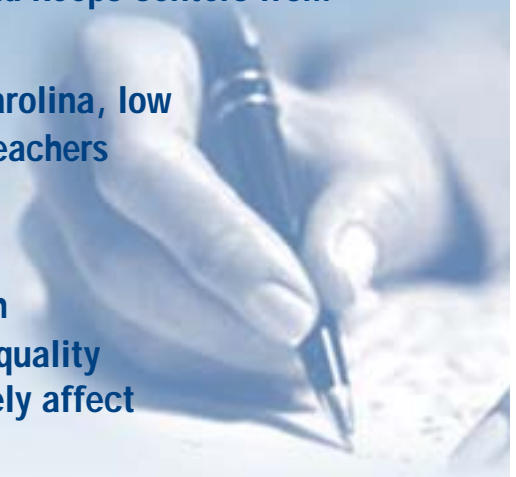




North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development

Promoting the Education, Compensation, and Retention of the Early Childhood Workforce

- ◆ Research clearly links the quality of child care to the education level, the stability, and the compensation and benefits offered to staff.
- ◆ Challenging job conditions and low wages have led to a high rate of turnover in the early childhood workforce. North Carolina currently has a 24% turnover rate.
- ◆ The staff education component in the NC rated licensing system is traditionally the lowest scoring component and keeps centers from earning higher stars.
- ◆ In every workforce study ever done in North Carolina, low salaries and poor benefits were identified by teachers as the primary reason they have left or will leave their child care settings.
- ◆ Most importantly, research has found that high turnover can have a detrimental effect on the quality of care in child care settings and can negatively affect developmental outcomes in young children.



What can your community do?



E D U C A T I O N

- Meet with community partners to assess the professional development, compensation, and retention needs in your community. Develop a plan of action to address your community's needs.
- Ask Child Care Services Association to provide a list of participating T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship recipients in your county. Make sure the recipients are also enrolled in available salary supplement programs. Schedule an appointment to go to facilities that are missing from the list and talk to the director about T.E.A.C.H. scholarship options. Call T.E.A.C.H. to schedule an informational workshop.
- Have local child care providers complete one of the NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development's (NCIECPD) self-assessments: Personal and Professional Plan of Action for child care providers and the Self-Assessment for Administrators for Child Care Programs. Both of these documents are available from the Division of Child Development or the Institute's website.
- Encourage the use of distance education. Providers can utilize technology to access a variety of learning institutions across the state.
- Work with the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency to ensure there are "Learning for a Lifetime" (NCIECPD) sessions and other opportunities for professional development planning.
- Promote community college and university registration dates every semester through CCR&R, Smart Start, licensing consultants, and More at Four programs.
- Assess the satisfaction of the regular users of educational opportunities to determine how these programs are meeting needs.
- While the ultimate education goal is a college degree, encourage providers to start with college classes that directly impact their work with children.



C O M P E N S A T I O N

- Create a community-based training for directors and owners on the development of salary schedules that appropriately reward educational attainment.
- Educate the community about the compensation issues facing the early childhood workforce highlighting data from the latest workforce study completed in your county.
- Create and find adequate funding for a salary supplement program linked to attained teacher education and retention. Outcome data from the state's largest salary supplement program, the Child Care WAGES® Project, indicate that teachers who receive a supplement are increasing their education, earning more money and leaving their child care programs at a substantially lower rate than those who do not.

- Contact state and federal wage and hour law consultants (1-800-625-2267) to conduct regular trainings with the child care centers in your community. Many child care directors are inadvertently not paying staff what they deserve.
- Support access to better benefits as a strategy for improving compensation. Results from evaluations of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program indicate lower turnover rates in programs now offering health insurance benefits.
- Help child care providers access all the resources to which they are entitled. Many child care providers are eligible for child care subsidy support through their department of social services or local purchasing agency. Their children may be eligible for health insurance funding through Health Choice. They may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. In addition, if they are in school, they may be eligible for help through PELL grants and other resources.
- Encourage child care providers to go back to school and access T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships to earn credentials or degrees. Teachers with more education earn more money.



R E T E N T I O N

- 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 turnover rate. Invite leaders from child care centers and homes to discuss strategies and create a better plan for improving work environments in child care settings.
- Educate parents/families, early childhood education students, legislators/local government officials, and the larger community about teacher turnover and the detrimental effects it can have on children.
- Promote participation in the North Carolina Child Care WAGES® Project or local salary supplement program to help address the problem of poor compensation that often leads teachers to seek more lucrative employment.
- Help child care programs learn the why and how of paid leave for their staff. Many providers do not receive a single day of paid sick leave on top of having no health insurance. Plan for staff time off by developing a workable substitute teacher arrangement.
- Use model work standards developed by the Center for the Child Care Workforce to encourage providers to consider strategies for shared decision-making. Adults have a real need to maintain a sense of control over their working environment and to receive recognition for their individual efforts.
- Provide opportunities and support for professional growth to foster lifelong learning and respect for the expertise needed in quality child care classrooms.
- Work to address the turnover issue at the time of hiring. Employers can clarify the expectations of a potential employee by providing a written job description, a well-defined salary structure and personnel policies before the first day of employment.



RESOURCES

NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development
www.ncchildcare.org

Financial Aid Opportunities
www.ncchildcare.org/financial.html

Planning for Professional Development

- Teachers
- Directors
- Community

www.ncchildcare.org/teacher.html

www.ncchildcare.org/admin.html

www.ncchildcare.org/checklist.html

North Carolina Partnership for Children
www.ncsmartstart.org

North Carolina 4-H School-Age Program, NCSU

www.nc4h.org/sacc

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®
www.childcareservices.org/TEACH/TEACH_Project.html or
919-967-3272

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program
www.childcareservices.org/TEACH/T.E.A.C.H.%20Health%20Insurance.html

Child Care WAGES®
www.childcareservices.org/WAGES/WAGES.html or
919-967-3272

Federal Student Aid
www.studentaid.ed.gov or
1-800-433-3243

Department of Public Instruction

- Scholarships and loans for teacher assistants working in public schools
- State teacher salary scales

www.ncpublicschools.org/scholarships or
919-807-3300

www.ncpublicschools.org/salary_admin/salinfo

AmeriCorps/VISTA
www.americorps.org/joining/benefits.html

Peace Corps
www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whyvol.finben

Hope Scholarship (Tax Credit)
www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96721,00.html#Q47

Lifelong Learning (Tax) Credit
www.irs.gov/formspub/page

College Board
www.collegeboard.com

Office of Post-Secondary Education
www.ed.gov/students/prep/college/thinkcollege/edlite-index.html

National Network for Child Care
www.nncc.org

Health Choice
www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dma/epcont.html

National Child Care Information Center
www.nccic.org or
1-800-616-2242

North Carolina Community College System
www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/ or
919-807-7100

North Carolina Division of Child Development
www.ncchildcare.net or
919-662-4499 or
1-800-859-0829

Center for the Child Care Workforce
www.ccw.org or
202-662-8005

Creating Better Child Care Jobs:
“Model Work Standards for Teaching Staff in Center-Based Child Care,” (Center for the Child Care Workforce, 1998)
“Taking On Turnover,” (Whitebook & Bellm, 1999)