



Arkansas Workforce Study: Program Administrators in Early Childhood Care & Education

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Executive Summary

Purpose

Workforce studies provide an understanding of the people that make up a particular field—their wages and benefits, education levels, professional development needs, and common barriers and supports to their work. Having effective policy and workplace supports is critical in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) because research has shown the first five years of life are the most important for a child’s developing brain. With support from the Arkansas Department of Human Services and Good 2 Great, this report is one of two complementary ECCE workforce studies funded to address that need.

Our previous report¹ focused specifically on the working lives of instructional staff from their perspective. This report covers the working lives of ECCE administrators, as well as their reporting on the workplace supports their programs offer instructional staff. With these studies, our goal is to establish a baseline understanding of Arkansas’s ECCE workforce that can inform effective policy and target limited resources to where they can create the best outcomes for Arkansan children.

Sample and Methodology

With the help of state and national ECCE leaders and researchers, we developed an online survey that was sent to 1,241 administrators of licensed ECCE programs in Arkansas. After two rounds of data collection, 417 participants at least partially completed the survey.

Programs were roughly evenly split between urban and rural counties (55.2% vs. 44.8%). Most were single-site programs (62.4%) or part of a multi-site program (26.0%). Family child care homes (FCCH) were also well represented based on statewide estimates (11.6% sample vs. 14.1% statewide). The majority of programs operated within non-profit (39.1%), for-profit (23.6%), or faith-based organizations (22.7%) and were rated as higher-quality programs (60.4%).

Summary of Findings

Wages

According to administrators, wages for instructional staff ranged from \$19,552 to \$29,349 per year, which is a similar range reported in our previous study. Lead teachers in Pre-K classrooms were the highest paid instructional position, with assistant teachers in FCCHs ranking lowest. Higher-quality programs reported paying statistically higher wages to their lead Pre-K teachers, assistant Pre-K teachers, and their administrator than those in lower-quality programs.

When comparing these rates to similar positions outside of ECCE, only administrators of centers are paid more than the average preschool teacher in Arkansas (\$37,502 per year

¹ <https://familymedicine.uams.edu/arkansas-workforce-study/>

vs \$31,700). However, even administrators are paid substantially less than the state's kindergarten teachers (\$45,850)². Such large pay disparities between similarly qualified staff likely plays a role in higher turnover within the ECCE sector, and by extension, the overall quality of care children receive.

Benefits

Unlike in many other industries, ECCE employers often do not provide common workplace benefits to *all* their employees. Less than half of programs in our study offer health or dental insurance (44.4% health insurance, 42.9% dental insurance) and retirement benefits were provided by just over 40% of the programs. While the majority (62.7%) reported offering one or more types of paid leave, (even) unpaid maternity leave is far from guaranteed (58.8%). In nearly every case, benefits were statistically more likely to be provided for those in higher-quality programs than in lower quality programs.

Professional Development

When asked about their support for professional development, results showed one-quarter of programs (24.9%) report *not* paying employees for state-required training hours if that training took place outside of normal business hours. Additionally, only one-third (35.9%) pay for training beyond what is required to meet minimum licensing requirements and only half (49.6%) reimburse their staff for expenses incurred related to training (mileage, fees, etc).

While unfortunate, this was not surprising. In our previous workforce study, focus group participants described identical issues, admitting they often chose their professional development based on whatever is closest, regardless of the content or training type.

Health-Related Absences

Administrators reported that they have someone from their instructional staff absent due to health reasons an average of once a week. While higher-quality programs were statistically more likely to offer health insurance to *all* their employees than lower-quality programs (73.8% vs 19.4%), there was no statistical difference on health-related employee absences.

While our survey cannot link these in a cause/effect relationship, past research suggests that when people have health insurance they are more likely to seek health care when needed, take fewer sick days, and be more alert and productive at work (see O'Brien³ for a comprehensive review of employee access to insurance). Logically, this should then result in fewer sick days for staff in ECCE programs and reduce the need for staffing substitutions to maintain proper child-teacher ratios.

² https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ar.htm#25-0000

³ O'Brien, E. (2003). Employers' Benefits from Workers' Health Insurance. *Milbank Quarterly*, 81(1), 5-43. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.00037>

Vacancies and Recruitment of Instructional Staff

We asked directors to report on staff vacancies in the last 6 months. For center-based programs, a staggering 3 out of 4 (76.6%) administrators report at least one instructional vacancy in their program within a 6 month span of time. This rate is much higher than desired, however, it is somewhat unsurprising given that results from the staff survey suggest more than half of instructional staff were uncertain of their future in the field (e.g., 22.4% report planning to leave the field within the next five years and 29.5% report being uncertain how long they will remain in the field).

When job role, age of children served, and program type are all considered, vacancies for center-based infant/toddler classrooms (both assistant and lead teachers) and assistant teachers in center-based Pre-K classrooms were the most common vacancies reported and that those positions are “somewhat difficult” to fill.

Predicting Future Administrator Vacancies

Nearly one-third of administrators report planning to leave the field within five years (29.2%) and 21.3% were unsure of when they will leave. This translates to the potential loss of half the administrative workforce in the coming years. Taken together with the results from instructional staff, these data reflect a highly unstable ECCE workforce.

When we asked this group of administrators what factors were important in field their reasons for potentially leaving, 66.7% reported financial reasons as “important” or “very important” in their decision (wanting better pay, better benefits, or career advancement). Noting 72% of staff also reported planning to leave for financial reasons, it is clear these issues are widespread across the sector.

Unlike instructional staff, 46.1% of administrators say retirement is important or very important in their decision. When applying this result to our state as a whole, we estimate about 12% of administrators across the field could be retiring in the near future.

Enrollment Trends and Tuition Subsidies

Overall, administrators report that enrollment is stable as compared to last year. Most administrators report their current enrollment is about the same (45.8%) and a nearly equal percentage of programs said their numbers had decreased somewhat/greatly (27.8%) as increased somewhat/greatly (26.3%).

Nearly half of programs surveyed accept children with child care subsidies. Just over one-third (36.2%) of programs said they *do* accept state vouchers for economically-disadvantaged families vouchers and have had children with subsidies enrolled in their program within the last six months. An additional 13.8% of administrators say they accept vouchers but have not had any of these children enrolled in the last six months.

We asked programs that do accept vouchers if they charge private pay parents more than they receive for children with those vouchers. Interestingly, the vast majority of programs

(80%) report charging the same in tuition as the voucher reimbursement rate. Market prices are intended to drive tuition subsidies. If programs believe that they are not legally permitted to charge private tuition parents more than voucher reimbursement, this could have negative consequences for our ECCE businesses as the costs of goods and personnel increase.

The majority of administrators that do not serve children with tuition subsidies said they did not qualify to accept vouchers based on their program type (they serve only children with grant funding – such as Head Start or ABC; 35%). Developing a better understanding of the reasons programs with state and federal Pre-K programs do not provide programming for children of other ages and funding sources may provide an avenue to increase the number of children in quality programs.

Recommendations

With the above in mind, we recommend the following as priorities to improve the working lives of our ECCE administrators and instructional staff, reduce turnover, and strengthen the quality of care that programs deliver.

1. Explore options for increasing the pay and benefits of both administrators and instructional staff.

States have implemented multiple techniques for increasing stability in the ECCE workforce, including strategies that comprise supplementing salaries with stipends and through targeted tax credits.⁴ Stipend strategies, like WAGES,⁵ provide education-based salary supplements to ECCE educators based on their education and years in the field. States have also implemented tax credits for ECCE staff to incentivize education and retention. For example, Louisiana and Nebraska have refundable tax credits for ECCE staff and administrators that are tied to the quality rating of the program in which they work, their education level, and years in the field.

Some states have worked to prevent turnover in state pre-kindergarten programs specifically by introducing pay parity policies, which equalize compensation and benefits between staff in pre-kindergarten and K-12.⁶ Pay parity policies can also be instituted between teachers paid by state resources, but who are not employed in similar types of programs (ex. pay for the same position can differ nearly \$10,000 between public and private programs in Arkansas). To promote qualified instructional staff into ECCE administrative rolls, such policies should also include wage increases for administrators (ideally, on par with elementary school administrators where qualifications are equivalent).

Wanting better wages and benefits was a key motivator of potential turnover for both administrators in this study and instructional staff in our previous study. Less than half of programs reported offering health or dental insurance to all employees and only 40% are offered retirement plans. Increasing the quality and access to benefits for all ECCE

⁴ <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2016/Early-Childhood-Workforce-Index-2016.pdf>

⁵ <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/child-care-wage/>

⁶ http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Pre-K-Parity-Report_Final.pdf

employees could also go a long way in reducing turnover.

2. Find ways to support and incentivize additional college-level education for current staff.

Additional educational attainment would both increase the pressure to raise wages across the sector and help grow the pipeline of staff available to fill program administrator and other leadership roles. The cost of tuition and paid time off for completing coursework are great obstacles in raising the level of teacher education. Indeed, only approximately one-third of program administrators reported paying for professional development beyond what is required by minimum licensing. Therefore, some states have developed infrastructures to subsidize tuition, most notably Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood)⁷ programs.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarships tie education, compensation, and retention together, awarding increased compensation upon attainment of a prescribed number of college credit hours. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood removes some of the typical barriers to college education through payment for most of tuition costs, books, travel (including requiring paid release time), as well as providing a scholarship counselor.

