

Children Deserve Quality Care and Education

A goal we are working to achieve in Illinois

Early Childhood Professionals in Illinois are an Educated Workforce



of teachers working in licensed early care and education settings have degrees

(includes licensed child care center teachers and Early Head Start/Head Start teachers)

Research shows high-quality, well-educated teachers positively impact a child's school readiness and outcomes. Increasing the quality of early childhood programs is achievable, building from the high level of education that exists in our ECE workforce.

92.9% of child care center staff in Illinois have some college education¹

The Gateways Scholarship program and Great START wage supplement program have played a significant role in providing the supports needed to increase the education level of our workforce in Illinois (as evidenced by comparing Illinois to national data).

“Young children’s learning and development depend on the educational qualifications of their teachers.”

Steven W. Barnett

Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications.

¹ Gateways Registry Members & US OHHS Targeting Early Childhood and School Age Workforce Investments.

² Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC’s Standards for Programs.

³ Ben Bernanke, Former Chairman, Federal Reserve Board

Information compiled by the Professional Development Advisory Council.



3 Facts About the Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce

1. “If early childhood practitioners have higher levels of formal education and specialized training, they are much more likely in their work with young children and families to use the evidence-based practices and possess the ongoing professional commitment we know are necessary to make a positive difference in children’s lives.”²
2. “Although education and the acquisition of skills is a life long process, starting early in life is crucial.”³
3. Achieving degrees for all ECE professionals is an attainable goal in Illinois, with continued public investments.