

Klickitat County Childcare Committee

Working to address the childcare needs of our rural children and families



A Childcare Crisis Exists Right Here



... there's a huge unmet need for affordable child care. Parents need affordable, reliable, safe child care options so they can work well-paying and satisfying jobs to provide for their families. (WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 2020 Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment Summary, October 2019 – DRAFT)

MAIN BARRIERS TO FINDING CHILDCARE IN KCLICKITAT COUNTY*

- **AVAILABILITY OF PROVIDERS**
- **COST OF CARE**
- **HOURS OF OPERATION**
- **LACK OF ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

***Results from 2019 Goldendale Community Childcare Survey**

Lack of Childcare Hurts Local Families



Childcare costs can equal a paycheck or exceed rent or mortgage payments, leaving little for savings, emergencies, health insurance or spending at local businesses.

Lack of stable, affordable childcare affects the ability of working parents to take classes or training to improve work skills and opportunities for job advancement.

Generational poverty is reinforced when working parents are stuck in low wage jobs, or become unemployed when lack of childcare results in their dismissal due to high absenteeism.

Financial and emotional troubles can lead to increased instances of domestic violence and child abuse or neglect. The resulting trauma can affect a person's mental, physical and financial health and stability throughout their lives.

Lack of Childcare Hurts Local Businesses



High turnover: Costly to find temporary coverage, recruit, hire and train new employees. Business reputation can be damaged if turnover appears constant.

Loss of experienced workforce can result in less efficient workers, higher production costs, increased material and time waste and lower profits.

Inability to recruit new talent results in less growth potential for businesses in very competitive marketplaces.

In 2019 Washington employers had \$2.08 billion in costs related to employee turnover or missed work due to child care issues.

Lack of Childcare Hurts Local Communities



Problems with recruiting and or retaining employees can lead to businesses relocating elsewhere, weakening our economic and tax base.

Difficulties in becoming a licensed home-based childcare provider reduce self-employment opportunities so important in rural communities.

Families working multiple jobs simply to pay childcare costs have little time or energy to volunteer with schools, churches, youth leagues or other groups or attend community events.

Low income working families often need to use public supports and services.

Children living in poverty without access to quality childcare are less likely to achieve success at school.

Safe, Affordable Childcare Supports Local Families, Businesses and Communities!



Investing in high-quality early child care and education does more than provide a strong foundation for young learners. The ‘spillover’ effects of investing in children at an early age have been linked to a stronger economy, increased caregiver job stability, and a reduction in the cost for special education, healthcare, and criminal justice spending later in life. 2020 Report, State of the Children for Southwest Washington

KEY FINDINGS**

\$83.5M

Annual cost employers incur due to child care in the Southwest region.

5,200

Workers with children under 6 years old quit a job due to child care issues in the Southwest region.

2,600

Workers with children under 6 years old fired from work due to child care issues in the Southwest region.

***Estimates of regional numbers based on state-wide percentages*

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Building on the earlier efforts local parents, business owners and community leaders have done to address the ‘childcare desert’ within the area.

Strengthening partnerships with KVH, PUD, County Commissioners, Washington Department of Children, Youth and Families, Goldendale Chamber of Commerce, Washington Gorge Action Programs, WSU/Klickitat County Extension, Goldendale School District, Klickitat County Economic Development & Goldendale Head Start.

Broadening connections with other community groups, legislators, tribal leaders and the business community to increase awareness of the importance of childcare and explore appropriate solutions.

Utilizing the Washington Department of Commerce planning grant to assist licensing of home care providers; perform ‘future steps’ preparedness (feasibility studies, business plan development, research grants and funding possibilities), develop problem solving strategies using community resources.

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Thank you!

For more information, visit gorgeearlylearning.com and click on the Klickitat County Childcare Committee link.

Use the contact form on the KCCC page for questions about our committee and to learn how you can support creative solutions to the local childcare situation.