

State of CARE FOR KIDS in Utah



Families can't afford to pay.

Each family must choose what caretaking option is best for them. Families that want to have one parent stay home often cannot afford to live on one income. While families that choose care outside the home face costs higher than college tuition. The reality is, most parents don't have true choice in child care.

Providers can't afford to stay.

Despite high tuition costs, the early educators who care for our littlest ones rarely make a living wage. With the largest driver of quality in child care being interactions between the child and caregiver, kids lose without a well-compensated, skilled, and engaged workforce.

There has to be another way.

We all have the same goal: for every Utah child to have the chance to grow up healthy, strong and ready to learn. The vast majority of a child's brain development occurs before they even begin their formal schooling. Whether in the care of a parent or educator, early learning prepares children to learn, grow, and succeed.

84% of parents feel overwhelmed by the cost of child care.

AVERAGE ANNUAL COST:
\$9,945 **\$7,646**
For Infant Care For Toddler Care

35%
of the state's child care need is met in Utah's current care system.

AVERAGE CHILD CARE EDUCATOR SALARY:
\$10.47 **\$20,940**
Per Hour Per Year

On average, child care educators make less than  **dogwalkers.**

Utah's economy loses **\$1.36 Billion** every year due to disruptions in child care access.

90%
of a child's brain develops by the age of 5, before kindergarten



Care for Kids

Priority Appropriations Requests

Long before the pandemic, Utah's child care system was struggling. Now we face a crisis: when federal COVID money runs out, there will be even less child care that is affordable and accessible. Without this funding, these programs will be eliminated.



Child Care Stabilization Grants (\$216M)

Rep. Andrew Stoddard

This funding will allow for a one-year extension of stabilization grants, currently received by hundreds of licensed child care providers in Utah - which have been a lifeline for the industry. This program is intended to prevent the catastrophic collapse of Utah's already insufficient stock of available care.



Retention Incentives for Early Childhood Professionals (\$38M)

Rep. Luz Escamilla

This funding will allow for a two-year extension of the Office of Child Care's \$2,000 bonus program for child care workers to improve retention within the field while structural reforms of the sector are pursued.



Regional Child Care Development Grants (\$2.1M)

Rep. Ashlee Matthews

This funding will allow for a three-year extension of grants for Utah's six Regional Care about Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies for creating new programs for rural outreach, small business training, start-up grants, and professional development.



Child Care Licensing-Related Fees (\$3M)

Rep. Ashlee Matthews

This funding will allow for a three-year extension of the Office of Child Care Licensing's program waiving the costs associated with child care licensure. These funds help to lessen the barriers to expanding, maintaining, and opening new child care programs.