

Westchester County
Child Care Salary Survey
2008



www.ChildCareWestchester.com



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INTRODUCTION

Westchester County is home to nearly 300 regulated center-based early care and education programs that care for and educate nearly 23,000 children ages birth to twelve years. These programs rely on a workforce that renders indispensable service to our community, preparing our youngest citizens for success in school and life, enabling parents to work, and supporting regional economic growth. Despite the singular importance of their contributions, the men and women employed by child care centers and school age programs receive modest salaries, limited benefits, and little public acclaim. Research shows that our early care and education programs must be of the highest quality if our children are to succeed in the competitive global economy we now live in. The quality of our early care and education system relies firmly on the shoulders of those employed there.

This report outlines the demographics of the men and women that work in our regulated child care centers and school age programs along with their current levels of compensation and work supports. We will also compare the results of this survey with the last salary and benefits survey conducted by the Council in 2000.

REPORT PROCESS

The Survey

The survey document was developed after reviewing other child care workforce surveys utilized across the country and the one used previously by the Council in 2000. The project was discussed with child care leaders at a variety of meetings throughout spring 2008 to gain input and participation. The final survey contained three sections, including program characteristics, employee demographics, and salary and benefits. Additional questions probing work conditions were also included. We asked that the surveys be completed by center/program directors or executive directors assuming they would have the best access to the detailed information requested.

Confidentiality was maintained through a careful coding of employee responses. No specific centers or programs are identified in this report.

Distribution

In May 2008, the Council sent an introductory email to potential survey participants emphasizing the importance of the survey and the requirements. This communication was followed by the actual mailing in early June to 276 child care centers and school age programs regulated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The original deadline for submission was June 18, 2008. Because the returns were insufficient at that date, the deadline was extended several times as the survey was repeatedly emailed and follow-up calls were made by staff to encourage completion. Some municipalities were targeted to ensure geographic representation. While almost all surveys were received via the mail, several were completed over the phone. The final deadline for surveys was mid-August to coincide with the work schedule of the summer intern who worked on the project.



Data Collection and Analysis

As surveys were returned to the Council, they were entered into Excel. Blank responses were treated as no answer, while discrepancies or unexpected responses were checked with the respondent via telephone. Descriptive statistics were obtained using Excel functions. Pivot tables were constructed to allow for grouping of the data along multiple dimensions, including all employees, program type (child care center vs. school age program), position, etc. The groupings for budget, licensed capacity and number of employees were formed using statistical quartiles as dividing points. Although the survey instructions called for multi-site organizations to prepare a separate survey for each site, in many cases they combined all staffing information on one form, so we treated these surveys as one program. Ultimately, we received 117 usable surveys from 276 centers and programs, representing 43% of the total distributed.

WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY?

The survey was sent to 164 regulated child care centers; 64 surveys were received, representing a return of 39%. The survey was also sent to 112 regulated school age programs; 53 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 47%. Overall, the respondents are non-profit organizations, many of them in Northern Westchester, generally non-unionized and non-accredited, though the percentage of accredited child care center respondents is almost four times higher than school age settings. The size, operating budget, and number of employees all span a very broad range.

Child Care Centers

- 75% of the respondents are non-profit while 25% are for-profit
- 42% of the centers are in the northern region of the county, 33% in the central region and 25% in the southern region
- Licensed capacity per site ranges from 15 to 217 with an average of 75 slots
- Number of employees per site ranges from 3 to 85 with an average of 18
- Annual budgets range from \$65,000 to \$4,200,000 with an average of \$810,696
- 31.25% of the centers are accredited by NAEYC, National Association of Child Care Professionals, or a Montessori education organization; 12.5% of the centers have lapsed accreditations, which we treated as unaccredited in our analysis
- Only 8% of the centers are unionized
- Subsidized children are being served in 69% of the southern centers, 41% of the northern and 29% of the central
- 1,168 child care staff are represented on the surveys received

School Age Programs

- 93% of the programs are non-profit and 7% are for-profit
- 41% of the programs are in the northern region of the county, 41% in the south, and 18% in the central region
- Annual budgets range from \$20,000 to \$2,900,000 with an average of \$363,905
- Licensed capacity per site ranges from 14 to 150 with an average of 62 slots
- Number of employees per site ranges from 2 to 37 with an average of 7
- 7% of the 29 programs are accredited
- There are no unionized school age programs among the respondents
- Subsidized children are being served in 50% of the programs in central Westchester, 42% of those in the south and 40% of those in the north
- 268 school age staff are represented on the surveys received



WHO IS WORKING IN OUR CHILD CARE CENTERS?

