



# Vermont Early Childhood Education and Afterschool Workforce Report

2024 Data on the Workforce within Regulated Child  
Care Programs

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The Vermont Department for Children and Families' mission is to foster the healthy development, safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency of Vermonters. The Department is structured around six divisions that deliver programs and services to Vermonters—one of those is the Child Development Division. The Child Development Division strives to improve the well-being of Vermont's children. It does this by working in partnership with families, early childhood and afterschool program staff, community members, and state and federal entities to increase statewide, client-centered access to developmentally appropriate and equitable child development services.



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# Executive Summary

The early childhood education and afterschool workforce are the backbone of Vermont's child care system and central to all efforts to improve child care capacity and quality. As the state works towards its goals for young children and its early childhood education and afterschool programs, this report offers information to guide the state's collective discussions and specific improvement initiatives.

The Vermont Early Childhood Education and Afterschool Workforce Report is a Child Development Division (CDD) publication that provides information on the number, roles, and educational backgrounds of the people serving Vermont's young children in regulated child care settings. This report aggregates data collected in the state's Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) as of December 31, 2024, and includes individuals who work in family child care homes, center-based child care and preschool programs, and afterschool programs regulated by CDD. Data on position type and education or credentials is analyzed by program type and region; comparisons to December 31, 2022 are provided when available.

Given the importance of a skilled and stable workforce serving young children<sup>1</sup> and the impact of child care on Vermont's economy overall, it is essential that we continue to assess the size and strength of the workforce and tailor policy and programs to meet needs in the state. This is the first report to look at workforce data since Act 76 passed in June 2023 and additional state funds began flowing to child care programs.

Data in this report indicate multiple positive trends related to the number of people in the workforce and their qualifications. Key findings include:

- The number of individuals working in regulated child care settings has increased by 8.5%, from 7,551 in 2022 to 8,190 in 2024.
- Increases were seen across nearly all educational/credential levels. While individuals working in regulated early childhood education and afterschool programs have a range of educational credentials, the number reporting post-secondary degrees is increasing. The number of individuals holding verified doctorate, master's, bachelor's, or associate's degrees increased by 22.4% from 2,512 in 2022 to 3,074 in 2024.

Information in this report supports the need for continued investments across the workforce development continuum, from initial career exploration opportunities and development of those already working in the field and seeking additional degrees and credentials to retention efforts

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<sup>1</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>.



for those who already hold relevant degrees and credentials. While additional data collection and analysis is needed, the findings point to the value of the workforce development programs expanded or initiated in recent years, including youth apprenticeships, scholarships for post-secondary education, student loan repayment assistance, and advanced professional development. With increased resources available from Act 76 of 2023 and the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five, Vermont is positioned to make continued progress in developing the workforce needed to provide safe, developmentally appropriate, enriching care and learning to children in regulated child care programs.



# Introduction

The Vermont Early Childhood Education and Afterschool Workforce Report is a Child Development Division (CDD) publication that provides information on the number, roles, and educational backgrounds of people serving Vermont's young children in regulated child care. The early childhood education and afterschool workforce are the backbone of Vermont's child care system and central to all efforts to improve child care capacity and quality. As the state reflects on its goals for young children and its early childhood education and afterschool programs, we hope that this report will inform collective discussions and improvement initiatives.

Because of the changing landscape of the child care in early childhood education and afterschool settings in Vermont during COVID-19 and major changes driven by Act 76 of 2023, this report compares data from December 2022 and December 2024. Data from prior years is available in previous reports.

## Data Collection and Scope of Report

CDD collects data on the regulated child care, preschool, and afterschool workforce in the state's Bright Futures Information System (BFIS). Data housed in BFIS includes place of employment, position, education, credentials, and training for individuals working in regulated child care settings; this data is collected to ensure compliance with Vermont's child care licensing regulations.

This report focuses on the subset of individuals holding positions that provide direct care and supervision to children in care. Individuals included in this report were associated with a regulated child care program in BFIS on December 31, 2024, and were working in a position involving direct care or supervision of children. These individuals work in the following settings:

- Family child care homes, both registered and licensed program types
- Full and part-day center-based child care programs serving children ages 6 weeks to 13 years, including Head Start programs, privately and publicly operated prekindergarten programs, and non-recurring child care services often provided at places such as ski resorts
- Afterschool programs regulated by CDD.



Education and credentials collected through BFIS represent data that have been reported by the individual and verified by Northern Lights at the Community College of Vermont (CCV).<sup>2</sup> If individuals have degrees or credentials that were not verified by Northern Lights at CCV on December 31, 2024, they were not captured within this report. Data is broken out by program type and position when possible. Please see Appendix A for a more detailed methodology.

## Data Limitations

This report is limited in scope based on the availability of relevant data and analytical resources. This report does not contain any analysis of the efficacy of the workforce. It does not analyze if individuals are qualified for their positions or are working with an approved variance. This report also does not capture data on individuals who have completed college coursework but did not obtain a degree or credential. BFIS does not collect (and this report does not contain) information on compensation, workforce turnover, job openings, or full- or part-time employment. The report does not analyze connections between the number of staff and the capacity of child care programs or the availability of child care in Vermont.

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<sup>2</sup> Northern Lights at CCV is the state's hub for professional development for the early childhood and afterschool workforce that verifies qualifications and required professional development as well as providing advising and training. Data on the education and credentials of individuals in the regulated child care, preschool, and afterschool workforce are collected and verified by Northern Lights at CCV.



