



Act 76 Monitoring: Implementation and Impact

Presentation to Senate Committee on Appropriations
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January 22, 2026

Building Bright Futures Serves as Vermont's Early Childhood Advisory Council

Building Bright Futures' role is to:

- Advise Vermont's Governor, Administration, and Legislature
- Convene early childhood partners through the Building Bright Futures Network
- Empower and elevate the voices of families and early childhood professionals
- Monitor the early childhood system through high-quality, up-to-date data
 - Named in Act 76 as the entity responsible for monitoring implementation and impact related to child care
- Respond to needs by elevating emerging priorities and issuing policy recommendations



Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council

January 2026



Public Members

*Ilisa Stalberg, Vermont Department of Health, MCH
*Renee Kelly, Head Start Collaboration Office
Janet McLaughlin, DCF Child Development Division
Jessica Vintinner, Agency of Commerce and Community Development
Laurel Omland, Department of Mental Health
Susan Colburn, Agency of Human Services, Secretary's Office
Erin Davis, Agency of Education

Public Non-Voting Members

Monica Hutt, Chief Prevention Officer, Gov's Office
Miranda Gray, Deputy Commissioner, Economic Services
Lindsay Barron, Director of Policy & Planning, Family Services

Legislative Members

Rep. Rey Garofano, Vermont House of Representatives
Sen. Martine Gulick, Vermont Senate

At-Large Members

* Flor Diaz Smith, Vermont School Boards Association
* Rebecca Webb, Barre Unified Union School District
Laura Young, Parent Representative
Debra Hartwick, Retired Pediatrician
Amber Hewston, Parent Representative
Carol Lang-Godin, Parent Child Center Network
Sharon Harrington, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
Erica McLaughlin, Vermont Principals' Association
Kiona Baez Heath, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
*Christy Swenson, Capstone Community Action/Head Start
Xusana Davis, Office of Racial Equity
Danielle Lindley Mitchell, Washington County Mental Health Services
Eddie Gale, A. D. Henderson Foundation
Dimitri Garder, Business Leader



**Executive Board denoted with an asterisk*

About Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan



- Vermont's statewide strategic framework for early childhood through 2030
- A comprehensive, cross-sector “plan of plans” to align policy, investments, and implementation
- Developed through extensive community and family engagement and informed by data and system analysis
- Designed to guide long-term policy, budget, and system planning



