



Community Link Program

Public Affairs Program • Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs • Syracuse University

Child Care Providers' Wages and Benefits in CNY

A Study Conducted for the Child Care Solutions, Inc.
By Shreya Damidi
November 2021

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS IN CNY COMPENSATION STUDY

Child Care Solutions, Inc.

By Shreya Damidi

November 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: This study reports the compensation and benefits received by childcare providers as well as their education and background in the Central New York area. The study will be presented to the board of directors at Child Care Solutions, Inc. The results will be used to advocate for equitable wages and benefits for childcare providers.

Methods: The data were collected through a Google form sent to a list of participants provided by Child Care Solutions, Inc. The survey was sent out on October 5th with a deadline of October 30th. A reminder was sent on October 20th. A sampling frame of 78 participants was sent the survey from a target population of 845 people. Out of the 78 participants that the survey was sent to, 47 responded.

Findings:

1. 87% of respondents reported they work for a day care or a family care group. (n = 45)
2. 63% of respondents reported they have at least a Bachelor's degree. (n = 44)
3. 71% of respondents reported they work in a management role. (n = 45)
4. 54% of respondents reported they make at least \$45,000 yearly. (n = 30)
5. 66% of respondents reported they make \$20 or less per hour. (n = 9)
6. 53% of respondents reported they "strongly disagree" or "disagree" with the statement regarding fair compensation for their work. (n = 45)
7. 72% of respondents reported that they received paid holidays. (n = 47)
8. 56% of respondents did not "agree" nor "strongly agree" with the statement that they are offered a fair amount of benefits. (n = 45)
9. 61% of respondents reported they struggled to find employees or did not have many kids to watch because of the pandemic. (n = 41)
10. 72% of respondents reported their workplace required education or certification in order to be hired. (n = 43)

INTRODUCTION

This study reports the compensation and benefits received by childcare providers as well as their education and background in the Central New York area. Child Care Solutions Inc. provides a variety of resources including assisting childcare programs in training and legal services as well as guiding parents in finding childcare. The organization's goal is to improve childcare and ensuring equal access in the community. This study surveyed the education, experience, wage, and benefits of childcare providers in the area as well as their attitudes on their compensation and benefits. The results of this survey will be used by Child Care Solutions, Inc. to advocate to local businesses for better wages for childcare providers.

METHODS

How Data Were Collected

Instrument Design: The survey used in this study was a Google form designed by Shreya Damidi from the Fall 2021 cohort of the Syracuse University Community Link Program. Lori Schakow, the executive director of Child Care Solutions, Inc., had input in question design.

Data Collection Method: After approving the final draft of the survey on October 6th, the executive director of Child Care Solutions, Inc. emailed the link to the Google Form to a list of clients of the organization. Reminders were sent every Wednesday between October 6th and November 3rd.

Target Population and Sample: The target population is childcare providers- daycare providers, school-age care providers, and head start program providers- in Onondaga county, estimated to be 845 people. A target sample of 78 providers were sent the survey and 47 responded. The survey had a 60% response rate.

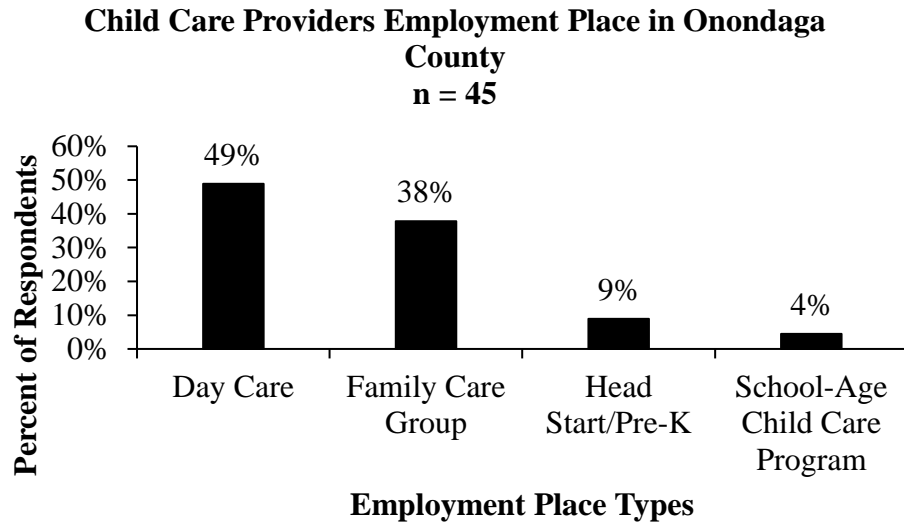
Quality of Data

Representativeness: Demographics were not asked in this study. Certain questions had a lower response rate, which may skew representativeness. 87% of respondents reported they work for a day care or family care group. The lack of representation for head start/pre-K and school-age childcare threatens the representativeness of this survey.

Accuracy: Google account sign-in was required to ensure no repeats in responses, which would have threatened the accuracy of the data. However, emails and account information were not collected, and the survey was anonymous. The questions were worded concisely to reduce confusion.

