

# FIXING THE CHILD CARE STAFFING SHORTAGE BY MAKING CHILD CARE JOBS "GOOD JOBS"

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## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Child care center workers earned just \$12.00 an hour in 2019, less than two thirds (62.7 percent) of the median hourly wage of all workers.
- While racial and ethnic earnings disparities declined between 2012 and 2019, Black child care center workers earned a median hourly wage of just \$10.89 in 2019 compared to \$12.00 for all child care center workers.
- The median hourly wage for child care center workers with bachelor's degrees (22.5 percent of workers) was just \$15.00 an hour in 2019, less than half (48.1 percent) of the median hourly wage of all workers with a bachelor's degree (\$31.20).
- One in four (23.9 percent) child care center workers has children under six years old, yet their wages are too low to afford center-based care for their own children; the average cost of center care for an infant would consume 63.7 percent of the annual income of someone working full-time, year-round and earning the median hourly wage for child care center workers.
- Stress and low pay affect the well-being of child care center workers. Nearly one in ten (9.3 percent) child care center workers was flagged for potential major depressive disorder.

# INTRODUCTION

Child care is an essential support for parents' full participation in the economy, education, and training, and for children's growth and development into healthy and well-adjusted adults. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic's onset, however, high-quality and affordable child care was already out of reach for many families, and availability has dramatically worsened since.<sup>1</sup> Child care centers are reporting great difficulties with recruiting and retaining staff, not least because child care workers are reportedly choosing to move to higher-paying jobs in other sectors, such as retail, in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.<sup>2</sup> The recovery of the child care sector is lagging dramatically behind the overall jobs recovery; while the number of all jobs on payrolls in June 2022 was just 0.5 percent below pre-pandemic levels, child care jobs were 10.8 percent lower, and have shown few signs of improvement in the last year.<sup>3</sup> A recent survey found that 90 percent of Head Start centers had to close classrooms due to staff shortages, and close to six in ten (57 percent) centers reported (low) compensation as the number one reason for staff leaving.<sup>4</sup>

While the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the attrition from child care centers, this is not a new development. Employment in child care centers has declined steadily since 2011<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, between 2012 and 2019, the number of child care centers declined from 129,000 to 121,000 while enrollment for 0-5 year-olds increased 2.4 percent in the same time period.<sup>6</sup> Demand for child care has continued to increase, but supply is not responding accordingly, lowering quality and contributing to the high price of child care.

This policy brief draws on data analysis of the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019 workforce survey to analyze the pay and work conditions of child care center workers leading up to the pandemic.<sup>7</sup> The NSECE is a nationally representative study on the use and availability of early care and education (ECE) in the United States. The survey collected responses from classroom-assigned instructional staff working with children from birth through age five, not yet in kindergarten. It did not include nannies, babysitters, and other directly-employed in-home child care workers. The NSECE was first fielded in 2012 and then repeated in 2019 using a similar study design to allow for direct comparisons.<sup>8</sup>

This brief begins with an overview of the composition of the child center care workforce in 2019, then provides detailed breakdowns of pay by race and ethnicity, examining changes since 2012. Next, the brief discusses the impact of educational attainment and certifications by race and ethnicity on earnings, and employer-provided support for professional development, before turning to the impact of low pay on child care workers' economic security and overall well-being. The brief concludes with policy recommendations for tackling the child care staffing crisis and improving the job quality and pay of child care center workers.

## THE STATE OF CHILD CARE CENTER JOBS

### The Child Care Workforce is Diverse

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the undervaluation of work by women, particularly women of color, who are overrepresented in low-paid care and service sector jobs.<sup>9</sup> The vast majority of child care workers is female, comprising 97.9 percent of the center-based workforce. While women of color are overrepresented in the care sector more broadly, with the exception of Asian workers, the racial and ethnic makeup of the center-based child care workforce does not vary greatly from that of the national female workforce. According to the NSECE, in 2019, 59.6 percent were White<sup>10</sup> (compared with 61.5

percent nationally), 17.3 percent Black (compared with 13.9 percent nationally), 17.2 percent Hispanic, (compared with 16.5 percent nationally), 2.7 percent Asian (compared to 6.4 percent nationally), and 3.2 percent other racial category (compared to 1.7 percent nationally).<sup>11</sup> Asian women are just half as likely to work in child care centers as their share of the national female workforce would suggest.

Immigrant workers, however, are underrepresented. In 2019, 11.0 percent of center-based workers were born outside of the U.S., compared to 17.4 percent of the overall U.S. workforce.<sup>12</sup> This lower share likely reflects the lack of access to work visas for child care center workers; visas are more readily available to families employing nannies and au pairs directly in their homes, and in-home child care services are disproportionately provided by immigrant women.<sup>13</sup>

### Child Care Workers are Underpaid

Earnings from providing child care are vital for the economic security of child care workers and their families. The large majority of child care workers (75.5 percent) works full-time and more than half (54.0 percent) are aged 35 years or older.<sup>14</sup> Thirty-nine percent of child care center workers have children aged 12 or younger, including one in four (23.9 percent) with at least one child aged five years or younger. Four in ten (40.4 percent) child care center workers report that their earnings make up all or almost all of their household income (an increase from 36.3 percent in 2012).

Yet, prior to the pandemic, the median wage for center care workers was \$12.00 an hour<sup>15</sup> — just 62.7 percent of the national median wage of \$19.14 for all occupations in the same year.<sup>16</sup> If wages aligned with the national median, over one million child care center workers (85.5 percent of the workforce) would receive a raise. For a full-time year-round worker, this would result in an increase in annual income of nearly \$15,000 (\$24,960 to \$39,811).<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, after controlling for inflation, child care workers have seen only a small increase in hourly wages since 2012 (when the survey was last conducted). In 2019 dollars, the median hourly wage in 2012 was \$11.69, not statistically different from its level in 2019 (Figure 1).



