

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN OF NEW JERSEY 2024-2025 EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Lack Of Infant/Toddler Care
Costs New Jersey's Economy
\$1.7 Billion Annually*



Building a Better Future begins with Investing in NJ's Child Care Infrastructure

Invest in a Sustainable Child Care Infrastructure

Like roads and bridges, New Jersey's child care infrastructure is essential to the state's societal and economic well-being and requires intentional investment. Key policy measures, such as fair compensation for the workforce and improved facilities, are critical for ensuring children have access to safe, developmentally appropriate environments. These steps will create a more equitable, resilient system that supports working families, providers, and the state's long-term economic health.

*Data: *Child Care Is Key to New Jersey's Economic Recovery From COVID-19* Report, September 2021 Council For A Strong America.

Recommended Policy Solutions:

WORKFORCE

- Create workforce pipelines and incentives to attract and retain qualified early care professionals to address current and future needs.
- Ensure pay parity for birth-to-five educators comparable to K-12 teachers to allow child care programs to operate effectively without financially burdening families.

FACILITIES

- Provide licensed and registered home-based childcare providers with funding for facility improvements, energy efficiency upgrades, and other enhancements to address the unique needs of providers and the population they serve.
- Integrate child care opportunities into housing policy measures to increase access to quality child care for families.



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Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) has been the trusted, independent voice that has prioritized children's needs for over 45 years. Our mission is to advance and strengthen policies and programs that promote equitable opportunities for all New Jersey children.

Our work results in:

- better laws and policies,
- more effective funding and
- stronger services for children and families.

This means more children are given the chance to grow up safe, healthy and educated.

Strengthen NJ's Public Preschool Mixed Delivery System

As New Jersey expands universal preschool, a well-structured mixed-delivery system is vital to support care and education for children from birth to age five. Preserving community-based child care providers is essential to ensure access to infant and toddler care for working families statewide. Fostering collaboration between districts and providers strengthens our early care and education infrastructure, creating a more resilient and accessible system.

Recommended Policy Solutions:

- Establish clear mixed-delivery policies with strong standards for preschool education for three- and four-year-olds.
- Align public preschool square footage requirements for community-based child care providers with state licensing guidelines to increase community-based provider participation in public preschool.
- Support the early childhood workforce by creating pathways for non-certified educators to gain necessary credentials for public preschool.
- Designate child care providers as a protected vendor class in school contracts to enable multi-year agreements for facility upgrades and the development of new preschool programs.
- Establish a position within the Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood Education to support community-based child care providers in the public preschool system.
- Create a task force to evaluate the preschool system, expansion process, and district-private provider partnerships for improvement.

Existing Proposed Legislation:

A2291/S1968 Provides categorical eligibility for subsidized child care services to certain child care workers.

A2222 Provides refundable gross income tax credits to staff members at child care centers.

A2243/S3382 Allows gross income tax credit for certain child care staff and registered family day care providers.

A4221/S3165 Requires DHS to conduct review of reimbursement rates paid by State's child care assistance program to certain child care providers.

S2241/A1920 Extends child care subsidies to families earning up to 300 percent of federal poverty level; appropriates funds.

S2238/A1415 Requires school district to provide majority of preschool pupil placements at licensed child care provider programs.

A918/S716 Establishes Employer-Based Child Care Assistance Partnership Program in DCF

A974/S2240 Provides temporary corporation business tax and gross income tax credits for certain employer-provided child care expenditures.

