

Anchorage's New Child Care & Early Education Fund

*Supporting Families, Providers,
and the Alaska Economy*



ANCHORAGE

CHILD CARE &

EARLY EDUCATION **FUND**



alaska children's trust



*Prepared by: Austin Quinn-Davidson
January 31, 2024*



Austin Quinn-Davidson

- Former Anchorage Assembly member and Acting Mayor
- Contractor supporting ACCEE Fund implementation
- Reach out from our website: www.careforkidsanchorage.com

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Before We Dive In

THANK YOU! Thank you for being here, and for spending your evening with me when you have so many other things you could be doing. Thank you for enduring many challenges: lack of workforce, COVID, financial hardships. Most importantly, thank you for caring for kids during the most important time of their lives. THANK YOU.

The Problem

- Since 2019, the number of licensed child care programs in Alaska has **dropped by 20%**
- For the first time in 20 years, **fewer than 200 licensed programs in Anchorage**
- **51% of Alaskan families cannot fully participate in the labor force** due to cost, availability, or quality of child care



Benefits of Available Care

- **Good for families, employers, and the economy**
 - Average two-parent household income increases by \$41k annually if child care is available
- **Supports working families, especially working women**
 - For child-free adults, American labor force participation is 79% for women and 84% for men. After men and women have children, labor force participation for men rises to 96% and drops for women to 67%.

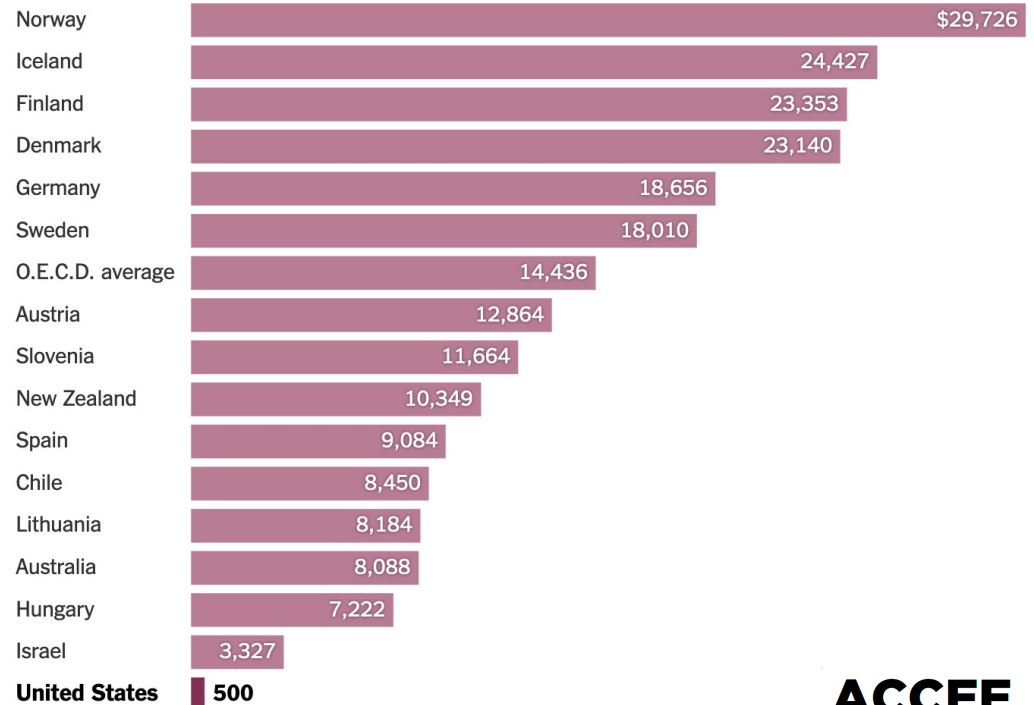


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How Much Governments Spend on Child Care for Toddlers

Annual public spending per child on early childhood care.



