



**NAFCC**  
National Association for Family Child Care

# 2023-2024 ANNUAL SURVEY FACT SHEET

[www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org)



## Executive Summary

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) recently conducted its 2023-24 survey, providing critical insights into the financial landscape and challenges faced by early childhood educators across the United States. The survey highlights the prevalence of educators in roles directly related to childcare and the significant financial hardships they encounter.

- Financial challenges, including low compensation, have emerged as primary concerns for early childhood educators. Despite often having similar credentials and expertise to center-based & K-12 educators, FCC educators reported earning significantly lower wages, with over 30% struggling to cover basic expenses. The survey also shed light on the impact of subsidy programs like the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) on alleviating food costs for early childhood programs but noted challenges with insufficient reimbursement levels.
- Family child care educators, in particular, face substantial financial hardships, often working long hours for modest wages that fail to support retirement planning or cover basic living expenses. Educators emphasized the need for living wages, retirement plans, and affordable healthcare options to sustain their profession effectively.

By amplifying educator voices, collaborating with research institutions, and conducting annual surveys, NAFCC remains committed to advancing policy initiatives that support the sustainability and growth of the early childhood education field. NAFCC's ongoing efforts aim to address the systemic challenges faced by early childhood educators, ensuring that they receive the compensation, benefits, and support they need to provide high-quality care and education to children and families nationwide.

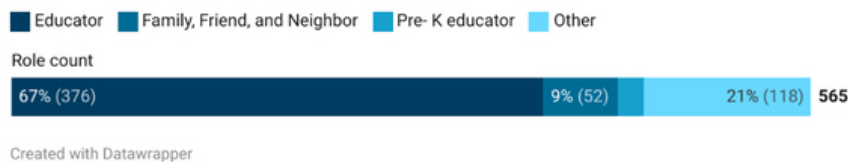


## Fact Sheet/For Immediate Release

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) is a nationwide non-profit organization dedicated to promoting high-quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care for nearly one million paid home-based early learning programs. The 2023-24 NAFCC survey, launched at the NAFCC annual conference, provides a real-time snapshot into the financial landscape of ECE educators across 48 U.S. states and one Canadian territory. Of the 565 respondents:

- 87% identified English as their primary language,
- followed by 12% for Spanish,
- The remaining 1% collectively reported Arabic, Cantonese, Hindi, or Mandarin as their primary language.

### Roles of Respondents



Additionally, of the 565 respondents:

- Nearly 70% are currently in educator roles,
- About 20% are in other roles,
- And 9% are family, friends and neighbors.

The 2023-24 survey revealed benefits like compensation, retirement, healthcare, and navigating state and federal regulations as the most pressing challenges identified by early childhood educators. **Surveyed educators reported earning an average hourly wage of \$13.66 per hour; 50% less than the estimated \$29-31 hourly salaries of K-12 educators**, despite many having similar credentials and expertise. FCC educators participating in NAFCC's leadership and quality programs (accreditation) reported earning \$14.40 per hour. More than 30% of educators stated their income does not allow them to cover expenses like rent, utilities, and supplies.

## Program Profile

|                                   | Family child care program | Group family child care program | Friend, Family, and Neighbor |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Av. # of FULL time children       | 7                         | 10                              | 5                            |
| Av. # of PART time children       | 3                         | 4                               | 3                            |
| Av. hourly income                 | \$14.16                   | \$15.36                         | \$13.71                      |
| Av. hours per week                | 56                        | 57                              | 47                           |
| WEEKLY fee collection             | 63%                       | 56%                             | 43%                          |
| MONTHLY fee collection            | 11%                       | 13%                             | 14%                          |
| Does not collect fees pre service | 22%                       | 24%                             | 43%                          |
| Did not answer                    | 4%                        | 7%                              |                              |

*n=310*

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## Income, Benefits, Retirement, and Subsidies

The annual survey highlighted previous policy initiatives focused on subsidy programs like Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) have made a significant impact. Approximately 80% of respondents are benefiting from food assistance in their early childhood programs.

