

Iowa Child Care Coalition

LEGISLATIVE

PRIORITIES 2025



The Iowa Child Care Coalition (ICCC) was formed to more strategically address Iowa's child care crisis. The Coalition, through nonpartisan legislative recommendations, seeks to increase access, affordability, and quality of child care while increasing the stability of the child care workforce across Iowa.



Child Care Assistance (CCA)

- Move CCA for providers from pilot into law.
- Increase the CCA entrance income limit from 165% FPL to 250% FPL with 5% increase increments each year and reduce the number of work hours required for CCA from 32 to 28 hours.
- Pay CCA based on enrollment rather than attendance.



Tax Strategies

- Implement tax initiatives and strategies to help alleviate economic barriers in child care programs, enabling budgets to support benefits and increase compensation.



Financial Support

- Establish funding to support recommendations in the 2023 Iowa Child Care Workforce Study that brings parity to pay for early childhood educators and public school teachers with the same level of education.
- Sustain and expand funding for child care solution funds, including locally-driven public-private partnerships.



Universal Pre-K Planning

- Ensure child care providers and early childhood programs are involved with preschool planning and decision-making if the state moves forward with additional preschool legislation.

There can be no child care without the child care workforce.

It is crucial for us to find ways to increase and sustain the child care workforce, which is facing critical shortages amidst low wages and lack of benefits, while increasing accessibility and keeping child care affordable for parents.

To create a truly stable child care workforce, both competitive pay and benefits are needed. Raising wages will reduce reliance on public assistance programs for child care workers and increase retention in the field. These, in turn, create better access to quality learning environments for children.

Solutions require quality data to inform decision-making. ICCC and statewide partners have and will continue to use the results of the 2023 Iowa Child Care Workforce Study and the Common Sense Institute's Iowa Child Care Solutions Fund report to guide our priorities and identify solutions for Iowa's child care workforce, as we would encourage policymakers to do, as well.

The **five** recommendations from the 2023 Iowa Child Care Workforce Study that the coalition believes could be expanded or extended are reflected in the 2025 Legislative Recommendations:

- We need to find sustainable ways to raise the wages of our child care workers.
- The child care workforce needs access to benefits such as health insurance, paid leave, and retirement supports.
- Ensure members of the child care workforce have a good work environment.
- Ensure Iowa has a robust system for collecting ongoing data about the needs of the workforce.
- Clarify misunderstandings about current programs that exist in Iowa to support child care businesses.

2025 ICCC Member Organizations

The coalition members, along with our statewide partners, collectively support these recommendations to create a more accessible, affordable, high quality child care system sustained by a professional, competitive, and compensated workforce.

