

# POWEROFUS

## The Youth Fields Workforce

Findings from the National Power of Us Workforce Survey



**More than 10,000 youth serving professionals and volunteers answered the call to explore, define, and elevate the youth fields workforce!**

A ground-breaking study of a broad field, the Power of Us Workforce Survey provides comprehensive insights into the youth fields workforce, showcasing their different backgrounds, dedication to youth development, varied career paths, and their current experiences and needs in professional learning, well-being, and compensation.

The findings in this snapshot reflect the responses of current staff not in leadership positions (i.e., frontline staff not serving as organizational, program, or site leaders).

### Who is in the youth fields?

Adults who work with young people in strengths-based interest development and enrichment opportunities through community organizations, institutions, and agencies.



### Career Pathways

The Power of Us Workforce Survey respondents not in leadership positions joined the field with a strong connection to the communities they serve, a sense of purpose, and a passion for supporting young people. They often are of younger age as they start in the youth fields. While many respondents not in leadership positions are committed to the youth fields, they report a slightly lower level of commitment compared to those in leadership positions.

**69%**

of respondents not in leadership positions are **very committed to the youth fields**, compared to 79% of respondents in leadership positions



### What Respondents Not in Leadership Positions Value about Their Job



#### Colleagues

Working with people I like



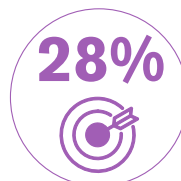
#### Altruism

Helping others



#### Pay

Earning a good living to pay for the things I need



#### Achievement

That feeling of accomplishment from doing a job well

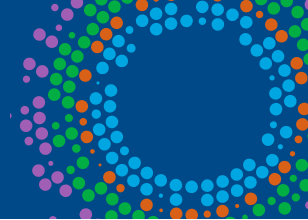


#### Environment

Working in pleasant surroundings

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## II

### Professional Learning

The Power of Us Workforce Survey respondents not in leadership positions bring different educational backgrounds and experiences to their roles, with many expressing a desire for continued professional growth. The Power of Us Workforce Survey underscores that organizations offer professional learning to many, and there are opportunities to expand part-time staff members' access to external providers and sources of professional learning

#### Range of Educational Backgrounds

The majority of respondents not in leadership positions hold a bachelor's degree or higher. However, they are more likely to have a high school diploma as their highest degree earned compared to respondents in leadership positions.

#### Limited Professional Learning in the Field

Respondents not in leadership positions have access to learning through their organization. However, they are less likely to participate in professional learning with the broader field, such as conferences and professional networking, compared to those in leadership positions.

#### Desire for Resources and Opportunities

Many respondents not in leadership positions want more organizational learning opportunities, resources for participation, and more convenient times, locations, and time off for training.

**86%**

of respondents not in leadership positions **have access to professional learning** through their organization. However, fewer respondents have access through other organizations (22%) or through the Internet (30%).

## III

### Professional Well-Being

The Power of Us Workforce Survey respondents not in leadership positions report having a sense of belonging, feeling valued at work, and access to the resources needed to succeed. They also see themselves as part of the larger youth fields community. Stress and burnout remain challenges for respondents, although to a slightly less extent than respondents in leadership positions.



#### Of Respondents Not in Leadership Positions

**86%**

**have the resources** to do their jobs

**86%**

**feel valued** at work

**88%**

**feel that they belong** at their organization

**84%**

**see themselves as a part of a larger youth fields community**

**41%**

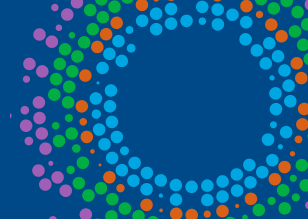
**feel burned out at work** compared to 49% of respondents in leadership positions

**31%**

**would like less stress in their job** compared to 41% of respondents in leadership positions

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## IV

### Compensation

The Power of Us Workforce Survey respondents not in leadership positions have mixed perceptions of fair pay. They reported pay that, when compared to external benchmarks, is more than childcare workers but less than teachers. There are also pay differences by age and location, as well as gaps in access to many benefits, especially compared to respondents in leadership positions.

Youth fields professionals' compensation is generally higher than childcare workers but lower than teachers.

47%

of respondents not in leadership positions are paid \$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour (if paid hourly)

45%

of respondents not in leadership positions are paid \$40,000-\$59,999 per year (if paid via annual salary)

While slightly more than half of respondents not in leadership positions have access to paid time off and medical insurance, less than half have access to other employee benefits, such as dental insurance, retirement, and family leave.



The Power of Us Workforce Survey is a national survey of the youth fields workforce, defined as paid staff and volunteers who work with youth beyond school hours, beyond the school year, and outside of classroom settings. Data collection began on February 22, 2022, and ended on March 31, 2023. The results are from a national, cross-sector sample of the workforce and serve as a baseline to inform practice, policy, and future research.

Over 10,000 current and former youth fields staff and volunteers participated in the survey, and the findings in this snapshot and associated documentation come from 2,054 current staff not serving as organizational, program, or site leaders in the youth fields workforce. The findings represent the characteristics and experiences of the staff who completed the Power of Us Workforce Survey.

More detailed findings on respondents not in leadership positions, as well as other findings from the Power of Us Workforce survey, are available here: <https://air.org/project/power-us-workforce-survey>.

Photos Courtesy of the 50 State Afterschool Network.