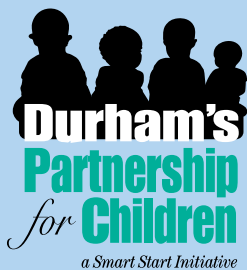


# Working in Child Care in Durham County



## Durham Workforce Study 2009

Durham's Partnership for Children,  
a Smart Start Initiative



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## Our Mission

To mobilize and unify the Durham community to create and support innovative and successful collaborative approaches to serving the needs of young children birth to 5 years of age and their families.

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For more information about the Durham Workforce Survey, please contact the Research Department at Child Care Services Association, 919-967-3272 or [research@childcareservices.org](mailto:research@childcareservices.org).

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## Introduction

Through funding from Durham's Partnership for Children, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) conducted a countywide survey of the child care workforce in Durham in Spring and early Summer of 2009. This study provides comprehensive data on child care providers and on the licensed facilities in which they work. Additionally, information gathered from this study is compared to similar studies conducted by CCSA in 2003 and 2001. Survey response rates in Durham County were 66 percent of center directors, 46 percent of teachers and 67 percent of family child care providers. Detailed information about survey methods and response rates is in the appendix. Totals may not equal one hundred percent due to rounding. In tables throughout this report, the number of participants responding to each item in 2009 is noted as "n".

The child care workforce in Durham County has experienced improvements in the proportion of centers providing some type of assistance with child care, the education level of teachers, centers providing time and a half for over time, family child care providers on the Child and Adult Care Food Program and teacher turnover. Durham County has remained stagnant or suffered losses in the proportion of centers providing fully paid health insur-

ance, paid leave (including sick, vacation, training, breaks and planning) and the percent of directors and family child care providers planning to leave the field in the next three years. The constant challenge of supporting workforce professional development while raising wages and lowering turnover is clearly at play in Durham County as it is across the state. County representatives can take some pride in the positive changes they have made for the workforce and build on these successes as the county continues working on the perennial challenges facing its child care programs and providers.



## Child Care Centers

The percentages of responding child care centers by their organizational structure and by their star ratings are shown in Table 1. Organizational categories were collapsed for simplification. For-profit centers included programs ranging from single-classroom facilities consisting of a multi-age group of children and one teacher/director to multi-site facilities for enrolling hundreds of children and employing a director, assistant director, lead teachers and assistant teachers. Faith-based, non-profit centers included programs with a Letter of Compliance (GS-110) as well as centers with a star-rated license. Other non-profit centers included non-profit independent centers that were community or board sponsored, non-profit public-school programs, Head Start sites and other publicly funded programs. Programs that could not be easily classified into one of these three groups (including employer based and other non-specified) were combined into a separate group. Public pre-k programs that are not licensed were not included as part of this study. Centers responding in 2003 looked similar to those responding in 2009 in terms of organizational structure (see Table 2). Star ratings percentages, however, are significantly different and may account for some of the changes in the data presented throughout this report.

**Table 1**

### Profile of Responding Centers vs. Overall Population of Programs in Durham County

Center License (n=90)			Organizational Structure (n=87)		
	Responses	Overall		Responses	Overall
4 or 5 Stars	48%	48%	For-profit Centers	61%	69%
3 Stars	16%	20%	Faith-based Non-profits	22%	21%
Under 3 Stars*	37%	33%	Other Nonprofit Centers	16%	11%
			Other	1%	0%

\*Includes 1- and 2-star licensed centers, GS-110 (Letter of Compliance) centers and centers with a temporary or provisional license.



In 2003, the largest group of responding centers had 3 stars, whereas in 2009, 4 and 5 star centers were the group providing the most input. Centers enrolled a median of 30 children ages birth to 5 (not including school-agers), down from 34 in 2003 and employed a median of 5 full-time and 1 part-time teachers and assistants. Total enrollment in the responding centers was 4,153 children, and 61 percent of the centers had children on their waiting list (up from 44 percent in 2003). Centers with a waiting list and a 4- or 5-star license had a median of 20 children waiting for care, whereas all other centers had a median of 7 children on the waiting list.

**Table 2**  
**Profile of Responding Centers vs. 2003 Responding Centers in Durham County**

Center License (n=90)			Organizational Structure (n=87)		
	Responses	2003 Responses		Responses	2003 Responses
4 or 5 Stars	48%	33%	For-Profit Centers	61%	62%
3 Stars	16%	39%	Faith-based Nonprofit	22%	18%
Under 3 Stars	37%	28%	Other Nonprofit Centers	16%	20%
Stars*			Other	1%	0%

\*Includes 1- and 2-Star licensed centers, GS-110 (Letter of Compliance) centers and centers with a temporary or provisional license.

**Impact of the Economy.** At this point in history, our country is mired in one of the worst economic times since the Great Depression. Unemployment is at high levels not seen in decades. Child care centers have not been spared. Almost half (48 percent) reported that parents are behind in fees. Nearly a third (32 percent) are not buying needed equipment or materials. For many (16 percent), enrollment is down or they have “lost” children. This situation has resulted in 10 percent of centers reporting that they had to close classrooms. These downturns are then passed on to staff in the form of layoffs (8 percent) and hiring freezes (6 percent).

