REGIONAL SUMMIT:

# Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis

CANTON REGIONAL CHAMBER℠

*In partnership with*

Groundwork OHIO

Great Start FOR GREAT FUTURES

REGIONAL SUMMIT:

# Workforce Solutions in a Child Care Crisis

*Presented by*

AULTCARE

*Gold Sponsor*

Huntington

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AKRON-CANTON AIRPORT

# Welcome and Opening Remarks

**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*

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# Begin with the end in mind:

"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**

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- ❑ 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?

Source: Stephen R. Covey (2004), "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change", p.98, Simon and Schuster

Groundwork OHIO

# Ohio loses approx. $5.48 Billion per year due to child care issues.

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

# Framing the Issue:

The Childcare Crisis in Our Community

Introduction by

**Ron Paydo**

*Market President, Akron/Canton, Huntington Bank*

**Lynanne Gutierrez**

*President & CEO, Groundwork Ohio*

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

LYNANNE GUTIERREZ
President & CEO
September 9, 2025

Groundwork OHIO

# 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.

**GroundworkOhio.org**

OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DAYTON Area Chamber of Commerce

CANTON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber

COLUMBUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GAC GREATER AKRON CHAMBER

Greater Cleveland Partnership

Goldman Sachs 10,000 small businesses

NAWBO COLUMBUS OHIO National Association of Women Business Owners

Ohio Business Roundtable

Ohio Excels

OHIO FARM BUREAU EST. 1919

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

**BABY**

Less than 1 in 5 Ohio babies from families with low incomes have access to a child care program.

**KINDERGARTEN**

65% of all kindergarteners enter the classroom not ready to learn. This increases to 79% of low-income kids.

**PARENTS**

61% of parents said they would go back to work if they had access to child care at a reasonable cost.

**CARE PROVIDER**

Child care professionals make, on average, $15 per hour. Turnover rate is over 4X higher than state's employment.

**BUSINESSES**

1M working parents in Ohio have cut back their work hours due to child care barriers.

**ECONOMY**

Ohio's economy loses approx. $5.48 billion a year on child care barriers alone.

**FUTURE**

?

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# 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.

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# Lack of Child Care Leads to Unemployment and Underemployment

Nearly **50%**
**of working parents**
have **cut back their work hours**
to care for their children.[2]

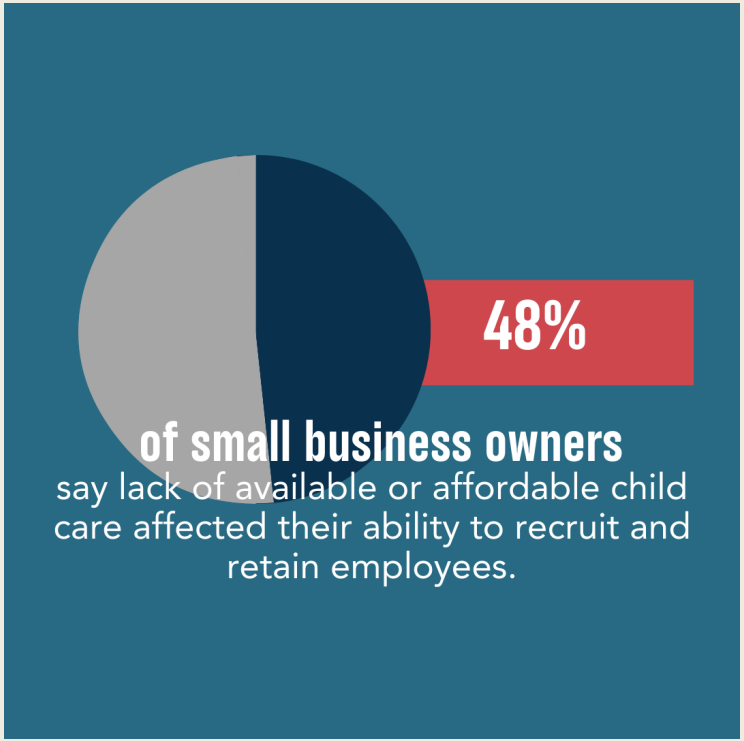
**1 MILLION**

of Ohio working parents cut back work
hours **due to child care barriers.**[3]

