The Conundrum of Child Care

“Parents can’t afford to pay… Child Care Providers can’t afford to stay. There must be a better way!”

The “Trilemma”

- Affordability for Parents
- Compensation for Staff
- Quality for Children

New Voices: Neuroscientists

- A child’s brain undergoes an amazing period of development from birth to three—producing more than a million neural connections each second.
- Ongoing, reliable interaction with trusted adults is essential for the development of healthy brain circuits.

54% of WI residents live in a Child Care Desert
Today, more than ever before, we understand the science behind how children develop. We know without a doubt that high-quality early education leads to positive outcomes for children and a better society as a whole.

New Voices: Economists

The newest research from Professor James Heckman and colleagues finds 13% ROI (Return on Investment) for comprehensive, high-quality, birth-to-five early education.

James Heckman, Nobel Memorial Prize Winner in Economics

Investing in ECE

High quality ECE programs are associated with:

- Higher rates of high school graduation
- Higher levels of educational attainment into adulthood
- Better health and mental health outcomes in adulthood
- Lower rates of incarceration

Longitudinal Studies on ECE

New Voices: Employers

Survey responses to: “What are the main workforce development challenges your company or the businesses in your community are facing?”

1. Lack of available workers
2. Lack of available childcare

Wisconsin Economic Development Association 2017 Fall Conference.

New Voices: Others...

- Local Governments
- Justice-Seekers: Minimum Wage, Paid Family Leave, Racial & Gender Equality...
- Child Care Workforce
- You??
“By failing to meet the needs of adults who work with young children, we are threatening not only their well-being, but that of the children in their care.”

Whitebook, Howes, Phillips

Key findings of 2016 ECE Workforce Study & 2018 Workforce Index

- Child care teachers are an educated workforce
- Advancements in education are not reflected in wages
- Wages are low: $10-$13/hour
- Turnover rate exceeds 35%
- Only 17% of child care teachers are eligible and participate in employer-provided health insurance
- 54% of ECE workforce accesses one or more public supports (e.g. food stamps, EITC, child care subsidy for their own child…)

Sources: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Child Care Index 2018
COWS, Wisconsin Early Childhood Workforce Study, 2016

Immediate Action Steps 2019-21 Budget

- Increase Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy payment rates. Use available CCDBG and TANF dollars to increase Wisconsin Shares to 75% of market rate – federally recommended rate (currently at 15% in Wisconsin).

A Case Study: Child Care at Reach Dane

- Reach Dane serves nearly 1,000 low income children ages 0-5 in Dane and Green Counties
- 82% of enrolled children are minorities
- From 2012 to 2016, the number of homeless infants and toddler quadrupled from 26 to 109. Reach Dane now serves more homeless children than any other Head Start program in the state

Sobering Statistics
Our Children Are Losing Ground

### Social-Emotional

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<th>Program Year</th>
<th>Fall Below Meeting/Exceeding</th>
<th>Winter Below Meeting/Exceeding</th>
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<td>2017-2018</td>
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<td>56%</td>
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### Language

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<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>46%</td>
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Workforce Issues Impact Children’s Development

- Turnover rates in infant/toddler classrooms average 50% per year
- The most commonly cited reason for teachers leaving the agency is wages

Low Income Families Struggle to Find and Maintain High Quality Care

- 74% of WI’s children under the age of 5 live in households where all available parents are working
- Without affordable, dependable care, parents reduce their work hours or opt out of the workforce
- U.S. businesses lose $3 billion annually due to child care breakdowns (Elswick, 2003)

The True Cost of Care

**ECE PROGRAM BUDGET**

- Staff wages and benefits
- Food, learning materials
- Rent and utilities
- Total

The Critical Next Steps

- Our community desperately needs more high quality infant/toddler care and home visitation programs, particularly for low income families
- High quality care is expensive. We have to be willing to invest in our children
- Parents need support in their role as the first and most important teachers of their children
Funding
- Continued flat funding in federal grants
- Grants do not support staff salaries that are competitive based on the education level required

How you can get involved:
- www.wisconsinearlychildhood.org

How you can get involved:
- Volunteer power!

THANK YOU!