

Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks

A Media Campaign Kit



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ABOUT STAND UP FOR CHILD CARE ADIRONDACKS

Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks is a child care advocacy group created as a follow-up to the October 2019 North Country Business & Education Forum: THE CRISIS OF CHILD CARE NEEDS AND THE WORKFORCE. The group is composed of the following organizations:

- Adirondack Birth to Three Alliance | Adirondack Foundation
- Adirondack Community Action Program (ACAP)
- Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country (CCCCNC)
- North Country Community College (NCCC)
- North Country Workforce Development Board (NCWDB)
- YMCA of Plattsburgh and Malone
- Workforce Development Institute (WDI)

In September 2020, Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks hosted a child care legislative round table with Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, then NYS Senator Betty Little and Assemblyman D. Billy Jones. The presentation revolved around the importance child care plays in the North Country's economy. Child care IS economic development!

The group unveiled three recommendations for the North Country, including the following:

- **Support Families** - Facilitated Enrollment to expand child care subsidy for working families.
- **Support Child Care Programs**—Advocate for increased investment in professional development, program investments, and higher subsidy rates. Additionally, streamline government assistance funds to make it easier for providers to access critical dollars for long-term investment.
- **Support the Profession** - Streamline and solidify a pipeline for the development of child care businesses, beginning with recruitment of new providers.

Additionally, the group has asked our NYS elected officials to commit to creating a legislative add of \$1.5 million for facilitated enrollment in Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties as well as advocate for CARES money to go directly to child care professionals.

If you support this legislative ask, we ask that you participate in the Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks campaign by promoting it on social media, through letters to NYS elected officials, amongst your colleagues, and overall, helping us get the word out!

This press kit has all the tools you need:

- E-mail template to forward to colleagues
- Social Media Messages and Shareables
- Press Release
- Key Messages
- E-mail to North Country elected officials

We appreciate your support and should you have questions, feel free to reach out to North Country Workforce Development Board Executive Director Sylvie Nelson at snelson@ncworkforce.com.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sylvie Nelson, NCWDB Executive Director
Telephone: 518-561-4295, ext. 3075
E-mail: sylvienelson@ncworkforce.com
Date: January 12, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

The North Country Needs Facilitated Enrollment to Help Families Access Quality and Affordable Child Care

Plattsburgh, NY – Without Child Care, there are no working parents.

Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks is a North Country child care advocacy coalition who today is launching a media campaign with videos bringing attention to challenges faced by the child care industry and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The videos feature child care providers, parents and community leaders who share their issues and propose solutions to stabilize the industry that is crucial to the success of our local economy.

“Child care is economic development,” said North Country Workforce Development Board Executive Director Sylvie Nelson.

Encouraged by Governor Cuomo’s commitment of \$40 million in the 2021 NYS budget toward child care, Stand Up for Child Care Adirondacks is asking state elected officials to commit to a legislative add of \$1.5 million for facilitated enrollment in the 2021 NYS budget. The funds would offset the high cost of child care faced by median income working families in Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties.

Additionally, the group is advocating for CARES money to go directly to child care providers to infuse cash into programs and long term investment as well as support the child care profession by streamlining and solidifying a pipeline for the development of child care businesses, beginning with recruitment of new providers.

The challenges are real.

According to the Center of American Progress, without financial help, 50% of child care centers will go out of business. And just as important, the cost of child care has surpassed housing as the most expensive category of basic living, creating a significant barrier for

families. Additionally, a staggering 70% of U.S. child care providers report working a second job to be able to make ends meet.

“In Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties, there are 20,000 children under the age of 12 in need of child care; 30% of which live in poverty and whose parents must disburse, on average, \$15,000 per year for two children in child care,” said Sara Allen Taylor, Project Director of the Child Care Coordinating Council of the North Country (CCCCNC). “Those numbers are unsustainable.”

Meanwhile, COVID-19 is putting a financial strain on child care providers. Decreased enrollment and increased operational costs have left most providers, both for-profit and nonprofit, in an unsustainable financial situation. Child care providers are working hard to balance their ability to operate with efforts to keep children healthy. The top priority for providers is safety as they care for young children during this time of heightened risk.