Public Opinion Strategies, Dec. 2024 Poll

Groundwork OHIO

# Child Care Crisis Significantly Hampers Recruitment and Retention




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

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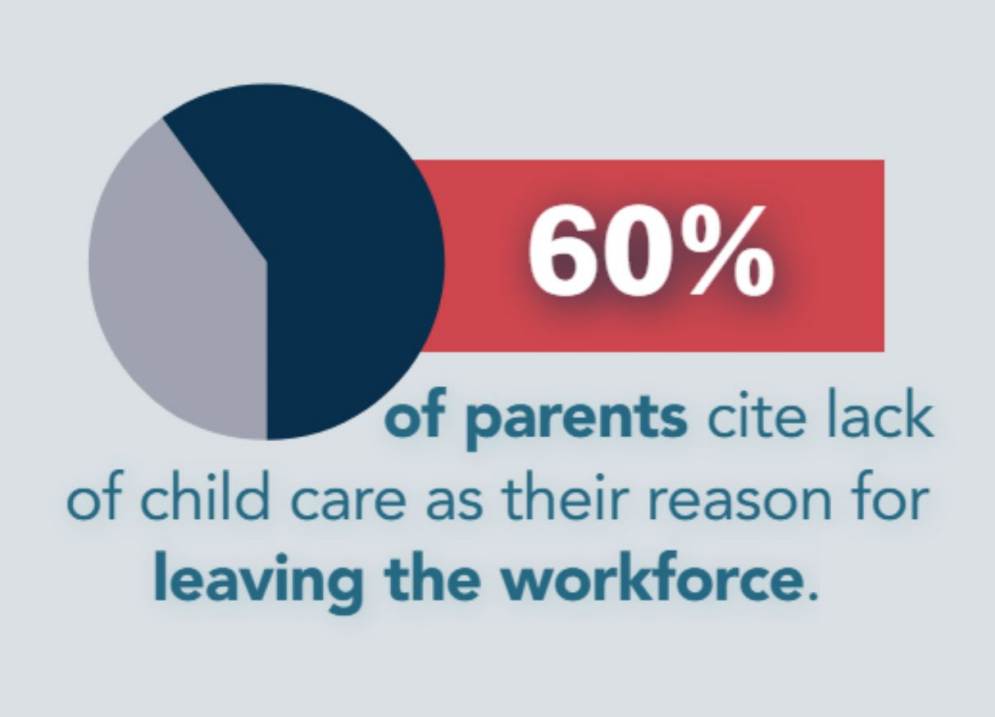
# Parents Identify Child Care as a Barrier to Work




Source: Groundwork Ohio Child Care Poll, 2024

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# Child Care is Unaffordable

