

NWRA Policy Recommendations: Yale University Study on COVID-19 in Child Care Programs

Findings from a recent Yale University study show that child care programs throughout the United States, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico did not contribute to the spread of COVID-19 to providers. This shows the dedication and vigilance of the child care community to keep providers and families safe and healthy. As the pandemic continues, the NWRA makes the following policy recommendations to provide crucial support for child care providers:



“The study shows child care workers were not just working to keep babies safe while they were working in child care programs; they were thinking about their safety even when they went out to get groceries.”

- Dr. Gilliam,
Yale University



Sustain or increase funding for health-related items such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies for child care providers.



Support a continued effort to maintain infection control measures such as social distancing and wearing masks.



Distribute stipend payments to child care programs maintaining low-ratio numbers to be in compliance with guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and state governments. These programs are working to maintain a socially distanced, controlled classroom environment, and some are at risk of going out of business because they are not running at full capacity and spending limited funds on PPE for staff.



Provide access to mental health and self-care resources for early childhood professionals to strengthen resiliency. Increase support for the emotional well-being of providers that include allowing paid time off, offering coaching support, and developing innovative approaches for licensing and professional development requirements.



Require mandatory participation in registries for child care providers. This will allow providers to receive information quickly and accurately in times of crisis, such as during a pandemic, wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural or national disasters. Essential child care workers can be contacted, updated, and connected through the registry.



Develop essential workforce supports that are delivered through workforce registries. This includes support such as job boards, resume builders, substitute pools, and learning management systems, which provide online learning and distance training opportunities that allow providers to remain prepared and meet regulatory requirements.



Build an infrastructure for workforce registries that supports increased effort to capture data on the full workforce in every state and provides higher saturation, accuracy, and live updates on workforce shifts and field needs at the state, regional, and national levels.



Invest in the technology and infrastructure to create live national and regional datasets that can inform policy, research, and equity initiatives.