Since 2003, the Workforce Development Institute (WDI) has consistently secured funds for the Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program (CCSFEP) in New York City, and Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties. The WDI CCSFEP is responsive to the needs of working families who would otherwise be ineligible for assistance while providing a multi-generational benefit with a strong return on investment.

“Without child care, parents can’t work.,” stated Brittany Buffum, WDI’s CCSFEP Program Manager. “The child care industry is an integral part of the state’s economic recovery, and is vital to keeping the North Country working.”

Creating a facilitated enrollment fund needs the involvement of New York State.

“We need our elected officials to include a \$1.5 million fund in the NYS budget for Clinton, Essex and Franklin counties which could be used for facilitated enrollment,” said Jamie Basiliere, CCCCNC Executive Director. “We also need to advocate for CARES money to go directly to child care professionals and alleviate the paperwork and delays.”

“In meetings with Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, Assemblyman Billy Jones and Assemblyman-elect Matt Simpson,” said Basiliere, “we are encouraged by the fact they understand the crucial role child care plays in the economy.”

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SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS AND SHAREABLES

Please use the following hashtags and graphics for your social media accounts:

#Childcare

#ChildCareIsEssential

#FacilitatedEnrollment

#ChildCareIsEconomicDevelopment

#FundChildCare

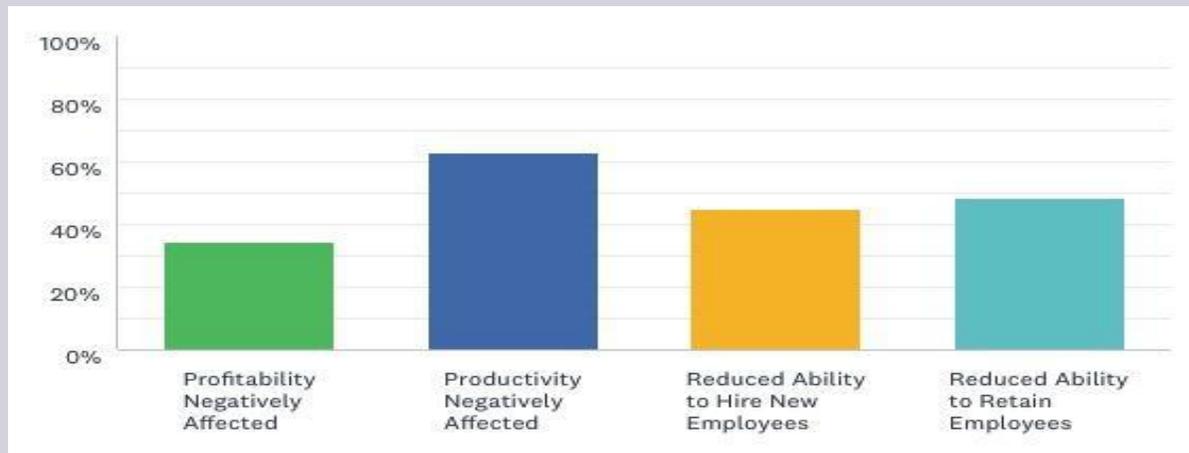
#EconomicSecurity

#StandupchildcareADKS

Without financial help, 50% of day care centers will go out of business – *Center for American Progress projects*



2019 North Country Child Care Survey: Impacts on Local Employers and Employees - 90% of businesses report experiencing negative impact of unmet employee child care needs



Recommendations:

- **Support Families** - Facilitated Enrollment to expand childcare subsidy for working families.
- **Support Child Care Programs**—Advocate for increased investment in professional development, program investments, and higher subsidy rates. Additionally, streamline government assistance funds to make it easier for providers to access critical dollars for long-term investment.
- **Support the Profession** - Streamline and solidify a pipeline for the development of childcare businesses, beginning with recruitment of new providers.



