



**Child Care Advocacy Toolkit:  
2021-2022 Budget Priorities**



Think Babies Michigan, formerly known as the Michigan Prenatal to Three Policy Collaborative, is working to ensure that Michigan is a top state to have and raise a baby. *Think Babies* is a call to action for policymakers to prioritize the needs of infants, toddlers, and their families and invest in our future. Our long-term policy agenda for 2020-2025, developed in partnership with families, advocates, researchers, government officials, and service providers, focuses on:

- Increasing the number of families with children prenatal-to-three who are utilizing essential health, developmental and social-emotional support services (including Home Visiting, Early On, etc.); and
- Increasing the number of infants and toddlers who have access and are enrolled in high-quality child care.

By 2025, it is Think Babies Michigan’s goal to increase enrollment by 50 percent in these programs—reaching an additional 83,000 children 0-3 living in low-income households.

This toolkit was developed by the Reimagining Child Care Funding Workgroup of the Think Babies Michigan Collaborative to help support partners in their efforts to call for increased support for child care, particularly for infants and toddlers. These resources and tools can be used to ensure that your voice is heard by policymakers. In addition to reaching out to your own state representative and state senator, provided in this toolkit is a listing of other key state legislators to contact about child care priorities based on their leadership position and/or committee assignment. Not sure who represents you? Find your [state representative here](#) and your [state senator here](#).

We hope this is helpful for you and your networks as you engage in conversations with policymakers at every level of government.

Be sure to join the Think Babies Michigan movement by signing up at [www.ecic4kids.org/policy-thinkbabiesmi](http://www.ecic4kids.org/policy-thinkbabiesmi). You can also find updated resources and information on this webpage.



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## 2022 State Budget Child Care Priorities

- 1. Target new child care funding to communities with the greatest need and least access to high-quality care, with a focus on equity while expanding access to high-quality care for infants and toddlers.**
  - Michigan must collect and use data—disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and income—to target child care resources to equity zones, or those areas of the state with the least access to high-quality care for infants and toddlers.
  - In addition, the state must engage parents and providers in a review of child care policies to determine if they promote or constrain access to high-quality child care for families of color, as well as parents in high-poverty communities in both urban and rural areas of the state.
- 2. Continue to increase both the supply and demand for child care by simultaneously: (1) increasing child care subsidy reimbursement rates for all providers and focus initially on enhanced contracts for child care businesses caring for infants and toddlers in areas of low supply; and (2) increasing initial child care eligibility to 185% of poverty.**

### **Adequate pay for child care providers:**

- The current financing system for child care is not sustainable, and does not cover providers' actual costs, or ensure adequate wages for child care workers.
- The market rate approach—which is more reflective of the incomes of families in an area than the actual cost of running a child care program—has created disincentives for providers to accept infants and toddlers because the cost of their care is higher. Michigan needs to adjust its payment rates to ensure an adequate supply of high-quality care based on the true cost of care.
- Contracts with providers can be an effective way to target resources in child care deserts or equity zones, as well as ensure that providers can afford to accept infants and toddlers into their programs—given the higher costs associated with caring for the youngest children.
- Contracts must have rate enhancements tied to them to cover the costs of high-quality care for infants and toddlers, including higher worker wages, and should include specified metrics for quality and access, along with the resources to measure the impact.

### **Providing child care subsidies to more families with low wages:**

- With the adoption of the 2021 state budget, the initial income eligibility threshold for child care was increased from 130% to 150% of poverty, which will allow the state to serve an additional 5,900 children statewide, including an estimated 1,336 infants and toddlers.
- Michigan is ranked 44th in income eligibility threshold. However, the investment in the FY 2021 budget to increase eligibility up to 150% (\$39,300 annually for a family of four) FPL brings Michigan to 39th.



- There is still a long way to go. Because Michigan has had one of the lowest eligibility thresholds in the country, the number of families served dropped by nearly 70% between 2003 and 2020.
- 3. Support home-based child care providers by forming staffed family child care networks that can reduce their isolation and make it easier for these small businesses to operate by the creating shared services solutions.**
- Home-based child care providers have struggled in Michigan and their numbers have declined. Many home-based providers work alone and are caring for children for long hours each day and week, with little time and few resources to manage a home-based business.
  - Staffed family child care networks can link these small businesses together to reduce isolation and strengthen business practices.
- 4. Support statewide socioemotional consultants to support child care providers who are working with children with high levels of stress and challenging behaviors.**
- In a recent survey, almost 4 of every 10 early childhood educators reported an average of two children in their programs whose families experienced domestic violence, parental incarceration or other involvement with the criminal justice system, and most educators said that these family stresses were an obstacle to reducing children’s challenging behaviors in their child care and early education settings.<sup>1</sup>
  - The state has historically invested in consultants who can help child care providers and other early educators address those behaviors, reducing the likelihood that the children need to be removed from child care settings temporarily or permanently. These services are continuing, however, funding for those services is at risk, and additional investments are needed to provide these critical services statewide.
- 5. Require an annual comprehensive child care system financing plan that ensures that all available federal and state funds are spent.**
- Funding for child care crosses numerous state departments, and greater transparency is needed on how the state is using its available funds for child care. That plan, and subsequent reporting on dollars spent, should track spending for the child care subsidy, child care quality improvements, licensing and regulation, professional development for providers, administrative costs, and other child care pilot programs or initiatives.
  - The need for more transparency on child care financing is made even more urgent because Michigan has in the past led the country in the amount of federal Child Care Development Fund dollars it returned unspent and is at the bottom of the states in its dedication of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to child care—in large part the result of restrictive policies that reduced caseloads and budgeting largely based on the caseload consensus process.



