Meeting the School-Age Child Care Needs of Working Parents Facing COVID-19 Distance Learning

Policy Options to Consider

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Abstract

As this paper was being written, school systems across the country were increasingly announcing plans for full or partial distance learning to respond to COVID-19, and it seems likely that more school systems may implement these plans should the pandemic surge in the fall or winter. As a result, working parents with school-age children are faced with the challenge of how to ensure that their children are in a safe learning setting while they work—a challenge that is even more daunting for families with low incomes, families who face greater health risks, and families who face inequities in access to educational and health resources as well as employment options. Unfortunately, these challenges are even greater because the pandemic has seriously constrained before- and after-school programs along with the center-based and home-based child care settings that usually provide after-school and child care supports to working parents.

This working paper gives an overview of the key issues and challenges facing both parents and after-school programs and child care providers as they try to ensure that school-age children are safe, supervised, and able to engage in quality distance learning while their parents work. It then lists policy strategies that policymakers could implement to better support these families and caregivers. These policy areas include cross-system coordination and collaboration, funding, child care subsidies, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, child care licensing, grants, training and technical assistance, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Overview

This working paper was developed to inform the policy debate occurring in summer 2020. School systems across the country are deciding how to deal with the fluctuating levels of COVID-19 infection and predicted surge in the fall, and a growing number of school systems are announcing plans for full-time or partial distance learning. As a result, working parents with school-age children (roughly between the ages of 5 and 17), as well as parents with school-age children who need to find work after becoming unemployed during the pandemic, face the challenge of balancing three important priorities: supporting their family's financial security by going to work, ensuring the health and safety of their child(ren) and family given the risks of COVID-19, and supporting their child(ren)'s education and academic success.

Doing all three of these tasks successfully means that parents must decide whether and how to rely upon others—namely out-of-school time programs, child care providers, or other caregivers—to help them care for their children and supervise their distance learning while they are working. Furthermore, parents must make these decisions within a highly uncertain context, including unknowns about key aspects of the virus, mixed messages from authorities, and a very real possibility of sudden pivots to either temporary distance learning due to a school outbreak or long-term distance learning due to rising infection rates in the community. Unfortunately, all these issues are made much more difficult because the pandemic has reduced family incomes while creating serious constraints and challenges for all the sectors that usually provide after-school and child care supports to working parents.

Helping parents manage the balancing act of working while protecting their family's health and their child(ren)'s education is not only important for the current and future success of the children and families themselves, but also for the health and economic recovery of businesses and employers, communities, states, and the country.

This paper lays out a range of policy strategies that federal, state, and/or local policymakers can take to help families meet these goals, some of which could also be supported by the private sector and philanthropies. We begin with some background to ensure that readers understand the challenges that parents and the after-school and child care communities face—and that policymakers need to address. We then turn to policy strategies, first describing

overarching goals and principles that policymakers, stakeholders, and others working to support families should consider when establishing policies to address these challenges, and then laying out a list of suggested policy steps that could help parents meet their goals. We cover seven policy areas:

- cross-system coordination and collaboration
- funding
- child care subsidies through the Child Care and Development Fund
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- child care licensing
- grants
- training and technical assistance
- Child and Adult Care Food Program and school food programs

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Understanding the Context

Many School Plans for the 2020–21 School Year Involve Distance Learning

As of July 2020, many school plans for the 2020–21 school year rely significantly on distance learning. While some school systems are planning to open normally, others are suggesting hybrid approaches where students attend school some of the time and learn remotely some of the time (alternating parts of days, days, parts of weeks, or full weeks), and an increasing number are announcing full-time distance learning to begin the school year.[1] However, even in the case of planned full- or part-time in-person attendance, parents face the possibility of sudden pivots to short-term full-time distance learning in the case of infection in the school building or their child being sent home if found to have symptoms that could be COVID-19, and there is a growing recognition that the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 may result in schools deciding to move fully to distance learning later in the fall or winter.

[1] See https://equityschoolplus.jhu.edu/reopening-policy-tracker/ for information on school reopening plans by state.

When possible, schools are providing families the option for full-time distance learning even if it is not schoolwide. This targets parents of children with health risks, families with members at higher risk of COVID-19, and others who are particularly concerned about the health risks of attending school or group care situations. While it is good that these families have the option of choosing whether to take on the risks associated with attending school during a pandemic, this is not an easy decision or without trade-offs. Specifically, working parents will be faced with finding full-time supervision and learning options for their children or quitting their jobs. They are likely to face serious constraints in their options for affordable alternative care arrangements, and their children are at risk of falling behind their peers who are able to access more on-site instruction.

The volatility and uncertainty of these schedules creates extra challenges for working parents and other priority populations who must arrange for care that can supervise their children's care and distance learning while also being flexible and responsive to changing demands.[2]

Most Parents of School-Age Children Work

While school is, of course, primarily designed to provide education to children, it also plays a major role in providing parents a safe and supervised environment for their children. Not surprisingly, therefore, parents with school-age children are very likely to work and do so at higher rates than do parents with younger children. In 2019, about 15 million or 76 percent of mothers whose youngest child was between the ages of 6 and 17 were employed, and 80 percent of them were employed full time. Employment rates were even higher for fathers with children in the same age range: almost 14 million, or 92 percent, were employed and almost all (96 percent) of them were employed full time.[3]

[2] See https://equityschoolplus.jhu.edu/reopening-policy-tracker/ for information on school reopening plans by state.

[3] "Press Release: Employment Characteristics of Families—2019," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 21, 2020.

Distance Learning Plans Create Major Gaps in Children's Care and Education for Working Families

To understand the coverage and supervision gaps that working parents face when their schools implement distance learning plans, it is useful to understand a few basic facts:

- **Work schedules:** While schedules vary from family to family, on average full-time workers work about 41 hours a week[4] and spend almost another 2.5 hours commuting.[5] Thus, on average, working parents need at least 43.5 hours of coverage for their children.
- **Hours of supervised settings needed for schools operating normally:** In a standard school year, children are in school for about 30 hours a week.[6] This means that parents who work full time likely need someone else to help care for their child care an average of at least 13.5 hours a week, though data suggest that many rely on such settings for more time.[7]
- **Hours of supervised learning settings needed for schools with distance learning plans:** While actual hours will vary across families, using the averages identified above generates the following estimates:
  - » hybrid plans that have children at school half time and distance learning half time would require parents to find care for 28.5 hours a week—or roughly *double* the time needed before the pandemic;
  - » hybrid plans that have children at school one-third of the time and distance learning two-thirds of the time would require parents to find care for 33.5 hours a week—*more than double* the amount of time needed before the pandemic; and

[4] "Household Data Not Seasonally Adjusted, A-24. Persons at work in agriculture and nonagricultural industries by hours of work," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 16, 2020.

