

WE NEED A STRONG CHILD CARE SYSTEM IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA



Child care is a critical piece of the local infrastructure. Virginia families need access to high-quality early childhood programs in order to work, but these programs are increasingly difficult to find and afford.

69%

of young children in Southwest Virginia have all available parents in the workforce.

1195

additional child care slots are needed in Southwest Virginia to meet demand.



The average cost of center-based infant care in Virginia is **\$14,500** a year, substantially higher than average in-state tuition.



The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the child care crisis. With increased costs and decreased enrollment, many child care providers have closed or are in significant financial peril; without access to quality child care, mothers are increasingly leaving the workforce, and children are not being adequately prepared to enter kindergarten.



1 in 3 mothers are considering leaving the workforce – potentially impacting **over 1,800** working mothers in the Southwest Virginia.



The cost of operating a safe child care program has **increased by 45%** during the pandemic.

45% of Virginia children started kindergarten without key literacy, math and social emotional skills.

67% of parents in Virginia say lack of access to child care amid the pandemic has negatively impacted their or someone in their household's job.

SOURCES

Infrastructure Section

Parents in workforce: Census Bureau, ACS Select Economic Characteristics, DP03, 7-year estimates, 2019. *

Child care supply: Bipartisan Policy Center, Virginia Child Care Gap Assessment, December 2020 (unpublished). *

Price of Child Care: Child Care Aware, Price of Child Care in Virginia, 2019.

COVID-19 Section

Mothers in workforce: McKinsey & Company, Women in the Workplace 2020, September 2020; Census Bureau, ACS, table S2301, 1-year estimates mothers with children under 18, 2019. *

Increased cost of child care: Center for American Progress, The True Cost of Providing Safe Child Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic, September 2020.

School readiness data: Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program, Fall 2020 Statewide Sample, January 2021.

Job impact data: Findings based on Virginia Promise Partnership online poll. **

* Calculations for Southwest Virginia reflect data from Bristol, Russell County, and Washington County.

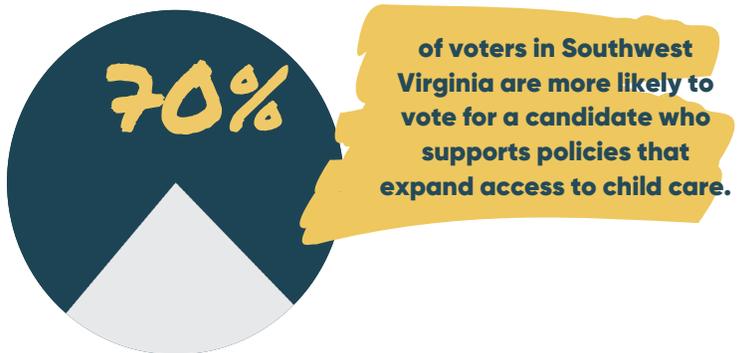
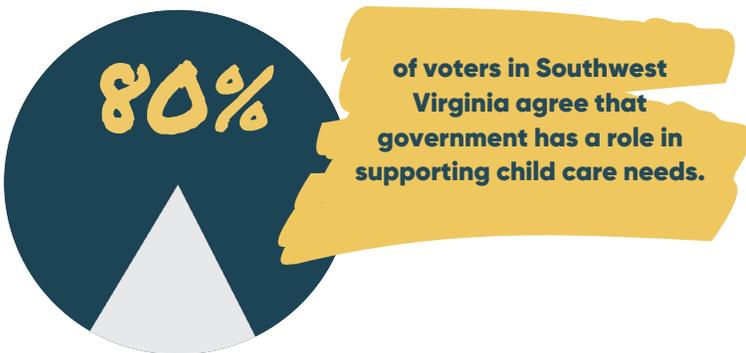
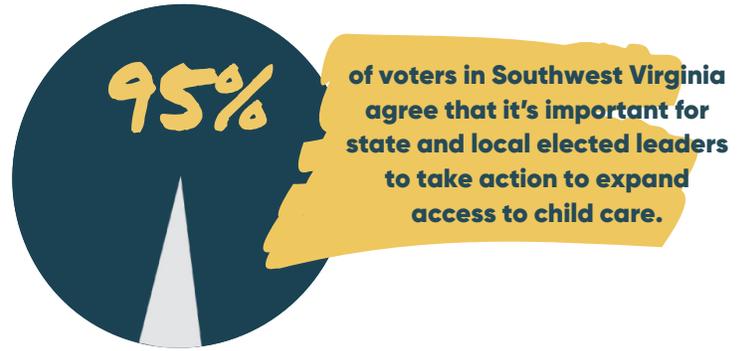
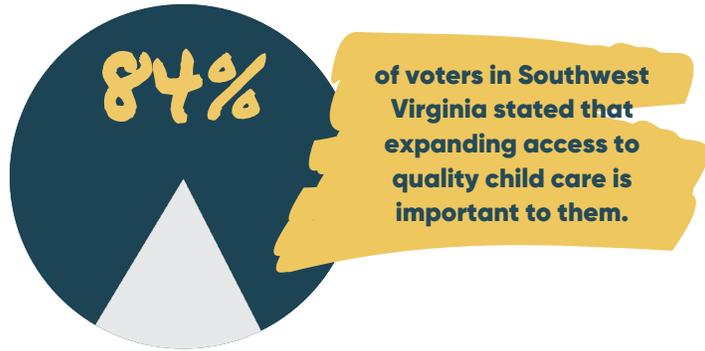
** The Tarrance Group conducted online interviews on behalf of the Virginia Promise Partnership with N=600 voters from across Virginia. Responses to this survey were gathered February 22-25, 2021 and the margin of error associated with a sample of this type is +4.1% in 95 out of 100 cases. For more, please visit www.vapromisepartnership.com.

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VIRGINIANS ARE LOOKING TO POLICYMAKERS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO CHILD CARE



Access to quality child care will be a key issue in Virginia's 2021 elections. Virginians overwhelmingly agree that government has a role in supporting our child care system and want to see policymakers take action in 2021.



Lack of access to high-quality child care has a significant economic impact on Southwest Virginia families and businesses. Access to affordable high-quality child care provides significant short and long-term impacts not only for the children in care, but also for the economic security of their families and the broader community.



Inadequate child care means that every year Southwest Virginia loses: **\$37 million** in family income; **\$13 million** in business revenue; and **\$7 million** in tax revenue.

SOURCES

Voter Opinions Section

Findings based on Virginia Promise Partnership online poll. **

Economic Impact Section

Based on author calculations using data from: Ready Nation, Council for a Strong America, *The Economic Impacts of Insufficient Child Care on Working Families*, September 2018. *

Census Bureau, ACS, table S2301, 1-year estimates, working parents with children under 6, 2019. *

* Calculations for Southwest Virginia reflect data from Bristol, Russell County, and Washington County.

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