

DAY WITHOUT CHILD CARE: FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

Let's talk about the state of Early Care & Education | May 8, 2023

"As a former early care educator with twenty years of dedication to a career I love, I had to choose between a passion for my career and being able to financially survive."

Former Early Care & Education Professional,
Lycoming County

"We currently do not have a way to meet the regular, ongoing early care and education needs of working families."

Early Care & Education Professional,
Tioga County

"I drive a half hour to another town to my child's daycare. Then I drive a half hour back to the town where I live and work. This is my only option to stay employed at my job."

Parent, Lycoming County



WHY IS THERE AN EARLY CARE & EDUCATION CRISIS?

- » Early Care and Education (ECE) is experiencing a shortage of qualified professionals that are keeping programs from operating at full certified capacity. ECE professionals are leaving programs for higher wages, better benefits, and a less demanding occupation.
- » ECE programs are essential to the infrastructure of communities they serve. ECE professionals are serving the needs of children, families, and the community all at once.
- » Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) certified ECE programs, Child Care Centers, Group Child Care Homes, and Family Child Care Homes provide the majority of the available care in the community.
- » Before the recent health crisis, Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties were enrolled to full capacity and fully staffed. During this period, these counties needed growth in capacity beyond existing certified ECE programs.
- » Currently Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties' ECE programs are experiencing closed classrooms and are unable to use existing capacity to enroll children.
- » Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties are permanently losing capacity with ECE programs choosing to close.



Effects of the crisis on capacity as of January 2023:

COUNTY	NON-ENROLLABLE SLOTS DUE TO LACK OF STAFF	SLOTS LOST DUE TO FACILITY CLOSURE
Lycoming	343	12
Clinton	22	6
Tioga	112	24

“Due to staffing, we’ve only been able to bring a few new children into our program and have long waitlists for all our age groups.”
ECE Program Director, Lycoming County

“The waitlist is long and provides no timeframe for when a child can start. Child care providers have mentioned they are struggling with staffing, which has caused closed classrooms and fewer enrollments.”
Parent, Lycoming County

» The table below shows the relationships between requirements, costs, and the consequences for the ECE field.

ECE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	COST OF COMPENSATION ISSUES	HOW THIS AFFECTS ECE PROFESSIONALS
<i>ECE programs must maintain yearly certification to remain in operation, giving ECE a high overhead to function.</i>	➔ <i>Due to the cost of daily operations, providers make minimal to no profit from tuition fees.</i>	➔ <i>Daily operations fees do not allow for wage increases equivalent to the highly skilled ECE professionals providing the services.</i>
<i>ECE programs’ new employees are required to obtain 4 clearances and 10 hours of health and safety training before entering the classroom.</i>	➔ <i>ECE programs take on the expense and time investment to place new employees in classroom.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals are making a commitment to provide quality care for the children and families they serve.</i>
<i>ECE professionals are required to have various levels of education based on position and type of setting where the professional is employed.</i>	➔ <i>ECE providers must be educated and/or licensed, but they are paid less than many professions that require neither.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals fill high-skill positions that consistently earn below a living wage.</i>
<i>ECE programs and professionals are required to commit to yearly training (12 hours per employee) to be in compliance with DHS Certification.</i>	➔ <i>ECE programs take on the expense and investment of keeping programs and providers in compliance with DHS Certification.</i>	➔ <i>ECE professionals commit to lifelong learning and continuous program improvement. They do so with the understanding they will not see a significant wage increase.</i>

- » The commitment qualified ECE professionals make for consistently low wages does not attract new professionals to ECE programs.
- » With ECE programs unable to employ qualified professionals, programs are struggling financially due to loss of tuition because of empty classrooms.
- » ECE is an underfunded industry that impacts ECE professionals, families, and the communities.

“It is frustrating to me that it is so difficult to find quality staff. The wage scale for Early Childhood Education is not nearly what it should be for the type of staff that need to be educating our children.”
ECE Program Director, Lycoming County



Scan Here!
Learn more about the high cost of working in Early Childhood Education



WHY ARE FAMILIES IN CRISIS?

Families are in crisis when:

- » Families are left with only potentially dangerous options for their ECE needs.
- » Families are experiencing a financial burden with tuition cost; this burden is greater for families that are not eligible for Child Care Works Subsidy.
- » Families are unable to obtain employment due to long waitlists with ECE programs.
- » Families' concerns over lack of ECE availability impact work attendance, performance, and productivity.
- » Families are without connections to additional services and referrals to agencies that suit their needs.

"Finding child care has been nearly impossible and the cost of child care is astronomical if you earn a middle-class wage."

Parent, Tioga County

"My husband and I made the decision to be a one child family due the expense of child care."

Parent, Lycoming County

"There are not enough options for child care. I have not been able to seek employment due to lack of child care."

Parent, Lycoming County

Children are in crisis when they do not have:

- » Opportunity for consistent positive relationships with their caregivers.
- » Opportunity to explore and learn in developmentally appropriate environments alongside their peer group.
- » Opportunity to develop school readiness skills.
- » Opportunity for age-appropriate assessment and referrals for developmental support.

"A critical period of brain development occurs from birth to 8 years of age. Children need access to quality programs."

ECE Partner, Lycoming County

WHY ARE COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS?