**Staffing.** The child care center staff that participated in the survey represented a wide variety of positions in the early childhood field and worked with children of all ages. Those who completed a director survey held titles such as director (64 percent), director/owner (23 percent) and other positions (12 percent).

As for staff who completed a teacher survey, 75 percent were teachers or lead teachers, 18 percent were assistant teachers, teacher’s aides or floaters and 8 percent held other positions. Teaching staff typically worked only with children age birth to 5 (95 percent).

**Wage Scales.** Center directors reported wage scales for center teaching staff that included low start-

ing wages and limits on the highest wages paid to teachers and assistants (see Table 3). Starting teachers earned \$10.00 per hour compared to only \$8.50 in 2003. This represents an average yearly increase of 3.3 percent. Teacher salary increases exceeded the Durham County average yearly growth for all industries which was only 2.6 percent per year.<sup>1</sup> For assistant teachers,

the average annual growth was right below average at 2.5 percent. The median starting salary of \$8.50 per hour for assistant teachers compares to the similar salary of \$7.50 per hour in 2003. Assistant teachers and substitute caregivers

continued to earn lower wages than other teaching staff.

**Employment Benefits.** Employment benefits offered by centers in Durham County are shown in Table 4. The same percent offer fully paid health insurance (13 percent) as in 2003 with virtually the same (47 percent vs. 48 percent) who offer partially paid health insurance. Similarly, 81 percent offer paid sick leave (compared to 80 percent in 2003). Of note, 91 percent offer some type of assistance with child care fees (compared to only 50 percent in 2003). Among teaching staff that had ever worked over 40 hours per week (50 percent), 52 percent said that their centers paid them time and a half for the overtime hours that they worked. Federal wage and hour law requires that non-exempt workers such as child care providers receive time and a half for overtime hours.

**Table 3**  
**Salaries in Child Care Centers in Durham County**

	2001	2003	2009
Starting Teacher Wage in Center (n=77)	\$8.00	\$8.50	\$10.00
Highest Teacher Wage in Center (n=72)	\$9.71	\$10.50	\$12.50
Pay Increase from Starting to Highest-Paid Teacher	21%	24%	25%
Starting Assistant Teacher Wage in Center <sup>2</sup> (n=61)	\$7.00	\$7.50	\$8.50
Highest Asst. Teacher Wage in Center <sup>3</sup> (n=59)	\$8.00	\$8.54	\$10.00
Pay Increase from Starting to Highest-Paid Asst. Teacher	14%	14%	18%

Note: Median wages are reported. Data are based on directors’ reports.

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (<http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/survey/most>).

<sup>2</sup> Information gathered from 68 percent of respondents.

<sup>3</sup> Information gathered from 66 percent of respondents.

**Table 4****Employment Benefits in Child Care Centers in Durham County**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2009</b>
Fully Paid Health Insurance (n=88)	13%	13%
Partially Paid Health Insurance (n=88)	47%	48%
Free Child Care (n=87)	13%	17%
Reduced Child Care Fee (n=87)	37%	74%
Parental Leave (n=87)	51%	43%
Paid Sick Leave (n=83)	80%	81%
Paid Vacation (n=81)	94%	91%
Paid Holidays (n=81)	90%	95%
Paid Retirement Benefits (n=87)	25%	28%



## Comparisons Between GS-110 Centers and Faith-Based Centers with a Star Rating

Religious sponsored programs have an option to be “exempt” from licensing and continue to operate. These programs are given a GS-110 permit. However, faith-based programs may choose to go through the licensing process in order to receive a star rating. In Durham County, faith-based programs have chosen to operate under both of these options. While some significant differences exist between license-exempt programs and those with a star rating, extreme caution should be used when examining this data due to a very small number of programs responding in both groups. For GS-110 programs, only nine programs completed a survey. For those programs with a license, only 13 responded. On any given question, fewer directors may have answered. Percentages may vary dramatically based on one or two people.

With that in mind, star rated, faith-based programs are more likely to be directed by an African-American woman in her mid-forties (67 percent African-American, 100 percent female and a median age of 44). GS-110 programs, on the other hand, are more likely to be directed by a white woman in her forties (63 percent white, 89 percent female and median age of 46). On average, directors in both types of faith based programs have been at their current center about four years. However, respondents in star rated programs have been in the field a median of 20 years compared to only 13 years for those respondents in GS-110 programs. While most directors plan to be working in the field in three years, 92 percent of directors in star rated programs compared to only 78 percent in GS 110 programs answered that they will definitely or probably be

working in the field three years from now.

In terms of education, 69 percent of directors in star rated programs have some type of college degree compared to only 33 percent of directors in GS-110 programs. Further, when asked if they are currently taking classes at a community college or university, 42 percent of directors in star rated programs answered “yes” compared to only 11 percent in GS-110 programs. 92 percent of directors in programs with a star rating said that either they or their teachers have received a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship at some point. Only 33 percent of directors in GS-110 programs answered “yes” to this question.

