



Act 76 Monitoring and Early Childhood Educator Licensure (S. 206)

Presentation to Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Dr. Morgan Crossman, Executive Director, and Anna Brouillette, Policy and Program Director

January 28, 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



About Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan

Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2030

Every Vermont child thrives in safe, healthy, and nurturing environments, supported by strong families, a valued workforce, and a coordinated system that puts children at the center.



GOALS

1

All Children and Families Have Their Basic Needs Met



Economic Security
Food Security
Housing
Transportation

2

All Children Are Raised in Safe, Healthy, and Healing Environments



Mental & Physical Health Care
Safe & Vibrant Communities

3

All Children and Families Have Access to High-Quality Opportunities That Promote Child Development and Well-Being



Inclusion & Services
Access & Affordability
Child-Centered Decision-Making

4

All Children Are Supported by a Well-Prepared, Well-Supported Early Childhood Workforce



Preparation
Compensation
Recruitment & Retention

5

Our System Centers Children and Families and Is Coordinated, Well-Resourced, and Data-Driven



Family-Centered, Data-Driven Decisions
Coordinated Support
Aligned Leadership & Resources

- 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

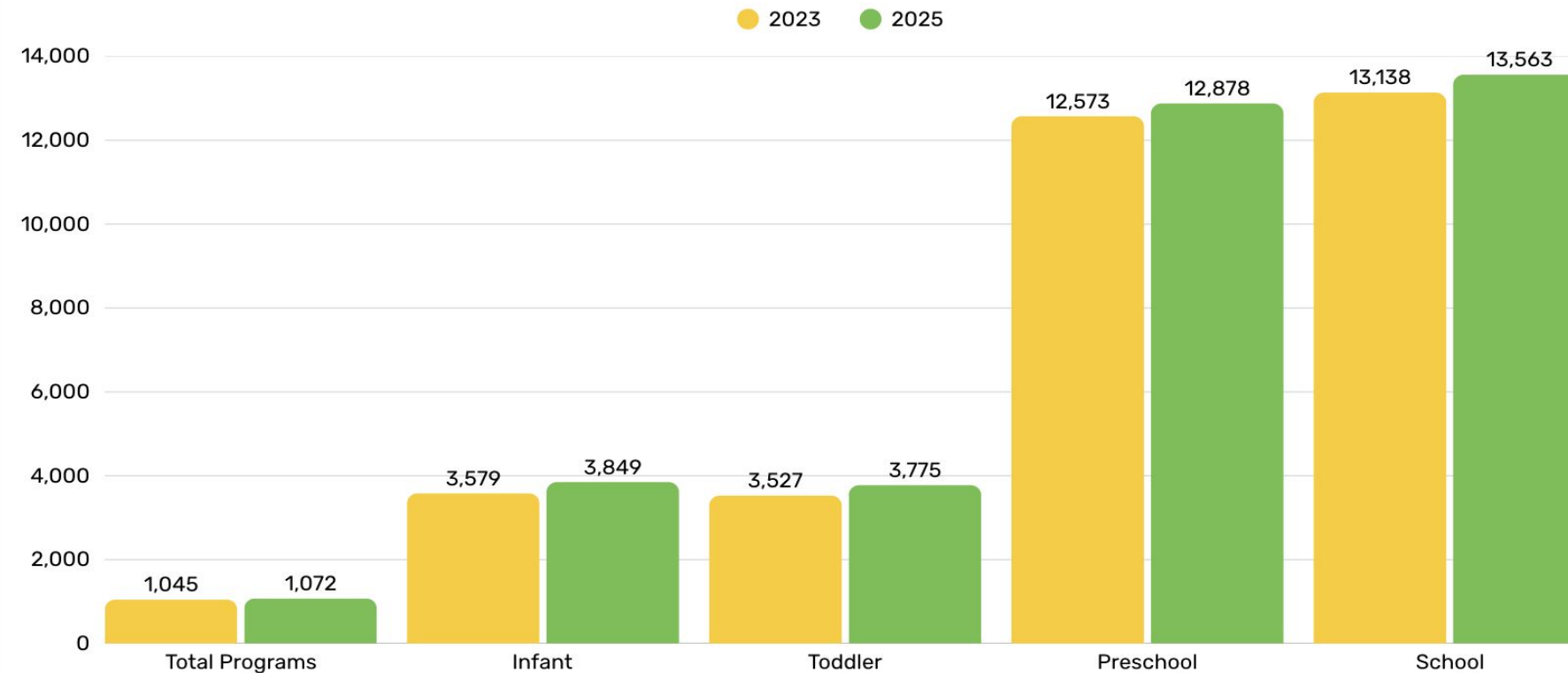


- Significant expansion in access and affordability
- Stronger financial footing for many programs
- Major investments in system capacity and system infrastructure
- A financing system that is functioning as intended
- Growing culture of learning and continuous improvement



