



riaeyc

Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children

An Affiliate of **naeyc**

IMPACT REPORT 2025



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Following years of dedicated volunteer work in advocacy and professional development, RIAEYC incorporated as a non-profit in 1989. As an affiliate of NAEYC (National Association of the Education of Young Children), RIAEYC is constantly evolving to meet changes in the field of Early Education to support educators, families, and impact policy.

This came at a perfect time in my career, as a recent early childhood graduate, I became a NAEYC and RIAEYC member back in the 90's. Over the years I was fortunate that my center employer purchased memberships for all the teachers. I remember attending my first state-wide RIAEYC conference and feeling a sense of camaraderie with educators from across Rhode Island. I thought, 'Wow all these educators are committed to their work with young children just like the teachers I work with.' The professional development workshops are invigorating and spark further inquiry, prompting me to seek more professional knowledge. To this day, NAEYC is my first search to find reliable research-based resources to promote best teaching practice for me and the educators and families I work with. Aligning with RIAEYC as a member and now a board member I have gained advocacy skills for advancing equitable learning spaces and opportunities for children, families, and communities. Joining a professional organization not only elevates your work but unites us all towards a common goal. In our case, our goal is positively improving the lives of children, the educators that work with them, families, and communities.

NAEYC and RIAEYC stand united in their mission statement to promote high-quality early learning for each and every child, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

NAEYC is excited to launch new expanded membership benefits. The CARES framework focuses on Community, Advocacy, Resources, Events, and Support. For more information on joining go to www.naeyc.org/get-involved/membership/join.

On behalf of the RIAEYC board, we thank NAEYC for leading the way, RIAEYC staff for their commitment to creating an infrastructure for quality early childhood education, and of course to the stars-the hardworking workforce that builds brains and trusting relationships each and every day with children. Let's keep working together!

A Message from Board President

Martha Donovan



A Letter from Executive Director

Lisa Hildebrand



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, I am proud to share the incredible progress we've achieved together. RIAEYC continues to make meaningful impacts in the early childhood system and field in the work that we do!

This year, we continued the expansion and growth of the programs we manage for the RI Department of Human Services, the RI Department of Education and the RI Department of Labor and Training to reach more educators than ever before. From BrightStars and LearnERS, where early learning programs and early childhood educators work together to achieve high-quality learning environments for young children, to our workforce development initiatives like the TEACH Early Childhood Program, the Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeship and the WAGE\$ Program that work to provide education, expand competencies and skills in the workforce and improve overall compensation for the field, each effort underscores the power of collaboration and innovation.

We also created and developed new collaborations with partners like Building Futures and the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, ensuring we remain responsive and forward-thinking. These successes are a direct reflection of the dedication of our team, volunteers, and partners—working hand in hand to bring positive change.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Carol Patnaude and Leslie Sevey; both are retiring after many, many years of dedicated service on our Board of Directors. Carol and Leslie's leadership, and unwavering commitment has been instrumental in shaping our mission and guiding our organization's success. On behalf of our RIAEYC Board of Directors and staff, thank you for believing in our mission and standing with us. Together, we are making a difference every day.



The logo for Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (riaeyc) features the word "riaeyc" in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. The "ria" is in blue and "eyc" is in black.

Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children

The logo for TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD features the word "TEACH" in large, bold, blue letters, with "EARLY CHILDHOOD" in smaller, bold, blue letters below it. The text is contained within a white rectangular box with a blue border.

RHODE ISLAND

A Program of Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children

The logo for BrightStars features the word "BrightStars" in a purple, serif font. Above the "i" in "Stars" are five yellow stars of varying sizes.

Recognizing, Improving, Connecting
Quality Care & Learning



Step Up to
WAGES
Rhode Island

A demonstration program of
Child Care Services Association



RHODE ISLAND
EARLY CHILDHOOD
REGISTERED
APPRENTICESHIP



LearnERS

CQI Coaching Framework

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Our Mission

All young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential. NAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

Rhode Island AEYC is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Rhode Island AEYC and NAEYC are dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for young children.





riaeyc

Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children



advocating
for the
FUTURE

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Introduction by Alyson Panzarella Girard, Early Learning and Policy Specialist

*I first met **Jessica MacLeod** when I was an undergraduate student taking her Advanced Child Development class, over 10 years ago now! It was a pivotal semester of soul searching as I sought to pave my own path in this field. I will never forget our fateful conversations because they brought me here to RIAEYC, where I have built a career that I'm proud of at an organization that I love. We have always kept in touch at NAEYC events and through our work, but we've recently grown closer as we both pursue doctoral degrees at the University of Rhode Island. It has been an honor to work in tandem with someone I deeply admire and whose guidance I will always treasure. I am so happy to highlight her in this way. Thank you, Jessica, for your 18 years of RIAEYC membership!*

How did you become interested in early childhood education and development? Was there ever a particular moment that validated your decision to enter the field?

I was interested in becoming a teacher from early in life, but I entered college with my major "undecided". My parents were both educators - my dad was a PE teacher and coach, and my mom was an elementary school teacher and a reading specialist - so I am sure that this family context shaped my interest in becoming a teacher. When I began exploring early childhood education courses as an undergraduate student at URI, many of which included a practicum component, I became certain that I wanted to enter the field of early childhood education. Engaging in the experiential learning component of URI's ECE curriculum, with opportunities to spend time at the URI Child Development Centers as well as local elementary schools, really solidified my decision to enter the field.