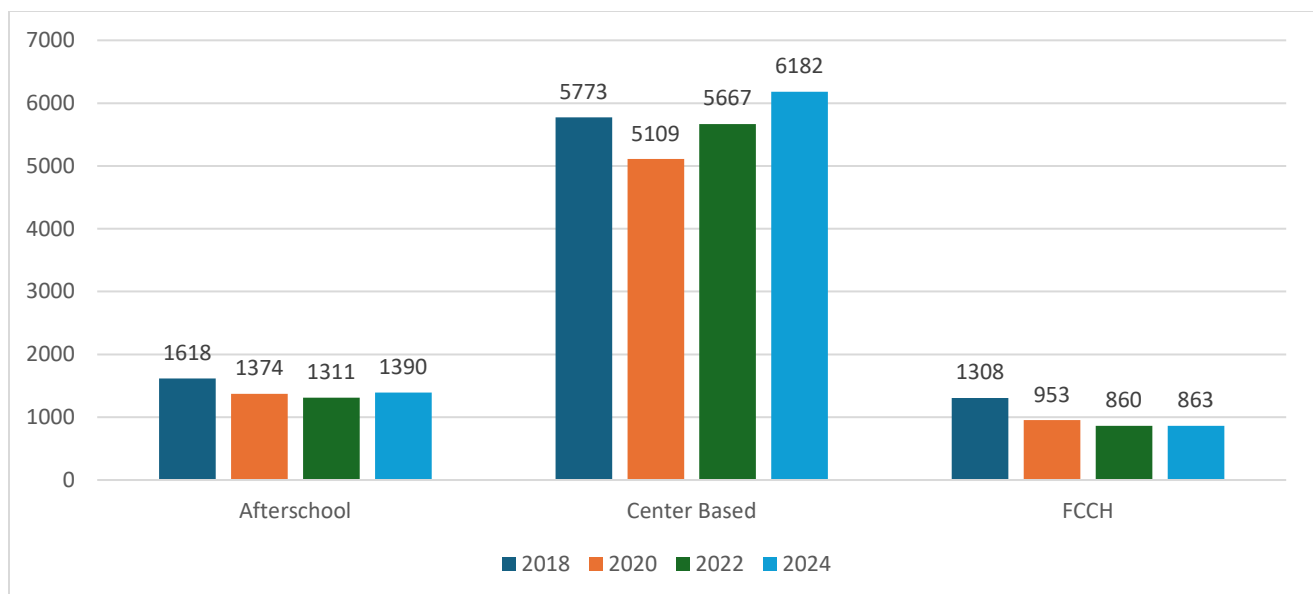
# Vermont's Regulated Child Care Workforce

The data reported represents individuals in BFIS, with no end date of employment, who work in positions related to the direct care of children. Data is sorted by the individuals' highest position held in a program. Individuals who work in multiple programs and/or multiple types of programs will only be shown once in the data in the highest position for each program type.

As of December 31, 2024, there were approximately 12,000 unique individuals working in regulated child care programs in the State of Vermont. This number includes cooks, partner staff, and other individuals who would not necessarily be responsible for providing direct care and supervision to children enrolled in their respective program(s).

This report focuses on 8,190 individuals that work directly with children in regulated care as of December 31, 2024, comparing them to the 7,551 individuals from 2022.<sup>3</sup> This comparison shows an 8.5% increase in the number of individuals working in regulated care.

Figure 1: Individuals working in regulated child care, 2018 - 2024



The increases varied by setting with a 6% increase in afterschool, a 9% increase in center-based, and a 0.3% increase in family child care homes.

<sup>3</sup> The 2022 figure has been revised up from the number presented in the 2022 workforce report. An issue in the data extract has been identified and adjusted the total number from 7,711 to 7,551.



Of the individuals working in regulated child care in 2024, 232 (2.8%) work in more than one type of program setting. For example, an employee at Afterschool Program may also work at a Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Program. Because individuals may work in more than one setting, counts by program type are not mutually exclusive and will not sum to the total for the full field.

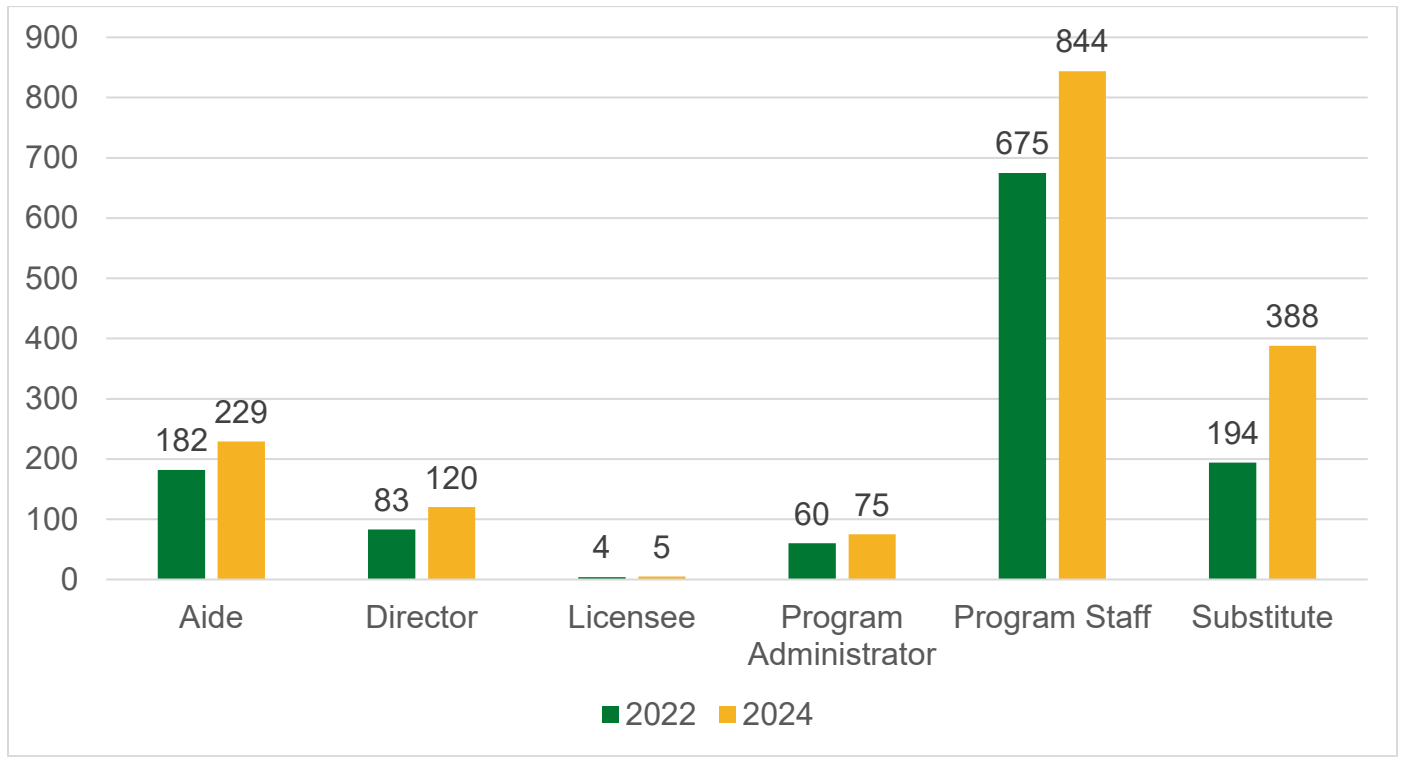
## Positions in Regulated Child Care by Role and Program Type

