



weca Wisconsin Early
Childhood Association
An Affiliate of **naeyc**

ANNUAL REPORT**2022**



Food 
Program



MISSION AND VISION

WECA serves, engages, and supports the early childhood workforce and early care and education in Wisconsin.

Our vision is a Wisconsin where early care and education is viewed as a public good worthy of long-term, sweeping, and sustained public funding. This guiding vision includes a well-compensated early childhood workforce and child care that is affordable and accessible for all families with young children.

We center diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in our philosophy, programs, and initiatives every day.

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Let's take a moment together for reflection – reflection on early care and education's core purpose.

High-quality child care provides significant learning and growth opportunities in the life of a young child and meets the immediate needs of our youngest children – work that early childhood educators are uniquely qualified to provide. It is critical for healthy development that takes place at a time when millions of neural connections are being made in the young brain every day. It is essential development that is good for all children, important for healthy families, and necessary for cultivating thriving communities. This early education sets children up for success as they enter the K-12 education system and long into their adult lives. We know when we educate and invest in young children in their earliest years, we all benefit.

At **Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA)**, we have the incredible opportunity and privilege of working with and supporting the early childhood educators who provide this essential early education in Wisconsin every day. This gives WECA a close look at what we hope all of us in Wisconsin should know and recognize – that child care professionals are skilled early educators who play an undeniably critical role in the lives and development of children, strong families, and the health of our entire state.

Of course, however, early care and education – or what the public knows as child care – is viewed differently by different people.

For early educators, it is their life's work, their profession, their passion, their contribution to the education of children, the health of families, and the development of their communities. That's to be commended, respected, and appreciated.

For parents and families, child care may be a safe, caring environment for their young children while they work. That is incredibly important.

For employers and businesses, it allows for hiring and keeping reliable employees, leading to productivity, profitability, and healthy local and state economies. That also is incredibly vital.

At WECA, we have the opportunity and expertise to provide insight on the importance of early care and education from all these different – and important – perspectives. It is the only way to advance meaningful change – meeting people where they are and articulating the value and benefits that resonate most with them.

Our key programs foster increased early childhood workforce compensation, educational attainment, nutritional supports, professional development opportunities, business and back-office services, and advocacy efforts – all necessary because of some very stark realities in this incredibly important field and profession. Child care has long been a broken business model, one balanced on the backs of early educators and families. This model ultimately does not allow for fair early educator compensation and forces parents and caregivers to struggle to afford and find the care they know supports their families.

This model desperately needs significant transformation, yet policymakers have long lagged behind in fully supporting significant public investments into child care. WECA works tirelessly to bring knowledge, resources, and expertise to elevate the importance of early childhood education and



support and enhance the critical work of child care professionals. We know and believe public investment is central to achieving a new early care and education landscape in Wisconsin – one where child care is viewed and valued as a vital public good. Importantly, the prospect of significant investment is taking shape and presents more hope than ever before.

In the last year, hope shined through when investments from federal pandemic relief funding allocated by state policymakers allowed us to provide significantly expanded REWARD Wisconsin Stipend and T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Wisconsin program benefits. With expanded eligibilities, increased stipends, and additional reimbursements, these enhanced workforce supports allowed us to assist more early childhood educators and their financial well-being and development than ever before.

At the same time, we are honored to study the lived experiences of Wisconsin's early educators – particularly those from diverse backgrounds – because it provides us an invaluable opportunity to advance meaningful and equitable change for this essential workforce and profession. Our interviews with educators who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color, Hmong, and those who live and work in rural Wisconsin have shed necessary light on unique needs, challenges, and opportunities for engagement, advocacy, and program development moving forward. It will continue to inform all our efforts in support of the early childhood workforce, now and long into the future.

Hope took a front seat as Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESN) continued as a national leader in early education-focused shared services, providing back-office, administrative, and business supports for child care programs. WEESN expanded to serve programs statewide through three tiers of support, launched new financial and tax resources, and prepared for the launch of a new Educator Assistance Program. The EAP will provide critical personal and wellness resources, like those offered by other major employers, to all educators of WEESN-enrolled programs and their families starting in 2023.

Hope was paramount when we launched a new statewide policy and advocacy initiative, Raising Wisconsin, which has grown out of increasing public awareness around the importance of affordable, accessible child care. Powered by a multi-sector coalition of key organizations, the effort brings together key partners and advocates from across the state – early childhood professionals, families, businesses, economic officials, and community leaders – to work together for transformational change in early care and education and optimal child health and well-being. It is an important milestone – both in WECA's longstanding advocacy work and for advocacy on behalf of early care and education throughout the state. It is a shining example of how we are stronger when we come together with one voice for advancing change.

