

# Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA

## 2022 Program Evaluation for Supplement Recipients



30 of 34 returned - 88%

**County:** Adams (1), Buffalo (4), Cedar (1), Custer (1), Dawes (2), Douglas (3), Gosper (1), Hall (1), Holt (1), Lancaster (8), Pierce (1), Platte (2), Sarpy (1), York (1)

**The staff of the Child Care WAGE\$® Program at Nebraska AEYC has been:**

|  |    |     |
|--|----|-----|
| Very helpful & pleasant                                | 26 | 87% |
| Somewhat helpful & pleasant                            | 2  | 7%  |
| Somewhat unhelpful & somewhat unpleasant               | 1  | 3%  |
| Not helpful or pleasant at all                         | 0  | 0%  |
| I have not had the opportunity to speak with the staff | 0  | 0%  |
| No Answer  | 1  |     |

**Would you like to comment on your interactions with the WAGE\$ staff?**

- Friendly and informative.
- It has always been great!
- Very responsive and attentive.
- Always helpful and was nice to meet Julie at a Norfolk convention.
- I always have positive interactions and quick responses.
- WAGE\$ staff are always helping and ensuring everything is taken care of.
- All of my questions have been addressed quickly.
- WAGE\$ staff are awesome.
- Always.
- Julie is very helpful and a great help with any questions!
- Every time I have reached out, they have been very helpful and responsive.
- They are easy to reach and always help answer questions.
- N/A (2)
- There has been very little interaction since there hasn't been any funds.

**Have you noticed any of the following benefits from receiving the WAGE\$ supplement?**

WAGE\$ helps me feel more satisfied with my job.

|           |    |     |
|-----------|----|-----|
| Yes       | 27 | 90% |
| No        | 3  | 10% |
| No Answer | 0  |     |

WAGE\$ is an incentive for me to seek additional education and/or it helps make pursuing coursework more financially feasible.

|           |    |     |
|-----------|----|-----|
| Yes       | 22 | 73% |
| No        | 8  | 27% |
| No Answer | 0  |     |

|  |    |     |
|--|----|-----|
| The WAGE\$ supplement helps ease financial stress. |    |     |
| Yes  | 26 | 87% |
| No   | 4  | 13% |
| No Answer  | 0  |     |

|   |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| WAGE\$ encourages me to stay with my current program. |    |     |
| Yes   | 27 | 90% |
| No  | 3  | 10% |
| No Answer   | 0  |     |

|   |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| My WAGE\$ supplement helps provide more resources for my program. |    |     |
| Yes   | 28 | 93% |
| No  | 2  | 7%  |
| No Answer   | 0  |     |

|  |    |     |
|--|----|-----|
| The WAGE\$ supplement makes me feel more appreciated & recognized for my work. |    |     |
| Yes  | 29 | 97% |
| No   | 1  | 3%  |
| No Answer  | 0  |     |

**Please list any other ways you believe Child Care WAGE\$® Program has helped you.**

- N/A; Not enough money.
- Makes me feel my education I have is worth it and I get something for my extra work.
- It has helped me supply more materials for my program and it has helped relieve some financial stress.
- These resources help me feel that what I do and my education matter.
- I consider WAGE\$ as a bonus (something this job doesn't usually have). Makes me appreciate my job more.
- It is paying for my masters and lately covered lots of unexpected items.
- This program has helped to supplement funding in my small ECE program so I may not need to pass along this financial burden to families.
- It makes me feel valued as a child care worker & helps ease financial stress for sure.
- The Child Care WAGE\$® program has helped us to continue to provide high quality care (get new materials and attend trainings).
- The funds have helped me purchase high quality items for my program, such as birch toy shelves and toys/materials. It has also helped me financially when I have had sick days closed unpaid otherwise.
- I love that it can be used for my program, myself, or both!
- I love being recognized for my education and work.
- The WAGE\$ program has helped me in paying for personal family expenses without having to dip into business funds.
- Has helped me feel validated in this career.
- It's an incentive, but not enough to relieve financial burden. It keeps me focused on the next step to keep moving forward.
- Since it hasn't been predictable, it's great "fun money", but sadly it doesn't seem like we can count on it.

**If you have not noticed any benefits, please explain why you believe the program has not yet helped you.**

- No longer receive it due to lack of funding for the program.
- N/A (2)
- Not enough money. Now they stop sending us money altogether.
- The only negative is when it says you get it twice a year and then you count on it and then there aren't funds. Wish it was calculated out to be more dependable.