## Talking Points for the Child Care Priorities

### **Priority 1: Target new child care funding to communities with the greatest need and least access to high-quality care, with a focus on equity while expanding access to high-quality care for infants and toddlers.**

- Child care is currently funded mostly by parents and on the backs of child care professionals who are underpaid and significantly undervalued.
- More than four of every 10 parents in Michigan live in child care “deserts” and 10 Michigan counties do not have any licensed slots at child care centers for infants and toddlers.
- Child care rates and the ability to improve access and quality for infants and toddler are tied to income and the cost of housing in an area. Lower-income communities in urban and rural areas need more funding so parents can go to work.
- We need to use data--disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and income--to target child care funds to areas with fewer resources and supply.

### **Priority 2: Increase supply and demand for child care**

Adequate pay for child care providers:

- Nearly half of the Michigan child care workforce receives some form of public assistance, such as food assistance and Medicaid.<sup>ii</sup>
- While child care professionals often have college degrees, they earn far less than their peers serving similarly aged children. Elementary school teachers in Michigan make more than 3 ½ times the salary of child care workers; state-funded preschool lead teachers make almost twice that of child care workers.<sup>iii</sup>

Child care subsidies to more families:

- Nearly 1 in 4 young children in Michigan live below the federal poverty line, and most of these children have parents in the workforce.
- Michigan families can pay almost \$11,000/year for care of their infant; tuition at a public university is about \$13,000/year.
- Any child care that costs more than 7% of a family’s income is considered unaffordable; for Michigan single parent families, these costs can take 27-43% of their median income.

### **Priority 3: Support home-based childcare providers by forming staffed family care networks that can reduce their isolation, make it easier for these small businesses to operate by creating shared services solutions.**

- Reduce stress for providers by enabling access to team of experts in both business and pedagogical leadership.
- Professional networking peer to peer support group is valuable tool to keep providers informed of rule changes, share best practices, peer support to solve some of dilemmas providers face.



- Access valuable services typically not available to businesses of childcare size and scale - human resources, accounting, taxes, substitute pool for providers, skilled financial management, group purchases, etc.
- Create community to share training opportunities, reduce feelings of isolation, share support staff such as social emotional consultants, DHHS workers, coaching and mentoring.
- Builds positive relationships between providers and the community - validates the important service they provide to families and businesses helping to keep the community strong.

#### **Priority 4: Support statewide Social-Emotional Consultation**

- When infants and young children are exposed to chronic stressful events, their brain development can be adversely impacted, leading to behavior problems, such as biting, hitting, or bullying - behaviors that often lead to difficulty with learning, higher rates of preschool suspension or expulsion and later school dropout.<sup>iv</sup>
- Did you know that children in childcare are expelled at a rate of 27.4%, more than 13 times higher than all k-12 expulsions combined?<sup>v</sup>
- Michigan Specific Data:
  - 39% of teachers reported that families are experiencing domestic violence, incarceration, or other association with the justice system.<sup>vi</sup>
  - 91% of teachers reported having one or more children in their care with challenging behavior - this leads to an increase in teacher stress, inability to teach or support the child's learning adequately and removal of children from care.<sup>vii</sup>

#### **Priority 5: Require an annual comprehensive child care system financing plan that ensures that all available federal and state funds are spent.**

- The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides federal grants to states to design and operate programs that help low-income families achieve self-sufficiency. States can transfer up to 30 percent of its TANF funds to the Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG), which provides child care assistance for low-income families and funds child care quality-improvement initiatives.<sup>viii</sup> Michigan ranks 6<sup>th</sup> from the bottom on TANF spending on child care (2018).<sup>ix</sup>
- Many child care providers, both center-based and home-based depend on State and Federal investments and subsidies to keep their doors open to meet the needs of children and families.
- Extra attention to spending is needed to ensure dollars continue to support Michigan families.
- With the current historic investment between COVID relief legislation passed by Congress in December, along with the recent American Rescue Plan funds, Michigan has an opportunity to provide immediate relief and begin to build a stronger child care system. If the funds are not appropriated by the Legislature, they will be returned to the federal government and Michigan will miss a once in a lifetime opportunity.



