



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **PRE4CLE SHARES “BUILD BACK BETTER” RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OHIO’S CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION SYSTEM**

**CLEVELAND, OHIO** – PRE4CLE, Cleveland’s plan to expand access to high-quality preschool, released recommendations today to help Ohio’s child care and early education system recover from the Covid-19 crisis and rebuild stronger for the future.

[The Build Back Better plan for Ohio](#) was crafted because child care and early education, like most industries, has been hit hard by the COVID-19 crisis. A successful economic reopening and recovery will rely on affordable and accessible child care for all families so parents feel they can safely return to work. The COVID-19 recovery also provides the opportunity to start fresh and build a newly resilient child care and early education system that offers high-quality care and education to children, reliable and affordable care to families as they head back to work, and fair compensation for child care and early education professionals.

“Child care and early education are the backbones of a successful economy, both now and in the future. We must act urgently to ensure current programs are supported so they are able to reopen safely for children, families and staff. At the same time, we must use this moment to build a strong foundation for the future that ensures every child and family has access to high quality, affordable care and education.” said Katie Kelly, PRE4CLE Executive Director.

Recent studies show that without additional pandemic support, Ohio’s early care and education programs will be operating in the red in a matter of weeks-and many will be forced to consider closing their doors permanently. As a result, Ohio stands to lose 45% of our state's child care supply, which translates to nearly 100,000 slots across the state.

In Phase 1 the Build Back Better recommends the following for recovery:

- Prioritizing health and safety
- Support the child care and early education industry
- Support the child care and early education workforce
- Support families and children

For each item, the plan recommends specific actions Ohio should take, such as supporting centralized purchasing of PPE and sanitation supplies, and advocating for the next federal relief bill to include at least \$50 billion for child care support.

In Phase 2, the Build Back Better plan recommends the following to rebuild the system:

- Prioritize quality
- Improve access
- Increase compensation for professionals
- Support providers to be more sustainable and resilient

As with Phase 1, there are specific recommendations for each priority. Some examples include identifying long term-stable revenue sources for child care and education, maintaining Ohio's Step Up to Quality goals, deadlines and funding, and increasing child care eligibility up to 200% of the federal poverty level.

Dr. Jaclyn Chisholm, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, and a member of the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact, said this plan is important for everyone. "Parents of small children are present in every facet of our economy, and without their participation full economic recovery is impossible. The only way to ensure parents and children are able to reach their full potential is if we have a sustainable, high-quality child care and education system that is accessible to all who need it. The Build Back Better plan helps show the path towards that future."

**About PRE4CLE:** PRE4CLE is Cleveland's plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds in the city. PRE4CLE helps families find and enroll in high-quality preschool programs, connects preschool providers to tools and resources to increase their quality and serve more children, and provides strategic leadership and advocacy to accelerate the availability of high-quality preschool in Cleveland. PRE4CLE fulfills a core priority of *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools* and is led by the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact. For a copy of the Build Back Better materials, visit [www.PRE4CLE.org](http://www.PRE4CLE.org).

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