

Early learning professionals in Washington



 Washington State Department of
Early Learning



2013 work force report



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Introduction

As our state continues to enhance quality in early learning settings through Early Achievers—our state’s quality rating and improvement system—we need to know more about our early learning work force so that we can effectively support these professionals in offering high-quality care. With limited resources, we need to target scholarships, coaching and other supports.

This is the Department of Early Learning’s (DEL) first annual work force report. It includes data from our state early learning professional development registry (the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool, or MERIT) for professionals working in licensed family home child care and licensed centers in calendar year 2013. DEL used funding from our Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant to enhance MERIT and gather and analyze these data.

This report does not include information about employees in state or federally funded preschool settings. Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Head Start employees were not required to enter their employment information in MERIT during 2013, but will be included in future work force reports.



About Washington's active licensed work force

More than 46,000 people worked in licensed child care settings around Washington in 2013. Of those, 29,066 reported working in child care centers, and 14,142 reported working in a family home child care. The median average for centers was 14 employees and the median average for family homes was three employees.

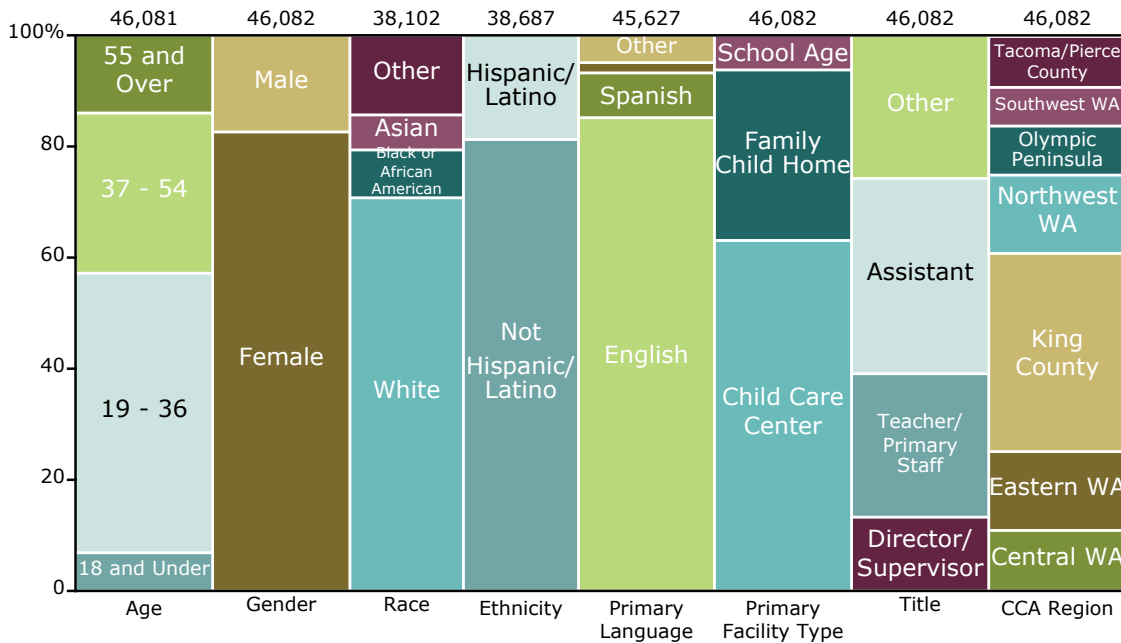
Early learning professionals in licensed child care settings are broken down into four categories that cover the various job titles in the field:

- Director/supervisor
- Teacher/primary staff
- Assistant
- Other

Job titles used in the field	Classification for this report
Owner Child care center director School-age program director Child care center assistant director School-age assistant director School-age site coordinator Child care center program supervisor Family child care licensee	Director/supervisor
Child care center lead teacher School-age lead staff or group leader Family child care provider Family child care staff Family child care primary worker	Teacher/primary staff
Child care center assistant or aide Family child care assistant School-age child care assistant	Assistant
Volunteer Family child care household member	Other

Overall, the work force is primarily younger, white, female employees; however, key differences exist in the work force by position. While females are distributed across job titles, men are more concentrated in the "other" job title, particularly in family home child care. Child care assistant positions are predominately occupied by younger employees in both child care centers and family child care. Note that with all charts, each column adds to the total number of data points collected, so the width of the columns in the chart helps to give a quick view of which responses had a higher rate of return.

Active licensed work force in 2013

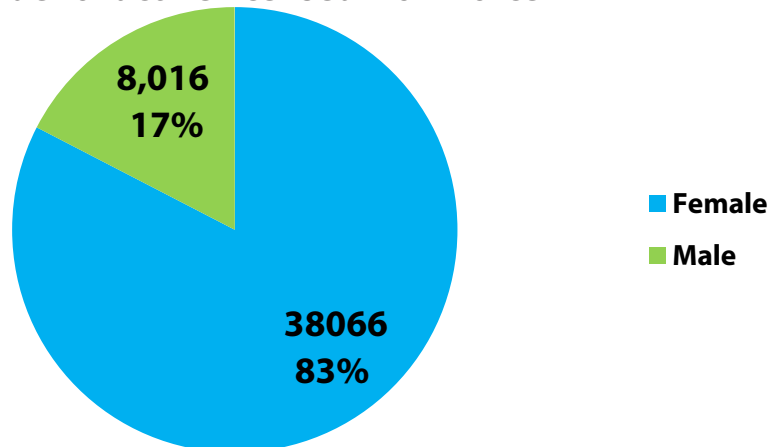


Note: Race and ethnicity are optional fields in MERIT; primary language is only required if an employee signs up for MERIT online. It is not required if an employee creates a MERIT account via mail-in survey.

