

WHERE DO THE CHILDREN PLAY?

CONSIDERATIONS ON COST
OF CARE AND SCHOOL-AGE
KIDS

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CHILD CARE LANDSCAPE

- What happens after kids go to school?
- Where do kids go after the school day/year ends?
 - School aged child care programs generally serve kids aged 5-18
 - Programs include care after school, before school, during holiday breaks and throughout the summer
- Difficult to become licensed under current rules in Montana – need to create this pathway
 - Developmentally appropriate programs and rules needed

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM EXAMPLES:

Boys and Girls Clubs

YMCAs

School based programs (Helena School Aged Childcare Program)

21st Century Community Learning Centers (can be a combination)

Community based programs (Great Falls Youth Alliance, Bigfork ACES)

Subject specific (Code Girls United, Montana Media Arts Project)

Summer Camps- eg. science, religious, outdoor, sports

Museums (Science Works, Exploration Works)

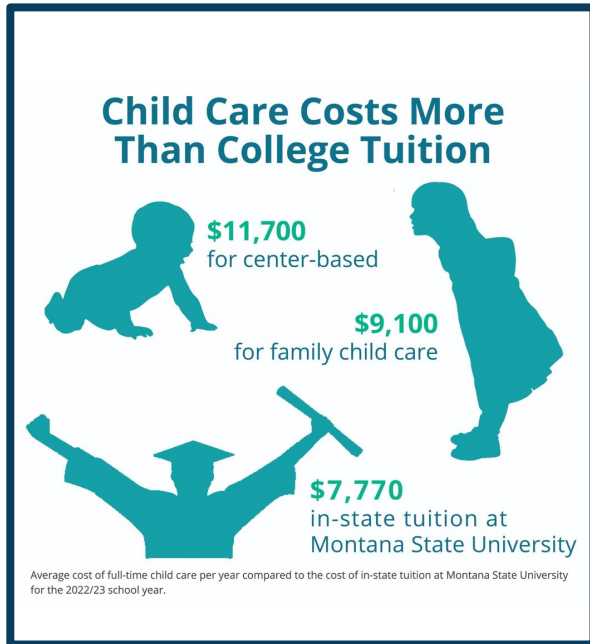
Libraries

Parks and Recreation

FUNDING FOR SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS

- No state funding for school age programs
- Current funding landscape:
 - Private contributions: parent fees, private grants, business contributions
 - Federal funding/programs
 - 21st Century Community Learning Center Grants
 - School Funding: General Funds / Title IV Funds / Perkins
 - Child Care and Development Fund (Best Beginnings Scholarships) must be licensed to access
 - OPI Snack & Summer Meal Supports
 - Municipal funding: recreation departments, libraries

CHILD CARE IS A BIG EXPENSE FOR FAMILIES



Family Child Care:

\$760 per month¹

Center-Based Care:

\$975 per month¹

School-Age
Afterschool:

\$186 per month²

School-Age
Summer:

\$690 per month²

For a family with 2-year old and 8 year old making the median income in Montana (\$85,400):³

\$9,100 per year for 2-year-old

\$3,700 per year for 8-year old

\$12,800 per year or 15% of the family income

WHY IS CHILD CARE SO EXPENSIVE?

- Children need well-trained staff to care for them and engage in age-appropriate play and activities.
- Child care workforce makes up 60-80% of total program expenses⁴
- Double sided challenge for programs:

Charge high enough
rates to pay
competitive wages
for your staff



But not so high that
parents cannot
afford it anymore



Reality:

Child care professionals
make low wages
(Median wage: \$12.84/hour⁵)

