

ACCESS

	Under 5 years		Infants and toddlers	
	County	PA	County	PA
Child population	34,150	681,354	19,766	399,126
Eligible for Child Care Works (CCW)	4,760	180,480	2,760	105,720
Eligible children enrolled	1,691	44,579	808	22,294
Unserved, eligible children	3,069	135,901	1,952	83,426
Percent unserved	65%	75%	71%	79%

Pennsylvania's child care system has a staffing shortage resulting in more than 35,500 children sitting on wait lists making it difficult for parents to work. This child care crisis costs working families, employers, and taxpayers \$6.65 billion annually in lost wages, productivity and revenue. The key to increasing working families' access to child care is addressing the child care staffing crisis.

QUALITY

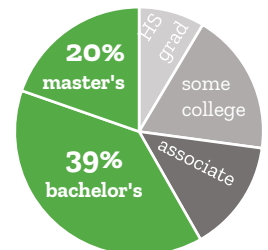
	Under 5 years in Child Care Works		Infants and toddlers in Child Care Works	
	County	PA	County	PA
Children enrolled in high-quality	61%	45%	59%	42%
Capacity meeting high-quality	53%	46%		

The General Assembly should invest \$70 million to increase funding for programs serving subsidized children that have reached a STAR 2, 3 or 4 rating, thereby incentivizing programs to achieve higher levels of quality, and sustaining those that have met the high-quality standards.

WORKFORCE

Weekly Wage (2022)
Child Care \$556
All-Private \$1,244
 Workers in the child care industry (all occupations) earn **45%** of the average weekly wage of private sector employees.

59% of teachers planning to leave child care sector are highly educated



The General Assembly should implement a child care teacher wage scale that will compete in today's labor market and recognizes the qualifications of the professionals doing the work. Start Strong PA proposes a \$430 million plan to raise wages to \$15/hr. for HS diploma or GED, \$19/hr. for Associate Degree, and \$21/hr. for Bachelor's Degree or higher.



Start Strong PA believes that because every child deserves an equal opportunity to a quality educational foundation that will prepare them to grow, learn, and succeed, we are calling on Pennsylvania to focus on the most important years of a child's development; the first three years of life.

Data is provided by KIDS COUNT®: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

BENEFITS OF HIGH-QUALITY CHILD CARE



increased employment and tax revenue



increased job retention and productivity for employers



higher earning potential for parents



improved math and language ability



healthy development



reduced grade repetition

"We want to provide high quality care and education for the children of every family that comes to us. Unfortunately, we currently have 80 children sitting on our waiting list in Bucks County. If we didn't have 3 open staff positions we could serve many more families."

- Nicole Fetherman, Executive Director, LifeSpan School & Day Care

"Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and related mitigation efforts, many firms have struggled to retain employees and fill job vacancies. That outcome could be partly due to a lack of affordable child care options for working families, as the child care industry has yet to revert to pre-pandemic employment levels."

- Independent Fiscal Office, Post-Pandemic Child Care Cliff (February 2023)

The General Assembly should invest \$500 million in new and recurring state funding to:

- Implement a child care teacher wage scale that will compete in today's labor market and recognizes the qualifications of the professionals doing the work. Start Strong PA proposes a plan to raise wages to \$15/hr. for HS diploma or GED, \$19/hr. for Associate Degree, and \$21/hr. for Bachelor's Degree or higher. The total investment for this progressive wage scale is \$430 million.
- Invest \$70 million to increase funding for programs serving subsidized children that have reached a STAR 2, 3 or 4 rating, thereby incentivizing programs to achieve higher levels of quality, and sustaining those that have met the high-quality standards. Such an investment will help compensate child care providers closer to the actual cost of providing these services.



Campaign led by Children First | Fight Crime: Invest in Kids | First Up | Mission: Readiness | Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children | Pennsylvania Child Care Association | Pennsylvania Head Start Association | Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children | The United Way of Pennsylvania | Trying Together

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