

# REGIONAL SUMMIT: **Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis**



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# REGIONAL SUMMIT: **Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis**

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# Welcome and Opening Remarks

REGIONAL SUMMIT:

## Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis

**Jeff Dafler**

*President & CEO, Canton Regional  
Chamber of Commerce*

**Lisa Zellers**

*Vice President, AultCare*

**Krista L. Allison**

*Stark County ESC, and Co-Chair, Great  
Start for Great Futures*



# Begin with the end in mind:

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"To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction."

Dr. Stephen R. Covey

## REGIONAL SUMMIT: Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis

- ☐ What valuable insights have you gained today?
- ☐ What are the most pressing challenges related to workforce child care needs in your community that motivates you to take action?
- ☐ What are two to three key points from today that you will share for discussion in your community?
- ☐ How do you envision your organization collaborating with businesses, community members, families, and public officials to develop solutions for our child care crisis?

Ohio  
loses  
approx.

**\$5.48**

**Billion**

per year due to  
child care issues.





# Framing the Issue:

The Childcare Crisis  
in Our Community

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

Introduction by

**Ron Paydo**

*Market President, Akron/Canton,  
Huntington Bank*

**Lynanne Gutierrez**

*President & CEO, Groundwork Ohio*

# Setting the Stage: Why Are Business Leaders Talking About Child Care?

**LYNANNE  
GUTIERREZ**  
**President & CEO**  
September 9, 2025



# About Us

Groundwork Ohio is a committed, **nonpartisan public-policy research and advocacy organization** formed in 2004 that champions high-quality early learning and healthy development strategies from the prenatal period to age 5, that lay a strong foundation for Ohio kids, families, and communities.

We advance quality early childhood systems in Ohio by engaging, educating, and mobilizing diverse stakeholders and strategic partners to promote data-driven and evidence-based early childhood policies.

**GroundworkOhi  
o.org**







OHIO CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

DAYTON  
Area Chamber of Commerce



CANTON *REGIONAL*  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Cincinnati USA  
Regional Chamber

COLUMBUS  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE



GREATER AKRON CHAMBER



Greater  
Cleveland  
Partnership



10,000  
small  
businesses



NAWBO  
COLUMBUS OHIO  
National Association of Women Business Owners



Ohio  
Business  
Roundtable



Groundwork  
OHIO



TOLEDO REGIONAL  
CHAMBER of COMMERCE



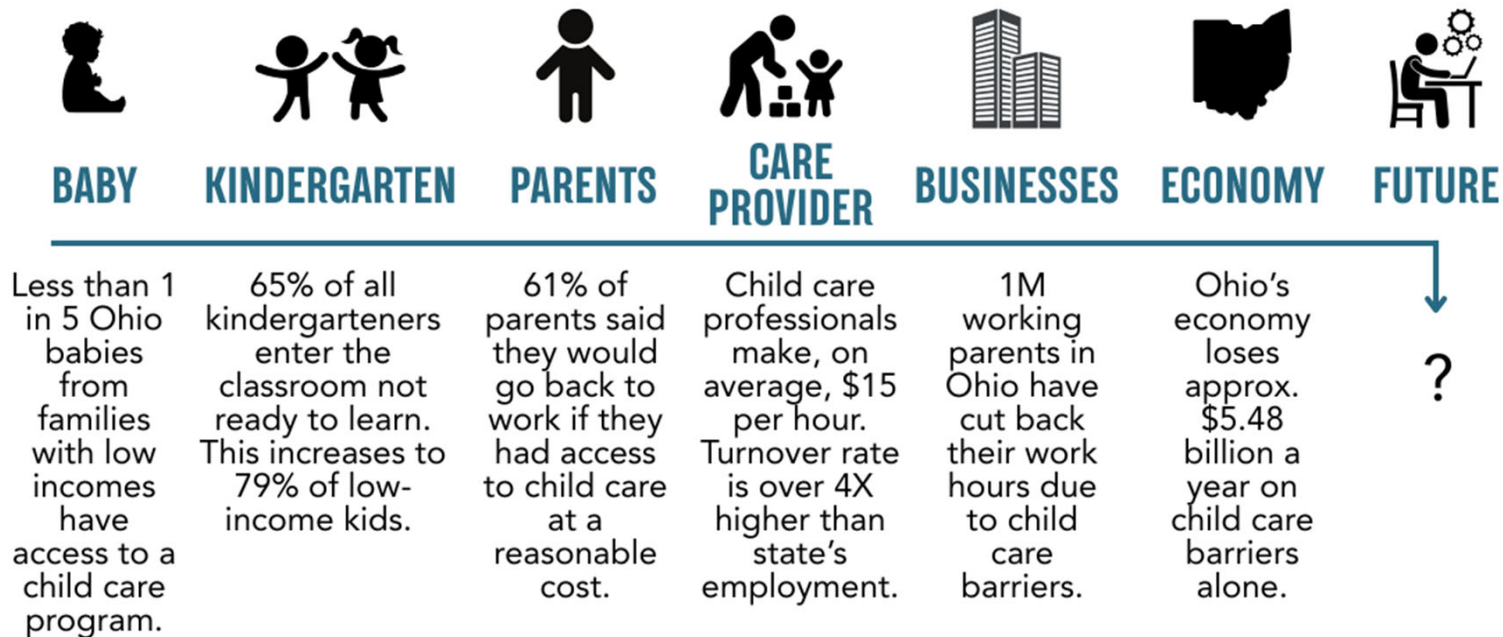
YOUNGSTOWN  
WARREN  
REGIONAL  
CHAMBER



