

# A Demographic Comparison of the Listed Home-Based Early Care and Education Workforce and the Children in their Care

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## Introduction

An early care and education (ECE) workforce that reflects the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the children in their care is an important dimension of child care quality (Downer, Goble, Myers & 2016; Markowitz, Bassok & Grissom, 2020). In 2012, out of the approximately 3.8 million members of the home-based early care and education workforce,<sup>1</sup> 107,220 were listed on a state or national registry of care providers, were paid to care for children, and provided regular care (i.e., at least five hours a week) for at least one child with whom they did not have a prior relationship (although they may have also cared for children with whom they had a prior relationship). These 107,220 teachers and caregivers served approximately 2 million children under age 6, and not yet in kindergarten (Paschall, Madill & Halle, 2020). Using the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), this snapshot compares the demographic characteristics of the listed, paid home-based ECE workforce providing regular care for at least one child with whom they have no prior relationship, and the demographic characteristics of the children in their care.

This snapshot is the third in a series of reports that describe the demographic characteristics of the ECE workforce using the 2012 NSECE data. The first report provides a descriptive analysis of the professional characteristics and motivations of the center- and home-based ECE workforce.<sup>2</sup> The second report compares the demographic characteristics of the populations of center- and home-based ECE workforce and the populations of children enrolled in center- and home-based ECE, as well as compares the populations of ECE teachers and caregivers across communities with varying levels of demographic diversity.<sup>3</sup> This third snapshot provides unique, additional information by comparing the demographic characteristics of the home-based workforce and the children in their direct care.

## Key Findings

- **Demographics of the Home-Based Workforce**
  - In 2012, the majority of home-based teachers and caregivers were non-Hispanic White, were born in the United States, and spoke only English when communicating with children in their care.
- **Comparison between the Home-Based Workforce and Child Race/Ethnicity**
  - Forty-two percent of the home-based workforce responded, “Don’t Know,” “Refused,” or provided no answer at least once when reporting the racial and ethnic identity of children in their care.
  - Among those who provided information, home-based teachers and caregivers tended to care for children with whom they shared a racial or ethnic identity.
- **Comparison between the Home-Based Workforce and Child/Family Language**

<sup>1</sup> This snapshot uses the terms home-based workforce and home-based teachers and caregivers interchangeably to describe the individuals who provide home-based care for children.

<sup>2</sup> For more information, please see: [Professional Characteristics of the Early Care and Education Workforce: Descriptions by Race, Ethnicity, Languages Spoken, and Nativity Status](#)

<sup>3</sup> For more information, please see: [Demographic Characteristics of the Early Care and Education Workforce: Comparisons with Child and Community Characteristics](#)

- Home-based teachers and caregivers who spoke languages other than English were more likely to care for children who do not speak English at home.
- A small percentage (<7%) of the home-based workforce reported needing an interpreter when speaking with parents of children in their care.
- **Comparison between Home-Based Workforce Nativity and Child Race/Ethnicity and Language**
  - Home-based teachers and caregivers born outside the United States reported that approximately half the children in their care were Hispanic and that approximately half the children in their care spoke a language other than English at home.

## Data and Methods

This snapshot uses data from the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey, a nationally representative sample of individuals who provided child care in their own home or in the child's home. This snapshot focuses on the home-based workforce who: 1) were listed on a state or national registry of providers; 2) were paid to care for children; 3) provided regular care (i.e., at least five hours a week) for at least one child with whom they did not have a prior relationship (may have also cared for children with whom they had a prior relationship); and 4) cared for at least one child under age 6, not yet in kindergarten (may have also cared for school-aged children). Data are representative of 107,220 home-based workforce members.

Race and ethnicity categories for the home-based workforce were non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, and non-Hispanic Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (NHPI), Other and Multi-Race (hereafter, non-Hispanic Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other and Multi-Race),<sup>4</sup> and Hispanic ethnicity. Languages spoken by the home-based workforce identified the languages they spoke when working with children: English only, Spanish (typically with English), or another language (typically with English but not Spanish).<sup>5, 6</sup> Nativity status indicated if teachers and caregivers were born in or outside the United States.

