



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 9, 2022

Contact: [press@michigan.gov](mailto:press@michigan.gov)

Gov. Whitmer Announces 40% of Michigan's Working Families with Kids Under Age 12 Now Eligible for Free or Low-Cost Child Care

Bipartisan investments expand child care to 150,000 more kids and their families, lowering costs and helping parents get back to work, state launches new tool to help families determine their eligibility

LANSING, Mich. – Today, Governor Whitmer celebrated the bipartisan expansion of access to free or low-cost child care for 150,000 more Michigan kids and their families over the past year. Families with two kids earning up to \$55,500 may qualify for help paying for child care. The state also launched a new tool to help Michiganders easily identify their eligibility for child care benefits.

“Child care is often the biggest expense in a family’s budget. That’s why I’m working across the aisle to put more money in their pockets by lowering the cost of child care and helping more parents go to work knowing their child is safe, happy, healthy, and learning,” said Governor Whitmer. “As parents, we all want what’s best for our children. This expansion will help more families pick a child care provider that’s right for their child—and their budget. I’m proud of the progress we’ve made to support young kids and families, and we’re not done working to make Michigan a great state to raise a family.”

“As a parent, I know that child care is a critical part of each family’s budget,” said Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist II. “This historic expansion of childcare to 150,000 more kids and their families will lower costs, help parents get back to work, and ensure kids have the support they need to succeed after a tough few years. Governor Whitmer and I will keep working to support child care professionals and providers, while making affordable, high-quality child care accessible for families in every Michigan community.”

“Quality child care is a great investment in children’s education,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice. “Child care can be an important part of our children’s cognitive, physical, and social development, for success in and beyond the classroom. It is also a critical component of economic development, to

facilitate parents' employment. I thank Governor Whitmer and the state legislature for their leadership in expanding this opportunity to more Michigan families."

"Michigan needs talent, and talent needs child care. Working parents can't be effective in the workplace if they're concerned about their children. That's why I'm proud of the bipartisan action the Governor and Legislature has taken to make child care more affordable and accessible," Kelli Saunders, Executive Advisor at the Small Business Association of Michigan and member of the Michigan Women's Commission. "We still have mothers that haven't returned to the workforce. Lowering child care costs can be a gamechanger for families."

More families are eligible for help paying for child care than you might think. To help families know if they are likely to qualify, Governor Whitmer partnered with the Michigan Department of Education and Early Childhood Investment Corporation to create an online eligibility calculator. Now families can know in less than two minutes if they could get help lower child care costs by visiting <https://greatstarttoquality.org/calculator/>.

"We've heard from thousands of families across Michigan that finding an affordable, quality child care program is stressful. Thanks to the bipartisan expansion of child care access, more families are now eligible for free or low-cost child care; however, far too many families do not know if they qualify," said Dawne Bell, Chief Executive Officer of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC). "To help support families with young children, ECIC is proud to have helped create a simple tool that lets families know quickly if they can lower their child care costs."

"Traverse Connect is pleased to see the historic investments our state has made over the past year to increase access to affordable child care," said Warren Call, President and CEO of Traverse Connect. "Northern Michigan businesses and its workforce depend upon accessible and high-quality child care to thrive and grow"

To qualify for the Child Development and Care Program (commonly called the child care subsidy), families must:

- Have a child under age 13
- Need child care because they're working or going to school
- Have a qualifying income, up to:
- \$36,620 for a family of 2
- \$46,060 for a family of 3

- \$55,500 for a family of 4

Families can visit [Michigan.gov/childcare](https://Michigan.gov/childcare) for a complete list of reasons they may qualify for low or no cost child care and qualifying income levels for larger families.

This expansion builds on the Governor's commitment to lowering costs for working families. She launched the MI Tri-Share Child Care Program ([Michigan.gov/Tri-Share](https://Michigan.gov/Tri-Share)). Through MI Tri-Share, the cost of an employee's child care is shared equally among the employer, the employee, and the State of Michigan — a three-way split — with coordination being provided regionally by a MI Tri-Share facilitator hub.

The Governor also increased funding so 22,000+ more four-year-olds can enroll in the state's free, high-quality preschool program—the Great Start Readiness program. To be eligible for free preschool, children must be at least four years old by December 1, 2021 and meet income eligibility requirements. Parents can find sites in their community by visiting [Michigan.gov/GSRP](https://Michigan.gov/GSRP) or calling the Great Start to Quality Resource Center at 877-614-7328.

This expansion is part of a \$1.4 billion investment to expand access to quality, affordable child care for families. To date, the Governor has awarded \$700 million in grants to nearly 6,000 child care businesses, providing bonuses up to \$1,000 for 38,000 child care professionals, and launched Caring for Mi Future—a \$100 million strategy to open 1,000 new child care programs by the end of 2024.

###