

ACCESS

	Under 5 years		Infants and toddlers	
	County	PA	County	PA
Child population	6,810	681,354	3,977	399,126
Eligible for Child Care Works (CCW)	1,980	180,480	1,160	105,720
Eligible children enrolled	298	44,579	156	22,294
<b>Unserved, eligible children</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>135,901</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>83,426</b>
<b>Percent unserved</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>79%</b>

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

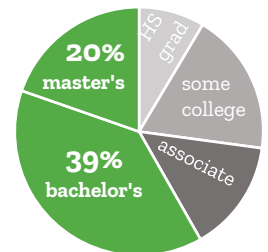
	Under 5 years in Child Care Works		Infants and toddlers in Child Care Works	
	County	PA	County	PA
<b>Children enrolled in high-quality</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Capacity meeting high-quality</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>46%</b>		

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 do our best to serve all families that need us in Fayette County. Unfortunately, we have 37 children on our waiting lists. If we could fill our 7 open positions we could fully enroll our 37 waitlisted families and give an additional 12-18 children the high quality care and education they deserve and the support their families need while they go to work."**

**- Melissa Judy, Crayon Clubhouse and Pinky Toes Child Care and Development Center**

"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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