

## **NEBRASKA EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

### **WHY THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE MATTERS**

#### **Research Tells Us:**

- The human brain is not fully developed at birth. Nearly 90% of brain growth takes place during the first five years of life.
- The greatest opportunity for lifelong impact on children's brain development is in the years from birth through age 8.
- The skills and knowledge of caregivers, teachers, and others who have professional responsibility for young children are essential for helping children realize their potential.
- The single most important building block of brain architecture and childhood development is reliable, positive, and consistent interactions between the developing infant or child and familiar, caring adults.
- A highly qualified early childhood workforce is the cornerstone of high-quality early care and education.

#### **In Nebraska:**

- More than 75% of children under age 6 live in homes where all adults work and no one is left to care for them if they are not enrolled in some form of child care.
- 84% of Nebraska counties do not have enough child care slots to meet the needs of families with young children.
- In 2016, more than 4,000 Nebraska parents were forced to leave a job, turn down a job offer, or change jobs because of child care problems.
- Statewide, only 15% of Nebraskans report being very satisfied with the quality of the early care and education programs available in the city or area where they live.

**Read the full report and join us at [EarlyYearsMatter.org/workforce](https://EarlyYearsMatter.org/workforce).**