



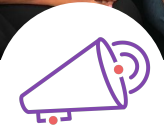
# The High Cost of Unaffordable Child Care: Impacts on DC's Businesses, Families and Taxpayers

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**Under 3 DC** harnesses the voices and power of the District's parents with young children, early educators, and community-based organizations to shine a spotlight on the need for more public investments in early education and health programs for infants and toddlers. Together, we can set the District of Columbia on a path to creating and sustaining a high-quality, equitable early childhood system.



### Campaign

Advocating for a system with equity at its core.



### Research

We shine a spotlight on the need for more public investments to support families with infants and toddlers.



### Policy

The District's economy won't recover if we don't close the gaps in access, affordability, and quality of care. Under 3 DC believes that making child care more affordable for everyone is one way to solve this problem.



Early education is as essential to the District's economic and social vitality as WMATA, roads, retail shops, health services, and recreation spaces.

Child care is a vital element of making the District an even better place for children, families, and businesses to thrive.



- Representative survey of DC parents of children under age 3, on employment challenges specifically due to child care problems, conducted by Zogby Analytics
- Translation into economic impacts on parents, businesses, taxpayers, by Prof. Clive Belfield, City University of New York.
- Both have conducted similar studies in other states and nationally

## "Because of child care problems for your child(ren) under age 3" (sample)

- 69% - missed a full day of work
- 46% - had to turn down opportunity for further education, training
- 44% - had pay or hours reduced
- 43% - had to turn down a new job
- 41% - had to change from full-time to part-time work
- 36% - had to turn down job promotion or desirable reassignment
- 27% - had to quit a job
- 21% - were demoted or transferred to less desirable position
- 21% - were let go or fired

*Problems occurred in EVERY ward, education and income levels*

# Economic Impacts

## Losses to DC Parents, Businesses, and Taxpayers

From birth - age 8

Annual



Aggregated across all parents of children under age three in Washington, DC, the annual losses to parents, businesses, and taxpayers total:

Annual across DC



## Challenges in Accessing Care (% rating 4-5 on a 1-5 scale, with 5 very significant)

- High quality (75%)
- Affordable (69%)
- At a convenient location (69%)
- Available on an emergency/sick child basis (68%)
- Flexible to accommodate changing work shifts (67%)
- Available generally - has open slots (62%)
- Open outside M-F, 9 am - 5 pm hours (60%)
- Available for a special needs child (51%)

57% of respondents said cost of child care would affect their ability to continue to live in DC - *hurting the ability to attract families downtown*



94% said most families should have to spend no more than 7% of their income on child care - *even lower than the 10% level in the Birth-to-Three For All DC Act*



*At night there's really no one to watch them. For my Nando's job, I had to work from 5 pm to 10 or 11 pm at night. Daycares don't run that late ... I ended up getting fired because I would always call out because I didn't have anybody to watch my kids. So that got hard. –Young parent*

*My work has non-traditional hours, so it was incredibly stressful for me to piece together how to ensure my child is in a high-quality early learning program and also get to and from my work on time so I can provide for him. I was doing all of this at a job paying \$17/hour. Parents like me are scrappy and we find a way to make it work, but it is far more stressful than it needs to be to raise a family in the District. –Isaac Bolden, Ward 8*



*“Reliable childcare means my daughter has a stable, caring learning environment while my partner and I participate in the workforce and grow our careers here. Families in the District already pay more for childcare than in any other state. We spend 17% of our income on child care. The Council must fight for educators and working families now.*

*–Danielle Geong, Ward 4*

# Release



- Release event March 13 at the Wilson Building, with DC Council Chair Phil Mendelson; Angela Franco, President & CEO of the DC Chamber of Commerce; Gregory McCarthy, executive Washington Nationals; Prof. Belfield; parents and Council staff.
- Press release distributed on [BusinessWire](#) produced 2,657 views, picked up by 143 outlets, including the AP and Yahoo! Finance, reaching a potential audience of 78.3 million people.
- Report distributed to DC Mayor Bowser and DC Council members and will be used in public testimony.

## Media

**The Washington Post**  
*Democracy Dies in Darkness*

# Advocates worry about day-care worker fund as D.C. budget tensions loom

The Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund subsidizes wages for day-care workers



By [Lauren Lumpkin](#)

March 28, 2024 at 6:00 a.m. EDT

- Op-ed by DC Chamber CEO in *Washington Business Journal*: "[Child care challenges don't just impact children and parents. They hurt businesses and taxpayers, too.](#)"
- Broadcast: WUSA9, Fox 5 DC, WJLA ABC 7, WTOP
- Print/Online: The Washington Post, CityBiz, The Washington Informer, Axios, The Afro, WUSA9, WTOP News



*“It’s past time that we treat child care as what it is – an element whose contribution to economic growth is as essential as infrastructure or energy.”*  
U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen

*Quality child care benefits everyone!*



# **NEW Report: The High Cost of Unaffordable Child Care**

[Read the Report](#)

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