



Regional Action Plan

Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County
Regional Child Care Coalition

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PSC



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Executive Summary

Background

In 2022, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) awarded the Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance with a planning grant to form a regional child care coalition, conduct regional research, and write an action plan to improve access to child care in Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties. Regional leaders formed the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County Regional Child Care Coalition (GLSSC) which is co-led by the Child Care Network, St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), Lapeer County Intermediate School District (ISD), Lapeer County Community Foundation, and Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership. The GLSSC convened a coalition comprised of representatives from economic development organizations, local governments, child care providers, parents of young children, and other applicable community partners. The GLSSC also worked with Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to facilitate the coalition, collect and analyze primary and secondary data, and assist in the action planning process.

Defining Child Care Gaps

Through reviewing publicly available data, fielding surveys, and conducting discussion groups, PSC analyzed data from regional parents and child care providers (both business owners/administrators and staff members), and municipal representatives. The top challenges are outlined below.

Child Care is Unaffordable for Families

- Child care is not affordable for the majority of families in the region. For those making the median household income, families are spending between nine and 33 percent of their income on child care.
- Only half of eligible families in the region are receiving the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS') Child Development and Care (CDC) Scholarship.
- When a family cannot access or afford childcare, their current or prospective employment opportunities may suffer, impacting their economic wellbeing.

The Care Families Need is Not Available

- Lack of available child care slots is a top barrier in accessing child care in the region.
- Many child care providers are unable to staff their child care program sufficiently to the capacity for which they are licensed due to child care staffing issues.
- Many families do not have access to the kind of child care they need (after school care, weekend hours) or the care that is available is not within an attainable travel radius for the family.

Providers Face Challenges Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff

- Every county in the region is facing a child care staffing shortage.
- Child care business owners are unable to recruit qualified child care staff members due to unsatisfactory wages and benefits, staff burnout, and insufficient funding.
- Child care wages are significantly less than the regional median household income and may even be a poverty wage for some workers depending on their family size.

Providers Cannot Access the Resources They Need to Thrive and Expand

- Many providers are willing to expand their child care program but lack the resources to do so.
- Child care business owners and administrators need additional support to successfully manage or expand their programs.

Regional Action Plan

The GLSSC has drawn on the aforementioned data to create a regional action plan to improve the state of child care for Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties. The key points of the plan are outlined below.

Use Data to Further Inform the GLSSC Strategy

- Identify and collect potential missing data points and update existing data to better inform the GLSSC strategy to improve various aspects of child care in the region.
- Use the new and updated data to revisit the ongoing regional strategy and adjust goals and objectives as needed.

Support Workforce and Business Development

- Work with ECIC and other state entities to provide technical assistance to current and potential child care providers to support the creation, expansion, and management of child care in the region.
- Foster partnerships between local educational institutions and child care providers to clarify and support career pathways for child care providers in a mutually beneficial manner.

Engage Employers

- Identify and inform local businesses and employers about the benefits of, and how to, support employee's child care needs, reinforcing the need for child care as an economic and business development provision.
- Facilitate and support connections between local businesses and child care providers to increase access to care for regional parents.

Advocate for Local, State, and Federal Policy Change

- Engage in, and support advocacy efforts to improve the MDHHS CDC Scholarship program.
- Ease municipal and licensing requirements obstacles for existing, new, and expanding child care businesses.
- Develop wages and benefit strategy to encourage competitive and fair compensation packages for child care staff.

Introduction

In 2022, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced Regional Child Care Planning Grants to help expand access to affordable child care throughout Michigan. The Early Childhood Investment Corporation awarded these grants to lead agencies charged with forming regional coalitions and writing an action plan to contribute to child care expansion.

ECIC awarded the Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance with a grant to fund this work in Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties, commonly associated with the state prosperity region six. The region is home to the I-69 International Trade Corridor, which provides ample economic development opportunities due to the region's road, air, rail, and water assets. The region is also home to growing industries such as health care, manufacturing, and construction. Some of the region's employers include General Motors, the McLaren Health System, and the region's higher-education institutions. As such, child care is a crucial factor in the region's continued ability to attract employees to the region.



Regional leaders formed the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County Regional Child Care Coalition to lead work that will expand access to child care in the region. In addition to the Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance the coalition includes co-leads from the following organizations:

- Child Care Network
- St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency
- Lapeer County Intermediate School District
- Lapeer County Community Foundation
- Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership

The co-leads were responsible for recruiting members to convene a coalition and guiding the data collection and action planning processes. The ECIC grant required that the coalition include members representing the economic development sector, local government, the child care sector, and parents. Please see Appendix A for a complete listing of GLSSC Coalition membership. Excluding the co-leads, the following representatives composed the GLSSC:

- Economic development: 8 members
- Local government: 7 members
- Child care providers: 10 members
- Parents: 9 members
- Other sectors: 5 members, including higher education, workforce development, Great Start to Quality regional resource center, and a philanthropic foundation

The Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance also worked with Public Sector Consultants to facilitate the coalition, collect and analyze primary and secondary data, and assist in the action planning process.

Through this work, the GLSSC hoped to learn what region-specific barriers are impacting parents and child care providers alike, in addition to what barriers exist across the entire state. This report is intended to detail the coalition's data collection process, summarize findings, and present the coalition's goals, objectives, and strategies to expand access to affordable, quality child care.

Data Collection

PSC's team of a senior consultant, consultant, and data scientist collected primary data through a variety of methods to understand the perspectives of child care staff and administrators, parents, and municipal representatives. Each of these data collection methods, their outcomes, and implications are detailed in the following sections. Relevant findings related to child care gaps will be included in the "Defining Child Care Gaps" sections where appropriate.

Desktop Research

To create a baseline, PSC collected and analyzed publicly available data to understand the child care environment in the GLSSC counties and the region as a whole. These data included information on the number of child care providers across the four counties, the slots available for children, costs, hours, and quality, among others. Additionally, PSC included data on staffing, such as educational requirements, salaries, and workforce shortage data in the desktop research analysis. PSC used sources such as Great Start to Quality, LightCast, and licensing data from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). A complete reference list is included in this report. The Desktop Research Summary is attached in Appendix B.

Parent Survey

The GLSSC created and distributed an online survey via Qualtrics to gather input from parents who need child care, whether they receive it or not. The survey, which is included in Appendix C, was open from July through October 2023. The GLSSC incentivized participation by offering an opportunity to enter a raffle for a \$25 Visa gift card for completion. PSC created a social media and promotions toolkit (Appendix D), which the co-leads and members of the coalition used to recruit parents and caregivers in their respective networks to take the survey.

Upon the survey's close, PSC verified the authenticity of the responses based on factors such as IP addresses and location data and recorded a total of 172 valid responses. The respondents were generally split across the GLSSC region, with 31 percent of respondents in Lapeer County, 27 percent in St. Clair County, 23 percent in Genesee County, and 18 percent in Shiawassee County. The majority of respondents were white (84 percent), female (77 percent), and married or cohabitating (over 80 percent). While this demographic portrait is fairly representative of the region, additional data collection may be required to reach a more diverse perspective from parents not currently represented.

The majority of parents surveyed had children ages zero to 12, but participants represented caregivers of children up to 19+ years old. Forty-three percent of parents provided care for their own children, and 60 percent reported that they were seeking child care for at least one of their children at the time of the survey. A full summary of survey results can be found in Appendix E.

Child Care Provider Survey

The GLSSC asked child care staff, business owners, and administrators to provide their perspectives through an online Qualtrics survey (Appendix F, open from July to October 2023). Similar to the parent survey, the GLSSC incentivized responses with the opportunity to enter into a raffle for a \$25 Visa gift card. PSC created a provider-specific social media and promotions toolkit (Appendix G) to be distributed by the co-leads and members of the coalition.

After verifying the authenticity of the responses, PSC recorded a total of 35 valid responses. Fifty-one percent of survey respondents worked in a child care center, 20 percent worked in a group home, 14 percent worked in a school-based program, and three percent worked in a family home. The provider programs that respondents represented were split between Genesee County (26 percent), Lapeer County (43 percent), and St. Clair County (31 percent). Although the coalition engaged in additional outreach to Shiawassee County during the survey period, there were no respondents from that county, meaning that the results of the survey may not accurately reflect some challenges that those providers may face.

Sixty-three percent of respondents were business owners and administrators, meaning that less than half (37 percent) of survey respondents represented staff. As such, supplementary data may need to be collected to further understand staff perspectives on the challenges facing the child care workforce. Additionally, 91 percent of respondents were female, and 89 percent were white. While this makeup is fairly reflective of the region's demographics, more data is likely needed to gather diverse voices not represented. A full summary of the findings is included in Appendix H.

Municipal Survey

The co-leads and PSC worked together to develop an online Qualtrics survey intended to gain an understanding of zoning and planning policies in municipalities across the GLSSC region. PSC created promotional emails and information on the survey and shared them with economic development organizations (EDOs), who then distributed the survey to municipal representatives in their counties.

Analysis of the initial open and click rates showed low engagement with the survey. Some of the reasons may have included municipalities' firewalls and restrictions on emails from external organizations. Due to the low initial response rate, the Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance agreed to work directly with EDOs to redistribute the surveys in an effort to increase response rates. At the time of this report's publication, this work is still in progress. As a result, a summary of the municipal survey will be published at a later date as an addendum to this report.

Discussion Groups

PSC facilitated four discussion groups—three with parents and caregivers of young children and one with child care business owners and administrators. For each of these groups, PSC worked with the co-leads to create a social media toolkit (included with the respective survey social media toolkit in Appendices D and G) and promotion plan to recruit individuals to participate in these discussions. Coalition members also promoted the discussions in their respective networks. GLSSC provided participation incentives in the form of Visa gift cards. The discussion groups are detailed further in the following sections.

Parents and Caregivers

PSC held two virtual discussion groups for parents and caregivers on August 8 and 11, 2023. PSC offered one daytime session and one evening session to accommodate a range of schedules. Each of the discussion groups had two parent participants; the questions asked can be found in the discussion guide in Appendix I.

Due to low virtual discussion group attendance, PSC and the co-leads worked with YMCA of the Blue Water Area to plan an in-person discussion group, which occurred on October 23, 2023. In addition to Visa gift cards, the GLSSC offered a light dinner and Tot Watch child care as incentives for participation. Six parents registered for the session and two attended.

Child Care Providers

PSC held one virtual discussion group with child care owners and administrators on September 6, 2023. Three people joined the discussion group, including one who was in the process of opening a new child care business. Additionally, a license-exempt provider attended one of the parent discussion groups, rather than the provider group, but offered insights related to their experience as a provider during the parent group. The discussion guide for the provider group can be found in Appendix J.

PSC planned a virtual discussion group for child care staff and the coalition promoted the group throughout their networks, but only one person registered. In response to this low registration, PSC cancelled the discussion. The GLSSC attempted to plan an in-person discussion group that could be held at a child care center but due to scheduling conflicts and limited time frame, the GLSSC was unable to hold a staff discussion group.

Defining Child Care Gaps

Access to child care is a worsening crisis across the state of Michigan and within the GLSSC region. Findings from the GLSSC's data collection process showed a number of challenges that parents and providers face, some of which are worsened by county or regional factors. While full summaries of challenges can be found in the appendices, the top challenges found in each of the completed surveys—costs, availability, staffing, and resources—are outlined in the following sections.

Child Care Is Unaffordable for Families

Individuals who responded to the parent and caregiver survey reported that they spend an average of \$1,426 per month on child care. This amount far exceeds what would be considered affordable for households in the region that earn the median household income (\$61,024) or less. “Affordable child care” is defined as 7 percent of a household’s income. For a household at the median household income, this would amount to \$4,272 per year for child care. Based on the parent and caregiver survey, families could be spending an average of \$17,112 per year on child care (between 9 and 33 percent of their income).

Analysis of the parent and caregiver survey showed that child care is not affordable for the majority of families in the region (those making less than \$200,000 annually; Exhibit 1).

EXHIBIT 1. Average Spent Monthly on Child Care Costs by Income Group

Monthly Amount Spent on Child Care per Household				
Annual Household Income	Number of Respondents	Average	Median	Range
All respondents	106	\$1,426	\$800	\$50–\$12,000
\$50,000 or less	22	\$949	\$788	\$80–\$3,000
\$50,001–\$100,000	42	\$1,671	\$910	\$80–\$12,000
More than \$100,000	37	\$1,377	\$490	\$50–\$12,000

Note: Income questions were optional, leading to a different N size than the complete survey. PSC removed four outliers related to child care costs per month from the data analysis—two \$1 responses, one \$22,000 response, and one \$23,000 response.
Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2016

Parent discussion group participants echoed these findings. One parent stated that they worked three jobs to meet the basic needs of themselves and their two young children. Another parent stated:

“I’m willing to be poor for a few years if it means my children can be cared for.”

Families who cannot afford child care may be eligible for MDHHS’s Child Development and Care subsidy; however, not all eligible families receive the subsidy. In October 2023 alone, only about half of the eligible children in each county received a CDC Scholarship (Exhibit 2). Child care administrators discussed their perspective on the barriers to accessing the subsidy, including their own difficulties in helping families apply for the subsidy (finding time to do so and adhering to privacy practices), and the delayed payment time frame. Delayed payment from MDHHS poses a financial risk to the child care provider who continues to provide child care to applicant families without receiving payment from MDHHS. According to child care administrators this payment lag may be months, impinging on their already tight profit margins as a child care provider, but they do not want to refuse the family service.

EXHIBIT 2. Total Children Eligible for a CDC Scholarship and Total Children Receiving a CDC Scholarship by County, October 2023

County	Total Children Eligible for a CDC Scholarship	Total Children Paid a CDC Scholarship	Percentage
Genesee County	5,325	2,816	53%
Lapeer County	382	216	57%
St. Clair County	951	383	40%
Shiawassee County	473	257	54%
Region	7,131	3,672	51%

Note: Some children may be members of the same family case.
Source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 2023

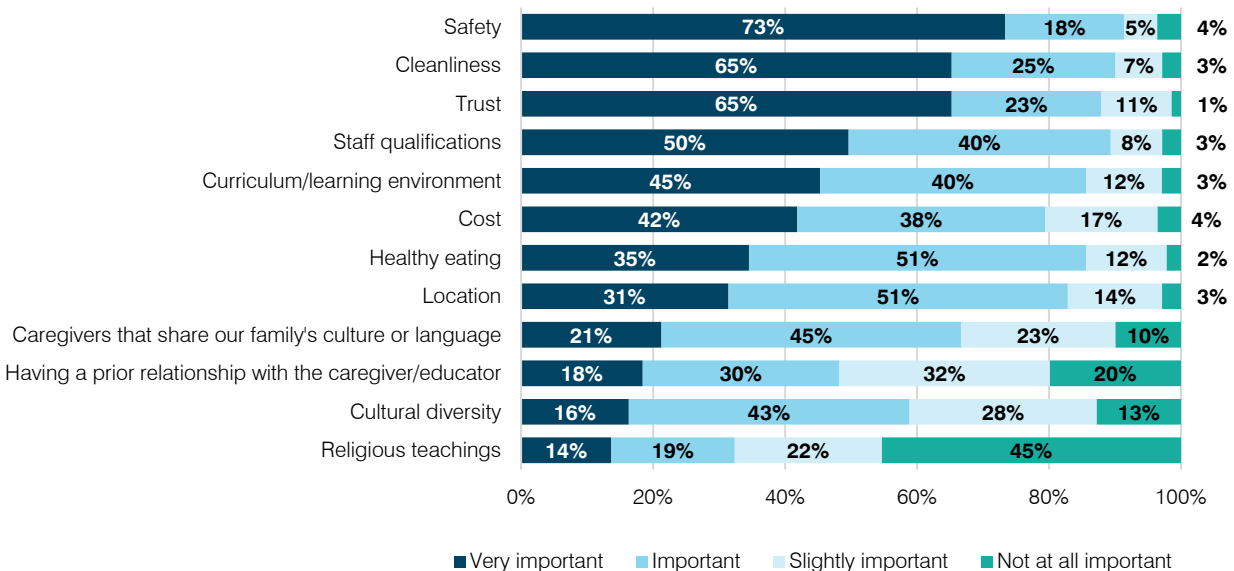
The costs of child care are not just financial; parents' and caregivers' employment may suffer for a variety of reasons. When a family cannot access or afford childcare, one or both parents—and sometimes other family members—may have job attendance issues. Coupled with the historical lack of support from employers for family-related needs like child care benefits or parental leave, this can be detrimental to one's economic opportunities and greatly impact a family's well-being.

Care Families Need Is Not Available

Survey respondents reported that limited availability of open slots that meet their needs was the second most prevalent barrier in the region. Overall, 44 percent of parents reported that they were unable to find open slots, and Lapeer County survey respondents stated that lack of available slots was their top barrier to accessing care (64 percent). In August 2023, when desktop research was completed, there were 23,512 child care slots available in the region, compared to 98,117 children under the age of 13, confirming that even if all children under the age of 13 may not need care, there would still be a large deficiency in available slots. Adding to the crisis of availability, providers surveyed also reported that 28 percent of their licensed slots are not actually available due to staffing issues. This indicates that the shortage based on the number of licensed slots is more severe than the official data may suggest.

Additionally, available slots may not meet the diverse needs of parents and caregivers and parent preferences. Parent and caregiver survey respondents cited their priorities of safety, cleanliness, and trust as the three most important factors when choosing child care arrangements (Exhibit 3). Of note, children older than 13 may need care for a variety of reasons such as summer or after-school programming, disability, or other special needs, meaning that there are likely even more barriers for families who need this type of care across the region.

EXHIBIT 3. Importance of Factors When Choosing Child Care Arrangements



N varied between 139 and 141 by factor.

Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Many families do not have access to care that is available during the hours they need. Families may need care after or before school, in the summer, or on weekends, among other times beyond traditional workweek hours. Exhibit 4 shows some of the times during which parents need but do not have access according to the parent and caregiver survey.

EXHIBIT 4. Select Types of Care Needed with No Current Access

Type of Care	Needed But No Current Access
Sick-child care	20%
Weekend care	17%
After-school care	11%
Before-school care	8%
Summer break care	10%

N = 145

During discussion groups, parents said that even when some nontraditional hour options are available to them, they still have difficulty accessing the care because of factors outside of their control, such as staffing.

“My daycare has early morning options, but it’s first come, first served. Due to understaffing, I never know if I’ll get the care I need so I can make it to work.”

Finally, in some places, especially rural communities in the region, child care falls outside of the distance that families are willing or able to travel. Thirty-one percent of all parent survey respondents reported that the location of providers and distance from work is a barrier to accessing child care. Shiawassee County respondents cited distance as their largest barrier to accessing child care (54 percent). The majority of parents across the region reported that they are willing to travel up to 15 miles for child care (84 percent), but 25 percent reported that they are already traveling more than 15 miles. A parent discussion group participant said that distance kept her from obtaining employment:

“I had a job opportunity, but I couldn’t take it because it would’ve been too long of a drive to pick up my children after work.”

As a result of limited availability, 60 percent of parents reported effects on job attendance, 33 percent reported that they missed appointments or engagements and had challenges with their productivity and performance, and almost half (43 percent) of said that they provide care for their own children.

Providers Face Challenges Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff

Child care business owner and administrator survey respondents cited staffing as their top challenge in managing their child care entity. Sixty percent of respondents reported that they are experiencing a staffing shortage, and 50 percent said they could not operate at full capacity as a result of these shortages. The Michigan State University Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship Child Care Mapping Project showed each county in the GLSSC region is experiencing the staffing shortages shown below (Michigan State University 2023):

- Genesee County: 24 percent
- Shiawassee County: 11 percent
- Lapeer County: 11 percent
- St. Clair County: 12 percent

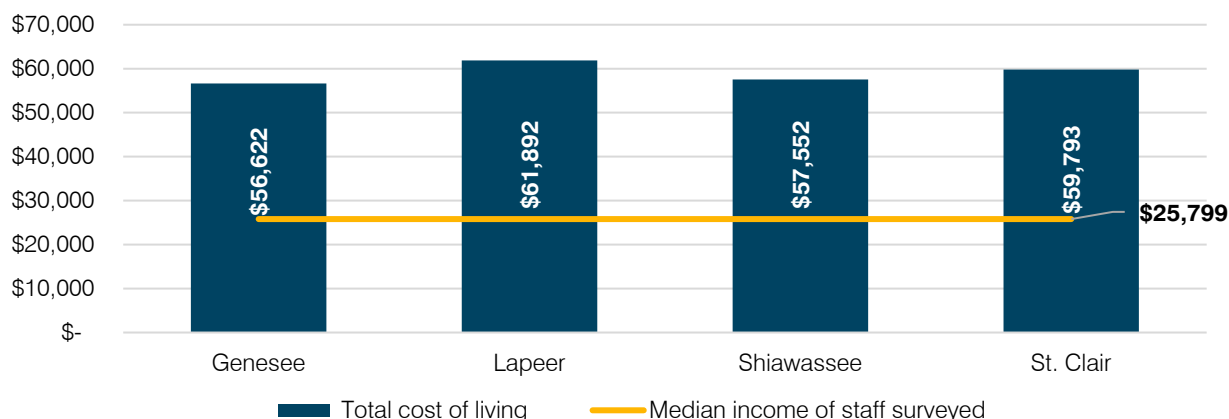
The Child Care Mapping Project defined staffing shortages as either high priority or urgent, considering factors such as population and child poverty rates in addition to staffing concerns. Genesee and St. Clair Counties were both defined as experiencing an urgent shortage in child care staffing, and Lapeer and Shiawassee Counties were defined as high priority. Additionally, the MSU mapping data was sourced in 2022 and may not accurately reflect additional changes in staff shortage data over the last year. Staffing shortages have continued to be exacerbated by COVID-19; 64 percent of survey respondents said they did not experience shortages prior to the pandemic.

Nearly two-thirds of child care staff (62 percent) and half of business owners (50 percent) are considering leaving the field, citing low wages, burnout, and lack of benefits. Approximately two-thirds of staff surveyed said they felt burnout or exhaustion, while 31 percent said they lacked benefits or had unsatisfactory benefits. Owners and administrators who participated in discussion groups and the survey emphasized that, although they are aware of these staffing issues, they do not have the funding or sufficient resources to recruit and retain additional qualified staff. In turn, this leads to additional stress on owners and administrators, and further possibility of burnout for staff members.

“Gaining and retaining staff has become extremely stressful. Not being able to spend time with my own family as well as take care of my own needs is challenging. I’m done missing out on my own children’s important moments.”

According to LightCast data, the median compensation (\$13.37/hour) for child care occupations in the GLSSC region is 11 percent lower than the national median wage (\$15.01/hour) (LightCast 2023). According to statewide data sources, child care staff who earn the region’s median compensation rate and work full time (40 hours per week for 52 weeks) earn approximately \$27,810 per year. Notably, child care staff surveyed by GLSSC reported an even lower median annual wage of \$25,799 (\$12.40/hour). These wages are significantly less than the regional median household income of \$61,024 and may even be a poverty wage for some workers depending on their family size. Staff at this level of compensation may not be able to afford the costs of living in any of the four counties in the GLSSC region (Exhibit 5).

EXHIBIT 5. Average Cost of Living for Two Adults and Two Children

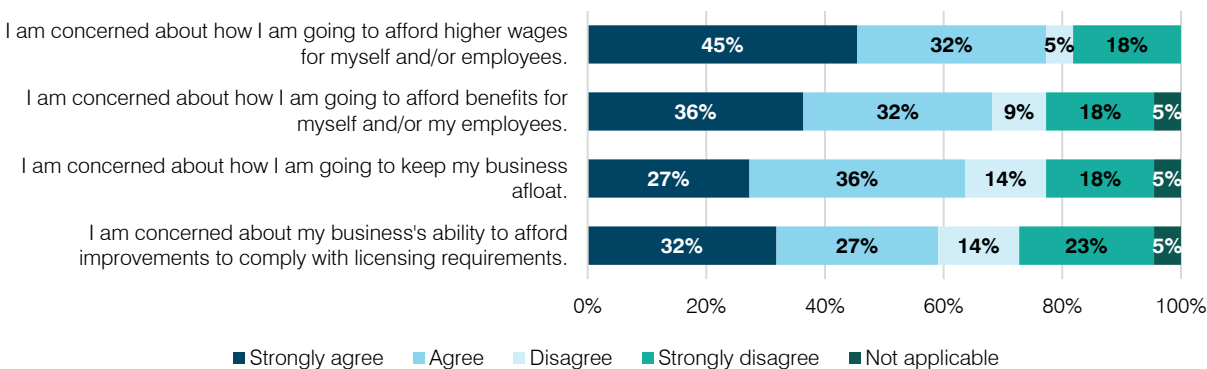


Sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology n.d.; United for ALICE 2021

Providers Cannot Access the Resources They Need to Thrive and Expand

More than half (55 percent) of child care business owner and administrator survey respondents said that they would consider expanding their licensed capacity at either a new location or their current location; however, they also highlighted the barriers to doing so. In addition to staffing, 41 percent of owners and administrators said they did not have enough space to expand, and 32 percent said they have insufficient capital. Many providers struggle to finance their businesses at the current operational level (Exhibit 6).

EXHIBIT 5. Concern About Financial Factors of Child Care Business



N = 22

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Child care business owners and administrators also expressed concerns about accessing business support beyond financial resources. Forty-one percent of survey respondents were not aware of business support services in the area, and when these supports are available, they may be costly or time consuming to access. Thirty-two percent of survey respondents said they cannot afford to access services and 23 percent do not have time to do so.

“I had to go on YouTube to learn about the business operations side of running a child care.”

Framing the Problem

As mentioned, parents and caregivers cannot access affordable and quality care that meets their needs. Likewise, child care providers do not have the resources to recruit and retain qualified staff or increase the number of slots they have available. There are a number of root causes from which many of the worsening challenges in the child care sector stem, including market failure, workforce gaps, and limited supply.

Market Failure

There is a continuing gap between the market rate and true cost of child care that leads to poverty wages for early childhood education staff. Ninety-one percent of child care business owners and administrators surveyed cited wages as the biggest challenge in recruiting qualified staff. As discussed, the median compensation in the GLSSC region is lower than the national median wage, which is still less competitive to many other professions that require less or no training. When grouped with high operational costs, insufficient financial support from the federal and state government, the consequences of low wages extend to families seeking care. Often, providers cannot afford staff and thus have fewer spots for children.

