



The Aspire Registry, New York’s early childhood workforce registry, promotes professional growth for early childhood educators and captures verified data about the early childhood workforce in New York State. In this edition of the Aspire Registry Data Stories, we examine how our system can illuminate the professionalism and expertise of New York’s early childhood workforce by highlighting early childhood employment trends, education and credential obtainment, and professional development offerings in the state over the past three years.

The Aspire Registry records educators’ professional accomplishments through individual profiles, provides access to high-quality professional development offerings, and supports licensing infrastructure while also emphasizing the importance of quality learning opportunities. Educators are associated with their employers, so the Registry also provides valuable employment data. This data can illuminate the current state of New York’s early childhood workforce and ensure educators have equitable access to high-quality professional development, credentials, and degrees.

For the following data story, we analyzed employee data from programs participating in QUALITYstarsNY, New York’s Quality Rating and Improvement System, from 2019 to 2022. This data set is a statewide, representative portion of the workforce, as QUALITYstarsNY programs are found throughout the state, and educators in these programs are required to have an active Aspire profile. The data points presented here offer a comprehensive picture of the strengths and needs of the early childhood workforce across the state in all settings.

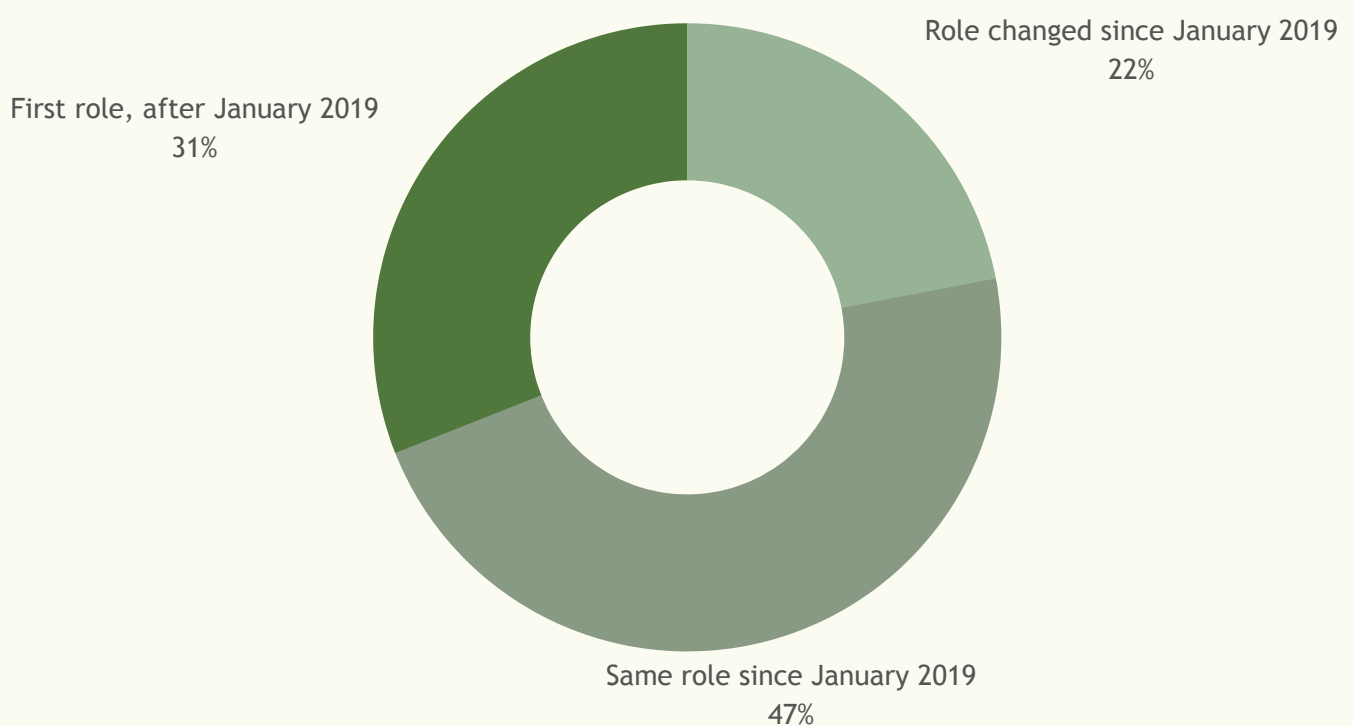


# Early Childhood Employment

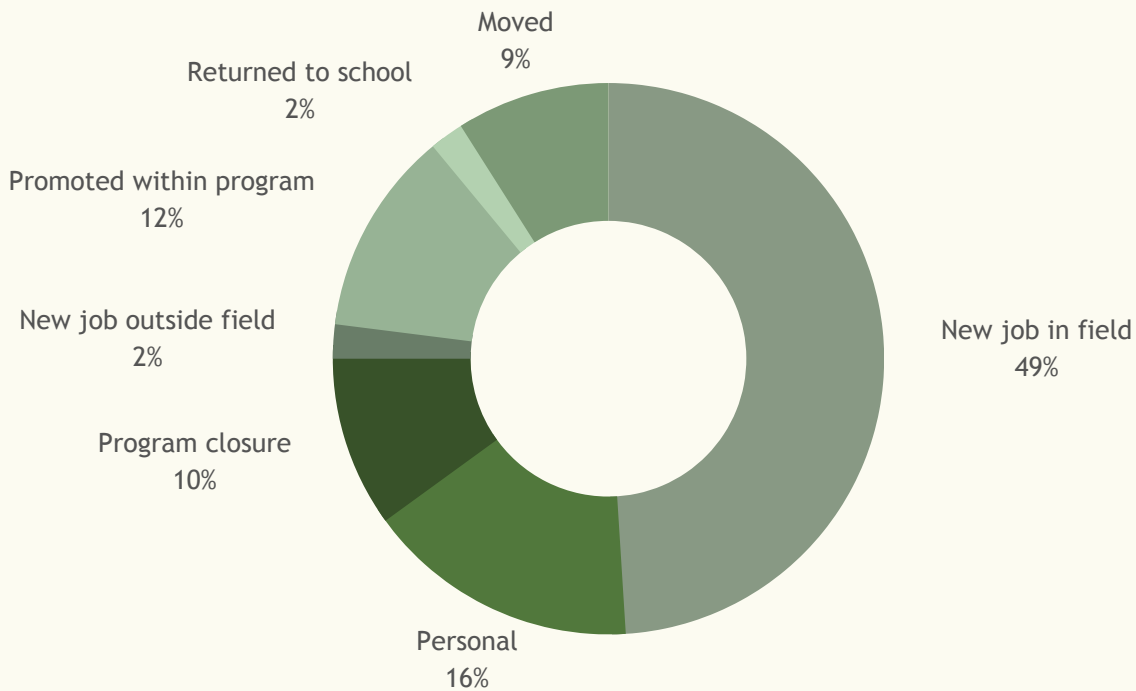
The early care and education field across the country is struggling with staff recruitment and retention due to low wages and the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the United States, 8.4% of child care jobs were lost ([Center for American Progress 2022](#)), and over two-thirds of child care providers report that staffing shortages are impacting their ability to serve families ([NAEYC 2022](#)). Using data from the Aspire Registry, we examined staff retention in New York state by analyzing position transitions at QUALITYstarsNY sites from 2019 to 2022. Almost 50 percent of early care and education professionals indicated they remained in the same role at the same site since 2019 (Figure 1). Among those who changed positions (Figure 2), 11% were promoted within the same program, and 49% reported transitioning to another role in the field. Information from the Registry can also highlight areas where additional data collection is needed to help inform policy decisions at the local and state level, including a deeper understanding of the factors that influence the decision of educators to stay or leave the profession.



**Figure 1: Summary of Role Changes for Workforce at QUALITYstarsNY Programs (2019-2022)**



**Figure 2: Reasons Current QUALITYstarsNY Employees Left Previous Role (2019-2022)**



Approximately  
**2100**

Career ladder shifts as professionals continued to pursue education opportunities

## Career and Education Advancement

As educators update their Aspire profiles with new degrees and credentials, Aspire Registry staff verify their documentation and educators can earn progressively higher levels on a career ladder. In addition to providing educators with recognition and a clear pathway for

