SNAPSHOT
CHILD CARE IN WASHINGTON

Child Care is Critical for Washington's Workforce
63% of children under 6 have all available parents in the labor force, up from 60% ten years ago.1

Child Care is Critical for Reducing Gender and Racial Disparities in Economic Participation
63% of mothers with children under 6 participate in the labor force in WA.2 67% of Black mothers with children under 6 participate in the labor force in WA.3

COVID-19 Poses a New Threat to the Child Care Sector
Capacity is declining in WA4
29% of child care slots could be lost. Pre-pandemic in WA there were 3.8 children for every available slot. With COVID closures that number could go as high as 5.3.

Provider costs are increasing in WA6
Center-based providers' costs are estimated to increase by 55%.
Family-based providers' costs are estimated to increase by 83%.

The Child Care Sector Was Struggling Prior to COVID-19
Child care workers struggled to make ends meet
17% of child care workers in WA lived in poverty.6

Costs of providing care were high in WA7
$1,390/month for center-based infant care
$990/month for center-based toddler care
$760/month for family-based care

Subsidies were insufficient8
Monthly gap between subsidy and cost to provider, per child9
$447

Child is hard to find for many families
63% of people in WA were living in a child care desert.10

Child care is hard to afford
A minimum wage worker in WA spends 52% of their earnings on child care, on average.11

Child Care Is Important to the Economy
Yet only 22% of low-income eligible families in WA receive federal subsidies.12

For additional state profiles and more on this topic, visit Investing in the Future of Child Care: sffed.us/childcare
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Endnotes


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