

Poverty-level wages pose urgent problem for US childcare, study finds^[1]

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Excerpts

A new report from the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment (CSCCE) at UC Berkeley finds that child care workers in every state struggle with poverty-level wages, even as they nurture and educate our children in the most important years of development.

The 2024 Early Childhood Workforce Index shows that nationally:

- Early childhood educators are paid a median wage of \$13.07/hour, from \$10.60 in Louisiana to \$18.23 in the District of Columbia;
- Those hourly rates are not a living wage for a single adult in any state;
- Nearly half (43%) of childcare workers' families survive on public assistance like food stamps

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Recommended policies include:

Invest in direct public funding to provide early educators with a living wage, health care, and safe, supportive work environments. For an estimate of a values-based budget for each state, see Financing Early Educator Quality.

Prioritize compensation standards and a wage floor across all settings so no one working in early care and education earns less than a regionally assessed living wage. Create a wage/salary scale that sets minimum standards for pay, accounting for job role, experience, and education levels.

Adopt system-level workplace standards such as guidance on appropriate levels of paid time off for vacation and sick leave, paid planning and professional development time, and mental health and teaching supports.

Related link: Poverty wages for childcare workers jeopardizes \$10-per-day childcare^[3]

Region: United States^[4]

Tags: poverty^[5]
poverty reduction^[6]
wages^[7]

Source URL (modified on 9 Jan 2025): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/25/01/poverty-level-wages-pose-urgent-problem-us-childcare-study-finds>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/25/01/poverty-level-wages-pose-urgent-problem-us-childcare-study-finds>^[2]
https://phys.org/news/2024-10-poverty-wages-pose-urgent-problem.html#google_vignette [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/11/poverty-wages-childcare-workers-jeopardizes-10-day-childcare> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7865> [5]
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