&

Parents can barely afford the
cost

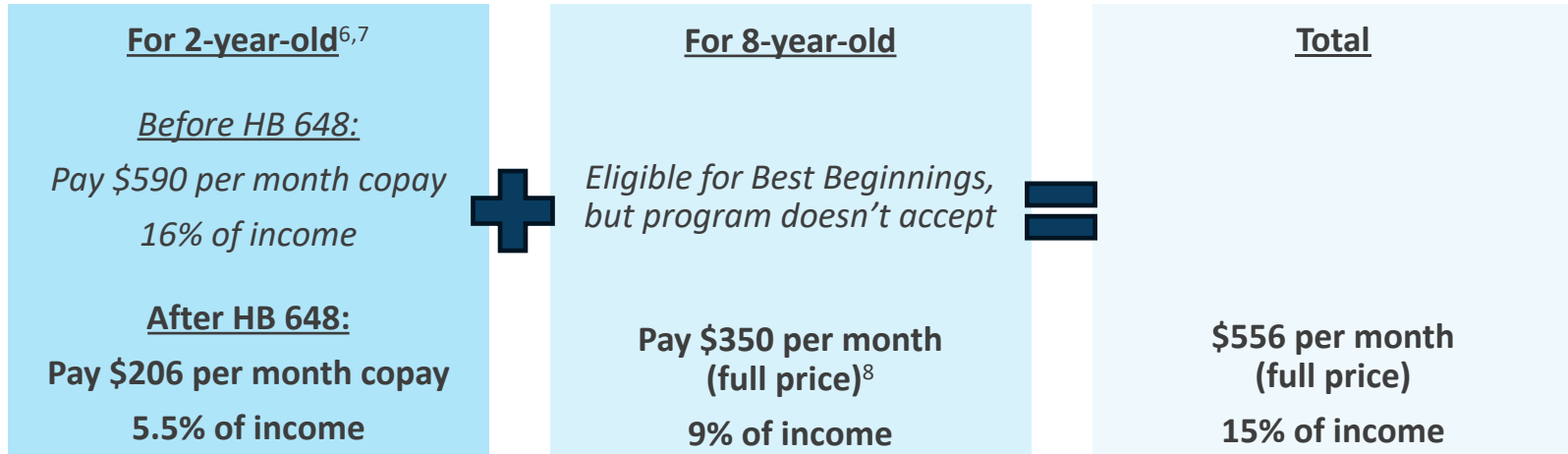
BEST
BEGINNINGS
HELPS
WORKING
FAMILIES PAY
FOR CHILD
CARE

Changes during 2023 session (HB 648):

- **More stable reimbursement for programs**
 - Based on enrollment vs. before a child had to attend 85% of days for full reimbursement
 - Matches the structure of private-paying families
- **Expanded eligibility to reach more families**
 - Eligibility is set at 185% federal poverty, with graduated eligibility up to 200%
 - Matches the expanded eligibility implemented using federal relief funds (ended in 2022)
- **Capped copay maximum to 9% of household income**
 - Some families were paying up to 20%

FAMILIES SEE DRASTICALLY LOWER COPAYS, BUT SCHOOL-AGE KIDS STILL FACE BARRIERS

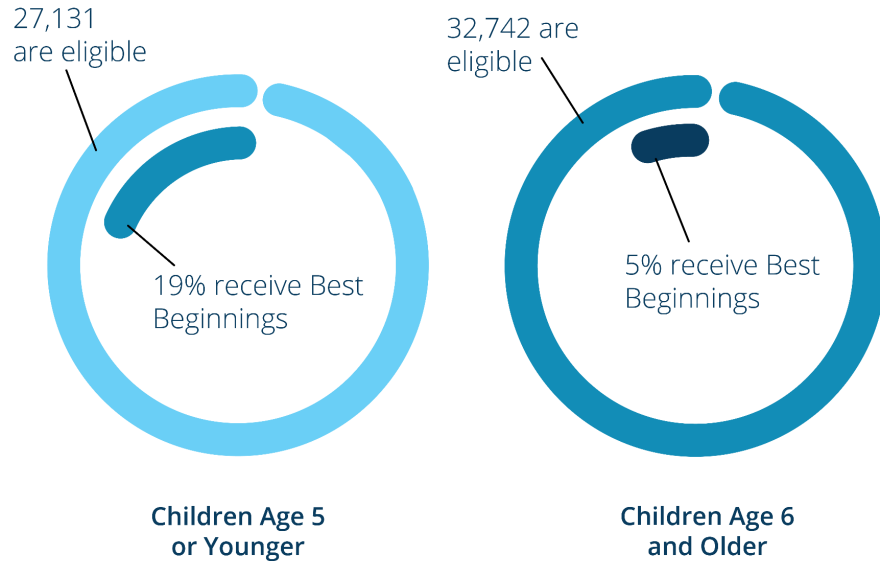
- Two-parent household, two children
 - 2-year-old, 8-year-old
 - Parents make \$45,000 per year combined
 - 2-year-old goes to a center that accepts Best Beginnings
 - 8-year-old goes to an afterschool program that does not



SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN ARE ELIGIBLE FOR BEST BEGINNINGS

- School-age children are eligible for a Best Beginnings Scholarship (through age 12).
- Must attend a licensed/regulated program.
- Currently, very few school-age programs become licensed because system not designed for this type of program.
- **Current reality is that very few school-age children who are eligible for Best Beginnings participate.**⁸

Eligible School-Age Children Are Less Likely to Receive a Best Beginnings Scholarship



THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 4-DAY SCHOOL WEEKS



Challenges:

- Programs at capacity
- Lack of staff
- Lack of space
- Variable hours
- No transportation
- Meals
- Costs shifted to programs



Opportunities:

- Make up for lost day
- Programs have more time with kids
- Longer enrichment activities
- Time for field trips

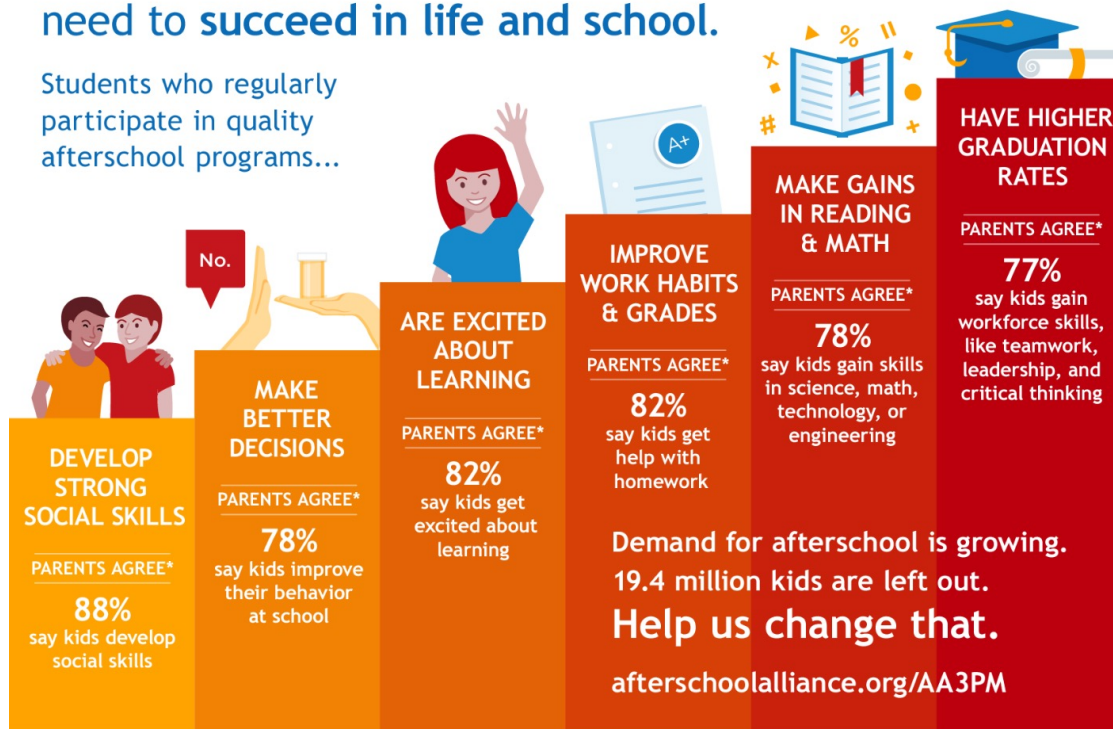


To Succeed:

- **Funding**
- Access to school space, playgrounds, gyms
- Shared staff
- Transportation
- Access to school nutrition resources

Afterschool provides the building blocks kids need to succeed in life and school.

Students who regularly participate in quality afterschool programs...



Get in touch...

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REFERENCES

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2. Afterschool Alliance, "[Montana after 3pm](#)," 2020.
3. U.S. Census Bureau, "Median Family Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2022 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) by Presence of Own Children Under 18 Years, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B19125, 2022."
4. Center for American Progress, "[Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go?](#)," Feb. 2018.
5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "[May 2022 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Montana](#)."
6. Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, "[Montana Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Child Care Sliding Fee Scale, effective 01-01-2023](#)."
7. Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, "[Montana Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Child Care Sliding Fee Scale, effective 07-01-2023](#)."
8. Example program cost from [Missoula YMCA for 2023-24](#).