In the absence of T.E.A.C.H., Arkansas has historically supported scholarship opportunities for ECCE staff to attain a CDA credential. In recent years, funding for that program was reallocated into programmatic supports within Better Beginnings. In light of the proposed expansion of Child Care Development Block Grant funding, support for this program could be re-evaluated.

3. Continue educational efforts about BehaviorHelp and support programs with resources to promote healthy social-emotional development.

While there have been modest decreases in reported suspensions/expulsions since 2016, nearly one-third of administrators in our study (31.0%) said some kind of suspension or expulsion took place in their program in the last year. Despite the existence of a nation-leading triage system in Arkansas for preventing suspensions and expulsions in the ECCE sector, 60.3% of administrators in our study reported having never heard of the BehaviorHelp program.

Previous studies have shown that children of color, in general⁸, and African American boys, in particular⁹, are suspended or expelled at disproportionately higher rates than children from other racial groups. Being suspended or expelled at such a young age can start children down a path so life altering, it has been dubbed, “The Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline”. Therefore, it is critical to continue awareness building efforts of BehaviorHelp resources across the sector.

⁷ <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/t-e-a-c-h-early-childhood/>

⁸ <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/expansive-survey-americas-public-schools-reveals-troubling-racial-disparities>

⁹ Gilliam, W. S. (2005). *Prekindergarteners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems*. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

Noting that teachers struggling with behavior challenges in their classrooms were a prominent theme in our previous survey of instructional staff, we also recommend increased funding for professional development that address these challenges (preferably multi-session, or mentor/coaching-based models, which are known to be more effective than single-session trainings¹⁰).

Introduction

Over the last decade, socio-emotional learning has evolved to be a centerpiece of effective teaching in the early childhood care and education field. This paradigm shift is often represented by the “Pyramid Model”—with an effective workforce at the key, foundational layer of the model. Unfortunately, a national average turnover rate of 30% across the early education field¹¹ has made establishing that foundation difficult. There are many complex and systemic factors at that drive turnover, but large-scale national studies have shown that low wages¹² and lack of benefits¹³ are clear predictors of turnover in the ECCE field.

Past studies have shed light on various difficulties affecting the ECCE sector in Arkansas, including high turnover of the infant-toddler workforce and in programs serving children funded by subsidies,¹⁴ declining wages that are well below the national average,¹⁵ and high rates of food insecurity¹⁶ across the field. While these targeted studies and similar regional studies¹⁷ have helped us better understand certain aspects of the challenges in our state, Arkansas was in the national minority for not having a regular, comprehensive, statewide workforce study to examine these and other ECCE-related challenges.

Workforce studies provide an understanding of the people that make up a particular field—their wages and benefits, education levels, professional development needs, and common barriers and supports to their work. Having effective policy and workplace supports is critical in the ECCE field because research has shown the first five years of life are the most important for a child’s developing brain. With support from the Arkansas Department of Human Services and Good 2 Great, this report is one of two complementary ECCE workforce studies funded to address that need.

¹⁰ Howes, C., James, J., & Ritchie, S. (2003). Pathways to effective teaching. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18(1), 104-120.

¹¹ http://www.childresearch.net/projects/ecec/2012_04.html

¹² Phillips, D., Howes, C., & Whitebook, M. (1991). Child care as an adult work environment. *Journal of Social Issues*, 47(2), 49-70.

¹³ Holochwost, S., DeMott, K., Buell, M., Yannetta, K., & Amsden, D. (2009). Retention of staff in the early childhood education workforce. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 38(5), 227-237.

¹⁴ McKelvey, L. M., & Chapin-Critz, M. (2016). *Survey of Child Care Directors*. University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; Little Rock, AR.

¹⁵ <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2016/Index-2016-Arkansas.pdf>

¹⁶ Swindle, T., Ward, W., Bokony, P., & Whiteside-Mansell, L. (2016). A cross-sectional study of early childhood educators' childhood and current food insecurity and dietary intake. *Journal of Hunger and the Environment*, 12, 1-15. NIHMSID: NIHMS848077

¹⁷ <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2016/Index-2016-Arkansas.pdf>

Our previous report¹⁸ focused specifically on the working lives of instructional staff from their perspective. This report covers the working lives of ECCE administrators¹⁹, as well as their reporting on the workplace supports their programs offer instructional staff. With these studies, our goal is to establish a baseline understanding of Arkansas’s ECCE workforce that can inform effective policy and target limited resources to where they can create the best outcomes for Arkansan children.

Workforce Study of Program Administrators: Survey

Measure Selection Process and Survey Measures

The Research and Evaluation Division of the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS/RED) developed Arkansas's workforce survey for ECCE program administrators. Development included suggestions from national leaders²⁰ who provided guidance from a national and state perspective. We also conducted a review of existing workforce study methodologies²¹ to better understand how ours should be conducted.

In addition to the review of state-level documents, multiple other sources of survey items were considered. We conducted a review of prior Race to the Top applications in search of workforce elements about which data were unknown. We also reviewed the Quality Progress Report (QPR), which is the annual report that meets the requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). We reviewed the QPR to identify any information specific to the workforce requested by the CCDBG that is currently not collected.

To further inform the work on this project, we participated in a webinar, *Edging Forward: Overview of States' Progress Addressing Workforce Data Gaps and Actions Steps for Policymakers*, hosted by The Early Childhood Data Collaborative. As a follow-up to this webinar, CCI conducted a review of the document *Early Childhood Workforce Index 2016*, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

¹⁸ <https://familymedicine.uams.edu/arkansas-workforce-study/>

¹⁹ We refer to directors of center-based programs and owners of family childcare homes collectively as administrators throughout this report

²⁰ Sarah LaMoine, Director of Early Childhood Workforce Innovations, Zero To Three and Joellyn Whitehead, Department Director of Data and Research, the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies and Standards and Data Chair for the National Workforce Registry Alliance

²¹ Fiscal Year 2015 Illinois Child Care Salary and Staffing Survey: Child Care Centers; Fiscal Year 2015 Illinois Child Care Salary and Staffing Survey: Family Child Care Home Providers; Early Childhood Investment Corporation: Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce Study (2009) Michigan; Working in Early Care and Education in North Carolina: 2015 Workforce Study; Oregon Early Learning Workforce: One Year Beyond Baseline Comparison of 2012 and 2013; Rhode Island Early Learning Workforce Study Executive Summary, January 2014; Vermont’s Early Childhood & Afterschool Workforce: Findings from the Vermont Early Childhood & Afterschool Workforce Surveys; Minnesota Child Care Business Update for Centers; Minnesota Child Care Business Update for Family Child Care

Key leaders in early childhood education in Arkansas also provided feedback on the initial draft of this study. Those leaders include:

- Diana Courson, Associate Director, A-State Childhood Services
- Dr. Deniece Honeycutt, Director, University of Arkansas Early Care and Education Projects (also part of team developing the new AR Workforce Competencies document)
- Geania Dickey, Principal, dot2dot Consulting, LLC
- Angela Duran, Campaign Director, AR Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

In March 2017, we met with staff from the state regulating body of ECCE in Arkansas, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE), to share our revised draft and solicit their feedback. After incorporating these changes, a follow-up meeting was held with the DCCECE management team in June 2017 to review each question and incorporate further feedback. Lastly, the survey was piloted with a diverse group of ECCE administrators, whose comments were integrated into the final version.

The sections below give a brief outline of the types of questions that appeared in our survey administrators (more information can be obtained by request by contacting Lorraine McKelvey at LMcKelvey@uams.edu).

Program Information & Child Demographics

We asked administrators about the organizational structure of their program (single/multi-site program or FCCH; profit/non-profit/church-affiliated/etc), as well as various quality measures of their programs (accreditations, Better Beginnings level, and funding sources) to inform an overall quality rating. We also asked for current enrollment of children by age, current enrollment receiving free/reduced lunch, and percentage of children enrolled by age, race, and with developmental delays. Finally, we asked various questions about voucher acceptance and prevalence, instances of suspension or expulsion, availability of transportation, and availability of multilingual care.

Retention and Compensation

We asked administrators about their difficulty filling open staff positions, average salaries among their staff, staff benefits, and the average percentage of days their instructional staff miss due to health issues. Finally, we also asked how much longer the administrators themselves planned to work in the ECCE sector and what factors they consider important in that decision.

Professional Development

We asked administrators about the characteristics and content of the trainings their staff attended in the last year and where they as a supervisor go to find information about professional development opportunities. We also asked whether they formed individualized professional development plans with their staff and what kind training (if any) their staff had on implementing the program's curriculum.

Sampling Method

In July 2017, UAMS/RED was provided data on all licensed programs in the state of Arkansas. Out of 2,257 licensed programs, 330 programs did not have an email contact for the administrator. Of the 1,927 programs with email contacts, 305 were duplicated addresses (i.e., one administrator over multiple ECCE licenses such as one contact for a large public school system), which resulted in 1,621 unique emails for the administrator/owner of the program. In October 2017, the survey was sent to 1,621 recipients, 380 were unsuccessful. This resulted in a sample of 1,241 with valid email addresses.