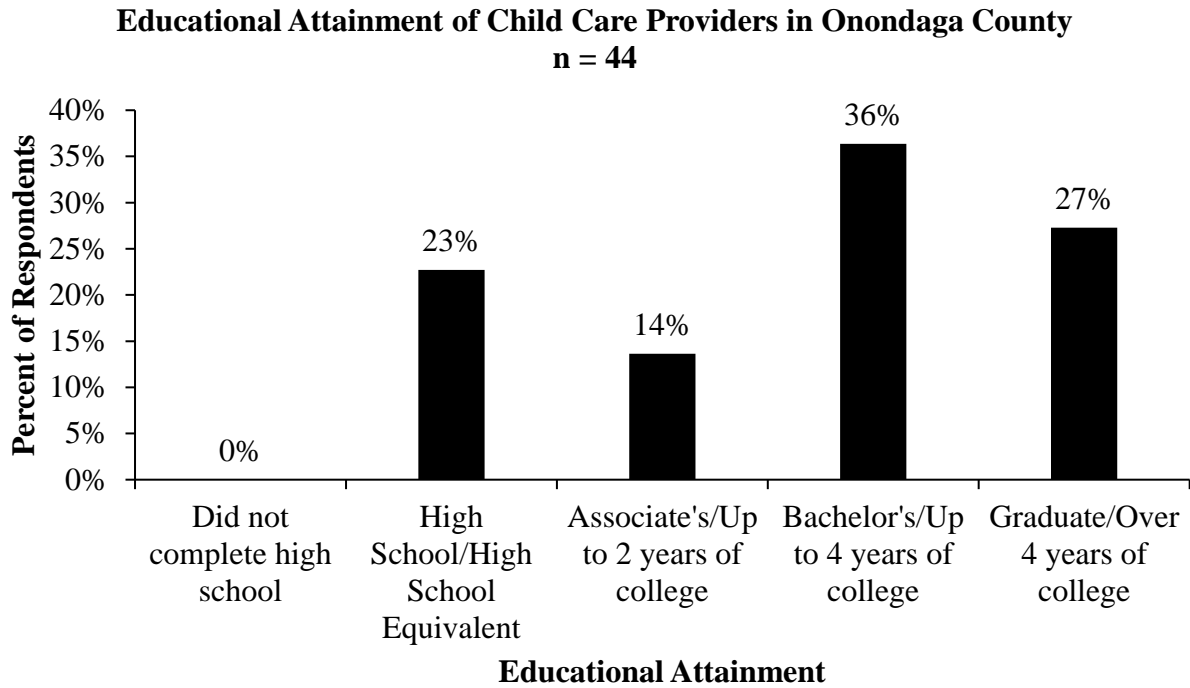
FINDINGS

1. 87% of respondents reported they work for a day care or a family care group.



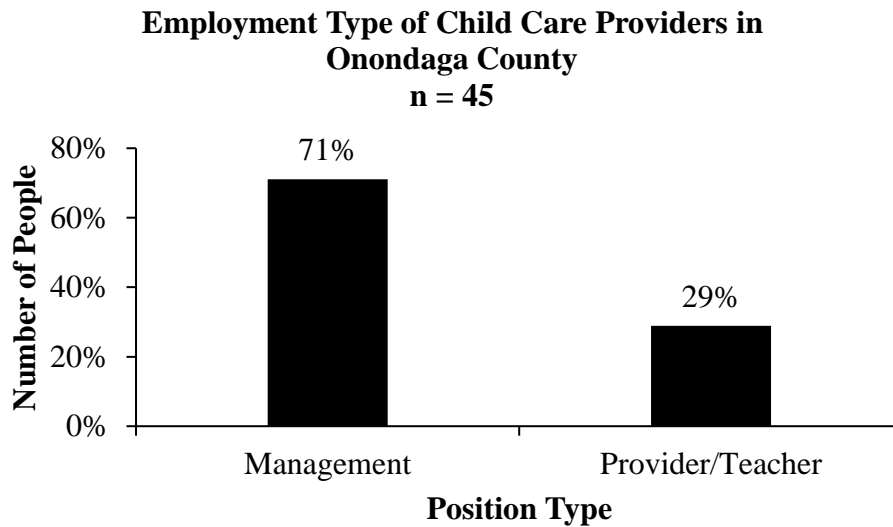
Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

2. 63% of respondents reported they have at least a Bachelor's degree.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

3. 71% of respondents reported they work in a management role.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

Comment: This question was multiple-choice with an option to type in another response. Due to several open-ended responses, responses were recoded into the categories above. Full responses are available in Appendix IV.

