

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Highlights More Than \$1 Billion Investment in Child Care Sector Since Start of Administration

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Governor Announces Additional \$17 Million in American Rescue Plan Funding to Upgrade and Expand Child Care Facilities

Murphy Administration Will Invest More Than \$140 Million Upgrading Child Care Infrastructure Statewide – Representing One of the Largest Investments of Any State in the Country

WEST ORANGE – Governor Phil Murphy today highlighted that his Administration has invested more than \$1 billion in expanding access to high-quality, affordable child care across New Jersey. The Governor also announced an additional \$17 million in funding for the [New Jersey Economic Development Authority \(NJEDA\)](https://www.njeda.gov/) [Child Care Facilities Improvement Program](https://www.njeda.gov/child-care-improvement-program/). With these new resources, New Jersey is dedicating more than \$140 million to improve child care infrastructure, representing one of the largest investments of any state in the country. The announcement was made at a child care center in West Orange that is expanding access to services thanks to funding from the NJEDA.

Building on the Murphy Administration's comprehensive strategy to support the state's vital child care sector, the NJEDA's Child Care Facilities Improvement Program provides grants to eligible child care providers for improvements that contribute to high quality early childhood learning environments. Through the program, which awards grants of up to \$200,000, the NJEDA has approved \$85 million in grants to over 400 child care centers that collectively enroll over 34,000 children and employ over 8,500 staff. With the inclusion of new funding announced today, the NJEDA now anticipates another 200 centers will receive awards, bringing the total to more than 600 child care centers across all 21 New Jersey counties. Nearly a third of all awards are to centers located in Opportunity Zones.

"Affordable, exceptional child care is a vital part of a stronger and fairer New Jersey economy, and the increased funding announced today will strengthen our state's economic security and provide equitable opportunities to working parents," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "Increased access to high-quality child care allows more parents to return to the workforce, bolstering New Jersey's economic growth and competitiveness. Thank you to the Biden-Harris Administration, who have provided record-high federal funding to expand access to child care, health care, and other critical resources for families in the Garden State."

"Access to high-quality child care is a critical piece of our Nurture NJ initiative, and the NJEDA's Child Care Facilities Improvement Program supports the equitable expansion of early childhood environments that will have lifelong impacts on future generations," **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "Improvements to facilities in our crucially important child care sector move us closer to our goal of becoming the best state in the nation to raise a family and unlock economic opportunities for working parents."

With the additional \$17 million in Federal American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund funding announced today, the NJEDA anticipates being able to approve all eligible child care centers that applied to Phase One of the program, which is no longer accepting new applications. A significant focus of the program is expanding or unlocking capacity within child care centers, especially for infants and toddlers. All construction work is delivered by New Jersey Department of Labor Registered Public Works Contractors and subject to prevailing wage and affirmative action monitoring.

The Child Care Facilities Improvement Program is already making an impact on child care centers across the state. The center visited today, [The Kids Palace II](https://www.kidspalacewestorange.com/) in West Orange, was approved for a grant award of \$189,300 to install sprinkler and alarm systems, allowing it to expand its state licensure to be able to accept infants. In addition, the Kids Palace II has received the NJEDA's Phase 4 Small Business Emergency grant, the NJEDA's Henri/Ida Business Assistance grant, and New Jersey Department of Human Services' Retention and Stabilization grants.

"Reliable and high-quality child care services are critical to the growth and success of New Jersey's economy; however, too often financially stretched child care providers forgo making necessary investments in facility upgrades," **said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan**. "The Child Care Facilities Improvement Program is an essential part of Governor Murphy's goal to support working families and to build a more inclusive economy."

"Governor Murphy's historic investment in childcare is smart economic policy. By making high-quality childcare more accessible, we empower more parents, particularly moms, to fully engage in the workforce, advance their careers, and pursue further education. At the same time, we provide our youngest children with essential early learning experiences that set them up for school and academic success. This all leads to a stronger, more resilient economy where every family has the opportunity to thrive," **said Congresswoman LaMonica McIver**.

"Governor Murphy's visit highlights the significance of the support we have received through this grant, which has been so important in helping us create a dedicated infant-toddler space in our center. We are deeply grateful for this opportunity to expand our services and positively impact more

families in our community,” **said Jorroys Reyes-Moton, Director and Owner of the Kids Palace II.**

“This investment continues the Murphy Administration’s commitment to support quality child care providers that are vital to New Jersey’s working families and the state economy. Today’s announcement complements \$3.6 million in Fiscal Year 2025 child care provider wage increases and Human Services’ Child Care Assistance Program subsidies for tens of thousands of New Jersey families,” **said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman.** “With a focus on improving learning environments, these NJEDA grants will empower child care providers to make necessary enhancements to their facilities, expand access to high-quality child care services, and strengthen our early childhood education system.”

“A thriving, modern and robust child care industry is a key component in supporting working families in New Jersey,” **said Department of Children and Families Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer.** “It gives young learners a foundation for academic success later in life, and gives parents options for world class child care and the peace of mind in knowing their child is being cared for in an updated and safe center. I applaud the Governor and my colleagues in NJ government for their ongoing investment in the stability and success of families throughout New Jersey – particularly those with young children.”

“We thank the State of New Jersey for its substantial investment in child care facilities, recognizing that these environments are more than buildings—they are the ‘third teacher,’ fostering curiosity, social connection, and lifelong learning,” **said Mary E. Coogan, President & CEO, Advocates for Children of New Jersey.** “As we continue to shape spaces that empower children, educators, and families, we look forward to future investments in the child care workforce—another critical component of the child care infrastructure that is essential to the health of our economy and the well-being of our communities.”

“SPAN appreciates the opportunity to celebrate New Jersey’s investments for and progress towards ensuring access to high-quality child care for families, allowing our children to thrive in enriching early learning environments,” **said Peg Kinsell, Policy Director, SPAN Parent Advocacy Network.**

“NJPTA salutes Governor Murphy for his commitment to improve New Jersey’s child care sector. Our organization, the nation’s oldest child advocacy association, prioritizes quality child care which leads to an optimal educational experience. It is essential to provide affordable childcare services in all of our communities. This effort underscores Governor Murphy’s dedication to ensuring the educational success of our NJ children, and we’re thrilled that the grant will have a progressive impact in the child care sector,” **said Sharon Roseboro, President, NJPTA.**

“AFT New Jersey applauds Gov. Murphy’s administration for its investment in early childhood education. The \$140 million will reap a 400 percent return, or \$560 million, according to the Advocates for Children of New Jersey’s research. AFTNJ members know that such a substantial financial investment in preschool has long-lasting effects on academic achievement for the students enrolled in quality programs,” **said AFT New Jersey President Jennifer S. Higgins.**

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