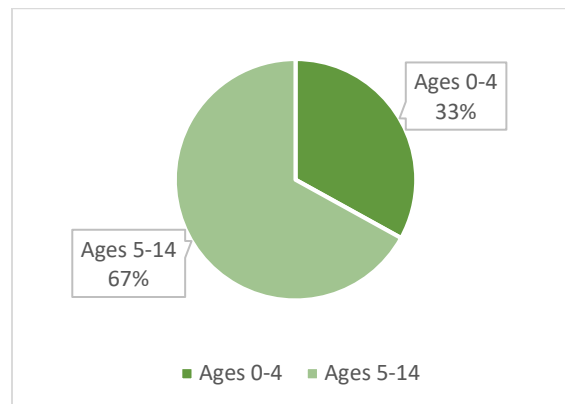




High-quality child care is essential to enable parents to get and keep a job, to set children up for success in school and life, and to strengthen Kentucky's economy. Access to affordable child care is especially important for low-skilled parents and single parents who have lower earning capacity. Yet many families—particularly low-income families—lack access to the high-quality child care that parents need to work and children need to grow and thrive.

Total Children of Child Care Age: **838,293¹**



Kentucky Children with Parents in the Workforce:

- Children under age 6 in two-parent families with both parents in the labor force: **116,463²**
- Children under age 6 in single-parent families, parent in the labor force: **85,080**

Annual Cost of Center-Based Child Care for an Infant: **\$6,258**, which equates to **60.7%** of annual tuition/fees for a public 4-year college (in-state)

Number of Children Who Receive Child Care Assistance: **28,678³**

Number of Families Served by Child Care Assistance: **17,910**

Number of Potentially Eligible Children: **131,024⁴**

Percent of Potentially Eligible Children Served: **10.8 percent⁵**



Federal Funding has Opened Doors for Kentucky's Working Families

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is the primary federal funding source for Kentucky's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). CCAP helps Kentucky parents pay for child care so that they can work, complete education or training, or search for a job. It is also available for foster parents and families involved with child protective services. Unless they are involved with the child welfare system, a family must earn 160 percent of the federal poverty level or less in order to participate, and their eligibility continues until they earn 200 percent of the federal poverty level. [Estimates suggest that every dollar of federal child care funding creates \\$3.80 of additional economic output.](#)⁶

In 2018, Congress addressed a longstanding funding gap by directing an additional \$42 million to Kentucky. Kentucky is using this funding to meet the baseline needs of families and the child care centers who serve them:

- Increase eligibility at recertification so that parents do not suddenly lose child care assistance when they get a promotion or better paying job;
- Raise payment rates for providers to allow centers to make much needed investments in staff and facilities to provide more high-quality care;
- Remove a 20-hour work requirement for parents enrolled in post-secondary education or training;
- Help cover the cost of background checks for child care center teachers; and
- Cover child care assistance for children in foster care.

The Investment in Child Care is Already Paying Off

A March 2019 survey of child care providers in Kentucky shows that Federal dollars are fueling local economies and offering opportunities:

- 65 percent of child care providers reported that the rate increase helped them to keep their doors open and stay in business.
- Nearly half (46 percent) said the new funds helped them to retain staff.
- Many reported they used the funds to raise wages (25 percent), give staff more hours (22 percent), and hire additional staff (19 percent).⁷

Gaps Remain in Kentucky's Child Care Infrastructure:

- Providers report increasing difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers due to competition from other low-wage jobs. Recent payment rate increases only meet the 40th percentile of market rates.
- A national survey estimates that parents of over 1 in 10 young children in Kentucky have trouble working due to lack of child care options, however anecdotal evidence suggests this is an underestimate.⁸



- Half of Kentuckians live in a child care desert. Child care supply is especially low in Kentucky's rural areas, where 66 percent of residents live in areas without enough licensed child care providers.⁹ Infant/toddler care is especially hard to find.

Increased Investments Needed:

Investing in child care puts parents on a path to stable employment and self-sufficiency. Now is the time to bring more parents into the workforce while our economy is doing well. Increased Federal investments will lead to a more prosperous future for working parents and their children by allowing Kentucky to:

- Ensure more low-income families can afford child care by raising eligibility to 200 percent of the federal poverty level, the amount a family needs to earn to be self-sufficient.
- Raise provider payment rates to the 75th percentile of market rates, so that providers can recruit and retain teachers and provide high quality care to children.

¹ Committee for Economic Development, Child Care in State Economies: 2019 Update

² Child Care Aware, 2018 State Child Care Facts in the State of: Kentucky

³ Kentucky Center for Statistics, Early Childhood Profile 2019

⁴ CLASP analysis of 2016 ACS 1-year data, 2012-2016 ACS 5-year data, and Administration for Children and Families Office of Child Care 2016 Administrative Data.

⁵ CLASP analysis of 2016 ACS 1-year data, 2012-2016 ACS 5-year data, and Administration for Children and Families Office of Child Care 2016 Administrative Data.

⁶ Committee for Economic Development – Child Care in State Economies: 2019 Update

⁷ Kentucky Youth Advocates, Child Care Investment is Paying Off

⁸ 2016 National Survey of Children's Health

⁹ Center for American Progress, America's Child Care Deserts in 2018. A child care desert is a census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots <https://childcaredeserts.org/?state=KY>

