child Care Workforce.”

Here are several key findings:

1. Teachers are well educated.

Over 52% of teachers in our child care centers have at least an associate degree. Why is this important? Because there is evidence that the education of the child care provider is critical to providing high quality care to kids. It is also worth noting that when it comes to education, child care teachers outperform the workforce as a whole. (Only 41% of all workers in Wisconsin have at least an associate degree).

2. Teacher pay is very low.

The median wage for a child care teacher with an associate degree is \$10 per hour. The median wage for a child care teachers with a Bachelor’s degree

is \$12 per hour. Why is this important? Because based on education levels, child care is lowest paid profession in the state.

3. Teachers don’t have great benefits.

Only 17% of teachers in child care are eligible for and participate in an employer-provided health insurance plan. Why is this important? Because teachers are exposed to every sneeze, every runny nose, every upset tummy and need health insurance to protect their own health while they are taking care of our little ones.

4. Teacher turnover is a consistent problem.

Over 3 in 10 child care teachers leave their positions every year. Why is this important? Because children thrive when they are with consistent and nurturing care givers. It is traumatic for children in child care to experience this turnover. Understandably, if you had a Bachelor’s degree, were being paid \$25,000 per year and didn’t have health insurance, you might leave your job too.

The barriers to affordable, quality care with fair teacher compensation are real. But solutions can be found when we recognize our common cause. Child care matters, to 250,000 children, to their parents and guardians, to employers throughout the state, and to a Wisconsin economy that thrives as a result.



P.S. Look for our 2017 “Why Child Care Matters to Me” social media campaign – launching during the Week of the

Young Child. Drop me a line if you are inspired to share why child care matters to YOU! (ruschmidt@wisconsinearlychildhood.org)





"As we celebrate National Week of the Young Child, let's commit with all that we are, to doing whatever we can to make sure that quality child care is the

rule and not the exception. If we all do what we can, our children win and their futures are brighter still."

-Danae Davis, Executive Director Milwaukee Succeeds



"Our kids are our most precious commodities and our most vulnerable. It is in the community's best interest that we provide our children

with environments of caring adults committed to providing love, support, and engaging intellectual challenges."

-Mike Koval, Chief of Police City of Madison, Wisconsin



"If we are serious about making our state a healthier place, we need to pay more attention to the education that our children are receiving at

home and at child care centers in their earliest days and years."

-Stephanie Harrison CEO Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association



"If you study low-wage jobs (and I do), you can't help but notice child care. And you can't help but be dismayed by the very low-wages that the

field offers. And if you have a kid (and I do), you can't help but be struck by the incredible value that child care workers bring to your child's life."

-Laura Dresser, Associate Director Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) University of Wisconsin-Madison



"Access to child care is crucial to the success of any business. Dependable child care must be available to meet the needs of employees in

every industry, doing all types of work from entry-level to executive-level positions. When quality child care is not available to parents, the economy of a community cannot thrive."

-Tim Zander Columbia County Board Supervisor, Owner/Farmer, Emerald Meadows Family Farm, Columbus, WI



"High quality child care is extremely important for families and should be equally important for our community at large. Early childhood

education needs to be a significant, undisputed piece of our local and national funding equation."

-Michael Johnson President and CEO Boys and Girls Club of Dane County



"Every baby is born with the potential to succeed, to achieve more than we can possibly imagine - when we as a community provide healthy starts in those all-important

first 1000 days. In the Week of the Young Child, celebrate the wonder of childhood and the crucial adults who foster stimulating and nurturing relationships."

-Renee Moe, President and CEO United Way of Dane County



"Early childhood is a critical time period for improving a child's overall quality of life. Increasing opportunities and access to quality

educational programs throughout that age is an essential tool in our work to close Wisconsin's achievement gaps. That also means investing in a skilled, early education workforce to provide those services to kids."

-Tony Evers, PhD. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Wisconsin



"A skilled early childhood workforce is important to me as a pediatrician because children develop through positive, supportive

and nurturing relationships. Since one of the key venues outside the home where children interact with others is in early childhood centers, it's important to have a stable, knowledgeable, and caring workforce."

-Dipesh Navsaria, MPH, MSLIS, MD Associate Professor of Pediatrics University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

WECA IN REVIEW



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN provides scholarships to support credit-based higher education for early childhood professionals working in regulated settings. In 2016, we awarded 1,342 scholarships – surpassing

last year's record of the most awards in any single year since the program started 17 years ago. T.E.A.C.H. is proven to successfully impact compensation and turnover, as well as education. Salary increases for educational advancement and bonuses awarded at the end of each contract result in an average 5.8% gain in compensation. During the commitment period after scholarship contract completion, turnover is just 6%, compared to a 35% annual turnover rate for the industry as a whole. These gains are moving us in the direction we need to go, according to a comprehensive research report entitled, "Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce," published and disseminated in 2016 and funded by T.E.A.C.H. This report and related data reveal that T.E.A.C.H. has a measurable, positive impact on YoungStar – Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. Of those programs supporting a T.E.A.C.H. Scholar in 2016, 213 increased their educational points and 109 programs increased their star level.

Improving higher education opportunities is another important component of T.E.A.C.H. In 2016, we were able to award five grants to Wisconsin colleges to further their work in making the transfer of credits a more seamless process for students. Additionally, nine grants were awarded to schools that are developing innovative teaching and learning strategies to better meet the needs of adult learners.



