

child care and early education

Child care and early education programs are critical to promoting child development, school readiness and helping parents work. Today, primary sources of care and education for young children are child care, Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs.

Child care, a necessity for many working families across the United States, can range from informal care provided by family and friends to formal child care programs. High quality, affordable child care provides an important environment for children to grow and develop. Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs are also important for promoting positive child-wellbeing including assisting with child development and school readiness. For example, high quality early childhood education programs have been found to promote long-term positive child development both academically and socially.

For many parents however, finding affordable, accessible and quality child care and early education programs is difficult. Many families earn too much money to qualify for assistance, yet struggle daily to meet their basic needs including paying for housing and food. Many low-income families and families in poverty also struggle with the high cost, while also finding themselves with the additional burdens of needing care for their children during non-traditional hours such as evenings and weekends and/or a lack of quality care in their communities.

One of the main arguments surrounding childcare and early education programs in the United States is the role of government and government funding. Supporters of high quality child care and early education programs argue that government investments in childcare and early education programs not only assist children and parents but society as a whole because these children are the future workforce of our country. Others argue that while high quality child care settings and early education programs such as Head Start are important to child well-being a child development, both state and federal governments have limited amounts of money in their budgets and funding decisions for all things-child care and early education, health care, job training and education programs, etc. should be made on a case by case basis.

YWCA Position

Since 1868, the YWCA has been providing early childhood programs for millions of children. Currently, many YWCAs are involved in providing childcare and early education programs. The YWCA supports quality, affordable and accessible early childhood education that assists adults in moving towards economic independence and provides children with culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate activities that enable children to succeed in school.

Candidate Questions

Do you support government funding for child care, Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs?
Will you make quality, affordable child care a top priority?