Groundwork  
OHIO

# LIFECYCLE OF IMPACT for Early Childhood Investments

Invest in Young Children = Invest in Ohio's Workforce, Today and Tomorrow



**Q:**

**Why are business leaders from all around Ohio and the nation sounding the alarm about the child care crisis?**



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**A:**

**Because Ohio's businesses need a reliable, growing, & diverse workforce to succeed and businesses simply can't get it.**



# Lack of Child Care Leads to Unemployment and Underemployment

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Nearly **50%**  
**of working parents**

have **cut back their work hours**  
to care for their children.<sup>2</sup>

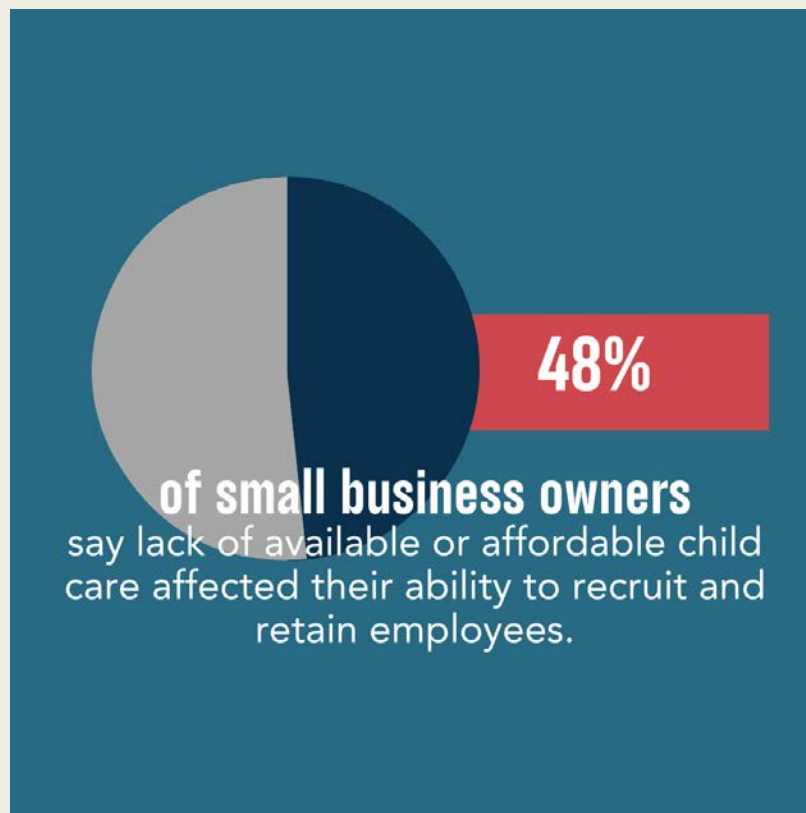
**1 MILLION**

of Ohio working parents cut back work  
hours **due to child care barriers.**<sup>3</sup>

