

Finding The Path Forward:

A Sustainable Plan for Early Care and Education

The Facts:



Louisiana ranks last out of 50 states for family wellbeing during the pandemic, with 50% struggling to pay bills and 25% not having enough to eat.



Most child care businesses operated on razor-thin financial margins before the pandemic, and yet high-quality child care is still unaffordable for most families



Only 40% of kindergarteners in Louisiana arrive at school meeting critical benchmarks.



Louisiana's economy loses \$1.3 billion every year due to child care breakdowns.



Teacher pay averages \$9.13 per hour and turnover is high, leading to reduced quality experiences for children.



Families rely on child care for parents to go to work, school, job training, or look for new work, especially during a pandemic



The child care sector lost a collective \$245 million between March 2020 and January 2021, due to the effects of the pandemic.



Child care costs almost as much as public college tuition in Louisiana, and is the biggest budget expense for most families with young children.



Only 15% of at-risk Louisiana children aged birth to three can currently access a publicly funded child care program



Two-thirds of Louisiana children have both parents or their single parent in the workforce.



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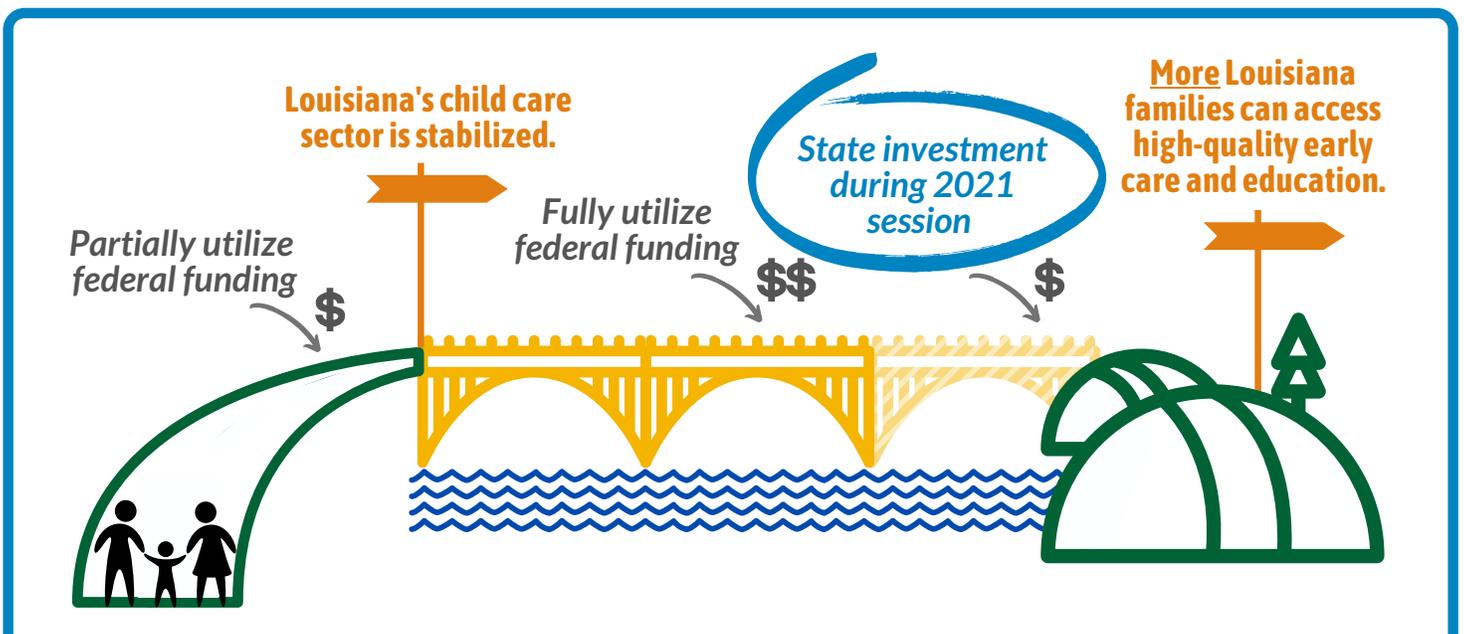
A Sustainable Plan for Early Care and Education

Creating a Sustainable Solution:

The federal government has provided Louisiana with a significant amount of aid related to child care. Most of those funds are targeted at stabilizing the struggling child care industry to maintain child care capacity for parents who need it to work.

Some federal funding, however, is flexible enough to use to immediately expand access to quality early care and education for families who desperately need it. The problem? This funding is one-time and must be spent over the next three years, meaning the state cannot rely on it in the same way as other federal funding programs that can be counted on annually.

Louisiana children, parents, and businesses need policymakers to find the path forward during the 2021 fiscal session.



By identifying an ongoing state funding source for early care and education, Louisiana can help more families have a safe, quality place to send their children while parents work, and provide our recovering businesses with a reliable workforce, and best leverage one-time federal relief funds.

