



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Child Development
and Early Education

Early Childhood Education: Building the Foundation

Rebecca Feinglos Planchard, MPP

Senior Early Childhood Policy Advisor

NC Department of Health and Human Services,
Division of Child Development & Early Education

Leadership North Carolina


December 8, 2021





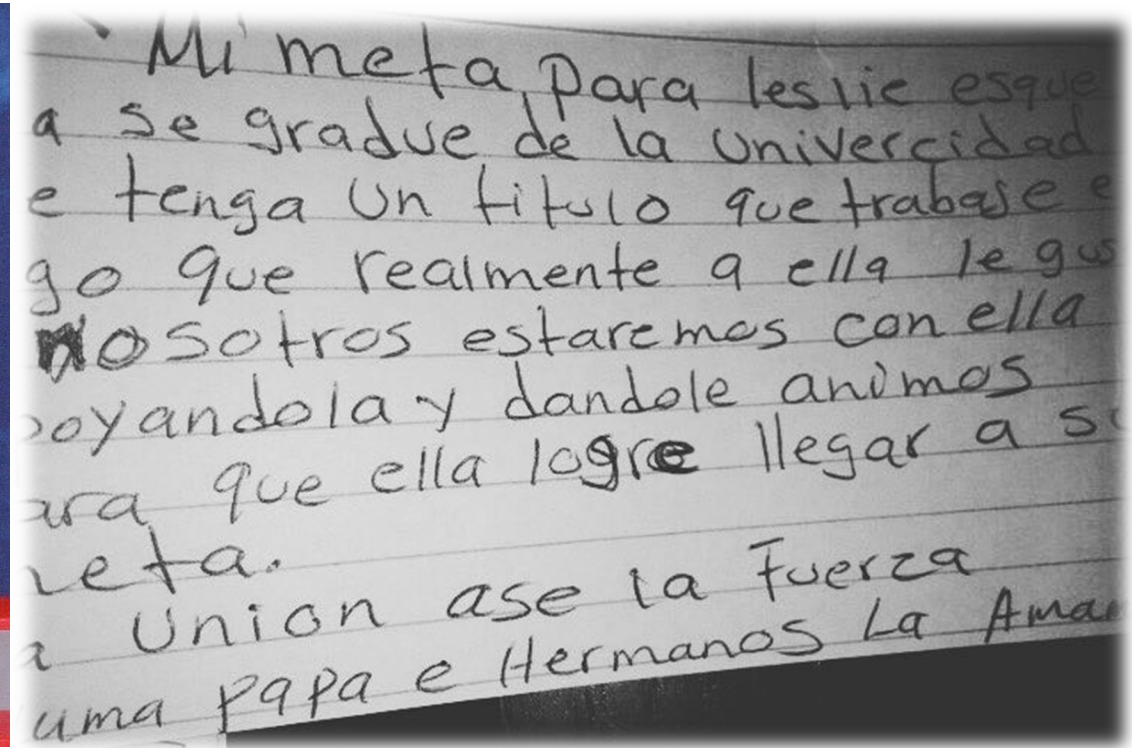
In our conversation today, we will:

- 1. Consider why early childhood education matters to all of us**
- 2. Compare early childhood education in NC to the K-12 system – it's different!**
- 3. Highlight impacts and key opportunities stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic – it's an unprecedented moment for early childhood!**

A young girl with dark hair in pigtails, wearing a white polo shirt, looks directly at the camera. She is in a classroom or playroom. In the background, other children and two adult women are engaged in an activity. There are colorful decorations on the wall, including a blue banner with white and red patterns. The foreground shows various toys and materials on a table, including a yellow ring, a red ring, a wooden drum, and some containers.

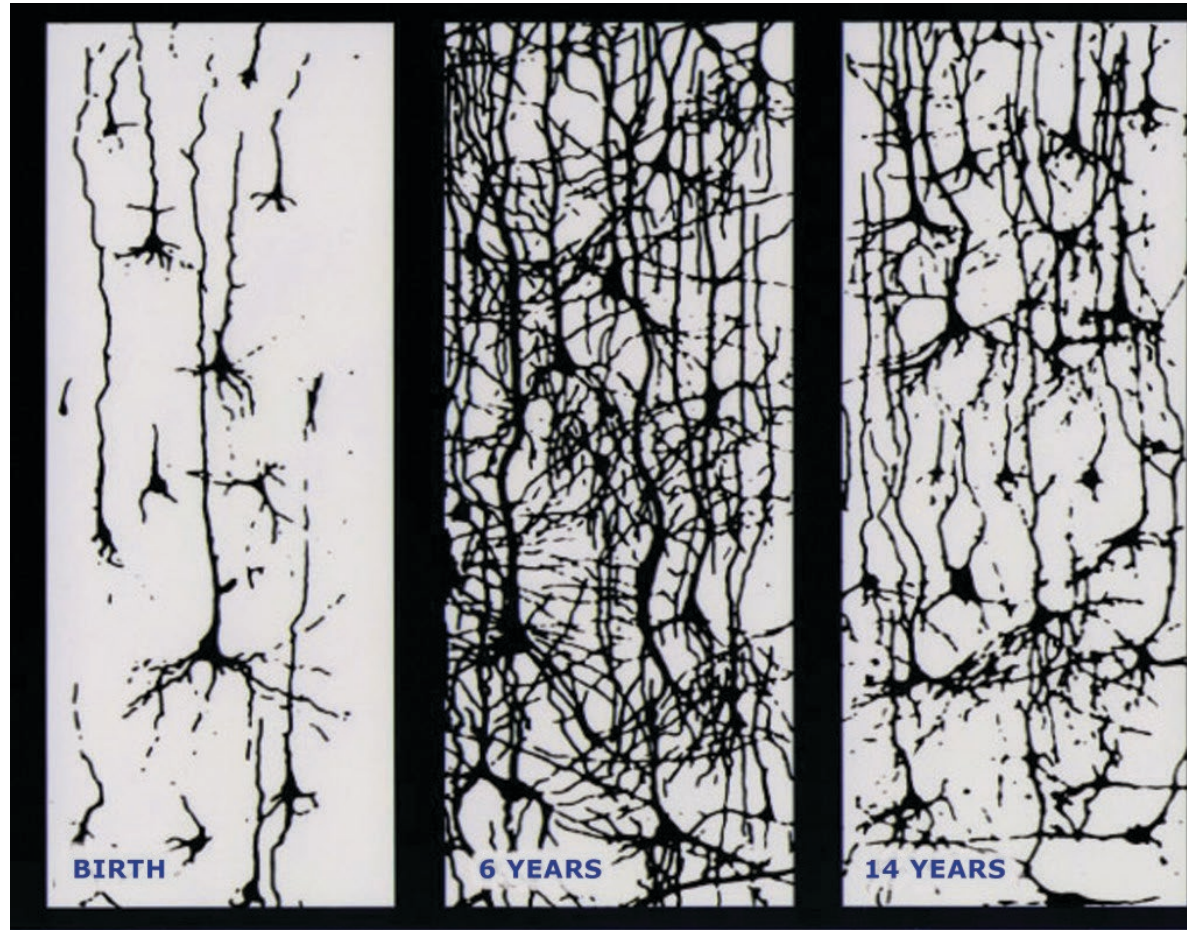
Why does
early childhood education
matter?