Jessica MacLeod, RIAEYC Member





Can you describe a professional situation that, looking back, was a success? Why?

A recent professional success that relates to NAEYC membership was developing an internal professional development series for teachers across both URI Child Development Centers. This PD series titled, Developmentally Appropriate Practice Study Group, involved each member of our team reading the newest DAP book, engaging in monthly meetings to discuss the chapters assigned for that month in relation to our work, conducting observation/consultation visits across sites, and completing self-reflection. Developing and leading this PD series felt like a professional success for me as a program leader and for our program as a whole - it was well-received by our teachers as a meaningful PD opportunity aligned with their high level of expertise, it led us to critically reflect on our policies and practices in relation to the updated DAP book, and it brought members of our teaching team across both sites closer together as colleagues. Through this work, we actively renewed and deepened our commitment to DAP.

How did you learn about NAEYC?

I learned about NAEYC as an undergraduate student at the University of Rhode Island many years ago. Our professors assigned NAEYC publications as required readings, and we regularly utilized NAEYC resources in our classes. I remember one of our professors, Sue Warford, the former director of the URI Child Development Center, inviting and encouraging all of us to volunteer at the RIAEYC early childhood conference as undergraduate students. Volunteering at the conference and attending workshops was truly an inspiring experience! It was amazing to see the collective energy of early childhood educators from across the state as people gathered for a full day of learning together and sharing resources. This experience helped me to understand the many benefits of getting involved with NAEYC as the premier early childhood education professional organization as well as tapping into local opportunities offered through the RI affiliate.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

LIFE LONG LEARNING

RIAEYC staff attended professional development sessions and conferences in six states and through virtual platforms, bringing the latest in education, advocacy, and best practices back to the educators and child care programs we support every day.

WOMEN'S SUMMIT BRYANT UNIVERSITY, RHODE ISLAND

All the presenters, including the key notes, centered their talks on the empowerment that comes with taking chances, embracing change, and doing so confidently, which was overall just really inspiring. One of the Key Note speakers in particular stood out as she discussed how a school project to conquer 100 fears (1 fear/day) turned her life around and gave her a career as a public speaker (public speaking being the last fear she tackled). ...I drove home feeling refreshed after listening to all the inspirational stories!”

Vivian, LearnERS Data Specialist

RI ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH: ANNUAL MAKING CONNECTIONS

“How to best support families. There are so many contributing factors and struggles before the start of the day, before children are dropped off for child care: how empathy can go a long way in truly supporting families and the daily struggles that come before children are in our care.”

Carolyn, Registered Apprenticeship Counselor



TEACH NATIONAL CONFERENCE VIRTUAL

“While virtual this year, the TEACH National Conference was a great reminder of the impact that we have on Early Childhood Educators and young children across the state! The work we do keeps highly qualified teachers engaged in their professional development and in their classrooms. And teachers feel supported and remain in the ECE field- children and families succeed!”

Elizabeth, TEACH Coordinator



**ECERS NATIONAL CONFERENCE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

“Looking at coaching with the ERS: Why coach with ECERS?”

- Relies on observation to assess quality of a classroom
- Comprehensively measures quality in PS classroom
- Serves as an objective assessment based on best practices
- Examines both structural & process indicators of quality
- Establishes a baseline score of overall quality globally”

“The ECERS-3 tool assesses the experience of the child/children in the classroom, not necessarily the effectiveness of the teacher in the room. The teacher should use the ECERS-3 to assess where they fall, and choose areas to improve in based on their own strengths and the children that they serve.”



Alyson Panzarella Girard presented at the NAEYC Annual Conference along with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS KIDS Ready To Learn (RTL) on our partnership with Rhode Island PBS. This initiative supports children ages 2 to 8 from low-income communities, as well their families, educators, and other key stakeholders, to help close the achievement gap. During the 2020–25 grant round, RTL developed an innovative model for family and community engagement, Learning Neighborhoods, including Rhode Island, that connects local PBS stations and community partners, including NAEYC affiliates, to engage families and educators with high-quality educational media and hands-on learning activities tied to computational thinking, functional literacy, and World of Work curricula. Alyson and other grantees from Georgia Learning Neighborhoods discussed our models for designing and operating a partnership that achieves meaningful outcomes for communities and share free, evidence-based resources that other communities can use to support their early learning, professional development, and family engagement goals.

**NAEYC ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA**



“Early Care & Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS) Registered Apprenticeship Bootcamp focused on the importance of Apprenticeship in workforce development, providing a valuable opportunity for our group to exchange expertise in the field of Early Learning and deepen our understanding of effective Registered Apprenticeship models. We worked to define our own internal processes, rethink program functionality, streamline program operations, and learn from evidence-based best practice. The main takeaways from the training were that successful and sustainable apprenticeship programs often include:

- No-cost programs: Minimizing financial barriers to participation for apprentices (Tuition and fees, textbooks and laptops, CD Permit Applications, Background checks)
- Dedicated program staff: Providing consistent support and guidance to apprentices throughout the program.
- Participant-centered on-the-job training: Focusing on the specific needs and goals of each individual apprentice.
 - Cohort-based learning community, in-program child care services, technology an access training, mental health services
- Participant-centered related technical instruction: Providing comprehensive and high-quality training experiences.
 - Flexible location and schedule, stackable apprenticeships, competency-based, transferable and degree-applicable”

Amber, Registered Apprenticeship Coordinator

**ECEPTS RA BOOTCAMP
NEW ORLEANS, LA**



LANGUAGE-RICH LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND EXPERIENCES HARVARD - BOSTON, MA

“Only 10% of the conversations in a typical early childhood classroom are between students and teachers, and involve at least five conversational switches. Teachers need to provide students of all backgrounds more opportunities to speak and have conversations in the classroom to improve language rates of young learners.”