All of this showcases the power of increasing public awareness and support for early care and education and the change we so desperately need for the child care field and the dedicated early educators who work in it. Moving ahead, WECA looks forward to more risk-taking, new opportunities, exciting innovations, and nuanced ways of thinking – both in our organization and in the public sphere as the work to elevate early care and education as a vital public good continues.

We are honored to do this work because it challenges us, invigorates us, and pushes us to achieve new milestones every day. At our core, we know our support of early childhood educators and the early childhood field directly influences the developing minds of thousands of Wisconsin's young children on their paths to positive futures.

Importantly, we know we will all see a stronger future when we work together to provide our youngest children with their best possible start.

“At WECA, we have the opportunity and expertise to provide insight on the importance of early care and education from all these different – and important – perspectives.”

*–Ruth Schmidt, WECA
Executive Director*

OUR 2022 JOURNEY

“We can all use the extra support and learning opportunities. They have given us direction and goals to aspire to. We need the support and it's here. Hopefully it's here to stay and continue to grow with us, and we can build some amazing relationships along the way.”

– Cassandra Letcher,
Group center director



EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE SUPPORTS

For Cassandra Letcher, the question is not why – as much as why not?

As the director of a group early childhood program in Beloit, she sees the daily, ongoing value of WECA's core programs and how they elevate the professional and personal experiences of providers and programs. That is why enrolling in them is a clear no-brainer.

"We can all use the extra support and learning opportunities," she said. "They have given us direction and goals to aspire to. We need the support and it's here. Hopefully it's here to stay and continue to grow with us, and we can build some amazing relationships along the way."

Our Lady of the Assumption Child Care is one of the hundreds of Wisconsin child care programs enrolled in several of WECA's core services that support the compensation, retention, and business operations of early childhood programs and the educators who staff them. More than 2,700 early childhood programs and nearly 5,300 early childhood educators from all 72 counties benefit from the programs and services provided by WECA, which was founded more than 50 years ago for the then-singular purpose of providing state conferences for child care providers.

The last fiscal year, mirroring the last five decades, has been one of particularly rapid growth and innovation to continue to support the early childhood workforce and meet immediate needs with the long-term vision of transformation for the workforce and the early care and education field. WECA received and helped allocate more than \$9.15 million into the workforce in the form of various financial stipends, reimbursements, and other critical direct supports.

Summer 2022 marked a major milestone with significant funding increases for the REWARD and T.E.A.C.H. programs. The increase in funding – federal dollars allocated by state legislators and policymakers – allowed WECA to facilitate these core programs, both originally founded more than 20 years ago, with greatly expanded eligibilities and increased financial supports for providers and programs.

REWARD, which provides wage supplements to early educators, expanded its eligibility parameters to include all Wisconsin Registry levels, no wage cap, and a reduction in the educator longevity at current program needed to apply. The combination of additional funding and broader eligibilities allowed WECA to nearly triple the number of stipends awarded and more than double the average stipend amount provided.

"The REWARD Wisconsin Stipend Program is so excited about this new funding," REWARD Director Amy Schuster said at the time of the expansion announcement. "It is the most extensive in the history of the program."

The expansion of T.E.A.C.H. has helped make qualifying educational pathways even more affordable – sometimes nearly free – for early childhood educators pursuing credit-based education. Several key program reimbursements, stipends, and



bonuses increased, and included a new technology stipend to assist with computer purchases.

“T.E.A.C.H. is such an amazing opportunity for early childhood professionals to achieve their educational dreams,” said T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Wisconsin Director Mary Erickson Gerbig.

Yimma Davila Castro, who operates Yimma’s Bright Beginnings Daycare in Milwaukee, was able to obtain her associate degree because of T.E.A.C.H. – cost would have otherwise prohibited it. The program also has put her on the path of pursuing a bachelor’s degree at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. T.E.A.C.H.’s benefits – combined with REWARD’s financial stipends, WEESN’s coaching and back-office business supports, and Food Program food reimbursements – are an unmatched source of support and guidance for her and her family child care program.

“This meant more income for my family, access to better materials, and quality education for the children who attend my child care,” Yimma said. “WECA listens to our specific needs and finds funds to create programs that help us simplify our job and make it easier for us, especially during the pandemic.”

