



Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Early Childhood Development

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN MARYLAND**

Fact Sheet (08-02) March 2008

**ECE Staff Qualification and Retention in Maryland: 2006 vs. 2007**

**2006 Survey**

Late in 2006, the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood, contracted with the Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., to conduct a statewide survey of child care directors and staff in licensed child care centers. The purpose of the survey was two-fold: first, to determine the extent to which professional qualifications of staff might exceed the minimum levels set by State licensing regulations; and second, to assess staff attitudes toward their work in the field of early care and education to help develop strategies to improve retention of qualified, experienced workers.

The survey was administered to directors and staff (preschool child care teachers, school-age child care teachers, and aides) at a random sample of full-time centers serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children, and any combination of these age groups. Approximately 600 directors and staff, drawn from a sampling pool of 700 centers, participated in the survey. The sample size was sufficient to ensure a survey data confidence level of at least 95% with a margin of error no greater than 4%

To assess professional qualifications, survey questions were targeted at respondents' educational background, completion of ECE-related courses and training modules, participation in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program, and involvement in ECE-related professional activities outside of the workplace. To assess staff attitudes, several questions were targeted at participants' reasons for working in early care and education and their job-related plans for the future. Query topics included the respondent's salary and desire to continue working in a child care program.

There were two main findings from the survey. First, while the average respondent was well-experienced, had completed significantly more continued training than required by licensing regulations, and was strongly committed to the growth and well-being of children in care, the respondent had a relatively low level of formal education with respect to the early care and education profession. Second, while the majority of respondents indicated that they would continue in the early care and education field, 40% of respondents who said that they would seek a different type of career cited inadequate pay as the main reason. Survey findings showed that to improve the quality of care, more participation in formal early childhood-related education needs to occur and compensation levels need to rise to a more acceptable level. These conclusions are interrelated: less formal education obviously has an impact on wage-earning potential; while low wages are an obstacle to participation in professional education and growth opportunities.

**2007 Survey**

The 2006 survey was intended only to provide baseline data against which future studies could be compared. The Division of Early Childhood Development, through the Maryland Committee for Children, Inc., conducted the same survey again in late 2007. Survey objectives and characteristics were identical, but the methodology was adjusted to eliminate a bias toward over-representation by center directors that was noted following the 2006 survey. For the 2007 survey, this resulted in a distribution of respondents across employment position categories that more closely resembles actual staffing patterns in child care centers.

The following table compares findings in key areas from both surveys. As the comparison shows, there has been significant improvement in most of these areas, particularly with respect to child care teachers:

<b><u>SURVEY MEASUREMENT</u></b>	<b><u>2006 Response</u></b>	<b><u>2007 Response</u></b>	<b><u>Rate of Change 2006 to 2007</u></b>
Highest Educational Level Achieved:			
Some College			
Directors	14.2%	10.0%	( 29.5%)
Child Care Teachers *	39.5%	38.4%	( 2.7%)
Associate Degree			
Directors	23.3%	24.0%	+ 3.0%
Child Care Teachers	11.2%	13.9%	+ 24.1%
Bachelor's Degree			
Directors	34.4%	36.0%	+ 4.6%
Child Care Teachers	11.5%	19.4%	+ 68.6%
Holds, or is pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, or a related discipline:			
Directors	61.0%	64.0%	+ 4.9%
Child Care Teachers	36.7%	42.3%	+ 15.2%
Participating in Maryland Child Care Credential Program:			
Directors	20.7%	14.0%	( 32.3%)
Child Care Teachers	15.8%	21.8%	+ 37.9%
Involved in ECE-related professional activities within the past 12 months:			
Directors	54.5%	50.0%	( 8.2%)
Child Care Teachers	28.8%	35.1%	+ 21.8%
Child Care Courses Completed:			
Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential			
Directors	11.0%	20.0%	+ 81.8%
Child Care Teachers	9.1%	17.9%	+ 96.7%
90 Clock-Hour Preschool Course			
Directors	70.7%	74.0%	+ 3.3%
Child Care Teachers	78.1%	78.9%	+ 1.0%
45 Clock-Hour School-age Course			
Directors	44.8%	44.0%	( 1.7%)
Child Care Teachers	25.2%	30.4%	+ 5.2%
45 Clock-Hour Infant/Toddler Course			
Directors	44.1%	48.0%	+ 8.8%
Child Care Teachers	23.1%	31.9%	+ 38.0%
Average Annual Salary:			
Directors	\$35,267	\$40,619	+ 15.1%
Child Care Teachers	\$19,659	\$23,548	+ 19.7%
Plans to continue working in ECE field:			
Directors	94.1%	96.0%	+ 2.0%
Child Care Teachers	88.4%	94.4%	+ 6.7%

\* Although child care aides were included in both the 2006 and 2007 surveys, their responses have not been counted here under "child care teachers" because aides do not have group supervision responsibilities in center classrooms. Under Maryland child care licensing regulations, only staff members who qualify as preschool teachers or school-age teachers are permitted to have group supervision responsibilities.