

# REPORT ON ACT 76 MONITORING:

## A Plain Language Summary for Everyone

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### **Background Information**

This document is a plain language summary of the executive summary of the Report on Act 76 Monitoring, produced by Building Bright Futures in January 2024. There are a few programs and organizations mentioned in this summary. Here's what they are and what they do:

- **Act 76:** Act 76 is a law that was passed in June 2023. The law says that the state of Vermont will invest more money in the child care system. Specifically, more money will be invested in the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).
  - **Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP):** This program helps make child care more affordable for families. This allows more families to access care for their children.
- **Building Bright Futures (BBF):** BBF is the organization responsible for monitoring Vermont's early childhood system and the impact of Act 76. They collect information through a network of over 500 partners and state agencies. They use the information they collect to advise the state of Vermont on the well-being of young children and their families.



- **Child Development Division (CDD):** CDD is the state agency that is responsible for overseeing child care programs. They are responsible for making many of the changes required by Act 76. This includes how money is given to child care programs and families.

## **Overview**

Act 76 is a law about child care and early education. It went into effect on June 20, 2023. The law has many parts. Some parts have already gone into effect. Other parts will go into effect in the future.

No one organization is responsible for carrying out Act 76. Instead, it will take the effort of many groups. Because Building Bright Futures (BBF) sits outside of Vermont's state government, BBF was given responsibility for monitoring progress on Act 76. With the help of partners, BBF has developed a plan for monitoring Act 76. This summary explains what we have done so far. It also shares what we have learned.

## **Collecting Information from Partners**

BBF collected information from our partners. The term “partners” includes people who are experts in their field, parents, child care providers, and others. We wanted to know what they felt was most important to understand about Act 76. To collect this information, BBF held 13 meetings with partners. Over 80 people participated in those meetings. BBF also used a survey to collect information. A total of 79 people completed the survey.



The meetings and survey had three goals:

1. We wanted to agree on what success looks like when the law works well for children and families.
2. We wanted to decide what to measure.
3. We wanted to develop a plan for monitoring the law over the next 10 years.

To reach those goals, we asked these questions:

1. What would success look like for each part of the law?
2. What are the top three things we would need to measure in order to understand the effect of Act 76?

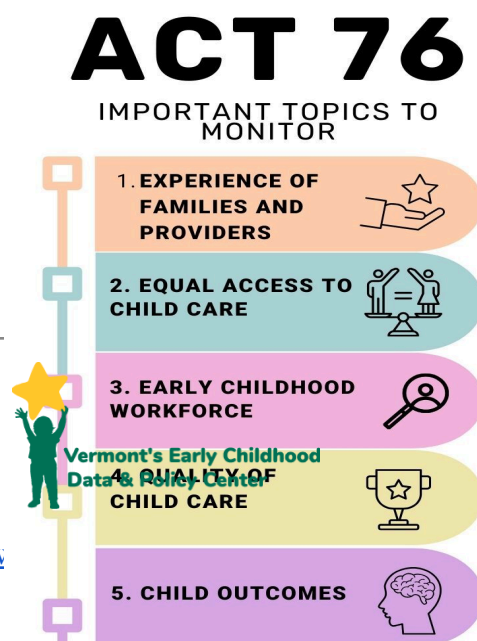
### **Understanding the Feedback**

We reviewed all the information we received from the meetings and survey. Our partners identified nine topics that were important to them. BBF will gather information each year to understand how Act 76 is affecting these topics. The nine topics are:

1. Experience of families and providers
2. Equal access to child care
3. Early childhood workforce
4. Quality of child care
5. Child outcomes
6. Financial impact
7. Child care program stability



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8. Cost
9. Economic impact

### **Measuring Success**

There are many pieces of information that could be helpful to monitor each of the nine topics. Some of the information is already collected. And some information we need isn't collected yet. Right now, Vermont has information for about one-third of the questions we would like to answer.

BBF is helping our partners make a plan to collect more information about Act 76 in the future. BBF will keep track of the progress in getting more information from our partners. When information is shared with BBF, we will post it on our data website. That website is located at [VermontKidsData.org](http://VermontKidsData.org).

### **Progress So Far**

#### **Successes**

Act 76 called for many changes and investments. Some of those changes have started. In those cases, we have already gotten feedback. Early childhood partners are happy with the information they have gotten about the changes from the CDD. CDD made a chart. The chart shows important steps that have happened already or will happen in the future. [The chart can be found on their website.](#)

The Readiness Payment program is the biggest change from the law that has happened so far. These payments have helped child care programs in many



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ways. Some programs used these extra payments to increase child care slots. Some improved their buildings and spaces. Others increased wages and benefits for staff. These are just a few examples of how the Readiness Payment program helped child care programs. Providers were also happy that it was easy to apply for the Readiness Payment program.

## **Challenges**

Some challenges have come up as the law goes into effect. One challenge is that partners were not given enough time to create the required reports. Another challenge is that child care programs are worried about the changes to the rules about what they are allowed to charge families. A third challenge is that people are confused about how the law affects the Universal Prekindergarten education program.

## **Improving the Collection of Information**

To understand this law over the next 10 years, Vermont must improve the way we collect information.

## **What's Already Happening**

BBF is working with state agencies to improve how much information is collected about Act 76. BBF is also working to improve how that information is shared with others. Lastly, BBF wants to help our partners use the available information to make our early childhood systems better.



## Challenges

Some of the improvements needed are limited by cost. To improve how much information is collected about Act 76, state partners need more staff to do the work. Many state partners also need access to better databases.

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