Many of the increased costs of retaining qualified staff are unfortunately passed on to families. As previously mentioned, parents are already spending more on child care than what is considered “affordable.” Families with low incomes, which are disproportionately marginalized populations, are especially vulnerable to the consequences of market failure. Though the cost of care was a top barrier across all parent survey respondents, it was especially prevalent among respondents from Genesee County. Sixty-four percent of parents and caregivers from Genesee County, which has the lowest median household income in the region, reported that the cost of care was their top barrier to accessing child care.

Workforce Gap

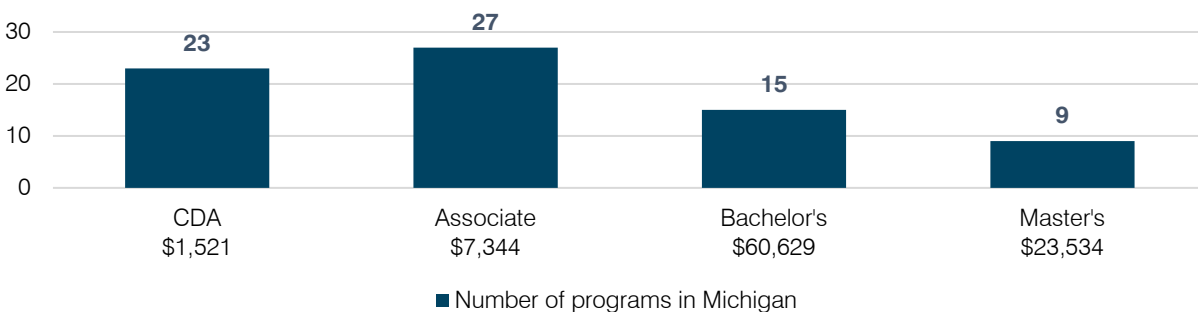
While low wages fail to entice new and retain existing child care workers, limited access to training and educational credentials and a retiring workforce also contribute to an ever-growing workforce gap. There are not enough workers currently in, or entering, the child care workforce to achieve sufficient access to quality, affordable care.

According to LightCast data, out of the 3,275 total early childhood employees in the region, 658 are 55 years old or older, presenting a risk of losing many of these employees to retirement in the near future. If and when these employees retire, it is likely to be difficult to replace them in a competitive job market. Child care providers are not only competing with other industries for staff, but also have to overcome the

public perception that working in early childhood education is an unskilled career comparable to working in the fast-food industry. During coalition meetings, child care providers said they feel that community members sometimes view them as “glorified babysitters.” Although child care is often required for successful employment and participation in the workforce, policymakers have generally not been proactive in enacting policies supportive of child care as a public good or an economic development necessity.

Educational certifications required to gain employment or advance in early childhood education, such as a child development associate (CDA) or associate degree, can be expensive to complete or difficult to access due to the time and cost of completing a program. The average associate degree in early childhood education costs \$7,344, a significant investment for a child care worker currently in the field making \$12.40 an hour. The cost of obtaining a credential will likely take years to recoup based on average regional wages. Exhibit 7 shows the number of early childhood education programs in Michigan and average program costs.

EXHIBIT 7. Number of Early Childhood Education Certification Programs and Median Program Cost in Michigan



Source: Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, analysis by PSC.

Individuals who invest in these continuing education programs may seek employment in other fields that offer more competitive compensation packages. Other than wages, the provision of health, dental, vision, and retirement benefits were the top priorities in seeking employment according to the GLSSC child care staff survey. Just under two-thirds of survey respondent employers (child care business owners and administrators) offered dental, life, and vision insurance; paid time off; and a retirement savings plan. Just over half offered disability and medical insurance.

Limited Supply and Access

As evidenced by the results of the parent survey and data collected through desktop research, there are not enough early childhood educational slots in settings that meet families’ needs and preferences. While market failure and the workforce gap are linked to limited supply, there are also regulatory barriers to expanding supply.

A number of child care provider coalition members expressed that state licensing regulations prevented them from providing care to more children. For example, one provider said that they have had to limit the number of children from one family they were able to serve due to compliance with licensing ratios, thus

turning away some siblings while providing care for the others. Additionally, lack of access to the CDC Scholarship due to lack of awareness, policy constraints, and slow reimbursement processes not only affects families' access to care, but also impacts providers' ability to financially sustain their business.

Coalition members also highlighted a number of concerns related to local zoning ordinances, commonly citing the complicated requirements and intimidation that accompany approaching municipal leaders who lack a clear understanding of the ordinance. Another concern was that the differences among ordinances and enforcement policies across municipalities not only prevented new providers from entering the field due to a lack of clarity, but also prevented current providers from expanding across municipal lines.

Finally, employers often lack understanding of the importance of child care for their employees. This can lead to a lack of supportive workplace policies such as paid time off, sick time, flexible schedules, or paid parental leave, all of which limit a parent's ability to engage in the workforce and provide care for their children. Employers also may not be aware of, or understand, the positive impacts that offering child-friendly employment benefits like onsite child care, flexible spending accounts, or other benefits could have on their ability to recruit and retain employees.

Charting a Course of Action

The GLSSC took part in a strategic action planning process to develop a regional plan to address access to child care. This process included a number of activities, outlined in the following section.

Action Planning

Following the data collection stage, the GLSSC moved to the action planning stage to generate strategic goals, objectives, and activities to increase the supply of affordable child care across the region. To prepare for action planning, PSC held a virtual data sharing meeting on November 3, 2023. During this session, PSC shared key findings from the data collection process and the coalition discussed the implications of the findings presented.

On November 8, 2023, 15 members of the coalition participated in a four-hour, in-person action planning session facilitated by PSC. Coalition members that attended represented parent, provider, economic development, and education perspectives. During the session, PSC facilitated activities including individual and partner brainstorming, and a whole-group consensus building activity. Coalition members generated ideas for goals, objectives, and actions to form the GLSSC's strategic plan during the consensus building activity and continued to refine their ideas throughout the session.

GLSSC offered the opportunity to provide input via an online survey prior to the session for those coalition members unable to attend the action planning session. Additionally, GLSSC provided coalition members an opportunity to give more ideas after the session. PSC sent a survey with the goals, objectives, and actions from the session, and asked for coalition members' ideas on other actions that the coalition could take and partners that they could engage to meet the strategic goals.

Regional Action Plan

In the action plan below, each objective is followed by the priority as determined by the coalition, the planned GLSSC actions, support that the GLSSC needs in order to reach the goal (often state-level work), opportunities for regional collaboration, and an estimate of the financial resources needed to attain the objective stated.¹ This plan is intended to be updated and changed to meet the coalition's needs as the GLSSC begins implementation, which will begin in earnest in 2024 led by the GLSSC co-leads.

Goal One: Use Data to Further Inform the GLSSC Strategy

GLSSC coalition members feel that additional data is needed to further inform their strategy to improve child care in the region. This goal is to identify, collect, and update existing data to strengthen and support all other goals.	
Possible Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• U.S. Census Data• Great Start to Quality• Michigan League for Public Policy• National Database of Childcare Prices• United for ALICE• MSU Child Care Mapping Project	
Root Causes Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market failure• Limited supply• Workforce gap	Problem Statements Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All problem statements could be addressed depending on the data the GLSSC decides to collect in the future.
Objective One: Identify, Collect, and Update Data Identify and collect potential missing data points and update existing data to better inform the GLSSC strategy to improve various aspects of child care in the region.	
Priority: High	Anticipated Costs: \$

¹ In the "anticipated costs" box, \$ = low or no additional financial resources anticipated, \$\$ = moderate financial resources anticipated, \$\$\$ = significant financial resources anticipated.

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate within the coalition to create research questions to encompass areas in which the coalition would like to learn more Leverage coalition expertise to identify what research questions may be answered by existing data and what may need new data collection Create data-gathering instruments as needed to collect missing data Field data gathering instruments and analyze data to identify key themes Utilize existing resources and public data sources to compile data as needed Review the data collected by PSC to determine what data needs to be updated 	No need for external support identified at this time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This data identification, collection and updating may be an opportunity to work with the other regional child care coalition established in state prosperity region six, the Thumb Area Child Care Coalition. Additional partnerships may include Ferris State University, the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region, and regional intermediate school districts (ISDs). These partners are all current coalition members. Colleges or universities, the Michigan League for Public Policy, state legislators, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, and Michigan's Children are all possible partners that are not current members of the coalition. 	Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. This strategy will require an upfront investment of staff time and resources, with the possibility of ongoing updates for key data points to keep the GLSSC current. The GLSSC can establish their data process by identifying what data points may need regular updates and assigning those to collaborative partners.	Results: By March 2024, applicable missing data points have been identified. By June 2024, missing data points has been collected, and previously identified data points have been updated.
Objective Two: Utilize Data to Inform Ongoing Strategy Use the new and updated data to revisit the ongoing regional strategy and adjust goals and objectives as needed.				
Priority: High			Anticipated Costs: \$	

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect key data points to the co-leads and coalition to identify further goals for the coalition as needed Create data-based materials for coalition's understanding and public educational use 	No need for external support was identified at this time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GLSSC will continue to collaborate internally with coalition members to utilize the data in their planning process. 	Once the data is identified, collected, and updated, utilizing it for implementation will not require additional effort beyond the encompassed implementation planning.	Results: Going forward from June 2024 through further implementation, new and updated data will guide the GLSSC strategy to improve child care in the region.

Goal Two: Support Workforce and Business Development

The GLSSC will support child care providers by providing technical assistance opportunities and facilitating partnerships with local educational institutions with the aim of improving child care business management, expansion, and career pathways.	
Possible Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wonderschool Child Care Technical Assistance Network Eastern Regional Resource Center LARA Licensing Technical Assistance and Navigators 	
Root Causes Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market failure Limited supply Workforce gap 	Problem Statements Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand Providers face challenges recruiting and retaining qualified staff Care families need is not available
Objective One: Inform and Support the Provision of Technical Assistance to Child Care Providers Work with ECIC and other state entities to provide technical assistance to current and potential child care providers to support the creation, expansion, and management of child care in the region.	
Priority: Medium	Anticipated Costs: \$\$

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing current GLSSC data, identify and prioritize technical assistance and support needs of child care providers Review existing technical assistance resources to inventory current available materials and identify needs for further content creation As needed, request additional how-to/resource guides from ECIC for child care providers on topics issues identified by the coalition (including business development support, simplifying zoning and planning issues, licensing requirements, etc.) Create and enact a distribution plan to provide technical assistance resources on high-priority topics to providers (series of webinars, informative newsletter, regional child care summit, etc.) 	<p>The GLSSC anticipates that the priorities identified in the child care administrator data will be similar to those identified by other regional child care coalitions (including business development support, simplifying zoning and planning issues, licensing requirements, etc.). The GLSSC requests the assistance of ECIC to create these technical assistance materials tailored to child care business owners and administrators to support their need for customized child care business support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships may include current coalition members such as regional ISDs, regional resource centers, and economic development organizations. Additional partnerships may include the Small Business Development Center, LARA, MI Tri-Share hubs, the Early Childhood Support Network, local Michigan Works! Agencies, and ECIC, which are not coalition members. 	<p>Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. The effort required to provide technical assistance will depend somewhat on the provision of educational materials from ECIC. There will be an upfront time investment to prioritize technical assistance needs, communicate with ECIC, organize learning opportunities, and recruit participants. GLSSC will plan on recording the online opportunities to allow participants to review these again or at a later date, reducing the burden for future opportunity organization. Additional considerations for may include engaging shared service networks, family child care networks, and other established efforts to encourage self-sustaining efforts.</p>	<p>Indicators: Output measures include the number of technical assistance opportunities offered and the number of participants who attended.</p> <p>Results: Outcome measures include the results of a post-technical assistance series session child care provider survey (comparable to the baseline survey distributed during the planning grant, which identified the child care provider support needs) that have shown an improved level of understanding and a lowered need of support after participating in offered technical assistance.</p> <p>Performance: Measures include well-attended and widely distributed technical assistance opportunities.</p>
<p>Objective Two: Foster Partnerships Between Educational Institutions and Child Care Providers</p> <p>Foster partnerships between local educational institutions and child care providers to clarify and support career pathways for child care providers in a mutually beneficial manner.</p>				
<p>Priority: High</p>			<p>Anticipated Costs: \$\$</p>	

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pertinent educational partners with whom to partner based on educational programming and interest With partners, identify priority areas for the educational institution (i.e., increased enrollment, etc.) and the child care providers (i.e., increased access to online programming, more training on special needs, business management, etc.) for mutual benefit Identify possible funding support for child care providers intending to utilize the educational partnership Create and enact plan to communicate partnerships to potential and current child care providers 	No need for external support was identified at this time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in partnerships with educational institutions may be an opportunity to work with the other regional child care coalition established in the state prosperity region six, the Thumb Area Child Care Coalition. Partnerships may include current coalition members such as Ferris State University, regional ISDs, and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region. Additional partners may include business resource networks, local Michigan Works! agencies, the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, and Michigan State University Extension, which are not current coalition members. 	Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. Identifying educational and child care partners will require staff time upfront and cultivating those relationships will require ongoing staff time. Creating and distributing a communications plan to engage other potential educational and child care partners will require another upfront investment of staff time, restarting the ongoing staff time required to cultivate new relationships garnered from that outreach.	<p>Indicators: Output measures include the numbers of child care provider and educational institution partnerships established and the number of child care providers who engaged in the partnership educational opportunities.</p> <p>Results: Outcome measures will be based on the priorities identified by child care providers and their partner educational institution through the facilitated relationship building.</p> <p>Performance: Measures will include successfully facilitated partnerships as noted through communications with educational and child care provider partners.</p>

Goal Three: Engage Employers

Engage and educate regional businesses and employers about the benefits of supporting employees’ child care needs and the ways in which to do so as an economic development effort.				
Possible Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pulse Employer Roadmap• Economic Development Research Partners Program• MI Tri-Share				
Root Causes Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market failure• Limited supply			Problem Statements Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care families need is not available• Child care is unaffordable for families	
Objective One: Identify and Educate Employers				
Identify and inform local businesses and employers about the benefits of and how to support employees' child care needs, reinforcing the need for child care as an economic and business development provision.				
Priority: High			Anticipated Costs: \$\$	
GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and field regional employer/business survey to set context for local employer’s current understanding of and interest in supporting child care needs• Inventory existing educational resources for employers about child care and identify any needs for additional content creation• As needed, request additional employer/business support and educational materials from ECIC/other state entities• Create and enact an outreach and distribution plan to engage employers in educational opportunities (i.e., series of	Due to the anticipated need for employer education and technical assistance provision across the state, GLSSC requests that ECIC support the regional coalitions by creating any additional employer technical assistance materials that	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing educational opportunities for employers may be an opportunity to work with the other regional child care coalition established in the state prosperity region six, the Thumb Area Child Care Coalition.• Partnerships may include current coalition members, such as local economic development organizations.	Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including identifying and surveying employers, and inventorying existing technical assistance resources. The effort required to provide educational opportunities will depend on how and when ECIC may be able to provide the applicable materials. Creating and distributing a communications plan to	Indicators: Output measures include the number of regional employers engaged in child care educational and technical assistance efforts, the number of technical assistance sessions provided, or materials distributed, and the number of attendees at the CEO roundtable event. Results: Outcome measures include a post-technical assistance survey, comparing employer levels of interest and knowledge of child care to the initial survey baseline findings. Additional measures include completed event feedback cards at the CEO roundtable which

webinars, in person events, informational newsletter, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host educational CEO Roundtable event for regional employers/business to learn about supporting employee child care needs 	may be utilized in this effort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional partnerships may include chambers of commerce, local business networks, and Pulse, which are not current coalition members. 	engage employer participants will require another upfront investment of staff time, however GLSSC will record the webinar opportunities to allow further distribution at a later date without additional investment.	have shown employers' interest in, and utility of, the event. Performance: Measures include local employees who have felt supported in their child care needs by their employers as measured by a brief poll distributed to regional parents of young children through social media and email listservs.
Objective Two: Facilitate Business and Child Care Partnerships Facilitate and support connections between local businesses and child care providers to increase access to care for regional parents.				
Priority: Low			Anticipated Costs: \$\$	
GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on regional employer survey, identify one to two employers with whom to work closely and facilitate a business and child care provider partnership Identify one to two child care providers interested in partnering with a regional business Research existing best practices for business and child care partnerships, including reviewing any current models or partnerships In partnership with the business and child care provider, create and implement a structured plan for a mutually beneficial partnership Through business/finance partnerships, review opportunities available for low-interest business loans to current and prospective child care providers 	GLSSC would appreciate ECIC's support in identifying current best practices for business and child care provider partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating relationships between employers with child care providers may be an opportunity to work with the other regional child care coalition established in the state prosperity region six, the Thumb Area Child Care Coalition. Partnerships may include current coalition members such as local economic development organizations and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region. 	Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including identifying potential partners, researching best practices, following a structured plan for partnership, and researching low interest loan opportunities. Ongoing staff time is anticipated to continue to cultivate the business and child care provider relationships and potentially ongoing staff time required to pursue low interest opportunities if limited options exist.	Indicators: Output measures include the numbers of business and child care provider partnerships established and documented best practices to draw upon. Results: Outcome measures include a successful partnership as defined by qualitative measures such as interviews with participants at six and twelve months past the establishment of their partnership. Additional measures include increased low interest financing options available for regional child care providers as compared to the beginning of the planning grant period. Performance: Measures include a demonstrated business and child care provider partnership model to replicate across the region.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional partnerships may include Chambers of Commerce, HR networks, Tri-Share partners, and local business networks that are not current coalition members. 		
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Goal Four: Advocate for Local, State, and Federal Policy Change

Work to remove barriers for parents and providers that are caused by policy failures. For a standalone, detailed account of GLSSC's policy priorities related to goal four, please see Appendix K.

Possible Resources:

- [Balancing the Scales: Regional Wage Reports](#)
- [MI Regional Child Care Planning Grant Resources](#)
- [University of Michigan Poverty Solutions](#)
- [Solving Region 8's Child Care Crisis Presentation on Child Care-friendly Municipalities—Pulse](#)
- [National Center for Family and Parent Leadership](#)
- [MDHHS Green Book](#)

Root Causes Addressed:

- Market failure
- Workforce gap
- Limited supply

Problem Statements Addressed:

- Care families need is not available
- Child care is unaffordable for families
- Providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand
- Providers face challenges recruiting and retaining qualified staff

Objective One: Improve MDHHS CDC Scholarship Program

Engage in, and support advocacy efforts to improve the MDHHS CDC Scholarship program

Priority: High

Anticipated Costs: \$

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop local partnerships of individuals and organizations interested in pursuing MDHHS CDC Scholarship changes Inventory existing educational materials and resources available Create a policy priority agenda documenting issues related to the MDHHS CDC Scholarship and provide to ECIC for state-level advocacy 	<p>Given the statewide level of effort required to enact policy and rule changes within state agencies, the GLSSC requests ECIC's assistance in creating educational materials pertaining to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child care providers Parents and caregivers of young children Policymakers <p>GLSSC requests ECIC's assistance in advocating for MDHHS CDC Scholarship eligibility changes at the state level. GLSSC also requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships may include current coalition members, such as Child Care Network and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region. Additional partnerships may include ECIC, LARA, Mi-LEAP, Child Care Providers Association of Michigan, and local departments of health and human services, the governor's office, and the ISD Early Childhood Administrators network, which are not current coalition members. 	<p>Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, most of which will be one-time investment, including identifying and establishing partnerships, inventorying existing resources, and providing ECIC with a policy priority agenda. GLSSC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support ECIC's state level advocacy efforts.</p>	<p>Indicators: Output measures include the number of local participants engaged in advocacy efforts for systems change, and the number of materials distributed to applicable recipients.</p> <p>Results: Outcome measures include increased utilization of the CDC Scholarship as evidenced by MDHHS CDC uptake data compared to the beginning of the planning grant period.</p> <p>Performance: Measures include an established inventory of educational and technical assistance resources for child care providers, parents, and policymakers, and local organizations empowered to participate in advocacy.</p>
<p>Objective Two: Ease Municipal and Licensing Requirement Obstacles</p> <p>Ease municipal and licensing requirement obstacles for existing, new, and expanding child care businesses.</p>				
Priority: Low		Anticipated Costs: \$\$		

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify local municipality priorities per regional child care providers (zoning, etc.) Inventory existing educational materials available Draft and distribute child care business–friendly ordinances to local municipalities Participate in public comment periods and/or hearings about child care licensing Draft and provide a list of licensing concerns to support ECIC’s statewide effort Advocate for increased funding for regional resource centers to support a regional navigation liaison 	<p>Given the statewide level of effort required to enact policy and rule changes within state agencies, the GLSSC requests ECIC’s assistance in championing the list of state-level licensing concerns, with input from regional coalitions.</p> <p>Due to the pattern of often restrictive municipal requirements around the state, GLSSC requests ECIC’s assistance in creating educational materials for child care providers to navigate local municipality requirements. Additionally, GLSSC requests examples of successful, child care business–friendly ordinances to offer to local municipalities interested in better supporting their local child care environment.</p> <p>GLSSC requests ECIC’s assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships may include current coalition members, such as municipal representatives, local economic development organizations, and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region. Additional partnerships may include ECIC and additional municipal representatives that are not current coalition members. 	<p>Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, an upfront time investment to identify municipal priorities and resources. The effort required to distribute child care business–friendly ordinances will depend on how and when ECIC is able to provide examples of ordinances but distributing them will be a one-time resource investment. Efforts such as participating in public comment periods and advocating for increased regional resource funding will require ongoing staff time.</p>	<p>Indicators: Output measures include the number of municipalities to which the example ordinances are sent.</p> <p>Results: Outcome measures include increased access for parents in areas which have implemented the child care-friendly ordinances as documented through the child care gap established at the beginning of the planning grant period. Additional outcome measures include improved navigation through municipal and state requirements as guided by the regional resource center’s navigation liaison (established through its increased funding) according to child care provider feedback.</p> <p>Performance: Measures include an established inventory of municipality-related educational materials, and documented child care-friendly ordinances.</p>
<p>Objective Three: Improve Child Care Wages and Benefits</p> <p>Develop wages and benefit strategy to encourage competitive and fair compensation packages for child care staff.</p>				
Priority: Medium		Anticipated Costs: \$		

GLSSC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and determine a regionally appropriate wage for child care providers across the spectrum of possible positions Develop talking points to engage with local policymakers Support ECIC's effort at the state level to increase child care provider wages and improve access to benefits through local information distribution and advocacy 	<p>Due to the established statewide need to improve child care wages and benefits, GLSSC requests ECIC assistance in advocating for child care provider wage increases at the state level.</p> <p>GLSSC requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships may include current coalition members, such as the Child Care Network and the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, Eastern Region. Additional partnerships may include ECIC, University of Michigan Poverty Solutions, and the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, which are not current coalition members. 	<p>Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including researching the regional wage and developing talking points. GLSSC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support ECIC's state-level advocacy efforts.</p>	<p>Indicators: Output measures include the number of policymakers with whom members of the GLSSC speak.</p> <p>Results: Outcome measures include a decreased workforce gap due to improved child care wages and benefits, as defined by the workforce shortage established at the beginning of the planning grant period.</p> <p>Performance: Measures include documented talking points tailored to regional policymakers and an established appropriate regional wage for child care providers of all levels.</p>

Implementation Planning

Following development of the regional action plan, the GLSSC co-leads participated in an implementation planning activity facilitated by PSC. The co-leads examined their approach to implementation planning, began to plot a timeline of activities by quarter based on priority or dependencies on other activities, and worked through an example of a 90-day implementation plan together. During this activity they discussed the next steps, possible goal team assignments, and responsible parties. GLSSC co-leads will use the initial implementation planning resources provided by PSC to begin implementation planning in 2024.

Overview of Key Findings and Strategies

Using Regional Child Care Planning Grant funding, the GLSSC completed a variety of data gathering activities and engaged with key stakeholders, the sum of which confirmed that there is critical need for intervention in the child care sector in the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair region. Surveys, discussion groups, analysis of publicly available data, and conversations at coalition meetings have demonstrated that child care is widely inaccessible, costs are grossly unaffordable for families, and the care they need is not available. These issues are complexly interwoven with the challenges that providers face. Wages and benefits for child care staff are not competitive in today's economy, and many child care staff are considering leaving the field. Even when a provider may have the desire to expand, they face regulatory barriers and do not have the financial or technical resources they need.

In response to these issues, the GLSSC created an action plan and will begin implementation planning in January 2024. The goals of this action plan include collecting additional data; working with employers, child care providers, and educational institutions to form meaningful partnerships that increase access to child care; and advocating for state-level policy change that will reduce barriers for child care providers and families alike. The GLSSC will continue to work within the coalition, coalitions from other regions, and ECIC to meet these goals.

