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Workforce Development & Childcare



Athens Wellbeing Project 3.0
White Paper Series

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Abstract

This white paper attempts to address the systemic issue of the scarcity of childcare for working families and how it relates to workforce development, specifically in Athens-Clarke County (ACC). Our team focuses on working families in ACC with young children, ages birth to five years old, who have at least one parent in the workforce. Having reliable childcare is crucial for a working caregiver's productivity, availability, and economic mobility. Our findings suggest that in order for our county to address workforce development issues, we need to pay special attention to increasing the supply of early care and education providers, specifically childcare learning centers as a majority of our target population utilize these services. We created strategic recommendations for Athens-Clarke County that include utilizing public advocacy and implementing employer-sponsored childcare.

Introduction

Workforce development plays a critical role in community economic development and generally aims to foster prosperity for individuals, communities, and businesses. Components of workforce development include employer and employee engagement, written policies, continuous improvement, resource investment, education, and succession and retention planning (WDMS, n.d.). Employers rely on their employees to be engaged, productive, and available during work hours, and many employees rely on safe, inexpensive, and reliable childcare to do so. For working families, especially those with infants to preschool-aged children, consistent, accessible and affordable childcare is critical for their capacity to support their family. Additionally, economies are driven by a growing labor force which can lead to more production, wages, and consumption (Growing the American workforce, 2019).

A study conducted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that state economies lost between \$100 million and \$10 billion in 2021 because of childcare issues (YCosar, 2021). This significant loss of funds includes an average annual total of \$528 million in lost tax revenue and a combined average annual loss of \$2 billion due to absences and employee turnover (YCosar, 2021).



Furthermore, caregivers experience lost wages and delayed career advancements due to childcare challenges, negatively affecting employers' bottom lines (GEEARS, 2022). Individuals struggling due to low pay and insufficient benefits require supplemental resources to cover rent, bills, food, and childcare. The study led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation also reveals that addressing childcare breakdowns would unlock significant economic potential for states, employers, and working parents (YCosar, 2021). In Athens-Clarke County, there are multiple organizations that support workforce development and recognize that childcare challenges hinder our economic growth.

The Policy Problem

In Athens-Clarke County, we have more working caregivers with young children that need childcare than we have the capacity to hold in our local childcare centers. The lack of early care and learning childcare centers in concert with capacity restraints inhibits workforce development and limits economic vitality. In Georgia, childcare challenges result in an estimated \$1.75 billion loss in economic activity (Saporta Report, 2018). The economic activity lost is a result of absenteeism and turnover because inconsistent childcare leads to a significant disruption in a caregiver's employment (Saporta Report, 2018). State income tax revenue encompasses \$105.2 million of the state's total loss in economic activity (GEEARS, 2022).

Families and individuals with children must choose to spend a significant portion of their income on satisfactory childcare, find cheaper and often inadequate options, or leave the workforce to become full-time caregivers. Exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the childcare crisis has only worsened disparities experienced by low-income and marginalized workers.

Research Questions

Our target population for this white paper is working families in Athens-Clarke County with young children, ages birth to five years old, who have at least one parent in the workforce. Given the challenges our target population faces due to the shortage of spots in our current early care and learning centers and its relationship to workforce development, our research team explores two research questions.

Question 1: What does the childcare landscape look like in Athens-Clarke County?

Question 2: How can we ensure childcare is understood to be a workforce development issue?

In answering these questions, we intend to advocate for reducing the gap of children who require childcare and its availability. Keeping caregivers in the workforce will improve economic vitality driven by a boost in productivity. Providing quality childcare helps children develop their human capital which is the key to long-term economic growth

Literature Review

Childhood Development

The benefits of prioritizing childcare before age five are astronomical for brain development. Children who attend high-quality early education are more likely to graduate high school, go to college, and have higher-earning jobs (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet., 2022). Additionally, every \$1 invested in high-quality early education saves \$7 by lowering the demand for social services and reducing crime rates (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet., 2022).

A strong foundation in early childhood learning lays the groundwork for cultivating responsible citizens and social prosperity (Shonkoff, J. P., 2010). Studies show that high-quality childcare can decrease behavioral problems in children, and those who participate in early learning programs acquire vital social skills through constant interaction with other children (Stepanek, A., 2020). Children also continue developing problem-solving skills and experience fewer peer-related difficulties later in life (Stepanek, A., 2020).

