

Worthy Work, Still Unlivable Wages: The Early Childhood Workforce 25 Years After the National Child Care Staffing Study Webinar

November 20, 2014

Tricia Haley: Some announcements before we get started. First of all, you may have noticed that your line is muted, and in fact, all of our lines are muted. That's so that we can avoid getting background noise during the course of the webinar. But it does not mean that we don't want you to ask questions. In fact we would love for you to ask questions. Please feel free to submit them through the chat feature throughout. And there will be Q&A either throughout the webinar or at the end. We do look forward to seeing your questions.

Additionally, we've heard from folks in the past, if they're having sound issues, sometimes it's because they're listening to the webinar on their computer. So if that's the case, just pop into your audio box, check out the phone number, and maybe dial in on a telephone if you are having any audio problems.

And finally, inevitably, someone will chat in and ask us whether these slides are available online. They are not yet. But, the presenters here have graciously agreed to let us record the webinar so that we will within the next week or so be able to post this webinar along with the slides, hopefully, online. So do watch out for that. We'll make sure that we send a note out when that goes up.

And with that, I will turn it over to Marsha Basloe, who is the senior adviser to Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda Smith in the Early Childhood Development Office, and she will kick us off.

Marsha Basloe: Thank you, Tricia. And I'm pleased to be here on behalf of Linda Smith. This is an exciting week in Washington with the Childcare and Development Block Grant Act being signed into law and Linda and Shannon had to leave to go to the White House. And so we're pleased that that's where they are and I'm really excited to be able to introduce the webinar.

We know that teachers and providers are really the backbone of quality in our programs. And the president's Early Learning Initiative, when it was rolled out, is really a comprehensive early learning agenda. And it's been about having quality early childhood development. We know that enjoying compensation is an important piece of this.

ACS is extremely interested in the workforce. We have a wonderful study that has now been in the works with the National Academy of Science, Science of Children: Birth to Eight, and that will be released sometime in

February. We've been working on the early Head Start Childcare Partnership and Pre-K development grant and we look at this as a financing strategy certainly the beginning of the financing strategy that Marcy and Deborah and Lea are going to talk about.

We are pleased to have this kick off our workforce webinar series and we look forward to having you join us as we continue to have workforce be part of our conversation in 2015. I'm going to turn it over to Lea.

Lea Austin:

Hi. Good morning. Thank you, Marcia. We're really pleased that the Office of Childcare is hosting this webinar and kicking off your webinar as part of your series on the workforce.

So, you're going to hear today about the status of the workforce from the new report coming out of the center, "Worthy Work, Still Unlivable Wages." And this report brings forth data -- you'll hear new data about the workforce and sort of where we've come in 25 years.

You'll hear from two of the primary co-authors of the report: Marcy Whitebook, who's the Director and Senior Researcher at the Center for the Study of Childcare Employment at UC Berkeley, and you'll hear from Deborah Phillips, Professor of Psychology at Georgetown University. And a little bit later you'll hear from me again. I'm also at the Center at UC Berkeley with Marcy and I co-authored the policy chapter of report.

So we're going to talk a little bit about the current context against key findings and new data that are in the report and we'll talk about policies that impact the workforce and discuss some of the recommendations. And though it can be challenging to do so in a webinar format, we really do want those questions coming in and we will either, again, take them as they come or we will have time at the end -- we've definitely left time to have questions and discussion.

And then I just want to take a moment before we get into the content to thank the funders of this report because it was quite a list to get this done and we could not have done it without their support. That was the Heising-Simons Foundation and the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation. And with that I'll turn it to Debra.

Deborah Phillips:

Thank you, Lea. I also want to extend my thanks to Marcia and in absentia to Linda and Shannon for making this webinar possible so we could talk to all of you and have an exchange with all of you about this report.

So 25 years ago Marcy Whitebook and Carollee House and I set out to conduct a two-generation study of childcare, examining both the quality of

care for children and also the quality of work for the adults who were responsible for their early development when they're not at home.

I entered into this study as a card-carrying development psychologist, deeply worried about the vast variation in childcare quality that children experience day in and day out in this country and very passionate about trying to figure out the active ingredients of quality that most affected children's development and that policy mechanisms could do something about. Little did I imagine then that teacher wages would be one of the most powerful of these ingredients.

I came away from the staffing study honestly shocked by the working conditions of childcare teachers. Salaries lower than parking lot attendees? Are you kidding? And I was deeply touched by their commitment to the children in their care as well as by the economic precariousness of their lives. I was absolutely convinced by the firm link we found between adult working conditions and children's experience in childcare of the urgency of addressing early childhood teacher's compensation and well-being.

I haven't changed my mind. In fact all that we've learned in the intervening years about the exquisite sensitivity of the developing brain to the responsiveness, stimulation, and protection that young children receive from the adults in their lives; and about how quickly stress and depression can undermine adults' capacity to provide this supportive and educational care has made me more convinced than ever that taking care of children means taking care of their teachers.

