



El Dorado County Child Care and Development Planning Council

Community Assessment
and Strategic Plan

El Dorado County
Child Care and Development
Community Assessment
and Strategic Plan
2000-2003

Kathi Walker, Coordinator

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Mission Statement

The Child Care and Development Planning Council of El Dorado County is a public-private partnership of business, education, community and government. The mission is to serve as the focal point for the planning and development of accessible, affordable, quality child care and development programs for children and families in El Dorado County.

Acknowledgements

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Dr. Vicki L. Barber, Superintendent of Schools
Sam Bradley, Supervisor, District I
Mark Nielsen, Supervisor, District II
Ray Nutting, Supervisor, District III
Penny Humphreys, Supervisor, District IV
David Solaro, Supervisor, District V

Introduction

Under the mandates of California's renowned welfare reform legislation, AB 1542, Local Child Care Planning Councils (LPC) were established in each county to assess the impact of the increased number of working families on the local supply of child care. Specifically, LPC's are charged with conducting an assessment of the community's child care and development needs at least every five years. These assessments are used to determine community needs and to set funding priorities for state grants.

A recent statewide initiative, Proposition 10, suggests counties report community needs in a results based format. This initiative collects a fifty cent tax on each pack of cigarettes for county commissions to support families with children prenatal through 5 years of age in the areas of health, children learning and ready for school and family functioning. With child care and development playing a large role in a child's early care and education, the council adopted the results based reporting format. For the purposes of this report, a result is a condition of well being for children, families or communities. An indicator is a measure, for which data is available, quantifies the achievement of the result.

In the Spring of 2000, the needs assessment committee developed child care and development results and indicators for El Dorado County that included the data elements mandated by state law and reported them in a results based accountability format. With information from the 2000 Census still a year away, data was purchased from Map Info to estimate the population of the county. This committee also identified data sources for the remaining variables and developed the framework for the assessment. Parent surveys were taken at Kids' Expo, a Day for the Young Child, and Family Connections to gather public opinion on child care topics.

On August 2, 2000, the Council and community members reviewed the results based accountability process used in data collection. Participants included parents, child care providers, educators, child care resource and referral agency, policy makers, social services, and community agencies including those serving families in domestic violence, children with special needs, and low income families. Facilitators then shared the specific data collected for the indicators in each of the three result areas: quality, affordability and accessibility. Members discussed the stories behind the indicators including why we have the problem, what do we know from experience, and do we have the data to substantiate the need. In the discussion, members identified community partners needed to address these issues and what strategies could be implemented. Two additional meetings were held in September to prioritize strategies and frame a strategic plan.

This report, including the community assessment and the strategic plan, was reviewed through the public hearing process prior to its approval by the Board of Supervisors and the Superintendent of Schools.



El Dorado County Fact Sheet: Child Care and Development Programs

Population

- In 1999, the estimated population of El Dorado County was 150,800. (California Department of Finance)
- There are approximately 32,648 children in the county: 6,505 children between the ages of 0-2 years of age (infants), 6,950 between the ages of 3-5 years (preschoolers) and 19,193 school-age children between the ages of 6-13 years. (Projections from the U.S. Census Bureau, Map Info Data)
- According to these estimates, approximately 22% of the county's population are children.

Family Economics

- The 1999-2000 state median income is \$45,132. (Family of three, California Department of Education)
- In 1999-2000 a family of three at 75% of the state median income will earn \$2,821 per month or \$33,852 annually. A family of three at the state median income will earn \$3,761 per month or \$45,132 annually. (The California Department of Education)
- Of the 32,648 children in the county, 17,245 (53%) are in families at or below the state median income. Of those, 3,663 are infants (0-2 years of age), 3,806 are preschoolers (3-5 years of age), and 9,776 are school age (6-13 years of age), (Projections from the U.S. Census Bureau, Map Info Data)
- In 1999, 51% percent of the families with children 0-5 years and 62% of the families with children 6-13 years had working parents and may need care for their children. (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network).

Ethnicities

- In 1999, the population of El Dorado County was 78% White, 17% Latino, 3% Asian, and 1% Native American. African-American made up less than 1% of the population. (Children Now)

Public Assistance

- In the 1999-2000 fiscal year, 715 of the CalWORKs families had received child care and development subsidies for 1,164 children: 305 infants, 207 preschoolers and 706 school age children. (El Dorado County Department of Social Services)
- In that same year, 60% of the families using child care services through CalWORKs chose licensed child care arrangements while the remaining 40% used license-exempt care. (El Dorado County Department of Social Services)



Licensed Child Care and Development Capacity

- In 1999, El Dorado County had a total of 2,319 licensed spaces at child care centers. (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network)
- By breaking down the family child care capacities equally among age groups and adding the center based capacities, the county has 681 spaces for infants, 2,482 for preschoolers and 1,286 for school age children. (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network)

Cost of Care

- The monthly average costs for full-time care in 2000 was \$494 for infant care, \$466 for preschool care, and \$439 for school age care. (Choices For Children).
- Currently a family with an infant and a preschooler in full time care would expect to pay an average of \$960 per month, 35% of a single parent household at 75% of the state median income. (Choices For Children, State Department of Education)

Subsidized Child Care and Development Programs

- According 2000 estimates, approximately 11,578 children are in families at or below 75% of the state median income and eligible to receive subsidies, with only 6,609 of these children in families with working parents and may need child care assistance. (Projections from the U.S. Census Bureau, Map Info Data, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network)
- Of the estimated 6,609 children eligible to receive services, only 3,865 received subsidized child care and development services in 1999-2000: 17% infants, 42% preschoolers and 41% school age children. (Survey of Subsidized Child Care and Development Contracts in El Dorado County, Child Care and Development Planning Council)
- In the 1999-2000 fiscal year, a total of \$7,837,164 was allocated for subsidized child care contracts in the county with 46% to half-day child development programs. (Survey of Subsidized Child Care and Development Contracts in El Dorado County, Child Care and Development Planning Council)
- Parent's choice in subsidized care in 1999-2000: 42% center-based care, 29% family child care, 24% license exempt care and 5% relative care. (Survey of Subsidized Child Care and Development Contracts in El Dorado County, Child Care and Development Planning Council)

Child Care Workforce

- In 2000, an experienced, center-based child care teacher earns an average of \$21,687 per year while the salary of a public elementary school teacher starts at \$32,000. (Profile of the El Dorado County Child Care Workforce, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network)
- Only 16% of the licensed family child care providers in El Dorado County reported they earned a net income of over \$15,000 last year. (Profile of the El Dorado County Child Care Workforce)



Quality, Affordable and Accessible Child Care and Development Programs

Quality

Structural indicators of quality child care are indicators that can be impacted by policy. Research identifies at least five consistent variables: group size, ratio of children to staff, administrative stability, staff turnover, provider education. In California, the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, oversees both center-based and family child care. Minimum health and safety concerns are addressed with regulations for group size, ratios, provider training in CPR and health, and fingerprint clearance. However, current licensing requirements do not address the quality standard specific to a child's development. Research indicates that accreditation of providers, reduced provider turnover, and education in child development enhance the quality of care situations.

In 1998, the Center for Child Care Workforce in collaboration with the Family Child Care Project, Wheelock College, and the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association developed a questionnaire for use with licensed child care providers. Questions on the survey specifically ask about the turnover rates and education levels of providers, and can be used to provide data on a regular basis. In order to substantiate the quality of a regulated environment, a question is also asked regarding program accreditation.

Accreditation is a program quality tool for licensed providers who demonstrate excellence in all aspects of the program. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines a high quality early childhood program as one that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and adults – parents, staff, and administrators – who are involved in the program. For example, accreditation by the NAEYC requires all programs to address interactions among staff and children, curriculum, staff and parent interactions, administration, staff qualifications and development, staffing patterns, physical environment, health and safety, nutrition and food service, and program evaluation. Other examples of program accreditation or excellence used in the survey are the Family Child Care Association, a permit or certificate issued by the State Department of Education, and a Child Development Associate Credential. Using accreditation as defined in the survey as a quality indicator not only captures the licensure of the program, but also attempts to include other quality measures not currently regulated.