Workforce Development

Childcare breakdowns are preventing caregivers from returning to work, and businesses and policy makers are paying closer attention to this issue (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. 2020). The US Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that 58% of working parents have reported leaving their jobs because they were unable to find any childcare solutions that met their needs (Swanek, 2022). 32% of those parents were women who decided to stay at home (Swanek, 2022). Many business leaders assert that the lack of childcare solutions for American employees is a crucial business challenge threatening the workforce and limiting U.S. businesses' bottom-line performance (Tobenkin, D., 2022). 29% of employed parents experience childcare breakdowns, which are associated with absenteeism, tardiness, and reduced concentration at work (Shellenback, K., 2004). 63% of employees surveyed in 2000 by the American Business Collaboration reported improved productivity associated with quality dependent care (Child Care Council, 2022).

Literature Review

Childhood Development Resources

The Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) is a resource available to the Athens-Clarke community. The CAPS program supports early education goals by assisting low-income families with the cost of childcare (CAPS, 2022). However, to receive CAPS benefits, families must meet certain income eligibility levels, have grandparents raising grandchildren, parents who are minors, or parents who are students (CAPS, 2022). Additionally, families must be Georgia residents with children 12 or younger or 17 years old or younger with qualifying special needs (CAPS, 2022). Most parents are required to participate in a state-approved activity, such as employment, education, or job search, for an average of at least 24 hours per week. The state median income guidelines set the income limit for families new to CAPS and ongoing eligibility based on federal poverty guidelines (CAPS, 2022). The federal poverty threshold is a guideline used mainly for statistical purposes, such as estimating the number of Americans in poverty each year (HHS, 2021). As of November 2021, the threshold is 150% of federal poverty guidelines due to funding from the ARPA, and it is time-limited (CAPS, 2021). Only an estimated 14.8% of income-eligible children in Georgia receive a CAPS scholarship (GEEARS, 2022).

ACC has an early learning center funded by The Georgia Head Start Association, Inc. (GHSA). GHSA is a statewide non-profit organization with the mission to provide education, leadership and advocacy that supports Head Start programs' efforts in delivering high quality comprehensive services to Georgia to enhance the capability of local Head Start programs to deliver quality comprehensive services to children and their families (Georgia Head Start Association, n.d.). In 2019, only 25% of Georgia's income-eligible 3-5-year-olds were enrolled in Head Start, and only 6% of eligible 0-3-year-olds were enrolled in Early Head Start (Head Start, n.d.).

Georgia's Pre-K Program is a lottery funded educational program for Georgia's four year olds to prepare children for Kindergarten. Children four years of age on September 1 of the current school year who are Georgia residents are eligible to attend Georgia's Pre-K Program during this school year (Georgia Dept. of Early Care and Learning, n.d.). Georgia's Pre-K Program is voluntary for families and for providers. In Athens-Clarke County, 722 of our children utilize the lottery funded Georgia pre-k program (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet., 2022).

Literature Review

In addition to these resources, the ACC School District has an After-School Program (ASP) at all 14 elementary schools in the county and is open to all students who attend Clarke County School District schools. The program is in operation from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m., involves activities including sports, arts and crafts, homework time, and a snack, and is significantly cheaper than other local childcare centers (Clarke County School District, 2021). The cost of the ASP is \$6 per day (\$30 a week) for the first child and \$4 per day for each additional child in the household (Clarke County School District, 2021). The cost to attend other local childcare centers in Athens is at least two to three times more expensive than the ASP; however, there may be a waiting list at some schools. This is a great program for households with caregivers to participate in due to easy accessibility, great affordability, and an enjoyable environment for the children.

The Childcare Industry

An article by Claire Ewing-Nelson (2020) discusses how childcare is the backbone of our economy and how childcare workers play an essential role in supporting a child's healthy development. Childcare employment plummeted by more than 30% at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and is still 7% lower today (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020). Staff turnover within the childcare industry is a pressing issue facing early childhood education (Caven, M., Khanani., 2021).

