

CHILDCARE IN SITKA

EARLY CHILDHOOD COALITION/CHILDCARE NOW

“...the pandemic has made broadly evident what was already clear to America’s parents, employers, and care providers: the nation’s early childhood care system is fragile. Working parents face intersecting challenges as they seek high-quality, affordable care that is suitable for the ages of their children and available when and where they need it.”

University of New Hampshire Public Policy Brief

ECC/CHILDCARE NOW

STATE OF CHILDCARE IN SITKA

WORK OF ECC/CHILDCARE NOW

ADVOCACY AT STATE LEVEL

COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANT

GOVERNOR’S TASK FORCE

MUNICIPAL SOLUTIONS IN ALASKA

VIEW FROM “THE FLOOR”

We are a coalition of parents and providers advocating for Sitka's families and children.

Early Childhood Coalition Members:

Tori Hay-Early Learning Program, Center for Community

Lisa Hodges-ELP, Center for Community

Chris Washko – Sitka Counseling

Kari Sagel – Sitka School District, STEPS Grant

Annette Evans – Sitka School District, Ventures

Jade Nodes – Sitka Tribe of Alaska

Lauren Wild – Parent

Barb Morse – Parks and Rec

Melissa Henshaw – City of Sitka

Elise Kitka – Sitka Counseling

Stephanie Abril – Sitka Counseling

Laurinda Marcello – Parent

Rachel Roy – Chamber of Commerce

Erika Apathy – Betty Eliason Child Care Center

Ellen Hughes – Betty Eliason Child Care Center



CURRENT STATE OF CHILDCARE

REPORTS, ARTICLES, FACT SHEET

AVAILABLE AT WWW.SITKAKIDS.COM.

CHOOSE EDUCATION TAB, THEN EARLY CHILDHOOD COALITION

OPENINGS

HEAD START, BETTY ELIASON CHILD CARE CENTER

SCALED BACK CARE

**VENTURES, BETTY ELIASON CHILD CARE CENTER, HEAD START
STRESS, LOSS OF WORK/INCOME, SAFETY ISSUES**

ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

PARENT STORIES, MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

SITKA HEALTH SUMMIT – SEPT. 22

**LONG TERM GOAL: CREATE
A STELLAR CHILDCARE
SYSTEM IN SITKA**

4-H BABYSITTING CLASS

- Jasmine Shaw, UAF Cooperative Extension
- Sitka School District, Parks and Recreation, SAFV, Ventures, Childcare Now, Sitka Health Summit, Sitka Fire Department
- 14 students, 100% completion
- Child development, nutrition, kitchen safety, trauma-informed care, first aid, CPR, entertainment, behavior, business
- “Meet and Greet” with parents
- Bonus
- Future classes



4-H BABYSITTING CLASS

“In some ways, it’s a little symbolic. The problem is so big, we want to create a future in a career that’s worthy of young people...if they want to continue with this as a career. There has to be a career waiting for them and there isn’t right now, because, economically, childcare is a broken system.”



ADVOCACY AT STATE LEVEL

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK ADVOCATES: ADD 15 MILLION TO AN EXISTING LINE IN THE ALASKA BUDGET (RATHER THAN A BILL)**
- **CHILDCARE RECEIVES THE MOST WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF THE BUDGET PROCESS**
- **SENATOR STEADMAN ADDS IT TO THE SENATE BUDGET COUNTERPROPOSAL**
- **REDUCED TO 7.5 MILLION, SIGNED BY DUNLEAVY**
- **GOES DIRECTLY TO SALARIES AND WAGES, ONE-YEAR APPROPRIATION**
- **WHAT WILL BE THE MECHANISM OF DISTRIBUTING?**
- **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT YEAR? HOW ARE WAGE INCREASES MAINTAINED?**



GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON CHILDCARE

- Identify policy solutions to childcare workforce constraints.
- Identify childcare regulations that pose barriers to increasing availability of licensed childcare slots.
- Develop solutions to incentivize employer-sponsored childcare facilities or benefits.
- Identify opportunities to foster public-private partnerships
- Develop framework for a pilot program to offer on-site childcare facilities in a State of Alaska office to serve as a model for employer-provided childcare benefits.
- [Alaska Child Care Task Force - Denali Daniels \(ddaalaska.com\)](http://ddaalaska.com)

COMMUNITY INNOVATION GRANT

SITKA COUNSELING TO PILOT THERAPEUTIC DAYCARE (TENTATIVE START IN JANUARY)

- SERVICES TO SIX CHILDREN, AGES 3-5 (POTENTIALLY 2-5)
- REFERRALS FROM DAYCARES AND AGENCIES
- ON SITKA COUNSELING CAMPUS
- PROGRAM COORDINATOR, TWO DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER
- JOB DESCRIPTIONS, VISITS TO EXISTING "OUTPATIENT CLINICS" RECRUITING STAFF
- SEEKING FUND TO UPGRADE FACILITIES. PLAN TO INCREASE TO 12 BY YEAR 2 OF GRANT
- ECC/CN FACILITATED LETTERS OF SUPPORT AND WILLINGNESS TO PARTNER
- CHILDCARE RESOURCE OFFICE UNFUNDED

CHILDCARE CAREER PATHWAY SUMMIT

SEPTEMBER 8 & 9, 2023

- BUILD HIGH SCHOOL CAREER PATHWAY TO ENHANCE AND PROMOTE CHILDCARE WORKFORCE
- BRING KEY PLAYERS TO THE TABLE: SHS, PHS, MEHS, UAA, 4-H, STA, CITY OF SITKA, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CHILDCARE PROVIDERS, SITKA COUNSELING, EARLY LEARNING CENTER, SEARCH, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, SITKA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, VENTURES
- EXAMINE TRAINING/CERTIFICATION MODELS AND DEGREE PROGRAMS
- DEVELOP A TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 12 MONTHS
- GAINING A COMMITMENT AND BUY-IN FROM KEY PLAYERS

IT COMES DOWN TO REVENUE

- ATTRACTING AND RETAINING QUALITY TRAINED EMPLOYEES REQUIRES MONEY
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES MONEY
- FAMILIES CANNOT AFFORD TO PAY WHAT CHILDCARES WOULD NEED TO CHARGE FOR COMPETITIVE WAGES AND BENEFITS
- CHILDCARE IS A PUBLIC SECTOR INDUSTRY TRYING TO OPERATE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

MUNICIPAL RESPONSES

- In April 2023, voters in Anchorage, Alaska dedicated their retail marijuana sales tax revenue to early childhood education. At a retail sales tax of 5%, the revenue will generate approximately \$6 million a year for childcare and early education.
- The City of Juneau includes monthly per-pupil stipends to childcare providers in its budget.





OUR ASK

Investigate and implement a municipal solution to Sitka's childcare challenge. Work with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, large employers, and the Early Childhood Coalition to seek long-lasting solutions.

SO OUR COMMUNITY CAN:

- Support families to work and live in Sitka.
- Support our children in development and increase positive outcomes such as school readiness and high graduation rates.
- Grow our local economy.