As the field moves to increase the quality of child care it is likely the price of care will increase. If families cannot afford licensed child care, they will look toward unregulated child care where there are no quality assurances. Therefore, although the structural indicators used for licensed child care are easily applied to quality care (group size, ratio, accreditation, education and turnover), affordability measures should be used to indicate quality for unregulated care. If quality child care was affordable for all families, more children would be placed in quality child care environments.



Affordability

California has a two tiered child care system where families below the 75% state median income are eligible to receive assistance in paying for child care and families whose income is above the 75th percentile must pay for child care on their own. Families are eligible to receive assistance based upon the size of their family and their gross monthly income. According to the State Department of Education, Child Development Division, a family of three at 75% of the state median income would earn \$33,852 annually. Recent studies estimate that statewide approximately 200,000 families are currently waiting to receive assistance in paying for child care.

In 1993, the Census Bureau issued a statistical brief entitled "What Does It cost to Mind the Kids?" Their findings indicate that families spend approximately 7% of their family's monthly budget on child care expenses. The goal of affordable child care is for each family to spend only 7% of their income on child care. The age of the child and the type of child care setting both impact the cost of care. In order to establish the affordability of child care, the average, monthly cost of child care is calculated as a percentage of the family's monthly budget.

Accessibility

Child care and development programs can be cost efficient and beneficial to the family (Lazar 1980). Additionally, child care and development of children can better prepare children for school (Zill 1995, Booth 1999, Peisner-Feinberg, 1999). High quality programs can have a positive impact on children from families traditionally identified as at risk.

Accessibility asks the questions does the community have the capacity to serve its families; specifically, all children needing care, children from low-income families, children of migrant worker families, children with special needs, and children in their primary language. Each of these special populations will be evaluated to determine the extent to which those children are able to be served in the county. With out a system to identify license-exempt care we are unable to accurately determine how many license-exempt providers exist in the county. Until then, we can only assess the capacity of licensed care providers to meet the needs of families. The ability to serve families is dependent upon their need.

Children who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of being abused or neglected receive a priority in all subsidized child care and development programs. Their need for care outside of the home is determined by whether or not the child is referred for respite care. For all other families with children, we assume families needing care are working, looking for work or in school or training programs. Under this definition, the percentage of children with working parents must be applied to the remaining populations of children as an indicator of need.



Community Response

- "Having child care is an opportunity for my child (who is in preschool) to do activities and interact with other adults and children. It also gives mom a chance to have some one-on-one time with my other daughter."
- "The El Dorado County Extended Day Program has really helped in allowing me the time to go back to school and still work. They are great with my kids."
- "Child care has given my children outside socialization and better self-esteem. Highly beneficial."
- "My daughter has learned much more before kindergarten than she would have staying home."

Result 1: Children will have quality child care and development programs

Structural indicators of quality child care are variables that can be impacted by policies. Research identifies at least five consistent variables: group size, ratio of children to staff, administrative stability, staff turnover, provider education. In California, the Department of Social Services licenses both center care and family child care. Minimum health and safety concerns are addressed by four regulations: group size, ratios, provider training in CPR and health, and fingerprint clearances. However, current licensing requirements do not address quality standards specific to a child's development. Research indicates that accreditation of providers, reduced provider turnover and education in child development enhance the quality of care situations.

Indicators:

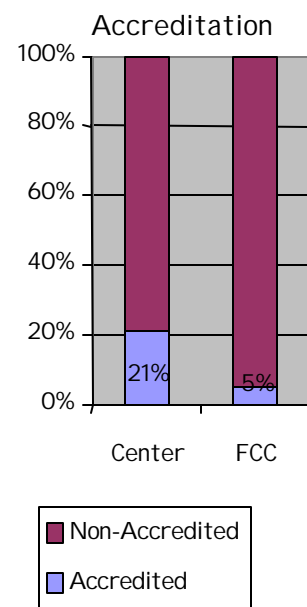
- Increase in the percent of licensed child care and development programs in the county that are accredited.
- Increase in the percentage of licensed child care and development providers in the county taking some college courses.
- Increase in the percentage of low staff turnover in licensed child care and development programs.

Data Sources:

- Center for Child Care Workforce Survey, El Dorado County, 2000.

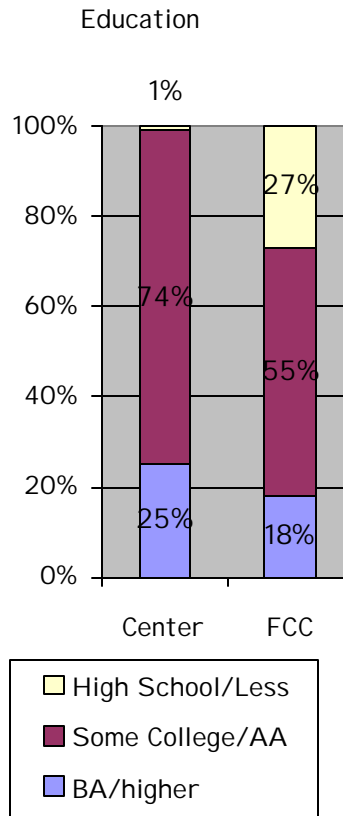
Accredited providers

With regards to accreditation, although a few centers declined to respond to the question, of those who did respond 21% (a total of 4) reported that they were accredited, with three of those being accredited through NAEYC and one through the American Montessori Society. Several (13%) reported being in the process of pursuing accreditation, with a few of those not pursuing mentioning that the process was too expensive. Only 5% (a total of 2) of the family child care providers had received the Family Child Care Accreditation from NAFCC (National Association of Child Care).



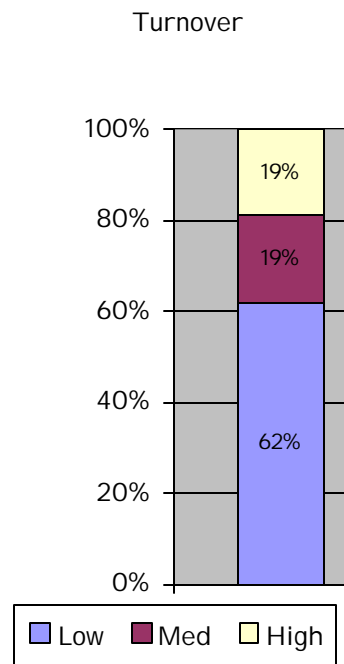
Provider’s Education

Education levels of El Dorado County child care and development teachers are significantly higher than those of both the general population and child care teachers nationwide. Twenty-five percent of center-based teachers have earned a Bachelor’s Degree (BA) or higher, 74% have an AA, Child Development Associate (CDA) Certification, or have completed some college units, and only 1% have a high school degree or less. Of the family child care providers, 18% have a BA/BS degree or higher, 55% have completed some college, 24% have a high school degree and only 3% have less than a high school diploma. Approximately 16% of family child care providers had a public school teaching credential.



Provider turnover

We defined staff turnover as high if the staff stays less than one year, medium if they stay between 1-3 years and low if they stay longer than 3 years. El Dorado County centers reported only a 19% high turnover rate, a 19% moderate turnover rate, and 62% low turnover rate. Family child care providers report having been in operation for ten years, but their long term commitment to the profession is uncertain. Over two-thirds (66%) report that they do not know how long they will continue to provide care; however, most providers report that economic improvements would encourage them to remain in the field.