The GLSSC would like to thank and acknowledge parents, child care providers, and members from the following community partners for their participation in the creation of the regional action plan:

- Lapeer Development Corporation
- Michigan Works! Macomb/St. Clair
- Great Start to Quality Eastern Resource Center
- St. Clair County RESA
- Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County
- St. Clair County Metro Planning Commission
- Dryden Township
- Shiawassee Community Foundation
- YMCA of the Blue Water Area
- Shiawassee Family YMCA
- Flint City Council
- Ferris State University
- City of Yale
- City of St. Clair
- City of Marysville
- Kimball Township

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Appendix A: Coalition Roster

Organization	Name
Flint & Genesee Group ²	Allison Newman
Child Care Network	Annette Sobocinski
Lapeer County Community Foundation	Nancy Boxey
Lapeer County ISD	Linda DeTavernier
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	Jody Roethel
St. Clair County RESA	Becky Gorinac
Acorn Child Development	Christie Mahl
Bentley Bright Beginnings Director of Early Childhood Education	Laurie Winke
Blue Water Community Action	Sherry Beiser
City Manager of Marysville	Randy Fernandez
City Manager, Yale	Lorrei A. Natke
City Superintendent, St. Clair	Quentin L. Bishop
CrossPointe Kids Daycare	Adam Grass
Dryden Township	Kimberly Diefenbach
Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County	Bruce Seymore
EduCare Flint: Preschool	Angela Hood-Beaugard
Ferris State University	Jeff Bean
Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance	Tyler Rossmassler
Flint City Council Member	Ladel Lewis
Great Start to Quality Eastern Resource Center	Julie Bash
Lapeer Development Corporation	Sam Moore
License Exempt Provider	Sheiltha Calhoun
Licensed Home Provider	Mecca Mack
Michigan Works! Macomb/St. Clair	Ann Austin
Parent	Kellyn Schwehofer
Parent	Christy Culver
Parent	Latashia Perry
Parent	Marquisha Conway
Parent	Jameshia Johnson
Parent	Latrese Brown
Parent	Felicia Campbell
Parent	Elizabeth Van Kulken
Parent	Bridgette Wood

² Individuals highlighted in blue are the co-leads of the GLSSC Coalition

Organization	Name
Represents various Lapeer County municipalities	Joe Israel
Shiawassee Community Foundation	Kim Renwick
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	Justin Horvath
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	Brent Jones
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	Sally Warren
Shiawassee Family YMCA	Laura Archer
St. Clair County Metro Planning Commission	David Struck
St. Clair County RESA	Riley Alley
Supervisor Kimball Township	Rob Usakowski
YMCA of the Blue Water Area	Josh Chapman

Appendix B: Desktop Research Summary

Regional Research Summary

August 2023

Background

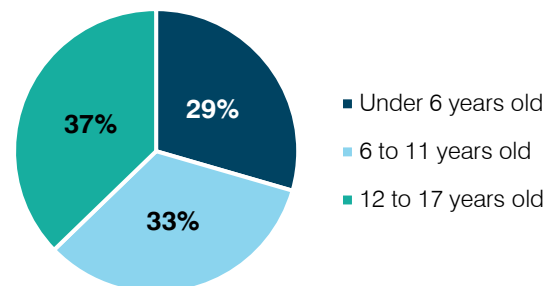
The Flint and Genesee Group received an Economic Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) grant to research child care needs and convene a coalition to improve child care across Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties. The Flint and Genesee Group partnered with Public Sector Consultants (PSC), a nonpartisan research and evaluation policy firm to co-facilitate the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition (GLSSC) and gather information on child care using desktop research, surveys, and discussion groups. This summary of PSC's desktop research includes data on educational requirements of early childhood education staff, their salaries and career paths, the costs of child care, and family demographics. While the majority of data are presented by county, PSC acknowledges that data regarding child care capacity, staffing shortages, and other factors are not restricted by county lines and that many families or members of the workforce regularly cross county borders for child care or employment.

Regional Profile

There are approximately 158,253 total children under the age of 18 across the region. Exhibit 1 shows the distribution of children by age grouping; over half of children in the region fall within the ages that may need child care (ages birth to 12). While not all children under the age of six need child care due to varied family circumstances, PSC will utilize that number as a baseline for the potential need for child care. Additionally, children 12 years of age and older may need care for a variety of reasons, such as summer or after-school programming, disability, or other special needs.

These children may live in a variety of household types, including heterosexual married couple households, same-sex married couple households, unmarried partner households, single parent households, foster care, and others. However, due to data and reporting limitations, data are most commonly available for heterosexual married couple and single parent households. PSC acknowledges that households outside of these categories are important, have their own child care needs, and unfortunately are not represented in most of the data used to consider the region's child care environment and needs.

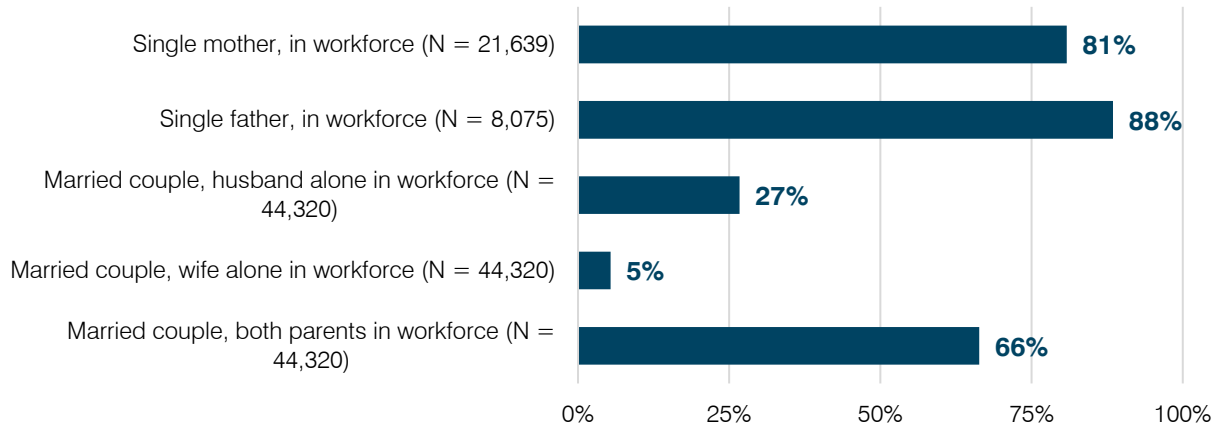
EXHIBIT 1. Distribution of Children in the GLSSC Region by Age



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. "ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates Table S0901: Children Characteristics – Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, and Shiawassee." *U.S. Census Bureau*. Accessed August 1, 2023.

Of the variety of reasons parents and caregivers need child care, the major one is obtaining or maintaining employment. Currently, the majority (92 percent) of parents with children under 18 years old in the GLSSC region are employed (Exhibit 2). Presumably, this means that a large portion of parents and caregivers need some form of child care.

EXHIBIT 2. Labor Force Participation by Household Type in the GLSSC Region



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. "ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates Table S2302: Employment Characteristics of Families—Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair." *U.S. Census Bureau*. Accessed August 1, 2023.

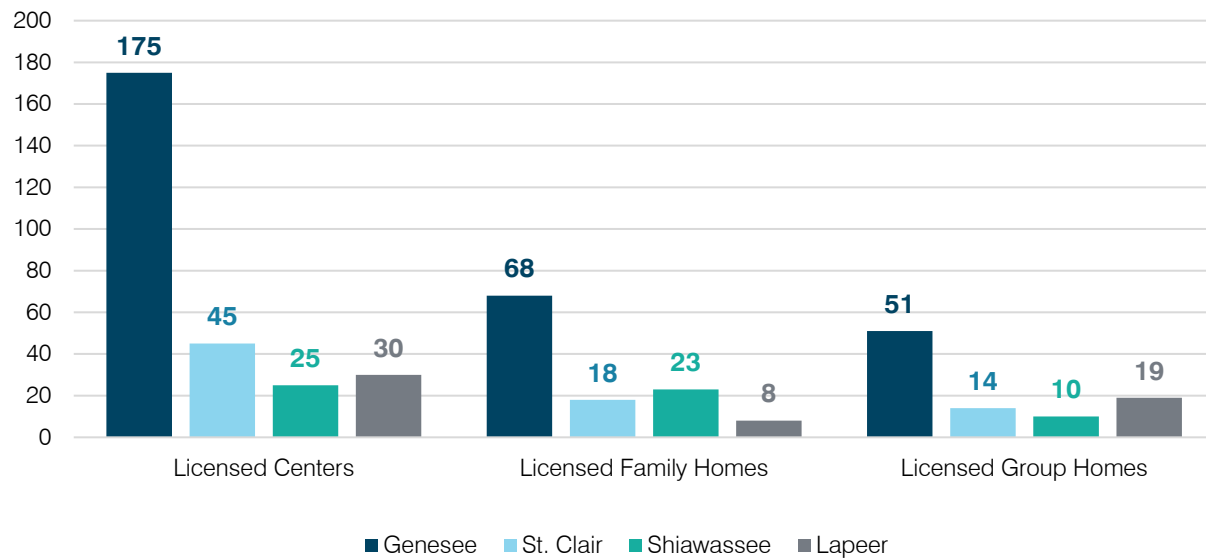
Child Care

According to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, there were 485 open licensed child care providers and 208 closed child care providers in the GLSSC region as of July 18, 2023. Data from Great Start to Quality (GSQ), also retrieved on July 18, 2023, listed 486 open providers. PSC analyzed data from GSQ to complete this summary, as GSQ includes more information on quality, nonstandard hours, and other factors of interest. However, PSC also acknowledges that the number of providers can fluctuate on any given day, which leads to minor discrepancies across data sources.

Location

Genesee County has the most child care providers in the region, followed by St. Clair, Shiawassee, and Lapeer Counties. Across each county, licensed centers are the most common type of provider (Exhibit 3).

EXHIBIT 3. Child Care Providers by License Type and County



Source: GSQ data analyzed by PSC, as of July 18, 2023

Capacity

Across all age groups, there were 23,512 child care slots in the region as of July 18, 2023 (Exhibit 4). Due to staff shortages and other variables, it is possible that not every slot was actually available to families. Anecdotal evidence indicated that insufficient staffing was the primary factor in child care providers not serving the number of children for which they are licensed to provide care. PSC intends to gain additional insight into this issue through child care administrator survey feedback. Even if all slots were available, it still would not be enough to serve even one-third of the children ages birth to 11 in the GLSSC region. Additionally, when analyzed by the license type, there are even fewer slots available to families that have preferences for the type of licensed care.

EXHIBIT 4. Capacity by License Type and County

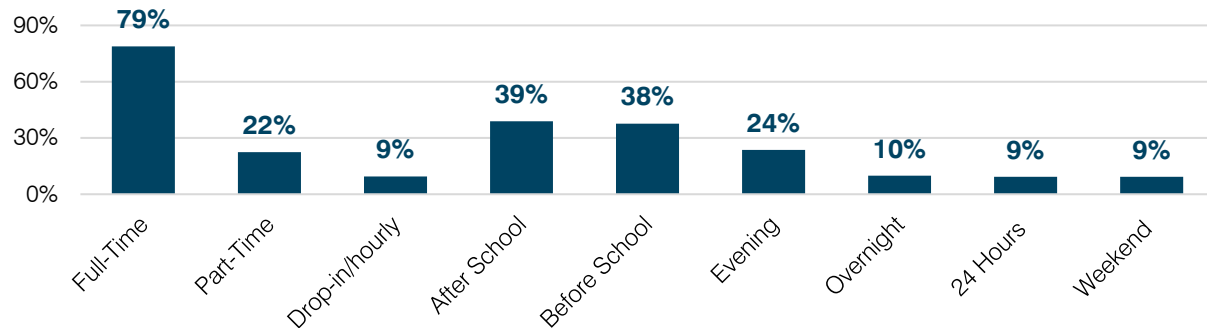
	Genesee County	Lapeer County	Shiawassee County	St. Clair County	Regional Total
Centers	14,773	1,929	2,091	2,754	21,547
Family Homes	426	51	150	114	741
Group Homes	658	256	130	180	1,224

Source: GSQ data analyzed by PSC, as of July 18, 2023

Hours of Care

While there are not enough slots to meet the region's child care needs, finding licensed child care is generally more difficult for families that need nonstandard hours. This could include families whose income earners work in fields such as manufacturing or service industries like healthcare and hospitality. While 79 percent of providers offer full-time care, fewer providers offer nonstandard hours of care, as seen in Exhibit 5.

EXHIBIT 5. Percentage of Child Care Providers Offering Various Types of Care Across the GLSSC Reion

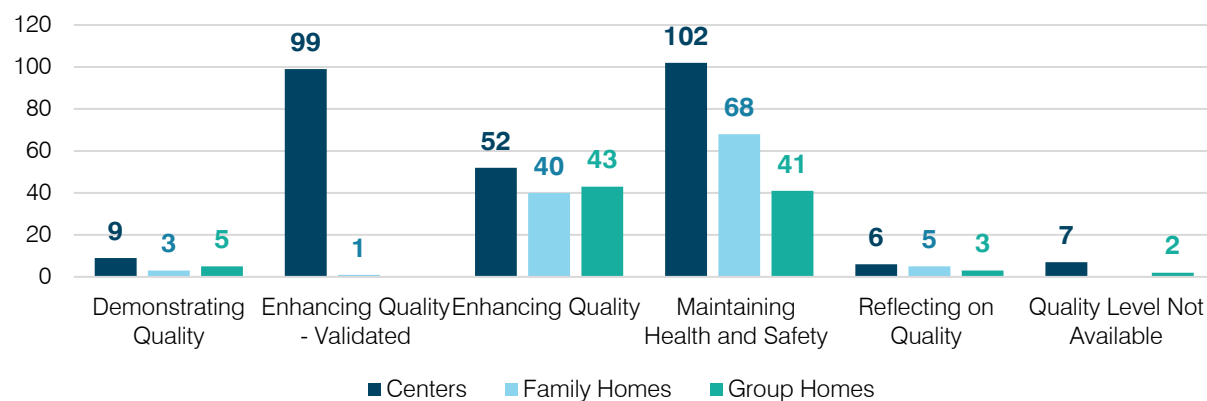


Source: GSQ data analyzed by PSC, as of July 18, 2023

Quality

For a parent or caregiver evaluating child care options, another possible desirable factor is the level of recognition in GSQ's quality standard system. PSC examined data from GSQ to determine how many providers achieved each level of quality recognition (Exhibit 6). Levels do not necessarily reflect the ability of a child care provider to safely and effectively care for children, but rather where they are in the process of continuous quality improvement.

EXHIBIT 6. Child Care Providers by License Type and Level of Quality Recognition

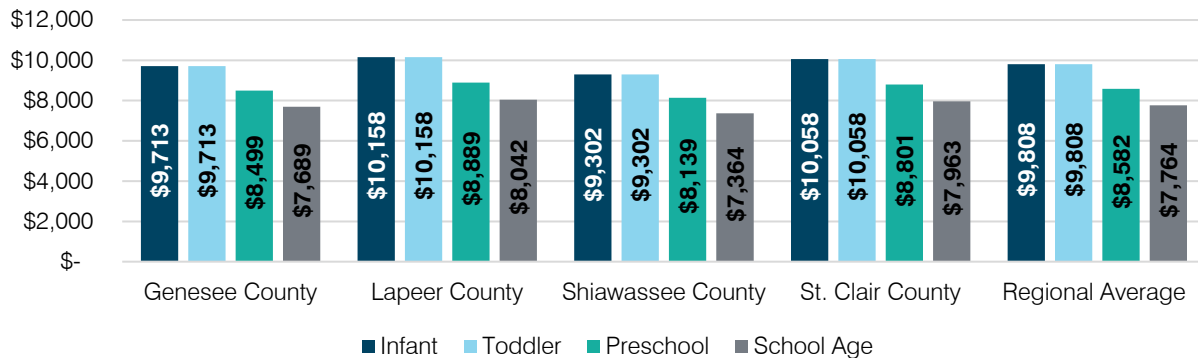


Source: GSQ data analyzed by PSC, as of July 18, 2023

Costs

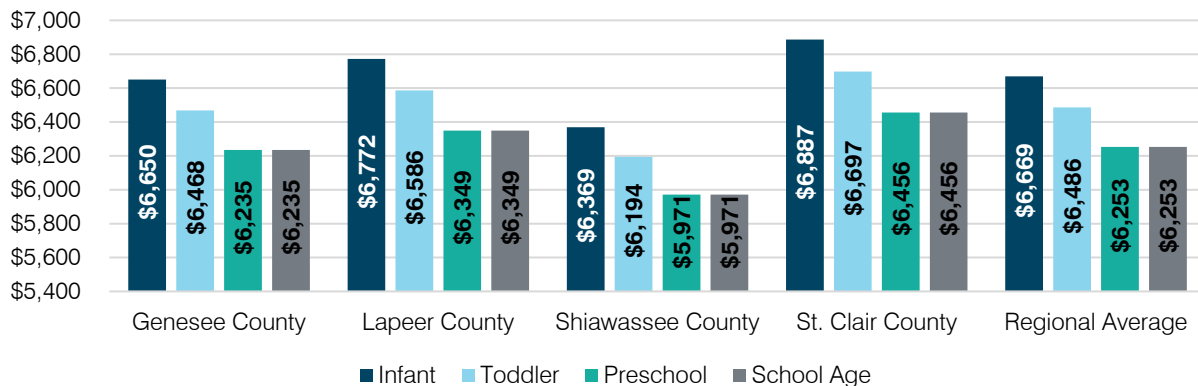
The federal Children and Families Administration defines “affordable child care” as no more than 7 percent of a family’s income.³ PSC reviewed data from the United States Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau and found that neither center-based nor home-based care for any age in any of the GLSSC counties met this definition. Compared to center-based care, home-based care is slightly more affordable, with a regional average of 9 percent of a family’s income. For a household that makes minimum wage, ECIC estimates that child care may cost up to 40 percent of a family’s income. Exhibits 7 and 8 show the median annual costs of center- and home-based care in each county.

EXHIBIT 7. Annual Median Costs of Center-based Child Care by County, 2022 Adjusted Dollars



Source: The Women’s Bureau. n.d. “National Database of Childcare Prices: 2016–2018.” *The Women’s Bureau*.
<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WB/media/nationaldatabaseofchildcareprices.xlsx>

EXHIBIT 8. Annual Median Costs of Home-based Child Care by County, 2022 Adjusted Dollars

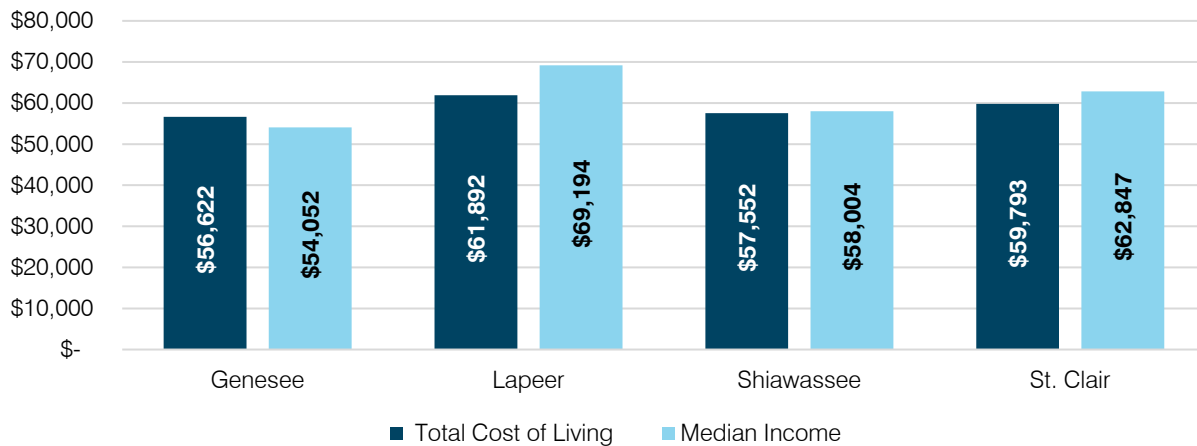


Source: The Women’s Bureau. n.d. “National Database of Childcare Prices: 2016–2018.” *The Women’s Bureau*.
<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WB/media/nationaldatabaseofchildcareprices.xlsx>

³ Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. September 2016. “Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program: Final Rule.” *Federal Register* vol. 81, no. 190: 67438–67595.
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/09/30/2016-22986/child-care-and-development-fund-ccdf-program>

Before accounting for the cost of child care, the median household income in Genesee County is not enough to afford the average cost of living in the county, which PSC calculated using the Center for Neighborhood's Housing and Transportation Index and the United Way's survival budget for a family of two adults and two children. In Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties, the median household income is enough to afford the basic costs of living, but likely not enough for many unforeseen expenses or for accumulating savings (Exhibit 9).

EXHIBIT 9. Average Cost of Living Compared to Median Household Income by County, Two Adults and Two Children



Sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology. n.d. *Housing and Transportation Index*. Accessed August 1, 2023.
 United for ALICE. 2021. "Michigan County Reports 2021." *United for ALICE*. Accessed August 1, 2023.
 U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. "ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates Table B1903: Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2021 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) — Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair." U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed August 1, 2023.

Many families whose household income is at or below the median are unable to afford licensed child care. For example, in Shiawassee County alone, the lowest average cost of child care is \$5,971 per year for a school-age child in home-based care. This would increase the costs of living for a family of four to approximately \$63,523, exceeding the median income. As such, child care for multiple children, children in other age groups, or in a center is likely not feasible.

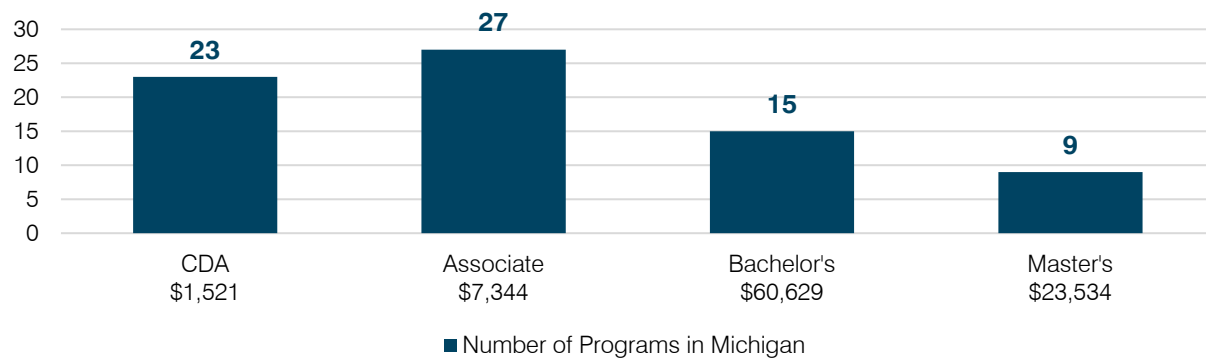
Workforce

The early childhood education workforce consists of child care workers, administrators, preschool teachers and assistants, and other staff that may work for a child care provider. The workforce is a driving factor of the availability of care across the region; Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties are not immune to the statewide child care staff shortage, which is caused by several reasons, including low compensation and benefits, the costs of obtaining education or credentialing, and burnout. PSC conducted desktop research on salaries, education, and the general state of the child care workforce. PSC also surveyed child care staff and administrators; a summary of findings will be published once the survey period is completed.

Education

Varied levels of education are required for different positions within the child care industry. Data from the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MIAEYC) illustrates the number of early childhood–centered degrees offered throughout Michigan. The most common credential type is an associate degree, with 27 colleges or universities across the state offering the degree at an average cost of \$7,344. The least common credential type is a master’s degree, with fewer than ten universities offering this credential type (Exhibit 10).

EXHIBIT 10. Number of Early Childhood Education Certifications and Median Program Cost in Michigan



Source: MIAEYC, analysis by PSC

Career Paths

A variety of career paths are available to early childhood educators based on their credentials. Exhibit 11 provides an overview of child care career paths based on credential type.

EXHIBIT 11. Career Paths Available by Credential

Credential	Requirements	Career Paths Available
Child Development Associate (CDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 semester credit hours in early childhood education, child development, or a related field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Start Readiness Program associate teachers Head Start assistant teachers Lead teachers in child care centers Trainers
Associate degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On average, complete 60 credit hours with at least 18 hours in early childhood education or child development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child care center program directors CDA professional development specialists Head Start lead teachers GSQ assessors

Credential	Requirements	Career Paths Available
Bachelor's degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on an educational institution's requirements to fulfill a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development, or; • A teacher certification with an early childhood endorsement, or; • A bachelor's degree in any field with at least 30 semester credits in early childhood education or child development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Start Readiness Program lead teachers • Early childhood special education teachers • School-age multisite directors • Great Start Readiness Program quality improvement specialists
Master's degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on an education's institution's requirements to fulfill a master's degree in early childhood education or child development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College faculty/university adjunct faculty • Research and policy associates • Child care licensing consultants • Agency and program directors and education-related organizations
Doctoral degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on an educational institution's requirements to fulfill an EdD or PhD in early childhood education or child development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University staff at higher education institution

Staffing Shortage

The Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan (WIN) reported that preschool teachers were the second highest in-demand across all educational occupations in 19 Southeast Michigan counties, including those in the GLSSC region.⁴ The Michigan State University Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship Child Care Mapping Project⁵ showed each county in the GLSSC region is experiencing the staffing shortages detailed below:

- Genesee County: 24 percent
- Shiawassee County: 11 percent
- Lapeer County: 11 percent
- St. Clair County: 12 percent

Compensation

One of the factors contributing to staffing shortages in early childhood education is compensation. WIN reported that the median hourly wage for preschool teachers is \$14.86 and \$13.95 for teaching assistants. If an employee in either of these roles works a traditional 40-hour work week for a full year, this translates to annual salaries of approximately \$30,909 and \$29,016, respectively.

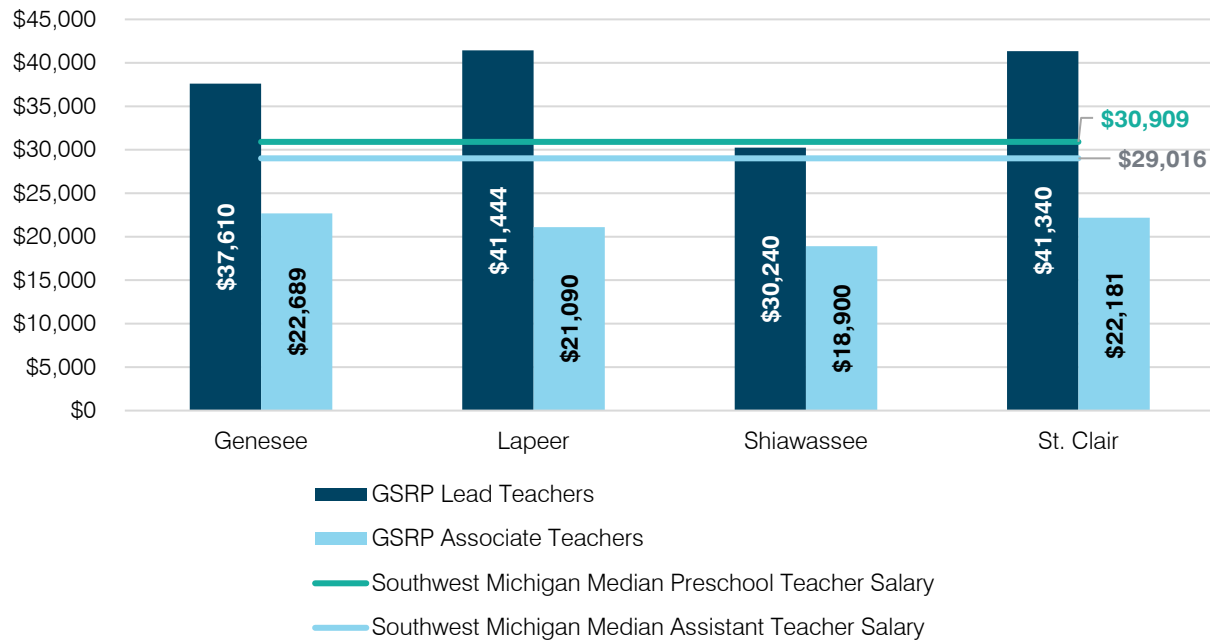
The Child Care Mapping Project collects salary data teachers and associate teachers in the Great Start Readiness Program, which shows that while GRSP teachers may make more than the regional median wages reported by WIN, they still may not make enough to meet their own needs depending on their family size and costs of living. For example, the cost of living in Genesee County for a family of four is an estimated \$56,622—almost \$20,000 more than the average salary of a GSRP teacher. However, GSRP

⁴ Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan. July 5, 2023. *WIN Region 2023 Q1*. Taylor: Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan. https://winintelligence.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/LMR-WIN-Region-Q1-2023_FINAL-WebOp.pdf

⁵ Michigan State University Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship. n.d. "Maps." *Child Care Mapping Project*. Accessed September 6, 2023. <https://cep.msu.edu/projects/child-care-mapping-project/maps-and-charts/areas-with-high-needs-and-urgency>.

teaching assistants make less than the regional median wages. Exhibit 12 shows the annual median salary for GSRP teaching staff compared to WIN’s regional median wages for the same roles.