Children's race and ethnicity categories were reported by the home-based workforce as counts of White, Black, another race,<sup>7</sup> and Hispanic/Latino children in their care. Due to non-exclusive counts (i.e., a child may be counted for more than one racial or ethnic category), totals in race and ethnicity categories sum to greater than 100%. Children's language was reported as the count of children who usually spoke a language other than English at home (the exact home language was not reported). The home-based workforce also reported if they needed an interpreter to communicate with the parent of a child in their care.

<sup>4</sup> The category of non-Hispanic Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other or Multi-Race combines the following racial categories provided in the 2012 NSECE survey: Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other and Multi-Race. Although there is great diversity within and among these racial groups, due to small sample size and to avoid disclosure in the public use dataset, the data combine these groups into the category "Other." In tables and figures throughout the report, the term "Non-Hispanic Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other or Multi-Race" is used to denote this combined category.

<sup>5</sup> The survey question about languages spoken with children was asked only of teachers and caregivers who provided care to four or more children (99% of sample; n=107,160).

<sup>6</sup> To assess the language the home-based workforce spoke when working directly with children, the 2012 NSECE home-based survey allowed respondents to respond "Yes," "No," or "Don't Know/Refused/No Answer" for each of the language categories "English," "Spanish," and "Other." If "Other" was selected, the respondent was prompted to specify up to three other languages. Though respondents could provide this further detail, the variables available in the public use dataset collapsed responses into broad categories to protect against disclosure. The public use response variables for languages spoken with children were non-exclusive and included: 1) Provider usually speaks Spanish with children; 2) Provider usually speaks English with children; and 3) Provider speaks a language other than English or Spanish with children. This snapshot presents three exclusive language categories: English only; Spanish, alone or in addition to English; and other language, alone or in addition to English, but not Spanish.

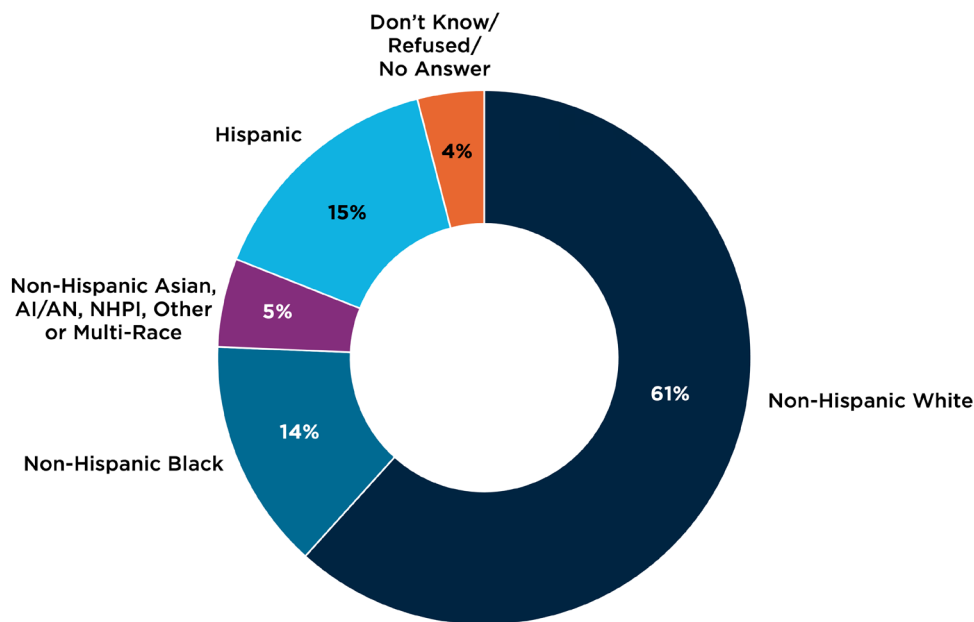
<sup>7</sup> For home-based teachers who cared for fewer than four children, the dataset includes the count of children who the teacher identified as "White, only," "Black, only" or "Other race." Included in the category of "Other race" are children who teachers identified as Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other or Multi-Race. To be consistent with the terminology used in the survey for providers who cared for four or more children (described below), this snapshot uses the term "Another race" to describe the group of children who teachers identified as Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Other or Multi-Race. For home-based teachers who cared for four or more children, the home-based survey asked teachers to provide a count for the total number of children in their care who were "Black," "White," or "Another Race," and, in a separate question, the total number of children in their care who were "Hispanic." For each of the provided categories, home-based teachers could provide a numerical count or select "Don't Know/Refused." In providing counts, it is possible that a teacher counted a child in more than one racial or ethnic category.