Why Early Childhood Education Matters to Me: My Students & My Families



Unity creates strength

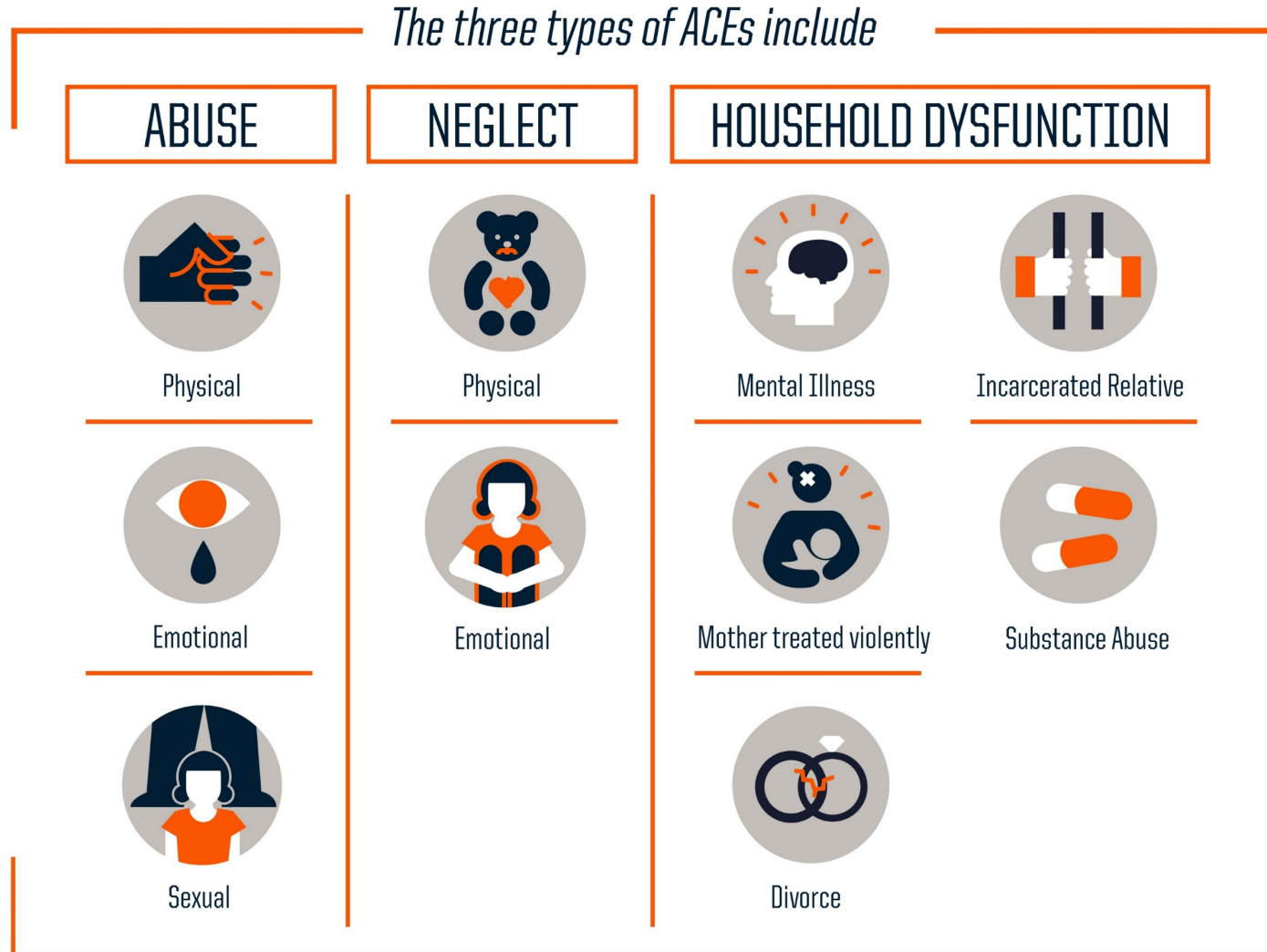
Early Childhood: A Time of Rapid Brain Development



In the first few years of life, more than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second.