**How has the WAGE\$ supplement made an important financial impact on your life?**

|   |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| I have been better able to pay my bills (electric, water, phone, etc.).   | 18 | 60% |
| I have been better able to address the basic needs of my family (food/housing).   | 16 | 53% |
| I have been better able to address the transportation needs of my family (gas, auto insurance, car payments, car repairs, etc.) | 12 | 40% |
| I have been better able to address the health needs of my family (medical bills, insurance, medication).                        | 14 | 47% |
| I have used my supplement to help pay for child care costs.   | 7  | 20% |
| I have been better able to pay for school for myself.   | 8  | 27% |
| I have been able to help pay for school for my child/grandchild/other family member.  | 5  | 17% |
| I have used my supplement to provide additional resources for my child care program.  | 25 | 83% |
| I have used my supplement to help pay for family recreation, gifts for others, or personal rewards.                             | 18 | 60% |
| I have used my supplement to start/add to my savings.   | 12 | 40% |
| I have not found the supplement to be a financial benefit.  | 4  | 13% |
| No Answer   | 1  |     |

**If the supplement has financially benefited you in other ways, please share those.**

- It's been "fun money", which is fine, but it would be nice to actually plan on it.
- Helped me to pay for medical bills for my daughter's birth.
- I've been able to rent a facility and move my child care out of my home, benefiting my family and my environments.
- N/A
- I try to save for emergencies.
- The money has been helpful to use towards the wear & tear child care has on my home.
- Depends on the timing of the money, but I have placed it in a retirement fund.
- It keeps me working for the next level.

**If you have not found the supplement to be a financial benefit, please explain why.**

- N/A
- When there is no supplement, it's pretty difficult to find benefits.
- Not enough money.

**As an overall evaluation of the Child Care WAGE\$® Program, I am:**

|                       |    |     |
|-----------------------|----|-----|
| Very satisfied        | 22 | 73% |
| Somewhat satisfied    | 6  | 20% |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 2  | 7%  |
| Dissatisfied          | 0  | 0%  |
| No Answer             | 0  |     |

**If you are dissatisfied with the Child Care WAGE\$ Program, please explain why.**

- There should have been better communication when the funds ran out and what kind of timeline or future exists.
- They stop paying money.
- I am disappointed funds ran out.
- I was sorry to see the program end.
- Heard some didn't get funding, so definitely can't depend on it. It is more of an extra help.
- I am concerned about how a program runs out of funding during a fiscal year.
- I am very disappointed there weren't funds to issue the last supplement.
- N/A
- The only way I have been dissatisfied with the program is funding was depleted before I received the second portion, so additional funding would be a solution.
- Just dissatisfied that it lost funding.

**Do you have any questions about the Child Care WAGE\$® Program or how it works?**

**Understanding your questions may help us improve our communication and outreach.**

- None (3)
- No questions, just more communication from program staff regarding the status of funding for the year. I was expecting the second portion and as a result of not receiving it (funding depleted), I had to pass along the expense to families.
- Funding sources – How and where is the funding working? Maybe I just haven't seen, but a budget and maybe a year report of how funding is being spent.
- No (5)
- N/A (4)
- A little refresher is always good. Sometimes one forgets what all is offered. Could be done through email.
- I just wish when we filled out the papers we knew if we were getting it or not.

**Why do you think the Child Care WAGE\$® Program is important? What has it meant to your life, to the children in your care, and/or to the early childhood community?**

- It surely could be important, but it has to be consistent. No one can plan or budget with no real idea of when funds are coming.
- If they paid us, it would help.
- With costs of everything rising, any financial help is appreciated.
- Yes, any recognition and award for advancing more than others is helpful.
- Child Care WAGE\$® has helped supplement my income to purchase new materials for my family child care, helped me pay bills and add some money to savings for my emergency fund.
- ECED is a hard field to work in. WAGE\$ has helped me feel better about my career and allow me to provide extras for myself, my family, and my business.

