



2026 Election Brief

Vermont is making child care progress. **Now, let's build on it.**

Child care is essential to Vermont. When quality child care is affordable and accessible:

Children develop the skills they need to thrive in school and life

Families can afford to live here

Parents can work

Businesses have a larger, more reliable workforce

Communities grow stronger

Right now, Vermont's investment in child care is fueling our economy and powering our workforce. Since 2023, our state's child care system has seen transformative growth – thousands of new spaces for children, hundreds of new jobs for early childhood educators, and Vermont families getting access to life-changing savings. But our progress is not guaranteed. **The 2026 election is a defining moment that will determine Vermont's child care future.**

Why Child Care Matters

For Children

Skilled early childhood educators help children develop the skills they need to thrive and start school ready to learn.

For Employers

Access to child care means businesses can recruit, retain, and support their workers.

For Families

Parents need access to quality, affordable child care, where their children are safe and learning, so they can work and build their futures in Vermont.

For Communities

Child care helps attract and retain young families so we can build vibrant local communities.

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Vermont Has Made Major Progress

Since Vermont's landmark child care law Act 76 passed in 2023:

- ✓ **5,000** more children receiving child care tuition assistance
- ✓ More than **4,300** families have tuition-free child care
- ✓ **1,200** new child care spaces created
- ✓ Child care worker wages increased by **30%**
- ✓ The child care supply-demand gap decreased by **19%**
- ✓ For the first time in a decade, family child care homes **increased**

Public investment through Act 76 proves that Vermont can build a child care system that is affordable and accessible for all. But its success depends on what we do next.

The Work Ahead and What Candidates Can Do

Vermont lawmakers have a lot to be proud of. They had the courage to care and changed the trajectory of our state with Act 76. State investments are working. We must protect these resources and strengthen the early childhood educator workforce that provides the quality child care we rely on. This progress is essential for our families, communities and economy. We can't stop now.

In this election and beyond, let's work together to:

Strengthen Vermont's early childhood educator workforce

Ensure child care access in every community

Make child care affordable for even more kids and families

Vermont has shown that **investing in quality, affordable, accessible child care is popular and it works.** Now is the time to stay committed to child care because when we do, **we all benefit.**



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