



VBREE Regional Initiative – Landscape Analysis

Overview

Each Ready Region faces distinct challenges and opportunities related to building child care supply. The purpose of the regional landscape analysis is to create a shared understanding of the current state across the region and to help mobilize a coordinated, collective effort to develop and implement a Regional Action Plan. Ready Regions' use of this shared template will result in consistent analyses and Plans statewide, while also recognizing variation. The draft outline for the Regional Action Plan is included in Appendix I.

Through the Community of Practice (CoP), nearly 50 stakeholder- and system-level research questions were identified to provide a comprehensive view of the region's child care landscape. The full list of CoP research questions is included in Appendix II. These questions are intended to guide regions in assessing child care needs and available resources, as well as identifying the root causes of challenges experienced by stakeholders within the system.

The landscape analysis uses these research questions to help each Region examine the child care system from multiple perspectives. Ready Regions may already have answers to many of the stakeholder- and system-level questions based on prior work and through their role as a leader within the regional child care ecosystem. In addition, data to address many questions will be provided by VECF, the Reinvestment Fund, and Planning District Commissions (PDCs), as discussed in CoP meetings.

To reduce the effort required and to sequence the work over time, the development of the landscape analysis is organized into a three-step process (outlined below) that builds on existing work and incorporates data provided by VECF, the Reinvestment Fund, and PDCs. The research questions have been mapped to the step of the landscape analysis based on the data sources and types of information needed. Each of the steps in the process adds depth and detail, ultimately resulting in a comprehensive picture of the Region's child care system.

1. Go With What You Know.

Start by leveraging existing qualitative team knowledge and prior research. The proximity of Ready Regions to key partners and stakeholders and systems-level vantage as a leader in the Region provides much of what is needed for a **foundational sketch**.

Go to area of work 1.

I. Stakeholder Reflection

Families, Child Care Providers, Employers

II. Systems-Level Reflection

Financing, Policy and Regulation, Data, Innovation and Infrastructure

2. Engage with Provided Data.

Leverage quantitative data provided by VECF, Reinvestment Fund, and PDCs. Reflect with partners to understand why child care gaps persist and to drive your strategies for targeted investments, **adding color and texture to the initial foundational sketch**.

Go to area of work 2.

I. Stakeholder Quantitative Data

Families, Child Care Providers, Early Educators, Employers

II. Systems-Level PDC Data

Funded Services, Early Educator Workforce, Physical Facilities

III. Infrastructure PDC Data

Economic Development

3. If Needed, Dig In To Learn More.

Supplement existing knowledge and data with information that may be useful for the Region to fully uncover root causes of child care challenges, close knowledge or data gaps, and **complete the picture of the landscape with precision and fine details**.

Go to area of work 3.

I. Survey

Family Survey, Child Care Provider Survey, Employer Survey

II. Stakeholder Interviews

Families, Providers, Local Governments, Employers

III. Inventory

Regulations, Planning Cycles, Facility Space, Financing

1. Go With What You Know.

Engage a core team of Ready Region staff to consider the questions in this section and capture what you already know about the Region in the Takeaways box. The core team should bring expertise and insights from their day-to-day work and responsibilities leading child care systems building. Gather prior research and reports, such as a recent Ready Region Strategic Plan, and engage other key Ready Regions stakeholders, such as shared governance members, Family Councils, or leadership teams, to further identify what is currently known about the region.

- **What’s needed to get started:** Ready Region staff experts, prior reports, dedicated meeting space, notetaking.
- **Intended outcome:** To have a qualitative analysis of the challenges and root causes of persistent child care gaps to provide rationale and justification for the strategies in the Regional Action Plan
- **Estimated time:** 2-3 hours, flexible based on team priorities over several months
- **Final product:** Topline summary or bulleted list for each stakeholder group and systems-level component in the Takeaways column, below, that summarizes the Ready Region’s qualitative reflection on the challenges, opportunities, implications, and outstanding questions. Be prepared to share key takeaways at a VBREE Community of Practice. Keep track of what sources you use, whether it is staff expertise, prior focus groups, or specific reports.