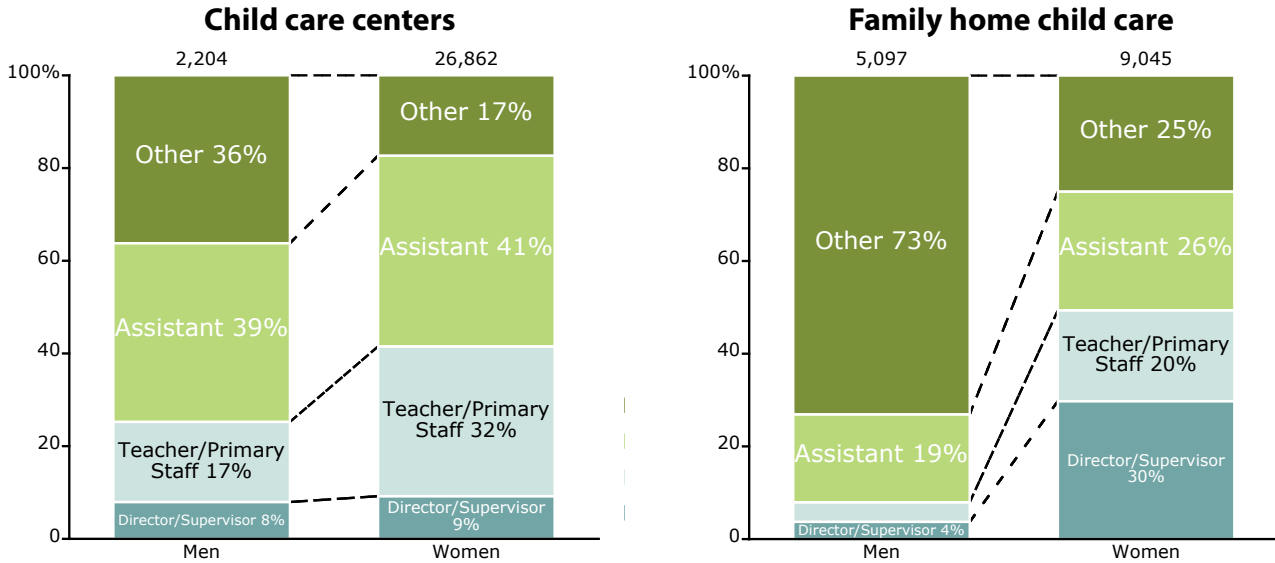
Gender

Across the four job titles that are used, if the professional was a female, the majority identified themselves as assistants and teacher/primary staff. If the professional was male, they most frequently categorized as "other" or assistant. Of the 46,082 active licensed workforce, 38,066 are female and 8,016 are male, with twice as many males serving roles in family home child care programs than in centers.

Gender of active licensed work force



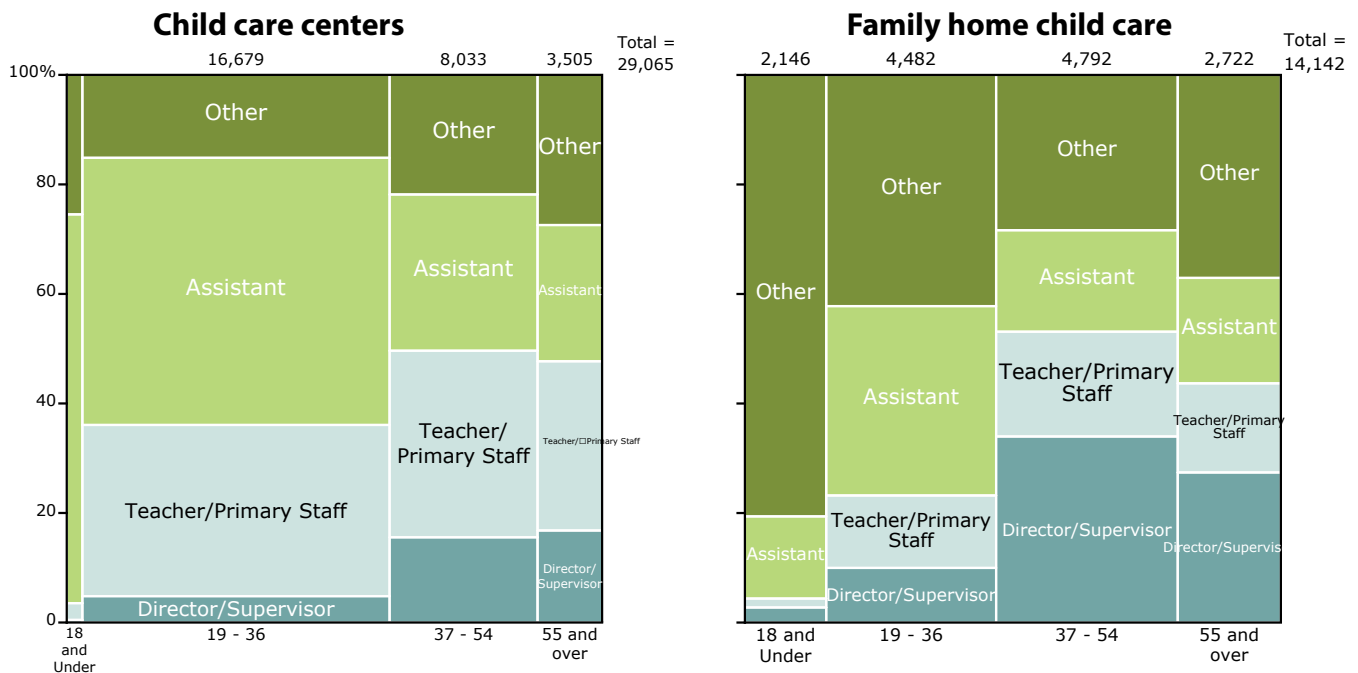
Gender of active licensed work force by facility type



Note: School-age Facility Type (N=2,874) omitted because it is small and not a focus of this analysis.