Reasons for high turnover include poor working conditions, low wages, minimal opportunities for advancement, and burnout (Hopkins , G., 2013). Turnover is highest in centers with lower wages; 23.1% of national early care and education centers pay their employees under \$10/hour and only 7.5% of centers pay their workers \$25/hour or more. Head Start-funded facilities have an hourly rate of \$20.99 with a 7.7% turnover rate (Grunewald, R., Nunn, R., & Palmer, V., 2022).

The staffing crisis is a domino effect. Labor market shortages prevent centers from being able to accept more children due to teacher-to-child ratio regulations. In turn, this leads to a decrease in tuition revenue for the centers because of limited enrollment. Operational expenses such as mortgage payments, supplies, insurance, equipment, utilities, and staff stay the same or increase because of environmental changes such as COVID-19 restrictions and inflation. This results in childcare centers must charge caregivers more to make up for the loss in net profit.

Data & Analysis

Data for this white paper were analyzed from several platforms: the Athens Wellbeing Project 2.0 Childcare Report, Georgia Early Childhood profiles produced by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Northeast Georgia Coalition informed by the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS), and primary data collection from a sample of 8 Athens-Clarke County childcare centers.

The Athens Wellbeing Project (AWP) is an initiative led by Dr. Grace Bagwell Adams, community partners, and a strong team of researchers in our county. The organization uses social determinants of health survey data to enhance the well-being of the Athens community through informed decision-making and improvements in service delivery. The AWP data includes a representative sample of Athens-Clarke County households. Secondary data is collected and analyzed at varying levels of geographic specification, e.g., U.S. Census American Community Survey, Georgia Department of Public Health Data, and Clarke County School District Data (Adams, 2022). AWP analysis included descriptive statistics of the following variables:

- Cost of childcare
- Source of childcare

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning North East Georgia Coalition created a fact sheet using profiles produced by the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS). The fact sheet is informed by the 2020 U.S. Census. GEEARS creates and promotes new, innovative ideas to encourage access to high-quality early education and recognizes the strong connections between quality early education and family engagement (GEEARS, 2022). The fact sheet presented by Clayton Adams from the Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning shows state and county-level data. The profiles represent the population of children under the age of six living with a parent, living in poverty, their race and ethnicity, the total number of early learning providers and the total licensed capacity, tuition assistance program enrollments, and quality-rated licensed early care and education providers.

Lastly, data were gathered via primary data collection. Our team called a sample of 8 Athens-Clarke County licensed childcare centers and asked about their tuition prices for toddlers, acceptance of CAPS, and length of waiting lists for admission into the center.

Findings

In Athens-Clarke County, 7,251 children under the age of six live with a caregiver (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). 68% of these children have all caregivers in the household in the labor force and 23% have at least one caregiver in the workforce. Only 10% of children have no caregivers in the workforce (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). Only 418 children are enrolled in Head Start, and 434 children receive tuition assistance through CAPS (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022).