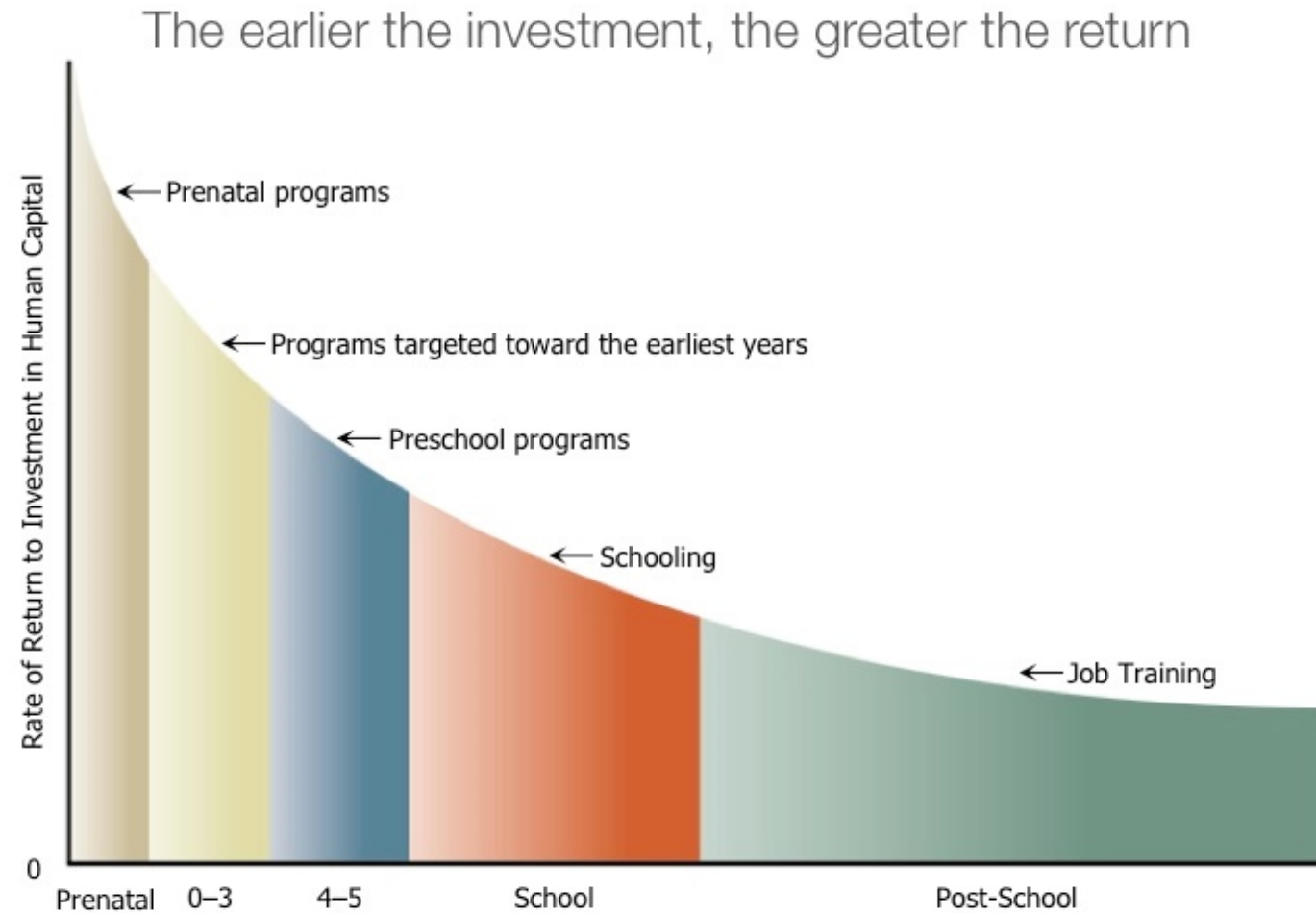
Source: Harvard Center on the Developing Child
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/five-numbers-to-remember-about-early-childhood-development/>

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Have a Lifelong Impact



Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/infographics/the-truth-about-aces.html>

Early Childhood Development is a Smart Investment



Source: <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/the-heckman-curve/>

But wait: What IS Early Childhood?

**Birth – Age 8
(typically 3rd grade)**



Age Range



*Health, Child Welfare, and
Early Education*

A young child with dark, curly hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, is focused on playing with a wooden abacus toy. The child is sitting at a table with various colorful toys, including red and yellow blocks. The background is a blurred classroom environment with colorful decorations. The text "What is our early childhood system like in North Carolina?" is overlaid in white on the image.

What is our early childhood system like in North Carolina?


Child Care in NC: We have a Mixed Delivery System

- **What is child care?**

- More than 2 unrelated children are in care for more than 4 hours during a 24-hour period who do not reside where the care is provided

- **Where do families access child care in North Carolina?**

- It's a mix!
- Private child care centers
- Programs in a public school (e.g. NC Pre-K)
- Family child care homes



I wonder why she keeps saying *child care* and not *day care*...

