



NAFCC
National Association for Family Child Care

Family Child Care: Essential, Trusted, Under Threat

Federal Action for Stable Care, Strong Families, and Thriving Communities

THE PROBLEM: Family Child Care Is Under Threat

Family child care educators provide essential home-based care for millions of children and families nationwide. Family child care often fills gaps that other programs cannot and is especially important for infants and toddlers, families working nontraditional hours, rural and native communities, and culturally diverse families. Despite their critical role, NAFCC's most recent national survey revealed an unsustainable situation for family child care educators:

35%

reported earning less than \$10 an hour

71%

working 50 or more hours per week

35%

decline in licensed FCC homes since 2012

Retirement, paid time off, and healthcare were named as the top three challenges family child care educators experience. Family child care educators work tirelessly as vital community anchors without having access to essential benefits for themselves.

Federal policy changes paired with chronic underinvestment are making it even harder for family child care to survive:

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Final Rule removed federal guardrails supporting enrollment-based payments, timely and prospective payments to educators, grants and contracts that stabilize child care supply, and affordable family copayments.

Federal budget negotiations and funding freezes continue to threaten child care and family support programs, including Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Head Start and Early Head Start, SNAP, Medicaid and accessible housing.

Harmful and unsubstantiated narratives around fraud in public benefit programs are increasing administrative burdens, compliance requirements, and scrutiny.

Inflation and rising operating costs continue to outpace reimbursement rates, contributing to staffing shortages, educator burnout, and financial instability.

Continued child care program closures nationwide are leaving families with fewer options and increasing pressure on family child care educators and networks to fill growing gaps.

Family child care educators are educators, small business owners, and a critical part of America's care infrastructure. Without stronger federal investment and protections, more family child care programs will close and more families will lose access to the care they rely on every day.

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THE SOLUTION: Strong Federal Guardrails and Long-Term Investment

Family child care needs stable federal policies that protect educators, support families, and strengthen the child care system for the long term.

Congress and federal agencies must:

- Increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to address immediate child care needs while building toward a fully funded, equitable, and universal child care system.
- Expand access to essential benefits for family child care educators, including affordable health care, retirement savings opportunities, paid leave, accessible housing and other economic supports that strengthen long-term stability.
- Support stable payment practices for small child care businesses through enrollment-based and prospective payments.
- Ensure family child care educators have equitable access to funding opportunities, contracts, networks, technical assistance, professional development, and business support.

THE ASK: Protect Family Child Care Before More Programs Disappear

We urge you to increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and advance policies that explicitly name, support, and strengthen family child care educators and their small businesses.

NAFCC Policy Priorities

Increased funding for home-based family child care

Improved compensation and benefits for family child care educators

Full inclusion of family child care in early childhood systems

Family child care-friendly policies and systems

A strong ecosystem of support for family child care educators

Sustainable family child care businesses

Equitable quality measures for home-based care

Supportive housing policies for family child care

Strengthened CACFP support for home-based family child care

Elevated family child care leadership

Scan the QR code to learn more about NAFCC's Policy Priorities.

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About NAFCC

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) is a nationwide non-profit organization dedicated to promoting high quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care and supporting all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children in home-based settings.

Website: www.nafcc.org