EXHIBIT 12. Great Start Readiness Program Teaching Staff Annual Median Salaries by County, Compared to Median Salaries Across Southwest Michigan Counties



Sources: Workforce Intelligence Network and the Michigan State University Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship

Appendix C: Parent and Caregiver Survey

Parent and Caregiver Survey

Regional child care coalitions are groups of community leaders throughout Michigan who want to increase the supply of high-quality child care. The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair (GLSSC), Regional Child Care Coalition is using survey research to inform data-driven decisions as they create an action plan to improve child care in Genesee, Shiawassee, Lapeer, and St. Clair Counties. The coalition is working with Public Sector Consultants, a Lansing-based research and consulting firm, to help distribute and analyze their surveys.

Anything you share in the survey will remain confidential and will be combined with answers from other individuals taking the survey. Your responses will not be linked to you in any way.

Current Child Care Arrangements

1. Are you currently looking for child care for any of your children? [Yes/No]
(If Yes to seeking child care) How long have you been looking for care? [drop down menu]
 - 0–3 months
 - 4–7 months
 - More than 7 months
2. Over the past six months, which situations have described your child care arrangement? Check all that apply.
 - I provide care for my child
 - My spouse/partner provides care for our child
 - My spouse/partner and I alternate providing care for our child
 - Child care center
 - Home-based child care
 - Pre-K program
 - Relative (e.g., grandparent, aunt/uncle)
 - Friend or neighbor
 - Babysitter or nanny
 - Child care is provided at my work child care center
 - Other, please describe: [text entry]
3. How far away is your current child care arrangement from your home?
 - Less than 5 miles away
 - 5–10 miles away
 - 11–15 miles away
 - More than 15 miles away

4. How far from your home would you be willing to travel for a child care arrangement?
 - Less than 5 miles away
 - 5–10 miles away
 - 11–15 miles away
 - More than 15 miles away
5. How far away from your work location is your current child care arrangement?
 - Less than 5 miles away
 - 5–10 miles away
 - 11–15 miles away
 - More than 15 miles away
6. How far away from your work location would you be willing to travel for a child care arrangement?
 - Less than 5 miles away
 - 5–10 miles away
 - 11–15 miles away
 - More than 15 miles away

Child Care Needs

7. Which of the following describe the kinds of child care you need? Check all that apply.
 - Weekday care
 - Weekend care
 - Full-day care
 - Half-day care
 - Care five days per week
 - Care fewer than five days per week
 - Care during daytime hours (6:00 AM–6:00 PM)
 - Care during overnight hours (6:00 PM–6:00 AM)
 - Before-school care (6:00–9:00 AM)
 - After-school care (3:00–6:00 PM)
 - Drop-in/emergent care
 - Special needs care
 - Sick child care
 - Summer break care
 - Home-based care
 - Center-/school-based care
 - Other, please describe: [text box]
 - I don't need child care

8. Which of the following describe the kinds of child care you need but do not currently have access to? Check all that apply.
- Weekday care
 - Weekend care
 - Full-day care
 - Half-day care
 - Care five days per week
 - Care fewer than five days per week
 - Care during daytime hours (6:00 AM–6:00 PM)
 - Care during overnight hours (6:00 PM–6:00 AM)
 - Before-school care (6:00–9:00 AM)
 - After-school care (3:00–6:00 PM)
 - Drop-in/emergent care
 - Special needs care
 - Sick child care
 - Summer break care
 - Home-based care
 - Center-/school-based care
 - I have access to the types of child care that meet my needs
 - Other, please describe: [text box]
9. Which of the following barriers to accessing child care have you experienced? Check all that apply.
- Cost of care
 - Location/distance from home or work
 - Availability of open spots
 - Dependability of care
 - Quality of care
 - Transportation to/from care
 - Finding care that matches work schedule
 - Finding care for child with additional needs
 - I have not experienced any barriers to accessing the child care I need
 - Other, please describe: [text box]
10. Which, if any, have you experienced because your child care circumstances don't fully meet your needs? Check all that apply.
- Job attendance (missing work, arriving late, leaving early, etc.)
 - Productivity/performance (distracted, worried, etc.)
 - Employment loss or withdrawal
 - Underemployment (working fewer hours or at a lower position)
 - Missing appointments and/or engagements (health, personal, social)
 - Other, please describe: [text box]
 - I have not experienced any of these

Cost

11. For each age level, indicate the number of children who live in your household in active child care (whether they live there all or some of the time). [numerical entry]
 - Aged 0–2
 - Aged 3–5
 - Aged 6–12
 - Aged 13–18
 - Aged 19+
12. How much does your family currently spend on child care per month per age group in your family? [numerical input per age group]
 - Aged 0–2
 - Aged 3–5
 - Aged 6–12
 - Aged 13–18
 - Aged 19+

Priorities

13. How important are each of the following when considering your child care arrangement? [Not at all important, Slightly important, Important, Very important]
 - Cost
 - Location
 - Safety
 - Cleanliness
 - Curriculum/learning environment
 - Cultural diversity
 - Caregivers that share our family’s culture or language
 - Staff qualifications
 - Healthy eating
 - Religious teachings
 - Trust
 - Having a prior relationship with the caregiver/educator

Demographics

14. In what county do you use, or are you seeking, child care?
 - Genesee
 - Shiawassee
 - Lapeer
 - St. Clair
 - Other, please describe: [text box]

15. What is your current marital/living status?

- Married/partnered
- Not married/partnered
- Prefer not to answer

16. What is your annual household income?

- \$25,000 or less
- \$25,001–\$50,000
- \$50,001–\$100,000
- \$100,001–\$150,000
- \$150,001–\$200,000
- More than \$200,000
- Prefer not to answer

17. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender male
- Transgender female
- Gender variant/nonconforming
- Prefer to self-describe: [text box]
- Prefer not to answer

18. What is your racial or ethnic identity? Select all that apply.

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin
- Arab or Middle Eastern North African
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Some other race: [text box]
- Prefer not to answer

Conclusion Page

Thank you for sharing your feedback and time today. All answers will remain confidential.

Please click [here](#) to indicate your interest in participating in future conversations on this topic and to enter a raffle to win a \$25 Visa gift card to thank you for completion of this survey.

If you have any questions about GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition or if you would like to become involved, please email Sarah Himes Greer at shgreer@publicsectorconsultants.com.

Indicate Interest/Visa Raffle

Enter me into the drawing for a \$25 Visa gift card. <Checkbox>

I am willing to be contacted about future opportunities to give input. <Checkbox>

Please enter your email address. The coalition may contact you in the coming weeks if you win the raffle or are selected to participate in future discussions on this topic. This field is not connected to your answers on the survey, so entering your email address does not compromise your survey response anonymity.

<short answer to enter email>

Appendix D: Parent and Caregivers Survey and Discussion Group Social Media Toolkit

Purpose

The goal of this toolkit is to provide community partners with ready-to-share graphics and information to encourage different community members to join Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition (GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition) as members or to participate in an upcoming discussion group or survey.

Audience

Parents and caregivers of young children

Sharing Options

Social Media Posts

You can share information about the survey from your (or your organization's) social media pages using the following sample text and images. Alternative text, or "alt text," which is text that a screen reader program or device can use to describe a picture for those with differing levels of vision, is provided for the images.

- [Facebook instructions for editing alt text](#)
- [LinkedIn instructions for editing alt text](#)
- [Twitter instructions for editing alt text](#)

Sample Text: Survey Post

The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition wants to hear what parents have to say about child care. Your input to reshape the early childhood education system matters. Tell us about your experiences and needs through this [anonymous survey](#)! Information gathered from this survey will contribute to the action plan for improving child care in our region. All survey respondents can enter to win a Visa gift card!

bit.ly/ParentandCaregiverSurvey



This is a sample of the image for post one. When you are posting on social media, please use the full-size graphic named [Parent 1] that is attached to the same email as this toolkit.

Alt text: [A picture of a family with children playing outside with text that reads, "Share your child care needs bit.ly/ParentandCaregiverSurvey."]'

Sample Text: Discussion Group Post

Share your child care needs with the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition and contribute to the action plan for improving child care in our region. Join [a discussion group](https://bit.ly/child-care-session) to share your thoughts and receive a thank you gift for your time!

<https://bit.ly/child-care-session>



This is a sample of the image for post two. When you are posting on social media, please use the full-size graphic named [Parent 2] that is attached to the same email as this toolkit.

Alt text: [A picture of a woman holding a child with a man next to her with text that reads, “We want to know about your child care needs <https://bit.ly/child-care-session>.”]

Appendix E: Parent Survey Summary

Family and Caregiver Survey Summary

November 2023

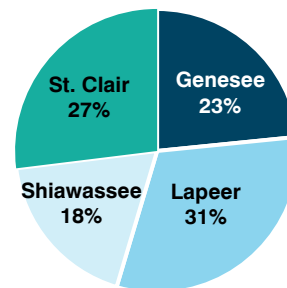
Introduction

The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition is a group of community leaders working to increase the supply of high-quality and affordable child care in these four counties. As part of that work, the coalition engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to assist them in creating a plan for the region. To support data-driven decisions for the plan and ensure the coalition's work centers on parent needs, the coalition and PSC developed and fielded a survey for parents and caregivers in the region to learn about their experiences accessing child care. This report presents PSC's analysis of the 172 survey responses.

Survey Respondents

Nearly one-third (31 percent) of respondents used or were seeking child care in Lapeer County, and more than one-quarter (27 percent) used or were seeking care in St. Clair County. Just under one-quarter used or were seeking care in Genesee County, and 18 percent used or were seeking care in Shiawassee County (Exhibit 1).

EXHIBIT 1. County of Residence

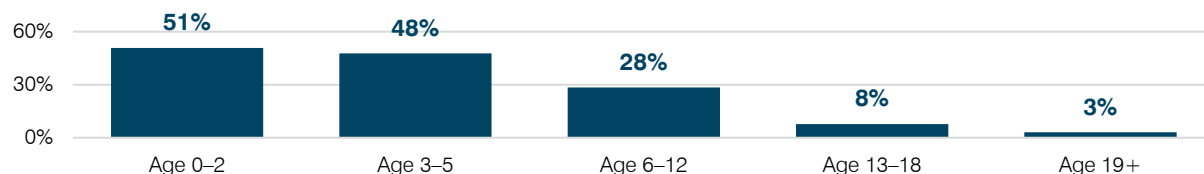


N = 141

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

More than 80 percent of respondents were married or lived with a partner. Among the 130 respondents who indicated that they had at least one child in active child care living in their household, the number of children ranged from one to five, with an average of 1.7 children in care per household. More than half of respondents had at least one child between the ages of zero and two years old, and nearly half had at least one child between ages three and five years old. Just over one-quarter (28 percent) had at least one child between six and 12 years old in care, and 11 percent said they had a child 13 years or older in active child care (Exhibit 2).

EXHIBIT 2. Percentage of Respondents with at Least One Child in Active Care by Age Group

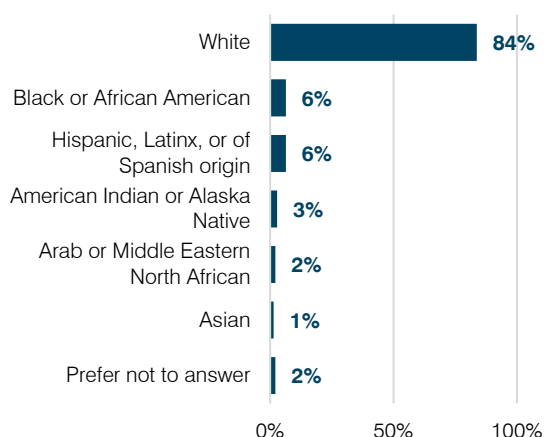


N = 130

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

More than 80 percent of respondents were white, and more than three-quarters were female (Exhibits 3 and 4).

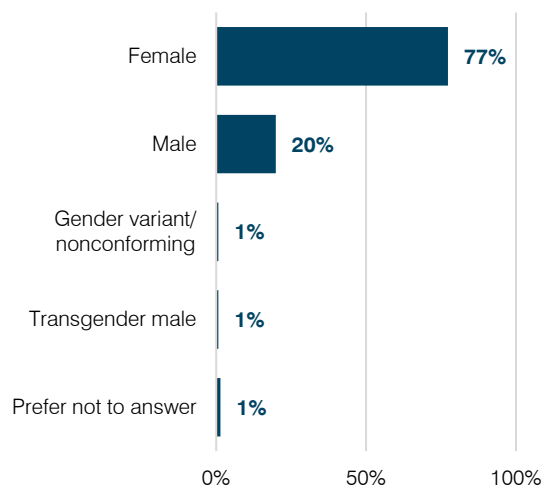
EXHIBIT 3. Respondent Race or Ethnicity



N = 141

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

EXHIBIT 4. Respondent Gender

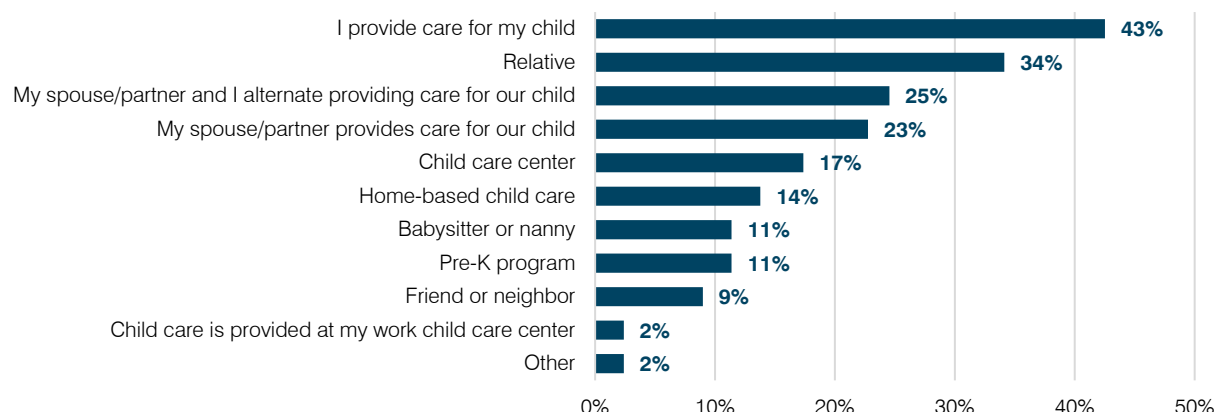


N = 141

Current Child Care Arrangements

More than 40 percent of respondents said they had provided care for their child in the six months prior to taking the survey and 34 percent said a relative had provided care. One-quarter said that they and their spouse or partner had alternated providing care for their child, and nearly one-quarter said their spouse or partner provided child care. A smaller percentage of respondents said their children received care in a child care center (17 percent), in a home-based setting (14 percent), from a babysitter or nanny (11 percent), in a pre-K program (11 percent), or from a friend or neighbor (9 percent). Only 2 percent of respondents said their child care arrangements included child care provided at their work's child care center (Exhibit 5).

EXHIBIT 5. Current Child Care Arrangements



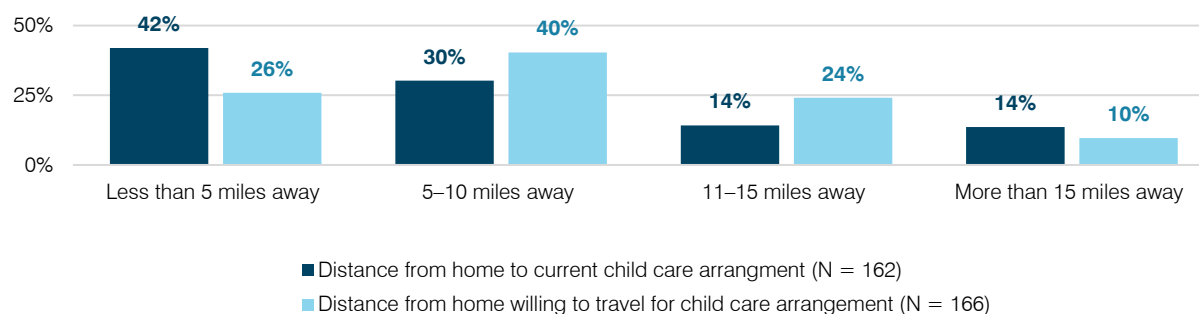
N = 167

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Child Care Location

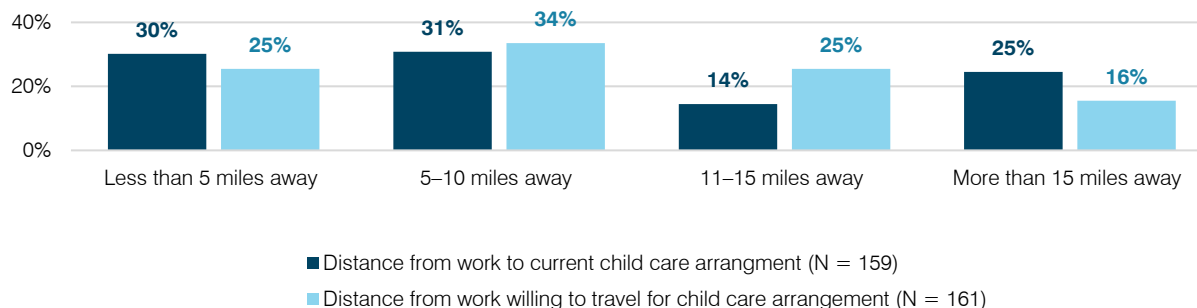
Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72 percent) currently travel ten miles or less from the home to their child care arrangement, and 28 percent drive 11 miles or more. However, two-thirds (66 percent) said they would be willing to drive ten miles or less and 34 percent said they would be willing to drive at least 11 miles from their home to their child care location (Exhibit 6). For more than 60 percent of respondents, the distance from work to their current child care location is ten miles or less, with nearly the same percentage saying they would be willing to travel that distance. One-quarter had a current distance between work and child care of more than 15 miles, while only 16 percent said they would be willing to travel that distance (Exhibit 7).

EXHIBIT 6. Current Child Care Distance from Home and Distance Willing to Travel



N varied by response.

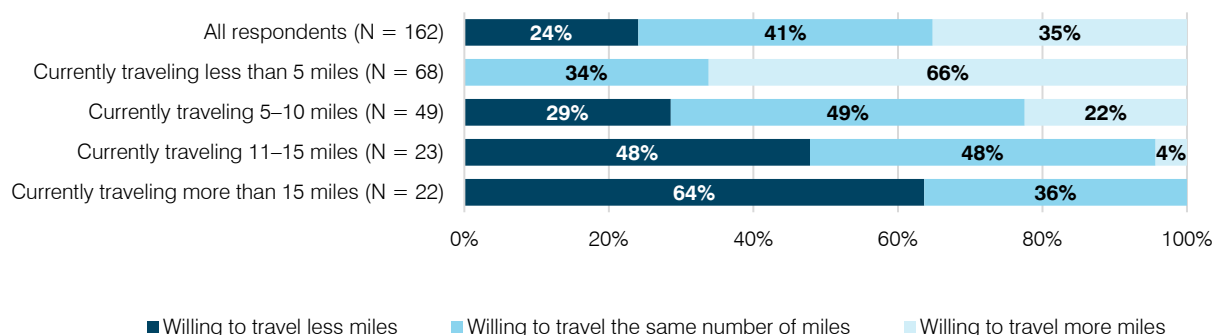
EXHIBIT 7. Current Child Care Distance from Work and Distance Willing to Travel



N varied by response.

Overall, 35 percent said they were willing to travel more miles from home to their child care arrangement than they currently do, and 24 percent said they were willing to travel fewer miles (Exhibit 8). The remaining 41 percent said the distance they would be willing to travel was the same as the distance they are currently traveling. Two-thirds of those currently traveling less than five miles said they would be willing to travel farther and nearly two-thirds of those currently traveling more than 15 miles said they would be willing to travel less miles.

EXHIBIT 8. Percentage Willing to Travel More or Less Miles than Current Distance Traveled



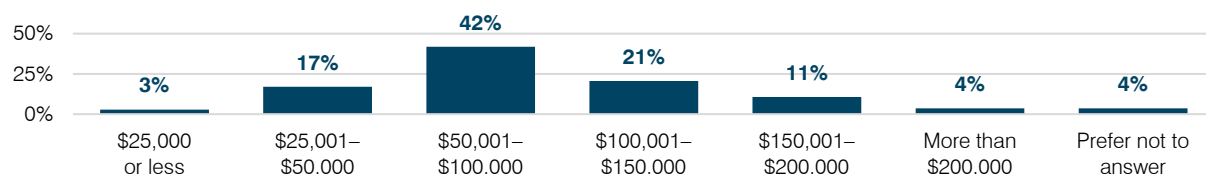
N varied by response.

“I had a job opportunity, but I couldn’t take it because it would’ve been too long of a drive to pick up my children after work.”

Child Care Costs

Most respondents had an annual household income of more than \$50,000, with 36 percent having an annual income higher than \$100,000 (Exhibit 9). Only 3 percent of respondents had a household income of \$25,000 or less. The 42 percent of respondents making between \$50,001 and \$100,000 is reflective of the region’s median annual household income of \$61,024.

EXHIBIT 9. Annual Household Income



N = 141

Note: Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.

Among the respondents who said they spent more than \$1 per month on child care, the average amount spent was \$1,426 (Exhibit 10). The average monthly cost of child care per household was highest—\$1,671—among respondents with annual household incomes between \$50,001 and \$100,000. Those with the lowest household incomes also average the lowest monthly child care costs.

Affordable child care is defined as being no more than 7 percent of your income; however, the majority of respondents (those making less than \$200,000 annually) are spending between 9 and 31 percent of their income to pay for child care.

EXHIBIT 10. Average Spent Monthly on Child Care Costs by Income Group

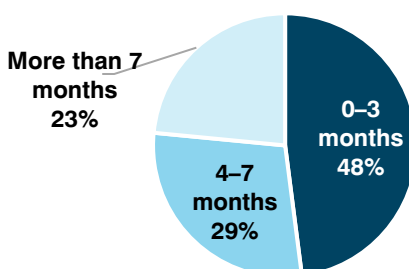
Monthly Amount Spent on Child Care per Household				
Annual Household Income	Number of Respondents	Average	Median	Range
All respondents	106	\$1,426	\$800	\$50–\$12,000
\$50,000 or less	22	\$949	\$788	\$80–\$3,000
\$50,001–\$100,000	42	\$1,671	\$910	\$80–\$12,000
More than \$100,000	37	\$1,377	\$490	\$50–\$12,000

Note: Four outliers were removed from the data analysis—two \$1 responses, one \$22,000 response, and one \$23,000 response.

Child Care Needs

Nearly 60 percent of respondents said they are currently seeking child care for at least one of their children. Of those, more than half have been seeking care for more than three months (Exhibit 11).