I. STAKEHOLDER REFLECTION

The Ready Regions’ work with key stakeholders provides a unique view of strengths, needs, and opportunities. Using what your team knows, sketch an outline of what families, child care providers, the early educator workforce, and employers look like in the Region.

<i>Families</i>	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
1. What are the main challenges families experience with child care in the Region? Is there anything	

Families	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
about the Region that makes these needs unique? (RQ7)	
2. What types of care do families in the region need and prefer to utilize, and why? Consider by: (RQ2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting: Home-based, center-based, FFN, etc. • Location: Preference near work or near home • Hours of care needed: “odd-hour” or overnight • Variation by types of children: infants and toddlers, children with special needs? 	
3. What is most important to families in the Region when searching for care (e.g., affordability, hours, location, quality, reliability)? (RQ2)	
4. How do families find out about different care options in the Region? Do the options in meet their needs? (RQ3)	
5. How do families find out about child care supports? For families accessing supports, what has been their experience with the system? Why would an eligible family in our region not access support? (RQ5,6)	

Child Care Providers	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
6. What are the most difficult aspects of running a child care business in the Region? Is there anything	

Child Care Providers	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
about the Region that makes these challenges unique?	
7. For providers in the Region who accept subsidies, what are their experiences with the subsidy system? For providers who do not accept subsidies, why don't they? (RQ11)	
8. What are the challenges for providers in the Region to accept additional children? For providers not fully enrolled, why are they not fully enrolled? (RQ13)	
9. What supports are available to help providers leverage all existing funding streams? What have we heard from providers is useful? (RQ27)	
10. Do providers in the Region use shared services? What are the benefits or challenges? (RQ42)	

Employers	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
11. Who are the key employers in the Region? (RQ19)	

Employers	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
12. How are employers in the Region impacted by child care? Are there any factors based on the types of employers in the Region that create unique child care needs, such as shift schedules and overnight? (RQ20,21)	
13. Do employers in the Region understand the connection between child care and workforce productivity? What are the challenges specific to the Region in engaging employers in child care?	

II. SYSTEMS-LEVEL REFLECTION

The Ready Region role as a child care leader and systems builder in the Region provides insights relevant to “the big picture.” Now add the systems-level backdrop to the Region in areas of financing, policy and regulation, data, and innovation and infrastructure.

Financing	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
14. Are there other sources of early childhood financing in the area? Consider funding at different levels: (RQ24) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County/local governments • Small business development funds 	

Financing	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School divisions • Business/employers • Philanthropy 	
15. What revenue sources are available in the Region as start-up funds for child care businesses? (RQ28)	
16. What “non-traditional” funding can child care programs tap into? (e.g., workforce development funds, community health worker funding, etc.) (RQ29)	

Policy and Regulation	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
17. What are the different regional economic, master, and strategic plans in your region that could include child care? What are their development cycles? (RQ32)	
18. What are the current policy, regulatory, and licensing barriers that are impacting the supply of child care in the Region? (RQ30)	
19. Do some localities in the Region seem easier or more friendly to open child care? What are the contributing factors to this? (RQ31, 33, 24)	

Policy and Regulation	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
20. How well do local policymakers understand the importance of early childhood? Who, if anyone, is already a champion? (RQ35)	

Data	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
21. How is regional child care data currently being used for planning and policymaking? How often is data updated? (RQ37)	
22. What data systems are used in the Region for measuring child care supply and what is the specific purpose of each? Can these data systems be used to track progress toward child care supply building goals? (RQ36)	

Innovation and Infrastructure	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
23. What strengths do you see as unique to the Region in terms of existing innovation and infrastructure? (RQ43)	
24. What innovative child care delivery models are being piloted in the Region (e.g., shared service hubs, employer-sponsored care)? What lessons	