[5] "Table A-1. Time spent in detailed primary activities and percent of the civilian population engaging in each activity, averages per day by sex, 2019 annual averages," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 16, 2020.

[6] US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public Teacher Data File," 1987–88, 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2003–04, 2007–08, and 2011–12; "Public School Data File," 1987–88, 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2003–04, 2007–08, and 2011–12; "Charter Teacher Data File," 1999–2000; and "Charter School Data File," 1999–2000.

[7] However, data from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (see appendix) suggest that many parents actually used settings for more hours than noted here, so these numbers may be underestimates.

» full-time distance learning plans would require parents to find care for all 43.5 hours they work—*roughly triple* the amount of time they needed before the pandemic.

To add to this complexity, parents whose schools are planning hybrid models (part-time on-site and part-time distance learning) will have to find care for their children for the full day some days or weeks—depending on the school's distance-learning schedule—and only the after-school portion for the others.

Further, given the uncertainties of sudden school closures due to contamination, child quarantine due to suspected illness, or movement to full-time distance learning in cases of rising community infection rates, even parents who start out the school year with some on-site learning may face temporary or longer-term needs for full-time support. And if a child is ill or thought to be exposed to COVID-19, they are unlikely to be able to attend any child care setting with other children, creating a significant need for caregiving options at home. This latter situation could well occur frequently because of the overlap between COVID-symptoms and other common childhood illnesses, such as colds (Eccles 2005) and the flu. Whereas in previous years, these children may well have gone to school with a cough, or only stayed home a day or two with a fever, the possibilities of COVID-19 infection may mean schools require children to stay home longer, creating unpredictable challenges for working parents.[8]

Distance Learning Plans May Significantly Increase the Cost of Ensuring Children Are Safe While Parents Are Working

It is impossible to estimate what the costs of these additional hours would be, given the uncertainties of what kinds of care will be available, how much providers will charge, what parents will be able to afford, and what care parents will use. However, the estimates for the hours of care that parents might need on pages 4 and 5 suggest that parents who paid for after-school care before the pandemic could easily face a doubling or tripling of their child care

[8] While the guidance varies or is unclear, most schools are requiring that children who present with symptoms of illness that could be COVID-19—such as a fever, cough, or shortness of breath—must be sent home, though the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not specify for how long. (See Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs," US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed July 13, 2020.) Many formal health recommendations are that those with symptoms should isolate for 14 days, but a quick scan of available school guidelines suggest that few schools are specifying how long children must stay home.

expenses *if* they continued to use the kinds of care they used before, and *if* the program's hourly charges remained the same.

While it is also difficult to provide an accurate estimate of the amount that full-time working parents were paying for after-school care *before* the pandemic, looking across a variety of sources suggests a ballpark figure of $100–$125 a week (box 1) as an average, with some parents paying significantly more. Given that data from 2012 suggest that families with only school-age children who regularly used paid care spent on average 11 percent of their income for such care, a doubling or tripling of costs would clearly be prohibitive (NSECE, 2016).

Even before the pandemic working parents were struggling to afford care for their school-age children (Afterschool Alliance 2014). These challenges will be exponentially harder now, particularly given the need to find significantly more hours of coverage coupled with the financial challenges many families are facing from loss of jobs and/or reduced income. A survey in mid-May, for example, found that about 44.7 percent of Americans who live in households with children under the age of 18 report that either they or someone in their home experienced a loss of employment income (Acs and Karpman 2020).

Box 1. How Much Did School-Age Care Cost before the COVID-19 Pandemic?

No single source provides a clear picture of child care costs for school-age children before the pandemic. Costs also vary widely across different types of care and from state to state and community to community. However, looking across the three sources below suggests that $100–$125 a week per child may be a reasonable ballpark estimate of the average amount paid by parents who paid for care:

- The National Survey of Early Care and Education estimated that the average *per child* expenditures per week in 2012 for parents who only had school-age children and regularly used care that they paid for was $97, which was on average about 11 percent of total monthly income for those families. However, this figure averages payments across families using different amounts of care, so it likely underestimates the amount paid by parents working full time. It also is a per child cost, so it would be higher for the many families that have more than one child in school (NSECE, 2016).
- Child Care Aware of America provided information on the costs of school-age child care in child care centers and family child care homes in 2016 (Child Care Aware of America, 2017). While costs varied significantly across states, the cost of before- and after-school center-based child care in the state that fell at the midpoint was $123.60 a

week, which was 24 percent of the median income of single-parent families in the state and 7 percent of the median income of married-couple families. Costs were slightly lower for school-age care in a family child care home: the cost in the midpoint state was $96 a week—18.5 percent of the median income of single-parent families, and 5.8 percent of the median income level of married-couple families.

- The Afterschool Alliance's national survey found that parents reported paying an average of about $114 a week for child care in 2014 (Afterschool Alliance 2014).