Eladia, BrightStars Navigator





“I felt inspired and hopeful that so many educators and advocates were coming together to understand how to effectively lobby for the early childcare sector.”

Gretchen, BrightStars Navigator

**NAEYC PUBLIC POLICY FORUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

“My biggest takeaway from this conference was the energy in the room. It is inspiring to be in a ballroom full of other advocates that are passionate about early childhood education. It reignited my own passion. "Hill Day," when we visit our Congressional Delegation, is also very empowering. New advocates may be nervous for the first meeting, but they really blossom by the second or third and they barely need me! It's so heartwarming and reminds me of my "WHY." We received House Gallery passes from our Congressional Offices. This is one of my favorite surprises for the new attendees. We timed it right and were able to watch a House vote - democracy in action!”

Alyson, Early Learning & Policy Specialist

CONNECT AND THRIVE

We know community makes a difference. And much like Week of the Young Child's Work Together Wednesday, we are teaming up with partners across the state to raise awareness of, to advocate for, and to help bring high quality early care and learning to every family in Rhode Island.

AT PROVIDENCE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

FREE PLAY DAY



WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

We partnered with Rhode Island PBS Education Services to bring NAEYC's Week of the Young Child to every county across the state through activity kits, with support from the RI Food Bank.

"After my son met Alyson and had a short conversation with her, his confidence skyrocketed. She told him he was a businessman, and from that moment on, he started seeing himself in a new light. That small but powerful moment of encouragement really stuck with him."

We celebrated Family Friday at the Warwick Public Library after a week of small activities designed to support early learning both in and out of the classroom.



ELEVATE YOUR CAREER

WOMEN'S FUND OF RHODE ISLAND



Financial Impact

to the Early Childhood Education Community

More than **\$6,000**
in RIAEYC Membership
Dues

Operating Budget of more than
\$6,170,000

Total Foundation Assets
\$2,164,127

We remain committed to investing in our early childhood workforce. The amounts below reflect stipends, wage supplements, materials and tuition costs covered for early childhood educators across the state who are committed to providing high quality care and early education to thousands of children in Rhode Island.

\$50,000+
in Paid Release Time
Reimbursement

Almost **\$100,000**
in TEACH Bonuses

\$35,000+
in Classroom Materials

\$135,00+
in LearnERS Stipends

More than
\$1.8 Million
in Wage Supplements

Almost **\$500,000**
in Tuition

IN THE NEWS & ON THE RECORD

Assessing Needs in Newport County

Rhode Island is ranked 6th in the nation for least affordable child care, with infant care costs higher than in-state college tuition. We decided to dive deep into our community to find out more- from parents, to child care programs, to business owners across Newport County- about the challenges our communities face when it comes to providing and accessing high quality care for our children. Partnering with the Reinvestment Fund and with support from the Van Beuren Foundation, we canvassed the Newport County community from March - May 2025. We're analyzing this data and are excited to share our findings in Fall 2025.

Executive Director Lisa Hildebrand spoke about this project in greater detail on *The Business of Greater Newport*. To learn more about "Child Care is Everyone's Business" and child care needs in the state, you can listen to the podcast episode [here](#).

Community Focus with WPRI

"We are very much in the middle of a workforce crisis. The average salary for our early educators is just a little bit above minimum wage...they can go into retail or really even just fast food and make more than they can working in a child care program." Executive Director Lisa Hildebrand spoke Kayla Fish of WPRI about the child care crisis and the cost of infant care in Rhode Island. You can find the full interview [here](#).

R.I. child-care centers raise alarm over funding for infants and toddlers

When teachers can't afford to stay in the field, classrooms close. When classrooms close, families struggle to access care. "If we do not act now, the cost socially, economically, and developmentally will be far greater in the future."

The Boston Globe reported on how the staffing crisis is affecting early care and education throughout our state. [And on how programs like Step Up to WAGE\\$ is helping educators stay in the workforce.](#)



Right from the Start

Last year's legislative session left room for hope. This year, state legislators rallied with us, and for our youngest learners. There is still work to do but we are celebrating:

- Extension of Child Care for Child Care Educators Pilot; covering the cost of child care for our workforce will help keep highly qualified educators in the classroom and keep classrooms open so both families and early educators can access child care and continue working.
- \$3 Million Commitment to Infant Care; Aimed to reopen closed infant care classrooms, this money will help offset the cost of high quality infant care through a new CCAP rate category.
- Improved Paid Family Leave; improvements include increasing the wage replacement rate, expanding the contribution base, and expanding the definition of family
- Funding for MomsPRN Program; the allocated funds will help new and expectant moms access mental health care through their OB/GYN or PCP.
- Pediatric Primary Care Rate Review; this is a great first step to ensuring Medicaid rates are sufficient to access to pediatric primary care for every baby and child in the state.

RIAEYC is a member of the Right From the Start Steering Committee.



