

# Who Cares for Kansas Children?



**KANSAS** Early Education Workforce Study 2005

# DEMOGRAPHICS

*Quality early care and education during the first years of life is the most cost-effective and efficient way to prepare children to succeed in school and life.*

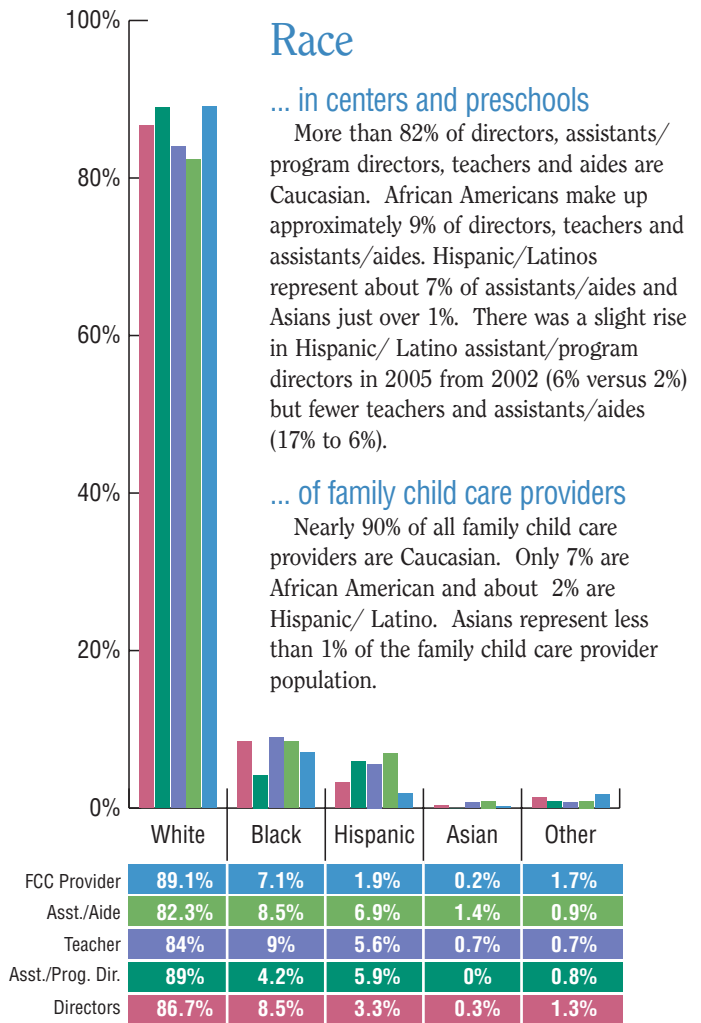
Although parents are children’s most important teachers, the majority of parents with young children work outside the home. On average, young children spend approximately 40 hours a week in early learning programs. Kansas early educators provide this important service.

The first five years of life have a powerful influence on children’s development. Research proves that high quality early learning programs have a positive effect on children’s cognitive, language, social, emotional, and physical development. The lack of appropriate experience in early childhood is a contributing factor to children entering kindergarten without the knowledge and skills to succeed in school.

The National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine report that “Higher quality care is associated with outcomes that all parents want to see in their children, ranging from cooperation with adults to the ability to initiate and sustain positive exchanges with peers, to early competence in reading and math.” (From *Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, 2000)

Kansas needs a well-educated and appropriately compensated early education workforce to give our children the quality early learning experiences they need to develop and grow to their fullest potential. Young children need consistent care from experienced, well-trained teachers to help build a solid foundation for future learning.

Not surprisingly, those working in the early education field are still predominantly white females. Little change has taken place in workforce demographics over the past several years.



## Age

### ... in centers and preschools

Directors ages range fairly equally from 20 to over 50 years of age. About 75% of assistant/program directors are in their 20s or 30s, and 40% of all teachers are in their 20s. Only 5% of teachers are less than 20 years of age.

### ... of family child care providers

Nearly 60% of all family child care providers are in their 30s or 40s.

## Gender

### ... in centers and preschools

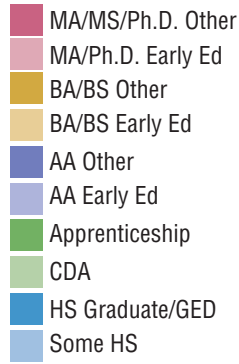
About 95% of center personnel are women. Men make up nearly 6% of assistant/program directors and nearly 8% of assistants/aides.