In November 2017, the survey was closed. A total of 177 participants opened and at least partially completed the survey (40 partial respondents), for a response rate of 14.3%. Because of low response rate, in February 2018, an additional data collection period was opened with a shortened version of the survey. The sample for the second data collection period was chosen by identifying nonrespondents from the first run. A total of 240 participants opened and at least partially completed the survey (47 partial respondents), for a response rate of 18.7%.

With both samples combined, the total target sample, adjusted for delivery failures, was 1,241, the total participant count was 417, and the total response rate was 33.6% (Note: partial responses were later removed during analysis, for a final participant count of 330).

Because the survey was anonymous, it is not possible to discern the characteristics of licensed programs that did and did not respond to the survey. However, we compare the survey respondents to statewide licensed providers based on Better Beginnings participation, geographic location, funding sources, and ages of the children served to provide comparisons for inference (details are provided in Appendix 2 and described in the results section below).

Our survey participants were more likely to be administrators of higher-quality programs and were less likely to accept tuition subsidies than the statewide averages. However, our sample represents programs from 59 of 75 Arkansas counties and was similar to the statewide distribution of programs across urban and rural settings and is representative of the percentage of FCCHs statewide.

Results: Program Information & Child Demographics

The following section details the program information and demographics of children served for the programs in our survey. Results tables can be found in Appendix 1.

What types of programs participated in the study?

Programs were roughly evenly split between urban (55.2%) and rural counties (44.8%). In total, 59 counties are represented in our survey, with most programs located in central Arkansas (Pulaski County in particular) and in two northwestern counties. Most administrators were representing single-site programs (62.4%) or multi-site programs (26.0%). Family child care homes (FCCH) were also well represented based on statewide estimates (11.6% sample vs. 14.1% statewide).

Non-profits were the most common type of organization to support/operate child care programs (39.1%), followed by for-profits (23.6%), faith-based (22.7%), and local educational agencies (15.2%), among others. See Table 1 in Appendix 1 for full results.

What percentage of programs were of higher quality?

Programs were rated as “higher-quality” based on three criteria: Better Beginnings level, program accreditations, and funding streams. High-quality programs were those that, 1) held a Better Beginnings level 3 rating, OR 2) certifications from either the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), or 3) were funded by ABC, Head Start, or Early Head Start.

This quality definition was established because level 3 is the highest Better Beginnings rating, both NAEYC and NAFCC have a higher minimum standard of quality than is required for a Better Beginning level 3 and programs receiving funds from ABC, Head Start, and Early Head Start are subject to enhanced quality standards as a condition of their funding.

Using these criteria, just over half the programs in this study were rated as higher-quality (54.2%), which is nearly identical to our 2017 workforce study of instructional staff and much higher than the statewide percentage (29.8%). Because of this overrepresentation of quality programs in the survey, we have included descriptions of findings for higher and lower quality programs separately, where appropriate.

For full results on program accreditations, Better Beginnings levels, see Table 2 in Appendix 1. For full results on funding streams see Table 3 in Appendix 1.

How common is it for staff to speak another language?

As not all Arkansan children (or their parents) speak English as a first language, it is important to have staff who can teach bilingually and translate to and for parents of the children for which they care. Nearly 1 in 3 (30.3%) administrators in our study reported having at least one staff member who was fluent in Spanish, and about 1 in 15 programs (6.7%) have staff fluent in another non-English language. Additionally, higher-quality programs were statistically more likely to have staff that speak Spanish than lower-quality programs (40.3% vs. 21.7%).

Do multilingual staff or other translators have a translator certification?

While formal translator credentials or certifications are not necessary for staff to communicate fluently with children and parents, they are considered best practice in ECCE leadership. In addition to fluency testing, professional credentials offer specific training on topics that are necessary for proper communication during interpreted meetings with families (ex., ethics, confidentiality, variation in dialects, word usage, and

handling difficult situations). Fewer than 1 in 5 (18.3%) administrators said their multilingual staff had a formal translator certification.

Do programs typically provide transportation for children?

Depending on an individual family's circumstances, lack of transportation to and from child care could pose a barrier to enrollment. Knowing this, we asked administrators if their programs provided daily transportation by bus and/or van for children enrolled in their care and found that just under one-third (30.9%) provide such transportation. There were no significant differences in programs provision of transportation based on program quality.

What types of children do programs serve most often?

Average enrollment for center-based programs in our study was 85 children (21 infants/toddlers, 52 preschoolers, and 12 school-age), with preschoolers making up the largest share of enrollment (60.4%). The racial composition of children enrolled was similar to the general population of Arkansas, with 67.2% Caucasian, 19.4% African-American, 8.2% Hispanic, and 11% multi-racial or another racial group.

Overall, 13.0% of infants/toddlers, 19.5% of preschoolers, and 3.7% of school-aged children enrolled have a developmental delay or disability. Further analysis shows these children are served almost exclusively in Medicaid-funded programs, which reported between 24.7% and 88.4% of their enrollment have delays/disabilities. This was unsurprising, as we know that children with delays are often served in dedicated programs in Arkansas²², however, it is considered best practice to integrate children with typical and atypical development in the same spaces where possible²³.

When program quality was taken into account, higher-quality programs had statistically higher Hispanic enrollment, lower Caucasian enrollment, and serve higher numbers of Pre-K children with developmental disabilities than lower-quality programs. For full results, including a breakdown of center-based vs. FCCH demographics, see Table 4a for all programs, 4b for center-based programs and 4c for FCCH in Appendix 1.

How are enrollment numbers trending?

Overall, administrators report that enrollment is stable as compared to last year. Most administrators report their current enrollment is about the same (45.8%) and a nearly equal percentage of programs said their numbers had decreased somewhat/greatly (27.8%) as increased somewhat/greatly (26.3%). Although licensed capacity for

²² Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas First Connections Infant and Toddler Program, Division of Developmental Disabilities. Federal Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Performance Report. April 16, 2012.

²³ Buysse, V., & Bailey, D. B. (1993). Behavioral and developmental outcomes in young children with disabilities in integrated and segregated settings: A review of comparative studies. *Journal of Special Education*, 26(4), 434-461.

enrollment is not likely to change, data analyzed by UAMS/RED for the market price study have demonstrated that programs typically enroll at about 80% of licensed capacity.

Do programs typically accept tuition subsidies?

Half of programs said they do not accept state-funded vouchers/subsidies from children of economically-disadvantaged families. Just over one-third (36.2%) of programs said they *do* accept these vouchers and have had children with subsidies enrolled in their program within the last six months (programs with children receiving child care subsidies in the last 6 months reported an average of 11 children utilizing subsidies over that time). An additional 13.8% of administrators say they accept vouchers but have not had any of these children enrolled in the last six months.

We asked programs if they charge private pay parents more than they receive for voucher children. Interestingly, the vast majority of programs (80%) report charging the same in tuition as the voucher reimbursement rate. Market prices are intended to drive tuition subsidies, not the reverse. If programs believe that they are not legally permitted to charge private tuition parents more than voucher reimbursement, this could have negative consequences for our ECCE businesses as the costs of goods and personnel increase. For full results, see Table 5 in Appendix 1.

What reasons do programs give for not accepting tuition subsidies?

To help state policymakers increase acceptance of children with child care subsidies, we asked programs who do not accept them to specify why. The majority of administrators that do not serve children with tuition subsidies said they either did not qualify to accept vouchers based on their program type (they serve only children with grant funding – such as Head Start or ABC; 35%). Developing a better understanding of the reasons programs with state and federal Pre-K programs do not provide programming for children of other ages and funding sources may provide an avenue to increase the number of children in quality programs. Other reasons included not have any openings (15.3%), the length/complicated nature of the paperwork involved (13.5%), reimbursement rates being too low (12.9%), or no voucher-eligible families asking to enroll in their program (10.4%). See Table 6 in Appendix 1 for full results.

How often are suspensions and expulsions occurring in Arkansas child care settings?

We asked administrators to report instances of suspension and expulsion that have occurred in their program during the last 12 months. To best understand the severity of suspensions/expulsions, we organized results based on the most severe action taken in each program, rather than count each type of suspension/expulsion as separate categories. For example, programs that had both a partial day suspension and an expulsion were counted under the expulsion category only.

- 68.5% report no suspension/expulsion activities
- 22.3% called a parent to pick up a child early (partial day suspension)
- 4.3% had at least one full-day suspension
- 4.9% had at least one expulsion

It is important to note, these rates are lower than reported in the survey of ECCE administrators²⁴ conducted in 2016, where 21% reported early pick up, 9% reported a full day suspension, and 7% reported expulsion. The reductions in these activities are likely a positive outcome of the implementation of the state's BehaviorHelp system and policies, which mandate that children in care funded through state resources (i.e., vouchers, ABC) are not permitted to expel children and are provided assistance through BehaviorHelp.

How often are programs calling parents to report challenging behaviors?

Because calls home to report challenging behavior often (but not always) precede suspension or expulsion, we asked programs how often they called parents to report such behavior in the last month (how often overall, not per parent). These rates below are similar to the rates that were reported by administrators in 2016, with the exception of calls multiple times per week, which was lower than administrators reported in 2016.¹⁵

- 50.0% report no calls home
- 37.6% call once or twice per month
- 7.6% call once or twice per week
- 4.5% call more than two times per week

Results: Retention & Compensation of Administrators and Staff

The following section reports on various aspects of employee recruitment/retention and compensation that could influence the effectiveness of an ECCE program and the well-being of their staff.