ANCHORED IN ADVOCACY

One of the most valuable learning experiences I gathered from my internship at RIAEYC this summer was the inner workings and functions of a nonprofit organization. It has been especially interesting to grasp new concepts of the multi-faceted nature of RIAEYC, and all of the different actors and branches involved in furthering their policy and advocacy goals. I loved learning about the day-to-day important connections that people make with other organizations and legislators. Seeing the lead-up to and aftermath of the budget being passed and how it affected the work of so much of the human services sector was a really valued experience as well.

From tabling at the Providence Children's Museum to attending a poster-making session for a rally at the statehouse, I have been so grateful to be a part of and learn from this diverse array of events and experiences. Some of my highlights from this summer included making infographics from our story bank to raise awareness for childcare funding legislation and getting to sit on meetings for the Newport County survey project. I have loved seeing the survey data come together and get transformed into graphs and trend stories that we can share out and use! Lastly, having the opportunity to sit in and contribute to the variety of meetings and webinars that we are involved in really broadened my overall knowledge and understanding of the perseverance and dedication needed for policy work in this field today.

I was drawn to RIAEYC for its outstanding reputation in policy and advocacy work, as well as for its incredibly support of Rhode Island children and families. I have been nannying and working with children for years, and RIAEYC combines my passion for policy work with the interests of children's educational welfare!



Norah Anderson, a rising junior at Dickinson College, at the State House for her Summer Internship with RIAEYC. Norah is double majoring in History and Law & Policy (with concentrations in Child Care and Women's Healthcare), and minoring in Political Science.

empowering

EDUCATORS

TEACH
EARLY CHILDHOOD[®]

RHODE ISLAND

A Program of Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children



TEACH provides an opportunity to access a higher education curriculum that focuses on the academic, social, and cognitive skills that develop in children from birth through school-age and beyond.

This scholarship programs provides the opportunity to qualified early childhood educators to pursue higher education for very little cost while staying in the classroom. In partnering with state institutions for higher learning, we're helping educators achieve their professional goals and employers retain high quality employees. With over 180 active scholars at more than 100 child care programs across the state, we're helping keep highly qualified educators in the classroom and early care classrooms open.



Family Child Care Providers are enrolled in	
CDA	18
Credit Bearing Model	1
Infant Toddler Certificate	15

WHERE OUR SCHOLARS STUDY

Rhode Island College

University of Rhode Island

Council for Professional Recognition

CCRI

SCHOLARS BY PROGRAM TYPE

Center based Employees: 153
Family Child Care Providers: 34

A TEACH Scholar's Impact Goes Beyond their Classroom

Beatriz Burgos, a teacher from Love 4 All Learning Center on Eddy Street Providence, RI was referred to TEACH by her program director. Beatriz initially applied to TEACH under the associate degree in January 2020. She completed her degree in summer of 2022 and continued onto the bilingual Birth to Three cohort fall of 2023. Beatriz has been determined to grow personally and professionally throughout the years. She is very self-driven and great advocate for herself and her community. Beatriz has referred multiple staff members from her current program to join the TEACH program. Beatriz graduated from the bilingual cohort this past spring semester and has decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in early childhood education at Rhode Island College this coming fall 2025. She was recently appointed as a new member of the National ECE Workforce Center's Early Educator Advisory Board and recognized by RIAEYC Executive Director Lisa Hildebrand for her ongoing advocacy efforts. We are beyond proud of her and her accomplishments and look forward to supporting her until she reaches the finish line once again!

“The TEACH scholarship program is a great opportunity. It has afforded staff to take classes and graduate with degrees, giving them an opportunity that they may not have had otherwise. Having degreed employees also improves the quality of the program and supports and strengthens positive outcomes for the children and families that we serve. It is a great way to support employees and further their knowledge and expertise.”

-Employer Sponsor

Center Based Scholars are enrolled in	
Associate's Degree	26
Bachelor's Degree	26
CDA	38
Credit-Bearing Model	11
Infant Toddler Certificate	21
Post Baccalaureate	13
Master's Degree	16



CLASS OF 2025

TEACH
EARLY CHILDHOOD®

RHODE ISLAND

A Program of Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

Bachelor's Degree

Yanelly Tejada

Monolingual Birth to Three Certificate

Elianny Tejada

Charlene Baird

Victoria Marchesi

Bilingual Birth to Three Certificate

Maria Porrás

Grisel Gomez

Luisanna Sanchez

Carolina Rodriguez

Beatriz Burgos

Confesora Cordero

Mirtha Tavaréz

Alfa Belliard

Esther Santana

Mendrid Peralta

Rosa Pujols

Yuli Reyes

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND

Associate Degree

Kristin Bowers

Nayely Meson

Yasmin Mola Fernandez





**Step Up to
WAGES
Rhode Island**

A demonstration program of
Child Care Services Association

investing in the

WORKFORCE

Step Up to WAGE\$ is an education based salary supplement program working to help reduce the early childhood staffing crisis. Since its launch in the Spring of 2023, the Step Up to WAGE\$ Pilot program has provided early childhood educators with over **\$3 Million** in wage supplements. More than 320 educators in over 170 programs received wage supplement funding. With the retention rate of WAGE\$ recipients remaining above 90% and a slight hourly rate increase since the last fiscal year, we see that early childhood educators who are paid fairly are able to continue providing the best care for our state's youngest learners. Since the start of the pilot program, almost 200 programs have educators who received a wage supplement.