The Story

In April of 2000, the local planning council sent out surveys from the Center for Child Care Workforce to fifty-percent of the child care providers in El Dorado County. The providers were chosen at random after grouping them by type of provider and geographic region in the county. Of the 108 surveys sent out, 61 were returned, a 56% response rate representing almost one-third of the child care provider population (28%).

Providers reported concerns with the survey including the length of the survey, invasive, confidential questions. The council sent out postcards and worked with Choices For Children, the local resource and referral agency, to address provider concerns.

The “Report on the El Dorado County Child Care Workforce” was completed in July 2000. Copies are available to the public.



Community Response

- "One parent is always home with the children. We work opposite shifts."
- "Dad stays home."
- "I have family to care for my child."
- "I am a stay at home mom. I think that's the best choice for my children."
- "We are glad we don't have child care because of the expense."
- "Having child care helped me have a job so I won't worry about my children."
- "...Enables me to work."
- "We had an au-pair and also used family daycare. We grew very close with our providers and are still in touch! Currently children go to after-school care on a drop in basis."

Result 11: Children will have affordable child care and development programs

According to the State Department of Education, Child Development Division, in 1999 a family of three at 75% of the state median income will earn \$2,821 per month or \$33,852 annually. A family of three at the state median income will earn \$3,761 per month or \$45,132 annually. The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network reports the median income in El Dorado County Median in 1999 as \$3,770 per month or \$45,244 annually.

The cost of full time licensed care in the county varies by the age of the child and the type of care. According to Choices For Children, the monthly average costs for full-time care in 2000 was \$494 for infant care, \$466 for preschool care, and \$439 for school age care.

In 1993, the Bureau of the Census released a Statistical Brief entitled: What Does It Cost to Mind the Kids? Their findings indicate that families nationwide can expect to spend approximately 7% of their monthly budget on child care expenses. Although this brief was written seven years ago, it is the only research done on the actual amount families spend on child care. Until other research has been conducted, this is the baseline for child care affordability.

Indicators:

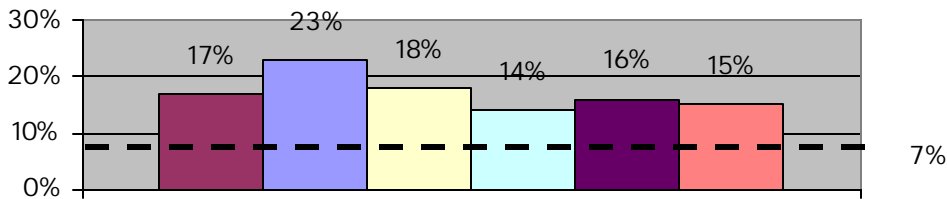
- Decrease in the monthly costs of child care, by the age of the child, as a percent of the family income for a family of three at or below 75% of the state median income.
- Decrease in the monthly costs of child care, by the age of the child, as a percent of the family income for a family of three at or below the state median income.

Data Sources:

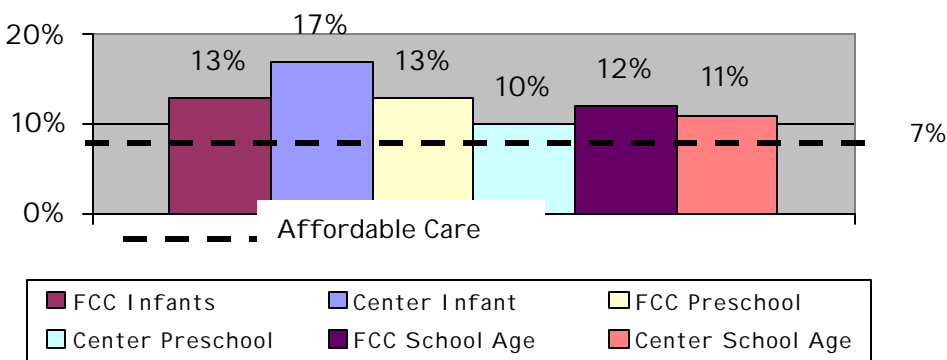
- California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2000 Market Rate Survey.
- CA Department of Education, Child Development Division, Family Fee Schedule, 1999/2000.



Monthly Costs of Child Care by Type of Care and Age of Child for a Family of Three at 75% of the State Median Income (\$2,821) in the year 2000.



Monthly Costs of Child Care by Type of Care and Age of Child for Family of Three at the State Median Income (\$3,761) in the year 2000



FCC Infants
 Center Infant
 FCC Preschool
 Center Preschool
 FCC School Age
 Center School Age

These graphs represent the percent of a monthly budget spent on child care from the perspective of two families. From the graphs we can see that for both families the most affordable child care is center-based care for a preschooler and the least affordable center-based care for an infant. The inconsistency in how center-based care can be both the most and the least affordable demonstrates an important point in affordability, capacity. Currently, the county meets the licensed capacity needs of 21% of families with infants and 70% of the families with preschoolers. Infant care is harder to find and less affordable while care for preschoolers is easier to find and more affordable.

If the goal of affordable child care is to spend only 7% of a family's income on child care, it is unlikely that a family will be able to afford the costs of care for one child let alone two or three. Currently a family with an infant and a preschooler in full time care would expect to pay an average of \$960 per month, 35% of a single parent household at 75% of the state median income.

The Story

According to the data, child care is not affordable for a family with one child let alone a larger family. Even when families qualify for child care subsidies, most programs have extensive waiting lists with only the lowest income families or families at risk of abuse or neglect receiving services. Families between 75% and 100% of the state median income, commonly referred to as the working poor, do not qualify for subsidized child care services. They are struggling to meet the rising costs of child care.

Many families are relying upon relatives and neighbors for care. Two parent families look for employment that allows them to work opposite shifts and reduce their child care needs.

Flexibility in the distribution of child care subsidies is necessary in order to deliver services that meet an individual family's needs.



Community Response

- "Currently, my roommate baby-sits. Rural child care in Grizzly Flats area is hard to find."
- "I can't find infant care. I am on a waiting list at Choices For Children."
- "I don't make enough money to pay bills. If you are not working but need child care to go to school, you can't get help."
- "Not having child care has affected my family but not being able to attend college and having to survive off of one income."
- "Having child care allows me to continue working and to support myself."
- "Child care allows me to work. As a single parent it is very hard for me to afford it. Not much help is offered."

Result III: Children of all ages will have access to child care and development programs

In order to determine the capacity of licensed child care, the total capacity of family child care homes was divided equally for infant, preschool and school-age care. While this may over estimate the total capacity, it helps to even out the flexibility of services family child care providers can offer: infant only option, toddler options, and school-age options. Although exempt from licensure, the County Office of Education regularly serves 3,500 school-age children on twenty elementary school sites in the county. Due to the large number of families receiving services, this capacity should be acknowledged and included in the total capacity for the county. In total, El Dorado County has 681 slots for infants, 2,482 slots for preschool age children and 4,286 slots for school age children.

The question of whether or not a family "needs" care is difficult to substantiate. Families use child care and development programs for a number of reasons including while they attend school or training programs, to meet the child's developmental needs or just needing a break; however, the only statistics available are the percentage of children in working families.

These percentages are applied to the total population of children in a specific category to determine the need for care outside of the home. The number of children needing care is compared against the number of licensed care providers in the county to estimate whether the supply of licensed care is adequate to meet the demands. This calculation will serve as the definition of need for this report.

In El Dorado County, 51% of the families with children between the ages of 0-5 (6,863 children) and 62% of the families with children between the ages 6-13 (11,880 children) would need care.

