

The Office of Head Start recently published Wage Comparability 101: A Guide for Conducting a Wage and Fringe Benefits Comparability Survey, which is available through the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center website at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Fiscal/Wage%20Comparability%20Toolbox>

This Toolbox includes guidance for Head Start programs to use in conducting wage comparability studies.

The Center for Community Futures ([www.cencomfut.com](http://www.cencomfut.com)) conducts a nationwide Salary Survey of Local Head Start Programs every three years and publishes the data in the Salary Survey Report of Local Head Start Programs (The Report).

The purpose of this document is to answer the ten questions asked in the Guide under the section, *What to Consider Before Conducting a Wage & Fringe Benefits Comparability Survey* regarding the Center for Community Futures' Salary Survey Report of Local Head Start Programs.

**From the Guide:**

**What to Consider Before Conducting a Wage & Fringe Benefits Comparability Survey**

From a financial perspective, an analysis of the employee compensation system should be based on a thorough understanding of applicable regulations and exploration of the personnel policies and procedures, processes and expenditures supporting an agency's compensation plan.

The following list of questions and answers can help your program decide whether to conduct its own study, hire a consultant to perform the work, join a coalition of organizations to conduct a survey, or draw from existing information from one or more sources:

<b><u>OHS's Guide for Conducting a Survey: Wage Comparability 101 Questions:</u></b>	<b><u>Center for Community Futures' Answers Re: Salary Survey Report of Local Head Start Programs:</u></b>
<p>1. <i>Are positions reported in other studies adequately similar to yours to use as comparisons?</i></p> <p>Choose benchmark positions, at least one from each grade in your position classification system, whenever possible, rather than trying to collect information on each and every position in the program. Head Start has some positions which have few comparable jobs in the broader community.</p>	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>The Salary Survey Report of Local Head Start Programs provides wage data for 134 key Head Start positions. This is a Head Start-specific study surveying the following Head Start positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountant</li> <li>• Administrative Assistant</li> <li>• Administrative Specialist</li> </ul>

<b>OHS's <u>Guide for Conducting a Survey:</u>  <u>Wage Comparability 101 Questions:</u></b>	<b>Center for Community Futures' Answers  Re: <u>Salary Survey Report of Local Head  Start Programs:</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area Manager</li> <li>• Assistant Director</li> <li>• Assistant Teacher</li> <li>• Bilingual Family Service Worker</li> <li>• Bookkeeper</li> <li>• Bus Driver</li> <li>• Bus Monitor</li> <li>• Case Management Specialist</li> <li>• Case Manager</li> <li>• Case Manager Supervisor</li> <li>• Case Specialist</li> <li>• Center Aide</li> <li>• Center Manager</li> <li>• Classroom Aide/Assistant</li> <li>• Clerk/Accountant</li> <li>• Clerk/Typist</li> <li>• Community &amp; Family Partnership Specialist</li> <li>• Community Partnership Developer</li> <li>• Component/Area Coordinator</li> <li>• Component/Area Director</li> <li>• Component/Area Manager</li> <li>• Computer Manager</li> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• Cook Aide/Assistant</li> <li>• Custodian/Maintenance Aide</li> <li>• Custodian/Maintenance Worker</li> <li>• Data Entry Specialist</li> <li>• Deputy Director</li> <li>• Developmental Specialist</li> <li>• Disabilities Coordinator</li> <li>• Disabilities Service Aide</li> <li>• Disabilities Specialist</li> <li>• Education Coordinator</li> <li>• Education Resource Specialist</li> <li>• Education Supervisor</li> <li>• Eligibility Technician</li> <li>• Enrollment Specialist</li> <li>• Executive Assistant</li> <li>• Executive Secretary</li> <li>• Family/Community Advocate</li> </ul>