After-School and Child Care Settings Are Diverse and Face Challenges with the Pandemic

Before the pandemic, working parents who needed someone to help keep their school-age children safe and engaged after school relied on a wide variety of care arrangements. Data from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), shown in the Appendix, found that of the 10.2 million children ages 6–12 who were regularly cared for by someone other than a parent,

- a little over half (52 percent) were cared for by an unpaid adult—most likely a relative, friend, or neighbor—and they spent an average of 24 hours a week in this form of care;
- about 15 percent were cared for in a home-based setting by someone that the family had a prior relationship with (again, probably a family, friend, or neighbor) and who was paid to care for the children, and they spent 17–24 hours a week in this care, depending on the age of the child;
- about 8 percent were cared for in a home-based setting by someone with whom the family did not have a prior relationship, likely a family child care provider or a nanny who was paid to provide this care, and they were cared for in this setting 13–16 hours a week depending on the age of the child; and
- about 40 percent were cared for in some form of organized child care or after-school program, and they spent 17–19 hours a week in this setting. This included settings ranging from formal after-school programs in schools or in community programs to

settings that provided single activities (i.e., sports) and recreational activities (NSECE Project Team 2016).[9]

However, the out-of-school-time programs and caregivers that previously provided care and learning environments to children in the after-school and summer hours are facing a perfect storm of challenges because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges include program closures, loss of facilities and physical space in schools, increased costs resulting from new health and safety requirements, reductions in the number of children served because of new limitations on group size, changing demand stemming from parental job loss and/or reduced income as well as changing parent preferences and concerns about possible exposure in group settings, different requirements and demands for children coming from different school districts, concerns about transporting children while maintaining social distancing, and staff and caregiver concerns about being exposed to the virus while caring for groups of children.

While it is beyond the scope and focus of this paper to document all the issues above, below we provide a few examples:

- Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report that the child care field lost a significant number of workers during the pandemic. In June 2019, 1,017,000 workers were classified as providing child care services. By April 2020, this workforce had lost 350,000 employees (or 34 percent of the June 2019 levels). These numbers recovered slightly by June 2020, adding another 80,000 jobs, but this total is still 23 percent below the June 2019 level.[10]
- Data from non-representative surveys of child care programs, and surveys of before- and after-school providers, indicate a significant number of providers are concerned and uncertain about being able to reopen, the costs of operation, staffing, and other challenges.[11]

[9] These percentages do not sum to 100 because some children may be in more than one form of care. See Appendix for these data broken down for children ages 6–8 and 9–12.

[10] "Table B-1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry sector and selected industry detail," Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 2, 2020.

[11] "A State-by-State Look at Child Care in Crisis: Understanding Early Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic," National Association for the Education of Young Children, March 27, 2020, and "Afterschool in the Time of COVID-19." Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance.

- According to 2012 data on the characteristics of the child care workforce, 26 percent of center-based staff, 41 percent of listed (mostly regulated) home-based providers, and 40 percent of unlisted (or not regulated) home-based providers are more than 50 years old (Whitebook, McLean, and Austin 2016). Further, child care providers overall appear to have a greater likelihood of health risk factors than the national averages or women with similar demographic characteristics (Linnan et al. 2017; Otten et al. 2019).

Distance Learning and the Pandemic Create New Demands for School-Age and Child Caregivers

After-school programs and the range of center-based and home-based providers face a host of challenging demands in working to meet the needs of families with school-age children engaged in distance learning. These include finding caregivers and staff willing and able to meet the increased hours of demand and the higher risks of illness, meeting new health and safety requirements and paying for the staff time and materials needed for social distancing and disinfecting, finding facilities, and accessing funding.

One issue that has not been sufficiently discussed is that the full range of caregivers must have the training, materials, technology, ability to communicate with teachers, and other resources needed to support children's ability to learn and participate in their school's distance learning activities. While a significant proportion of after-school providers and caregivers likely help children with homework and other learning supports, they have not had to support all the educational activities that make up children's distance learning. A range of supports will be needed, ranging from training around technology and school expectations to technological resources, connections and communication with schools and parents, and so forth. In addition, programs caring for multiple children, and for changing groups of children in communities that alternate which children attend school on site, will likely need additional resources and staff to manage the competing demands.

Placing these demands on caregivers is particularly challenging given that the child care workforce is generally poorly paid. The median hourly wage for child care workers across settings was $9.77 in 2015 (Whitebook, McLean, and Austin 2016), and around 75 percent of child care workers self-reported access to health insurance in 2012 (NSECE 2013). In

comparison, the median hourly wage of elementary school teachers was $26.39 (Whitebook, McLean, and Austin 2016).

Parent Demands and Preferences May Be Shifting due to COVID-19

While parents will undoubtedly continue to seek a range of child care settings for their school-age children, as they did in the past, there is some indication of a greater interest in in-home child care settings during the next months of the pandemic. There are several reasons for this increased interest, including

- challenges and reductions in capacity facing larger after-school programs from new limitations on group size and changing demand;
- the potential that larger programs may face closure by state or local governments if the pandemic worsens—closures that could be short or long, state-mandated or in response to program concerns and constraints, and in some cases potentially permanent;
- parental concerns about having their children in large group settings given the health risks;
- the reality that home-based settings tend to be more flexible about hours of care and more able to meet parent scheduling needs (NSECE 2015); and
- transportation concerns that limit the distance families can go for care given that children cannot use public school transportation during days of distance learning.

In addition, if a child is ill or must be quarantined, and their parent must work, the only possible arrangement parents can use responsibly is to stay home from work or have someone come to their home.

There already is some indication that parents may be shifting to smaller care arrangements with fewer children in a home-based setting,[12] and both news reports and anecdotal reports suggest that some parents are forming small pods of children to be cared for and supported in their distance learning in a home setting – though the costs of such an approach are likely to be beyond the ability of many families to afford.[13] Given the current trajectory of the

[12] Linda Morris and Suzann Morris, "As Economies Reopen, State Administrators Note a Shift to Family Child Care," Bipartisan Policy Center, June 2, 2020.

[13] Melissa Mollet, "DC-Area Families Form 'Pandemic Pods' to Supplement Online Learning," MSN, July 22, 2020.

pandemic, the predictions for a bad winter, and the very real likelihood of closures of schools and other group settings due to overall trends, this trend seems likely to continue.

What Are the Implications of Failing to Address These Challenges?

Quick and comprehensive steps are needed to ensure that working parents are supported in balancing their family priorities and that after-school programs and caregivers are supported in both supervising children *and* assisting with their distance learning. Failure to respond to these needs will likely create negative outcomes for parents and children, after-school and child care providers, employers, and the larger economy. Further, these costs are disproportionately likely to be borne by women and communities of color, both of which face systemic inequities and barriers.

