

## How the Model Works

The model compensation scale for child care and development personnel works as a wage matrix that takes into consideration experience, responsibilities and education. Each row represents a position and each column displays an education requirement. Each cell in the table represents the hourly wage rate for a combination of position, years of service and education level. Some cells with NA values identify those combinations that are not applicable, such as a combination of an assistant teacher position with a Master degree.

The base wage for a person with no experience and a minimum level of education requirement - six to 12 units of early childhood education/child development (ECE/CD) - is determined by the living wage level for a single individual in Los Angeles County. This level is estimated at \$12.20 per hour (California Budget Project, 2008) assuming that health insurance is provided by the employer. The base value in the matrix represents this living wage level, which is the bottom left value in the table.

Starting from this base wage level of \$12.20<sup>1</sup>, a child development worker would receive a \$.25 per hour wage increase for each year of experience in the same child development center. For example, an assistant teacher would earn \$12.45 per hour after completing one year of service in the same center. Years of service column illustrates the wage increments for each additional year served in the same center. Wage rates would increase up to five years of service for each position. Zero (0) years of service refers to the starting position in a specific child development center. The rate of increase (\$.25 per hour) for each additional year of service is identical for all positions. This does not take into consideration merit increases, which can vary and may take the place of an increase based on time on the job alone.

This scale places the greatest emphasis on educational attainment. Regardless of experience, upon receiving a higher level of education, the worker's wage would increase by a certain increment depending on the level of education. The rate of increase between different education steps varies. For example, an assistant teacher completes more than 12 units of ECE/CD (moving to the next step), her/his hourly wage would increase by \$.50 per hour. Likewise, staff (an assistant teacher, teacher or a head teacher) who obtains a Bachelor degree would earn an additional \$2.50 per hour. Finally, when a worker is promoted to a higher level of position with additional responsibilities, the wage level would go up by \$.75 per hour at a given education level. This rate of increase is fixed for all promotions. For example, when a teacher with three years of service and an Associate degree (fourth level of education) is promoted to a lead teacher, her/his hourly wage would increase from \$16.45 to \$17.20 per hour.

The mid-range for head/lead teacher under Bachelor degree qualifications is \$21.45 per hour. The annual salary at this hourly rate is the equivalent of the average annual salary for California kindergarten teachers. See notes at the bottom of the scale for more salary equivalents.

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<sup>1</sup> The scale version with an allowance for health coverage begins at \$13.52 per hour.