The following charts show the number of positions held by program type. Regulated child care saw increases in nearly all position types across all program types. The largest increases were for substitutes, assistants, and teacher associates.

Because individuals may hold more than one position, the charts reflect changes in positions held, not the total number of unique individuals working in regulated child care. For example, if a person serves as an Assistant at one program and a Substitute at another, both positions are represented in the charts below. At least 428 positions in the Center Based Child Care setting, 285 positions in the Afterschool Child Care setting, and twelve positions in the Family Child Care Home setting are filled by individuals who worked in multiple positions.



Figure 2. Afterschool Child Care Programs

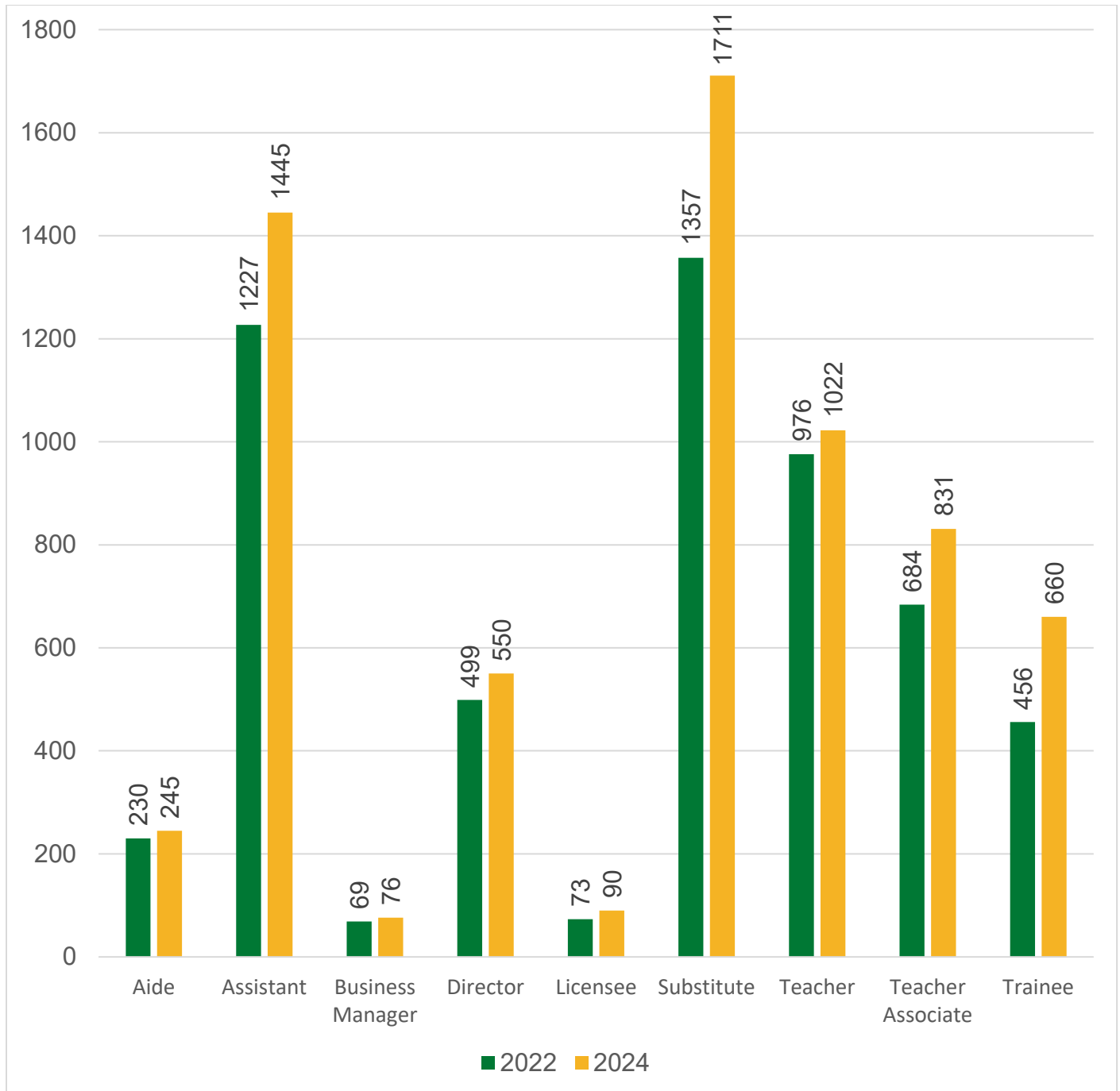


From 2022 to 2024, the total number of positions in regulated afterschool programs increased by 463 (39%). This reflects both an increase in individuals working in this program type as well as an increase in people holding multiple positions. The largest increases were in substitutes (194 more positions, 100% higher than 2022) and program staff (169 more positions, 25% increase). Notable increases were also seen in aides (47 more positions, 26% increase) and directors (37 more positions, 45% increase).

