

According to ChildCare Aware of America, child care is one of the largest expenses families face and is largely unaffordable throughout the nation. (The US and the High Cost of Child Care, 2018)

In San Mateo County, child care expenses for two children, estimated at \$3,500/month, can easily exceed housing costs in a family's budget. (Insight Center, Family Needs Calculator, 2018)

The unaffordability of child care places a huge economic and emotional burden on families and communities.



Why does it cost so much?

In the ideal child care program, you would find:

- Spacious, well-designed facility space
- Well-compensated, well-resourced, highly trained staff
- Low child-to-adult ratios and small group sizes
- Sufficient, healthy outdoor play space

However, **investments in all of these aspects of quality results in higher costs that are passed on to parent consumers.**

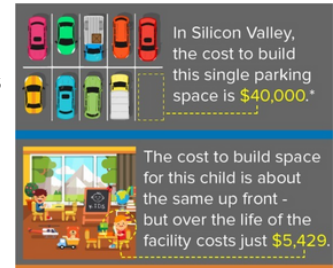
"There's a flaw in the system. Parent fees alone are not enough to fund quality, early education."
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, UC Berkeley.

Raising aspects of quality, like teacher salaries and benefits or bigger classrooms, also raise monthly tuition. The cost of child care is a serious equity issue low-income, BIPOC, and historically marginalized communities disproportionately cannot afford high-quality care and struggle to access child care.

What is Build Up doing about this equity issue?

The Build Up Child Care Capital Fund. The cost of the child care program begins with the construction of the facility. In a 2017 needs assessment for San Mateo County, Brion Economics estimated it **takes \$40,717 in capital investments to build one child care space**, not including the cost of land. **To meet the estimated demand by 2025 requires \$428 million in capital funding alone.** Most child care programs are small businesses with low profit-margins that cannot afford to take on these capital costs without help. ChildCare Aware recommends among its policy solutions that the federal government invest infrastructure funds to help cover the start-up costs for child care businesses to support quality and access.

Build Up worked with partners at the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the Child Care Coordinating Council, First 5 San Mateo County, and Gilead Sciences, Inc. to start a Child Care Capital Fund for our regional needs.



What can you do to help build the supply of affordable child care?

- Contact your federal lawmakers urging them to invest in child care
- Read and share our "Solutions Briefs" for Cities, Developers, School Districts, Employers, and Faith-based Organizations
- Educate yourself further about the problem by watching a short video from UC Berkeley (available on our website, www.buildupsmc.org) or using The Center for American Progress' interactive tool to make choices about the quality and cost of care (<https://www.costofchildcare.org>).
- Join our mailing list to stay informed of our work in San Mateo County at buildupsmc.org

For more resources, visit the 'Resources' page on the Build Up SMC website.

Climate change is only going to make this issue worse. Young children are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. They are more sensitive to poor air quality and air pollution as their lungs aren't fully developed, and it has already led to an increase in respiratory diseases, like asthma. BIPOC and low-income children and families disproportionately live with high levels of air pollution and worse air quality. Rising temperatures, more frequent natural disasters, flooding from rising sea levels, and more will all impact young children more.

This means that child care facilities— whether centers or home-based care— should install climate resiliency measures, including high quality air filters, electrification of facilities, trees and coverings to provide shade in outdoor play areas, EV charging, and more. **However**, because of the lack of widespread investment in child care and high operation costs, child care centers and facilities don't have the funds to cover climate resiliency measures and underscores the necessity for widespread investment in our child care system.

Thank you to Build Up's Seed Funders and Partners:



To learn more, visit www.buildupsmc.com or contact Christine Padilla: Director, Build Up for San Mateo County's Children, 650.517.1436 or cpadilla@sanmateo4cs.org.

Twitter/Facebook: @BuildUpSMC Instagram: TheBuildUpInitiative