



# The True Cost of Providing Safe Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic

By Simon Workman and Steven Jessen-Howard    September 3, 2020

As the nation continues to grapple with the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic, child care is among the hardest-hit and least supported industries. Parents have long struggled to find and afford child care that meets their needs; and child care businesses have equally struggled to balance the cost of providing quality, developmentally appropriate care with the limited revenues available to them.<sup>1</sup> Now, the pandemic has exacerbated the existing child care crisis and raised significant new challenges. Many child care programs were forced to close for a period of time, and while many have since reopened, they are operating with decreased enrollment and increased instability due to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> This new reality poses a dire threat to many child care programs, which were already operating on razor-thin margins and lack the financial reserves to weather the current crisis.

While the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed by Congress in March 2020, provided states with \$3.5 billion through the Child Care and Development Block Grant to support access to child care, this level of funding is woefully insufficient to meet the ever-growing need.<sup>3</sup> Recognizing this shortfall, in July 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives passed on a bipartisan vote the Child Care Is Essential Act, which would provide a \$50 billion investment to stabilize the industry.<sup>4</sup> However, as of August 2020, the Senate has failed to act on this bill or to appropriate significant additional funds for child care in a new stimulus package. Meanwhile, child care businesses continue to serve the children of essential workers and others who rely on child care to work. However, without significant federal investment, half of America's child care capacity is at risk of permanent closure.<sup>5</sup> This would have a catastrophic impact on the American economy, jeopardizing thousands of child care jobs, leaving millions of children without access to child care, and plunging parents and employers into turmoil as they continue to juggle work and family responsibilities.

Despite the critical role of child care in supporting the economy, there is a lack of clear understanding as to what it really costs to provide quality child care—particularly as child care programs face new guidelines and challenges responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, the Center for American Progress has developed an interactive calculator that estimates the cost of providing child care

that meets pandemic-related state guidelines.<sup>6</sup> Initial analysis finds that providers are facing, on average, a 47 percent increase in operating costs during the pandemic, with even higher increases for programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds.

These data underscore the need for immediate federal investment in child care to ensure that providers can meet these additional costs, stay open, and provide safe care for the millions of children and families who rely on it. As states grapple with the economic fallout of the pandemic and the need to balance their budgets, the federal government must step in and provide the funds necessary to support access to child care. Beyond the immediate needs related to the pandemic, policymakers should prioritize long-term funding for child care, recognizing the role the industry plays as the backbone of the economy. Robust public investment is needed to address the inequities in access to child care that have long existed and to fill the gap between what parents can afford to pay and the true cost of providing child care, including a living wage for early childhood educators.

	Ratios	Group Size	Number of classrooms	Number of children
Infants				
Toddlers				
3-year-olds				
4-year-olds				
Total				

Click the image above to view the interactive and see estimates for each state.

## Estimating the cost of child care during the pandemic

The child care market has long been broken. Most parents cannot afford the true cost of quality child care that adequately compensates teachers, and public subsidies designed to help working families access child care are limited in scope and insufficient in funding.<sup>7</sup> In 2018, CAP developed an online interactive to help better understand the true cost of providing high-quality center-based child care, highlighting the gap between available revenues and expenses.<sup>8</sup> While it is commonly understood that providers are facing increased expenses as they respond to the pandemic, few studies have attempted to quantify these costs.<sup>9</sup> As states enact the necessary emergency public health regulations to ensure that children are safe in child care settings during this time, it is critical that they understand the financial impact of these requirements and provide sufficient supports to help programs meet them.

CAP's new interactive calculator estimates the additional expenses incurred by providers who are operating under state emergency child care licensing requirements put in place to respond to the pandemic. The calculator is informed by state requirements and includes several default variables related to staffing patterns, salaries, and additional sanitation costs. Given the ever-changing nature of the pandemic and state responses to it, users can also override these variables to create a custom model based on the latest requirements. Full details of the assumptions in the calculator can be found in the methodological appendix.<sup>10</sup>

The calculator can be used to better understand the increased costs of providing care during the pandemic in both child care centers and family child care homes. It also shows how these costs vary when early childhood educator pay is increased beyond the current, unacceptably low level. Finally, the calculator can be used to estimate the statewide costs of supporting the child care industry during this time, helping state policymakers as they seek to understand the resources needed to ensure the survival of a critical part of their economic infrastructure.