continued professional growth, career ladder data can provide policymakers, parents, and the broader public with a window into the professionalism demonstrated by the early childhood workforce as well as where more support may be needed.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, there were nearly 2,100 shifts in experience and education from 2019 to 2022 among employees at QUALITYstarsNY programs. This represents professionals who reached a milestone in their experience in the field (2 years, 5 years, or 10 years) as well as those who earned new credentials, college credit hours, and degrees. Almost 200 educators in QUALITYstarsNY participating programs who initially reported having a high school diploma or less earned their Child Development Associate credential (CDA). Among QUALITYstarsNY educators, there were 33 instances of educators earning a bachelor's degree from 2019 to 2022, 27 instances of earning undergraduate college credit, and nearly 130 career ladder level increases

from a bachelor's to a master's degree. This data reveals the commitment of early childhood professionals as they pursued credentials and degrees, even during the pandemic. This data also demonstrates the power of the Registry and what it can help us to understand about the early childhood workforce.

Finally, data from the Registry can also be used to inform policymakers and stakeholders on projects that support the workforce, including initiatives around revising the early childhood educator career ladder and improving compensation.

## Professional Development Offerings

In addition to tracking employment and credentials, the Aspire Registry supports the workforce through connections to high-quality professional development opportunities. Through the [PD Finder](#), Aspire members can find high-quality learning opportunities to deepen their knowledge and continually improve their practice with young children.

Between 2019 to 2022, more than 17,500 courses were submitted to the Aspire Registry by way of trainers, training organizations, and directors who provided in-service training. Of those courses, over 6,100 trainings were reviewed and approved by Aspire staff, and approximately 67% received the Quality Assured badge in our PD Finder. These courses fulfilled the [Aspire Course Review Criteria](#), which evaluates trainer qualifications, content, and the intensity of the professional development opportunity.



# The Power of a Registry

This data illuminates the power of state registries. If all early childhood educators in New York participated in the Aspire Registry, the large-scale, detailed data captured would paint an even clearer picture of the state's early childhood workforce. This information helps identify the strengths and needs of early childhood professionals and positively inform policies that impact the workforce.

Questions? You can contact us directly at [info@nyworksforchildren.org](mailto:info@nyworksforchildren.org). We look forward to hearing from you; your inquiry may even inspire future Data Stories publications!

You can also [follow this link](#) to access previous editions of Data Stories and additional information or visit us on our website, [www.nyworksforchildren.org](http://www.nyworksforchildren.org).

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