Early Care & Learning Programs in NC



| AGE | Birth – 2 years | 3 years | 4 & 5 years | 5 – 8 years | |
|----------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| PROGRAMS | Child Care Subsidy (serves children through age 12) | | | | |
| | Early Head Start | Head Start | | | |
| | Smart Start | | | | |
| | NC Infant & Toddler Program | Preschool Exceptional Children | | Exceptional Children | |
| | | | | NC PreK | |
| | Title 1 Preschool | | | | |
| | | | | | K-12 System |

NC's Early Care and Learning Programs/Supports

Payment support for high quality child care for working families

Child Care Subsidy

Comprehensive services for low-income infants and toddlers

Early Head Start

Comprehensive pre-school for low-income 3 and 4 year-olds

Head Start

Pre-kindergarten for at-risk 4-year-olds

NC Pre-K

Services for children from birth - age 3 with disabilities

NC Infant & Toddler Program

Services for pre-school-age children with disabilities

Preschool Exceptional Children

Early care and education for children ages 0 - 5

Child Care Programs

Locally administered early education funding

Title I Preschool

Who Oversees and Funds Early Childhood Programs in NC?

Department of Public Instruction



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Office of Early Learning

- Preschool Exceptional Children
- Title 1 Preschool

NC Department of Health and Human Services



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

- **Division of Child Development & Early Education**
 - Child Care Subsidy
 - Child Care Programs
 - Smart Start*
 - NC Pre-K
- **Division of Public Health**
 - Home Visiting
 - NC Infant Toddler Program

Federal Government

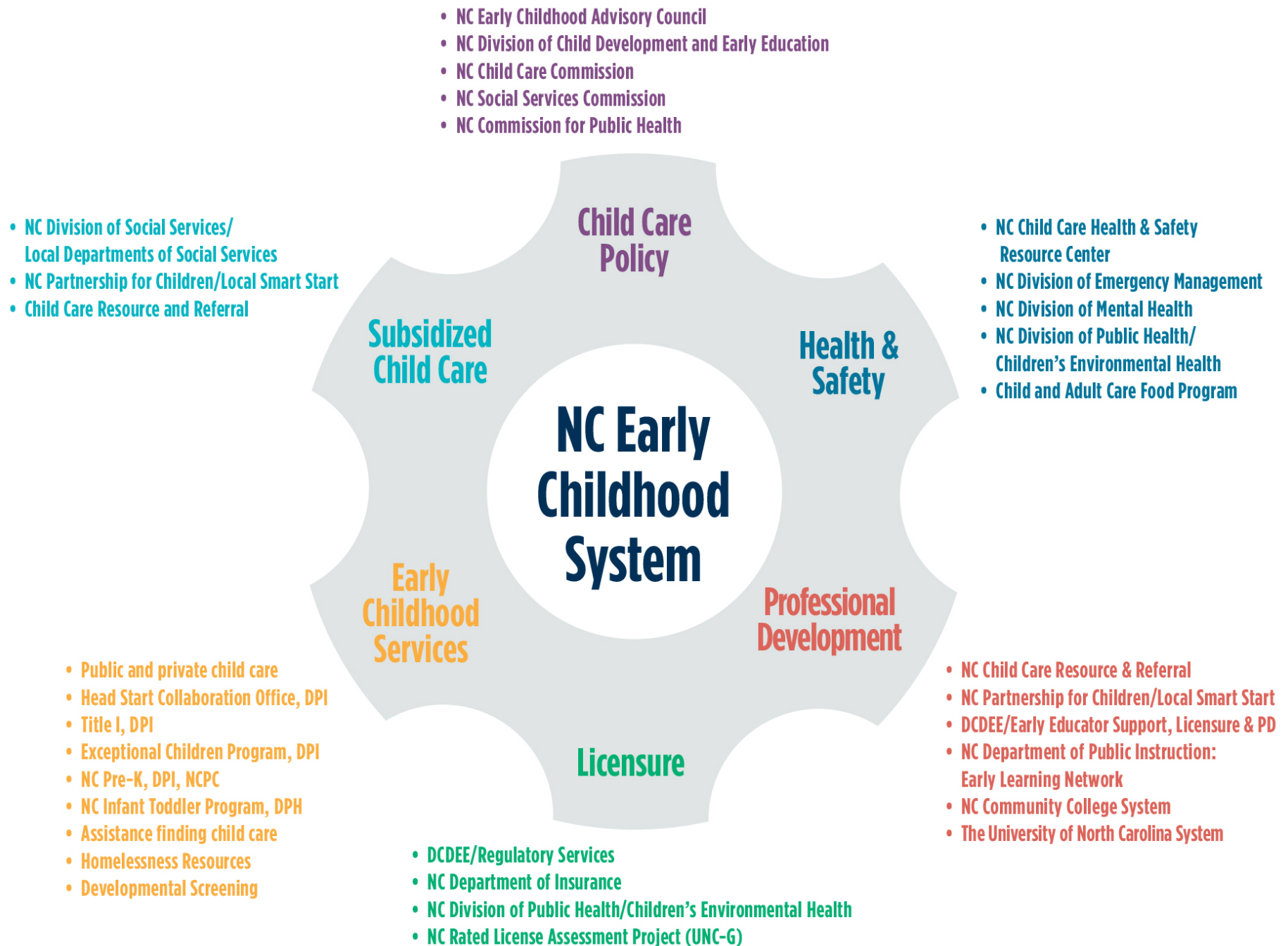


- Early Head Start**
- Head Start**

*While funds flow through the Department of Health and Human Services, Smart Start is administered by The North Carolina Partnership for Children.