Age
 The majority of child care employees (57 percent) are under 37 years old. In child care centers, most staff ages 19 to 36 are assistants, while in family homes, staff ages 19 to 36 are split evenly between assistant and other. Overall, 71 percent of assistants are under 37 years old. Teacher/primary staff represent 26 percent of all employees, and 55 percent of those employees are under 37 years old.

Age of active licensed work force by facility type and position



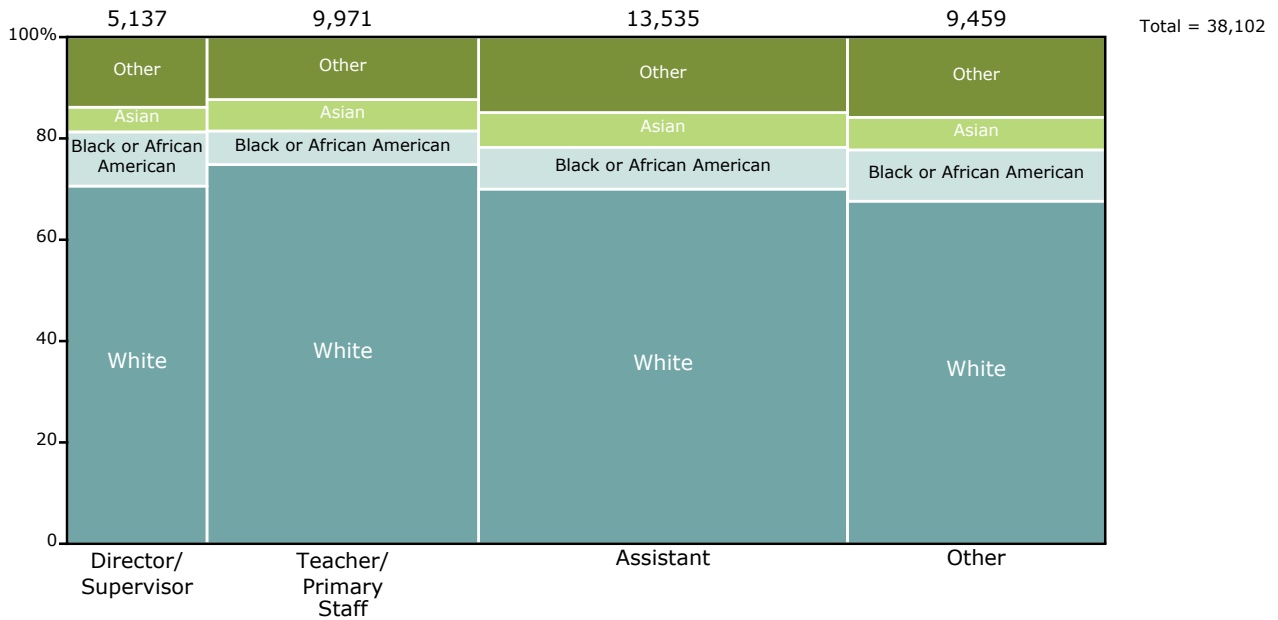
Note: School-age Facility Type (N=2,874) omitted because it is small and not a focus of this analysis.

Race

Race is an optional field in MERIT. DEL collected responses to this field for 38,102 child care workers (as compared to the 46,082 active licensed work force). Although 7,980 did not self-identify their race, this was consistent across all position categories, each having approximately the same proportion of missing values and do not appear to be concentrated within any specific geographic regions.

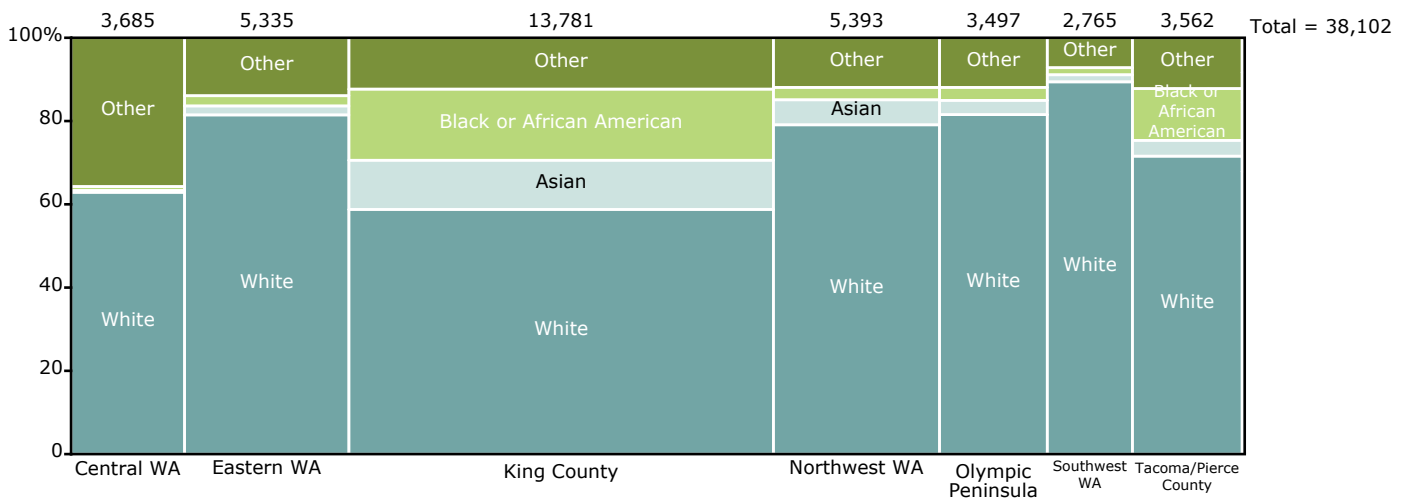
There is a fairly consistent distribution of reported race between positions, with a slight increase in white professionals serving as Teachers/Primary Staff. Throughout the seven Early Achievers regions in Washington, Central Washington and King County employees have more diverse racial composition than the other regions through the state.