Programmatically, median salaries tend to be higher in star rated programs. On average, median salaries are \$1.44 lower in GS-110 centers. However, the median differences range from a low of \$0.31 higher for starting teachers in star rated centers to a high of \$4.25 higher for directors in star rated programs. No significant differences were noted in benefits between the programs with the exception that GS-110 programs are more likely to provide retirement benefits than star rated centers (56 percent vs. 23 percent). Finally, star rated programs tend to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program at a much higher rate than GS-110 centers with 77 percent participation compared with only 22 percent for GS-110 programs.

Again, caution should be taken when comparing star rated faith-based programs to GS-110 centers. Low numbers of respondents results in large percentage changes due to one or two directors.

## More at Four Directors

As with faith-based programs, caution should be taken when interpreting data from More at Four Directors. Though a higher percentage of More at Four programs responded (85 percent of DCD licensed More at Four sites) this percentage represents only 11 programs. Thus, percentage differences are drastically changed with just one or two respondents. Additionally, More at Four programs are exclusively 4 or 5 star programs. When comparing these programs to the overall population of responding Durham centers, the expectation would be that these programs are of higher quality than the gamut of programs throughout the county.

More at Four directors tend to be women of color in their mid-forties (82 percent non-white, 100 percent female and a median of 44 years old). They tend to mirror the overall population of responding directors in terms of years of experience with a median of 5 years in their program and 14.3 years in the early childhood field. Ninety-one percent have a college degree compared to only 63 percent of directors in all centers in Durham County. Given that a higher percent of More at Four directors have a college degree compared to the overall population of directors in the county, it follows that a higher percentage receive a WAGE\$ supplement and that supplement is higher (55 percent receive a supplement averaging \$2,450 a year).

A higher percentage of More at Four directors reported that either they and/or at least one of their teachers have received a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship (91 percent vs. 73 percent). Likewise, in areas of compensation and benefits, More at Four programs beat out child care centers in Durham County. The median starting salary of teachers in More at Four programs is \$10.88 per hour with the median highest paid teacher at \$14.21 per hour. Assistant teachers also fare better with the starting assistant making a median of \$10.00 and the highest median assistant pay at \$12.00 per hour. Though More at Four programs are similar to other child care centers in Durham County in terms of providing free or reduced child care and such benefits as sick, vacation and holiday time as well as paid breaks, job descriptions, etc., there are some benefits that More at Four programs are more likely to provide than other programs. For instance, 91 percent of More at Four programs partially or fully pay for health insurance compared to only 60 percent for non-More at Four sites. Likewise, 55 percent of More at Four programs pay for retirement, 73 percent have job protected maternity/paternity leave and 55 percent provide disability insurance (vs. 28 percent, 43 percent and 32 percent respectively).

## Family Child Care

Responding family child care home providers somewhat mirrored the overall population of home providers in Durham County (see Table 5) with slight differences. Overall, there was a higher percentage of 4 and 5 star responding centers than the overall population (51 percent vs. 44 percent). Similarly, fewer programs with under 3 stars responded (30 percent vs. 35 percent). While these numbers may somewhat affect the information presented in this study, the effect should be minimal.

The Durham County family child care homes responding to this survey had been in business for a me-

**Table 5**

### Profile of Responding Homes vs. Overall Population of Homes in Durham County

Home License (n=138)	Responses	Overall
4 or 5 Stars	51%	44%
3 Stars	19%	21%
Under 3 Stars*	30%	35%

*\*Includes 1- and 2-star licensed homes and homes with a temporary or provisional license.*

dian of 10.0 years (compared to 6.0 years in 2003 and 4.2 years in 2001).

Providers worked 50 hours per week on average, and 86 percent worked without help from a paid assistant. Among the special services offered by the responding homes were evening care (64 percent), overnight

care (38 percent), drop-in care (61 percent), holiday care (21 percent) and care for sick children (4 percent). These are similar percentages to 2003 with the exception of overnight care which increased in 2009 from 28 percent in 2003. Total enrollment as of January 2009 ranged from zero to eight children ages birth to 5 with a median of five young children in each home.



**Earnings and Expenditures.** Family child care providers' median gross monthly earnings are based on child care tuition fees, subsidy payments and Child and Adult Care Food Program reimbursements for January 2009. Their expenditures included items such as food, toys, substitute care, advertising, training fees, diapers, crafts, transportation, supplies, field trips and gifts for the children. Home occupancy costs such as utilities, home improvement or repairs, cleaning and rent or mortgage payments are not included. Based on these data, estimated net yearly earnings were \$25,548. Food costs represented about 48 percent of providers' monthly expenditures, and 78 percent of Durham County providers defrayed this expense by participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. In 2003, about the same percent of expenditures was spent on food; however, only 64 percent of programs participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Median hourly earnings were

\$9.52, estimated by dividing net monthly earnings by the number of hours each home was open (see Table 6). In comparison, family child care providers had a net hourly income of \$6.17 in 2003 and \$7.64 in 2001. Inflation from January 2003 to January 2009 is estimated to be 16.2 percent.<sup>5</sup> Given this estimate, income for family child care providers has risen at a greater rate in Durham County than inflation.