Indicator:

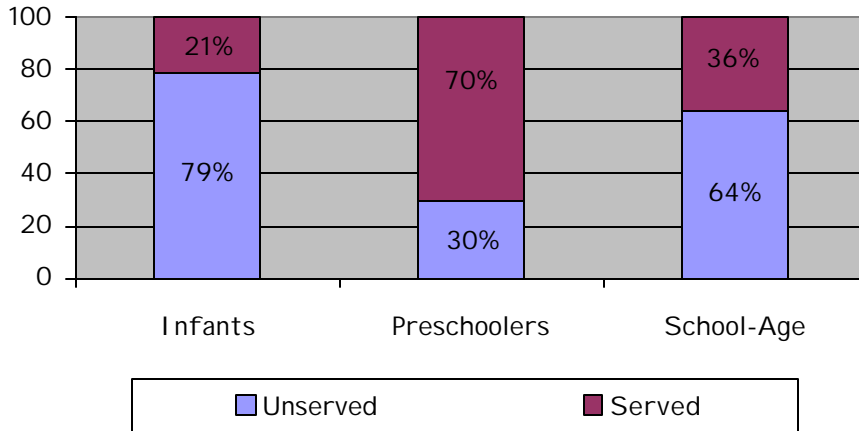
- Increase in the percent of licensed child care and development spaces in the county for children needing care.

Data Sources:

- US Census, 1990, MapInfo Data Projections, 2000.
- California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 1999.



Percent of Licensed Child Care and Development Spaces
for Children Needing Care, 1998



According to the data, there are 3,318 infants, 3,545 preschoolers, and 11,900 school age children who may need care outside of the home. Based upon these estimations, El Dorado County has enough licensed child care spaces for 21% of the infant child care needs, 70% of the preschool-aged child care needs and 32% school age child care needs. Preschool-aged children appear to have most licensed child care however, these numbers do not reflect half day preschools or child development programs. Although these numbers would indicate the need for more care in the county, there is currently a 12% vacancy rate among licensed child care providers.

According to the Survey of Subsidized Contracts taken in July of 2000, 71% of the families accessing subsidized child care services utilize licensed child care and development programs. The remaining 29% are either using license exempt care including care by a relative. Currently, this is the only measurement of license exempt care usage by families in the county. Identifying license exempt providers not only allows for a more accurate determination of the child care capacity in the county but allows the field to embrace all persons caring for children. As the research grows in the field of brain development, so does the importance of reaching all early care and education providers, including parents, with resources and a network of support. This training would not only increase the number of child care providers serving families but would potentially increase the quality of the care environments

The Story

The ability to determine whether the county is meeting the child care and development demands is limited by the availability of data.

First, how many families and children are there. Population counts are limited to projections from the census of population taken every ten years. With zip codes changing regularly, breaking the data into community level data is difficult. Out of county births are difficult to count and need to consider families who move in and out of the county.

Do the families need care outside the home?

How much care is there? It is common in rural counties for families to choose care arrangements that are exempt from licensure. Their reasons can vary from cost, convenience, trust or not knowing all of their child care options. How do we measure these choices?



Community Response

- "I'm able to go back to school to earn my Bachelor's Degree. The only way I can afford it is with financial help from my family though. Public funding is essential."
- "If I didn't have child care I could not afford to work."
- "Head Start has been great for her social development."
- "My experience has been great with the Head Start and State Preschool programs. They have worked with me to reach my goals and have been very supportive to me. My children have loved the programs."

Access to Subsidized Child Care and Development Programs

In the 1999-2000 fiscal year, El Dorado County had nine contractors with twenty-two subsidized child care and development programs. Families qualify for these programs based upon their need and eligibility. A priority is given to children identified as abused or neglected or at risk of abuse or neglect. Eligibility is determined by the size of the family and their gross monthly income. Services can be provided in a center or parents can choose the arrangement and pay for the care by voucher. These services vary depending upon the type of subsidization the family receives. A family may qualify through the welfare to work program (CalWORKs) or as a teen parent (CalSAFE). Services are also available through the local community colleges. Each program operates a waiting list (see appendix 2).

An important distinction should be made between subsidized child care programs and child development programs. Child care programs provide care for children while their parents work or are in training and child development programs are usually part-time and designed to meet the child's developmental needs. Children in part-time programs can attend two programs that wrap, one after another, to constitute full-day care; however, these wrap around programs are dependent upon space and funding.

For the purposes of this report, wrap programs will be considered full-day care and child development programs will be listed separately.

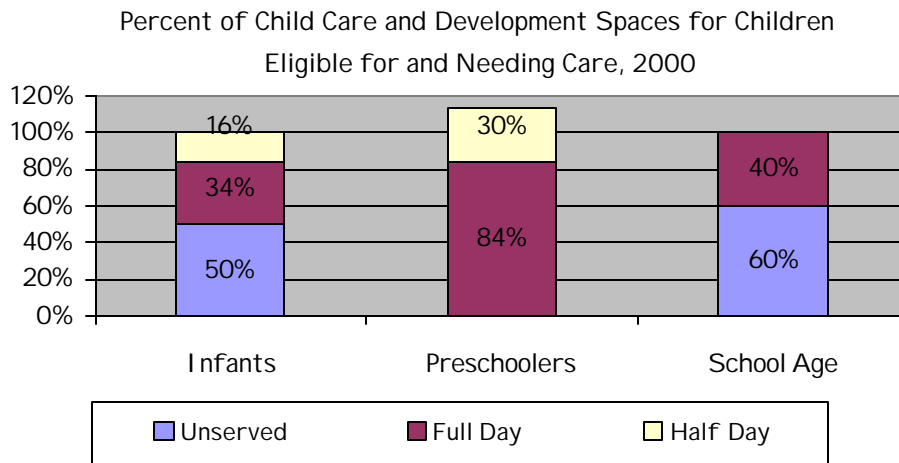
Indicator:

- Increase in the percent of subsidized child care and development spaces for children eligible for and needing care.

Data Sources:

- Survey of subsidized child care and development programs, El Dorado County Child Care and Development Planning Council.
- US Census, 1990, Map Info projections, 2000.





The Story

According to the State Department of Education, there are twelve subsidized programs designed to meet the developmental needs of children. Most child development programs offer family centered services in addition to part day programs focused on the child's developmental needs. Caring for children in half day programs greatly assist the children; however, part-time programs do not allow families full-time employment.

In an attempt to extend half-day child developments into full day care, programs have provided services back-to-back. These wrap programs are a start to meeting the child care needs of low-income families; however, with families working an eight hour day, longer with lunch and commutes.

Additional funding is necessary to meet the full day, child care needs of low income families.

According to 2000 population estimates, El Dorado County has 6,609 children who are eligible by income for services. Again, the percentage of children in families with working parents was applied to estimate the number of children who may need care. In the 1999-2000 fiscal year, 3,865 children between the ages of 0-13 were receiving subsidies for child care or child development programs, meeting the needs of 58% of the eligible population needing child care.

Of the 1,305 eligible infants that may need child care and development subsidies, half (658) were receiving services. Sixteen percent are in half-day or home based child development programs.

Of the 1,333 eligible preschoolers that may need child care and development subsidies, 1,125 (84%) are receiving services. An additional 394 are receiving services through half day, child development programs. From these numbers we can estimate that the county is close to meeting the subsidized child care and development needs of families with children aged 3-5.

Of the 3,971 school age children that may need subsidized child care and development subsidies, 1,588 (40%) are receiving services. The remaining 60% may be in recreational programs, licenses exempt care, or are latchkey children going home on their own. In any case, a large number of school-aged children eligible for subsidies are left un-served.

Missing from this discussion are the families that fall between 75% and the state median income. Commonly referred to as the working poor, these families do not have access to subsidies to assist them in affording child care. As families move through the welfare to work program this population will continue to grow.