---

## The true cost of child care has increased 47 percent during the pandemic

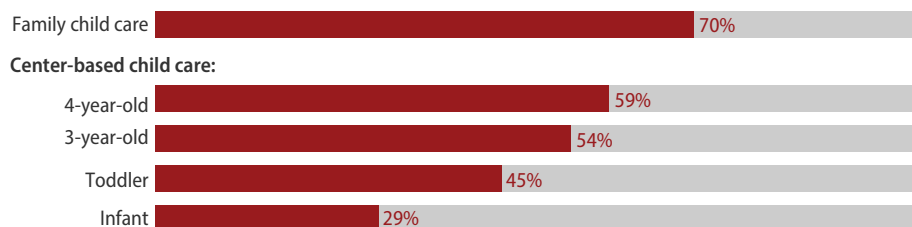
Using default data embedded in the calculator, initial analysis finds that the cost of center-based child care that meets enhanced health and safety requirements is, on average, 47 percent higher than the cost of meeting pre-pandemic requirements. This is driven primarily by a reduction in program capacity due to physical distancing requirements and by the need to purchase additional sanitation supplies. Meanwhile, the cost of home-based family child care is 70 percent higher than it was before the pandemic. Tables A1 and A2 in the Appendix provide data on the average increased cost in each state.<sup>11</sup>

Within this average, the calculator provides data broken down by age. While infant child care remains the most expensive age group, it is the classrooms for 3- and 4-year-olds that see the biggest increase in cost—due to the significant decrease in group size that is necessary for these age groups. Figure 1 below shows the average cost by age group. Notably, family child care homes are not broken down by age group; since they usually operate as single classrooms, different ratios and group sizes are not built into the calculator by default. Table A3 in the Appendix shows the breakdown by age for each state.

FIGURE 1

### The cost of child care during the pandemic has increased more for preschoolers than it has for infants and toddlers

The average increase in the cost of child care during the COVID-19 pandemic, by age



Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

## Group size and ratios

The variations in data between states is driven primarily by the group size limitations that many, but not all, states imposed in response to the coronavirus pandemic. While many states have limited group size to no more than 10 children per classroom, others have offered no guidance to limit class size, or have only made recommendations, rather than enact new emergency public health regulations. The data in the calculator are based on the most restrictive requirements put in place by the state

as of July 2020. For example, if a state enforced a limit of 10 children per classroom in April, but as of September, they reverted back to regular licensing standards, the calculator would use the limit imposed in April as the default for the coronavirus scenario. Users can modify the defaults in the calculator to account for the current requirements at the time of use or to reflect actual practice by providers in states that have no mandated smaller group sizes.

To help states understand the resources needed to support child care providers during the pandemic, the calculator also includes data estimating the statewide costs of child care. Many providers had to temporarily cease operations during the worst of the pandemic or are facing rolling closures in response to localized outbreaks. While these providers are closed, it is important that they continue to receive support to cover at least their fixed operating costs so that they can survive the closure and be ready to reopen when conditions improve. The calculator uses data from CAP's child care deserts database of licensed child care providers to estimate the cost of covering the fixed expenses of a user-specified percentage of child care providers in each state.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the calculator can be used to estimate the cost of covering the total operating costs of a user-specified percentage of child care slots in each state. As policymakers increasingly recognize the value of child care and discussion of child care as a public good intensifies, states can use the calculator to estimate the cost to provide child care—at no cost to families—for all essential workers in the state.<sup>13</sup> Table A4 in the Appendix provides an example of these costs for each state, based on covering the fixed expenses of 20 percent of providers and the operating costs of 40 percent of total state capacity.

