

Building a Brighter Future:

Investing in Early Care and Education

Ken Taylor, Kids Forward Executive Director and CEO

KIDS FORWARD'S MISSION AND GOALS



Kids Forward aspires to make Wisconsin a place where every child thrives—**notably children and families of color and those furthest from opportunity.**



We believe we must invest in a child care system that works for every kid, every family, and every community.



WISCONSIN'S CHILD CARE SYSTEM

- **Wisconsin Shares** (launched in 1997) is our state's child care subsidy program for low income working parents.
- **YoungStar** was launched in late 2010 to improve the quality of child care programs in Wisconsin. YoungStar rates the quality of child care programs through a 5-Star system.



IS IT WORKING?

- YoungStar has been effective in increasing the percentage of high-quality child care programs.
- Wisconsin Shares has been shrinking due to reduced public investments.
- More children of color could be benefiting from these programs if access is improved.



IMPACT

- When we don't invest enough in subsidies, providers close, putting a strain on the whole system.
- Lacking a sufficiently robust child care subsidy program negatively impacts our state's economy—today and into the future.



HOW TO MOVE FORWARD: POLICY SOLUTIONS

- Increase investment in Wisconsin Shares
- Support ECE workforce through refundable tax credits and professional development
- Establish quality improvement grants in YoungStar



Kids Forward

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