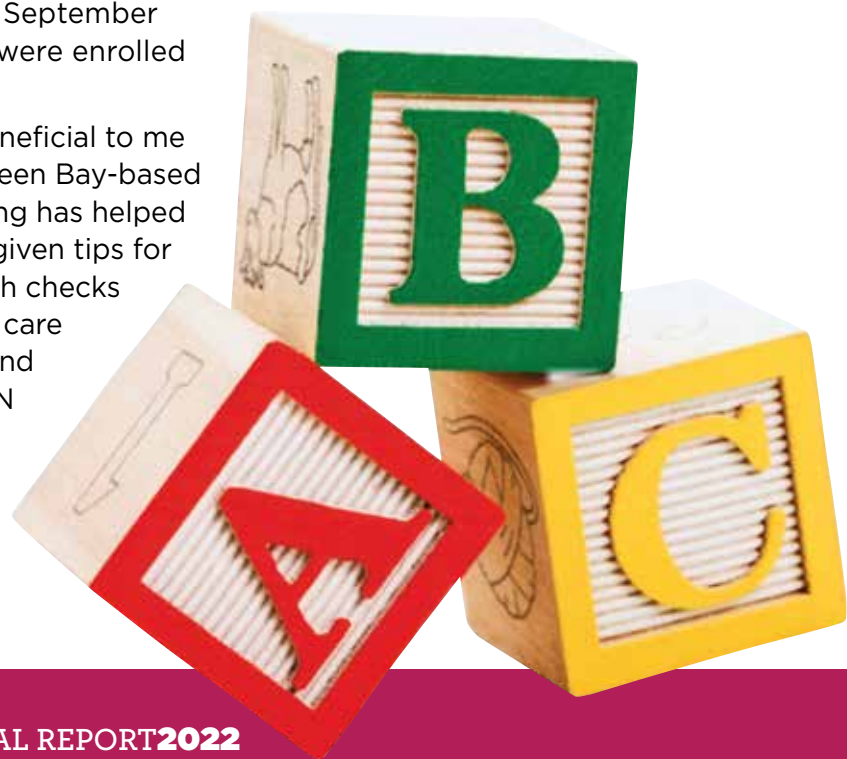
“I chose to join all of the programs because, first, every provider I meet suggests them, and after I work with them, I see for myself their benefits.”

WEESN has continued its significant growth and reputation as a nationally recognized and innovative leader in shared services for early care and education. In a year of rapid development of new services, the program continued to provide back-office, administrative, and business supports and coaching for child care programs with the expertise of WEESN staff who have years of experience and knowledge in early care and education. The WEESN team attended and Co-Directors Paula Drew and Kelly Matthews were featured presenters at a national shared services conference where they were able to share insights on the launch, continued growth, and future of the program.

“We felt reinforced in the approach WEESN is taking,” Drew said after the conference. “We are already doing strong equity work, promoting good business practices, and developing a deep level of engagement with providers. There is so much to be done, but we are well positioned to do this vital work.”

WEESN expanded to serve programs statewide through three tiers of support in fall 2021, launched new financial and tax resources that are not only available for Wisconsin programs but also to providers across the United States, and prepared for the January 2023 launch of a new Educator Assistance Program. As of the end of September 2022, nearly 1,600 programs across Wisconsin were enrolled in WEESN.

“The support I have received has been highly beneficial to me and our program,” shared Anita, director of a Green Bay-based center enrolled in WEESN Tier 2. “Virtual training has helped answer questions about Child Care Counts and given tips for marketing and writing job descriptions. My coach checks in with me regularly – she understands the child care business, listens, offers suggestions, and helps find answers. Virtual coaching is my favorite WEESN benefit and is extremely valuable.”



ADVOCACY AND COALITION BUILDING

When Claire Lindstrom wanted to make a difference in her community, joining Raising Wisconsin's child care coalition-building efforts was an important way to impact the lives of families with young children in the Eau Claire area.

"I joined the team at Raising Wisconsin to make a difference in my community and connect with other parents who are struggling," Claire shared.

Engaging more parents and business leaders in child care policy and advocacy efforts was a direct response to continued feedback from legislators that they did not hear enough from either group in the 2021-23 state budget cycle. Importantly, 2022 marked a major milestone in WECA's longstanding advocacy work – the launch of and serving as the lead organization for a new statewide, coalition-based effort, Raising Wisconsin.

Raising Wisconsin's launch in April 2022 formally kicked off statewide advocacy centered on transformational change in child care and optimal child health and well-being to support Wisconsin's early childhood educators, infants, toddlers, families, businesses, communities, and the state's overall economic and social health. The effort now builds on WECA's decades-long history of advocacy in support of early care and education and early childhood educators and brings together nearly 60 organizations and advocates in a State Collaborative Team to provide insight, expertise, support, and networks to enhance and broaden the initiative's reach. It started as the Wisconsin Infant Toddler Policy Project in 2019, but broad-based support and the need for wider reach and recognition led to its transformation into Raising Wisconsin three years later.

"As child care access and affordability continue to be a challenge throughout Wisconsin, we have seen increasing numbers of state organizations, economic leaders, parents, and community leaders who recognize the critical importance of high-quality and affordable child care for healthy children and a healthy Wisconsin economy," WECA Executive Director Ruth Schmidt said at the initiative's virtual launch event.