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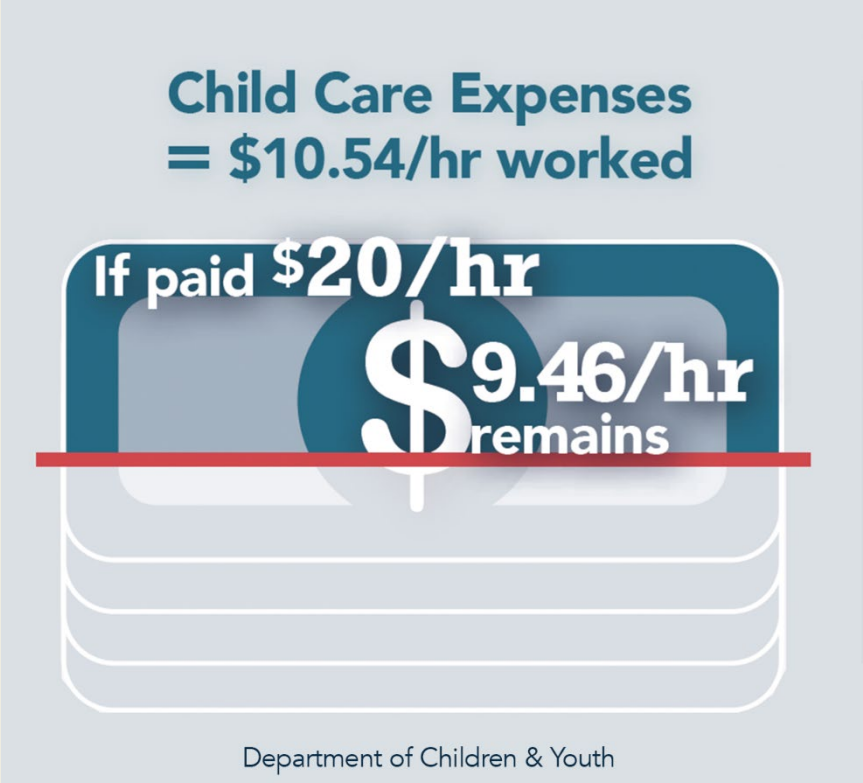
# Child Care is Unaffordable

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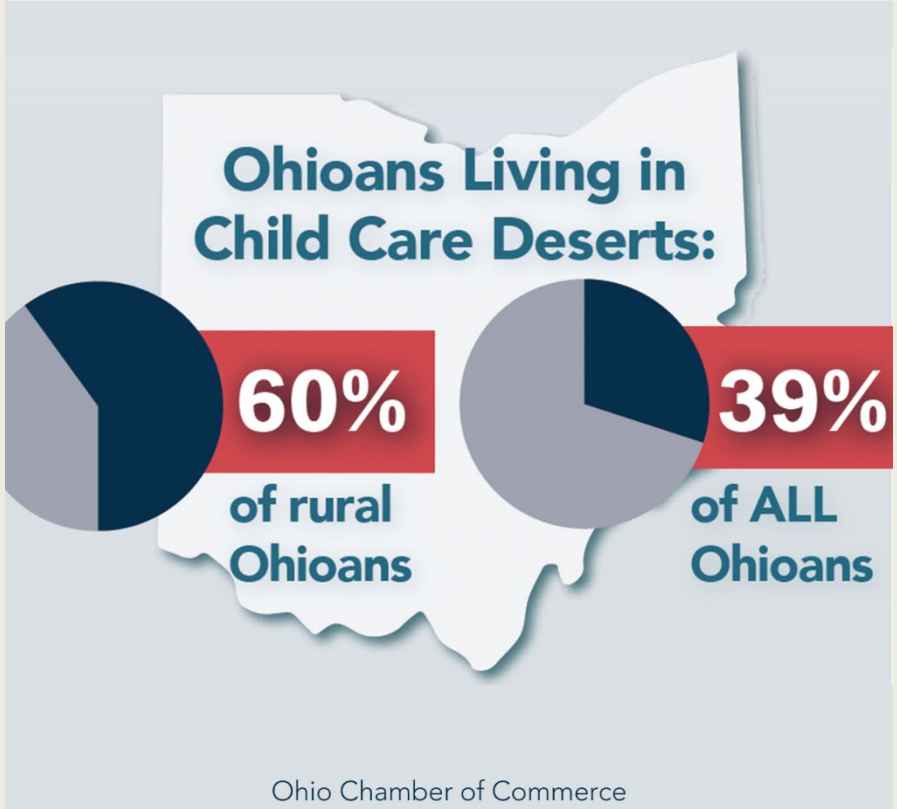
# Child Care is Hard to Find

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# But…Parents Identify Child Care as an Opportunity

Nearly **50%**
**of working parents**
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**1 MILLION**

of Ohio working parents cut back work
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Public Opinion Strategies, Dec. 2024 Poll