So about a year ago, Marcy and Carollee and I began to discuss the possibility of taking stock of the state of the early care and education workforce to mark the 25th anniversary of the Staffing Study. We couldn't begin to redo the Staffing Study. That would have entailed going back to the five Staffing Study cities and conducting an updated observational study of hundreds of centers. It was a herculean effort back then and we were 25 years younger. Today, in addition to the massive undertaking, we would be looking at a very different ecology of childcare and one that would be very difficult to compare to that which existed 25 years ago.

We also knew, however, that it would be a challenge to knit together a coherent story from available data comparing the workforce in 1989 to today's workforce. This is due in part to the changing ecology of early care and education, but also due to the fragmented and siloed state of data on the early childhood workforce.

Fortunately, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, in the Department of Health and Human Services has updated the 1990 profile of childcare settings study with the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and

Education, giving us a reasonably comparable 22 year window to examine. Head Start has long collected data on its workforce, as has the Department of Defense, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau continue to collect annual data on childcare workers and preschool teachers.

I'm going to share with you what this collection of evidence reveals about the early care and education workforce then and now. Marcy Whitebook will then tell you about the new data regarding economic worries among early care and education teachers and their reliance on public benefits due to their poor wages. Then Lea Austin will share our perceptions of the current policy landscape and our thoughts about creating a pathway on this landscape toward a different future for early childhood teachers and thus for young children.

Before jumping into the data here, it is important that you understand that we are stuck with the antiquated Bureau of Labor Statistics and Census Bureau job labels of childcare worker and preschool teacher, which perpetuate the false dichotomy between care and education. We do restrict our look at these data to center-based workers. In fact, throughout the report, unless we state otherwise, we focus on center-based teachers and primarily on teachers and lead teachers, not assistant teachers. This is true for example, in our comparisons of the two national surveys, where we also restrict our sample to centers that serve three to five-year-olds, sometimes exclusively, but often in conjunction with other age groups.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as was true in 1989, childcare workers continue to land at the bottom of the U.S. wage scale, which you see on the far left of the horizontal bar here, rating third out of the 100 percentile in rankings based on wages. We actually still pay those who care for and educate our youngest children on a par with those who walk our dogs, flip our burgers, park our cars, and mix our drinks.

Childcare workers' wages have barely kept pace with the cost of living, increasing by only one percent in real dollars since 1997, a smaller increase than that earned by fast food cooks. Preschool teachers, in the Census Bureau lingo, "Those who instruct preschool children in activities needed for primary school," have fared somewhat better. Their wages have increased by 15 percent since 1997, but they still have a long ways to go to catch up with their colleagues who teach primary school.

And there's a very unsettling contrast with what has happened to what families pay for early care and education during this same period. Census Bureau data have recently revealed that parent fees for early care and education have increased by nearly 90 percent, effectively doubling since

1997. 1 percent, 15 percent, 90 percent -- we have no idea where that money is going, but clearly not to their children's teachers.

The take-home message from this figure, based on 2012 data from the Census Bureau and from the National Survey of Early Care and Education, is the exceedingly low premium that is placed on higher education within the ECE field. This figure reflects the annual wages for teachers, all of whom have a bachelor's degree or higher. Among teachers with bachelor's degrees, those who teach kindergarten earn over 20 percent more than their colleagues who teach pre-kindergarten alongside them in school-sponsored settings, and they earn 60 percent more than those who teach pre-kindergarten in other settings, including Head Start programs.

The exact same stair step pattern characterized teacher wages at the time of the National Childcare Staffing Survey. Degree teachers working with infants and toddlers still earn less than those who work with preschoolers. And comparisons to the other end of the spectrum show that early childhood teachers with bachelor's degrees earn half the wages of women, and one-third the wages of men in the civilian labor force who also have bachelor's degrees. How can we possibly expect to attract the best and the brightest to this field, even among those who want to teach young children?

Equally striking and disturbing was the variation we saw in wages and qualifications across different sectors within the early care and education market, relying on different funding streams and operating under different auspices and sponsors. Moreover, sectors of the market that were characterized by improvements in qualifications did not coincide with sectors characterized by improvements in wages.

Head Start, for example, has made remarkable progress in filling its classrooms with well-trained and educated teachers. The majority of Head Start teachers now have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field. And wages in Head Start improved between 1997 and 2007 but then completely stagnated, despite ongoing dramatic increases in teacher qualifications. This is why we use terms like "illogical," "irrational," and "inequitable," to describe the compensation structure in early care and education.

Turnover fueled in part by unlivable wages continues to deplete investments in professional development. And while turnover has slowed it has slowed in all areas of teaching and it remains at levels recorded during the mid-1970s. Can't we do better than that?

Over the past 25 years, our knowledge about the vital importance of the first five years of life has exploded. Our expectations of early care and education's role in closing the achievement gap has risen dramatically. And vast numbers of early childhood teachers have worked hard to improve their educational credentials. And yet we have failed to assure them wages that correspond to their educational level, that will free them from economic worry, and that will enable them to support their families without relying on public benefits. It's to these latter two stories that Marcy will now turn.

