

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program

(Teacher Education and Compensation Helps)

www.thechildrensforum.com/TEACH



Issue

- Staff turnover in early care and education (ECE) programs leads to disruptions in teaching and learning and instability for children and their families; the national average turnover rate is 31%.
- Early childhood educators often remain at the minimum mandated entry levels of training.
- Early childhood educators typically receive low wages/compensation and often have little incentive to continue their training and education.

Response

- The Children's Forum has been the statewide licensee for the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program since 1998.
- Funded through the Florida Office of Early Learning, T.E.A.C.H. links training, compensation, and commitment to improving the quality of early care and educational experiences for young children and their families.
- T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships for early childhood teachers and facility directors to work toward a Bachelor degree or Associate degree in early childhood education, a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, a Florida Staff Credential, a Director Credential, and credential renewals.
- T.E.A.C.H. involves a three-way partnership for the sharing of expenses by the scholar, the sponsoring child care center or family child care home, and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program.
- Upon completion of a scholarship contract, participants receive a financial bonus or hourly wage increase.

Accomplishments

- Since 1998, 44,984 scholarships have been awarded to over 29,000 scholars in the state.
- In 2015-2016, 3,780 scholarships were awarded, representing an expenditure of \$4.5 million.
- The T.E.A.C.H. program secured state funding to begin awarding Bachelor degree scholarships in July 2015.
- The turnover rate for T.E.A.C.H. scholarship participants is less than 6%.
- According to annual survey results, 99% of participants would recommend T.E.A.C.H. to others in the field.

Importance

- Increased income for well-trained early childhood educators promotes the professionalism of the field by providing a living wage, reducing turnover, and attracting qualified educators.
- Reduced turnover means children and families have consistent opportunities to build relationships with their early childhood educators and create stable learning environments throughout the child's early years of development.
- Increasing the number of early childhood educators and directors in the workforce who hold higher credentials leads to higher-quality learning environments and improved school readiness opportunities for children.

...because kids can't wait

"The T.E.A.C.H. program is an excellent program that is helping many early childhood educators get a better education in order to better serve the children in their communities. I am very thankful for the opportunity that T.E.A.C.H. and the child care center has given me to get my AS degree in Early Childhood Education. I would not have been able to go back to school without this scholarship."

—T.E.A.C.H. Scholar