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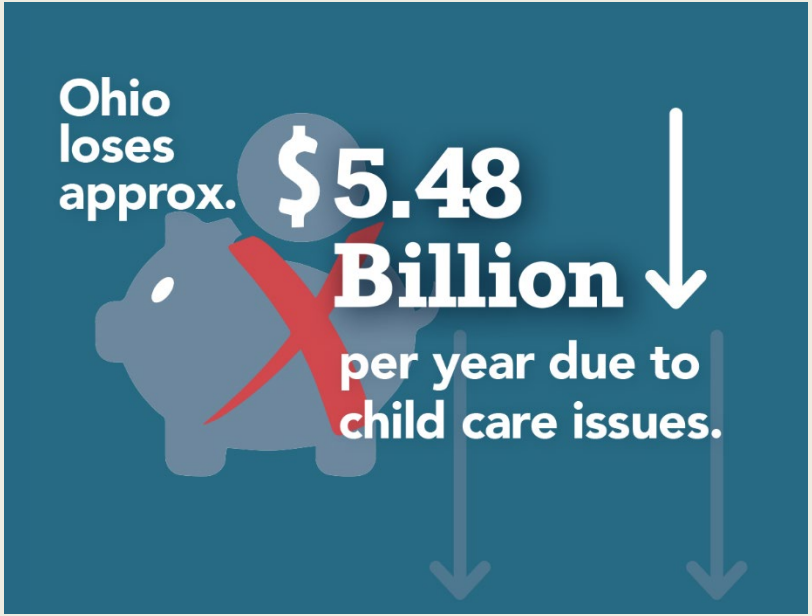
# The Child Care Crisis Impacts Us All

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

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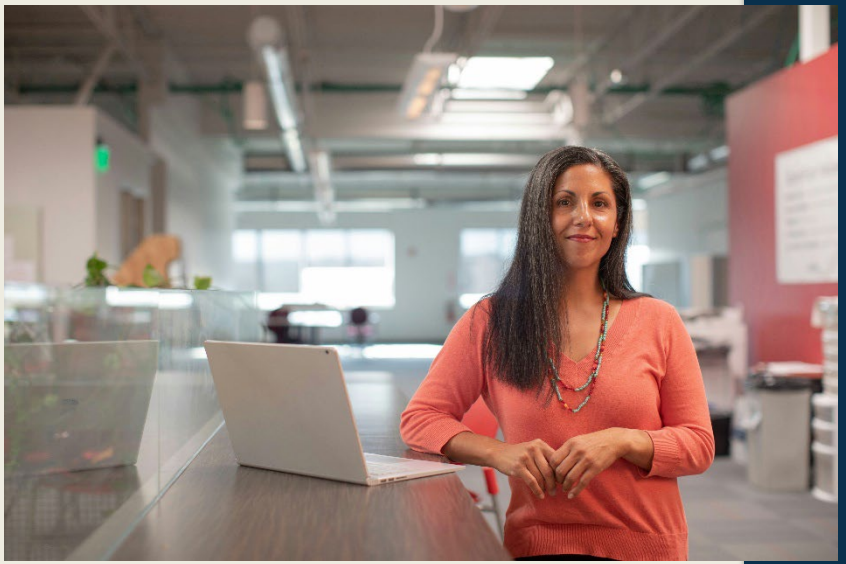
# What Working Parents
# AKA Your Employees
# Tell Us…



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# 25%

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

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# 24%

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

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# 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.

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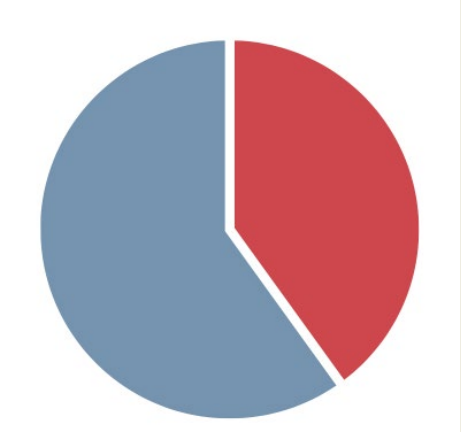

More than 40% of parents of young children have had to **call off or miss a shift at work** because of child care issues.

