



## Press Release

### CONTACT:

Claire Wiebe, Campaign Manager

[claire@nebraskacaresforkids.org](mailto:claire@nebraskacaresforkids.org) or 402-405-1791

For Immediate Release:

## Nebraskans Want Immediate and Long-term State Funding for Child Care

### *Survey: 79% of Voters Support Using State Funds to Help Solve Child Care Crisis*

May 1, 2024 – A new statewide public opinion survey released today shows that Nebraskans overwhelmingly want major, long-term state investment in quality child care and early learning – and they want it now. The survey, conducted in early 2024 by We Care for Kids/*Por todos los niños* and Nebraska Extension, asked Nebraskans whether they were willing to put significant state resources toward child care. Nearly 4 out of 5 Nebraskans agreed, saying they would approve dedicating as much as \$190 million in funding per year for the next 10 years to help with the state's child care crisis.

The survey results show that immediate and long-term funding is overwhelmingly supported across rural, city, suburban, and smaller communities; parents and non-parents; and by Republicans, Independents, and Democrats. 79% of those surveyed agreed that Nebraska should use a portion of the state budget surplus to fund access to affordable, quality child care and early learning.

Nebraskans are unified in wanting action now. Eighty percent say the state has the resources to help local communities meet the need for affordable child care for working families and should dedicate significant funding to increase the availability of child care. And they want legislators to share their commitment to making child care funding a priority. They believe that state legislators should support child care and early learning like they do Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and higher education (83%); and that state legislators should make child care and early learning a higher priority than it is today (82%).

“This survey is a message from Nebraskans for lawmakers to act – and act big – on access to quality, affordable child care and early learning,” says Kathleen Lodl, Associate Dean and Professor at Nebraska Extension. “Voters called out their belief that children are our future as a

driver of their support and that early education is an important part of keeping Nebraska a great place to live and raise a family. Nebraskans are speaking loudly and clearly."

The survey shows that Nebraskans understand that child care and early learning have a direct impact on the economy and community development, with 83% saying access to quality, affordable child care is essential to Nebraska's ability to strengthen the economy and help workers provide for their families. Almost 90% of Nebraskans agree that improving access to affordable, quality child care and early learning is an important part of keeping Nebraska a great place to raise a family and live a good life.

"Clearly, there is a strong desire to fix Nebraska's child care crisis and for state government to do its part," said Claire Wiebe, We Care for Kids/*Por todos los niños* Campaign Manager. "Communities across Nebraska are working hard to solve the problem, but they can't do it alone."

More information about the survey and tools to share the findings are online at [NebraskaCaresForKids.org](https://NebraskaCaresForKids.org).

The survey of 501 registered Nebraska voters was conducted January 25-31, 2024, by New Bridge Strategy. Interviews were conducted via telephone (both cell phones and landlines) and online. Interviews were distributed proportionally throughout the state. Quotas were set for key demographic sub-groups, such as gender and age. The margin of error is  $\pm 4.38\%$  for the overall sample. The margin of error will vary for sub-groups.

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[Photos and videos are available for media use here.](#)

## **Nebraska Extension**

Nebraska Extension brings University of Nebraska expertise and research in eight key areas of impact directly to Nebraskans from all walks of life in each of the state's 93 counties. Nebraskans turn to Nebraska Extension to strengthen their families, inspire their communities, empower young people, conserve and protect natural resources, and advance their farms, ranches, and businesses.

## **We Care for Kids**

We Care for Kids is a partnership of more than 120 diverse state and community-based organizations throughout Nebraska and is coordinated by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska. We Care for Kids works to ensure that all Nebraska families have access to quality early childhood education for their children.