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# Intersecting Worlds: Connections between Early Childhood Education and K-12 Education

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Background

1. Childcare policy is premised on the twin goals of child development and work force entry.
2. Sixty one percent of children under the age of five are in regular childcare arrangement of some kind.
3. Recent research has drawn attention to the presence of **"child care deserts"** where parents have few or no options for childcare.

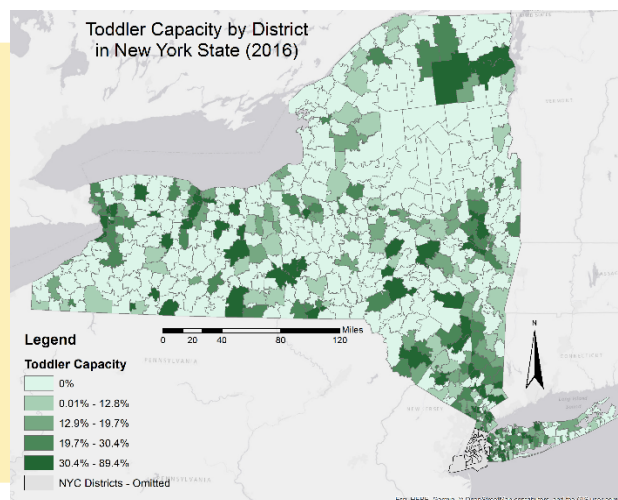Universal Pre-K — Child Care — Head Start/ Early Head Start
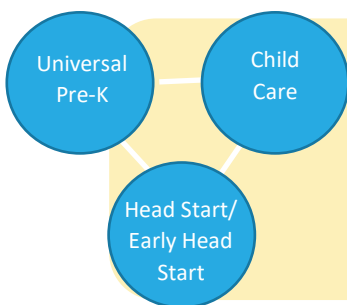
New York State Policy

New York State's **universal pre-k (UPK)** policy provides access to early childhood education to four-year-olds across the state. The policy also allows school districts to partner with community-based organizations to provide UPK programming to the children in the community.
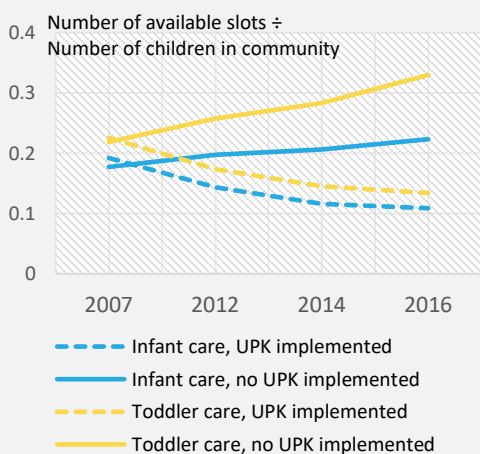
Findings

1. New York State has childcare deserts across the state (light green districts are childcare deserts)
2. Over time, there is an unintended consequence of UPK – communities experience reduced capacity to care for infants and toddlers in rural communities

Toddler Capacity by District in New York State (2016)

Legend
Toddler Capacity
- 0%
- 0.01% - 12.8%
- 12.9% - 19.7%
- 19.7% - 30.4%
- 30.4% - 89.4%
- NYC Districts - Omitted

Capacity in Rural Districts

Over time, there is a reduced capacity to care for infants and toddlers in rural communities with UPK.

Number of available slots ÷ Number of children in community

Y-axis: 0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4
X-axis: 2007, 2012, 2014, 2016

- - - - Infant care, UPK implemented
——— Infant care, no UPK implemented
- - - - Toddler care, UPK implemented
——— Toddler care, no UPK implemented

Data sources: OCFS (~18,000 providers), NYSED (UPK, district demographic data, fiscal data), Head Start (enrollment)

Implications for Policy

- **"Community aware" policies that take into account a range of contextual factors that may impact child care**
  - Rurality, community size, and the presence of other ECE programs matter for child care capacity
- **Policies that support communities' capacity to serve infants/toddlers and their families such as increased funding for child care programs serving infants and toddlers**
- **Administrative data collection in collaboration with researchers**
  - Low-cost changes to increase usefulness of data, such as regular archives of data, Head Start program level data accessibility, and identifiers to link files
- **Funding for research to evaluate effectiveness of policy options**