

# NEW HAMPSHIRE EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

## 2026 Policy Data Basics



### Granite Staters need child care

**62,000**

children under age 5 live in NH



**70%** of NH families with young children use child care

**75,000**

NH adults have a child under age 5



About **16,000**

NH adults don't work because they are caring for a child

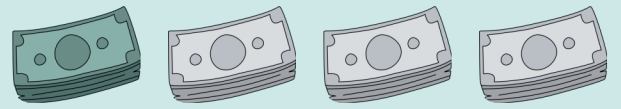


### Families face high prices

**\$29,082**

Tuition cost for **infant + 4-year-old** in a NH child care center

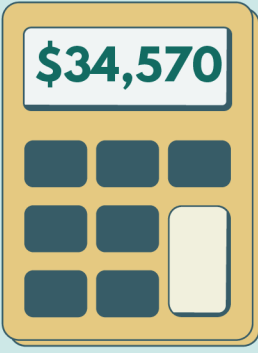
Equal to... **25%** of median NH family income



### Low wages, high operating costs

Average annual salary

**\$34,570**



for NH child care workers



**\$1.1 million**

Estimated **cost to operate** a 3-classroom NH child care center

### Uneven supply has economic toll

New Hampshire has...

**667**

**licensed programs** that serve children under age 5  
*10% fewer than in 2017*

Number of **formal slots** for children under 5

**40,000**

New Hampshire has...

**34%**

**fewer home-based slots** in 2026 than 2017...

...reducing options for families



**\$35,000**

**each unavailable slot's cost** in lost income, revenue, and taxes

### Building a better system



**Continue to grow** the NH Child Care Scholarship Program to level access



**Partner** with schools, employers, & municipalities on solutions



**Strengthen data capacity** to evaluate and scale what works.

### Sources

**Need:** Census Bureau (HPS Phases 3.6-4.2; ACS 2023, 5-year)

**Prices:** CCA 2024; ACS 2023, 5-year

**Wages:** BLS OEWS, 2024; P5 Cost Model

**Supply:** NH DHHS, 2017 - 2026; UNH Carsey School 2025 Preschool Study; NHFPI 2025



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