



MILEAP

Michigan Department of Lifelong
Education, Advancement, and Potential





From Birth Through Postsecondary to Prosperity

Infrastructure and Investments



**Affordability
&
Access**



**Stakeholder
Engagement**



**Talent &
Workforce
Development**

Affordability & Access

Mi Tri Share

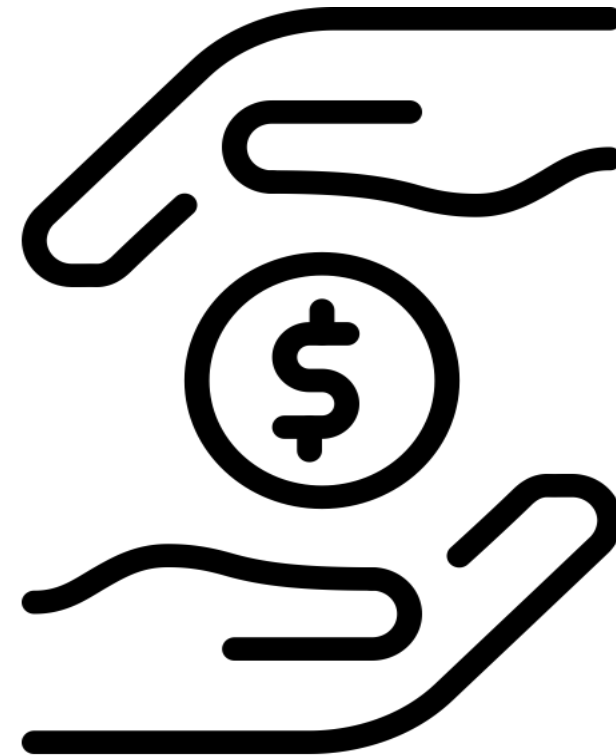
- Just over 300 employers supporting 900+ families and 1,020+ children.
- Saved families \$13.8+ million in child care costs

PreK for All

- As of January 2025, 55,000 children enrolled
- Increase of 4,000 children since October of 2024
- Saving families approx. \$14,000/year on child care costs

Child Care Scholarship

- Supporting over 47,000 children
- Reducing child care costs for families by over \$40 million monthly.



Stakeholder Engagement



Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Child care business specialty hub provides resources to,

- start or expand child care programs
- create tools the share across the economic development and small business support ecosystem
- connect to partners to help support child care businesses

Stakeholder Engagement

PULSE Toolkit – When Child Care Works We All Work

- Employers
- Municipalities
- Developers

Wage Pilot

- \$16 million initiative launched in January 2026 to strengthen MI's child care system
- 2 year initiative to increase take-home pay for early childhood educators employed in licensed child care programs

Small Business Association of MI (SBAM)

- Nuture Benefits: \$4.4M investment began in January 2026 to provide benefits to child care program staff
- As of April there are 78 employers with 204 eligible employees taking advantage of the Nuture Benefits program.



Supply Building



MSU Child Care Mapping Project

- Compare child care availability over time
- Identify areas with limited child care supply
- Understand community needs
- Guide investment and resources

Child Care Mapping Project | Engaged Research and Evaluation Center | University Outreach and Engagement

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Early Childhood Investment Corporation

MEDA Conference

May 7, 2026



Early Childhood
Investment Corporation



Powered by Early Childhood Investment Corporation



Early Childhood Investment Corporation

We have a vision... that all young children and their families in Michigan thrive.

- Created in 2005 to be a statewide leader in early childhood, ECIC collaborates to:
 - Increase public and private investment in the earliest years
 - Elevate issues affecting young children and their families
 - Continuously improve Michigan's comprehensive early childhood system, ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed in school and in life.
- In order to make this vision a reality, we work to ensure:
 - Race, culture and community are celebrated assets in a young child's life
 - Our work is informed by research and driven by the voices of diverse populations to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
 - Collaboration is central to our work, and we strive to co-create knowledge and innovation for the field

Child Care Innovation Fund

- First-of-its-kind effort to reimagine child care system through common-sense, cross-sector solutions.
- Expand equitable access to high quality, affordable child care for working families.
- Since 2021, the Fund has granted over \$19.0 million to regional and local partners for over 130 child care innovation investments.
- Implementation learnings and data gathered from our investments are used to educate and advocate for scaling promising child care solutions across Michigan.



The Challenge

Insufficient Supply

44%

Of Michiganders live in a child care desert, where there are more than 3 children per every available licensed child care space.

An Underpaid

Workforce **1%**

Of the child care workforce earns enough to support the average family size in Michigan (one adult, one preschooler, one school-aged child).