---

### What drives the higher cost of care?

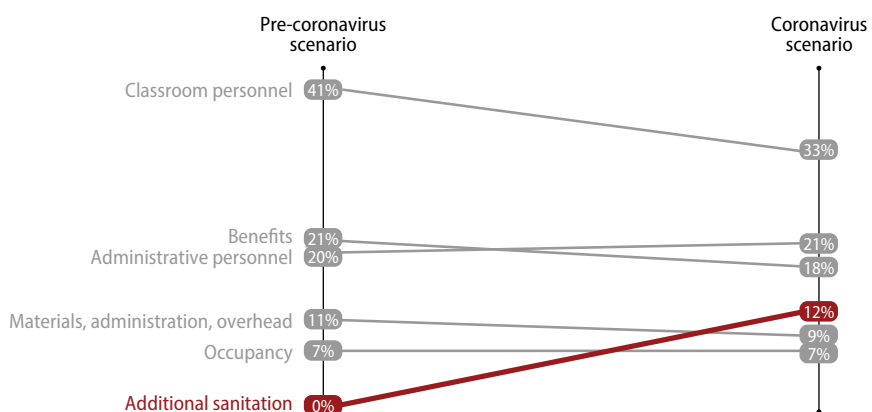
The largest expense for a child care program is the cost of paying staff. Even though the average early childhood educator makes only slightly more than \$12 an hour, personnel expenses account for approximately 70 percent of a child care provider's total budget.<sup>14</sup> Personnel costs have continued at the same level, or even increased, during the pandemic, as child care centers have been unable to maintain ratios by having "floating" staff that move between classrooms and are now required to have fully dedicated staff for each classroom instead. In addition, most providers are requiring parents to drop off their children at the entrance to the building, rather than walk them to the classroom. This requires additional staffing to manage the new pickup and drop-off procedures, such as taking temperature checks or asking parents or guardians health screening questions. As providers seek to support the emotional health of the children in their care, they might also consider increasing access to mental health specialists to support children during the pandemic, especially those whose parents are working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis.

In addition to staffing costs, providers are spending more on sanitation supplies. While child care centers and family child care homes have always had high sanitation standards, the calculator includes additional expenses for personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves, thermometers for temperature monitoring, and additional hand sanitizer and disinfectant. The calculator also includes the cost for a weekly deep cleaning of the program. Figures 2 and 3 show the breakdown of expenses in the default scenarios presented in the calculator—before and during the pandemic—for child care centers and family child care homes.

**FIGURE 2**

**Increased sanitation expenses due to COVID-19 account for an average of 12 percent of a child care center's budget**

Child care center expenses as a share of total expenses, before and during COVID-19 pandemic

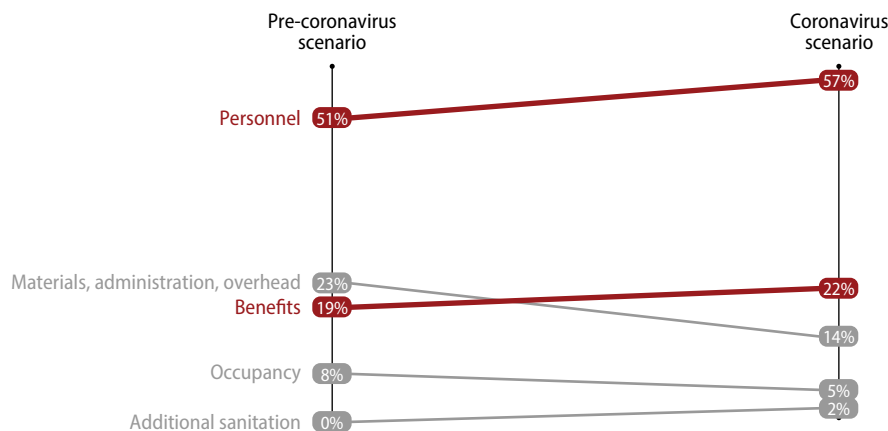


Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

**FIGURE 3**

**Personnel and benefits take up a larger share of family child care providers budgets during COVID-19**

Family child care home expenses as a share of total expenses, before and during COVID-19 pandemic



Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

Early childhood educators are often paid only slightly more than minimum wage, and many rely on public assistance.<sup>15</sup> While this has always been unacceptable given the important role that they play in the development of young children, it is even more alarming when considering the essential role that this workforce is playing during the pandemic. Thousands of early educators—primarily women, and often women of color—are putting themselves and their families at risk by continuing to work during the pandemic in order to ensure that care can be provided to families who do not have the option of working remotely during this time. Family child care providers may be particularly vulnerable since they are inviting children into their own homes where they and their families eat, sleep, and play. The lack of health insurance benefits offered in many programs puts educators further at risk. To address this inadequacy, the calculator includes health insurance by default and also includes an option to estimate the cost of care in a scenario in which employees are receiving higher salaries. In this way, states can better understand the true cost of providing care that meets both families’ and early educators’ needs.

