Staff Turnover in the Early Childhood Workforce

WHAT FACTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Turnover is a pressing problem in today’s early childhood education (ECE) centers. Turnover among early childhood educators affects ECE quality and has been linked to weakened language and social development in children birth to age five. This infographic highlights findings from a recent study that analyzes data from a nationally representative sample of ECE centers and the center-based provider workforce.

Children’s ages and who pays matter a lot.

Staff turnover rates at centers serving children birth to age 5 were almost double the turnover rate among staff in centers serving children ages 3–5.

Of all childcare center types, private-pay centers serving children birth to 5 had the highest staff turnover. Almost twice as many of these centers had high turnover rates compared to all other ECE centers. This still held true even after accounting for wages and other factors.

To what extent do wages and benefits matter?

Across all centers, higher wages were associated with lower levels of turnover.

Nonwage benefits such as health, retirement, training, and professional development were largely unrelated to centers’ turnover patterns.

Black educators were more likely than their peers to work in low-wage centers.

39% of Black educators worked in low-wage centers, whereas only 27% of white educators and 26% of Hispanic educators worked in low-wage centers.

Although this study analyzed data from 2012, this disparity persists: The 2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index found that Black early childhood educators are paid $0.78 less per hour on average than white educators.

To read the full report: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?projectID=4633

*See next page for definitions of key terms.
A Note About this Infographic

Members of the REL Northeast & Islands Early Childhood Workforce Development Research Alliance wanted to better understand which center-level factors were associated with early childhood workforce turnover to inform policy and program guidance for ECE centers.

This infographic highlights findings from the resulting study, *Center- and Program-Level Factors Associated with Turnover in the Early Childhood Education Workforce*, published by the Institute of Education Sciences.

Key Terms

High turnover: Centers are identified as having high turnover when the proportion of teachers who left their positions exceeded 20 percent in the year the survey was conducted (2012).

Free centers: In the NSECE, centers are coded as receiving payment from some or all families, receiving payment from no families, or don’t know. Free centers receive payment from no families.

Low turnover: Centers are identified as having low turnover when the proportion of teachers who left their positions was below 5 percent in the year the survey was conducted (2012).

Private-pay center: In the NSECE, centers are coded as receiving payment from some or all families, receiving payment from no families, or don’t know. Private-pay centers receive payment from some or all families.

Turnover: This refers to the proportion of educators who left their respective centers in the last 12 months.

Endnotes


