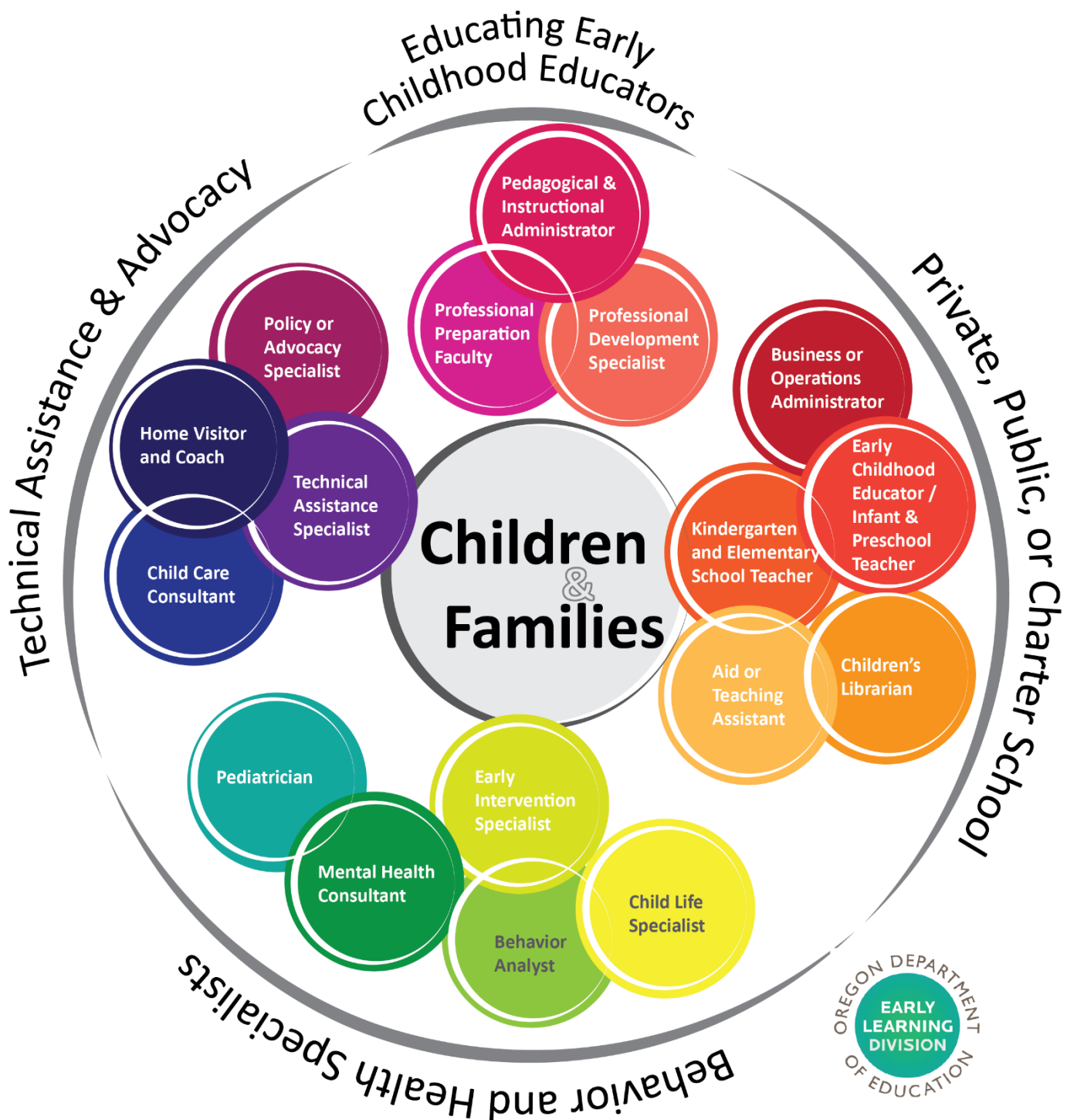


Sector Growth

Early childhood job opportunities are expected to grow over the next several years, according to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), as a large number of teachers are expected to retire and the emphasis on early childhood education increases. Some 50,000 preschool teaching jobs are estimated to be needed by 2028, along with more than 100,000 kindergarten and early elementary teaching positions. Individuals with a degree in child development or early childhood education can expect a wide range of career options. In addition to the growth in child care jobs, the pandemic highlighted the need for child care in other sectors. In Oregon, initiatives funded by Future Ready Oregon will need child care to succeed.



A National Shift for Public Good

Since the pandemic, an increasing number of states are recognizing early care and education as a public good, working toward beginning or expanding state funded child care and pay parity with K-12 teachers.

Public good can be defined as something that:

Benefits society overall, sometimes by providing a benefit that is utilized by all and sometimes providing a benefit only used by some; are made available to all who can utilize it; and often, but not always, are supplied by government institutions, usually through taxation. For the purposes of this document, we assert that ECE should be governed and paid for largely by the public sector through a mixed-delivery system. With a return on investment of up to 13%, and a contribution of \$163 billion to the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP), the benefits of investing in high-quality early childhood education are clear and extensive—for children, adults, and society at large. A substantial research base confirms that when children participate in high-quality early childhood education, they are:

- More likely to experience improved cognitive and social outcomes
- More likely to graduate from high school; less likely to require remedial education; and
- Generally healthier and able to be more productive contributors to their local, state, and national economies. ([NAEYC, 2020.](#))

This investment increases the number of potential students ready to attend your school.



Oregon's Future

Oregon is committed to investing in early childhood education as evidenced by the support for early childhood teacher compensation requirements that align with those in the kindergarten environment. Oregon increased investments in publicly funded early childhood programs (i.e., Oregon Prekindergarten, Preschool Promise, contracted slots) to implement those requirements. In addition, the state is working to guarantee professional supports such as planning time, paid professional development time, wellness and health benefits, etc.

In partnership with Early Learning Hubs and other key organizations, the Early Learning Division continues to work on building greater public understanding of the critical role and impact early childhood educators have on children and families.



The Vital Role of Higher Education

Going hand in hand with fair compensation, educators also need pathways to early childhood degrees and ongoing professional learning supports in order to implement best practices. Emphasizing higher education reflects the recommendation in [Transforming the Workforce](#) (NRC, 2017) to transition to a minimum bachelor's degree in early childhood. "In order to fully realize the opportunities for young children, an early childhood educator must be deeply grounded in the science of early learning. Ideally, postsecondary general education" [Alvin \(2019\)](#). As the support for early education as a public good solidifies into policy your services will be increase exponentially. These conditions can ensure that Oregon retains the workforce it needs, rather than continue to see a quarter of the workforce leaving the field each year.