---

### Covering the higher cost of care during the pandemic

The increased costs of providing child care during the pandemic are too high for providers to shoulder on their own and beyond what most families can afford. Even before the pandemic, working parents were struggling with the high cost of child care.<sup>16</sup> Child care subsidies, intended to support access to child care for working families, reach fewer than 1 in 10 eligible children in most states—despite low eligibility limits—and fail to reimburse providers at the true cost of providing quality care.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the majority of families are left to pay for child care on their own, facing prices that rival the cost of college tuition and that often exceed the cost of their mortgage or rent.<sup>18</sup> The result is an insufficient supply of child care in many communities, especially lower-income neighborhoods. This leaves families scrambling to put together a patchwork of care that they can afford and that meets their needs—but that too often still leaves them struggling to maintain stable employment.<sup>19</sup>

To help providers maintain operations throughout the pandemic, many states have used funding from the CARES Act to help offset their increased costs and have modified subsidy policies to provide payments based on enrollment rather than attendance.<sup>20</sup> However, data from this calculator show that much more funding is needed, with the CARES Act estimated to only cover the cost of 30 percent of child care slots for one month. While child care providers were eligible for the Paycheck Protection Program, data from the Bipartisan Policy Center finds that only 6 percent of providers were able to access this program, receiving less than 5 percent of the total funds distributed.<sup>21</sup> Even for those who did receive a loan, the impact of the pandemic is likely to be felt long beyond when these funds are fully expended. Without significant federal investment to help cover the increased costs of care, there will only be more stories of providers closing their doors for good.<sup>22</sup> When the pandemic has passed and offices are open once again,

this crisis will be evident for all. An increased number of parents will find themselves in a child care desert with severely limited options for licensed care, and businesses will find themselves with a workforce unable to work.

---

## Conclusion

Child care is a necessity for working families. This was true long before the pandemic but has become even more clear as families juggle the demands of work while dealing with school and child care closures. Without child care, parents cannot work and the economy cannot return to normal. However, many child care programs are at risk of permanent closure as they struggle to budget for increased expenses and decreased revenue. In order to save the child care market, significant public investment is needed—both in the short term to meet the increased costs of new health and safety protections and to stabilize the industry and in the long term to ensure a comprehensive early childhood system that meets the needs of children, families, early childhood educators, and businesses.

The Child Care Is Essential Act and the Child Care for Economic Recovery Act, passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in July 2020 but not picked up by the Senate, would inject more than \$50 billion into the child care industry, ensuring its survival throughout the pandemic. While airlines and other industries have received bailouts to weather the current storm, child care providers have once again been undervalued and largely left to fend for themselves. In the long term, a comprehensive solution such as the Child Care for Working Families Act would provide stable and sufficient funding for child care, ensuring that families can afford care that meets their needs and that educators are fairly compensated.

While federal funding is necessary to provide the level of resources needed to save the child care industry, states must also preserve their current investments in early care and education despite the budget shortfalls they are facing. Investments in early childhood provide lifelong dividends, for children, for families, and for state economies. In recent years, many states have made admirable investments in their early learning systems. Now, as they look to balance their budgets, states must not do so on the backs of young children, working families, and early childhood educators.

The impacts of the coronavirus pandemic have been severe for millions of businesses across the country. But the child care industry has been hit particularly hard. As the data in this report show, without significant investment, the industry will collapse. While the majority of child care providers are private businesses, the service they provide is a public good. Not only are they a key part of the infrastructure that supports the current U.S. workforce, but they also play a significant role in shaping the future workforce, harnessing the potential of young children during a critical period of brain development and setting them up for a lifetime of learning and social interaction. Nothing less than the future economic prosperity of the United States is at risk if we fail to support child care providers and educators throughout the pandemic and beyond.

*Simon Workman is the director for Early Childhood Policy at the Center for American Progress. Steven Jessen-Howard is a former research assistant for Early Childhood Policy at the Center.*

---

## Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank Mat Brady and Bill Rapp for their assistance developing the interactive calculator, as well as MK Falgout and Cristina Novoa for their assistance analyzing the data that inform this issue brief.



## Appendix

**TABLE A1**  
**The cost of center-based child care has increased**  
**by an average of 47 percent due to COVID-19**

Average monthly cost of center-based child care before and during COVID-19 pandemic

