

South-Central Early Learning Hub Executive Summary for Early Care and Education Workforce and Incoming Workforce Survey



Methods

The South-Central Early Learning Hub (SCELH) partnered with Pacific Research and Evaluation (PRE) to administer a survey in winter 2023 to individuals working in and/or pursuing education in early care and education.

This survey was created in response to a survey administered in summer 2021, in which families noted a barrier in finding available spots for childcare. The purpose of the current survey was to learn from early learning professionals about their perspective on childcare access, as well as their experience within the industry.



86.7%

of respondents currently work in early care and education

19.4%

of respondents currently participating in an early care and education certificate or degree

13.3%

of respondents previously worked in early care and education

94.1%

of current early care and education professionals anticipate continuing their career in this field.

Top Three Obstacles Current Workforce Faces in their work



1

Low pay

2

Behavioral challenges with children

3

Feeling underappreciated

47.1%

of the current workforce disagrees that the amount of money they make in their role allows them to meet their individual and familial needs.

70.6%

of the current workforce did not receive or qualify for services or forms of financial assistance.

71.4%

of the current workforce have earned a degree or certificate. More than 70% are at steps 8, 9, or 10 for the Oregon Registry Online.

Top Three Obstacles Previous Workforce Faced in their work

1

Low pay

2

Working too many hours / lack of work-life balance

3

Behavioral challenges with children



of early care and education administrators and directors have had NO available spots in their programs in the past six months.



Top reasons for not accepting more children into programs...

Size of the facility 46.2%

Not enough staff 38.5%

Programs have eligibility requirements that some families do not meet 34.6%

Kindergarten Readiness

Educators are preparing students for Kindergarten by...



Helping children handle big emotions (100%) and teaching self-regulation (92.3%)



Building routines (92.3%)



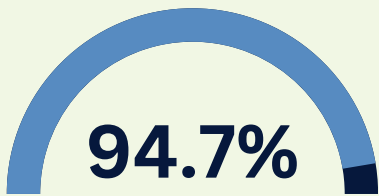
Promoting healthy eating habits (88.5%)

49.4% of current workforce respondents feel prepared to care for children with special needs.

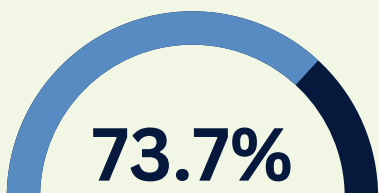
Many respondents from the current workforce would feel more prepared to provide care to children with special needs if they had adequate training.



Incoming Workforce



of the incoming workforce is participating in an early care and education certificate or degree program.



of the incoming workforce is pursuing this career because they want to work in a field that supports children and families

Top Training Areas for the Incoming Workforce

Supporting the culture and customs of families (68.4%)

Exploring curricula and how to utilize it in the classroom (57.9%)

Supporting students with special needs (52.6%)

Hands-on training for classroom activities and strategies (52.6%)





Evaluation Insights

1

OBSTACLES FOR THE WORKFORCE

Respondents from the current workforce and previous workforce each indicated that the main obstacles they face while working in the field include low pay, behavioral challenges with children, lack of work-life balance/working too many hours, and feeling underappreciated.

2

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Nearly half of the current workforce responding to the survey disagree that they make enough money in their role to meet their individual or familial needs; however, 70% of respondents indicated that they either do not receive or do not qualify for any services or forms of financial assistance.

3

CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Nearly half of early care and education professionals completing the survey agreed that they feel prepared to provide care to children with special needs, while just over half of incoming workforce respondents noted that they are being trained in supporting children with special needs.