Women Are More Likely to Drop Out of the Labor Force and Reduce Family Financial Well-Being

Without ways to ensure their child(ren)'s safety and well-being, women are likely to drop out of the workforce. This significantly affects their family's economic security given that 40 percent of all households with children—and 67.5 percent of Black households with children—report that the mother was the equal, primary, or sole breadwinner for the family (Frye 2020). This is likely to further contribute to the economic insecurity and resulting challenges faced by families in the coming year.

Longer-Term Earnings Will Decrease

Working is important for the longer-term financial well-being of parents. Research suggests that parents who stay out of the workforce because they can't afford child care lose far more than just their immediate salary. Their ability to find work and their earnings potential are reduced by time out of the labor market, lowering lifetime earnings by the equivalent of three to four times their annual salary for each year they are out of the workforce (Madowitz, Rowell, and Hamm 2016).

Structural Inequities Increase the Barriers Families Face and Exacerbate the Impact on Children's Achievement

Families with lower incomes, and particularly Black, Latino, and immigrant families, are more likely to face multiple challenges—many of which stem from structural racism and systematic inequities. For example, these communities are more likely to face

- schools with fewer resources (Owens and Candipan 2019);
- gaps in child care supply (Malik et al 2018) and unmet demand for afterschool programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2014);
- greater likelihood of employment that does not allow parents to work at home (*The Lancet* 2020);
- higher risk of COVID-19 infection for parents, children, and family members due to higher rates of underlying health conditions stemming from structural racism in access to health care and the conditions that support health;[14] and
- less access to devices and high-speed internet needed to support distance learning.

All these factors have contributed to significant racial and ethnic disparities in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these communities, as well as on the effectiveness of distance learning on children's development. One study found that lower-income children and Black and Latino students were significantly more likely to have been negatively impacted by distance learning. Specifically, researchers project that if children do not return to in-class learning until January 2021, Black students will be 10.3 months behind where they would have been with in-class learning, Latino students will be 9.2 months further behind, and lower-income students will be 12.4 months further behind, compared with 6.8 months for all students (Dorn et al. 2020).

Parents Who Are Unable to Find or Afford Care They Trust May Leave Their Children Unsupervised

Parents who are unable to find care settings for their children that they trust and can afford, yet must work to support their families, may have to resort to leaving their children unsupervised or in the care of older siblings. This problem was already a troubling one before the pandemic: a national parent survey by the Afterschool Alliance in 2014 found that an estimated 10 million school-age children were left unsupervised after school—including 19 percent of middle school students—and the likelihood of "self-care" rose as children got older. Though in some cases this self-care may have been by choice, 40–47 percent of parents of elementary and middle school students reported their children would have been enrolled in a program had one been available; the proportions were significantly higher in communities of color and lower-income communities (Afterschool Alliance 2014).

[14] "COVID-19 in Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, June 25, 2020.

An increased use of self-care would be of significant concern for several reasons, including that children who do not have access to an adult at home are far less likely to be able to successfully engage in distance learning, thus further undercutting their education, and because research has found that self-care is associated with higher levels of antisocial behavior (Posner and Vandell 1994; Steinberg 1986), risk-taking behavior (Cohen et al. 2002; Dwyer et al. 1990), substance use (Mott et al. 1999; Richardson et al. 1993), and poor psychological adjustment (Atherton et al. 2016; Pettit et al. 1997). These issues, when layered on top of already strong indications that many children have experienced higher levels of trauma because of the pandemic, suggest that increased self-care rates could well exacerbate the negative impacts of the pandemic on children's long-term well-being (Bryant, Oo, and Damian 2020).

The Economy Needs Parents of School-Age Children to Be Able to Work

The economy is highly dependent on workers with children younger than 14, who a recent study estimated made up an estimated 32 percent of the workforce in 2018 (Dingel, Patterson, and Vavra 2020). While some of these workers may have adults in the household who could help care for their children, the researchers estimated that 11 percent of the entire workforce—and 40 percent of the under 55 workforce, who are the most likely to go back to work during the pandemic—are likely to face child care–related barriers to returning to work. This represents an estimated 17.5 million workers. This proportion reaches more than 20 percent in many parts of the country—sometimes as high as 33 percent—and represents as much as a quarter of people working in health care and education (Dingel, Patterson, and Vavra 2020).

Overarching Policy Goals and Principles

The policies in the next and final sections provide a sampling of the steps that could be taken to help working parents meet the care and education needs of their school-age children during times when their schools require distance learning due to the pandemic. This section suggests an overarching goal that policymakers and stakeholders should hold in mind as they address these challenges, as well as a set of guiding principles.

Goal

Ensure that school-age children engaged in distance learning whose parents are working are cared for by caring adult(s) who can support their learning within the context or setting that their parent feels is the best for them/their family circumstances; allows their parents to work; is responsive to changes in school distance-learning plans; and protects the physical, emotional, and social health and well-being of children, their families, and the caregivers/staff caring for them during their distance-learning hours.

Guiding Principles

- Support parent's ability to make the choices they believe are the best for their child, family, and circumstances.
- Prioritize strategies that support working families who face the greatest risks and inequities, and the providers that serve them. These priority groups include
  - » parents who must continue to work outside the home (especially low-wage workers, including those defined as "essential"),[15]
  - » parents who have individual or family risk factors for COVID infection,
  - » families who are part of groups that face higher incidence and risk of COVID infection including communities of color and immigrant communities and families who are homeless, and
  - » parents of children with special needs.

  These categories of families are hereafter referred to as *priority populations*.

- Support the quality of support and supervision of distance learning.
- Support the social-emotional well-being of children, family members, and caregivers and educators.
- Recognize the need for continuity, stability, and reliability of care for both children and parents.
- Accommodate changing schedules/hours of required support for distance learning as schools respond to fluctuating local infection rates.

[15] For more information about how different states defined essential workers, see https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/covid-19-essential-workers-in-the-states.aspx.

- Ensure that all caregivers for school-age children have access to the resources they need to support children's well-being, distance learning, and development, including access to schools/teachers, technology, and special services. Caregivers refers to the following:
  - » Home-based care (including providers who are licensed and those legally exempt from licensing, care in the child's home or in the home of the provider, and care by relatives, friends, and neighbors)
  - » Child care centers
  - » Before- and after-school programs
  - » Summer programs, where applicable

  This range of providers is hereafter referred to as *the full range of providers*.