- » Communities are in crisis when families have inadequate ECE options.
- » Working parents must leave the workforce completely to provide care for their children.
- » Businesses experience lost revenue due to a smaller or inconsistent workforce.
- » Communities obtain less revenue from federal, state, and local taxes.
- » Communities are experiencing slower economic growth due to lost revenue.



"I am working with 3 clients to obtain employment. They have tried multiple child care providers and every single one has a waitlist that could take months to get enrolled. The lack of child care availability in the area greatly affects my clients' ability to obtain and maintain a job due to unreliable childcare."

Social Service Agency, Lycoming County

"Not having quality child care is highly detrimental to the workforce and makes being a working mother that much harder."

Parent, Lycoming County

"From a Human Resources perspective, we have experienced challenges related to availability of childcare. We had a staff member who was not able to return to work after having a child due to no available child care. Another staff member found out on a Friday that her child's center would no longer have a slot for her child effective the following Monday. In addition, there were two potential employees that accepted job offers, but ultimately had to turn down the jobs because they were unable to find childcare."

Human Resources Director, Lycoming County



Scan here to learn more about The Growing Cost of PA's Child Care Crisis



Learn more about PA Early Learning Standards



HOW TO IMPROVE THE STATE OF EARLY CARE & EDUCATION?

As an ECE Professional

- » ECE programs can join their local Chamber of Commerce.
- » Request ECE be added to the PA Department of Labor & Industry's High Priority Occupations (HPO) list in your county.
- » Explore groups such as Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children (PennAEYC), Start Strong PA, the PA Early Learning Investment Commission, and PA Child Care Association.
- » Share your personal experiences (positive or negative) about ECE and encourage families and community members to do the same.



Scan this QR code to view the HPO list!



Scan here to visit the PennAEYC website!



Scan this QR code to share your story!



Learn more about Day Without Child Care!

As a Family

- » Become a registered voter.
- » Contact local, state, and federal leaders to let them know how the state of child care has affected your family or families you know.
- » Recognize and celebrate Early Care & Education during NAEYC's Week of the Young Child and Child Care Aware of America's Provider Appreciation Day.
- » Learn more about A Day Without Child Care!

As a Community

- » Share your special talent with ECE programs! Community helpers, musicians, artists, and first responders can provide meaningful experiences for young children.
- » Businesses can explore ways to become a resource to their employees who struggle with the ECE crisis.



HOW DO I FIND A QUALITY EARLY CARE & EDUCATION PROVIDER NEAR ME?

Contact your area Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)

- » An ELRC is a partner with the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning. ELRCs provide quality supports for early learning programs and help families access high quality early learning programs.
- » ELRC Region 7 serves Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties.
 - **Lycoming** | 570.601.9707
 - **Clinton** | 570.858.5872
 - **Tioga** | 570.724.4649



Use PA COMPASS to search for ECE programs & apply for services

- » <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/>
- » The COMPASS tool provides detailed information on providers – their Keystone STARS ratings, inspection results, capacity information, and more!



WHAT OTHER EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS ARE IN OUR COMMUNITIES?*

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS	EARLY INTERVENTION	HOME VISITING PROGRAMS	EARLY HEAD START & HEAD START
PA Pre-K Counts Nursery School Programs Library Programs Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)	Pennsylvania's Early Intervention program, which serves children with developmental delays or disabilities ages birth to five, provides individualized support and assistance for both child and family. Intermediate Units Wrap Around Services	Parent-Child Home Partnership Nurse-Family Partnership Healthy Family America Parents as Teachers Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Head Start Home Visiting Program	Early Head Start and Head Start provides services such as child development, health/nutrition, parent involvement, and family activities to families and children from ages birth to five.

*These programs may follow other governmental regulations and serve different needs.

ONLINE RESOURCES



**Early Learning
Resource Center
Region 7**

www.stepcorp.org/ELRC



COMPASS

www.compass.state.pa.us



Interactive Resource Map

<https://lyco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=eed88b73b1b44579811b8be4c5abcc1e>



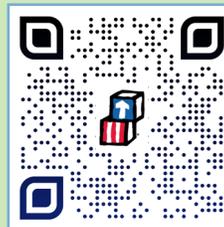
Child Care Regulations

www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Child-Care/Pages/Child-Care-Regulations.aspx



Keystone Stars

www.pakeys.org/keystone-stars



STEP Head Start

www.stepcorp.org/HeadStart



**Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K
Learning Standards**

www.education.pa.gov/Early%20Learning/Early%20Learning%20Standards/Pages/Infant-Toddler-Pre-K-Learning-Standards.aspx



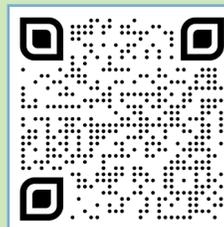
The Pennsylvania Key

www.pakeys.org



**National Association for the
Education of Young Children**

www.naeyc.org



**To view an interactive
PDF of this publication
with live links visit:**

[www.stepcorp.org/
DayWithoutChildCare](http://www.stepcorp.org/DayWithoutChildCare)



**EARLY LEARNING
RESOURCE CENTER**

PA OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING

*This information is
brought to you by
ELRC Region 7 Local
Leadership Council
in collaboration with
community partners.*

In partnership with  serving Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga counties.

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