



Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

MEDIA CONTACT: Brandon Cwalina, ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov

**MEDIA ADVISORY: TOMORROW IN READING – Shapiro
Administration to Celebrate New Budget Investments to Expand and
Support Pennsylvania’s Child Care Workforce, Reinforce Commitment
to Ensuring Families Have Access to Quality Child Care**

Reading, PA - Tomorrow, **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh** will visit Patton Avenue Learning Center to celebrate a \$25 million investment in **Governor Josh Shapiro’s [2025-26 budget](#)** to expand and strengthen the child care workforce with yearly bonuses, while supporting access to high quality child care for families around the Commonwealth.

Investing in the child care workforce ensures that families can continue working while children receive the foundation they need to succeed. The Governor’s budget secures major investments in the child care workforce through competitive wage increases, recruitment, and retention bonuses for child care workers, including:

- **\$25 million for the Child Care Staff Recruitment and Retention Program**, which will provide a **\$450 bonus per employee** at licensed Child Care Works (CCW) providers. These bonuses will support approximately **55,000 child care workers** and help stabilize the child care sector; and
- **\$7.5 million for Pre-K Counts** to help providers raise wages and stabilize the early educator workforce.

WHO:

Department of Human Services Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh
Patton Avenue Learning Center Director Yessenia Vasquez
Reading Housing Authority CEO Stacey Keppen
Opportunity House CEO Alyssa Bushkie

WHEN:

Media Availability: Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 12:20 PM

WHERE:

Patton Avenue Learning Center

1000 Patton Ave
Reading, PA 19611

MEDIA RSVP:

Press interested in attending must RSVP with the name of photographer/reporter to rapwdhspressoffice@pa.gov.