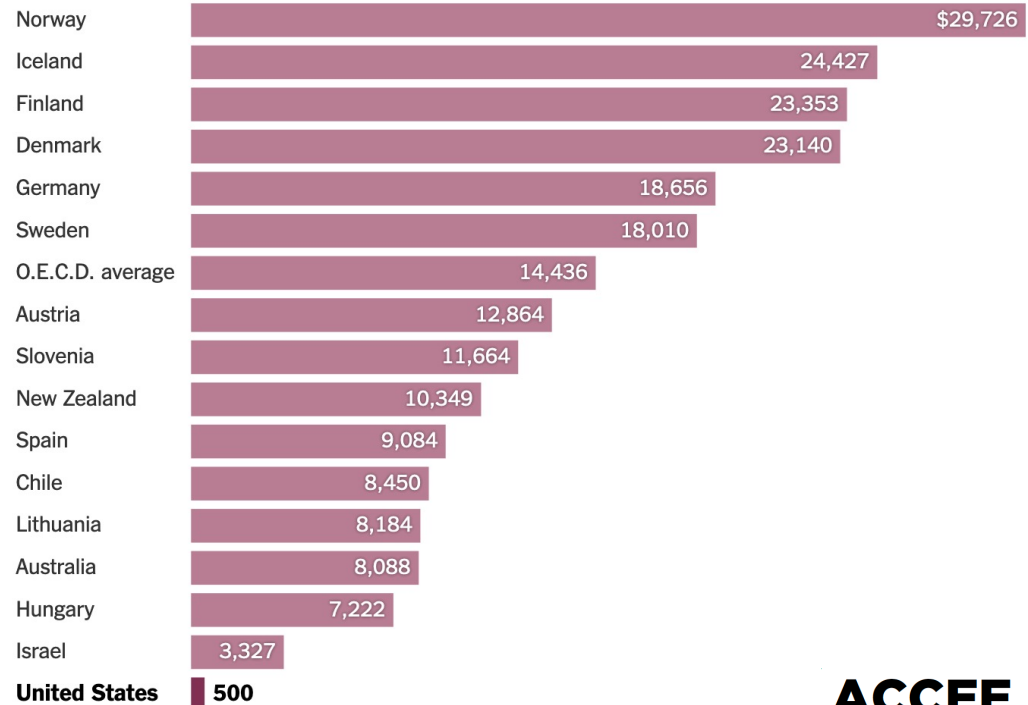
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Compare to K-12 investment:

- \$16,390 per student annually
- In Alaska, \$21,325 per student

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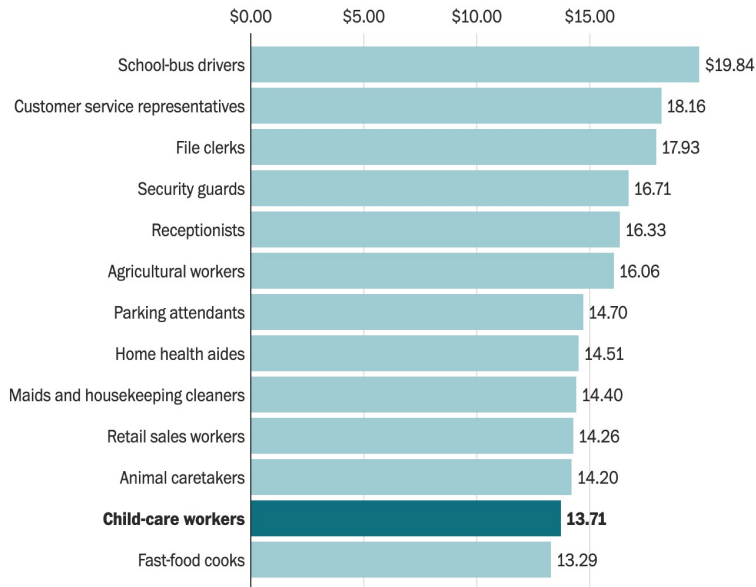
***The Problem:
High cost to parents,
low pay for providers***

- Average cost for Alaskan households using child care per month was \$982, with higher income families paying an average of \$1,167
- Many spots in Anchorage cost up to \$1800/month
- Cost of licensed care represents **15% of Alaskan parents' annual income**
- This jumps to 20% of a single male household, or 35% of a single female household



The Problem: High cost to parents, low pay for providers

U.S. median hourly wage for select occupations, 2022



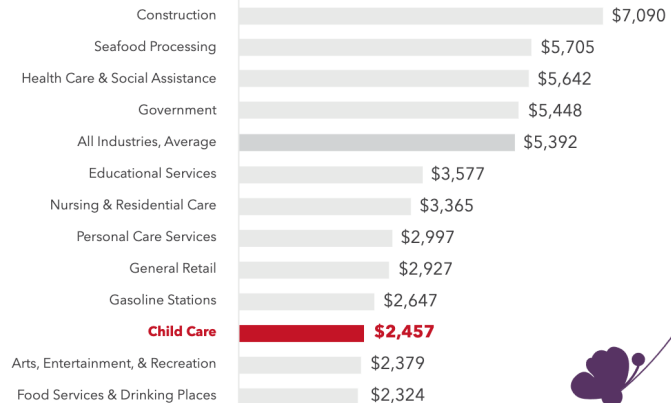
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

THE WASHINGTON POST

Early Care & Education Workforce Essential but Underpaid:

Wages in the ECE sector are among the lowest in the economy, yet people employed in this sector are entrusted with children's care and education at a critical time of development.

