



CHARTING THE COURSE TO 2030

ADDRESSING A CRITICAL NEED

In May 2020, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation convened the Back to Work Task Force to re-imagine and sustain a stronger child care system for Virginia. The Task Force included top Virginia leaders from business, government, philanthropy and communities whose work was informed by child care and early learning experts. Like other states across the country, Virginia's child care industry had been struggling with insufficient financing and a broken cost model only made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address these concerns, the Task Force launched the Virginia Promise Partnership (VPP) in December 2020, a coalition of thirty leading organizations working together to achieve **our bold goal of quality, affordable child care for all Virginia families by 2030.**

VPP started off strong during the 2021 General Assembly Session by successfully advocating for legislation that supported common sense business practices for child care providers; temporarily expanded eligibility for child care subsidy; and established a dedicated revenue stream to expand public-private, at-risk preschool services.

In February 2021, VPP conducted the first-ever statewide poll on early childhood education (ECE) to gain insights into Virginians' views on and experience with child care. The poll demonstrated the detrimental impact of the child care crisis as well as broad bipartisan support for expanding access to quality ECE, with 74% of voters agreeing that it is very or extremely important for elected officials to address child care in education policymaking. VPP leveraged these poll results in communications to policymakers and the broader public.

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CREATING A ROADMAP TO THE BOLD GOAL

Parents, providers and coalition partners played a key role in developing our roadmap and cost estimate, with support from national experts. The policy plan outlines four priorities to reach the **bold goal** by 2030:

- **Access:** All families in Virginia can access affordable child care, regardless of income.
- **Choice:** Families can choose the child care they need, where and when they need it.
- **Quality:** All early childhood programs have the resources to offer high-impact experiences supporting child development and learning.
- **Workforce:** Early educators have higher pay and more skill-building opportunities to effectively engage children in child care.

Dramatic change in the early childhood sector will not happen overnight. VPP has outlined three phases of work to reach the **bold goal**:

PHASE 1 STABILIZE (2022-2024)

Stabilize the current system, which is facing challenges as providers struggle with gaps in revenue, staffing, and capacity to provide services that meet the needs for families who need them most.

PHASE 2 STRENGTHEN (2025-2027)

Strengthen the system by expanding access to middle-income families and better compensating early educators.

PHASE 3 SUSTAIN (2028-2030)

Sustain the system by extending access to all families, further professionalizing the workforce, and making it easier for parents to find the services they need.



CENTERING PARENT VOICE

Parents are our children's first and most important teachers, and parent voice is essential to informing early care and education policy. The Virginia Promise Partnership Parent Advisory is a group of parents from across the state who meet monthly and are committed to:

- **Ensuring** diverse parent voice and experience who inform early care and education policy
- **Advocating** for quality, affordable child care, and
- **Providing** a forum for parents to share and network

Specifically, parents have been instrumental in providing valuable perspectives around policy to VPP and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), informing the development of VPP's Phase One Policy Roadmap and Cost Estimate, communicating with legislators on key issues, providing feedback to VDOE on proposed process and policy changes, and telling the parent story through videos and social media.

SUPPORTING OUR PROVIDERS

The Virginia Promise Partnership Provider Advisory is a committed cohort of child care providers throughout the Commonwealth who are a critical part of the VPP mission. Our Provider Advisory:



Provides valuable perspectives to the VPP and feedback to VDOE

Tells the provider story through videos and social media

Informed the development of VPP's Phase One Policy Roadmap and Cost Estimate

Participated in funder technical assistance sessions, highlighting the expertise of Virginia's early education and care providers

“I think it's important for Virginia leaders to listen to my voice because I've lived it. I have multiple children that have gone through Virginia's child care system and, frankly, it's not working for us. This is something that all parents have to go through.”