- Recognize the need to protect the health and safety of the full range of providers providing learning and supervision to school-age children during times of distance learning. This should include
  - » establishing levels of protection, pay, and benefits that recognize levels of risk associated with each form of care; and
  - » ensuring that full range of caregivers and staff have access to COVID-19 testing and health insurance.

- Ensure that policy strategies support parent's ability to work, or to find new work, including addressing shift work or changing work schedules as needed.
- Recognize that parent's child care decisions are likely to be shaped by the child care needs of all their children, including preschool-age children.
- Support the ability of parents to care for their sick children without jeopardizing their employment, and identify supports for parents whose children are in quarantine due to possible exposure to COVID-19.
- Ensure that policies are consistent with health and safety guidance to minimize exposure of children and staff to large groups, and minimize exposure to many different individuals; recognize the implications this has for parents striving to limit their family's overall exposure.

- Ensure that proposed strategies are sustainable and able to provide services for the foreseeable future given uncertainties of pandemic and possibilities of subsequent shutdowns.

Policy Strategies

This section lists policy strategies that the federal government, states, localities, child care stakeholders, and schools—as well as the private and philanthropic sectors in some cases—could implement to support working parents and after-school caregivers to ensure the safety and learning of school-age children involved in distance learning. Along with the focus on child care and after-school systems and policies, this list includes actions that education agencies, nutrition agencies, and other services can take. Note, however, that several other policy areas also play an essential role in dealing with these issues—policies that are not addressed in this paper either because they have been addressed in other policy documents or are outside the author's expertise to address quickly. These include the following:

- *Importance of stabilizing the overall child care sector* and the necessary steps to do so—see CLASP and the National Women's Law Center's "Five Reasons Stabilizing Child Care during the Coronavirus Pandemic is Critically Important for Families and the Economy" and National Women's Law Center's "Improving and Expanding Child Care Assistance to Stabilize Our Economy."
- *Paid leave/job protections for workers and parents*, addressing illness and mandated quarantines—see the Kaiser Family Foundation's "Coronavirus Puts a Spotlight on Paid Leave Policies" and the Department of Labor's summary of the "Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights."
- The importance of protecting *parents who are faced with employment discrimination* due to child care challenges.
- *COVID-19 testing, treatment, insurance coverage for child care workers and caregivers*—see WUNC's "1 in 5 Childcare Workers Lack Health Insurance, Heightening Their Fears of COVID-19."
- *Liability protections for programs caring for children.*

- *Clear and consistent health and safety guidance across sectors* for child care, after-school providers, and schools for protection of children, staff, teachers; guidance for appropriate strategies for response to community spread and exposure, as well as to quarantine; and so forth.[16]

The rest of this paper discusses cross-sector collaboration and leadership, funding, the child care subsidy system, 21st Century Learning Centers (21st CLC), licensing, grants, training and technical assistance, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and other school food programs.

Cross-Sector Collaboration and Leadership

The policy discussions about these issues are often siloed, making it challenging to ensure that proposed strategies are rooted in the complexity of factors and challenges that parents face. Siloed discussions are also much more likely to result in gaps, duplication, or contradictory strategies—all of which are wasteful and inefficient at a time of crisis and scarce resources. A comprehensive approach that brings together the different sectors that are involved could support a coherent approach and overarching strategy, minimizing gaps and duplication.

Some communities are already involved in cross-sector conversations; **however, it is essential that part of the discussion focus on the needs of working parents.** Sectors that should be involved in these conversations include each sector involved in supporting the health, well-being, safety, and education of children, as well as the ability of their parents to work:

- full range of child care and after-school programs, including home-based care providers
- parents/parent representatives with a diversity of perspectives and lived experiences (with a focus on diversity in race and ethnicity, income, and work status)
- schools/education agencies controlling funding
- child care licensing
- child care subsidy system
- public health system

[16] "Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, April 21, 2020; "K-12 Schools and Child Care Program," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, June 3. 2020.

- employers

Other possible partners include parks and recreation departments, museums, libraries, faith-based institutions, higher education, public housing, and summer camps, which also serve families.

Creating cross-sector task forces with these sectors could be done nationally, statewide, and locally to support consistent information, guidance, coordination, and so on, though recommended strategies should recognize the very different experiences of different localities with the pandemic and allow communities to adjust their responses accordingly. Ideally there would be coherent and coordinated guidance from the higher levels down, so states, localities, and local programs and schools are not being provided different advice.

Suggested Priority Steps for Cross-Sector Task Forces

1. Assess (initially and ongoing) parent's child care needs and preferences, and their caregiving arrangements around issues of distance learning, with a focus on the needs of working parents (or parents seeking work), and on the particular needs of priority populations.
2. Assess (initially and ongoing) the availability of care providers to meet parent's needs; identify gaps, underused facilities, and whether there are ways to leverage existing capacity before establishing new programs or to adjust existing services to support what children and families need.
3. Connect schools with caregivers involved in supporting distance learning for individual children to support coordination, sharing of technology and training, consultation around child learning challenges, communication around sudden school closures, and so on.
4. Identify ways to help children involved in distance learning access school meals, support services, and other services normally provided in the school setting.
5. Coordinate data collection across school and child care settings on infection rates for children and staff/caregivers, tracking where children are being cared for, closures and quarantine, testing, and so on.
6. Blend funding from education, child care, social services, and public health to meet needs of school-age children and working families. Map the funding and link with

data on where it goes, who is served, and what it is spent on to identify gaps, duplication, and areas of strength and success.

7. Support consistent guidance across sectors and government levels on health and safety mechanisms for COVID-19, rather than the conflicting guidance currently provided by different sectors as well as within and across local, state, and federal levels.
8. Identify strategies to meet the needs of all teachers, nonparental caregivers, and after-school and summer program staff to have health insurance, access to testing, and paid leave to ensure they do not lose income if they become ill or exposed to COVID-19.