While licensed capacity within afterschool programs has declined from 2022 to 2024, these increases may point to higher program enrollment and consistency within regulated afterschool programs.



Figure 3. Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Programs



From 2022 to 2024, the number of positions held in center-based child care and preschool programs increased by 1,059 (19%). This reflects both an increase in individuals working in this program type as well as an increase in people holding multiple positions. The largest increases were in substitutes (354 more positions, 26% increase), assistants (218 more positions, 18%

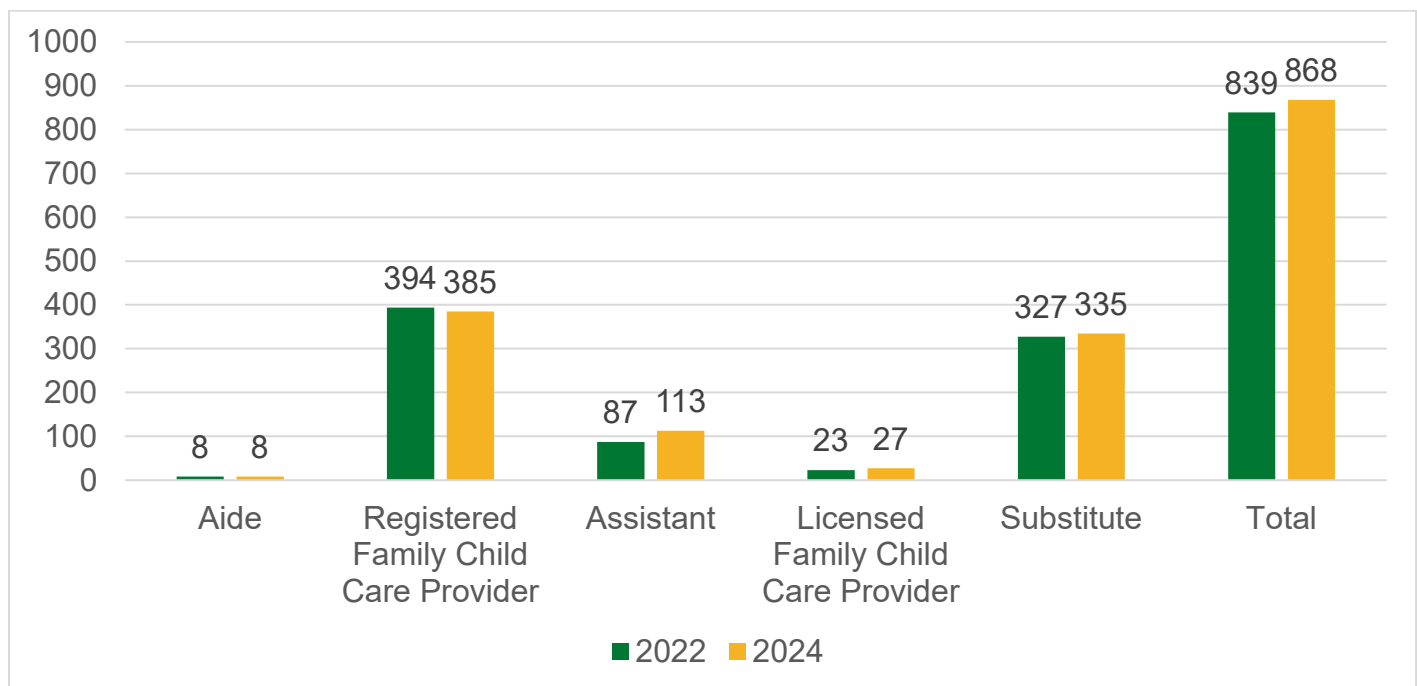


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increase) and trainees (204 more positions, 45% increase). Notable increases were also seen in teacher associates (147 positions, 21% increase), teachers (46 positions, 5% increase), and directors (51 positions, 10% increase).

The position growth across centers may indicate increased child care capacity and more consistent staffing. The most significant increases were in positions with fewer requirements and typically considered entry level, such as substitutes, assistants, and trainees. As a result, the percentage of people in field positions with higher qualifications (teacher, teacher associates, directors) decreased even as their numbers increased. This points to the need for continued investments to support staff in advancing their credentials and to retain and support staff who have already earned credentials.

Figure 4. Family Child Care Homes



From 2022 to 2024, the number of people working in all positions in family child care programs increased by 29 people (3%). The largest increase was in assistants (26 more people, 30% increase). The increase in the number of assistants may indicate that more family child care homes are hiring paid help or able to support their substitutes to get additional qualifications.

Registered family child care providers declined by 9 (2%) between 2022 and 2024, while licensed family child care home providers increased by 4, (17%). However, since the fourth quarter of 2023, the data shows a largely consistent pattern of growth, as most of the losses were in the first part of 2023. CDD data also shows a net gain of 11 registered family child care homes between Q4 2023 and Q4 2024, a trend which has continued into 2025.