### ... of family child care providers

Women make up 99% of family child care providers however, more than 25% of assistants and substitutes are men. This might be due to providers relying on a spouse to fill these roles.

# EDUCATION BACKGROUND

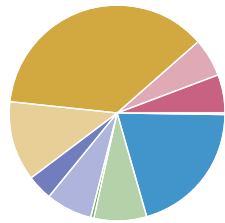
Historically early educators have held degrees in Home Economics, Social Work, Psychology, Elementary Education and other related fields. Early Childhood or Human Development Degrees, designed specifically to address the need of Pre-K children, have been available since the 1960's. However, individuals have often been steered away from these degrees because of the low pay in the field. This may have an impact on the number of workers with degrees in early education.



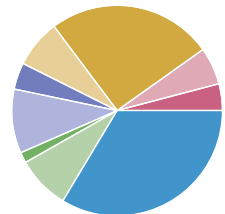
## College Degrees

### ... in centers and preschools

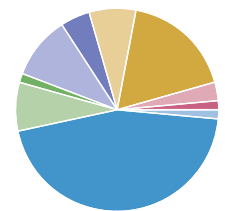
When comparing center and preschool staff to family child care providers, more center staff have college degrees. More than half of the directors have a baccalaureate degree, but only 13% are in the early childhood field. Nearly one third of assistant/program directors have a bachelor's degree in various fields, with 7% in early childhood education. Teachers and group leaders are far less likely to have a college degree, although many have education beyond a high school diploma.



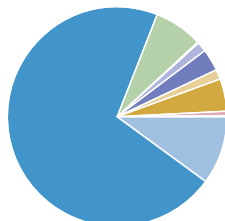
Director



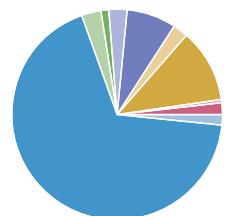
Assistant/Program Director



Teacher/Group Leader



Assistant/Aide



FCC Provider

### ... of family child care providers

Nearly 70% of family child care provider's highest level of education is high school. About 14% hold a bachelor's degree, 2% of those in early education.

## Credentials

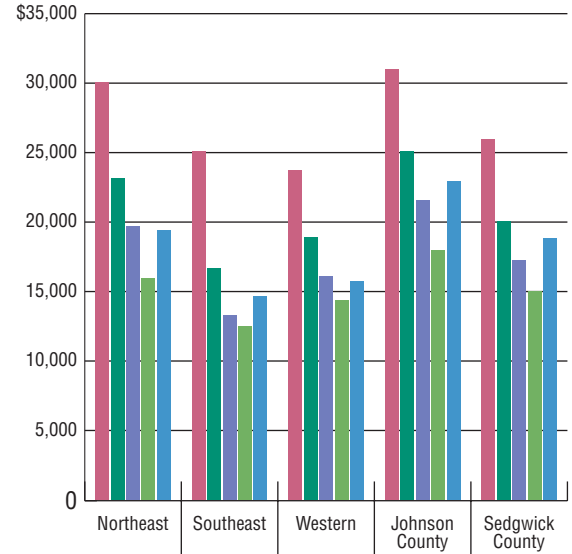
### Child Development Associate (CDA)

Slightly more than 8% of directors and assistant/program directors have earned the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Of those who provide direct care to children (center teachers/group leaders and assistants/aides), 7% hold a CDA. Just over 3% of family child care providers have earned their CDA.

### Early Childhood Associate Apprenticeship

Close to 2% of assistant/program directors and 1% of teacher/group leaders have earned the Early Childhood Associate Apprenticeship certificate.

# SALARIES



FCC Provider	\$19,370	\$14,638	\$15,704	\$22,932	\$18,798
Asst./Aide	\$15,974	\$12,521	\$14,331	\$17,971	\$14,976
Teacher	\$19,718	\$13,312	\$16,057	\$21,590	\$17,264
Asst./Prog. Dir.	\$23,150	\$16,640	\$18,886	\$25,105	\$20,051
Directors	\$30,035	\$25,084	\$23,732	\$30,971	\$25,937

## Wages

### ... in centers and preschools

Center/preschool staff, including assistants/aides, make more money than family child care providers. Teachers/group leaders average \$8.58 per hour and assistant/aides \$7.26. Still, with the number of hours worked, directors and teachers/group leaders can make less than \$1.10 per hour.