Management:

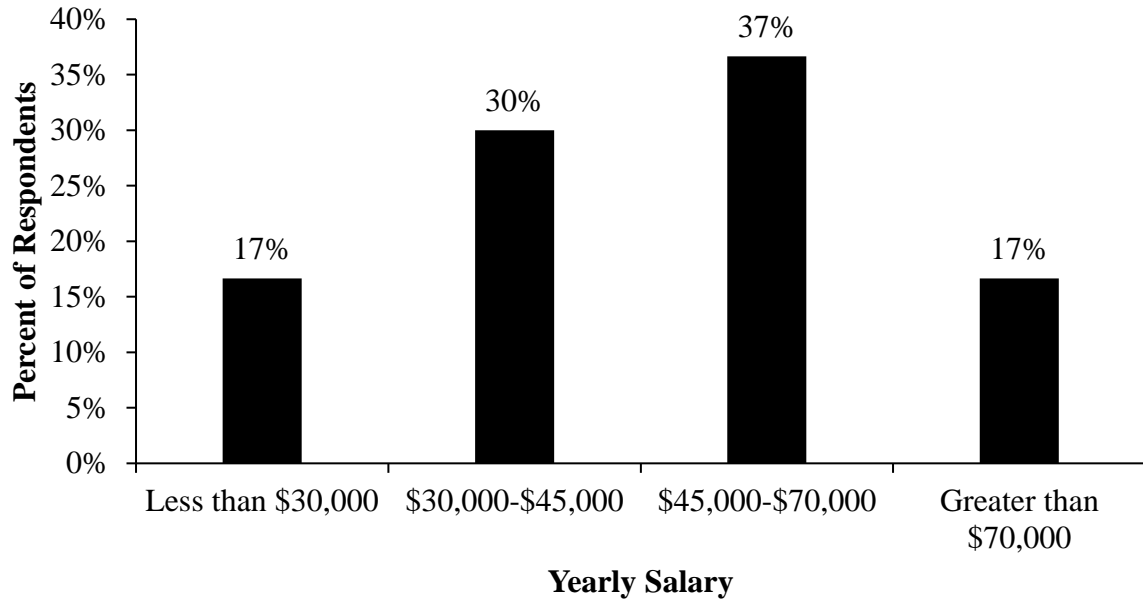
“Director, office support”

Provider/Teacher:

“Assistant teacher”

4. 54% of respondents who reported receiving an annual salary said they make at least \$45,000 yearly.

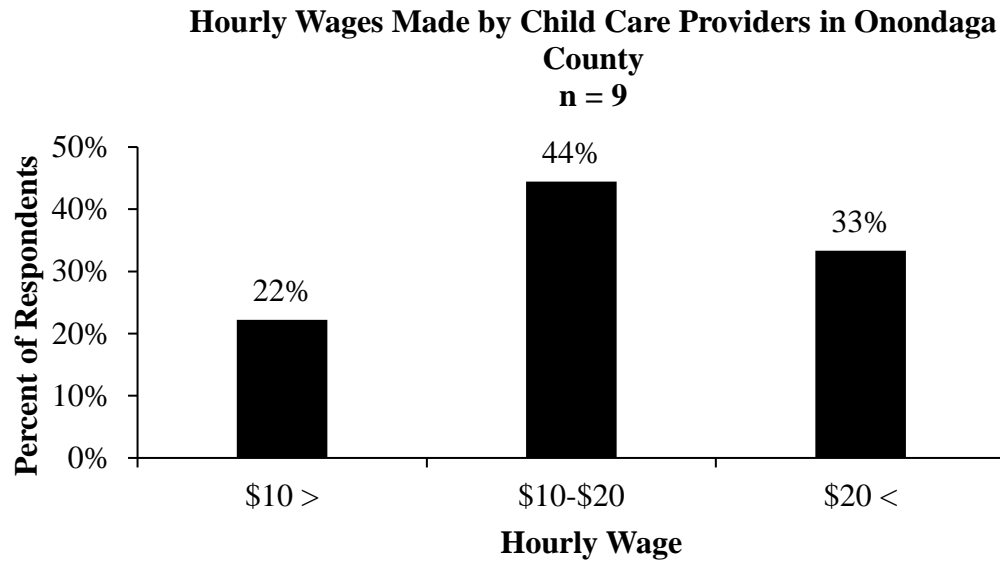
Yearly Salaries of Childcare Providers In Onondaga County
n = 30



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

Comment: This was an open-ended question recoded into the categories above. Because the percents were rounded to nearest whole number, the percents do not add up to exactly 100%.

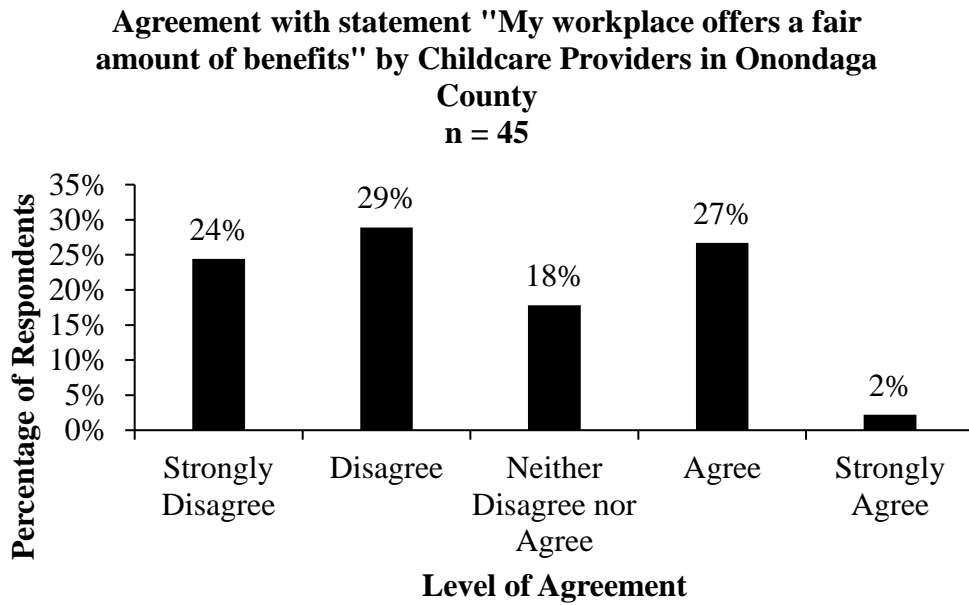
5. 66% of respondents who reported receiving an hourly salary said they make \$20 or less per hour.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

