



Early Childhood Education

Investing in Young Children

Investing in our Future

“...a fundamental duty of government is to provide for education.”

John Adams in the Constitution of the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts written in 1779

Economic Impact

- Number of Jobs in Central Massachusetts Created by the Early Care and Education Industry:

□ Group Child Care	1,878
□ Family Child Care	1,429
□ Public Preschool	491
□ Other jobs created	<u>1,555</u>

Total Jobs: 5,535

Economic Impact

Direct Effects from ECE Business Operations	\$155,831,444
Indirect effects from ECE Business Operations	\$ 58,841,953
Effects from ECE staff Spending Wages	<u>\$ 61,179,425</u>
TOTAL IMPACT	\$275,852,822

The Current Crisis

- 61% of third graders in Worcester do not meet proficiency in reading on the MCAS
 - 18.8% of children in the public school are receiving Special Education Services (15.3% statewide)
 - 46.1% of births in 2000 were paid for by public funds
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The Current Crisis

- 14 centers in Worcester have closed since 2000
 - 134 centers in Central Massachusetts have closed since 2000.
 - Local centers lose, on average, \$7.00 per child per day for state subsidized slots (\$1,750 per child per year)
 - In central Massachusetts there are 8,313 children receiving subsidized care.
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Cost of Care

- The annual cost of licensed early education ranges from \$9,100 for preschool to \$12,735 for infant care.
 - does not reflect the true cost of care
 - The cost for a full-time in-state student at Worcester State College is \$5,539.00.
 - A family earning \$30,000 would have to devote a third of its income toward the cost of preschool for just one child.
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Recent Grants

- Universal Preschool
 - Only 1 Worcester center eligible
 - Locally we were unaware of focus on evaluation tool
 - Because of our focus on quality, our centers meet all other criterion
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Recent Grants

- **Mental Health Consultation**
 - DEEC released 2 RFR's
 - Together For Kids applied for both grants
 - We received \$166,938 for Training and Consultation Services
 - Applied for \$374,190 for Mental Health Consultation Services. Did not receive grant award.
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Recent Grants

- Professional Development
 - Central MA initially not funded
 - With advocacy, money was reinstated
 - Not certain of future grants

 - NAEYC Accreditation Support
 - Central MA initially not funded
 - With advocacy, money was reinstated
 - Not sure of future grants
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Sources of Revenue

- Parent fees
 - Vouchers (including Community Partnership)
 - Contracted Slots
 - United Way and other funded scholarships
 - $\approx 25\%$ of centers are positively impacted by a state rate increase
 - The remaining centers rely on parent fees and low staff wages
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Rate Increase

- The rate is initially based on differences in geographic areas
 - Future rate increases should be across the board since the base rate is already lower in Central Massachusetts
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Other Policy Issues

- Children and Families First
 - Move toward vouchers over contracts
 - Parent choice is important
 - Some families need the support that contracted slots provide
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Other Policy Issues

- **Prioritize Low-Income Families**
 - Middle income families are ineligible for subsidies
 - Face the highest costs in relation to income
 - High costs come early in careers when income is less
 - May be forced to use unlicensed, low quality care
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Affordability

- Subsidized by low teacher salaries and minimal benefits
 - To raise quality we must raise teacher salaries
 - Parents cannot afford early childhood education – but children and our community cannot afford to be denied
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Quality Issues

- Increasing educational requirements for teachers with no or inadequate increases in salary
 - 1st year pre-school teacher in the public school ≈ \$30,000.00
 - 6 hour day/180 days per year
 - \$27.78 per hour – plus benefits including retirement and health insurance
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Quality Issues

- Teacher in a childcare center with a bachelor's degree and many years of experience: \approx \$24,000
 - 8 hours per day 260 days per year
 - \$11.54 per hour plus no retirement package and fewer benefits
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Why Does It Matter?

- The retention of teachers holding a bachelor's degree allows programs to maintain high quality over time
 - Young children need stable relationships with caregivers. Inadequate pay leads to high turnover in staff.
 - Accreditation and funding require bachelor level teachers.
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Access to Education

- We must establish a community-wide professional development system
 - The system needs to address the barriers to further education
 - Tuition Costs
 - Transportation
 - Childcare
 - Time
 - Language
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Access to Education

- Increased credentials should be tied to increased salary
 - \$3 million scholarship pool used within 2 months
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This Year's Budget

- \$3.1m in line item 3000-6075 to provide mental health consultation services in childcare settings.
 - \$17 million in line item 3000-4060 to increase access
 - \$16 million in line item 1599-0042 for rate increase
 - \$6 million for Infant/Toddler
 - \$10 million across the board
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This Year's Budget

- \$6 Million for Line Item 7070-0065 for Early Educator Scholarships
 - \$1 Million for Line Item 3000-2000 for Resource and Referral
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Thank you for your support

