

PORTLAND WORKS FOR KIDS

When our children thrive, our city thrives

High-quality child care is essential for a vibrant, thriving city. It provides a powerful pathway to growing the human capital of a prosperous and sustainable community. It strengthens the workforce and local economy by allowing parents to work, build a career, and pay their bills. It also provides young children with experiences that support school readiness and nurture their cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

In recent weeks, the value of early care and education has become top-of-mind for many members of our community, including those who struggle to balance remote working while home with young children. The lack of high-quality early care and education in Portland – and across Maine – will likely worsen as a result of COVID-19.

According to a March survey conducted by the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children, 88% of licensed child care programs that responded said they would not survive or were unsure if they could reopen if they remained closed for one to two months. While Portland Works for Kids is striving to address some immediate issues caused by the pandemic, especially regarding child care access for essential personnel, the shortage of child care is not a new problem in Portland.

Portland Works for Kids is working to address the short- and long-term aspects of the shortage, including advocating for support for providers. Short-term, increasing access will help the workforce get back up and running as soon as it is safe. Long-term, research has shown that quality child care yields better academic and social outcomes for children, safer and healthier communities, a better prepared future workforce, and less spending on social services.

WHY HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

90% OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT OCCURS BY AGE 5



High-quality early care supports school readiness and nurtures cognitive, social, and emotional growth¹

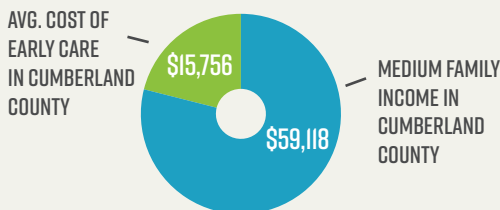
IT'S A SMART INVESTMENT IN PORTLAND'S FUTURE



Every \$1 invested yields a 13%-16% return on investment in future savings in education, health, economic productivity, and reduced crime²

THE NEED

CHILD CARE IS A MAJOR EXPENSE FOR FAMILIES



In Maine, 59% of all families and 99% of families living in poverty pay over the federal standard (7% of household income) for full-time child care³

PORTLAND DATA⁴

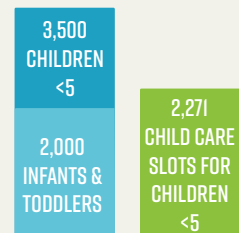
56 LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES
(23 HOME-BASED AND 33 CENTER-BASED)

3,500 CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5

57% OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 ARE INFANTS

20% OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN LIVE IN POVERTY

CHILD CARE CAN BE HARD TO ACCESS⁵



In Portland, there are 3,500 children under age 5 and only 2,271 available slots (home-based and center-based combined)

Data Sources: ¹INBRIEF: The Science of Early Childhood Development, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. ²Art Rolnick and Rob Grunewald, Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return, March 2003. ³Maine Children's Alliance, THE STATE OF CHILD CARE IN MAINE: 2019. ⁴American Community Survey, US Census, 2012-2016. ⁵ChildCare Choices, Fall 2019.

PORTLAND WORKS FOR KIDS

WHO WE ARE

Portland Works for Kids is a community-wide effort comprised of dozens of partners working together to make high-quality early childhood care and education affordable and accessible to everyone. Concerned community members are aligning efforts across sectors, including businesses and employers, health care professionals, non-profit organizations, early childhood care and education providers, parents, caregivers, and neighbors.

WHAT WE DO

Portland Works for Kids convenes local leaders and stakeholders, shares resources, combines efforts, and collects local data to help identify specific areas of need and inform strategies. Right now, Portland Works for Kids is comprised of four working groups along with several ad-hoc committees and related initiatives:

- **Workforce Development** to support training and increased pay for early childhood care and education providers
- **Quality Improvement** to increase the number of affordable, high-quality programs
- **Revenue Task Force** to identify and create new funding sources
- **Advocacy Committee** to conduct outreach and education with city leadership, business owners, and community members to support policy and systems changes

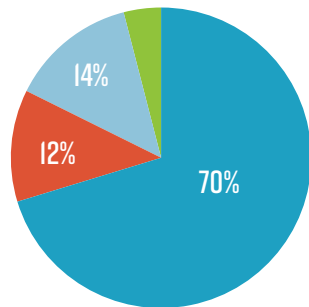
“High quality child care is essential for a vibrant, thriving community. It strengthens the workforce and local economy by allowing parents to work and pay their bills. It also provides young children with experiences that support school readiness and nurture their cognitive, social, and emotional growth.”

– Quincy Hentzel, CEO
Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce



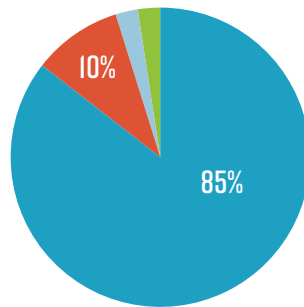
WHAT BUSINESS OWNERS IN GREATER PORTLAND SAY *

70% SAID AN EMPLOYEE HAD EXPERIENCED CHALLENGES FINDING AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CHILD CARE IN THE PAST YEAR



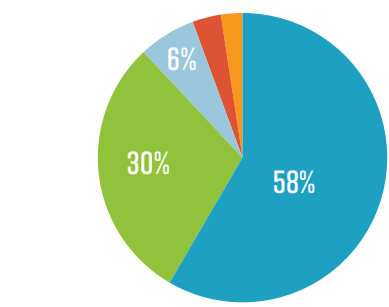
■ YES ■ NO ■ DON'T KNOW ■ N/A

85% SAID AN EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCED UNPLANNED WORK ABSENCES DUE TO CHILD CARE ISSUES IN THE PAST YEAR



■ YES ■ NO ■ DON'T KNOW ■ N/A

88% AGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT) THAT INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY CHILD CARE SHOULD BE A PRIORITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY



■ STRONG AGREE ■ SOMEWHAT AGREE ■ DON'T KNOW ■ SOMEWHAT DISAGREE ■ STRONGLY DISAGREE

*From a survey emailed to Portland Regional Chamber member on 2/24/20

JOIN US!

- Align efforts and share resources and data
- Build capacity and expertise on committees

- Share information about the issue
- Advocate for policies that support access to affordable, high-quality early child care and education

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WWW.PORTLANDSTARTINGSTRONG.ORG