Race of active licensed work force by position



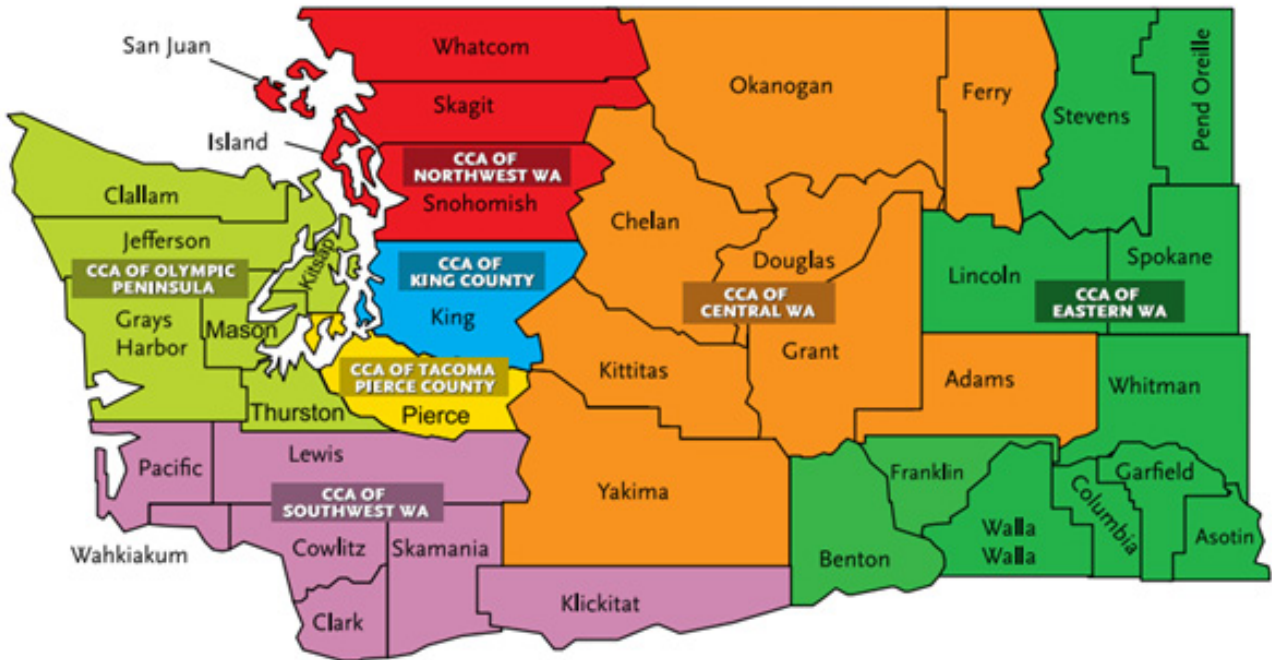
Note: "Other" includes American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and "Other."

Race of active licensed work force by Early Achievers region



Note: "Other" includes American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and "Other."

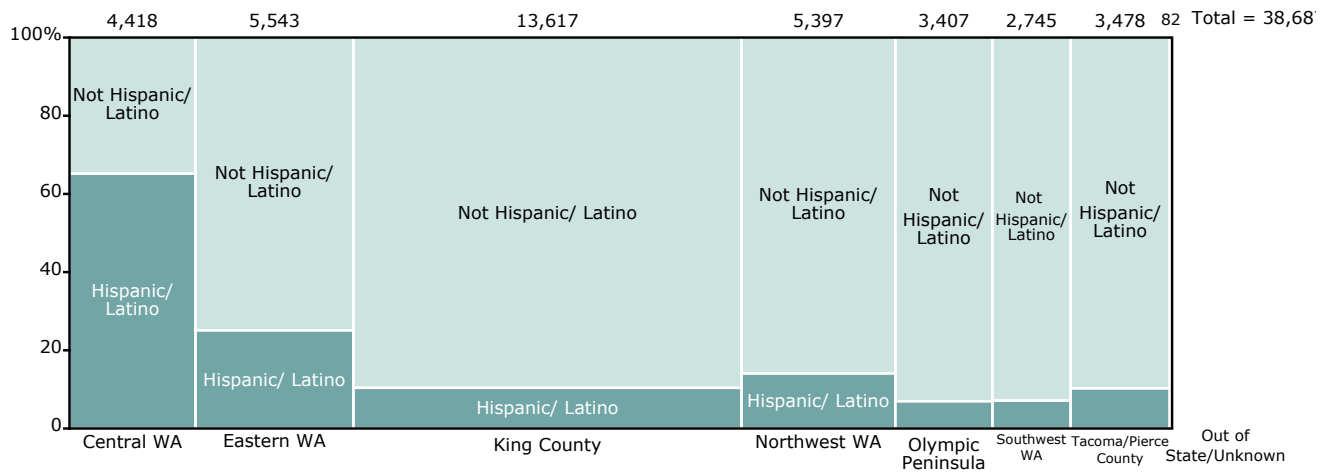
Early Achievers regional map



Ethnicity

The ethnicity of the active licensed workforce is significantly different in central and eastern Washington. In central Washington, 65 percent of the active licensed workforce self-identify as Hispanic and in Eastern Washington, 25 percent self-identify as Hispanic, as compared to the rest of the state at an average of 7 percent Hispanic.