Public Opinion Strategies, Dec. 2024 Poll

# Child Care Crisis Significantly Hampers Recruitment and Retention

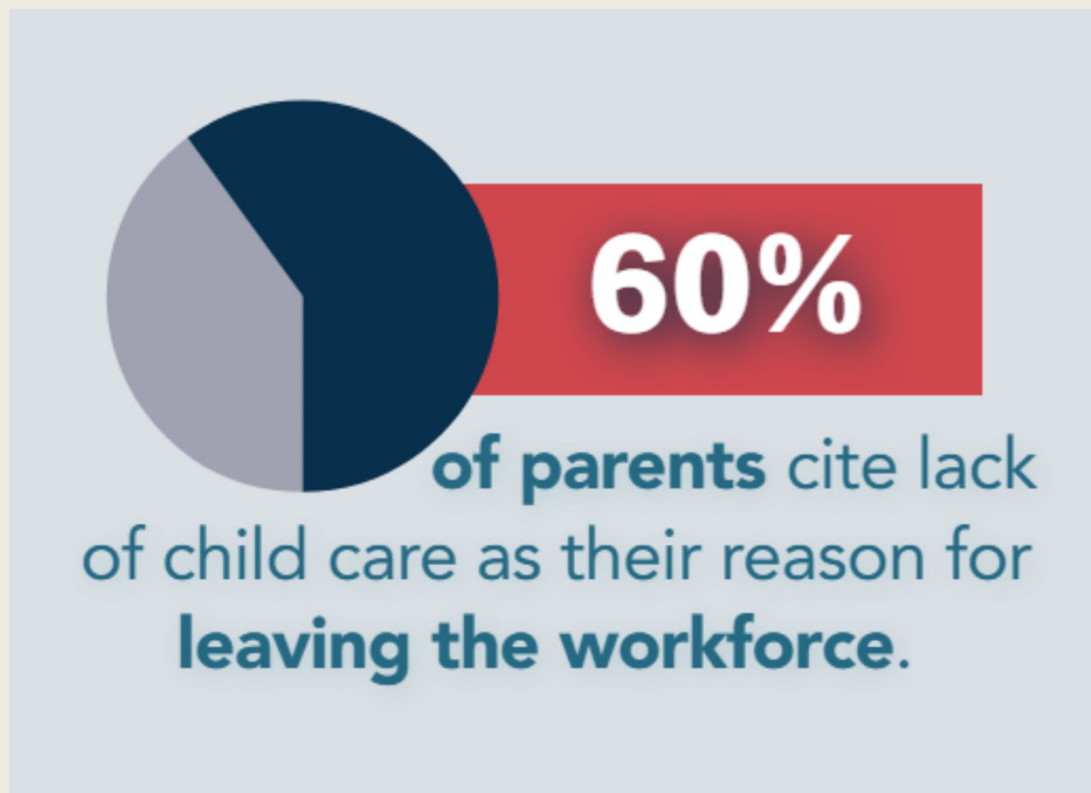
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Source: Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business Voices, 2024

# Parents Identify Child Care as a Barrier to Work

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Source: Groundwork Ohio Child Care Poll, 2024

# Child Care is Unaffordable

## Annual child care expenses in Ohio (avg)

Infant care:

**\$13,780**

Toddler care:

**\$12,376**

Preschooler care:

**\$11,752**

Child Care Aware of America, Child Care in America



# Child Care is Unaffordable

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Child Care Expenses  
= \$10.54/hr worked

