

Policy spotlight: Child care is foundational for economic recover

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Overview of the report

This Policy Spotlight examines how the pandemic is affecting child care centers and family child care providers, who offer care in their homes. It also documents the financial assistance from the state and federal governments that has been available for providers so far and makes some policy suggestions.

Like many other industries, the child care sector has been hit hard by the pandemic. Providers closed their doors or dramatically reduced capacity under government orders put in place to slow the spread of the virus.

“Child care is a lot like a restaurant or hairdresser in terms of being a personal service, so providers are very subject to social distancing concerns,” said Policy Spotlight author Elizabeth T. Powers, an IGPA senior scholar and associate professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “But child care also holds a unique position in our economy. Access to affordable child care will be necessary to get working parents, who are a big part of the labor force, back on the job.”

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