If you're an employer in Montgomery County, Maryland, we invite you to visit the Early Care and Education Toolkit for Employers at

ECEtoolkit.org

WHO IS THE ECE TOOLKIT FOR? The Toolkit is a resource for employers in Montgomery County, MD. It was created by a team of local employers and child care experts. Our goal is to make it easy for organizations of all sizes to find answers and get inspired.

The Toolkit puts accurate ECE information at your fingertips, making it easier to take action and to realize some of the benefits associated with creating a supportive work environment for employees with young children – including positive impacts on recruitment, retention, and productivity.

WHAT IS ECE? ECE stands for Early Care and Education. This is how many child-development experts talk about child care from birth to age 5. They do so because the first five years are critical for brain development. ECE emphasizes the fact that young children are always learning. All early care is also early education.

"The Early Care and Education Toolkit is a strategic resource for employers. At our company, we have a lot of new parents. Our approach is all about giving our team support and flexibility to address their child care needs. We know this has a direct impact on productivity, engagement, and ensuring we can attract and retain the best workforce. It's also the right thing to do."

– Dusty Rood, President & CEO, Rodgers Consulting

Under **Resources for Working Parents**, you'll find answers and resources for parents with young children. Sharing accurate information about child care and early education with your employees is a simple and effective way to support ECE.
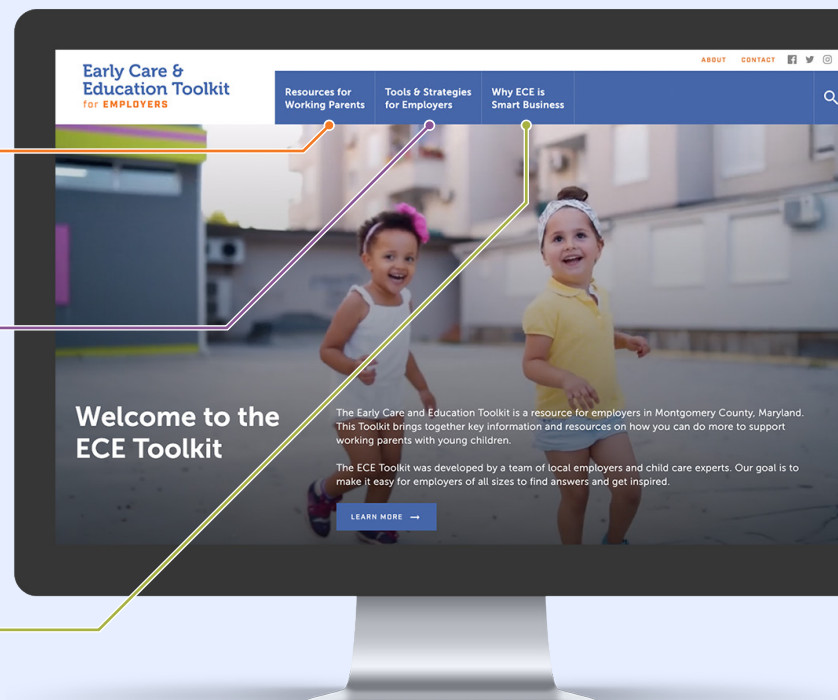
You can point employees directly to the Toolkit's parent-focused pages using this link: ECEtoolkit.org/resources/parents

As you explore **Tools & Strategies for Employers**, you'll find information and guidance to help you cultivate an ECE-friendly workplace – including easy ways to support your employees in their search for child care, an array of family-friendly benefits you might offer, and examples of what other employers are doing.

Click on **Why ECE is Smart Business** to learn more about the business case for ECE and how making ECE a higher priority can boost your competitive edge and support the local economy.

The ECE Toolkit is an easy-to-navigate website arranged in 3 sections.

Early Care & Education Toolkit for EMPLOYERS

Resources for Working Parents | Tools & Strategies for Employers | Why ECE is Smart Business

ABOUT   CONTACT

Welcome to the ECE Toolkit

The Early Care and Education Toolkit is a resource for employers in Montgomery County, Maryland. This Toolkit brings together key information and resources on how you can do more to support working parents with young children.

The ECE Toolkit was developed by a team of local employers and child care experts. Our goal is to make it easy for employers of all sizes to find answers and get inspired.

LEARN MORE →

LOOK INSIDE for a poster with ECE information for working parents with young children.

We invite you to display the poster in your workplace – and visit **ECEtoolkit.org** for more ideas, information, and inspiration!