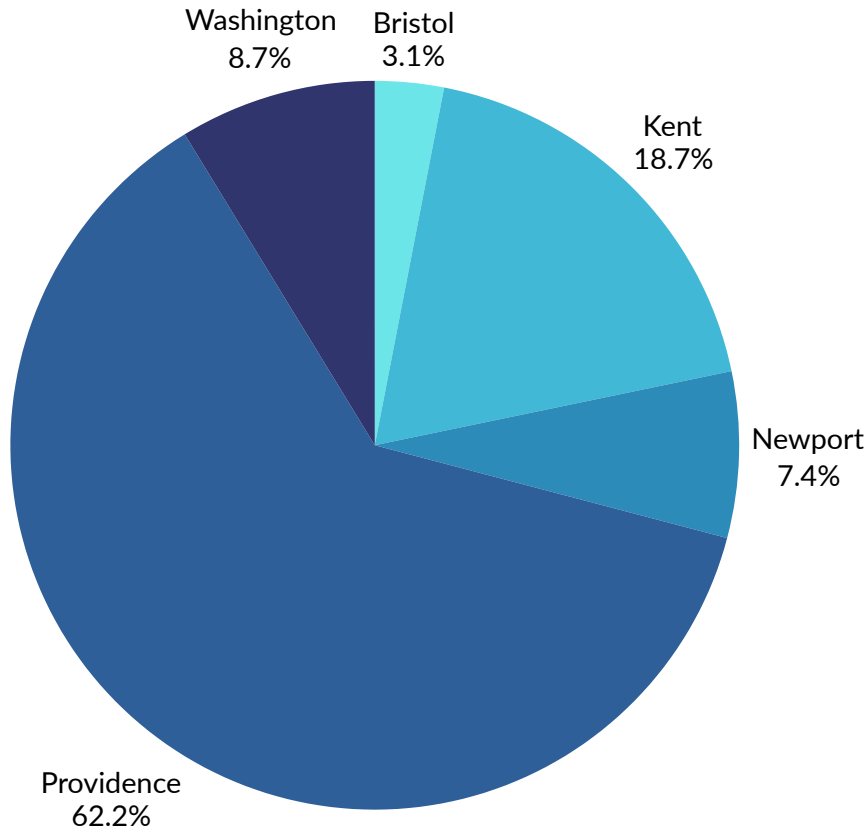
Retention Rate: 93%
Average Hourly Rate: \$18.23

13 Infant/Toddler educators increased their education, 11 of whom increased their supplement level.

Step Up to WAGE\$ Education Levels

Level 1: CDA or 3 College Credits in ECE
Level 2: 12 or more college credits in ECE
Level 3: 36 college credits with 12 or more in ECE or an Associate's Degree with less than 12 ECE credits
Level 4: Associate's Degree including 12-23 ECE credits or a Bachelor's Degree with less than 12 ECE credits
Level 5: Associate's Degree with 24 or more ECE credits or Bachelor's Degree with 12-23 ECE credits
Level 6: Bachelor's Degree with 24 or more ECE credits

Step Up to WAGE\$ Funding by Children Enrolled

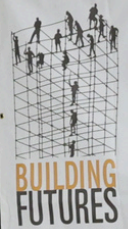


Number of children enrolled in WAGES participants' care:
7,866

Number of children at a Center:
7,542
Number of children at an FCC:
324



APPRENTICESHIP
WORKS
Apprenticeship
RHODE ISLAND



inspiring

GROWTH





After a successful pilot phase, the Rhode Island Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeship began its next phase in partnership with Building Futures, with recognition for excellence at Building Future's National Apprenticeship Week Celebration.

The Rhode Island Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeship is an innovative program developed in partnership with the RI Department of Human Services and the RI Department of Labor and Training that is transforming our Early Childhood Education community. This comprehensive program positions itself to build a stronger, more skilled workforce by offering fully supported paths for Infant/Toddler Assistant and Lead Teachers to earn college credits and certificates at the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College.

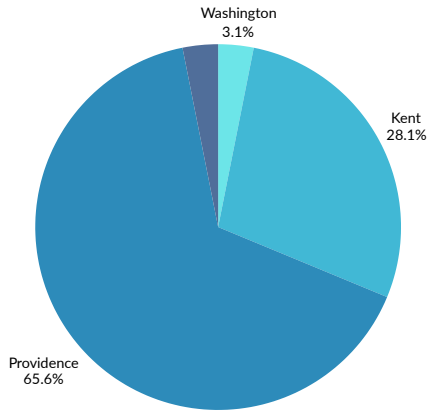


The RI Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeship focuses on advancing Infant and Toddler educators teaching qualifications. Registered Apprentices receive personalized coaching and mentoring, including the same impactful LearnERS Program coaching that helps centers achieve BrightStars excellence. This hands-on guidance truly elevates teaching quality and is at the heart of this program. We invest in our educators by providing financial compensation, supporting two salary increases supplemented by the RI Department of Human Services and the RI Department of Labor and Training. Participants are also provided with free technology resources, ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed.

RIAEYC and the Rhode Island Department of Human Services were present with the **Impact via Apprenticeship Award**, recognizing the important work that early childhood educators do in the classroom to support the state's youngest learners every day, and the role organizations like DHS and RIAEYC play in designing and implementing career pathways to ensure a highly qualified Early Care and Education workforce.

The RI Early Childhood Registered Apprenticeship is open to infant/toddler teachers and teacher assistants who work a minimum of 25 hours per week in the classroom at a BrightStars participating program. And with 15 Level 1 participants and 17 Level 2 participants, we're helping employers invest in their staff *and* in their students.