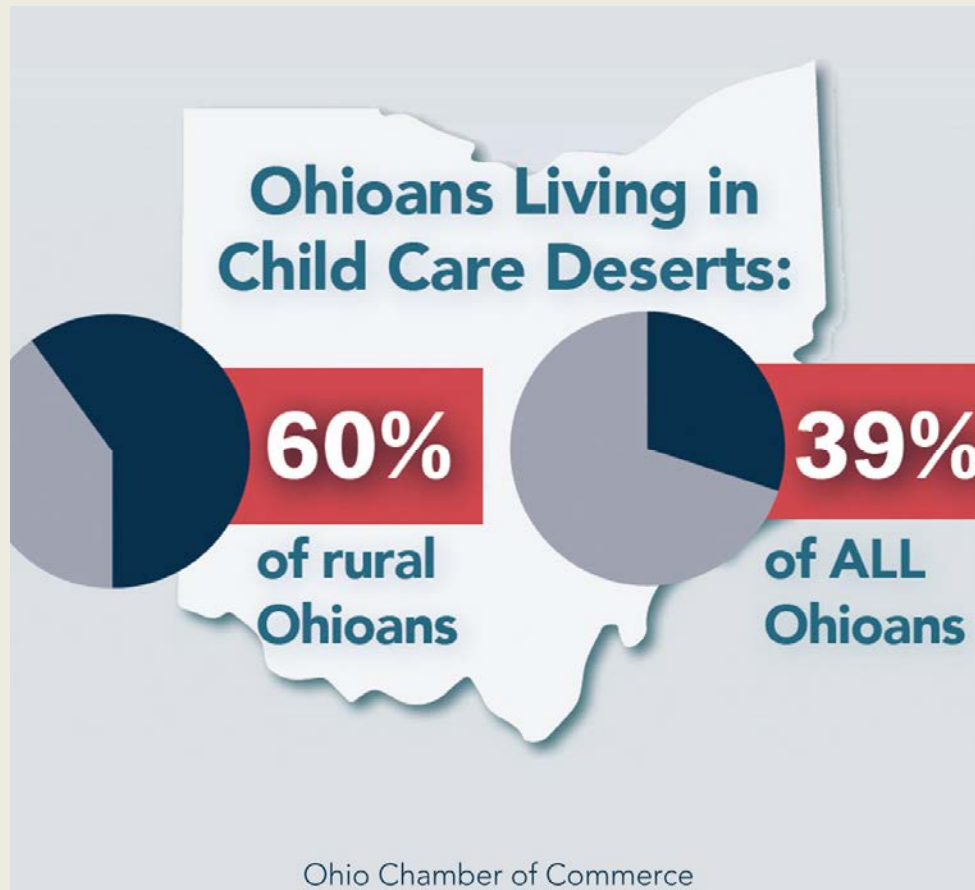
If paid \$20/hr

\$9.46/hr  
remains

Department of Children & Youth

# Child Care is Hard to Find

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# But...Parents Identify Child Care as an Opportunity

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Public Opinion Strategies, Dec. 2024 Poll

# The Child Care Crisis Impacts Us All

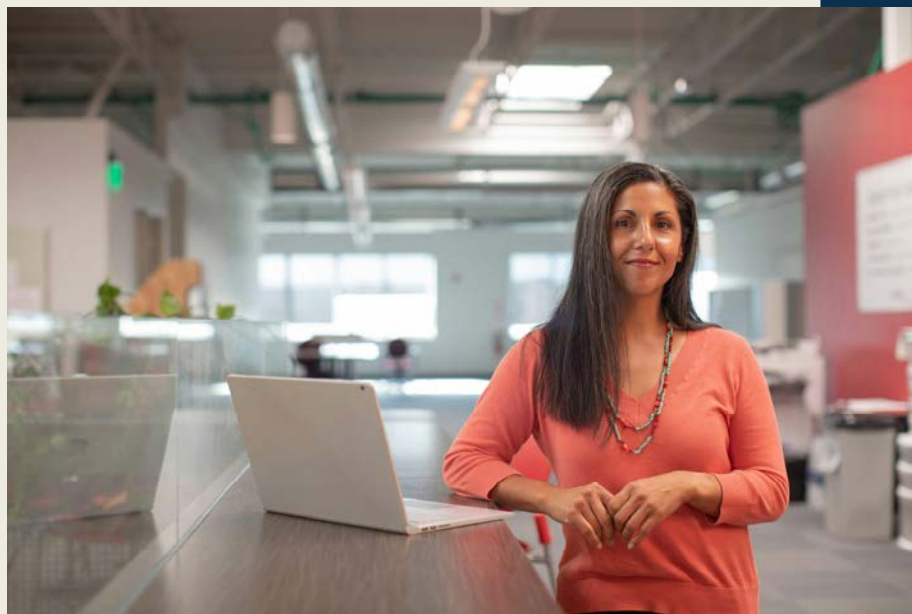
Ohio's lack of affordable child care results in an estimated \$5.48 billion annual loss for Ohio's economy.



Source: [Untapped Potential in Ohio: How Child Care Impacts Ohio's Workforce Productivity and The State's Economy](#), U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2025



# What Working Parents AKA Your Employees Tell Us...



# 25%

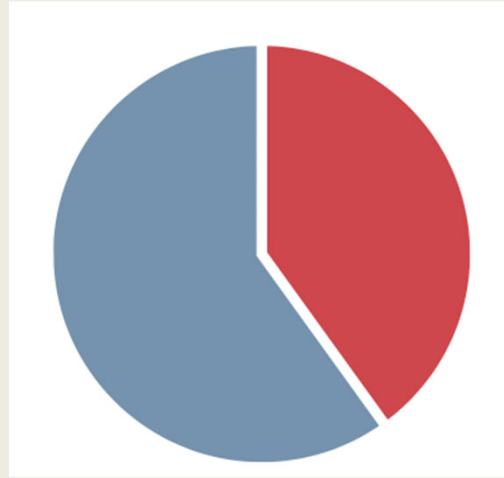
of parents say their  
**work performance has declined**  
because of child care issues.

# 24%

of parents say they have  
**refused a job opportunity,  
promotion, or change**  
because it would increase  
child care expenses.

# HALF

of working parents say that  
over the last couple of months,  
**they have had to cut back on their work hours**  
to care for their children.



