

## Gender Equity: Affordable Child Care

### **Background Information**

*Quality childcare in the first five years of life lead to better learning and growth outcomes later on. The complexity of early childhood development is a network of influence from both inherent and environmental factors that are strongly impacted by the quality of care received. According to CAA, 700 neural connections are made each SECOND. Because of this, CAA emphasizes that “future learning, behavior and health” are dependent upon a high quality and nurturing environment when a child's parents cannot be there.*

- The cost of childcare in Nevada ranges from \$10,324 for infants to \$8,792 for toddlers ages 3-4.
- Quality and affordable childcare in Nevada ranks reportedly near last (50th)
- School readiness in Nevada, which is defined as pre-school enrollment and readiness to learn received a letter grade of “F.”
- Nevada child care subsidies currently serve only 3.21% of its eligible population.

### **Problem Statement:**

Childcare in the first five years of life is a major drain on monthly income. The pressure it places on working families creates immense financial and occupational strain, especially on working class single mothers. Creating an affordable and quality child care system in Nevada would help to ease some of the burden and stress that comes with locating and financing high quality early childhood education. Furthermore, ensuring that all young Nevadans are receiving a high quality education will yield better educational and health outcomes for generations to come.

### **Proposed Solution:**

- Childcare subsidy expansion*
  - Provide additional funding to expand child care subsidy expansions for single-parent families in order to provide for job, educational or vocational endeavors.*
  - Require child care subsidies to be used at Nevada QRIS care programs to ensure high quality care*
- Quality rating improvement systems (QRIS)*
  - Further resources needed to implement an adequate quality rating system
  - Gradual statewide expansion
- Implement background checks to exempt child care providers*
  - Expand background checks to child care providers at home care centers to ensure high quality of care
- Childcare tax credits*
  - Tax credits are non-stigmatizing and work within a familiar system.
  - Should be system building (easily integrated into existing system), accessible to taxpayers, financially rewarding enough to promote participation, and trackable (easily measurable).

### *High quality workforce for high quality learning*

- Increase financial subsidy for early childhood professionals to prevent poverty among professionals. Doing so will also attract students and qualified individuals to the field.

\*For further information, please consult the Childrens Advocacy Alliance's 2017 Legislative Briefing Book