



A Union of Professionals

2019 Wage Data for Early Childhood Educators

Data Summary—Preschool Teachers

- The number of preschool teachers making less than \$15 per hour is 187,574 (44 percent of the preschool teacher workforce).
- The number of preschool teachers making less than a living wage for a single parent is 342,392 (80 percent of the workforce).
- In no state is the median wage for a preschool teacher a living wage, and only 15 states have a median wage that is greater than \$15.
- From 2017 to 2018, the median wage increase for a preschool teacher was less than inflation in 16 states, and in 12 states the median wage actually decreased.
- From 2012 to 2018, the median wage increase for a preschool teacher was less than inflation in 19 states; in five states, the median wage actually decreased.

Data Summary—Child Care Workers

- The number of child care workers making less than \$15 per hour is 424,921 (75 percent of the child care workforce).
- Number of child care workers making less than a living wage for a single parent: 508,176 (90 percent of the child care workforce).
- In no state is the median wage for a child care worker a living wage or greater than \$15 an hour.
- From 2017 to 2018, the median wage increase for a child care worker was less than inflation in 25 states, and the median wage actually decreased in six states.
- From 2012 to 2018, the median wage increase for a child care worker was less than inflation in 26 states.

Earnings Comparisons

- Total Earnings of all Preschool Teachers (428,110 people), 2018: \$14.6 billion
- Total Earnings of all Child Care Workers (566,700 people), 2018: \$13.9 billion
- Earnings of the highest-paid Hedge Fund Managers (25 people), 2017: [\\$16.8 billion](#)ⁱ

ⁱ Nathan Vardi, “The Twenty-Five Highest Earning Hedge Fund Managers and Traders”, *Forbes*, April 17, 2018.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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