# Demographic Characteristics of the Home-Based Workforce

## Most home-based teachers and caregivers were non-Hispanic White.

Among the 107,220 members of the home-based workforce, 61% identified as non-Hispanic White; 14% identified as non-Hispanic Black; 5% identified as non-Hispanic Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other or Multi-Race; and 15% identified as Hispanic (any race). Four percent of the home-based workforce responded “Don’t Know/Refused/No Answer” to questions about their racial and ethnic identity.

**Figure 1.** Race and Ethnicity of the Home-Based Workforce

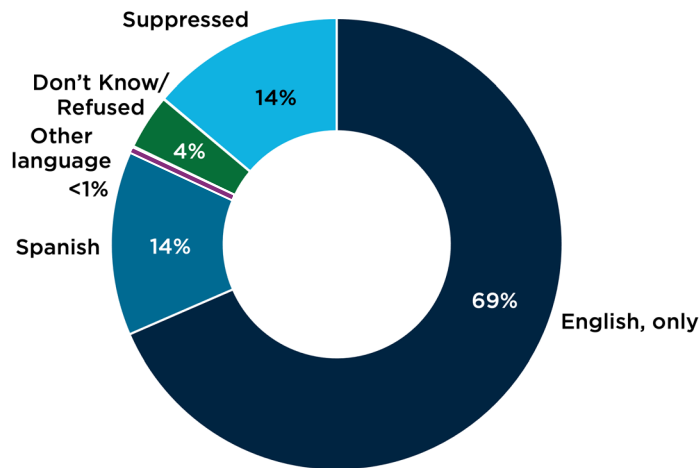


Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.

## Most home-based teachers and caregivers spoke only English when caring for children.

Among the home-based teachers and caregivers who provided care for four or more children (n=107,160), 69% spoke only English; 14% spoke Spanish (typically with English); and 3% spoke another language (typically with English but not Spanish) when caring for children.

**Figure 2.** Language(s) Home-Based Workforce Spoke When Caring for Children

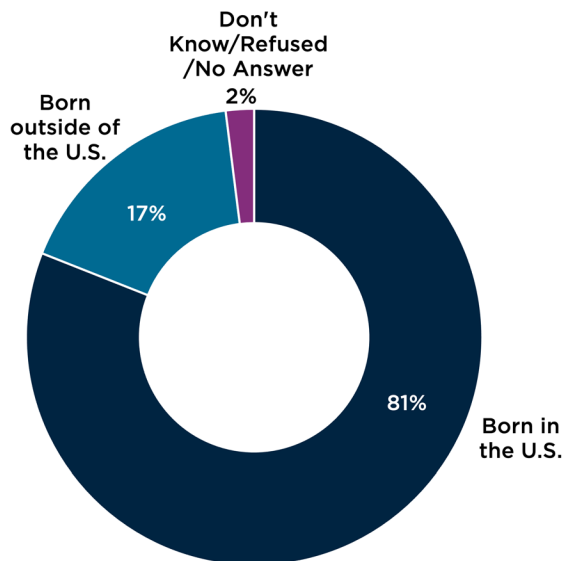


Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.  
Note: The question about language spoken with children was asked only of teachers and caregivers who cared for four or more children. In the 2012 NSECE public use home-based provider dataset, 14% of responses to the language spoken with children were suppressed (not shared in the data) to avoid respondent disclosure.