**Funds flow from the Federal Government directly to local grantees.

Many Agency and Non-Profit Partners Play Important Roles



The *Leandro* Case and Early Childhood

“

Simply put, it is the **duty of the State of North Carolina** to protect each and every one of these at-risk and defenseless children, and to provide them their lawful opportunity, through a **quality pre-kindergarten** program, to take advantage of their equal opportunity to obtain a **sound basic education** as guaranteed by the North Carolina constitution.

”

*Judge Howard Manning,
2011 Ruling*





Supports for early learning & development – from birth – are essential to a sound, basic education

But: the stats on how we support our early childhood educators don't measure up

- **1 in 5 early childhood teachers does not have health insurance**
- **Vast majority of all early childhood teachers are women**

| Early Childhood Teachers (0 – 5): | K – 12 Public School Teachers |
|--|---|
| <u>Median</u> wage, lead teacher \$10/hour or \$28,000 a year | <u>Average</u> wage for North Carolina K-12 Public School Teachers = \$53,975 a year |
| Median wage, teacher assistant \$9/hour or \$18,720 a year | |

| Early Childhood Teachers (0 – 5): | NC population (0 – 5): |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 51% White | 55% White |
| 40% Black | 42% Black |
| 6% Hispanic | 23% Hispanic |

| K – 12 Public School Teachers | K-12 Public School Student Population |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 79% White | 50% White |
| 13% Black | 26% Black |
| 2% Hispanic | 17% Hispanic |

Sources: CCSA, Hunt Institute

A close-up photograph of a baby lying on its back on a colorful, striped blanket. The baby has light brown hair and blue eyes, and is looking towards the camera with its mouth slightly open. The baby is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt with blue trim. The background is a soft-focus pattern of yellow, green, and blue stripes. Overlaid on the center of the image is white text.

How has COVID-19 impacted
child care in North Carolina?

How did we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Our priorities during the crisis were to protect children, families and providers to keep North Carolina working:

1. Health and Safety
2. Operational Support
3. Workforce Support
4. Access and Affordability



Timeline: Crisis, bold action, recovery and more work to do

Prior to COVID-19

- **265,000** children enrolled in regulated child care, 25% receiving subsidy
- 5,746 licensed child care facilities
- 76% centers/255,600 children
- 24% homes/9,900 children
- **41,000** teachers and staff

December 2020

- **126,000** children enrolled in regulated care
- Open facilities
 - Centers 93%
 - Homes 97%
- **39,000** teachers and staff

April 2020

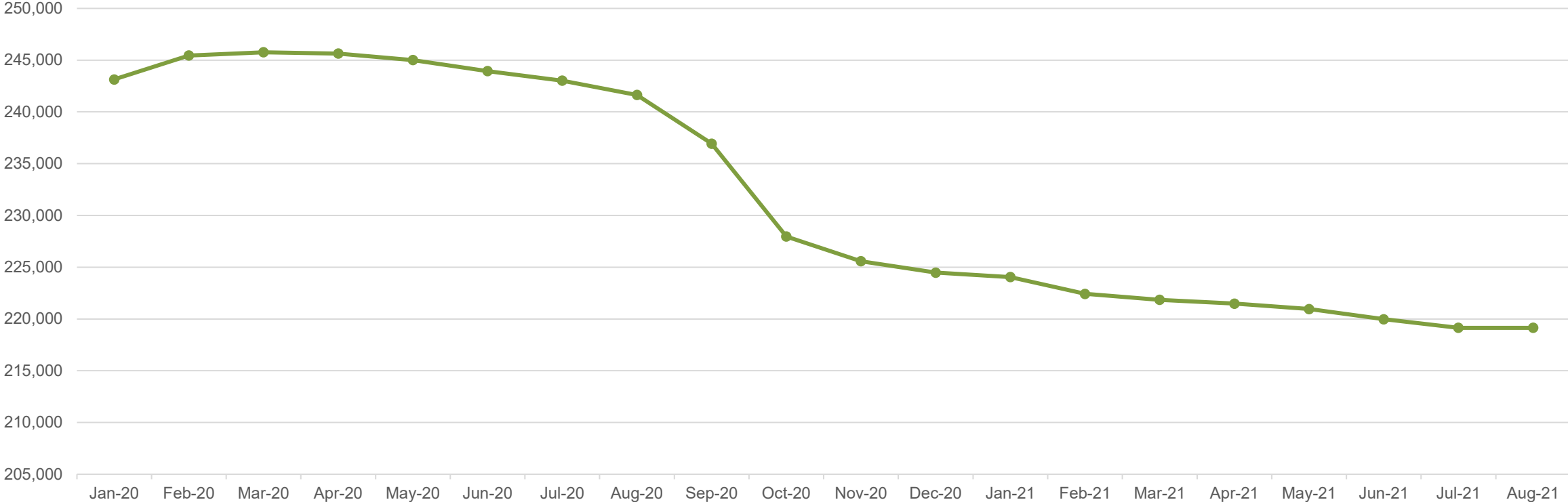
- **60,000** children enrolled in regulated child care
- Subsidy stabilized + co-pays
- Open facilities
 - Centers 49%
 - Homes 87%
- **20,000** teachers and staff

April 2021

- **185,000** children enrolled in regulated care
- 70% total pre-pandemic enrollment; 100% pre-pandemic subsidy enrollment
- Open facilities
 - Centers 93%
 - Homes 97%
- **39,000** teachers and staff