Marcy Whitebook: Okay. Hi. Thank you, Debra. Thank you, ACF, Office of Childcare and Lea. And I just want to say to people is that there was not a -- the webinar link did not include the link to the report, but if you go to the center for the study -- but you're going to send it. And also you can get a link to the report on the center website as well. But it will be sent.

I want to also just -- for a moment say that -- I want to give a special thanks for the other Center for the Study of Childcare Employment staff who aren't here today, Laura Sakai, Fran Kipnis, Siri Nebasi [ph], and Megan Delahoy [ph], who, when you get to the link and you see the length of the report it would have never happened without their incredibly hard work.

More than four decades ago, as a recent college graduate, I chose a career as a nursery school teacher. My experience as a Head Start volunteer in high school first drew me to child development and how early childhood programs could help to address poverty and inequality. As a young feminist, working to provide good childcare seemed like a perfect fit to me. I was more importantly enthralled by witnessing and facilitating how young children learned. But it quickly became apparent that something was amiss.

Many parents could not find or afford good services. Only some teachers had access to education and training. Only a handful of programs paid a decent wage. And I witnessed one skilled fellow teacher after another leave to pursue a career that offered greater respect and reward. Repeatedly I was told that I could do something more with my college degree. No doubt I could have made more money teaching older children or in almost any other line of work, but then and now I viewed teaching young children as a much needed service to our nation.

So along with a handful of my colleagues, some of whom are no doubt listening in today, we set out to expand and improve childcare and to secure the rights, raises, and respect for early childhood teachers that would allow them to provide what children and families needed and deserved. But as the title of our report makes clear, and as our findings

underscore, our efforts and those of so many others who have joined us over the years, have not panned out as we had hoped. It pains me that today recent college graduates still rightly perceive early childhood teaching as a pathway to poverty.

The work of teaching young children is highly skilled and complex. Personally it's the most intellectually challenging work I have ever done; also, physically challenging. It is imperative that early childhood teachers know about typical and atypical child development and they have to understand the importance of play in children's learning and know how to use that play to promote learning across multiple domains, including developing mathematical understanding, building the skills for literacy, and many other things as well.

Additionally teachers must be skilled in helping children develop important lifelong personal dispositions, such as task persistence. These skills must be applied in the context of working with children and other adults, including parents from a variety of cultures and economic backgrounds, and increasingly children who are dual language learners and children who have special developmental needs.

At the same time many teachers are also attending school while working full time, not only to advance their skills and knowledge, but undoubtedly with the hope of improving their economic status. These teachers are striving to meet our 21st century expectations only to find themselves earning 20th century wages.

We sought to understand more about the consequences of low pay against the backdrop of these expectations we now hold for the teachers of young children. Economic insecurity, as Debra mentions, fuels stress and depression among adults and we know from studies of mothers, affects their interaction with children. Our examine of economic insecurity reminds us that many early childhood teachers are also parents, whose children face the very risks associated with being poor that so many of our early care and education policies seek to ameliorate.

If you turn to chapter four of the report, that's where we dive further into the issue of economic security, and what we describe there is a study we conducted in one state with more than 600 center-based teaching staff. They were surveyed about worry, about their family's economic well-being, as well about workplace policies that influence their learning.

So we asked them about things like being able to pay their monthly bills, pay for transportation to and from work, whether they worried about having enough money for food for their families and also about paying their rent and a host of other things about their economic status. So we

also asked them about employment policies that affect earning such as getting -- worrying about being laid off, having their benefits reduced, having their hours reduced, being sent home for unexpected absences, or center closures, losing a day's pay if they have to deal with some kind of family issue, and not getting a raise.

If you look at the slide now on your screens, you see that those who earn - - let me just say one other thing here I forgot for a moment, is that the staff that we interviewed, about half of them had an associate's or higher degree and they were employed in a relatively high quality sample of centers that included for profit, non-profit, Head Start, and public pre-K programs. So if you look at the slide on the far left you see that those who earned less than \$12.50 per hour and those with dependent children expressed more worry about having enough food for their families than their colleagues earning higher wages and those -- and those without dependent children.

And even teachers with associate's or higher degrees expressed reported economic worries. They were less worried, but they also had worries about their families and worries about program policies, such as being sent home without pay due to an unexpected closure and low attendance. And to look at that, if you go to page 53, figure 4.9, you see those data.

Significantly overall worry scores were found among teaching staff employed in higher quality programs and those that were publicly funded. Overall worry expressed by teaching staff was significantly higher among those working in for profit compared to non-profit programs.

It's troubling to imagine the stress that is induced from such worry while simultaneously being responsible for a classroom of children. Low pay not only fuels worry, but it leads many in the early childhood workforce to augment their earnings with public support. Using census data, we were able to look at participation rates in public support programs among those who define themselves as early childhood workers.

This particular analysis includes both the center-based teachers as well as home-based providers. Our analysis focused on four programs: the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit, the ITC, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- SNAP or food stamps -- and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families -- TANF -- that later of which was utilized by only 2 percent of childcare worker families.