How common are instructional staff vacancies and how difficult are they to fill?

We asked administrators to report on staff vacancies in the last 6 months. For center-based programs, a staggering 3 out of 4 (76.6%) reported at least one instructional vacancy in their program within a 6 month span of time. This rate is much higher than desired, however, it is somewhat unsurprising given that results from the staff survey suggest more than half of instructional staff were uncertain of their future in the field (e.g., 22.4% report planning to leave the field within the next five years and 29.5% report being uncertain how long they will remain in the field).

²⁴ McKelvey, L. M., & Chapin-Critz, M. (2016). *Survey of Child Care Directors*. University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; Little Rock, AR.

In center-based programs, vacancies for assistant teachers were more common than for lead teachers (71.4% vs. 62.5% with at least one vacancy). When job role, age of children served, and program type are all considered, vacancies for center-based infant/toddler classrooms (both assistant and lead teachers) and assistant teachers in center-based Pre-K classrooms were the most common vacancies reported. For full results see Table 7 below or in Appendix 1.

Table 7. Arkansas ECCE programs with instructional staff vacancies in the last 6 months and reported level of difficulty filling vacancies.		
Vacancies and difficulty to fill, by job type and program type (n = 34-296)	<i>In only a 6 month period, three-quarters of center-based programs and nearly one-third of FCCH's have some kind of vacancy among their instructional staff.</i>	
	<i>Staff in Infant/Toddler classrooms and assistant teachers in Pre-Kindergarten classes are the most difficult to retain. Vacancies in these positions are also the most difficult for programs to fill.</i>	
Lead Teacher (n = 97-267)		
	% programs w/vacancy	Average difficulty to fill
Position Average	62.5%	Somewhat difficult
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	62.2%	Somewhat difficult
Pre-K (center-based)	50.2%	Somewhat difficult
School-aged (center-based)	54.6%	Neither difficult nor easy
Assistant Teacher (n = 94-257)		
Position Average	71.4%	Neither difficult nor easy
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	67.0%	Somewhat difficult
Pre-K (center-based)	65.0%	Neither difficult nor easy
School-aged (center-based)	53.2%	Neither difficult nor easy
Assistant Teacher/Aide (n = 34)		
All ages (Family Child Care Home)	32.4%	Neither difficult nor easy

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Has the restructuring of the Arkansas teaching licensure requirements affected programs' ability to recruit qualified staff?

In 2012, the Arkansas Department of Education made changes to the teacher licensure system to increase the flexibility of teacher placement. However, this flexibility came with a potential unintended effect of reducing the number of teachers who are credentialed to teach very young children (birth to Pre-K). To better understand the potential effects, we asked programs who were aware of these changes if they had more difficulty (post-restructure) recruiting Pre-K teachers. The majority of administrators said there was “no change” in difficulty (60.9%), but a sizeable percentage (37.3%) said it was “somewhat harder” or “much harder” (higher-quality programs were statistically more likely to say the change made recruiting more difficult). For full results, see Table 8 in Appendix 1.

What is the average pay rate for administrators and their staff?

According to administrators, wages for instructional staff ranged from \$19,552 to \$29,349 per year, which is a similar range reported in our previous study. Lead teachers in Pre-K classrooms were the highest paid instructional position, with assistant teachers in FCCHs ranking lowest. Sadly, in line with the findings from the survey of instructional staff, teachers in infant/toddler settings are paid the least despite research that clearly suggests the importance of quality ECCE experiences from birth to five.

Higher-quality programs reported paying statistically higher wages to their lead Pre-K teachers (\$16.51 vs \$11.66), assistant Pre-K teachers (\$10.90 vs \$9.44), and administrator (\$19.56 vs \$16.55) than those in lower-quality programs. There were no other statistically significant differences in pay based on position and setting.

When comparing these rates to similar positions outside of ECCE, only administrators of centers are paid more than the average preschool teacher in Arkansas²⁵ (\$37,502 per year vs \$31,700). However, the average salary for administrators within ECCE programs is substantially less than the average kindergarten teacher (\$45,850).

While our study did not measure this directly, such large pay disparities between similarly qualified staff likely plays a role in higher turnover within the ECCE sector, and by extension, the overall quality of care children receive. For full results, see Table 9 below or in Appendix 1.



ECCE program administrators make \$8,300 less on average than kindergarten teachers in Arkansas.

²⁵ https://www.bls.gov/oec/current/oec_ar.htm#25-0000

Table 9.
The average pay of ECCE workforce in Arkansas as reported by program administrators.

Pay, by job and program type (n = 15-316)	<p>Wages for instructional staff ranged from \$19,552 to \$29,349 per year, which is a similar range reported in our previous study.</p> <p>When comparing pay rates to similar positions outside of ECCE, only administrators of centers are paid more than the average preschool teacher in Arkansas²⁶ (\$37,502 per year vs \$31,700).</p> <p>However, the average salary for administrators within ECCE programs is substantially less than the average kindergarten teacher (\$45,850).</p>	
Lead Teacher	Per Hour	Per Year
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	\$10.90	\$22,672
Pre-K (center-based)	\$14.11	\$29,349
School-aged (center-based)	\$11.70	\$24,336
Assistant Teacher		
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	\$9.28	\$19,302
Pre-K (center-based)	\$10.22	\$21,258
School-aged (center-based)	\$9.46	\$19,677
Assistant Teacher/Aide		
Any age (family child care home)	\$9.40	\$19,552
Administrator/Owner		
Administrator of single/multi-site center	\$18.29	\$38,043
Owner of family child care home	\$11.47	\$23,858

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Questions about income for positions other than administrators were only asked in the first round of data collection.

²⁶ https://www.bls.gov/oec/current/oec_ar.htm#25-0000

What kind of job benefits are offered to staff?

Unlike in many other industries, ECCE employers often do not provide common workplace benefits to *all* their employees. Less than half of programs in our study offer health or dental insurance (44.4% health insurance, 42.9% dental insurance) and retirement benefits were provided by just over 40% of the programs. While the majority (62.7%) reported offering one or more types of paid leave, (even) unpaid maternity leave is far from guaranteed (58.8%).

When it comes to financial supports to improve the quality of the care provided in the program, one-quarter (24.9%) report *not* paying employees for state-required training hours if that training took place outside of normal business hours and only one-third (35.9%) do pay for training beyond what is required to meet minimum licensing requirements. As shown in Tables 10a and 10b in Appendix 1, in nearly every case, benefits were statistically more likely to be provided for those in higher-quality programs than in lower quality programs.

Along those same lines, it is worth noting that in general, the percentage of programs in this survey that reported providing each type of benefit was higher than the percentage of staff in our previous survey who reported being offered them. Samples in both surveys suggest that there was an overrepresentation of staff in higher quality settings, but staff reports of benefits were lower than those of administrators. For a more detailed breakdown, see Tables 10a for benefits provided to all staff and 10b for benefits provided to only some staff in Appendix 1.



Fewer than half
of ECCE programs
offer health
or dental
insurance
to all of their
staff.

How often do programs have instructional staff absences due to health issues?

Administrators reported that they have someone from their instructional staff absent due to health reasons an average of once per week. Results also show only 44.4% of programs report offering health insurance to all of their staff. While higher-quality programs in our study were statistically more likely to offer health insurance to *all* their employees than lower-quality programs (73.8% vs 19.4%), we did not find a statistical difference in the two groups on health-related employee absences. However, past research suggests that when people have health insurance they are more likely to seek health care when needed and be more alert and productive at work (see O'Brien²⁷ for a comprehensive review of employee access to insurance).

²⁷ O'Brien, E. (2003). Employers' Benefits from Workers' Health Insurance. *Milbank Quarterly*, 81(1), 5-43. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.00037>

This could be particularly important in the ECCE space, as past research with Head Start staff suggest that their employees have worse physical and mental health than the general population, even when controlling for factors like age, race, education, and marital status.²⁸ Finally, reducing health-related absences may also lessen job-related stress for administrators and other staff by reducing the need to find classroom substitutions to meet minimum required child-teacher ratios.

When are administrators planning to leave the field?

Nearly half of administrators plan to continue working in the ECCE field at least six more years (49.4%), nearly one-third planned to leave within five years (29.2%) and 21.3% were unsure of when they will leave the field. Program quality did not have a statistically significant effect on how soon administrators planned to leave the field, although it was a significant factor for instructional staff in our previous study²⁹. While it is not possible to know of the historical yearly loss of program administrators, these data are worrisome as they suggest the potential for loss of nearly half the administrative workforce in the coming years. Further, taken together with similar rates of potential to leave the field as reported by instructional staff, these findings present a highly unstable ECCE workforce. See Table 11 in Appendix 1 for full results.

What factors are important in administrators' plans to leave the field?

When we asked this group of administrators what factors were important in field their reasons for potentially leaving, 66.7% reported financial reasons as “important” or “very important” in their decision (wanting better pay, better benefits, or career advancement). Noting 72% of staff also reported planning to leave for financial reasons, it is clear these issues are widespread across the sector. There were no significant differences between program quality and leaving the field for financial reasons.