2025 REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP GRADUATES



Where are our RAs?
 Washington County: 1
 Kent County: 9
 Providence County: 21
 Newport County: 1
 Bristol County: 0

LEVEL I: INFANT/TODDLER CDA TRAINING THROUGH CCRI

Amanda Robetson
 Angeleah Williams
 Theresa Bergeron
 Desiree Dompier
 Tara Thibault
 Eliana Pisaturo

LEVEL II: BIRTH-3 CERTIFICIATE THROUGH RIC

Adrienne Perez
 Antoniea Perry
 Olivia Kindschy
 Arlene Bautista
 Kayla Hawkins
 Kristy Calzo
 Madison Gonya
 Maria Barnes
 Samantha Sion

“Honestly, I wouldn’t have been able to accomplish so much without my coach and the team that I had supporting me throughout my apprenticeship experience. I’ve faced quite a lot of challenges throughout this program, but they helped me get through it, not only in my career, but as a mother myself. It’s been a wonderful and eye-opening experience and I’m so grateful to have been a part of it.”





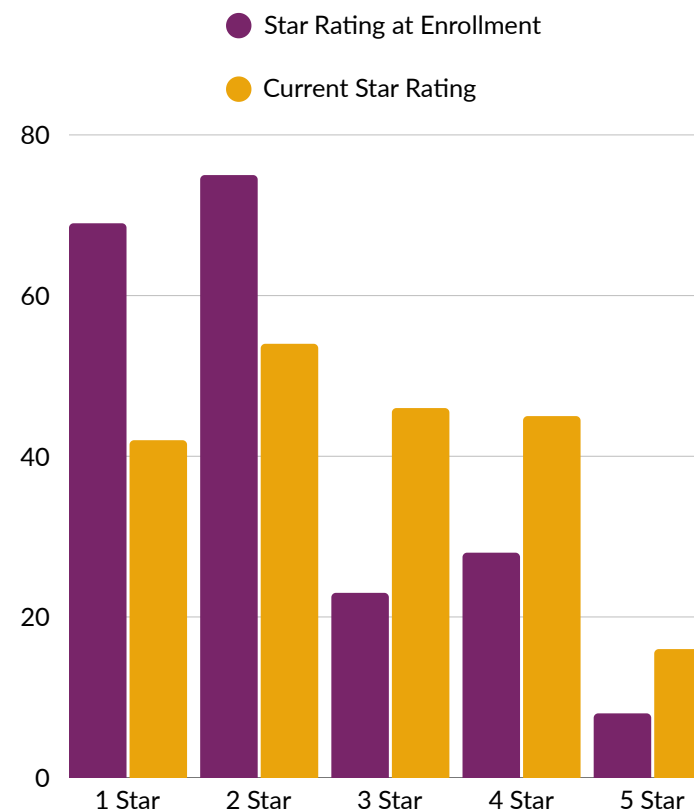
engaging in professional
DEVELOPMENT



Open to BrightStars participating programs, LearnERS is personalized professional development that utilizes easy-to-use, fun, online sessions that line up with the items and sub-scales of Environment Rating Scales (ERS). The program utilizes coaching and peer learning to inspire teachers to implement meaningful changes in their classroom environment and practices that can improve the quality of the care and education that children receive.

36 programs engaged with LearnERS for the first time programs and 23 programs applied for a LearnERS cohort after being previously engaged with LearnERS. Since the start of this fiscal year, 53% of programs that have participated or are currently participating in LearnERS are a 3 Star rating or higher, 30% of programs are a 4 star rating or higher, and 8% of programs are a 5 star rating.

Star Rating by Program Type					
	Star Rating at Enrollment				
	1 Star	2 Stars	3 Stars	4 Stars	5 Stars
CCC	32	50	16	24	7
FCC	34	24	3	2	0
SA	3	1	4	2	1
	Current Star Rating				
	1 Star	2 Stars	3 Stars	4 Stars	5 Stars
CCC	21	28	33	34	13
FCC	18	25	9	9	2
SA	3	1	4	2	1



74 programs that have participated in LearnERS (36%) have increased their star rating at least once since their initial enrollment. Since July 2024, there have been 44 increases in Star Ratings among LearnERS programs (this refers to the number of increases, rather than the number of programs that have increased, and may include multiple increases from one or more programs that have chosen to modify their rating more than once).

Number of Programs that have engaged with ERS PD by County				
	CCC	FCC	SA	Total
Bristol	4	1	4	9
Kent	18	0	1	19
Newport	2	1	0	3
Providence	93	60	6	159
Washington	13	1	0	14

Within the last fiscal year, 6 cohorts began their professional development journey with LearnERS, with 91 early childhood educators actively enrolled in the program. Of the 6 new cohorts, 4 are center based teachers and 2 are family child care providers.



“Just wanted to send a quick email to say how amazing Eladia has been in our bright stars journey in North Providence. She made herself available to the staff for questions, prepared them through Learners for the ECERS and honestly, was just incredibly helpful. Thank you for having such a great program like Learners. Best experience for us!”

-Casey

“I just wanted to thank you again for coming out and helping me rearrange my classroom! It has been going so well the past couple days, almost all my centers fit more students now and mealtimes are so much smoother already. And thank you so much for the toys, the kids love them!”





a focus on family CHILD CARE

Mirtha Tavares has been a dedicated member of BrightStars since 2014, where her commitment to enhancing the quality of her family childcare program has always stood out. From the moment we launched the LearnERS program, Mirtha was one of the first individuals who came to mind due to her interest in and genuine commitment to providing quality care.