Ethnicity of active licensed work force by Early Achievers region

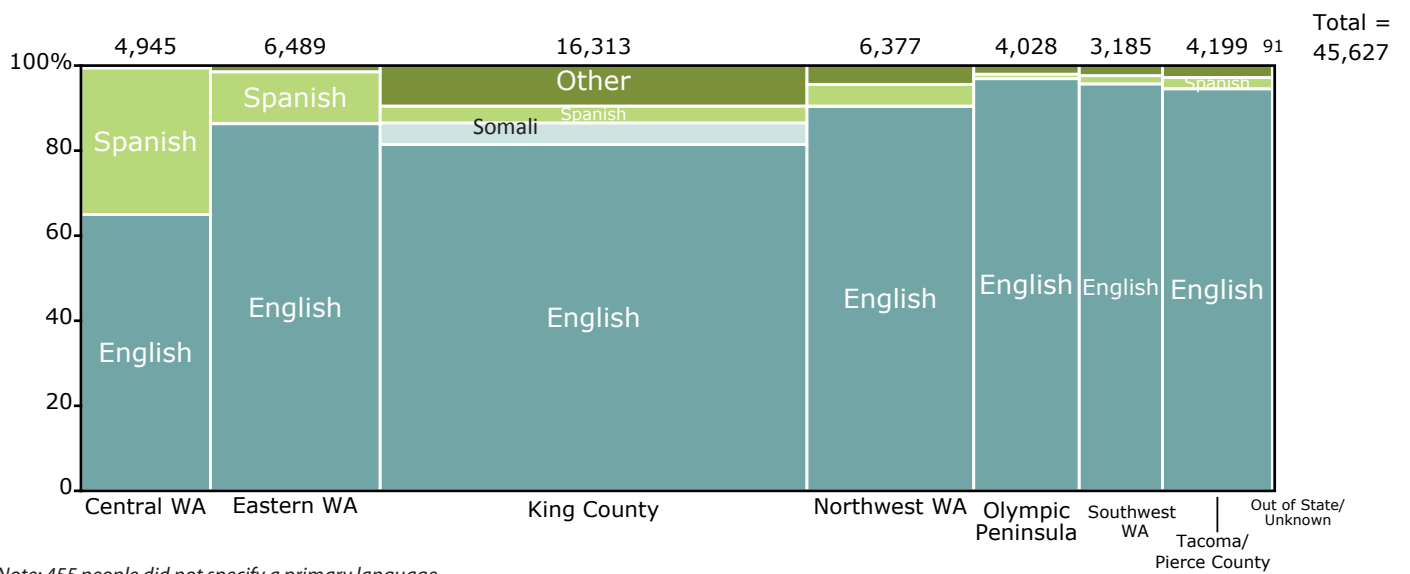


Language

In Central Washington, nearly 40 percent of the work force identified their primary language as a language other than English. In King County, approximately 20 percent identified their primary language as a language other than English.

Although King County has more diversity, they have more professionals with diverse culture who select English as their primary language than any other region, or who selected a different primary language, but still selected English as a secondary language. Central Washington has a comparable number of culturally diverse professionals, with most preferring Spanish as their primary language and very few indicating English as a secondary language.

Language distribution of active licensed work force by Early Achievers region

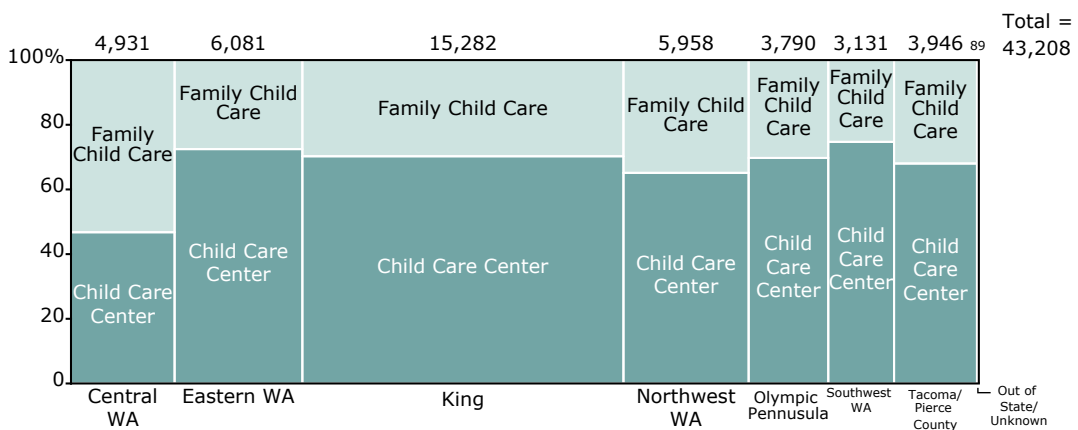


Note: 455 people did not specify a primary language

Distribution of work force across facility types

Half of the active licensed work force in Central Washington operate out of family child care versus on average of 31 percent for the rest of the state. This means there are more early learning professionals working in family child care settings in central Washington (52 percent) versus the number of professionals working in child care centers.