Of those planning to leave or uncertain of how much longer they will work in the field, nearly half (46.1%) say retirement is important or very important in their decision. When applying this result to our whole sample, we estimate about 12% of administrators will be leaving the field due to retirement in the near future. See Table 12 in Appendix 1 for full results.



Half of program administrators said they plan to leave the field within 5 years or are unsure how long they will stay.

²⁸ Whitaker, R. C., Becker, B. D., Herman, A. N., & Gooze, R. A. (2013). The Physical and Mental Health of Head Start Staff: The Pennsylvania Head Start Staff Wellness Survey, 2012. *Preventing Chronic Disease, 10*, E181. <http://doi.org/10.5888/pcd10.130171>

Results: Education & Professional Needs

The following section details the types of professional development administrators most often use for themselves and their staff, their perceptions about training availability, and use of comprehensive curricula in their programs. Results tables can be found in Appendix 1.

How common is it for administrators to use individualized professional growth plans with their staff?

Individualized professional growth plans are a best-practice principle for professional development used across a variety of sectors. Indeed, findings from our study of ECCE instructional staff demonstrated that individuals who were likely to leave the field were less likely to have individualized plans. Only two out of five administrators (39.3%) said they develop such plans with *all* their staff, with one in five (20.6%) saying they do so only for *some* staff. Not surprisingly, higher-quality programs were statistically more likely to use individualized plans with *all* their staff than lower-quality programs (58.3% vs 22.9%).

We should note that the all-staff rate for individual plans mentioned above is 20% higher than findings in our workforce study of instructional staff. Given that the sampling of both workforce surveys suggest overrepresentation of programs and staff from higher quality settings, it is interesting that staff have disparate perceptions from administrators about the support for their continuing education.

Are administrators aware of statewide resources for professional development?

Nearly all administrators reported having heard of the Arkansas Professional Development Registry (PDR; formerly TAPP; 99.1%). While the vast majority knew of Child Care Aware (81.8%), it is surprising that not all administrators are using these local resource and referral agencies. The state's expulsion prevention triage support system, BehaviorHelp, was lesser known at 39.7%.

Higher-quality programs statistically more likely to be aware of BehaviorHelp, with 58.3% reporting knowing about the program versus only 24.5% of lower-quality programs. This is not surprising given that suspension/expulsion policies apply to programs receiving state funding for ECCE services. However, given that instructional staff requested support to promote healthy social-emotional development, it is clear that these resources could be very useful to additional programs. See Table 13 in Appendix 1 for full results.

What sources of information are administrators using to find out about professional development opportunities?

We asked administrators how often they used various sources to search for information about professional development opportunities or were sent opportunities through those

channels (Never, Annually, Quarterly, Once per month, or Weekly). As expected, PDR was a common source of information (once per month), along with email/mail from training sponsors (once per month). Social media and the DCCECE website were both rated “quarterly”, with all other sources ranked “annually” or “never”. Please note that this question was excluded from the re-release of the survey. As such, answers are not representative of the full sample. See Table 14 in Appendix 1 for full results.

What sources of professional development are administrators using to train their staff?

The vast majority of administrators say they used trainings in PDR offered by ASU, UAMS, or UA-ECEP (87.9%) or online courses outside of PDR (81.2%). Professional associations/conferences (59.7%) and in-house training (52.1%) were also popular sources. See Table 15 in Appendix 1 for full results.

What types of training are administrators using most often to develop their staff?

We asked administrators how often they or their staff attended trainings that used different types of training methods in the last year (Never, Annually, Quarterly, Once per month, or Weekly). Single topic, one-session trainings, online trainings, protected reflection time with other teachers, and meetings with mentors or coaches were all used quarterly, on average. In-depth, multi-session trainings, professional conferences, and observation time averaged annual usage. Please note that this question was excluded from the re-release of the survey. As such, answers are not representative of the full sample. See Table 16 in Appendix 1 for a visual representation of results.

What content areas are covered most often in the training of ECCE staff?

We asked administrators how often they or their staff were exposed to various ECCE content areas during trainings they attending in the last year (Never, Annually, Quarterly, Once per month, or Weekly). Children’s development and learning was the most common topic, averaging once per month. Most content areas were received quarterly (ex. teacher-child interactions, collaborating/communicating with families), with cultural and linguistic diversity received once a year. For full results, see Table 16 in Appendix 1.

Do administrators feel there are adequate trainings available to develop their staff to meet legally mandated requirements?

When asked about the availability of trainings to meet federal health and safety requirements (first aid/CPR) and transportation training requirements, administrators identified a large need for more accessibility. Only 27.4% said there are enough related health and safety trainings and only 48.0% said there are adequate opportunities for transportation training.

How common is it for programs to use a comprehensive curriculum?

Nearly three-quarters of programs (71.8%) reported using a comprehensive curriculum. To train staff on that curriculum however, most programs use their own internal staff (administrators or lead teachers, 63.2%; curriculum coordinators, 31.6%) rather than external sources of training (30.8%).

General Discussion

When comparing our results from ECCE program administrators to our recent study of instructional staff, we see many co-occurring themes and complementary findings—namely a workforce that is poorly compensated, often lacks access to basic benefits, and is experiencing dramatic levels of turnover.

Instructional Staff

According to administrators, wages for instructional staff ranged from \$19,552 to \$29,349 per year, which is a similar range reported in our previous study. Lead teachers in Pre-K classrooms were the highest paid instructional position and, in line with the findings from the survey of instructional staff, teachers in infant/toddler settings are paid the least. Further, common workplace benefits are also not available to *all* ECCE staff. Less than half of programs in our study offer health and/or dental insurance and retirement benefits.

Inadequate compensation, combined with the non-competitive benefits, likely plays a large role in turnover and absenteeism of instructional staff. For center-based programs, a staggering 3 out of 4 (76.6%) administrators report at least one instructional vacancy in their program within the last 6 months. When job role, age of children served, and program type are all considered, vacancies for center-based infant/toddler classrooms (both assistant and lead teachers) and assistant teachers in center-based Pre-K classrooms were the most common vacancies reported.

In addition to leaving the field, administrators report that health-related absenteeism among instructional staff is also very high. Administrators reported that, on average, they have at least one staff vacancy per week due to illness. This repeated challenge to meeting required staff to child ratios poses a disruption to classroom stability and likely stresses administrators.

We did not find a statistical difference between higher- and lower-quality programs on health-related employee absences, despite the fact that higher-quality programs were more likely to offer health insurance to *all* their employees than lower-quality programs. This could be particularly important in ECCE, as past research with Head Start staff suggest that their employees have worse physical and mental health than the general population, even when controlling for demographic factors.³⁰

It is also possible that health-related absenteeism is associated with the high levels of depression risk (one-third screened positive for depressive symptoms) among instructional staff that was

³⁰ Whitaker, R. C., Becker, B. D., Herman, A. N., & Gooze, R. A. (2013). The Physical and Mental Health of Head Start Staff: The Pennsylvania Head Start Staff Wellness Survey, 2012. *Preventing Chronic Disease, 10*, E181. <http://doi.org/10.5888/pcd10.130171>

reported in our previous study. While our studies did not measure this directly, previous research³¹ suggests staff who are depressed may have more health-related absences or have lower workplace productivity than employees who do not experience such stressors.³²

Administrators

Of all ECCE positions, only administrators of centers are paid more than the average preschool teacher in Arkansas (\$37,502 per year vs \$31,700). However, even administrators are paid substantially less than the state's kindergarten teachers (\$45,850)³³.

Such large pay disparities between similarly qualified staff likely plays a role in higher turnover within the ECCE sector, and by extension, the overall quality of care children receive. Indeed, Nearly half of administrators in our survey reported planning to leave the sector within 5 years or were unsure of how long they would stay. This rate is nearly identical to that previously reported by instructional staff. These two findings demonstrate a very unstable ECCE workforce.

As with instructional staff, financial reasons were the most common factor motivating administrators to leave the ECCE sector. However, unlike instructional staff, a high percentage of administrators (46.1%) report retirement as key in their decision to leave the field. This could mean that 12% of administrators across the state plan to retire within the next 2 years.

In addition to employee absences and vacancies, administrators are frequently worried about increasing costs of doing business. One such cost increase is in employee compensation, which rose in 2017 when Arkansas passed a minimum wage increase from \$7.25, the federal minimum wage, to \$8.50. To be clear, we believe pay increases are warranted given the pay rates and levels of food and economic insecurity seen in our workforce studies. However, to support wage increases and greater program quality overall, programs will have to find a way to increase their revenue going forward.

In order to learn more about the funding levels of ECCE programs in Arkansas, we asked administrators about their programs' sources of revenue the rates of tuition they charge. While we have discussed these sources earlier in this report, one key finding is worth reiterating: 80% of programs report charging the same rate for private tuition as the voucher reimbursement rate issued by the state. It is possible that administrators believe that programs *cannot* charge more in private tuition than the voucher rate. Given the need to increase revenue over time and that market prices are meant to drive voucher reimbursement, our results clearly suggest action should be taken to clarify the policy.

³¹ Lener, D., & Mosher-Henke, R. (2008). What Does Research Tell Us About Depression, Job Performance, and Work Productivity? *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 50(4), 401-410. doi: 10.1097/JOM.0b013e31816bae50

³² "Workplace productivity" is a neutral term used across industries. When applied to ECCE, productivity would translate to quality of care delivered.

