

All I want for next Mother's Day is a childcare revolution ^[1]

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Excerpts

I'm in the halls of the U.S. Senate in a stodgy, muted committee room with signs, strollers, pump bags with freezer packs for breast milk and activists ranging from 11 months of age to 40-some years with the Campaign for Childcare. We have come to Washington D.C. at the end of May with petitions signed by over 3,000 folks from all over the country wanting universal child care. I'm giving myself and my friends a late Mother's Day gift: organizing for a better world.

We are a committed group of mostly mothers and childcare workers (or both) who are fed up with unaffordable childcare costs, lack of access to quality care and the pittance childcare workers are paid to do their critical work.

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According to UNICEF's report "Where Do Rich Countries Stand on Childcare," the United States sits in 40th place out of 41 ranked nations.

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The childcare crisis may get worse as federal pandemic-related money is running out (unless renewed) in September. The fate of many childcare centers is unknown. With the program ending Sept. 30, an estimated 3.2 million children could lose access to child care, according to research by The Century Foundation. Washington's decision on whether to continue funding could be make-or-break for childcare centers and families across the country. In Pennsylvania alone, 2,848 childcare programs could close, resulting in parents losing \$412 million, according to the Century Foundation.

This federal funding is just a Band-Aid, however, until the United States can fund universal child care, which is the only solution that addresses the reality of unaffordable costs, childcare deserts and underpaid workers.

Without it, child care will remain a market failure.

Region: United States ^[3]

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