**Benefits.** Family child care providers usually work

alone or with the help of an unpaid or underpaid family member. Child care tuition covered providers' vacation time in 81 percent of homes, and 70 percent of providers charged for days when they were sick. These measures help identify the degree to which providers run their child care programs as a business designed to meet the providers' personal and professional needs. Nonetheless, 27 percent of the providers that responded said that they cared for children even when the provider were sick, and 5 percent said that they never take vacations.

**Table 6**

**Earnings and Expenditures of Family Child Care Homes in Durham County (n=122)**

	2003	2009
Total Monthly Earnings (Median)	\$2,208	\$2,838
Total Monthly Expenditures (Median)	\$605	\$705 <sup>4</sup>
Hours Worked Per Week (Median)	51	50
Net Hourly Income (Median)	\$6.17	\$9.52

## Profile of the Child Care Workforce

The child care workforce in Durham County, as in North Carolina, is overwhelmingly female and includes a large proportion of workers who have children of their own (see Table 7). Among the teaching staff that responded, 25 percent indicated that their children were enrolled in the centers where they work. Of these respondents, 72 percent received free or reduced child care from the center; 32 percent received government assistance to help them pay for child care (note: respondents can receive both kinds of assistance).

Many people working in the early childhood field face severe economic challenges that affect themselves and their families. For example, 32 percent of the teachers and assistants and 48 percent of the family child care providers that responded said that they had no health insurance coverage from any source. These alarming figures are an increase from 2003 in providers with no health insurance from 28 percent of teachers and 39 percent of family child care providers. Additionally, 40 percent of teachers and assistants and 38 percent of family child care providers had received some type of public assistance (e.g., Medicaid, Food Stamps, TANF) in the last three years. This compares to 2003 in which 36 percent of teachers and assistants and 25 percent of family child care providers received one or more forms of public assistance in the past three years.



**Table 7**

**Demographic Profile of the Child Care Workforce in Durham County**

	Center Directors		Teachers & Assistants		Family Providers	
	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009
Median Age	40	46	30	33	43	47
Female	100%	97%	98%	98%	100%	100%
People of Color	69%	62%	74%	71%	88%	90%
Have Children	81%	90%	67%	65%	93%	90%
Single Parent with Child 0-18	17%	9%	26%	21%	25%	26%
At Least One Child 0-18	53%	53%	50%	49%	57%	51%
Annual Family Income < \$20,000	8%	5%	45%	20%	26%	21%

<sup>4</sup> Expenditure information was gathered from 79 percent of family child care providers.

<sup>5</sup> From [www.inflation.com/inflation/inflation\\_calculators](http://www.inflation.com/inflation/inflation_calculators).

## Education of the Child Care Workforce

Child care provider education is a critical factor influencing children's early learning opportunities. This section profiles Durham County providers' educational attainment and aspirations as expressed in the current survey. See Table 8 for education data on center directors (directors, director/owners and assistant directors), family child care providers, teachers (teachers and lead teachers) and assistant teachers (assistant teachers, teacher aides and floaters). Gains in degree-earning providers are a positive sign that the workforce is growing to meet the needs of young children. Center directors have completed higher levels of education than teachers and family child care providers, though all groups do not match the minimum education requirements for teachers and administrators in public elementary, middle and high schools. Some directors (30 percent), teachers (16 percent) and family child care providers (15 percent), however, have a college degree in fields other than early childhood education or child development and have taken at least one course in the field.

Durham County child care providers have a strong interest in working toward higher levels of education. As shown in the tables, many directors, teachers and family

child care providers had completed college courses. Furthermore, 37 percent of the teachers and assistants and 37 percent of the family child care providers said that they were currently taking courses leading to a degree or credential in the early childhood field. Among all of the responding teachers and assistants, 24 percent were working towards a two-year degree or higher. Of the survey respondents who were not taking courses 21 percent of the directors, 48 percent of the teachers and assistants and 41 percent of the family child care providers that responded said that they are interested in doing so.

In 2009, 63 percent of directors, 38 percent of family child care providers and 45 percent of teachers and assistants indicated that they had attained an Associate, Bachelor's or Master's Degree in some field. In comparison, 58 percent of directors, 27 percent of family child care providers and 34 percent of teachers and assistants in 2003 had earned an Associate, Bachelor's or Master's Degree in some field.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, 6 percent of directors, 1 percent of family child care providers and 4 percent of teachers and assistant teachers have a B-K/Pre-school add-on Teacher Licensure.

**Table 8**

### Education of Center Directors, Family Child Care Providers and Teachers in Durham County

	Center Directors		Teachers and Assistant Teachers		Family Providers	
	2003	2009	2003	2009	2003	2009
<b>Highest Education Completed</b>						
Bachelor's Degree or More in ECE/CD	20%	25%	8%	11%	1%	7%
Bachelor's Degree or More in Other Field	32%	30%	17%	22%	10%	15%
Associate Degree in ECE/CD	3%	7%	5%	8%	5%	12%
Associate Degree in Other Field	3%	1%	4%	4%	11%	4%
High School + Any College Courses	38%	36%	45%	41%	57%	49%
High School + Workshops	3%	1%	6%	7%	12%	10%
High School Only	1%	0%	14%	6%	4%	1%
Less than High School	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
<b>Other Education Credentials</b>						
N.C. EC Credential	49%	63%	56%	69%	59%	82%
N.C. EC Administration Credential	79%	77%	13%	18%	19%	44%
Child Development Associate (CDA)	15%	16%	11%	9%	12%	13%
<b>Educational Pursuits</b>						
Currently Taking ECE/CD Courses	32%	31%	27%	37%	27%	37%
Interested in Taking Courses*	31%	21%	48%	48%	51%	41%

\*Percentages were drawn from the survey respondents who were not currently taking courses.