Distribution of active licensed work force in facilities by Early Achievers region



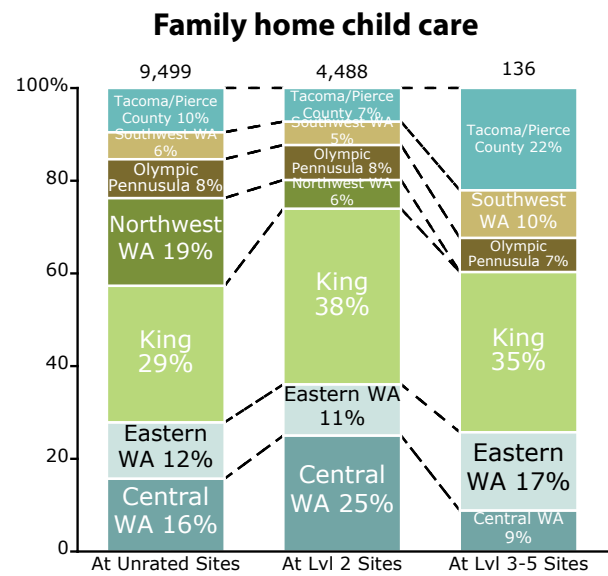
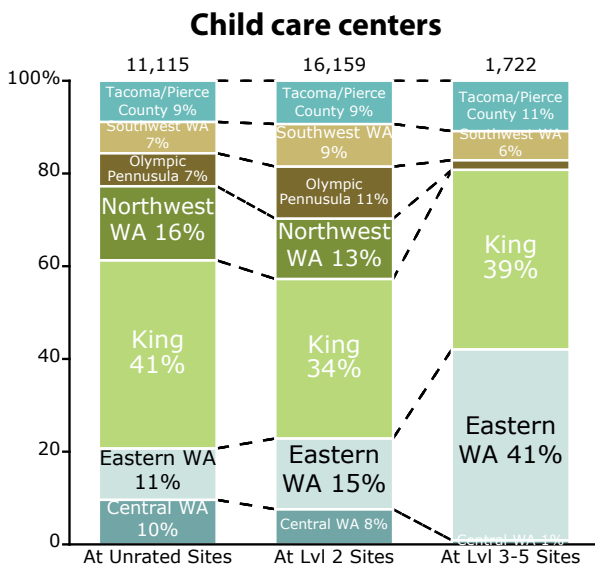
Note: School-age Facility Type (N=2,874) omitted because it is small and not a focus of this analysis.

Distribution of work force in Early Achievers sites

Early Achievers, Washington’s quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), is voluntary for licensed child care providers and helps early learning programs offer high-quality care. About half of the active licensed work force is employed with programs that are enrolled in Early Achievers. Child care centers that participate in Early Achievers have more employees on staff.

Across site type, Early Achievers participants have more assistants and fewer “other” job positions. Nearly all of the staff at sites rated a level 3 through 5 are in the Eastern Washington region or King County.

Distribution of active licensed work force in Early Achievers sites



Professional development for Washington's active licensed work force

Training overview

Those who care for and teach young children need information and resources to support them as professionals. Research shows that increased training and education for early learning professionals relates to higher-quality interactions with and care for children.

Learn more about Washington's professional development system: www.del.wa.gov/requirements/professional/Default.aspx

Our state's early learning professional development system helps those caring for and teaching young children to:

- Understand what they need to know and do when caring for children.
- Manage their training and education record.
- Find training and education opportunities to help them move forward in their career.
- Find resources and financial support for individual professional development.

MERIT is the online tool that professionals use to accomplish these goals.

Those employed in licensed child care must take initial training and annual continuing education. Initial training for early learning professionals is the Child Care Basics course, a 30-hour training that incorporates information about health, safety and brain development, and serves as an introduction to the early learning field. Annual continuing education is taken to meet the 10-hour requirement for ongoing training and can be completed in a variety of topics and settings. These are commonly referred to as "STARS hours." Early Achievers participants have additional training.

Training type	Description
Initial training requirement: Child Care Basics	The initial training requirement for licensed child care work force
Annual continuing education	Required 10 hours of continuing education every year after first year of employment
Early Achievers training	Training required of those who join our state's quality rating and improvement system
Conference session/special event training	Events held in-person

2013 training

According to 2013 MERIT data, training is typically delivered in a classroom (in-person) environment, and the largest proportion of training is dedicated to fulfilling annual continuing education requirements. The data includes training that was offered as part of Early Achievers and also as a conference/special event.

Consumption of training can be measured by number of participants or by the total hours awarded, but both methods yield similar results. The volume of training class attendance is not seasonal and appears to be fairly consistent throughout the year.

In 2013:

- 99,628 participants received training and 246,274 STARS hours were awarded.
- Two hours is the most common training length, regardless of training type or delivery method.
- 68 percent of all trainings are delivered in-person in a classroom or conference setting.
- Early Achievers classes account for 19 percent of all trainings but 52 percent of online trainings.

Training delivery methods

Four training delivery methods are available for early learning professionals: in-person, online, self-paced and hybrid, which is a combination of in-person and self-paced with a minimum of 50 percent face-to-face.

In-person

- The most commonly accessed training type, with a slight dip in delivery during the months of December and January. In-person delivery includes the training opportunities that happen in conference settings.
- 68,146 trainings offered in-person during 2013.