³³ https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ar.htm#25-0000

Recommendations

With the above in mind, we recommend the following as priorities to improve the working lives of our ECCE administrators and instructional staff, reduce turnover, and strengthen the quality of care that programs deliver.

1. Explore options for increasing the pay and benefits of both administrators and instructional staff.

States have implemented multiple techniques for increasing stability in the ECCE workforce, including strategies that comprise supplementing salaries with stipends and through targeted tax credits.³⁴ Stipend strategies, like WAGES,³⁵ provide education-based salary supplements to ECCE educators based on their education and years in the field. States have also implemented tax credits for ECCE staff to incentivize education and retention. For example, Louisiana and Nebraska have refundable tax credits for ECCE staff and administrators that are tied to the quality rating of the program in which they work, their education level, and years in the field.

Some states have worked to prevent turnover in state pre-kindergarten programs specifically by introducing pay parity policies, which equalize compensation and benefits between staff in pre-kindergarten and K-12.³⁶ Pay parity policies can also be instituted between teachers paid by state resources, but who are not employed in similar types of programs (ex. pay for the same position can differ nearly \$10,000 between public and private programs in Arkansas). To promote qualified instructional staff into ECCE administrative rolls, such policies should also include wage increases for administrators (ideally, on par with elementary school administrators when qualifications are equivalent).

Wanting better wages and benefits was a key motivator of potential turnover for both administrators in this study and instructional staff in our previous study. Less than half of programs reported offering health or dental insurance to all employees and only 40% are offered retirement plans. Increasing the quality and access to benefits for all ECCE employees could also go a long way in reducing turnover.

2. Find ways to support and incentivize additional college-level education for current staff.

Additional educational attainment would both increase the pressure to raise wages across the sector and help grow the pipeline of staff available to fill program administrator and other leadership roles. The cost of tuition and paid time off for completing coursework are great obstacles in raising the level of teacher education. Indeed, only approximately one-third of administrators report paying for professional development above what is required for minimum licensing. Some states have developed infrastructures to subsidize tuition, most notably Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood).³⁷

³⁴ <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2016/Early-Childhood-Workforce-Index-2016.pdf>

³⁵ <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/child-care-wage/>

³⁶ http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Pre-K-Parity-Report_Final.pdf

³⁷ <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/t-e-a-c-h-early-childhood/>

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarships tie education, compensation, and retention together, awarding increased compensation upon attainment of a prescribed number of college credit hours. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood removes some of the typical barriers to college education through payment for most of tuition costs, books, travel (including requiring paid release time), as well as providing a scholarship counselor.

In the absence of T.E.A.C.H., Arkansas has historically supported scholarship opportunities for ECCE staff to attain a CDA credential. In recent years, funding for that program was reallocated into programmatic supports within Better Beginnings. In light of the proposed expansion of the Child Care Development Block Grant funding, support for this program could be re-evaluated.

3. Continue educational efforts about BehaviorHelp and support programs with resources to promote healthy social-emotional development.

While there have been modest decreases in reported suspensions/expulsions since 2016, nearly one-third of administrators in our study (31.0%) said some kind of suspension or expulsion took place in their program in the last year. Despite the existence of a nation-leading triage system in Arkansas for preventing suspensions and expulsions in the ECCE sector, 60.3% of administrators in our study reported having never heard of the BehaviorHelp program.

Previous studies have shown that children of color, in general³⁸, and African American boys, in particular³⁹, are suspended or expelled at disproportionately higher rates than other racial groups. Being suspended or expelled at such a young age can start children down a path so life-altering, it has been dubbed, “The Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline”. Therefore, it is critical to continue building awareness of BehaviorHelp resources across the sector.

Noting that teachers struggling with behavior challenges in their classrooms were a prominent theme in our previous survey of instructional staff, we also recommend increased funding for professional development that address these challenges (preferably multi-session, or mentor/coaching-based models, which are known to be more effective than single-session trainings⁴⁰).

³⁸ <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/expansive-survey-americas-public-schools-reveals-troubling-racial-disparities>

³⁹ Gilliam, W. S. (2005). *Prekindergarteners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems*. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

⁴⁰ Howes, C., James, J., & Ritchie, S. (2003). Pathways to effective teaching. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18(1), 104-120.

Appendix 1: Tables

This appendix contains copies of every table shown in the body of the report in addition to a selection of tables for data that was described verbally in the report.

Table 1. Characteristics of ECCE programs in Arkansas.	
County of program (n = 319)	<i>Programs in our survey were split relatively evenly between urban and rural counties.</i>
Urban	55.2%
Rural	44.8%
Program type (n = 327)	<i>Most participants oversee a single-site program.</i>
Single-site program	62.4%
Part of a multi-site program	26.0%
Family child care home	11.6%
Program supported, run, or operated by... (n = 330)	<i>ECCE programs are most likely to be affiliated with a non-profit organization.</i>
Non-profit	39.1%
For-profit	23.6%
Faith-based organization	22.7%
Local education agency (ex. school district or co-op)	15.2%
None of the above	11.8%
University or college	3.3%
Hospital	< 1%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Results for support/operation of programs were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%.

Table 2.
Quality level, accreditations, and Better Beginnings level of ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Quality level (n = 330)	<i>The majority of programs represented in our survey were higher-quality.</i>
Higher-quality	54.2%
Lower-quality	45.8%
Program accreditations (n = 330)	<i>Very few programs have accreditations other than Better Beginnings.</i>
Arkansas Better Beginnings	72.1%
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	8.2%
Commision on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)	4.8%
Other accreditation	4.8%
National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)	2.7%
Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (ANSAA)	>1%
Better Beginnings level (n = 238)	<i>Of the 72% of administrators who said their program was part of Better Beginnings, nearly all were split between Level 1 and Level 3.</i>
Level 1	35.0%
Level 2	7.0%
Level 3	30.0%
Not part of Better Beginnings	28.0%
Part of Better Beginnings, Level Unknown	< 1%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Programs were rated as “higher-quality” if administrators told us the program held a Better Beginnings level three rating, currently hold NAEYC and/or NAFCC accreditations, or were funded by ABC, Head Start, or Early Head Start. This standard of quality was chosen because level three is the highest Better Beginnings rating, NAEYC and NAFCC are national accreditations that have more stringent quality requirements than Better Beginnings Level 3 and programs receiving funds from the above streams are subject to enhanced quality standards as a condition of their funding.

Table 3.
Funding streams and percent of children with free/reduced lunch in ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Funding sources in the last 12 months (n = 330)		<i>Private tuition is the most common funding stream for Arkansas ECCE programs.</i>
Parent fees/Private tuition		71.8%
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP; i.e. free/reduced lunch)		47.3%
Federal funding (voucher, subsidy, CCDF)		34.8%
Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)		21.8%
Private donations, grants, or fundraising		20.9%
In-kind/match donations (ex. National School Lunch Act, or Title 1)		12.4%
Medicaid ^a		12.4%
Head Start/Early Head Start (including EHS Child Care Partnerships)		9.7%
Pre-K Development Grants		4.8%
Corporate/employer subsidies		<1%
Percentage receiving free/reduced lunch (n =305)		<i>Free/reduced lunch rates for programs in our sample are well below the state K-12 average of 70%</i>
Free/Reduced lunch ^b		46.4%

Notes: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. a. Medicaid funding was calculated here as any program having >90% enrollment of children with developmental disabilities/delays (any age) or any program with a CARF accreditation. Results for accreditation and funding were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%. b. This figure was calculated using the number with of children receiving free/reduced lunch (CACFP meals) divided the overall number of children enrolled.

Table 4a. Demographics of children served in ECCE programs in Arkansas.	
Average # of total enrollment, by age All programs (n = 309 - 321)	<i>Programs in our survey average 85 children enrolled and mostly serve preschoolers.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	21 children
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	52
School-age (6+ years)	12
Total	85
Percentage of total enrollment, by age (calculated from above)	<i>Preschoolers make up the largest chunk of ECCE enrollment in Arkansas.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	24.1%
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	60.9%
School-age (6+ years)	14.9%
Race (n = 330)	<i>The children served at programs in our survey are racially similar to the general population of Arkansas.</i>
Caucasian	67.2%, 30.1 SD
African-American	19.4%, 28.8 SD
Hispanic	8.2%, 8.19 SD
Multi-Racial	5.3%, 7.4 SD
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.1%, 9.6 SD
Native American	2.6%, 12.6 SD

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. In results accompanied by the standard deviation (SD), administrators were asked to choose between eight separate percentage ranges. To create an average, the midpoint of the range was used. Therefore answers may not add to 100%.

