



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FLORIDA AMONG FIVE STATES AWARDED GRANTS TO ADDRESS
COMPENSATION OF THE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE**

TALLAHASSEE, FL (February 14, 2017) The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center (Center) has awarded grants to five states to work on improving public awareness, public policies and funding to address the compensation of the early childhood workforce. The lead organizations for those states include the **Tallahassee-based Children's Forum, Inc.** (Florida), Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children, Child Care Services Association (North Carolina), and Wisconsin Early Childhood Association.

A study by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment found that 52 percent of Florida's child care and early learning practitioners participated in one or more public income support programs. Moreover, the average hourly wages for child care professionals is \$9.53 and \$11.65 for prekindergarten teachers.

“Parents struggle every day with the high cost of child care; yet teachers are often paid very low wages, said Sue Russell, Executive Director of the Center. “This project will allow states to explore strategies that decouple what parents can afford to pay from what well-educated, competent teachers deserve.”

With grant funding from the Alliance for Early Success, a national alliance of state, national and funding partners, each state's lead organization will assemble teams comprised of stakeholders who are committed to addressing the education, compensation and retention issues facing the early education workforce. In addition, they will create and implement a strategic action plan to move the needle on compensation over the coming year.

“Experiences that occur during the first five years of a child's life influence the trajectory for later success or failure in school and in life,” said Phyllis Kalifeh, Ed.D., President and CEO of the Children's Forum. “Quality early learning experiences begin with competent teachers who are fairly compensated. I applaud the Alliance for Early Success and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center for recognizing the needs of child care providers and look forward to improving outcomes for young children.”

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For more information on the Children's Forum, please contact Jenna Brown,
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About the Children's Forum

The Children's Forum is a statewide, nonprofit organization with an uncompromising mission to build and support systems which promote positive experiences and outcomes for young children. Through a broad array of programs, services, research and advocacy, the Forum is committed to helping children achieve life-long success.

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