Despite better wages than family child care, statewide 23% of center/preschool directors, 44% of assistant/program directors, and 69% of teachers/group leaders make less than \$20,000 per year for a 40-hour work week. 12.8% of center/preschool directors and 10.5% of teachers/group leaders have not experienced an increase in the wages from the entry level wage.

Not surprising, Johnson County has some of the highest family child care wages, whereas Southeast Kansas has some of the lowest. The same holds true for wages of center/preschool staff. Johnson County has more family child care providers and center/preschool staff with college degrees. This, along with the economic status of the community, may help explain why they are able to command a higher wage.

### ... of family child care providers

The average family child care provider across Kansas makes \$6.59 per hour. Due to the hours they work, their wages can actually be as little as \$0.08 per hour.

Figuring this wage on a 40-hour work week, 81% of family child care providers make less than \$20,000 per year; and even at a 50-hour work week (common for 73%) 66.6% still make less than \$20,000 per year.

The limited education level of family child care providers (68% with only a high school diploma, see education graph), along with the fact that the early childhood field is underpaid as a whole, makes it difficult for family child care providers to command a higher salary.

Family child care providers across Kansas pay their substitutes almost as much as they earn themselves (Providers average \$6.59, substitutes \$6.21).

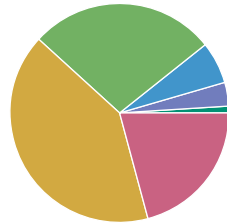
# HOURS WORKED & BENEFITS

# WAGE COMPARISONS

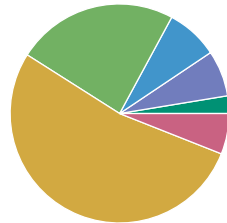
## Hours Worked

Many family child care providers in Kansas work well over 50 hours per week. About 73% work 50+ in direct care of children and nearly one third work another 10-19 hours on additional duties for their child care business. 53% of family child care providers work up to 9 hours a week in other employment.

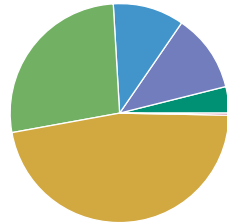
Although 21% of center/preschool directors in Kansas work 50+ hours per week, there are far fewer who work these excessive hours. While many people in any field work excessive hours on occasion, most do not do it on a regular basis. This work schedule puts major strain on family child care providers for little financial benefit.



