



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

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## **WNY Women's Foundation Releases Study on Child Care Shortage Around the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus**

*Report finds demand for child care at BNMC, justifying the need for continued efforts to increase child care availability in the surrounding area.*

**Buffalo, N.Y.** – The WNY Women's Foundation, in partnership with Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) and the Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC) WNY, released a report detailing the acute need for child care options in the neighborhoods around the medical campus and the high demand for child care among BNMC employees. Results suggest more-than-adequate demand to support exploring options for a new child care facility in the district.

"The results of the study justify continued efforts to increase the local supply of child care in and around the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus by exploring employer-supported child care models," explained Sheri Scavone, CEO of the WNY Women's Foundation.

The report, "Building Innovation for Equitable Child Care in Western New York," summarizes the results of a multi-pronged data-collection process, including a BNMC employee survey that garnered participation from nearly 1,000 individuals. The study's authors also analyzed U.S. Census data, American Community Survey data, and conducted neighborhood resident and employer interviews.

The report's key findings include:

- The estimated demand for child care in the area exceeds supply by more than 500 slots.
- Three out of four BNMC employees with children would consider enrolling their child in a program located near or at the BNMC.
- Among local residents, one out of two children may be unable to access child care near their homes.
- As is the case nationwide, the top considerations related to child care for BNMC employees are cost and location.
- The feasibility study suggests more than enough demand (between BNMC employees and local residents) to support a child care program on site.

This report follows a 2015 survey led by the WNY Women's Foundation and BNMC which detailed the challenges BNMC employees faced around child care. For example, 49% of respondents reported missing one to four days of work per year due to child care issues.

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The WNY Women's Foundation and BNMC applied for and received one of nine national grants for a place-based child care study which garnered the support, data analysis, and collaboration of national partners. The [LISC National Building Innovation for Equitable Childcare program \(BIEC\)](#) provided the funding for this collaborative study. BIEC funds pre-development expenses for innovative mixed-use projects that incorporate child care and support a resilient child care system and broader community development strategies. As part of this effort, the WNY Women's Foundation, BNMC and LISC WNY assembled a steering committee to guide the work.

"We have been able to bring together an amazing and collaborative group to help address the lack of access to quality, affordable child care in the district, said Jamie Hamann-Burney, director of planning & implementation at BNMC. "We're looking forward to the next steps and helping implement solutions to this critical issue."

As phase three of the project begins, the steering committee made up of Buffalo Niagara Medical campus stakeholders, social service providers, and foundation leaders has hired project manager Amy Nagy of [WindsorTurner](#), and plans to advance the feasibility of the project by:

- Identifying a partner who can help deliver a quality child care program unique to BNMC employee needs
- Examining funding strategies to support upfront capital costs, as well as ways to reduce operational costs

"While we still have a long way to go, we're hopeful this work will culminate in a new child care option for both BNMC employees and local residents," said Scavone. "This report will further inform our collaborative efforts, as we aim to push the boundaries of how child care space has traditionally been thought of and developed."

Scavone added that it will be critical to establish a collaborative of home-based and small-center local providers as part of this effort, allowing for family choice and expanded hours of care.

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### **WNY Women's Foundation**

The WNY Women's Foundation creates opportunities for each woman to earn, learn, lead, and thrive. Learn more at [www.wnywomensfoundation.org](http://www.wnywomensfoundation.org)