## Education and Credentials

Data on the education and credentials of individuals in the regulated child care, preschool, and afterschool workforce are collected and verified by Northern Lights at CCV. This report contains data that has been collected by Northern Lights and entered in BFIS through December 31, 2024.

People working in regulated child care in Vermont are required to maintain a BFIS credential account with their certifications and educational credentials listed. However, the absence of education records does not necessarily imply a lack of education or a lack of qualifications for the position; it does indicate that whatever certificates and/or degrees an individual may possess have not been verified and posted within BFIS. Newer staff members as well as those working in positions with fewer requirements may not have up-to-date accounts. Staff working in public-school-operated prekindergarten programs are not required to maintain up-to-date BFIS accounts as their education is verified by their school district. In addition, this requirement was not widely enforced during the COVID-19 pandemic though CDD has returned to normal child care licensing enforcement. As public investment in child care continues, more attention may be placed on uniform and up-to-date credentials and technology improvements can enhance availability of data and strength of analysis.

## Positions With Education Listed in their BFIS Credential Account

The following tables represent the number of individuals employed by position and program type along with whether they have any education listed in their credential account.

Overall, positions with higher qualifications have higher rates of education listed in their BFIS credential account.



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Table 1. Number of Afterschool Program Positions and Percentage with BFIS Credential Accounts

| Position               | Number       | % with Education Listed in BFIS |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Aides                  | 229          | 9%                              |
| Directors              | 120          | 88%                             |
| Licensees              | 5            | 80%                             |
| Program Administrators | 75           | 92%                             |
| Program Staff          | 844          | 41%                             |
| Substitutes            | 388          | 42%                             |
| <b>Total Positions</b> | <b>1,661</b> | <b>58%</b>                      |

Table 2. Number of Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Program Positions and Percentage with BFIS Credential Accounts

| Position               | Number       | % with Education Listed in BFIS |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Aides                  | 245          | 40%                             |
| Assistants             | 1445         | 62%                             |
| Business Managers      | 76           | 71%                             |
| Directors              | 550          | 93%                             |
| Licensees              | 90           | 62%                             |
| Substitutes            | 1711         | 45%                             |
| Teachers               | 1022         | 80%                             |
| Teacher Associates     | 831          | 75%                             |
| Trainees               | 660          | 30%                             |
| <b>Total Positions</b> | <b>6,630</b> | <b>62%</b>                      |

Table 3. Family Child Care Home Positions with Education Listed in BFIS

| Position                               | Total      | % with Education Listed in BFIS |
|----------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Aides                                  | 8          | 25%                             |
| Assistants                             | 113        | 58%                             |
| Licensed Family Child Care Providers   | 27         | 96%                             |
| Registered Family Child Care Providers | 385        | 95%                             |
| Substitutes                            | 335        | 44%                             |
| <b>Total Positions</b>                 | <b>868</b> | <b>64%</b>                      |



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Overall, as of December 2024, 61% of direct-care position records within regulated care have a degree or credential verified in BFIS, an increase from 54.7% in 2022. This contributes to the overall increase in education and credentials documented in the remainder of the report.

Submission rates are higher for those positions that lead classrooms and/or have programmatic leadership roles: directors, program administrators, teachers, teacher associates, and both registered and licensed family child care homes. Rates are lowest for substitutes, aides, and trainees, which are positions with fewer qualifications and often shorter tenures. This suggests that positions that lead classrooms and/or programs are better represented in the data. It also suggests that those without education and credentials in BFIS are less likely to have education and credentials at high levels.

## Education and Credentials for Regulated Child Care Overall

The following charts and tables reflect individuals with known education records as of the end of December 2024, compared to December 2022. The following reflects these individuals' highest level of achievement. If someone has a bachelor's degree and a CDA, only the bachelor's degree will be counted.

**Table 4. Number and Percentage of Individuals Working in Regulated Child Care with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level (2024)**

| <b>Degree or Credential</b>                                                                | <b>2024</b> | <b>% at this Level</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 701         | 13%                    |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 2           | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 855         | 16%                    |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 135         | 3%                     |
| Afterschool Credential                                                                     | 0           | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 222         | 4%                     |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 44          | 1%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 259         | 5%                     |
| Associate, and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                                | 595         | 11%                    |
| Bachelor's Degree, and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                  | 1838        | 35%                    |



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| <b>Degree or Credential</b>                                         | <b>2024</b> | <b>% at this Level</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Master Degree, and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate | 622         | 12%                    |
| Doctorate                                                           | 19          | 0%                     |
| <b>Total with Credential in BFIS</b>                                | <b>5292</b> |                        |

Among those staff with verified credentials, 58% reported having a college degree at the associate's level or higher. Another 5% report a Vermont Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate or apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate, all of which require college credits. The most common highest credential reported was a bachelor's degree (35%) and a Vermont Early Childhood Level 1 Certificate or the Fundamentals course (16%).

**Table 5. Change in Individuals Working in Regulated Child Care by Highest Education Level in BFIS (2022 and 2024)**

| <b>Degree or Credential</b>                                                                | <b>2022</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b># change</b> | <b>% change</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 457         | 701         | 244             | 53%             |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 2           | 2           | 0               | 0%              |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate <sup>4</sup> or Fundamentals Course Completion      | 667         | 855         | 188             | 28%             |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 88          | 135         | 47              | 53%             |
| Afterschool Credential                                                                     | 1           | 0           | -1              | -100%           |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 226         | 222         | -4              | -2%             |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 36          | 44          | 8               | 22%             |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 199         | 259         | 60              | 30%             |
| Associate, and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                                | 466         | 595         | 129             | 28%             |

<sup>4</sup> Vermont's Early Childhood Level Certificates recognize for education and experience in alignment with Vermont's [Early Childhood Career Ladder - Northern Lights at CCV](#)



