

Letter to Editor: Resources for Businesses



Business leaders are encouraged to write letters to the editor that highlight the importance of child care access in attracting and retaining labor, as well as expansion considerations. Reference the Talking Points and Sample Letter below to inspire your own story of impact.

Talking Points

- The majority of NC's young families need access to child care so they can work. 66% of NC families with children under six have all available parents working.
- Businesses need a dependable workforce now - and in the future. Access to child care is critical to recruit and keep workers. It's as important as roads, water, and electricity, and needs the same public support. While parents work, young children benefit by gaining skills for success in school and life.
 - "I can't make it without my team, and we can't make it without child care." (this is the language in the social media campaign and a core message for business leaders to carry).
- Access affects the ability to attract and keep employees, limiting growth. Nearly 30% of NC's young families said their child could not attend child care because of closures, access, costs, or safety concerns. That's a lot of people trying to work who can't. Lack of child care is affecting local businesses and the state overall – costing NC \$5.65 billion in lost economic development activity, according to NC Chamber reporting.
- Our child care system is in crisis. Many child care programs serve families receiving Child Care Subsidy Assistance. Due to outdated subsidy reimbursement rates, providers are not being paid for the full cost of child care for care provided – a condition no business can sustain.
- By supporting this rate fix, we keep more programs open, and stabilize tuition, benefiting all.
- The state used pandemic funds to offer stabilization grants, but that relief ends March 2025. Nearly 300 centers closed last year, and 1500 more are at risk due to this issue.

Providers say time has run out and they may have to close doors.

- By setting a new subsidy reimbursement rate floor, providers and families benefit, regardless of location. Consistent payments, set closer to the cost of care, move the system in the right direction. Child care already costs more on average than college tuition in NC, and parents can't afford to pay more.
- Since the pandemic, providers have received emergency compensation grants to help raise wages to recruit and retain the teachers required for their programs to remain open. When these grants end March 31, child care providers may not be able to retain the workforce they need to remain open, and child care closures will have a ripple effect as working parents across North Carolina's economy will be unable to work.
- Proposals to help provide a child care benefit for the child care workforce could help offset some of the losses of programs and encourage teachers to remain in the field.
- The average starting pay for a child care teacher is \$14/ hr in North Carolina. Child care providers operate on incredibly thin profit margins that don't allow the ability to increase wages or provide benefits without raising tuition rates on parents.

About Child Care Subsidy Assistance: The Subsidy program provides access for low-income workers, with support ending as their earnings rise. It helps working parents build a career pathway and prepare a child for success in school. By supporting gainful employment and access to high-quality early learning we build self-sustainability, increase revenue from taxes, and have higher outcomes for education by all.

Sample Letter to Editor

Subject:

I can't run my business without child care!

Message: 247 of 250 word limit

As the [title] of [business] I need a dependable workforce now - and in the future. Access to child care is critical to recruit and keep workers. It's as important to my business needs as roads, water, and electricity, and needs the same public support.

Child care sites are disappearing from our community, and the ones left are struggling to stay open. That's affecting how many people can show up to work, or even accept an open position. Not having ready labor due to child care issues is costing my business, and our state.

Providers say one big issue is subsidy reimbursements from the state are out of date, and don't cover the cost of care. What business can survive on partial payments? This continued loss holds wages down and forces tuition up as providers try to make the math work. I actually could not keep my doors open if this was happening to me. It's time for a permanent fix.

Other states are finding ways to fix their child care system. We are going to lose business growth to these states if we don't act now. When you invest in child care, it's an investment in business - that's certain to pay off.

Knowing what the problem is and not making an effort to fix it is a choice that will affect child care, families, and businesses. If providers close their doors, mine may close next.

Fix the system, and we unleash my business growth, and the state's.

Additional Resources

[Addressing North Carolina's Child Care Crisis: Eleven Strategies to Expand Supply & Support for Working Families](#), February 2025, NC Chamber Foundation. Explanation of the Child Care Subsidy reimbursement rate issue

[North Carolina State Child Care Fact Sheet](#), 2/21/2025, "66% of NC children under 6 live in households where all available parents work."

[Child Care Survey](#), February 2024, North Carolina Child Care Resource & Referral Council (CCR&R Council), "Nearly 30% of licensed child care sites report risk of closure after March."

[Child Care Availability: A Key Driver of Economic Health](#), 2/10/25, NC Early Childhood Foundation, "The Census Bureau's [Household Pulse Survey](#), shows that in North Carolina, during April and May of 2024, 29% of respondents aged 25 to 39 reported that their child was unable to attend child care as a result of child care being closed, unavailable, unaffordable, or because they were concerned about their child's safety in care."