### Most of the home-based workforce was born in the United States.

Among the 107,220 members of the home-based workforce, 81% were born in the United States; 17% were born outside the United States; and 2% responded “Don't Know/Refused/No Answer” to the question about their country of birth.

**Figure 3.** Nativity Status of Home-Based Workforce



Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.

# Comparing the Demographic Characteristics of the Home-Based Workforce and the Children in their Care

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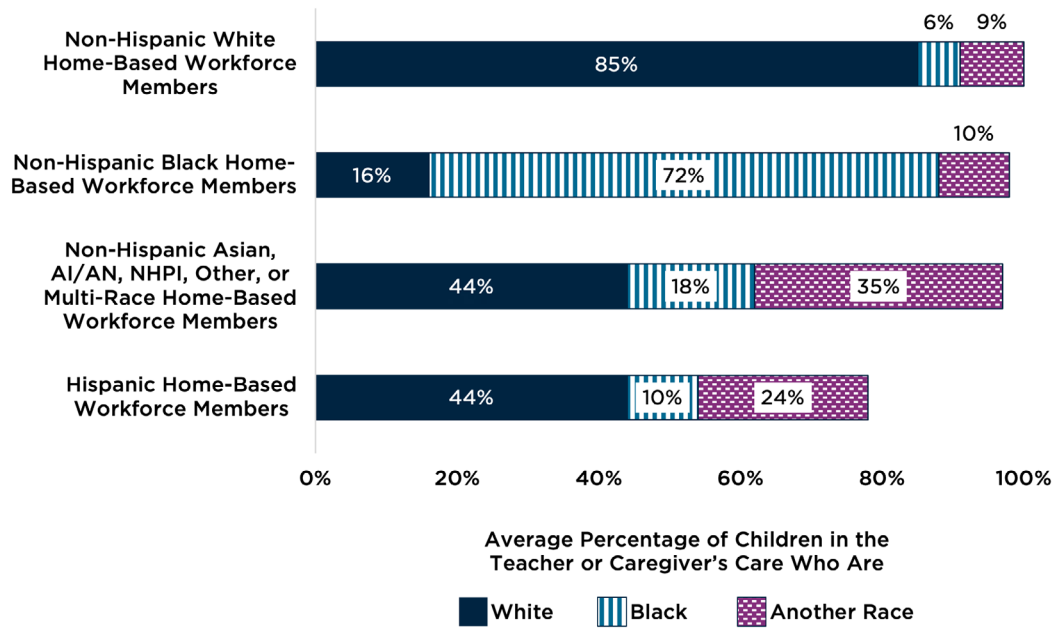
## **Forty-two percent of home-based teachers and caregivers responded, “Don’t Know,” “Refused,” or provided no answer for counts of at least one racial or ethnic category of children in their care.**

Just more than half (58%) of the workforce provided counts of children for each of the four racial and ethnic categories. However, 16% of the workforce responded, “Don’t Know,” “Refused,” or provided no answer to counts of children for one of the four racial and ethnic categories; 25% of the workforce provided those answers to counts of children for two of the four categories; and 1% provided those answers for three of the four racial and ethnic categories. Home-based teachers and caregivers were more likely to respond, “Don’t Know,” “Refused,” or provide no answer when asked to provide a count of children who did not share their racial or ethnic identity.