More than 40% of parents  
of young children have had to  
**call off or miss a shift at work**  
because of child care issues.





Parents with young children say they have  
**had to leave the workforce**  
because of an inability to find  
affordable child care.

# 68%

of Ohio parents with children under 6  
identify at least **ONE** of these factors in  
their work lives.

# 30%

of Ohio parents with children under 6  
have identified **TWO-to-THREE** of these factors.

When stay-at-home parents of young children are asked  
**what would having child care allow them to do,**  
there is one response that stands out:

**"Work"**

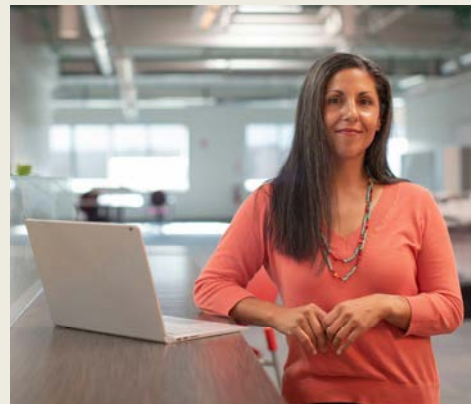
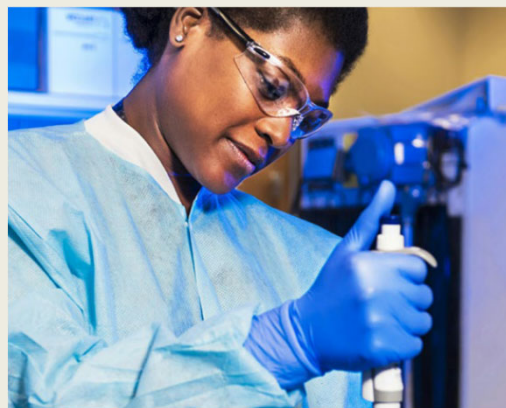
And, when parents of young children  
with child care are asked  
**what having child care allows them to do:**

**"Work"**

# 61%

of non-full-time working moms say  
**they would go back to work**  
if their child had access to  
quality child care at a reasonable cost.





**No wonder businesses are talking  
about child care.**

**Q:**

## How can you help address the child care crisis?

 <b>EXPLORE</b>	  <b>INVEST</b>	   <b>ADVOCATE</b>
<p><i>Shift workplace practices to address employee needs.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p><b>Schedule Predictability</b></p> <p><b>Job Sharing</b></p> <p><b>Flexible Scheduling</b></p>	<p><i>Support employees to make child care more accessible and affordable.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p><b>Back-Up Child Care</b></p> <p><b>Child Care Benefits</b></p> <p><b>On-Site Child Care</b></p>	<p><i>Share experiences and perspectives to propel change.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p><b>Get Involved:</b></p> <p>Engaging in public advocacy helps to raise awareness about the economic benefits of investing in child care and garner support for policy changes at local, state, and federal levels. Businesses can partner with others to advance child care access in the state.</p>

# Advocacy Solutions

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- Invest in access to affordable, quality child care for working families.
- Learn and engage in public-private partnerships. Share your learnings.
- Implement tax benefits for families and tax policies that benefit businesses.



## Learn More & Join the National Conversation:

Join our Business Coalition to connect  
with other statewide business leaders.

*Support the Workforce of Today & Tomorrow.*



Learn More at  
**GroundworkOhio.org**



@GroundworkOhio



## Annual child care expenses in Ohio (avg)

Infant care:

**\$13,780**

Toddler care:

**\$12,376**

Preschooler care:

**\$11,752**

Child Care Aware of America, Child Care in America



The background of the slide features a soft-focus photograph of a baby with light hair, wearing a light blue patterned onesie, being held by an adult whose long brown hair is visible. In the lower-left background, a laptop screen is partially visible, displaying a dark image. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue filter.

# Legislative Perspectives:

Policies and Pathways  
to Change

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

Moderated by

**Liz Hibbs**

*Director of ECEA/SPARK*

**Theresea Varrasso**

*Legislative Officer at Ohio Department  
of Children and Youth*





# Legislative Perspectives:

Policies and Pathways  
to Change

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

**Senator Jane M. Timken**

*Ohio Senate, District 29*

**Senator Casey Weinstein**

*Ohio Senate, District 28*

**Representative Scott Oelslager**

*Ohio State House of Representatives,  
District 48*

**Representative Bill Roemer**

*Ohio State House of Representatives,  
District 31*

# HALF

of working parents say that  
over the last couple of months,  
they have had to cut back on their work hours to  
care for their children.



