



AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF THE CHILD CARE SECTOR

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS



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“The most basic of all human needs is to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.”

—Ralph Nichols

One of the most sacred of actions is to listen to another person and actually hear them—to take in their hopes, thoughts, and even fears, without interruption or judgment. At the 47th Champions for Child Care Annual Summit, Vibrant Futures wanted to communicate to child care businesses and professionals that they matter to the lives of children, health of community, and fabric of society. We wanted to not only provide a powerful professional learning

experience, we wanted to make room for these important stakeholder voices. When the opportunity was extended, our small business owners and professionals in Michigan's child care sector weighed in on all things child care. They endeavored to give voice to the opportunities that often get lost in the noise of everyday life.

This short brief is the culmination of the sector's collective desire, important



insights, and profound wisdom on how Michigan can improve conditions for child care owners, and operators. It serves to amplify their collective voice revealing opportunities for reducing barriers to entry, slowing declines, and increasing sustainability. Each of the data points mutually reinforces the emerging truth that the future of work for far too many is inextricably tied to the future of child care.

Chana Edmond-Verley
CEO, Vibrant Futures



479

Child care businesses and professional voices

8,800

Children in their care

AVERAGE PAY
PER HOUR

Most qualify for assistance

\$12

Assistant Teacher

\$9.25

Family Provider



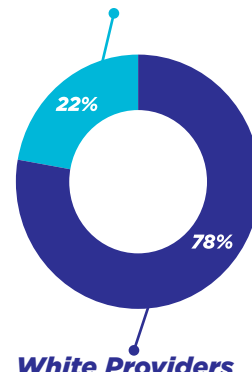
TOP BARRIERS TO ENTRY AND LONGEVITY IN CHILD CARE *in their own words*

2020-2021

63% Licensing process and regulations
61% Earnings/profit levels
52% High responsibility/low recognition
32% Other policy barriers (CC subsidy)
16% Raise CDC provides rates by 10%
5% Expand Tri-share up to 250% of FPL
5% Covered CDC family co-pays

66% Licensing process and regulations
61% High responsibility/low recognition
57% Earnings/profit levels
25% CC subsidy process/reimbursement
25% Talent pipeline issues
16% Lack of shared services and subsidies
13% Social Isolation

Providers of Color



White Providers



The data presented here represent professional child care business owners and their workers, and were collected at the Vibrant Futures Annual Child Care Summit.



Child care business professionals from around the state gathered to strengthen their business practices, sharpen their skills, and voice their invaluable perspectives on Michigan's child care crisis.

PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS TO CHILD CARE SUBSIDY



Increased payment: Higher pay rate for essential child care workers

Greater accessibility: Increase support, communication and outreach

Modernize process: Increase speed, better technology, streamline paperwork

Speed of process/payment: On time, faster notice if subsidy discontinued

Payment structure: Pay based on enrollment not attendance, hourly limits

Access to resources: Support systems for providers and families

PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS TO LICENSING PROGRAM



Fewer regulations: Difficult to keep up with ongoing changes, cumbersome

Reduce paperwork: Streamline requirements, reduce burden

More supportive approach: Consistency in rule interpretations, opportunities to make corrections, support for implications of unscheduled visits

Ratio flexibility: Adjustments for school aged siblings/children

Education: Ongoing opportunities to learn about regulations and requirements



IN GOVERNOR WHITMER'S BUDGET, WHAT MATTERS MOST TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

PRIORITIES

- 1 Provide business stimulus grants to child care providers
- 2 Pay child care providers on enrollment over attendance
- 3 Increase eligibility in child care subsidy to 200% FPL
- 4 Raise rates by 10% for CDC providers
- 5 Expand Tri-share up to 250% of FPL
- 6 Cover CDC family co-pay

MAJORITY OF VOICES

Allegan,
Barry,
Kalamazoo,
Ingham,
Ionia,
Kent,
Muskegon,
Ottawa



"SO many strict regulations. I know safety needs to be first but there is just so much to keep up on and so much paperwork."

"Child care was barely recognized by the state or government before COVID-19, and then we had a lot of support. Will that support continue?"

"There is a shortage of teachers of African American representation. Many people are unaware that start up and support services for child care exist. Representation matters so much."

"I don't know of anybody who goes into childcare to make a huge profit. We are in this business because we care about children and we are good at it. I struggle in a rural poor community to make enough to put food on my own family's table."

BARRIERS TO TALENT PIPELINE

Increased wages: Competitive wages to compete with centers or institutions

Awareness: Education about career pathways, greater outreach

Financial support: Grants, health benefits, start-up cost assistance

Training: Educational opportunities and coaching for new businesses

Recognition and support: Valued as education professionals

Vibrant Futures holds sacred the promise and potential in every child, youth, family, and caregiver to ensure more vibrant futures for all by creating cradle-to-career opportunities for children and their families.

Edmond-Verley, C.; Notario-Risk, N.; Clevenger, T. (2021). "47th Annual Summit: Champions 4 Child Care." Grand Rapids, MI. Vibrant Futures.

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