The State of Child Care in the District of Columbia

Affordable, accessible and reliable childcare is needed to ensure that parents can work towards economic security, that the minds of children are nurtured and developed, and that businesses have a stable and productive workforce.

However, the foundation of childcare in DC fails to provide the support necessary to ensure that women, families and children thrive.

The realities of child care in DC:

- In DC the average annual cost of full-time, center based infant care is 52% of the median annual income for a single mother with children under the age of eight.\(^1\)

- For a single worker with an infant and a preschooler this equals $2,456 of their monthly budget.\(^2\)

- In 2008, child care employees earned on average $15,391 per year or $8.84 per hour for classroom aides.\(^3\)

- Wards 7 and 8 have the centers with the lowest total capacity of all the eight wards. Ward 8 has only enough capacity to reach 36.5 percent of resident children under five, while Ward 7 has capacity for 41.0 percent.\(^4\)

- Over 13,000 children on child care providers’ waiting lists.

- None of the subsidy rates met the 75th percentile of the market rate. Subsidizing child care at a lower rate forces child care providers to lose money on every subsidized child they take, reducing the number of slots available to families receiving subsidies and increasing the waiting list.\(^5\)

- Single mothers with young children who receive child care assistance are 40 percent more likely to still be employed after two years than those who do not receive such assistance.\(^6\)

- Child care break downs cause 45 percent parents to miss at least one day of work every six month and 65 percent of parents to be late for work or leave work early.\(^7\)

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