



Early Childhood Workforce Index 2016

TENNESSEE



IN TENNESSEE, there are 481,935 children age birth through five years; 64 percent of these children live in households where all available parents are currently working, and 30 percent of all Tennessee children are part of low-income families. It is widely agreed that the current early care and education system across states is woefully underfunded. The [cost of services](#) is out of reach for many working families, including those who earn middle-class wages. At the same time, large swaths of early childhood teachers — even those with college degrees — earn unlivable wages.

More than 17,230 members of the early childhood teaching workforce provide services to children in Tennessee.

Occupation	Percentile	Median wage
Surgeon	99th	≥ \$90
Kindergarten teacher	64th	\$23.05
Preschool teacher	12th	\$11.46
Child care worker	2nd	\$8.93

Selected Occupations Ranked by Earnings

- In 2015, the median wage for child care workers was \$8.93, **a 3% decrease since 2010.**
- For preschool teachers, the median wage was \$11.46, **a 4% increase since 2010.**



Early Childhood Workforce Policies

Qualifications	BA for all pre-K teachers?	Yes
	At least CDA or vocational training for licensed providers?	No
QRIS and work environment	Paid time in professional development?	Yes
	Paid planning and/or preparation time?	No
	Salary schedule/benefits?	Yes
	Same for home providers?	No
Compensation strategies	Salary parity for pre-K teachers?	Yes
	Wage supplement?	No
Financial resources	State reported extra CCDBG spending?	No
	State applied for federal grant?	Yes
	Ratio of pre-K to K-12 spending over 50%?	Yes
Workforce data	Formal data collection mechanism?	Yes
	Includes compensation?	Unavailable
	Reports data publicly?	Yes
	Comprehensive?	No

Family & Income Support Policies

Income supports and child care assistance	Refundable Earned Income Tax Credit?	No
	Higher than federal minimum wage, indexed for inflation?	No
	Child care assistance income eligibility set at 85% of state median income or above?	No
	Refundable child care tax credit?	No
Supports for health and well-being	Paid sick days law?	No
	Paid family leave law?	No
	Expanded Medicaid eligibility?	No

The *Early Childhood Workforce Index* provides a composite appraisal of the early childhood workforce in each state focused on: Earnings and Economic Security; Early Childhood Workforce Policies; and Family and Income Support Policies. The full [2016 Index](#) includes a discussion and rationale for each category and spotlights successful and promising practices in selected states. To see how Tennessee compares to other states, visit our [interactive state-by-state database](#). For an overview of data sources for the indicators listed above, see our [guide to indicators](#).