Funding

The proposals recommended in this paper require significant levels of new investment. To address the urgency of the issue, funds should be direct, immediate, flexible, and designed to be allocated to support services quickly. Given that these resources are going to support both the education and safety of children, investments should be made in (and coordinated among) education, social services/child care, and potentially public health funding streams. The Afterschool Alliance, for example, includes a broad list of potential federal, state, and local partners and funding streams in its recent fact sheet on after-school and summer programs and reopening the schools (Afterschool Alliance 2020a).

While clearly funds to support the strategies suggested below will require significant public sector investment from varied sources, the important role of school and child care in allowing parents to go back to work (and thus in the economic recovery) suggests that there also is an important role for the private sector. However, in the past, private-sector support for child care efforts has been more concentrated in supporting the needs of high-wage employees, and a recent study found that employers tend to see child care support as more of a public-sector responsibility (Stanczyk et al. 2019). Ideally, strategies to involve the private sector should focus on strategies to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income workers.

The philanthropic community can also support the ideas reported here, as it will be important to invest in innovations and new strategies to accelerate action. Furthermore, some of these strategies may be only needed in the short term, depending on how the future develops.

Subsidy System—Child Care and Development Fund

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is the primary source of child care funding and is a federal-state program that helps parents with low incomes pay for child care to support work or education and training. It is not funded at levels sufficient to serve all those eligible for services; as of 2016, the program served about 15 percent of those eligible under federal rules (Chien 2019). States have discretion to set policies within federal parameters. In 2018, 44 percent of the children served by CCDF were between the ages of 5 and 12,[17] including 10 percent who were 5[18] and 34 percent who were 6–12. The funding demands for this age group tend to rise significantly in the summer months when school-age children needed full-time care and to drop during the school year to support the part of the day they are not in school (NCASE 2019).

The list below includes various suggestions, some of which are already within the control of state agencies to implement; some of which would require the state to request a waiver; some of which would require guidance or approval by the Office of Child Care at the US Department of Health and Human Services, which administers the CCDF; and some of which (i.e., funding levels) would require congressional action. In April, the Office of Child Care issued guidance on the kinds of pandemic-related policy changes that required states to ask for a waiver versus the ones that were within their purview (OCC 2020).

General CCDF Strategies

- Significantly increase funding levels to accommodate the increased needs of school-age children, support the increased needs of low-income working families and those seeking employment, stabilize child care providers (see links above), fund the increased provider costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety protocols, and to support economic recovery.
- Explore partnerships with schools to ensure funds are available to pay for supervision and support of children during distance learning, and consider whether subsidy funds

[17] "FY 2018 Preliminary Data Table 9 - Average Monthly Percentages of Children in Care by Age Group," US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care, December 3, 2019.

[18] Education data indicate that 84 percent of 5-year-olds are enrolled in kindergarten. See https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cfa.asp.

can be used to pay for care and supervision of children during the school days when children are not physically at the school site. Consider whether CCDF training funds can be used to work with schools to develop emergency protocols to credential school-age child care providers to be able to support children's learning, given that many child care providers do not meet the school system requirements for even paraprofessional support.

- Assess increased demand, increased costs, and changes in demand patterns for subsidies due to needs of working parents with school-age children who face significant number of hours in distance learning.
- Comprehensively assess the full range of relevant subsidy policies to identify any ways the current system is not designed for the new realities for parents and providers (some examples below).

Parent Outreach

- If funding is available and parents can use subsidies for a full range of child care providers (see suggestions below), conduct immediate outreach to families with school-age children to inform of eligibility for child care assistance for increased hours and different care options.
- Prioritize outreach to the priority groups identified above.

Parent Eligibility

- Review eligibility policies related to meeting the needs of working families with school-age children who need coverage for distance learning:
  - » Raise state income cutoff to fully support lower-income families and – if funding is made available – consider raising it to support moderate-income families, especially as the significant increase in the hours of care needed for school-age children due to distance learning will significantly increase the costs for parents.
  - » Prioritize and incentivize care options, and consider waiving copayment, for priority populations.
  - » Consider whether the subsidy system eligibility criteria of "receive or need to receive protective services" can be used to support payment for these hours, as the funds will support children who are at risk of being left unsupervised.

- Recommendations more broadly related to supporting economic recovery include the following:
  - » Provide or prioritize subsidies for job search, both at initial application and for subsidy recipients who have lost jobs.[19]
  - » Provide or prioritize subsidies for parents seeking education and training, including online training, do not require parents to also be working to be eligible, and allow parents to use in-home caregivers.[20]

Provider Policies

- Implement strategies to incentivize providers serving school-age children to participate in the subsidy system, such as reducing enrollment barriers or paperwork, assessing payment levels and approaches, and providing training and technical assistance.
- Examine all policies affecting subsidy approval processes for the full range of providers serving school-age children (including home-based providers) to identify ways to expedite approval, including
  - » ensuring that state CCDF rules for quality standards are designed to reflect the realities of the range of after-school providers (rather than the realities of programs serving preschool-age children) and do not inadvertently create barriers for approval; and
  - » targeting provider outreach, enrollment efforts, and incentives toward providers serving priority communities,
  - » identifying sector-specific strategies to expedite provider approval while ensuring children's safety and well-being, such as
    - providing extra supports and technical assistance to after-school and out-of-school time programs facing relocation due to limited access to schools or

[19] The law requires states to provide subsidies for at least three months (or, at state option, until the next eligibility re-determination) if the parent loses their job while on subsidies. It does not require states to provide subsidies to a parent who applies in order to look for a job, though some states do allow this. For information on current state policies, see Tran, Dwyer, and Minton (2019).