"As more people looked to join that conversation, the next step was the development of Raising Wisconsin."

Raising Wisconsin's launch came right on the backdrop of an important bipartisan investment by state legislators and policymakers in February 2022 – Department of Children and Families and legislators' allocation of \$194 million in second-round federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to



support early care and education. This included the expansion of early childhood professional scholarships and stipends, shared services, more funding for Child Care Counts, and other critical investments aligned with Raising Wisconsin's broad goals and policy priorities.

The work and power of the coalition continues to gain local, state, and national attention, including fund partners who graciously donate to support and continue Raising Wisconsin's work.

"Investing in WECA's policy, advocacy, education, and awareness, and business leader and early education workforce engagement pays off exponentially when it leads to permanent, multi-million-dollar increases in state funding that dwarf the original philanthropic investment," said Alliance for Early Success, a national nonprofit that works with early childhood advocates and provides targeted investments to help state-based work succeed.

Claire is one of five regional parent engagement leaders bringing together local networks of families across the state in key legislative districts, a coalition totaling more than 120 Wisconsin parents. WECA, Raising Wisconsin, and Chamber and economic development partners also planned and hosted six employer-legislative forums in the last fiscal year to highlight the workforce, business, and economic impact of child care challenges in key legislative districts across the map.

The work to elevate child care as a critical public good – and increase public awareness around its importance – underscores the opportunities that lie ahead in advocacy efforts. Longtime early educators and advocates hope it continues, particularly in the midst of the effects of the pandemic, which placed an even brighter spotlight on the challenges in the field and sector than ever before.

"COVID made known how essential child care is," shared Rafat Arain, a former WECA board member who owns Milwaukee-based Crescent Learning Center. "Early education is an important part of our life. As soon as more people – people in power – realize the importance of it, it will have an even wider scope. I have great hope in child care."

"I joined the team at Raising Wisconsin to make a difference in my community and connect with other parents who are struggling."

*– Claire Lindstrom,
Parent Engagement Leader*



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MEMBERSHIP, AND TRAINING

Rafat sees the inherent value in all of WECA's services, including membership. In fact, she started a new initiative of purchasing her staff members' first year of membership to WECA to ensure they stay connected to the services, networking, and supports it provides via dual membership to National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

"If you don't have the support, then you see people give up," Rafat shared. "I'm very glad I was on the WECA board and that I got to know all the services and supports it offers – I appreciate all the work being done by WECA."

Membership is one valuable opportunity early educators and other early childhood advocates have to enhance their professional development and career journeys through WECA. In the last fiscal year, WECA offered nearly 90 hours of training, a majority of which is eligible for Wisconsin Registry credit, including Annual Conference sessions and content, broad WECA trainings, and programs and events offered specifically for programs enrolled in WEESN.

"The support from WEESN is unmatched by any other workplace I have been in," said Alisha Jaquith of Crossroads Kids Connection. "The training and professional development we have been offered has aided our team in growing and improving to provide higher quality care to our families. WEESN has made our crazy ECE lives that we love more enjoyable."

The WECA Conference provides significant professional development credit, networking, and learning opportunities for Wisconsin's early educators in one three-day span. The 2022 event received glowing feedback from its record 800-plus virtual attendees, who attended virtually through a new digital platform.

"What a wonderful conference you put on! I have to say, I think the best I have ever attended by WECA," shared a returning attendee. "The keynotes were outstanding, as were the other presenters. But, the keynotes are worth the registration fee alone – each of them."

Attendees viewed a total of 6,000 hours of content, which featured the theme, "Cultivating Connections," through four keynote presentations, 25 live workshops, and 23 on-demand sessions on topics including growth and retention of professionals, health and resilience, racial justice, cultural responsiveness,



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– Alisha Jaquith, Crossroads Kids Connection

leadership, communication strategies, and brain development, among many others. The conference was graciously supported by 18 sponsors, exhibitors, and in-kind donors whose financial support ensured the event was a dynamic, inspiring, and valuable educational opportunity for all in the early childhood community.

“The 2022 conference was extremely well-attended and provided so many new professional development and learning opportunities,” said Jen Dittrich, WECA Membership and Training Director. “We are dedicated to continuing to provide engaging, dynamic, and timely professional development opportunities for this vitally important workforce and field.”

The conference began on Thursday, Sept. 29, with a morning keynote on preparing an early childhood profession during a pandemic provided by higher education experts Mary Harrill, Ana DeHoyos O’Connor, and Dr. Sharon Little. Additional Thursday sessions followed and were capped with a Thursday evening keynote, “Because,” presented by Rachel Giannini, who was featured in the documentary, “No Small Matter.”

