

A STATE OF SCHOOL READINESS

Don't just take it from us...



What researchers are saying

More than **1,200 researchers** agree that quality early care and education produces better education, health, economic and social outcomes for children, families, and the nation.

The ECE Consensus Letter for Researchers is based on a wide body of research in education, development psychology, neuroscience, medicine and economics.¹

What business leaders are saying

*"Investing in early childhood education and care is a necessary down payment on an adequately prepared future workforce and strong economy."*²



What teachers are saying



*"In the first few days of kindergarten it is immediately evident to me whether a child has had quality early education experiences. It comes out in language (or its lack), impulse control, capacity to focus and be part of a group, and much much more."*³

We know that qualified child care teachers lead to great outcomes including school readiness. This matters a lot because over 74% of children under age 6 have all parents in the labor force, which means 250,000 children are in child care.

1. National Institute for Early Education Research, <http://nieer.org/publications/ece-consensus-letter-for-researchers>

2. ReadyNation, Dr. Sara Watson, Global Director.

3. Rachel W., Kindergarten teacher, Madison Metropolitan School District.

A growing problem in the early education classroom.

Wisconsin's child care programs are having serious difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. Stability of the workforce is important for the healthy development of children, yet low wages contribute to a teacher turnover rate of 30% annually.⁴

Here's the disparity: starting median wage in child care is \$10/hour for a teacher with an associate degree; 52% of child care teachers meet this level of education. Similarly educated workers in the general population earn on average \$18/hour; 41% of Wisconsin workers meet this level of education.

Wisconsin-ready

Goal: Increasing the number of children in high-quality child care programs (4- and 5-star) in YoungStar.

The following investments, in Wisconsin's 2017-2019 biennial budget, will advance the quality and positive economic contributions of early childhood education in Wisconsin.

\$10M/year - **Implement Quality Grants** to fund ongoing quality advancements in child care programs, recommended by the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council.

\$7.5M/year - **Expand T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD**, proven strategies for raising the education level of early childhood teachers and stemming turnover through stipends based on educational achievement.

\$20M/year - **Increase child care payment rate of Wisconsin Shares** so that high quality programs can afford to serve children from low-income families – children most at risk for not being ready for school and for life. An increase in rates makes quality child care more affordable to low-income parents.

4. Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce," COWS, 2015. <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/2016-report/>