### Center Based Direct Teaching Staff Education.

Education levels of teachers and assistant teachers vary dramatically. When combined, 45 percent of teachers and assistant teachers have received at least a two year degree in some field as noted above. However, when the two groups are separated, 51 percent of teachers and only 26 percent of assistant teachers have such a degree. Further differences can be noted in Table 9.

### Education of Teachers by Age Group Taught.

Education levels of teachers differ as a group depending on the age of children in their care. Infant and/or toddler teachers (ages of children from birth to 36 months) tend to have lower levels of education than those who teach three year olds or older. Many teachers indicated that they taught multiple age groups spanning across infant/toddlers and preschoolers. In these cases, education levels were counted in both age groups. Fifty-six percent of those teachers who taught preschoolers had at least a two year degree compared to only 45 percent of those teachers who taught infants and/or toddlers. For infant and/or toddler teachers, 31 percent had a Master's or Bachelor's degree compared to 42 percent for preschool teachers.

Table 9

### Education of Teachers and Assistant Teachers

	Teachers	Assistant Teachers
<b>Highest Education Completed</b>		
Bachelor's Degree or More in ECE/CD	14%	2%
Bachelor's Degree or More in Other Field	23%	17%
Associate Degree in ECE/CD	9%	3%
Associate Degree in Other Field	4%	4%
High School + Any College Courses	39%	48%
High School + Workshops	5%	13%
High School Only	5%	9%
Less than High School	<1%	4%

## Earnings of the Child Care Workforce

Child care provider earnings in Durham County remain low (see Table 10 on page 8). The median self-reported wage of child care teachers and assistants in Durham County does not compare favorably to the starting wage of public school teachers in Durham County (\$19.90 per hour). Child care center directors' median self-reported wage barely competes (though still 15 percent lower at the 50th percentile) with that of the public school teachers despite the added responsibility of running a business and working year round. Some child care providers (13 percent of teachers, 12 percent of assistant teachers and 9 percent of family child care providers) said that they worked another paid job in addition to their job as a child care provider. The median number of hours worked in these additional jobs was 11 for teachers, 15 for assistants and 10 for family child care providers.

In 2009, the median salary for directors was \$16.83. This compares to 2003 in which the median director salary was \$14.00 (an increase from \$12.01 in 2001). In 2003, the median teacher and assistant teacher salary was \$9.25 per hour; in 2009, it increased to \$11.00 per hour. For teachers and lead teachers only, those who teach infants and/or toddlers had a median salary (without supplement) of \$11.00 per hour. Preschool teachers fared better with a median salary of \$12.00 per hour.



**Table 10****Self-Reported Earnings of the Child Care Workforce in Durham County**

	Center Directors (n=67)		Teachers and Assistant Teachers (n=509)		Family Providers (n=122)	
	2003 <sup>7</sup>	2009 <sup>8</sup>	2003	2009	2003	2009
<b>Salary Supplements Included</b>						
Highest Hourly Earnings (90th Percentile)	\$ 19.89	\$ 23.25	\$ 13.75	\$ 15.87	\$ 12.62	\$ 16.66
Median Hourly Earnings (50th Percentile)	\$ 14.15	\$ 17.31	\$ 9.36	\$ 11.00	\$ 6.63	\$ 9.54
Lowest Hourly Earnings (10th Percentile)	\$ 10.12	\$ 11.49	\$ 7.25	\$ 8.50	\$ 1.47	\$ 3.43
<b>Salary Supplement Not Included</b>						
Highest Hourly Earnings (90 percentile)	\$ 19.70	\$ 23.25	\$ 13.28	\$ 14.83	\$ 12.40	\$ 15.68
Median Hourly Earnings (50th Percentile)	\$ 14.00	\$ 16.83	\$ 9.25	\$ 11.00	\$ 6.17	\$ 9.52
Lowest Hourly Earnings (10th Percentile)	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.58	\$ 7.25	\$ 8.50	\$ 1.36	\$ 3.28

## Professional Support for the Child Care Workforce

Early childhood research has shown that higher education and compensation of child care providers can lead to positive outcomes for children. Programs such as the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project and salary supplements have addressed the educational and financial needs of child care providers while lowering staff turnover. At the program level, child care centers offer staff opportunities to develop their teaching skills and professionalism through coursework and by creating a supportive work environment. The workforce survey included a number of questions on these professional support topics.

**The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project.** According to center directors, 73 percent of centers in Durham County had at least one staff member that had received a T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship. This matches the percentage in 2003. On the teacher and family child care provider surveys, a proportion of teachers and assistant teachers (32 percent) and of family child care providers (49 percent) said that they had received a T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship. In 2003, 23 percent of teachers and only 27 percent of family child care providers had received such a scholarship. Among the child care providers that responded, 100 percent of center directors, 97 percent of teachers and 99 percent of family child care providers had heard of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project.