Not only has she been an invaluable asset to her own cohort, offering support and encouragement to her fellow childcare providers, but she has also extended her influence throughout the wider community of family childcare providers. Mirtha's hard work and dedication paid off when she successfully increased her program to a 4-Star rating. This remarkable achievement is a testament to her passion for quality care and her willingness to grow professionally.

Mirtha has openly expressed her gratitude for the support she received through the LearnERS program, highlighting how it empowered her to enrich her own program. Inspired by her positive experience, she has actively encouraged other childcare providers to participate in the LearnERS program, demonstrating her commitment to lifting the standards of care within the community.

We are proud to congratulate Mirtha for her outstanding dedication to quality and her role as a leader among her peers. Her journey serves as an inspiring example of what can be achieved through commitment and collaboration.



connecting
high quality

LEARNING



FAMILY REFERRALS

BrightStars is proud to assist families in finding quality early care, education and afterschool programs. This free referral program results in a tailored list of programs that may meet your family's needs - including CCAP, extended care hours, and openings/waitlist status - that will help your family navigate the child care system. In the last fiscal year, we helped families find care for 65 children.

Total Number of Family Calls: 82

Total Number of Children Needing Care: 65

Calls requesting assistance with CCAP: 5

CCAP Families: 33

Age Group of Children (Care Requested for):

of Infants: 18

of Toddler: 21

of Preschool: 15

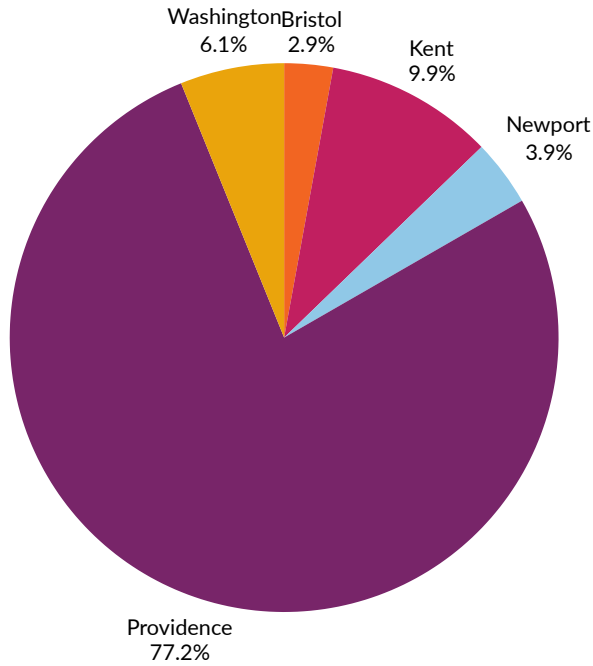
of School Age: 11



We continue to build our community partnerships to meet busy families where they are to support them in finding high quality child care. And to answer all of their questions about child care and what high quality care looks like for their family- whether you're just starting to look or already have children in early care programs.



BrightStars Participation by County

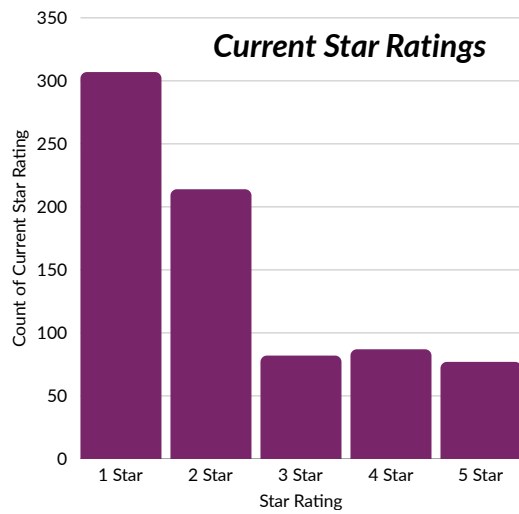


RIAIEYC manages BrightStars- the state’s tiered quality rating system for early learning programs. Funded by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Brightstars currently works with over 700 child care programs across the state. Participation is free to all programs, and provides a myriad of supports and professional development opportunities at no cost to the program or its staff.

As of June 30, 2025, over 20% of participating child care programs are considered “high quality,” receiving a 4 or 5 star rating.

Percentage of Programs Considered “HIGH QUALITY” by County

- Bristol County- 36%
- Kent County- 28.9%
- Newport County- 43%
- Providence County- 17%
- Washington County- 38%



	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Total
Bristol	9	2	3	5	3	22
Kent	27	11	16	13	9	76
Newport	10	1	6	7	6	30
Providence	249	190	50	52	51	592
Washington	12	10	7	10	8	47

This BrightStars data is accurate as of June 30th, 2025.



PROVIDENCE COUNTY	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Total
Child Care Center	46	38	24	26	35	169
Family Child Care	182	137	13	7	3	342
Public School	4	7	2	9	7	29
School-Age Program	17	8	11	10	6	52
Grand Total	249	190	50	52	51	592

Providence County has the highest concentration of family child care providers participating in BrightStars. Kent County has the highest concentration of Child Care Centers. While Washington County has the highest percentage of “high quality” ratings per participating programs, Newport County has the highest concentration of 5 star ratings.



