

Child Care Mapping Project Research Brief



Expanding Child Care Access to Strengthen Michigan's Workforce

Michigan faces child care shortages. This makes it harder for parents—especially mothers—to work, negatively impacting local and Michigan economies. The lack of child care support could also prevent young families from advancing in their careers and diminish their long-term earning potential. A recent study conducted by researchers from Michigan State University found that:¹



Every **additional mile** that a family resides away from a licensed child care provider is linked to a **drop in labor force participation** of:

- ▼ 2.7% among women
- ▼ 2.2% among two-parent households
- ▼ 1.7% among single-parent households

Child care-related employment disruptions cost Michigan \$2.88 billion each year² — \$2.3 billion in employer losses and \$576 million in lost state tax revenue.

5,643 more Michigan women are estimated to join the labor force if child care is available within 5 miles

Policy Recommendations

-  **Invest in child care infrastructure:** Expand licensed child care, especially in rural and low-income communities where shortages suppress labor force participation.
-  **Use data-driven spatial planning:** Ensure all families can access child care within five miles to reduce access-related employment barriers.
-  **Integrate child care planning into local workforce and economic development strategies:** Consider child care access, policy, and tax incentives in planning.
-  **Promote employer-based solutions:** Encourage businesses to provide child care options to leverage tax incentives, attract job seekers, and build a more stable workforce.



1. "More care, more workers? Gauging the impact of child care access on labor force participation" <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14080458>

2. U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. (2023). *How childcare impacts Michigan's workforce productivity and the state economy*. https://www.michamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Untapped_MI_082523_DIGITAL.pdf

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