Average monthly wages by sector:



Note: Most recently available data from Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 2023.



ACCEE
FUND



*The average provider
in Alaska makes under
\$30k a year*

*Not a living wage and
often not enough to
support their own
families*

*Families of child care
workers are twice as
likely to live in poverty*

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We need to change this system, now.



PROPOSITION NO. 14

AMENDING THE ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CHARTER REGARDING THE MARIJUANA RETAIL TAX AND DEDICATING TAX PROCEEDS TO CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION

This proposition would establish dedicated funding for child care and early education, an Accountability Board of Child Care and Early Education, dedicate the net retail marijuana sales tax revenues to this board's budgeted activities, and move the marijuana sales taxes from under the tax increase limitation ("tax cap") calculation to be above the tax cap and lower the tax cap one time by one million dollars in 2024.



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- Dedicates marijuana tax to **child care & early education**
- Establishes **Accountability Board** to oversee the fund

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- Funding decisions made by Anchorage Mayor and Assembly
- Funds are dedicated as of Jan. 1, 2024. First budget in October 2024. Funds available in **2025**.
- Expect **\$4-5 million** annually

Allowed Uses

- Create **access** to CC & EE (age 0-12) programs
- Fund **reading programs**
- Fund **livable wages, training, and staffing** for CC & EE programs
- Fund facilities - prioritize using underutilized or closed **ASD buildings**



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- IT made up of Muni reps, School Board, SMEs, JBER rep, Head Start programs, providers, parents, Chamber, original Prop 14 team



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- Recs should address **current needs** and long-term **sustainability** of sector
- IT wants to hear from parents, employers, businesses, providers, & the broader community as it shapes recs





Implementation Timeline

- **Winter 2024**
 - Research best practices and trends in the sector
 - Hear from experts & explore other programs
 - Public engagement
 - Develop approach to strategic implementation
- **Spring/Summer 2024**
 - Develop & introduce Accountability Board ordinance
 - Develop a draft three-year strategic plan & draft budget
 - Accountability Board seated

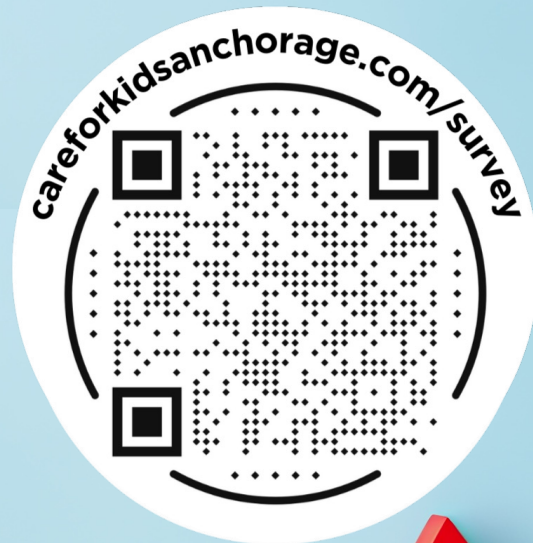
Ways to Engage

- **Complete our online survey!** Contains specific questions for parents, providers, businesses, and others. Enter to win one of four gift cards!
- Six **community conversation events** set up for parents and providers. More info at www.careforkidsanchorage.com/events
- **Contact me** with ideas or questions: aqdstrategies@gmail.com or via our website



Plan for the Next Hour

- **We are here to learn from you!** You are the experts.
- We want to hear the **challenges** you've experienced in your work providing early education or child care.
- We want to hear **your ideas for solutions**. How can we use the ACCEE Fund to solve the challenges providers are facing?



Plan for the Next Hour

- I will share some questions about challenges and solutions to get you started
- Take 5 mins on your own to think about challenges and solutions – put each thought on a sticky note
- Take 15 mins to discuss in small groups. Try to organize thoughts into themes, i.e. workforce issues, licensing
- We will spend 45 mins discussing together



Questions

- Is your pay enough to pay your bills/live comfortably?
- What challenges do you have at your job? Issues with pay, benefits, time off, availability of training/professional development, feeling appreciated, something else?
- Do you think you will stay in your career field?
- What would make this sector more sustainable?
- How can the ACCEE funds better support you in your work caring for children?





Thank you!
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