46 percent of childcare workers compared to 25 percent of the US workforce resided in families enrolled in at least one public support program annually between 2007 and 2011. Participation rates in public

support programs varied little by whether childcare workers were employed full or part time.

But childcare workers who earned less than the proposed \$10.10 Federal minimum wage were one and a half times more likely to reside in families participating in public support programs than were those in which the childcare worker earned more than \$10.10 per hour. Participation rates in public support programs were highest among the -- among single parent childcare workers and among workers with at least one child under five years old.

At every level of worker education, from not yet having a high school diploma up to a B.A. or higher degree, participation in public support programs was higher for childcare worker families than for the families of all US workers with comparable education. Again, underscoring the low premium placed on education within our workforce. The estimated cost of reliance on these public support benefits by childcare workers and their families is approximately \$2.4 billion dollars per year.

Our nation has an uneven playing field on which the wages of teachers depend more on the ages of the children they teach and where they work than on their qualifications. Economic insecurity linked to wages is endemic, especially among teachers who have children of their own. It's a lose-lose-lose, because parents are paying a lot, children aren't getting what they need, and certainly our teachers are not.

We're particularly concerned that our teachers who are working full time are struggling to think about feeding their families. We need in the words of the 1990s Worthy Wage campaign to find a much better and more equitable way to help parents pay and to attract teachers and help them stay, something that our Department of Defense, a handful of state pre-K programs, and most other industrialized nations have managed to accomplish.

It's our hope that this new evidence will spur the nation to not only aspire to but to achieve livable, equitable, and dependable wages for early childhood teachers, of whom we expect so much but to whom we still provide so little.

Debra, Carollee, and I, are very clear that we will not do the next round of the study, but we have chosen the title: Worthy Work, Finally Livable Wages: Early Childhood Teaching in the US. We hope that report can be written sooner than 2039. So now I'm going to turn it over to Lea, whose going to tell you how much our current policies are helping us to get there and she'll also review some of our recommendations about how we can move forward.

Lea Austin:

Thank you. So as you can see from the quote on the slide you are looking at, more than a decade and a half ago, the National Academy of Sciences recommended a two-pronged approach to improving the quality of early care and education, but to date our investments in quality improvement have primarily focused on the first part of that recommendation, namely professional development and quality initiative to improve the education and training of the workforce.

So for this report we reviewed the primary Federal, State, and local workforce policies to learn if and how compensation strategies are being advanced. What we found is that, while over the past 25 years there have been significant efforts and as Marcy and Debra have identified to increase early childhood teacher qualifications, it appears to be an inflicted assumption that professional salaries will follow these increases in education and qualification.

The task of creating intentional sustainable policies for improving the compensation and work environments of the workforce as a whole despite recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences and others, has gone largely unaddressed. There are some exceptions, most notably, which has been mentioned, is the Department of Defense childcare system that requires compensation at rates equivalent to that of other military employees with comparable training, seniority, and experience.

And some public pre-K programs pay teachers comparably to their counterparts in the K - 12 system, so once you start digging a little deeper, you start seeing that there are some differences between parity and comparability where one may have the salary scale and benefits with K - 12, and another system may require that teacher have the same starting salaries but may not have the same salary scale or benefits to go along with that.

There's other differences in these pre-K pay requirements that we discuss in more detail in the report. And again, just so -- if you wanted to have the report now, you could just Google "Center for the Study of Childcare Employment," and find the report on our page, but it will also be sent out after the webinar to everybody as well.

But most importantly, what we've found is that improving compensation has been left to discretionary and sporadic initiatives, such as stipends or bonuses. These are often characterized by insufficient funding, are limited in scope, and compete for quality improvement funds with professional development and other important and pressing priorities. They frequently have to rely on short-term funding and they're not reaching most of the early childhood teaching workforce. This is not to discount these

initiatives. They have really important impacts and can serve as a source of relief for those that receive such stipends or bumps in income.

As we heard from Tuesday, Angie Robertson, who's a teacher, or was a former teacher, she talks about her co-workers having to use their credit cards to pay for rent and buy food, so something like a stipend can be helpful to provide that relief to help somebody, you know, pay a bill or go towards paying debt. But the structures have does fundamentally change the irrational wage structure which Debra described for us.

Despite the stagnation though that we've seen and the challenges with the policies that do exist or the lack of policies that we have, we do see that there is a path forward. Today is a new day and we can think about what are the opportunities for advancement. And though teachers have long known this from their own experiences, the context of what we know about children's development and well-being as linked to the adults in their communities or adults in their lives is documented and becoming more widely understood by research, policy, and advocacy communities.

As so to move us forward, it's our assessment that a focused and comprehensive reassessment of the nation's early care and education policies is needed to develop a well-defined strategy for financing early care and education services. Such a strategy is required to address the needs for equitable teacher wages aligned with educational levels across ECE settings for children from birth to five, while also relieving the tremendous cost burden that so many working families face.