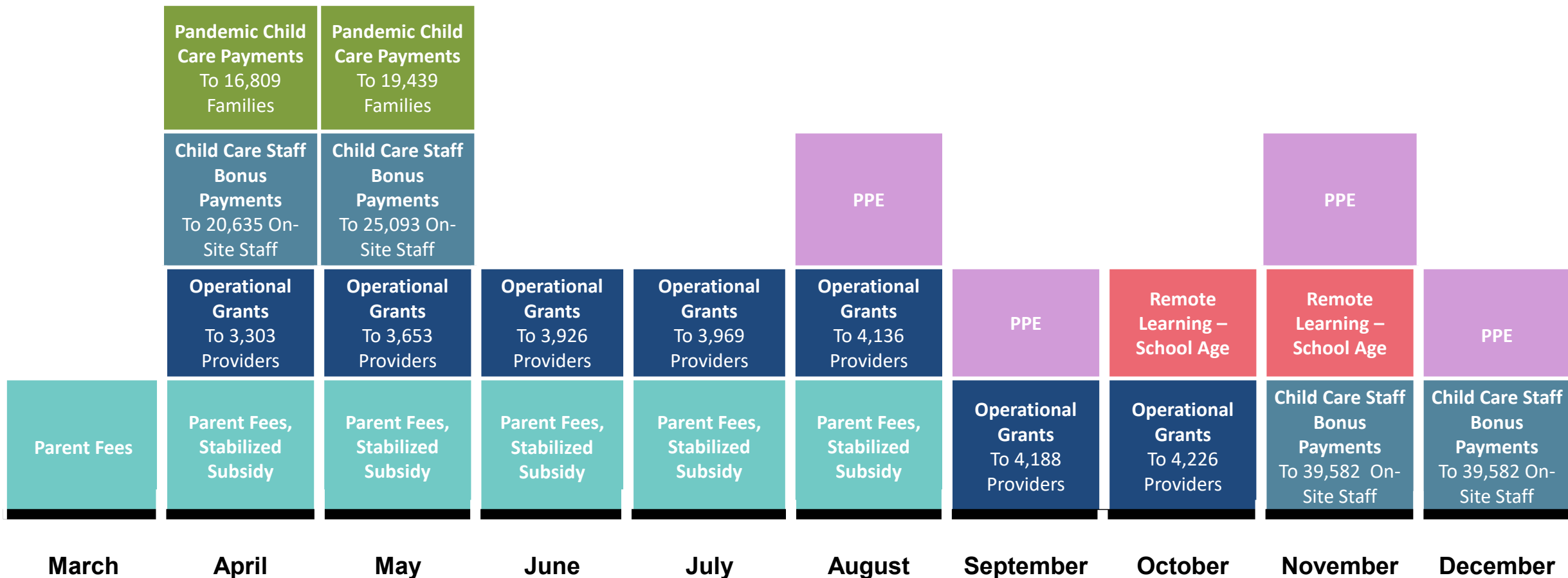
Significant decline in # children enrolled in NC child care

We haven't yet recovered



Notes: These are data from DCDEE's regulatory system. Regulatory data is updated at yearly site visits. Therefore, at any given snapshot of data taken, sites' data will be between 1-364 days old. The enrollment data also include duplicate counts, since it is a total across all three shifts of possible enrollment (a single child could be enrolled in multiple shifts.)

Layered Early Childhood Pandemic Crisis Supports in 2020



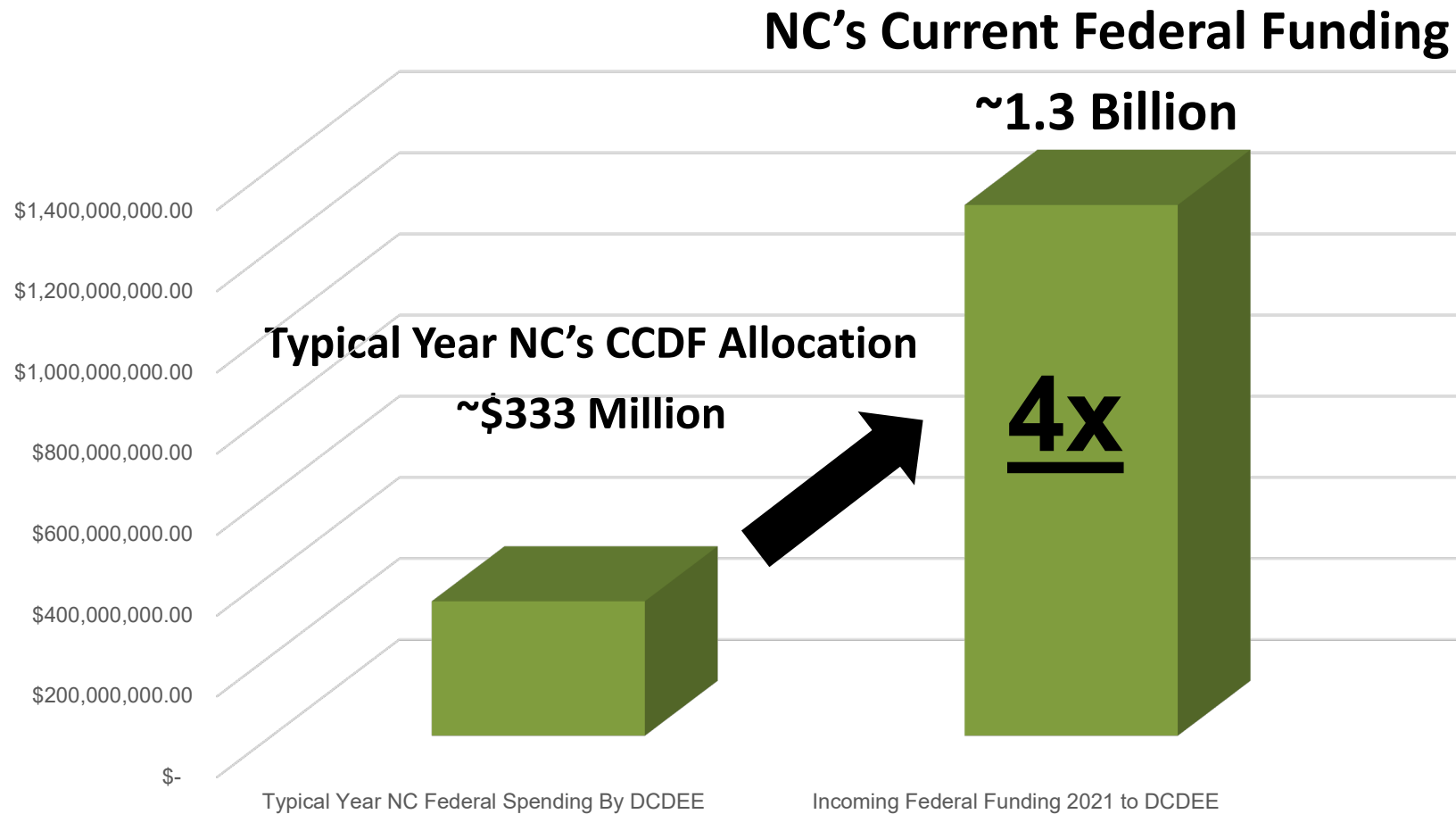
What's next for early childhood education? How do we move from **CRISIS** to **RECOVERY**?