<b>OHS's <u>Guide for Conducting a Survey:</u>  <u>Wage Comparability 101 Questions:</u></b>	<b>Center for Community Futures' Answers  Re: <u>Salary Survey Report of Local Head  Start Programs:</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family &amp; Community Partnership Coordinator</li> <li>• Family Advocate</li> <li>• Family Development Coordinator</li> <li>• Family Development Manager</li> <li>• Family Development Specialist</li> <li>• Family Development Worker</li> <li>• Family Service Aide</li> <li>• Family Service Assistant</li> <li>• Family Service Coordinator</li> <li>• Family Service Director</li> <li>• Family Service Manager</li> <li>• Family Service Specialist</li> <li>• Family Service Worker</li> <li>• Family Specialist</li> <li>• Fiscal Assistant</li> <li>• Fiscal Director</li> <li>• Fiscal Manager</li> <li>• Fiscal Officer</li> <li>• Fiscal Specialist</li> <li>• Food Service Aide</li> <li>• Food Service Worker</li> <li>• Head Start Director</li> <li>• Health Assistant/Aide</li> <li>• Health Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Health Services Manager</li> <li>• Home Base Coordinator</li> <li>• Home Base Supervisor</li> <li>• Home Visitor</li> <li>• Human Resources Assistant</li> <li>• Human Resources Coordinator</li> <li>• Human Resources Director</li> <li>• Human Resources Manager</li> <li>• Infant/Toddler Specialist</li> <li>• Information Manager</li> <li>• Information Specialist</li> <li>• Intake Supervisor</li> <li>• Intake Worker</li> <li>• Janitor</li> <li>• Literacy Coordinator</li> <li>• Literacy Manager</li> </ul>

<b>OHS's <u>Guide for Conducting a Survey:</u>  <u>Wage Comparability 101 Questions:</u></b>	<b>Center for Community Futures' Answers  Re: <u>Salary Survey Report of Local Head  Start Programs:</u></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy Specialist</li> <li>• Mental Health Coordinator</li> <li>• Mental Health Counselor</li> <li>• Mental Health Specialist</li> <li>• Mental Health Supervisor</li> <li>• Nutrition Aide</li> <li>• Nutrition Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Nutritionist</li> <li>• Office Assistant</li> <li>• Office Manager</li> <li>• Operations Assistant</li> <li>• Parent Education Specialist</li> <li>• Parent Involvement Specialist</li> <li>• Parent Involvement/Social Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Parent Involvement/Social Services Specialist</li> <li>• Payroll/Personnel Clerk</li> <li>• Program Aide/Assistant</li> <li>• Program Area Coordinator</li> <li>• Program Area Manager</li> <li>• Program Counselor</li> <li>• Program Enrichment Specialist</li> <li>• Receptionist</li> <li>• Referral Specialist</li> <li>• Secretary</li> <li>• Senior Bus Driver</li> <li>• Social Services Assistant</li> <li>• Social Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Social Services Manager</li> <li>• Social Services Supervisor</li> <li>• Social Worker</li> <li>• Special Services Coordinator</li> <li>• Special Services Manager</li> <li>• Strategic Planner</li> <li>• Teacher 1: Associates degree in ECE</li> <li>• Teacher 2: Baccalaureate degree in ECE</li> <li>• Teacher 3: Advanced degree in ECE</li> <li>• Teacher 4: Associates degree in related field</li> <li>• Teacher 5: Baccalaureate in related field</li> </ul>