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| <b>Degree or Credential</b>                                               | <b>2022</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b># change</b> | <b>% change</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bachelor's Degree, and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate | 1482        | 1838        | 356             | 24%             |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate      | 549         | 622         | 73              | 13%             |
| Doctorate                                                                 | 15          | 19          | 4               | 27%             |
| <b>Total with Education or Credential listed in BFIS</b>                  | <b>4188</b> | <b>5292</b> | <b>1104</b>     | <b>26%</b>      |
| No Education or Credential Listed in BFIS                                 | 3425        | 3839        | 414             | 12%             |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                                        | <b>7613</b> | <b>9131</b> | <b>1518</b>     | <b>20%</b>      |

From 2022 to 2024, Vermont saw an increase in the number of individuals at nearly every credential level. In 2024, 1,104 more people reported a degree or credential than in 2022, a 26% increase. This reflects increases in the number of people working in the field and the number submitting education and credentials in BFIS in addition to higher credentials among those working in regulated child care.

The largest increases in number of people were in bachelor's degrees (356 more), high school diplomas (244), Early Childhood Level 1 Certificates or Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals ("Fundamentals") completion (188), and associate's degrees (129 more). The Vermont Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate and the Afterschool Credential remained flat, with decreases of 4 and 1 respectively; these credentials that are becoming less emphasized as options for college-credit bearing coursework are more accessible and affordable.

Notably, 562 more people have verified associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degrees, a 22.4% increase from 2022.

## Increase in Education by Individuals with Education or Credentials in BFIS between 2022 and 2024

The following tables reflect individuals who increased their educational level in BFIS between December 2022 and December 2024.



**Table 6. Number of People Who Have Increased their Education Level Between 2022-2024**

| <b>New Highest Level of Education</b>                                                      | <b>People</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 1             |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 37            |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 73            |
| Associate and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                                 | 65            |
| VT Early Childhood Level III A Certificate or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 38            |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 7             |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 14            |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 18            |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 28            |

Overall, 281 individuals who were in the 2022 report increased their education by the end of December 2024. This includes 65 new associate's degrees and/or Vermont Early Childhood Level III B Certificate holders, 73 new bachelor's degree and/or Vermont Early Childhood Level IV A or IV B Certificate holders, 37 new master's degrees and/or Vermont Early Childhood Level V A or V B Certificate holders, and one new holder of a doctorate degree.

This information shows that people who are working in regulated child care are taking steps to increase their credentials. This contributes to the overall increase in education and credential reported.

## Education and Credentials by Program Type

The following tables and charts analyze education and credentials by child care licensing program type. Each program type has distinct staffing requirements related to staff-child ratios and position qualifications that drive different patterns and trends.

We will see that most individuals have increased the number of verified certificate or degree holders since 2022, and that the number of verified certificates or degrees of each type has increased across the board as well.



## Education and Credentials in Afterschool Programs

Since 2022, Vermont afterschool programs saw an increase in the number of people working at most education or credential levels. In 2024, 258 more people reported a degree or credential than in 2022, a 58% increase. This reflects increases in the number of people working in afterschool programs, the number submitting education and credentials in BFIS, and the credentials of those working in regulated child care.

**Table 7. Number and Percentage of Afterschool Staff with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level**

| <b>Highest Level of Education</b>                                                          | <b># of Staff</b> | <b>% at This Level</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 135               | 19%                    |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 2                 | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 22                | 3%                     |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 93                | 13%                    |
| Afterschool Credential                                                                     | 0                 | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 7                 | 1%                     |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 2                 | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 16                | 2%                     |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 71                | 10%                    |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 258               | 37%                    |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 94                | 13%                    |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 3                 | 0%                     |

Among the 703 afterschool staff submitting credentials, 61% reported having a college degree at the associate level or higher. The most common highest credential reported are a bachelor's degree (37%) and a high school diploma (19%); the next most common are a master's degree (13%) and an Afterschool Foundations Certificate (13%).



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Table 8. Number of Afterschool Staff with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level (2022 and 2024)

| Highest Level of Education or Credential                                                   | 2022         | 2024         | Change     | % Change   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 62           | 135          | 73         | 118%       |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 1            | 2            | 1          | 100%       |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 19           | 22           | 3          | 16%        |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 65           | 93           | 28         | 43%        |
| Afterschool Credential                                                                     | 1            | 0            | -1         | -100%      |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 4            | 7            | 3          | 75%        |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 3            | 2            | -1         | -33%       |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 6            | 16           | 10         | 167%       |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 41           | 71           | 30         | 73%        |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 170          | 258          | 88         | 52%        |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 70           | 94           | 24         | 34%        |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 3            | 3            | 0          | 0%         |
| <b>All Positions with Education in BFIS</b>                                                | <b>445</b>   | <b>703</b>   | <b>258</b> | <b>58%</b> |
| No Education or Credentials in BFIS                                                        | 753          | 958          | 205        | 27%        |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                                                         | <b>1,198</b> | <b>1,661</b> | <b>463</b> | <b>37%</b> |

The largest increases in numbers of people were in bachelor's degrees (88 more), high school diplomas (73), associate's degrees (30 more), afterschool foundations certificates (28), and master's degrees (24). The only decreases were at less-used credentials with fewer than 5 people. Notably, 142 more people have verified associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degrees, a 50.5% increase from 2022.



## Education and Credentials in Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Programs

Between 2022 and 2024, Vermont center-based child care and preschool programs saw an increase in the number of people working at all education or credential levels. Eight hundred forty-one more people reported a degree or credential in 2024 than in 2022, a 26% increase. This reflects increases in the number of people working in center-based programs, the number submitting education and credentials in BFIS, and the credentials of those working in regulated child care.

