

THE CHILD CARE CRISIS IS A WOMEN'S WORKFORCE CRISIS

For many women, the inaccessibility of child care poses a significant hindrance to their careers. The ongoing child care crisis is keeping women out of the workforce, curbing their earning potential, and severely limiting their employment opportunities.

- More than **400,000** women left the U.S. workforce in the first half of 2025 due to lack of child care.
- Nearly **50%** of working mothers who leave their jobs do so because of a lack of accessible child care. **It is the #1 reason mothers quit their jobs.**

For many women, child care is the key to securing and maintaining employment. However, whether it is due to affordability or availability, it is simply inaccessible for many.

Child care costs **more per year** than in-state tuition at a public university.



WA ranks **3rd** in the nation for **least affordable** early learning options.

Child care costs roughly **20%** of a two-parent household's income and **40%** of a single mother's household income.



Over **60%** of families live in "child care deserts" where there are only licensed child care slots for **1 in 3 children**.



The inaccessibility of child care has a disproportionate impact on women.



40% of parents have quit or been fired from their jobs since having children - **the majority of which are women.**

Mothers are 40% more likely than fathers to report they felt the negative impact of a lack of child care on their careers.

Outside of the workplace, working women take on the majority of child care duties at home as well.



- Women's time caring for children
- Men's time caring for children

Women's Wellness and Safety

Without employment and reliable income, women and their children are at a significantly higher risk of:



Poverty



Food insecurity

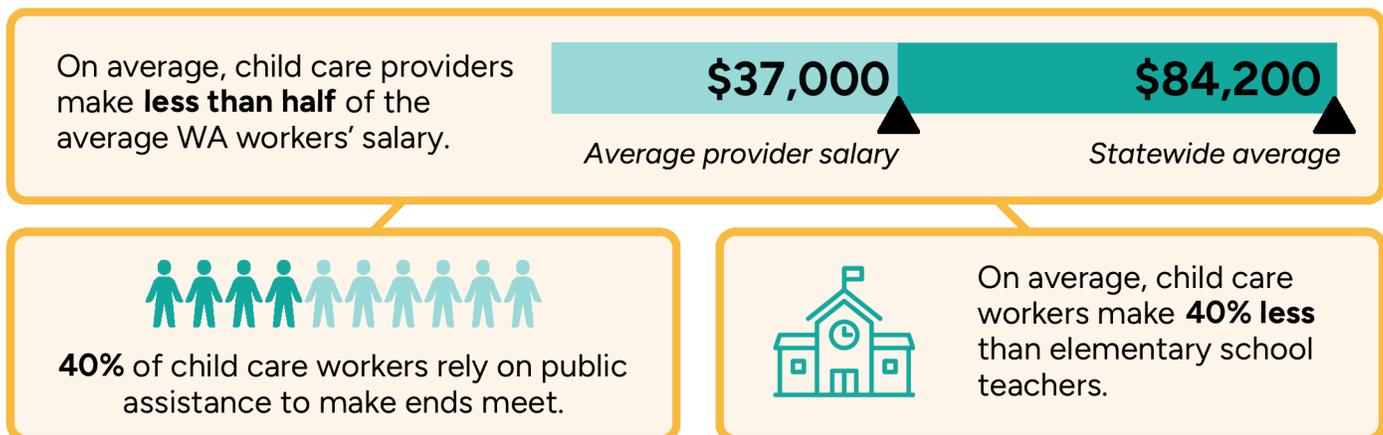


Housing instability

In addition, a lack of reliable income also puts women and their children at a significantly higher risk of experiencing domestic violence. **The primary reason women remain in abusive relationships is financial dependence on their abusive partner.**

Women in the Early Learning Sector

Despite the critical work they do, child care providers are largely underpaid and undervalued. This issue disproportionately impacts women, as they make up **90%** of the early learning workforce.



When women can access child care, early learning providers - many of whom are small business owners - also benefit financially.

How does BrightSpark address these issues?

-  We refer women and families to child care programs that fit their unique needs, including their schedule, budget, language, and culture.
-  We support women and families in identifying and applying for subsidies to help cover the costs of care.
-  We connect child care providers with subsidies and grants so they can earn more money and access more resources for their classrooms.
-  We advocate for policies that increase and expand child care subsidies as well as pay providers what they're worth.

Learn more
by visiting
our website!