<p><b>OHS’s <u>Guide for Conducting a Survey: Wage Comparability 101 Questions:</u></b></p>	<p><b>Center for Community Futures’ Answers Re: <u>Salary Survey Report of Local Head Start Programs:</u></b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher 6: Advanced degree in related field</li> <li>• Teacher 7: Childhood Development Associate (CDA) credential</li> <li>• Teacher 8: State awarded certificate (exceeding CDA credential)</li> <li>• Teacher 9: degree in related field, with experience, and a state awarded certificate (exceeding CDA credential)</li> <li>• Teacher 10 (not meeting any of the above 9 positions)</li> <li>• Teacher Aide</li> <li>• Technical Specialist</li> <li>• Training Facilitator</li> <li>• Transition Specialist</li> <li>• Transportation Director</li> <li>• Transportation Supervisor</li> <li>• Volunteerism Coordinator</li> <li>• Volunteerism Manager</li> </ul>
<p>2. <i>Can you identify benchmark positions in your organization with adequate parallels in an outside survey?</i></p> <p>Be sure to choose benchmark positions which have parallels in the area. For example, if Disabilities Aide and Secretary are in the same grade, choose Secretary as the benchmark job. There are many secretaries about whom we can gather comparability information, but few Disabilities Aides in other programs.</p>	<p>2. Yes.</p> <p>In addition to the positions listed above, the Report provides data on combined positions and on other positions (those not covered in the survey but reported by responding programs). For example, in the 2009 Report, this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus Driver/Classroom Aide</li> <li>• Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator</li> <li>• Executive/Head Start Director</li> <li>• Translator</li> </ul> <p>and 146 additional positions with hourly rates provided, plus 86 additional positions with annual salaries provided.</p>
<p>3. <i>Do you know who responded to the survey?</i></p> <p>It is useful to obtain information about the organizations who have responded, so you can create a profile for comparability. Do you know the respondents to an external survey? In your own or a collaborative survey, a form asking organizations for information like budget, number of clients, type of agency (government, private non-</p>	<p>3. Confidentiality is guaranteed.</p> <p>While we protect the confidentiality of programs responding to our survey, the Report shows information like budget, type of agency, number of full-time equivalent employees, and number of children enrolled.</p> <p>We do not reveal the names nor addresses of programs responding to our survey to</p>

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profit, for-profit, faith-based, etc.), and number of staff will help you describe the group against which you compared your wages.	anyone.
<p>4. <i>Are job duties, levels of responsibility and qualifications clear from the survey?</i> If you conduct your own survey, you can provide information about the jobs in your program for which you are requesting comparability data. A two to three sentence description of the position will help the organizations surveyed understand the job better than by just providing a job title. For example, “teacher” in a child care center may have dramatically different requirements and qualifications than “teacher” in a public school pre-K program.</p>	<p>4. No. Our Salary Survey does not address or include job duties, responsibilities, or qualifications.  The Report does not replace the need for you to do local comparisons. It is an <b>additional perspective</b> on salaries and personnel policies that is not available anywhere else.</p>
<p>5. <i>Is there a knowledgeable person whom you can contact with questions?</i> If you use a survey conducted by another organization, is there someone who can serve as a resource to answer questions about the findings and methodology? If you conduct your own survey, be sure to ask for a contact person and phone number and/or email address from organizations who submit information to you, so that you can ask questions, if necessary, to ensure that data are accurate and complete.</p>	<p>5. Yes. Our staff are available to answer yours questions about anything regarding the survey and Report. Our contact information is printed clearly on the survey, Report cover, and other communications, including phone number, e-mail address, web site, and fax number. The Surveyor and Report Writer is: Teresa K. Wickstrom Center for Community Futures <a href="mailto:teresa@cencomfut.com">teresa@cencomfut.com</a> Phone and Fax: 909-790-0670 <a href="http://www.cencomfut.com">www.cencomfut.com</a></p>
<p>6. <i>How much information is gathered?</i> The least sophisticated wage comparability survey will gather only information about the job and the wage paid by other organizations. However, it is suggested that you go further and request information about each individual employed in each position surveyed. Information such as, level of education, number of years of experience, will help you determine how similar the comparability group is to your</p>	<p>6. In addition to the entry-level hourly and annual pay rates of the 134 Head Start positions surveyed, the Report includes data about fringe benefits and personnel policies, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health insurance, single coverage;</li> <li>• Health insurance, dependent coverage;</li> <li>• Dental insurance, single coverage;</li> <li>• Dental insurance, dependent coverage;</li> <li>• Life insurance</li> <li>• Short-term Disability insurance</li> <li>• Long-term Disability insurance</li> </ul>

