

Without a Warranty

As a consumer you will be paying for the service every week or month. What are you getting for your money? Be informed. There is no warranty on the early care and education or school age services you purchase. Unlike purchasing a car, a home or an insurance policy, you have no additional protections or consumer rights. In North Carolina, the NC Division of Child Development (www.nchildcare.net) regulates programs that provide early care and education and school age services.

As a parent, you can help to build a stronger, more stable teaching team in your child's program by asking about how the individuals caring for your child are supported in their work environment. Do you see evidence that your child is being served by a professional who will be there tomorrow?

Choosing Child Care Checklists

- <http://www.childcareservices.org/fs/pdffiles/ChildCareCenterChecklist.pdf>
- http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/parents/pr_sn2_checklist.asp

Learn More

- **What Child Care Providers Earn:**
<http://www.naccra.org/randd/child-care-workforce/what-providers-earn>
- **Recommended Salary Schedule:**
<http://ncicdp.org/compensation/salary-schedule/>
- **Wage and Hour FAQs:**
<http://www.nclabor.com/wh/faqs.pdf>

References:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/sangamonenard/factsheets/family81.html>
Preschool Policy Matters, National Institute for Early Education Research, Revised December 2004.
http://www.childcareservices.org/_downloads/WAGES%20ProgramSummary08_09.pdf
http://www.childcareservices.org/_downloads/NC2003wfreport.pdf

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Stacking Up: Why What Early Educators Earn Matters to You



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Compensation Counts

Early care and education programs can provide a healthy, quality environment for children to learn. Creating a strong, stable learning environment for children requires competent and compensated staff.

When employers offer low pay and few or no benefits, early care and education programs have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff who are educated and prepared to provide what your family and child need. As a result, staff leave their positions and the children they care for to find better paying employment to support their families.

Poor Pay Costs Plenty

Investments in a staff member who leaves the program and must be replaced by a new employee who also must be trained, raises the costs associated with running a business. Higher levels of compensation stabilize the teaching team, reduce the cycle of re-employment and create consistency in the classroom.

High levels of workforce turnover can be difficult for young children too. When a family child care provider leaves the business or a teacher unexpectedly leaves or changes to another classroom or leaves the program, the loss of the relationship can be stressful to young children. This is especially true for infants and toddlers who are learning to build trust and first relationships. Feeling safe and secure with a caregiver is essential in their development and learning process. When young children experience the stress related to losing a primary caregiver, common behaviors may include regressing to earlier conduct, aggression, withdrawal, loss of appetite, or depression.

Research shows that programs that offer paid breaks, job descriptions, personnel policies, paid leave for professional development, financial support for continuing professional development, paid planning time, and orientation for new staff members have a lower staff turnover rate.

<http://ncicdp.org/documents/institutebrochure.pdf>



Does it all stack up?

Talk with your child's teacher or program administrator/director to see how your child's teacher stacks up on the early educator compensation checklist. Are they fairly compensated? Is your child's teacher...

- Offered reduced child care costs?
- Earning a fair salary that is commensurate with their education and experience?
- Offered access to federally mandated Family and Medical Leave?
- Offered free or reduced meals?
- Offered reduced child care tuition rates?
- Provided paid breaks?
- Receiving annual increases or bonuses?
- Receiving dental insurance (employer supported)?
- Receiving flexible leave days (funeral, birthday, child involvement)?
- Receiving health insurance (employer supported) benefits?
- Receiving life insurance (employer supported)?
- Receiving long term and short term disability insurance?
- Receiving paid annual leave (at least 5 days a year)?
- Receiving paid holidays (at least 8 per year)?
- Receiving paid planning time?
- Receiving paid sick leave?
- Receiving professional development leave?
- Supported by incentives such as...
 - Acknowledgements (i.e. Teacher of the Month)?
 - Paid Certification fees?
 - Paid memberships to professional organizations?
 - Supports for training and/or college classes?
 - Supports to attend board or committee meetings during work hours?