

Sacramento CARES



Program Survey 2009



Summary of 2009 Survey

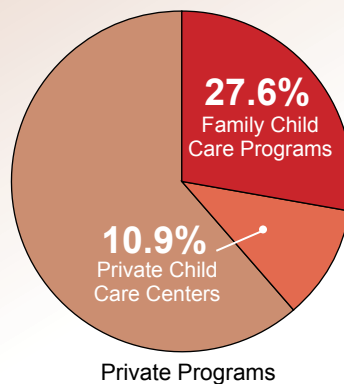
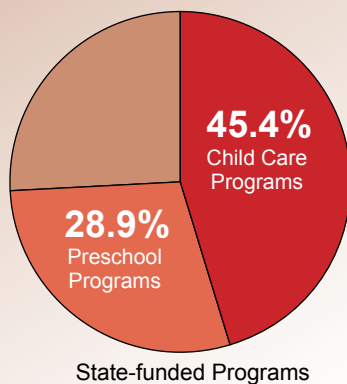
Between May 30, 2009 and July 15, 2009, Child Action, Inc. conducted a survey of Sacramento CARES program participants to identify a number of factors, including longevity of participation in the program, effects of the program on professional development and program quality, as well as challenges and barriers to participation in the program. In 2008, the Sacramento CARES program distributed 421 stipends to early care and education professionals of which 323 responded to the survey to share the program's impact on their lives.

Current CARES Participants

Since the program's inception in 2001, 21% of survey respondents have participated in CARES five or more years. Respondents reflect a balanced representation of child care program types, with the highest percentage of participation from state-funded preschool (28.9%) and child care programs (45.4%), as well as family child care programs (27.6%). Private child care centers accounted for 10.9%. A small percentage (1.3%) of respondents indicated they worked for Head Start, migrant care or other program types. Of the 304 who responded to this question, 43 indicated they have worked in multiple child care program types.

Where CARES participants work

Totals may exceed 100% because 43 survey respondents indicated they have worked for multiple program types.





Sacramento CARES program participants are required to demonstrate that they hold or have applied for one of six child development permits issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. There was growth in the number and types of permits held by participants from the time they started CARES

through May 2009. The one exception was the number of Teacher permits, which decreased by 2%, most likely because participants were able to meet the requirements of the Master Teacher, Site Supervisor or Director permits. The number of Site Supervisor permits held reflects the greatest increase, from 42 to 87 (14%) of survey respondents now holding the permit.

Number of participants who earned a Site Supervisor permit

45

Simultaneously participants demonstrated a growth in education levels as they participated in the Sacramento CARES program. Initially 157 respondents indicated they had some college when they started the CARES program. That number dropped by 10.5% by May 20, 2009, with 33 participants moving on to obtain an associates degree. The increase in the percentage of Bachelors degrees and post-graduate work is also significant, demonstrating the effect of the CARES program in motivating and assisting participants in seeking higher education. Six respondents completed a Bachelors degree and 25 went on to complete post-graduate work.

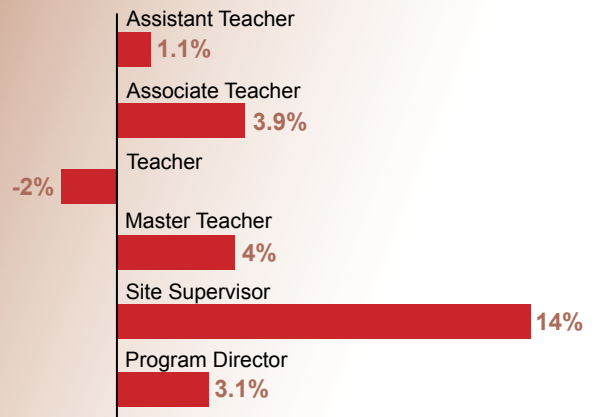
25

Number of participants who went on toward post-graduate work



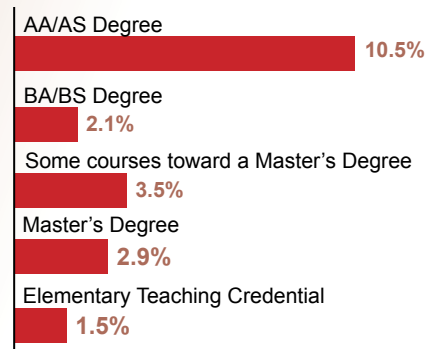
Growth in Child Development permits held by CARES participants

(From individual start date through May 2009)



Growth in education levels held by CARES participants

(From individual start date through May 2009)





