

montgomery moving forward

mobilizing leaders to solve our biggest problems together
nonprofits / business / philanthropy / government / education / community

Employers CAN Make a Difference in Early Care and Education

EMPLOYERS CAN...adopt best practices in their own workplace

- **Educate** yourself about early care and education (ECE)
- **Offer** the Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP), an employer-sponsored flexible spending account for child care, as an option in employee benefit packages
- **Connect** employees to ECE resources
 - **Provide** ECE resource and referral information and a list of quality child care options near the office to all employees
 - **Distribute** county and state fact sheets about tax and child care subsidy eligibility and assist with enrollment process
- **Create or participate** in a consortium of nearby companies that pool resources to support a quality off-site child care center
- **Establish** on-site child care or contract with a program to provide on-site child care for employees
- **Donate** learning materials to under-resourced local providers

REDUCE absenteeism	IMPROVE retention rates
ENHANCE recruitment strategies	
Implement policies that help working families balance responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flex schedules• Personal cell phone use• Private spaces for new mothers• Maternal and paternal leave• Telecommuting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job sharing• Consistent schedules• Backup child care options• Adoption support and leave

EMPLOYERS CAN...influence the creation of an excellent system of early care and education in Montgomery County

- **Endorse** MMF's Call to Action for Early Care and Education
- **Attend** MMF's March Symposium and contribute to new ideas for making ECE affordable and accessible for all county families.
- **Promote** early learning policies as part of the economic development agenda, highlighting the return on investment that early learning programs bring to communities
- **Encourage** ECE quality so that children are in programs that adequately prepare them for success in kindergarten
- **Include** ECE as an agenda item for trade meetings, task forces and other industry forums
- **Engage** in the ECE public discourse
 - **Call** into radio shows
 - **Write or post** op-eds and letters to newspapers, policy makers and blogs
 - **Host** expert speakers at board or company meetings and leadership retreat

Be an ECE Champion
Advocate for public and private investment in a cohesive ECE system
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage public officials on the topic• Use social media to follow and share information from industry experts• Develop fluency surrounding the link between ECE and its impact on the current workforce• Attend and participate in local and state discussions

Principles of a Business-Friendly Early Childcare and Education (ECE) Environment for Montgomery County, Maryland

This is a working document developed by the members of the MMF Business Advisory Group.

Vision

Montgomery County leverages its ECE environment to strengthen the local economy, build strong families, and improve the quality of the public education system.

Montgomery County, MD, will become a recognized model for having a robust, effective and efficient ECE environment; a place where employers seek to keep or move their businesses, where young families look to stay and move to, and where ECE providers can build and enjoy a viable and fulfilling career.

Principles

1. The strategic, economic, fiscal, and moral benefits of having an effective and efficient ECE environment are understood by the business community.
2. Montgomery County's ECE environment should be designed and leveraged to attract and retain the household-forming generation (i.e., parents ages 25-40) at all income levels and create a competitive advantage for the county.
3. Government partners with business in this realm by providing the tools (tax credits; efficient, effective use of county resources; comprehensive referral services) to help ease the burden of child care and education in Montgomery County and doesn't dictate or mandate what employers must do.
4. The regulatory environment for ECE providers supports the delivery of high-quality learning and care experiences by ensuring that regulatory oversight is relevant to issues of developmentally appropriate practice, health and safety for children, and supports a service delivery model for ECE providers that allows for sustainability, investment and growth.
5. The business-supported organizations provide educational and best-practice resources to employers.
6. Given the high cost of ECE, government-supported initiatives must support traditional middle- and low-income families that may be struggling to afford quality care.