



Wisconsin Counties Association
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& Exhibit Hall **2023**

8:00 – 9:00 AM

Access to Child Care in Wisconsin

Speakers: Jackie Anderson, Director of Raising Wisconsin, WI Early Childhood Association;

Ruth Schmidt, Executive Director, WI Early Childhood Association

Moderator: Hope Otto, Human Services Director, Racine County

Child Care Access and Investing in Wisconsin's Future

Ruth Schmidt, WECA Executive Director

Jackie Anderson, Director of Raising



Wisconsin Early
Childhood Association



Child Care Cost



Wisconsin family with one infant
1/5 (20%) of their annual income

Typical family with an infant and 4-year-old
1/3 (33%) of their annual income



Source: Economic Policy Institute

Child Care Availability



Child care “deserts” exist across more than 50% of the state and 70% in Wisconsin’s rural areas.

This means there are more than three children under age 5 for every licensed child care slot.



Source: Center for American Progress

A Broken Business Model and Failed Market



Child care programs' budgets are funded predominantly by parent fees.

Programs operate on razor-thin margins.

Early educators receive low wages and rarely have access to standard benefits.



Workforce and Economic Impact



Child care professionals are **the workforce behind all other workforces.**

Child care is an **economic engine** and necessary for functioning, profitable businesses.





Workforce Implications

**83% of employers say
Wisconsin businesses will
face workforce shortages
now and in the future without
affordable child care.**

Source: Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation &
Department of Children and Families, 2021 Employer Survey

Women's Workforce Participation

Women in Wisconsin have consistently worked at rates above the national rate, but the advantage is shrinking. In 2022, **Wisconsin's women's labor force participation dipped below 60%** for the first time since the late 1980s.

Source: Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS),
State of Working Wisconsin 2023





Annual Economic Impact

\$1.9 BILLION

**in lost earnings,
productivity, and revenue.**

Source: Council for a Strong America

Counties Invest and Engage in Child Care Efforts



American Rescue Plan
Act (ARPA) Investments

DreamUp! Grants

Child Care Taskforces



Where Do We Go From Here?

Your local efforts are important.

Those efforts must be paired with advocacy for significant state investment.

The voices of local and regional community leaders are essential in this work.

2023-25 State Budget and Child Care Advocacy



Raising Wisconsin's Child Care Advocacy Campaign



- Nearly 100,000 Letters
- Record-setting Child Care Advocacy Day
- A Day Without Child Care social blitz
- Business/employer sign-on letter (100 signers)
- Webinars on the business case for state investment
- Employer-legislator child care forums

The Ask: \$300 Million to Continue Child Care Counts



Despite these significant and record-setting efforts, **the Legislature voted against providing any funding to continue Child Care Counts past January 2024.**

What Does This Mean for Your Community?

More than half of Wisconsinites live in child care desert, system in desperate need of help

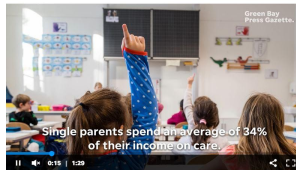
Business executives make case for investment in child care programs

EDUCATION

Wisconsin families may soon see child care costs rise as funding help declines

Madison Lammett Appleton Post-Crescent
Published 5:02 a.m. CT April 21, 2023

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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT WORK & THE ECONOMY

Child care providers 'are reeling' as they wait for state to try again for financial support

BY ERIC QUINN AUGUST 1, 2023 9:00 AM

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WUWM 89.7
MILWAUKEE'S NPR



WUWM
All Things Considered

HOME NEWS LAKE EFFECT PROGRAMS & PODCASTS ABOUT WUWM CONNECT SUPPORT

Wisconsin child care centers say they feel financial pinch, hope for bipartisan help

WUWM 89.7 FM | By Chuck Quimbach
Published August 1, 2023 at 10:57 AM CDT

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86% of program directors/owners say they have or will **increase parent fees**

47% of early educators are considering **leaving the field**

32% of program directors/owners may **close their doors**

Source: WECA Child Care Counts Impact Survey, 2023

In Their Words: Impact on the Early Childhood Field

It is so disappointing and frustrating to be in this field with no respect or regard for what we do. We were considered 'essential' to keep the Wisconsin economy going during covid. We are a key 'community asset' when communities are trying to get more industry and commerce into their communities, but legislators don't see that."

-Provider, Ozaukee County



"I am one of the least costly programs around. I will need to increase my rates AND take a pay cut or risk losing my staff and therefore turn children away."