Online

- Most frequently used for Early Achievers trainings and Child Care Basics.
- Annual continuing education classes offered online are of similar size as other delivery methods, with an average of 20 participants per class.
- 23,644 trainings offered online in 2013.

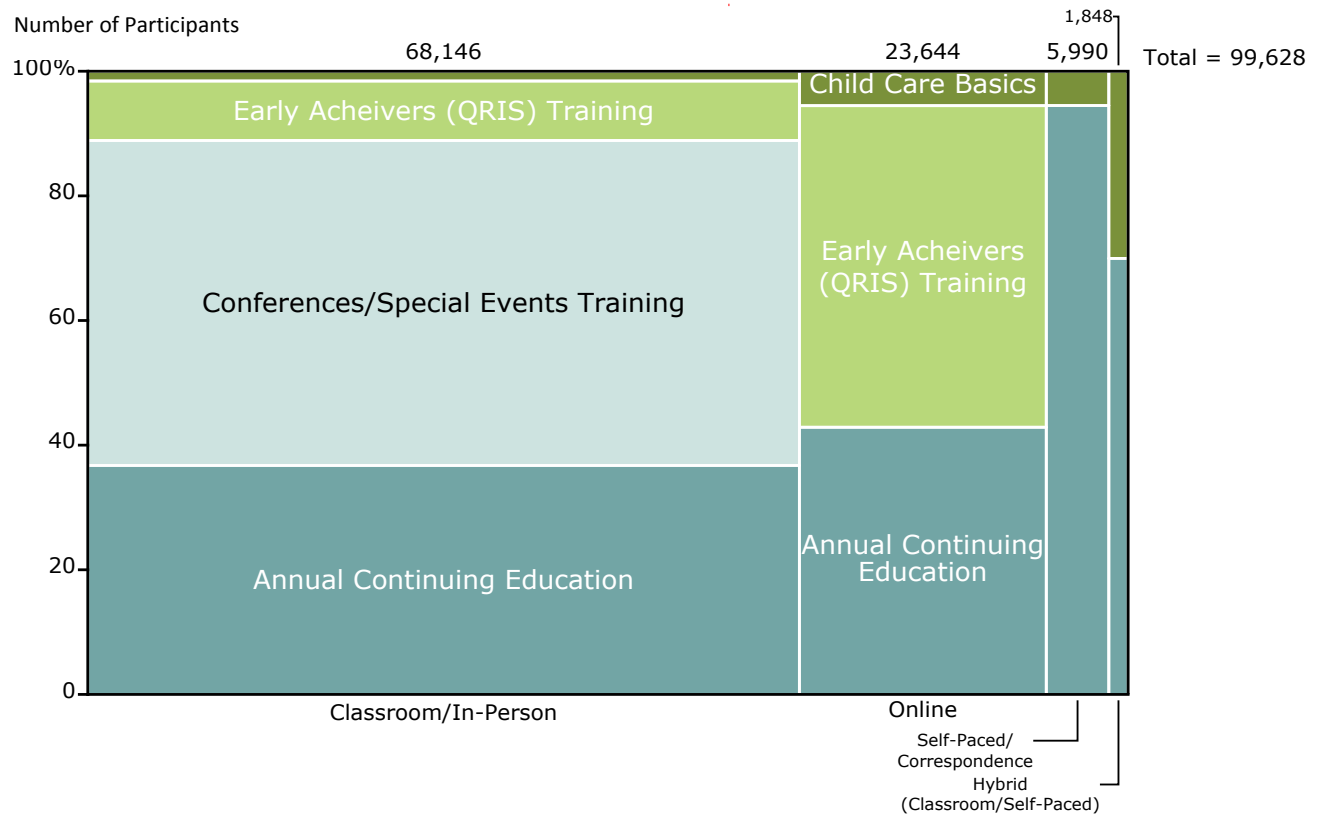
Self-paced

- 5,990 self-paced trainings offered in 2013.

Hybrid

- 1,848 hybrid trainings offered in 2013.