Growing Demand

-\$2.88 Billion

Cost to Michigan in lost economic activity each year due to insufficient child care availability.



ECIC's Primary Role: Administrative Lead + Funder



Launched **Promising Ideas Incubator** in 2022 with private funds to offer "Catalyzing Innovation Between Sectors" to create synergy between the economic development sector and the child care sector



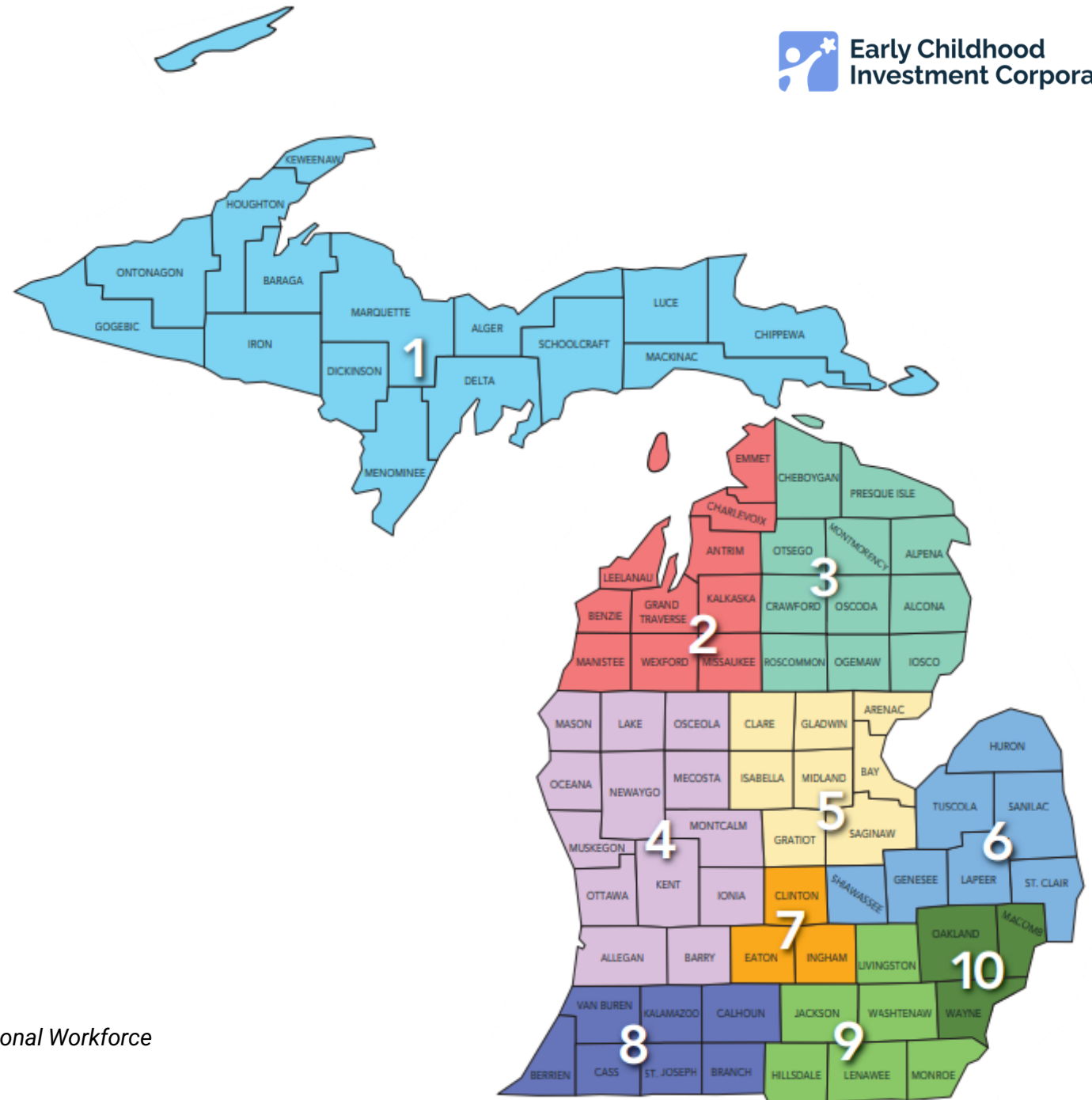
Awarded ARPA Funds from MiLEAP in 2023, to lead 18-month pilot of the **Regional Child Care Planning Coalitions**



Awarded CCDF Funds from MiLEAP in 2024, to serve as the administrative lead for the **Regional Child Care Coalition initiative**, with a 5-year commitment

