

Preschool and Childcare Center Directors

SOC: 11-9031 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$56,270 Median Salary	2,300 Employment	-3.0% Growth Rate
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Bachelor's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 18.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

9.5/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	4.2/10	Investigative	6.8/10
Artistic	4.4/10	Social	7.8/10
Enterprising	8.6/10	Conventional	7.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Business skills, Communication skills, Interpersonal skills, Leadership skills, Organizational skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Preschool and Childcare Center Directors are early childhood education leaders who plan, direct, and oversee **the daily operations of preschools and childcare centers**. They ensure that young children receive safe, developmentally appropriate care and education while managing staff, complying with regulations, and supporting families. Their role blends educational leadership, business management, and child advocacy.

This career is well suited for individuals who are passionate about early childhood development, leadership, and creating high-quality learning environments for young children.

What Do Preschool and Childcare Center Directors Do?

Directors manage both educational programs and operational aspects of early childhood centers.

Common responsibilities include:

- Developing and overseeing curriculum and learning programs
- Hiring, training, and supervising teachers and childcare staff
- Ensuring compliance with licensing, safety, and health regulations
- Managing budgets, enrollment, and tuition systems
- Observing classrooms and supporting instructional quality
- Communicating with parents and caregivers
- Coordinating assessments, records, and reporting requirements

Types of Early Childhood Programs Managed

Directors may lead different types of early learning environments:

- Preschools: Focus on early education and school readiness.
- Childcare Centers: Provide full-day care for infants, toddlers, and young children.
- Head Start and Public Programs: Serve children from diverse backgrounds.
- Private or Faith-Based Centers: Operate independently or through organizations.
- Multi-Site or Franchise Centers: Oversee multiple locations or large enrollments.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Preschool and childcare center directors combine educational expertise with administrative skill.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

Paths into directorship vary by state and program type:

- Bachelor's Degree (common): Early childhood education, education administration, or related fields
- Teaching or Childcare Experience: Classroom experience with young children
- Director Credentials or Licensure: Required in many states
- Continuing Education: Ongoing training in leadership, compliance, and child development
- Advanced Degrees (optional): For leadership or public program roles

Where Do Preschool and Childcare Center Directors Work?

Directors work in a range of early childhood settings:

- Private Preschools and Childcare Centers
- Publicly Funded Early Childhood Programs
- Nonprofit and Community-Based Organizations

- Faith-Based Early Learning Centers
- Corporate or Employer-Sponsored Childcare Programs

Work schedules typically follow business hours but may include evenings or events.

How Much Do Preschool and Childcare Center Directors Earn?

Earnings vary by center size, funding, and location:

- Entry-Level or Small Center Directors: Typically earn modest management salaries
- Experienced or Multi-Site Directors: Often earn higher compensation
- Public Program or Administrative Leaders: May earn more in larger systems

Compensation may include benefits tied to the organization or program.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career is demanding and responsibility-heavy. Directors must balance educational quality, regulatory compliance, staffing challenges, and family expectations—often simultaneously. The challenge lies in maintaining high standards of care and education while managing limited resources and diverse needs.

Who Should Consider Becoming a Preschool or Childcare Center Director?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Are passionate about early childhood development
- Enjoy leading and mentoring educators
- Are organized and comfortable with administrative work
- Communicate well with families and staff
- Want to shape early learning environments at a leadership level

How to Prepare Early

- Study child development and early education principles
- Gain experience working in childcare or preschool classrooms
- Develop leadership and organizational skills
- Learn about licensing and regulatory requirements
- Explore early childhood education degree or credential programs

Preschool and childcare center directors shape the foundation of lifelong learning by creating safe, nurturing, and high-quality environments where young children, families, and educators can thrive together.