GENDER: 94% are female and 6% are male

AGE: 17 to 89 years with an average of 42 years. Slightly more than 40% are over 40 years.

RACE/ETHNICITY: 63% Caucasian

17% African American/Black

15% Hispanic/Latino 2% Asian/Pacific Islander

2% Other

>1% American Indian

HOURS WORKED: 61% of employees work full time. Employees work an average of 30.94 hours per week.

POSITION: 45% are Assistant Teachers

22% are Head Teachers

9% are Teachers

8% are Administrative Directors/Directors

16% Other

EDUCATION: 73% of all child care employees have a high school education or above.

Assistant Teachers: 42% – high school degree; 9% – Associates degree; 19% –

Bachelors degree 8% – Masters degree

Teachers: 30% Bachelors degree; 24% Masters degree or higher Head Teachers: 31% Bachelors degree; 32% Masters degree or higher Directors: 27% Bachelors degree; 59% Masters degree or higher

STATE CERTIFICATION: 13% of all child care employees have New York State Teaching Certifications including:

15% of Assistant Teachers

17% of Teachers 22% of Head Teachers 46% of Directors

TURNOVER: The turnover rate for the prior 6 month period is almost 6%.

Most employees left because of illness, pregnancy, or family reasons. Others left the field of child care altogether or ended employment due to

performance issues.



WHAT WAGES DO OUR CHILD CARE CENTERS PAY?

Position	Average Hourly Wage	Hourly Wage Range	Annualized 2008
Administrative Director/Director	26.32	8.04 – 47.74	51,324
Head Teacher	17.86	7.26 - 39.68	34,827
Teacher	15.82	7.50 - 37.95	30,849
Assistant Teacher	13.06	7.15 - 48.87	25,467
Program/Ed Coordinator	22.87	15.5 - 34.19	44,597
Clerical	16.93	7.28 - 27.47	33,014
Social Worker	20.42	8.53 - 31.87	39,819
Nurse	25.19	12.50 - 50.00	49,121
All Positions	16.00	7.15 – 70.00	25,742

A very wide range of wages was reported at every position:

- Most hourly wages for Directors fall between \$16.58 and \$34.94.
- Most hourly wages for Head Teachers fall between \$11.25 and \$32.14.
- Most hourly wages for Teachers fall between \$9.78 and \$20.00.
- Most hourly wages for Assistant Teachers fall between \$8 and \$15.91.

Wages by Legal Status



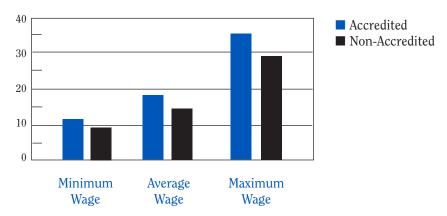
On average, non-profit centers pay a higher hourly wage (\$16.15) than do for-profit centers (\$15.21)

Wages by Location in County

Centers in central Westchester report the highest wages followed by northern Westchester and southern Westchester:

	Minimum Wage	Average Wage	Maximum Wage
Central	12.35	18.03	33.13
Northern	9.70	16.20	29.65
Southern	9.84	15.53	30.35

Wages by Accreditation Status



Wages at accredited centers are higher than in non-accredited centers:

	Minimum Wage	Average Wage	Maximum Wage
Accredited	11.88	18.57	35.89
Non-Accredited	9.86	14.87	28.41

Wages by Union Status

Center Type	Average Hourly Wage	Hourly Wage Range
Union	17.17	10.60 - 34.91
Non-Union	16.54	10.51 - 30.50

Wages at unionized centers are slightly higher than those paid at non-unionized centers.