-Provider, Washington County

Source: WECA Child Care Counts Impact Survey, 2023

In Their Words: Impact on the Early Childhood Field



“The grants helped give teachers a wage increase to \$18 per hour. No tuition increase. What would you do? Cut wages - employee leaves. Raise tuition - parents leave. This is a no-win solution. The only outcome would be closing. Please step up and keep these businesses continuing to operate.”

-Provider, Brown County

“Without the childcare counts we will be forced to raise prices and therefore become unaffordable to many families we serve.”

-Provider, Green County

Source: WECA Child Care Counts Impact Survey, 2023

Let's Really Think About Affordability

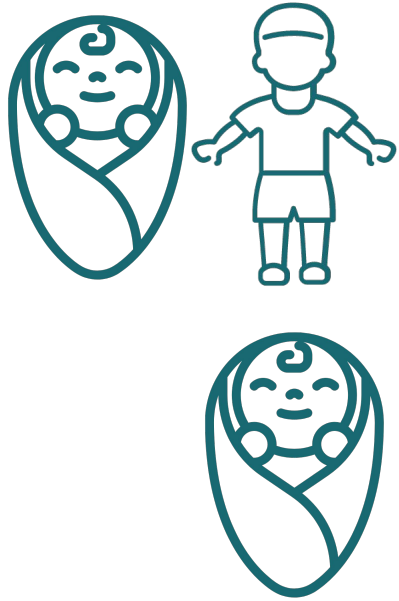


“After funding was reduced, our child care center was forced to raise rates by \$30 per week in order to maintain their wonderful staff and keep their doors open. The extra \$120 per month is a large expense. We have been accruing credit card debt to pay for groceries and student loan debt to pay for child care while I am in school. Subsidized child care and child care funding would greatly help my family to ensure my daughter is safe and receives a good education while I attend school in order to improve my family's financial future.”

-Erica, Parent from La Crosse

Source: Raising Wisconsin Share Your Story Form

Family Budget Impact: Chippewa County



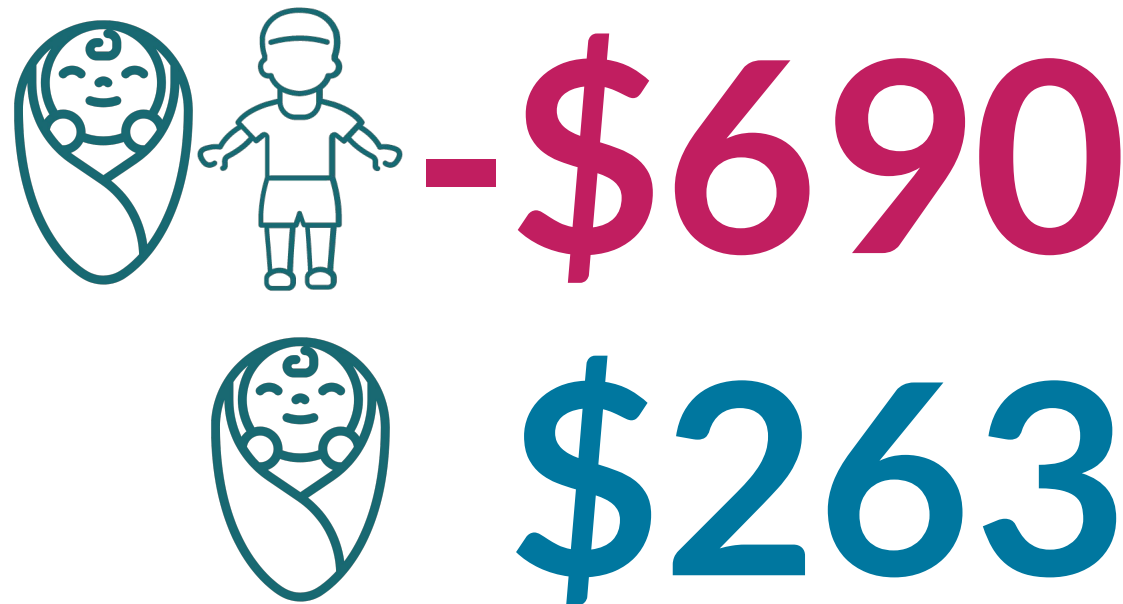
- \$655

\$238

It's the end of the month and you're a working family with young children. How much do you have left over after paying for basic expenses and child care?

Source: Affordability Calculator: Early Learning Policy Group & WECA

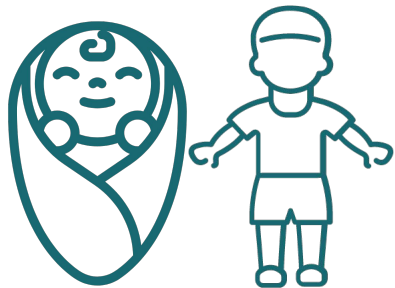
Family Budget Impact: Sheboygan County



It's the end of the month and you're a working family with young children. How much do you have left over after paying for basic expenses and child care?