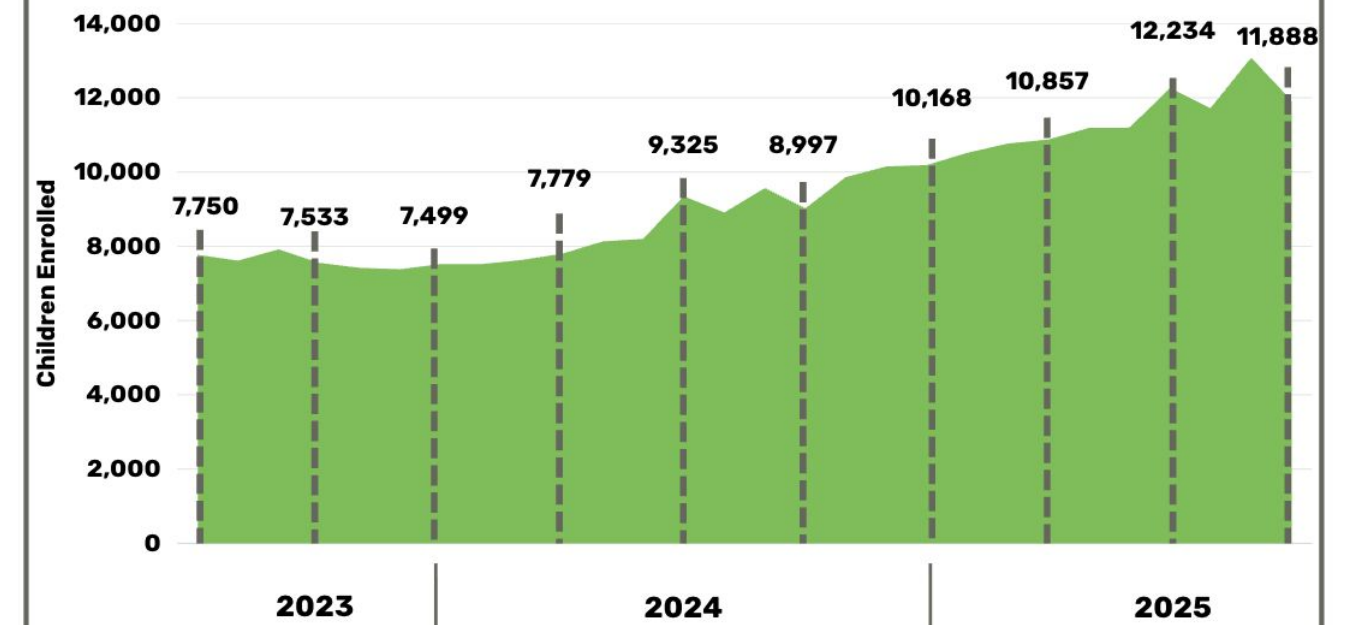
Child Care Access

Licensed Child Care Programs & Capacity by Age, Sept. 2023 vs. Sept. 2025¹