Average Child Care Employee Hourly Wages by Educational Level

Some college in Early Childhood	12.49
Education (ECE)	
High school	12.73
Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)	14,25
AA in Early Childhood Education/ Child Development (ECE/CD)	14.85
AA – non ECE/CD	15.38
BA	17.04
BA and CDA Community College	17.19
ECE certificate	17.55
BA in ECE/CD	18.52
BA and Children's Program Administration Credential (CPAC)	21.63
Masters	23.75
Masters in ECE/CD	27.50
CPAC	28.61
MA in ECE/CD and CPAC	30.29
PhD	32.80
BA in ECE/CD and CPAC	33.65

In general, child care staff with higher levels of education are paid more. Specialized degrees and credentials from the field, including the CDA and the Children's Program Administrator Credential or CPAC are also linked to higher wages.

WHAT EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DO OUR CHILD CARE CENTERS PROVIDE?

Nearly all (94%) child care centers have full-time-time employees; those that do, offer at least some benefits. A majority of the centers (91%) also employ workers part-time. Many offer at least some benefits to their part-time workers.

- Most child care centers provide full-time employees with health insurance while less than half offer it to part-time staff
- There is a small percentage of full-time staff that do not receive sick days, vacation time or holidays
- Regular wage increases are common
- Part-time employees are slightly more apt to be paid overtime than full-time staff
- Many centers observe the public school calendar and close during winter and spring breaks. Those employees receive holidays rather than vacation for those closings; as a result, the number of reported holidays is high while that of vacation days is relatively modest
- Most full-time employees receive between 6 and 15 sick days, 6 to 15 + vacation days and at least 6 holidays
- Sick, vacation and holiday benefits are more variable for part-time employees. Fewer than half receive health insurance

Legal Status:

- Non-profit centers are more likely than for-profit centers to provide health insurance and overtime
- Non-profit centers offer more sick days, vacation and holidays while for-profit centers are more apt to provide regular wage increases

County Location:

- Health insurance is provided at similar rates across the County
- Centers in the south are least apt to offer regular wage increases but provide the most generous vacation and holiday benefits
- Centers in the north offer fewer sick days, vacation days and holidays

Accreditation Status:

- Accredited centers do better than non-accredited in providing regular wage increases, overtime and holidays
- Non-accredited centers are slightly more apt to offer health insurance and more generous sick time and vacation days

Licensed Capacity:

- The smallest centers are generally more modest in their benefits; 14% in that group reported offering no sick time and no vacation days to their employees
- Many centers in the two largest categories of licensed capacity offered at least 11 holidays



Child Care Center Employee Benefits

Benefit	Employee	Work Hrs	Legal	Status	Cou	nty Locat	ion	Accre	dited		Licensed	Capacity	
	% Full time	% Part time	% For Profit	% Non Profit	% North	% Cent	% South	% Yes	% No	% <44	% 45-54	% 55-100	% >100
Health	87	45	75%	91	89	82	88	79	88	79	88	93	88
Regular Wage Increases	87	81	94	84	92	88	77	100	81	79	88	86	94
Overtime	57	64	44	66	50	65	71	65	58	50	77	57	50
Sick Days													
0	5	22	6	5	4	6	6	0	7	14	0	7	0
1 to 5	18	26	38	11	27	12	12	17	19	14	13	29	19
6 to 10	37	36	31	39	38	35	35	65	26	28	44	43	31
11 to 15	33	10	13	41	23	47	35	12	42	36	37	21	37
15+	5	3	6	5	8	0	6	6	5	7	6	0	6
Vacation Days													
0	10	28	13	9	8	18	6	12	9	14	6	0	19
1 to 5	10	28	13	9	8	12	12	18	7	7	6	14	13
6 to 10	30	21	44	25	42	18	23	35	28	50	31	36	6
11 to 15	18	14	25	16	19	23	12	12	21	14	25	14	19
15+	32	9	7	41	23	29	47	23	35	14	31	36	44
Holidays													
0	5	16	13	2	8	6	0	6	5	14	6	0	0
1 to 5	5	10	6	5	11	0	0	0	7	0	6	7	6
6 to 10	35	31	31	34	38	18	47	41	33	43	50	21	25
11 to 15	35	24	38	36	35	41	29	18	42	14	25	50	24
15+	15	16	12	16	8	24	18	29	9	14	6	14	19

Percentages may not total 100% where some respondents did not provide complete answers.



