

**Wisconsin  
Women's Council  
Child Care and  
Wisconsin's Workforce**

May 26, 2021



# Child Care: Wisconsin Industry Trends

- Over half of WI's residents live in child care deserts; in rural WI, this jumps to nearly 80%
- Close to 75% of children age 4 and under are in care outside the home
- 70.2% of WI infants have mothers in the workforce compared to the national average of 61.6%

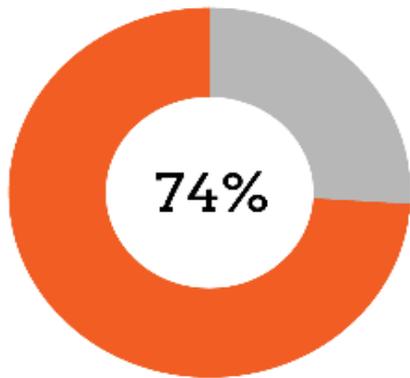


# Child Care: Economic Impact



- 86% of working parents said problems with child care hurt their efforts and time commitment at work; they were falling behind, missing work, or absent
- 83% of millennials report they would leave a job for one with more family friendly benefits
- 60% of employers have job vacancies that last over 12 weeks

# Parent Perspectives Pre COVID-19



Strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that "parents have an easy time finding child care for infants and toddlers that meets their needs."

Strongly agree or agree with the statement that "Center-based child care options for infants and toddlers cost too much in my community."

79%

# Child Care: High Cost



## Expensive

- The average annual cost of infant care across child care settings in Wisconsin is \$12,567—that's \$1,047 per month. In our largest urban counties infant care can exceed \$18,000 - \$20,000 per year

## Unaffordable for families in Wisconsin

- Infant care for one child would take up between 18.5% to 25% of a median family's income in Wisconsin
- This is 49% of the annual income of the average single parent in WI

# WI: 20<sup>th</sup> out of 50 States

## How does your state stack up? *Annual infant care costs*



Source: Economic Policy Institute: *The cost of child care in the United States*

# Child Care: Gap Assessment by The Bipartisan Policy Center

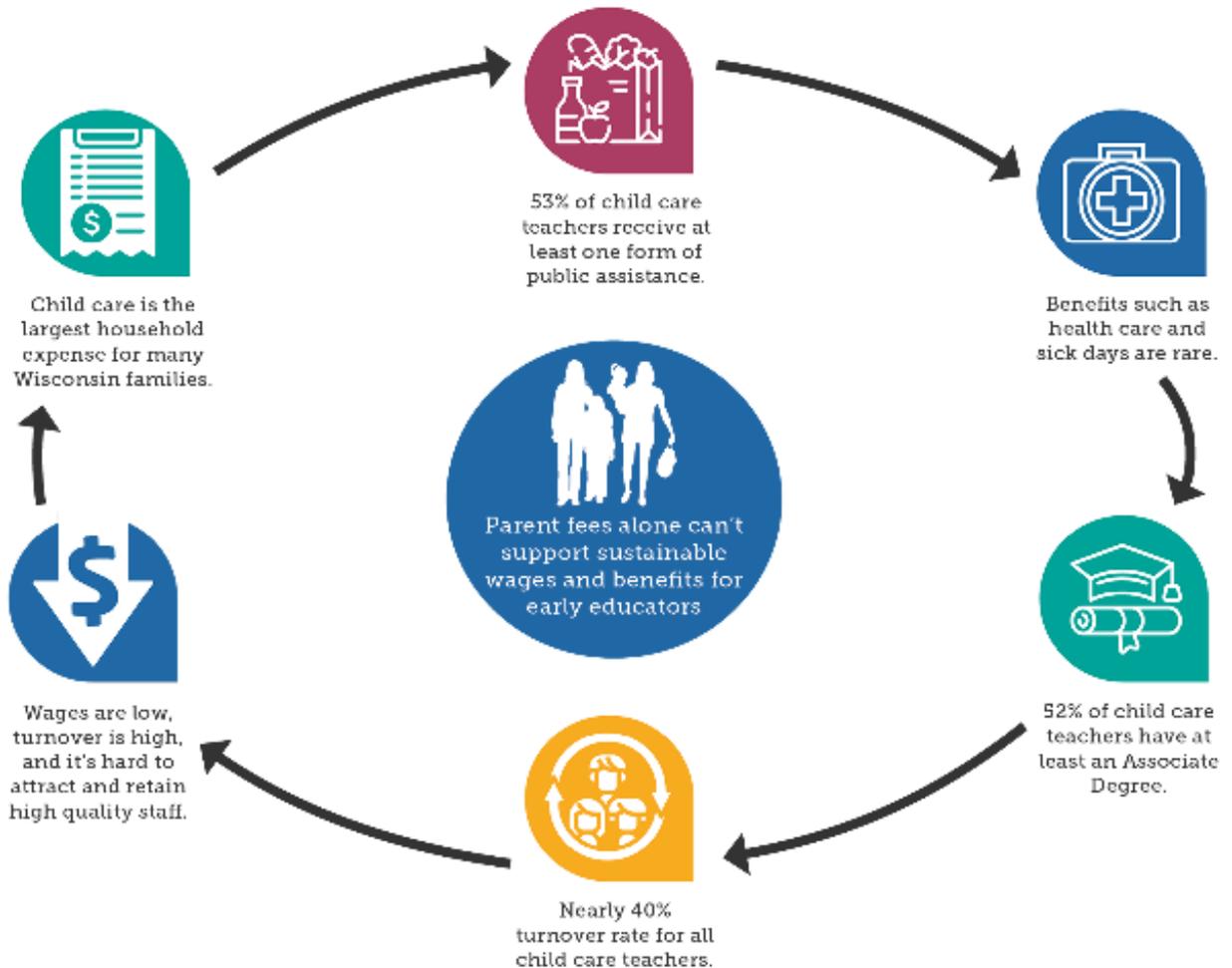
## Prior to COVID:

- **288,430** children (birth to age 5) have the potential need for child care.
- There is a supply of **171,040** child care slots.
- The families of **117,090** children do not have access to child care.
- Child care gap: **40.6%** of the potential need. In rural WI, there is gap of **50.1%**

# Child Care: The Workforce Behind the Workforce



Wisconsin  
Median Child  
Care Worker  
Wage:  
\$10.66/hour



# In Brief



- Bold response needed to stabilize child care; like transportation and electricity, it is infrastructure for a strong economy
- Child care is simultaneously job creating and job enabling
- Child care is a two-generation solution
- Child care challenges are complex and demand multi-sector solutions and leadership



# Wisconsin Infant Toddler Policy Project



# Policies and Priorities: WI Infant Toddler Policy Project (WITPP)



1. All low-income families have equitable access to the information and supports they need to promote optimal early childhood development and well-being



2. All low-income families will have equitable access to a range of affordable, high quality child care options that meet their employment and family needs



3. The early childhood workforce will have the skills, training, and support to deliver high quality care with commensurate compensation

# WITPP State Collaborative Team

Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment  
Black Child Development Institute Milwaukee  
Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Education/Hoocak Ee  
Cooni Waziperes Hocira  
Kids Forward  
League of Wisconsin Municipalities  
Main Street Alliance  
Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board  
OEM Fabricators  
Office of Early Learning Initiatives-City of Milwaukee  
One City Schools  
Penfield Children's Center  
Primary Health Care Association  
Prosperity Southwest Wisconsin  
Reach Dane/Reach Green  
Reach Out and Read Wisconsin  
The Registry  
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative  
Supporting Families Together Association  
UMOS

United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha Co.  
United Way of Portage County  
United Way of Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health  
Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and  
WIAAP Foundation  
Wisconsin Community Action Program  
Wisconsin Council of Churches  
Wisconsin Counties Association  
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families  
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development  
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association  
Wisconsin Head Start Association  
The Wisconsin Partnership  
Wisconsin Philanthropy Network  
Wisconsin Towns Association

In consultation with Department of Children and Families,  
Department of Public Instruction, Department of Workforce  
Development, and Office of Governor Evers.

# WITPP: Creating a Statewide Effort in Support of Infants & Toddlers

## **Connections**

- Local Chambers of Commerce, employers and others working together
- National League of Cities and National Counties Association

## **Economic Development**

- Business Advisory Council
- Children's Funding Project - Revenue Development

## **Statewide Advocacy**

- Support and interest among community groups (i.e. 7 Rivers Alliance, a new Fox Cities collaborative formed around the WITPP goals)
- Governor Evers' budget listening sessions
- 250+ child care advocates and 100+ legislators attended WECA's Advocacy Days

# Child Care: Federal COVID-19 Relief Funding

- **Round 1: CARES Act, 2020**
  - \$131 million for child care in WI
  - Funded Child Care Counts program
- **Round 2: Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021**
  - \$148 million for child care in WI
  - Approved by the Joint Finance Committee in early 2021
- **American Rescue Plan**
  - \$580 million for child care in WI
  - Discussions occurring over innovative ways to invest the funding

# Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021

## Phase One:

### **Expand Child Care Counts (\$106 million)**

Administer two additional rounds of the Child Care Counts program in 2021, including a \$60 million program in Spring 2021 and a \$46 million program in Summer 2021.

Fund critical technology infrastructure (\$10 million).

Invest in workforce recruitment and retention (\$10 million).

Create and expand shared services networks (\$5.5 million).

# Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021

## Phase Two:

### **Incentivize private sector partnership (\$10 million)**

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored how critical child care is to Wisconsin's economy. This new program will offer funding to businesses to purchase infant and toddler child care slots for their employees. It will require matching funds from businesses, which will allow them to transition to a sustainable child care support program for their employees.

Invest in workforce training and communications (\$5.5 million).

# State Funding



# Governor Evers 2021-2023 Budget



- \$140 million to address child care quality, affordability, and access; \$106 million in new funds over the biennium.
- Investments in infant and toddler care by providing child care providers with grants based on percentage of infant and toddlers served, ages of Shares and non-Shares children, and star level. At least half of total monthly payments are required to be allocated towards staff salaries and benefits.
- 2 pilot programs in child care deserts to create a sustainable path towards accessibility.

# Governor Evers Budget (Continued)



- \$3 million in funding for early childhood social emotional training and technical assistance.
- \$500,000 annual TANF increase for the REWARD program for child care workers.
- Creating a non-refundable child and dependent care credit

# Joint Finance Committee Actions

- The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) reverted the budget bill back to base
- JFC will meet throughout May and June before wrapping
- Waiting on Legislative Fiscal Bureau revenue estimates in early/mid June
- Full legislature may vote on budget bill by end of June



# Call to Action

## State Advocacy Request

- Ask Wisconsin legislators to include the creation of Child Care Strong in the Wisconsin state budget bill.
- Money from the American Rescue Plan may be used to fund Child Care Strong in this budget, providing legislators with an opportunity to evaluate the program after two years before investing state money in the subsequent budget.
- Ask for increases in WI Shares reimbursement rates, expansion of program eligibility

# Contact Information



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