EXHIBIT 11. Length of Time Seeking Child Care

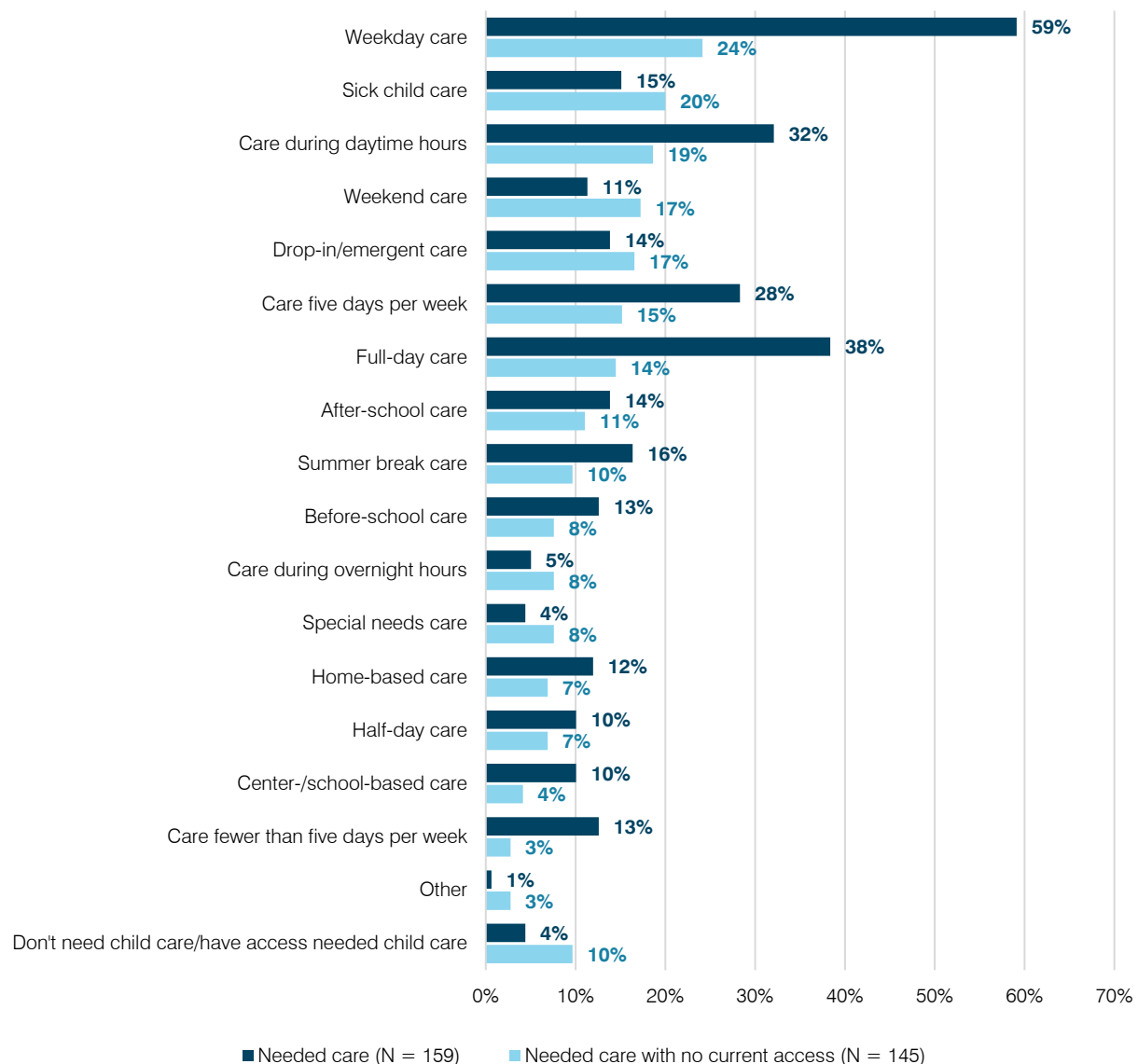


N = 98

Nearly 60 percent of respondents said they needed weekday care and 24 percent said they need this type of care but do not currently have access to it (Exhibit 12). Additionally, 38 percent said they need full-day care, 32 percent need care during daytime hours, and 28 percent need care five days a week, while 14 percent, 19 percent, and 15 percent, respectively, said they needed those types of care but do not currently have access to that care.

"I work three jobs. When I work on weekends, I pay \$1,000 for child care but only make \$200, so I'm losing money."

EXHIBIT 12. Types of Care Needed and Types of Care Needed with No Current Access



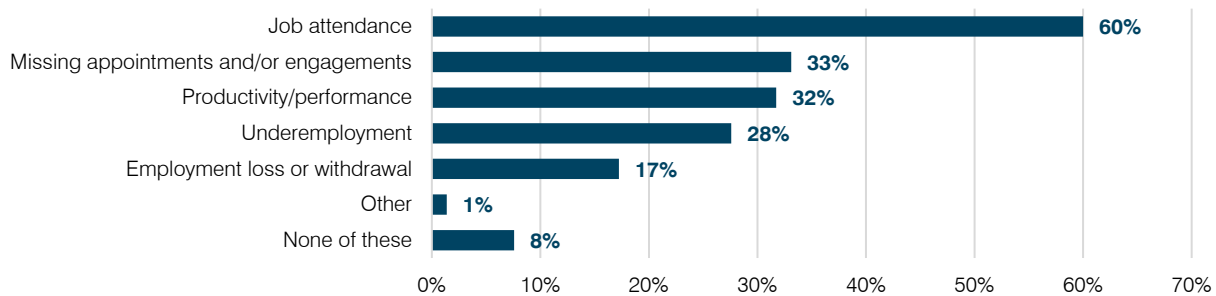
N varied by response.

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

“My daycare has early morning options, but it’s first come, first serve. Due to understaffing, I never know if I’ll get the care I need so I can make it to work.”

Sixty percent of respondents said they had job attendance issues, such as missing work, arriving late, or needing to leave early because their child care circumstances at the time of the survey did not fully meet their needs. One-third said they had missed appointments or engagements for this reason, and nearly one-third said they experienced productivity or performance trouble, such as being distracted or worried (Exhibit 13).

EXHIBIT 13. Effects of Child Care Circumstances Not Fully Meeting Needs



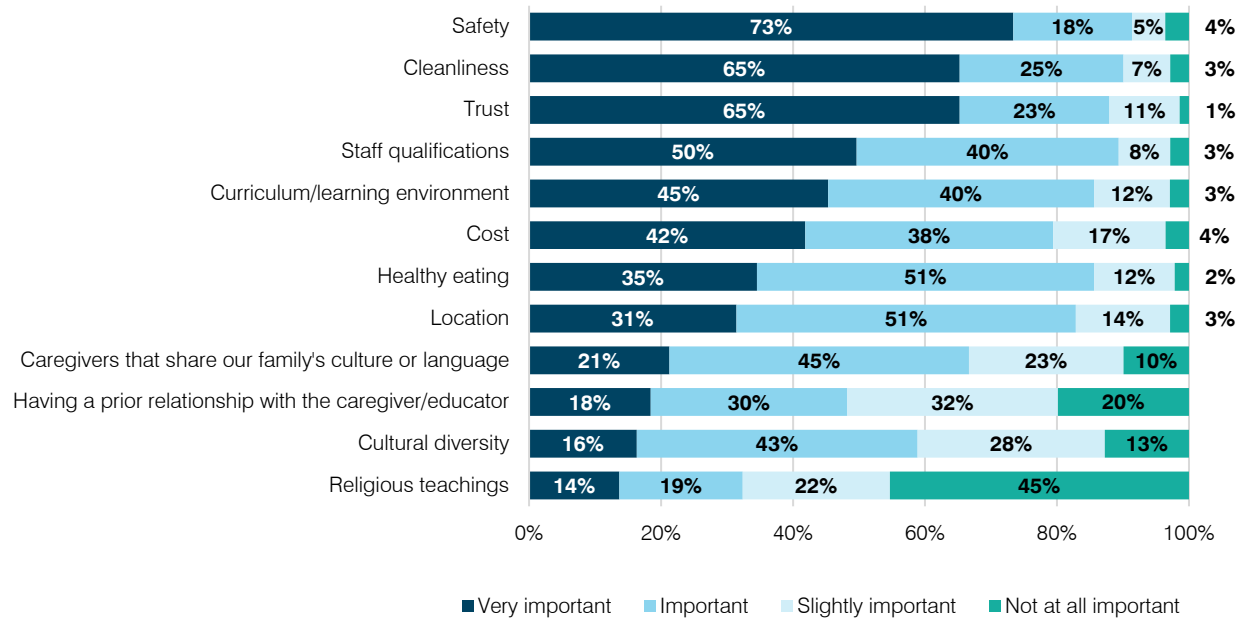
N = 145

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Important Factors When Choosing Child Care

Nearly three-quarters of respondents said that safety was a very important factor when considering child care arrangements, with another 18 percent saying it was an important factor. Nearly two-thirds said that cleanliness and trust were very important considerations and half said that staff qualifications were very important (Exhibit 14). Religious teachings were rated very important or important by the fewest respondents, with 45 percent saying this factor was not at all important. Other factors deemed less important by large percentages of respondents included caregivers that share the family’s culture or language, having a prior relationship with the caregiver, and cultural diversity.

EXHIBIT 14. Importance of Factors When Choosing Child Care Arrangements



N varied between 139 and 141 by factor.
Note: Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Barriers to Accessing Child Care

More than half (56 percent) of respondents said that the cost of care was a barrier to accessing child care and 44 percent said that the lack of available open spots created a barrier to care access. Nearly 40 percent said that the quality of available care was a barrier, and one-third said dependability issues caused a barrier (Exhibit 15). Only 3 percent of respondents said they had not experienced any barriers to accessing care.

The highest ranked barriers to care varied by county:

Lapeer County's Top Barrier

- Availability of open spots: 64 percent

Shiawassee County's Top Barrier

- The location or distance from work: 54 percent

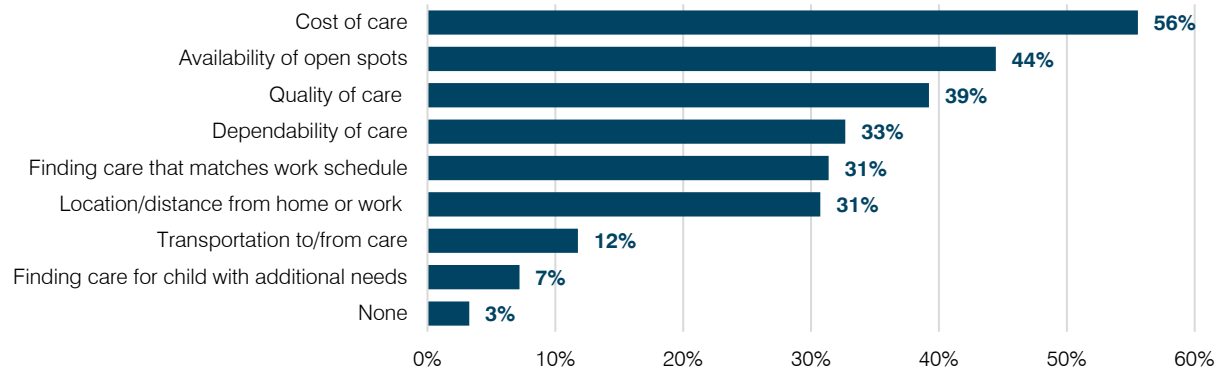
Genesee County's Top Barrier

- Cost of care: 64 percent

St. Clair County's Top Barrier

- Quality of care: 58 percent

EXHIBIT 15. Barriers Accessing Child Care



N = 153

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Appendix F: Child Care Provider Survey

Welcome Page Text

The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition (GLSSC) is a group of community leaders in each county who want to increase the supply of high-quality child care. The coalition is using survey research to inform data-driven decisions as they create an action plan. We want to hear from child care provider business owners and staff about their experience of working in our community.

Anything you share in the survey will remain anonymous and will be combined with answers from other survey respondents. Please ensure all individuals you work with at your child care organization complete this survey.

Introductory Questions

1. Please describe your child care program. Select all that apply.
 - Child care center
 - Family child care home
 - Group child care home
 - Non-licensed, home-based (e.g., parent, family member, nanny, family friend)
 - License exempt provider
 - Out-of-school program (e.g., before-/after-school, summer care)
 - Privately owned business
 - Nonprofit organization
 - Church-based program
 - Cooperative model
 - State or federally funded (Head Start, Great Start Readiness Program, etc.)
 - School-based program
 - Part of a multisite or chain child care organization
 - Tribal early care and education program
 - Connected to a larger institution (e.g., social services organization, college/university, faith-based institution)
 - Other, please describe [text box]
2. What ages do you provide care for? Select all that apply.
 - Infants (birth to less than one year)
 - Toddlers (one to less than two and a half years)
 - Preschool (two and a half years to kindergarten entry)
 - School age (kindergarten and to age 13)
3. What best represents your position at your organization?
 - Owner or administrator (**SKIP LOGIC to Owner/Administrator Section**)
 - Staff (**SKIP LOGIC to Staff Section**)

Child Care Business Owner/Administrator Section

4. How many years has your organization been operating? [text box numerical entry]
5. How many children have you served over the last year? [text box numerical entry]
6. Please select the traditional work shifts for which you provide care. Select all that apply.
 - First shift (e.g., 7:00 AM–5:30 PM)
 - Second shift (e.g., 3:00 PM–11:00 PM)
 - Third shift (e.g., 11:00 PM–7:00 AM)
 - Weekend hours
 - After-school programming
 - Summer programming
 - Other, please describe [text box]
7. Please indicate the number of children in each category in your program:

Please report “n/a” or leave blank for any age group you do not serve.

	Licensed Capacity	Current Enrollment	Waitlist
Infants (birth to less than one year)			
Toddlers (one to less than two and a half years)			
Preschool (two and a half years to kindergarten entry)			
School age (kindergarten to 13 years)			

8. What challenges do you face with enrollment/capacity? Select all that apply.
 - Not enough staff to operate at full capacity
 - Difficulty filling open slots
 - Not enough space for expansion at the current location
 - Lack of available space for a new program
 - Licensing challenges related to expanding into new spaces
 - Licensing challenges in general
 - Insufficient capital to expand business
 - Competition with other programs for staff
 - Competition with other programs regarding cost of care
 - Other, please describe: [text box]
 - None of the above

Staff Recruitment and Retention

9. Is the center/program you work in currently experiencing staffing shortages?
[Yes/No/I don't know/Not applicable]
- **(SKIP LOGIC: If Yes to Currently experiencing staff shortage)** What impact has the staffing shortage had on your experience at work? Select up to five choices.
 - I have less time to prepare for the day
 - I cannot complete my usual duties
 - I have taken on additional tasks on top of my usual duties
 - I have less time to support staff and families
 - I spend more time in the classroom providing care
 - I work longer hours
 - I am less able to take time off
 - I have less time for self-care
 - I am unable to provide care at my program's full capacity due to limited staffing
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - Not applicable
10. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, did the program you work in experience staffing shortages?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
 - Not applicable
 - I did not employ anyone prior to the pandemic
11. In your opinion, what are the main challenges to **recruiting** qualified staff? Select all that apply.
- Wages
 - No benefits or unsatisfactory benefits
 - Concerns for health and safety
 - Lack of child care for own children
 - Underqualified candidates
 - Lack of paid time off (sick, vacation, personal)
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - I don't know/Not applicable
12. In your opinion, what are the main challenges to **retaining** qualified staff? Select all that apply.
- Wages
 - No benefits or unsatisfactory benefits
 - Lack of paid time off (sick, vacation, personal)
 - Burnout or exhaustion
 - Lack of child care for own children
 - Regulations (federal and state)
 - Uncertainty about how to gain credentials and/or degrees

- Other, please describe [text box]
- I don't know/Not applicable

13. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement:
[Not applicable, Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree]

- I am worried about staffing recruitment.
- I am concerned about retaining the employees I do have.

Business Needs and Supports

14. What kind of support do you need as a child care business owner? Select your top five choices.

- Business ownership/management support (mentoring, small business resources, planning, etc.)
- Understanding municipal policies that impact your business
- Cash flow challenges related to caring for children who receive state or federal dollars
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Identifying additional funding sources
- Fund development
- Licensing support
- Identifying and/or implementing curriculum
- Helping families apply for child care subsidy support
- Bookkeeping
- Early childhood development resources
- Staff training
- Family recruitment and retention
- Food service
- Beginning or advancing your Great Start to Quality recognition level
- Contract management
- Parent communication
- Other, please describe [text box]
- Not applicable/No support needed

15. Over the last year, have you paid for support in any of the following child care business ownership areas? Select all that apply.

- Business ownership/management support (mentoring, small business resources, etc.)
- Understanding municipal policies that impact your business
- Cash flow challenges related to caring for children who receive state or federal dollars
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Identifying additional funding sources
- Fund development
- Licensing support
- Identifying and/or implementing curriculum
- Helping families apply for child care subsidy support
- Bookkeeping

- Early childhood development resources
 - Staff training
 - Family recruitment and retention
 - Food service
 - Beginning or advancing your Great Start to Quality recognition level
 - Contract management
 - Parent communication
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - Not applicable/I have not paid for any of these supports in the past year
16. What has prevented you from taking full advantage of these supports? Select all that apply.
- Unaware of the availability of these services in my area
 - I have found services, but they are not specific to child care
 - Costs associated with accessing these types of services
 - Do not have time to access these services
 - None of the above/Not applicable

Funding and Income

17. Currently, is your child care provider employment/business your primary source of income? [Yes/No]
18. Which of the following funding sources did you receive last year? Select all that apply.
- Child Development and Care (CDC) subsidies
 - Tiered subsidy reimbursement based on quality level in Great Start to Quality
 - Early Head Start/Head Start
 - Great Start Readiness Program Pre-K funding
 - Caring for MI Future grants
 - Child Care Stabilization grants
 - Grants from philanthropic organizations
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - None of the above/Not applicable
19. Over the past year, have you received any additional funds and/or grants at the local, state, or federal level? [Yes/No/I don't know/Not applicable]
- **(SKIP LOGIC: If Yes to Additional Funds):** What kind of funds have you received? Select all that apply.
 - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
 - Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
 - Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)
 - City-level relief grant
 - Traditional bank financing
 - Other state grant support
 - Other (please describe) [text box]

Moving Forward

20. If given the appropriate resources (e.g., funding, capacity-building support), would you be willing to consider expanding your licensed capacity?

- Yes, expanding at current location
- Yes, expanding at a new location
- Yes to both of these
- No to both of these

21. [SKIP LOGIC based on previous response – if yes]

For which age groups would you consider expanding services for? Select all that apply.

- Infants (birth–less than one year)
- Toddlers (one–less than two and a half years)
- Preschool (two and a half years–kindergarten entry)
- School age (kindergarten entry–13 years)

22. [SKIP LOGIC based on expansion question – if yes]

What would you need to expand? *Select all that apply.*

- Funding to purchase property and/or build a new building
- Grant or loan to cover remodeling costs of an existing building I own or lease
- A different location
- Additional staff
- One or more partners to help with costs and logistics
- Business planning help
- Other, please explain: [text box]
- None of these; I can expand on my own

23. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

[Not applicable, Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree]

- I am concerned about how I am going to keep my business afloat.
- I am concerned about how I am going to afford higher wages for myself and/or employees.
- I am concerned about how I am going to afford benefits for myself and/or my employees.
- I am concerned about my business's/organization's ability to afford improvements to comply with child care licensing requirements.

24. Are you considering leaving your job in child care or closing your child care program in the next year?

[Yes/No/Maybe]

- (If Yes or Maybe): Why are you considering leaving your program? [text box]

Child Care Staff Section

4. Please select all applicable certifications or post-secondary degree programs you have completed.

- Child Development Associate (CDA)
- GED/high-school diploma

- Associate degree
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
 - Other, please explain: [text box]
 - None of these
5. How many hours in a typical week do you work in a child care position?
- Less than part time (under 20 hours)
 - Part time (20–29 hours)
 - Full time (30–40 hours)
 - More than full time (Over 40 hours a week)
6. What is your hourly wage? <numeric entry>
7. Which of the following benefits does your employer offer? Select all that apply.
- Retirement savings plan
 - Paid time off
 - Medical insurance
 - Dental insurance
 - Vision insurance
 - Life insurance
 - Disability insurance
 - Other benefits, please describe [text box]
 - None of the above
8. Please choose the option which best describes your financial situation in an average month.
- My family always struggles to make ends meet.
 - My family often struggles to make ends meet.
 - My family occasionally struggles to make ends meet.
 - My family does not struggle to make ends meet.
9. How many miles do you live from your employer? <numeric entry>
10. What are your top three priorities when searching for, or applying for, a new position in child care?
Please rank your selection by priority, 1 = the highest priority, 2 = high priority, 3 = important
- Wages
 - Health, dental, vision, and retirement benefits
 - Staff child care discount
 - Health and safety of provider location
 - Proximity of child care provider to home
 - Support for continuing education opportunities
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - I don't know/Not applicable

11. What factors are you **currently facing** that might lead you to consider leaving your current position in child care? Select all that apply.
- Insufficient wages
 - No benefits or unsatisfactory benefits
 - Burnout or exhaustion
 - Lack of paid time off (sick, vacation, personal)
 - Lack of child care for own children
 - Unclear career mobility options
 - Lack of support from administrative team
 - Uncertainty about how to gain credentials and/or degrees
 - Worried about my employer closing
 - Inconsistent hours/pay
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - I don't know/Not applicable
12. What kind of support would you like to have at your place of employment? Select all that apply.
- Additional training
 - Opportunities for advancement
 - Assistance in attaining a credential or degree
 - Consistent scheduling
 - Opportunities for team celebrations
 - Supervisor communication
 - Mentorship opportunities
 - Job shadowing a potential new role
 - Constructive feedback about performance
 - Other, please describe [text box]
 - I don't know/Not applicable
13. On a scale of 1 (*not at all supportive*) to 5 (*very supportive*), please rate how supportive you find your workplace environment.
- a. What could your employer do to improve your workplace environment? [text box]
14. On a scale of 1 (*not at all committed*) to 10 (*very committed*), please rate your level of commitment to early childhood education as your career.

Demographics (Both Groups)

1. Where is your child care organization located?
- Genesee County
 - Lapeer County
 - Shiawassee County
 - St. Clair County
 - Somewhere else, please describe [text box]

2. Where do you live?
 - Genesee County
 - Lapeer County
 - Shiawassee County
 - St. Clair County
 - Somewhere else, please describe [text box]
3. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Transgender male
 - Transgender female
 - Gender variant/nonconforming
 - Prefer to self-describe: [text box]
 - Prefer not to answer
4. What is your racial or ethnic identity? Select all that apply.
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Arab or Middle Eastern/North African
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic, Latinx, or of Spanish origin
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Some other race: [text box]
 - Prefer not to answer

Conclusion Page

Thank you for sharing your feedback and time today. Please click [here](#) to indicate your interest in participating in future conversations on this topic and to enter a raffle to win a \$25 Visa gift card to thank you for completion of this survey.

If you would like to learn more about the GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition, please email Sarah Himes Greer at shgreer@publicsectorconsultants.com

Indicate Interest/Visa Raffle

Enter me in the drawing for a \$25 Visa gift card. <Checkbox>

I am willing to be contacted about future opportunities to give input. <Checkbox>

Please enter your email address. The coalition may contact you in the coming weeks if you win the raffle or are selected to participate in future discussions on this topic. This field is not connected to your answers on the survey, so entering your email address does not compromise your survey response anonymity.

<short answer to enter email>

If you would like to learn more about the GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition, please email Sarah Himes Greer at shgreer@publicsectorconsultants.com

Appendix G: Child Care Provider Social Media Toolkit

Child Care Survey and Discussion Group Social Media Toolkit

Purpose

The goal of this toolkit is to provide community partners with ready-to-share graphics and information to encourage child care administrators, business owners and staff to join the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County (GLSSC) Regional Child Care Coalition as members or to participate in an upcoming discussion group or survey.

Audience

Child care administrators/business owners and child care staff

Sharing Options

Social Media Posts

You can share information about the survey from your (or your organization's) social media pages using the following sample text and images. Alternative text, or "alt text," which is text that a screen reader program or device can use to describe a picture for those with differing levels of vision, is provided for the images.

- [Facebook instructions for editing alt text](#)
- [LinkedIn instructions for editing alt text](#)
- [Twitter instructions for editing alt text](#)

Sample Text: Survey Post

Calling all child care champs! Your input can help reshape the early childhood education system. Tell us about your experiences and needs through this anonymous survey! The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County Regional Child Care Coalition wants to hear about child care providers' experiences, needs, and preferences. Information gathered from this survey will contribute to the action plan for improving child care in our region.

<https://bit.ly/CCProfessionalsSurvey>



This is a sample of the image for post one. When you are posting on social media, please use the full-size graphic named [Staff Survey] that is attached to the same email as this toolkit.

Alt text: [Woman reading to children. Text says, "Help shape the future of child care in your area bit.ly/CCProfessionalsSurvey."]

Sample Text: Discussion Group Post—Administrators/Business Owners

Chart the course for better quality child care. Join a discussion group on Wednesday, September 6 to share your thoughts on how the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County Regional Child Care Coalition can improve child care for the region and for your business. Your input will inform their action planning process.

<https://bit.ly/GLSSCSessions>



This is a sample of the image for post two. When you are posting on social media, please use the full-size graphic named [Owners Admin Discussion] that is attached to the same email as this toolkit.

Alt text: [Young children reading. Text says, "Join the conversation and help improve child care in your area https://bit.ly/GLSSCSessions."]

Sample Text: Discussion Group Post—Child Care Staff Members

Speak up about your vital work as a child care professional! Join a discussion group on Monday, September 11, to share your insights on how the Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair County Regional Child Care Coalition can improve child care for the region. Your input will help shape their action planning process.

<https://bit.ly/GLSSCSessions>



Appendix H: Child Care Provider Survey Summary

Child Care Provider Survey Summary

November 2023

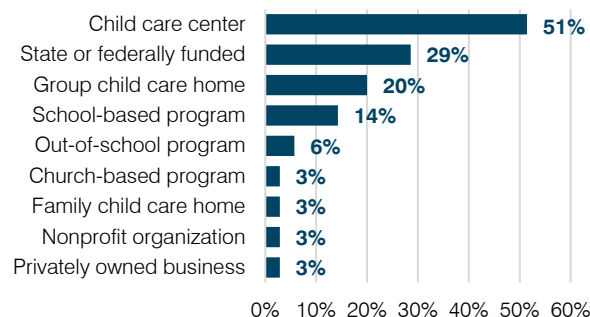
Introduction

The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair (GLSCC) Regional Child Care Coalition is a group of community leaders working to increase the supply of high-quality and affordable child care in these four counties. As part of that work, the coalition engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to help them create a plan for their region. To ensure the coalition centers the region's needs and makes data-driven decisions, the coalition and PSC developed and fielded a survey of the region's child care providers to learn about their experiences providing child care. A total of 35 child care providers responded to the survey.

Child Care Program Information

More than half of respondents described their child care program as a child care center, and nearly 30 percent said their program was state or federally funded (Exhibit 1). One-fifth represented group child care homes, 14 percent school-based programs, and 6 percent out-of-school programs. Types of programs not represented by survey respondents included licensed exempt providers, non-licensed home-based programs, and tribal early care and education programs. All respondents said they provide care for preschool-age children (defined as two and a half years to kindergarten entry) and more than half provided care for infants (birth to less than one year) and toddlers (one to less than two and a half years). Fewer (40 percent) provided care for school-age children (Exhibit 2).

