



Child Care Keeps Fresno County Working

Economic & Social Benefits

High quality, affordable and accessible early care and education keeps Fresno County working because it supports increased employee productivity and retention and reduces absenteeism. Parents who come to work with the knowledge that their children are safe and well cared for are more productive, reliable and stable employees.

The broader economic impact that early care and education has on our community has been documented in many reports including: *The Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Fresno County, (2007)* which quantified the contributions of child care to our local economy. Findings include:

- Child care generates \$201.1 million a year in gross receipts.
- Child care employs over 8,500 in Fresno County.
- There are 25,424 licensed child care slots in Fresno County.
- Fresno County has 210,381 children ages 0-13. Out of those children, 108,191 have parents in the work force. This means that there are only child care slots available for only 23% of the children needing child care for working parents.
- Child care creates the potential for additional start-up businesses.
- Child care increases productivity and retention of employees in businesses in the county.
- Child care ensures future public savings on social needs by lowering drop-out and crime rates, and decreasing special education and welfare costs.
- Child care is a crucial component of developing the future workforce.
- High quality child care programs significantly improve a child's long-term educational success and chances of becoming a productive member of the labor force and society. Investing in the child care infrastructure of Fresno County has direct, positive benefits for the county's overall economic competitiveness. Like transportation, education, public works, and affordable housing, child care is a necessary and vital part of the economic infrastructure.
- A community's most important investment may likely be early childhood education. Research indicates that the early years are vital in terms of cognitive, and social development and that children are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of living in poverty.

Community Sustainability & Livability

Quality of life for our community is determined partly by the availability of homes, jobs, transit and many other essential services. However, child care is often a missing piece in community

planning. Child care is directly connected to land use, housing, employment and transportation. These connections are pieces of the puzzle for working family's lives and related to where they commute, work and live.

A California Department of General Services study (1990) indicated that working parents add five to six miles to their daily commute for transporting children to child care and school, adding to 1,352 extra miles traveled each year resulting in approximately 56 pounds of auto emissions per person (California Health and Safety Code section 1597.70). Families who reside in rural areas in Fresno County have the potential for even longer commutes to child care. Connecting child care, transportation and housing will assist parents in accessing jobs, reducing vehicular trips, miles traveled and commute times.

Including child care in or adjacent to housing, especially affordable housing that is connected to transit oriented development adds to the community's sustainability and livability. This supports parents in accessing jobs, reducing trips, miles traveled and ultimately improving air quality. Just as schools and community centers are built to provide services to resident families, so should child care. Families who live near child care may walk allowing for easy access and fewer vehicular trips.

Recognizing the relationship of the child care system to other community needs and development activities is vital to achieving the County's overall goals, quality of life for residents and the economic stability of the families who reside in Fresno County.

For more information, please contact:

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