PARENTS AND THE HIGH COST OF CHILD CARE

Child care costs are burdening families while quality child care options are not widely available.

Child care is a major expense in family budgets, often exceeding the cost of housing, college tuition, and food.

- **HOUSING**: Average cost for infant care in Cumberland County is the same as the annual cost of housing.
- **COLLEGE TUITION**: Average cost for infant care in Cumberland County is more than the annual in-state tuition for USM School of Law.
- **FOOD**: Average cost for infant care in Cumberland County is $5,000 more than the annual cost of food.

*Based on a family with 2 working adults and 2 children for Cumberland County. Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator

$15,756 average cost for infant care in Cumberland County

$26,200 the federal poverty level for a family of four

73% the percentage of Maine children under age 6 live in a household with all parents in the workforce

30% the number of center-based child care sites in Maine declined by 30% between 2011 and 2018.

Source: Maine Children’s Alliance

Research shows 90% of a child's critical brain development happens by age 5.

3,500 the number of children in Portland under the age of 5

Unreliable child care also hurts business.

45% of employed parents experienced some kind of child care breakdown in the past three months which were associated with absenteeism, tardiness, and reduced concentration at work.

Source: ChildCare Aware

Lack of child care options lead to employee absences - costing businesses $4.4 billion annually in the United States.

Source: ChildCare Aware