

**2022  
Early Childhood  
Education  
Task Force**

# **FINDINGS**

**1. Child care deserts exist across the Commonwealth and there is a demonstrated need to expand child care services through providers of all types.**

**2. There are five pillars to early childhood education in Kentucky, HANDS, First Steps, Head Start/Early Head Start, public pre-kindergarten, and independent childcare providers.**

**3. In Kentucky there are roughly two open jobs for every individual seeking a job, this puts a strain on employers trying to fill open positions.**

**4. Childcare availability in Kentucky affects a person's decision to enter the workforce.**

**5. The Kentucky Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is a key tool in early childhood education program funding.**

**6. House Bill 499 from the 2022 Regular Session created a pilot program for an employee childcare assistance partnership to incentivize employers to contribute to the childcare costs of employees.**



**7. Child care worker shortages lead to a lack of adequate child care in Kentucky.**

**8. Nationally several states have policies that encourage collaboration and coordination across different agencies to align rules, processes, and funding requirements. Thirteen states have a governance structure of consolidation that combines existing programs and divisions into one state agency. The final approach, used in eight states, is the creation of a dedicated early childhood agency that reports directly to the governor's office.**

**9. High quality child care provided by trained providers is beneficial for the academic and social development of children.**

# **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. Increase child care access and quality for working families by supporting employer engagement in child care solutions and to ensure successful implementation of the Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership that was established in HB 499 from the 2022 Regular Session that will include partnerships with the Cabinet For Health And Family Services and economic development organizations throughout the Commonwealth.**

**2. Encourage the Cabinet For Health And Family Services to utilize the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for providing eligibility for child care workers, providing a transitional period for families exiting the program in order to address the benefits cliff, establishing a cost modeling method to set CCAP provider reimbursement rates based on the true cost of quality care, and sustaining current CCAP eligibility standards established by administrative regulation.**

**3. Encourage the Kentucky Department of Education to expand the capacity for Head Start/Early Head Start, public pre-kindergarten, and other public private partnerships.**

**4. Encourage the Cabinet For Health And Family Services to establish child care worker wage enhancement programs, child care business coaching programs, and employee continuing education and certification support programs that include the development of post-secondary education programs in early childhood education ownership and entrepreneurship.**



**5. Encourage the Kentucky League of Cities, the Kentucky Association of Counties, and the Kentucky Department of Local Government to study and formalize zoning and land use regulations to facilitate the growth of child care services while continuing to ensure safety, appropriate land use rules, and local control.**

**6. Direct the Division of Child Care, in collaboration with the Department of Revenue and the Cabinet for Economic Development, to raise awareness of and address issues related to state and federal tax laws, including tax incentives, that affect child care facilities and employer-based child care benefits in the Commonwealth.**