We call upon policymakers at all levels, those of you who are on this webinar and other stakeholders, ranging from business and finance leaders to early childhood teachers and parents to identify a sustainable dedicated source of public funding to upgrade the compensation of the workforce and again to relieve the burden that families are experiencing.

And also to set a rational and equitable set of guidelines for determining regionally based entry-level wages and salary increases as well as workplace standards for teachers to effectively engage in the complex work of taking children. Or as we heard Meaghan Gunner say earlier this week from the University of Minnesota, she sort of aptly described this as the complex work of developing brains.

There are also immediate opportunities that offer fertile grounds for making inroads into improving early childhood employment and services within the current system. We recommend that workplace and compensation policies become essential feature of states' QRIS criteria and as a benchmark of pre-K quality in line with some of the language in

the preschool development and expansion criteria which calls for comparable salaries for pre-K and K-12 teachers.

That when Head Start is next reauthorized, increase in earmarked funding for aligning teaching staff salaries with their dramatically increased qualifications should be at the center of that re-authorization.

That Federal and state policies regarding quality improvement funds should be revised to ensure that professional development and compensation efforts, rather than competing with each other be linked with appropriately dedicated funds.

That funds be made available to help states to build, strengthen, and sustain data systems, such as workforce registries, that can help to capture the extent to which members of the workforce participate in education and professional development activities, receive compensation increases and remain in the field.

And lastly, that researchers who study early care and education policies, and both the developmental and societal impact of impacts of early care and education renew attention to the adult worker environment and teacher well-being as critical elements effecting developmentally supportive practices in ECE settings as well as cost benefits of these settings impact in the short and longer terms.

In 1989, Marcy, Debra, and Carollee concluded that the evidence from the Staffing Study revealed a shaky foundation upon which to build a structure to house and nurture our children while their parents earn a living. The shaky foundation of poor wages, turnover, and vast variations across differing program offices has not been stabilized and still poses a hazard to young children and their families.

Another 25 years is a bit too long to wait to improve early childhood jobs as a matter of justice to the early childhood workforce, to their own families, and to the children and families that they serve.

And so we thank you for going through this with us and your attention to this and I think that we have some questions that have come in.

Tricia Haley:

So we do have a couple of questions but we don't have a lot so I'm guessing everyone was just holding their questions till the end of the webinar. Now is the time. Type those questions in. But we will answer the one's that we've got. So first of all the first question we've got is, "Was the 90 percent increase in childcare costs inflation adjusted as you did with wages?"

Marcy Whitebook: Yes. Those are inflation adjusted numbers. And when you get the reports, just go to figure 3.2 and you'll see the unadjusted and adjusted numbers. So the 90 percent is based on the adjusted numbers.

Tricia Haley: Great. Thank you. "Secondly, do you consider the amount of free and discounted childcare that many teachers receive when calculating compensation?"

Marcy Whitebook: We don't really have clear data about what percentage of teachers are receiving free and discounted childcare. We do in the studies we do at the center ask about that. We do know that in terms of the support teachers get we didn't include childcare specifically in the information we said about economic worry. We also don't have any information about housing support as well.

I think it's also important to realize that there are a lot of benefits that our teachers are not getting, such as paid sick leave, paid planning time, paid time off for required professional development. I think we need more careful examination when we are looking at issues of equality and teacher quality to what the adult working environment is like and what kind of supports are in place for teachers to really function as professionals and to provide for children what they need to succeed.

So there's more work to be done on really understanding that and we have a measure now at our center now that we call the sequel [ph] where we begin to use that to look at quality so we're not just looking at degree level or education level but also looking about whether or not the environment is supporting teacher to apply what they know and build their skills.

Tricia Haley: Thank you Marcy. The next question is from someone who is wondering if you are speaking with legislators, what would you all recommend as one or two points that to inform them about.

Deborah Phillips: Well, I can start on that.

Marcy Whitebook: You go. Go. That's Debra, by the way.

Deborah Phillips: Yes, Debra. I would start with two points. One is through the "what is at stake" question. And what is at stake is really the fact that these teachers are responsible for children during the time when children are experiencing the most rapid brain development of any other stage of life. So what is at stake is the brain development of young children and their future capacity to learn and be innovative and productive citizens, really. That's not hyperbole.

And the second point I would make is that there is a great deal of rhetoric now about the return on investment that you get on early childhood education. A lot of people are touting early childhood education as the answer to almost everything you can imagine in our society today and Nick Kristof just had a column in the New York Times again yesterday basically quoting Jim Heckman yet again on the same point. But virtually all of the programs for which we have the data on return on investment pay teachers equitable wages.

So Boston, Tulsa, pay pre-K teachers the same as they pay K teachers and the parent and child centers and ABeCeDarian and so on. Really the return depends on adequate wages for the teachers. If you start paring back on the wages, you're not going to get the same return on investment.