Table 4b.**Demographics of children served in center-based ECCE programs in Arkansas.**

Average # of total enrollment, by age Center-based programs (n = 289)	<i>Programs in our survey average # children enrolled and mostly serve preschoolers.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	24 children
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	58
School-age (6+ years)	15
Total	94
Percentage of total enrollment, by age (calculated from above)	<i>Preschoolers make up the largest chunk of ECCE enrollment in Arkansas.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	25.5%
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	61.7%
School-age (6+ years)	16.0%
Race (n = 330)	<i>The children served at programs in our survey are racially similar to the general population of Arkansas.</i>
Caucasian	66.2%, 29.7 SD
African-American	18.7%, 27.6 SD
Hispanic	8.8%, 15.6 SD
Multi-Racial	5.6%, 7.6 SD
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.4%, 10.0 SD
Native American	2.8%, 13.2 SD
Percentage enrolled with developmental delay or disability, by age in programs that did not report funding from Medicaid (n = 194-239)	<i>Programs that are non-Medicaid funded serve a small percentage children with delays or disabilities.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	4.4%, 12.3 SD
Pre-K (3-5 years)	10.1%, 15.1 SD
School-age (6+ years)	1.3%, 5.7 SD

(Table continued on next page)

Percentage enrolled with developmental delay or disability, by age in programs that reported funding from Medicaid (n = 27-41)	<i>Medicaid funded programs serve a high percentage of children with a delay or disability.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	70.5%, 40.7 SD
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	88.4%, 20.7 SD
School-age (6+ years)	24.7%, 43.4 SD

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. In results accompanied by the standard deviation (SD), administrators were asked to choose between eight separate percentage ranges. To create an average, the midpoint of the range was used. Therefore answers may not add to 100%.

Table 4c.	
Demographics of children served in Family Childcare Homes in Arkansas.	
Average # of total enrollment, by age Family child care homes (n = 38)	<i>Programs in our survey average children enrolled and mostly serve preschoolers.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	4 children
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	6
School-age (6+ years)	2
Total	12
Percentage of total enrollment, by age (calculated from above)	
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	33.3%
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	50.0%
School-age (6+ years)	16.7%
Race (n = 17 - 29)	<i>The children served at programs in our survey are racially similar to the general population of Arkansas.</i>
Caucasian	77.0%, 31.7 SD
African-American	23.8%, 37.8 SD
Hispanic	<1%, 1.4 SD
Multi-Racial	2.2%, 4.3 SD
Asian/Pacific Islander	<1%, 1.0 SD
Native American	<1%, 1.0 SD
Percentage enrolled with developmental delay or disability, by age (n = 245-314)	<i>Family Child Care Homes report serving a small percentage children with delays or disabilities.</i>
Infant/Toddler (0-35 months)	3.7%, 16.2 SD
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	4.7%, 17.0 SD
School-age (6+ years)	3.8%, 18.6 SD

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. In results accompanied by the standard deviation (SD), administrators were asked to choose between eight separate percentage ranges. To create an average, the midpoint of the range was used. Therefore answers may not add to 100%.

Table 5.
Voucher acceptance rates of ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Acceptance of vouchers (n = 326)	<i>Fifty percent of administrators said their programs do not accept state vouchers/subsidies for children in low-income families.</i>
Yes, and have had subsidized children enrolled at some time in the last 6 months	36.2%
Yes, but have not had subsidized children enrolled at some time in the last 6 months	13.8%
Do not accept vouchers	50.0%
...If yes, how many served per week (n = 117)	<i>On average, children with subsidies make up 13% of program enrollment statewide.</i>
# of children served in a typical week whose families receive voucher/subsidy assistance	11 children
...If yes, charge more for private pay (n = 163)	<i>The vast majority of programs do not charge differently for private pay than they do for children with vouchers/subsidies</i>
Charge private pay parents more than parents whose children receive vouchers	20.2%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Table 6.
Arkansas ECCE programs' reasons for not accepting state vouchers/subsidies.

<p>Reasons for not accepting state vouchers/subsidies (n = 163)</p>	<p><i>Fifty percent of administrators who said their programs do not accept state vouchers for children from low-income families.</i></p> <p><i>Of those, the most common reasons were program qualifications or lack of openings.</i></p>
<p>Program doesn't qualify (Head Start, etc.)</p>	<p>35.0%</p>
<p>Program doesn't have openings</p>	<p>15.3%</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>14.7%</p>
<p>Don't have time for the paperwork/the paperwork is too complicated</p>	<p>13.5%</p>
<p>Voucher rates are too low</p>	<p>12.9%</p>
<p>There are no interested families/no families in need</p>	<p>10.4%</p>
<p>We offer our own tuition break/scholarship to families in need</p>	<p>9.8%</p>
<p>Don't know what the voucher/subsidy program is/have never looked into it</p>	<p>9.2%</p>
<p>Voucher contracts are too short/inconsistent</p>	<p>5.5%</p>
<p>Voucher/subsidy families can't afford or won't pay the tuition balance (co-payment)</p>	<p>4.3%</p>

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Results above were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%.

Table 7.
Arkansas ECCE programs with instructional staff vacancies in the last 6 months and reported level of difficulty filling vacancies.

Vacancies and difficulty to fill, by job type and program type (n = 34-296)

In only a 6 month period, three-quarters of center-based programs and nearly one-third of FCCH's have some kind of vacancy among their instructional staff.

Staff in Infant/Toddler classrooms and assistant teachers in Pre-Kindergarten classes are the most difficult to retain. Vacancies in these positions are also the most difficult for programs to fill.

Lead Teacher (n = 97-267)

	% programs w/vacancy	Average difficulty to fill
Position Average	62.5%	Somewhat difficult
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	62.2%	Somewhat difficult
Pre-K (center-based)	50.2%	Somewhat difficult
School-aged (center-based)	54.6%	Neither difficult nor easy

Assistant Teacher (n = 94-257)

Position Average	71.4%	Neither difficult nor easy
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	67.0%	Somewhat difficult
Pre-K (center-based)	65.0%	Neither difficult nor easy
School-aged (center-based)	53.2%	Neither difficult nor easy

Assistant Teacher/Aide (n = 34)

All ages (Family Child Care Home)	32.4%	Neither difficult nor easy
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Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Table 8.
Effect of 2012 licensure system restructuring on Arkansas ECCE programs' ability to recruit qualified Pre-K teachers.

Difficulty recruiting qualified Pre-K teachers since restructure (n = 317)	<i>Of those aware of the changes, a sizable percentage found it more difficult to recruit Pre-K teachers after the licensure restructuring.</i>
No change	60.9%
Somewhat harder	20.9%
Much harder	16.4%
Somewhat easier	< 1%
Much easier	< 1%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Table 9.
The average pay of ECCE workforce in Arkansas as reported by program administrators.

Pay, by job and program type (n = 15-316)	Wages for instructional staff ranged from \$19,552 to \$29,349 per year, which is a similar range reported in our previous study.	
	When comparing pay rates to similar positions outside of ECCE, only administrators of centers are paid more than the average preschool teacher in Arkansas ¹ (\$37,502 per year vs \$31,700).	
	However, the average salary for administrators within ECCE programs is substantially less than the average kindergarten teacher (\$45,850).	
Lead Teacher		
	Per Hour	Per Year
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	\$10.90	\$22,672
Pre-K (center-based)	\$14.11	\$29,349
School-aged (center-based)	\$11.70	\$24,336
Assistant Teacher		
Infant/toddlers (center-based)	\$9.28	\$19,302
Pre-K (center-based)	\$10.22	\$21,258
School-aged (center-based)	\$9.46	\$19,677
Assistant Teacher/Aide		
Any age (family child care home)	\$9.40	\$19,552
Administrator/Owner		
Administrator of single/multi-site center	\$18.29	\$38,043
Owner of family child care home	\$11.47	\$23,858

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Questions about income for positions other than administrators were only asked in the first round of data collection.

¹ https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ar.htm#25-0000

Table 10a.
Job benefits offered by ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Percent of programs reporting these benefits offered to ALL STAFF, by program quality	All Programs (N=330)	Higher-Quality Programs (N=151)	Lower-Quality Programs (N=179)
Insurance			
Health insurance***	44.4%	73.8%	19.4%
Dental insurance***	42.9%	68.9%	20.8%
Disability and/or life insurance***	46.6%	75.4%	22.2%
Holidays and leave			
Paid vacation days	42.1%	46.8%	38.0%
Paid holidays*	55.6%	67.7%	45.2%
Paid sick/personal days***	62.7%	85.5%	43.1%
Unpaid maternity leave*	58.8%	71.7%	47.9%
Paid training			
Paid for training hours required by licensing**	74.1%	85.5%	64.4%
Pay or stipend for additional training beyond required hours***	35.9%	52.5%	21.4%
Payment/reimbursement for educational or training expenses (travel, fees, tuition, etc.)***	50.4%	69.4%	33.8%
Cost Reductions			
Free meals for staff	40.6%	45.2%	36.6%
Free/reduced child care fees	49.6%	37.7%	55.6%
Raises and retirement			
Periodic increases in wages based on cost of living or performance/education**	59.4%	71.0%	49.3%
Retirement or pension plan***	40.2%	70.5%	14.1%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. ⁺*P* < .10, **P* < .05, ***P* < .01, ****P* < .001, chi-square comparisons for program quality. All questions about benefits were only asked in the first round of data collection.