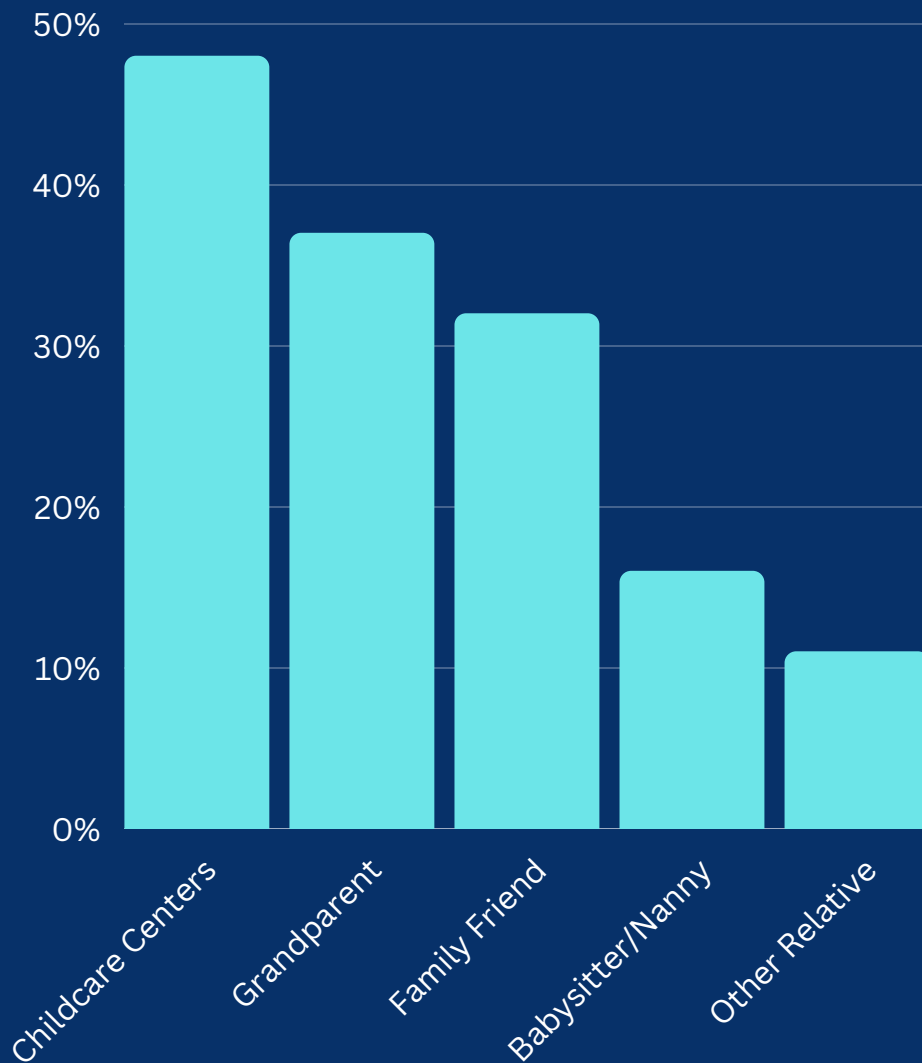
4,930 (68%)	Have all caregivers in the household in labor force
1,667 (23%)	Have at least one caregiver in the workforce
725 (10%)	Have no caregivers in the workforce
3,532 (49%)	Live in poverty
418 (5.7%)	Are enrolled in Head Start
434 (6%)	Receive tuition assistance through CAPS

Table 1: Children Under the Age of Six with a Caregiver
(N= 7,251)

Based on these statistics, most of the children under the age of six in Athens-Clarke county live with families who are experiencing poverty. Because these working families are struggling to make ends meet, their sources of childcare fluctuate. Programs like CAPS and Head Start are helpful, but clearly underutilized. Low-income families in Athens are disproportionately affected by a lack of affordable childcare options.

Findings

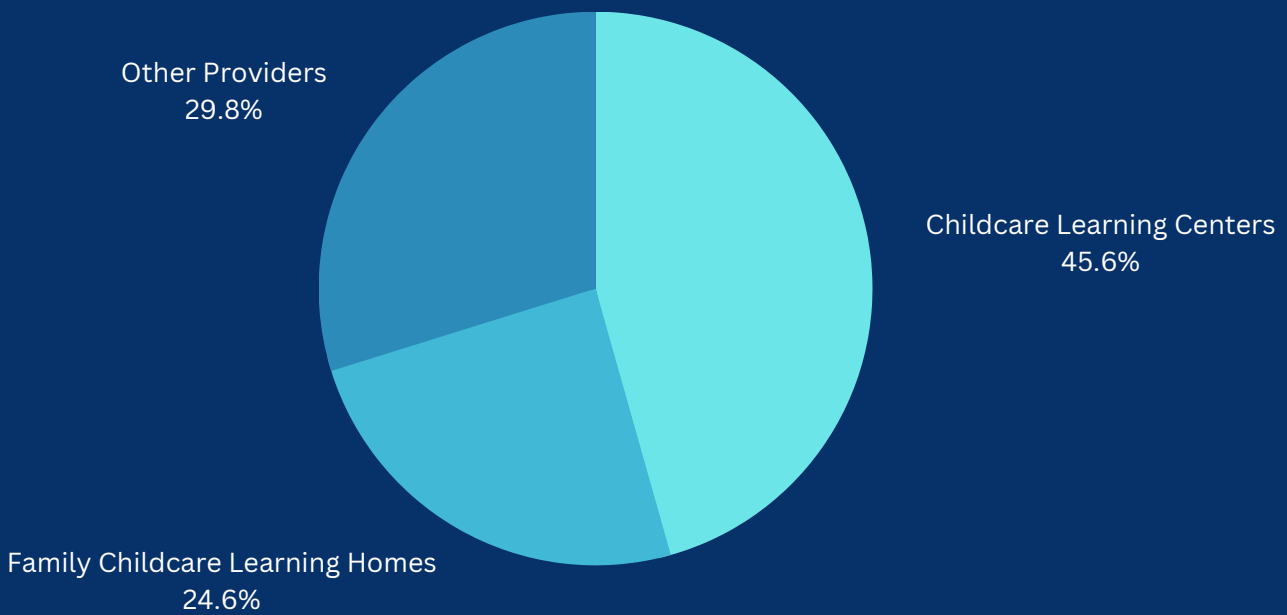
From the Athens-Wellbeing Project 2.0 Childcare report of the entire representative sample of households surveyed with children under the age of 6, the sources of childcare are presented in Graph 1. This portrays that the majority of households in our county utilize childcare centers as their primary source of care.