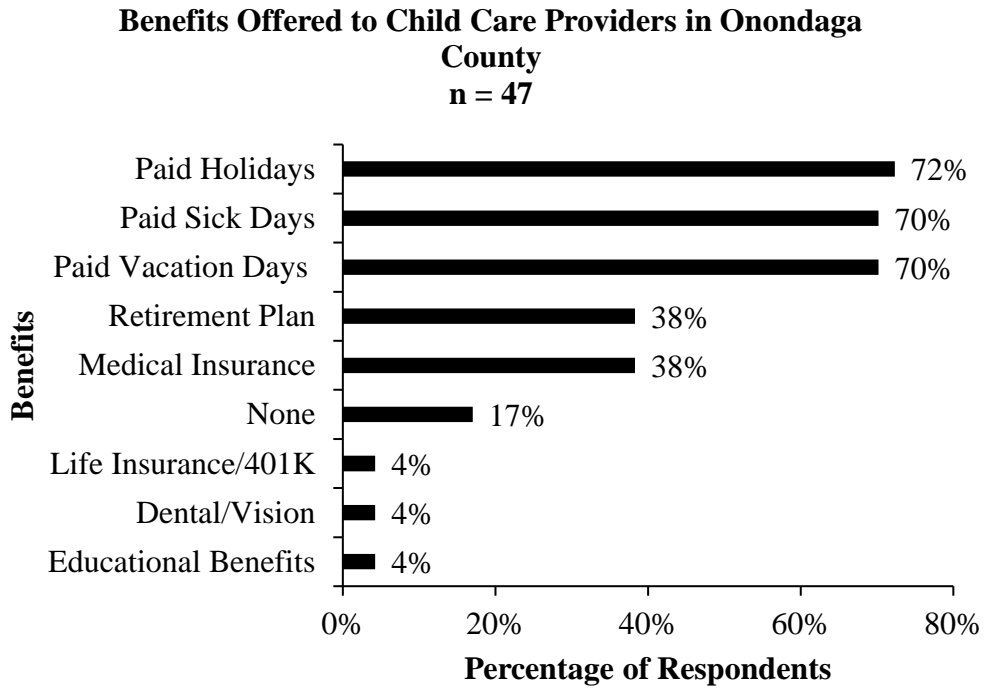
Comment: Because the percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number, they don't add up to 100%. This was an open-ended question coded into the categories above.

6. 53% of respondents reported they “strongly disagree” or “disagree” with the statement regarding fair compensation for their work.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

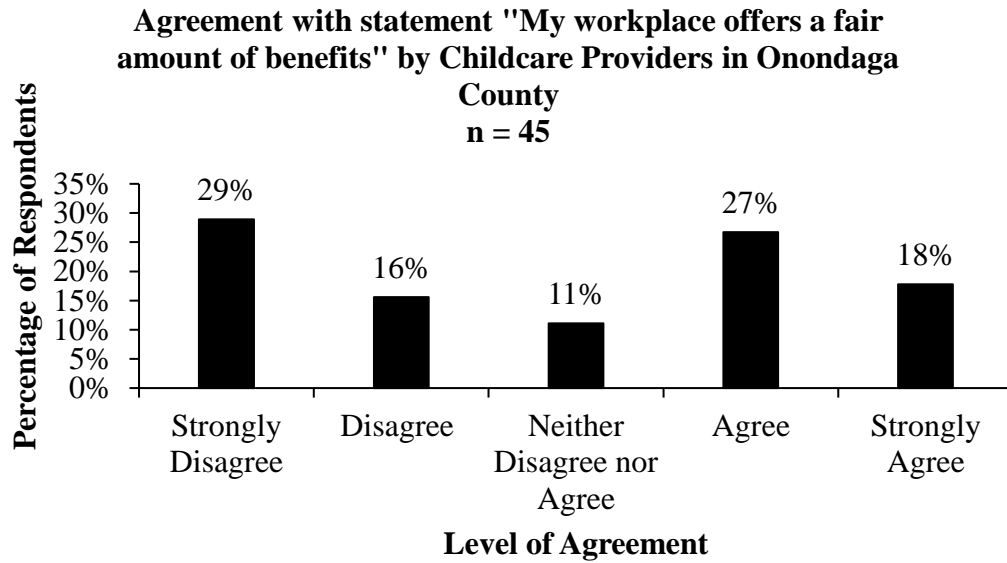
7. 72% of respondents reported that they received paid holidays.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

Comment: This question was check-all-that-apply; percentages may exceed 100%.