**Salary Supplements.** Among Durham County teachers and assistant teachers, 38 percent received a salary supplement funded by Durham's Partnership for Children (up from 31 percent in 2003). The median supplement amount was \$1,870 per year. Of those receiving the supplement, 88 percent said it encouraged them to continue in the child care field. Additionally, 37 percent of directors received a supplement (an increase from 33 percent in 2003) at a median of \$1,500 per year encouraging 93 percent to remain in the field. Finally, 60 percent of family child care providers (compared to only 28 percent in 2003) received a supplement at a median of \$1,500 per year. Of these providers, 87 percent said receiving a supplement encouraged them to stay in the field.

**Other Center-Provided Support.** Child care centers can support the professional development of staff without creating a significant financial burden on their programs. Seven key types of professional support that centers can provide staff are an orientation, written job descriptions, written personnel policies, paid education and training expenses, paid breaks, compensatory time for training and paid preparation or planning time (see Table 11). Among the responding centers, 79 percent offered at least five of these types of support and 9 percent offered three or fewer. Providing a professional work environment may be a low-cost means for centers to prevent staff turnover. By comparison, in 2003, 80 percent of centers offered at least five types of support and 7 percent offered three or fewer.

<sup>7</sup> Item Response Rate 63 percent.

<sup>8</sup> Item Response Rate 74 percent.

**Table 11****Professional Support Benefits for Staff in Child Care Centers in Durham County (n=90)**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2009</b>
Orientation	92%	97%
Written Job Description	96%	96%
Written Personnel Policies	93%	96%
Paid Education/ Training	87%	79%
Paid Breaks	72%	60%
Time Off for Training	65%	62%
Planning/Preparation Time	72%	72%

## Experience and Turnover of the Child Care Workforce

Young children need experienced, well-educated teachers with whom they can form close attachments over time. These attributes are even more important for teachers of infants and toddlers. Durham County has a combination of seasoned child care professionals who have remained with their current programs for years and of less-experienced providers who have either just begun in the field or in a new child care program (see Table 12). Among survey respondents median experience in the child care field was 16.0 years for directors, 7.5 years for teachers and assistants and 10.0 years for family child care providers. For teachers only, preschool teachers (and leads) had been in the field for 10.0 years compared to only 7.0 years for infant and/or toddler teachers. In 2003 by comparison, directors had been in the workforce for 13.0 years, teachers and assistants for 6.2 years and family child care providers for 6.0 years.

The current survey included two measures of turnover: (1) for center-based teacher turnover, the percentage of child care teachers who left their centers during the previous year and (2) for individual directors, teachers and family child care providers, the percentage of workers who are planning to leave the child care field in the next 3 years (see Table 13). As a proportion of all full-time teachers and assistants, 18 percent left their centers during the previous 12 months.<sup>9</sup> Turnover rates within centers ranged from 0 percent to 167 percent of full-time staff. Of

the centers that responded, 42 percent had no full-time staff turnover during the previous year while 5 percent of centers had turnover at or above 100 percent of current full-time staff. In 2003, 24 percent of full-time teachers and assistants left their centers during the previous 12 months.

Survey respondents planning to leave most commonly indicated that higher earnings would encourage them to stay. Different motivators among the groups stemmed from the unique roles and responsibilities of each group, though all three were generally interested in additional support (e.g., increased program funds, better employment benefits and more substitute teachers), for the work they do.

**Table 12****Child Care Workforce Experience in Durham County**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2009</b>
Teachers Years in Current Center (n=416)	2.0	2.4
Teachers Less Than One Year in Current Center	27%	24%
Teachers Years in Child Care Field (n=417)	7.0	8.3
Assistant Teachers Years in Current Center (n=128)	2.0	1.1
Assistant Teachers Less Than One Year In Current Center	33%	39%
Assistant Teachers Years in Child Care Field (n=126)	4.5	5.0
Directors Years at Director in Current Center (n=90)	6.0	4.5
Directors Years in Child Care Field (n=90)	13.0	16.0
Family Child Care Providers Years as FCC Provider (n=137)	6.0	10.0

<sup>9</sup> Turnover data reported by center directors with less than one year of employment in the centers were not included in the turnover calculation.



**Table 13**  
**Child Care Workforce Turnover in Durham County**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2009</b>
Full-Time Teacher and Assistant Teacher Turnover (n=76)	24%	18%
Full-Time Teacher Turnover	22%	17%
Full-Time Assistant Teacher Turnover	32%	20%
Part-Time Teacher and Assistant Turnover (n=70)	22%	30%
Part-Time Teacher Turnover	20%	25%
Part-Time Assistant Teacher Turnover	26%	34%
Teachers Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=420)	31%	19%
Infants/Toddler Teachers Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=237)	NA	22%
Preschool Teachers Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=215)	NA	17%
Assistant Teachers Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=129)	29%	23%
Directors Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=87)	6%	6%
Family Child Care Providers Leaving the Field in 3 Years (n=135)	13%	13%

## Conclusion

The past several years have shown progress for the child care community in Durham County. With a significant increase in education for center directors (63 percent with a two year degree or higher), teachers (45 percent with a two year degree or higher) and family child care providers (38 percent with a two year degree or higher) has come a huge bump in salary. Likewise, child care providers are feeling the rewards of the field and remaining in their chosen profession (16 years for directors, 8.3 years for teachers, 5.0 years for assistant teachers and 10.0 years for family child care providers).

