10 Reasons to Become an EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL

Across the nation, conversations are taking place about the shortage of qualified early childhood professionals. In Kansas, the topic of workforce development comes up at virtually any meeting about our field. There is no denying early educators work hard for low pay, which can make it challenging to recruit people to the field. However, this work also brings many rewards you can't get in other professions.

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ChildCare Aware® OF KANSAS

Kansas Department for Children and Families

1. **The ability to help shape our future.**
Working with young children is a nurturing profession. The love and care you show children today will shape how they treat others for the rest of their lives.

2. **Supporting strong, healthy families.**
In early childhood, our work is not just with young children, but with the whole family. Early educators have the opportunity to provide connections to community resources and supports to help families thrive.

3. **The opportunity to work in a fun environment.**
Young children are playful by nature. While early educators work extremely hard, it is also fun work. There are very few professions where playing dress-up or using playdough is actually encouraged!

4. **Preventing child abuse and neglect.**
Because of the daily contact and relationships formed with families, early childhood professionals provide a frontline of defense for young children when it comes to abuse and neglect.

5. **Seeing children learn something new.**
Young children are constantly learning! In fact, there is no other time in our lives when we will learn as rapidly as we do in the first three years of life. Early educators have the joy of planning experiences to support this development and seeing the magic in a child's eyes when they master new skills.

6. **Being part of a community of like-minded people.**
The early childhood community is tight-knit and very supportive. By joining professional organizations, like Child Care Providers Coalition (CCPC) or Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children (KSAEYC), early educators have the opportunity to network with others who share their passion for young children and families.

7. **Every day is unique.**
When working with a group of young children, there is rarely a dull moment. From the activities and experiences they plan to the environment they provide, early educators are continually adapting to keep things fresh for the children in their care.

8. **The opportunity to be a life-long learner.**
It is often said that the best teachers are learners themselves. By attending professional development classes, teachers develop knowledge and skills to support their work with young children. By growing their own skills, early childhood professionals feel more confident and competent in their work.

9. **All the hugs and macaroni necklaces you could ever want.**
Young children find pleasure in the simple things in life. While working with young children, early educators have the ability to set aside the complexities of life, if even for a bit, and be "in the moment" with children as they share their special gifts.

10. **The joy of making a positive difference in the life of a child.**
Every child deserves a champion – someone who believes in and encourages her to become the best version of herself. Early childhood professionals have the honor of being an advocate or cheerleader for young children every single day!