

# THE IMPACT OF QUALITY CHILD CARE

## Is there enough *QUALITY* child care in South Dakota?



### Children are our future.

Parents have the freedom to choose how to live their lives in SD and they are choosing to participate in the workforce. South Dakota families deserve the peace of mind to know their children are in a safe, nurturing, and *QUALITY* early care and education environment.<sup>1</sup>

### Quality Indicators in Child Care

- Highly-skilled, responsive providers
- Age-appropriate curriculum
- Language - rich, safe, healthy learning environments
- Supports children's social and emotional well-being

Percentage of children, ages 0 to 5, with all available parents in the workforce.

74%

Choose Quality Care ➤



### There are more than 2,800 child care providers in SD, with the majority unregulated.

In South Dakota, being regulated means providers have to meet basic health and safety standards. They do not have to meet quality expectations.

800

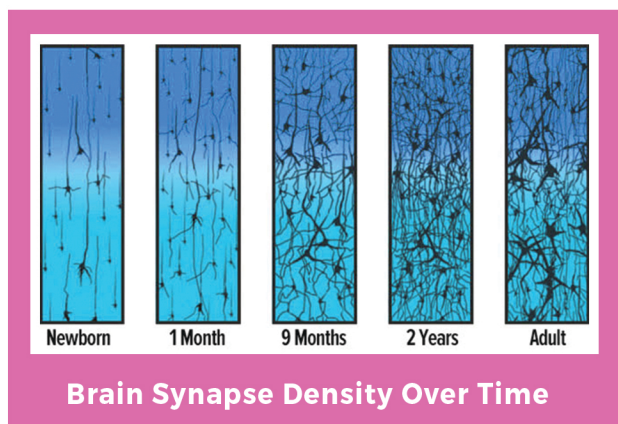
regulated child care providers in SD

2,000+

unregulated child care providers

Unregulated providers may care for up to 12 children and operate without regulations. If a preschool operates for less than 4 hours, they may have unlimited kids in care and not be regulated in any way.

### Quality child care supports healthy brain growth.



Decades of research showing that the environment of a child's earliest years can have effects that last a lifetime.

Young children's brains form over 1 million new neural connections every second, building a foundation for learning and growth throughout their active experiences. Those connections, if not used, are pruned by the brain's development process. Therefore, this foundation is strengthened by continued positive interactions with caring adults.<sup>2</sup>

**"Early experiences determine whether a child's developing brain architecture provides a strong or weak foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health."<sup>3</sup>**

~ Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University

Email [info@earlylearnersd.org](mailto:info@earlylearnersd.org) for more info



South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children

1) U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey, 1 year estimates; U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Sept. 29-Oct. 11, 2021  
2) [www.developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/)  
3) Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2007). A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy: Using Evidence to Improve Outcomes in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children. <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>