Community Response

- "I have no breaks and no transportation."
- "I have respite care through Choices For Children."
- "I have no money to pay and no transportation."
(teen parent)
- "Not enough income to afford babysitting."
(teen parent)
- "I would like to go to work, but I cannot afford babysitting."
(teen parent)
- "Grandmother has to watch my child for \$50.00 a week. If you go to day care its \$110.00 a week whether you work or not."
(teen parent)

Access for children abused or neglected or at-risk of abuse or neglect

Volumes of research have been developed citing the importance of bonding between a parent and child. The baby's ability to trust is dependent upon the family's ability to provide consistent care and respond to the infants need for love and stimulation (Wallach 1994). Children who have experienced a long history of unmet emotional needs are likely to have difficulty succeeding when they enter school. With time, effort and skill, caregivers can provide children with the opportunity to challenge the odds and turn their lives in a positive direction. For this reason, children at-risk of abuse or neglect are given a priority for subsidized child care.

In order for a child to receive first priority for services, he or she must have an open case with Children's Protective Services and/or a letter from a legally qualified professional identifying the child as abused or neglected or at-risk of abuse or neglect. At the county level we can determine the number of children with open CPS cases; however, we cannot determine the number of children referred for care.

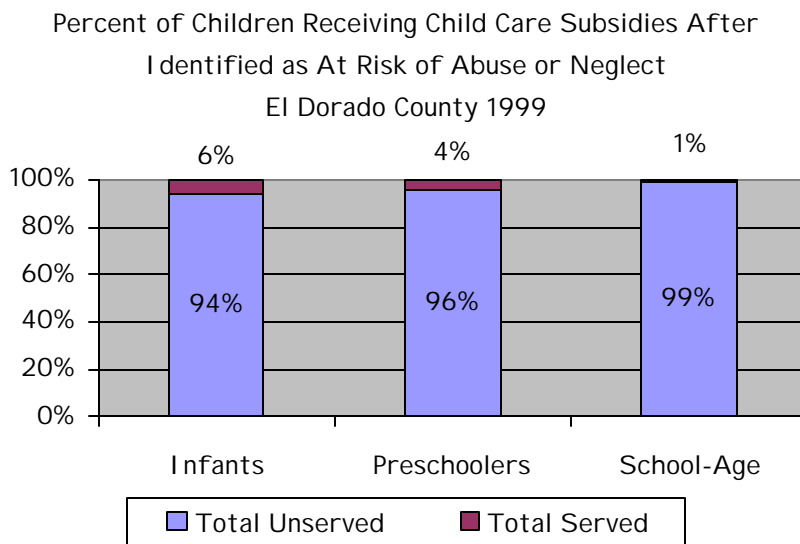
Indicator:

- Increase in the percent of children identified as abused or neglected or at-risk of abuse or neglect receiving child care and development subsidies.

Data Sources

- El Dorado County Department of Social Services, April 2000.
- Survey of Subsidized Child Care Programs, July 2000, El Dorado County Child Care and Development Planning Council.





The number of children identified as at risk as abuse or neglect is defined as the number of Child Protective Services (CPS) cases in by the age of the child. In 1999, the Department of Social Services reported that El Dorado County had a total of 1,987 children between the ages of 0-13 years with open CPS cases. This figure represents 6% of the total population of children in the county. Of those with cases, 305 were infants (0-2 years), 427 were preschoolers (3-5 years) and 1,255 were school-age children (6-13 years).

According to the survey of subsidized child care providers in 2000, only 52 children received child care and development services after being identified as or at risk of abuse or neglect. Of those receiving services, 33% were infants, 37% were preschoolers and 31% were school age children. The referrals are almost equally distributed among the age groups.

These numbers do not reflect the number of children actually referred for care. Referrals are made on a case by case basis and are not currently available. The number of children referred compared against the number served would give a more accurate picture of whether children at risk are receiving services.

With the county's movement toward the implementation of integrated services with a focus on prevention, it is likely that use of respite care will increase and child care providers will be invited to be part of the team caring for children.

The Story

Under the state's Child Care and Development Act, children identified as at risk of abuse or neglect receive a priority for subsidized child care and development services. In order for a child to be eligible for this priority, he or she must have an open case with the County Children's Protective Services and/or a letter from a legally, qualified professional identifying the child as at risk of abuse or neglect. With this letter, a child is deemed as the highest priority for needing subsidized child care and development services.

With 1,997 children between the ages of 0-13 identified as at risk of abuse or neglect and only 52 receiving subsidized child care and development services, the questions for the community are: do more children need these services and are not referred and can the county afford to serve all eligible children?



Community Response

- "We have a special needs child. Finding child care in our area, adequate special needs care is unheard of."
- "I have a special needs infant who currently has child care, but the need in the community is great...need trained special needs child care workers and better pay."
- "My children, three of them, have special needs which has now caused my wife to abandon her career."
- "...I cannot work outside of the home putting a financial strain on our family."
- "We can't get child care because he has special medical needs."

Access for children with special needs

Parents have difficulty finding child care for special needs children because the care is short in supply. Many providers lack specialized training needed to care for children with special needs and those that do have specialized medical skills are simply not affordable. The dilemma of caring for special needs children has forced many parents to cease working outside of the home. In addition to full-time care needs, many families may need part-time, respite from caring for their child.

Children with disabilities are identified through the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) and Local Educational Areas (LEA) and have a written plan to meet the child's educational needs. These plans are referred to as IEPs, Individual Education Plans, or for children under the age of three, IFSPs, Individual Family Service Plans. These plans are the basis for enumerating the number of children identified as having special needs in the county. El Dorado County has two SELPA's reporting a total of 1,321 children with special needs as of December of 1999.

These numbers do not include children who may exhibit signs of emotional or behavioral disorders and do not qualify to receive services under either an IEP or an IFSP. These types of diagnosis may include children with attention deficit disorder (ADD), hyperactivity, depression or children who function below average and fall through the cracks.

Indicator:

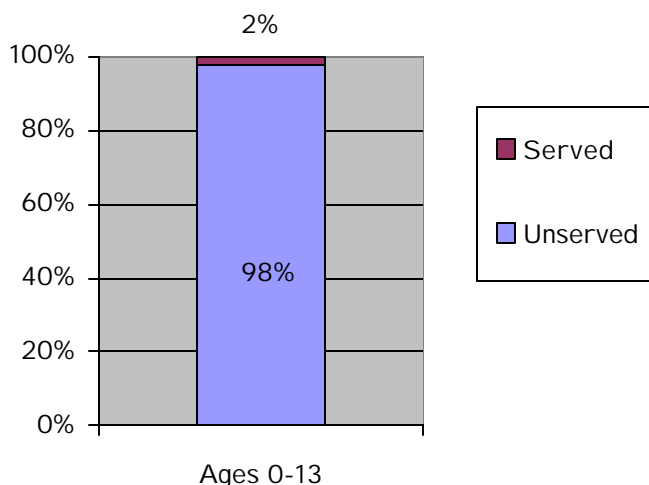
- Increase in the percent of licensed child care and development providers for special needs children needing care.

Data Sources:

- Special Education Student Data Report: December 1, 1999, Enrollment in Selected Age Groups by District, Summary Report: Age Group 0 - 22 years for SELPAs 901 and 911.
- Special Needs Providers, El Dorado County, 2000, Choices For Children.



Capacity to Serve Children With Special Needs in Licensed Child Care, 1999



In 1999, 783 children between 0 and 13 years of age were identified with special needs and may need child care and development services. Of those 783 children, 168 were children under the age of five and 615 were school age children.

Among infants, the disability recorded most often is other health impairments (33%). Both orthopedic impairments and speech and language impairments were found in twenty-two percent of the cases. The disability with the highest incidence for both preschoolers and school age children was speech and language impairments (89% and 81% respectively).

In 2000, only 19 of the providers listed with Choices For Children, the child care resource and referral agency, indicated they are trained to provide care for children with special needs. Assuming each provider cared for one child, only two percent of the child care needs are met. If each provider was trained to serve children with speech and language impairments, 76% of the 783 children needing care could be served.

