

Turnover begets turnover: An examination of job and occupational instability among child care center staff ^[1]

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Abstract

Over half of child care center teaching staff and a third of directors interviewed in 1996 had left their centers by 2000. The demographic and professional profiles of those who left and stayed at their centers were similar. Among those who left, only half continued to work in child care. Highly trained teaching staff were more likely to leave their jobs if they earned lower wages, worked in a climate with less stability of highly trained co-workers, and worked with a greater percentage of teaching staff who did not have a bachelor's degree. Directors were more likely to leave if they earned lower wages. The study extends previous research by revealing the links among the characteristics and stability of the teaching staff as a whole and the retention of highly trained teachers. It also underscores the multi-faceted benefits resulting from paying higher wages to all staff.

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