

# Arkansas

## Child Care Is Essential to America's Economic Recovery

### Child Care and COVID-19 Across the U.S.

- Child care is an essential workforce support for parents, as highlighted by [the Chamber of Commerce](#), and critical to ensuring parents can return to work and the economy can begin to recover.
- [64% of surveyed](#) child care providers say they wouldn't survive a closure of more than one month without significant public investment. At the same time, a majority of providers have been forced to close to protect public health and in response to plummeting enrollment.
- Currently, across all provider types, [60% of programs](#) are fully closed and not providing care to any children.
- As a result, a recent [Bipartisan Policy Center survey](#) showed two-thirds of parents who still need child care are having difficulty finding it. Further, about half of parents are concerned their provider would no longer be open when they are able to return to work.
- Nearly half of all child care capacity, [4.5 million child care slots](#), is at risk of permanently disappearing without significant public investment — before this crisis, about 12 million children under the age of five were in child care.
- As our country moves through the various phases of recovery and reopening the economy, no industry will be able to restart if the child care industry collapses and a big portion of the labor force no longer has access to reliable, high-quality child care they depend on to be able to go to work.

Substantial, direct, and targeted support to child care is critical - and supported by [87% of voters](#), who are in favor of providing enough federal assistance during this crisis to ensure child care providers are able to make payroll and cover other expenses like rent and utilities. Strong support for funding is bipartisan — 82% of Republicans and 94% of Democrats say they are in support.

A coalition of the nation's leading early learning and care organizations recently released [updated recommendations](#) ahead of the next emergency relief package on the need to provide substantial relief specific to child care.

## Child Care and COVID-19 in [Arkansas](#)

- According to the Center for American Progress, 61,739 licensed child care slots are at risk of [disappearing](#), which represents 43% of licensed child care slots
- In March, 147 child care providers in [Arkansas](#) responded to a [NAEYC survey](#) reporting that 32% would not survive closing for more than two weeks without significant public investment and support that would allow them to compensate and retain staff, pay rent, and cover other fixed costs.
- A [second survey in April](#) with 18 child care providers responding in Arkansas indicated that 28% of child care programs were completely closed, with another 6% open only for children of essential workers.
- Of providers who are still open, 50% are operating at less than 25% capacity.
- 44% of respondents reported needing to either lay off or furlough employees, or reported being laid off or furloughed themselves. Another 66% anticipated such actions occurring in the next 1-4 weeks.
- Arkansas received \$41.5 million in supplemental funds in the CARES Act to serve the children of front-line and essential workers and support providers yet, we know this is not enough to cover the impacts COVID-19 has had on the child care market and ensure providers will be there when the economy begins to open up. To read more about how your state has allocated its supplemental funding, click [here](#).