Friday kicked off with keynote remarks from author and agent for social change Kevin Carroll, who discussed unleashing creativity and growth through the lens of play – both as healthy development for children and a philosophy for centering one’s career and life purpose. Friday continued with sessions on leadership, health and safety, communication, child development, and more. Saturday began with the morning keynote dedicated to talking about race, racism, and justice with young children featuring the authors of the book, “Our Skin,” Megan Madison and Jessica Ralli. Conference attendees also received a copy of Kevin’s book, “Rules of the Red Rubber Ball” and “Our Skin.”

“We believe that young children deserve a whole lot of grownups who are ready to support them in their feelings, all of those feelings, so they know they’re not alone,” Megan said. “We need young children’s great ideas for how to change the world.”



FOOD SYSTEMS AND NUTRITION

When Deanna Schillinger joined the WECA Food Program in 1993, she wanted to create more variety in food and nutrition options for the children at her family child care program. Input and guidance from WECA's Area Coordinators has been essential over the years, too.

"The main reason was because the kitchen is probably my least favorite place to be, so the Food Program helped me get more ideas, more variety," she shared. "I can't imagine having a day care without it."

More than 28 years later, she welcomed Gov. Tony Evers and other local legislators and staffers for a visit to her Phillips-based Dinosaur Land Day Care in northern Wisconsin. The visit was prompted by a thank you letter she wrote to the state leader during the pandemic. Child Care Counts funding, allocated by state policymakers, was critical to assist her program and many others with operational and other expenses and remain open.

"It was a great visit," Deanna said of the December 2021 stop.

The Food Program's reimbursements and WEESN's Farm to ECE programming represent WECA's longstanding and growing commitment to children-centric nutrition, food, and wellness initiatives that benefit families and communities. Over the last year, the Food Program provided reimbursements for 2.72 million healthy meals and snacks to 550 Wisconsin family child care providers.

"The Food Program provides continued learning about offering better quality food and getting a bigger nutritional 'bang for your buck' as a provider and shopper," WECA Food Program Director Pam Polenz said.

WEESN's Farm to ECE initiative continues to grow, adding to the breadth and reach of WECA's work to enhance the lives of providers, children, families, and communities across Wisconsin.

WEESN provides the connections and infrastructure to support child care programs and the providers who staff them with purchasing and using local foods, coordinating on-site youth gardening, and offering hands-on agricultural education and family engagement opportunities. This programming fosters learning and development opportunities, healthy eating habits, and valuable lifelong skills for children, and builds connections with food producers and businesses in local communities.



Farm to ECE benefited more than 2,500 children in 190 WEESN programs over the past year, with 50 farms across Wisconsin connected to the effort. Crossroads Kids Connection, a center licensed to serve 70 children, received multiple grants through the program to help purchase fresh, locally grown produce, enhance gardening opportunities for children, and make updates in the center's kitchen.

"Our children learned garden care, how to plant, water, and the joys of harvesting," said Nicole Dempsey, dietary manager for Crossroads. "This experience is something they may not receive at home, so I think it is very special to be able to provide hands-on gardening here at their child care. Gardening is a lifelong skill they will carry with them for years to come."

The Farm to ECE initiative also provides an opportunity for businesses to connect with early childhood programs, children, and families in their local communities. Tara Roberts-Turner, general manager of Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative, said the co-op was not aware of early childhood Farm to ECE initiatives before becoming connected with WEESN but has wholeheartedly welcomed the opportunity to create lifelong nutritional habits and skills in youth. The co-op has been able to sell more produce from newer small local farmers as a result of the collaboration – a critical market to support.

"This project can have a substantial impact on the health and well-being of children in our state as well as improve the economic health of the small farm community," Tara shared. "Working together, children are getting more variety and freshness than before, while our smaller farms are able to expand their sales into wholesale production. It's a win-win for our community."



BROAD REACH: BY THE NUMBERS

WECA is a statewide nonprofit organization with significant local reach. It exists to support early childhood educators, child care programs, and tens of thousands of young children, families, and communities across Wisconsin.