Michigan's Regional Child Care Coalitions

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Lake Superior Community Partnership
<i>Community Coordinated Child Care Association of the U.P.</i> |
| 2 | Networks Northwest
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| 3 | Develop Iosco
<i>Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG)</i> |
| 4 | Vibrant Futures
<i>Grand Rapids Chamber</i> |
| 5 | Middle Michigan Development Corporation
<i>Midland County ESA & Saginaw Future</i> |
| 6 | Child Care Network
<i>Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership</i> |
| 7 | Lansing Economic Area Partnership
<i>Capital Area Michigan Works! & United way of South-Central MI</i> |
| 8 | Sturgis Area Community Foundation
<i>Southwest Michigan First & Pulse</i> |
| 9 | Child Care Network
<i>Ann Arbor SPARK</i> |
| 10 | IFF
<i>Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan – Detroit Regional Workforce Partnership & Policy Equity Group</i> |



ECIC's Secondary Role: Support Regional Leads and Co-Leads to Effectively Implement

01.

Capacity Sharing

Share capacity with Regional Child Care Coalitions to enable the engagement of all required members

02.

Parent Leadership

Facilitate leadership development opportunities for parents on Regional Child Care Coalitions

03.

Resource Creation

Develop and disseminate strategic communications and child care supply building resources

04.

Technical Assistance

Offer on demand consultation, connection to state and national resources, and host monthly learning community

05.

Monitoring

Help Regional Child Care Coalitions meet federal guidelines for the use of these funds

Regional Child Care Coalition Impacts

01

System Infrastructure Integration

Permanent part of early childhood system infrastructure funded by MiLEAP

02

Supply Building, Business Supports, Sustainability

Achieving system changes in child care supply building, child care business supports, and sustainability

03

Early Educator Wage Progress

Selected to lead Michigan's Early Education Wage Initiative

04

Connection + Partnership

Intentionally connected and partnering with other child care innovations

05

Economic + Municipal Changes

Shining an economic and municipal spotlight on long standing and complex issues hindering child care supply building efforts



Early Results

Year 1 Evaluation Findings

- **Nine Coalitions have launched workgroup structures that enable effective implementation.**
 - Coalitions were more likely to have contributed to greater progress if they initiated targeted workgroups to work on specific system change strategies. Coalition meetings set the stage and build momentum; Coalition workgroups are the “doing” engines.
- **Coalitions are prioritizing powerful systems change strategies in FY26.**
 - A systems change is a change in a regional system condition (i.e., policy, practice, goal, mindset, resource, etc.) within regional organizations, agencies, communities, or service delivery networks that directly or indirectly helps to increase local child care supply.
 - Coalition’s FY26 project plans included a significant increase in the number of systems change strategies in comparison to FY25.

Lessons Learned



Prioritize trust building, partnership, curiosity, and adaptation



Build connective tissue



Center and share collaborative capacity



Use strategies powerful enough to change mindsets, policies, regulations and/or funding



Focus on learning, rather than compliance, using system focused, developmental evaluation

Thank you.

Have additional questions or want to follow up on something you heard in this presentation?

Follow up using the contact information below.

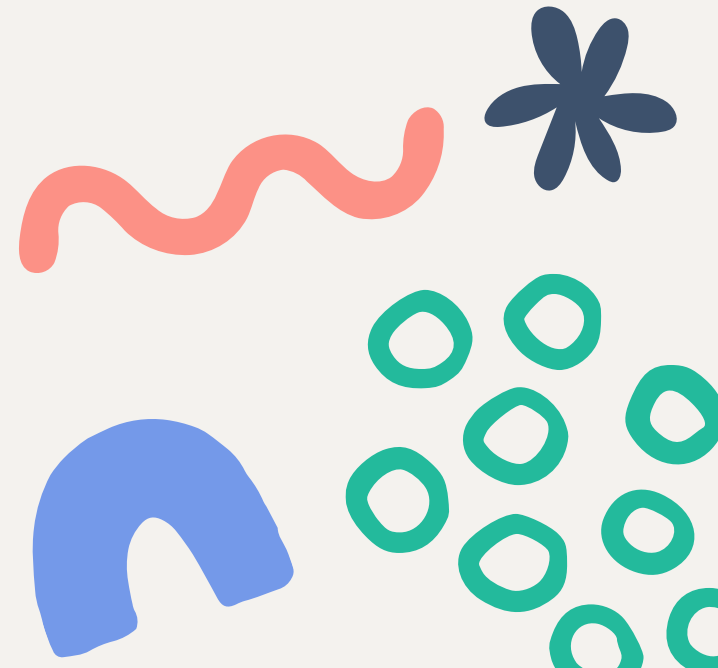


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Building A Work Force That Works