Innovation and Infrastructure	
CONSIDER: Ready Region staff expert insights, existing data, past reports, other stakeholders, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Assets, challenges, opportunities, key information, unanswered questions, etc., most relevant to regional child care landscape
learned have emerged from these innovations? (RQ42)	
25. What financing innovations are being tested (e.g., public-private partnerships)? (RQ44)	
26. What land use innovations has your region implemented or explored (e.g., co-location, repurposing spaces for child care)? (RQ45)	
27. What do you see as existing or emerging facility space opportunities in the Region? (RQ45)	

III. EVIDENCE

Keep track of what sources you use for the stakeholder and systems-level qualitative analysis, whether it is staff expertise, prior focus groups, specific reports, etc.

Evidence	
SOURCE:	HOW IT WAS USED:
<i>Example: Prior Family Council groups</i>	<i>Example: To understand the needs of families in the region and the challenges accessing care</i>

2. Engage with Provided Data

Analysis of existing data provides a strong foundation for understanding child care supply in the region. Use the provided VECF, Reinvestment Fund, and PDC data to validate the findings from Step 1, explore why gaps persist, and identify where targeted investments can have the greatest impact. As you review the quantitative data, consider how it enhances your understanding of child care supply, how it aligns with your existing knowledge, and what new insights emerge.

I. STAKEHOLDER QUANTITATIVE DATA

First, get a sense of the demographics of families, child care providers, early educators, and employer stakeholders in the Region. As you review this data, reflect: What does this data mean? Why does this matter? What story does this tell you?

- **What's needed to get started:** VECF-provided data file with unique Ready Region and sub-market data and state-level comparisons and the Reinvestment Fund report for the Region
- **Intended outcome:** Use quantitative data to strengthen qualitative analysis, answer outstanding questions, and validate or reveal additional insights into the challenges and opportunities for child care supply in the Region
- **Estimated time:** 3-4 hours
- **Final product:** Bulleted list for each stakeholder group and systems-level component that summarizes key takeaways from the quantitative data, including validations and additional insights. Be prepared to share key takeaways at a Community of Practice.

<i>Families</i>	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
28. What are the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of families in the region? Key indicators affecting child care choice include: (RQ1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty 	

Families	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family structure/employment (Single parent, two parents, both working, single income) • Race/ethnicity/ language • Urban/rural 	
29. How much do families pay for child care by age and setting type? (RQ4)	
30. What is the true cost of care in the region by age and setting type? (RQ25)	
31. What percent of income-eligible children are receiving publicly funded services? (RQ5)	
32. What is the “school readiness” of children in the Region? (RQ8)	
33. What impact does the lack of child care have on a parents’ ability to work in the Region? (RQ9) <i>Please refer to the SEE-Partnership research on CCSP waitlists and the Virginia Employer Child Care Survey.</i>	

Child Care Providers	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
34. How many child care seats are available in comparison to the number of children who require child care? How has this changed over time? Please refer to your Reinvestment Fund report to answer these questions. (RQ10)	

Child Care Providers	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall care • Infant and toddler care • Publicly funded care 	
35. What is the region's child waitlist for publicly funded child care by age? (RQ13)	
36. What percentage of child care providers in the Region accept child care subsidies? (RQ11)	
37. What is the overall level of quality of providers in the Region? (RQ12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By provider type • By subsidy utilization 	
38. To what extent are providers in the Region fully enrolled? (RQ13)	

Early Educator Workforce	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
39. What are the demographics of the Regional child care workforce? (RQ15)	
40. How much are early educators compensated (salary and benefits) in the Region, and what is the financial well-being? How does the compensation compare to other sectors where educators could also work? (RQ16)	

Early Educator Workforce	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
41. What are the credentials/qualifications of the early childhood workforce in your region? (RQ17)	
42. What is the educator turnover rate in the region for publicly funded child care? How does it differ between position (assistant vs. lead) and site type? (RQ18)	

Employers	
CONSIDER: VECF data file, Reinvestment Fund report, other secondary data analysis, etc.	TAKEAWAYS: Validation, new insights, deepened understanding, etc. most relevant to regional child care landscape
43. What are the major industries in the region? (RQ19) Do these industries tend to have scheduling aspects that might impact employee child care needs? <i>Please refer to the Virginia Employer Child Care survey results.</i>	
44. What are the average wages in these industries? (RQ20)	

II. SYSTEMS-LEVEL PDC DATA

Second, understand the state of the current market through the lens of the three supply building components of funded services, early educator workforce, and physical facilities. As you engage with this data, reflect: How does it help illuminate the underlying structural conditions or root causes that create low child care supply? How do these conditions impact the Region?