## **Among those who provided information, home-based teachers and caregivers tended to care for children with whom they shared a racial or ethnic identity.**

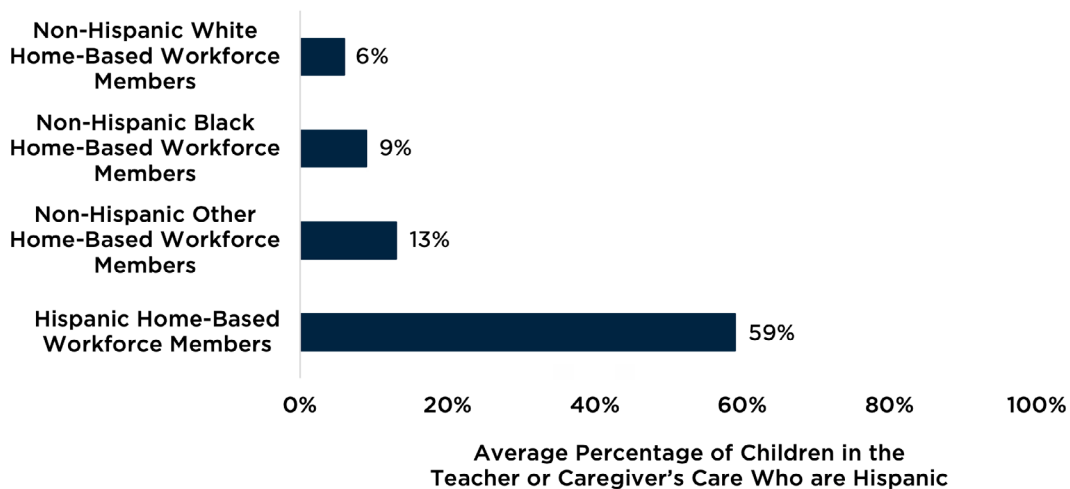
As shown in Figure 4A, the home-based workforce tended to share the racial or ethnic identity of the children in their care. Specifically, home-based caregivers who identified as non-Hispanic White reported that, on average, 85% of the children they cared for were also White; caregivers who identified as non-Hispanic Black reported that, on average, 72% of children in their care were also Black. As shown in Figure 4B, caregivers who identified as Hispanic reported that, on average, 59% of the children in their care were also Hispanic. Workforce members who identified as non-Hispanic Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other or Multi-Race were the exception to this pattern. However, the authors caution against drawing conclusions about this category. Due to small sample sizes and to avoid disclosure, this category combines diverse racial groups, and patterns within each racial group may be lost in aggregate. In addition, this heterogeneous category cannot be matched with children’s racial or ethnic categories.

**Figure 4A.** Average Percentage of Children in Care Who Are White, Black, or Another Race by the Race and Ethnicity of the Home-Based Workforce



Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.  
 Note: The home-based workforce gave counts (i.e., 0-28) of the children in their care across different racial categories. It is possible that some children were counted in more than one racial category. Information about children's Hispanic ethnicity was not available by race (e.g., non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black). The response categories "Don't Know/Refused/No Answer" for workforce and child race and ethnicity are not included in this analysis.

**Figure 4B.** Average Percentage of Children in Care Who Are Hispanic by the Race and Ethnicity of the Home-Based Workforce

