

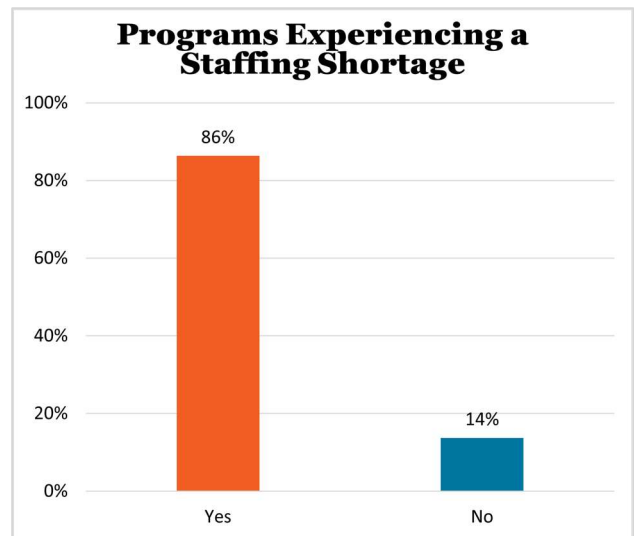
Vermont’s Early Childhood Educator Staffing Crisis

Impact on Center-Based Child Care Programs

Overview:

A March 2022 survey of regulated **center-based child care programs** in Vermont found that:

- **86% are experiencing a staffing shortage.** On average, there are 3.1 open positions per center-based program.
- **80% are enrolling fewer children than desired.** On average, there are 10.1 fewer children served daily per center-based program.



Context:

84% of Vermont’s young children enrolled in regulated child care programs attend one of the state’s approximately 490 center-based programs.¹ A recent report on the supply of and demand for regulated child care in Vermont for children under 5 likely to need care determined that Vermont needs approximately 8,752 additional child care slots to meet demand.²

In order to meet families’ needs, Vermont’s regulated child care programs rely on thousands of early childhood educators. According to data from the Vermont Child Development Division shows that between December 2018 and December 2020 there was a 14% decline (1,200) in the number of individuals working with children in regulated child care settings, and anecdotal evidence points to an even greater decline since the end of 2020.³

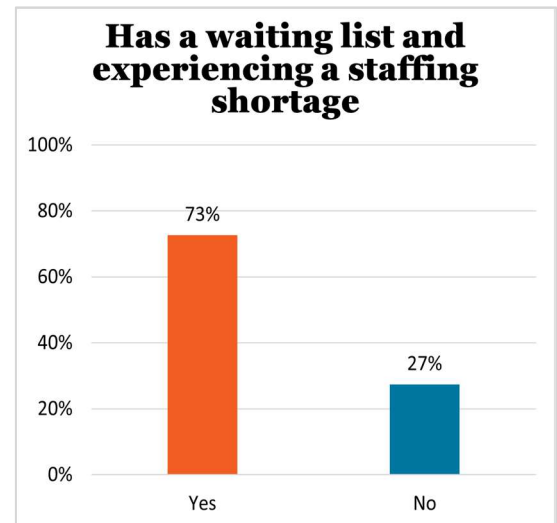
“We need investments in the ECE workforce and SOON! Staff who are committed to their work are starting to consider other options because there is no relief from the ongoing issues we face as early childhood educators.” - Julie Buechler, Ascension Childcare

Findings:

95 program leaders of regulated center-based child care programs from throughout Vermont responded to a survey in late March and early April 2022 asking if and how staffing shortages impacted their program.

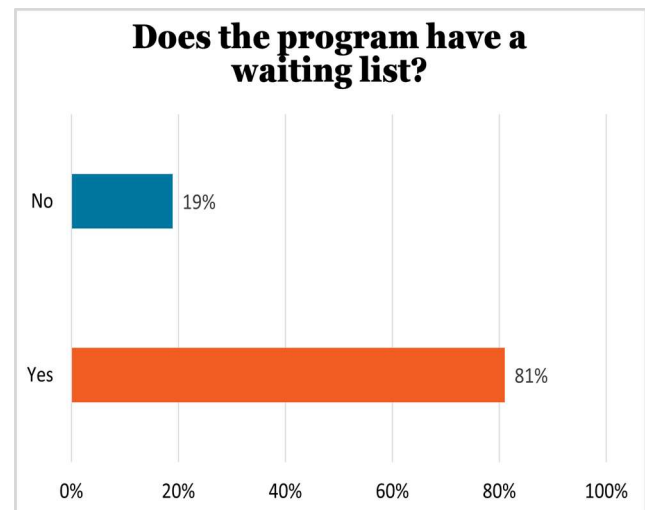
Staffing

- **86% of programs** that responded to the survey are experiencing a staffing shortage.
- **73% of programs** that responded to the survey are experiencing a staffing shortage AND have a waitlist.
- There are **286 open staffing positions** across the programs that responded. On average, there are **3.1 open positions** per center-based program.
- Programs are raising compensation and offering bonuses to address staffing shortages:
 - **68% of programs** that responded to the survey raised wages for staff.
 - **47% of programs** that responded to the survey offered retention bonuses to their existing staff.



Capacity

- **80% of surveyed programs** are under-enrolled (desired enrollment does not meet desired capacity).
- **81% of programs** have a waitlist.
- Programs are offering less care due to the staffing shortage:
 - **63% of programs** surveyed are enrolling fewer children.
 - **51% of programs** surveyed are reducing their program hours.
 - **43% of programs** surveyed are closing classrooms temporarily.
- If current enrollment were to meet ideal capacity of the surveyed programs, **966 child care slots** would be added to the existing child care supply.



¹ Levinson, D., Crossman, M., Brouillette, A., & Truzansky, B. (Eds.). (2022). The State of Vermont's Children: 2021 Year in Review. Building Bright Futures: Williston, VT. Retrieved from: <https://47717snyayj49hh0r38uhcqo-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/The-State-of-Vermonts-Children-2021-Year-in-Review.pdf>.

² Horwitz, J., Salina, K. (February 2022). Stalled at the Start Vermont's Child Care Challenge. Burlington, VT: Let's Grow Kids. Retrieved from: https://letsgrowkids.org/client_media/files/FinalSATS2022.pdf.

³ Ibid 1