Other Benefits and Work Supports - Full-Time Child Care Employees

Benefit Offered by Centers	Dental Plan	Life Insurance	Disability	Child Care	DCAP	Tuition	Paid Breaks	Paid Lunch	Paid Prep Time
% yes	49	51	83	75	17	65	63	53	81
% no	51	49	17	22	80	30	36	46	16
Benefit Offered by Centers	Paid Staff Meetings	Paid Staff Training	Job Description	Written Concerns	Salary Schedule	Formal Grievance	Staff Room	Maternity/ Paternity Leave	
% yes	66	68	97	53	46	75	64	17	
% no	32	31	3	46	54	25	36	83	



Worker Turnover

Of the 99 child care workers reported to have left employment in the previous 6 months, 23% left the field entirely, 20% had job performance issues, 11% moved away, 9% returned to school, 8% left because of salary, 4% left because of benefits and 25% left for "other" reasons.

WHO IS WORKING IN OUR SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS?

GENDER: 84% are female and 16% are male

AGE: 16 to 79 years with an average age of 39.6. 44% of employees are over 40 years of age

RACE/ETHNICITY: 84% Caucasian

7% Hispanic/Latino

6% African American/Black

2% Other

1% Asian/Pacific Islander

HOURS WORKED: Most school age employees work part-time, with only 8% working full-time. Employees work an average of 18.8 hours per week

POSITION: 46% are Assistant Teachers

17% are Administrative Directors/Directors

16% are Teachers

11% are Head Teachers

10% are Other

EDUCATION: 61% of all school age employees have at least a high school education

Assistant Teachers: 55% - high school degree; 8% - Bachelors degree; 5% - Masters degree

Teachers: 24% – high school degree; 19% – Bachelors degree; 2% – Masters degree

Head Teachers: 37% – Bachelors degree; 37% – Masters degree Directors: 37% – Bachelors degree; 22% – Masters degree

STATE CERTIFICATION: 16% of school age employees hold New York State Teaching Certifications including:

33% of Directors 33% of Head Teachers 29% of Teachers

5% of Assistant Teachers

TURNOVER: 10% of the employees left employment in the past 6 months, with most exiting the

field entirely



WHAT WAGES DO OUR SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS PAY?

Position	Average Hourly Wage	Annualized Full-time (1)	Annualized Part-time (2)
Administrative Director/Director	26.37	47,993	20,515
Head Teacher	19.22	34,980	14,953
Teacher	15.07	27,427	11,724
Assistant Teacher	12.07	21,967	9,390
Program/Ed Coordinator	15.97	29,065	12,424
All Positions	15.83	28,810	12,315

A wide range of hourly wages were reported at all positions:

- Hourly wages for Directors generally fall between \$16.58 and \$34.94.
- Hourly wages for Head Teachers generally fall between \$11.25 and \$32.14.
- Hourly wages for Teachers generally fall between \$9.78 and \$20.
- Hourly wages for Assistant Teachers generally fall between \$8 and \$15.91.

(1) Full-time: 35 hrs per week for 12 months (2) Part-time: 20 hrs per week for 9 months

Wages by Program's Legal Status



For-profit programs report higher hourly wages than non-profit programs:

	Minimum Wage	Average Wage	Maximum Wage
For Profit	11.75	18.85	29.17
Non-Profit	9.70	15.68	24.78

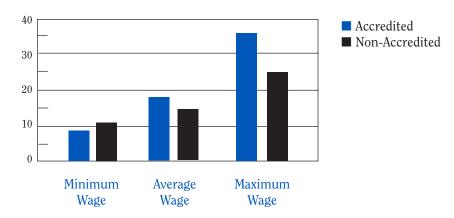
Wages by Location in County



School age wages are highest in central Westchester, followed by northern Westchester and then the southern region.

