

POLLING: RURAL VOTERS ON CHILD CARE & HEAD START

In a new poll from First Five Years Fund, Rural Americans say money is tight, and child care is a significant part of that burden. The survey shows that **the recent expansion of child care tax credits is very popular** with both rural Democrats and Republicans, but across the board, **these voters support building on this momentum and want Congress to find ways to do more.**

The September poll, conducted by the Republican polling firm UpONE Insights, surveyed voters living in geographic areas defined as “rural” by the U.S. Census Bureau. A majority of those surveyed (53%) identify as MAGA, while just under a third (31%) identify as Democrats.

Rural Parents have been hit particularly hard by child care challenges, with a significant number saying they’re having trouble finding work, are cutting back on basic necessities, and are putting off growing their families due to a lack of affordable options that meet their family’s needs. And across the board, Rural Voters as a whole strongly believe that investing in child care and early learning is a smart use of taxpayer dollars. **Here are additional highlights from the poll:**

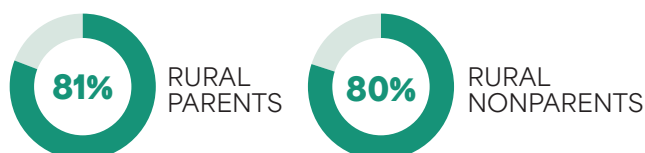
Rural Americans are worried about money. Child care challenges add to that stress.

59% of Rural Americans say their personal finances are “only fair” or even “poor”.

67% of Rural Americans also say they anticipate their financial situation will stay the same or get worse over the next year.

Rural Americans say the lack of affordable, quality child care is a problem.

4 out of 5 Rural Americans say the ability of working parents to find and afford quality child care is either in a “state of crisis” or “a major problem,” including:



1 out of every 5 Rural Americans say:

They’re **putting off having more children** because it’s too expensive **(20%)**

They **struggle to find or keep a job** due to child care challenges **(19%)**

They’re **cutting back on basic necessities** to pay for child care **(21%)**



Rural Americans want federal action to expand options for affordable, quality child care.

Rural voters strongly support funding for federal child care programs and want to see it increased.

Fully two-thirds (69%) of Rural Americans say federal funding for child care and early learning programs is a good investment of taxpayer money.

And a strong majority (55%) of Rural Americans would like to see that funding increase.

There is strong Rural support for Head Start.

Four out of five (78%) Rural Americans say they support Head Start, including:

71% OF RURAL REPUBLICANS
73% OF RURAL INDEPENDENTS
92% OF RURAL DEMOCRATS

The expansion of child care tax credits is very popular.

72% of Rural Americans support the expansion of the child care tax credits included in this year's tax package, including:





81% OF RURAL REPUBLICANS
60% OF RURAL INDEPENDENTS
58% OF RURAL DEMOCRATS

And Rural America wants Congress to go further.

There's strong support for action beyond this year's tax relief, with **74% of Rural Americans** wanting Congress to take additional steps to help working families find and afford quality child care, including:

72% OF RURAL REPUBLICANS
67% OF RURAL INDEPENDENTS
80% OF RURAL DEMOCRATS

Rural America's support for Head Start focuses on the supports it provides to children from low-income families, including:

-  **89%** Specialized services for children with developmental delays or disabilities
-  **86%** Healthy meals and snacks for children
-  **83%** Health screening and other medical care for children
-  **83%** Early learning programs that better prepare children for success in school