- **What's needed to get started:** Meetings with the Planning District Commission (PDC) partner(s) to produce decision support tools using standardized data methodology and publicly available data to create summative insights specific to the Region. Initial connection and meetings with PDC will be organized and managed by VECF.
- **Intended outcome:** Use decision support tools to understand why gaps persist and identify where targeted investments will have the greatest impact, by linking demand, workforce, and economic conditions.
- **Estimated time:** 5-8 hours
- **Final product:** Bulleted list for each systems-level component that summarizes key takeaways from the PDC data, including validations, additional insights, and opportunities for investment. Outputs to be developed in partnership with PDC, with potential to include affordability constraint scores, physical accessibility constraint scores, dependency constraint scores, workforce capacity estimates, child educator shortage and opportunity zone maps, commute burden analysis, wage-housing affordability assessment, educator pipeline analysis, educator retention analysis, educator growth readiness classification, and physical child care site inventory.

Funded Services		
CONSIDER: Planning District Commission (PDC) Outputs	PDC OUTPUTS: Decision Support Tools	TAKEAWAYS: Root causes of child care gaps, impact on Region, opportunities for investment, etc.
Where within the region do supply gaps exist in communities where families are already cost-burdened, low-income, or financially stretched?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability constraint scores 	
What is the level of difficulty for a family to physically reach child care within a reasonable travel time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical accessibility constraint scores 	

What share of families in the region need child care regardless of cost or convenience, where lack of care directly impacts workforce participation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependency constraint scores 	
--	--	--

Early Educator Workforce		
CONSIDER: Planning District Commission (PDC) Outputs	PDC OUTPUTS: Decision Support Tools	TAKEAWAYS: Root causes of child care gaps, impact on Region, opportunities for investment, etc.
What is the current early educator workforce availability in the region as compared to the workforce required to close the child care gap?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce capacity estimates 	
How do the locations of where early educators live compare to the geographic areas of high child care need or demand in the region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage and opportunity zone maps 	
In what areas in the region are early educators' access to child care sites constrained by distance or transit gaps?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commute burden analysis 	
What geographic areas in the region have a mismatch between affordable housing locations and provider locations? What are the areas where early educators cannot afford to live near their jobs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage-housing affordability assessment 	
What are the regional early educator preparation programs, including through community colleges and universities, and how does workforce preparation compare to early educator need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline analysis 	
What areas in a region have high early educator turnover and what underlying factors may be contributing to that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention analysis 	
How ready is a region to grow the supply of child care based on the conditions of the early educator workforce?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth readiness classification 	

Physical Facilities		
CONSIDER: Planning District Commission (PDC) Outputs	PDC OUTPUTS: Decision Support Tools	TAKEAWAYS: Root causes of child care gaps, impact on Region, opportunities for investment, etc.
What is the inventory of physical locations with the potential to host new or expanded child care facilities in high-priority areas across the region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical site inventory 	

III. INFRASTRUCTURE PDC DATA

Third, consider the readiness of areas in the region for investing in child care as key infrastructure for economic development. As you review the decision tools, reflect: How can this data be used to develop precisely targeted interventions across the region? How does this inform the prioritization and sequencing of investments?