The share of women living in poverty is twice the rate for child care workers than for all workers.<sup>18</sup> Even before the pandemic, 23 percent of child care workers struggled with hunger.<sup>19</sup> One in seven workers (14.6 percent) relied on government assistance to meet basic needs such as cash assistance for disabilities, housing assistance, free or reduced-price lunch for their children, or food stamps.<sup>20</sup>

Center child care workers who belong to unions make up only 6.8 percent of the workforce but have a median hourly wage more than 50 percent higher than non-union workers (\$18.36 compared to \$12.00).

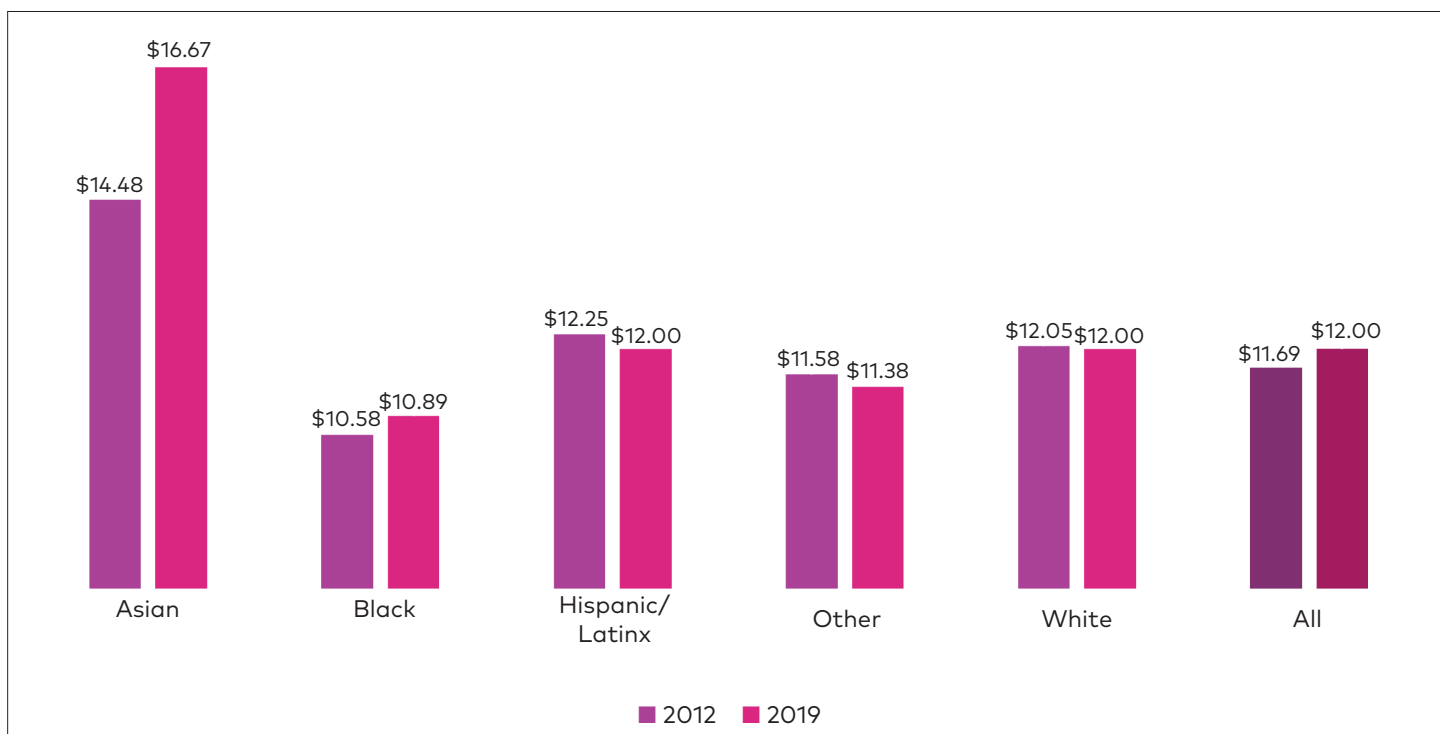
### While All Child Care Center Workers Earn Low Pay, Black Workers Make the Least

Figure 1 shows inflation-adjusted median hourly wages by race and ethnicity in 2012 and 2019. In 2019, Black child care workers earned the least, only \$10.89 per hour at the median, followed by workers who fall in the Other racial category, at \$11.38 an hour. Hispanic/Latinx and White workers had a median hourly wage equal to the overall median of \$12.00, while Asian workers made \$16.67 at the median.

The only group who saw a substantial increase in median hourly earnings when adjusted for inflation between 2012 and 2019 were Asian child care center workers, who earned \$2.19 more per hour. The real median hourly earnings of Black workers also increased, but by just 31 cents per hour. The median hourly earnings of Hispanic, Other racial category, and White workers actually fell in real terms (by 25, 20, and 5 cents respectively). Furthermore, differences in real median wages between 2012 and 2019 were not statistically significant for any group.<sup>21</sup>

### FIGURE 1. Median Hourly Wages Fell between 2012 and 2019 for Hispanic, White, and Other Child Care Center Workers

Median hourly wages for child care center workers by race/ethnicity in 2012 and 2019, in 2019 dollars



**Note:** White, Black, Asian, and Other are non-Hispanic. Other includes American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, two or more races, and individuals reporting some other race. Hispanic workers may be of any race. Wages are reported in 2019 dollars using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Database CPI-U series ID CUUR0000SA0, <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm>. The difference in median wages between 2012 and 2019 was not statistically significant for any group.

**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019

### **Child Care is Unaffordable on Center Worker Wages**

Child care workers' earnings are so low that they are unable to afford center-based child care for their own children. Using median hourly wages as reported in Figure 1, center-based infant care would consume 70.1 percent of Black workers' equivalent full-time year-round earnings, 67.1 percent of other racial category workers', 63.7 percent of Hispanic/Latinx and White workers', and 45.8 percent of Asian workers' earnings. Even home-based care is too expensive. Black workers would have to devote 60.4 percent of their equivalent full-time year-round earnings to home-based child care, other racial category workers 57.8 percent, Hispanic/Latinx and White workers 54.9 percent, and Asian workers 39.5 percent.

