

South Carolina State Fact Sheet

Access to high quality early childhood education (ECE) boosts the well-being of children and helps parents get and keep a job. It's time for policymakers to build the supply and quality of child care and early learning by investing in early childhood education and educators working in centers, schools, and homes.

Our State's Families Need Quality, Affordable Child Care and Early Learning



352,358

children are between the ages of 0-5 ⁽¹⁾

67%

of children have all available parents in the workforce ⁽²⁾

9%

of family income is spent on child care ⁽³⁾

58%

of child care programs report **staffing shortages** that limit the number of slots available for families ⁽⁴⁾

42%

of people are living in a

child care desert ⁽⁶⁾

Investing in Quality Child Care and Early Learning Helps Meet Families' Needs and Boosts the Economy

221,687

Children have a potential need for child care ⁽¹⁾

206,405

Licensed capacity in centers and home based child care ⁽²⁾

\$1.2-1.9 B

Long term impact of child care gaps on the state's economy ⁽⁵⁾

↑ 1,572

Licensed child care centers in 2024 ⁽³⁾

Compared to 1,477 in 2022

↑ 824

Licensed home based child care in 2024 ⁽⁴⁾

Compared to 812 in 2022

27,171

Children in state funded PreK programs ⁽⁶⁾

6,847

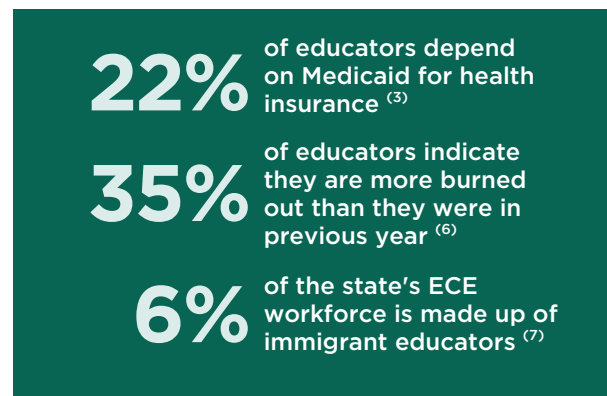
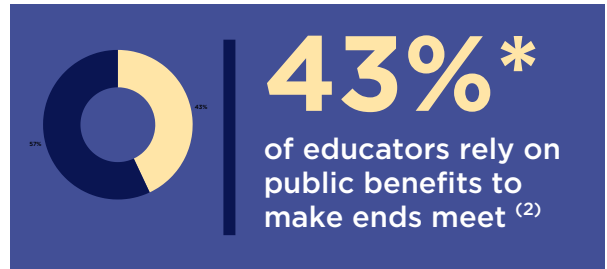
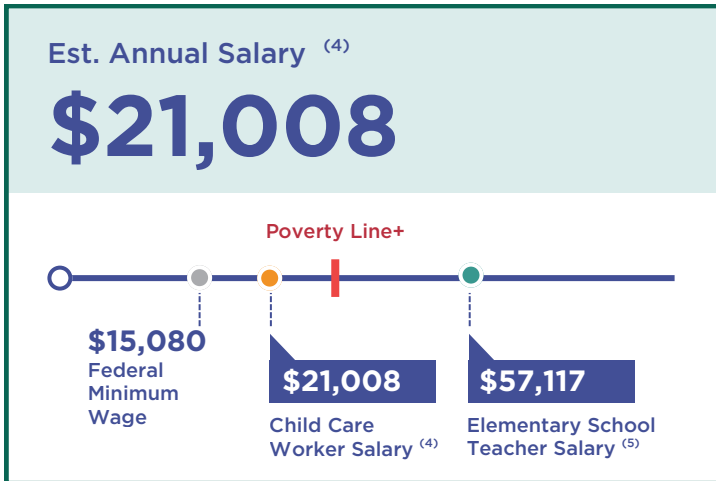
Children served in NAEYC accredited early learning programs ⁽⁷⁾

62

NAEYC accredited early learning programs ⁽⁸⁾

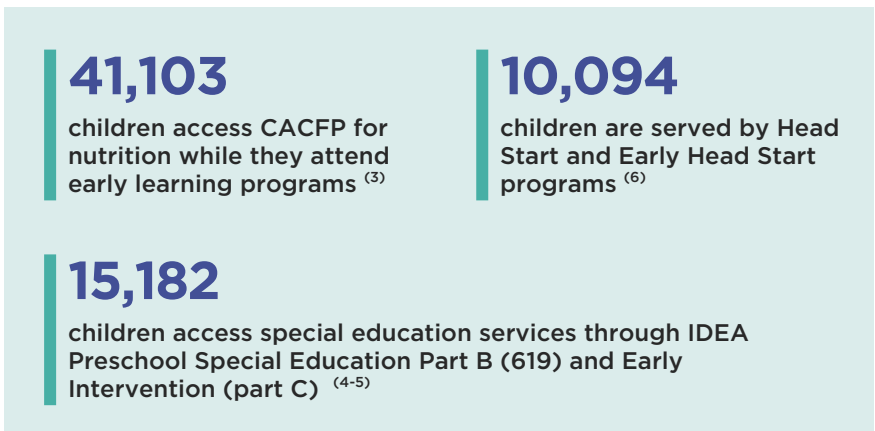
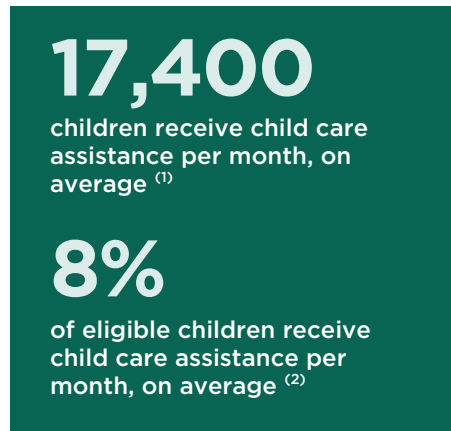
Our State's Early Childhood Educators Need Support and Compensation

23,100 Educators working with children birth through 5 ⁽¹⁾



✓ Currently provides scholarships to support early childhood educators in accessing professional development, and earning credentials and degrees ⁽⁸⁾

Federal Investments Support Access to Child Care and Early Learning and Increase the Well-Being of Children, Families, and Educators in Our State



✓ **Preschool Development Grant**
Currently receiving a grant to improve our ECE system ⁽⁷⁾

Programs including CCDBG, Head Start, IDEA, CCAMPIS, CACFP, CHIP, TANF, SNAP, MIECHV, and Medicaid, as well as tax credits such as the Child Care and Dependent Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, provide critical investments to support the well-being of young children, their families, and the early childhood educators who support them.

From the ECE field

"We are seeing many families that are wanting to be in our program but unfortunately we don't have the space or teachers to add more."

—Director/Administrator

Resources on Policy Solutions to Address the Child Care Crisis and Advance the Early Childhood Education Field

- [NAEYC Federal Policy Agenda](#)
- [Compensation Means More Than Wages: Increasing Early Childhood Educators' Access to Benefits](#)
- [The Costs of Deregulating Child Care: Decreased Supply, Increased Turnover, and Compromised Safety](#)
- [The Cost of Cuts: What Families and Educators Will Lose in the Wake of the Budget Battle](#)
- [Medicaid is a Critical Support for the Early Childhood Education Workforce](#)



Scan QR code for citations.

+2025 Federal Poverty Guideline for a family of four in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia is \$32,150 per year. The poverty guidelines are updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).