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

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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"

Groundwork OHIO

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

# “Work”

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# 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.

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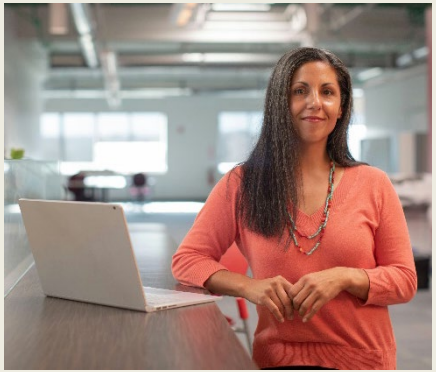

No wonder businesses are talking about child care.

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

| EXPLORE | INVEST | ADVOCATE |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Shift workplace practices to address employee needs.* | *Support employees to make child care more accessible and affordable.* | *Share experiences and perspectives to propel change.* |
| **Schedule Predictability**<br>**Job Sharing**<br>**Flexible Scheduling** | **Back-Up Child Care**<br>**Child Care Benefits**<br>**On-Site Child Care** | **Get Involved:**<br>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. |

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# Advocacy Solutions

- 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.

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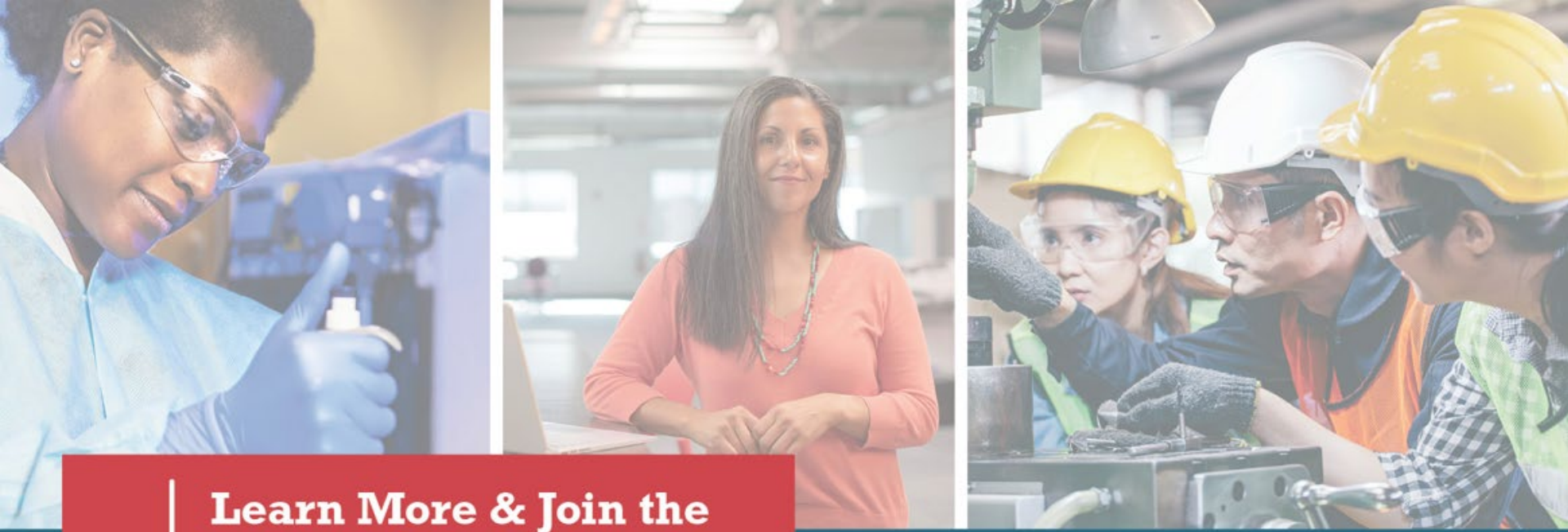

# Learn More & Join the National Conversation:

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

***Support the Workforce of Today & Tomorrow.***

Learn More at

**GroundworkOhio.org**

**@GroundworkOhio**

Groundwork OHIO

# 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

# Legislative Perspectives:

Policies and Pathways to Change

Moderated by

**Liz Hibbs**

*Director of ECEA/SPARK*

**Theresea Varrasso**

*Legislative Officer at Ohio Department of Children and Youth*

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# Legislative Perspectives:

## Policies and Pathways to Change

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**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.

