

Employer Child Care Toolkit

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Written by: Jennifer Stout



Over the past several years, as Utah employers have faced challenges in recruiting and retaining employees, many companies have begun reviewing options to best attract and retain talent. One of the strategies that employers can consider is related to employee access to child care – ways in which to support parent access to care, choices for care, and affordability.

In 2022, a U.S. Chamber Foundation study, [Untapped Potential: How Child Care Impacts Utah's Workforce Productivity and the State Economy](#), found a \$1.36 billion annual loss to Utah's economy due to child care challenges. The report found a \$1.1 billion cost to employers due to employee absences and turnover related to parent challenges with child care.

Voices for Utah Children, Promise Partnership Utah, and Utah Community Builders (a program of the Salt Lake Chamber Foundation) worked together to develop an [Employer Child Care Toolkit](#). The concept of the toolkit is that it provides a menu of options for employers to consider in better supporting parents in accessing child care. Prices for child care may include some options at no cost, others at a low cost, some at a medium cost, and others are more significant investments. What we found in discussions with employers across the state was that many were unaware

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of the options or how they might be able to “lean in” to help make a difference for both their employees and boost their own company's productivity.

The [toolkit](#) offers a menu of strategies and resources to inform management discussions. For example, employers should start with a survey of employees – what is their need for child care? Their challenges? What are the ages of their children who might need care? What are their preferences as to center-based care or home-based care, closer to home or closer to work, whether they need care during nontraditional hours, or if they have a child with special needs? The [survey](#) can be downloaded and used as is or customized by companies. Responses to the survey can help inform company leaders as to approaches that best fit their company.

Other toolkit features include:

- [Information](#) related to federal and state child care tax credits for employers and employee benefits such as Dependent Care Assistance Plans (DCAPs), which enable employees to put aside wages annually that are tax-free, that can be used to reimburse child care expenses.
- [Links to Child Care Resource Agencies](#) throughout the state that can help employees find care, as well as links to the state child care subsidy program for low-wage workers.
- Some [“quick wins” for employers](#), such as placing child care information in onboarding packets for new-hires or in places where employees frequently gather (e.g., the lunchroom).
- [Link](#) to help employees understand if they can qualify for Child Care subsidies in Utah.
- An [Employer Champion page](#) spotlights Utah employers who are leaning in on behalf of their employees (e.g., Qualtrics in Provo partners with Bright Horizons to offer an on-site child care center, Cloud Village, which serves 250 children aged 3 months to 5 years).

The intent is to offer employers an array of options to expand child care access for employees. As we learn about new strategies or the state legislature passes new incentives or strategies for public-private partnerships to support child care, we'll grow the toolkit.

Child care challenges are complicated. It's about supply, affordability, and quality.

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Our vision is to support employers in understanding how they can be part of the solution. There's no one way to address child care access challenges, but we all can lean in to play a role. Children, parents, employers, and communities depend on it.

[CHECK OUT THE UTAH EMPLOYER CHILD CARE TOOLKIT TODAY!](#)