

Gov. Evers: Announces plan to bolster child care statewide for working families

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MADISON — During his 2023 State of the State address tonight, Gov. Tony Evers announced he will be proposing additional support to make child care more affordable and accessible for working families and bolster child care providers statewide in his 2023-25 biennial budget proposal, including providing investments in the [Child Care Counts: COVID-19 Stabilization Payment Program](#) and the [“Partner Up!” Program](#).

In his 2023 State of the State address delivered tonight, Gov. Evers highlighted the Evers Administration’s efforts to stabilize the child care industry during the coronavirus pandemic. The governor also announced initiatives from his 2023-25 executive budget to further bolster the child care sector, defray child care costs for working families by expanding the Child and Dependent Care Credit, and support employer-child care provider partnerships:

“...If we want to address our state’s workforce challenges, we have to make sure child care is accessible and affordable. And together we will.

“So, the first thing I’m going to do is deliver on my promise to expand the Child and Dependent Care Credit, which will provide nearly \$30 million in tax relief to more than 100,000 Wisconsinites.

“Through our Partner Up! Program, more than 200 employers from Prescott to Two Rivers are helping make child care more affordable for their employees. We also helped stabilize the child care industry through our monthly Child Care Counts Program, providing the financial stability

providers needed to stay open and recruit and retain quality staff to care for our kids. All told, we helped more than 3,300 providers across the state keep their doors open; we helped more than 22,000 child care professionals stay employed or become employed; and we helped ensure care continued for more than 113,000 kids across our state. That's a big deal, folks.

“These two programs made a big difference in the lives of kids and working families across Wisconsin. But the reality is that the federal funds that support them won't last forever. So, we'll be continuing these programs to keep child care affordable and accessible in my budget. We're going to provide more than \$340 million for Child Care Counts so providers can have the financial stability they need to keep the lights on, pay their workers fair, competitive wages, and continue to provide high-quality care to kids across the state.

“We'll also be investing more than \$22 million into the Partner Up! program to expand partnerships between employers and child care providers. Our employers are ready to play a role in ensuring workers have access to affordable child care, and we're ready to support them. ...”

As the governor announced this evening, in his 2023-25 executive budget, he is proposing more than \$340 million to provide a permanent investment in the Child Care Counts: COVID-19 Stabilization Payment Program that was created during the pandemic to support Wisconsin's early care and education community. The Child Care Counts Program provided the financial stability needed for over 3,300 providers to stay open, recruit and retain over 22,000 qualified staff, and continue providing high-quality care for over 113,000 children statewide.

Gov. Evers is also proposing more than \$22 million to support the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families' (DCF) innovative “Partner Up!” Program, which supports employer-child care provider partnerships and child care provider staff recruitment and retention. To date, more than 200 employers statewide are participating in the “Partner Up!” Program to help make child care more affordable and readily available for their employees.

Finally, the governor also announced he will be including his [previously proposed plan](#) to create a caregiver tax credit and expand the Child and Dependent Care

Credit in his budget proposal, providing nearly \$30 million in tax relief to more than 100,000 Wisconsinites.

A list of the governor's proposed investments, which includes funding of new general purpose revenue (GPR) in addition to reallocated Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding, is provided below:

- Provides \$302 million GPR and \$38 million TANF/CCDF to permanently establish the Child Care Counts Program, allowing for continued benefits across the state.
- Sets local economies up for success by supporting working parents and bolstering community child care infrastructures by:
 - Investing \$11,198,000 GPR in each fiscal year in the innovative "Partner Up!" Program to support partnerships between businesses who purchase child care slots for their employees and child care providers, and supporting retention, recruitment, and career development for potential providers.
- Eases the financial burden on families, supporting excellent early childhood resources for children while bolstering the workforce by expanding the Child and Dependent Care Credit, providing nearly \$30 million in relief to an estimated 107,000 Wisconsinites.

The governor's full 2023-25 executive budget proposal will be announced following his 2023-25 Biennial Budget Message to the Legislature on Wed., Feb. 15, 2023, at 7 p.m.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).