

# CHILD CARE

*Keeps Alabama  
Working*



*The early care and education industry is  
critical to the vitality of Alabama's economy*

- The early care and education (ECE) industry has a **\$1.03 billion impact** on our state's economy and is responsible for an average of **24,717 full time equivalent jobs**.
- The ECE industry adds to the overall economic efficiency of our state by **enabling parents to participate in the workforce or attend higher education**.
- Comprehensive quality early care and education lays the groundwork for Alabama's future workforce, by preparing upcoming generations for school and work success. Quality ECE also **attracts new business and industry to our state**.
- To benefit every Alabama resident, the early care and education industry stakeholders – working families, businesses, government and the child care industry – must work and plan together to maintain a high quality system of ECE that is **necessary for working families and lays the foundation for school readiness that is necessary to grow a capable, productive future workforce**.

*"In terms of its social weight, the unique feature of the ECE industry is its potential for creating an enormous and long-lasting social economic benefit for society, at large. A well-funded and well-staffed comprehensive early childhood education program can produce significant positive externalities."*

M. Keivan Deravi, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, AUM



### History of Child Care in Alabama:



Though child care programs existed earlier, during World War II the need for care for children became more acute as women were recruited to work

in factories producing war equipment. In Mobile alone, 14 centers were operated, caring for over 2,200 children between the ages of 2 and 12 years so their mothers could support the war effort in local factories. Today, with 65% of Alabama children under six having all parents in the workforce, a reliable system of quality ECE programs is necessary to reach full employment in our state.

### Description of the Early Care and Education Industry:

**CHILD CARE CENTERS** – programs licensed and monitored by state DHR; centers exempt from state licensing such as faith-based programs and those regulated by other state and federal agencies

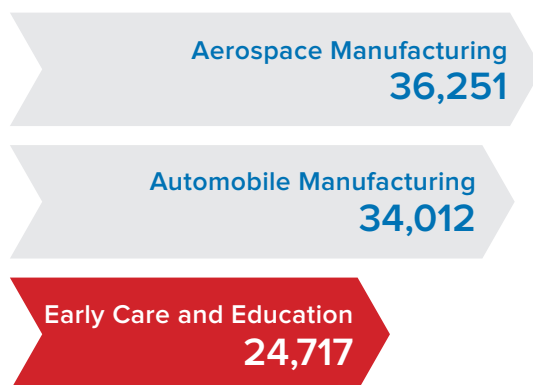
**FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES** and **FAMILY CHILD CARE GROUP HOMES**

**STATE PRE-K** – State funded program for 4-year olds; school-based Pre-K

**HEAD START** – Direct federal to local program for preschoolers (income based)

### Alabama Employment by Sector, Comparison to ECE Industry:

According to the Alabama Department of Commerce, key target industries include aerospace and automobile manufacturing. By comparison, the ECE industry is also a large employment industry, providing jobs to over 24,000 Alabamians. In turn, over 200,000 parents can go to work each day in every job sector in Alabama.



Information from Alabama Department of Commerce found at [www.madeinalabama.com](http://www.madeinalabama.com)

### — BY THE NUMBERS —

**\$1.03**  
billion

impact on  
Alabama's economy

**24,717**

full time equivalent  
jobs provided

**65%**

of children under the age  
of six have **all available**  
parents in the workforce

### Recommendations:

- “Don’t Be In The Dark About Child Care” – visit [www.alabamachildcarefacts.org](http://www.alabamachildcarefacts.org) to learn about child care options in Alabama and what young children and families need.
- **Strengthen public investment in quality licensed early care and education.** Investments in early education reap long-term benefits and build the future workforce. Availability of quality licensed early care and education also attracts new business to our state.
- **Support efforts to expand First Class Pre-K to more children in our state.** Research demonstrates that every \$1 invested in high-quality Pre-K saves taxpayers up to \$7. Pre-K results in savings by reducing the need for remedial and special education, welfare, and criminal justice services, according to a well-documented body of economic and program research.
- **Establish and support the Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) across the state.** QRIS provides early care and education facilities with program, professional development and financial supports. The system also provides parents with a framework to evaluate potential ECE facilities to make the best decision for their family.
- **Ensure that all early care and education programs are inspected** for basic health and safety standards.