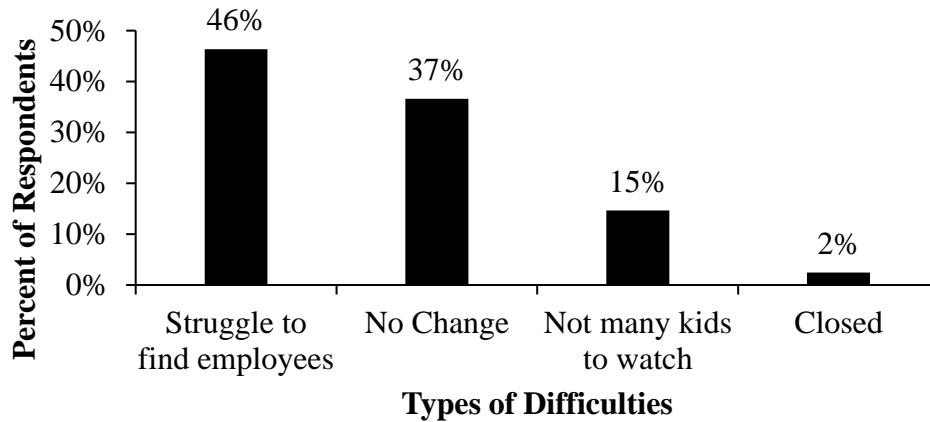
8. 56% of respondents did not “agree” nor “strongly agree” with the statement that they are offered a fair amount of benefits.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

9. 61% of respondents reported they struggled to find employees or did not have many kids to watch because of the pandemic.

Impact of Pandemic on Hiring or Finding Staff for Child Care Providers in Onondaga County
n = 41



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

Comment: This question was open-ended. Responses were re-coded into categories for the purpose of this graph. Full responses are available in Appendix IV.

Struggle to find employees

“It has been difficult to find individuals who meet the requirements and candidates want higher salaries.”

No Change

“No change due to pandemic”

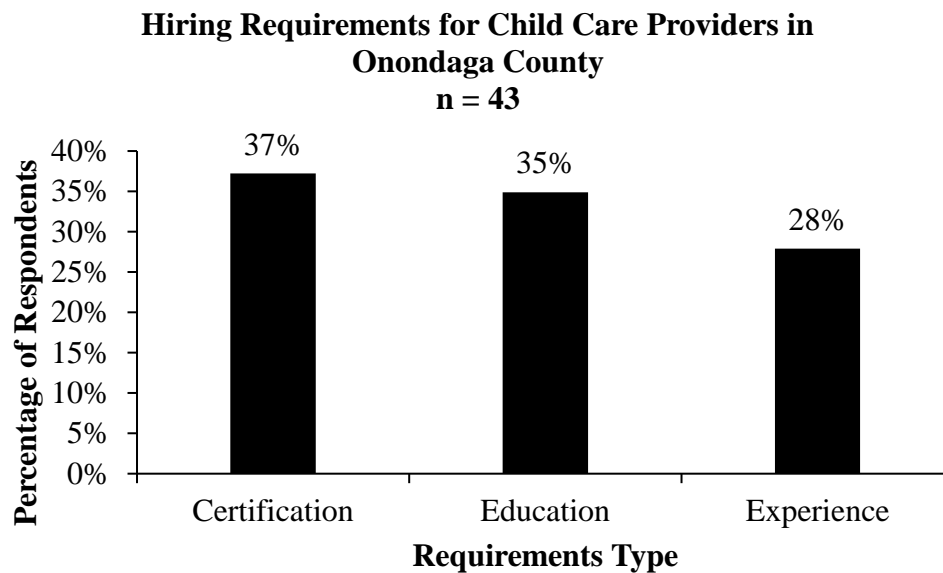
Not many kids to watch

“Lost clients due to business closing (worked from home)”

Closed

“closed during pandemic”

10. 72% of respondents reported their workplace required education or certification in order to be hired as a childcare provider.



Source: Data collected for Child Care Solutions, Inc. by Shreya Damidi, Community Link Project, November 2021.

Comment: This question was open-ended. Responses were re-coded into the categories above. Full responses are available in Appendix IV.

Certification

“CPR & First Aid Certification”

Education

“HS Diploma/GED”

Experience

“Some experience”

APPENDICES- TABLE OF CONTENTS


Appendix I	Research Questions
Appendix II	Response Frequencies
Appendix III	Codebook and Spreadsheet
Appendix IV	Open-ended Question

APPENDIX I

Research Questions

Child Care Provider Compensation Study

Child Care Solutions, Inc. is partnering with Shreya Damidi from the Syracuse Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs to assess child care compensation in Onondaga County. The results of the survey will be used to advocate for equitable pay. A summary of the results will also be shared with child care program directors. Non identifying information will be collected or shared.

 srdamidi@g.syr.edu (not shared) [Switch account](#)



Are you employed by a

- Day care center
- School age child care program
- Other: _____

What is your position?