E-MAIL TO COLLEAGUES

Dear Colleague,

I am excited to share with you the launch of Stand Up For Child Care Adirondacks, a campaign advocating for bold action to rescue and reshape the North Country's child care system.

Simply put, child care IS economic development.

In September, a cross-sector coalition of businesses, nonprofits, child care providers, and others hosted a roundtable with Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, then Senator Betty Little and Assemblyman Billy Jones to highlight the dire situation of child care in the region and unveiled three recommendations:

- **Support Families** - Facilitated Enrollment to expand child care subsidy for working families.
- **Support Programs** - Advocate for CARES money to reach child care providers without hassle. Immediate cash infusion into programs and long term investment.
- **Support the Profession** - Streamline and solidify a pipeline for the development of child care businesses, beginning with recruitment of new providers.

Although we are encouraged by Governor Cuomo's comments during his Jan. 11, 2021 State of the State address about committing \$40 million to child care, time is of the essence. We need your voice to advocate for our state elected officials to create a \$1.5 million legislative add in the 2021 NYS budget for facilitated enrollment. This, we believe, will help the North Country's economy recover from the pandemic.

Here are two things you can do to help Stand Up For Child Care in the Adirondacks:

1. Sign onto our [advocacy letter](#) that will be forwarded directly to our elected officials for them to allocated \$1.5 million in NYS' 2021 budget for facilitated enrollment in the North Country.

2. Share our [video](#) with people in your network to help raise awareness of the child care crisis.

Thank you for joining the effort to bring attention to the North Country child care crisis. On behalf of the Stand Up for Child Care Adirondack coalition, I thank you!

Sincerely,

LETTER TO ELECTED OFFICIALS

The letter, below, will be sent to elected officials and you can easily sign onto it by clicking on [this link](#).

It requests that North Country state elected officials include a \$1.5 million legislative add to their budgets to help save child care in Clinton, Essex, and Franklin counties.

Even with encouraging words from Governor Cuomo's 2021 State of the State address committing \$40 million to child care, child care in the North Country is in crisis and needs immediate funding so providers can continue this essential service to parents. Please add your signature below to show support for this request by clicking on [this link or contacting your elected official directly](#).

BODY OF THE LETTER:

Dear Representative/Senator:

As you are aware, the North Country is facing an unprecedented demand for child care. Many of our residents do not have access to qualified and affordable child care so they cannot return to work, compounding the situation the COVID-19 pandemic has created. Child care IS economic development!

Pre-pandemic, the situation was critical, now it has become an emergency. I urge you to watch this short video that highlights the challenges our local child care providers face and the rippling effects this crisis has on family - and economic - wellbeing:

<http://bit.ly/StandUpChildCareADKS>

Unfortunately, a crisis like this strikes the most vulnerable in our population and low-wage workers are being impacted at disproportionate levels. Prior to COVID-19, workers were barely surviving when the economy appeared strong and now, they are faced with another barrier to re-connecting to the workforce: the lack of quality and affordable child care. This is also hurting businesses: 90% of employers in our region report experiencing negative impacts caused by unmet child care needs for their employees.

Although we are encouraged by Governor Cuomo's commitment of \$40 million toward child care as highlighted during his 2021 State of the State address, North Country child care needs funding now. This is why I am urging you to include a \$1.5 million legislative add in the 2021/2022 NYS Budget, to provide for the facilitated enrollment of expanded child care subsidies to working parents in Clinton, Essex, and Franklin counties.

This funding will expand an established program with a demonstrated track record of success already operating in eight counties across the state. Better employee retention improved attendance and productivity and increased capacity to cover basic living expenses are among the benefits families and businesses gain when parents can afford safe, reliable child care and return to work. It is especially

important this year to put child care at the top of your list of legislative priorities – child care is an economic investment!

We hope we can count on you to stand up for child care in the Adirondack by advocating for a modest \$1.5 million investment in our child care system during this critical time. This investment will yield returns in economic recovery and family wellbeing.

Our cross-sector coalition thanks you for Standing Up for Child Care!

In Partnership,