



POLICY SNAPSHOT

Supporting the Early Care and Education Workforce is good for Wisconsin’s Economy

The early care and education (ECE) workforce is essential in supporting parents’ ability to work, strengthening the economy, and fostering children’s development and learning. Yet, approximately 98% of Wisconsin workers earn more than early educators. Low wages affect early educators in many ways, including their personal financial stability, job satisfaction, quality of care, and interactions with children. This also leads to high turnover, which, in turn, suppresses the supply of available care for families. Lack of dependable care impacts the state’s employment rate and has a staggering impact on Wisconsin’s economic productivity – at an estimated loss of \$4 to \$6 billion per year.

Early Educators in Wisconsin at a Glance:

- Family child care providers earn \$7.46 an hour
- Center-based early educators earn \$13.78 an hour
- More than 80% of educators have some form of higher education
- Approximately 1 in 3 rely on some form of public assistance, like Medicaid or FoodShare

Caring for and educating children demands expertise in child development and the skills to nurture children during the most critical phase of brain development. **The median hourly wage**

Wisconsin Median Wage by Occupation	
Occupation	Hourly Median
Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$69.02
Compensation and Benefits Managers	\$63.58
Training and Development Specialists	\$30.02
Lodging Managers	\$28.89
Social Workers, All Other	\$27.58
Food Science Technicians	\$22.78
All occupations	\$22.88
Tutors	\$16.04
School Bus Monitors	\$14.29
Child Care Workers	\$13.78
Dishwashers	\$12.63
Family Child Care Providers	\$7.46

across all occupations in Wisconsin is \$22.88. The majority of child care professionals have some form of higher education and approximately 10 years of experience yet earn nearly \$5 an hour less than the average Wisconsin worker with a high school diploma.

By investing in the early care and education workforce, Wisconsin can increase the supply of care, help parents seek and maintain employment, and strengthen the state’s economy.

Data retrieved from the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics