

VIRTUAL TOWNHALL: CHILD CARE PROVIDERS - YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Researchers estimate that, without additional public support, 40% of Michigan’s child care providers will permanently close their doors because of the pandemic¹. On Tuesday evening, September 22, 2020, over 250 of Michigan’s child care providers came together for a Virtual Townhall to share what they are experiencing, what they need to survive and what actions elected officials and government administrators can take now to help stabilize the essential child care sector.

View the recorded Townhall and download the full report at www.ecic4kids.org/townhall

Child Care Townhall: Summary Report

Who participated in the Townhall?



47% - Provider,
Center-Based



42% - Provider,
Home-Based



1% - Legislator/
Legislative Staff



8% - Advocate/
Community
Organization



2% - Parent

If federal or state funding is available for the child care sector in the future, here are the **top needs**, according to Michigan child care providers and early educators:

- ✓ Award flexible, non-competitive funding that could help pay for operating costs, rent, hazard pay for employees, PPE supplies, or cover costs not covered due to low enrollment.
- ✓ Use a simple, straightforward grant process, reducing administrative steps, tax burdens, and reporting requirements.
- ✓ Expedite payment of grants and relief funding – continue to use direct deposit options.
- ✓ If policymakers want to help make child care more affordable to families, Michigan’s child care providers loudly express: give financial support directly to families. Any future relief dollars to child care providers should focus on supporting child care businesses, not require child care providers to administer financial assistance for families.

“How am I going to battle COVID today?”
-MI Child Care Provider

What are your top challenges during COVID?

- ❖ Needing operational support –low enrollment, revenue is down. “We lost 60% of our income, we are looking at closing.”
- ❖ Ensuring the safety of our staff and the children.
- ❖ Navigating administrative hoops to apply for funding.
- ❖ Uncertainty about the future.
- ❖ Finding and retaining adequate staff.

“Parents are scared. We are too. We don’t stop—we keep going.”
-MI Child Care Provider

¹ Child Care Survey, NAEYC, July 2020

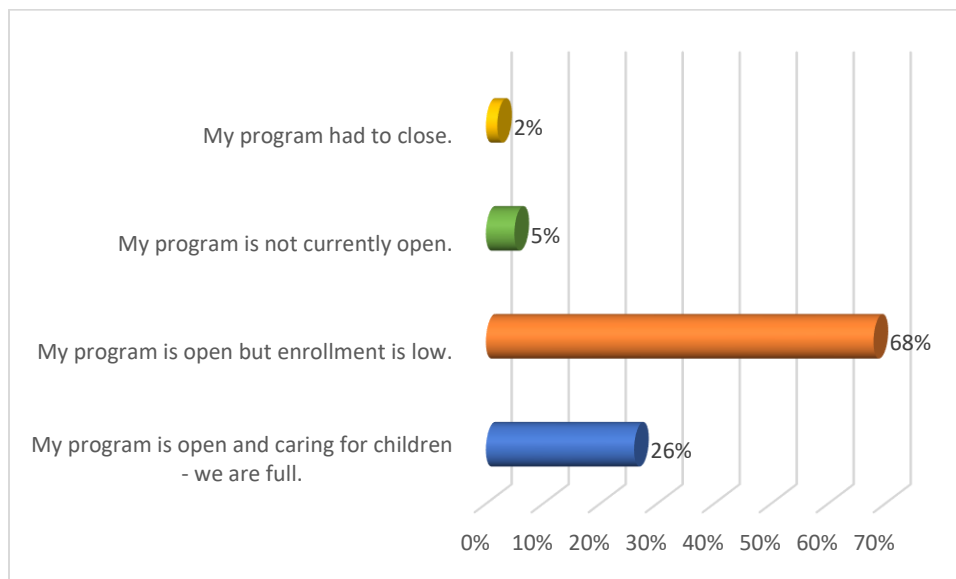
If temporary changes to subsidy rules due to COVID are being considered, here are the top requests, according to Michigan child care providers and early educators:

- ✓ Allow billing for school-age children during the school day, if child care providers are caring for children while parents are at work.
- ✓ Increase the base rates for subsidy payments to cover livable wages for child care workers and provide bonus rates for achieving higher star ratings.
- ✓ Allow billing for absences – enrollment is low.
- ✓ Weekly or monthly billing and payments are preferred and reduce administrative burdens.

“Child care is the foundation that allows our economy to run. The sector workforce is in crisis. If these same circumstances existed in the airlines or auto industry, Congress and Legislatures would FLOOD the industries with funding.”

-MI Child Care Provider

Status of Child Care Operations (Townhall Participant Poll)



Thanks to the Virtual Townhall Co-Hosts: the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, Hope Starts Here and the Grand Rapids Chamber. Listening to all the feedback and ideas provided during the Virtual Townhall were leaders from the Office of the Governor, Michigan Department of Education – Office of Great Start, Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and invited State Legislators.

Most importantly, thank you to all Michigan Child Care Providers and Early Educators – you are essential and your voice matters. We are so grateful that so many child care experts shared their powerful stories and gave their time at the end of a long day to help shape stronger policy and funding decisions for early childhood. Thank you.

Stay Connected:

Watch for updates on funding decisions and how your voice made a difference!