2013 training participants by delivery type

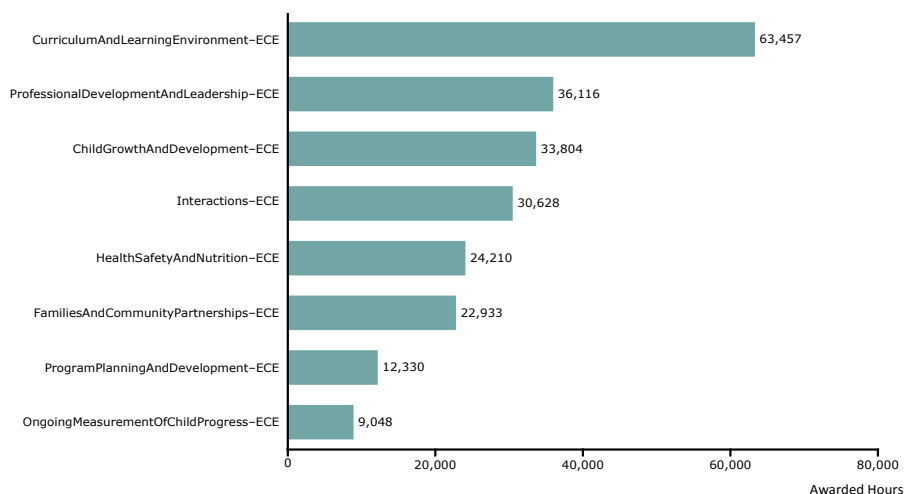


Early Care and Education Core Competencies

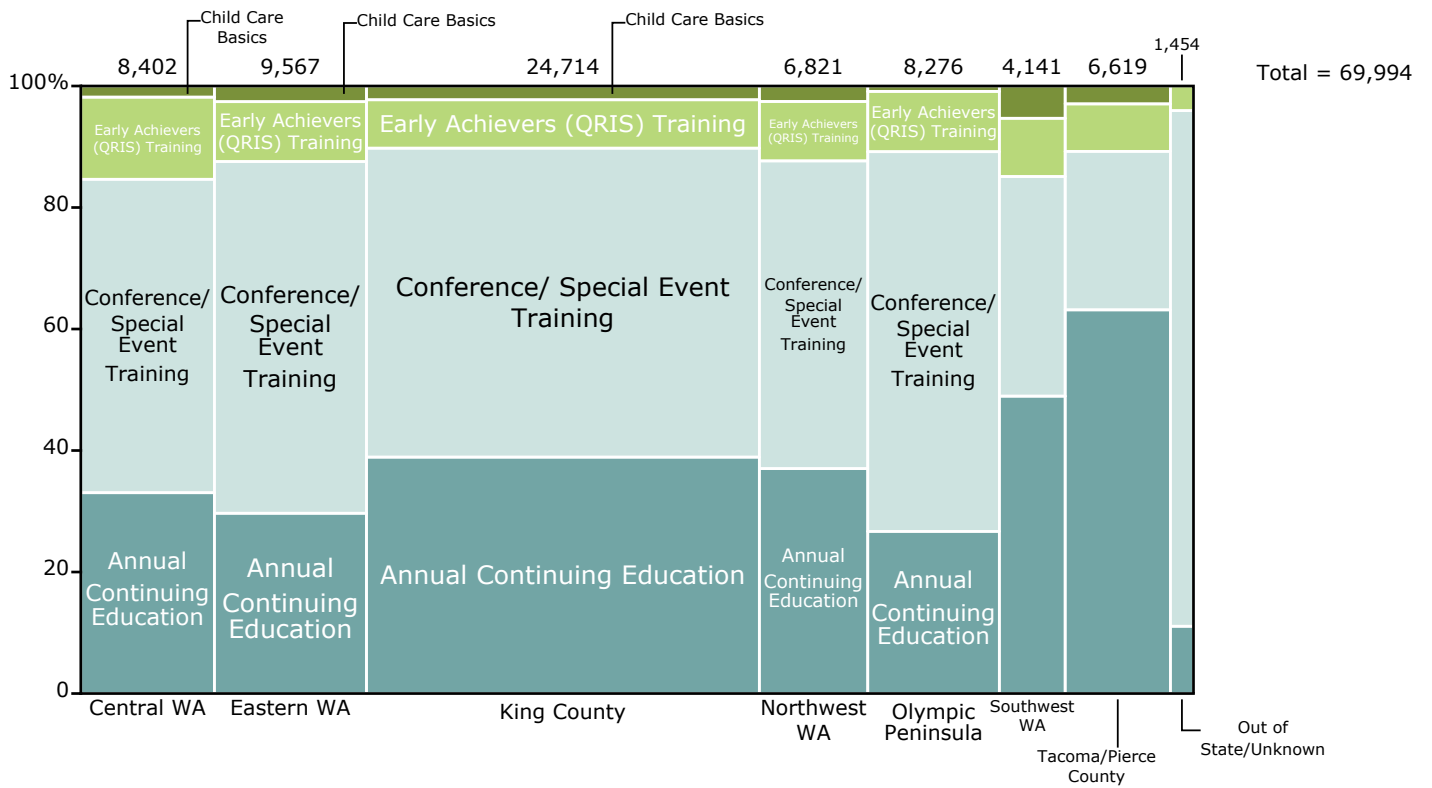
The Early Care and Education Core Competencies (core competencies) include eight categories of core knowledge and skills early learning professionals should have.

All state-approved trainings must tie back to one or more core competencies. Six core competencies account for 86 percent of awarded hours, with the most frequently delivered core competency being curriculum and learning environment.

2013 training by core competency



2013 training type by region



Lessons learned and next steps

This is Washington's first report using MERIT data to analyze active licensed child care work force data state-wide. DEL and partners will use these conclusions to help target professional development opportunities to match the needs of providers and communities.

Some key lessons learned this year:

- The workforce data shows the majority of professionals in the field classify themselves as assistants. DEL will identify ways to **provide additional training opportunities and support for assistants**. By increasing training opportunities for assistants, we will provide access to high quality training for those who most frequently provide direct care for children.
- From the data, it is clear that Washington's licensed child care work force is accessing training linked to the state core competencies. It appears that DEL and partners should encourage the work force to access online trainings more frequently.
- More data are needed about reasons for workers choosing in-person trainings. It may be that workers prefer group settings even if the travel and time are increased.
- The Central and King County regions have the most diverse workforce in Washington. DEL supports local regions to develop personalized strategies for program implementation that builds on community strengths and customizes for community needs. DEL is also focused on increasing opportunities for high quality training and removing potential barriers to training. Next steps include increasing training delivery options and updating the trainer approval process.
- Educational information and salary/benefits information wasn't as available in MERIT as hoped. As a result of this, and the completion of an 18-month pilot, DEL has **retired the career lattice and moved to a framework that allows for streamlined data collection**. The revised educational framework will be available in MERIT in fall 2014. Educational information will be included in future reports. DEL plans to include **salaries and benefits information** in future reports in with state longitudinal data partners.

Next steps:

- DEL will create a report covering demographics of state-approved trainers, along with additional information about training delivery. The training information included in this report is a summary. The trainer report will cover information about who is offering training, where and when they are located, and frequency of trainings.