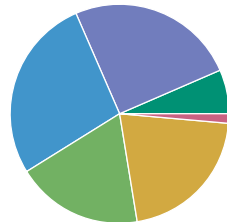
Directors



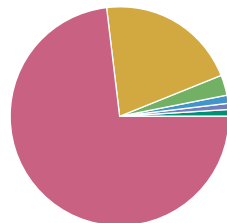
Assistant/Program Directors



Teacher/Group Leader



Assistant/Aide



FCC Provider

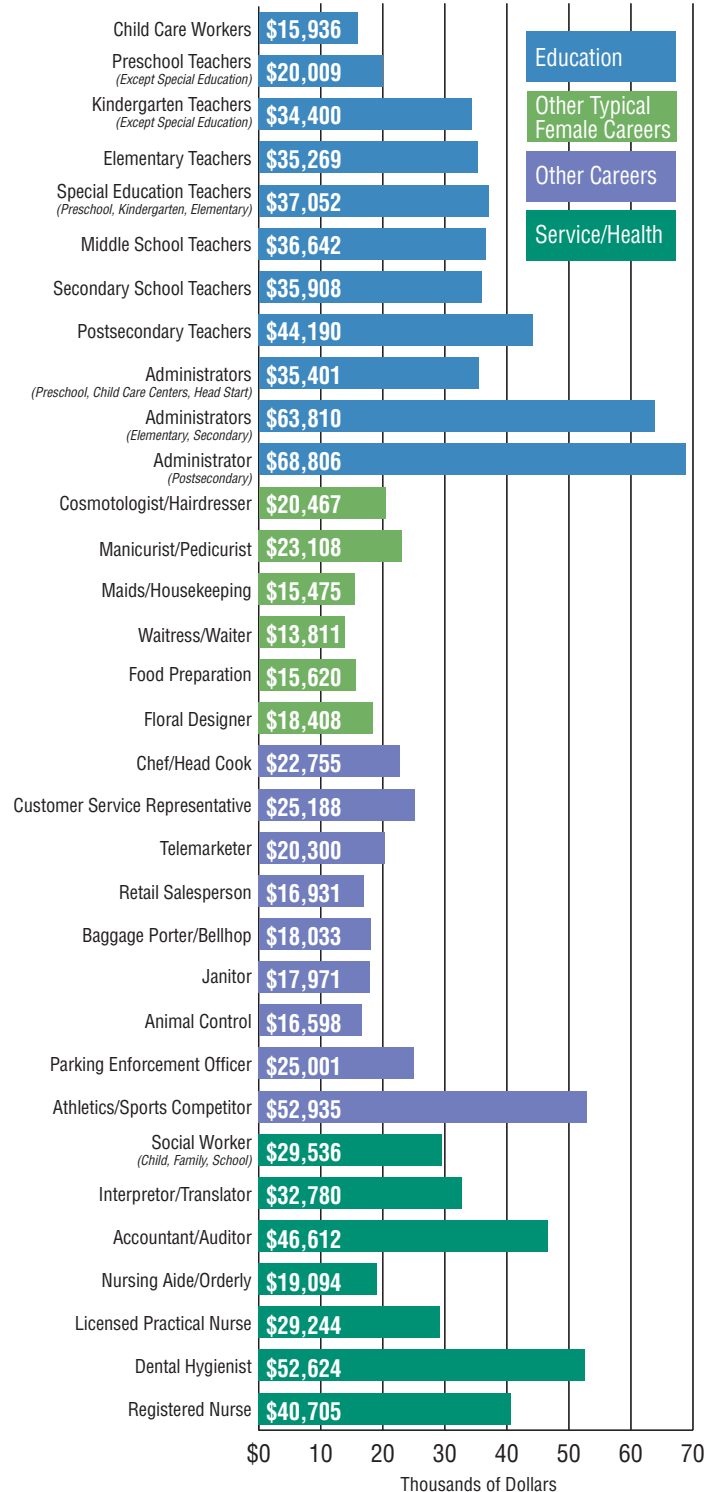
## Benefits

Benefits for most full-time center and preschool staff include vacation and sick pay. For 1 out of 3, continuing education fees/time, reduced fee/care, and family leave are also available. Most benefits, however, are not available to almost half of center/ preschool staff. Insurance (individual/ family health and dental), life insurance and retirement are partially paid by the business for only 2 to 3 of every 10 personnel.

Centers/preschools tend to employ positions as part-time (except for directors and assistant/program directors). This is likely done to avoid paying the costs of benefits. Eight out of 10 part-time staff across Kansas do not get individual or family insurance, individual or family dental, life insurance, or a retirement package; 6 of 10 do not get continuing education time/fees or sick pay; 7 of 10 do not get reduced fee/care for child care or family leave.

Benefits are very limited for family child care providers in Kansas. Vacation, sick pay and life insurance are the ones typically offered. Still, less than 20% of family child care providers get these benefits. Although some providers get benefits through another household member, many do not have any benefits.

More than 70% of family child care providers do not get individual health insurance, retirement, or vacation; over 80% do not get individual dental insurance and sick pay; and more than 90% do not get family leave.



All salaries are from the Kansas Department of Labor website. Median wage was used when figuring annual salaries.

Child care workers, who impact children's lifelong learning potential, are the lowest paid of all educators. Individuals who work as telemarketers, janitors, floral designers, retailer and nursing aids/orderlies have higher salaries than early educators.

# CONSISTANT QUALITY CARE

## Accreditation

Approximately 9% of centers/preschools are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Four percent of family child care homes are accredited by the National Association of Family Child Care. These programs meet higher quality standards than those required by Kansas licensing and registration.