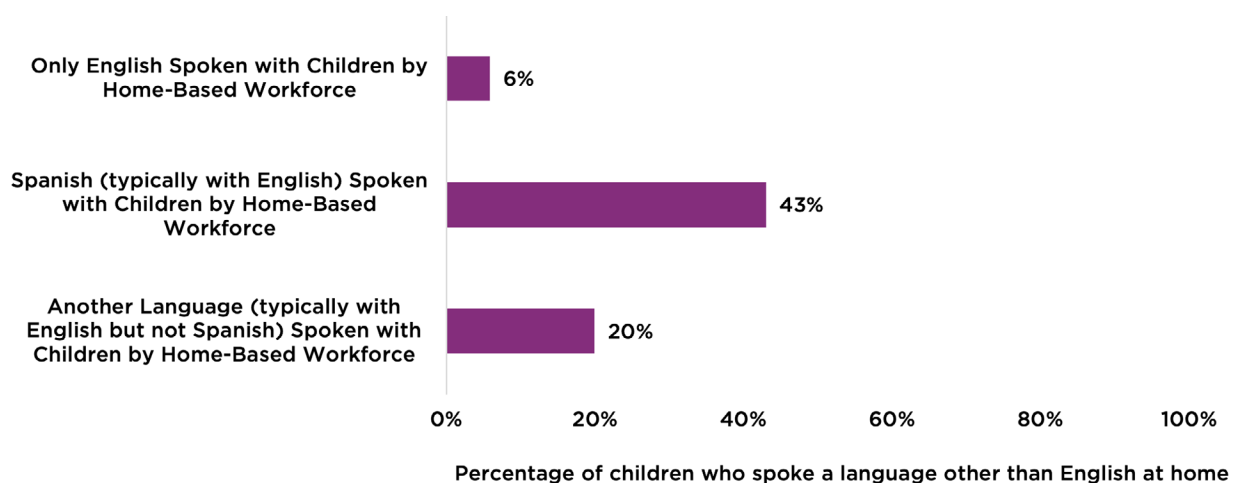


Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.  
 Note: The home-based workforce gave counts (i.e., 0-28) of the children in their care who they identified as Hispanic. Information about children's Hispanic ethnicity was not available by race (e.g., non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black). The response categories "Don't Know/Refused/No Answer" for workforce and child race and ethnicity are not included in this analysis.

## Home-based teachers and caregivers who spoke languages other than English were more likely to care for children reported to not speak English at home.

As shown in Figure 5, home-based teachers and caregivers who spoke English only reported that 6% of the children in their care spoke a language other than English at home. In contrast, the home-based workforce who spoke Spanish (typically with English) reported that 43% of children in their care spoke a language other than English at home; and home-based teachers and caregivers who spoke another language (typically with English but not Spanish) reported that 20% of the children in their care spoke a language other than English at home.

**Figure 5.** Percentage of Children Reported to Speak a Language Other Than English at Home by the Language the Home-Based Workforce Spoke when Caring for Children



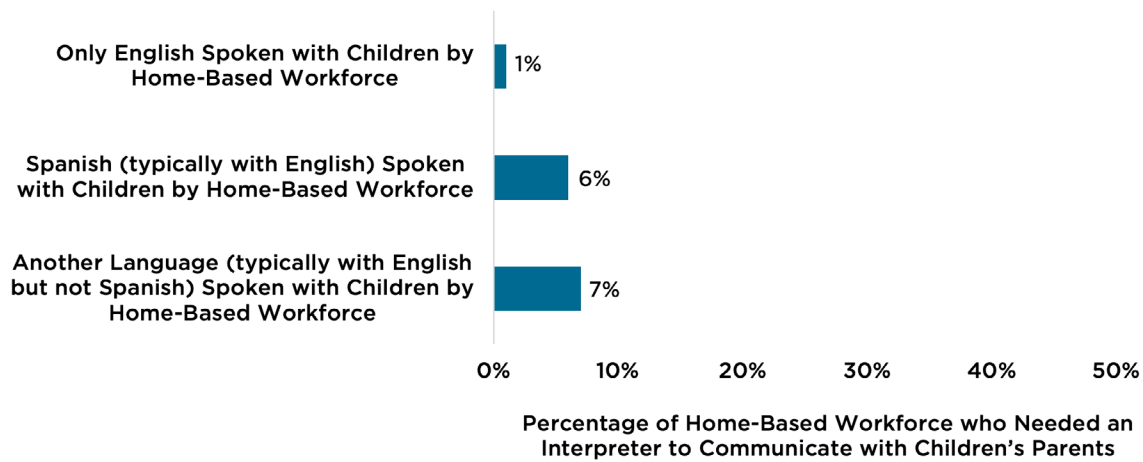
Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.

Note: Survey question about the language spoken with children was asked only of home-based workforce who cared for four or more children. Response category "Don't Know/Refused" was not included in this analysis.

## Very few home-based teachers and caregivers reported needing an interpreter to communicate with parents.

Figure 6 shows that 1% of the home-based workforce who spoke English only reported needing an interpreter to communicate with children's parents. In comparison, 6% of the home-based workforce who spoke Spanish (typically with English) and 7% of the workforce who spoke another language (typically with English but not Spanish) reported needing an interpreter to communicate with parents.

