

Issues in the preparation and professional development of early educators to serve young DLLs?

Marlene Zepeda, Ph.D.
California State University, Los Angeles

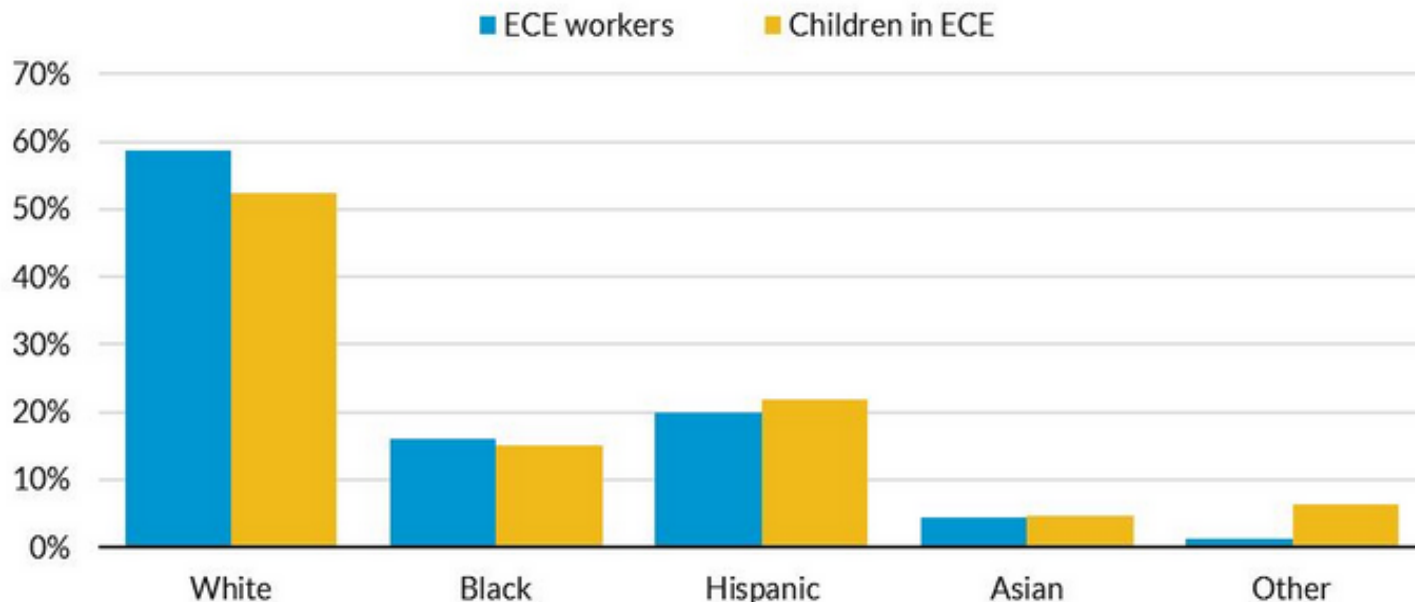
Presentation to the Buffett Early Childhood Institute's
Symposium on Promoting the Success of Young Children
Learning English: Nebraska and National Perspectives
June 20, 2018

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- What is the diversity of ECE workforce both nationally and in the state of Nebraska?
- Why is it important to have a diverse workforce?
- What are the key elements for professional preparation and development when serving young DLLs?
- What are some promising approaches for diversifying the ECE workforce?

