



**Washington Parish has a critical need for affordable and reliable early care and education (ECE) seats.**

- There are 2,763 children birth to 5 years old in Washington Parish
- Less than 1 in 5 infants and toddlers in Washington Parish have access to quality early care and education.
- In Washington Parish, the vast majority of children begin kindergarten behind their peers.
- Placing infants and toddlers in high-quality care supports their long-term development, health, and kindergarten readiness.
- Washington RSN is leveraging federal, state, and local funding to expand access to publicly funded ECE seats to ensure at-risk children have access to early learning opportunities.
- Washington RSN is establishing sustainable funding sources to improve ECE supply and access long term.
  - Local fundraising efforts have double the impact!
  - All funds raised to increase seats in Washington Parish are DOUBLED by the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.
- In Washington Parish, 1,902 children under 5 have both parents – or their single parent – in the workforce. Rising costs of early childhood education put a strain on working parents who struggle to find and afford quality care for their child.
- More than 62% of families in Washington Parish cannot afford the basics.
  - These families are Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed (ALICE), according to the United Way of Southeast Louisiana.
  - When parents cannot afford early childhood care, they are unable to reliably show up to work.

**Access to ECE supports working parents and helps to prevent employment disruptions for local businesses.**

- Childcare breakdowns result in a \$1.3 billion loss annually for Louisiana’s economy.
- Investing in quality early care and education yields a 13% return on every \$1 invested.

- This return is even greater when local funds are raised for ECE seats in Washington Parish because every dollar donated is doubled by the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.
- Every \$1 invested in quality early care and education results in a \$1.78 return to the local economy in purchased goods and services.
  - The economic benefits of investing early to provide greater outcomes for more children is clear.
  - The long-term results of these early investments include greater productivity and reduced social spending for society.