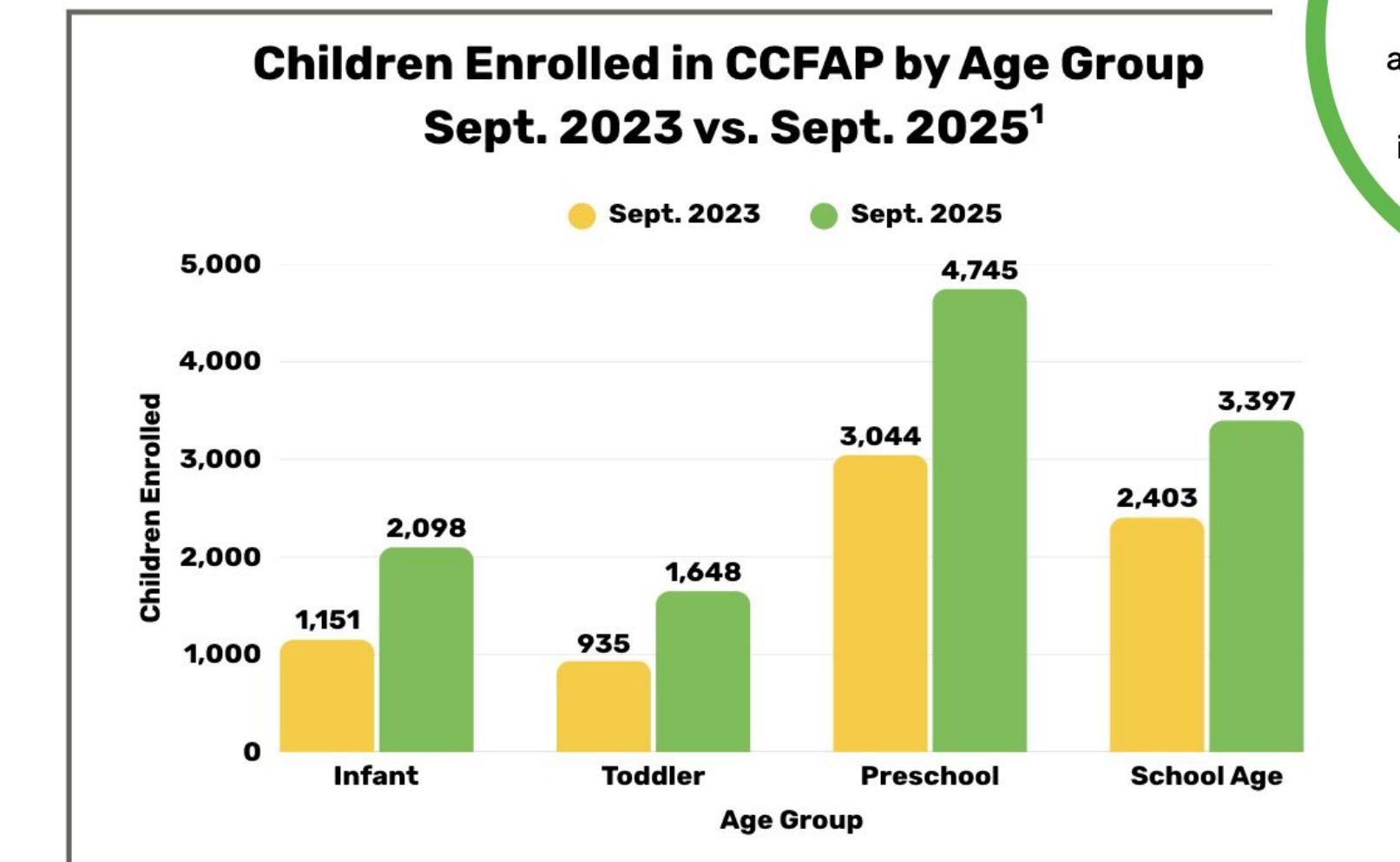