- **What’s needed to get started:** Meetings with the Planning District Commission (PDC) partner(s) to produce decision support tools using standardized data methodology and publicly available data to create summative insights. Initial connection and meetings with PDC will be organized and managed by VECF.
- **Intended outcome:** Use decision support tools to understand why gaps persist and identify where targeted investments will have the greatest impact, by linking demand, workforce, and economic conditions.
- **Estimated time:** 5-8 hours
- **Final product:** Bulleted list for each infrastructure component that summarizes key takeaways from the PDC data, including validations, additional insights, and opportunities for investment. Outputs to be developed in partnership with PDC, with potential to include economic readiness map by employment center, site readiness scores, employer signal summary, investment priority ranking, growth scenario projections

Economic Development		
CONSIDER: Planning District Commission (PDC) Outputs	PDC OUTPUTS: Decision Support Tools	TAKEAWAYS: Ideas for targeted interventions, prioritization of investment, etc.
Within the region, where does child care supply pose a risk to economic readiness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic readiness map by employment center • Site readiness scores 	
Where within the region have employers signaled interest in or capacity for investment in child care?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer signal summary 	
What specific geographies within the region are priorities for investment, based on the data?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment priority ranking 	
Where is child care demand expected to grow by 2050?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth scenario projections 	

3. If Needed, Dig In To Learn More.

Through the previous two steps, Regions may identify gaps in knowledge or expertise, a desire to explore findings more deeply, or areas where additional quantitative data would be helpful. Targeted stakeholder interviews or surveys can help address these needs. As additional information is gathered, it is important to consider the composition of the sample group. Representation from across the Region should be balanced with awareness of potential respondent fatigue from over-surveying. Focusing on essential questions and using targeted outreach can help improve both accuracy and completion rates. In some cases, existing state-level surveys may already provide insights that can be applied at the regional level. **Any additional information collected in this step will be developed by Ready Regions, as needed, using tools provided in the Playbook for Regions.**

Stakeholder Survey
TOOL
Virginia Family Survey
Virginia Child Care Provider Survey
Virginia Statewide Employer Survey (Zoho Connect)

Stakeholder Interviews
TOOL
Family Focus Group (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)
Provider Focus Group (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)
Employer Engagement Focus Group (Playbook)
Local Government Engagement Guide (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)

Inventory
TOOL
Regulation Inventory (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)
Regional Planning Cycles Inventory (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)
Facility Space Inventory (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)
Financing and Resources Inventory (<i>Playbook-to be created</i>)

APPENDIX I – OUTLINE: REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Executive Summary

- Standard language introducing the VBREE Regional Initiative and purpose of the Regional Action Plan

Introduction: Setting the Stage

What is the context for the action plan?

- High-level description of Region – map of region with major cities/towns, overview of major industries and employers, overview of existing child care system, discussion of any unique features or challenges faced by families, child care programs, early educators, or employers in region.
- Overview of how Regional Action Plan was developed and high-level description of data methodology; including standard language for methodology elements in the stakeholder analysis and snapshots (detailed data detail provided in appendix)
- Demographic characteristics for key stakeholders in region of families, child care providers, early educators, and employers

Section 1: Defining Child Care Gaps

What are the most pressing child care needs of the Region?

- Summary of unmet child care needs in region
- Assessment of systems-level challenges and opportunities

Section 2: Framing the Problem

What are root causes and what impact is this problem having?

- Discussion of key data findings from landscape analysis by child care supply building components of funded services, educator workforce, and physical facilities, and through the lens of key stakeholders of families, child care providers, early childhood educators, and employers in the region

Section 3: Charting a Course of Action

What strategies will you use to spark change?

- Identification of key strategies to pursue based on key challenges and opportunities

Section 4: Enabling Success

What supports need to be in place?

- Consideration of resources to implement and sustain ongoing change

Section 5: Tracking Progress

How will you measure progress toward closing child care gaps?

Conclusion: Final Thoughts

What are your next steps and recommendations?

Appendix

- Regional Delegation members
- Full landscape analysis

APPENDIX II – CoP RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Regional Action Plan Landscape Analysis: Research Questions and Data Sources

Stakeholder-Level

Goal: Understand demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the region and assess the early care and education system from four perspectives: (1) Family; (2) Child care provider; (3) Early childhood educator; and (4) Employer.