	Minimum Wage	Average Wage	Maximum Wage
Central	11.00	17.85	34.54
Northern	9.79	15.32	25.67
Southern	9.65	12.86	20.17

Wages by Accreditation Status



Minimum hourly wages are higher in non-accredited programs but average and maximum levels are higher in accredited settings:

	Minimum Wage	Average Wage	Maximum Wage
Accredited	8.50	17.01	45.09
Non-Accredited	10.03	15.58	23.56

Average School Age Employee Hourly Wages by Educational Level

High School	12.08
Community College with Early Childhood Education (ECE) certificate	13.17
Some college in Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD)	13.75
AA in ECE/CD	17.11
BA in ECE/CD	18.18
AA in non ECE/CD	18.21
Children's Program Administration Credential (CPAC)	19.01
BA in non ECE	20.92
Masters	21.91
Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)	23.71
Masters in ECE/CD	24.49

In general, staff with higher levels of education are paid higher wages. Employees with a CDA report average wages double that of staff with a high school degree.



Percentage of School Age Programs Offering Employee Benefits

Benefit	Employee Work Hrs		Legal Status		County Location			Accredited		Licensed Capacity			
	% Full-time	% Part-time	% For Profit	% Non Profit	% North	% Cent	% South	% Yes	% No	% <44	% 45-54	% 55-100	% >100
Health	83	23	0	88	90	100	60	100	81	86	100	67	83
Regular Wage Increases	87	81											
Overtime	40	85	0	35	50	33	0	0	38	71	0	33	0
Sick Days													
0	11	67	100	6	0	0	40	0	13	14	0	0	17
1 to 5	17	19	0	18	0	67	20	100	19	14	50	33	0
6 to 10	61	7	0	65	100	0	20	0	56	71	0	67	67
11 to 15	6	0	0	6	0	33	0	0	6	0	0	0	17
15+	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacation Days													
0	17	74	100	12	0	33	40	0	18	14	0	33	17
1 to 5	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 to 10	56	4	0	59	60	67	40	50	56	72	50	33	50
11 to 15	11	0	0	12	10	0	20	0	13	0	50	0	17
15+	17	11	0	17	30	0	0	50	13	14	0	33	17
Holidays													
0	6	44	0	6	0	0	20	0	6	14	0	0	0
1 to 5	11	22	0	12	10	33	0	0	13	28	0	0	0
6 to 10	61	15	0	65	70	33	60	50	63	57	100	50	67
11 to 15	6	0	100	0	0	0	20	0	6	0	0	0	17
15+	11	4	0	12	20	0	0	50	6	0	0	25	17

Percentages may not total 100% where some respondents did not provide complete answers.

WHAT EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DO OUR SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS PROVIDE?

- Over half (62%) of the school age programs employ full-time staff; those all offer at least some benefits to their full-time staff. Almost all (93%) of the programs have part-time employees and offer some benefits to their part-time staff
- Many programs observe the public school calendar and close during winter and spring break. Those employees receive holidays rather than vacation for those closings; as a result, the number of reported holidays is high while vacation days are more modest
- There were no unionized school age programs in our sample, so a comparison of unionized and non-unionized programs has been omitted
- There were only two accredited and two for-profit school age programs among the respondents, so the value of any comparisons is limited

Employee Work Hours:

- A majority of school age programs offer health insurance to their full-time staff, but not to their part-time employees
- A majority do offer regular wage increases to their employees both full and part-time
- Part-time employees are twice as likely to receive overtime pay as full-time
- Most full-time employees receive between 6 and 10 sick days, while most part-time employees either receive no sick time or a limited number of sick days
- The majority of full-time employees receive between 6 and 10 vacation days, while almost three-quarters of part-time employees do not receive any vacation days at all
- Most full-time employees receive 6 to 10 holidays, while nearly half of of the part-time employees receive no holidays

Legal Status:

- Most of the non-profit programs offer health insurance, while none of the for-profit programs do
- Regular wage increases are offered by nearly all programs
- Non-profit programs generally offer sick days and vacation days to their employees, while the for-profit programs do not
- The for-profit programs offer more holidays than do the non-profits
- For-profit programs are more likely to offer health insurance to their part-time employees, while for-profit programs are more likely to offer regular wage increases and overtime compensation
- Non-profit programs offer more sick days and vacation days to their employees
- For-profit programs offer more holidays to their employees

