

## FY22 Results

Before first grade, a child may spend more than 10,000 hours in child care. Research tells us that children enrolled in a good early care and education program in the first five years of life are most likely to be in a highly skilled job or in college at age 21. Ensuring quality early care and education for children today creates a viable workforce for the future and a strong American economy in the long run.



The quality of early care and education a child receives is directly linked to teacher education and compensation, but in Iowa, many early educators do not have higher education degrees and earn less than \$15 an hour. The Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> Program provides education-based salary supplements to early educators to address the key issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover in the early childhood workforce. The WAGE\$ supplements make the early childhood field a more affordable and attractive professional option, thus reducing turnover rates. WAGE\$ offers higher financial awards as participants earn additional education, creating an important incentive to return to school. Ongoing supplements at the lower levels of education on the WAGE\$ scale are contingent upon completion of more coursework.

In Iowa, the **Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children** administers Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup>. In FY22, the program provided salary supplements to **1,341** child care professionals for education earned and for their commitment to their early childhood program. These teachers, directors and family child care educators worked in **585** different programs serving approximately **23,890** children.

### Education

- **55%** of active participants either had an associate degree in ECE or higher or submitted education documentation to show progress in college.

### Compensation

- **43%** of WAGE\$ participants earned less than \$15 per hour from their employers.
- WAGE\$ recipients earned an average six-month supplement of **\$1,231**, or approximately **\$2,462** more per year, as a result of their participation.

### Retention

- Only **8%** of WAGE\$ participants left their early education programs.

### Demographics

- **12%** of WAGE\$ participants were people of color and/or Latinx.
- **85%** of WAGE\$ participants worked in early care and education centers.
- **15%** of WAGE\$ participants worked in family child care homes.

### Personal Impact

In surveys of WAGE\$ participants:

- **90%** said WAGE\$ encouraged them to stay in their current early education program.
- **67%** said WAGE\$ encouraged them to pursue further education.
- **94%** said receiving a WAGE\$ supplement helped ease financial stress.
- **70%** said they needed the funds to pay bills.
- **33%** said they were more able to address the basic needs of their families, such as food and housing.

This year alone, **23,890** of Iowa's children benefited from consistent care provided by a better educated teacher.

*"It is difficult to stay in child care when you are underpaid. When you are paid competitively, it makes you feel successful and the enthusiasm then is transferred to the children. My life and the lives of my children have been forever changed with my educational level and the money."* -WAGE\$ participant

The Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> Program is currently licensed and operating in five states. National outcomes can be found in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> and Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> 2021-2022 Annual National Program Report.



"I am the owner and operator of Jana Michaelis Family Daycare in Scott County. I have been a child care provider for 26 years and during those years, the T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ program have been amazing resources and created opportunities for myself and my program that wouldn't have been possible otherwise.

"I participated in the T.E.A.C.H. program in 2011 where I earned my Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. With my limited income as a family child care provider, I did not have the financial means to pursue an early childhood education degree independently. With the help of the T.E.A.C.H. program, I earned my degree and gained confidence as a child care provider. This degree has benefited myself and my program tremendously. Due to the knowledge I gained, I am a better provider for the children and families that attend my program. Additionally, prospective families value my degree when considering their daycare options. Overall, the T.E.A.C.H. program has been a blessing for myself and my program.



"In addition to the T.E.A.C.H. program, I have participated in the WAGE\$ program since 2021. As the financial demands of providing care continue to increase, the WAGE\$ program is a tremendous help to my program and my ability to provide the highest quality care. The stipend allows me to purchase items such as art supplies, sand and water toys, diverse books for several ages, social emotional materials, soccer balls and basketballs for larger motor skills, games and puzzles for cognitive and small motor skills and, finally, resources to continue to grow my knowledge as a provider. This stipend allows me to focus on the children, their environment, and their development while lessening the financial burden and stress of how I can continue to pay for all of the expenses.

"Finally, with the WAGE\$ program coordinated to the Iowa Quality Rating System I am more incentivized to continue my participation in the Iowa Quality Rating System. I am a dedicated child care provider and work tirelessly to improve my family child care program. The children in my program, their families, myself as a provider and the community all positively benefit from both programs. As stated above, I have been a child care provider for 26 years and have participated in the Iowa Quality Rating System since it began in 2006. The professional development opportunities allow me to grow and learn as a provider. Thank you for your continued support!"

**– Jana Michaelis, T.E.A.C.H. Graduate and WAGE\$ Participant**

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