**Child Care in the United States**

### Mothers Are Working Today

- Working mothers in the United States:
  - with infants under age 1: 58%
  - with children under age 6: 64%
  - with school-age children: 74%

### Child Care is Hard to Find

- Throughout every state:
  - Families with infants and toddlers have a hard time finding child care.
  - Families needing nontraditional hour care or care for a child with special needs have a hard time as well.
  - Many communities have waiting lists for care.

### U.S. Child Poverty

- Children under age 6 below poverty: 22.8%
- Children under age 6 below 200% of poverty: 45.6%

All Children Benefit from High Quality Child Care, Low Income Children Benefit More

### Child Care Is Expensive in the United States

- The average annual cost of center-based infant care in the United States is $10,462.
- The average annual cost of home-based infant care in the United States is $7,692.

16.2% of Family Income for Single Mothers
41.4% for Single Mothers

11.9% of Family Income for Single Mothers
30.4% for Single Mothers

*Percentages based on state median incomes and average cost of child care.

### Quality Child Care Matters

**During the earliest years of a child’s life:**

- 700-1,000 new neural connections form every second. These connections are influenced by genes and experiences.
- By 24 months, low income children are 6 months behind in skills critical to language development.
- By age 3, low income children have heard 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.

### Quality Child Care Depends on a Quality Workforce

- **Wages Matter.** To attract and retain a quality workforce, early childhood educators need to earn decent wages.
- In every state, child care worker wages qualify a family of three for public aid.
- The median annual wage for a child care professional in the United States of America is $20,320.

*It’s time to invest in high quality child care.*