County Location:

- School age programs in the southern part of the county are less likely to offer health insurance, regular wage increases and overtime than programs in the central or northern parts of the county
- Programs in the north offer the most sick days, vacation days and holidays, followed by programs in the central part of the county and programs in the south



Accreditation Status:

- With a small sample of accredited programs, we found they are more likely to offer health insurance and regular wage increases, but less likely to provide overtime compensation
- Accredited programs offer more sick days, vacation days and holidays than non-accredited programs

Other Benefits Provided to Full Time School Age Employees

Benefit Offered by Centers	Dental Plan	Life Insurance	Disability	Child Care Discounts	DCAP	Tuition	Paid Breaks	Paid Lunch	Paid Prep Time
% yes	50	44	72	78	33	78	50	56	78
% no	50	56	28	11	56	17	44	39	22
Benefit Offered by Centers	Paid Staff Meetings	Paid Staff Training	Job Description	Written Concerns	Salary Schedule	Formal Grievance	Staff Room	Maternity/ Paternity Leave	
% yes	67	83	95	56	50	78	67	45	
% no	33	17	5	44	44	17	33	14	

Note:

Where percentages do not total 100%, other responses left blank.

Almost all programs have written job descriptions. Disability, child care, tuition reimbursement, paid training, a formal grievance procedure and a staff room are all commonly provided. Life insurance, dental coverage and a DCAP (dependent care assistance plan) are the least available benefits/work supports.



Turnover Among School Age Programs

Of the 48 school age workers reported as having left employment in the past 6 months, 23% left the field entirely, 19% returned to school, 17% moved away, 17% had job performance issues, 6% left because of salary, and 4% left because of benefits, and 15% left for "other" reasons.

DISCUSSION

Research indicates that the experiences of children's earliest years have a significant and long-lasting influence on the shape and trajectory of their lives. A majority of young children will spend some portion of their lives in the care of adults other than their parents. It makes sense then, for those children, our children, here in Westchester County, to receive early learning experiences of the highest quality.

Sadly, the salaries paid to early care and learning professionals do not match the significance of the work they perform. Child care center salaries have improved markedly since the Council's 2000 survey with increases of 19% for directors, 29% for teachers and 54% for assistant teachers. But the huge gap between the head teachers' average salary of \$34,827 and the average kindergarten teacher salary in New York State of \$62,320 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007) is hard to reconcile, particularly when one considers that nearly one-third of the head teachers surveyed hold at least a master's degree.

The salary discrepancies apply to administrative positions as well. The average New York elementary or secondary school administrator earned \$97,290 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007) compared to \$51,324 for Westchester child care center directors and \$47,993 for full-time after school directors. Over half the center directors and nearly one-fourth of the after school directors hold masters degrees or better.

Even though assistant teachers' salaries have risen nearly \$9,000 to an average of \$25,467, they remain behind other occupations with modest educational requirements including:

Maids and housekeepers \$26,950 Pest control workers \$32,670 Roofers \$42,900 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007)

Considerable gains have been made in the area of benefits for full-time Westchester early care and learning workers. Health coverage is nearly universal. Vacation, sick and holiday benefits, though varied, are often fairly generous. The prevalence of other benefits, including paid training, discounted or free child care, and tuition reimbursement was unexpected. The range and richness of benefits for school age employees however, is comparatively limited since the vast majority work part-time.

Turnover was lower than expected for both child care center staff (under 6%) and after school programs (10%) for the six month period preceding the survey. Westchester directors customarily describe staff turnover as chronic and highly problematic. The levels reported in the survey may reflect a slowing economy and more workers electing to stay where they are.

CONCLUSION

More widespread and generous benefits, coupled with steady salary increases and an uncertain economy may yield a stable, increasingly well-educated early care and education workforce over the next few years in Westchester County. But a greater recognition of the critical opportunities provided by the early care and education system, along with new emphasis on staff credentials contained in Quality Stars New York, the quality rating improvement system, may put more pressure on child care salaries. In a culture where occupational status is often reflected in compensation, better salaries for Westchester's early care and education are appropriate and overdue.

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