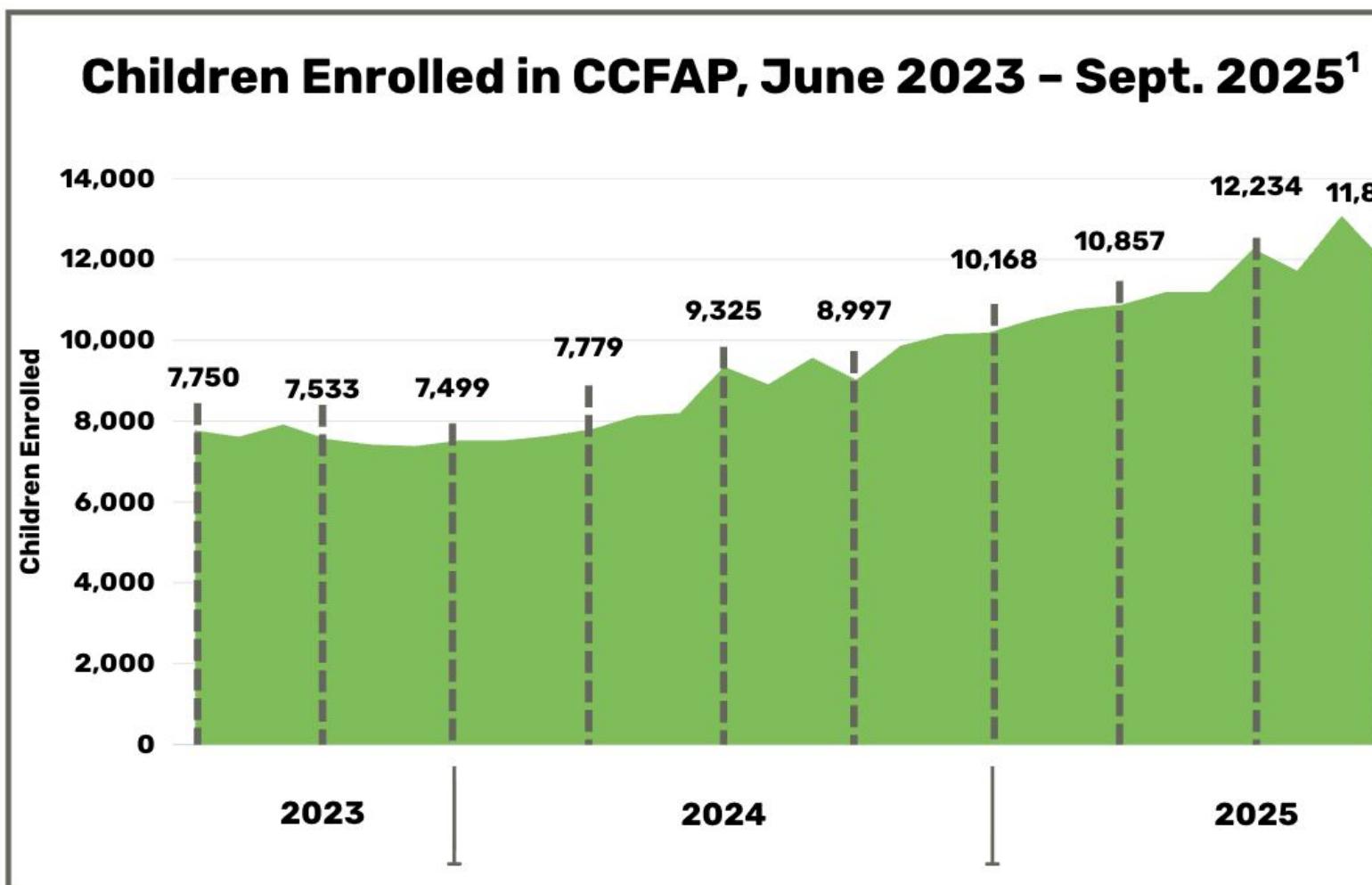
Act 76: Key Progress in 2025