[20] For more information on this issue, see https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/building-americas-workforce/projects/bridging-gap.

changed business models, and who need to quickly comply licensing standards;

- focusing on barriers for home-based settings serving school-age children, including license-exempt home-based providers, and identifying mechanisms to support efficient approval and strategies to remove unnecessary barriers while continuing to support children's well-being and safety; and
- identifying and reducing barriers to allowing parents to bring caregivers into their home to reduce exposure to health risks.[21]

- Explore mechanisms for providers and caregivers to be paid for care for children who are in quarantine due to possible COVID-19 exposure.
- Improve provider payment policies and practices, including the following:
  - Establish payment authorization policies that allow for variations in care hours to reflect school distance-learning schedules and sudden closures, as well as for hours needed for providers to clean facilities and materials while children are not present.
  - Ensure that payment levels across the range of providers accommodate higher costs and risks, as well as the demands for supporting distance learning associated with providing care to children during COVID-19.
  - Adopt policies that ensure stable payments and income for providers, even as their schedules and enrollment may vary over a day, week, month, or year; explore continuation of payment by enrollment rather than attendance during times of fluctuating demand.
  - Assess payment practices to ensure that rapid changes in schedules are quickly and accurately processed and accommodated for parents as well as for paying providers, with minimal burden on parents and providers.
  - Consider strategies to provide extra supports to caregivers for children with individualized educational plans and children at risk of abuse or neglect.

[21] For example, during the early months of the pandemic, both RI and OK established ways for families to access in-home caregivers. RI created a partnership with care.com and OK their Kith Care strategy to support parents who needed in-home caregivers.

- » Ensure providers are compensated appropriately (bonus pay, etc.) for increased demands for distance learning support as well as health and safety procedures.

- Invest in family child care networks and home-based child care networks with a particular focus on supporting their efforts to care for school-age children and meeting their distance learning needs
- Consider investing in shared services models for "buying clubs" for personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, liability insurance, health insurance, etc. for the full range of providers.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative supports before- and after-school and summer learning programs. In 2016–17, it served 1.4 million K–12 students in 9,592 sites (NCASE 2019). Grants support schools and community organizations to provide after-school and summer learning programs to children in high-poverty, low-performing schools, providing them funds for academic enrichment activities, other enrichment activities to support children's healthy development, and literacy and educational services for the families of the children who are served.[22]

The Afterschool Alliance has provided a set of policy recommendations for how to build on various education funding sources to strengthen the ability of after-school and summer programs to better meet the needs of children and families during the coming months.[23] Strategies to allow the 21st CCLC to more effectively support school-age children and working families in the time of distance learning include the following:

- Expand funding for 21st CCLC to allow it to address the greater needs for after-school programming due to distance learning. Ensure programs have the necessary resources to fully support students when in-person operations resume, including over the summer and in the upcoming school year. Support increased number of program staff to accommodate smaller student to staff ratios.

[22] See https://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html and http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policy21stcclc.cfm for more information.

[23] See http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/covid/reopening-programs.cfm for more information.

- Provide temporary flexibility during the pandemic to allow 21st CCLC programs to operate virtually and in-person to provide programs to students when they are not in the classroom and are engaged in distance learning during school hours.
- Expand resources to support staff in meeting the distance learning needs of students and expanded hours of service, including access to professional development around trauma informed care.
- Address the needs of programs previously operating in schools that need to find new facilities given the changes in school facilities due to COVID-19 by supporting rapid transition and start-up costs.
- Ensure that programs have the technology supports and communication mechanisms with schools to effectively support distance learning.
- Support continued funding for after-school and summer learning programs to ensure proper safety measures, including masks, sanitation, and other necessary measures.

Child Care Licensing

Child care licensing establishes the basic health and safety standards that various programs must meet to operate legally and are usually established at the state level. State licensing policies, however, vary widely in which programs are required to be licensed (and which are legally exempt from licensing), as well as in what standards they must meet. As a result, after-school and summer programs, and different kinds of child care settings, can face very different rules from one state to another. Nonetheless, states could take some common steps to adjust their policies to reflect the demands and challenges created by the pandemic:

- Assess current guidance around group size, blended age groups (including school-age children), and policies that can be employed to allow providers to minimize number of contacts for individual children, their families, and their caregivers, and support providers in making these changes.
- Consider the new demands that the school distance learning schedules impose on the full range of providers, including home-based care and after-school programs, and ensure that no rules limit their ability to respond quickly to changing needs.
- Provide extra supports and technical assistance to programs working to meet new rules and comply with health and safety needs within the context of new schedule requirements.

- Create mechanisms to quickly provide start-up supports and facilitated entry for small home-based providers to meet increased demand (for care overall and for school-age care in particular).
- Recognize challenges facing school-age programs previously located in schools who need to relocate to other sites because of school responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide targeted technical assistance, support, and help to expedite their ability to meet licensing standards to begin operation.

Grants

Varied federal and state funding streams, including from the part of the CCDF that is set aside for grants to meet various targeted needs, as well as grants from states, localities, or the private or philanthropic sector, could be invested in grants to help meet the child care needs of working parents whose children need to be safe and participating in distance learning. Funds could be used to support any of the ideas laid out in other sections above, and ideally would meet the goals and principles described at the beginning of this document. These grants could directly support parents—particularly those in the priority populations defined earlier—or caregivers or after-school and summer programs, or entities that are working to support parents or caregivers. And given that much of the focus of public funding is on the needs of preschoolers, it is essential that these grants target the needs of working parents who are facing child care challenges around distance learning for their school-age children.

Broad suggestions for ways grants could support these goals include the following:

- Support the full range of providers to take on the additional responsibilities associated with distance-learning as well as meeting the health and safety protections required by COVID-19.
- Support collaborative relationships between schools and those non-parental caregivers/programs who will be responsible for supporting the distance-learning needs of school-age children to support communication mechanisms, cross-training, technology sharing, and so forth.
- Ensure caregivers and programs in low-resourced communities have access to technology and training to support distance learning for children in their care.
- Provide grants to center-based programs and home-based caregivers to redesign or reconfigure space to meet health and safety requirements to better serve school-age

children, as well as to grants or in-kind donations to low-resourced programs to support access to PPE or cleaning supplies, or the costs of sanitation and deep cleaning.

- Provide targeted and intensive supports to non-parental caregivers and programs who are working with children at the greatest risk of falling behind with distance learning, including children with special needs, children whose families face the greatest barriers to supporting their learning, children who were already behind at school, and so on.
- Support in-kind resources in the form of personal protective equipment or cleaning supplies, or grants to support the costs of sanitation and deep cleaning, for low-resourced programs
- Support the ability of nonparental caregivers and after-school programs to access COVID-19 testing for themselves and their staff.
- Explore mechanisms to support group insurance coverage for caregivers and staff caring for school-age children.
- Consider investing in shared services models for "buying clubs" for personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, liability insurance, health insurance, etc. for the full range of providers.