Workforce Diversity

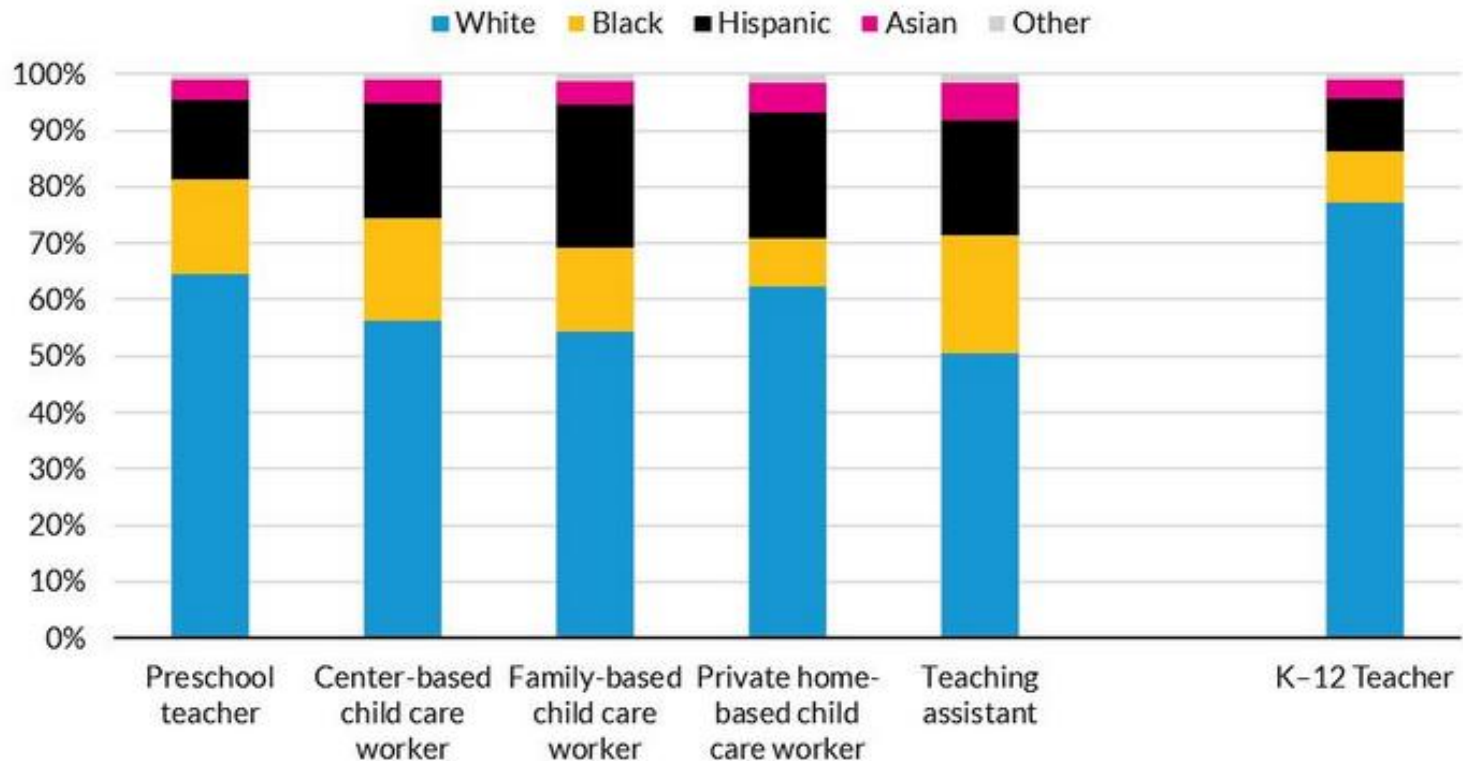
How Does Early Childhood Education Worker Diversity Compare with Children in ECE?



Sources: 2015 American Community Survey. Early childhood program participation results from the National Household Education Surveys Program of 2016 from the National Center for Education Statistics. Occupation definitions come from Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Early Child Care and Education: HHS and Education Are Taking Steps to Improve Workforce, But Not Fully Meeting Quality Needs* (Washington, DC: GAO, 2019).

URBAN INSTITUTE

Early Childhood Educators by Race/Ethnicity and ECE Setting



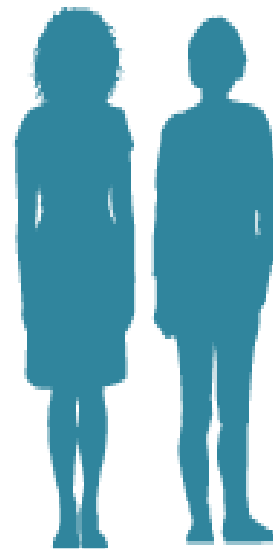
Sources: 2015 American Community Survey. Occupation definitions come from Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Early Child Care and Education: HHS and Education Are Taking Steps to*