REWARD encourages retention by providing salary stipends

to teachers who have advanced their education. Stipends begin to bridge the gap between what teachers are paid and the value of their skills. Wages in the range of \$10 to \$13 an hour for child care teachers and \$8.50 to \$9.50 for teacher assistants results in many living below the federal poverty level for a family of three. These low wages are the primary driver of high turnover. In Wisconsin, approximately one-third of the child care workforce leave their positions each year, most often for jobs with better pay and/or benefits. An individual's level on The Registry, Wisconsin's recognition system for early childhood professionals, determines if one is eligible for a REWARD stipend. In 2016, the threshold for participating in REWARD was lowered to include Registry levels 7 and 8, resulting in a total of \$2.9M awarded to 3,829 eligible people. The average stipend value was approximately \$757. REWARD incentivizes ongoing education with stipends that grow as educational benchmarks are reached.



The WECA Food Program partially reimburses food expenses for family child care

providers who serve nutritious meals to the children in their care. For over 30 years, WECA has offered a USDA Food Program because we know that good nutrition is critical to learning. This key program, offered in every county of the state, enables children to get healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. WECA staff make periodic visits throughout the year to offer nutrition guidance and ensure compliance with the program. In 2016, with the assistance of the WECA Food Program, over 950 family child care programs served over 2.9 million meals and snacks to more than 12,000 children. WECA is the only child care food program in Wisconsin to be invited to participate in

a federal study on nutrition and activity in child care settings. Over 1,500 child care providers nationwide will be participating in the study.



WECA provides hundreds of opportunities for early childhood professionals to learn new skills. The 2016 WECA Annual Conference in Green Bay offered over

60 workshops on a range of topics for almost 500 attendees. When asked what they liked the most about the WECA Conference, the most frequent response was “connecting with other people.” In this age of busy schedules, smart phones, texting and Facebook, it is affirming to know that we are able to provide this critical space for early childhood professionals to get together, network with one another, make connections, and play.

WECA staff bring expertise through training across the state. Over 1,600 early education teachers attended WECA trainings in community settings and on-site in child care programs in 2016. WECA works to help Wisconsin’s early learning workforce gain new knowledge and apply proven practices. The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, business skills, family engagement, Achieving Your Professional Development Goals, and the Wisconsin Pyramid Model for Social-Emotional Competence are popular and much-needed training topics. Throughout 2016 WECA also offered webinars - a convenient training

platform for child care professionals who are eager to learn, but short on time and funding for face-to-face training. Over 13 credit-bearing webinars were offered - a number that continues to grow each year. WECA again coordinated a “sold out” Pathways to Quality Conference in Milwaukee which hosted workshops for 534 child care professionals wanting to grow their program’s quality and increase their star rating in YoungStar. WECA trainings and workshops are consistently rated good or excellent, receiving a score of 4.6 out of 5 on average.

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As the state affiliate of NAEYC (National

Association for the Education of Young Children), WECA is the largest professional association in Wisconsin for the early learning workforce. In 2016, more than 1,400 WECA members received benefits including discounts to conferences, professional resources and local networking and mentoring through WECA’s local chapters.

As the Wisconsin NAEYC affiliate, we engage in research, communications and advocacy to heighten the visibility of the early childhood workforce. Our ultimate mission is to diversify and strengthen the financial investment that government, individuals, foundations and businesses make in quality early learning for all children. WECA members hail from virtually all counties in the state. Our 10 local chapters provide dynamic professional networks to early childhood educators - convening trainings, regional bus tours, professional recognition events and local advocacy actions.



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AFFILIATE LEADERSHIP GROUP AND MEMBER ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Member Advisory Council identifies services and benefits to support members in the delivery of quality early childhood experiences and advises WECA on their implementation. The Affiliate Leadership Group serves as support for WECA's local affiliates across the state, planning events and providing resources to WECA members.

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WECA FINANCIALS

	2016	2015		2016	2015
Revenue			Expenses		
Food Program	\$4,730,381	\$5,002,686	Direct: Operations	\$12,697,901	\$11,941,523
YoungStar	\$3,216,135	\$4,239,410	Direct: Personnel	\$3,629,195	\$3,717,831
T.E.A.C.H. & REWARD	\$5,992,969	\$4,674,172	Indirect: Administration	\$291,766	\$309,295
Race to the Top	\$2,346,857	\$1,500,000	Total Expenses:	\$16,618,862	\$15,968,649
Other:	\$388,595	\$604,425			
Other Contracts	\$204,602	\$400,292	Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$56,075	\$52,044
Contributions	\$26,044	\$24,633			
Membership	\$37,272	\$39,774			
Annual Conference	\$68,863	\$85,186			
Training Events	\$18,098	\$23,390			
Interest	\$10,861	\$14,916			
Miscellaneous	\$22,855	\$16,234			
Total Revenue:	\$16,674,937	\$16,020,693			



THREE WAYS TO INVEST

Engage with us to inspire teaching excellence for all young children in Wisconsin

- 1. Donate:** Visit wisconsinearlychildhood.org/donate and give a gift in honor of a special early childhood teacher or program.
- 2. Advocate:** Join WECA's Forward For Kids list to receive updates and action alerts on key early childhood education issues. To join, visit wisconsinearlychildhood.org/advocacy.
- 3. Connect:** Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter. Share your thoughts and join the conversation.

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Madison Office
744 Williamson St., Suite 200
Madison, WI 53703
800-783-9322

Milwaukee Office
316 N. Milwaukee St., Suite 410
Milwaukee, WI 53202
414-278-9322



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