Graph 1:
Athens Wellbeing Project 2.0 Survey Data, Source of Care

Findings

In our county, there are 57 early care and learning providers. Graph 2 shows the breakdown of those providers. 26 of the early care and learning providers in Athens-Clarke are childcare learning centers of which 85% are licensed to serve infants, 92% are licensed to serve toddlers, and 100% are licensed to serve preschoolers (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). 14 of the providers are family childcare learning homes, of which 71% are licensed to serve infants and 93% are licensed to serve toddlers and preschoolers (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). There are 17 other providers that are not subject to licensing by The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) such as local school systems (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022).



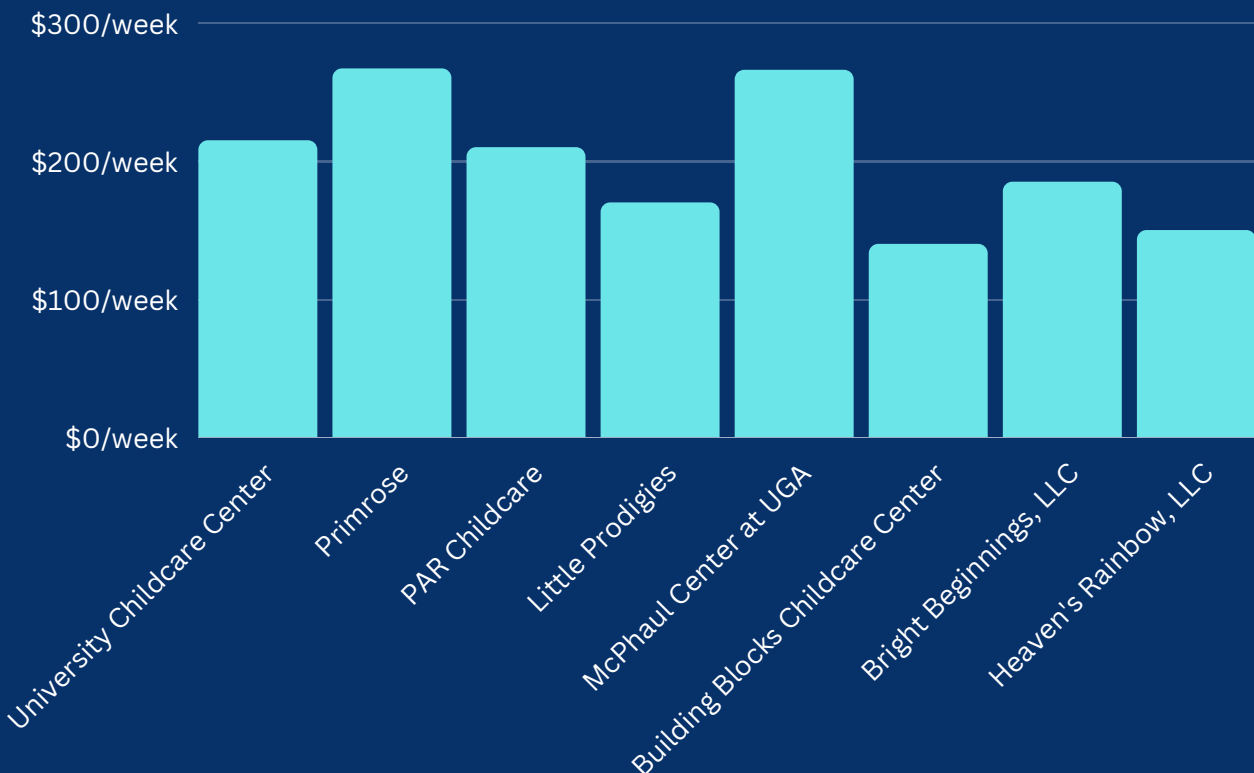
Graph 2:
Percentage of Early Care and Learning Providers out of 57 total providers in Athens-Clarke County
Source: GEEARS Fact Sheet