- This program has allowed me as a small ECE program to utilize funding from WAGE\$ and not need to pass along the cost to tuition paying families.
- I think it is super important as it gives child care workers a reason to pursue further education, feel more valued for what they do, and provide encouragement to stay in the field. It has allowed me personally to pursue and get my bachelor's degree in early childhood, as well as provide funding for me to purchase materials for my program.
- Encourages me to pursue further education.
- Huge! I would not have an associate degree without WAGE\$! I have been able to do great things by saying I have a degree. My families and community see it, too.
- I think ECE teachers are a dying profession. A lot of that has to do with wages. This makes up for a small portion of what we are losing out on.
- People question why I don't teach in the public schools and why I have wasted my education. WAGE\$ helps provide meaning and value to my career choice.
- It is a way for providers to increase wages based on education without burdening family with tuition cost. It is helping bridge the gap in pay for early childhood educators.
- Nice to be recognized for going above and beyond a child care provider who has no childhood education. Keeps me from needing to charge my families more.
- It helps us child care providers feel that someone sees us and knows how challenging this profession can be at times. It helps to be able to pay bills and to get the extra things on our wish lists to help allow our kids to grow and explore that we may not have been able to get otherwise. Early childhood professionals are essential, but it is definitely a job that typically has long hours and can, at times, be very trying. Pair that with low wages, and people don't stick around long. WAGE\$ helps incentivize people to not only better themselves with schooling and/or training, but also gives them money to help them do so.
- WAGE\$ helps early childhood educators earn wages closer to a living wage without charging families more tuition. It also makes some providers consider the benefits of furthering their education, which is very important.
- It has been a big incentive to want to continue my education. It also helps make me feel appreciated for all that I do.
- Empowering and validating.
- This has been a great program that has given child care providers a little bit more financial support without charging the parents more. Many parents are unable to pay more for their child care business and I have been able to keep the same rates by using this supplement instead of increasing rates.
- Helps continue to provide child care, which I love, affordably.
- It has relieved some financial burden and stress. I have been able to work on program improvements.
- The WAGE\$ program has helped me provide not only quality items for the children in my care, but also income for me on days I would otherwise not be paid, such as sick days. Many programs, such as myself, remain at the same fee as before the pandemic. Prices of items have gone up, yet this allows me to continue to provide cost-efficient care.
- Because it helps financially in a position that already is underpaid. We can't increase income without increasing tuition and that sometimes is not ideal for families, so having this extra money helps to compensate for that.
- It has helped me get paid the same as others with my degree.
- I am less worried about making ends meet. I am able to continue child care.

- It has helped me be able to continue my education without worries of financial instability. The extra money helps pay my bills. I am disappointed about losing funds because I am not getting enough credit hours per semester.

**The funds for Child Care WAGE\$® supplements are provided by the Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative and the Nebraska Department of Education. What would you like to tell them about the supplement?**

- See above. It is a great program that could help both centers and home-based programs with enough funding.
- Thank you for recognizing the importance of quality ECE and the need for funding without passing further expenses to families.
- I am always thankful and appreciative to be acknowledged for my education and career with these funds.
- Providers need this. Please consider making it available for all providers.
- Appreciate every little bit, especially with the current financial situation with inflation killing us right now.
- I would like to say “thank you” to all involved in the WAGE\$ program.
- I value having incentives like WAGE\$ to help motivate myself to be more and do more for my business.
- They need to pay more money.
- It's great recognition for the work of furthering one's education.
- I enjoy receiving the supplements. It has helped me with extra income to pay my bills. It will hurt me to not receive the funds because I cannot meet the required credit hours due to difficulty for me to do more than one course.
- This has really helped. It has been able to help me continue in the early childhood field that I love.
- Thank you! (4)
- Thank you so much! You have no idea how much this extra money helps, especially right now that everything is getting more expensive.
- These funds have been crucial to my program. Receiving them truly benefits not only myself as an educated provider, but also to the children in my care.
- I hope they continue the program!
- Thank you! It has allowed me to make changes to be more fulfilled in my employment I otherwise wouldn't have been able to do.
- This supplement is not only helping child care providers, but the families they serve as well. Helping us with the needed finances without putting an additional strain on the families we serve.
- Thank you! WAGE\$ helps me feel validated and recognized for all the time, effort, and money I put into my program.
- As state above, it helps so many people out in so many ways and we are so appreciative of this program.
- Thank you so much! I feel appreciated for my work.
- Please work on finding a permanent funding source for this program. Also consider raising the stipend amount as minimum wage increases. As minimum wage increases, providers might be using these funds toward staff wages.
- Thank you for investing in quality child care programs and providers!
- Thank you for supporting us as this helps us give back to our community, too!

**Are you familiar with the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program? (T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships to help early childhood educators increase their education, and possibly move up the WAGE\$ scale. If you would like more information about these scholarships, please call 402-858-5143 or email [teach@nebraskaaeyp.org](mailto:teach@nebraskaaeyp.org) to request T.E.A.C.H. materials.)**

- Yes (5)
- Yes, currently enrolled in T.E.A.C.H.
- Yes, I am familiar with the program. It is a wonderful program.
- Yes, I'm familiar.
- Yes, I am currently a recipient.
- Yes, I am aware.
- Yes, I got my bachelor's with T.E.A.C.H.
- I am familiar.
- T.E.A.C.H. is amazing and I look forward to a possible expansion to funding for masters programs.
- I am familiar. I already have my bachelor's degree, so it doesn't apply to me.
- Yes, looking forward to applying at a later time.
- Yes. I used it to obtain my teaching certificate.
- Yes, I am and I use it! So thankful!