Our priorities during the crisis were to protect children, families and providers – but now we shift to build beyond surviving to moving the system forward toward sustainability. We will continue to invest in:

1. Providers
2. Teachers and Staff
3. Children and Families



Scale of Incoming Federal COVID Relief Funding to Typical Child Care Development Fund



NC Stabilization Grants – Making an impact for 32,000+ teachers



“I was like, is this a scam?” Chambers said when EdNC visited in October. But once she saw the details, she broke down. “I just bawled,” she said.



Michelle Chambers, owner and director of A+ Child Care and Learning Center, is using the next 18 months to decide if she should close her doors after 27 years. Liz Bell/EducationNC

<https://www.ednc.org/2021-12-02-child-care-provider-future-financial-pandemic-recovery-funds-teachers-covid-nc/>

The Stabilization Grant process: \$805M via American Rescue Plan

CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

- Enter data in online portal
 - Initial application
 - Monthly reporting
 - Quarterly uploads of receipts

STABILIZATION GRANTS

1 Fixed Costs & Families Grants

2 Compensation Support Grants

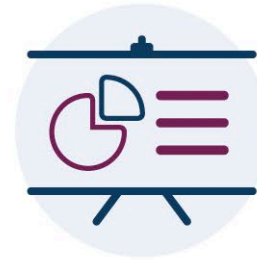
Fixed Costs & Families Grant Funds can be used for the following (and more!)



**Rent, Mortgage,
Utilities**



Payroll Benefits



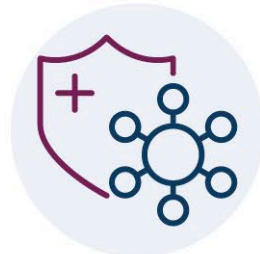
**Health & Safety
Training**



**Facility Maintenance
or Improvements**



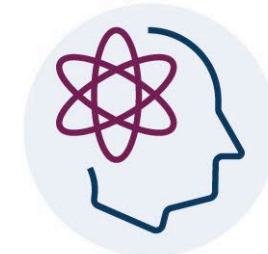
**PPE, Cleaning &
Sanitizing Supplies**



**Equipment Related to
COVID-19**



**Goods to Continue
Child Care**



**Mental Health Support
for Staff & Children**

Compensation Grant Options

Option 1. Provide Bonuses

- Programs will provide bonuses to their staff
- Must submit bonus plan to describe bonuses to teaching and non-teaching staff
- Recommend that bonus structure considers education and longevity

Option 2. Increase Base Pay and/or Provide or Increase Benefits

- Programs will increase base pay, must implement a salary scale based on education and longevity for teaching and non-teaching staff

AND/OR

- Provide or increase benefits; must submit a plan for providing benefits
- Higher grant awards than Option 1

Option 3. Decline to participate in Compensation Grants

How much are the quarterly grants for? Examples

Family Child Care Home

- Facility Type: Family Child Care Home
- Star Rating: 4 Stars
- Total Licensed Capacity: 8 children
 - = \$5,877
- Percent children enrolled who receive child care subsidy: 37.5%
 - = \$353
- Percent infants/toddlers served: 25%
 - = \$294
- Community Context (County's Social Vulnerability Index): 58.6%
 - = \$529

Estimated Fixed Costs and Families Grant Amount

\$7,053

Mid-Size Center

- Facility Type: Child Care Center
- Star Rating: 3 Stars
- Total Licensed Capacity: 65 children
 - = \$26,123
- Percent children enrolled who receive child care subsidy: 26.2%
 - = \$1,566
- Percent infants/toddlers served: 40%
 - = \$2,610
- Community Context (County's Social Vulnerability Index): 2%
 - = \$738

Estimated Fixed Costs and Families Grant Amount

\$31,062

Large Center

- Facility Type: Child Care Center
- Star Rating: 5 Stars
- Total Licensed Capacity: 151 children
 - = \$58,050
- Percent children enrolled who receive child care subsidy: 23.2%
 - = \$1,742
- Percent infants/toddlers served: 18.5%
 - = \$2,903
- Community Context (County's Social Vulnerability Index): 31.3%
 - = \$3,483