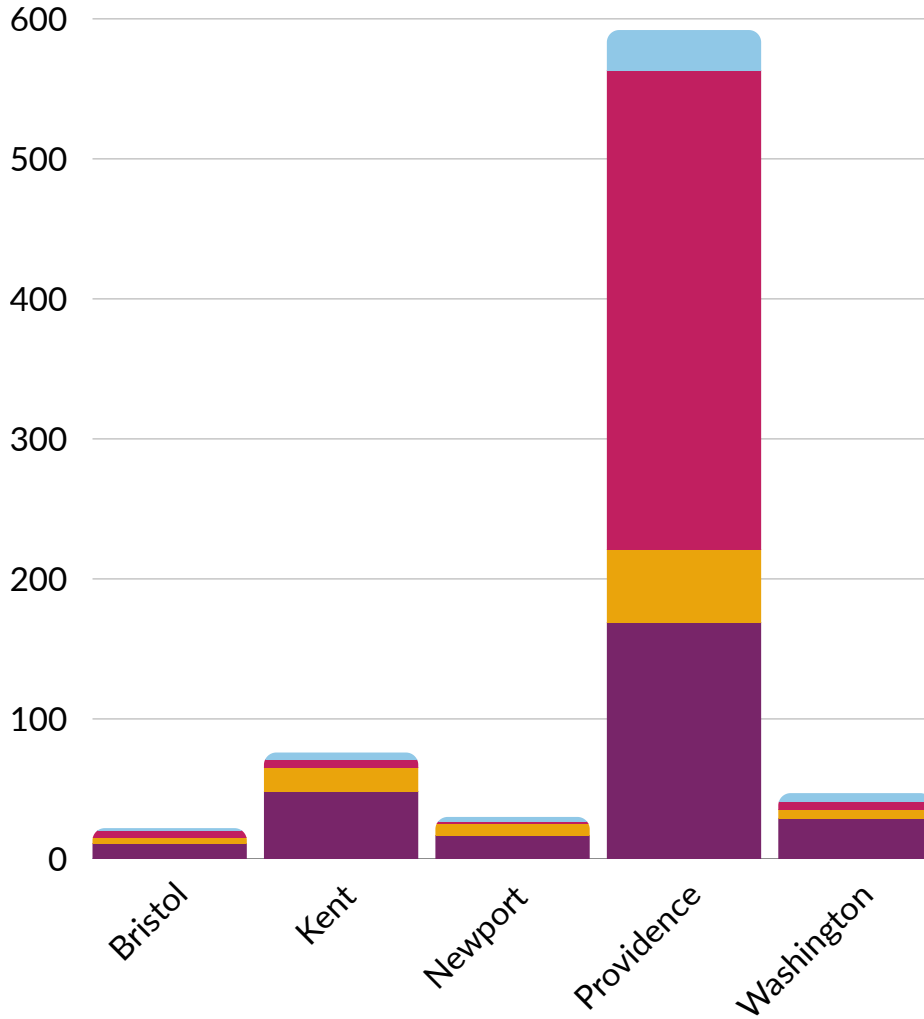
NEWPORT COUNTY	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star	Total
Child Care Center	5	1	2	6	3	17
Family Child Care	2					2
Public School			1	1	1	3
School-Age Program	3		3		2	8
Grand Total	10	1	6	7	6	30

This BrightStars data is accurate as of June 30th, 2025.



Program Type by County

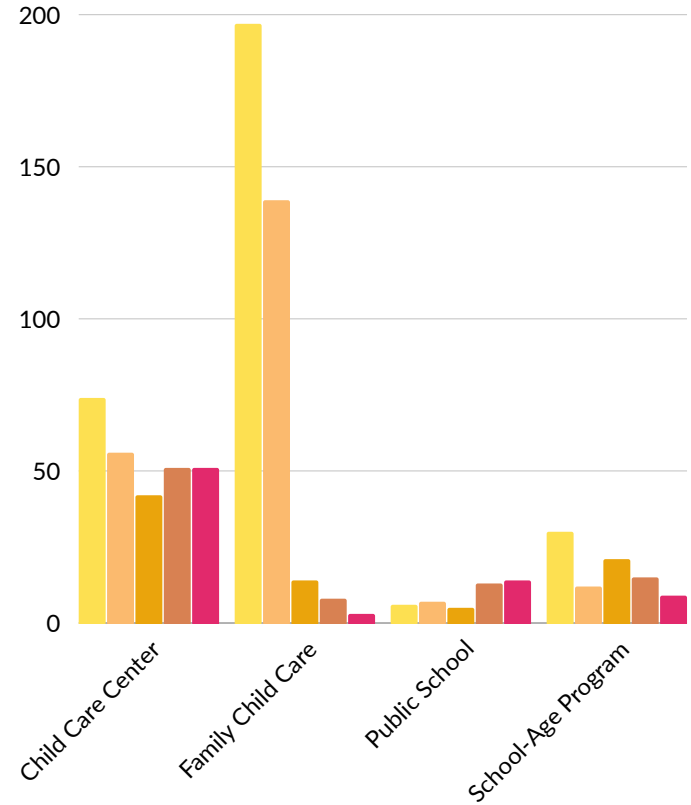
- Child Care Center
- School-Age Program
- Family Child Care
- Public School



This BrightStars data is accurate as of June 30th, 2025.

Star Rating by Program Type

- 1 Star
- 2 Star
- 3 Star
- 4 Star
- 5 Star





BrightStars is managed in partnership with and funding from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services. We work closely with the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The LearnERS program is made possible by funding from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services.

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