# Family Voices:

Real Stories,  
Real Impact

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

Moderated by

**Alicia Robinson**

*Senior Director Community Engagement &  
Partnerships, Summit Education Initiative*

**Amy Wise**

*Director of Strategic Initiatives,  
Early Childhood Resource Center*

A woman with long brown hair is holding a baby. The baby is wearing a light blue patterned onesie. In the background, a laptop is visible on a desk. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# Family Voices:

Real Stories,  
Real Impact

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

**Jazzmin Bowman**  
*Summit County*

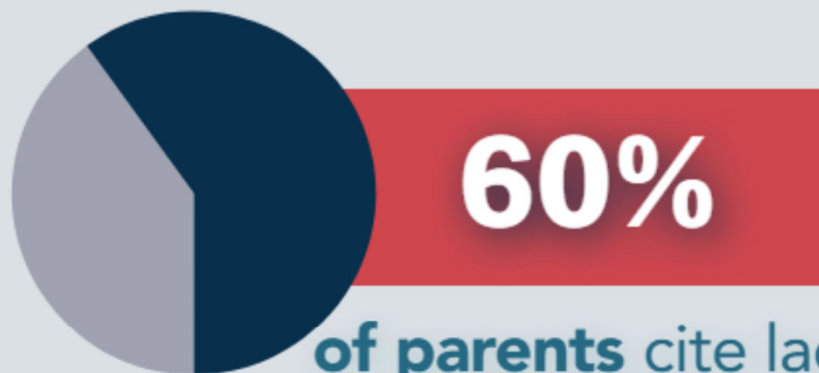
**Ana Dulaney**  
*Stark County*

**Darla Garens**  
*Holmes County*

**Candace Love**  
*Summit County*

**Alexandra Neal**  
*Stark County*

**Candace Tell**



**of parents** cite lack  
of child care as their reason for  
**leaving the workforce.**

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Source: Groundwork Ohio  
Child Care Poll, 2024





# Business Solutions:

How Employers /  
Communities Are  
Responding

REGIONAL SUMMIT:

## Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis

Moderated by

**Joe Luckring**

Regional President, PNC Financial Services Group

Alliance Employment Promise:

**Rick Baxter**

President, Alliance Area Chamber of Commerce and  
Alliance Area Development

**Liz Hibbs**

Director, ECEA/SPARK

Greater Akron Unified Early Learning System:

**Richelle Wardell**

Education and Health Strategist, City of Akron

Tusco MFG

**Mike Lauber**

CEO, Tusco MFG





# Our Resource and Referral Agencies:

How They Can Help

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

**Lara Schwartz**

*COAD, Child Care Services Manager*

# Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis:  
Regional Summit

September 9, 2025



## Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)

Funded through the Federal Child Development Block Grant  
via the Ohio Department of Children and Youth



Lara Schwartz,  
COAD4kids

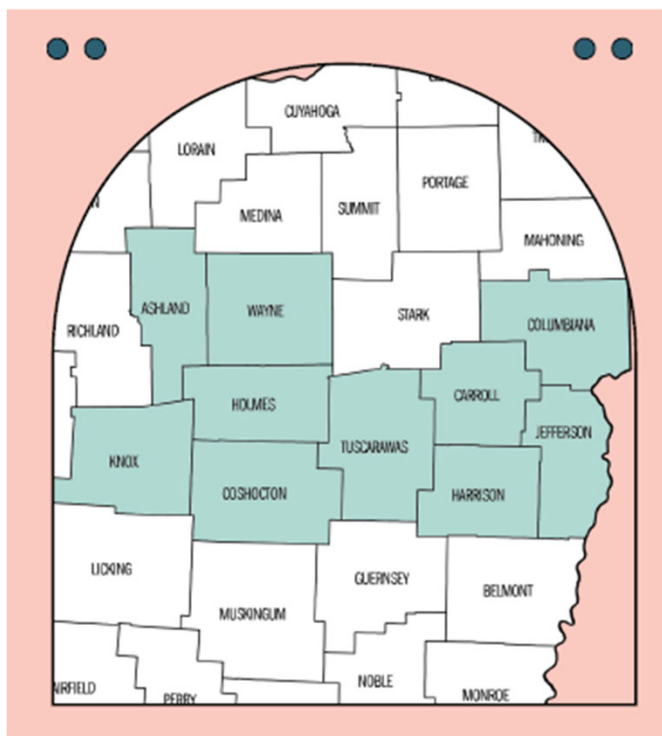


Amy Wise,  
Early Childhood Resource Center

# Our role

- Help families find child care and navigate family resources
- Work to increase the supply of child care
- Provide training for early childhood professionals
- Offer technical assistance to classroom teachers and program administrators
- Assist individuals to become foster/adoptive parents