Nicholas Palacio, Virginia Promise Partnership Parent Advisory Chair



MAJOR STEPS ON THE WAY TO THE BOLD GOAL

During the 2022 General Assembly Session, VPP continued our progress toward the **bold goal**. Specifically the General Assembly passed a biennial budget that makes key investments towards commitments in access, choice, quality and workforce:

ACCESS AND CHOICE FUNDING TO:

- Expand the Mixed Delivery Preschool Program (including a pilot program for 200 infants and toddlers)
- Expand Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) access to three-year-olds
- Expand eligibility criteria for the Child Care Subsidy Program to 85% SMI
- Support community-based and private providers under the VPI program

QUALITY FUNDING TO:

- Expand VQB5 classroom observations
- Continue expansion of the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) Pre-K assessment system

WORKFORCE FUNDING TO:

- Expand Recognize B5, the teacher incentive grant program



Governor Youngkin also signed legislation that:

- **Strengthens** Virginia's child care and early education system through a more robust regional infrastructure and resources (Ready Regions),
- **Provides** for a study of the Child Care Subsidy Program and military families,
- **Aims** to expand the pool of childcare programs in Virginia by allowing the operation of properly licensed and authorized childcare services on rental property, and
- **Allows** for the Governor to appoint one member with expertise or experience in early childhood education to the state Board of Education.

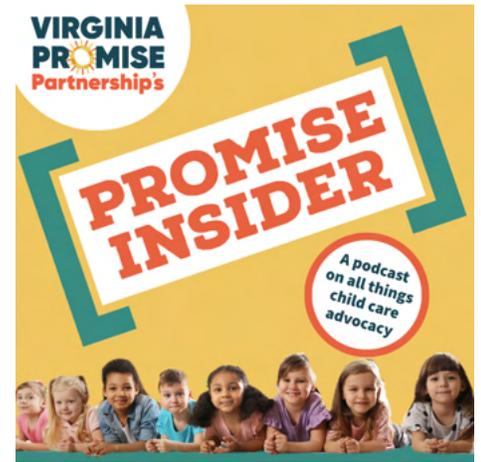
I'm committed to a bigger investment... If you are kindergarten ready, you will be life ready and, on top of that, for our workforce to get moving in Virginia, we have to have reliable, quality care for our children.

**Glenn Youngkin,
Governor of Virginia**

In an effort to expand the Partnership's advocacy tools and resources, Virginia Promise in Action (VPiA) was established in July 2021. VPiA is a companion, bipartisan 501(c)(4) organization focused on building the political will necessary to advance effective policy improvements and increase investment in Virginia's child care system.

SHARING THE VIRGINIA CHILD CARE STORY

Communicating the message of quality, affordable child care has been an important component of VPP's work. Through social media, websites, op-eds and letters to the editor, and a monthly newsletter, VPP has kept advocates, legislators and the public abreast of the most pressing early education and care topics. VPP also launched a digital talk show and podcast, **Promise Insider**, to further grow the advocacy network and awareness of the urgent need to repair the child care system.



OP-EDS & EDITORIALS

[The Roanoke-Times: Jones: The Time is Now: We Must Make the Promise for Our Children, Our Workforce & Our Economy](#)

[The Virginian-Pilot: Editorial: Fix Virginia's broken child care system;](#)

[Richmond Times-Dispatch: Kathy Glazer column: Addressing Virginia's child care crisis](#)

[Daily News-Record: Letters to the Editor: Quality Child Care](#)

Full page ads in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, The Roanoke Times, and The Virginian-Pilot encouraging elected officials to champion child care

Blog Posts with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce

[The Business Case for Strong Child Care](#) and [Building A Strong Child Care System For A Strong Virginia](#)

Organic and paid social and digital content and advertising have expanded the reach of these efforts and built our base of supporters.

