

Quality Matters in Early Childhood

- It matters to children
 - The experiences children have in the birth to five years lay the foundation for their later development
- It matters to parents
 - Many parents won't go into the workforce if they can't find an affordable setting for their child with which they are comfortable
- It matters to policymakers
 - Short-term impacts on the workforce
 - Long-term impacts on child outcomes

Quality Has a Cost

- To deliver quality and ensure safety, the state sets maximum staff/child ratios
- Young children benefit significantly from having continuity in their relationships with adults
- Retaining skilled professionals requires stable and predictable compensation, and favorable working conditions
 - Working with young children is inherently exhausting; what can be done to mitigate that?

Parents Struggle to Afford Child Care

- Child care is not funded like school or pre-k – parents have to find a service provider and then pay them
- State provides subsidies for the lowest-income families, but the cost to families can still be substantial
- Young parents haven't had time to reach their earning potential or save up

Some Fundamental Facts That Aren't Changing

- The costs of child care will be driven by the costs of personnel – it is a labor-intensive enterprise
- The target market for child care will be adults near the lowest point in their earning trajectory
- Child care is essential for working parents to stay in the workforce
- Participating in the workforce is essential for families to be self-sufficient and provide for their children

How to Continue Strengthening the System

- Make sure professionals are paid adequately to produce supply – and quality experiences
 - If you don't, they leave the early childhood workforce and there's no supply, and then the parents who need child care leave the workforce themselves
- Make sure families have enough subsidy to make child care affordable
 - If you don't, parents leave the workforce
- Make sure enough families get subsidy to keep them in the workforce
 - If you don't, parents leave the workforce
 - Prioritize the families who need it most