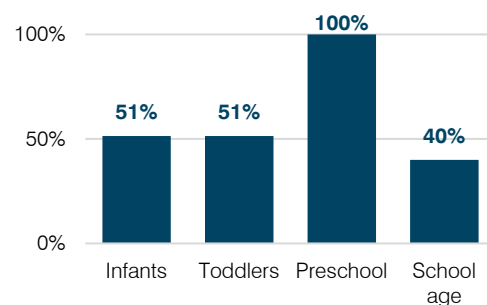
EXHIBIT 1. Types of Child Care Centers or Programs



N = 35

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

EXHIBIT 2. Age of Children in Care



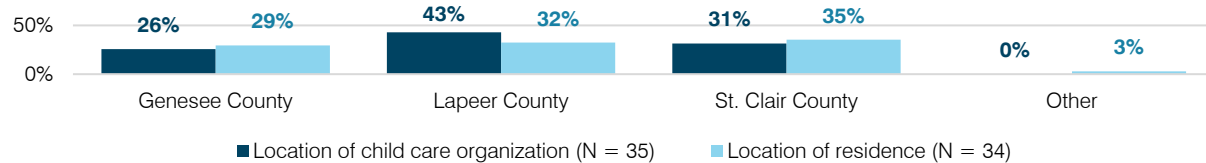
N = 35

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Survey Respondents

While all respondents provided care in the GLSSC region, no respondents provided care in Shiawassee County although PSC conducted additional outreach in an effort to gain Shiawassee County respondents. More than 40 percent of respondents worked for child care organizations in Lapeer County, 31 percent for organizations located in St. Clair County, and 26 percent worked in Genesee County (Exhibit 3). Nearly all respondents also lived in one of those three counties.

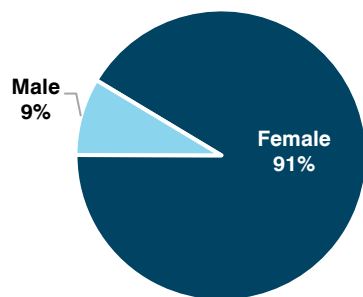
EXHIBIT 3. Location of Child Care Organization and Residence



N = Varies by response

Most respondents (91 percent) were female and 89 percent were white (Exhibits 4 and 5).

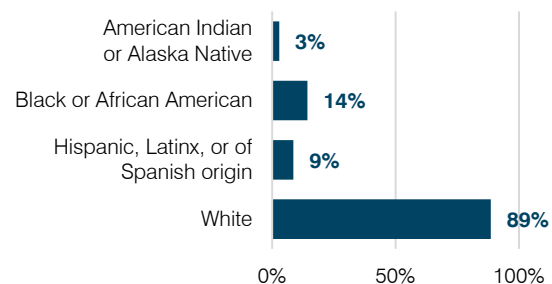
EXHIBIT 4. Percentage of Respondents by Gender



N = 35

Survey questions were largely based on whether the respondent was a child care organization owner or administrator or a member of the organization's staff. Nearly two-thirds of respondents were owners or administrators and just over one-third were staff (Exhibit 6).

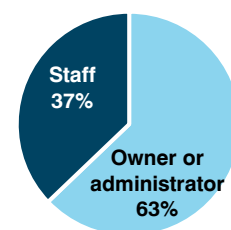
EXHIBIT 5. Percentage of Respondents by Race or Ethnicity



N = 35

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

EXHIBIT 6. Respondent Position in Organization



N = 35

Child Care Organization Owners or Administrators

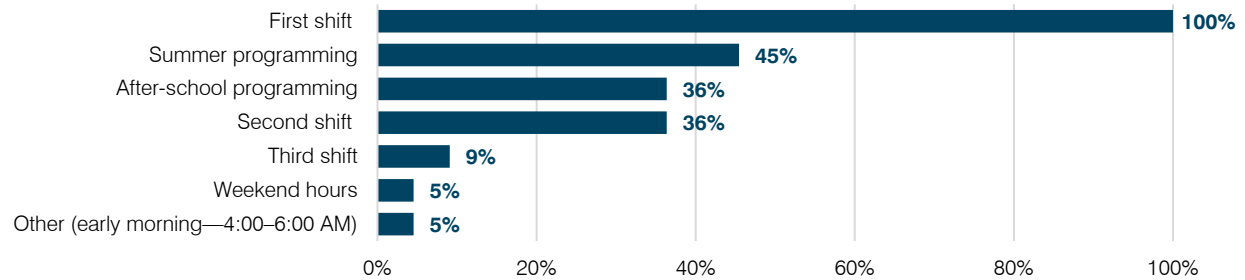
Organizations represented by the owner or administrator respondents have been operating for an average of 19 years, with the years of operation ranging from zero to 40. The child care organizations served 101 children on average over the last year, with a range of between 12 children and 500 children. Licensed capacity, enrollment at the time of the survey, and the number of children on a waitlist varied by the age of the children served. For example, those serving infants had an average licensed capacity of 9.6, an average current enrollment of 6.9, and an average of 6.5 children on a waitlist. Those serving preschool-age and school-age children had higher average licensed capacities and current enrollment numbers (Exhibit 7).

EXHIBIT 7. Number of Children by Licensed Capacity, Current Enrollment, and Waitlist and by Age

	Licensed Capacity	Current Enrollment	Waitlist
Infants			
Average	9.6	6.9	6.5
Range	2–24	0–24	1–20
Toddlers			
Average	13.2	9.8	6.6
Range	2–30	2–30	2–20
Preschool age			
Average	45.2	31.6	6.6
Range	7–178	2–130	0–25
School age			
Average	55.7	35.8	8.9
Range	0–473	0–300	0–45

N = Varies by response and by age

All respondent child care organizations provided care during the first shift (e.g., 7:00 AM–5:30 PM), 45 percent provided summer programming, and 36 each provided after-school programming and care during the second shift (e.g., 3:00–11:00 PM). Only a few respondents provided care during the third shift (e.g., 11:00 PM–7:00 AM) or on weekends (Exhibit 8).

EXHIBIT 8. Percentage Providing Care by Work Shift

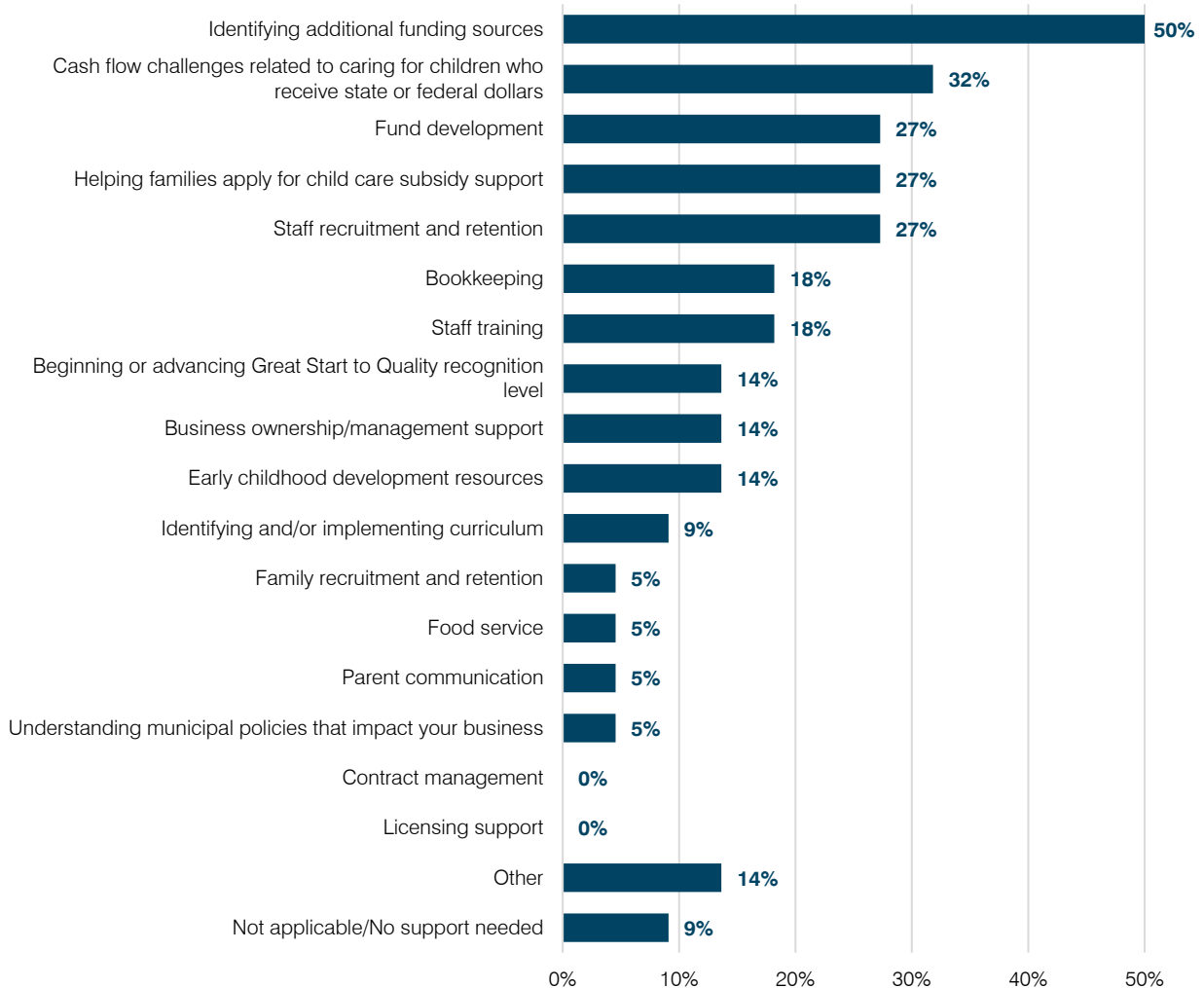
N = 22

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Support

Half of respondents said support for identifying additional funding sources was in their top five choices of necessary child care business owner supports. Additionally, nearly one-third said they needed support with cash flow challenges related to caring for children who receive state or federal dollars. Nearly 30 percent of both owners and administrators said they needed support with fund development, helping families apply for child care subsidies, and staff recruitment and retention (Exhibit 9).

EXHIBIT 9. Needed Business Supports



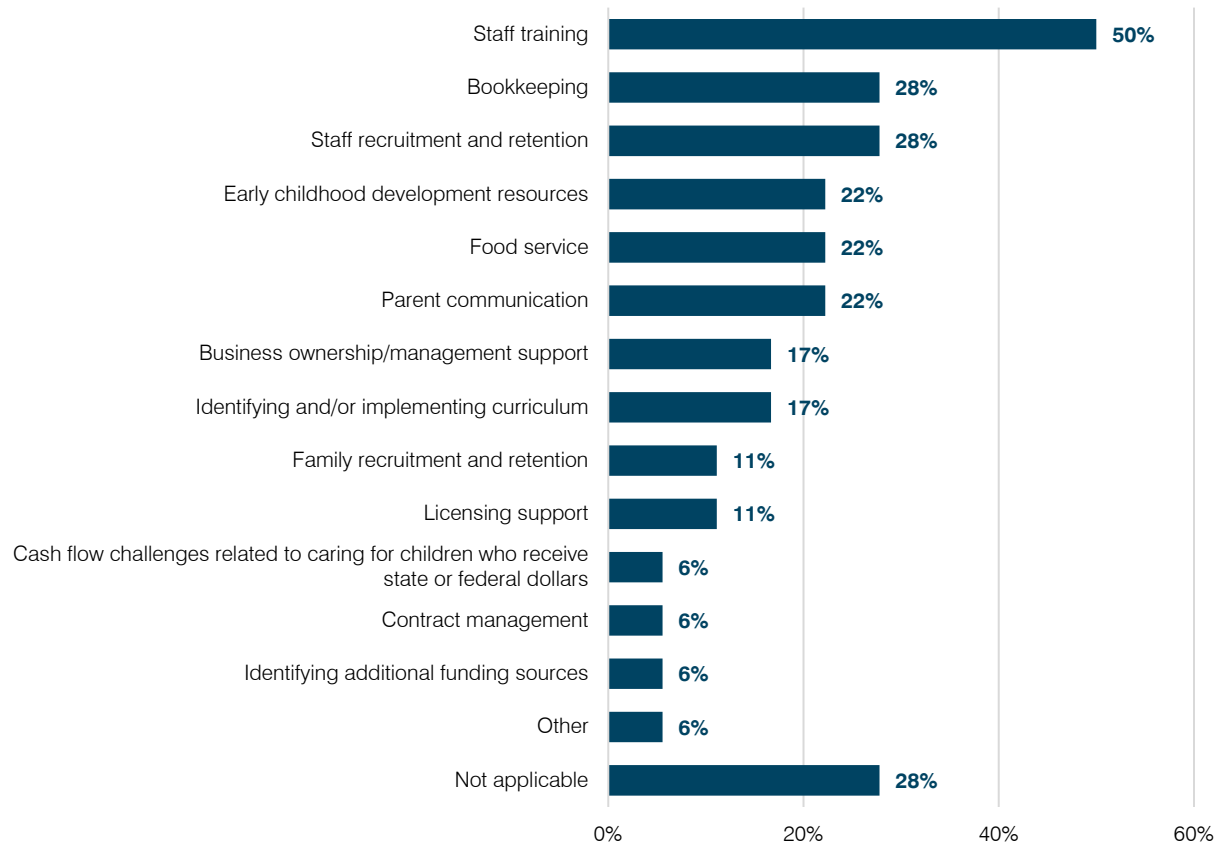
N = 22

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

“I had to use YouTube to learn everything about operating a child care business. Figuring out the business side of things is a lot.”

While only 18 percent of respondents chose staff training as a top support needed, half said they have paid for staff training over the last year. More than one-quarter each have paid for bookkeeping support and staff recruitment and retention support in the year prior to taking the survey (Exhibit 10).

EXHIBIT 10. Support Paid for over the Last Year

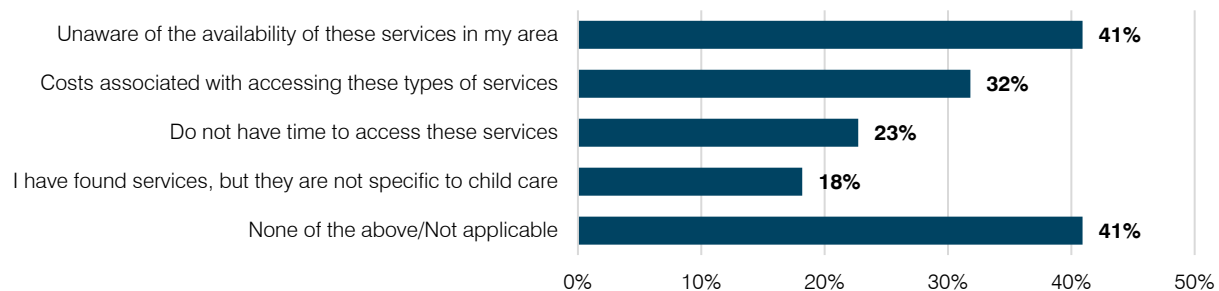


N = 18

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

More than 40 percent of respondents said they did not take full advantage of available supports because they were unaware of services in their area, and nearly one-third said they did not take full advantage due to the cost associated with accessing services (Exhibit 11).

EXHIBIT 11. Reasons for Not Fully Using Child Care Business Supports



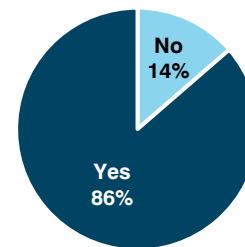
N = 22

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Funding

Most respondents (86 percent) said their child care employment/business is their primary source of income (Exhibit 12).

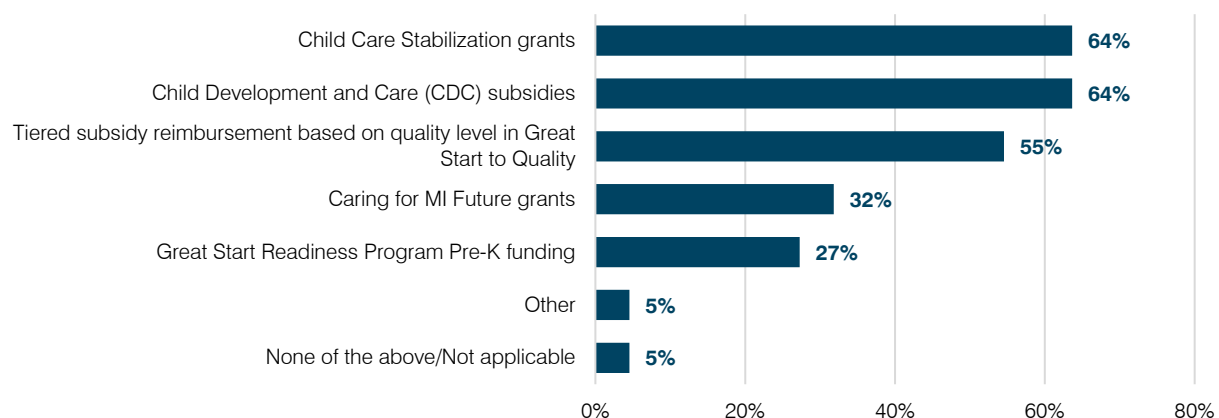
EXHIBIT 12. Percentage Whose Primary Source of Income is Child Care Employment/Business



N = 22

In the year prior to taking the survey, nearly two-thirds of respondents had received funding from Child Care Stabilization grants and Child Development and Care subsidies (Exhibit 13). More than half had also received tiered subsidy reimbursement based on their Great Start to Quality level. Around one-third received Caring for MI Future grant funding, and just over one-quarter received Great Start Readiness Program Pre-K funding.

EXHIBIT 13. Types of Funding Sources Received in the Last Year



N = 22

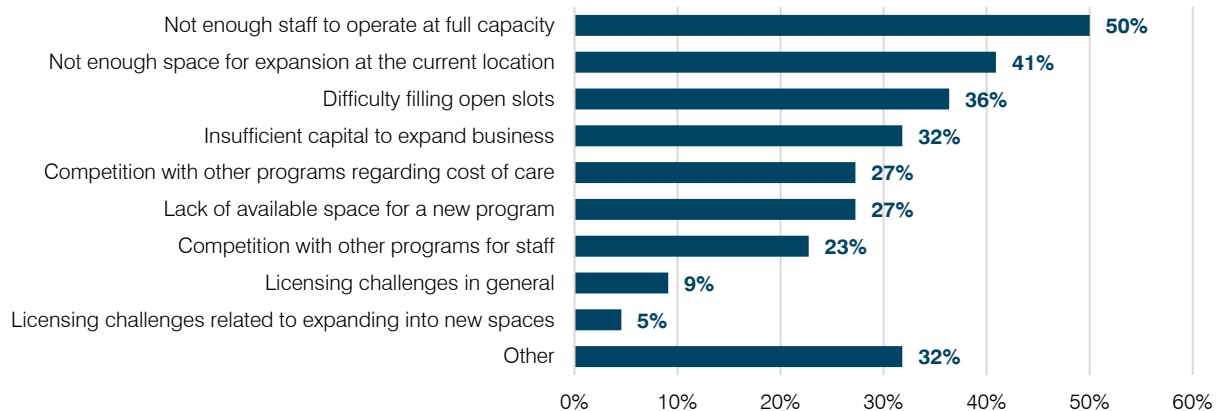
Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

In addition, four respondents (18 percent) said they had received additional funds and/or grants at the local, state, or federal level in the year prior to taking the survey. Of those, two said they received other state grant support, and another said they received a facility improvement grant and a startup grant.

Challenges

Child care providers cited several challenges. Half of respondents said that they did not have enough staff to operate at full capacity, 41 percent did not have enough space for expansion at their current location, 36 percent had difficulty filling open slots, and 32 percent had insufficient capital to expand their business (Exhibit 14). Additionally, around one-quarter of both owners and administrators were challenged due to competition with other programs regarding care cost, lack of available space for a new program, and competition with other programs for staff.

EXHIBIT 14. Percentage Facing Challenges with Enrollment or Capacity



N = 22

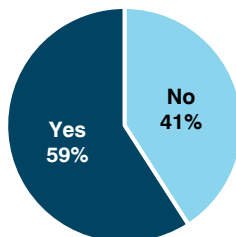
Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Staffing Shortages

Nearly 60 percent of respondents said they are currently experiencing a staff shortage, while only 27 percent said they experienced shortage prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (Exhibits 15 and 16.)

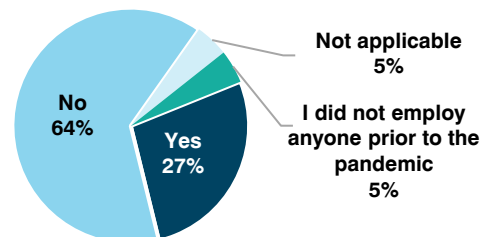
“There is a desperate need for people who love children.”

EXHIBIT 15. Percentage Currently Experiencing a Staffing Shortage



N = 22

EXHIBIT 16. Percentage that Experienced Staffing Shortage Prior to COVID-19

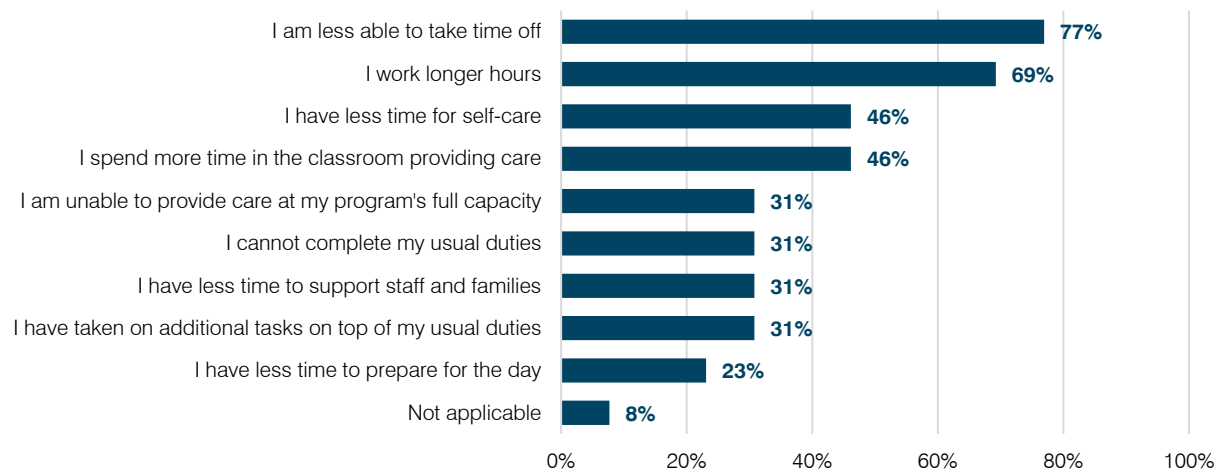


N = 22

Note: Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding.

The top staffing shortage impacts included respondents being less able to take time off, having to work longer hours, having less time for self-care, and spending more time in the classroom providing care. More than three-quarters of respondents said not being able to take time off was one of the top five impacts, nearly 70 percent said a top-five impact was working longer hours, and nearly half said a top-five impact was having less time for self-care and spending more time in the classroom providing care (Exhibit 17).

EXHIBIT 17. Impacts of Staffing Shortages



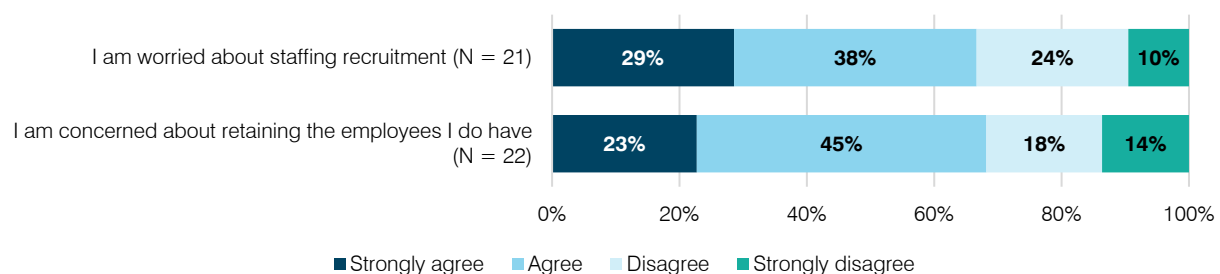
N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Staff Recruitment and Retention Challenges

Around two-thirds of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they were worried about staffing recruitment and concerned about retaining the employees they do have (Exhibit 18).

EXHIBIT 18. Concern About Staff Recruitment and Retention

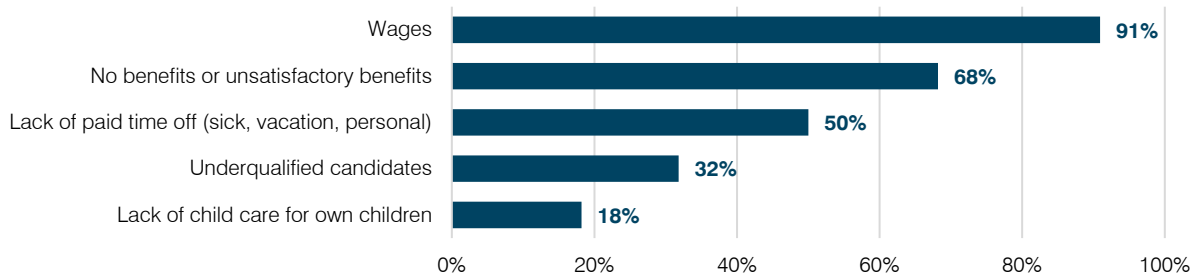


N = Varies by response

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Nearly all respondents (91 percent) said wages were a main challenge for both recruiting and retaining qualified staff (Exhibits 19 and 20). Additionally, more than two-thirds said no benefits or unsatisfactory benefits was a main challenge for both recruitment and retention, and half said that lack of paid time off made recruiting and retaining staff challenging. In addition, 59 percent said that burnout or exhaustion was a main challenge in retaining qualified staff.