- Lead Teacher
- Assistant Teacher
- Director
- Assistant Director
- Other: _____

What is your educational background?

- Did not complete high school
- High school/High school equivalent
- Associates/Up to two years of college
- Bachelors/Up to four years of college
- Graduate/Over four years of college

How much experience do you have in child care?

- 0-3 years
- 4-8 years
- 9-12 years
- 13+ years

What is your salary?

Your answer _____

You are fairly compensated for your work.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

What benefits does your workplace offer? *Check all that apply

- Paid vacation days
- Paid sick days
- Paid holidays
- Medical insurance
- Retirement plan
- None
- Other: _____

What hiring requirements does your workplace have?

Your answer _____

Teachers- How did the pandemic impact your ability to work or to find work?
Directors- How did the pandemic impact your workspace (ex. inability to find teachers)?

Your answer _____

What percent of your staff separated from employment with your program last year?

Your answer _____

How long does it take to fill staff vacancies?

Your answer _____

Where are the staff going when separated from employment with your program?

- School District
- Another child care program
- Private industry
- Unemployment
- Other: _____

APPENDIX II

Response Frequencies

Are you employed by a? (n =45)

- Day care center (48%)
- School age childcare program (4%)
- Family day care (26%)
- Head Start/Pre- K (7%)
- Self-own/self-employed (11%)
- No response (2)

What is your position? (n = 45)

- Lead Teacher (9%)
- Assistant teacher (2%)
- Director (41%)
- Assistant director (4%)
- Owner (15%)
- Provider (9%)
- Site supervisor (2%)
- Classroom aide (2%)
- Supervisor (2%)
- Administrator (2%)
- Program coordinator (2%)
- Office (2%)
- Business Manager (2.2%)
- Assistant (2.2%)
- No response (2)

What is your educational background? (n = 45)

- Did not complete high school (0%)
- High school/High school equivalent (24%)
- Associates/Up to two years of college (13%)
- Bachelors/Up to four years of college (36%)
- Graduate/Over four years of college (27%)
- No response (2)

How much experience do you have in childcare? (n = 45)

- 0-3 years (2%)
- 4-8 years (2%)
- 9-12 years (11%)
- 13+ years (85%)
- No response (2)

What is your salary?

- Response (42)
- No response (5)

Comment: Individual responses available Appendix III

Rank your agreeability with the following statement: You are fairly compensated for your work.

(n = 47)

- Strongly disagree (24%)
- Disagree (28%)
- Neither agree nor disagree (20%)
- Agree (26%)
- Strongly Agree (2%)
- No response (2)

What benefits do your workplace offer? (n = 47)

- Paid vacation days (67%)
- Paid sick days (69%)
- Paid holidays (73%)
- Medical insurance (38%)
- Retirement plan (35%)
- None (17%)
- Tuition waiver to attend OCC (2%)
- Dental/Vision (4%)
- Free tuition for children (2%)
- 401K (2%)
- Simple IRA (2%)

Rank your agreeability with the following statement: My workplace offers a fair amount of benefits. (n = 45)

- Strongly disagree (28%)
- Disagree (15%)
- Neither agree nor disagree (13%)
- Agree (26%)
- Strongly agree (17%)

What hiring requirements does your workplace have?

- Response (44)
- No response (3)

Comment: Individual responses available Appendix III

How did the pandemic impact your ability to work, to find work, or to find employees?

- Response (42)
- No response (5)

Comment: Individual responses available Appendix III

What percent of your staff separated from employment with your program last year (n = 45)?

- Response (45)
- No response (2)

Comment: Individual responses available Appendix I

APPENDIX III
Codebook and Spreadsheet

COLUMN	FIELD NAME	DEFINITION	CODE
A	ID	Respondent's Anonymous identification number	Same as ID
B	EMPLOY	Respondent's place of employment type	1-Day Care 2-School Age Care 3-Family Care 4-Head Start/Pre-K 5-No response
C	POSITION	Respondent's position type in workplace	1-Management 2-Provider/teacher 3-No response
D	EDUC	Respondent's highest level of education attained	1-High School 2-Associates degree 3-Bachelor's degree 4-Graduate studies 5-No response
E	EXPERI	Respondent's experience in childcare in years	1-0-3 years 2-4-8 years 3-9-12 years 4-13+ years 5-No response
F	SAL	Respondent's salary	1-\$10> per hour 2-\$10-20 per hour 3-\$20< per hour 4-\$30,000> per year 5-\$30,000-45,000 yearly 6-\$45,000-70,000 yearly 7-\$70,000< yearly 8-No response
G	FEELSAL	Respondent's feeling regarding being fairly compensated	1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neither agree nor disagree 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree 6-No response
H	BEN	Respondent's benefits received	1-Paid vacation days

		from work (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-Paid sick days 3-Paid holidays 4-Medical insurance 5-Retirement plan 6-Educational benefit 7-Dental/vision 8-401K 9-None 10-No response
I	FEELBEN	Respondent's feelings about benefits received being fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neither agree nor disagree 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree 6-No response
J	HIRING	Respondent's workplace's hiring requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-Education 2-Certification 3-Experience 4-No response
K	PANEM	Respondent's impact of pandemic on work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-Struggle to find employees 2-Closed 3-Not enough kids to watch 4-No change 5-No response