### **Health Insurance Coverage is Limited for Child Care Center Workers**

In addition to low pay, child care center workers lack benefits. Just one in four workers (26.2 percent) had health insurance coverage from their employer while another 13.9 percent was covered by Medicaid, Medicare, or military health insurance.<sup>22</sup> About one in six (15.7 percent) of child care center workers had no health insurance through work or any other means compared to 11.5 percent<sup>23</sup> of workers under 65 nationally.

### **MANY WORKERS HAVE COLLEGE-LEVEL EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS BUT EDUCATION PAYS MUCH LESS THAN IN OTHER FIELDS**

The large majority of child care center workers have at least some college-level education, and close to half (48.1 percent) have an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree (Figure 2).

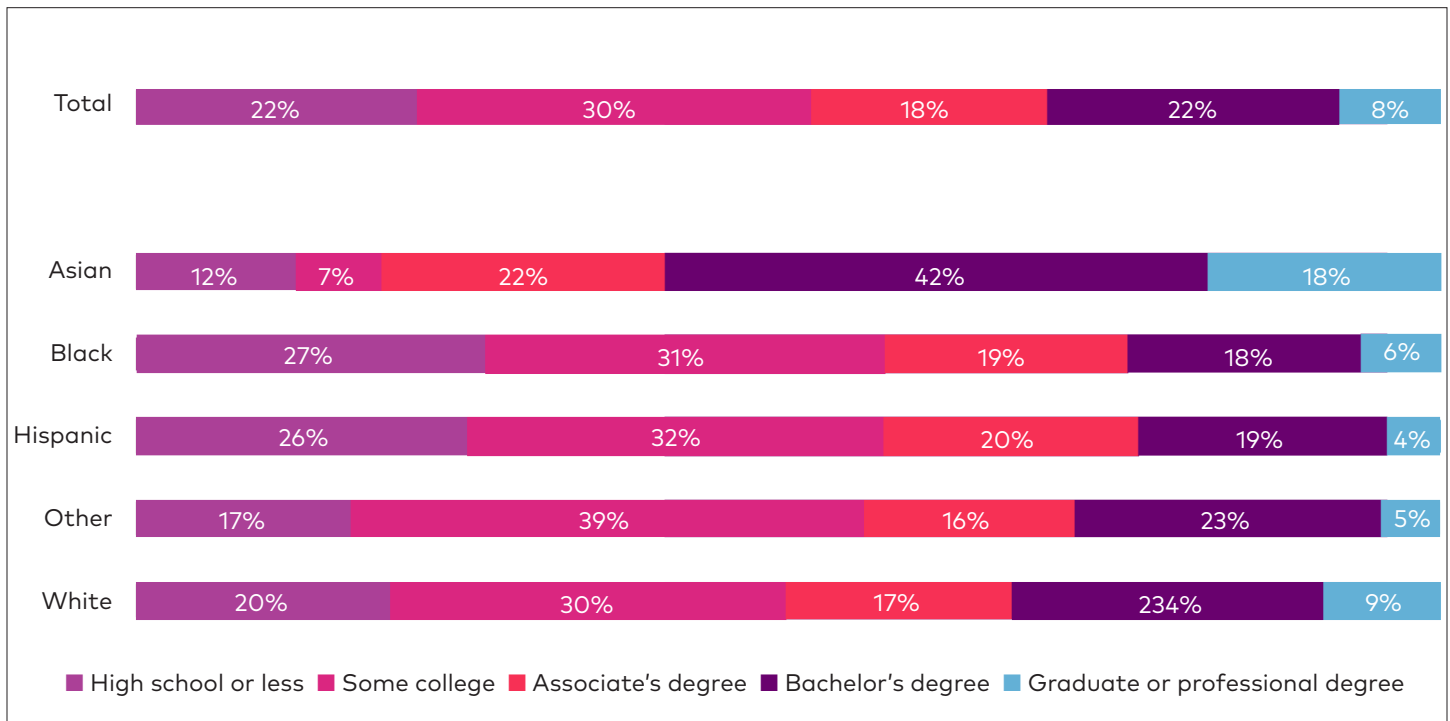
### **Educational Attainment Varies Substantially by Race and Ethnicity**

Among all those working in child care centers, Black and Hispanic workers are least likely to have college-level education; just over one in four (26.9 percent and 25.5 percent, respectively) achieved a high school diploma or less as their highest level of educational attainment. Nearly as many (23.9 and 23.1 percent, respectively) have a bachelor's degree or more, while roughly one in five (18.6 percent and 19.5 percent, respectively) hold an associate's degree. By contrast, one in three White child care center workers (32.9 percent) hold at least a bachelor's degree, and another 17.2 percent an associate's degree (Figure 2). Asian workers have the highest educational attainment, with six in ten (59.4 percent) holding at least a bachelor's degree, and another 21.7 percent having an associate's degree. These high levels of educational attainment may explain why Asian child care center workers earn the highest median hourly wage.



**FIGURE 2. Across Race and Ethnicity, the Large Majority of Workers in Early Childhood Care and Education have at least some College-level Education**

Highest Level of Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity, 2019



**Notes:** White, Black, Asian, and Other are non-Hispanic. Other includes American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, two or more races, and individuals reporting some other race. Hispanic workers may be of any race. Figures in chart have been rounded to nearest whole number.