Findings

In the state of Georgia, a child must be five years old on or before September 1 to enter a public Kindergarten, and the compulsory school age in Georgia is 6 years old (Georgia Department of Education, n.d.). The population of children in our county under age five who require childcare totals 6,519 (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). It is important to know the demographics of these children. Of these children, 51% are white, 36% are black or African American, 19% are Hispanic or Latino, 10% are another race or multiracial, and 3% are Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022).

The total licensed capacity of ACC's early care and learning childcare centers is 2,749, and only 65% of those are quality-rated, by definition (GEEARS Child Fact Sheet, 2022). Analyzing this information, we found that our current infrastructure can only hold 42% of our children in a licensed childcare center.

Coupled with the lack of capacity are the high tuition rates of our local childcare centers. From our primary data collection, we found the weekly tuition rates for a single toddler are the following, which can also be seen in Graph 3:



Graph 3: Weekly Tuition Rates for a Single Toddler from a sample of ACC Childcare Learning Centers

Source: Primary Data Collection

Findings

Graph 3 shows the tuition prices per week, specifically for a toddler, at 8 Athens-Clarke county licensed childcare centers. Based on these numbers, the average tuition for quality-rated childcare centers in ACC is \$200 a week, \$800 a month, or \$9,600 a year. This does not include the costs of other sources of care required when childcare centers are closed, the child is sick, or cannot attend childcare for any reason. This number also does not include the cost to have multiple children in an early care and learning childcare center.

The monthly cost of childcare in Athens-Clarke County exceeds the average for the state of Georgia. In Georgia, the average cost of quality-rated childcare is approximately \$7,644 a year for an infant in childcare and \$6,500 a year for a 4-year-old in a quality-rated childcare early learning center (Economic Policy Institute, 2018).

As of late November 2022, all of the centers we contacted were at full capacity. Table 2 shows the length of the waitlist for a toddler in eight childcare centers in Athens-Clarke county. These long and lengthy waiting lists are inconvenient for working parents whose only source of available childcare is an early care and learning childcare center.

Of the eight facilities surveyed, Building Blocks Childcare Center was the only childcare center that mentioned offering lower tuition rates with CAPS eligibility. Both of these factors inhibit a decent amount of households in our county from accessing an early care and learning childcare facility.

With regard to caring for more than one child over the summer and other school holidays, lower income households typically utilize those in their social circles such as siblings, grandparents, and family friends for childcare more often than the full sample (Adams, G. 2020). The full sample more often tend to use childcare centers, babysitters, and afterschool care, all of which are generally associated with greater cost compared to childcare sources in social circles. There is a significant difference between the full sample and lower-income households sampled in the AWP data collection process (Adams, G, 2022). There is not enough affordable childcare in Athens to support the low-income population. This contributes to the workforce development issue because working families are not able to increase their income if they cannot go to work.

Findings

Child Care Center	# of Spots Open	Length of Waitlist	Tuition (Per Week)
University Childcare Center	Full	100 Children	\$215
Primrose	Full	Full 1 year (August 2023)	\$267
Piedmont Athens Regional Childcare	Full	15 Children	\$210
Little Prodigies	Full	25 Children	\$190
McPhaul at UGA	Full	30 Children (1-3 year wait list)	\$267
Bright Beginnings, LLC	Full	full 1 year (August 2023)	\$185
Heaven's Rainbow, LLC	Full	Full 1 year (August 2023)	\$150
Building Blocks Childcare Center	Full	Full 1 year (August 2023)	\$140

Table 2: Table Showing the Length of Waitlist for A Toddler for 8 Childcare Centers in Athens-Clarke County

Findings

Our findings suggest that in order for our county to address childcare shortages and cost, we need to pay special attention to increasing the supply of early care and education providers, specifically childcare learning centers as a majority of our households utilize these services.

