



# The Tipping Point

## 2023 Central Ohio Child Care Provider Survey

### Executive Summary

The 2023 Central Ohio Child Care Provider Survey findings confirm one thing the field itself has understood for a long time: every part of the child care system is connected. However interconnected, it is not in balance.

The 2023 survey time frame includes the crucial intervention by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) of federally funded Child Care Stabilization Grants administered by the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association. This report covers a period of Congressional inaction on child care as a public good, though proposals were considered and continue to be offered. Federal relief funding has ended. In Ohio, prudent and forward-thinking investments by state and local government means the flow of ARPA funding will continue into 2024, but everywhere the end of this relief funding is in sight.

#### Key Takeaways

- ✓ Staffing challenges: Caregivers can not afford to enter or stay in the field while 70% of central Ohio's child care centers have open positions or a desire to hire staff. Family child care providers also express a strong desire to hire additional staff.
- ✓ Enrollment challenges: If central Ohio child care programs were able to operate at full licensed capacity, an estimated 9,925 more children could be enrolled.
- ✓ Tuition Increases: For the second consecutive year, 56% of providers have raised tuition fees, with 66% planning further increases in the next six months.
- ✓ More than half of providers report that their monthly revenue does not cover expenses
- ✓ Child Care Stabilization Grants worked, and more is needed.

#### The 2023 report includes:

- Analysis connecting children, caregivers, compensation and capacity
- Resources including a summary data by county and by setting type (child care center and family child care home), and a primer on child care program budgets
- Three new spotlights, diving deeper into crucial issues:
  - Stabilization Grants Worked
  - Early Childhood Educator Wellness
  - Families and Work

#### It is time for action for our communities.

Child care is one part of a care economy that has failed to work for families, providers, communities and children. Action for Children urges federal, state, and local government, as well as corporate and philanthropic leaders to take a comprehensive approach to solving the child care crisis, rooted in the needs of the child care professionals and families closest to the challenges.