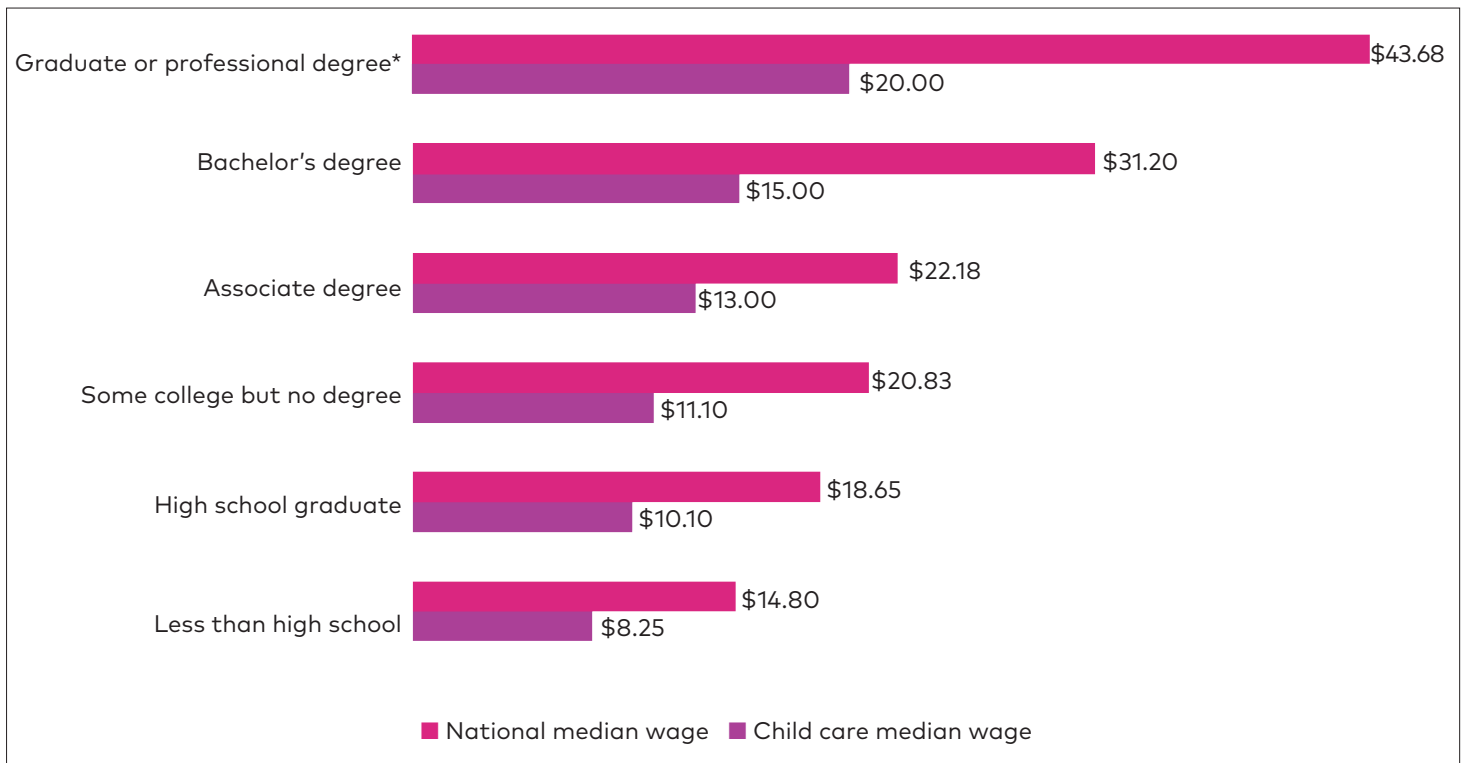
**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019

### Education Increases the Earnings of Child Care Workers but Much Less than for Other Workers

Education matters for the earnings of child care center workers, but the return on investment in education is much smaller than it is for workers in other sectors of the economy. Figure 3 shows a steady rise in median wages with higher educational attainment. The median hourly wage for a child care center worker who had not completed high school was just \$8.25, rising to \$10.10 for those who had completed high school, and rising to \$20.00 for those who held a graduate or professional degree.

Yet, at each level of education, child care center workers earn shockingly little compared to other workers in the economy with comparable levels of educational attainment. Child care center workers who have not completed high school earn just 55.7 percent of the economy-wide hourly earnings for workers without high school education—\$6.55 less per hour (and \$262 less per week for anyone working a 40-hour week).<sup>24</sup> Astonishingly, the median child care worker with a bachelor's degree makes only \$15.00 an hour—less than half (48.1 percent) of the national median for the same level of education at \$31.20. The median hourly earnings of a child care worker with a graduate or professional degree are just 45.8 percent of those earned by all workers with those levels of education.<sup>25</sup>

**FIGURE 3. Child Care Workers with High Levels of Education Still Have Comparatively Low Earnings**  
 Median hourly wages by highest level of educational attainment in 2019 dollars



**Note:** \*Average of national median wage earned by those with graduate or professional degrees for comparison to NSECE data. Sample insufficient to provide educational earnings by race and ethnicity.

**Sources:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019 and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Learn more, earn more: Education leads to higher wages, lower unemployment," Career Outlook, May 2020.

### Higher Education is Prohibitively Expensive for Those Earning Child Care Center Wages

Twenty-three percent of child care workers were enrolled in a college child care course at the time of the NSECE survey. While higher education is typically a path to higher wages, the high cost of college tuition combined with low wages remain a considerable barrier to educational attainment for child care workers. Tuition at 2-year and 4-year colleges would account for 13.5 percent and 37.5 percent, respectively, of someone working full-time year-round and earning the median hourly wage for child care center workers.<sup>26</sup> Based on median hourly wages, a Black worker would have to devote 41.3 percent of their wages to 4-year college tuition.

Many workers would need to rely on student loans to pursue higher education which would increase their financial burden for years to come. Nationally, women hold nearly two-thirds of outstanding student loans—they tend to borrow more than men, and Black women have the largest burden of debt.<sup>27</sup> A recent study showed 19 percent of child care providers were burdened by student debt compared to 17 percent of U.S. adults.<sup>28</sup>

## THE ROLE OF CERTIFICATIONS

### Certification Requirements are Varied and Costly

One in two child care workers (49.8 percent) holds at least one child care certificate (Figure 4).<sup>29</sup> Certifications in early childhood education provide workers with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide high-quality care and instill confidence in parents that their children are well-cared for in an

enriching environment. Many states require training or education in early care and education topics completed prior to working in, operating, or assuming a new role in a licensed child care program, but these requirements vary widely from state to state.<sup>30</sup>