Though the CACFP program has helped reduce food costs for early childhood programs, educators observed that soaring food prices and insufficient reimbursement levels do not match actual food and operating costs. One educator remarked in the 2023-24 survey, **"We need CACFP reimbursements that cover the full cost of every meal and snack given to young students."**

### Is your program currently accepting CACFP?

■ Yes ■ No ■ N/A



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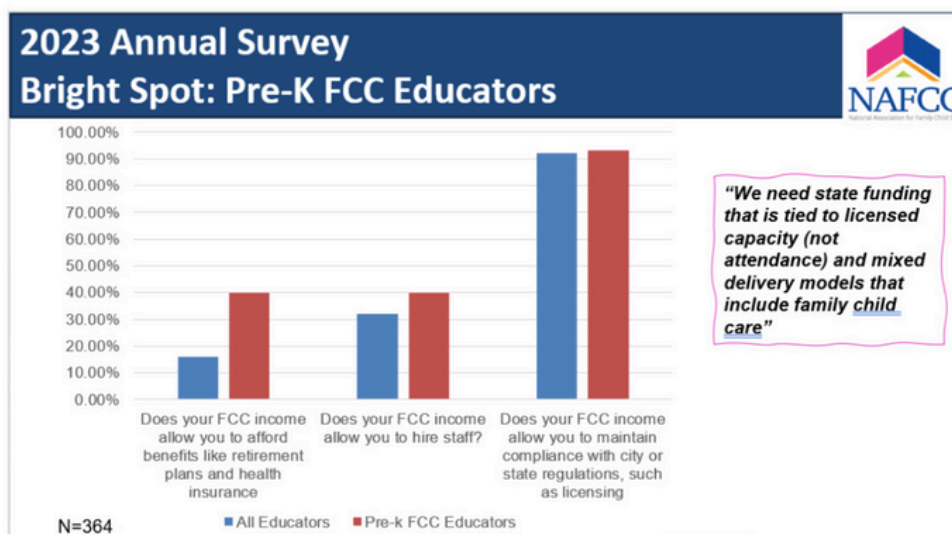
Educators expressed fluctuating attendance, reliance on family fee payments, and delays in receiving already inadequate state subsidies collectively contribute to major financial hardships.

On average, educators who own family child care programs reported working 56 hours per week educating 7 full-time and 3 part-time children. **Their average hourly rate was only \$14.16.** While 63% of educators reported collecting fees before providing services, over one-third must wait until the end of the week or month to receive payments.

Educators owning group family child care programs face similar challenges, working 57 hours per week while educating an average of 10 full-time and 4 part-time children. Their average hourly rate was slightly higher at \$15.36. These modest wages fail to enable most providers to contribute meaningfully to retirement accounts after covering basic living expenses.

As one educator stated in the 2023-24 survey, "Childcare professionals need a living wage, retirement, and affordable health care plans to take care of ourselves." Educator suggestions focused on allocating parts of existing childcare subsidies towards automated retirement contributions and developing retirement planning resources tailored to home-based childcare educators.

Educators also strongly suggested incorporating home-based programs in Universal Pre-K as another path to compensation equity. Regarding policy challenges, one educator commented on wanting "state funding that is tied to licensed capacity (not attendance) and mixed delivery models that include family child care not just FCCHNs."



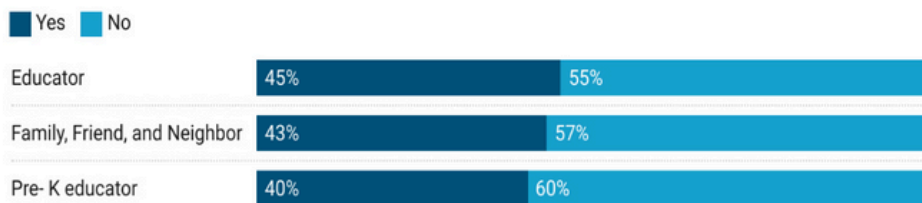


## Advocacy

The survey suggests that NAFCC has an engaged group of advocates with more than 25% of survey respondents having visited state or federal lawmakers regarding early childhood priorities and 45% reported participating in childcare-related advocacy.

Additionally, 53% expressed a desire for further training on policy and advocacy engagement. Educators expressed compensation, retirement, health insurance and an increase in pay for children participating in their state subsidy program as a launching point to begin a comprehensive advocacy campaign.

### Have you participated in any advocacy activities to support family child care?



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