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Home Grown’s Statement on the Council of Economic Advisers Brief : Child Care Is Infrastructure —Evidence from Universal Pre-K

Home Grown, a national collaborative of funders committed to improving the quality of and access to home-based child care, is excited to see the Council of Economic Advisers brief, [Child Care Is Infrastructure: Evidence from Universal Pre-K](#).

For more than three years, Home Grown has co-funded research and policy analysis to support the inclusion of [family child care \(FCC\) programs](#) in state- and city-funded pre-K initiatives with teams at both the [National Institute of Early Education Research](#) and the [Pre-K In FCC team](#) including Erikson Institute, University of Delaware, and Equity Action Research Coalition at the UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. All of that research is found on the [Pre-K in Family Child Care](#) website.

The [Child Care Is Infrastructure: Evidence from Universal Pre-K](#) brief underscores several key findings, including that on average the introduction of universal pre-K across a number of states led to higher employment rates among mothers with young children and when accounting for workforce turnover, this change still reflected more overall growth in the labor force in places that introduced universal pre-K than places that did not. The brief demonstrates what we know: Access to pre-K and child care benefits children, families, businesses, and the overall economy.

Home Grown’s work to expand the research base and policy tools supporting public pre-K systems to include family child care as pre-K settings ensures that the nearly 6.4 million children ages 0-5 who receive care in a home-based child care setting (NSECE, 2019) already have access to high-quality pre-K in settings where they have existing strong relationships with a family child



care provider. Home-based child care is where some of our most underserved and hard-to-reach children and families are receiving services, including families of color, those in rural communities, those who speak languages other than English, those who work nontraditional hours, families of children with disabilities, and families below the federal poverty level. The FCC providers serving these families often share the same culture and language and reside in the same communities as the children in their care. HBCC providers are community anchors and have built strong relationships of trust with the families of children they care for. They offer responsive caregiving settings embedded in a naturalistic environment where siblings can remain together and children can have the same child care teacher from infancy through pre-K. And while most public pre-K models operate for a school day (six hours or less) and a school year, pre-K offered in family child care settings enables families to access the critical full-day, full-year child care arrangements that they need to enter and remain in the labor force.

Yet, recent studies from NIEER on [state-funded](#) and [locally funded pre-K](#) reveal that while many states and communities have made investments to fund public pre-K, only eight out of the 75 largest cities reported including FCC in city/county-funded pre-K programs in 2022-2023 and only 24 states reported allowing FCC to participate in their public pre-K programs. Fewer than 1% of providers in most pre-K systems were family child care. Exclusion of FCC providers from public pre-K systems is a loss for the system and further marginalizes the families and providers who need system resources. Systems that include FCC providers may be better able to achieve their goals around equity and inclusion and meeting the needs of the hardest-to-reach families. That's why Home Grown is thrilled to be working with NIEER this fall to support a [cohort of public pre-K systems with targeted TA and evidence-based tools](#) to modify their pre-K systems to include FCC.

We thank President Biden for continuing to prioritize child care and engaging in this way. We look forward to continuing to explore this with the current and incoming Administration. There are many ways different parts of government can contribute to the solutions and we stand ready to help identify and implement those solutions.

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