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NEWS RELEASE

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REPORT REVEALS STATE of the EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE in MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

TALLAHASSEE, FL (January 18, 2011) In an effort to answer the needs of the early childhood workforce in Miami-Dade and improve the quality of care in early childhood settings, The Children's Trust and the Children's Forum have released a Quality Counts Initiative report.

The report was based on 2 ½ years of research of the Quality Counts program in Miami-Dade County, which provided professional development opportunities for child care providers through career advising, monetary incentives for obtaining college degrees and/or credentials in the early care and education field, and an electronic database of professional development data and resources.

“The professional development of Quality Counts participants has significantly improved since their entry into the program,” said Jesse Leinfelder, Administrator of the Quality Counts program at The Children's Trust. “In addition to increasing the education, compensation and retention of child care providers, professional development experiences also enhance the quality of care for Florida's youngest children which lead to positive outcomes in school and in life.”

Notable findings of the Quality Counts report include:

- Nearly 20 percent of participants received formal degrees in child development or early education
- More than half of those who did not have formal credentials when they initially began the program now possess a Florida Staff Credential
- Turnover rates among participants at their place of employment ranged from 8 to 26 percent which is well below the national turnover average of 30 to 40 percent.

The Quality Counts report represents about 37 percent of the total Miami-Dade County early care and education workforce. The workforce included in the study is primarily female and has relatively low education levels and wages.

“The exciting part about these results is that progress is being made in the education and retention of teachers which positively benefits young children in early childhood classrooms throughout Miami-Dade County,” commented Phyllis Kalifeh, President of the Children’s Forum in Tallahassee. “The result is that children will be more equipped to succeed in school and that is due, in part, to teachers who know how to provide more appropriate early learning experiences for them.”

To download a copy of the Quality Counts report, visit

<http://www.thechildrensforum.com/downloads/publications/QCCC%20Workforce%20Study.pdf>. For more information, contact Jesse Leinfelder at 305-571-5700 or jesse.leinfelder@thechildrenstrust.org

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