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<p>staff and will provide invaluable information about the wage necessary to attract the best qualified staff. Including information about fringe benefits in the survey will provide you with information about total compensation so that you can make informed decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuition reimbursement</li> <li>• Retirement benefits</li> <li>• Career Development reimbursement</li> <li>• Vision insurance, single coverage</li> <li>• Vision insurance, dependent coverage</li> <li>• Vacation leave</li> <li>• Sick leave</li> <li>• Combined leave/Paid Time Off</li> <li>• Paid Holidays</li> <li>• Paid Maternity leave</li> <li>• COLA increases</li> <li>• Merit Pay increases</li> </ul> <p>However, the Report does not relate program fringe benefits or personnel policies to job positions. That information is available through our Individualized Salary Survey Reports. The Survey addresses level of education for Teachers but not for other positions.</p>
<p><i>7. How are wages reported?</i></p> <p>The survey should provide wage information based on hourly wage, not monthly, annual or some other aggregated compensation. Why do this? Because some organizations consider full-time to be 40 hours a week, others 35 hours a week. Some year-round staff work 2,080 hours a year; others work 1,920 or 1,760 hours a year. If you receive annual salary information from two organizations for the same position and one organization is based on 40 hour weeks, 52 weeks a year (2,080 hours/year) and the other is calculated on 35 hours a week for 48 weeks a year (1,680 hours/year), and both report salaries of \$30,000 a year, we have a big difference in hourly wage (\$14.42/hour in the first instance, and \$17.86 in the second - a 24% difference). When you ask for hourly wage data, you are able to compare “apples and apples.”</p>	<p><i>7. Both ways.</i></p> <p>The Report provides salary charts for both hourly pay rates and annual salaries.</p>
<p><i>8. How many organizations are represented in the survey?</i></p>	<p><i>8. Enough.</i></p> <p>Our Reports have sufficient response from</p>

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<p>Your local survey should gather information from at least five other organizations. If you are able to obtain data from more agencies that are comparable to yours, do so. The more information you have from comparable organizations, the better comparability data you will generate. Studies conducted at the state level are likely to have a broader base of data. If the labor market in your area is significantly different from that of the broader state market, you can correct for the differences using the “correction factor method” described later in this guide.</p>	<p>across the country for statistically valid results.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year of Survey</th> <th>Number of Responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2000</td> <td>203</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003</td> <td>282</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2006</td> <td>195</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>169</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year of Survey	Number of Responses	2000	203	2003	282	2006	195	2009	169
Year of Survey	Number of Responses										
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<p>9. <i>Do you have sufficient statistical sophistication to perform accurate and thorough analyses?</i> Data should be compiled and analyzed using a spreadsheet, statistical package or other software which enables you to perform basic statistical analyses. You should generate frequencies and averages for most data elements. For wage, education and experience data, it will be useful to report high, low, and median data as well as averages. Measures which reflect the variability or dispersion of reported wages are also useful. The range and the standard deviation are the most common dispersion statistics, which tell you how spread out the data values are.</p>	<p>9. Yes.</p> <p>The salary charts included in the Report show the minimums, maximums, averages, and standard deviations for each position and by program characteristic (budget size, number of employees, type of service delivery area, etc.)</p>										
<p>10. <i>Is there someone who understands these statistics (either in-house or a consultant) to help you synthesize the information and compile a wage comparability report?</i> You are encouraged to work with a consultant who understands wage studies, so that you can further understand and use your data wisely and appropriately.</p>	<p>10. Yes.</p> <p>Our Survey Project Manager, Teresa Wickstrom, graduated from UCSB after studying Sociology and Statistics for four years. She has worked with surveys and statistics since 1993.</p> <p>She is available to answer any questions regarding the Survey or Report.</p>										