State	Pre-coronavirus scenario	Coronavirus scenario	Percent increase
Alabama	\$631	\$935	48%
Alaska	\$937	\$1,282	37%
Arizona	\$685	\$1,257	84%
Arkansas	\$597	\$1,103	85%
California	\$922	\$1,417	54%
Colorado	\$920	\$1,469	60%
Connecticut	\$1,156	\$1,528	32%
Delaware	\$781	\$1,217	56%
District of Columbia	\$1,298	\$1,400	8%
Florida	\$564	\$1,141	102%
Georgia	\$548	\$1,177	115%
Hawaii	\$986	\$1,289	31%
Idaho	\$614	\$672	10%
Illinois	\$958	\$1,391	45%
Indiana	\$798	\$934	17%
Iowa	\$787	\$1,257	60%
Kansas	\$829	\$923	11%
Kentucky	\$688	\$1,084	57%
Louisiana	\$545	\$1,151	111%
Maine	\$1,028	\$1,226	19%
Maryland	\$1,065	\$1,624	53%
Massachusetts	\$1,272	\$1,396	10%
Michigan	\$777	\$1,251	61%
Minnesota	\$940	\$1,505	60%
Mississippi	\$780	\$883	13%
Missouri	\$810	\$902	11%
Montana	\$810	\$1,206	49%
Nebraska	\$898	\$1,304	45%
Nevada	\$652	\$722	11%
New Hampshire	\$793	\$1,358	71%
New Jersey	\$1,013	\$1,678	66%
New Mexico	\$723	\$1,356	88%
New York	\$1,339	\$1,750	31%
North Carolina	\$681	\$765	12%

*continues*

State	Pre-coronavirus scenario	Coronavirus scenario	Percent increase
North Dakota	\$928	\$1,406	52%
Ohio	\$630	\$1,269	102%
Oklahoma	\$652	\$1,118	71%
Oregon	\$975	\$1,273	31%
Pennsylvania	\$852	\$950	12%
Rhode Island	\$940	\$1,289	37%
South Carolina	\$589	\$663	13%
South Dakota	\$777	\$842	8%
Tennessee	\$849	\$1,200	41%
Texas	\$671	\$740	10%
Utah	\$686	\$872	27%
Vermont	\$1,025	\$1,128	10%
Virginia	\$739	\$1,323	79%
Washington	\$979	\$1,520	55%
West Virginia	\$741	\$829	12%
Wisconsin	\$720	\$808	12%
Wyoming	\$833	\$1,223	47%

Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

**TABLE A2**  
**The cost of family child care has increased by an average of 70 percent due to COVID-19**

Average monthly cost of family child care before and during COVID-19 pandemic

State	Pre-coronavirus scenario	Coronavirus scenario	Percent increase
Alabama	\$619	\$1,064	72%
Alaska	\$814	\$1,432	76%
Arizona	\$732	\$1,281	75%
Arkansas	\$725	\$1,192	64%
California	\$823	\$1,442	75%
Colorado	\$768	\$1,384	80%
Connecticut	\$896	\$1,481	65%
Delaware	\$680	\$1,185	74%
District of Columbia	\$891	\$1,586	78%
Florida	\$688	\$1,203	75%
Georgia	\$740	\$1,207	63%
Hawaii	\$883	\$1,464	66%
Idaho	\$647	\$1,116	73%
Illinois	\$751	\$1,291	72%

*continues*

State	Pre-coronavirus scenario	Coronavirus scenario	Percent increase
Indiana	\$683	\$1,167	71%
Iowa	\$683	\$1,143	67%
Kansas	\$723	\$1,199	66%
Kentucky	\$767	\$1,241	62%
Louisiana	\$687	\$1,129	64%
Maine	\$815	\$1,400	72%
Maryland	\$826	\$1,370	66%
Massachusetts	\$863	\$1,504	74%
Michigan	\$769	\$1,285	67%
Minnesota	\$841	\$1,396	66%
Mississippi	\$708	\$1,129	59%
Missouri	\$718	\$1,216	69%
Montana	\$749	\$1,258	68%
Nebraska	\$836	\$1,355	62%
Nevada	\$725	\$1,212	67%
New Hampshire	\$730	\$1,266	73%
New Jersey	\$904	\$1,488	65%
New Mexico	\$748	\$1,246	67%
New York	\$894	\$1,519	70%
North Carolina	\$678	\$1,175	73%
North Dakota	\$683	\$1,216	78%
Ohio	\$708	\$1,213	71%
Oklahoma	\$709	\$1,159	63%
Oregon	\$746	\$1,329	78%
Pennsylvania	\$725	\$1,229	69%
Rhode Island	\$735	\$1,311	78%
South Carolina	\$682	\$1,140	67%
South Dakota	\$723	\$1,201	66%
Tennessee	\$730	\$1,200	64%
Texas	\$801	\$1,292	61%
Utah	\$713	\$1,204	69%
Vermont	\$794	\$1,425	79%
Virginia	\$812	\$1,335	64%
Washington	\$780	\$1,426	83%
West Virginia	\$729	\$1,216	67%
Wisconsin	\$665	\$1,166	75%
Wyoming	\$753	\$1,276	70%

Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

TABLE A3

### The increased cost of center-based child care during COVID-19 varies significantly between states and by child age

Increased cost of center-based child care meeting COVID-19 guidelines in each state, by child age

State	Infant	Toddler	3-year-old	4-year-old
Alabama	28%	60%	57%	57%
Alaska	22%	36%	48%	48%
Arizona	54%	72%	111%	126%
Arkansas	52%	96%	94%	115%
California	39%	43%	74%	74%
Colorado	49%	49%	70%	85%
Connecticut	21%	21%	51%	51%
Delaware	30%	72%	63%	76%
District of Columbia	10%	7%	7%	7%
Florida	51%	107%	142%	175%
Georgia	87%	89%	149%	170%
Hawaii	19%	26%	54%	44%
Idaho	11%	10%	8%	8%
Illinois	36%	35%	62%	53%
Indiana	17%	16%	14%	23%
Iowa	31%	70%	67%	89%
Kansas	11%	13%	9%	9%
Kentucky	30%	47%	84%	97%
Louisiana	74%	108%	137%	151%
Maine	14%	14%	39%	15%
Maryland	25%	66%	72%	72%
Massachusetts	11%	11%	7%	7%
Michigan	41%	72%	64%	79%
Minnesota	29%	83%	73%	73%
Mississippi	14%	14%	14%	10%
Missouri	14%	11%	10%	10%
Montana	26%	68%	58%	58%
Nebraska	24%	42%	60%	74%
Nevada	13%	11%	9%	9%
New Hampshire	43%	85%	79%	93%
New Jersey	54%	70%	71%	71%
New Mexico	77%	77%	103%	103%
New York	18%	15%	44%	56%
North Carolina	14%	13%	10%	10%
North Dakota	29%	48%	78%	63%
Ohio	76%	110%	108%	124%

*continues*

State	Infant	Toddler	3-year-old	4-year-old
Oklahoma	34%	83%	93%	113%
Oregon	20%	21%	47%	47%
Pennsylvania	14%	12%	10%	10%
Rhode Island	22%	38%	49%	49%
South Carolina	15%	13%	11%	9%
South Dakota	7%	7%	9%	9%
Tennessee	25%	40%	56%	55%
Texas	11%	11%	9%	8%
Utah	20%	21%	32%	46%
Vermont	12%	11%	8%	8%
Virginia	45%	92%	102%	102%
Washington	26%	80%	66%	66%
West Virginia	14%	12%	10%	10%
Wisconsin	15%	12%	11%	10%
Wyoming	20%	47%	62%	81%
Average	29%	45%	54%	59%

Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

**TABLE A4**  
**The monthly cost of supporting the U.S. child care system**  
**totals more than \$4.8 billion**

Statewide costs of supporting the child care system during the pandemic

State	Monthly operating costs for 40 percent of slots	Monthly fixed costs for 20 percent of providers
Alabama	\$39,823,364	\$1,425,120
Alaska	\$9,354,137	\$224,054
Arizona	\$106,428,503	\$1,757,033
Arkansas	\$63,473,107	\$1,432,174
California	\$467,951,996	\$11,861,966
Colorado	\$85,488,750	\$1,851,462
Connecticut	\$58,731,653	\$1,222,445
Delaware	\$16,044,567	\$399,625
District of Columbia	\$27,668,334	\$454,732
Florida	\$342,547,379	\$6,257,241
Georgia	\$164,245,738	\$3,001,942
Hawaii	\$12,787,424	\$420,873
Idaho	\$14,891,018	\$607,425
Illinois	\$158,056,632	\$3,134,850
Indiana	\$66,096,542	\$1,757,588
Iowa	\$75,505,743	\$1,614,826

