

## ***New Jersey: Quick Stats on Young Children and Workers Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)***

### **Young Children under 6 in New Jersey**

Among the 621,000 young children in New Jersey overall, 55 percent are white, 22 percent are Hispanic, 14 percent are black, and 9 percent are Asian. The top languages spoken in young children's homes are English only (55 percent), followed by Spanish (25 percent) and Chinese, Hindi, or Portuguese (1 percent each). Young children of immigrants constitute 39 percent of all children ages 5 and under in the state. The young child population's ethnic, racial, and linguistic diversity calls attention to the need for increased cultural and linguistic competence in the early childhood workforce in order to effectively serve these children and their families.

### **ECEC Workforce**

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce in New Jersey grew by 110 percent between 1990 and 2011-13. Today, immigrants make up 27 percent of the overall ECEC workforce, and the foreign-born ECEC workforce alone has grown by 329 percent in the past two decades. The average age of ECEC workers is 40, and an overwhelming majority (95 percent) is female.

### ***Cultural and Linguistic Diversity***

The ECEC workforce in New Jersey is diverse, with approximately 56 percent identifying as white, 22 percent as Hispanic, 16 percent as black, and 5 percent as Asian. The languages spoken by ECEC workers reasonably reflect the languages represented in the young child population. Sixty-six percent speak only English, 20 percent speak Spanish, 2 percent Portuguese, and less than 1 percent Tagalog or Italian (each).

Immigrants provide much of the ethnic and language diversity present in the workforce and are therefore an important contributor of cultural and linguistic competence and skills in New Jersey.

### ***Education, English Proficiency, and Professional Standing***

Forty percent of New Jersey's ECEC workers overall have an associate's or higher degree. Nine percent are low educated, with less than a high school diploma. Immigrant ECEC workers are significantly more likely than their native counterparts to be low educated: 19 percent have attained less than a high school diploma, compared with only 4 percent of natives. On the other hand, a significant proportion of immigrant ECEC workers (33 percent) holds an associate's or higher degree.

Immigrants tend to be concentrated in lower-paying sectors of the workforce, with 27 percent of all immigrant workers employed as family-based care workers and 18 percent as private home-based child-care workers (versus 11 percent and 7 percent of natives, respectively). Conversely, only 14 percent of immigrant workers are employed as preschool teachers (compared with 30 percent of natives) and 2 percent as program directors (compared with 5 percent of natives). These data raise concerns about potential barriers to advancement for immigrant workers.

One such barrier to advancement may be the issue of limited English proficiency: 16 percent of the ECEC workforce overall, and 52 percent of immigrant ECEC workers, are classified as LEP.

### ***Wages and Income***

The average annual income for ECEC workers in New Jersey overall is \$29,000, which is only \$6,000 higher than the \$23,000 federal poverty level for a family of four. Overall, 14 percent of ECEC workers live in poverty in New Jersey. Immigrant ECEC workers are more likely to live in poverty than their native counterparts, at 21 percent compared with 11 percent of natives.

**Number, Race and Ethnicity, and Top 5 Languages Spoken for All Children and Children of Immigrants under Age 6**

<b>New Jersey</b>		
<b>Children under 6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Children of Immigrants</b>
<b>Size</b>	621,000	241,000
Immigrant share (%)		38.8
<b>Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home</b>		
Language 1	English only	Spanish
Share language 1 (%)	55.2	43.1
Language 2	Spanish	English only
Share language 2 (%)	24.7	12.5
Language 3	Chinese*	Hindi
Share language 3 (%)	1.4	3.6
Language 4	Hindi	Chinese*
Share language 4 (%)	1.4	3.5
Language 5	Portuguese	Arabic
Share language 5 (%)	1.4	3.2
<b>Race/Ethnicity* (%)</b>		
Non-Hispanic whites	54.8	27.1
Non-Hispanic blacks	13.8	10.5
Non-Hispanic Asians	9	24.1
Hispanics	22.2	38.1

## Size, Growth, and Key Characteristics of the Total, Immigrant, and Native ECEC Workforce

New Jersey			
ECEC Workforce	Total	Immigrants	Natives
<b>Size and Growth</b>			
<b>1990</b>			
ECEC workforce (estimate)	27,000	4,000	23,000
Immigrant share (%)		13.4	
<b>2011-13</b>			
ECEC workforce (estimate)	56,000	15,000	41,000
Immigrant share (%)		27.4	
Percent change: 1990 to 2011-13	109.7	329	75.7
<b>Characteristics in 2011-13</b>			
Average age	39.4	43.7	37.8
Share female (%)	94.8	97.7	93.7
<b>Top 5 Languages Spoken</b>			
Language 1	English only	Spanish	English only
Share language 1 (%)	66.3	47.3	85.3
Language 2	Spanish	English only	Spanish
Share language 2 (%)	20.5	16.1	10.4
Language 3	Portuguese	Portuguese	Italian
Share language 3 (%)	1.8	5.5	0.8
Language 4	Tagalog	Tagalog	Arabic
Share language 4 (%)	1.1	3.6	0.6
Language 5	Italian	Gujar	Portuguese
Share language 5 (%)	0.9	2.7	0.4
<b>English Proficiency</b>			
Share limited English proficient (LEP)	15.7	52.1	2
<b>Race/Ethnicity* (%)</b>			
Non-Hispanic whites	56.4	24.1	68.6
Non-Hispanic blacks	16.2	12.1	17.8
Non-Hispanic Asians	5	15.2	1.1
Hispanics	22.1	48.4	12.2
<b>Educational Attainment (%)</b>			
Population ages 25 and older	44,000	14,000	30,000
Less than high school	9	19.2	4.2
High school/GED/Some college	51.2	48.2	52.6
Associate's or higher	39.8	32.6	43.2

<b>Occupational Groups (%)</b>			
Population ages 16 and older	56,000	15,000	41,000
Family-based child-care worker	15.1	26.6	10.8
Private home-based child-care worker	10.1	18.3	7
Teacher assistant	10.9	7.3	12.2
Preschool teacher	25.5	14	29.8
Center-based child-care worker	34.1	31.7	35
Director of programs	4.4	2.1	5.3
<b>Average Annual Earned Income (\$)***</b>			
All workers	29,000	26,000	31,000
<b>Poverty (%)</b>			
Under 100 percent poverty	13.6	21.2	10.7
100-199 percent poverty	16.8	22.6	14.6
200 percent or higher	69.6	56.1	74.7

Notes: \*Chinese includes Chinese, Mandarin and Cantonese.

\* Other race is not included due to small numbers

\*\* Workers who worked full time year around and earned at least 1 dollar in previous year

This fact sheet is based on analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011-13 (pooled) American Community Survey (ACS). For definitions and national-level trends, see *Immigrant and Refugee Workers in the Early Childhood Field: Taking a Closer Look*, [www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrant-and-refugee-workers-early-childhood-field-taking-closer-look](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrant-and-refugee-workers-early-childhood-field-taking-closer-look).

Limited English Proficient (LEP) status applies to persons who reported speaking English less than "very well" in the ACS.

The 2012 federal poverty threshold for a family of four with two children under age 18 was \$23,283 and for an unrelated individual, \$11,720. See U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty Thresholds for 2012 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children under 18 Years," accessed April 3, 2015, [www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/).

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