In fiscal year 2022, we had the following impact:

Total Financial Support for

Early Childhood Workforce: \$9,158,667

Early Childhood Educators Served: 5,299

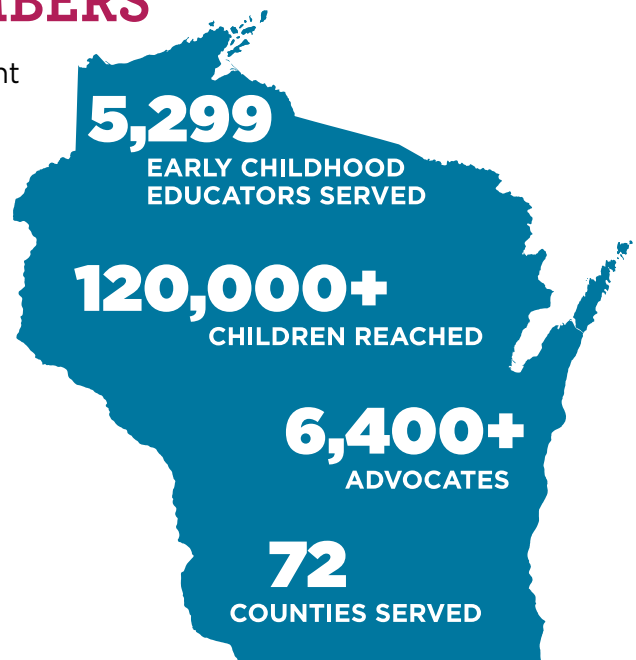
Child Care Programs Impacted: 2,748

(More than 61% of all regulated programs in Wisconsin)

Children Reached: 120,000+

Members: 1,452

Counties Served: 72 of 72



AT A GLANCE: PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND INITIATIVES

ADVOCACY

WECA is a leader in advocacy that supports early care and education and the early childhood workforce. In response to increasing public awareness of child care's wide-ranging impact, efforts have expanded to support early childhood professionals in addition to parents and families, businesses, economic development, and communities through the April 2022 launch of **Raising Wisconsin**, an initiative powered by multi-sector support.

Advocates: 6,400+

Parents Engaged in Advocacy Networks: 120

Raising Wisconsin State Collaborative Team Members: 57

Early Childhood Workforce Equity Study Participants: 39

Business Advisory Council Members: 25

Legislator-Employer Forums Hosted: 6

Regional Parent Engagement Leaders: 5



FOOD PROGRAM

The **Food Program** helps regulated family child care providers serve nutritionally balanced meals and snacks to children throughout Wisconsin. It is supported by federal **Child and Adult Care Food Program** (CACFP) funding and is the only Wisconsin food program to serve all counties and Tribal nations.

Providers Served: 550

Children Reached: 4,800

Meals and Snacks Provided: 2,720,000

MEMBERSHIP

WECA is the state affiliate of **National Association for the Education of Young Children** (NAEYC), the largest professional association of early childhood educators and professionals in the United States. Membership to WECA/NAEYC provides professional development opportunities, resources, advocacy power, and networking.

Total Members: 1,452 (a 15% increase over previous fiscal year)

Week of the Young Child Celebration Events: 5

Members Registered for NAEYC Public Policy Forum: 43

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

WECA provides extensive professional development and training opportunities for early childhood educators, including the **Annual Conference**, which the organization has hosted since 1971. Professional development opportunities and trainings cover a variety of relevant topics and many offer Wisconsin Registry credit.

2022 Annual Conference

Hours of Content Viewed: 6,000

Attendees: 800+

Professional Development Hours Offered: 65

Live Workshops: **25**

On-Demand Sessions: **23**

Keynote Presentations: 4

Sponsors, Exhibitors, & In-kind Donors: **18**

Format: Virtual, **2** In-person Sessions

Total Professional Development Hours Offered*: 88

**Includes WECA conference, general WECA training opportunities, and WEESSN offerings.*

REWARD WISCONSIN STIPEND PROGRAM

The **REWARD** program provides vital supplemental financial support to early childhood educators who continue to work in an under-compensated and under-resourced field. It distributes thousands of stipends to early childhood educators throughout Wisconsin each year. It expanded significantly through increased funding and broader eligibilities in summer 2022.

Total Stipends Awarded: 5,203

Total Value of Stipends: \$2,930,750



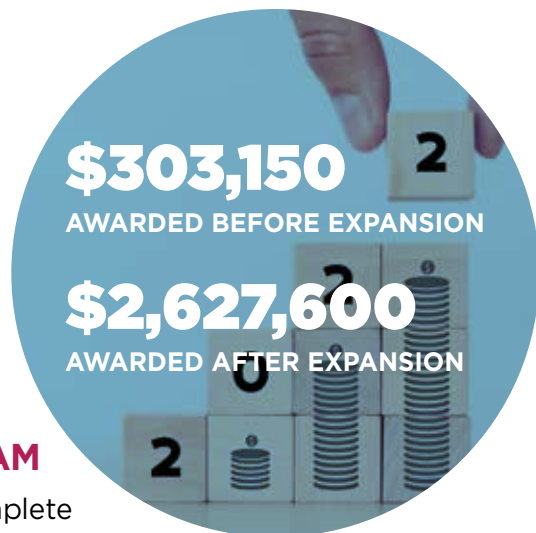
REWARD WISCONSIN STIPEND PROGRAM, continued