Starting at birth, every waking moment is a precious opportunity to learn and grow.

High-quality child care is important because the years from age zero to 5 lay the foundation for your child's future success in school and in life.

Finding Child Care

LOCATE: Child Care is a free referral service with information on all regulated child care in Maryland.

Referral specialists help parents identify care based on personal preferences including program type, location, and cost. Call 877-261-0060 to speak with a LOCATE counselor about child care needs.

Servicio especial en español
Llame a LOCATE: Child Care al 800-999-0120
español@marylandfamilynetwork.org

Looking for child care in DC, Virginia, or another state? Search for your local Child Care Resource & Referral agency here: **ChildCareAware.org/ccrr-search-form**

Evaluating Quality

Be an advocate for your child and find the best child care program possible.

All early care is also early education. You want an environment that is going to nurture your child's potential, and this is important for infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers. Visit alone first, without children. This makes it easier to stay focused and pay attention to all areas of the program. Take notes, and come to each visit with a "wish list" and questions. Ask about the program's philosophy and beliefs about child development. Ask about teacher training and qualifications. Observe how teachers and staff interact with children.

For more on how to find high-quality child care, visit **ECEtoolkit.org/high-quality-child-care**

Paying for Child Care

Child care is expensive, and paying for care is a challenge for many families.

For guidance on how to budget for child care costs, visit **ChildCareAware.org/budgeting-child-care**

Learn more about tax credit and programs that may help you pay for child care at **ECEtoolkit.org/paying-for-child-care**

Young children are always learning!

High-quality child care is part of a bigger picture of childhood development. Here are a few great websites for parents, grandparents, extended family, and anyone who cares for young children:

**HealthyChildren.org
ZEROtoTHREE.org
PEPparent.org
Vroom.org**

For more information, visit the parent pages in the Early Care & Education Toolkit for Employers
ECEtoolkit.org/resources/parents

Early Care & Education Toolkit
for EMPLOYERS

Recruitment. Retention. Productivity.

These are 3 big reasons why Early Care and Education is a priority for employers.

In 2016, absence and turnover due to child care issues of working parents with children age 5 and under cost Maryland employers a staggering $2.41 billion.

*How much are issues related to ECE costing **your** business?*

There are many steps you can take to support working parents with young children and reduce the costs associated with child care. The ECE Toolkit for Employers provides guidance and resources to help you:

- **Connect** employees with tools and advice for locating high-quality child care
- **Share** information about programs and tax credits that can help employees pay for child care
- **Learn** more about family-friendly benefits for a better bottom line
- **Boost** your competitive edge

Do you employ or manage workers in Montgomery County? Do any of your employees have children under age 5? Are you trying to attract new hires who may have young children? **Then the ECE Toolkit is for you!**

Get started today at ECEtoolkit.org

5 WAYS TO TAKE ACTION IN 5 MINUTES

Jumpstart your ECE efforts with some easy things you can do today.

While some ECE-related endeavors can require a larger investment of time and resources, there are many things you can do quickly and easily — even in the next 5 minutes!

Look under **Tools & Strategies for Employers** for 5 Ways to Take Action in 5 Minutes

Supporting ECE is a powerful way to invest in the workforce of tomorrow.

The ECE Toolkit for Employers was created in response to the goals set forth in the *Call to Action for Early Care and Education* issued by Montgomery Moving Forward.

That Call to Action envisions a coordinated, comprehensive ECE system that will support two important goals:

1) Attracting and retaining a talented workforce of today by supporting families with young children.

2) Ensuring the skilled workforce of tomorrow by addressing the growing opportunity gap.

The first goal may be your primary motivation for investing in ECE. But when you support and promote access to affordable, high-quality child care, you also are helping to lay the groundwork for the next generation of workers. Making sure every child has access to high-quality child care from birth to age 5 will help ALL children in our community be prepared when they enter kindergarten and put them on the path for long-term success in school and in life.

The Role of Montgomery Moving Forward

ECE is a complicated issue that requires sustained cross-sector cooperation around a shared vision. This makes it an especially good fit for MMF's Collective Impact approach, which is a way of working that allows an entire community to work toward a shared vision. Going forward, MMF remains deeply committed to serving in a convening and facilitating role around improving Early Care and Education in Montgomery County. To learn more, visit **nonprofitmoco.org/mmf**.

Acknowledgments

montgomery moving forward

montgomery moving forward is an initiative of nonprofit montgomery

nonprofitmoco.org