

# UNLOCKING WORK IN EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO: IMPACTS OF IMPROVING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

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Finding available and affordable child care is a pressing concern for many Colorado families.

## STATEWIDE IMPACTS

- Many parents choose to care for their children full time, however 1/5th of all mothers with kids under 6, return to the workforce after their child reaches school age.
- 17% of mothers with younger children who are out of the labor force but would prefer to be working cite child care as the main issue, impacting the state economy by \$3.8 billion.
- There are 2 licensed child care slots for every 3 children under 6 whose parents are in the labor force, creating a deficit of 88,500 slots.

Rather than creating additional government and public funding streams, it is important to educate leaders on 25 recent state bills, including many for local governments to improve the financial sustainability of the child care business model. As an example, just 3 of the initially projected 56 child care centers have taken advantage of the enhanced property tax exemption granted under HB22-1006. Local government can now declare child care a local need and enhance existing targeted state tax credits.

Key Child Care Stats in El Paso County						
	Sidelined Mothers - Moms likely to Return to the Labor Force After Their Child Reaches 7 Years Old		Parents Living with Children Under 6 as Share of County Labor Force	Childcare Slots*	Child Care Slot Deficit/Surplus	Child Care Centers Granted Exemptions Under HB22-1006
	All Sidelined Mothers	Sidelined Mothers Due to Child Care				
State	60,046	10,200	19.23%	162,421	-88,464	81
El Paso County	8,647	1,301	24.9%	17,531	-14,541	19

\*Certain forms of childcare such as Neighborhood Youth Organizations are not counted due to irregular and infrequent hours.

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