Even before the pandemic, Latina mothers and child care workers faced profound barriers to building economic security.

Between 2014 and 2018, 23 percent of Latinas lived in poverty (compared to 9 percent of white men), and for every dollar paid to a white father, Latina mothers are only paid 45 cents. This financial precariousness makes it more difficult for Latinas to afford the reliable, quality child care crucial for their employment and their children’s development. Additionally, Latina child care workers—who represent one in five of all child care workers—face 50 percent higher poverty rates compared to other women in the child care workforce.

COVID-19 has only exacerbated the disparities that harm Latinas and their families. The pandemic has caused lingering job shortages in the child care industry, which disproportionately affects Latina workers. Additionally, Latinas overall continue to face high rates of unemployment, even as the overall unemployment rate has dropped. This blow to the child care industry and Latina employment will affect the financial security of Latinas and their families long after the immediate crisis as passed.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Building a system of high-quality, affordable child care for all will help Latinas and their families today and over the course of their lifetimes.
The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated the deep economic inequities Latinas and their families face in the United States. Investing in high-quality, affordable child care would not only support Latina families, communities, and child care workers in real-time, but also build economic security for Latinas and their families throughout their lives.