Before Expansion

Stipends Awarded: **1,184**
Average Stipend: **\$256**
Stipends Total: **\$303,150**

After Expansion

Stipends Awarded: **4,109**
Average Stipend: **\$639**
New Recipients: **1,000**
Stipends Total: **\$2,627,600**



T.E.A.C.H. EARLY CHILDHOOD® WISCONSIN PROGRAM

T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships to early educators to help them complete credit-based ECE coursework through the Wisconsin Technical College System, University of Wisconsin System, and private colleges with little to no out-of-pocket expenses. After expanding significantly through increased funding in summer 2022, several reimbursements and stipends increased, including the much-anticipated addition of a new technology stipend.

Individuals Receiving Scholarships: **1,052**

Children Served by Scholars: **34,250**

College Credits Earned: **7,195**

Total Courses Completed: **2,496**

Scholars Worked in: **454** group centers, **122** family child care programs

Average Wage Increase for Center Employees Who Completed Contacts: **4.3%**

Average GPA: **3.48**

Value of Technology Stipends Awarded: **\$187,049**

WISCONSIN EARLY EDUCATION SHARED SERVICES NETWORK (WEESN)

WEESN, a nationally recognized leader in early education-focused shared services, provides shared back-office, administrative, and business supports for child care programs to help them save time, increase revenues, and make their jobs less stressful.

Programs Enrolled: **1,571**

Group Centers: **879**

Family Programs: **692**

Tier 1: **1,182**

Tier 2: **132**

Tier 3: **257**

Number of Children Reached: **68,732**

Program Site Visits (Virtual and On-site): **2,499**

Total Coaching Hours: **2,272**

Farm to ECE Supports

Children Served: **2,500+**

Participating Programs: **190**

Participating Farms: **50+**



SUPPORT IN 2022

“Investing in WECA’s policy, advocacy, education, and awareness, and business leader and early education workforce engagement pays off exponentially when it leads to permanent, multi-million-dollar increases in state funding that dwarf the original philanthropic investment.”

– Alliance for Early Success



WITH GRATITUDE: PHILANTHROPY AND DONORS

Philanthropic Support in 2022

WECA is honored to partner with donors who so generously provide financial and in-kind support that makes this work possible. WECA remains committed to being a trusted steward of public and private funds that advance early care and education and support the ECE workforce across Wisconsin. We will continue to work tirelessly so that the system of early care and education equitably serves young children and their families, employers, child care programs and communities throughout the state.

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

American Family Insurance
Celebrate Children Foundation
City of Madison
Concordia University
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Group Foundation
Discount School Supply
Early Learning Ventures
First Business Bank
Greater Watertown Community
Health Foundation
Kaplan Early Learning Company
Kwik Trip
LENA Foundation
Supporting Families
Together Association
Total Administration
Services Corporation
UW Health
UW Whitewater
Wisconsin Registry

GRANTING AGENCIES

Alliance for Early Success
American Family Institute for
Corporate & Social Impact
City of Milwaukee
College of Menominee Nation
Covering Wisconsin
Dane County Department of
Human Services
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Greater Watertown Community
Health Foundation

Hopewell Fund
Kids Forward
Kids Gardening
MGE Foundation
NeuGen LLC
Otto Bremer Trust
Pritzker Children's Initiative
Roots & Wings Foundation
Waukesha County
Technical College
Waupaca County
Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families
Wisconsin Department of
Public Instruction
Wisconsin Partnership Program

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Jeremy and Katie Hale
Heather Halvorson
Stephanie Harrison
Jan Hartwig
Corrine Hendrickson

Jennifer and Alex Hilgendorf
Kelly and Adam Hook
Denise Jess
Luis Jimenez
Heidy Jimenez-German
Nora Jimenez-German
Robert Kellerman
Jani Koester
Andrew Kroll
Kristen Kroll
Nick Larson
Brandy Lea
Horacio Lemus
Kathleen Lieber
Wendy Little
Donald MacCrimmon
Kate MacCrimmon
Kelly Matthews
Michelle Mau
Renuka Mayadev
S Rose McCredie
Dr. John R. Meurer
Crestalee Meyer
Kristi Meyers

Dr. Dipesh Navsaria and
Dr. Rania Huntington
Lindsey Nellessen
JoAnne Nelson
Carol Niec
Mary Niec
Pete Nusbaum
J P
Jeanette Paulson
Nancy and Wayne Paulson
Cassie and Matt Perenchio
Richard and Darcy Perrin
Lynn Persson
Riley Pink
Monica Piper
Cindy Poole
Schnell Price Lambert
Susan Pritchard
Allie Pugh
Denise Ratterman
Valerie Renk
Emma Reusch
Tim Rikkers
David Riley