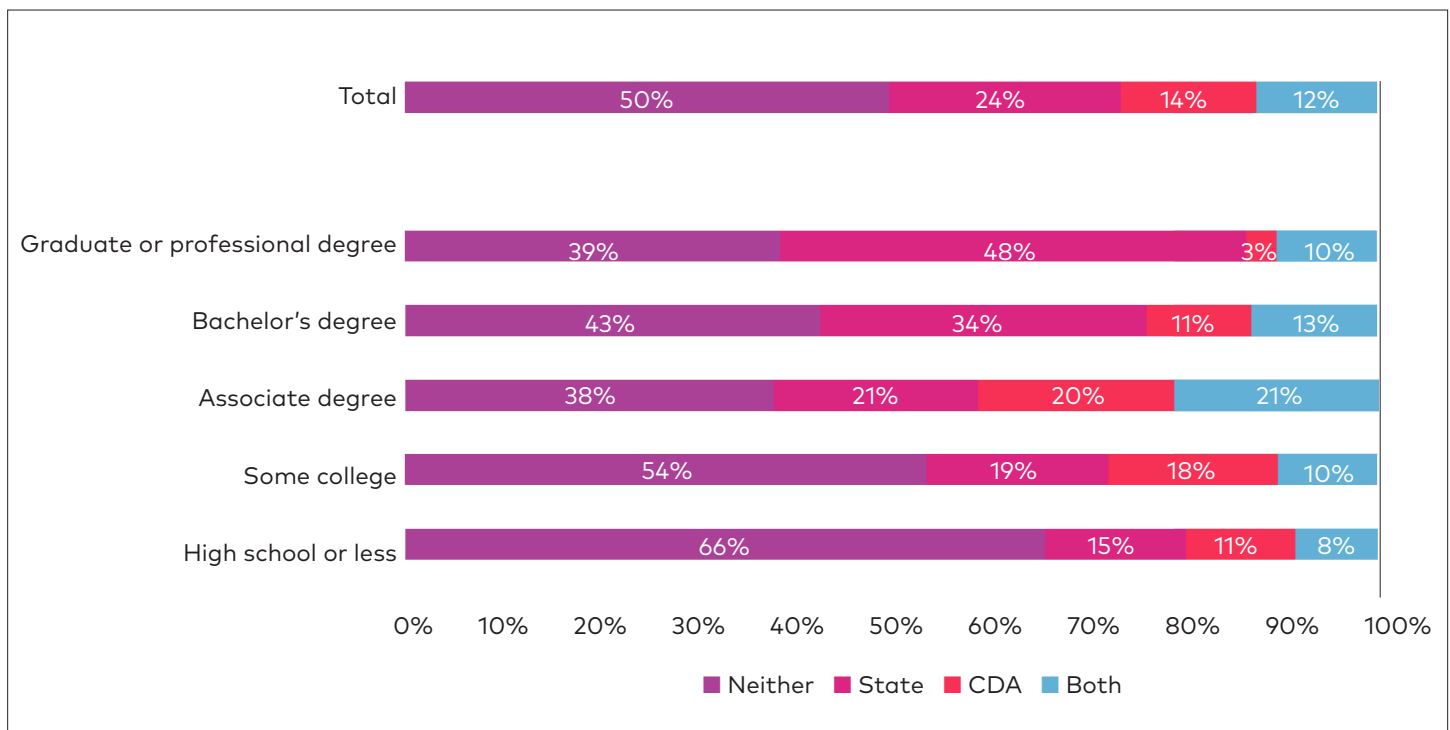
While some states mandate their own certifications, the Child Development Associate (CDA) is a nationally-recognized and well-known child care worker certification. The CDA is awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition,<sup>31</sup> but many programs are run by third parties, including educational institutions that prepare enrollees for the exam and provide the necessary 120 hours of early childhood education training. These programs typically take about 6 months to complete and can cost thousands of dollars in addition to the \$500 CDA application.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the CDA needs to be renewed every three years and requires 45 training hours and a \$150 renewal fee.

### Associate's Degree Holders Most Likely to be Certified

Across all educational attainment levels, state certifications are more common than the CDA (Figure 4). Child care center workers with a high school completion or less are the least likely to have any certification (34.1 percent), while associate degree holders are the most likely to be certified (62.5 percent) and to have both state certification and the CDA (21.2 percent). Graduate and bachelor's degree holders are also more likely to be certified (61.3 percent and 57.2 percent, respectively) than not.

**FIGURE 4. Most Workers with Higher Education Also Have Certifications to Work in Center-Based Child Care**

Certifications by educational attainment, 2019



**Note:** Figures in chart have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019



## Workers with Certifications have Higher Earnings

Child care workers with certifications have higher median wages than those without credentials. Child care center workers with a state certification or a CDA earn more (\$2.46 and \$1.85 per hour at the median, respectively) than those with none. Child care center workers with both certifications earn \$2.75 more per hour (Figure 5). Workers at each level of educational attainment, except a graduate or professional degree, have higher median wages if they are certified than workers who are not.<sup>33</sup> While these are modest increases, a worker with both certifications would take home an extra \$110 per week, and, if they work full-time year-round, an additional \$5,720 per year.