RAISING AWARENESS

Child Care and Early Childhood Professionals Day and [#DayWithoutChildCare](#)

VPP joined Governor Glenn Youngkin at the River's Bend Children's Center in Chester, Virginia on May 5, 2022 as he signed a proclamation recognizing Child Care and Early Childhood Professionals Day. Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera and First Lady Suzanne Youngkin also made remarks, and Deputy Secretary of Education McKenzie Snow and Delegate Carrie Coyner attended as well. VPP celebrated the Provider Advisory members and all providers through videos on social media on this special day.

VPP also promoted a social media campaign on a [#DayWithoutChildCare](#) on May 9, 2022. This national campaign reminds us how important our child care providers are to children, families and communities.



MOBILIZING OUR GRASSROOTS

VPP is leading efforts to build out a statewide network of grassroots advocates whose outreach will keep child care efforts top-of-mind among federal, state and local elected officials and community leaders.

The Virginia Promise Partnership launched a website and social media platforms to share information and capture, communicate, and engage with grassroots advocates and supporters. VPP counts over 900 Promise Makers, who have committed to the **bold goal** of quality, affordable child care, and 100 Promise Advocates, who regularly participate in advocacy trainings. VPP partners with coalition member Save the Children Action Network to conduct educational sessions. Training topics have included:

- **Communicating with the Media**
- **Child Care at the Local Level**
- **Telling Your Child Care Story**
- **Engaging Your Legislators Year Round**
- **Redistricting**
- **Amplifying Parent Voices**

VPP conducted the organization's first Lobby Day in February 2022. First, the Partnership delivered Valentines and handmade messages created by young children across the Commonwealth on Valentine's Day to all member offices. The next week, VPP held a (virtual) General Assembly Advocacy Day. During the Advocacy Day event, attendees heard from leading Virginia policymakers, learned more about the latest General Assembly activity on early learning policy, and shared their stories on the importance of quality child care. Attendees heard from Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera as well as Senator Monty Mason (D-Williamsburg) and Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington) on the child care and early education policy landscape.

The Partnership was introduced on the House and Senate floors by Early Childhood/Innovation Subcommittee Chair, Delegate Carrie Coyner (R-Chesterfield), and longtime early learning advocate Senator Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond).



CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

VPP's progress has positioned the organization to grow a sustainable movement and secure quality, affordable child care for all Virginia families by 2030. The strong coalition brings a wealth of experience and strong relationships to the Partnership.

One of the most important outcomes from VPP has been the elevation of the profile and voices of those most directly impacted by the child care crisis to highlight the need for greater investment in ECE. These stakeholders (families and ECE providers) are often left out of policy, advocacy and decision-making discussions. The growing network of grassroots advocates and leaders are emerging and growing in confidence as an influential force in Virginia's ECE agenda.

COALITION PARTNERS

CASA
Child Care Aware of Virginia
Early Care & Education Consortium
Freedom Virginia
Legal Aid Justice Center
National Domestic Workers Alliance
Neimand Collaborative
Robins Foundation
Save the Children Action Network
The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis
The Impact Project
Virginia Alliance for Family Child Care Associations
Virginia Alliance of YMCAs
Virginia Association of Counties
Virginia Association of School Superintendents
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Virginia Child Care Association
Virginia Early Childhood Foundation
Virginia Education Association
Virginia First Cities
Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association
Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
Virginia Main Street Alliance
Virginia Municipal League
Virginia Organizing
Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time
Virginia PTA
Virginia School Boards Association
Virginia Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy
Voices for Virginia's Children

2021 – 2022 LEADERSHIP

VPP is led by coalition partners who are committed to strengthening our early care and education system in Virginia.

Steering Committee

Kathy Glazer, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, Fiscal Agent

Kristina Hagen, Virginia Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy, Grassroots Advocacy Committee Chair

Kelly Harris-Braxton, Virginia First Cities, At-Large Member

Krysta Jones, Virginia Promise Partnership, At-Large Member

Tammy Mann, Provider Advisory Chair

Ryan O'Toole, The Impact Project, Policy Committee Chair

Nicholas Palacio, Parent Advisory Chair