

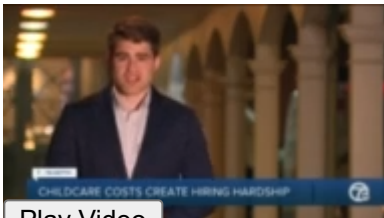
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# How advocates say the pandemic exposes need for changes in childcare industry



Play Video

Pause

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Current Time 0:12

This is a modal window.

Duration Time 2:24

Caption: Settings Dialog

Beginning of dialog window. Escape will cancel and close the window.

Progress:

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Stream

## Playback Rate

As the cost of childcare plays a role in keeping people unemployed, what is being done to fix this and is it enough?



By: [Brett Kast](#)

*Posted at 5:11 AM, May 04, 2021 and last updated 5:11 AM, May 04, 2021*

“Once you do the math and what the state pays us, it doesn't make sense,” said Nina Hodge, who has owned Above and Beyond Learning Childcare Center on the East Side of Detroit.

For more than 15 years, Hodge has owned the center. 95% to 98% of her families rely on state subsidies to pay for it.

With the subsidies, Hodge gets paid an hourly rate of \$5.30 for children under 2.5 years old. \$4.05 for 2.5- 5 years old, and \$3.95 for children over 5 years old. Not even enough to cover half the pay of one employee. Leaving her families to pay the rest.

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“I have to say, you have to pay me a copay because at the end of the day I have to use that copay to pay the light bill the gas bill the insurance, it has to add up,” Hodge said.

“This is not an issue unique to Michigan,” said Matt Gillard, President and CEO with the nonprofit Michigan's Childcare. “Childcare is an issue across this country.”

Michigan’s children advocates for the childcare industry in Lansing, and Gillard says this pandemic has shown just how critical their role is.

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“I think a lot of the business community underestimated the significance or importance of a strong child care system for their ability to retain or attract workers,” Gillard said.

But that may be changing as other industries show support.

“We have supported and will support the increased ability and use of some of these federal fund dollars to increase child care opportunities,” said Justin Winslow, President and CEO of Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association.

Hodge herself has advocated for a number of changes. She wants the subsidy rate increased, and says it should be based on enrollment, not hourly attendance. She’s hoping more support will help get her and the families she serves back on their feet.

“Providers are out here are suffering, they’re going through a lot right now,” Hodge said. “Are you hearing us or are you just listening to us? Because if you was really hearing you would make some changes.”

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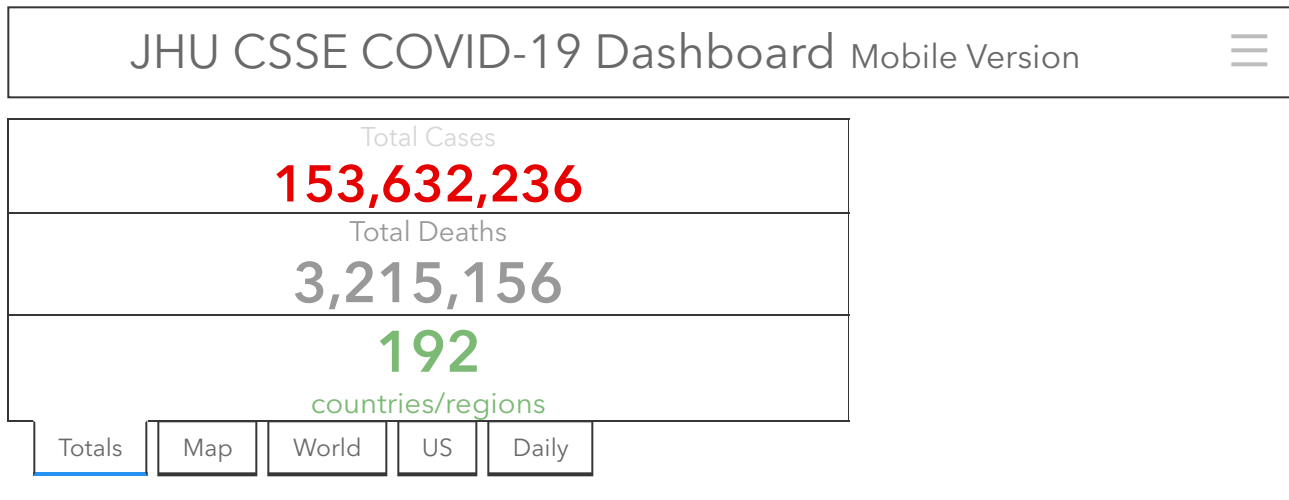
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## Global Coronavirus Tracker:



## See map here

Data from *The Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University*.

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