URBAN INSTITUTE

Early Childhood Workforce Index 2016

NEBRASKA

156,575
Children age 0-5



7,910
Members of the
early childhood
teaching workforce

Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Survey

TABLE 3 | DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Home-Based	Center-Based	PreK	K-3
GENDER				
Male	0.5%	3.0%	2.2%	2.7%
Female	99.5%	97.0%	97.8%	97.3%
AGE				
Mean (SD)	48.41 (11.03)	36.46 (12.41)	39.39 (11.49)	42.23 (12.24)
18-30	5.3%	39.9%	29.1%	21.4%
31-44	32.7%	30.7%	36.2%	33.6%
45-60	48.4%	25.2%	31.7%	38.3%
61+	13.6%	4.2%	3.0%	6.7%
RACE				
White	93.8%	87.0%	98.9%	98.6%
Black	2.5%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Hispanic	1.7%	3.1%	0.7%	0.7%
Other	2.0%	5.1%	0.4%	0.7%

Why is it important to have a diverse workforce?

- Function as role models
- May have more positive perceptions of children of color
- Have a better understanding of the children's lived experiences; less likely to stereotype
- Influence the instructional context through culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy



Conceptual Frame for Understanding the Development and Learning of DLLs*

- Development of DLLs differs in significant ways from that of children who are English only
- Culture-specific parenting goals, values and practices differ across different ethnic groups
- Racial and ethnic identity may influence the development of DLLs especially for their language development
- The amount and quality of DLLs' exposure to and use of their two languages are important features that relate to later school success.

Espinosa & Zepeda (in press).

Workforce Characteristics: One Size Does not Fit All



DLLTC: Cumulative Features

		MONOLINGUAL		BILINGUAL		BILITERATE	
		Monocultural	Bicultural	Monocultural	Bicultural	Monocultural	Bicultural
BEGINNING	Skills:						
	Indicators:						
DEVELOPING	Skills:						
	Indicators:						
ADVANCED	Skills:						
	Indicators:						

Cultural Competence*

- Possessing cultural knowledge of diverse children including understanding their prior experiences, their frames of reference and their approaches to learning in order to accommodate instruction.



- Geneva Gay, University of Washington

Linguistic Competence

- Knowledge of the language and educational backgrounds of children
- Understanding the program's expectations for first and second language development
- Instructional skills need to scaffold learning to engage DLLs in the learning environment
 - Use of the home language/explicit bridging between home language and English
 - Explicit vocabulary instruction
 - Intentional oral language development
 - Opportunities to participate in small groups/peers
 - Incorporate elements of the home culture

What are some promising approaches for preparation and professional development of early educators?

- **Cohort Programs**
- Grow Your Own Programs
- Specific professional development for the incumbent workforce



What will it take to equip the present and future workforce?

- Leadership across all levels of decision-making that prioritizes the development and education of young DLLs.



WORKFORCE COMMISSION

What can states and localities do?

- **Advocate that state early learning standards and educator competencies integrate research on best practices for young DLLs into their guidance documents.**
- **Ensure that the needs of DLLs are addressed in the Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS).**
- **Require that accreditation organizations and state agencies that oversee licensure and certification mandate coursework and fieldwork focused on DLLs.**
- **In conjunction with institutions of higher education, minimize barriers for individuals who received their education and training in a foreign country.**

Continued

- **Mount and support statewide initiatives to create an educator pipeline focused on expanding the workforce with the linguistic potential and cultural backgrounds reflective of the diversity of children served.**
- **Support the continuation of the National Workforce Registry Alliance and Early Childhood Data Collaborative that collects and tracks workforce characteristic**
- **Ensure that those individuals delivering training and education regarding young DLLs have appropriate knowledge about how first and second language develops in young children, be familiar with the different settings in which the workforce operates, understand the variation that exists in the knowledge base of educators and be sensitive to the cultural and linguistic differences that distinguish particular workforce audiences.**
- **Support K-12 leaders in understanding the development of young DLLs and associated best practices. When prekindergarten programs operate under the auspices of K-12 school systems, more attention to the coordination between segments is required including professional development of current educators and administrators who may have very little knowledge of young children's development and effective pedagogical practices for DLLs.**

Their Destiny is Our Future!

