



## thread 2023 POLICY AGENDA

### Ensuring Child Care Works for all Alaskans

thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource & Referral Network, has a vision that every family in Alaska has access to high-quality, affordable child care. A thriving child care system supports children's growth, development, and education, and has a positive economic impact for families and communities.

**Alaska loses \$165M annually due to child care breakdowns.**

Untapped Potential: Economic Impact of Childcare Breakdown Report, US Chamber of Commerce Foundation

**thread** believes a combination of diverse policies is needed to stabilize the current child care system and lay the foundation for a stronger child care system moving forward. Comprehensive legislation creates sustainable funding, increases access to child care by supporting the workforce, makes it affordable for parents, and supports a high-quality, mixed-delivery system.

#### PRIORITY 1: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE

##### Where we are going

- Effective investments to support child care.

##### How we will get there

- Increase the state investment within the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) with continued increases as federal investment increases.
- Design a sustainable funding structure for a mixed-delivery system of early care and education that leverages current funding sources and establishes a strategy for increased, sustainable investment.
- Determine the true cost of high-quality child care in Alaska by completing a cost of care survey.

#### PRIORITY 2: INCREASE SUPPORT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

##### Where we are going

- Wage and benefit parity with kindergarten teachers having comparable education/experience background.

##### How we will get there

- Reinstate Alaska SEED Retaining Our Outstanding Teachers (ROOTs) program to support early childhood educators.
- Support capacity building grants to programs with specified funding for wages and benefits.
- Explore creating a state-funded benefits program and pay scale.



## PRIORITY 3: DECREASE OUT-OF-POCKET CHILD CARE COSTS FOR FAMILIES

### Where we are going

- Families spend no more than 7% of their annual income on child care as recommended by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

### How we will get there

- Increase funding to the child care assistance program so more eligible families can receive assistance.
- Reduce administrative and financial barriers in the child care assistance program by decreasing required out-of-pocket costs and increasing time period between recertification.
- Design a pilot program to fund scholarships for families over the subsidy income eligibility.

## PRIORITY 4: MIXED-DELIVERY, HIGH-QUALITY SYSTEM

### Where we are going

- Ensure future policies and programs support mixed-delivery and continued alignment of all early childhood programs (public schools, Head Start programs, and licensed community-based child care programs, including center-based, family home, military, faith-based, and tribal providers).

### How we will get there

- Adopt Learn and Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition & Improvement System, standards as the high-quality standards framework for all early childhood programs
- Include licensed, community-based child care and school-based programs in publicly-funded pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs.

**More than 88,000 children from 54,000 Alaska households are in need of early care & education services.**

## Resources

- Untapped Potential: Economic Impact of Childcare Breakdowns  
[uschamberfoundation.org/sites/default/files/EarlyEd\\_ALASKA\\_2021\\_DIGITAL.pdf](https://uschamberfoundation.org/sites/default/files/EarlyEd_ALASKA_2021_DIGITAL.pdf)
- 2020 Early Care & Learning Economic Impact Report  
<https://www.threadalaska.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Alaska-Early-Care-and-Learning-in-Alaska-Report.pdf>
- Alaska Early Childhood Strategic Direction  
[earlychildhoodalaska.com/strategic-plan-documents](https://earlychildhoodalaska.com/strategic-plan-documents)
- Child Care Aware of America  
[childcareaware.org](https://childcareaware.org)
- thread  
[threadalaska.org](https://threadalaska.org)

## CONTACT

[threadalaska.org](https://threadalaska.org)

907.265.3100

