

Utah Has a New Plan to Fix Childcare

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Written by: Anna Thomas



There's a bright spot of news in the childcare advocacy world this week!

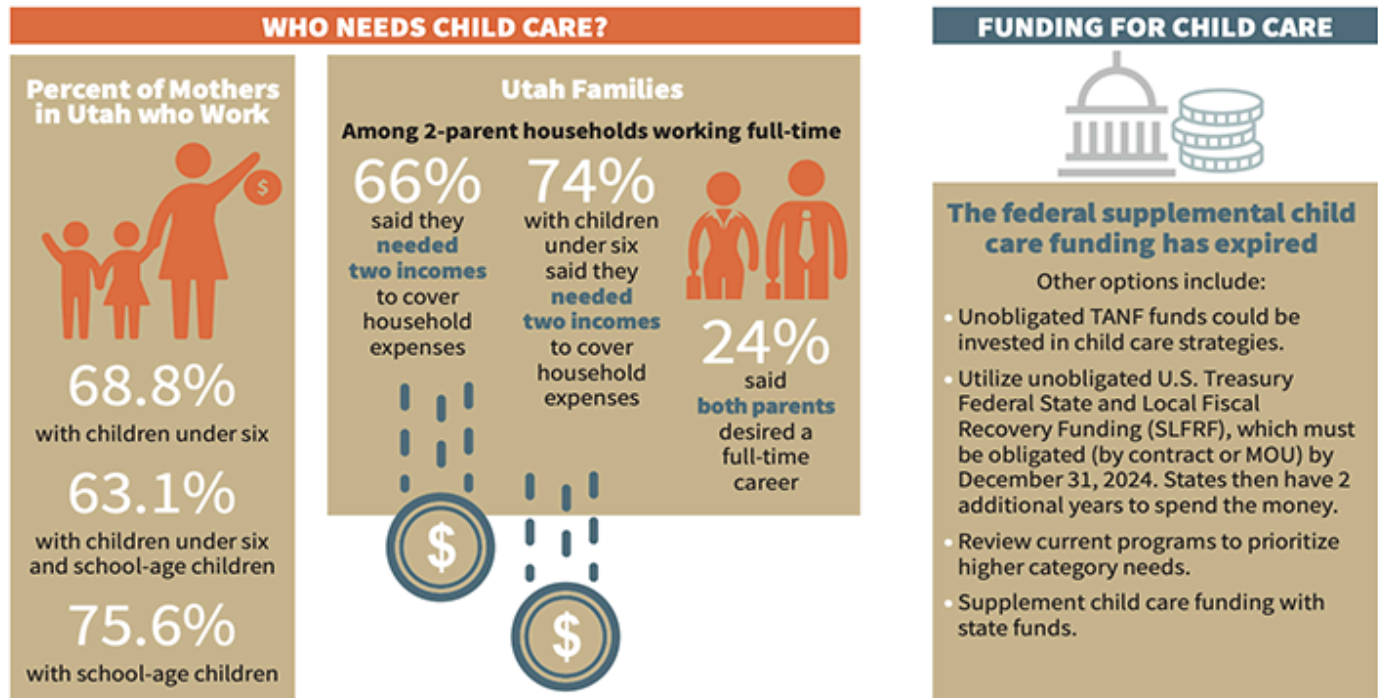
The [Women in the Economy Subcommittee](#) of the Governor's [Unified Economic Opportunity Commission](#) recently released a new 84-page plan to address the childcare crisis in Utah. The comprehensive Utah Childcare Solutions and Workplace Productivity Plan includes more than 30 solid recommendations for action we can take to alleviate our childcare crisis.

[Download the full Childcare Solutions & Workforce Productivity Plan here](#)

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* This image was created by the Early Learning Policy Group for use with the Childcare Solutions and Workforce Productivity Plan discussed in this post.

The plan is a much-needed public confirmation of the severity of Utah's current childcare situation, as well as of many reasonable and commonsense ideas that local childcare advocates have been recommending for years. Completed over the course of several months by outside contractor [Early Learning Policy Group](#), the plan includes lots of great information about our state's changing demographics, the financial struggles of parents with young children, and the challenges facing Utah's childcare workforce.

[Download the 12-page executive summary here](#)

Survey data and focus groups with parents illuminate the need and desire for quality childcare around the state, and the plan includes some heartbreaking quotes from those parents, as well:

"Parents enter the workforce because they don't have another choice. Most are dual income, but they don't have a choice. It's a big issue for families."

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"I was leaving my kids, but when I picked them up, the boyfriend brought them out, not the woman I left my children with. It wasn't a regulated program, just someone who cared for kids. I stopped taking my child there. She was two. I didn't want the boyfriend taking care of the kids."

"Because the legislature is not in the same situation we are, they don't need to worry about child care. They don't have any empathy. Can never really sympathize with us. That is why I don't think anything will ever happen."

Several of the plan's recommendations mirror our Early Care and Learning policy priorities for the 2025 legislative session, including:

- **Doubling public investment in Utah's [state-funded preschool grants](#)**, which have served thousands of Utah children over the past decade and can be easily scaled up for greater impact.
- **Using state funds to provide [childcare subsidies for staff working in child care programs](#)**, a childcare recruitment and retention strategy that was authorized by the legislature via [HB461 "Child Care Grant Amendments"](#) last session.

The Early Learning Policy Group also produced some helpful graphical illustrations of data from the plan, which can be found [here](#), and a [cool interactive tool](#) based on that same data.

The Childcare Solutions plan is a welcome addition to the state-level childcare policy landscape. The vast majority of the recommendations are reasonable and cost-effective ways to address childcare affordability and accessibility in Utah without endangering the health and safety of children or compromising the quality efforts of childcare programs. We hope to see the legislature pursue a solid list of policy

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proposals included in this plan.