Under the American Disabilities Act, all licensed child care providers are required to serve children with disabilities; however, parents are not comfortable leaving children with providers who don't have the training to meet the needs of their child. Parents and providers need more resources, trainings and support to bridge this gap in child care and development services.

The Story

Through the planning process, planning council members shared their stories as to why families with special needs children were not accessing child care and development programs. From these discussions the council has learned that many families do not feel they can find a child care provider who can meet the needs of their special needs child.

The council has concluded that there are two major issues in serving children with exceptional needs: training and trust. Child care providers need trainings and resources to serve children with exceptional needs. Parents need to build relationships and trust with that provider. With training and trust building the child care community will have more success in transitioning special needs children into child care.



Community Response

- Many of the children considered from a migrant worker family are typically low income and may qualify and already receive services from other subsidized child care and development programs in the county.
- With the passage of state initiatives questioning citizenship, many families may be eligible to receive services but not willing to identify themselves as from a migrant worker family.
- Many of the migrant worker families live in communities where they have built relationships and trust. Often those families will rely upon each other to meet their child care needs.

Access for children from migrant worker families

Children from migrant worker families are regularly subjected to an unpredictable life. Changes in homes, daily routines and caretakers make life stressful for children in these families (Birckmayer, et al 1975). Child care and development programs can be designed to meet the migratory needs of the these families allowing children the benefits of a consistent educational environment with services delivered in the child's home language.

The State Department of Education provides child development programs that meet the unique needs of children from migrant worker families. These programs are located near the fields, have schedules that follow the seasons, and provide services in the primary languages of the families they serve.

Many families are settling into communities and not relocating to follow the seasonal agriculture. Because these families do not relocate, they do not qualify as being from migrant working families and do not receiving child care subsidies. Additionally, recent immigration policies have distanced migrant families from governmental programs.

Indicator:

- Increase in the percent of licensed child care and development spaces for children from a migrant worker family and needing care.

Data Sources:

- Survey of subsidized child care and development programs in the county.
- El Dorado County Public Health Department.



The Story

According to the State Department of Education, Migrant Education Services, El Dorado County does not have a migrant population. As documented by the County Public Health Department, we know this is not true. According to this report, at least 972 migrant workers and their families live in the Camino area and have established residency in the county.

Unfortunately, even if the county can establish a population of children from a migrant worker family, the definition from the State Department of Education, Child Development Division (SDE/CDD) precludes families in our county from qualifying for subsidized child care and development programs. Item (a)(1) of the SDE/CDD definition bases eligibility upon a family's mobility in following agricultural season. Because families in our county do not move, they are ineligible for these

The California Education Code defines a "migrant agricultural worker family" as a family that has earned at least 50 % of its total gross income from employment in fishing, agriculture, or agriculturally related work during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of application for child care and development services. Children of migrant agricultural worker families are enrolled in subsidized child development programs based upon four priorities. One of which requires that families must follow the crops moving from place to place.

According to a survey of all subsidized child care providers in the county, no children are being served after being identified as from a migrant worker family. Currently there are no statistics collected by the State Department of Education documenting a migrant population in El Dorado County. This fact is confirmed by Even Start, a program that provides literacy programs to migrant families with young children.

In April of 1999, the El Dorado County Public Health Department conducted a report on the number of migrant workers and their families who currently reside in specific sections of El Dorado County. According to their research, there are 976 migrant workers and their families residing in MSSA 23.2, census tracks including Pollock Pines, Camino, Pleasant Valley, Somerset, Fairplay, Mt. Aukum, Omo Ranch, and Grizzly Flat. Although these families would qualify to receive migrant services due to their employment in agriculture, they have established homes and live in the area year round. For this reason, the families do not meet the first requirement of the Education Code, "the family moves from place to place".

Migrant families rely upon seasonal employment and typically qualify for low-income services. They are eligible to receive subsidized child care and development services from other various programs. In order to increase services to migrant families the State Department of Education will need to revise their eligibility criterion.



The Story

Although the data indicates that El Dorado County is meeting the language needs of children in child care and development programs, it is unclear if those providers are serving families in the areas of the county with the highest incidence of linguistic diversity.

Without data broken down by community, it is difficult to determine whether families are truly accessing child care and development programs in their primary language. Additionally, the best local measure the county has for language is the LEP counts taken by the public school system. We can only make an educated guess that language is shared within a family and those families in a district with a high LEP scores would indicate that siblings under the age of five would share those linguistic characteristics.

Access for children from all identifiable linguistic backgrounds

For families that speak little or no English, pre-school can provide a valuable bilingual education (Schwartz 1996). Providing care in a child's primary language builds trust, improves communication and respect. Research indicates a need for children to be served in their home language and culture consistent with their family life (Lally 1995).

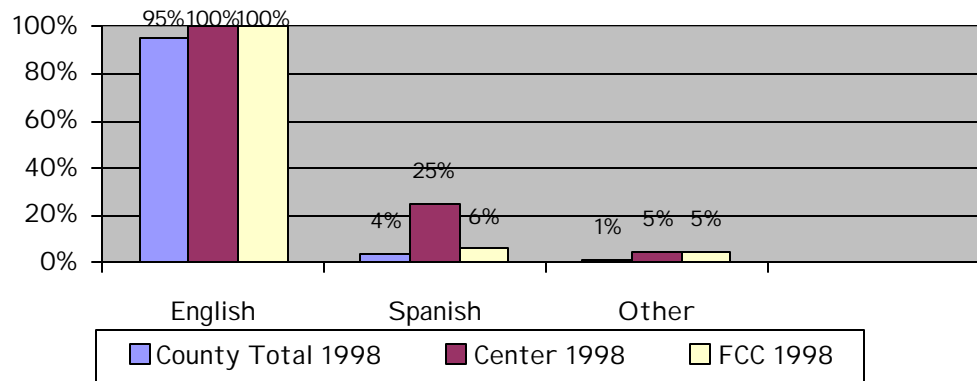
Although the state and federal governments do not offer child care subsidies based upon a family's primary language, it is in the best interest of the child and the community to serve children in their primary language.

Indicator:

- Increase in the percent of licensed child care and development spaces for children in their primary language.

Data Sources:

- Survey of subsidized child care and development programs.
- County Office of Education: Ethnicity and LEP reports.



According to the data, the child care workforce easily exceeds the community's needs for care in the family's primary language county-wide. Unfortunately, this data is not available for communities within the county. Limited English Proficient (LEP) counts from the El Dorado County Office of Education indicate the majority of the 4.7% LEP populations are in the Camino Union Elementary School District and the Lake Tahoe Unified School Districts. It is unknown whether the bi-lingual child care services are concentrated in these districts.



El Dorado County
Child Care and Development
Strategic Plan
2000-2003



Result Area I : Quality

Children will have Quality Child Care and Development Programs.

Indicators:

- Increase in the percentage of licensed child care and development programs in the county that are accredited.
- Increase in the percentage of low staff turnover in licensed child care and development programs.
- Increase in the percentage of licensed child care providers in the county taking some college courses.

Strategy 1: *Support the professional development of child care and development providers by developing opportunities for education, accreditation, training and staff development.*

Action Steps:

1. Develop a matrix of child development education and training opportunities in the county and advertise on the web-site, through the resource and referral, and local provider associations.
2. Identify gaps in training.
3. Sponsor trainings and educational opportunities to fill in gaps and promote professional development.

Strategy 2: *Support professional growth incentives including stipends, increased wages or benefits for provider's increased education or years of experience.*

Action Steps:

1. Develop a county-wide plan to implement AB 212 (CARES)
2. Educate child care and development providers about stipend programs.
3. Develop and implement an evaluation plan for the success of stipend programs.

Strategy 3: *Improve data collection to support working conditions of child care and development providers.*

Action Steps:

1. Survey child care and development community as to what information and/or data is valuable to support the professional development of providers.
2. Identify current survey issues and develop a plan to resolve the issues.
3. Re-survey the provider community with the next community assessment.