- Ashland
- Carroll
- Columbiana
- Coshocton
- Harrison
- Holmes
- Jefferson
- Knox
- Tuscarawas
- Wayne

**COAD4kids** Tuscarawas County:  
420 S. Reeves Ave, Ste C, Dover,  
Ohio 44622  
(330) 364-8882



## EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCE CENTER

- Mahoning
- Medina
- Portage
- Stark
- Summit
- Trumbull



### **Early Childhood Resource Center**

(Administrative Office)

1718 Cleveland Avenue Northwest  
Canton, Ohio 44703

### **Early Childhood Resource Center**

37 N. High Street, Suite D  
Akron, Ohio 44308

### **Early Childhood Resource Center**

6414 Market Street  
Boardman, Ohio 44512

### **Phone**

(877) 691-8521 or (330) 491-3272





## Early Care and Education Business Partnership

- A **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** involves collaboration between the government and private sector to address shared challenges or goals.
- The **Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY)** has launched a PPP initiative to address workforce challenges by supporting employees in need of affordable and reliable child care.
- The partnership includes **businesses, government or non-profits, and DCY** sharing the cost of expanding child care access and availability.
- It encourages **innovative solutions** and seeks to create **mutual benefits** for families, employers, and child care providers.

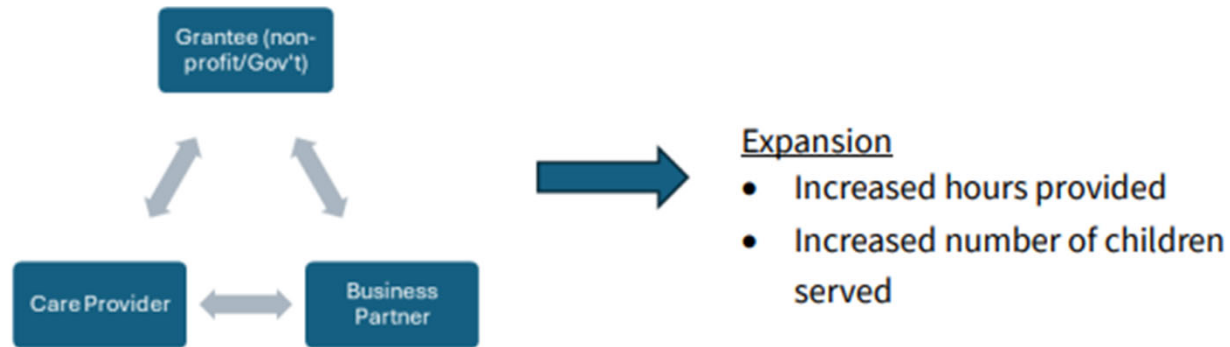


## What are the goals of Early Care and Education Business Partnership?

- **For businesses:** Increased employee attendance, more productivity, and fewer employees separating employment.
- **For working families:** Families will have better access to reliable and high-quality child care meeting their working schedules.
- **For child care programs:** These programs will have increased financial stability and experience less staff turnover.



## Who is eligible for the grant?



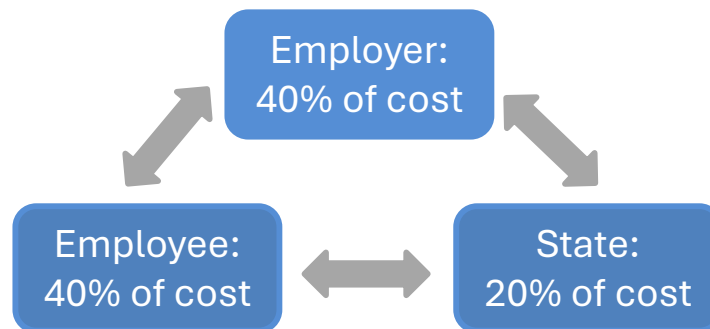
Scan to  
Learn More!