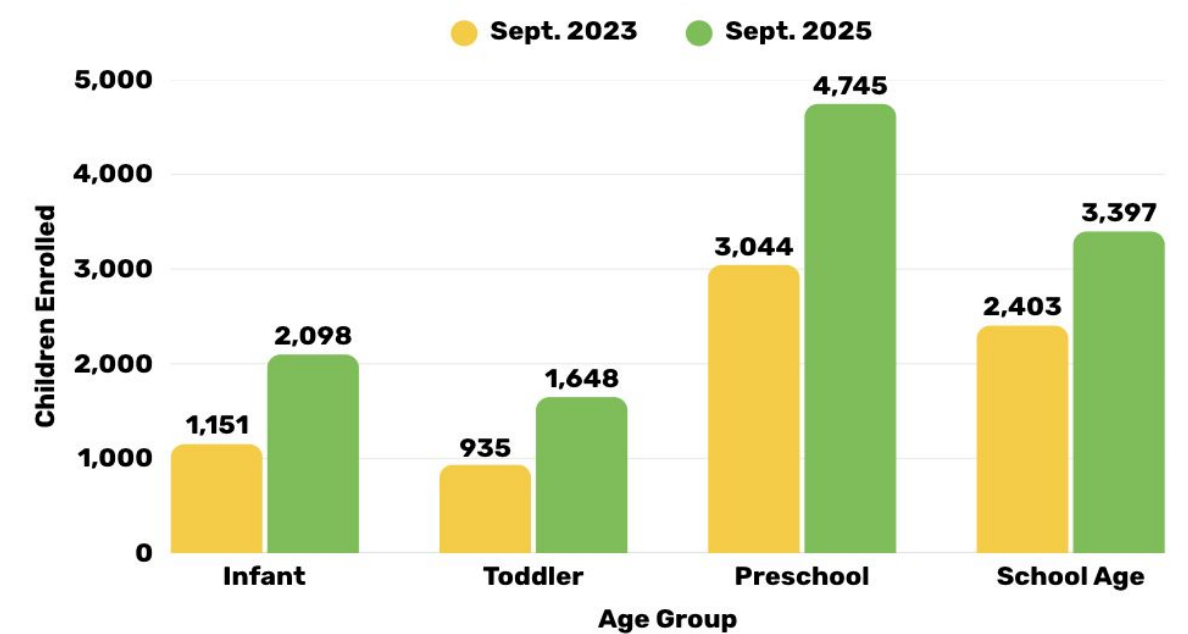


Of note, functional capacity has increased beyond what is reflected in licensed capacity changes.