Perhaps one reason that the economic situation has increased and the turnover has dropped for the child care providers in Durham County is the increased usage of community supports. A higher percentage of center director, teachers and family child care providers receive a salary supplement funded by Durham's Partnership for Children. Likewise, more teachers and family child care providers take advantage of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships. (In fact, the percent of family child care providers receiving a scholarship has nearly doubled from 27 percent in 2003 to 49 percent in 2009.) Finally, family child care providers are being reimbursed for food costs through the Child and Adult Care Food Program at a much higher rate than in 2003 (78 percent in 2009 vs. only 64 percent in 2003).

Despite these gains for the workforce, some areas continue to lag behind. The increase in providers with no health insurance indicates the potential for significant financial difficulties for many Durham County providers and their families. Thirty-two percent of teachers and 48 percent of family child care providers have no insurance from any source.) Likewise, the increase in both family child care providers' and teachers' use of public assistance demonstrates that, while wages have grown, the net benefits of these increases is not enough for families to be self-sufficient.

Clearly, the strategies employed by Durham County to focus on the workforce have been successful. Providers are increasing their education and remaining in the field for longer. The decision to embed More at Four in private child care settings has played a role in driving the increase in both the wages and the education levels of child care providers. Ultimately, the children of Durham County are reaping the benefits of the battles fought and won by the child care advocates and funders of the county and the state.



## Recommendations

1. Disseminate the findings of this study to the early care and education community. Encourage center directors and family child care providers to compare their policies and practices with Durham County providers at large to help them develop strategies to improve salaries, benefits and working conditions.
2. Over the past six years, Smart Start and other investments have led to improvements in compensation, education and retention. These investments should be continued and expanded to further increase the quality of care provided to Durham's youngest residents.
3. Increasing health insurance costs are making it very difficult for child care providers to fully cover health insurance programs. Additional supports to programs to help with health insurance for their employees could increase longevity and improve the health of both child care teachers and the children in their programs.
4. Some areas of the workforce have not improved as dramatically as other areas. Key partners should study the results of this report and develop and fund strategies and programs that directly impact these areas.
5. Infant and/or toddler teachers tend to have less education, are paid less and have fewer years of experience both within their centers and in the field as a whole than preschool teachers. Projects aimed at improving the education, compensation and retention should have specific strategies aimed at helping infant/toddler teachers.
6. Inform and engage the faith community in understanding quality and the benefits of licensure. Use those faith-based programs that have 4- or 5-stars to inform and recruit GS-110 programs to become licensed.
7. An updated workforce study for the state of North Carolina should be conducted. Data gathered in 2003 is now six years old and, as has been shown through this county report, is largely outdated in some areas.







## Appendix A: Survey Methods and Response Rates

Child care programs selected for survey participation were drawn from February 2009 Child Care Services Association NACCRRAware reports and cross referenced with February 2009 licensing reports of the North Carolina Division of Child Development. Programs that served only school-age children or that provided care only during the summer months were not included in this study. Additionally, unlicensed, public pre-k programs were not included as part of this study. In Durham County survey packets were mailed to 100 percent of the licensed centers (n=141) with enough questionnaires for 141 directors and 1,188 teachers and to 100 percent of the licensed family child care homes (n=214). Center packets included a cover letter, questionnaire and postage-paid envelope for the director; cover letter, questionnaire and postage-paid envelope for each teacher and raffle tickets for the director and teachers. Family child care providers received a cover letter, a questionnaire with postage-paid envelope, and a raffle ticket.

The written questionnaires used in this survey were based on forms for child care center directors, teachers and family child care providers previously created and used by the authors of this study. The questionnaires were modified to include relevant and time sensitive items.

Staff followed the initial survey mailing with a reminder postcard, and a follow up survey mailing to non-responsive programs. To ensure a high survey response rate, repeated phone calls were made to child care centers and family child care homes to both remind

participants to respond and to conduct surveys over the phone. When appropriate, mailings were hand delivered to programs. Study representatives also attended community events and visited sites to collect surveys from child care center teachers.

The survey sample of 141 Durham County centers was reduced to 137 when phone calls revealed that some centers had closed, were extension sites of other centers or were Head Start sites supervised by one area coordinator. Based on director reports and director refusals, the adjusted teacher count was 1,226. The survey sample of 214 family child care homes was reduced to 205 when phone calls revealed that some homes were no longer in business. A total of 90 director surveys, 562 teacher surveys and 138 family child care provider surveys were received. This yielded a response rate of 66 percent for directors, 46 percent for teachers and 67 percent for family child care providers. The goal was to obtain response rates of 65 percent for directors, 50 percent for teachers and 65 percent for family child care providers to ensure strong representation of the county's child care workforce as a whole. Response rates below these goals are not necessarily inadequate but do require a more careful interpretation of the study findings. A number of directors (2) refused to have their centers participate in the survey, thus preventing teachers from having an opportunity to receive a questionnaire.

