



Susan Looper | Missouri



Susan's story

Susan Looper and her husband were new parents looking for a good child care option for their daughter. They were dismayed when they realized that between the high cost of care and the long commute between their workplaces and the child care facility they liked, the situation was just untenable.

Finding a quality care provider is a challenge many parents face every day – identifying a place with a good safety record, has reasonable adult-to-child ratios, and is close to home and/or work. The thought of leaving her daughter at any of the sites near her home left Susan in tears. That's when the Loopers decided to try to make it work as a one-income family, with Susan staying home to care for their daughter.

After just three months, her husband had to take on a second job to make ends meet, but sending their daughter to an expensive provider they weren't comfortable with was still not an option. They were in need of quality, *affordable* care. Making the decision to have Susan become a stay-at-home mother wasn't an easy one, but it was necessary. The care and education needed for their daughter was something they couldn't afford outside of the home – but its importance was still clear. Early childhood education is critical for *all* children.

Child Care Stats in MO
The cost of infant care in Missouri is more expensive than the annual cost of tuition at a four year college.

U.S. businesses lose approximately \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of child care breakdowns.

There are 288,837 children under the age of 6 in Missouri who could be in need of child care.

Congressional Request: 2017

CCAoA is requesting a \$1.4 billion increase (over the FY 2016 level) for next year to ensure that nearly 217,000 children and families don't lose access to care, and also to help states meet the requirements of the 2014 CCDBG law.

We ask that you co-sponsor the "Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act of 2017" (H.R. 947/S.337), which would:

- Provide up to 12 weeks of leave for working families
- Enable workers to earn up to 66% of their monthly income while on leave
- Cover workers in all companies, no matter size
- Be administered through the newly created Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave

We also ask that you co-sponsor the "Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act of 2017," which would expand and enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to reflect the realities of modern-day child care costs. The PACE Act would make CDCTC refundable and increase the credit rate, which would greatly benefit millions of working families struggling to pay their monthly bills as child care is the greatest expense after housing.