



Utah Child Care Cooperative

White Paper

Utah's Need for Child Care

March 2020

When Utahns decide to start a family, they face tough financial tradeoff decisions. Utahns start families at a much younger age than other states¹ with careers at a young stage. This is why for many families it is more cost effective for a parent to leave the workforce than to pay for child care. For most families in Utah, the parent that chooses to stay home is the mother.²

However, households increasingly need two incomes to afford the cost of living with near stagnant wage growth,³ and the rising cost of housing,⁴ education and tuition debt,⁵ raising children,⁶ and healthcare.⁷

Offering child care solutions would support all those who want to contribute to Utah's economy.

"It's like I can't start a real career until my kids graduate high school. I have to say in mediocre, worse paying positions."

-Utah parent

SNAPSHOT: Labor Force Participation of Utah Parents

52% of children under 6 have all available parents in the workforce. (This includes single parents, where it is more than twice as likely to be a single mother than father.)⁸

Utah Mothers Work

60% of working mothers have a child under 6

73% have children between 6-17

*These numbers show that mothers return to work when their children go to school. **Would they have stayed in the workforce if they had access to affordable, quality child care?***

NEED: Parents Want to Work More

30% of Utah parents have had to cut back on work hours because of unmet child care needs.⁹

44% of Utah mothers surveyed said they would utilize child care to work more or pursue their education.¹⁰

AFFORDABILITY: Child Care Costs in Utah

Child care that costs more than 7% of a family's income is unaffordable:

- **Single parents in Utah pay 34% of their income** for infant care, and 60% for two children.
- **Married parents pay 12% of their income** on child care.¹¹
- **63%** of Utahns can't afford child care, where infant care is 53% more expensive than college tuition.¹²

ACCESSIBILITY: Utah ranks last in the nation for accessibility to child care. There are 4 children that need care for every open child care slot.



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Economic losses from absences and turnover due to child care breakdowns in other states:

State	Tax Revenue Lost	Economic Activity Lost
Louisiana ¹³	\$117 million	\$1.1 billion
Maryland ¹⁴	\$84 million	\$1.3 billion
Georgia ¹⁵	\$105 million	\$1.8 billion

Luckily in Utah, there is a workforce gap that needs to be filled.¹⁶

Opportunity:

- Government covers 39% of the cost of child care.
- Parents shoulder 60%.
- Businesses currently cover 1%, yet can benefit from the workforce child care creates.¹⁷

A lack of child care costs businesses money:

- U.S. businesses lose \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of childcare breakdowns.
- U.S. businesses lose \$4 billion annually due to loss of productivity as the result of childcare breakdowns.¹⁸

End Notes

¹ <http://gardner.utah.edu/2016/09/new-data-sheds-light-on-utahs-shifting-demographics/>

² http://www.uvu.edu/uwlp/docs/uws_poverty.pdf

³ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/news/2017/09/12/438778/new-census-data-show-household-incomes-rising-share-going-middle-class-record-low/>

⁴ <https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/May2018HousingReport.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.sitrib.com/news/education/2018/10/15/utahs-colleges-hike/>

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a8a0/39525cbbc312c379cb423ba0d54eab501e29.pdf>

⁶ https://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/crc2015_March2017.pdf

⁷ <https://www.epi.org/publication/health-care-report/>

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2661579>

⁸ <https://www.uvu.edu/uwlp/docs/childcareinfographic.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.uvu.edu/uwlp/docs/childcareinfographic.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://jobs.utah.gov/occ/EarlyChildhoodServicesStudy.pdf>

¹¹ http://www.usa.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CCA_High_Cost_Report_01-17-17_final.pdf

¹² <https://www.uvu.edu/uwlp/docs/childcareinfographic.pdf>

¹³ http://www.brylskicompany.com/uploads/1/7/4/0/17400267/losing_ground-1.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/MarylandFamilyNetwork_Countingourlosses_FullReport_Hyperlinked_Singles.pdf

¹⁵ https://www.metroatlantachamber.com/assets/opportunities-lost-report-final_ymXE7Za.pdf

¹⁶ <https://jobs.utah.gov/wi/pubs/reports/difficultfilljobstudy.pdf>

<https://slchamber.com/ceoutlook/>

<https://www.ksl.com/article/46372252/utah-has-desperate-need-for-highly-educated-skilled-workers>

¹⁷ http://www.earlychildhoodfinance.org/downloads/2001/FinanceCatalog_2001.pdf

¹⁸ <https://usa.childcareaware.org/families-programs/about-child-care/>