

CHILD CARE IS ESSENTIAL

To Vermont's children, families, economy, and recovery. Now more than ever.

Child care is essential for Vermont families, but even before the pandemic, 3 out of 5 of Vermont's youngest children did not have access to the care they need. COVID-19 has only exacerbated already pressing challenges for families and early childhood educators. Without equitable access to a high-quality and affordable child care system, Vermont cannot fully recover and grow its workforce, support young families, or set its youngest residents up for future success in school, relationships, work, and life.

Together, with our 24,000 Petition signers, Let's Grow Kids is calling on the Vermont Legislature to undertake a 3-year process to transform child care for children birth to five.

- » **In 2021:** Our campaign will advance legislation that lays the foundation of our future child care system by establishing state goals for child care affordability, access, and quality.
- » **In 2022:** Our campaign will support the stakeholder processes, complete legislative work, and, via the newly formed Let's Grow Kids Action Network, organize communities to support legislators who have championed child care legislation in the 2022 elections.
- » **In 2023:** Our campaign focus will be passing a revenue bill and fully implementing affordability, access, quality, and accountability measures.

This transformation will create an equitable child care system that is:

- » **Accessible:** Children from all backgrounds and abilities will have access to high-quality child care when and where they need it.
- » **Affordable:** No family will spend more than 10% of their income on child care.
- » **High-quality:** Every child will be taught by qualified early childhood educators who are fairly compensated and well-supported.
- » **Accountable:** The system will have well-coordinated and transparent governance, administrative, and accountability structures and resources.
- » **Sustainable:** Stable, long-term funding for the system will be secured.



Let's Grow Kids continues to work with educators, stakeholders, and partners throughout the state to create lasting efforts that advance the early childhood education workforce, develop ongoing child care capacity, and improve coordination between child care and other critical early childhood resources, such as pre-K-12 schools, Parent Child Centers, and Children's Integrated Services.

Questions about this document? Please contact:

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The 2021 legislative session can lay the foundation for Vermont's future child care system by advancing legislation that:

- » **Establishes** statewide goals for access, affordability, and quality
- » **Continues** the transformation of Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program to expand eligibility, reduce family co-pays, increase reimbursements paid to child care programs, and streamline administration
- » **Strengthens** our early childhood education workforce by increasing compensation for early childhood educators, increasing investment in existing scholarships for current early childhood educators, and creating a new scholarship program and student loan repayment support program for new early childhood educators
- » **Upgrades** the IT system used to administer Vermont's child care system
- » **Continues** investment in the expansion of existing child care programs and creation of new programs
- » **Analyzes** the governance and administration of the child care and early education system in Vermont and develops recommendations on how to strengthen and streamline governance, administration, and accountability structures and resources
- » **Charges** experts with finding a stable, long-term funding source for a transformed child care system



The time to act on child care is now.



THANK YOU FOR LEADING THE WAY
TO A NEW REALITY WHERE...

~~3 in 5~~ of Vermont's youngest children ~~don't~~ have access to the child care they need. That means ~~too many~~ children are ~~missing out on~~ getting a strong start in life. Families ~~cannot afford child care~~, and early educators are ~~not~~ making a living. Communities are ~~struggling to be~~ healthy and vibrant, and **our shared future is not bright.**