*continues*

State	Monthly operating costs for 40 percent of slots	Monthly fixed costs for 20 percent of providers
Kansas	\$35,937,700	\$1,154,670
Kentucky	\$58,621,486	\$1,371,849
Louisiana	\$72,285,310	\$1,729,689
Maine	\$24,045,258	\$775,735
Maryland	\$91,909,057	\$1,870,880
Massachusetts	\$85,670,005	\$1,773,783
Michigan	\$148,480,057	\$3,577,980
Minnesota	\$131,812,824	\$2,339,873
Mississippi	\$38,544,146	\$1,026,995
Missouri	\$52,931,466	\$1,666,260
Montana	\$9,544,312	\$285,685
Nebraska	\$45,489,480	\$944,777
Nevada	\$12,223,087	\$360,281
New Hampshire	\$16,362,088	\$364,047
New Jersey	\$183,765,116	\$2,512,795
New Mexico	\$30,985,850	\$616,890
New York	\$237,487,243	\$4,194,963
North Carolina	\$102,107,829	\$3,503,405
North Dakota	\$19,020,972	\$481,397
Ohio	\$230,528,105	\$4,752,763
Oklahoma	\$47,638,237	\$1,242,645
Oregon	\$47,637,557	\$1,154,764
Pennsylvania	\$147,105,247	\$3,998,074
Rhode Island	\$12,999,228	\$316,030
South Carolina	\$46,675,285	\$1,426,326
South Dakota	\$9,194,051	\$239,136
Tennessee	\$97,669,183	\$2,318,249
Texas	\$278,582,254	\$7,006,481
Utah	\$20,534,056	\$545,660
Vermont	\$7,764,693	\$420,790
Virginia	\$153,425,149	\$2,576,729
Washington	\$87,275,317	\$1,706,973
West Virginia	\$13,300,000	\$471,643
Wisconsin	\$46,663,723	\$1,753,123
Wyoming	\$9,955,065	\$266,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,704,784,219</b>	<b>\$98,170,869</b>

Source: Estimates based on author scenarios generated in interactive calculator. See Simon Workman, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.