Source: Affordability Calculator: Early Learning Policy Group & WECA

Family Budget Impact: Racine County



-\$2,102

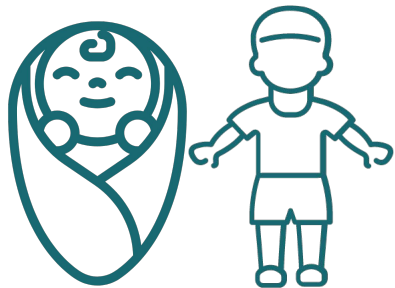


-\$915

It's the end of the month and you're a working family with young children. How much do you have left over after paying for basic expenses and child care?

Source: Affordability Calculator: Early Learning Policy Group & WECA

Family Budget Impact: Crawford County



-\$1,718



-\$825

It's the end of the month and you're a working family with young children. How much do you have left over after paying for basic expenses and child care?

Source: Affordability Calculator: Early Learning Policy Group & WECA

Child Care “Affordability”

Scan this code to visit a child care cost/affordability calculator. You can see what a family experiences in your home county.



Source: Early Learning Policy Group & WECA

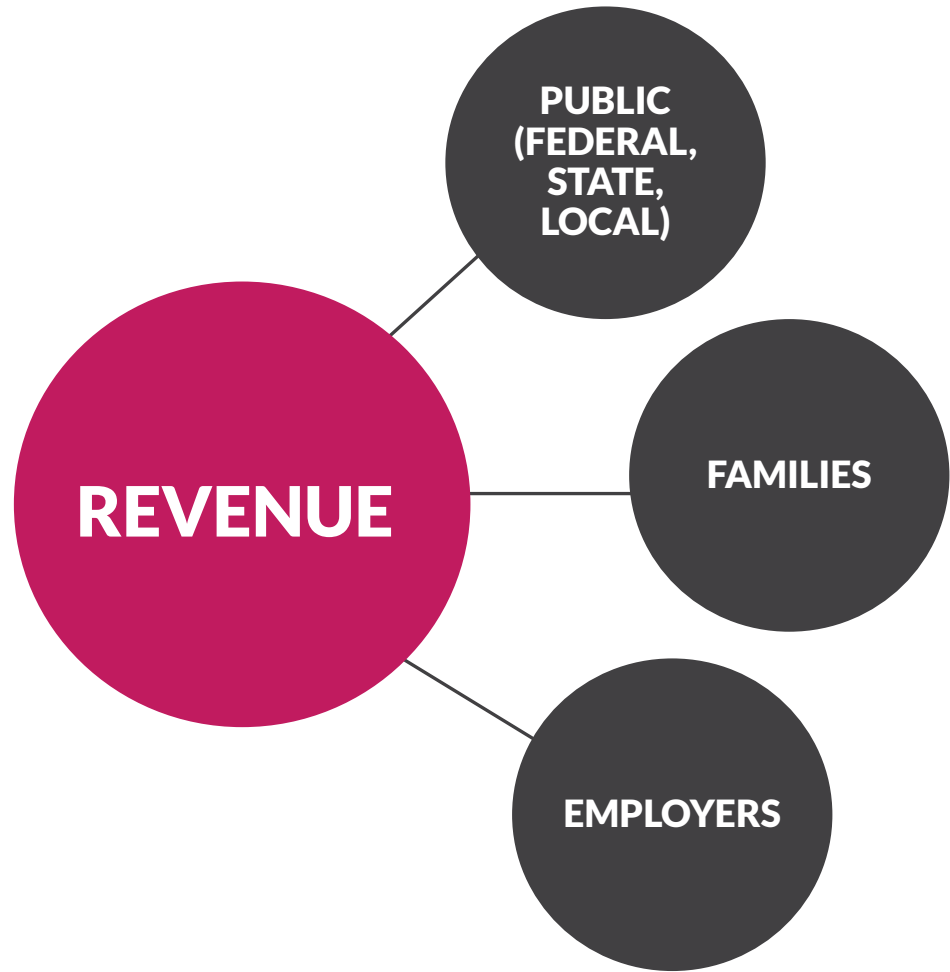
In Their Words: Parent Perspective



“Child care is already expensive. Asking families to carry more of a burden when there are options to help and support them is insanity.”
-Parent from Dodge County

Source: WECA Child Care Counts Impact Survey, 2023

What Is Necessary to Support the Child Care Sector?



Thank you. Questions?

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