- Significant expansion in access and affordability
- Stronger financial footing for many programs
- Major investments in system capacity and system infrastructure
- A financing system that is functioning as intended
- Growing culture of learning and continuous improvement

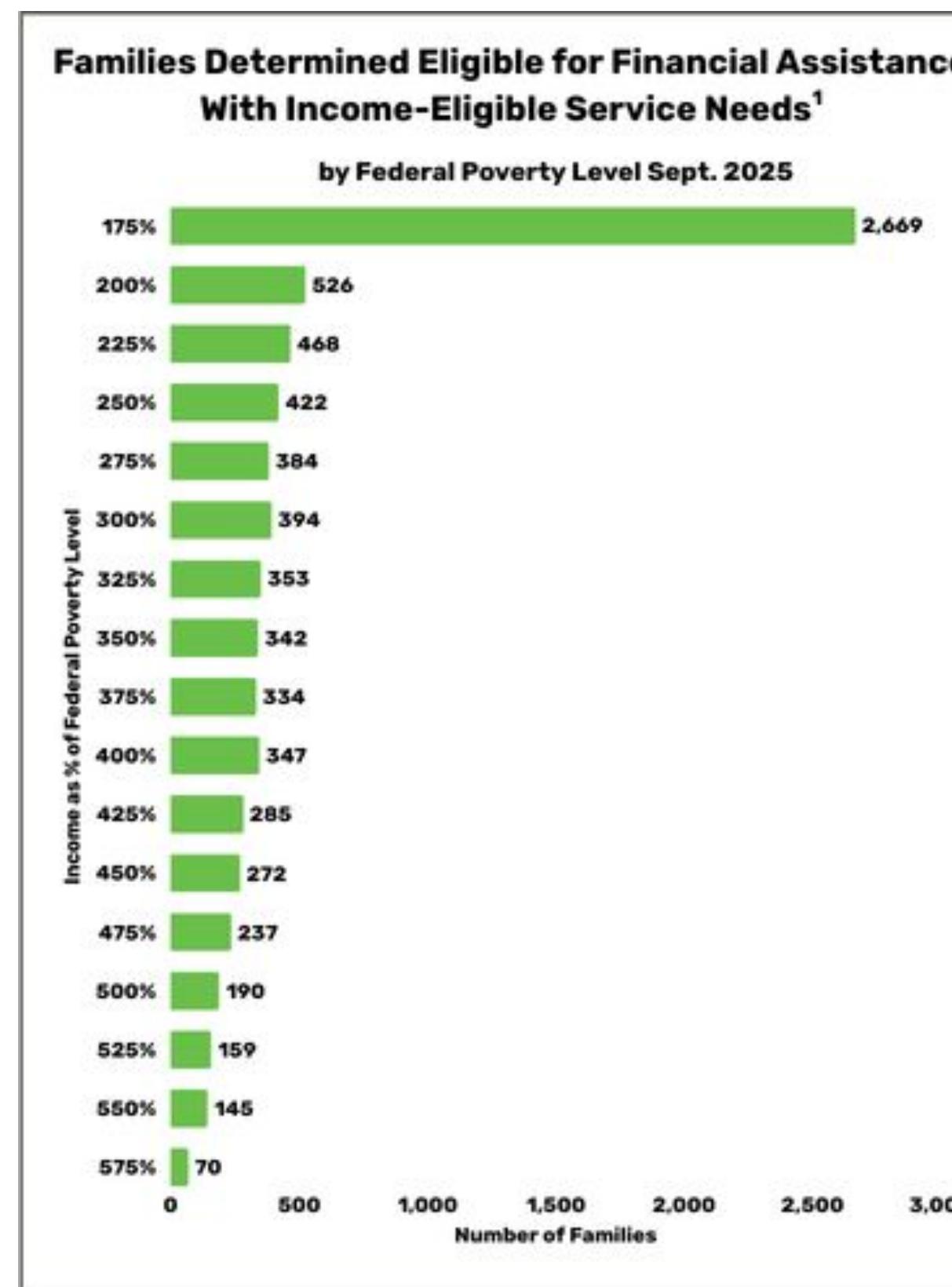


Child Care Affordability



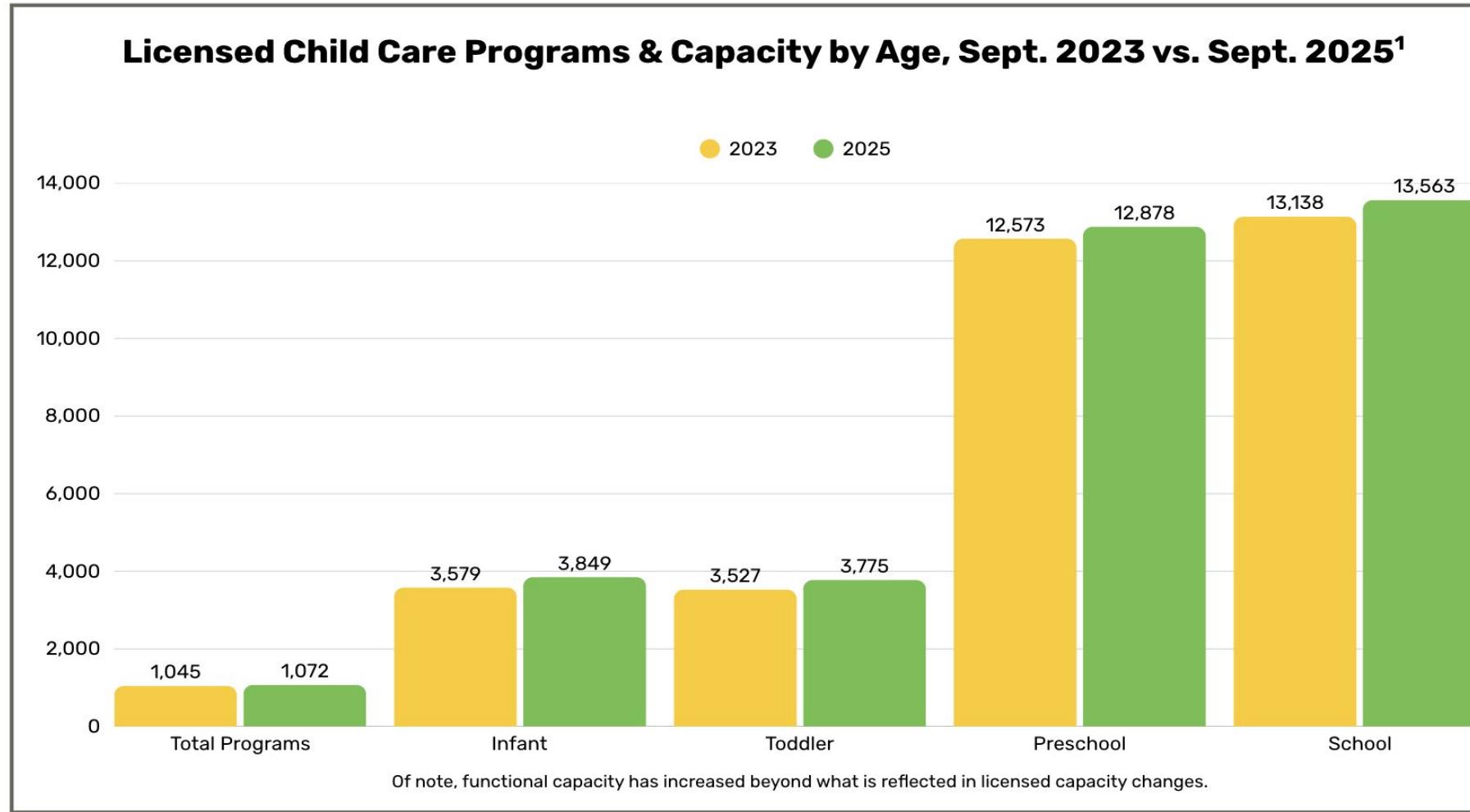
**\$2,275 per month
Child care cost
savings²**
For a family of two
adults and two children
with a household
income at 275% of the
FPL