Table 10b.
Job benefits offered by ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Percent of programs reporting these benefits offered to SOME STAFF, by program quality	All Programs (N=330)	Higher-Quality Programs (N=151)	Lower-Quality Programs (N=179)
Insurance			
Health insurance***	11.3%	6.6%	15.3%
Dental insurance***	11.3%	8.2%	13.9%
Disability and/or life insurance***	9.8%	6.6%	12.5%
Holidays and leave			
Paid vacation days	27.1%	19.4%	33.8%
Paid holidays*	22.4%	16.1%	31.5%
Paid sick/personal days***	17.9%	9.7%	25.0%
Unpaid maternity leave*	6.9%	6.7%	7.0%
Paid training			
Paid for training hours required by licensing**	14.0%	4.8%	21.9%
Pay or stipend for additional training beyond required hours ***	13.7%	11.5%	15.7%
Payment/reimbursement for educational or training expenses (travel, fees, tuition, etc.)***	23.3%	22.6%	23.9%
Cost Reductions			
Free meals for staff	9.0%	9.7%	8.5%
Free/reduced child care fees	5.3%	6.5%	4.1%
Raises and retirement			
Periodic increases in wages based on cost of living or performance/education**	10.5%	8.1%	12.7%
Retirement or pension plan***	9.1%	8.2%	14.1%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. [†] $P < .10$, $*P < .05$, $**P < .01$, $***P < .001$, chi-square comparisons for program quality. All questions about benefits were only asked in the first round of data collection.

Table 11.
Years until administrators plan to leave the ECCE workforce in Arkansas.

Planning to exit workforce in... (n = 328)	<i>Half of the administrators plan to leave the field within 5 years or are unsure how much longer they will stay in the field.</i>
Less than 1 year	1.8%
1-2 years	7.0%
3-5 years	20.4%
6-10 years	18.6%
11 years or more	30.8%
Not sure	21.3%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Table 12.**Important factors in ECCE administrators' plans to leave the field.**

“Important” or “Very Important” (n = 83-89)	<i>As with instructional staff, administrators say economic reasons are their top drivers for leaving the field. However, administrators were much more likely to be planning to retire.</i>
I want a higher paying job	58.8%
I want better benefits	55.4%
I will be retiring	46.1%
No opportunity for career advancement	41.7%
Classroom management is stressful	40.7%
I am looking for a different job opportunity outside of child care	38.8%
I want a job that has more flexibility (e.g., working different or fewer hours)	36.9%
I am leaving for personal reasons	29.4%
Other (n=51)	23.5%
I am leaving for health reasons	13.3%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Results for support/operation of programs were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%.

Table 13.
Arkansas ECCE administrators' awareness of professional development resources and specialized credentials.

<p>Have heard of this resource (n = 330)</p>	<p><i>While administrators know of Arkansas professional development registry, some are not aware of local supports for training through the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and most are not aware of the BehaviorHelp system.</i></p>
<p>Arkansas Professional Development Registry (PDR; formerly TAPP)</p>	<p>99.1%</p>
<p>Child Care Aware</p>	<p>81.8%</p>
<p>BehaviorHelp</p>	<p>39.7%</p>
<p>AR Birth – Pre-K teaching credential</p>	<p>33.9%</p>

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Results above were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%.

Table 14.

The frequency of Arkansas ECCE administrators' use of sources to find out about professional development opportunities/resources.

Sources used to find information on professional development, average response (n = 124-136)	<i>Administrators check a few sources for professional development opportunities regularly, but most are checked only annually.</i>
Arkansas Professional Development Registry (formally TAPP)	Once a month
Emails or mailings from sponsors of training/education	Once a month
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	Quarterly
AR Division for Child Care & Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) website	Quarterly
Arkansas Department of Education (ADE)	Annually
Institutions of higher education (2- or 4-year colleges)	Annually
Local Child Care Aware office	Annually
School principal or other district personnel	Annually
Professional networks/associations (AECA, AAIM, AAFCCA, ACPAC)	Annually
Head Start training and technical assistance system	Never

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations.

Table 15.
Arkansas ECCE administrators' use of professional development sources.

Administrator or staff received training in the last year from this source... (n = 330)	<i>The vast majority of administrators use PDR and other online training to develop their staff, with roughly half using conferences or in-house training.</i>
Training in TAPP/PDR offered by ASU, UA-ECEP, UAMS, or other contract agency	87.9%
Online	81.2%
Professional association meeting/conference	59.7%
In-house training by the administrator or program-paid sources	52.1%
Local Child Care Aware office	39.7%
Enrolled in college or university (2- or 4-year)	33.0%
Local school district	13.6%
Other	5.2%

Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. Results above were “select all that apply” and may add to over 100%.

Table 16.
Training types and content areas used in professional development for ECCE programs in Arkansas.

Types of training used most often to develop staff, the median response (n = 124-136)		<i>Higher-quality training types like multi-session training, conferences, and observation time are used less often than single-topic, one-session training.</i>
Single topic, one-session training		Quarterly
Online learning		Quarterly
Dedicated/protected time to reflect with other teachers		Quarterly
Meeting with mentors or coaches		Quarterly
In-depth, multi-session training		Annually
Professional conferences		Annually
Observing other teachers in similar settings		Annually
Content areas used in the last year, average response (n = 314-323)		
Children’s development and learning		Once a month
Children’s health, safety, and nutrition		Quarterly
Collaborating, communicating with, and/or supporting families		Quarterly
Teacher-child interactions (ex. classroom climate and behavior management)		Quarterly
Inclusion, participation, and learning for children with identified disabilities/delays		Quarterly
Using observation and assessment to plan daily activities or child screening		Quarterly
Learning environments, curriculum implementation, and program quality		Quarterly
Cultural and linguistic diversity		Annually

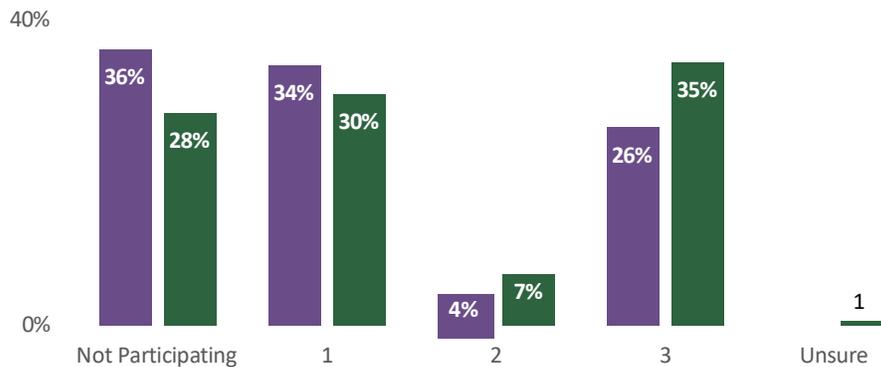
Note: Responses from participants who did not complete the entire survey were removed from these calculations. All questions about types of training (top half of this table) were only asked in the first round of data collection.

Appendix 2: Representativeness of Sample

Better Beginnings Level

Compared to the overall participation levels in Better Beginnings, programs in our survey were more likely to have a BB rating (Figure 1) and were more likely to have a higher BB rating.

Figure 1: Better Beginnings ratings of **survey participants** are slightly higher than the **statewide average**.



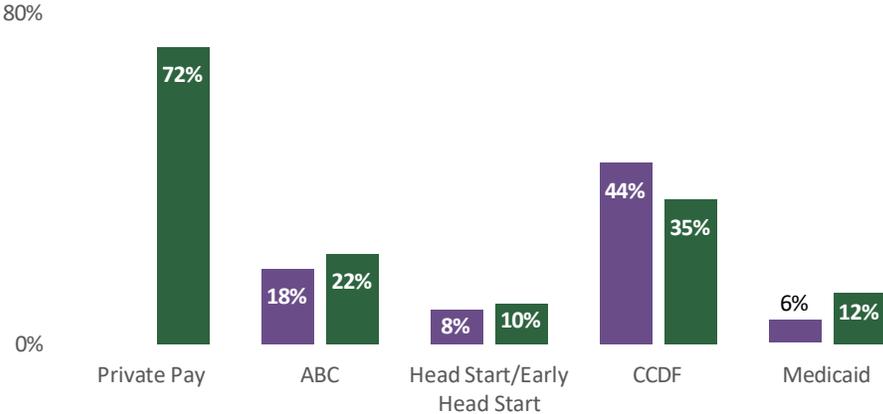
Geographic Location

Respondents were asked to select the county in which their programs were located. More respondents were located in central Arkansas, Pulaski County in particular, and in two Northwestern counties. A total of 59 counties are represented. The distribution of program administrators who participated in the survey were roughly evenly split between urban and rural counties (55.2% urban, 44.8% rural). The rates of urban/rural program respondents is similar to the percentages of programs statewide (59.6% urban, 40.4% rural), with a slight overrepresentation of rural programs.

Funding Sources

We asked programs to report on the types of funding they use to operate. As can be seen in Figure 2, survey respondents were similar to the statewide percentages of programs. Programs that receive ABC, Head Start, and Medicaid funding were slightly more likely to be survey respondents. Programs that participate in the child care subsidy program were slightly less represented. A noted limitation of these statistics is the lack of inclusion of private pay funding data in the licensing dataset used to make comparisons for representativeness of survey respondents.

Figure 2: Funding streams of **survey participants** are similar to the **statewide average**.



Together, these comparisons suggest that the respondents of the survey were similar to programs throughout Arkansas. However, there is an overrepresentation of programs with higher levels of Better Beginnings and with ABC, Head Start, and Medicaid funding, and a lower participation rate from those participating in the child care subsidy program. As a whole, these differences would lead us to believe that programs who responded to the survey are of slightly higher quality than the state as a whole.

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