Impacts of Child Care on the Montana Workforce

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An estimated **6%** of the labor force relies on child care to remain employed.

Yet

**44%** of the estimated demand.

Shortages Across the State

Child Care Deserts

Any geographic area where licensed child care capacity meets **less than a third** of potential demand.

60% of counties are classified as child care deserts.

Montana families pay $7,900 on average for care for children under the age of five which translates to 16% of the state’s average wage in 2020.

Cost of full-time daycare for an infant in center-based care is $12,750 per year.

88% of Montana families cannot afford care.

Workforce Impacts

• **54,000** Montana parents working reduced hours – which accounts for 10% of the labor force.
  
  – **62%** of Montana parents missed time from work due to inadequate child care in 2019.
  
  – Montana households with children ages 0-5 lose an average of **$5,700** in wages annually due to inadequate childcare.

• Approximately **32,000** Montanans are unable to return to work due to a lack of childcare/ need to monitor at-home-learning.

57% of businesses identify a lack of affordable child care in their community, and 60% stated improving access to child care should be a priority for their community.

Source: 2020 Child Care Business Survey, MTDLI.
40% of businesses report difficulty recruiting or retaining qualified workers due to a lack of affordable child care in their community.

30% of Montana businesses say inadequate child care has prevented their company from growing.

$55 million lost business revenue annually.

Additional Resources

Child Care Availability
Watson, Amy. “Child Care Deserts: An Analysis of Child Care Supply and Demand Gaps in Montana.” August 2021. MTDLI

Watson, Amy. “Child Care in Montana.” September 2018. MTDLI.

Business Impacts


Child Care Workforce