



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®

Retention for child care professionals runs as low as 60%. The effects on child care programs are thousands of dollars lost per employee lost (150% of each employee's salary by some estimates), not counting state investments in higher education, credentials, training and registration that are lost. In addition to lost training and expertise, turnover negatively affects continuity of care. The quality of the bond between teacher and child is critical to quality outcomes for children, and early brain development.

Retention for workers participating in T.E.A.C.H. OHIO is greater than 94% and compensation increases more than 8% per year per employee. Participation in the program can run 7 years or more per professional, providing huge benefits related to continuity of care.

Are you a funder with resources you want to support our scholarships (or create your own)? Please follow this link:

<http://teach.occrra.org/index.php?pid=17>

...for information useful to funders including FAQ's and fact sheets.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® *in* OHIO

Planning for bringing T.E.A.C.H. to Ohio began in 1999, with a special symposium hosted by the Early Childhood Professional Development Committee under the leadership of the Head Start Collaboration Project. In February 2003 the T.E.A.C.H. project came to OHIO, with the award of the T.E.A.C.H. license to the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association (OCCRRA).

Before the project began, there were two pilot projects in the fall of 2002, one in Cuyahoga County operated initially by Starting Point, and the second in Stark County operated by Early Childhood Resource Center. Both pilot projects were transferred to OCCRRA on November 24, 2003.

As the licensee agency, OCCRRA sets Ohio's policies and procedures for operating the T.E.A.C.H. project so that it will meet the requirements of the licensing agreement with Child Care Services Association, the requirements of the project funders, the project, management, the fiscal policies of OCCRRA, and utilizes the input from the T.E.A.C.H. Advisory Committee and other key early care and education stakeholders.

The project is responsible to and will be evaluated by its funders, CCSA, and the OCCRRA board to determine its effectiveness, results, and to help plan its future growth. The T.E.A.C.H. project staff is involved in the collection of specific types of information and data needed for evaluation purposes. In addition, T.E.A.C.H. utilizes the input and advice from its Advisory Committee.

The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program originated in North Carolina to help address the critical staffing issues in the early childhood field. The program is designed to help improve the education,

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compensation and retention of early childhood professionals in both child care centers and family child care homes. Below is an overview of the rationale for the program's development, and a description of the principles and components designed specifically to solve the staffing crisis in the field.

Rationale

Communities have long recognized that high quality early childhood education and care is critical to families with young children. In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that the quality of child care available in a community directly impacts the cognitive and socio-emotional development of all its young children, particularly those from low-income families. Revolutionary advances in brain science have given us new understanding of how young children learn and grow. For these reasons, improving the quality of early childhood education has been receiving increasing attention.

Research has demonstrated that young children perform better when their teachers have a good education and are well compensated. Yet, for example in North Carolina, less than half of teachers of young children have either two or four year degrees. Of those that do, few have degrees in child development or early childhood education. Also in North Carolina and all over the country, child care professionals often make little more than minimum wage and receive few or no benefits. This leads to the inability of the field to attract and retain well-educated professionals. High turnover rates, up to 50% in many centers, can significantly impact continuity of care and create attachment difficulties for children.

The **Teacher Education And Compensation Helps** (T.E.A.C.H.) Scholarship Program is an innovative program to address the critical work force issues in the early childhood field.

Guiding Principles

The T.E.A.C.H. program is based on four guiding principles:

- * **Partnership** – Child care programs and teachers and family child care professionals become partners in the educational process and scholarship. Child care programs, whom we refer to as sponsors, share in the cost of the scholarship with the Funder and scholarship recipient. Sponsors also provide paid release time and a raise or bonus. Recipients pay for a portion of their tuition and books, and commit to continuing to work for the sponsor. Funders pay the cost to administer the program and the majority of cost related to tuition, books, and release time.
- * **Diversity** – T.E.A.C.H. values and supports diversity, engaging participants from diverse types of child care programs, ethnic, geographic, and educational backgrounds.
- * **Existing Systems** – T.E.A.C.H. uses the existing community college system to deliver coursework. This helps build the infrastructure for early childhood professional development throughout the state.
- * **Collaboration** – The success of T.E.A.C.H. is based on collaboration with key early childhood stakeholders at the local and state level.

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Four Components

The T.E.A.C.H. approach is unique in that it builds a qualified, committed work force through combining scholarship, education, compensation, and commitment:

- * **Scholarship** – The scholar receives assistance with the cost of tuition, books, travel or internet expenses, and paid release time to be used to attend class or study.
- * **Education** – The scholar takes classes or training to work toward a degree or credential in early childhood education.
- * **Compensation** – At the successful completion of each scholarship period, the scholar receives a bonus or raise.
- * **Commitment** – At the end of a one year scholarship, the degree scholar agrees to stay at their job for one year. The CDA scholar makes a six month commitment.

T.E.A.C.H. reaches beyond assisting individuals with their personal career objectives. T.E.A.C.H. also seeks to create systemic changes in the child care field. Of particular concern are extremely low wages and very high turnover. The goal of T.E.A.C.H. is to ensure that it is economically and professionally feasible for individuals to stay in the field. T.E.A.C.H. aims to improve the education, retention, and compensation of early childhood professionals.

Origins in North Carolina

The need for a scholarship program to support early childhood educators became clear after [Child Care Services Association \(CCSA\)](#), in conjunction with Child Care Resources, Inc. of Mecklenburg County North Carolina and the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, reported on the working conditions of child care teachers in North Carolina in 1990. The report, *Working in Child Care in North Carolina*, revealed that:

- In 1989, more than 50 % of child care teachers in centers in North Carolina were earning \$4.50 less per hour;
- About 38% of these teachers left their center in a given year;
- Over 70% of the teachers had only a high school education;
- An overwhelming majority (88.2%) of teachers reported receiving no compensatory time or pay for participating in training;
- Almost 40 % of teachers reported no reimbursement for training expenses.

In response to these discouraging findings, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program



model was developed. During the program's pilot year in Wake, Durham, and Orange counties, 21 teachers completed a combined total of 118 courses for 383 credit hours toward an Associate Degree in early childhood education. In addition:

- None of the teachers left the sponsoring center during the scholarship year and all but one remained at the center after the additional commitment year.
- All of the teachers who finished the program received raises, increasing their hourly wages almost 13% to an average of \$6.97.

T.E.A.C.H. North Carolina scholarships were extended to family child care providers in 1993 and to child care directors in 1995. The success of the Associates Degree Scholarship Program also quickly led to additional scholarship options for participants.

One of these options is the CDA Assessment Scholarship, which was launched in North Carolina in 1996. While the best-known path for training and education is college coursework, college is not the only way to pursue training and education that improve the quality of child care. The CDA credential, which can be earned without attending college courses, also helps ensure quality care for children. It is a particularly good option for child care providers who want to earn a non-college credential first, before going on to higher education.

Funding in North Carolina for the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project has come from a variety of sources, including private foundations, local United Ways, the Child Care and Development Block Grant, corporations and the state legislature.

The success of T.E.A.C.H. has been recognized outside of North Carolina and the program has been licensed by CCSA in 20 other states since 1995. The program has been very effective in each state at increasing retention, salaries and education levels of teachers, and as a result, improving families' access to quality early childhood services for their children.

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