Estimated Fixed Costs and Families Grant Amount

\$66,177

Compensation Grant Amount Example

Bonuses

- 25 full time teaching and admin staff
- 3 part time teaching and admin staff
- 3 full time non-teaching staff
- 2 part time non-teaching staff

1 Star Estimated Base Pay and Benefits Grant

\$18,000/quarter

4 Star Estimated Base Pay and Benefits Grant

\$18,000/quarter

Base Pay/Benefits

- 25 full time teaching and admin staff
- 3 part time teaching and admin staff
- 3 full time non-teaching staff
- 2 part time non-teaching staff

1 Star Estimated Base Pay and Benefits Grant

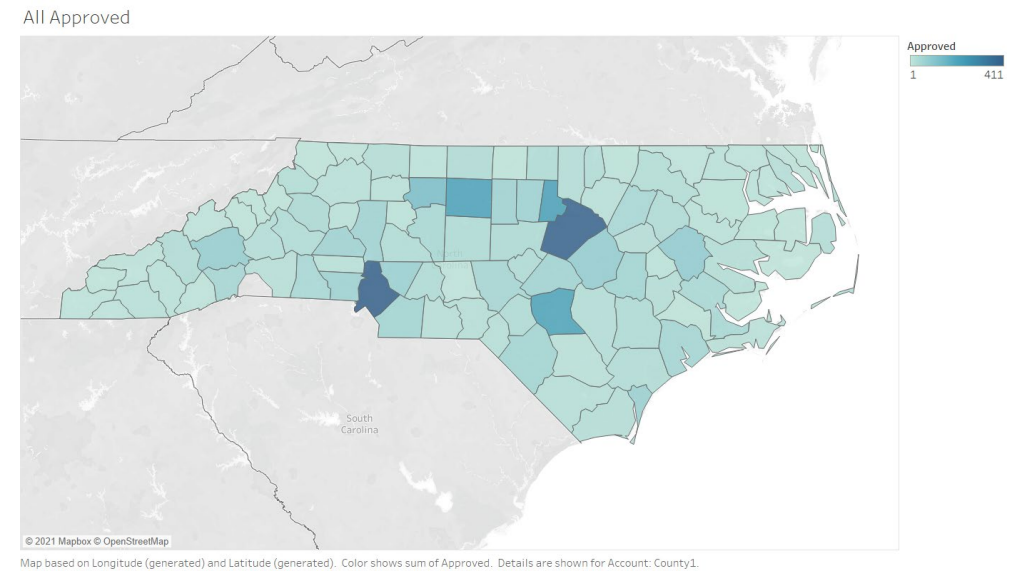
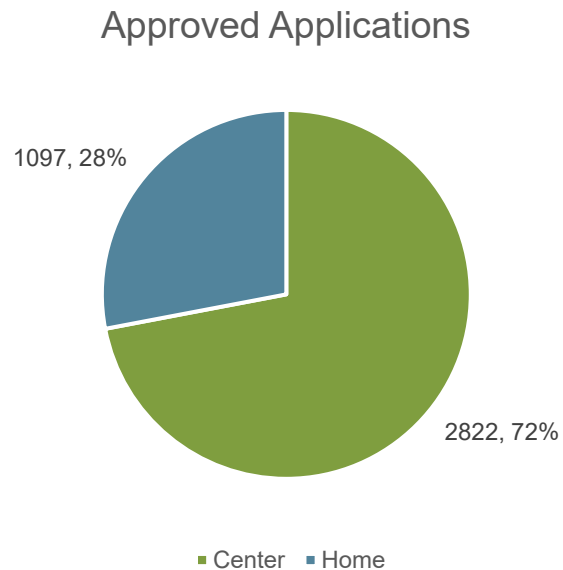
\$19,825/quarter

4 Star Estimated Base Pay and Benefits Grant

\$48,963/quarter

How many grants have we given out so far? (As of 12/1)

- **Approved Applications: 3,919**
 - Child Care Centers: 2,822
 - Family Child Care Homes: 1,097
- **ALL NC counties with eligible facilities – 99 counties – have at least one facility that has applied for and been approved for a grant**
 - Note: Polk County has no grant-eligible facilities (all are public)



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt, is pointing his right index finger towards the camera. He has a bright, happy smile. The background is a dark, textured wooden wall. The text is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

NOW is the time
to advocate for more supports
for early childhood education

What's Next? Build Back Better

CHILD CARE AND PREKINDERGARTEN IN THE BUILD BACK BETTER ACT: A GUIDE FOR POLICYMAKERS



What would the child care provisions of the Build Back Better Act mean for families?

Broadly speaking, the intent of the proposal is to ensure that child care is accessible, affordable, and high-quality. Using a sliding fee scale and family copayments based on income, the proposal would dramatically expand the availability of child care subsidies, especially among middle-class families.

What would the universal Pre-K provisions of the Build Back Better Act mean for families?

In addition to the child care supports described above, the Build Back Better Act proposes to create – over a period of years - a universal prekindergarten entitlement for all 3- and 4-year-old children.

<https://hunt-institute.org/resources/2021/11/build-back-better-guide-for-policymakers-early-childhood-education/>



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Child Development
and Early Education

Visit ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov

Rebecca Feinglos Planchard, MPP

rebecca.planchard@dhhs.nc.gov

rebecca.feinglos@gmail.com



@rfplanchard