## Contact Key Legislative Leadership

You should reach out to these key legislative leaders, but also be sure to reach out to your representative and senator. Not sure who represents you? Find your [state representative here](#) and your [state senator here](#).

### House

Leadership:

Representative	Role	Party	Contact	District
Jason Wentworth	Speaker of the House	R	<a href="mailto:jasonwentworth@house.mi.gov">jasonwentworth@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-8962	<u>Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Osceola</u>
Thomas Albert	Appropriations Committee Chair	R	<a href="mailto:ThomasAlbert@house.mi.gov">ThomasAlbert@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0846	<u>Ionia, Kent</u>

Appropriations Subcommittee on School Aid and Department of Education:

Representative	Role	Party	Contact	District
Brad Paquette	Chair	R	<a href="mailto:bradpaquette@house.mi.gov">bradpaquette@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-1796	<u>Berrien, Cass</u>
Annette Glenn	Majority Vice Chair	R	<a href="mailto:AnnetteGlenn@house.mi.gov">AnnetteGlenn@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-1791	<u>Bay, Midland</u>
Regina Weiss	Minority Vice Chair	D	<a href="mailto:reginaweiss@house.mi.gov">reginaweiss@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0478	<u>Oakland</u>
Tommy Brann	Member	R	<a href="mailto:TommyBrann@house.mi.gov">TommyBrann@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-2277	<u>Kent</u>
Pamela Hornberger	Member	R	<a href="mailto:PamelaHornberger@house.mi.gov">PamelaHornberger@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-8931	<u>Macomb, Saint Clair</u>
Scott VanSignal	Member	R	<a href="mailto:scottvansingel@house.mi.gov">scottvansingel@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-7317	<u>Lake, Newaygo, Oceana</u>
Mark Huizenga	Member	R	<a href="mailto:MarkHuizenga@house.mi.gov">MarkHuizenga@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-8900	<u>Kent</u>
Timothy Beson	Member	R	<a href="mailto:TimothyBeson@house.mi.gov">TimothyBeson@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0158	<u>Bay</u>
Rachel Hood	Member	D	<a href="mailto:RachelHood@house.mi.gov">RachelHood@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0822	<u>Kent</u>
Amos O'Neal	Member	D	<a href="mailto:AmosOneal@house.mi.gov">AmosOneal@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0152	<u>Saginaw</u>
Shri Thanedar	Member	D	<a href="mailto:ShriThanedar@house.mi.gov">ShriThanedar@house.mi.gov</a> (517) 373-0144	<u>Wayne</u>





## Senate

### Leadership:

Senator	Role	Party	Contact	District
Mike Shirkey	Majority Leader	R	<a href="mailto:SenMShirkey@senate.michigan.gov">SenMShirkey@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-5932	<u>Branch, Hillsdale, Jackson</u>
Jim Stamas	Appropriations Committee Chair	R	<a href="mailto:SenJStamas@senate.michigan.gov">SenJStamas@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-7946	<u>Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Gladwin, Iosco, Midland, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle</u>

### Appropriations Subcommittee on K-12 and Michigan Department of Education:

Senator	Role	Party	Contact	District
Wayne Schmidt	Chair	R	<a href="mailto:SenWSchmidt@senate.michigan.gov">SenWSchmidt@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-2413	<u>Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Luce, Mackinac</u>
Rick Outman	Majority Vice Chair	R	<a href="mailto:SenROutman@senate.michigan.gov">SenROutman@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-3760	<u>Clare, Gratiot, Isabella, Mecosta, Montcalm</u>
Rosemary Bayer	Minority Vice Chair	D	<a href="mailto:senrbayer@senate.michigan.gov">senrbayer@senate.michigan.gov</a> 517-373-2417	<u>Oakland</u>
Jon Bumstead	Member	R	<a href="mailto:SenJBumstead@senate.michigan.gov">SenJBumstead@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-1635	<u>Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana</u>
Kevin Daley	Member	R	<a href="mailto:SenKDaley@senate.michigan.gov">SenKDaley@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-1777	<u>Bay, Lapeer, Tuscola</u>
Lana Theis	Member	R	<a href="mailto:SenLTheis@senate.michigan.gov">SenLTheis@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-2420	<u>Livingston, Washtenaw</u>
Dayne Polehanki	Member	D	<a href="mailto:sendpolehanki@senate.michigan.gov">sendpolehanki@senate.michigan.gov</a> (517) 373-7350	<u>Wayne</u>