<i>Families</i>		
<u>Research Question</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Resource</u>
<p>1. What are the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of families in the region? Key indicators affecting child care choice include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and education level • Family structure/employment (Single parent, two parents, both working, single income) • Race/ethnicity • Urban/rural • Access to transportation 	Secondary data analysis	American Community Survey/Census Data; Kids Count Data Center: Virginia Child and Family Well-Being
<p>2. What types of care do families in the region need and prefer to utilize, and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting: Home-based, center-based, etc. • Location: Preference near work or near home • Hours of care needed: “odd-hour” or overnight • Variation by types of children: infants and toddlers, children with special needs? 	Family survey/ focus group	Will provide sample survey questions and focus group protocols derived from. Survey questions can be derived from: 2023 virginia family survey.pdf and Michigan regional surveys
<p>3. How do families find out about different care <u>options</u>?</p>	Family survey/ focus group	Will provide sample survey questions and focus group protocols; Virginia family survey has a question: 2023 virginia family survey.pdf
<p>4. How much do families pay for child care in the Region?</p>	Family survey/ focus groups	Virginia survey asks about burden (Very hard to pay, etc.): 2023 virginia family survey.pdf

		Virginia Cost Estimation Model: 638313107042070000
5. Are families getting help paying for child care? If so, what supports are they accessing? What has been their experience with the system?	Family survey/ focus group	Will provide sample survey questions and focus group protocols; Virginia family survey has a question: 2023_virginia_family_survey.pdf
6. How do families find out about child care <u>supports</u> ?	Family survey/ focus group	Will provide sample survey questions and focus group protocols; Virginia family survey has a question: 2023_virginia_family_survey.pdf
7. What do families think policymakers should know about their experience with child care?	Focus group	Will include questions in the sample family focus group protocol
8. What is the “school readiness” of children in the Region?	Secondary data analysis	
9. What impact does the lack of child care have on parents’ ability to work in the Region?	Family survey	
<i>Child care provider</i>		
10. How many child care seats are available in comparison to the number of children who require child care? How does this vary by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of setting • Age group (infant care) • Needs of the child (disability, etc.) 	Secondary data analysis	VECF Data Dashboard Infant to toddler gap analysis Reinvestment Fund Research
11. What percentage of child care providers in the Region accept child care subsidies? For those who accept subsidies, what are providers’ experiences with the subsidy system?	Secondary data analysis; Surveys; focus groups	Subsidy data Virginia Child Care Provider Survey

For providers who do not accept subsidies, why don't they?		
12. What is the overall level of quality of providers in the Region? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By provider type • By subsidy utilization 	Secondary data analysis	VQB5 data
13. To what extent are providers in the Region fully enrolled? For those providers not fully enrolled, why are they not fully enrolled?	Secondary data analysis	LinkB5 data? Virginia Child Care Provider Survey
14. What are the most difficult aspects of running a child care business in the Region? <i>Child care workforce</i>	Focus group	Will include a question in the provider focus group protocol
15. What are the demographics of the Regional ECE workforce?	Secondary data analysis	PDG B-5 Needs Assessment Data: Virginia's Early Childhood Workforce (Regional)
16. How much are early educators compensated (salary and benefits) in the Region, and what is the financial well-being? How does the compensation compare to other sectors where educators could also work?	Secondary data analysis and focus groups	Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce (Statewide) PDG B-5 Needs Assessment Data: Virginia's Early Childhood Workforce (Regional) Wage comparability study
17. What are the credentials/qualifications of the early childhood workforce in your region?	?	?
18. What is the educator turnover rate in the region?	Secondary data analysis	SEE Virginia Regional Profiles: Ready Regions

<i>Employers</i>		
19. What are the major industries in the region?	Secondary data analysis	Working on it...
20. What wages/benefits/schedules are typical across these industries?	Secondary data analysis	Working on it...
21. How are employers in the region impacted by child care?	Employer survey	Statewide summary: One-Pager VA Employer Survey Summary
22. What initiatives have employers put in place to support the child care of their employees? What supports would help employers?	Employer survey	Statewide summary: One-Pager VA Employer Survey Summary

System-Level

Goal: Understand the financing, policies, programs, and regulations that facilitate or hinder access, affordability, and quality of the Region’s early care and education system and its impact on employers in the Region.