**Figure 6.** Percentage of the Home-Based Workforce Who Reported Needing an Interpreter by Language the Home-Based Workforce Spoke when Caring for Children



Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.

Note: Survey question about the language spoken with children was asked only of home-based workforce who cared for four or more children. Response category "Don't Know/Refused" was not included in this analysis.

## Home-based teachers and caregivers born outside the United States reported that almost half the children in their care are Hispanic, and almost half the children in their care do not speak English at home.

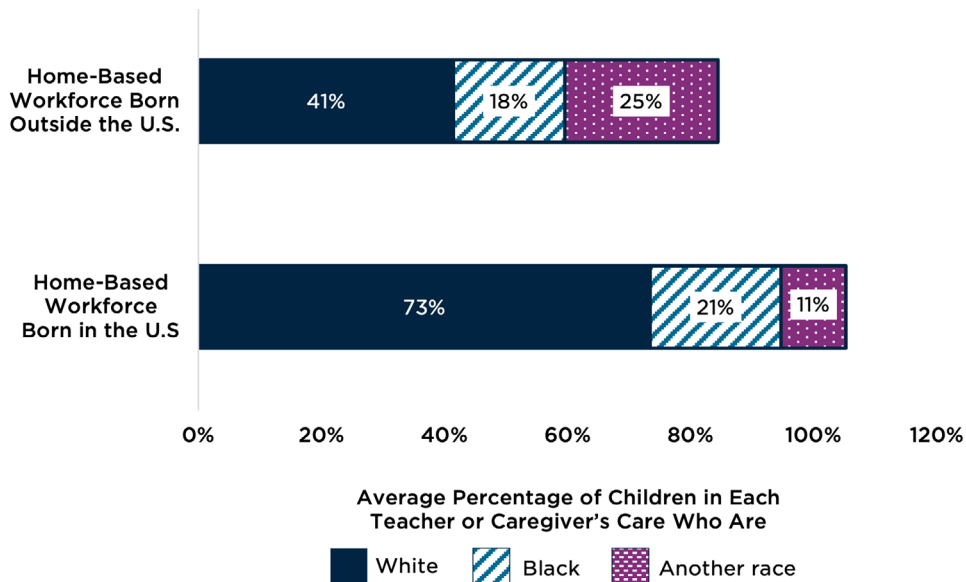
Children's race and ethnicity categories were reported by the home-based workforce as counts of White, Black, another race,<sup>8</sup> and Hispanic/Latino children in their care. Due to non-exclusive counts (i.e., a child may be counted for more than one racial or ethnic category), totals in race and ethnicity categories sum to greater than 100%. As shown in Figure 7A, home-based workforce members born outside the United States reported that 41% of the children in their care were White; 18% were Black; and 25% were another race. Home-based workforce members born in the United States reported that 73% of the children in their care were White; 21% were Black; 11% were another race; and 8% were Hispanic. Figure 7B shows that the workforce born outside the United States reported that 47% of the children in their care were Hispanic, while the workforce born in the United States reported that 8% of the children in their care were Hispanic.

Forty-seven percent of the children cared for by a home-based teacher or caregiver born outside the United States did not speak English at home, compared to only 6% among home-based teachers and caregivers born in the United States.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 7 for more detail about what categories were included in "another race" for home-based teachers who cared for fewer than four children and for home-based teachers who cared for four or more children.