Department of  
Children & Youth

## Child Care Cred Program

- Approved in Ohio's new state budget to provide a way to make child care more affordable for families through employer partnerships.
- Employers can choose to participate
- Employees must fall between 200% - 400% of FPL
  - Under \$62,600 for single-person household
  - Under \$128,600 for a four-person household
- Should be available to employers and employees in January



# Thank you!



[www.coadinc.org](http://www.coadinc.org)



EARLY CHILDHOOD  
RESOURCE CENTER

[www.ecresourcecenter.org](http://www.ecresourcecenter.org)

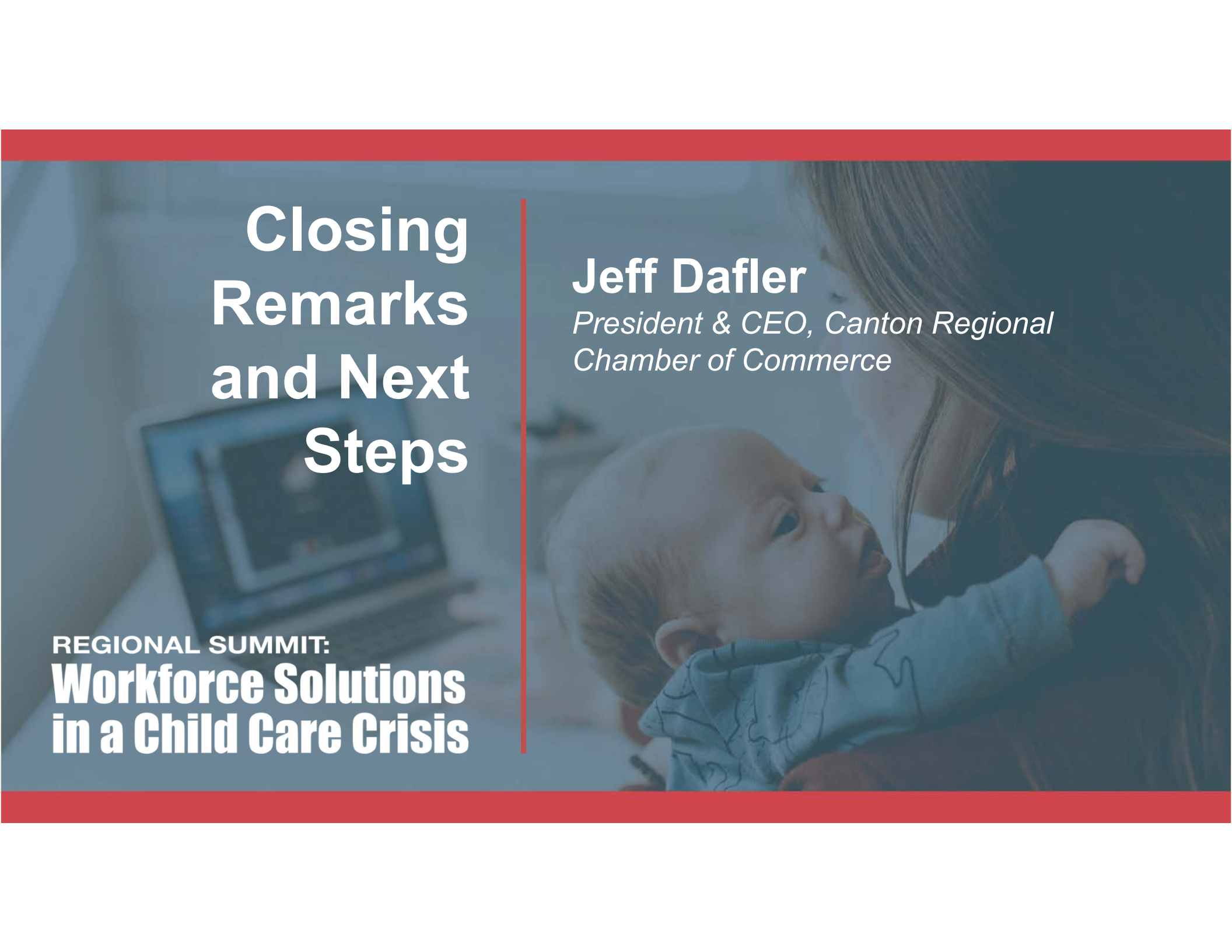
# Collaborative Discussion:

Building a Path Forward

REGIONAL SUMMIT:

**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

- ☐ What valuable insights have you gained today?
- ☐ What are the most pressing challenges related to workforce child care needs in your community that motivates you to take action?
- ☐ What are two to three key points from today that you will share for discussion in your community?
- ☐ How do you envision your organization collaborating with businesses, community members, families, and public officials to develop solutions for our child care crisis?



# Closing Remarks and Next Steps

REGIONAL SUMMIT:  
**Workforce Solutions  
in a Child Care Crisis**

**Jeff Dafler**

*President & CEO, Canton Regional  
Chamber of Commerce*



**Scan for  
Speaker  
Bios**