Financing		
<u>Research Question</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Resource</u>
23. How much funding does the region receive from the following federal/state programs? Does participation in these programs meet the need in your region (e.g., waitlists)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care subsidy • VPI • Head Start • Mixed Delivery 		
24. Are there other sources of early childhood financing in the area? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County/local governments • Small business development funds • School divisions • Business/employers 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philanthropy 		
25. What is the true cost of care for high-quality child care in your region? Do payment rates for subsidy and Mixed Delivery approach the true cost of care?		
26. From a systems perspective, what are the key barriers (1) families and (2) ECE providers experience when seeking to draw down state/federal child care programs?		
27. Are providers in the region blending/stacking/braiding funding from the different funding streams? What supports are available to help providers leverage all existing funding streams? What program requirements (eligibility, program standards, quality, etc.) make the blending and braiding of funding streams more difficult?		
28. What revenue sources are available as start-up funds for child care businesses?		
29. What “non-traditional” funding sources do child care programs tap into (e.g., workforce development funds, community health worker funding, etc.)?		
Policy/Regulation		
30. What policies and regulations create barriers to opening or expanding child care programs in the region (e.g., licensing, fire inspection, etc.)?	Provider survey/focus groups	
31. How long does the licensing process currently take from application to license? Why does it take that long? What are the barriers in the process?		

32. What are different regional, economic, master, and strategic plans in your region that could include child care? What are their development cycles (see p.7 of the playbook)?		
33. How cumbersome are the licensing/zoning regulations? (Page 12-13 of the playbook). Does the region impose any additional regulations?	Provider survey/focus groups	
34. How are early childhood and K-12 systems coordinating and aligning? Are there opportunities for growth (see p.9 of the playbook)		
35. How well do local policymakers understand the importance of early childhood? Who, if anyone, is already a champion?		
Data Systems & Infrastructure		
36. What regional data systems exist to track supply, demand, and the ECE workforce?		
37. How is data currently being used for planning and policymaking? How often is data updated? How is data made available for families, ECE providers, and the community?		
38. What is the regional understanding of licensed capacity compared to the true availability of slots (see p.8 of the playbook)?		
39. How are communities currently using data to inform decision-making? Where are the opportunities to expand data-driven decision-making?		
Economic Development		
40. Where can child care investment enable growth? Where should child care capacity be increased? Where are the business ready sites?		

41. Where are there sites that can be developed into child care centers?		
Innovation		
42. What innovative child care delivery models are being piloted in your region (e.g., shared service hubs, employer-sponsored care)? What lessons learned have emerged from these innovations relevant to your region and others across the commonwealth?		
43. What supply building measures/innovations are taking place in the Region?		
44. What financing innovations are being tested (e.g., public-private partnerships)?		
45. What land use innovations has your region implemented or explored (e.g., co-location, repurposing spaces for child care)?		

APPENDIX II – DATA SOURCES

- American Community Survey
- Census Data
- Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP)
- Labor Force Participation rates by age
- Maternal labor force participation rates
- SEE-Partnerships data
- SEE Virginia Regional Profiles: Ready Regions
- VECF Data Dashboard
- Infant to toddler gap analysis
- Reinvestment Fund Research
- CCSP Waitlist Data
- Mixed Delivery Waitlist Data
- Monthly CCSP Data (from VDOE)
- VQB5 data
- LinkB5 data
- PDG B-5 Needs Assessment Data: Virginia’s Early Childhood Workforce (Regional)
- Center for the Study of the Child Care Workforce (Statewide)
- Wage Comparability Study