



# STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JEANNE SHAHEEN  
GOVERNOR

July 29, 1999

Dear Friend:

Research shows the experiences children have in their first three years dramatically affect them for the rest of their lives. Yet, despite all we know about the importance of quality child care and early learning, making affordable, quality care available continues to be a challenge.

Nearly a quarter of New Hampshire parents surveyed report they have been forced to scale back at work or change jobs for child care-related reasons. At the same time, it is estimated that businesses lose as much as \$24 million per year as the result of child-care related absences from work.

Because we all have a stake in the kind of care available to the children of New Hampshire's working families, I established the Business Commission on Child Care and Early Education (Business Commission) in April 1998. I charged the Business Commission with gathering data to better define the state's child care needs and with developing recommendations about how to engage the business community in addressing those needs.

I am delighted to enclose *New Hampshire's Child Care Challenge*, the Business Commission's final report on ways the business community, government, and others can work together to improve the availability of safe and affordable child care. The report identifies barriers to increasing the availability and quality of child care in New Hampshire and recommends actions we can take to eliminate some of those barriers.

The Business Commission's work is an important first step in addressing New Hampshire's child care challenge. I hope you will work with me as we begin to prioritize the report's recommendations and take action to ensure the best care possible for New Hampshire's youngest and most vulnerable citizens.

You may obtain more information or additional copies of the Business Commission report by calling the governor's office at 271-2121 or visiting our web site at [www.state.nh.us/governor/](http://www.state.nh.us/governor/).

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne Shaheen".

Jeanne Shaheen

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Booklet; "New Hampshire's Child Care Challenge," 2 pages

# NEW HAMPSHIRE'S Child Care Challenge

Executive  
Summary



The Governor's Business Commission  
on Child Care and Early Childhood Education