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	ID	EMPLO	POSITI	EDUC	EXPERI	SALAR	FEELS/	BEN	FEELBE	HIRING	PANDEM
2	1	1	1	3	4	4	1	123	1	4	5
3	2	3	1	3	3	1	1	123	5	3	1
4	3	1	1	2	4	4	4	12	4	3	1
5	4	1	2	1	4	2	2	123	4	3	4
6	5	1	1	3	4	6	1	12345	3	3	1
7	6	3	1	2	4	6	4	9	1	4	5
8	7	3	1	1	4	7	4	123	4	1	4
9	8	3	2	1	3	8	4	12	3	2	4
10	9	3	1	3	4	6	3	9	1	4	5
11	10	3	2	5	4	6	4	123	3	4	5
12	11	1	1	1	4	4	5	12345	5	4	1
13	12	1	1	4	4	4	1	9	1	2	2
14	13	4	2	1	4	2	5	235	1	1	4
15	14	1	1	4	4	7	4	12345	1	2	1
16	15	1	1	4	4	3	4	2345	4	3	1
17	16	1	1	1	4	5	2	123	2	1	3
18	17	2	1	5	4	8	5	123	1	3	1
19	18	1	1	1	2	5	2	7	2	4	3
20	19	3	1	1	4	4	1	9	1	4	2
21	20	1	3	3	4	4	3	12345	1	2	1
22	21	1	2	3	4	6	2	12345	1	1	4
23	22	5	3	5	5	8	6	10	6	4	5
24	23	4	1	4	4	3	2	12347	5	1	1
25	24	3	1	4	4	2	2	9	1	1	4
26	25	1	1	5	5	8	6	10	1	1	4
27	26	3	1	2	4	6	2	123	2	3	3
28	27	4	2	3	3	2	3	12345	4	3	5
29	28	2	1	4	4	6	4	12345	5	4	1
30	29	1	1	4	4	6	3	12345	3	2	1
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34	33	1	1	3	4	5	2	12345	4	1	4
35	34	1	1	3	4	6	2	12345	4	1	4
36	35	1	2	4	3	2	2	12345	4	3	4
37	36	1	1	3	4	7	4	12345	5	3	1
38	37	1	1	3	4	6	2	123	2	3	1
39	38	1	1	1	4	8	4	9	1	4	1
40	39	1	1	3	4	5	4	12345	1	1	1
41	40	1	1	3	4	5	4	12345	4	1	1
42	41	5	1	4	4	5	3	123	2	2	3
43	42	1	2	3	4	3	1	1	6	2	5
44	43	1	1	4	4	7	4	123456	5	2	1
45	44	1	1	4	1	8	4	26	1	4	5
46	45	3	1	4	4	3	2	123	3	2	1
47	46	1	1	2	3	1	1	3	2	2	4
48	47	3	1	3	4	6	2	12345	5	2	4

APPENDIX IV

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

What is your position?

Management

- Director
- Director
- Owner
- Director
- Owner
- Owner
- Owner
- Assistant director
- Director
- Director
- Director
- Office
- Business Management
- Owner
- Owner
- Site supervisor
- Supervisor
- Owner
- Director
- Director
- Director
- Assistant director
- Program coordinator
- Director
- Director
- Director
- On site head home day care owner
- Director
- Director
- Director
- Administrator
- Director
- Assistant
- Director
- Director

Provider/Teacher

- Lead Teacher
- Leader Teacher

- Provider
- Classroom aide
- On-site provider
- Registered childcare provider
- Assistant teacher
- Lead teacher
- Lead teacher

What is your salary?

>\$10 per hour

- 10
- \$10/hour
- Currently can't afford to have a salary

\$10-20 per hour

- 20.00/hour
- 15
- \$17/hour
- \$24
- \$14.04/hour
- 15 hour

\$20< per hour

- \$24
- \$25 per hour

\$30,000> yearly

- \$18,000
- \$17,000
- \$1500 bi-weekly
- \$25,000
- \$28,500

\$30,000-45,000 yearly

- \$30,000
- \$40,000
- 2800 monthly
- \$35,000
- \$39,000
- 42,000
- 42,6000

\$45,000-70,000 yearly

- 50,000
- 48,000

- 60,000
- \$58,000
- \$55,000
- 53,760
- \$52,000
- 60,000
- 45,000
- 46,000

\$70,000 yearly<

- 80,000
- 79,000
- \$130,000

What are the hiring requirements in your workplace?

