

How Municipalities Can Increase Access to High-Quality Child Care

Municipalities have a unique opportunity to improve access to high-quality child care in their communities, and they have a stake in developing solutions for their community's child care needs.

The US Chamber of Commerce Foundation in 2017 released the report, *"Workforce of Today, Workforce of Tomorrow: The Business Case for High-Quality Childcare,"* an in-depth analysis of the impacts of child care on employers and our national economy. Access to high-quality child care has immediate impacts on workforce productivity, recruitment and retention, and it also has the multi-generational potential to reduce poverty and help solve our nation's labor shortage. Here are some ways municipalities can get involved:

Start the discussion

- Talk to Child Care Aware of WA about the importance of high-quality child care and the challenges families and educators face in your community
- Make a site visit to a local child care facility

Implement child care policies for your employees

- Survey your employees regarding their child care needs, and then offer flexibility where needed
- Offer employees who need child care either direct fee assistance or flexible spending accounts
- Educate employees about Child Care Aware of Washington's free child care referral service (800) 446-1114 | <http://wa.childcareaware.org/>

Expand access to high-quality child care

- "Adopt" a local child care provider – find out what they need to care for more children and offer to help secure those resources
- Donate used supplies, equipment, furniture and computers to local child care providers
- Offer backup child care
- Provide onsite child care at your offices

Engage your community

- Join an Early Childhood coalition in your area
- Join the Board of a local early learning organization
- Convene a community conversation on child care

Raise your voice

- Tell your elected representatives how child care access impacts your community
- Write an op-ed or a letter-to-the-editor of your local paper
- Speak at public events about the importance of child care to your community
- Share what you are doing to increase access to high-quality child care in your communications (blog, newsletter, social media, email, etc.)
- Contact Child Care Aware of Washington (IncreaseAccess@wa.childcareaware.org) for alerts about strategic opportunities to raise your voice



For help getting started on any of these ideas, please email us at Child Care Aware of WA at ChildCareAware@wa.childcareaware.org or call (866) 416-4321