

# Child Care Is Essential

Supporting Early Care and Education During the COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond

## A National Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unparalleled crisis in the United States' early care and education (ECE) system. Early educators are struggling with reduced attendance and increased health and sanitation requirements. This is resulting in higher costs and significant loss of income in a field that was already underpaid and under resourced.

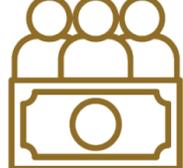
In a national survey of over 5,000 child care providers:<sup>1</sup>

**67%**  
is the average decrease in enrollment in child care programs

**73%**  
of programs have had or will have to engage in layoffs, furloughs, and/or pay cuts

**82%**  
of child care programs are not confident they'll be able to survive a year without public assistance

**50%**  
of programs owned by people of color are certain they will close permanently without additional public assistance

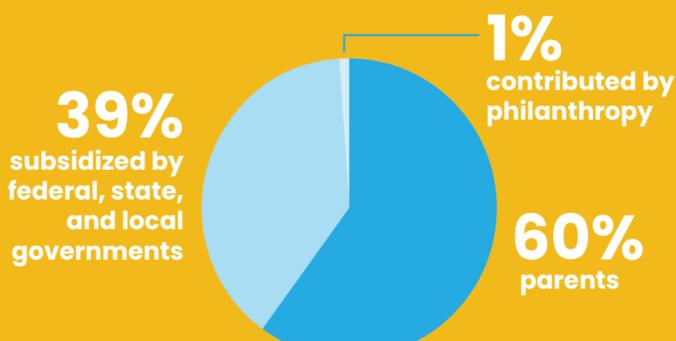


The economy of the United States is reliant on child care so that parents can go to work. And yet, if the early care and education system is not supported during this crisis, it risks collapse.

**"...most childcare providers felt the industry will see widespread, permanent closures without significant federal funding to help providers recover."**

- The Guardian, July 27, 2020

## How is childcare funded?<sup>2</sup>



**"...the fragile child care system, still seen largely as a personalized service instead of a public good, is heavily reliant on parental fees, and it has begun to shatter amid the Covid-19 pandemic."**

- The New York Times, August 4, 2020

## Local Impact

Early educators in San Francisco have experienced many challenges due to COVID-19. A joint survey of 267 family child care and center-based programs by OECE, First 5 San Francisco, and Children's Council of San Francisco shows:

**> 50%** worried that they would go out of business within the next three months without significant financial support

**25%** reported that they had to lay off or furlough early educators

**13%** reported that they had to lay off or furlough other program staff

We know that the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the ECE field disproportionately affect women of color.

In San Francisco:

**92%**  
of the ECE workforce are women

**83%**  
of the ECE workforce are women of color<sup>3</sup>

## Local Successes

The City's investment in early care and education has enabled OECE to support early educators to meet increased health and sanitation requirements and remain stable during disruptions in service.

Since shelter in place began, OECE has disbursed:

**\$1.7 million +** in emergency grants to city-funded early education programs, including:

**\$155,000**  
to help programs with renovations and repairs for COVID-related health requirements

**\$20,000**  
to support programs through temporary closures

**\$1.54 million**  
in emergency operating grants to family child care programs

**\$7.4 million +**  
in early educator stipends via the Compensation and Retention Educator Stipend (CARES) program

**\$200,000**  
to support the purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to ECE programs

## The Result

Despite significant challenges, sustained City investment in early care and education enabled OECE to help mitigate negative impacts of COVID-19 on San Francisco's ECE community.



**NONE** of the 403 early care and education sites funded by OECE have had to permanently close, as of September 2020



**100%** of city-funded ECE programs are currently open and providing in-person care and education in accordance with SFDPH health and safety guidance<sup>4</sup>



The early care and education system plays a vital role for children, families, and communities. It must be supported to withstand this crisis and emerge strong as a central part of our country's recovery.



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<sup>1</sup> National Association for the Education of Young Children, July 13, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley, July 22, 2020

<sup>3</sup> CPAC Needs Assessment, 2017

<sup>4</sup> Sites run by the San Francisco Unified School District follow district policies and are currently still closed for in-person instruction