

# Our Policy Principles



The Child Care for Every Family Network has brought together the people directly involved in and impacted by child care—families, providers, organizers, and advocates—to build a racial and gender justice-centered child care system that is accountable to those who have been most harmed by our lack of investment and currently underfunded programs.

Our network includes 1500+ impacted families, child care providers, state and national organizations, and allies ready to transform our child care system. Learn more at [childcareforeveryfamily.org](https://childcareforeveryfamily.org).

**Equity**

**Accessibility**

**Affordability**

**Financially Stable**

**Culturally &  
Linguistically  
Responsive**

**Thriving Workforce**

**Systems Design**

**Quality**

**Governance**

See descriptions of each principle! —>

Our vision is a country where every child and family has equitable access to publicly-funded child care and early learning opportunities that prioritize safety, development, and well-being for all children and families; and where the child care workforce is compensated in a way that is commensurate with the critical value of their work.



# A child care system that works for our country's kids, families, child care providers, and economy will be rooted in...



- ✓ **Equitable:** Program policies, practices, and standards are developed with equity in mind. This includes ensuring systems are created responsibly; training and professional development meet the workforce's diverse needs; licensing, and monitoring standards are anti-racist; and payment practices, including reimbursements and other manners of payments, support a thriving workforce.
- ✓ **Accessible:** Families are eligible to and able to access the care they need. This includes multiple types of care, care that meets the needs of diverse children and multiple children within a family with differing needs; and access is irrespective of race, ethnicity, language, gender, literacy level, disability, immigration status, geographical location, socioeconomic class, economic circumstances, employment or income.
- ✓ **Affordable:** In a universal and publicly-funded system, families receive free child care and early education services without parental contributions, such as copays and fees, and without means testing.
- ✓ **Supportive of a Thriving Workforce:** The workforce is compensated (wages, benefits) in a way that is commensurate with the critical value of their work with children, families, and their support of the wider economy. This includes the workforce in centers, home-based programs, and relative (and other trusted) caregivers. Compensation, access to training and professional development, good working conditions, and pathways to organize into a union allow them not just to survive, but to thrive.
- ✓ **Culturally & Linguistically Responsive:** The child care and early learning system has resources devoted to attracting, retaining, and developing a racially and ethnically diverse workforce across all positions in a child care and early learning system. The child care and early learning system acknowledges that quality care can be provided in a wide range of settings, implements developmentally and culturally responsive curriculum options and ensures child-development assessment and screening tools are culturally and linguistically suitable.
- ✓ **Financially Stable:** The child care and early learning system is a fully funded entitlement by the federal government. Funding covers the true cost of care to allow for the workforce to be valued, supported, and competitively compensated. States and local communities support the equitable implementation, administration, and expansion of the program.
- ✓ **Systems-Designed:** Those who are most impacted by decisions are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the program, including involvement in decision-making at all levels of the system through advisory roles for policy decisions. Essential outcomes include family economic stability, the social/emotional health, the well-being of children, the stability of the child care workforce, identification of additional child and/or family needs, and more.
- ✓ **Quality:** Quality standards, measures, monitoring, and support are for the purposes of building a foundation for children to thrive. Families and children have a wide range of needs. The child care and early learning system and its component parts are able to meet those varying needs: ensuring that all children are safe and nurtured in a developmentally appropriate, culturally, and linguistically relevant setting, at times and locations needed, with flexibility in the system to assure access to multiple care arrangements. The quality principles address quality caregiving; understanding and implementing "quality" (improving the research base); quality system; and quality programs.
- ✓ **Well-Governed:** The child care and early learning system is governed by centering justice and equity and focusing on equitable, multi-generational outcomes, rather than relying on punitive rule-based compliance. The governance structures include Federal, state, Tribal, and local roles, and co-governance with leadership and decision-making that is shared with families and child care providers. Requirements for ensuring basic health and safety of children in publicly funded care arrangements are consistent and developed at the federal level, collaboratively with child care providers and families.