Limitations

Limitations in our data include several facilities being wary of providing clear answers regarding their capacity and length of the waitlist. This information, along with tuition rates, are not explicitly stated on the childcare learning centers' websites. The lack of transparency is a barrier for families in search of an affordable childcare learning center. The lack of clarity in answers provided by the childcare learning centers makes it difficult for families to actively plan for childcare.

Recommendations

The notable lack of spots in early care and learning childcare centers further emphasizes the need for intervention to increase the availability of affordable childcare options for families in the workforce. Based on our research, literature review, data analysis, and findings, we have strategic recommendations for Athens-Clarke County community members and businesses.

Recommendation #1) Public Advocacy

Our first recommendation is to utilize public advocacy. Public advocacy at the local level could address the need for access, affordability, and quality childcare in Athens-Clarke County. Advocacy will begin by identifying key players. We suggest The Clarke County Chamber of Commerce staff and members head this effort. The stakeholders for this are business owners and working caregivers in the community. This advocacy can be informed by or in partnership with local early care and learning childcare facilities and local Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) and partners, specifically, the Childcare Resource and Referral Agency of Northeast Georgia. Additionally, elected officials, such as the mayor and county commissioners can identify budget and legislative priorities that represent opportunities for influence.

Understanding policies and funding streams already existing in Athens-Clarke county will set the landscape for addressing our capacity constraints. We advise exploring existing childcare policy agendas. The Clarke County Chamber of Commerce can incorporate working caregivers voices and stories into the advocacy to build grassroots support. Another step in this recommendation is determining an advocacy agenda which will be a call to action for chamber members and other stakeholders. A call to action can entail that members and other stakeholders provide employees with a directory of all of the local early care and learning programs within our county, as well as provide ways to establish flexibility in the workplace where possible by tapping into Employee Assistance Programs or Employee Resource Groups. Finally, develop a strategy for advocacy.

Recommendations

The Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce created a model to convene and unite local businesses, childcare providers, school administrators, and other community leaders to identify what works for their community (Talent Forward, 2022). Effective coalitions are built when businesses are willing to reach out to other businesses to join in a cause they care about. Utilizing partnerships and relationships is a powerful way to help support an issue. Intentional efforts to build cross-sector and interdisciplinary collaborations result in ongoing conversations about actionable models for improvement at the community level to directly support working families.

The public advocacy option would greatly impact organizational growth, brand impact, and community standing for participating businesses (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020). Innovative community partnerships could revolutionize childcare by helping families and employers communicate with one another and achieve mutually beneficial solutions.

Recommendation #2) Employer-Sponsored Childcare

Our second recommendation is for organizations to invest internally by implementing employer-sponsored childcare. Employers could partner with existing early care and learning centers to reserve a certain number of spots for the children of their employees. Employers could provide a list of all early care and learning childcare providers and programs within our county that entails whether the providers offer tuition assistance. Employers can support employees with child care by offering to fully or partially subsidize their child care costs. The solution can look different for each employer.

One example of an organization that has implemented a version of childcare support in Athens-Clarke County is Piedmont Athens Regional. Piedmont Athens Regional has a partnership with Piedmont Athens Regional Child Development center that is owned and operated by an external partner. The development center is open to all community members, but the partnership gives priority to Piedmont employees and puts their children at the top of the waiting list to get a spot in the center.

According to SHRM's 2019 Employee Benefits Survey, only 4% of U.S. companies offer free on-site child care and another 4% offer subsidized on-site care (SHRM, 2020). On-site care is a complex implementation strategy, but it would provide reliable childcare for caregivers while at work.

Recommendations

Utilizing this option would help organizations see high impacts in recruitment and retention, employee performance, organizational growth, and brand impact (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020). This option also addresses the childcare access and affordability challenges of working parents in our community.