Childcare as Critical Economic Infrastructure

Tekeyah Gaines, Senior Program Manager



**Detroit Economic
Growth Corporation**
GROW HERE, WIN TOGETHER



Bridging Childcare & Economic Development



- 6+ Years advocating for Detroit's childcare industry
- Grassroots Grant making
- Provider Convening
- Technical Assistance
- Program Development

Childcare providers are not just caregivers they are entrepreneurs supporting our workforce



Childcare Providers Are Small Businesses

They carry a dual responsibility: running a business and supporting families so they can participate in the workforce.



Limited Capital Access

Complex Systems

Facility & Licensing

Staffing Shortages

Rising Operating Costs



Daily Challenges Providers Navigate



Accessing Capital

Securing funding for facility improvements remains a persistent barrier.



Hiring & Retention

Finding and keeping qualified staff is an ongoing struggle.



Zoning & Licensing

Navigating complex regulatory requirements consumes critical time.



Sustainable Operations

Maintaining viable business operations while serving families

Providers are resilient but need stronger systems of support



The Economic Case

When Childcare is unstable:

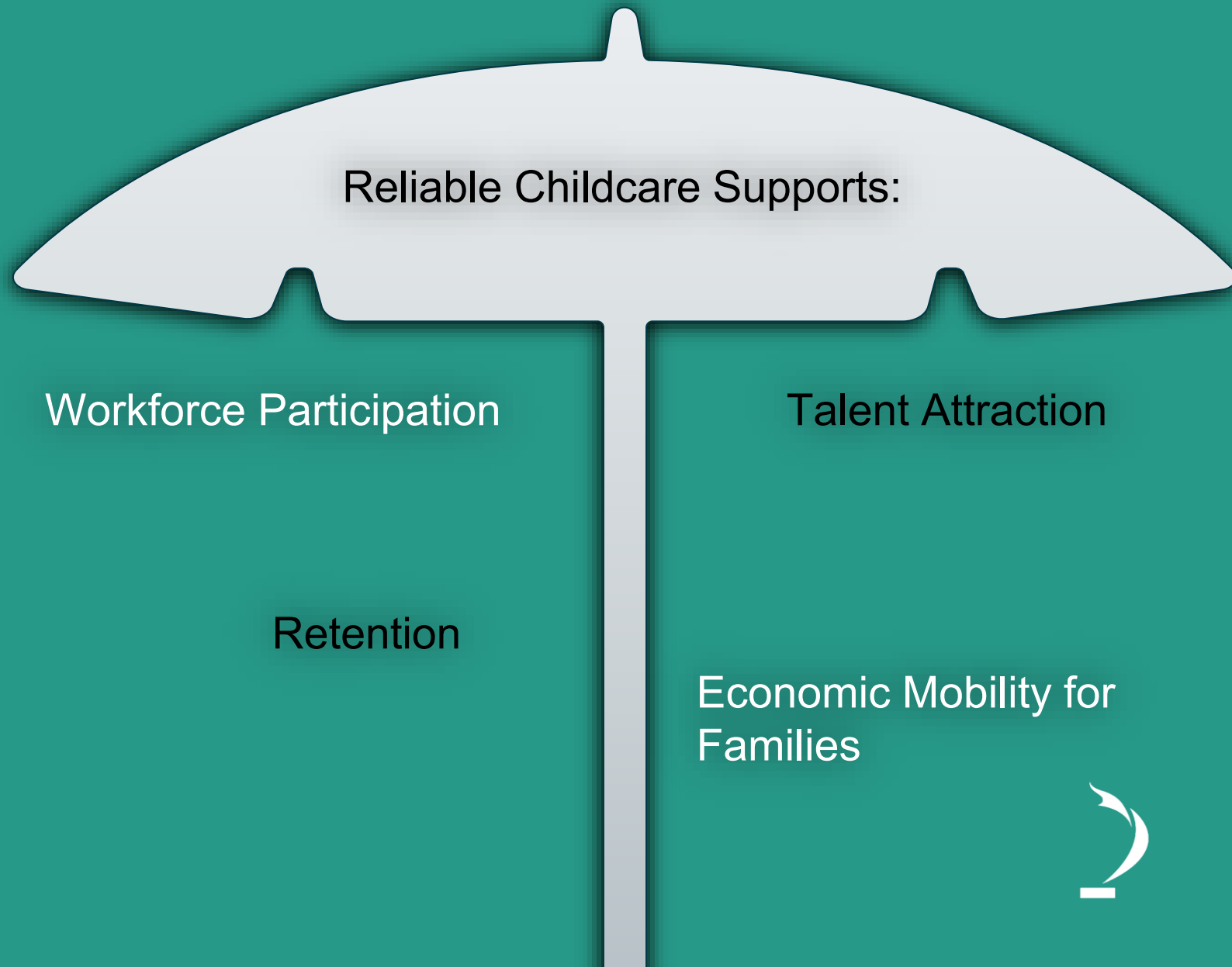
Businesses face hiring challenges