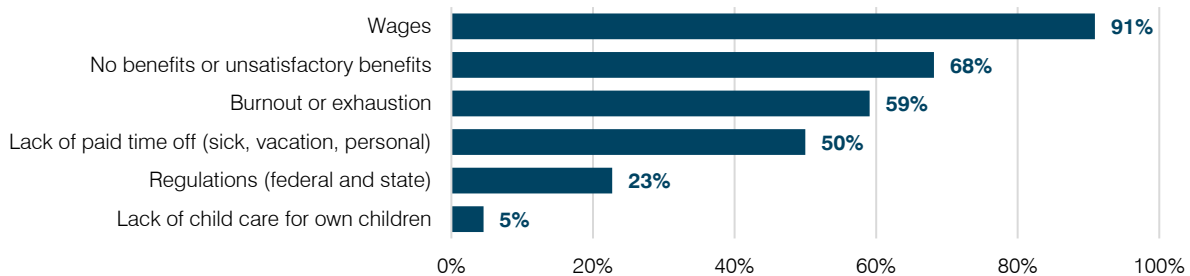
EXHIBIT 19. Challenges Related to Recruiting Qualified Staff



N = 22

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

EXHIBIT 20. Challenges Related to Retaining Qualified Staff



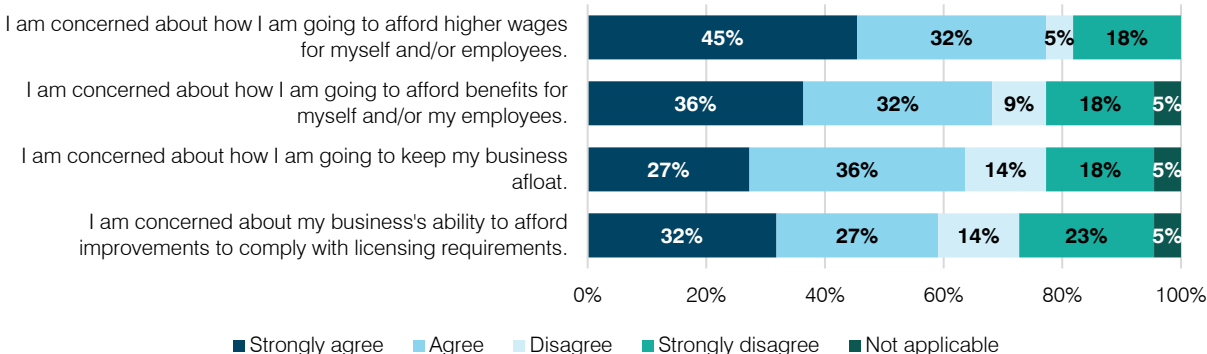
N = 22

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Financial Challenges

More than three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were concerned about how they were going to afford higher wages for themselves or their employees, and 68 percent either strongly agreed or agreed that they were concerned about how they were going to afford benefits for themselves or their employees (Exhibit 21). Around 60 percent of both owners and administrators also strongly agreed or agreed that they were concerned about how they were going to keep their business afloat, and they were concerned about their business's ability to afford improvements to comply with licensing requirements.

EXHIBIT 21. Concern About Financial Factors of Child Care Business



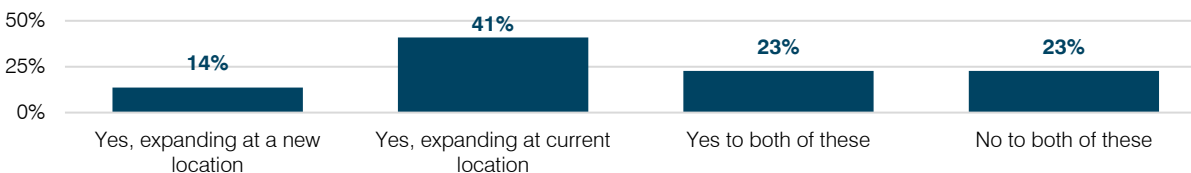
N = 22

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Expansion

More than three-quarters of respondents said that they would consider expanding their licensed capacity if given the appropriate resources. More than 40 percent said they would consider expanding at their current location, 14 percent said they would consider expanding at a new location, and nearly one-quarter said they would consider both (Exhibit 22).

EXHIBIT 22. Percentage Who Would Consider Expanding Licensed Capacity

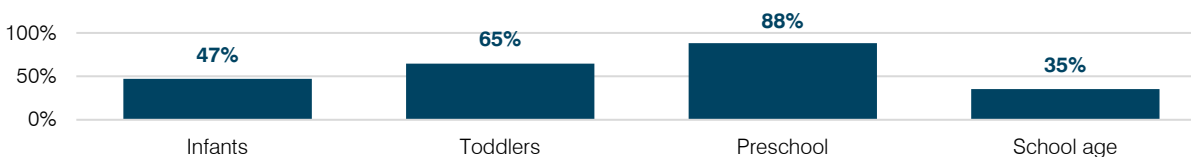


N = 22

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Most said that they would consider expansion for preschool-age children, nearly two-thirds would consider expanding for toddlers, nearly half for infants, and just over one-third for school-age children (Exhibit 23).

EXHIBIT 23. Age Groups for Which Respondents Would Consider Expansion

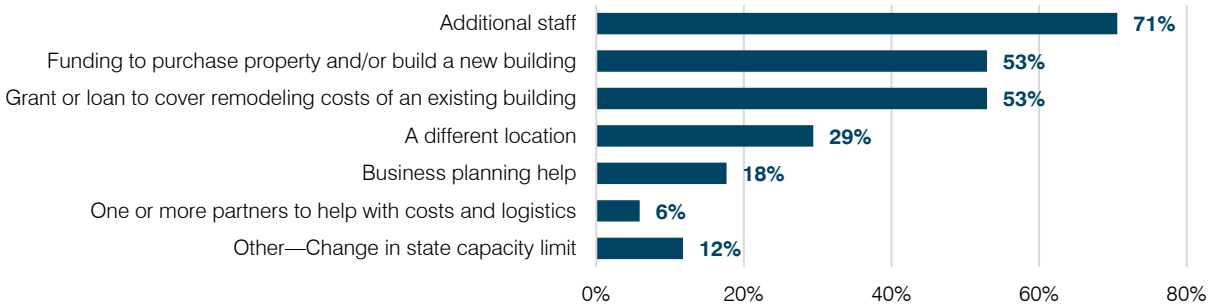


N = 17

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

More than 70 percent of respondents said they would need additional staff to expand their licensed capacity, and more than half of both owners and administrators said they would need funding to purchase property or build a new building and a grant or loan to cover remodeling costs of an existing building (Exhibit 24). Nearly 30 percent said they would need a new location. Nearly 30 percent said they would need a new location.

EXHIBIT 24. Needs for Expansion



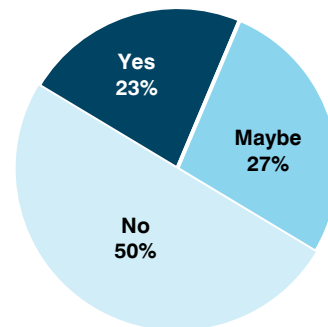
N = 17

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Leaving Child Care Workforce

While half of respondents said they were not considering leaving their job in child care or closing their child care program in the next year, 23 percent said they were considering it, and the other 27 percent said they may be considering leaving the child care workforce (Exhibit 25).

EXHIBIT 25. Percentage Considering Leaving Child Care Work



N = 22

Reasons respondents gave for considering leaving their child care work included low wages, not being able to compete with no-cost preschool programs, lack of qualified staff, long hours, and stress over licensing violations. Comments included:

After paying all the bills, expenses, and supplies I make less than minimum wage. I cannot raise my prices. We are very rural. But [I] cannot support my family on this.

—

I'm working 12 hours a day to pay my employee more than I'm earning so I can keep my employee.

Long hours, less money. I'm overworking to pay staff more money than the program is making.

—

GSRP is getting all 3–4 year old children. I cannot stay open with just under 3.

—

I do not like GSRP and unfortunately people will typically want free programs over tuition-based programs. We run a relatively low cost tuition and have an amazing program, but people don't want to pay or only want all day child care.

—

Gaining and retaining staff has become extremely stressful. Not being able to spend time with my own family as well as take care of my own needs is challenging. I'm done missing out on my own children's important moments.

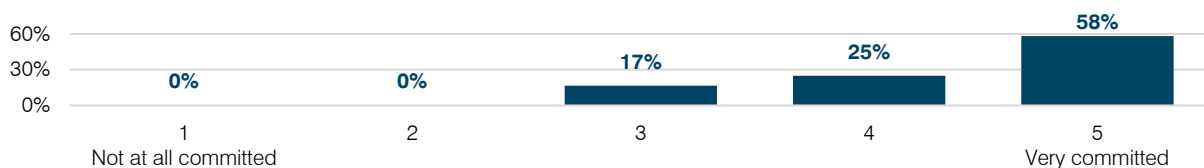
—

Constantly being worried that you will be "in trouble" with licensing because instead of consulting, they seem to be out looking for violations.

Child Care Staff

Of all survey respondents, 13 were child care staff, most of whom rated their level of commitment to early childhood education as their career either a four or five on a five-point scale, with five being “very committed” (Exhibit 26).

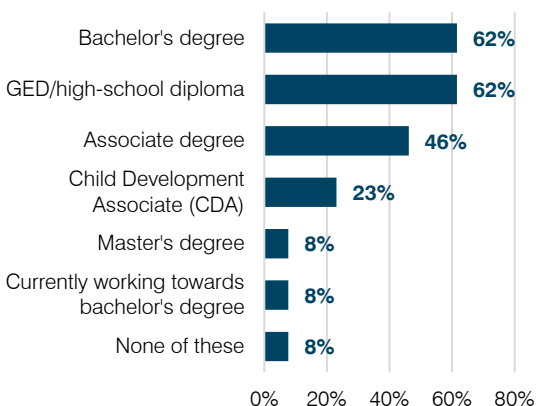
EXHIBIT 26. Level of Commitment to Early Childhood Education as a Career



N = 12

Nearly one-third of staff respondents had a bachelor's degree, 46 percent an associate degree, and 23 percent a Child Development Associate credential (Exhibit 27). Most (85 percent) worked full-time (30–40 hours per week) in their child care position (Exhibit 28).

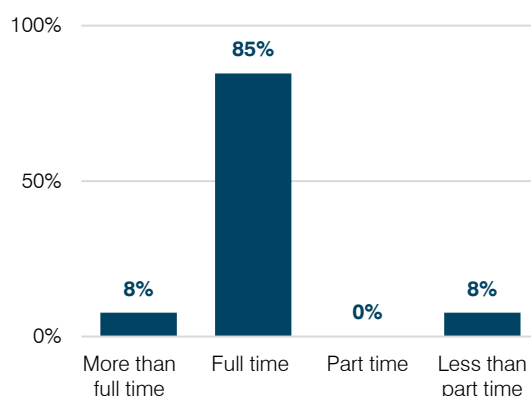
EXHIBIT 27. Child Care Staff Education Levels



N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

EXHIBIT 28. Typical Hours Worked per Week

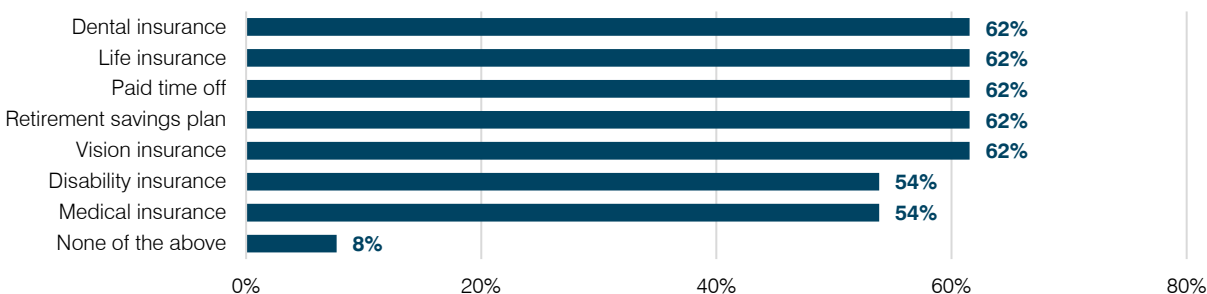


N = 13

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Just under two-thirds of respondent employers offered dental, life, and vision insurance; paid time off; and a retirement savings plan (Exhibit 29). Just over half offered disability and medical insurance.

EXHIBIT 29. Benefits Offered

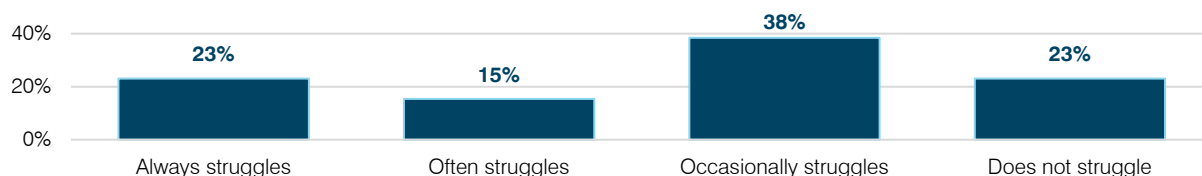


N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Respondents lived an average of ten miles from their employer, with a range of zero to 53 miles. They were paid an average hourly rate of \$17.91, with a range of \$11.77 to \$23.00. Nearly one-quarter said their family always struggles to make ends meet and another 15 percent said their family often struggles (Exhibit 30).

EXHIBIT 30. Percentage of Families Who Struggle to Make Ends Meet



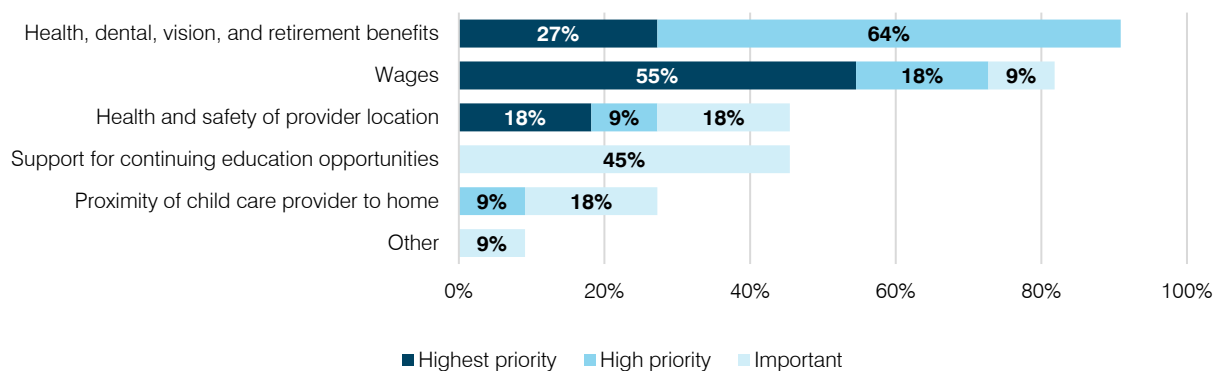
N = 13

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Job Priorities

When searching or applying for a job, 91 percent of respondents said that health, dental, vision, and retirement benefits were either their highest priority or their second highest priority (Exhibit 31). More than half said wages were their highest priority and nearly 20 percent chose wages as their second highest priority.

EXHIBIT 31. Top Three Job Priorities

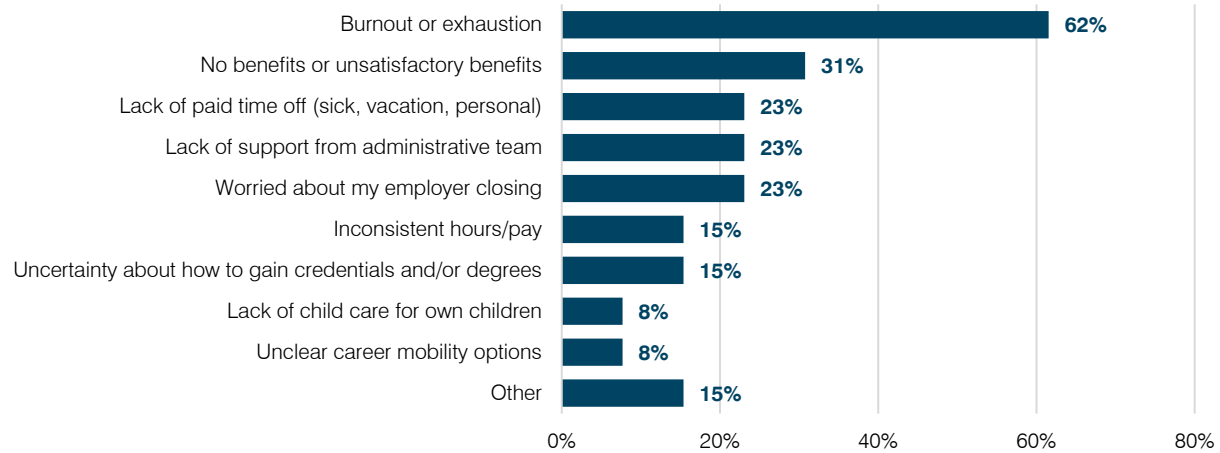


N = 11

Challenges

Although most respondents expressed a high level of commitment to early childhood education as a career (Exhibit 26), nearly two-thirds of respondents said that burnout or exhaustion was a factor they were currently facing that might lead them to consider leaving their current child care position (Exhibit 32). Additionally, nearly one-third said that no or unsatisfactory benefits were a factor that may lead them to consider leaving. Nearly one-quarter each also said they currently face a lack of paid time off, lack of support from their administrative team, and worry about their employer closing.

EXHIBIT 32. Factors that Could Lead to Leaving Child Care



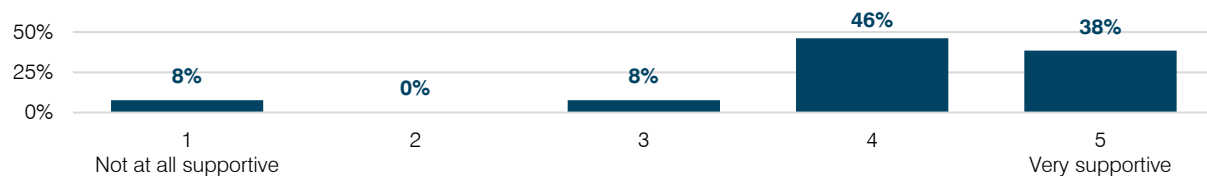
N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Support

On a scale of one to five, with one being “not at all supportive” and five being “very supportive,” 84 percent of respondents rated the supportiveness of their workplace environment either a four—46 percent—or a five—38 percent (Exhibit 33).

EXHIBIT 33. Level of Workplace Environment Supportiveness

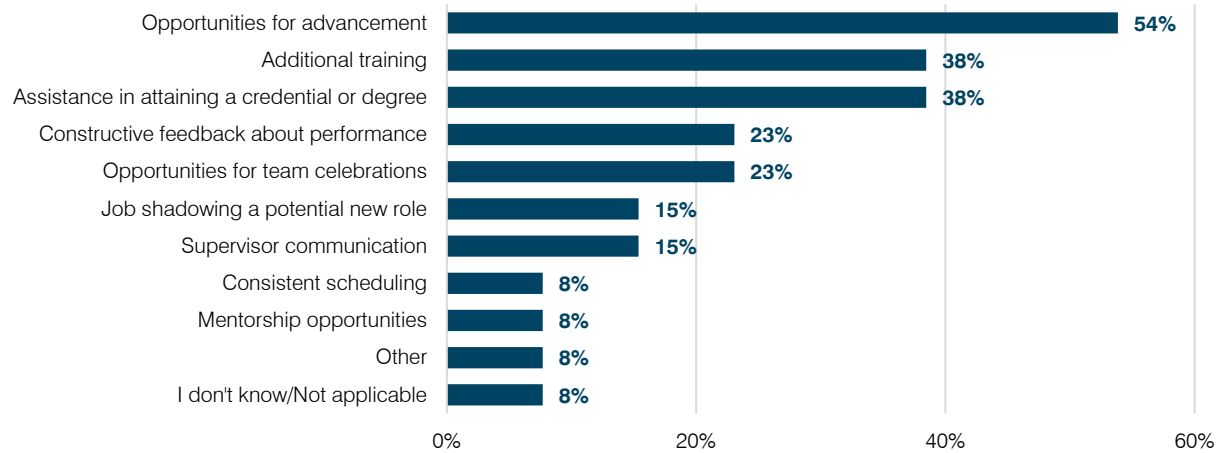


N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

More than half of the respondents said they would like opportunities for advancement at their place of employment. Nearly 40 percent of respondents would like additional training opportunities and assistance in attaining a credential or degree.

EXHIBIT 34. Desired Workplace Support



N = 13

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

One respondent said their employer could improve their workplace environment in the following ways:

[Having] a better open line of communication, [being] present, respectful, and genuine, [holding] others to the same standards they hold you to, providing training, and being more transparent.

Appendix I: Parent and Family Discussion Group Guide

Introduction

Hi. My name is _____, and I'm from Public Sector Consultants (PSC), a Lansing-based, nonpartisan research and consulting public policy firm. My colleague, [name], is joining me today. I will lead the discussion and [colleague] will take notes and may have some additional questions for the group.

Thank you for joining today's conversation. The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Regional Child Care Coalition (GLSSC) is a group of community leaders in Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair Counties who want to increase the supply of high-quality child care. The coalition is gathering feedback from parents and families of young children to inform data-driven decisions as they create an action plan to do so.

Anything you share in the discussion today will remain anonymous and nothing you say will be directly attributed to you. We believe honest and candid input that is inclusive of all viewpoints will best support the efforts to develop an action plan that meets the communities' needs.

To support this being a productive and positive conversation, let's establish some participation ground rules before we begin. Some I like to use include:

- Be present (limit distractions, turn cameras on if possible)
- Be respectful (honor confidentiality)
- Step up and step back (speak up, but if you share a lot, take a step back to allow others to speak too)
- Acknowledge the number of questions we have and that we might have to move our conversation forward to get to all of them
- Use both/and thinking (we all have different experiences, and we want to hear from everyone)

Are there any others you'd like to add?

To get a sense of who is here today, let's do some quick introductions. If you can, please share your name, what county you live in, and your current child care arrangement.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Discussion Questions

- How do you feel about your current child care arrangement?
Prompt: Hours of service, cost, location, staffing, staff ratios, class sizes
 - What things would you change about your current child care arrangement?
Prompt: Hours of service, cost, location, staffing, staff ratios, class sizes
 - If you or your partner work from home, do you use child care on those days?
 - Do you have backup child care options if your current child care arrangement must close for illness/weather/professional development days?
 - In your ideal scenario (e.g., finances are not a concern, location/hours are convenient), what type of child care arrangement would you most prefer (or would you have preferred) during infant and toddler years?
Prompt: Child care center, home-based care, parent (partner or self; permanently stay-at-home or paid leave), relative, nanny, community-based before- and after-school programs, school-based before- and after-school programs, etc.
 - a. During preschool years?
 - b. During school-aged years?
 - c. Summer programming?
1. When your child was between zero and five years old, did you change your child care arrangement at any time?
 - a. How did you change your arrangement (setting, hours, days of the week, etc.)?
 - b. What prompted you to change your child care arrangement?
 - c. How did you feel your child care experience changed when you changed the setting?
 - Do you receive any child care benefits through your employer?
Prompt: Flexible spending accounts, paid parental leave, financial assistance like vouchers to offset costs, flexible work scheduling and/or remote work options, onsite child care, information about financial assistance for child care expenses, Tri-Share participation, backup care assistance
 - d. Which employer benefit for child care have you or would you find most valuable?
 - Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your child care needs that we did not discuss today?

Appendix J: Child Care Business Owner/Administrator Small Group Discussion Guide

Introduction

Hi. My name is _____, and I'm from Public Sector Consultants (PSC), a Lansing-based, nonpartisan research and consulting public policy firm. I am joined today by my colleague, [name]. I will lead the discussion and [colleague] will take notes and may have some additional questions for the group.

Thank you for joining today's conversation. The Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawassee, and St. Clair (GLSSC) Regional Child Care Coalition is a group of community leaders in the region who want to increase the supply of high-quality child care. The GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition is gathering feedback from child care business owners and administrators to inform data-driven decisions as they create an action plan to improve child care in the region.

Anything you share in the discussion today will remain anonymous and nothing you say will be directly attributed to you. We believe honest and candid input that is inclusive of all viewpoints will best support the GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition in its efforts to develop an action plan that meets the community's needs.

Also, I wanted to note that Kate from Flint Beat is here to listen and learn more about child care. She won't be writing down names or identifying information, but she wants to learn more about how people in the child care field are being impacted by the current state. Everything you share will remain confidential.

To support this being a productive and positive conversation, let's establish some participation ground rules before we begin. Some I like to use include:

- Be present (limit distractions, turn cameras on if possible)
- Be respectful (honor confidentiality)
- Step up and step back (speak up, but if you share a lot, take a step back to allow others to speak too)
- Acknowledge the number of questions we have and that we might have to move our conversation forward to get to all of them
- Use both/and thinking (we all have different experiences, and we want to hear from everyone)

Are there any others you'd like to add?

To get a sense of who is here today, let's do some quick introductions. If you can, please share your name and what county you live in and then you can choose the next person to introduce themselves.

Thank you, everyone. Some Zoom-based options for engagement today include the use of emojis and the chat function. If your camera is on, please feel free to give a thumbs up or nod to show agreement with others' comments and you can also use your emojis or the chat to note similar feelings or general agreement. You can also use chat more generally if there is something you'd rather type out and share instead of saying aloud.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background

Zoom poll:

How long has your child care program been open?

Do you own or operate multiple child care programs? How many? In our region or others?

Did you open it yourself or were you hired after the child care program was established?

Discussion start:

2. If you opened it yourself:
 - a. How did you make the business decision to open your child care program?
 - b. What things did you consider when planning to open a child care location (location, need, etc.)
3. What has been the biggest help to get your business or program where it is today?
4. What is the greatest challenge facing your child care program?
 - a. How have you addressed these challenges?

Business Supports

5. What kind of support do you need as a child care business owner or administrator?
 - Prompts: We have heard that some of the supports child care business owners and administrators need are:
 - a. Business ownership/ management support (mentoring, small business resources, planning etc.)
 - b. Staff recruitment and retention
 - c. Identifying additional funding sources
 - d. Fund development
 - e. Licensing support
 - f. Identifying and/or implementing curriculum
 - g. Helping families apply for child care subsidy support
 - h. Early childhood development resources
 - i. Staff training
 - Would any of these supports be useful to you?
6. What resources have been the most helpful for supporting your program?
 - a. Examples of programs: Our Strong Start Navigator, Our Strong Start Licensing Toolkit, Small Business Development Center, Great Start Resource Center, Michigan Tri-Share Program, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Michigan AEYC, TEACH Early Childhood Michigan.
 - b. Examples of types of support: Advertising and outreach, website development, projections, nonprofit board management, accounting/bookkeeping, business plan development, LARA navigation, retention programming, onboarding programming.