Employers have the option to operate on-site care themselves or partner with an external childcare provider to manage daily operations and handle compliance issues. On-site care puts businesses in direct control over access, affordability, and quality. It is an investment and time commitment taking approximately up to one and a half years to launch. The initial costs may vary depending on size and scope of the organization in Athens-Clarke County. While organizations may have the space available, others will have to account for start-up costs associated with constructing or renovating a new space. One of the first steps in this journey is to explore ways to offset the costs by looking into existing subsidies, quality/facilities grants, partnering with other employers, tax benefits, and incentives (U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2020).

Bill SB22-213 signed into law in Colorado in June of 2022 created an employer-based childcare facility grant program for employers to construct on-site areas to provide licensed childcare services to their employees. The law's primary goal is to provide working parents, especially mothers, with affordable and attainable childcare services. The bill is designed to reduce the cost, burdens, and regulations around on-site childcare through financial incentives (General Assembly of the State of Colorado, 2022). Community Hospital in Grand Junction, Colorado plans to utilize an employer-based childcare grant from the state to build a 10,000-square-foot center with capacity for 100 children starting at six weeks of age. The project is estimated to take a year to complete (Schimke, 2022). Community Hospital has approximately 1,200 employees and is therefore comparable to what it would take an Athens-Clarke county business of a similar size to employ on-site care. In 2018, Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) received a historic boost in funding from the Childcare Development Fund in the amount of \$93 million (Camardelle, 2020). Examining the qualifications to apply for a subsidy grant through DECAL is worthy of our time and efforts.

Patagonia, a successful outdoor apparel company, provides on-site childcare for its employees. The Great Pacific Child Care Development Center (GPCDC), located in Patagonia's headquarters, holds space for 100 children (Anderson, B., 2019). The child care program is subsidized, and provides childcare to their employees at a reduced price.

Recommendations

Employees pay anywhere from \$500 to \$1,300 a month to enroll their children at GPCDC. Patagonia's CEO, Rose Marcario, said that high quality care is not as expensive as some may think (Anderson, B., 2019). Patagonia utilizes tax benefits which allow the company to recoup about 30% of the net cost of the child care development center (Anderson, B., 2019). Patagonia has had nearly 100% of its new moms return to work over the last half dozen years, and turnover for parents who have children in the on-site child care program runs 25% less than for our general employee population (Anderson, B., 2019).

Another example of a company that has had a prosperous on-site childcare facility is PepsiCo.. The former CEO of PepsiCo., Indra Nooyi, implemented an on-site childcare center and the benefits were immediate and lasting, especially on their bottom line which is associated with an increase in profits from the increase in productivity (Novellino, 2016). Pepstart, the daycare center located in PepsiCo headquarters, fosters care to 70 kids ranging from six months to five years of age. The on-site program encourages parents to engage in their duties while at work knowing their children are accounted for.

The program at PepsiCo is not free for employees, but because the company takes care of the overhead costs, such as rent, heat and electricity, it is more cost effective than a stand alone childcare center (Novellino, 2016). Bright Horizons, the company that runs Pepstart, has opened hundreds of similar programs for other organizations across the country. Bright Horizons is the largest provider of employer-sponsored childcare, and Atlanta has 9 locations that utilize these benefits (Bright Horizons, n.d.).

Investments in high quality childcare result in wide-ranging positive outcomes affecting every level of business. Employer based childcare reduces staff turnover, shrinks commute times, boosts morale, and provides child care hours that better match parents' work hours (Schimke, 2022).

About AWP and the White Papers

Athens Wellbeing Project

The Athens Wellbeing Project (AWP) is an unprecedented collaboration between institutional stakeholders and community partners with the mission is to empower the Athens community with meaningful data that will lead to more informed decision-making, improvements in service delivery, and greater quality of life for our citizens. The purpose of the Athens Wellbeing Project is to assist our community leaders and institutions by providing a comprehensive snapshot of our community's unique needs and assets in Athens-Clarke County. AWP uses a Social Determinants of Health framework to guide all data collection and reporting, providing information across five domains: civic vitality, community safety, health, housing, and lifelong learning.

The White Paper Series

The Fall 2022 White Paper Series was produced as part of the academic requirements of the Fall 2022 Health Policy Analysis course (HPAM 7400) in the Department of Health Policy & Management, College of Public Health, University of Georgia. The course was taught by Dr. Grace Bagwell Adams with Rebecca Baskam serving as the teaching assistant. The student team drafted the white paper and conducted the analysis and recommendations seen here.



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