Colleen Robson
Susan Rodin
Kathy Roloff
Gwen Ruppert
Hildegard Schmidt
Ruth Schmidt and
Kevin Zamzow
Deborah Schmidt-Rogers
Amy Schuster
Roy and Iris Schuster
Yamila Simonovsky
Tim and Pat Size
Jessie Small
Jeff Spitzer-Resnick
Ladonna Steinert
Jason Stephens
Eena Taylor
Julie Stoffel
Marianne Torkelson
Carol Trone
Mari Beth Valley
Marisa Voelker
Mindy Walker
Nancy Webb



Mark Westover
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Patricia Wooldridge
Paula Zipperer
Anonymous

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Community Shares
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GreenStalk Garden
Lakeshore Learning
Madison Top Company
Paradigm Gardens

ADDITIONAL FUND PARTNERS

100 Women Who Care Madison
Amazon Smile
Community Shares of Wisconsin

“The most pressing issues we see are equitable access to quality early childhood education and care options and a strong pipeline of well supported early childhood education professionals. WECA has both the vision and the ground game to create and build coalitions within the state of Wisconsin to foster change in the early childhood education and care landscape. We feel that WECA has both the expertise and trust-based foundation to set the table for the partners in the state to create the change that is needed.”

– American Family Insurance
Institute for Corporate and
Social Impact

A POWERFUL NETWORK

WECA's mission to support early care and education across Wisconsin is strengthened through the powerful, collective voices of early educators, members, families, business leaders, advocates, donors, and allies.

You can make a difference through:

PHILANTHROPY: Donations of any size push WECA's work forward. Visit the website and click Donate.

ADVOCACY: Sign up to receive our Advocacy Digest and Alerts e-newsletter, which features updates and action alerts on key early care and education policy and advocacy efforts. Visit the WECA and Raising Wisconsin websites to learn more and start receiving regular advocacy communications.

MEMBERSHIP: WECA/NAEYC membership unlocks valuable resources and tools to support early childhood educators and early childhood advocates. Learn more, including how to join, by clicking Become a Member on the website.

ENGAGEMENT: WECA and Raising Wisconsin's network of social media followers continues to grow. Like, follow, and share – and tell your friends and networks to do the same – on all platforms! Your voices help elevate important conversations about early care and education.



LEADERSHIP & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WECA is led by an experienced administrative team and governed and guided by a volunteer Board of Directors. All WECA employees are steadfast champions for early childhood professionals and early care and education in Wisconsin. In fiscal year 2022, the organization's employee base nearly doubled.

LEADERSHIP



Ruth Schmidt
Executive Director



Jeanette Paulson
Director of Workforce
Initiatives

“The least we can do is donate toward what someone is doing and give them support. It might be a small donation, but at least it's a donation. Every penny adds up.”

*– Rafat Arain,
child care owner and former
WECA board member*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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President
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Tashawna Green
Train Up A Child
Learning Center



Renuka Mayadev
University of
Wisconsin-Madison,
Wisconsin Partnership
Program



**Latisha Spence-
Brookens**
Moraine Park
Technical College

2022 FINANCIAL REPORT

Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Inc.

Statement of Activities

Year Ended September 30, 2022

	2022	2021
REVENUES		
Food Program	\$3,473,138	\$3,169,258
Teach & Reward - CCDF, PDG, ARPA, & 53206	8,287,401	4,960,344
WEESN - SW PDG	-	283,288
WEESN - Jackson County	-	74,208
WEESN - CRRSA Expansion	3,958,162	134,125
Workforce Retention - CRRSA	39,123	8,202,727
Dane County - ARPA	50,000	-
Sleeves Up for Kids	10,000	-
Inkinds	1,400	199,951
Federated Campaigns	7,127	9,397
Individuals, Corporations, Foundations	1,918,068	1,392,182
Other Contracts	182,353	224,473
Membership	29,283	24,100
Fees for Service	119,854	159,081
Annual Conference	30,940	19,596
Interest	5,174	2,927
Miscellaneous	60,518	52,619
TOTAL REVENUES	\$18,172,541	\$18,908,276
EXPENSES		
Direct: Operations	\$12,924,141	\$16,276,537
Direct: Personal	3,987,842	2,804,174
Indirect: Administration	330,014	159,853
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$17,241,997	\$19,240,564
Change in Net assets without Donor restrictions	601,154	73,243
Change in Net assets with Donor restrictions	329,390	(405,531)
Increase (Decrease) in net assets	\$930,544	\$(332,288)



Wisconsin Early Childhood Association

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Fitchburg, WI 53719

Ph: 800-783-9322

www.wisconsinearlychildhood.org



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