Lea Austin: And this is Lea. Just to reiterate Debra's point, we know legislators like to see things quickly and in brief, and I think what supports Debra's point about the premium and equity of wages is the slide that we had -- and this information's in the report as well -- showing the mean annual salary with teachers with degrees compared to the civilian labor force, elementary school teachers, kindergarten teachers, and you really can just very visually see the dramatic differences.

Tricia Haley: So someone here indicates that some of our teacher have declined deserved pay increases because the amount does not offset the support from public support programs. How do we address that?

Marcy Whitebook: This is Marcy. I mean, I think we basically have to say to legislators and to everybody that the way we finance our current system just doesn't work. Parents are paying too much of their income for the most part and you can't fix this problem by charging parents more. Our subsidy policies in many states have seen cutbacks over the years so it's not -- we're always trading off how many families we can serve but we're serving them too low, but reimbursement rates are very low. So I think we have to basically say we need to finance things differently.

And I think one of the things that's happening in a lot of communities is people are saying that creating a living wage, raising the minimum wage and then what happens is the early childhood community says, well we can't participate in that because we don't have any place to get the money. And so the little raises that people are offering to teachers often are not as much as the public benefits. So I think the only way we can really do that is financing differently and breaking the link between what families are paying and what we're paying teachers.

In San Francisco, it's really interesting. They have a living wage and they actually have a fund that allows them to pay early childhood teachers more

and that allows you to do that. So part of that we have this situation -- and we hear this a lot too -- is because the raises we're offering teachers are very well intentioned, but they're not enough to make up for this difference.

And I think it's interesting, going back to the economic worry. We looked at well, where did you see a significant drop in worry? And it wasn't when you got \$1 above minimum wage. It wasn't even at the proposed federal minimum wage. It was much more in line with some of the minimum wages that are being set by cities where they've done an analysis of what people need to be able to support themselves.

Tricia Haley: Thank you. Questions are now coming in. People are excited and ready. Let's take a look at what we've got next.

Now this is a good question. "Are there any recommendations for how early childcare centers can start increasing wages and compensation right away? For example, are there other funding sources to pursue, is there a way to raise awareness? Do you guys have any ideas on that?"

Lea Austin: I was going to say Marcy, it speaks to the response you were just giving and maybe kind of --

Marcy Whitebook: So I was just in Wisconsin and people there are really thinking about -- we were talking a lot about this issue. And so one of the things people were saying is that really beginning to do the education with parents about where their childcare dollars go. I think parents' experience is that they are paying so much and they're struggling so hard to pay it and they do the math and they see well like, all this money is coming in, Why isn't it going to people?

So I think one of the things is letting parents talk about these issues. Use this data we hope as an opportunity to say, this isn't really working; we don't want to ask you to do this on your backs but we can't also support ourselves and really stay and do what for your children or we're doing a tremendous sacrifice.

That being said, we heard stories in certain communities where people were going to their business leaders who are saying they care about early childhood and at least having the business community make some contribution that can be used, whether it's making sure that there's working computers in classrooms or supporting some small reward for people.

I think it's also really important if there's any activity going on in communities around minimum wage or paid sick days or any of those

things to really talk about the need for some kind of community fund that can help at least make some of those small changes.

So I think in many ways in our field we haven't known how to do this so we've stopped talking about it over the last 25 years, especially after the Worthy Wage campaign sort of quieted down a little bit. And I think we have to talk about this problem. We have to really say that we are not doing anybody any favor by not addressing it. It's a public will question and we can't will that public will until people understand what the problem is. And as long as parents are experiencing as their personal problem and teachers are saying there's nothing we can do, we're going to be stuck.

And so I think we have to begin to say this is a problem, we need a different way of financing, and in that process I do believe that we will come forward some small amounts of money that will make a little difference, but ultimately we really have to build a campaign in our country that says we need more support for our children from day one. And to really provide the kinds of early learning experience that we know are really necessary for the brains of our future.

Tricia Haley:

So our next question is whether you all know, "Does the QRIS system -- the quality rating and improvement system -- in any state look at compensation along with teacher qualification in regards to program quality?"

Lea Austin:

This is Lea. We looked at QRIS systems several years ago and so we know that there have been more that have come online since we've looked at them and we have done a scan of some of the newer systems. But what we typically find is that compensation is not included in QRIS as a benchmark or sort of different levels as you move up in tiers or ratings.

We did find a couple of programs -- L.A., which was a county or a local based program; it wasn't statewide -- but L.A. had compensation specifically in their QRIS. I do know that they've had some changes in their systems and I don't know if that has been maintained. L.A. was one of two and I apologize because the second one doesn't come to mind, but that really was it.

Typically, when you saw things related to compensation or benefits, what items were things like having a salary scale, which is certainly a good thing, that there is some indication that you've got increases based on perhaps education and experience and tenure, but very little language overall related to increases or related to benchmarking salary either at a starting level or to education.

Marcy Whitebook: And this is Marcy. I just want to add that the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association just put out a paper -- Peggy Hath and her colleagues wrote this paper and if you go to the WECA website you can find it. My apologies to my Wisconsin friends that the name of your paper has slipped my mind for the moment. But they did a really interesting analysis where they looked at how it's not just that we're not putting compensation into QRIS, but in many instances, we're creating -- as you go up, paying for quality gets harder and programs are struggling.