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OHIO

# Family Voices:

Real Stories,
Real Impact

Moderated by

## Alicia Robinson

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

## Amy Wise

*Director of Strategic Initiatives, Early Childhood Resource Center*

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**60%**

**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

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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

**Lara Schwartz**
*COAD, Child Care Services Manager*

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# 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

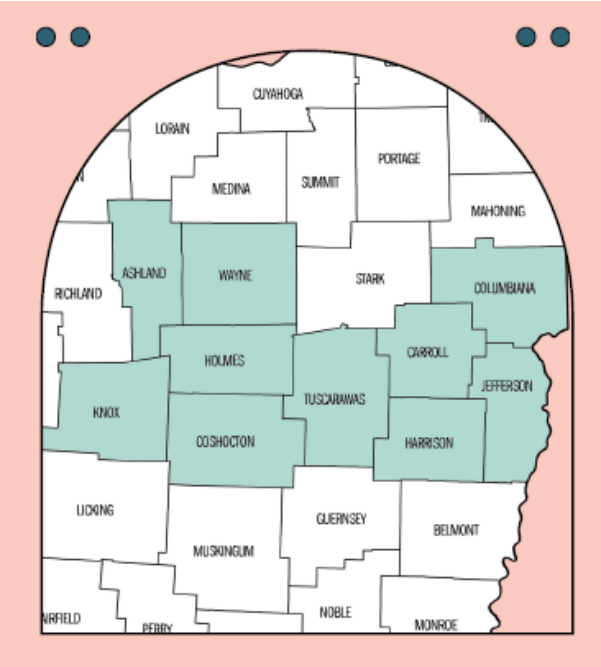
Lara Schwartz,
COAD4kids

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

# COAD4kids




- 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.

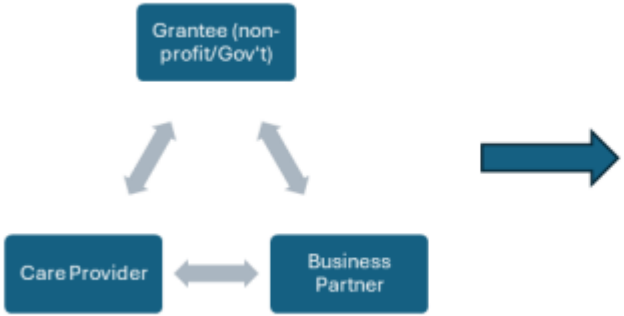
Ohio Department of Children & Youth

# 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.

Ohio Department of Children & Youth

# Who is eligible for the grant?




<u>Expansion</u>

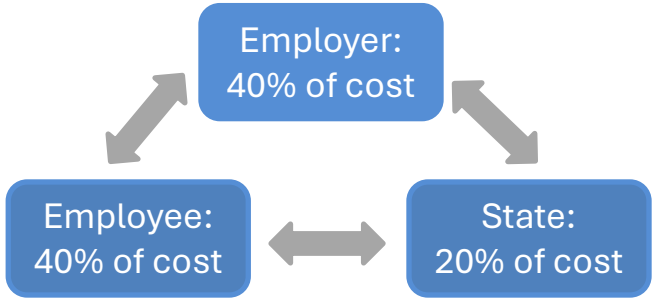
- Increased hours provided
- Increased number of children served

Scan to Learn More!

Ohio 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!

COAD4kids

www.coadinc.org

EARLY CHILDHOOD
RESOURCE CENTER

www.ecresourcecenter.org

# Collaborative Discussion:

Building a Path Forward

- ❑ 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?

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# Closing Remarks and Next Steps

**Jeff Dafler**
*President & CEO, Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce*

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