

## What are the benefits of WAGES?

The program:

- Rewards child care practitioners within programs
- Rewards education attained
- Maintains marketplace competition for better salaries
- Keeps costs for quality early child care programs affordable for parents
- Assists with the creation of a stable, well-educated and fairly-compensated workforce
- Provides a direct, graduated supplement that is logical and sufficient
- Provides counseling and administrative support

## Who benefits from WAGES?

- Children benefit because they receive uninterrupted care from practitioners who are specialists in the early childhood field, who thoroughly understand early childhood development and who are sensitive to their needs.
- Child care practitioners benefit because they achieve higher levels of education and are better compensated for their work.
- Child care programs benefit because they have staff members who are knowledgeable about positive child development practices and stay longer in their programs.

## Who is Eligible?\*

The program provides services to those child care practitioners who:

- Work in a county that is participating in the Child Care WAGES® FLORIDA Project
- Work in a licensed or license-exempt child care program (center or home)
- Are continuously employed at the same child care program for a minimum of six months
- Work at least 10 hours per week with children ages birth - five (supplements will be prorated based on a 40-hour work week)
- Have a formal child care credential and/or some education beyond a high school diploma
- Earn less than \$17.50 per hour as a child care professional.

*\*Individual county requirements may differ.*

## How Do I Apply?

In order to participate in the project, interested child care practitioners must submit an application. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. To apply:

- Fill out an application
- Provide verification of hourly wage and current employment in a participating county
- Provide verification of educational credentials (see checklist on application)

You can request an application by calling the Child Care WAGES® FLORIDA Project at (888) 352-4453 or by visiting our website at:

[www.wages-fl.com](http://www.wages-fl.com)

## Child Care WAGES® FLORIDA Project Supplement Scale

Level	Teachers, Assistant Teachers, and Family Child Care Providers	Annual Supplement
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor Degree plus or including at least 24 credits in ECE or CD</li> <li>• Bachelor Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• Masters Degree plus or including at least 18 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> </ul>	\$3,000
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor Degree plus or including at least 18 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 90 credit hours toward a Bachelor Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 90 credit hours of well-rounded coursework plus or including at least 15 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> </ul>	\$2,250
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Degree plus or including at least 24 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• Associate Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• Bachelor or Masters Degree out of field</li> </ul>	\$1,500
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Degree plus or including at least 12 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 45 credit hours toward an Associate Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 45 credit hours of well-rounded coursework plus at least 15 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> </ul>	\$1,125
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Degree out of field</li> <li>• At least 70 credit hours of well-rounded coursework ("C" or above a 2.0 GPA)</li> <li>• 36 credit hours toward an Associate Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 36 credit hours of well-rounded coursework plus at least 12 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 36 credit hours of well-rounded coursework plus a Director Credential and Florida Staff Credential<sup>†</sup></li> </ul>	\$750
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 credit hours toward an Associate Degree in ECE or CD</li> <li>• 24 credit hours of well-rounded coursework plus at least 12 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> </ul>	\$600
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• National CDA</li> <li>• Director Credential plus Florida Staff Credential<sup>†</sup></li> </ul>	\$450
1*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 credit hours in ECE or CD</li> <li>• Florida Staff Credential<sup>†</sup></li> </ul>	\$200

All education awarded as Early Childhood Education or Child Development must be focused on children ages birth - five; documentation is required.

\* Funding for Level 1 on the scale is temporary. Practitioners awarded at Level 1 must obtain Level 2 within two years in order to retain eligibility. Family child care providers must reach Level 2 within three years for continued funding. Please contact the Child Care WAGES® FLORIDA Project with any questions regarding this policy.

<sup>†</sup> Florida Staff Credential was formerly known as the CDA-E.

**CDA:** Child Development Associate • **ECE:** Early Childhood Education • **CD:** Child Development

[www.wages-fl.com](http://www.wages-fl.com)



## The Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> FLORIDA Project

**Rewards education attained:** Supplement award amounts are based on the level of education an individual has already attained. As participants earn higher education, they are eligible for increased supplement award amounts.

**Rewards retention:** Supplements are disbursed in six-month increments, after the recipient has spent a continuous six-month period in the same child care program.

**Maintains marketplace competition for better salaries:** Supplements vary based only on education attained, not on wages earned.



**Does not increase costs to parents:**

Because funding for this project comes from external sources and goes directly to individual child care practitioners, families can have the benefit of better-educated practitioners without having to pay additional fees out of their own pockets.

**Integrates with other education and compensation initiatives:**

Participants in WAGE\$ can increase their supplement amounts by gaining more education. Because scholarship programs such as the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> Scholarship Program offer tuition assistance to earn college credits toward early childhood credentials or degrees, participation in both programs can help practitioners move up the supplement scale while receiving assistance with tuition costs.

**Provides a direct, graduated supplement that is logical and sufficient:**

Supplements reward an individual's professional development efforts regardless of the work environment and addresses low wages without affecting budgets, regular wages or parent fees. Award amounts are sufficient to make a difference, and the scale levels represent logical progression within educational systems.



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[www.thechildrensforum.com](http://www.thechildrensforum.com)

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*Sponsored by the Children's Forum, Inc., The Children's Trust, Palm Beach State College, Children's Services Council of Palm Beach, Early Learning Coalition of Broward County Inc., Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc., Agency for Workforce Innovation/Office of Early Learning and the State of Florida.*

## Program Overview

- The Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> FLORIDA Project is an education-based salary supplement program designed to increase compensation, retention and education.
- The Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> FLORIDA Project is licensed by Child Care Services Association of Chapel Hill, NC. The Children's Forum is the program administrator of WAGE\$ under contracts with local early learning coalitions and private contributors.
- The WAGE\$ program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid early care and education practitioners working with young children. WAGE\$ supplements are paid directly to the child care practitioners on a biannual basis.
- It is the goal of the program to offer WAGE\$ supplements on an ongoing basis subject to funding.
- The program is NOT funded by child care programs or employers.
- WAGE\$ supplements are NOT to be considered bonuses or stipends to replace employee raises.
- There are NO requirements as to how WAGE\$ supplements are used by the child care practitioners.
- Local early learning coalitions or children's services councils may choose to fund all or part of the WAGE\$ supplement scale **based on the availability of funding.**
- Participants must remain in the same child care program in order to remain eligible for the biannual WAGE\$ supplements. If a participant changes employment, she/he must reapply to the WAGE\$ program.

**Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup>  
FLORIDA Project**