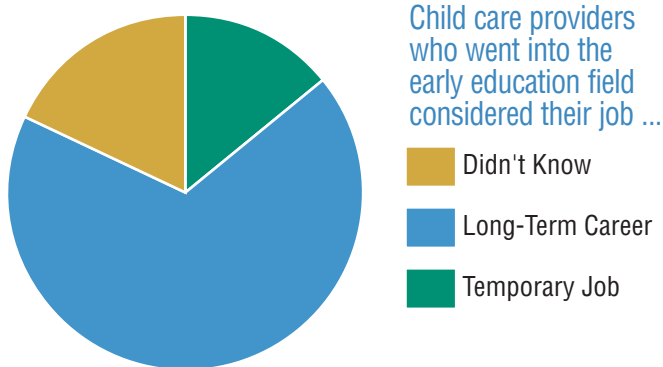
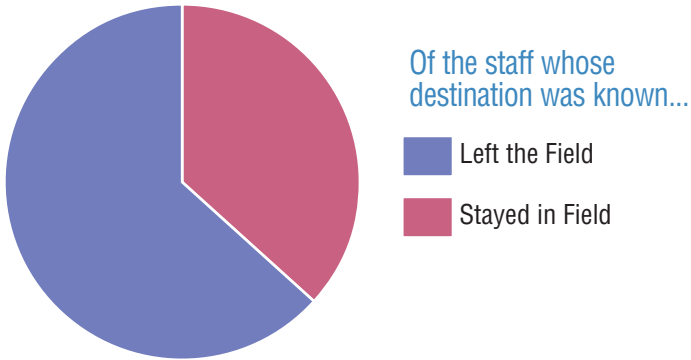
## Turnover & Experience

Slightly more than 40% of directors and assistant/program directors have stayed with their current center for more than 6 years. Less than 12% of directors and assistant/program directors have left within the last 12 months. Only 15% of teachers have been with their centers for 6+ years and another 26% have been employed for 3-5 years.

When turnover in centers/preschool staff occurs, it is typically the teacher/group leader (28%) or assistants/aides (24%) who leave. Considering that most of these positions are part-time, that is understandable. More than 60% of staff, whose destination when leaving was known, left the field.

More than 40% of family child care providers have provided care and education for more than 10 years, indicating stability in providers. However, some of these providers (18.2%) left the field at some point and later returned.

Sixty-eight percent of family child care providers indicated that they viewed child care as their long term career.



# CONCLUSION

## What we know

*Research confirms that early educators with higher education levels offer higher quality early learning programs with more positive child outcomes. This is particularly true when the education is in child development and early childhood education.*

Individuals who receive adequate wages are more likely to remain in the early care and education field. Benefits such as health insurance, retirement and vacation are also critical to maintaining a quality early education workforce.

Most parents cannot afford to pay the full cost of quality child care. Early educators subsidize the system through low wages and few benefits.

A child's emotional health and ability to form positive, loving relationships are greatly influenced by the bond developed with a caregiver over time. It is critical that children do not experience frequent changes in caregivers.

## Recommendations

*A healthy economy requires strong businesses and productive workers. Child care is a needed infrastructure that allows parents to work. Kansas needs to invest in the early education system. High quality early learning programs enhance the productivity of working parents and strengthen communities.*

Kansas should provide funding to support the education of early educators. Credentials such as the CDA are proven to enhance quality of early learning programs.

Provide funding for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® KANSAS and Child Care WAGE\$® KANSAS to increase education levels of early childhood professionals and increase retention in the field.

Kansas should support the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems plan which includes strategies to expand the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) and quality of early learning programs through projects such as the Kansas Quality Rating System (KQRS).

Kansas should increase public investment in quality child care to ensure that low-income working parents have access to affordable, quality care.

Implement the Kansas Quality Rating System to measure and continuously improve the level of quality care in early learning settings.

## Children/Families

- It is critical that children do not experience frequent changes in caregivers.
- Most parents cannot afford to pay the full cost of quality child care.

## Workforce

- Credentials such as CDA are proven to enhance quality of early learning programs.
- Early Childhood or Human Development Degrees, designed specifically to address the need of Pre-K children, have been available since the 1960's. However, individuals have often been steered away from these degrees because of the low pay in the field. This may have an impact on the number of workers with degrees in early education.
- Head Start seems to pay better than other center/preschool despite the fact that higher education levels in Head Start and centers/preschools seem somewhat comparable.
- Many family child care providers in Kansas work well over 50 hours per week... with a salary of less than \$20,000.
- Due to the hours family child care providers work, their wages can actually be as little as \$0.08 per hour.
- More than 70% of family child care providers do not have benefits.
- More than 60% of child care center staff, whose destination when leaving was known, leave the field of early education.



**KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE  
RESOURCE & REFERRAL AGENCIES**

P.O. Box 2294, Salina, Kansas 67402-2294 • 785-823-3343 • [www.kaccrra.org](http://www.kaccrra.org)

*This study was conducted by the Professional Development Initiative for Early Care and Education in Kansas (PDI) through the Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (KACCRRA). Data analysis was provided by Evaluation Insights. The Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund provided funding for this study.*