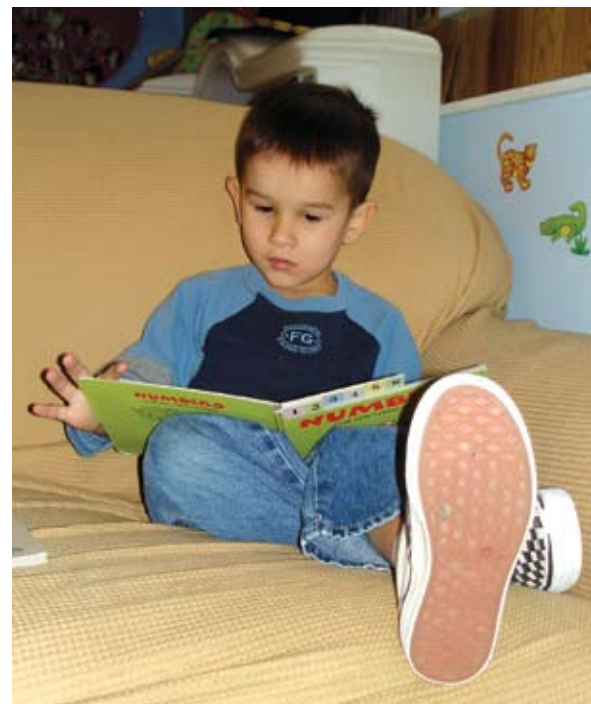
Impact and Effect on Children, the Community, Child Care Programs and Staff

The 2009 Sacramento CARES Survey was introduced at the Sacramento CARES stipend distribution session on May 30, 2009. Participants were asked to complete the survey and then discuss the impact the program has had on them. Participants noted the program has:

- Helped motivate and move people towards an AA, BA or MA
- Provided opportunities for professional growth through workshops, etc.
- Opened minds to how to work with parents and colleagues
- Helped build self-esteem and confidence of participants
- Motivated participants to go beyond basic requirements needed for work
- Motivated participants to get permits and move up the matrix
- Helped improve program quality
- Helped participants change/identify career paths
- Facilitated job advancement

Program directors in attendance credited the program with:

- Lowering staff turnover
- Improving staff camaraderie and creating a family atmosphere
- Program improvement
- Environmental assessments that have made managers more receptive to changes in the program



85%

of those surveyed noted that the CARES program has increased their commitment to working with families and children.

79%

noted the CARES program motivated them to pursue professional development activities.

78%

said it helped them take advantage of opportunities to continue their education.

No longer in CARES because . . .

We asked survey respondents who indicated they are no longer participating in the program to identify the challenges to their participation. The top five reasons they gave were:

1. Could not balance work, school and family obligations
2. Classes were not available at convenient times
3. No longer in the profession
4. Could not afford college tuition
5. Wanted to give others a chance to receive a stipend

Additional reasons for no longer participating in the CARES program or leaving the field included: moving, opening own program, student teaching, disability, unable to complete program requirements, and working on or having completed educational objectives outside of the CARES program.

Respondents who remained in the profession but changed employment indicated better pay as the primary reason (8.8%) for changing programs, followed closely by more opportunities for professional growth (7.7%) and more opportunities for advancement (7.1%).

For those who left the profession all together, the number one reason for leaving the field was termination or being laid off. Better pay, benefits and more opportunities for advancement were cited as other reasons remaining respondents left the child care field.

While the majority of respondents plan to continue participating in CARES, six percent are unsure if they will apply again. They are unsure they will meet qualifications either by not completing the necessary coursework/professional development requirements or because they are unsure of the future of their programs and their employment.

Additional reasons for not continuing with Sacramento CARES include:

- Moving/working out of county
- Retirement
- Disability
- Too much paperwork
- Balancing work and family obligations
- Reached academic goal
- Tax - reduction of refund and penalties

#1

Reason for leaving the field was termination or layoff.



8.8%

Respondents who remained in the profession but changed programs for better pay.

7.7%

Respondents who remained in the profession but changed programs for more opportunities for professional growth.

7.1%

Respondents who remained in the profession but changed programs for more advancement opportunities.





Survey respondents commented on how Sacramento CARES influenced their education, professional development and skills as caregivers and teachers.

“Participating in the CARES program has had a very positive impact on the quality of care being provided to the children in my program. I feel like I understand the children in my program more ...”

“The children feel more valued because I have the education to better serve them.”

“I’ve become a better teacher and team player.”

“I have used some of the money to buy some games and supplies to add to the curriculum to help in the children’s development.”

“It has improved my teaching skills and how to communicate with parents.”

“I feel I increased the quality of my program.”

“I’m more effective in the classroom as a teacher and as a co-worker mentoring others.”

“Since I have been participating in the CARES program it has improved my whole outlook on the work and it has helped me to value my job and the work I do.”

“The children have benefited from my increased education level and the classroom pets have benefited by having a better habitat.”

“I am more informed, more invested and better able to support others.”

Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) is a program designed to support the education and professional development of the Sacramento early care and learning workforce.

The target population of the CARES program is early childhood education staff, including home-based, licensed and license-exempt family child care providers, family child care assistants and center based staff in public and private child care programs in Sacramento County. The program encourages retention of caregivers in the field of early care and education and provides cash incentives or resources to further professional development. Professional development may consist of workshop participation to completion of college coursework.

The Sacramento CARES program is funded through grants provided by First 5 Sacramento Commission and the California Department of Education, Child Development Division. The Sacramento County Local Child Care & Development Planning Council develops the policy for the program, and the program is administered by Child Action, Inc.

For information on the Sacramento CARES program, contact Child Action, Inc at (916) 369-0191.

Funding provided by:



This report was funded in part by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division, and does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department or Division.