



# #REIMAGINEchildcare

## The time is now...

### **Accessible, high-quality care for infants and toddlers is essential for New Jersey's future.**

Research shows high-quality child care sets the foundation for children during the key developmental years from birth to age three, and positively impacts them for the rest of their lives. Child care also serves as the backbone of our economy, allowing parents to go to work and school, confident their young children are in a safe, nurturing and enriching learning environment.

But quality child care for infants and toddlers in New Jersey can be hard to find. Forty percent of New Jersey communities are 'child care deserts' where there isn't enough high-quality infant and toddler child care to meet families' needs. And even when finding quality care isn't a problem, cost frequently is. Infants and toddlers need much more supervision and individualized care than older children. Providers have to take care of fewer kids, which makes it more expensive.

Additionally, COVID-19 has devastated the child care industry, permanently closing child care centers across New Jersey and leaving many child care professionals without a job. And families – disproportionately those in communities of color and low-income communities – are struggling to access quality child care that is safe and affordable.

## ...to reimagine child care for New Jersey

**Launching on August 18, 2020, the Reimagine Child Care campaign** unites under one banner a coalition of organizations dedicated to improving the affordability of, access to, and quality of early childhood education in the state of New Jersey. Reimagine Child Care is funded by The Nicholson Foundation and the Turrell Fund, and led by Advocates for Children of New Jersey. Growing from their previous collaboration on the recently concluded Right From the Start NJ campaign and infused with the new urgency of the issue of child care at this moment, the Reimagine Child Care campaign includes the following components:

- The development and launch of a new website and social media properties that collectively define goals around 0-3 infant and toddler child care and elevates each partner's individual efforts.
- Monthly social media and contextual ad buys to place coalition partners' information on child care issues in front of more people, helping to create new activists and engage new organizations to take up the fight.
- Weekly social media toolkits which will provide partners with content they can also share across their own social media properties and with activists.
- The development of a two-pronged survey to a) quantify the general public's views around childcare and b) understand the specific challenges parents are facing at this moment in time. The first portion - the general public piece - has been completed. Key takeaways were:

- Nine in ten (91%) New Jersey adults believe it is important to have high-quality, affordable infant and toddler care available for N.J. families
- Statements about brain development and how access and affordability of high-quality child care prepares infants and toddlers for Pre-K were the most compelling messages to the general public surveyed in the omnibus. Specifically:
  - Babies' brains develop fastest between the ages of 0 and 3, laying the foundation for the rest of a child's life.
  - Infants and toddlers with access to high-quality child care are better prepared for pre-K and success in school

We look forward to continuing our work together to ensure infants and toddlers can access high-quality and affordable child care that will help them thrive.