



Build a High Quality Early Childhood Workforce

And Invest in Children
from Birth to Age Eight

Kentucky kids need a strong start in life. High quality early learning experiences build the foundation for success in later childhood and into adulthood. As we look to the future of Kentucky, focusing on giving young children a solid start will help more children reach their full potential, allow parents to stay in the workforce, and net the greatest returns on investment.

While Kentucky has made progress in giving more children access to high quality early learning experiences, an investment in the early childhood workforce would strengthen the industry's infrastructure and benefit business owners, teachers, working parents, and children from birth through age eight.

Give children a strong foundation with a high quality early childhood workforce:

Implement strategies to increase compensation for child care teachers

The current median salary in Kentucky is \$18,910, which is below the eligibility cutoff for SNAP. With such low wages, many teachers choose to leave their jobs or the occupation altogether. This makes it very challenging for child care centers to recruit and retain high quality staff and disrupts children's education.

Raise the standards for early childhood educators

The primary factor impacting the quality of care a child receives is their interactions with teachers. Currently, the minimum requirement for an entry-level job at a child care center is a high school diploma. Raising the standard would ensure that all educators would have some foundational information about child development and help them better care for children.

Raise the standards for elementary schools

Make sure elementary schools are ready for kindergarteners by ensuring teachers and principals are prepared to help children transition from preschool to K-12 education. Early grade teachers need to know how young children learn best, and principals need to know how to best support those teachers.

Blueprint for Kentucky's Children Solution:

Build a high quality early childhood workforce that creates a brighter future for Kentucky kids, helps working parents, and advances the early childhood profession.

