



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

February 7, 2025

My name is Matthew Faragher Houghton, and I serve as the Chief Program Officer in Child Development at the Bangor Regional YMCA. Our programs include early childhood education for students aged 12 months to 5 years, before and aftercare, and day camps for students in grades K through 5.

Throughout the year, our Child Development Programs hire over 50 new staff members, many of whom are local students pursuing degrees in Childhood Education, Education, and Athletics at UMO, EMMC, and Husson University. These students have shared with me that they rely on their monthly checks to cover education-related expenses, as well as essentials like food, rent, gasoline, and car maintenance. Without these supplemental checks, they would struggle to manage these costs, which have significantly increased over the past two years. Many have expressed that they would need to leave their childcare positions if the monthly stipends were terminated, to seek higher-paying jobs to make ends meet.

These proposed budget cuts would greatly harm the heroic work that childcare professionals do each day which greatly benefit students, their families and our greater region. Let's keep our passionate, energetic, committed, and professional childcare workers in Maine by treating them with the financial respect they deserve. I join my fellow YMCA leadership in saying: Please do NOT support these harmful budget cuts.

With kind regards, Matthew Houghton

Matthew Faragher Houghton
Chief Program Officer- Child
Development
THE BANGOR REGION YMCA
Lifting People. Strengthening
Community.

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