### FIGURE 5. Child Care Workers with Certifications Earn More

Median hourly wages by certification attainment, 2019



**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019

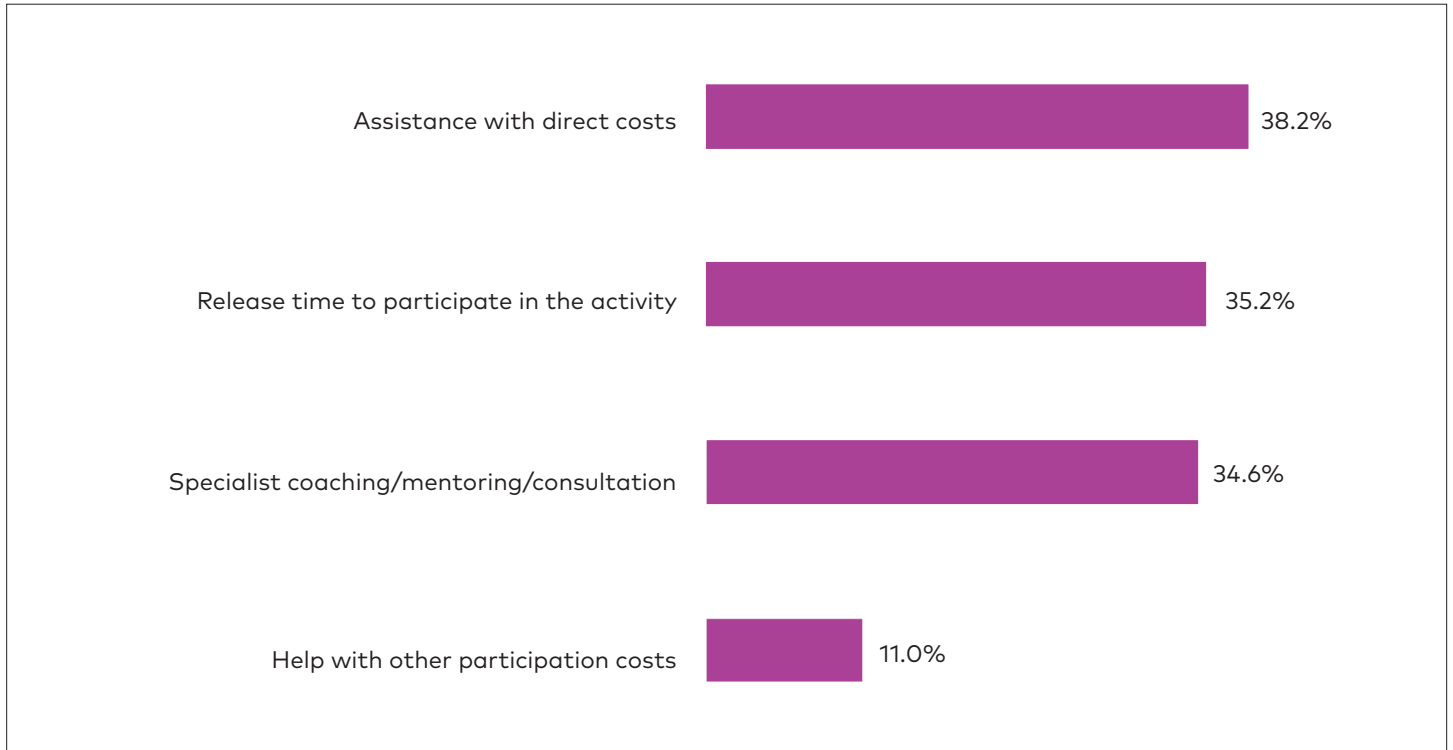
Certifications are important for increasing wages, but completing and maintaining them requires substantial time and resources. Beyond certification, however, there are other costs associated with professional development and training such as workshops offered by professional associations, professional organization meetings, health and safety training, and coaching or mentoring by specialists.

## SOME CHILD CARE WORKERS RECEIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS BUT TOO MANY DO NOT

Professional support—through encouraging and subsidizing professional development and regular meetings with management—improve job satisfaction and quality of care.<sup>34</sup> Figure 6 shows the percentage of workers who received assistance when they engaged in professional development activities. Nearly four in ten (38.2 percent) workers received assistance with the direct costs of improving their skills, either from their employer, a local or state agency, or college or university, and more than one in ten (11.0 percent) received help with other participation costs such as travel and child care for their own children. Over a third (35.2 percent) received release time from their employer to complete professional development activities. As for direct support from management, 34.6 percent of workers received coaching or mentoring from a supervisor in creating or updating a professional development

plan. Without such support, workers must cover professional development expenses with their already strained wages and on their own time or take unpaid time off work.

**FIGURE 6. More Than a Third of Workers Received Assistance Obtaining Professional Development**  
Professional development in the past twelve months, 2019



**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019.



While many workers report receiving frequent input and feedback from their managers to help improve their skills at working with children's behavior and helping children learn (52.2 and 47.8 percent at least once a month, respectively), about one in six (13.3 and 15.3 percent, respectively) received such feedback and learning opportunities just once a year.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, 7.2 percent of workers reported never discussing with their supervisor ways to improve their skills working with children's behavior, while 6.5 percent never discussed their skills helping children learn.<sup>36</sup>

## **THE CONSEQUENCES OF POOR WAGES AND JOB QUALITY**

### **LOW WAGES CONTRIBUTE TO THE HIGH TURNOVER RATES IN CHILD CARE**

Low wages, inadequate benefits, and a lack of support for professional development are driving workers out of child care. Many are not able to support themselves or their families and cannot build a career with benefits or a path to occupational advancement.

Child care centers struggle with retaining workers due to chronically low wages. One third of workers have been in the field for five years or fewer.<sup>37</sup> One quarter of respondents had searched for a job in the last three months. Those seeking jobs most commonly (50.6 percent) cited a desire for higher pay, while another 13.4 percent were looking for a second job in addition to their child care work.<sup>38</sup> Even modest pay increases can substantially improve retention. For example, one Virginia program halved its early childhood educator turnover rate (from 30 percent to 15 percent) after offering each worker a \$1,500 bonus.<sup>39</sup>