Children will have Affordable Child Care and Development Programs.

Indicators:

- Decrease in the monthly costs of child care, by the age of the child, as a percent of the family income for a family of three at or below 75% of the state median income.
- Decrease in the monthly costs of child care, by the age of the child, as a percent of the family income for a family of three at the state median income.

Strategy 1: *Educate employers as to the advantages of offering child care options to their employees including subsidies and on-site child care.*

Action Steps:

1. Identify and contact employers in the county currently implementing employer supported child care models.
2. Identify already established employer supported child care literature.
3. Develop a fact sheet/packet for employers outlining suggested employer supported practices.
4. Develop a plan to distribute information to employers including Kids Expo, chamber recognition and speaking engagements.

Strategy 2: *Educate local and state policy makers about the value of child care and development programs including the need for more subsidies.*

Action Steps:

1. Conduct an economic analysis of child care industry in the county based upon the National Economic Development Law Center.
2. Develop a plan to distribute information collected in analysis.
3. Develop a community event such as a policy makers breakfast to show case local child care and development programs.

Strategy 3: *Improve the data collection for un-served and under-served children and geographic locations in the county.*

Action Steps:

1. Draft a plan for the implementation of a centralized eligibility list for families eligible for subsidized child care.
2. Identify gaps in current data collection system.
3. Implement a system to collect those data elements.
4. Develop an ongoing data collection system to indicate funding priorities for subsidized programs.

Result Area II: Affordability



Result Area III: Accessibility

Children will have Access to Child Care and Development Programs.

Indicators:

- Increase in the percent of children receiving child care subsidies after being identified as having special needs child by the County Special Education Local Planning Area and needing care.
- Increase in the percent of children receiving child care subsidies after being qualified as at risk of abuse or neglect and needing care.

Strategy 1: *Develop a system in the county to provide services to families and child care providers serving children with special needs or children at risk of abuse or neglect.*

Action Steps:

1. Identify what agencies in the community provides services to families with special needs children or children at risk of abuse or neglect.
2. Identify what intake systems those agencies utilize.
3. Identify a specialist(s) who trains and transitions families with special needs children or children at risk of abuse or neglect to serve as a liaison between families and providers.

Strategy 2: *Increase the number of providers who serve special needs children and children at risk of abuse and neglect.*

Action Steps:

1. Identify services provider who work with families with special needs children and children at risk of abuse or neglect by and encourage them to offer trainings to the child care provider community.
2. Identify systems of support for child care and development providers caring for identified children including training, mentoring and resources.
3. Increase the education and training opportunities for providers specific to serving identified families.

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For more information, contact:

Kathi Walker, Coordinator
Child Care and Development Planning Council
6767 Green Valley Road
Placerville, CA 95667

Phone: (530) 295-2312 Fax: (530) 295-1273
www.edcoe.k12.ca.us

El Dorado County Child Care and Development Planning Council

1999-2000 Membership

Membership is jointly appointed by the Board of Supervisors and the Superintendent of Schools as a consumer, provider, community representative, public agency or discretionary appointee. The Council must have equal representation from each category and reflect the ethnic composition of the county.

Liaisons to Council

Liaison to the Superintendent of Education, Vicki L. Barber, Ed. D.

- Lynn B. Lucas, Executive Director, Child Development Programs, El Dorado County Office of Education

Liaison to the Board of Supervisors

- Judi Harkins, Assistant to Supervisor David Solaro, District V

Consumers

- Lisa Harris, Western Slope
- Jenny Hubbard, South Lake Tahoe
- Debra Ward, Western Slope

Providers

- Wendy Burri, St. Stephens Preschool
- Linda Campbell, EDCOE Extended Day
- Kris Neeser, Family Child Care Provider, South Lake Tahoe

Community Representatives

- Lois Denowitz, South Lake Tahoe Women's Shelter
- Eileen Johnson, Child Abuse Prevention Council
- Shelley Shepard, Family Connections

Public Agencies

- Aloha Montgomery, EDC Department of Social Services
- Susanne Milton, EDCOE Child Development Programs
- Sue Stillings, EDC Public Health Department

Discretionary Appointments

- Jennifer Lawrence, Co-Chair, Choices For Children
- Tina Barna, Co-Chair, Choices For Children
- Ginger Swigart, Past Chair, Education Coordinator, EDC Office of Education



El Dorado County Subsidized Child Care and Development Programs

Center Based

Child Development Programs
El Dorado County Office of Education
6767 Green Valley Road, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 622-7130 x270
(Early Head Start 0-3 years, Head Start, State
Preschool 3-5 years, general child care 0-5
years, CalSAFE child care, school age child
care)

Lake Tahoe Child Development Center
3441 Spruce Avenue
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 541-5887
(general child care, 2 ½ -5 years)

Happy Kids Child Care
2635 Cambridge Road
Cameron Park, CA 95682
(530) 676-2223
(general child care 0-3, State Preschool 3-5
years)

Al Tahoe Child Development Center
1195 Rufus Allen, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 544-4813
(State Preschool, 3-5 years)

Lake Tahoe Community College
Child Development Center
1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 541-4660 x288
(general child care, 0-5 years, school age care)

Voucher Payment

Choices For Children
South Lake Tahoe (530) 541-5848
Western Slope (530) 676-0707
(0-13 years)

PACEAPP
1 (800) 541-9922 x124
(0-13 years)

CalWORKs

El Dorado County
Department of Social Services
3057 Briw Road, Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 642-7200
(0-13 years)

Community Colleges/Voucher Payment

Cosumnes River College, El Dorado Center
6699 Campus Drive, Placerville, CA 95667
(916) 642-5648
(0-13 years)

Lake Tahoe Community College
1 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 541-4660 x295
(0-13 years)





Definition of Terms: Child Care and Development Programs

Licensed

There are two types of licenses for child care facilities in California:

Child Care Centers – typically operated outside the licensee's home. Child care centers provide child care supervision to infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-age children. Centers are usually in public buildings. They are located in schools, church facilities and a variety of other settings. Depending on its usable indoor space, the number of restrooms and the size of the outdoor play space, centers can care for virtually any number of children. Separate licenses are required to care for infants, preschool, and school-age children, although care for all three age groups can be provided at a single site. Qualified teachers for centers that care for infants or preschoolers must have completed at least 12 units of specified Early Childhood Education. For private centers with a license for school-age children, the course work may be in other subjects more appropriate for the care of older children.

Family Child Care Homes – always operated in the licensee's own home. Family child care homes are in residential settings and provide a home-like environment. Homes may be rented, owned or leased. Family child care can include care provided in mobile home parks and apartment buildings as well. Small family child care homes can care for up to eight children. Large homes can care for up to 14 children when the care provider has the help of an assistant. The number of children counted in small and large family child care homes includes the licensee's children who are under the age of 10. Family child care homes may care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers or school-age children, and often serve a mixture of these groups.

License Exempt

Unless specifically exempted by statute or regulation, arrangements for providing child care are required to be licensed by the California Department of Social Services. The following settings are exempted from needing a license:

Relative Care – care provided by a parent, stepparent, grandparent, aunt, sister, etc. Care can be in the relative's or the child's home. Any number of children can be in care as long as they are related. For example, a parent has 2 adult children, each of whom has 3 minor children; the grandparent cares for all 6 children. Such an arrangement does not require a license.

Cooperative Care – care provided by the parents of the children. This type of care arrangement is for no more than 12 children and each parent or set of parents rotates as the care giver for all of the children, and each parent or set of parents rotates as the care giver for all of the children. No money is exchanged for the care, which can be provided in a home or a commercial building.



Care for One Family - care provided in the home of the care provider for the children of one family not related to the care provider. The care provided may be taking care of their own children as well. As with relative care, there is no limit on the number of children receiving care, as long as they are from one other family only.