Child Care Affordability (Cont.)

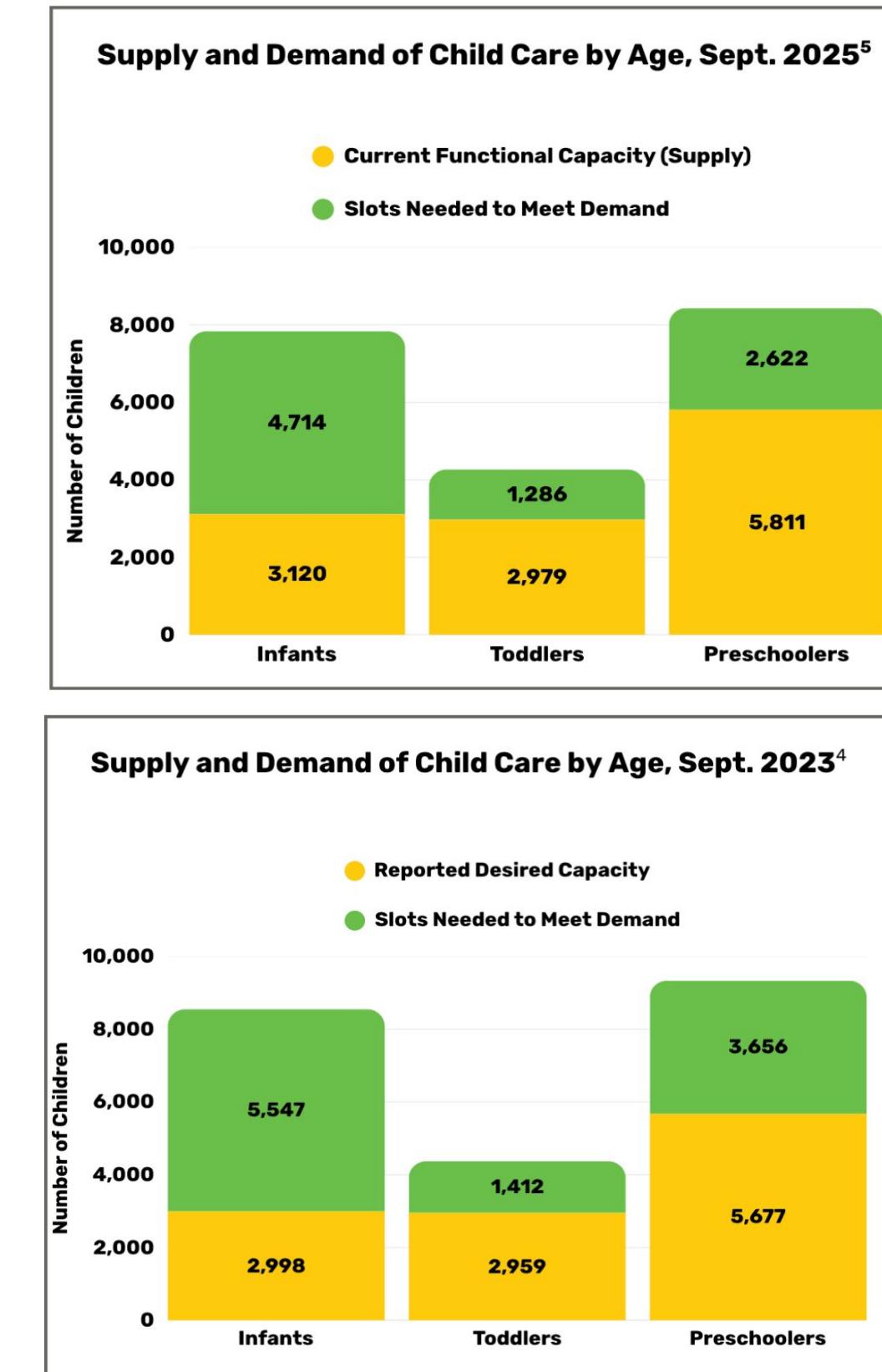


An additional 2,800 working families were determined eligible in 2025 compared to 2023, increasing the percent of working families from 53.7% to 65% of all families.

Child Care Programs & Capacity



Staffing shortages were described as the single biggest challenge across all listening sessions. Long hiring and onboarding processes compound these challenges.



+ 5.2%
individuals working in
regulated child care
settings⁶

Between December
2022 and 2024

+ 22.4%
individuals holding
verified associate,
bachelor's, master's,
or doctoral degrees⁶

Between December
2022 and 2024

Child Care Contribution Revenue & Fiscal Status

Vermont Child Care Contribution Payroll Tax Revenue by Quarter³					
	FY2026 Q2 amount reflects CCC revenue collected through 11/30/2025				
	Q1 (Jul-Sep)	Q2 (Oct-Dec)	Q3 (Jan-Mar)	Q4 (Apr-Jun)	Total
FY 2025	\$74,392	\$17,912,842	\$21,003,974	\$20,408,189	\$59,399,397
FY 2026	\$20,121,397	\$19,964,397	Data Not Yet Available	Data Not Yet Available	\$40,226,771
Total					\$99,626,168

The Child Care Contribution consists of a .44% payroll tax, .11% of which may be paid by the employee and began in July 2024.

- CCC revenue is stabilizing
- CDD reported projections that approx 99% of the roughly \$172 million budgeted for CCFAP is expected to be expended

What Still Limits Our Child Care System's Potential?

- Workforce shortages and sustainability challenges
- Administrative complexity
- Uneven supply and access



Advisement: 2026 Policy Recommendations

- The 2026 Policy Recommendations include the following priorities:
 - Ensure Child and Family Food Security Needs Are Met
 - Strengthen Housing Stability for Vermont Families
 - Ensure Health and Mental Health Care Access
 - Sustain Access to Mental Health Consultation and Support
 - Invest in Trauma-Informed and Child-Centered Supervised Visitation for Families Statewide
 - Streamline Fingerprinting-Supported Background Checks
 - Advance Prekindergarten Education in Vermont's Education Transformation
 - **Protect Child Care Investments**
 - Advance Early Childhood Educator Licensure
 - Protect Vermonters' Data and Privacy
 - Strengthen Children's Integrated Services (CIS)
 - Listen to Families and Use Qualitative Data in Times of Change
 - And many more: see the [handout on Policy Recommendations](#)



**Check out Vermont's Early
Childhood Data and Policy Center
for more information, tools, and
data**



Don't forget the stories!

When we combine stories and numbers, or qualitative and quantitative data, we create stronger, fairer policies, and opportunities for equitable growth and development.