Regional competitiveness suffers

Employers struggle with retention

Parents miss work

Childcare is Economic Infrastructure



Community Impact in Action



When childcare providers succeed, entire communities benefit from new facilities opening
gaining stable access to care and work



How Economic Development Can Support Childcare

Supporting childcare providers strengthens local economies and workforce systems

Problem Solvers

Addressing barriers like zoning, facilities, and financing

Conveners

Bringing together providers, employers, lenders & municipalities

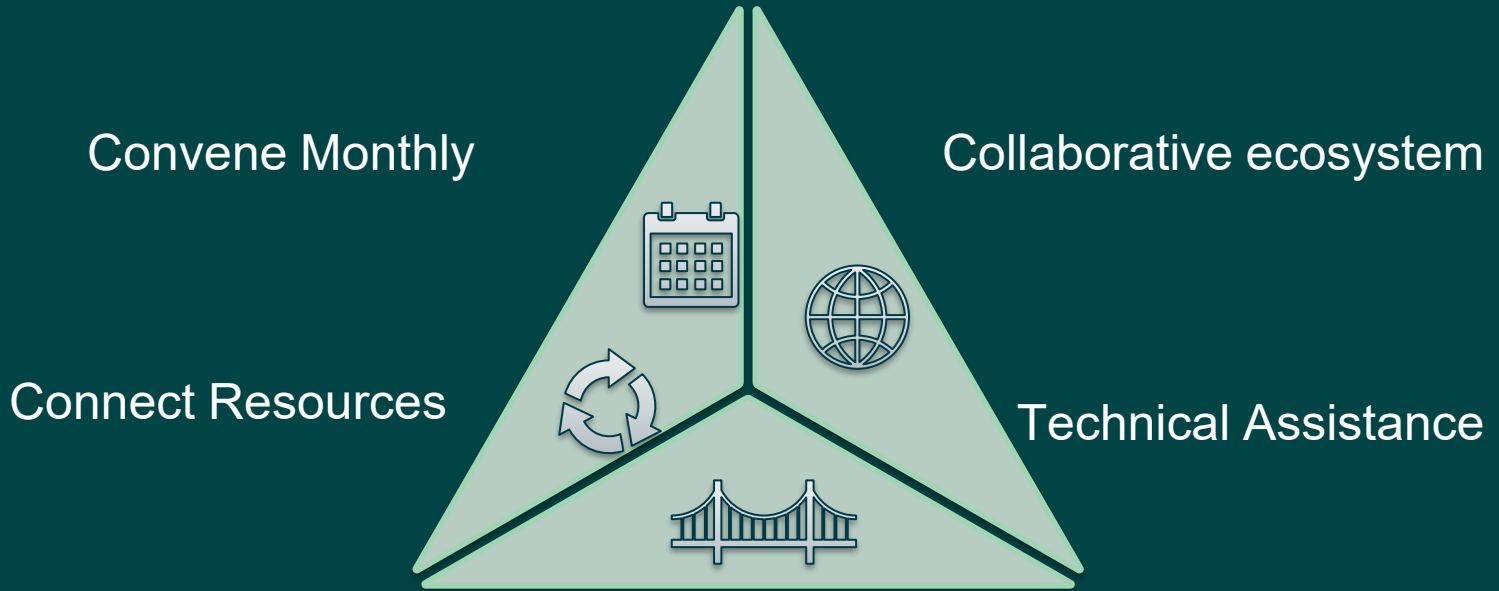
Resources Connectors

Linking providers to grants, technical assistance, and capital



Building Support Through Collaboration

Childcare Solutions require cross- sector collaboration. Through DEGC, we work to:



If We Want A Workforce That Works:



01

Treat Childcare as
Economic Infrastructure

Recognize its foundational
role in workforce
participation

02

Support Providers as
Small Business Leaders

Give them the tools, capital,
& systems they need

03

Connect Childcare with
Economic Development

Build integrated systems across
sectors.



Thank you!

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**Detroit Economic
Growth Corporation**
GROW HERE, WIN TOGETHER