Even programs that are meeting the quality standards they're struggling financially to meet those standards. And then they did an analysis of if you added better wages for people, programs would drastically be losing money on the available sources of income now. So I think it's a really important report to look at to understand some of these issues so we can talk about them.

And then I think we will be soon going back to the -- Child Trends has just set up this wonderful database that Lori has and we want to repeat the analysis that we did in 2010 that looks at these issues. And we'll -- stay tuned to our website and we'll be letting you know more about that.

Tricia Haley: And if you are in Wisconsin and know the name of that report, feel free to chat it in. And if you are the non-LA program that Lea was referring to, feel free to chat that in a well.

Have you all looked at the difference of unionized teachers versus non-unionized teachers and has statewide collective bargaining -- has statewide collective bargaining helped improve wages?

Deborah Phillips: Going back to the original staffing study, there what -- we did ask a question about unionization, and we actually did find that programs that unionized paid higher wages. We don't have the data there to answer that question. Although my understanding is that the National Survey of Early Care and Education does actually have questions about unionization so I think that analysis will be forthcoming at some point. We'll be able to look at that question.

Marcy Whitebook: Yeah. And I think that there was a question as well about children in after-school programs and I, again, believe that the national survey has questions -- I mean they get all of the ages of the children that are served in these programs, both home and center-based actually. So that survey is a real goldmine of current data on the landscape of all different forms of childcare for all different ages of children. So information on that will be forthcoming for sure.

Tricia Haley: Great. So someone commented that, "It's great to recommend Head Start programs aligned with CE but when the vast majority of childcare teachers are employed in small, non-subsidized settings, how do they make headway? If the center tries to pay them better than other centers they tend to be priced out of the market."

Everyone here is nodding in agreement and a little bit of puzzlement.

Deborah Phillips: I mean, I think that is fundamentally the problem. The way we've structured early childhood programs in our country is that we're relying primarily on parent fees and that if you look at why the Department of Defense program is successful is the link was broken between parent fees and the qualifications and pay of the staff. And so it's not that parents don't pay. They're on a sliding scale. I think, if I have this right, they don't pay more than 10 percent, right?

Marcy Whitebook: Uh, it might be 15. It's not much.

Deborah Phillips: You know, they pay a portion of their income based on what they can afford, much as -- sort of healthcare is for people who are using the exchanges. So I think that we need to figure out a way to break that link because as long as you're -- and whoever sent in that question, you're right. The majority of people are not touched by the initiatives that do anything to address salaries. I mean, public pre-K teachers, it's expanding, but it's like 6 percent of the workforce are working in those programs. And we know there are a lot of military childcare programs but it doesn't touch everybody.

And you know, Head Start similarly. I think it is time to say we are done our best trying to improve and deliver quality and we've made great strides in the field over the last 25 years. And I am just amazed at the number of people who have gone back to school and gotten their education. How many people have really worked the thing through figuring out what are the components of quality. And we can't deliver it on a pittance for the people doing the work and we can't do it on the backs of parents.

And so I think it really is time to say -- and I know people are tired of me saying this because I've been saying it for years -- but we need to find a better way and it's really time to have that conversation.

Tricia Haley: So sort of speaking actually of the training and education increase, "While requirements for training and education have increased dramatically since 1979, there are also opportunities to access free education scholarships. However, we're finding that teachers move to other fields when they have achieved higher degrees. Did you find the same in your study?"

Deborah Phillips: Sorry. I just lost my train of thought.

Marcy Whitebook: Well, while you're catching your train of thought Debra, I will just say that the name of the Wisconsin report is "Starting Early, Starting Now: Investing in Teachers to Grow Childcare Quality" and you can get it at WisconsinEarlyChildhood.org.

Deborah Phillips: And we'll send out the link at the end of the webinar. And somebody else who would like the link to the National Survey of Early Care and Education, which is the survey I've been referring to with the 2012 data set.

Yeah. So the question is moving to other fields when they've achieved higher degrees. I mean, absolutely. And again, you know, part of what the military has done, in addition to kind of unblinking parent fees and teacher wages, is that they have put all childcare and early education teachers on the military wage scale.

And everybody in the military is rewarded similarly for their education and their experience and their qualification. So there's no incentive for a pre-K teacher in the military to become an elementary school teacher. And the same is true in the states with these pre-K programs where they're put teachers on the same wage scale as K-12 teachers. In virtually any other circumstance, there is a huge incentive to leave childcare work to go to other jobs. So yes, that happens.

In the report that we have -- that we've been talking about today, we don't have that longitudinal data that you're asking for, but other people -- Marcy and her colleagues have looked at that in other areas.

Tricia Haley: So being cognizant of time, I will mention one thing, I will ask one more question, and then I will turn it back over the Marcia to wrap up. Someone else did mention that Pennsylvania does have an education and retention award that is linked to the career lattice that is linked to the QRIS and ranges from \$600 to \$4,120. So feel free to talk with your colleagues in Pennsylvania about that.

