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Survey home: <https://www.naeyc.org/ece-workforce-surveys>

NAEYC Survey Shows Child Care in ‘Unsustainable Status Quo’

~ More than 10,000 child care providers ring alarm bells for American families, economy on rising costs, burnout, and closures ~

WASHINGTON (February 25, 2025)—A [new survey](#) by the [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#) (NAEYC) of more than 10,000 early childhood educators across the country illustrates how insufficient public investment in our early childhood education system burdens educators across all settings and the families they serve; and how it threatens to further reduce an already insufficient supply of quality child care and early learning programs.

The survey, NAEYC’s 10th since 2020, shows that:

- It’s increasingly expensive to run child care and early learning programs.
- When public dollars dry up, and costs continue to rise, programs are forced to raise tuition or close.
- Families need child care, but can’t afford rising costs.
- Educators want to work, but can’t afford to accept low wages.
- Educators who do stay are facing increased burnout.
- Respondents know of more child care programs that are closing than are opening.

“Families can’t afford to pay more, and educators can’t afford to earn less,” said Michelle Kang, NAEYC CEO. “As costs rise, more early childhood educators will leave the field, and more programs will shut down—deeply impacting communities and threatening the stability of our economy.”

The survey’s key findings are in alignment with previous surveys and include:

- Among program administrators who responded to the survey, 32% reported paying more for rent, 45% reported paying more for property insurance, and 46% reported paying more for liability insurance.
- The rising cost of insurance was significantly more challenging for respondents working in family child care programs, with 50% reporting paying more for liability insurance and 62% reporting paying more for property insurance.
- More than half of program administrators (55%) overall reported they had to raise tuition in the last year.
- At the same time 55% of program administrators indicated they were underenrolled relative to their preferred capacity, with the top reasons being that parents can’t afford

to enroll their children (41%), compensation is too low to recruit and retain enough qualified staff (37%), and they don't have enough staff (36%). A lack of demand for services was the least often selected reason (7%) for under-enrollment

Furthermore, among all survey respondents:

- 47% reported that their sense of burnout had worsened in the last year, especially from low wages, the physical and mental demands of the job, and insufficient resources to deal with children's developmental and behavioral challenges.
- 26% reported they were considering leaving the ECE field in the next year, but would stay with higher wages (60%), more support addressing children's behavioral challenges (30%), and more respect (20%).
- 56% were aware of at least one program closing in their community in the last year, and 9% were aware of 4 or more programs closing.

The survey, conducted in January 2025, included early childhood educators from all states and settings, including faith-based programs, family child care homes, Head Starts, and child care centers.

In its policy brief on the survey, NAEYC notes that Congress is considering major budget legislation that could lead to harmful cuts that exacerbate the challenges families and educators face. Instead, NAEYC advocates that Congress invest in programs and supports that build up our supply of quality child care, raise educator wages, and help families afford the care they need.

The full NAEYC survey brief and methodology can be found at www.naeyc.org/ece-workforce-surveys.

About NAEYC

[The National Association for the Education of Young Children](http://www.naeyc.org) (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. The association comprises nearly 60,000 individual members of the early childhood community and more than 50 Affiliates, all committed to delivering on the promise of high-quality early learning. Together, we work to achieve a collective vision: that all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.

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