



Build Up
San Mateo County

Expanding Facilities for Early Childhood Education

A brief for employers prepared by Build Up SMC, an initiative preserving, expanding and improving the supply of early education and care.

San Mateo County has a **shortfall of 17,000 child care spaces**, which will rise to 22,000 spaces by 2032. The good news is that local employers, along with partners from education, philanthropy, and local government, can play a significant role in increasing the supply of ECE facilities..



Why should employers take action to increase the availability of ECE?

It creates a stronger workforce. Businesses that offer child care support are better able to **recruit and retain talent**. In a recent survey, 83% of Millennials would leave their job for one with better family/lifestyle benefits, including such as child care, flexible work schedules, and paid parental leave. Employees listed “help securing reliable child care” as one of the **top five benefits** that would improve their ability to do their job.

Employees are more productive when parents have consistent, high-quality child care. A 2018 report shows the U.S. economy loses an astonishing \$57B per year in revenue, wages, and productivity as a result of child care issues.

It’s crucial for family well-being and safety. On average, workers in San Mateo County travel over 30 miles one-way between home and work. Being in proximity to their children is especially important to employees when considering emergencies.

The return on investment of every \$1 spent on child care is \$13 to \$16. The benefit comes in the form of better education as well as myriad social, economic, and health outcomes. High-quality ECE experiences build a solid foundation for children to succeed in the workforce of tomorrow.

“Access to affordable early childhood education and care is a **proven driver of economic growth** in communities, so when state and local economic development discussions are happening, early education should have a seat at that table. In San Mateo County, early ed, philanthropy, business, developers, and city planners are at the table together, thanks to Build Up SMC.”

-- Cheryl Oldham

Senior VP, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Center for Education and Workforce

Three Recommended Actions and Local Examples for Employers

1. Build Child Care Facilities and Invest In Existing ECE Programs.

Employers can use available onsite space to build child care facilities or collaborate with other employers to create nearby “consortium” facilities, as well as provide financial support for expansion of additional spaces at existing facilities. Current ECE operators with room to grow typically do not have adequate funds for expansion. **Local examples** include:

The City of Daly City
The County of San Mateo
Electronic Arts

Genentech
Gilead Sciences, Inc.
Mills Peninsula Medical Center

Oracle
San Francisco Airport
Stanford USGS

Oracle planned to build a large child care center on campus, but faced regulatory challenges. Oracle's solution was to support the expansion of a nearby child care center in exchange for employee access to 60% of the spaces for children ages birth to 5.

2. Provide Paid Parental Leave

Providing paid leave reduces the need for infant child care, and increases retention, especially among women. 82% of companies with paid-leave programs experienced a measurable increase in morale, and 63% of employers say they have seen an increase in productivity because of the policy.

Local Example: Facebook offers full-time employees four months of paid leave to bond with a new child.

3. Contribute to the Build Up's Child Care and Preschool Capital Fund

This fund offers capital grants to child care operators in San Mateo County to open or expand centers.

Local Example: Gilead Sciences Inc. was Build Up's first corporate donor with a grant of \$50,000 to the Capital Fund, complementing a \$250,000 individual donation through Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

4. Align with Build Up on Public Policy and Advocacy

Chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and individual employers can become advocates for high-quality ECE by using their networks and clout to drive policy and engage decision-makers to support ECE expansion.

Local Examples: The presidents of the Chamber of San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA) are active members of the Build Up Advisory Body. SAMCEDA's president completed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Education and Workforce Fellowship Program. The Silicon Valley Leadership Group hosts an Education Summit each year and has highlighted ECE issues. The Bay Area Council promotes policies that support gender equity and family-friendly policies

Climate change is going to affect young children the most, as their bodies haven't developed to cope with the health affects, causing an **increase in respiratory diseases, chronic illnesses, and other long-term consequences**. Flexible family and lifestyle policies and benefits will help **recruit and retain** employees, as well as support employees to take care of their children and overall family wellbeing.

Sources for this document include: SMC Early Learning Facilities Needs Assessment & Early Learning Facilities Study, Brion Economics, 2016; SMC Child Care & Preschool Needs Assessment, SMC Child Care Partnership Council, 2017; Millennials Would Leave Job for Better Benefits, Care.com, 2015; Building Bridges: Creating Strong Partnerships for Early Childhood Education, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2019; Emerging Business Trends in Paid Family Medical Leave, The Paid Leave Project, 2018.

Thank you Build Up's Funders and Partners:



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Updated June 2024