Our last question is -- oh, hold on, we're discussing what our last question is. [pause] All right. The decision is that we're going to do both.

So we'll start with, "Do you know what the average turnover of childcare teachers is in profit versus nonprofit?"

Deborah Phillips: Right. So I can do that one quickly. Because we have that table in the report. So when you get the report, go to Table 3.5. It is just as it was in the staffing study and in the profile study 25 years ago, turnover is worse

in the for profit market. But we have that all broken out in the table. We have a little bit of data from Head Start on why people leave and about a third of those mention compensation in the Head Start data.

Marcy Whitebook: And then --

Deborah Phillips: No. By all means. Go ahead.

Marcy Whitebook: I mean, this is an older study that we did of what we call infrastructure organizations in California a few years ago. These were things like art resource and referral agencies, our First Five organizations, our childcare planning councils, and we wanted to figure out who was doing those jobs and whether or not they'd been teachers. And I don't have the exact numbers but one of the things we found was that many, many, many of the people who were working those organizations were former early childhood teachers. And when we asked why were you doing this work now instead of other work, it was because of the wages.

We don't do enough of that longitudinal data, and I think that's part of why we have that recommendation that we should be looking -- we've kind of - - we've not just disconnected getting people educated and qualified from paying them more, but when we do research we really don't look at how much money we're investing into professional development and education and then what's happening to people's career trajectories.

I think TEACH is really the only place where you see those data. And they do a really good job of where there is compensation linked then you see people staying in. But we do have this exodus and we also have this situation where, the way the job is paid, it is not a big selling point for recent college graduates to come do the work.

Tricia Haley: So before I ask our last question, I will let you know we did not get to all the questions. But we will make sure that we send the full list to Marcy, Deborah, Lea, and actually Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda Smith and Shannon Rudisill so that they at least know what questions are out in the field.

And we will end with this question. "Is there a strong correlation between compensation and quality of care and student's future success?"

Deborah Phillips: Yes.

Tricia Haley: Well, thanks for coming, everyone.

Deborah Phillips: There are a couple studies, including some reanalysis of the original Staffing Study data, that have kind of put everything in the bucket and

looked at what is the strongest predictor of the quality of the environment for the children and wages pop up at the top.

Marcy Whitebook: Always.

Deborah Phillips: But now I think we know why. And I think Marcy's data on economic stress and reliance on public assistance, where there is some data on depression among childcare workers and we know that stress and depression make it very difficult for adults to do the incredible complex work of taking care of young children, whether they're mothers or childcare teachers or whoever. Because it truly is rocket science and you have to be on top of your game every nanosecond.

And what happens is the interactions become more sporadic, less dependent on what the kids are doing, the children begin to feel -- they get more intrusive, they get more withdrawn -- the teachers do when they're stressed and depressed, just like mothers. And we've now linked that kind of intrusive, insensitive care giving in childcare to elevated stress hormones in children, to greater anxiety and vigilance in their behavior, to compromised immune functioning in children, and parent reports of their children having more infections.

So we can no longer pretend that we don't know why wages matter for children. We're seeing some very distressing outcomes in children in situations where teachers are stressed.

Marcy Whitebook: And I want to just add one other thing, is that we used to say when the first study came out is that good things went together in early childhood, when you had higher wages, you had better training, you had better work environments. Well bad things go together too in early childhood too. So the lower the wages, you also have less support. It's not just that the reward is lower, but you also tend to you people who have less skill and knowledge about doing the work and you have less supports on the job to help people engage in professional practice. You don't have enough staff, you don't have enough time to provide individualized attention to children, you don't have time to take breaks; you don't necessarily have enough equipment.

And it goes on and on and so I think that it's a complex story. I just want to end on a slightly positive note which is that we know this matters and also just that our hats are off to people who do this work every day, because even up against these conditions people manage overall to really attend the children and facilitate their learning, but at a tremendous cost to themselves and to their own families.

And I think it's important that we really say we need more for people so that they can do what they do and really be able to focus on it without so much stress for themselves.

Marsha Basloe: On behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, we really want to thank Marcy and Lea and Deborah, and Tricia, for putting together the webinar today. For enormously important information and we do know this matters now Marcy. We will be sending out the link to the report so that you can get a copy of the report. We will also be sending out the link to the Wisconsin report.

We thank you for your questions. Please send them in and we will share them. And we need to keep this conversation going, so if you have some comments that you would like to submit, the Office of Childcare, the Office of Early Childhood Development, and the Office of Head Start are open to hearing your comments.

And they can also send -- Marcy.

Marcy Whitebook: Well, not me personally, but let's enter our website and we --

Marsha Basloe: And we'll be happy to share some of those --

Marcy Whitebook: -- we will make sure that we'll share them around and make sure you get your answers.

Marsha Basloe: Thank you for joining the webinar. We look forward to bringing you future webinars on the workforce.