



Equitable access to basic needs and supports

Idea 40	Access to high-quality childcare and early childhood education
Proposal 40h	Prioritize the creation of accessible, affordable childcare that promotes social/educational development of children while enabling parents to work and achieve financial security
Description	<p>Prioritize the creation of accessible, affordable childcare that promotes social/educational development of children while enabling parents to work and achieve financial security.</p> <p>Childcare is a crisis in the United States, and many middle-class, working-class, and low-income families are unable to both provide stable secure environments for their young children and work consistently in a manner that fosters career growth and future stability. This is particularly critical for highly mobile families (e.g., military families and others) but affects most Americans.</p>
How will the proposed action advance equitable health and well-being?	Accessible, affordable, high quality childcare would be transformational for improving equitable health and well-being. It would allow families to work in a manner that allows them to sustain their own financial security, which is an important social determinant of health and wellbeing.
Is there work we can build on?	<p>Higher Ground Education is a chain of Montessori childcare/ early education centers that has experimented with pop up schools/day care and other innovative forms to test expansion:</p> <p>There are low-cost high-quality private schools in Africa and India (Bridge international academies) that may be models for us to try in the U.S.</p>
Who would have to act? Who would be key partners?	<p>Local cities and counties Local educational and cultural institutions Entrepreneurs Chambers of commerce and workforce development offices Employers (see below) Parents</p> <p>In rural communities (and in general), can employers play a substantial role in solving for the lack of childcare resources? Lack of childcare disproportionately affects working mothers, the same individuals who work for primary rural employers like Walmart. Could Walmart, as a benefit to its employees, fund some childcare directly for its employees (reaping the benefit of an available workforce), while also partially funding broader community childcare resources,</p>



	which would expand capacity and capability in the broader local ecosystem?
A few high-level action steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Look at zoning permits to allow for more daycare opportunities within residential communities2. Investigate public-private partnerships to encourage local entrepreneurs to access these resources3. Explore dual-use community resources (schools, community colleges) for low cost real estate.4. Allow funding to be used to pay micro-childcares5. Develop some shared quality standards around early childhood education (perhaps at the state level) to define what quality means. Offer incentives to providers who demonstrate quality of care.6. Allow for a modified au pair program that provides subsidies for qualified foreign workers to provide au pair services in rural locations at a more affordable level for the users (e.g., au pairs are paid \$250/week plus room and board in Europe)
Other comments or guidance	