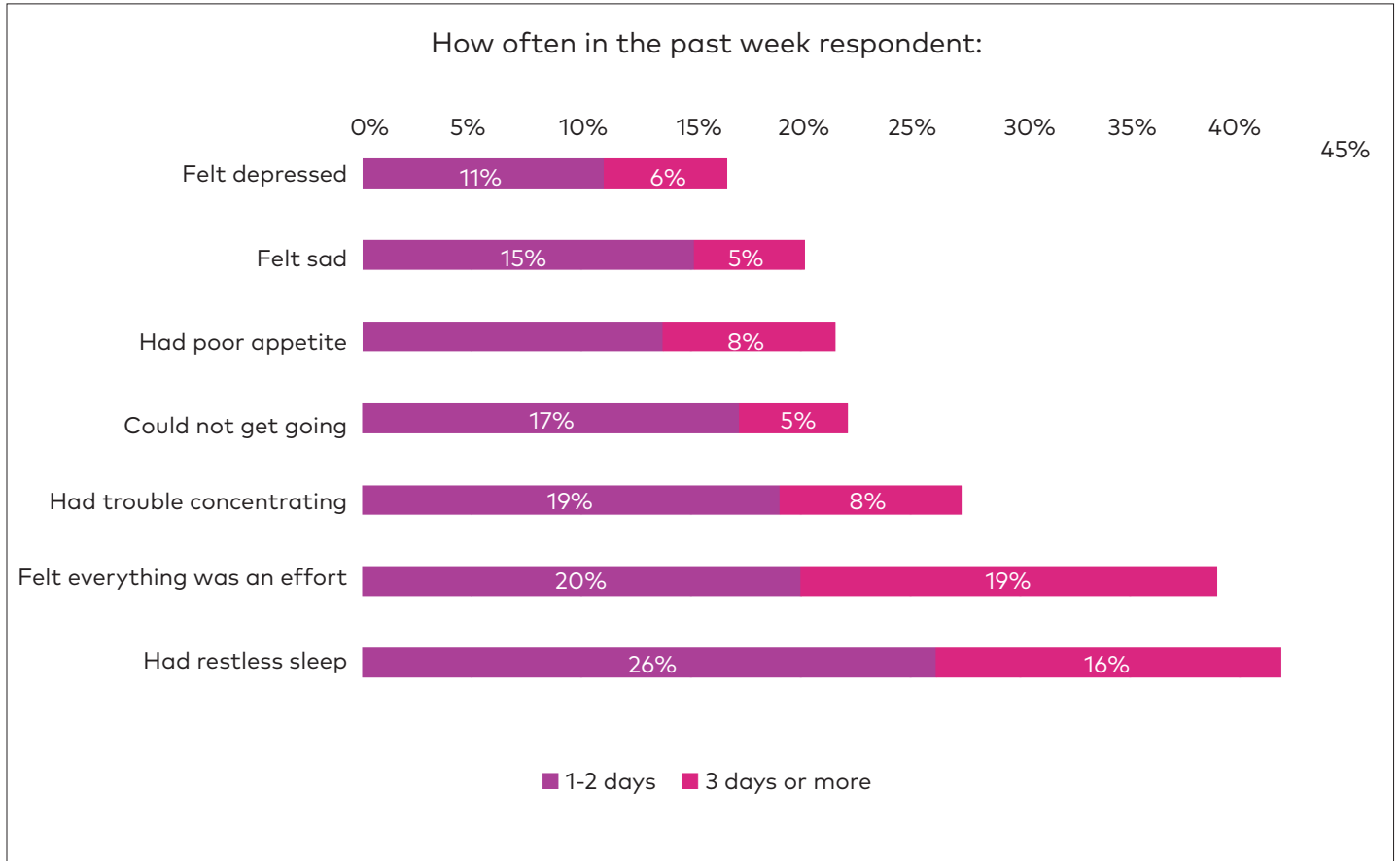
According to another recent survey, more than three-quarters (78 percent) of child care centers cite low wages as the single largest impediment to recruitment.<sup>40</sup> It also found that 81 percent of centers identify low wages as the most common reason for educators to leave the field, while 54 percent of centers point to a lack of benefits, and 33 percent cite exhaustion and burnout. By contrast, only 8 percent cite regulations as a barrier to worker retention.

### **Child Care Workers Have Poor Mental Health**

Child care is demanding work both emotionally and physically. The NSECE survey asked early childhood educators about seven different dimensions of their mental health, in accordance with the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D).<sup>41</sup> Figure 7 shows the percentage of respondents experiencing each symptom during the past week. Based on their answers to these questions, the survey flagged 9.3 percent of workers for a suspected major depressive disorder. Nearly six percent (5.6 percent) of respondents reported feeling depressed at least three days a week. More than four in ten respondents (41.9 percent) had restless sleep and 39 percent felt everything was an effort, potentially affecting their ability to perform their duties effectively.

**FIGURE 7. About Four in Ten Care Workers Report Having Trouble Sleeping or Feeling Everything was an Effort**

Dimensions of mental health survey, 2019



**Note:** Figures in chart have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Source:** IWPR analysis of National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) 2019

Working low-income jobs for many years increases stress, compromising mental and physical health.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, many child care center workers experience emotional exhaustion due to inadequate co-worker support, and a lack of clear expectations and work role, resulting in burnout.<sup>43</sup> This burnout contributes to the high turnover rate in the child care industry,<sup>44</sup> which negatively affects the children in care and has been linked to lower language and social development in children aged 0-5.<sup>45</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This brief highlights the undervaluation and underpayment of child care work. Child care workers have been undervalued throughout history and into the present largely due to the racial and gender composition of the workforce. Historically, paid child care has been performed largely by women of color within private homes.<sup>46</sup> Associating child care with women of color and viewing it as an extension of motherhood has resulted in child care labor being undervalued and poorly compensated.<sup>47</sup> Tying the requirements for care work to the traditional gender roles imposed on women rather than to learned skills was a way to justify lower wages.<sup>48</sup>

Child care provides numerous benefits to society, but providers are not adequately compensated. Child care workers perform vital work that prepares children for success later in life. Children who attend preschool have higher earnings and educational attainment as adults.<sup>49</sup> They are also better prepared for kindergarten, achieve better grades<sup>50</sup>, and are less likely to experience disciplinary actions<sup>51</sup>. Child care also benefits parents by allowing them—especially women—to stay connected to the labor force, increasing their lifetime earnings and retirement savings.<sup>52</sup> Disruptions in child care require parents to take (often unpaid) leave from work or make (often last-minute) accommodations, causing lost productivity and contributing to a perception of unreliability in the workplace. Child care centers should be able to provide jobs that lead to careers that allow people to live, work, and thrive. To make this happen, however, child care jobs need to be “good jobs” with fair compensation, benefits, and quality as well as the potential to develop professionally.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Supply federal funding to raise early childhood educator wages.** Women—especially women of color—are expected to perform vital care work for poverty or near-poverty wages because the work they do is inherently undervalued. Paying more for the skilled labor that child care requires will attract new workers, retain current educators, and improve the quality of life for both groups.