Among the 4,016 center-based child care program staff with credentials in BFIS, 61% reported having a college degree at the associate level or higher. The most common highest credential reported was a bachelor's degree (36%); the next most common are a Vermont Early Childhood Level Certificate or the Fundamentals course completion (16%), a master's degree (13%), a high school diploma (11%), and an associate's degree (11%).

**Table 9. Number and Percentage of Center-Based Child Care and Preschool Program Staff with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level**

| <b>Highest Level of Education/Credential</b>                                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>% at this Level</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 458           | 11%                    |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 0             | 0%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion Certificate       | 660           | 16%                    |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 39            | 1%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 153           | 4%                     |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 38            | 1%                     |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 218           | 5%                     |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 449           | 11%                    |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 1457          | 36%                    |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 528           | 13%                    |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 16            | <.1%                   |



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Table 10. Number of Center-Based Child Care Staff with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level (2022 and 2024)

| <b>Highest Level of Education/Credential</b>                                               | <b>2022</b>  | <b>2024</b>  | <b># Change</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 304          | 458          | 154             | 51%             |
| Afterschool Essentials Course Completed                                                    | 1            | 0            | -1              | -100%           |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 471          | 660          | 189             | 40%             |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 22           | 39           | 17              | 77%             |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 150          | 153          | 3               | 2%              |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 30           | 38           | 8               | 27%             |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 174          | 218          | 44              | 25%             |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 351          | 449          | 98              | 28%             |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 1,209        | 1,457        | 248             | 21%             |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 451          | 528          | 77              | 17%             |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 12           | 16           | 4               | 33%             |
| <b>Total with Education in BFIS</b>                                                        | <b>3,175</b> | <b>4,016</b> | <b>841</b>      | <b>26%</b>      |
| No Degree or Credential Listed                                                             | 2,396        | 2,614        | 218             | 9%              |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                                                         | <b>5,571</b> | <b>6,630</b> | <b>1,079</b>    | <b>19%</b>      |

The largest increases in numbers of people were in bachelor's degrees (248 more), Vermont Early Childhood Level Certificate or Fundamentals course completion (189), high school diplomas (154), master's degrees (77), and associate's degrees (44 more). Notably, 427 more people have verified associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degrees, a 21% increase from 2022.



## Education and Credentials in Family Child Care Homes

Between 2022 and 2024, Vermont's family child care homes saw both increases and decreases in the number of people working at various education or credential levels. Overall, 18 more people reported a degree or credential in 2024 than in 2022, a 3.5% increase

**Table 11. Percentage of Individuals working in Family Child Care Home with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level**

| <b>Highest Level of Education/Credential</b>                                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 108           | 12%      |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 173           | 20%      |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 3             | 0%       |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 62            | 7%       |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 4             | 0%       |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 25            | 3%       |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 75            | 9%       |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 123           | 14%      |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 28            | 3%       |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 0             | 0%       |

Among those working in family child care programs with credentials in BFIS, 26% have a college degree at the associate's level or higher. The most common highest credential reported was a Vermont Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals course completion (20%) followed by a bachelor's degree (14%), a high school diploma (12%), an associate's degree (9%), and a Level II Certificate or CDA (7%).



**Table 12. Number of Individuals Working in Family Child Care Homes with Education Listed in BFIS by Highest Education Level (2022 and 2024)**

| <b>Highest Level of Education/Credential</b>                                               | <b>2022</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b>Change</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| High School or Equivalent                                                                  | 91          | 108         | 17            | 19%             |
| VT Early Childhood Level I Certificate or Fundamentals Course Completion                   | 177         | 173         | -4            | -2%             |
| Afterschool Foundations Certificate                                                        | 1           | 3           | 2             | 200%            |
| VT Early Childhood Level II Certificate or Current Child Development Associate (CDA)       | 72          | 62          | -10           | -14%            |
| Other Type of Education Certificate                                                        | 3           | 4           | 1             | 33%             |
| VT Early Childhood Level IIIA Certificate, or Apprenticeship or CCV Child Care Certificate | 19          | 25          | 6             | 32%             |
| Associate's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IIIB Certificate                        | 74          | 75          | 1             | 1%              |
| Bachelor's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level IVA or IVB Certificate                   | 103         | 123         | 20            | 19%             |
| Master's Degree and/or VT Early Childhood Level VA or VB Certificate                       | 23          | 28          | 5             | 22%             |
| Doctorate                                                                                  | 0           | 0           | 0             | 0%              |
| <b>All with Education in BFIS</b>                                                          | <b>563</b>  | <b>601</b>  | <b>38</b>     | <b>6.75%</b>    |
| Without Education in BFIS                                                                  | 276         | 267         | -9            | -3%             |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                               | <b>839</b>  | <b>868</b>  | <b>29</b>     | <b>3%</b>       |

The largest increases were in bachelor's degrees (20 more) and high school diplomas (17 more). The largest decreases were in a Vermont Early Childhood Level 2 Certificate or Child Development Associate (10 fewer) and in Vermont Early Childhood Level 1 or Fundamentals course completion (4 fewer). Notably, 20 more people have verified bachelor's degrees and 5 more have master's degrees. The number with a degree of an associate's or higher increased 13%.



## Key Findings and Conclusion

Overall, this report points towards growth and progress for those working in Vermont's regulated child care programs in both early childhood education and afterschool settings between December 2022 and December 2024. The data shows that:

- More people are working in the field at all levels
- More people have their education and credentials verified by the state in BFIS
- More people have qualifications beyond a high school diploma
- More people are reporting post-secondary degrees
- People already in the field are advancing their education and credentials
- People who already have education and credentials are joining the field

These trends are early indicators of the impact of Act 76 of 2023, which increased the state's annual investment in regulated child care by \$125 million beginning in July 2023. Growth in child care capacity is directly linked to growth in the workforce so this data is a positive sign for families seeking child care and aligns with increases in licensed child care capacity.