Education

- High school diploma, experience with kids
- Educated and reliable
- High school with CDA or better
- HS Diploma/GED
- High school for assistance and early childhood education for lead teachers
- ECE Degree or CDA
- Diploma, age, background check, training taken
- High School completion
- It depends on the position being filled, for Teachers a BA is desired, for positions below that it a blend of experience and disposition.
- Floaters and Assistants need HS diploma, Leads need AA or higher in Early Education or related field.
- Education and Experience, We follow NYS regulations, NYS Teaching Qualifications and Early Head Start standards as it relates to hiring and years of experience in the field

Certification

- CPR & First Aide Certification
- NYS Certification as a School Building Leader and training/experience in early childhood and special education
- Site Staff need to meet OCFS requirements for positions
- like to play with children and keep them safe
- NYS certified Teachers and Special Education Teachers, CDA and other OCFS Requirements
- Those required by OCFS
- background clearances for OCFS and employer; Covid vaccine; onBoarding; etc.
- CPR First Aide
- state requirements
- Nys trainings
- Meet all NYS hiring regulations and be fully covid vaccinated.

- Clearances, drug test, health/TB upon hire

Experience

- Childcare experience, Clean background, fingerprints
- Some experience
- Experience with children, credentials
- WE follow OCFS requirements for leads and the experience that is required. Team players, flexibility. positive attitude, great communication and writing skills and a genuine love for children.
- Nothing against children
- experience with young children in a day care setting, and in most cases a CDA or degree in early childhood
- like to play with children and keep them safe
- Vaccinated, experience, education
- Experience and education

How did the pandemic impact your workspace?

Struggle finding teachers/staff

- My assistant and I both played the role of teachers, as we had to assist all the school age children with their class work, We are not a center but we teacher our infants and toddler, and prep them for pre-K. The school age children we had then we assisted and teacher, checked homework, assisted with classwork, and lots more.
- It is nearly impossible to find workers that are competent and or reliable.
- It has been difficult to find individuals who meet the requirements and candidates want higher salaries.
- Unable to find teachers, decrease in enrollment staff leaving for better pay with less work.
- Couldn't find teachers and parents didn't bring kids.
- We have had a very hard time hiring teachers and especially teacher aides. This left our existing staff very stretched. Staff were also highly stressed by concerns about exposure to COVID-19 at work, as well as by trying to meet all of the protocols we needed to have in place to keep everyone safe. This led to a high degree of burnout.
- lost teachers who were uncomfortable working with a population that isn't vaccinated; difficult to find teachers as other employers raised wages to get new hires
- The pandemic made it much more difficult to recruit site staff, for a long time we were not even getting any candidates and now with the changes in minimum wage that has been another obstacle in recruiting staff as well as the pandemic itself.
- I was very busy!
- very difficult to find employees
- Challenge in finding teachers / staff who are able to commit to the time needed. Ever changing requirements that don't seem to have a clear direction if we are moving forward or backwards. Lack of DOH timeliness on potential COVID cases / exposures to allow families to plan beyond what we as the program tell them the have to do.
- There is a lack of qualified people applying for all positions
- inability to find teachers
- Expectation of staff much higher

- Did not impact my ability to find work, but it was impossible to get coverage for days off due to lack of substitutes.
- Difficult to find staff, including substitutes; challenging to keep staff motivated
- Can't find workers, over worked current employees, a lot of people staying home instead of working, inability to have enough staff to support Covid demands
- still struggle to find substitutes
- Struggling to find qualified teachers to fill the classrooms, which impacts enrollment and the overall operations of the program
- Numbers decreased; staff left. Have extreme difficulty finding staff for over a year now. I have a waitlist to add 6 kids to my preschool room but can't because I can't find staff.
- 3 long-time teachers (over 27 years each) resigned to take TA positions in school districts. Another teacher refused to be vaccinated so retired (13 years at center and MA degree), We have hired two new teachers. However, still have 3 open positions and weeks go by without any new applicants. The center has a huge waiting list for all age groups and could fill every slot. However, I cannot consider doing that until we can hire more qualified teachers. We are losing money as a result and not able to assist families on the waiting list.
- Definitely inability to find teachers. Much more time spent, getting the door at drop off and pick up because parents are not coming in the building. Many more costs with buying items for covid ex: Hand sanitizer, Masks, and more.

Closed

- closed during pandemic

Not many kids to watch

- Did not accept any new children to create our own pod. Followed all guidelines.
- It's been terrible! Our enrollment is very low because we can't find people to fill our staffing spots.
- Lost clients due to business closing (worked from home)
- No impact other more costly
- Lost some children due to it
- Centers at low capacity. Difficult to recruit children and staff. Difficult to offer comparable wages. Difficulty to retain staff that could go elsewhere and make more money with less demands. Staff morale concern.

No change

- I worked full time the whole time except 3 times shut down for positive case inside team
- We worked at capacity
- Really didn't impact much
- Not hardly at all
- I worked the entire time
- It did not impact my job. We adapted our program and went remote until we could get children back in the classroom.
- A little but we survived
- No change due to pandemic
- We did ok with staffing last year with reduced group sizes but since June 2021 we keep losing staff and cannot hire enough to keep up.

- I was able to work/find work.
- never closed