Public Recreation Programs - recreational programs operated by any public entity, often a city, county, or school district. The programs must be operated only during the hours school is not in session and must be for children of kindergarten age and above. The programs must operate for 16 hours or less per week, or for a total of 12 weeks or less in any one year. Recreation programs can also accept children not yet in Kindergarten who are at least 4 years and nine months of age, as long as the program operates for less than 16 hours per week or no more than 12 weeks during any given year. Children under 4 years and nine months may also attend recreation programs as long as no child attends any program for more than 12 hours per week and more than 12 weeks in a given year.

Extended Day Care - care provided to school-age children by a public or private school. Usually, this exemption is for the children who attend a public or private school, and receive care after school at the school site. The after school program is exempt if the school is responsible for the entire program, including employing the staff who operate the program.

Parents-on-Site Child Care - care offered for parents on a short-term basis, usually no more than a few hours, while the parents are participating in an activity such as bowling or physical fitness. Parents must be readily available on the premises at all times. Care for children in shopping centers, malls or ski resorts is required to be licensed because parents are not readily available and could leave the area for extended periods of time.

Nanny Care - care arranged for children in their own home. A nanny hired by the child's parents to provide care in the child's own home would not be required to be licensed. If the nanny were to care for other neighborhood children, the care arrangement would no longer be exempt and would require licensure as a child care center (care outside of the care provider's own home).

Parents in School or Adult Education Child Care - care for children on a school premise while the parent is attending school. Child care provided at a school site when the parent is attending classes on the same premises, and the school is operated by (or contracted to operated by) a public school district, is exempt. As with temporary, short term care, the parent must be readily available.

One-Day-A-Week Care - programs that operate on day per week for four hours or less. These short-duration programs are often arranged by groups of parents, or by church groups, to provide a bit of respite for the parents in the community. Parents may, but are not required, to serve as the care providers.



Instructional Child Care - offer instruction to school-age children for no more than 30 consecutive days during school vacations or breaks. Such programs include bible schools and summer craft schools. Children younger than school-age can also attend for up to 15 consecutive days.

Activities-Based Child Care - recreational programs, similar to those found at public parks or schools during the summer. Activities-based child care is exempt if children can come and go at their will, and there is no monitoring as to attendance or length of stay. In these programs, children are supervised only to the extent that they do not injure or harm themselves while participating in the activities offered. Such activities may include soccer, baseball, softball, or arts and crafts. Centers that provide drop-in care for younger children while parents are shopping or involved in other activities must be licensed.

Although the above programs are not required to have their staff screened by licensing, checks of criminal and child abuse histories can be obtained through TrustLine.

Unlicensed

Safe, quality child care is a public policy priority in California. License requirements mandates health and safety protections for children in care settings, require criminal record background checks for all care providers, and establish educational qualifications for teachers and directors of child care centers.

If not specifically exempted as described previous license exempt section, care and supervision of children without a license is illegal. Unlicensed care providers can receive a civil penalty or misdemeanor citation. Direct questions regarding whether a child care arrangement requires a license should be directed to the local licensing district offices.

State Child Care and Development Programs

Child Care Subsidies - two primary agencies provide child care subsidies to low-income and welfare families: the California Department of Education, and the California Department of Social Services. The dual goals of both California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services are to support quality child care that prepares children for success in school and to help families to achieve self-sufficiency.

California Department of Education - administers many State and Federal programs that assist low-income families to pay for child care. Through the Child Development Division, the California Department of Education also is the lead agency in California for administering the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant.

California Department of Social Services - operates child care payment programs so parents on welfare can work, attend school or training. Through its Welfare to Work Division, Child care Programs Bureau, the Department administers subsidized child care programs through the State's 58 county welfare departments.



Welfare related child care programs are being consolidated into a three stage system. These stages can provide seamless access to child care for low-income families from their initial intake welfare until they become self-sufficient and exceed 75% of the state's median income.

Stage One: Families on welfare whose need for child care is unstable or limited term. Examples include families, which have recently or not yet obtained employment or are involved in short-term job search or training programs. County welfare departments administer the child care programs during this stage.

Stage Two: Welfare families whose need for child care has become more stable or who have recently moved off welfare. Other parents may be in long term training programs or employed, while still being eligible for welfare. Families who have left welfare may be eligible to continue to receive child care in this stage for an additional twenty-four months. Under this stage, child care is administered by the Alternative Payment Program agency, which may include a county welfare department that has contracted with the California Department of Education, Child Development Division.

Stage Three: Families whose income level does not exceed 75% of the State's median income. Families with earned income will be expected to share in child care costs, depending on income level. Child Care is administered by Alternative Payment Programs agencies that are not county welfare departments. Funding for this stage is more limited, and families may be put on waiting lists until opportunities become available.

Federal Child Care and Development Programs

Head Start - In 1965, the federal government established the Head Start Programs as part of the "War on Poverty." Head Start center based and home based programs have been widely recognized as providing effective preschool care for three and four year old children of low-income families. Head Start is a program model that provides a comprehensive range of services for the child and family including services to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological needs. A major component of the program is the emphasis on parent participation.



Alternative Payment Programs

Alternative Payment Programs contract with the California Department of Education to provide subsidies for the cost of child care. Subsidies are available for care provided in private centers, family child care homes and certain license-exempt child care settings. This subsidy usually takes the form of a monthly “vendor” payment to the provider selected by the family.

Under California's child care system, parents have full responsibility to select child care arrangements that meet their own unique needs and desires. Parents who want help choosing a child care setting for their child are offered assistance. Some provider education may also be offered.

County welfare departments offer a similar vendor-voucher program. Some counties have also contracted with the California Department of Education to operate a local Alternative Payment Program agency. Most Alternative Payment Programs are co-located with local resource and referral agencies.

Resource and Referral Programs

Publicly funded Resource and Referral agencies (R&R's) are located in every county in California. There are currently 90 R&R offices operating throughout the state. Their service to parents, providers, businesses and others concerned about child care include:

- Assisting parents in locating and choosing child care in their area.
- Providing general information about licensing procedures and regulations.
- Recruiting, training and providing technical support to child care providers.
- Conducting workshops for parents and providers.
- Providing resources on quality child care
- Administering or referring to subsidized food programs.
- Requesting TrustLine clearances for families utilizing license exempt child care who are interested in determining if babysitters are free of criminal records or substantiated child abuse complaints.
- Processing fingerprints for in-home and licenses exempt subsidized child care providers.

R&R's provide information describing the community's child care services and delivery system. They help identify and target child care needs in the community and focus efforts to recruit new providers into the area. Working closely with other agencies involved in child care, R&R's collaborate on efforts to develop community-based solutions to local child care issues.



Trustline

Child care providers in licensed homes, centers, and other persons required by the state subsidy guidelines, must receive a criminal record clearance as part of the licensing process. TrustLine is the California Department of social services' registry of all other types of license exempt in-home child care providers who have passed a background screening. All care givers listed with TrustLine have been cleared through a fingerprint check of records at the California Department of Justice. This means they have no criminal convictions or substantiated child abuse reports in California that indicate they should not be providing care for children.

Employment agencies are also required by law to register their child care providers with TrustLine upon placement. Before TrustLine, parents and others using babysitters and private nannies would not know if the person to whom they were entrusting the care of their child had a criminal or child abuse history.

Anyone can check to see if a provider is registered on TrustLine by calling (800) 822-8490 and giving the person's full name, driver's license number or other approved identification. If your care giver or the person you are interviewing is not registered, just call TrustLine to learn how they can apply. Nearly all child care providers who receive a child care subsidy either from the California Department of Education or the California Department of Social Services are required to be cleared through the TrustLine registry. TrustLine is continually updated. Caregivers that have committed a subsequent crime will be removed.



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