## Endnotes

- 1 Rasheed Malik and others, "America's Child Care Deserts in 2018" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2018), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2018/12/06/461643/americas-child-care-deserts-2018/>; Simon Workman, "Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go?: Understanding the True Cost of Quality Early Childhood Education" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2018), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2018/02/14/446330/child-care-dollar-go/>.
- 2 National Association for the Education of Young Children, "Holding On Until Help Comes: A Survey Reveals Child Care's Fight to Survive" (Washington: 2020), available at [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/holding\\_on\\_until\\_help\\_comes\\_survey\\_analysis\\_july\\_2020.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/holding_on_until_help_comes_survey_analysis_july_2020.pdf).
- 3 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, Public Law 136, 116th Cong., 2nd sess. (March 27, 2020), available at <https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ136/PLAW-116publ136.pdf>.
- 4 Child Care Is Essential Act, H.R. 7027, 116th Cong., 2nd sess. (July 30, 2020), available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/7027>.
- 5 Steven Jessen-Howard and Simon Workman, "Coronavirus Pandemic Could Lead to Permanent Loss of Nearly 4.5 Million Child Care Slots," Center for American Progress, April 24, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/news/2020/04/24/483817/coronavirus-pandemic-lead-permanent-loss-nearly-4-5-million-child-care-slots/>.
- 6 Simon Workman and Mathew Brady, "The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic," Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/?p=489962>.
- 7 Simon Workman and Steven Jessen-Howard, "Understanding the True Cost of Child Care for Infants and Toddlers" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2018), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2018/11/15/460970/understanding-true-cost-child-care-infants-toddlers/>.
- 8 Center for American Progress, "Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go?," available at [www.costofchildcare.org](http://www.costofchildcare.org) (last accessed July 2020).
- 9 See, for example, Rob Grunewald, "How a COVID-19 10-person group limit affects Minnesota's child care providers," Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, June 24, 2020, available at <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2020/how-a-covid-19-10-person-group-limit-affects-minnesotas-child-care-providers>; Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, "Modeling Child Care Center Costs and Revenues in Louisiana" (New Orleans: 2020), available at [https://0cd902dd-9de1-4dae-8781-4a355ebda8df.filesusr.com/ugd/43cca3\\_b72abbb3b2c4459a84cd5589c57519c1.pdf](https://0cd902dd-9de1-4dae-8781-4a355ebda8df.filesusr.com/ugd/43cca3_b72abbb3b2c4459a84cd5589c57519c1.pdf); Rebecca Ullrich and Aaron Sojourner, "Child Care is Key to Our Economic Recovery: What it will take to stabilize the system during the coronavirus crisis" (Washington: National Women's Law Center and Center for Law and Social Policy, 2020), available at <https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2020/04/CCKeytoEconomicRecovery.pdf>.
- 10 Simon Workman, "Methodology for 'The Cost of Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic'" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2020), available at <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2020/09/03111756/COVIDchildcare-methodology-update.pdf>.
- 11 It is important to note that the data in these tables are based on the requirements put in place by each state. In instances where states did not require smaller group sizes, the data will not show significant cost increases, but individual programs may have opted for smaller group sizes in order to comply with local ordinance or program-level decisions related to minimizing the risk of contracting the coronavirus.
- 12 Center for American Progress, "Child Care Deserts," available at [www.childcaredeserts.org](http://www.childcaredeserts.org) (last accessed August 2020).
- 13 MK Falgout and Katie Hamm, "Governors Lead the Way in Responding to Child Care Needs Amid the Coronavirus Crisis," Center for American Progress, May 7, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/news/2020/05/07/484733/governors-lead-way-responding-child-care-needs-amid-coronavirus-crisis/>; National Conference of State Legislatures, "Early Care & Education 2019 State Legislative Action Report," available at <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/early-care-education-2019-state-legislative-action-report.aspx> (last accessed August 2020); Katie Hamm and others, "America, It's Time to Talk About Child Care" (Washington: 2019), available at <https://caseforchildcare.org/2020CaseForChildCare.pdf>; Elliot Haspel, "A (Mostly Serious) 10-year Plan to Transform U.S. Child Care," Capita, April 27, 2020, available at <https://www.capitasocial.org/capita-ideas/2020/4/27/a-mostly-serious-10-year-plan-to-transform-us-child-care>.
- 14 Workman, "Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go?."
- 15 Marcy Whitebook and others, "Early Childhood Workforce Index 2018" (Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2018), available at <https://csce.berkeley.edu/files/2018/06/Early-Childhood-Workforce-Index-2018.pdf>.
- 16 Rasheed Malik, "Working Families Are Spending Big Money on Child Care" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2019), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2019/06/20/471141/working-families-spending-big-money-child-care/>.
- 17 Karen Schulman, "Early Progress: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2019" (Washington: National Women's Law Center, 2019), available at <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/NWLC-State-Child-Care-Assistance-Policies-2019-final.pdf>; Steven Jessen-Howard and Simon Workman, "Early Learning in the United States: 2019," Center for American Progress, September 16, 2019, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2019/09/16/474487/early-learning-united-states-2019/>.
- 18 Child Care Aware of America, "The US and the High Price of Child Care: An Examination of a Broken System" (Arlington, VA: 2019), available at <https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/2019%20Price%20of%20Care%20State%20Sheets/Final-TheUSandtheHighPriceofChildCare-AnExaminationofaBrokenSystem.pdf>.
- 19 Rasheed Malik and others, "The Coronavirus Will Make Child Care Deserts Worse and Exacerbate Inequity" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2020), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2020/06/22/486433/coronavirus-will-make-child-care-deserts-worse-exacerbate-inequality>; Steven Jessen-Howard, Rasheed Malik and MK Falgout, "Costly and Unavailable: America Lacks Sufficient Child Care Supply for Infants and Toddlers" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2020), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2020/08/04/488642/costly-unavailable-america-lacks-sufficient-child-care-supply-infants-toddlers>; Cristina Novoa and Steven Jessen-Howard, "The Child Care Crisis Causes Job Disruptions for More Than 2 Million Parents Each Year," Center for American Progress, February 18, 2020, available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/news/2020/02/18/480554/child-care-crisis-causes-job-disruptions-2-million-parents-year/>.
- 20 The Hunt Institute, "COVID-19 Resources & Policy Considerations," available at <http://www.hunt-institute.org/covid-19-resources/state-child-care-actions-covid-19> (last accessed August 2020); Alliance for Early Success, "Child Care Subsidy and Payment Changes in Response to COVID-19" (Washington: 2020), available at <https://legacy.earlysuccess.org/sites/default/files/ChangestoChildCarePayments20200424.pdf>.

21 Linda Smith and Manami Suenaga, "Child Care, Essential to Economic Recovery, Received Just \$2.3 Billion in PPP Funds," Bipartisan Policy Center, July 13, 2020 available at <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/child-care-essential-to-economic-recovery-received-just-2-3-billion-in-ppp-funds/>.

22 Rikha Sharma Rani, "With less money and more risk, waves of child-care providers call it quits," *Los Angeles Times*, August 22, 2020, available at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-08-22/coronavirus-dwindling-child-care-options-california>; DaLyah Jones, "Texas Already Lacked Affordable Child Care. Then COVID Hit," *The Texas Observer*, August 24, 2020, available at <https://www.texasobserver.org/child-care-covid-19>; Scott MacFarlane, Rick Yarborough and Steve Jones, "Some Child Care Centers Closed Due to COVID-19 May Not Reopen," NBC4 Washington, July 7, 2020, available at <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/some-child-care-centers-closed-due-to-covid-19-may-not-reopen/2354787/>.