Early Childhood Initiatives that Won’t Bust the Bottom Line

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Nebraska Facts & Figures

• **First in nation** for percentage of labor force participation with single mothers with children under 6

• **2nd in nation** for percentage of married couple families with both spouses in labor force

• **2nd in nation** for share of families in poverty with a householder or spouse who worked full-time and year-round

• **5th highest** birth rate in nation
Early Childhood is a Business Issue

• Annual State Chamber of Commerce surveys routinely cite **workforce shortages** as the primary challenge to employers.

• Employers need employees who possess:
  • Job-relevant technical knowledge
  • Fundamental character, critical thinking and self-regulation skills

• High-quality early learning opportunities create a more **flexible, responsive future talent pool** to meet the needs of emerging technologies and industries.

• Employers report nearly **58,000 vacant jobs** in Nebraska.

• Child care costs the U.S. **57 billion in lost earnings, productivity and revenue** (“Want to Grow,” 2019).
How can employers support working parents?
Be a Resource

• Survey your workforce
• Post signs or flyers on brain development
• Lunch and learn opportunities
• Include child care resources in employee handbook
• Refer working parents to Step Up To Quality (https://www.education.ne.gov/stepuptoquality/)
• Educate your employees about their subsidy eligibility (http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Care-Subsidy.aspx)
Policies for Healthy, Happy Employees

• Offer flexible work arrangements (telecommuting, flextime, etc.)
• Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
• Employee Wellness Program
• Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
• Private spaces for breastfeeding
• Backup care options or subsidize child care
Be a Champion for Early Childhood

- Educate leadership or executive team
- Write an op-ed or blog post
- Engage social media
- Propose child care as a topic of discussion at chamber of commerce or economic development meetings
- Advocate for public policy changes
- Invest philanthropic dollars to support early care and learning programs
First Five Nebraska is here to help.