The majority of response rates to individual questions were above 80 percent. Items with significantly low response rates have been noted in the report.



## Appendix B: Resources for the Child Care Workforce in Durham County

### **Durham's Partnership for Children: A Smart Start Initiative**

The mission of Durham's Partnership for Children is to mobilize and unify the Durham community to create and support innovative and successful collaborative approaches to serving the needs of young children birth to age five and their families. Durham's Partnership for Children designs and funds model programs to ensure children and their families are ready for school. Funded programs focus on early education, family support and health and early intervention. For more information, visit [www.dpfc.net](http://www.dpfc.net), (919) 403-6960.

### **Programs Funded by Durham's Partnership for Children that Support the Child Care Workforce:**

#### **Durham Inclusion Support Services**

Durham Inclusion Support Services provides consultation, technical assistance and training to child care providers and families who care for a child for whom there is a developmental, behavioral or social-emotional concern. For information, contact Community Partnerships, Inc., (919) 781-3616, or go to [www.compарт.org](http://www.compарт.org).

#### **Early Childhood Outreach Project (EChO)**

EChO provides consultation, support and referral services to Durham child care providers and families when a child's behavior presents a challenge. This activity increases the capacity for childcare providers to foster social-emotional development and address the mental health issues of children by offering trainings in the "Caring for Children with Challenging Behaviors" curriculum. For more information, contact Exchange Clubs Child Abuse Prevention Center, (919) 403-8249, or go to [www.exchangefamilycenter.org](http://www.exchangefamilycenter.org).

#### **Grow a Teacher**

Grow a Teacher encourages recent high school graduates to apply to and enroll in semester credit hours towards a degree in early childhood education. Scholarships for tuition and fees to Durham Tech, as well as reimbursement for textbooks are provided for these students. Grow a Teacher provides on-site services to current child care providers to provide information about financial aid assistance; assists providers in developing a professional development plan; and assists them in applying to institutions of higher education. For more information, contact Child Care Services Association, (919) 403-6950 or go to [www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org).

#### **Nutrition Consultation**

A Registered Dietician consults with food preparation staff, teachers and directors in licensed child care centers and homes, and to parents of enrolled children, in order to improve the nutritional value of meals served, improve compliance with child nutrition rules and the quality of mealtime interactions, and support parents in understanding the importance of nutrition in their child's development. For more information, contact the Durham County Health Department, (919) 560-7784, or go to [www.co.durham.nc.us](http://www.co.durham.nc.us).

#### **School Readiness Quality Enhancement/School Readiness Quality Maintenance**

This project provides technical assistance to child care programs seeking to improve or maintain the quality of child care for children birth to age 5. Programs seeking a higher star rating or national accreditation or those seeking to maintain their star rating will receive support through a variety of strategies that include on-site consultation, quality improvement and professional development

planning, specialized training, support groups, resource library materials and grants/awards. For more information, contact Child Care Services Association, (919) 967-3272, or go to [www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org).

#### **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® AmeriCorps Program**

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®AmeriCorps program provides educational release time to teachers of children birth to age 5 working in licensed, nonprofit child care centers. T.E.A.C.H. Corps members also enhance teacher to child ratios; provide one-on-one interactions with children; and/or develop and implement literacy projects. For more information, contact Child Care Services Association, (919) 967-3272, or go to [www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org).

#### **WAGES®**

The Child Care WAGES® Project supplements the earnings of teachers, directors and family child care providers who work with young children. For information, contact Child Care Services Association, (919) 967-3272, or go to [www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org).

### **Other Community Resources:**

#### **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally funded program that provides per-meal reimbursements to child care programs that meet the CACFP's nutritional guidelines for meals and snacks served. Program participants have received significant savings in food costs because of these reimbursements. For information on how to participate or about sponsorship, contact Sheritha Shivers-Moore at (919) 403-6950.

#### **Community Colleges, Four-Year Colleges and Universities**

North Carolina has an extensive system of institutions that offer college coursework in the child care field. Child care providers and administrators can take courses and earn credentials in early childhood education and child development at community colleges, four-year colleges and universities throughout the state. Contact: Durham Technical Community College - Ilene Britt, (919) 686-3586 College North Carolina Central University - Dr. Deborah Parker, (919) 530-6477

#### **NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development**

The North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development strives to increase child care quality by addressing the education and compensation needs of the child care workforce. The Institute supports professional development opportunities, scholarship programs and outreach about the links between provider education and child care quality to ensure progress toward a better educated and compensated workforce. For more information contact, Debra Torrence, (919) 942-7442, [www.ncchildcare.org](http://www.ncchildcare.org).

#### **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarships**

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to child care workers to complete course work in early childhood education and to increase their compensation. T.E.A.C.H.® offers a variety of scholarship programs for teachers, directors and family child care providers working in licensed child care programs. All T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships link continuing education with increased compensation and require that recipients and their sponsoring child care programs share in the cost. For more information, contact Child Care Services Association, (919) 967-3272, or go to [www.childcareservices.org](http://www.childcareservices.org).

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