- Prompt: Is there anything these programs could do to make them more effective at supporting you as a child care business owner or administrator?

Costs

We understand that discussing costs can be a sensitive topic. Please remember that anything you share will not be attributed to you or your company or organization and that you do not have to answer anything you are uncomfortable with sharing. Feel free to use the chat function to send us a message privately if you would like.

7. Based on what you know, what is the average cost per child to provide care by age group (like schools' per pupil funding formula) at your center or home-based child care program?
 - a. Infant
 - b. Toddler
 - c. Preschooler
8. How much, on average, do you spend annually on advertising and outreach?
 - a. For family recruitment purposes
 - b. For staffing recruitment purposes
9. How many full- and part-time employees do you have?
 - a. What percentage of your employees make at least \$15 per hour?
10. Do you accept subsidy payments?
 - a. What impacts your decision to accept or not accept subsidy payments?
 - b. What, if any, encouragement, or assistance do you offer families interested in applying for the subsidy?

Future Planning

11. Would you consider expanding your program or establishing a new program over the next year?
 - a. What would impact your decision to expand or not expand?
12. How do you expect the upcoming universal preschool initiative to impact your program?
13. If you could express one thing to those working on implementation, what would you share with them?

Closing

Is there anything else you'd like to share today that we didn't get to in the questions or discussion?

Thank you for your feedback this evening. Everything you shared today will remain confidential and will directly inform the GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition's action planning. If you would like to be more involved in the coalition, please put your email address in the chat box and we can reach out to you about coalition membership.

In the next two weeks, you will receive an e-gift card as a thank you for participating in tonight's discussion group. It will be sent to the email address you used to register for this discussion. If you need it to be sent to another address, please enter that address in the chat box.

Appendix K: GLSSC Regional Child Care Coalition Advocacy and Policy Priorities

Goal Four: Advocate for Local, State, and Federal Policy Change

Objective One: Improve MDHHS Child Development and Care (CDC) Scholarship Program

Purpose

- Increase awareness and utilization of the MDHHS CDC Scholarship
- Change eligibility requirements for subsidy program to increase access to and utilization of the subsidy by families with young children

Audience

- State policymakers

Topics

- MDHHS CDC Scholarship
 - Adjusting family eligibility to increase access to and utilization of the subsidy

GLSSC Actions

- Develop local partnerships of individuals and organizations interested in pursuing MDHHS CDC Scholarship changes
- Inventory existing educational materials and resources available
- Create a policy priority agenda documenting issues related to the MDHHS CDC Scholarship and provide to ECIC for state-level advocacy

Support Needed

- Given the statewide level of effort required to enact policy and rule changes within state agencies, the GLSSC requests ECIC's assistance in creating educational material pertaining to:
 - Child care providers
 - Parents and caregivers of young children
 - Policymakers
- GLSSC requests ECIC's assistance in advocating for MDHHS CDC Scholarship eligibility changes at the state level.
- GLSSC requests facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.

Objective Two: Ease Municipal and Licensing Requirement Obstacles

Purpose

- Increase the number of existing, new, and expanding child care businesses (licensed and unlicensed)

Audience

- State and municipal representatives

Topics

- Local municipality ordinances which affect child care businesses
 - Enacting child care business-friendly ordinances at a local municipal level
- Child care licensing
 - Reducing burden on child care providers while balancing child safety and care quality

GLSSC Actions

- Identify local municipality priorities per regional child care providers (zoning, etc.)
- Inventory existing educational materials available
- Draft and distribute child care business–friendly ordinances to local municipalities
- Participate in public comment periods and/or hearings about child care licensing
- Draft and provide a list of licensing concerns to support ECIC’s statewide effort
- Advocate for increased funding for regional resource centers to support a regional navigation liaison.

Support Needed

- Given the statewide level of effort required to enact policy and rule changes within state agencies, the GLSSC requests ECIC’s assistance in championing the list of licensing concerns GLSSC will create at the state level.
- Due to the pattern of often restrictive municipal requirements around the state, GLSSC requests ECICs assistance in creating educational materials for child care providers to navigate local municipality requirements.
- Additionally, GLSSC requests examples of successful, child care business–friendly ordinances to offer to local municipalities interested in better supporting their local child care environment.
- GLSSC requests facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.

Objective Three: Improve Child Care Wages and Benefits

Purpose

- Encourage competitive and fair compensation for child care providers

Audience

- Legislators, state representatives, union representatives

Topics

- Child care provider wage increase at the regional and state level

GLSSC Actions

- Research and determine a regionally appropriate wage for child care providers across the spectrum of possible positions.
- Develop talking points to engage with local policymakers.
- Support ECIC's effort at the state level to increase child care provider wages and improve access to benefits through local information distribution and advocacy.

Support Needed

- Due to the established statewide need to improve child care wages and benefits, GLSSC requests ECIC assistance in advocating for child care provider wage increases at the state level.
- GLSSC requests facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.



**PUBLIC SECTOR
CONSULTANTS**

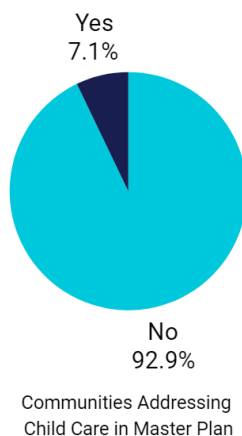
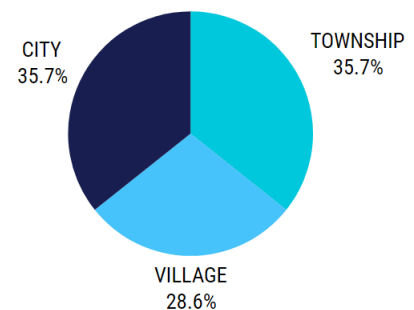
230 N. Washington Square
Suite 300
Lansing, MI 48933

Municipal Child Care Infrastructure Questionnaire Summary

The recent questionnaire circulated among various municipal stakeholders in Michigan aimed to gather insights on the current state and regulatory environment of child care services.

Municipalities from diverse designations such as townships and cities participated, providing a comprehensive view of how local regulations align with the broader needs for child care access and development.

Municipal Participation



Master Plan

The municipalities that responded, including Montrose Charter Township, City of Flint, Fenton Township, Richmond, and City of Linden, each have their master plans, which are crucial for structured growth and zoning compliance. However, only a minority explicitly mention child care as a strategic element within these plans. For instance, the City of Flint's master plan acknowledges child care but does not extensively cover it.

“Healthy families raise healthy youth. Provide family support services, such as daycare and adult education to help parents and caregivers fulfill their roles.” - Flint’s Master plan

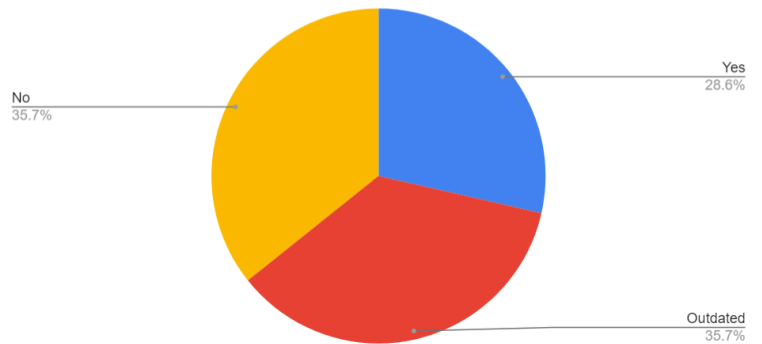
This indicates a potential area for development in integrating child care more robustly into municipal planning.

Zoning and Regulatory

In terms of zoning, the questionnaire reveals a varied approach to accommodating child care facilities. Most communities have zoned areas specifically allowing or conditionally permitting child care businesses, which aligns with Michigan’s state zoning laws that encourage municipalities to provide adequate space for such essential services.

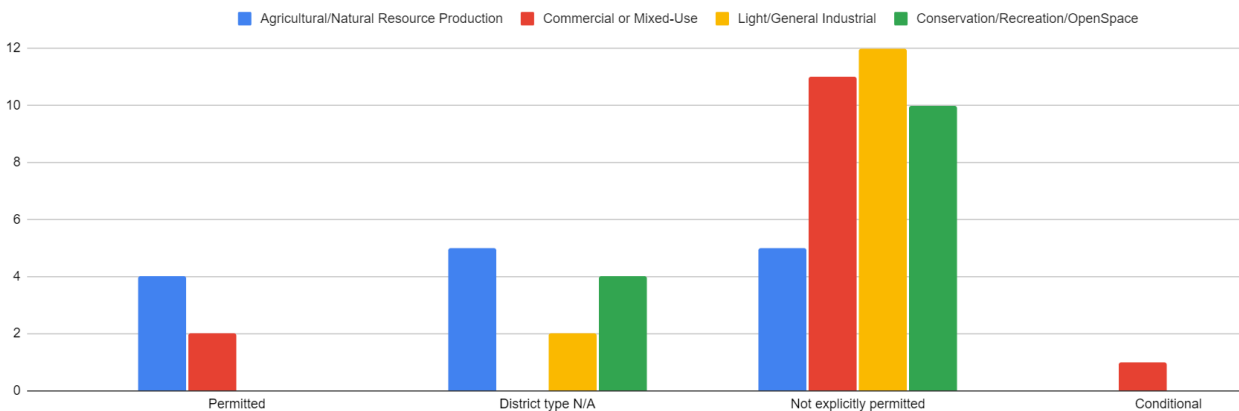
Nearly 35% of municipalities have code that has not been updated to include new state standards (PA 116) regarding the increase of available slots. By updating code to match the state, municipalities could expand the total number of child care slots in their municipality. The remaining 65% either do not address child care (35%), or has code that has been updated (28%).

Count of Are definitions generally consistent with PA 116, the Child Care Organizations Act?

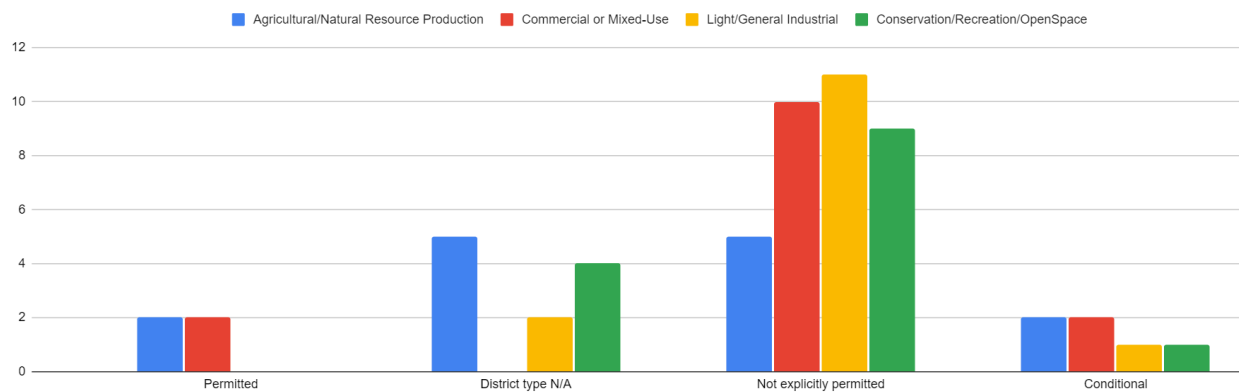


Municipalities permit child care facilities in residential and agricultural zones, many do not allow them by use in commercial or industrial zones.

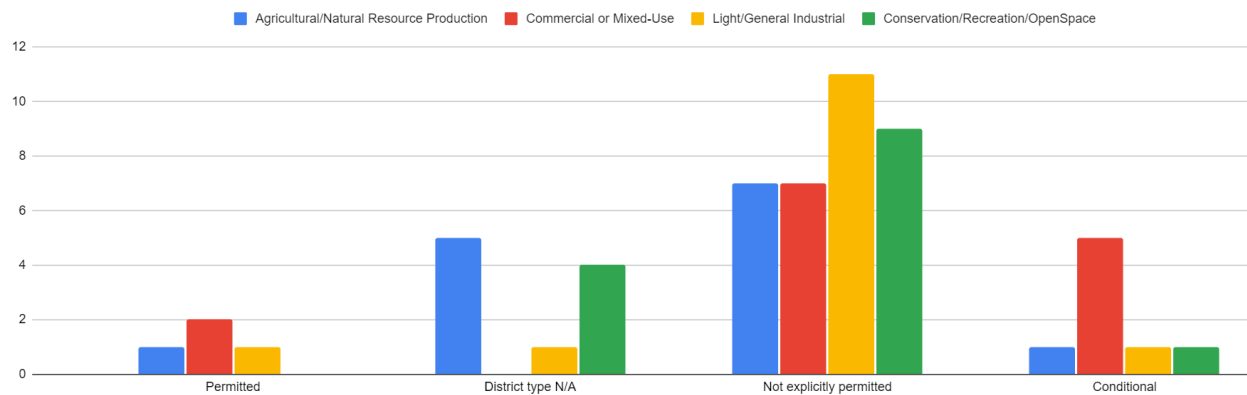
Family Homes - permitted or conditional use by district type



Group Homes - permitted or conditional use by district type



Child Care Centers - permitted or conditional use by district type



Additional zoning requirements are included in several municipal codes. These requirements can cover a variety of aspects such as proximity, signage, parking, and hours of operation.

Municipality	Not closer than 1,500 feet from each of the following: (1) Another child care group home, (2) Adult foster care, (3) A facility offering substance use disorder services, and (4) A community correction center, resident home, halfway house, or other similar facility.	Has appropriate fencing for the safety of the children in the group child care home as determined by the local unit of government.	Maintains the property consistent with the visible characteristics of the neighborhood.	Does not exceed 16 hours of operation during a 24-hour period.	Meets local identification signage requirements, if any.	Meets local off-street parking requirements for employees, if any.
Montrose Charter Township	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
City of Marine City	no	yes	no	no	no	no
Wales Township	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Fenton Township	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no
No Answer Given: Algonac, City of Flint, Richmond, City of Linden						
No special conditions are listed / Not included in code: Marathon Township, North Branch Village, Metamora Village, Columbiaville Village, North Branch Village, Casco Township						

Conditional approval requirements.

Fee Structures

The fee for obtaining a special use permit, where child care is not permitted by right, ranges from approximately \$200 to \$1500. Notably, Wales addresses the burdens of child care business owners face by not requiring a fee for the special use permit for child care businesses. This approach can significantly reduce the financial barriers for new childcare providers and serve as a model for other municipalities.

Summary of Key Findings

1. **Master Plan Integration:** There is a significant gap in the explicit integration of child care strategies in municipal master plans, with few cities like Flint mentioning it and

others overlooking it. Emphasizing the benefits of incorporating childcare into master plans can lead to more strategic placement of childcare facilities, better support for working families, and alignment with community development goals.

Average age of Master Plan: 3 years

2. **Zoning Code:** There is a diverse application of zoning laws concerning child care. Code that is not up to date or contains additional requirements could be limiting child care availability.

Updates to code could expand child care capacity

3. **Fee Structures:** The top end of the fee range for special use permits showcases the financial burden on child care providers. Wales's approach of not requiring a fee could be an effective model for reducing barriers.

Up to \$1500 for SUP/CUP when applied (with possible additional fees)

4. **Community Support and Consultation:** There is an expressed interest from several communities in obtaining consultation to foster more child care businesses, indicating a proactive stance towards enhancing local child care infrastructure.

Actionable steps are available to municipalities looking to address child care access.

The data from the questionnaire underscores the need for more targeted efforts to incorporate childcare into the strategic frameworks of municipal planning. Enhancing the clarity and consistency of zoning laws to support childcare facilities can create a more conducive environment for the growth of these essential services. Municipalities expressing interest in consultation to improve childcare provisions highlight a promising path forward towards creating a supportive ecosystem for families and providers alike.

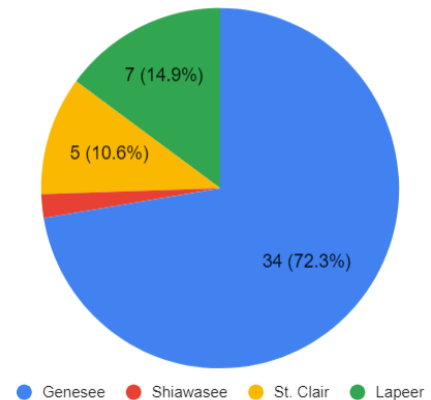
Next steps include organizing workshops for municipal planners on integrating childcare into master plans and zoning codes, offering one-on-one consultations for interested municipalities to provide tailored advice and support, and ensuring that municipalities regularly review and update their master plans to reflect the evolving needs and challenges of childcare provision.

Report on Child Care Providers Survey

Introduction

The survey was conducted among child care business owners and providers in Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, and Shiawassee counties aimed to gather insights into their operational practices, challenges, and support needs. The survey's primary focus was on understanding the adoption of child care management software, identifying areas where providers seek support, and gaining a better understanding of the overall landscape of child care services in these regions.

Count of Replies per County



Survey Methodology

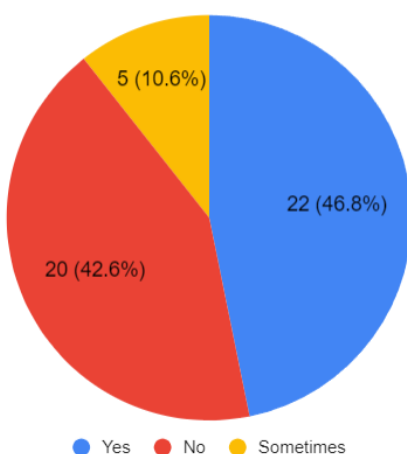
The survey was distributed to child care providers across the aforementioned counties. It included a mix of questions designed to capture quantitative data (e.g., software usage, license types) and qualitative insights (e.g., areas where support is needed). The survey reached a diverse group of providers, including those operating under Center, Family Home, and Group Home licenses.

Key Findings

License Types - The majority of respondents operated a **Center**, with fewer providers working under **Family Home** or **Group Home** licenses. This distribution suggests that most respondents are likely to be managing larger facilities, which might influence their needs and challenges.

Center	27
Family Home	8
Group Home	7
Other	3
Not Licensed	2

Usage of Child Care Software



Child Care Software Usage - There is a mixed adoption of child care management software among the respondents:

Yes: A significant portion of respondents are using some form of child care management software, with **Procare** being the most frequently mentioned tool.

No: A substantial number of providers are not using any software, potentially relying on manual processes or alternative methods for managing their operations.

Software Functions: *Among those using software, the primary functions utilized include: payroll management, billing, attendance tracking, and meal-tracking. This indicates a focus on essential administrative tasks.*

Support Needs - The providers expressed a variety of support needs, reflecting the diverse challenges they face:

- **Payroll and Billing:** Several respondents indicated a need for support in managing payroll and billing processes, which are crucial for the smooth operation of their facilities.
- **Staff Training:** Another common area of need is staff training, particularly for directors and other leadership roles. This suggests that providers may struggle with workforce development and retention.
- **Simplifying Paperwork:** A recurring theme was the desire to condense or streamline paperwork, indicating that administrative burden is a significant pain point for many providers.

Accountant and Tax Preparer Usage - The use of external financial services such as accountants and tax preparers varies among providers. While some rely on these services, others handle financial tasks in-house. This variation might be linked to the size of the operation and the resources available to the provider. More research should be done to understand about the entities providing these services to child care business owners and whether or not staff at these entities have specialized training in supporting child care business owners.

55% of respondents do not use an accountant

48% of respondents do not use a tax professional

Conclusion

The survey provides valuable insights into the operational challenges and needs of child care providers in Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, and Shiawassee counties. While there are minor concerns regarding the representativeness and potential biases in the data, the findings offer a solid foundation for understanding the current landscape of child care services in these regions.

Moving forward, it would be beneficial to address the identified support needs, particularly in areas like payroll management, staff training, and paperwork reduction. Additionally, efforts to increase the adoption of child care management software could help providers streamline their operations and reduce administrative burdens.

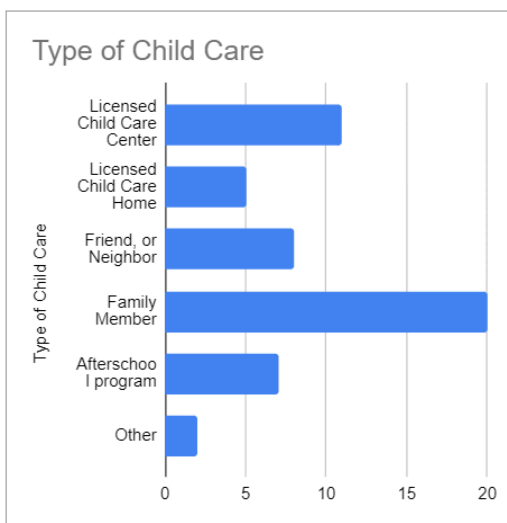
Report on Parent Preferences in Child Care

Introduction

This report summarizes the findings from a recent survey conducted to understand the child care needs and preferences of families in the Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, and Shiawassee regions. The survey aimed to gather key insights into the types of child care arrangements families currently use, their satisfaction with these arrangements, and the affordability of child care services. This survey was shared online and was distributed to parents attending local community events. The sample shows that families that have different needs, with representation of different scheduling needs, care providers and methods of payment.

County	People ▼
Genesee	14
St. Clair	6
Lapeer	5
Shiawassee	2
Tuscola	2
Iosco	1

Key Findings

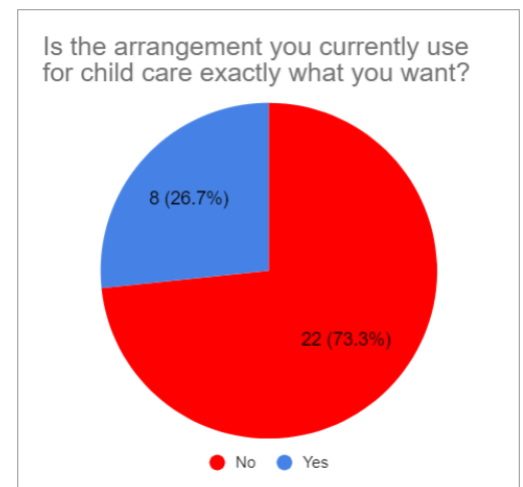


Diverse Child Care Arrangements

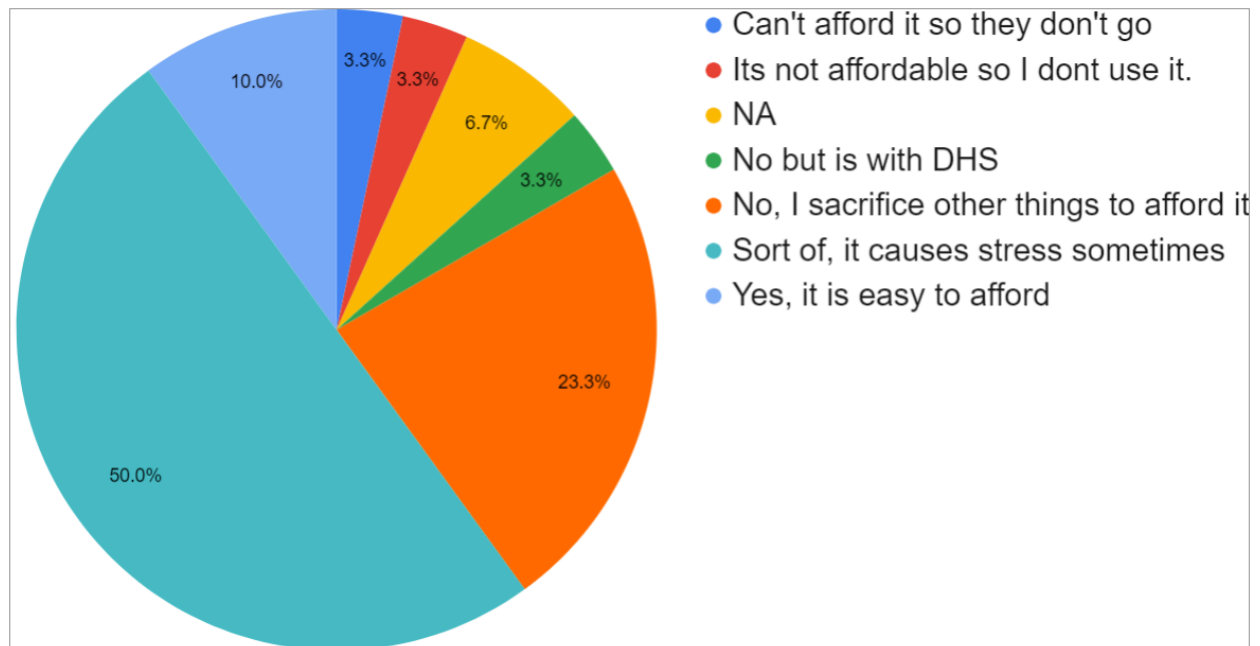
- Families in the surveyed regions utilize a wide variety of child care options, with the most common being licensed child care centers, family members, and afterschool programs.
- Many families rely on informal care networks, such as friends, family members and neighbors, alongside formal child care providers. This highlights the importance of both community and professional care services in meeting families' needs.

Satisfaction with Current Child Care

- A significant number of respondents indicated that their current child care arrangement "mostly works," but they would prefer to make some changes. This suggests that while many families are managing with their existing options, there are opportunities to improve services to better align with their preferences.
- A smaller group of respondents expressed complete satisfaction with their current arrangements, indicating that some existing child care services are successfully meeting the needs of these families.



Affordability Concerns



- Affordability emerged as a key concern among respondents. A considerable portion of families reported that their current child care arrangements cause financial stress. Weekly child care costs varied widely, with some families relying on government assistance programs like the Child Care Scholarship to help cover expenses.
- The variability in reported costs underscores the financial challenges many families face when securing quality child care, highlighting the need for diverse affordable solutions.

Conclusion

This survey offers valuable insights into the child care preferences and challenges faced by families in the Genesee, Lapeer, St. Clair, and Shiawassee regions. While many families are managing with their current arrangements, there is a clear demand for improvements, particularly in affordability.

Moving forward, these insights should inform the development of targeted policies and programs to support families in accessing quality, affordable child care that meets their diverse needs.