

Child Care Programs Did Not Have to Close During Pandemic

Like many organizations, child care programs have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. The [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#) estimated that half of all child care programs were forced to close their doors to protect the health of their staff and the families they serve.

A [new study conducted by researchers at Yale University](#) suggests child care programs that remained open during the COVID-19 pandemic and did not contribute to the spread of the virus to providers. Researchers found no differences in COVID-19 outcomes between early educators who continued to provide in-person care for young children and those who did not, as long as programs followed core health and safety practices. This is good news.

Although the impact of COVID-19 on the early childhood field has been devastating, we are hopefully beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. Now that we know early educators in child care settings did not contribute to the spread of COVID-19, we need to work on re-opening child care programs so that families can return to work. The pandemic has demonstrated that early educators are essential workers and are vital for our economic infrastructure and future prosperity.

-Phyllis Kalifeh is President and CEO of the Children's Forum