**Back unionization efforts.** Child care workers belonging to a union have wages 50 percent higher than those who do not.

**Support workers pursuing higher education and professional development.** Higher education and professional development are linked to higher compensation and improved job satisfaction and quality. When workers feel they understand their roles and have room to grow in their career, they provide better care and enjoy better mental health and a greater sense of purpose. Providing funding for professional development and supporting higher education as an employer benefit will ensure that more child care workers can pursue these options.

**Provide student loan debt relief.** While higher education is associated with higher pay, it can be prohibitively expensive. Among workers with college degrees, median wages for child care workers are still much lower than for those working in other sectors. Student debt relief will allow workers to support themselves and their families while expanding their knowledge and skillset to provide high quality care.

**Expand benefits.** Good jobs come with benefits including health insurance, retirement savings plans, and paid family and medical leave. Mental health services such as therapy and support groups should be prioritized to ensure workers' health and stamina. Improvements to employee benefits will also help attract and retain new workers.

*This policy brief was prepared by Georgia Poyatzis. The author would like to thank Jessica Milli, Jeff Hayes, and Ariane Hegewisch for their advice and suggestions. The author also thanks the IWPR staff who helped to prepare and disseminate this publication, including Kate Ryan, Wil Lutz, Lucie Prewitt, and Carolina Espinoza. This brief was made possible by the support of Fondation CHANEL, the Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundation, and Pivotal Ventures, an investment and incubation company created by Melinda French Gates.*

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See for example, Glynn, Sarah Jane, "Millions of Families Are Struggling to Address Child Care Disruptions." (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, June 22, 2021), <<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/millions-families-struggling-address-child-care-disruptions/>>; Haspel, Elliot, "Perspective | There's a Massive Child-Care Worker Shortage and the Market Can't Fix It." *Washington Post*, May 26, 2021, <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/05/26/child-care-center-worker-shortage/>>.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Dean, Grace, "Childcare Centers Say Staff Are Leaving Them in Drove for Better Wages, Including for \$15-an-Hour Roles at Walmart," *Business Insider*, September 20, 2021, <<https://www.businessinsider.com/labor-shortage-daycare-childcare-preschool-staff-education-jobs-work-employment-2021-9>>; and Miller, Clair Cairn, "Can't Compete': Why Hiring for Child Care Is a Huge Struggle," *The Upshot*, *New York Times*, September 21, 2021, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/upshot/child-care.html>>.

<sup>3</sup> IWPR calculations based on IWPR analysis of U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, June 3, 2022; see also Hegewisch, Ariane and Eve Mefferd, "Women Make Gains in Men-Dominated Jobs, but Still Lag Behind in COVID-19 Recovery." IWPR QF Q103 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, April 13, 2022), <<https://iwpr.org/iwpr-publications/quick-figure/women-make-gains-in-men-dominated-jobs-but-still-lag-behind-in-covid-19-recovery/>> (accessed May 10, 2022).

<sup>4</sup> National Head Start Association, *Confronting Head Start's Workforce Crisis*, (Alexandria, VA: 2022) <<https://nhsa.org/resource/confronting-head-starts-workforce-crisis/>>.

<sup>5</sup> Milli, Jessica, "Why Investing in Child Care Providers Is Essential for Providers, Children, and Families. (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, 2022). <<https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/why-investing-in-child-care-providers-is-essential-for-providers-children-and-families/>> (accessed May 23, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> Datta, A Rupa, Zachary Gebhardt, and Claudia Zapata-Gietl, "Center-Based Early Care and Education Providers in 2012 and 2019: Counts and Characteristics," (Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2021, <[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/cb-counts-and-characteristics-chartbook\\_508\\_2.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/cb-counts-and-characteristics-chartbook_508_2.pdf)>.

<sup>7</sup> The NSECE is a nationally representative study on the use and availability of early care and education (ECE) in the United States. The NSECE is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; NSECE Project Team (National Opinion Research Center). 2021. "National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), [United States], 2019: Version 3." ICPSR - Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research.

<sup>8</sup> More information on the design, data collection, and sampling methodology for the NSECE surveys in 2012 and 2019 can be found at the Child and Family Data Archive, <<https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/nsece.html>>.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, Glynn, Sarah Jane and Diana Boesch, "Bearing the Cost: How the Overrepresentation in Undervalued Jobs Disadvantaged Women During the Pandemic," (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, March 2022) <<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WB/media/BearingTheCostReport.pdf>>.

<sup>10</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, White in this brief connotes White non-Hispanic.

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<sup>13</sup> Banerjee, Asha, Elise Gould, and Marokey Sawo, "Setting higher wages for child care and home health care workers is long overdue," (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, November 18, 2021) <<https://www.epi.org/publication/higher-wages-for-child-care-and-home-health-care-workers/>>.

<sup>14</sup> IWPR analysis of NSECE data.

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- <sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2019), "May 2019 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates." <[https://www.bls.gov/oes/2019/may/oes\\_nat.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/2019/may/oes_nat.htm)>.
- <sup>17</sup> IWPR calculation of NSECE 2019 data, assuming full-time year-round work as 2080 hours per year.
- <sup>18</sup> Vogtman, Julie, "Undervalued: A Brief History of Women's Care Work and Child Care Policy in the United States." (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, December 14, 2017), <<https://nwlc.org/resource/undervalued-a-brief-history-of-womens-care-work-and-child-care-policy-in-the-united-states/>>.
- <sup>19</sup> "Who Is Providing for Child Care Providers? Part 2," RAPID Survey, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Graduate School of Education, 2022), <<https://rapidsurveyproject.com/our-research/who-is-providing-for-child-care-providers-part-2>>.
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- <sup>22</sup> IWPR analysis of NSECE 2019 data; the NSECE does not include information on other benefits.
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