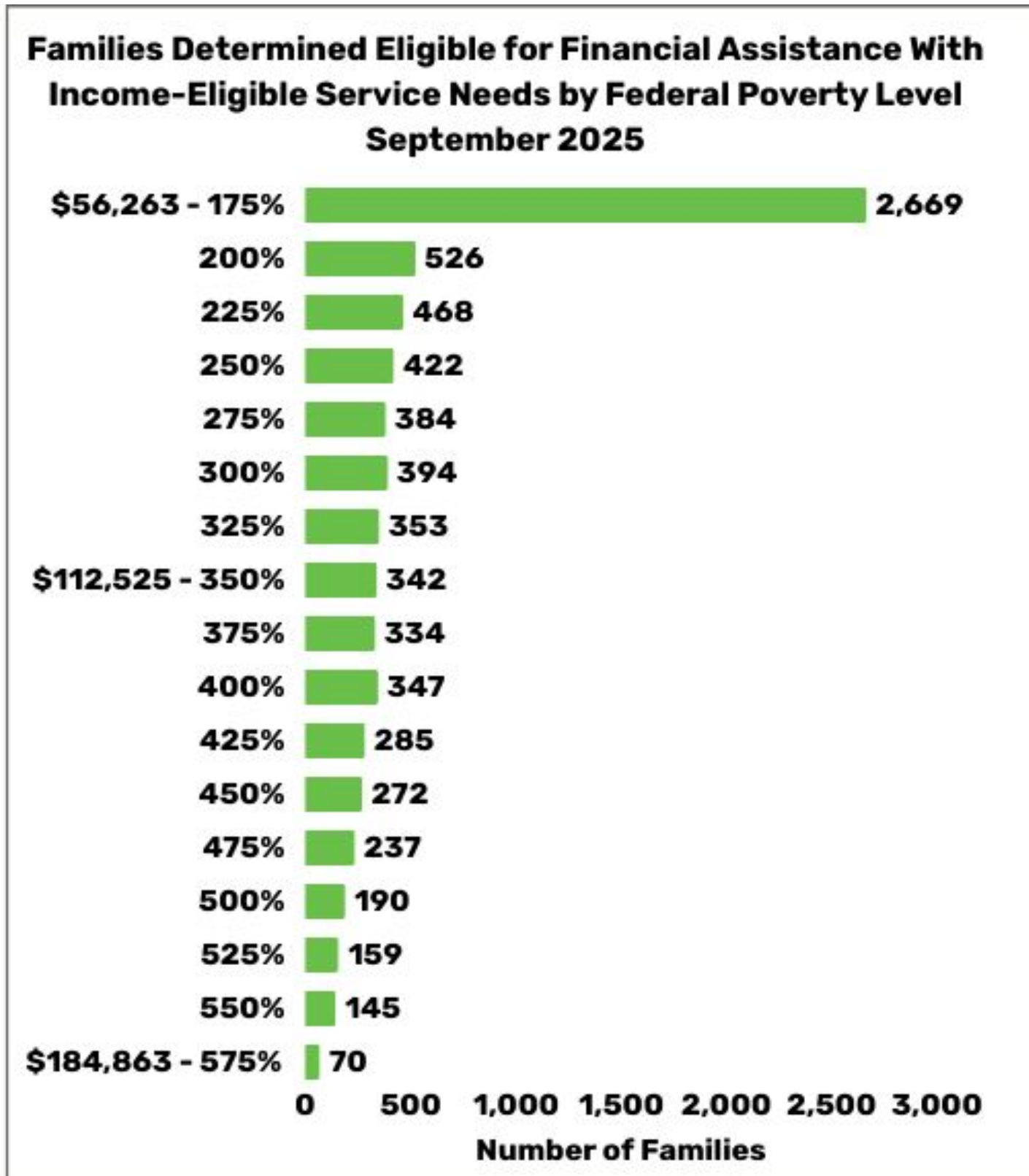
Children Enrolled in CCFAP, June 2023 – Sept. 2025¹



**Children Enrolled in CCFAP by Age Group
Sept. 2023 vs. Sept. 2025¹**



Child Care Affordability



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.

**\$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

What Still Limits Our Child Care System's Potential?

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

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



Early Childhood Educator Licensure and S. 206

Alignment with 2026 Policy Recommendation

Implement a licensure system for Vermont's early childhood educators to strengthen accountability through clear quality benchmarks, consistent with recommendations from the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). Recognize and address concerns from the field and families by ensuring the transition is gradual, well-supported, and aligned across agencies, and that potential confusion with other licensing systems is minimized. Monitor workforce data to assess impacts, guide implementation, and ensure the pipeline of new early educators remains strong and sustainable. Identify strategies to help early education programs cover licensure costs for their staff to ensure accessibility and equity.

Alignment with Vermont's Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2030

Ensure children are educated and care for in high-quality environments and by well-prepared early childhood educators

Advance a well-prepared, well-qualified early childhood workforce by developing a clear system of professional expectations, career pathways, and accountability.



Early Childhood Educator Licensure (Cont.)



Strong alignment with the values and desire shared by the field:

- Safe and high quality settings
- Recognition
- Clear pathways and defined expectations
- Accountability

Implementation Considerations:

- Workforce and program stability
- Agency alignment, simplicity, and terminology
- Capacity and supports for transition
- Financing and timing

