

# Apprenticeship: A Win-Win Strategy for Early Childhood Employers and Practitioners

**The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation and the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry is seeking partnerships for registered apprenticeships.**

## What is Apprenticeship?

- an employer-driven strategy to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled EC staff
- a flexible training strategy that can be customized and integrated into current training and HR strategies – building a skilled staff and reducing turnover costs
- engages new hires or current employees

For early childhood practitioners, Apprenticeship means they can earn and learn, receiving a paycheck from day one and earning wages while they learn on the job.

An apprenticeship partnership is right for you if you are a child care center owner interested in:

- Identifying the skills and knowledge that apprentices should learn
- Hiring new workers or selecting current employees to be apprentices
- Providing on-the-job training
- Identifying an experienced mentor to work with apprentices
- Paying progressively higher wages (determined by you) as skills increase

## What would an Apprenticeship look like for my child care center?

A child care center owner or director would identify an employee to become an Apprentice, as well as a highly skilled mentor (current staff member) to work one-on-one with the Apprentice. The Apprentice would be paid as a full-time (at least 30 hours per week) employee of the center as a teacher or instructional aide, and would work toward and meet prescribed goals in skill-building. The Apprentice would learn on-the-job as well as take select community college coursework (144 training hours per year) to build specialized skills that the child care director identifies as critical for his/her staff. After the first year, as long as the Apprentice is progressing as anticipated, the child care owner commits to increasing the Apprentice's wages by a predetermined amount. After 2-3 years, if all goals are successfully met, the Apprentice is awarded a nationally-recognized certificate.

## How do I sign up?

- 1) Contact local Registered Apprentice consultant <https://tinyurl.com/DOLIRACH>
- 2) Contact [pathfinders@vecf.org](mailto:pathfinders@vecf.org)



## Why should child care owners consider Apprenticeship now?

**It's a low risk way to recruit, train, and retain a high quality workforce!**

- As you pay a teacher normal wages for full-time work, (at least 30 hours per week) **Project Pathfinders** can cover the full cost of tuition for community college coursework taken on-the-job to increase your employee's skills.

To learn more, please contact Project Pathfinders at [pathfinders@vecf.org](mailto:pathfinders@vecf.org).

**Project Pathfinders**  
Leading the Way for Virginia's Early Educators