

Roots of decline: How government policy has de-educated teachers of young children ^[1]

Author: Bellm, Dan & Whitebook, Marcy

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

Report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the report:

As the Losing Ground authors note, "Consistently low wages and benefits from 1983 to 2004 help explain the low educational attainment of early childhood educators." But while this is no doubt true, it is not so much an answer as the springboard for further questions: Why have wages and benefits in ECE remained consistently so low, during a period when other occupations have evolved quite differently? In particular, why has compensation remained stagnant in such a growth industry & given the huge increase in demand for child care services and a sharply rising need for more child care workers? How can so important a service still be so undervalued?

We are neither economists nor sociologists. But as researchers and policy analysts who have devoted more than 20 years to studying the early care and education workforce, we maintain that this explanation of wage stagnation does not take us quite far enough. We believe it is useful to tease apart the broader set of reasons why this workforce sector remains in such a precarious and untenable position, given its enormous value in the daily lives of young children and their families.

This paper, based on our review of the literature and on interviews with key informants in four of the seven states studied by the Losing Ground team (California, New Jersey, New York and Wisconsin), examines the demographic and public policy context of the team's findings.

Region: United States ^[3]

Tags: staff ^[4]

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