

# CHILD CARE IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR ECONOMY

Strategic investments in early childhood education will transform our economy.

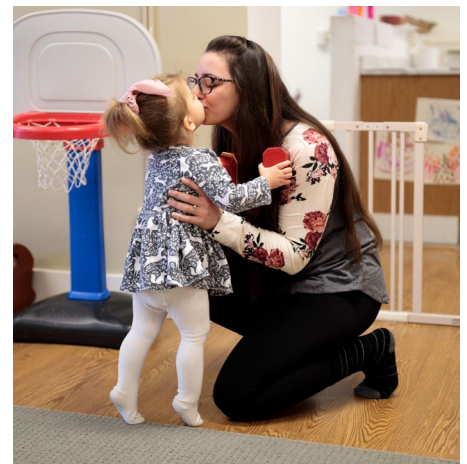
Funding affordable access to high-quality early childhood education in Vermont will provide an immediate financial boost for families with young children, rejuvenate our aging demographic, and to help Vermont's economy to recover from the pandemic. Over time, sustained investments will support Vermont's education, health care, and corrections systems by addressing the root issues that drive up costs year over year.

## The impact of Vermont's child care crisis:

- » **Children are missing out on a strong start:** **3 out of 5** of Vermont's youngest children don't have access to the child care they need. The first five years are the most critical and too many Vermont children are missing out on the opportunity for a strong start.
- » **Families can't afford to stay in Vermont:** Currently, many families spend more than **30% of their income** on child care. This financial burden dramatically impacts families' decisions to grow their families, participate in the workforce, and even stay in Vermont.
- » **Women are excluded from the workforce:** Women are **3 times more likely** to leave their jobs when their family can't find or afford child care, impacting their lifelong earnings and professional opportunities and negatively impacting the employers they are forced to leave.
- » **Employers can't find qualified workers:** Before the pandemic, there were an estimated **10,000 vacant jobs** open in Vermont each year. Vermont businesses struggle to find and retain qualified employees, impacting productivity and the potential for growth.
- » **Early childhood educators are leaving the field:** Early childhood educators earn an average of **\$38,870 a year**, often without benefits. That's about \$17,000 less than the average annual income for a kindergarten teacher with similar qualifications. Many early childhood educators simply can't afford to stay in the field.



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"Vermont is an expensive place to live, and I have no idea what my family would do if I couldn't work. Having access to high-quality child care has made it possible for me to expand my hours to full-time and go to work every day with the peace of mind that my daughter is being cared for in a nurturing environment."

KAILIE SPECIALE

Housekeeping Supervisor  
Bolton Valley Resort



“I believe that child care is **AN ECONOMIC INVESTMENT** that will drive economic growth for my family business, our community, and Vermont’s future.”

MICHELE ASCH

VP Leadership and Organizational Development  
Twincraft Skincare

## The impact of a high-quality child care system on Vermont’s economy:

- » **Close or eliminate achievement gaps** caused by poverty, structural racism, and social inequity. By investing in early childhood education, we ensure that all of Vermont’s children can succeed individually so that we can live, work, and thrive collectively.
- » **Increase economic opportunity** and ability for parents to advance in the workforce, for early childhood educators to advance in their profession, and for children to advance in their lives.
- » **Create more opportunities for women** to participate in the workforce, increase their lifelong earning potential, and improve their career trajectory.
- » **Invite and retain young families** to live, work, and raise their family in a state that prioritizes high-quality child care. Ensuring families spend no more than 10% of their annual income on child care means that many families will save thousands of dollars each year that they can dedicate to other critical needs like food, housing, student loan payments, and invest back into Vermont’s economy.
- » **Increase the number of early childhood educators** who enter and remain in the field, which will help to grow a sustainable workforce and increase the number of high-quality spots available.
- » **Decrease spending** in child welfare, special education, health care, crime, and substance abuse costs.
- » **Increase earnings and associated tax revenues** of early childhood educators who earn a parity wage, parents who can return to the workforce, and young families who are incentivized to move to the state.

## Expanding Vermont’s early childhood education system would yield:

**\$3 for every \$1 invested**  
net benefits to our government and society



**\$1.3 billion**  
net benefits to Vermont  
over the working  
lifetime (65 years) of the  
children served