Training and Technical Assistance

Funding to support training and technical assistance for after-school and child care providers serving school-age children during distance learning is also needed. Similar to the discussion above, funding for training and technical assistance can come from the portion of the CCDF dedicated to supporting quality and supply, from grants from state or local government, or from the private or philanthropic sectors.

- Focus intensive supports to the full range of caregivers for school-age children involved in distance learning.
  - » Adapt resources designed to support parent engagement to meet their unique needs of after-school and child caregivers.
  - » Ensure that nonparental school-age caregivers have access to technology and training and support to help children's distance learning.

    - » Ensure that training efforts and supports for staff and caregivers are culturally responsive and recognize and support the diversity of the children they support.
    - » Work with schools and other experts to ensure stronger supports for caregivers caring for children with IEP's and special needs.
- Focus training and technical assistance on helping programs and caregivers better meet the needs of the priority populations outlined earlier.
- Support training and technical assistance on children's social-emotional health for staff and caregivers, specifically but not limited to the trauma resulting from the pandemic. Also support investments in similar supports for caregivers and staff.
- Build on virtual home-visiting models in conjunction with schools to ensure outreach and supports.
- Build on family child care network model to deliver supports on virtual learning to broad array of home-based settings.

Child and Adult Care Food Program/School Food Programs

During a normal school year, school-age children's nutritional needs are met by the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP), run by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) at the US Department of Agriculture. After-school programs, licensed child care centers, and licensed family child care homes can also participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to provide school-age children with snacks or a meal. During the summer months, when children are not in school, after-school programs and schools switch to the NLSP's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), which allows them to provide a full day of meals to children.

During the pandemic, the FNS provided waivers to allow schools and child care programs to provide meals in a variety of other ways due to school closures, including "grab and go" or being delivered to children's homes (though there are reasons to think that many children did not access meals). About 37 percent of after-school providers responding to a survey by the Afterschool Alliance reported helping get meals to children during the pandemic (Afterschool Alliance 2020b).[24] However, these efforts will not be able to continue during times when

[24] For an analysis of school feeding efforts during the pandemic, see Schwabish et al. (2020); for an analysis of the CACFP's efforts during the pandemic, see forthcoming report by Kuhns and Adams (2020). For information on the role of after-school providers during the pandemic, see http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/covid/meals.cfm.

children are not in school due to distance learning during the school year unless policies are changed. This is for three reasons:

1. **Limitations of the non-congregate waiver extension:** Currently the extension of the non-congregate meal service waiver only applies to the NSLP, SBP, and CACFP. By not including the Summer Food Service Program as a non-congregate option on days when children are engaged in distance learning or the school is closed, programs other than schools (such as after-school programs) will no longer be able to provide three meals a day, as they are limited to the more restrictive CACFP.
2. **Non-congregate waiver for CACFP and the Afterschool Activity Waiver:** While the non-congregate waiver extension includes CACFP, it is unclear whether this applies to the Afterschool Meal Program, which requires that an enrichment or educational component be provided alongside meals. When schools closed in the spring, a waiver of the after-school enrichment activity was quickly issued. This ensured that schools, non-school sponsors, and out-of-school time programs were able to easily implement meal service even as they remained shuttered or at limited capacity.

   Although some school and community-based programs will be able to resume programming in the fall, it is unrealistic to assume that they will be operating at full capacity. To ensure access to the suppers and snacks provided through CACFP, it is imperative that the after-school activity be waived when programming isn't possible. Waiving the after-school activity requirement is also critical for those schools that plan on providing suppers through non-congregate methods on days when school is and is not in session.

3. **Area eligibility extension:** Allowing sites to provide meals in communities that do not meet the 50 percent area eligibility threshold has been essential to reaching children that may be newly eligible during the summer months. This is especially important considering the ongoing economic impact of COVID-19 on families and communities. Currently, all state-approved area eligibility waivers for SFSP and SSO have only been extended through August 31. Extending the area eligibility waiver—in conjunction with the option to use SFSP or SSO when children are not at school—

through the 2020–21 school year will help reduce not only barriers to participation during distance-learning school days but administrative burdens on sponsors and schools.

Additional strategies to support nutritional supports for school-age children include these five:

- Assess the nutritional gaps likely to be facing school-age children who are not physically in schools due to distance learning, and maximize the likelihood that those children will be able to access meals
- Allow nonschool sponsors to use both the SFSP and CACFP on days when school is not in session or engaged in distance-learning for some or all students at the school, to ensure continued access to meals.
- Waive the after-school activity requirement for those sponsors and schools participating in the CACFP Afterschool Meal Program, or schools serving NSLP snacks.
- Extend the area eligibility waiver through the 2020–21 school year while allowing the use of SFSP/SSO.
- Identify ways to strengthen the participation of family child care homes in the CACFP and consider strategies to enroll license-exempt home-based providers.

Appendix. Nonparental Child Care Arrangements for School-Age Children in 2012

Table A.1. Nonparental Child Care Arrangements for School-Age Children in 2012

	6–8 Years Old		9–12 Years Old		Total (6 –12 Years Old)	
Care arrangement	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Individual, unpaid	2,282,000	49.14	3,018,000	54.09	5,300,000	51.74
Average hours in care	24.1		24.3			
Individual, paid, prior relationship with child or family	726,000	15.63	790,000	14.16	1,516,000	14.80
Average hours in care	17.0		24.0			
Individual, paid, no prior relationship with child or family	417,000	8.98	377,000	6.76	794,000	7.77
Average hours in care	13.5		15.9			
Other organizational early care and education	1,866,000	40.18	2,197,000	39.37	4,063,000	39.66
Average hours in care	17.5		19.3			
Total, any regular early care and education arrangement	4,644,000		5,580,000		10,224,000	
Average hours in care	21.7		24.0			

Source: National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team, *Early Care and Education Usage and Households' Out-of-Pocket Costs,* Report 2016-09 (Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, 2016).
Note: Row totals do not sum to overall total because children can be in more than one setting.

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