

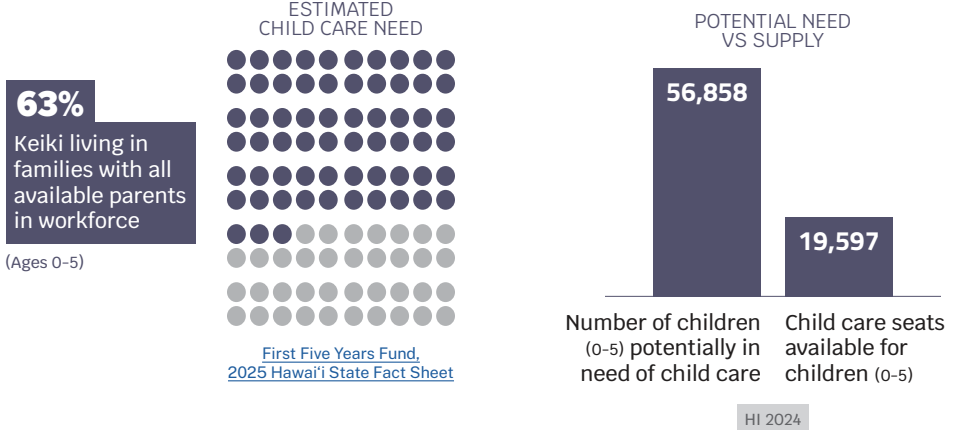


Child care problems hurt Hawai'i's families and the state's economy.

NEED VS. CAPACITY

Hawai'i's supply of licensed/registered child care is insufficient to meet the needs of working families.

68% of Hawai'i residents live in a **child care desert**.



Pre-school aged children specifically see a large gap, with 86% of Hawai'i's families lacking access to preschools that are both affordable and in nearby, convenient locations.

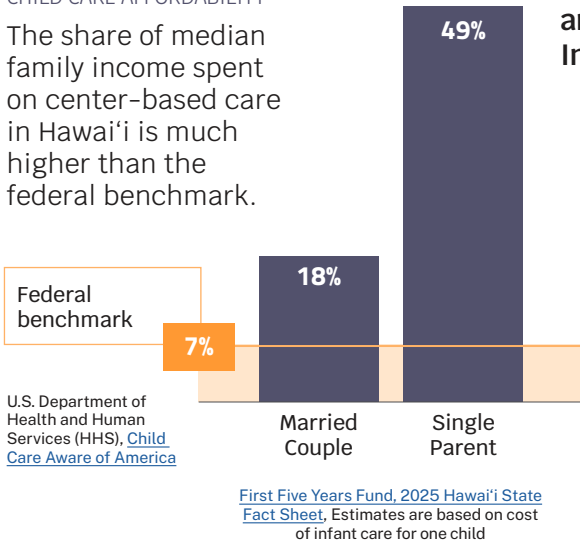
[UH Center on the Family](#)

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

High tuition puts child care out of reach for many families in Hawai'i.

CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY

The share of median family income spent on center-based care in Hawai'i is much higher than the federal benchmark.



Financial assistance is limited, and even less available for Infant/Toddler care.

- Federal and state-funded subsidy assistance is not available to a large number of families who do not meet the eligibility requirements but can't afford child care on their own.
- State-funded subsidy assistance is available for children 2-5 years old via Preschool Open Doors (POD). There is **NO** state-funded subsidy for infants and young toddlers like it.

Hawai'i ranks **4th least affordable** for infant-center care in the country.

[Child Care Aware of America](#)

A Licensed or registered child care provider has received a certificate of approval issued by the State authorizing the operation of a child care facility and meets certain minimum health, safety, and training standards, including first aid and CPR training.

WORKFORCE

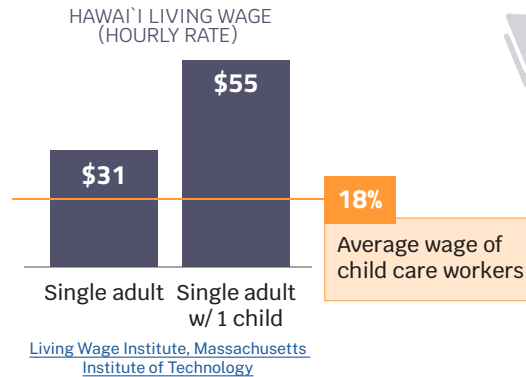
When it comes to child care, quality is essential and the **workforce is key to quality.**

There are only 4 states nationwide **without any quality rating system** for child care. Hawai'i is one of them.

- Key indicators of high-quality child care include
- ✿ Low adult:child ratio
 - ✿ Positive and meaningful adult-child interactions
 - ✿ Strong environments and curricula

These quality criteria depend on an effective, well-trained, and fairly-compensated workforce. **Hawai'i's Child Care workforce, however, suffers from chronically low wages and high turnover.**

The child care workforce is **under-valued and under-compensated.**



HAWAI'I HOURLY RATES BY OCCUPATION

OCCUPATIONS	MEDIAN WAGES
Retail Sales	\$19.48
Child Care Workers	\$18.37
Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$17.22

May 2025, Department of Labor

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Child care makes a significant difference in the **economic health and security** of families - and the state overall.



Parents leaving their job as a direct result of issues with child care

53%

- Hawai'i's child care issues lead to workplace disruptions in the form of absenteeism and employee turnover.
- The loss of tax revenues due to child care issues is estimated at **\$396 MILLION** annually.

Hawai'i's Chamber of Commerce estimates a total of **\$1.18 BILLION** annually in **untapped economic potential.**

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Childcare Economic Impact Report 2025

A 10-year estimate puts Hawai'i's economic loss due to the state's child care gap at **\$2.0 BILLION - \$3.0 BILLION.**

Buffett Early Childhood Institute, Child Care Aware of America, Bipartisan Policy Center, "Child Care Gaps Assessment" (2025).

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Commit to Keiki is a statewide, non-partisan collaborative designed to ensure a brighter start for Hawai'i's youngest keiki and their families. CommitToKeiki.org

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) takes action for Hawai'i's youngest keiki by bringing together government and non-government stakeholders to implement systems-level strategies. HawaiiActionStrategy.org