These positive trends come as Vermont continues to experience workforce challenges associated with its aging population, tight housing market and health care costs. The continued challenges in Vermont's early childhood and afterschool workforce reflects these issues and are exacerbated by the low wages and limited benefits typically available to those working in regulated child care settings.

## Key Findings

The number of individuals working in regulated child care increased 8.5% from 7,551 to 8,190 from December 2022 to December 2024. The increase was driven by growth in the center-based child care programs and regulated afterschool programs, which increased the number of staff by 515 people (9%) and 79 people (6%), respectively. While family child care grew only slightly over the two-year period, 2024 marks the first time in over a decade in which the family child care workforce grew rather than declined in number.

The growth of the workforce was spread across most position types. The position with the greatest increase was substitutes; this could be seen as a positive sign as substitutes allow for programs to operate even when regular staff are away or it could be negative as programs may be using substitutes when they do not have enough regular staff. Growth in aides, assistants, and trainees points to new people entering the field who will need support and training to provide high-quality care and education. Growth in teachers, teacher associates, directors, and licensees points to increased leadership available in the field and within some programs to mentor other staff and build capacity to serve children overall. The increase also reflects an



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more people filling multiple positions – for example, serving as teacher at one program and a substitute as at another; this trend is an area for additional analysis.

More people working within regulated child care have related education and credentials. Based on the data in BFIS, the number of people with education and credentials above a high school diploma increased by 860 people, a 23% increase. The number with a college degree at an associate's level or higher increased by 562 people, or 22.4%. Among those for whom data is available, 58% have a college degree at the associate's level or higher. However, if you include those without education and credentials listed in BFIS, the percentage drops to 33.6% of those working in the field, similar to the 33% reported last year.

Even with this growth, it's important to acknowledge that many programs still report difficulty in hiring qualified staff and often request variances from child care licensing. Anecdotally, families still report being unable to find care for their children when they need it, especially for infant and toddler care. Vermont still needs more early childhood educators and afterschool staff who are prepared and ready to work at all levels from program leaders to lead teachers/staff to assistants; this includes family child care homes as well.

The Child Development Division (CDD) will continue to support numerous efforts to support members of the regulated child care workforce to achieve their educational goals and advance their credentials in ways that are accessible and affordable. Given the increased numbers of staff at all position types and educational levels, maintaining a continuum of programs is needed. Programs funded by CDD include:

- Northern Lights at CCV, the state's hub for professional development for the early childhood and afterschool workforce that provides training and continuing education
- T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood scholarships, a comprehensive scholarship that includes tuition, release time, and books for those seeing AA, BA, and AOE Educator Licensure
- Vermont Early Childhood Education Registered Apprenticeship, a program that pairs in-program learning guided by a mentor with college-level coursework
- Vermont Early Childhood Education Youth Apprenticeship, a training program for high school CTE students that includes training, college coursework, and paid internships
- Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program, funds for student loan payments for early childhood educators working in regulated child care

The Division provides grants to support training and coursework for leadership development and advanced training like Early Childhood Educators Institute, the Program for Infants and Toddlers Certification, and the Early Childhood Leadership Institute. In addition, people working within regulated child care can access grants for specific courses and receive financial bonuses when they achieve new degrees and credentials.



These investments align with the state's understanding in the state of the need for preparation and training aligned with core knowledge and competencies of early childhood educators and afterschool staff.

## Conclusion

The data shared in this report – along with the observations and lived experience of those working in the field – provide important information for analysis, planning, and evaluation of the early childhood education and afterschool systems and for workforce development, in particular. Additional information and analysis are needed related to financial factors, especially compensation trends for those doing this essential work. CDD looks forward to working with public and private partners to collect additional information, strengthen our early childhood and afterschool data systems, and conduct additional analysis.

Given the importance of a skilled and stable workforce serving young children and the impact of child care on the economy overall, it is essential that we continue to assess the size and strength of the workforce and tailor policy and programs to meet the state's needs. With the increased resources available from Act 76 of 2023 and the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five, Vermont is well positioned to make continued progress.



## Appendix A.

### Methodology

The tables and charts in this report are based on an unduplicated count of individuals listed in the BFIS “Quality & Credentialing Work Experience” extract for the month of December 2024.<sup>5</sup> This extract lists all individuals employed in the regulated child care field in the state of Vermont by position, start date, and end date (if applicable).

CDD took this list of employees, filtered out all individuals whose terms of employment ended prior to the end of December 2024, and filtered out all individuals with open employment dates who appeared to be associated with defunct providers. CDD also removed any employment records associated with out-of-state programs and license-exempt approved relative child care providers, as they are not part of the regulated child care landscape in Vermont.

Following this, CDD paired the employment records with the educational achievements listed in the BFIS “Quality & Credentialing Education” extract for the month of December 2024. This extract lists every certificate and degree known to BFIS<sup>6</sup> for everyone in the regulated child care field in the state of Vermont.

CDD ranked the certificates and degrees and retained the highest-ranking value for everyone.

CDD then produced a list of all individuals employed in the regulated child care field in the State of Vermont at the end of December 2024. The list was first deduplicated using a unique individual identifier, position, and program type to generate a statewide count of individuals employed by program type.

Sections of the report that are organized by individual are unduplicated when reported for the entire regulated child care workforce. When reported by program type, individuals who work in multiple program types would be counted in each program type.

Sections of this report that are organized by position type reflect position-level counts, which may include duplicated individuals. For example, an individual working as both an assistant and a substitute is counted once in individual-level analysis and twice in position-level analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> BFIS is a relatively old data system in the process of being replaced. Monthly extracts into Excel are the most reliable and complete data sources available for analysis.