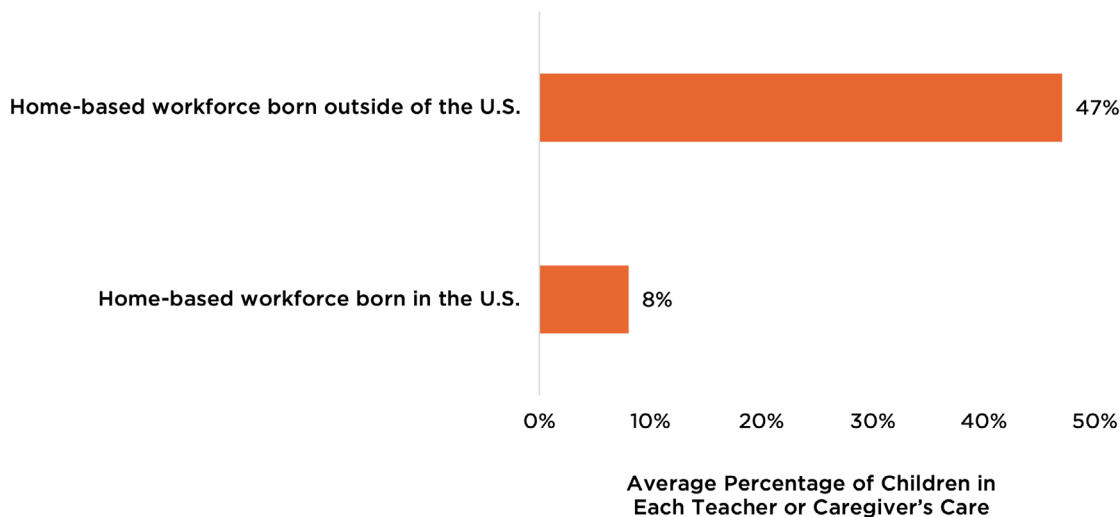


**Figure 7A.** Average Percentage of Children Reported in Each Racial Category by the Nativity of the Home-Based Workforce



Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.  
 Note: Home-based workforce gave counts of the race and ethnicity of children in their care. Response categories "Don't Know/Refused/No Answer" were not included in this analysis.

**Figure 7B.** Percentage of Children Who Were Hispanic by the Nativity of the Home-Based Workforce



Source: Authors' analysis of the 2012 NSECE home-based provider survey public use data.  
 Note: Home-based workforce gave counts of the race and ethnicity of children in their care. Response categories "Don't Know/Refused/No Answer" were not included in this analysis.

## Considerations

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This snapshot compares the demographic characteristics of the home-based workforce with the demographic characteristics of the children they serve. The findings indicate that the home-based workforce often shared the racial/ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of the children in their care and were generally able to communicate with parents without using an interpreter.

Data collection on race and ethnicity is complex, and reporting on the race and ethnicity of others can be inaccurate compared to individuals' self-reports (McKenney & Bennett, 1994; Porter, 2014). Therefore, the home-based workforce's report of children's race and ethnicity limits these analyses. The counts of children across racial and ethnic groups are non-exclusive, so analyses are unable to distinguish Hispanic and non-Hispanic racial groups or the number of children who are multi-racial. In addition, almost half (42%) of the home-based workforce responded, "Don't Know," "Refused," or provided no answer at least once when asked to provide a count of the children in their care across four racial and ethnic categories.

Due to small sample size, the public use dataset collapses the home-based workforce racial categories of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, Other and Multi-Race into the category "Other." This snapshot further collapses the racial category Asian only into a category called "Asian, AI/AN, NHPI, Other or Multi-Race" to allow for sufficient cell size for reporting. Using the collapsed racial category disallows analysis of the home-based workforce who identify with one of the racial categories with a small sample size. For more discussion of the limitations of the collapsed category of race and the implications for future research, refer to Paschall, Madill, and Halle (2020).

Analyses with additional data sources, (e.g., the 2012 NSECE restricted-use data for home-based teachers and caregivers who care for three or fewer children or the 2012 NSECE household data), could confirm or improve the precision of the demographic comparison of the home-based workforce and the children in their care provided in this snapshot.

## References

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## Suggested Citation

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## Reports in this Series

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Paschall, K., Madill, R., & Halle, T. (2020). *Professional characteristics of the early care and education workforce: Descriptions by race, ethnicity, languages spoken, and nativity status*. OPRE Report #2020-107. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Paschall, K., Madill, R., & Halle, T. (2020). *Demographic characteristics of the early care and education workforce: Comparisons with child and community characteristics*. OPRE Report #2020-108. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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