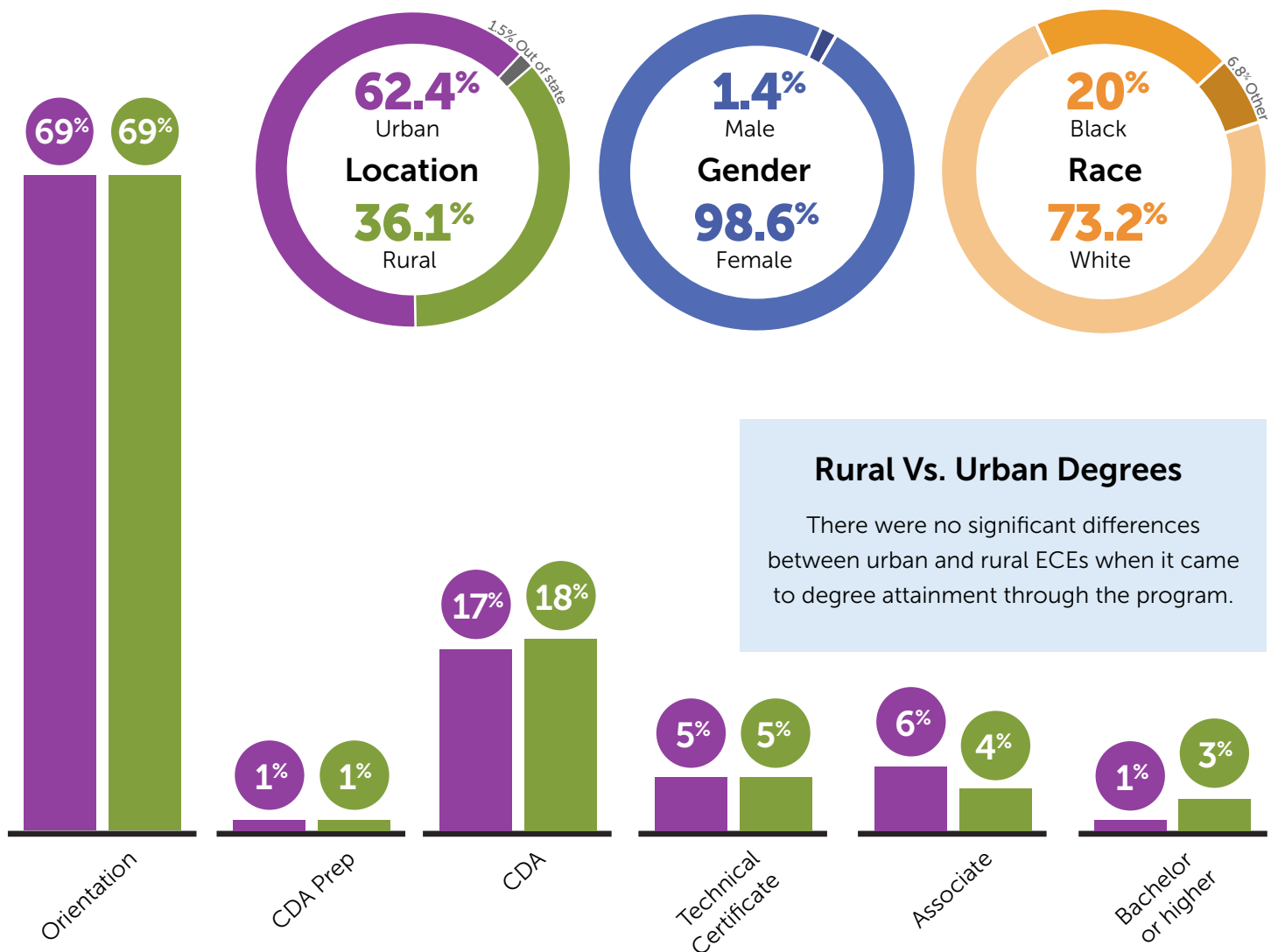


Supporting Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) Access to Educational and Employment Opportunities

In 2024, Digital Promise conducted research with Tennessee State University examining the educational and professional experiences of early childhood educators (ECE) in Tennessee. We analyzed program-level participation data and conducted focus groups with ECE service providers and administrators of the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA).* Our goal was to assess the current program's effectiveness, highlight the challenges providers face, and propose recommendations to enhance early childhood education for providers, children, and families.

*The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) provides free education and training to ECEs throughout the state.

Who participates in TECTA?



Percentages reported based on total number of TECTA participants from 2013–2022 (2,284).

Successful Social Change

Our findings revealed several social change recommendations for employers, policymakers, and education/training programs that can benefit early childhood educators. Implementing these changes can help meet educators' needs, enhancing their ability to provide quality services.







Employers

-  Create Flexible and Collaborative Work Environments
-  Provide Financial Support and Opportunities for Professional Development
-  Offer Mentoring and Competitive Compensation
-  Give Access to Mental Health Resources

Policy Makers

-  Fund Higher Education
-  Raise Minimum Wage
-  Engage Communities and Collaborators

Education/Training Programs

-  Offer Free or Subsidized Education
-  Provide Childcare Support and Flexible Learning Opportunities
-  Improve Accessibility Through Stipends, Mentorship, and Inclusivity
-  Facilitate Transferability of Credentials

From Childcare to Educare: Inspiring Change in Early Childhood Education for Rural Tennessee

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Funding for this project is provided by the American Institutes for Research through Ascendium Education Group, whose mission is to elevate opportunity for learners from low-income backgrounds so they can achieve their academic and career goals.

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