## Community Outreach & Engagement

<p><b>Targeting organizations that have the parents we want to engage with</b></p> <p>This list of organizations is meant as a thought starter. You may not have all of these in your area, or you may not have time to contact all of them - and that is okay. These organizations could be reached in a variety of ways - email, telephone call, etc. If you do reach out to an organization, ask them if they would also be willing to share the information with their network.</p> <p><b>Every community is different - and you know your community best.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Child care providers</li> <li>● Consider school age and K-12 alignment - using communication tools schools have like robomessaging by local districts, school advisory boards, PTO, or PTA's – ask to present.</li> <li>● Local libraries</li> <li>● Michigan Works</li> <li>● Chambers of Commerce</li> <li>● Fraternity and Sorority groups</li> <li>● Local Head Start or Community Action Agency</li> <li>● YMCA, Youth Clubs, Family Resource Centers</li> <li>● Faith community, churches that have an outreach or family focus, Interfaith Community</li> <li>● Informal and formal kinship care providers</li> <li>● Program that has Community Health Workers</li> <li>● Regional and Local Community Collaborative meetings – Perinatal Collaboratives, LLG, Multi-discipline collaborative bodies</li> <li>● Early Childhood Partners/Entities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outreach Channels</b></p> <p>Figure out who you plan to engage and how you can best access them and their communities. Utilize organizations and group member lists to get the message out. Keep in mind to consider all channels as you develop an equitable outreach plan. This list is not all encompassing of possible ways to reach people; every respective community member can use their voice and partner with local agencies to extend outreach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social Media</li> <li>● Robocalling</li> <li>● Text Now</li> <li>● Ready4K</li> <li>● Email Blast</li> <li>● Handbills (Flyers)</li> <li>● Letters/Notes</li> <li>● Share the Policy Priorities and Talking Points with an organization who might have established outreach channels</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outreach Plan</b></p> <p>Each community should prioritize your own communities for the best outreach.</p> <p>This outreach plan can be used as toolkit and could be an opportunity for your own advocacy efforts (leveraging your respective community and community partners/stakeholders).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social Media Campaign</li> <li>2. Robocalling</li> <li>3. Text Now Campaign</li> <li>4. Ready4K or</li> <li>5. Email Blast</li> <li>6. Press Release</li> <li>7. Presentation</li> <li>8. Network Leverage (individual outreach)</li> </ol>



<sup>i</sup> Maribel R. Granja, Sheila Smith, and Carey McCann, *The Voices of Michigan’s Early Care and Education Teachers: Children’s Challenging Behavior, Expulsion, Disparities, and Needed Program Supports*, National Center for Children in Poverty and Build Initiative, 2020: <https://www.nccp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-Voices-of-MIs-ECE-Teachers.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Michigan AEYC, *MI Wage Profile*, 2019: [https://www.miaeyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Michigan\\_wage\\_profile\\_updated\\_Mar2019.pdf](https://www.miaeyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Michigan_wage_profile_updated_Mar2019.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Build Initiative, *State Fact Sheet for Michigan*, 2020: [http://www.americaforearlyed.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/AFEE\\_FactSheet\\_Michigan.pdf](http://www.americaforearlyed.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/AFEE_FactSheet_Michigan.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Chatterjee, R., *CDC: Childhood Trauma Is A Public Health Issue and We Can Do More to Prevent It*, National Public Radio, 2019: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/11/05/776550377/cdc-childhood-trauma-is-a-public-health-issue-and-we-can-do-more-prevent-it#:~:text=mrs%2FGetty%20Images-,Childhood%20trauma%20can%20lead%20to%20long%2Dterm%20health%20problems.,prevent%20it%2C%20says%20the%20CDC.&text=Childhood%20trauma%20causes%20serious%20health,calls%20for%20concerted%20prevention%20efforts>.

<sup>v</sup> Shantel E. Meek and Walter S. Gilliam, *Expulsion and Suspension in Early Education as Matters of Social Justice and Health Equity*, National Academy of Medicine, 2016: <https://nam.edu/expulsion-and-suspension-in-early-education-as-matters-of-social-justice-and-health-equity/>

<sup>vi</sup> Maribel R. Granja, Sheila Smith, and Carey McCann, *The Voices of Michigan’s Early Care and Education Teachers: Children’s Challenging Behavior, Expulsion, Disparities, and Needed Program Supports*, National Center for Children in Poverty and Build Initiative, 2020: <https://www.nccp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-Voices-of-MIs-ECE-Teachers.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>viii</sup> First Five Years Fund, *Federal TANF, 2017*: <https://www.ffyf.org/total-federal-tanf-and-state-moe-expenditures-for-child-care-and-early-learning-in-fy-2017/>

<sup>ix</sup> Pat Sorenson, *Child Care Financing Reform is a Critical Next Step for Michigan Families and the Economy*, Michigan League for Public Policy and Think Babies Michigan, 2021: <https://mlpp.org/child-care-refinancing-reform/#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20Michigan%20was%20sixth,a%20national%20average%20of%2017%25>