
PROPOSAL TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

from the

Sacramento County Local Child Care and Development Planning Council

June 8, 2000

The California Children and Families First Act of 1998 (Proposition 10) will allocate over one billion dollars of tobacco tax funds in the years 1998-2000 to improve early childhood development for children in the prenatal stage to age five and their families. Specifically, the initiative specifies the creation on an integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative system of information and services that emphasizes:

- ❖ *Parental education and support*
- ❖ *High quality accessible and affordable child care*
- ❖ *Child health care programs*

The Importance of the First Years of Life

The first five years of life are critical for children's physical, cognitive, and emotional development. A growing body of research suggests that early experiences have substantial influence on a child's future cognitive, behavioral, educational and economic outcomes. "Recent research on brain development in infants shows that the most rapid and important stages of a child's brain development occur before the age of five. The number of brain cell connections an infant forms is important since these connections constitute the neural network that enables a child to sort experiences, think and solve problems later in life. Babies raised by caring, attentive adults in safe, predictable environments, are generally better suited for learning once in school than those raised with less attention in a less secure environment."¹

¹ California Budget Project March, 1999

The Role of High Quality Preschool and Child Care Programs in Early Childhood Development

"This isn't about ideology or philosophy—it's about facts. The issue is whether the care children get while their parents are working will be enough to help the kids get a good start in life, or whether it will be the kind of care that ultimately damages their development and endangers the public." Sanford Newman, President of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

The **Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study, 1995**² found that children in higher quality preschool classrooms showed better language ability, pre math skills, viewed themselves more positively, had warmer relationships with teachers, and more advanced social skills than children in low quality classrooms. Furthermore, a 1999 update of this report found that quality care has a lasting affect on children in that the positive development noted in the preschool years continued at least through Kindergarten and the end of second grade.

A more recent study, the **Abecedarian Project**,³ followed children from low-income families in North Carolina from infancy to age twenty-one. It found that good early childhood education positively affects reading and mathematics skills. Participants in the study consistently outperformed their peers in cognitive and academic tests, were more likely to attend college or hold high-skilled jobs and were less likely to become a parent by age twenty one.

It's predecessor, the now famous 1960's **Perry Preschool Project**, also followed children enrolled in a high quality preschool program through the age of twenty one, and found the same positive outcomes. Children attending the Perry preschool program showed higher rates of graduation from high school, more college enrollment, less teenage pregnancy and lower criminal activity than a peer group who did not receive a preschool experience.

² Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study, 1995 & 1999. University of North Carolina, University of Colorado, UCLA and Yale.

³ Abecedarian Project, October 1999. US Department of Education

What is the Current Status of Child Care?

"It is extremely important to understand that the positive influences of child care on children's development are only found when the child care is high quality."⁴

Carollee Howes, PHD UCLA

The overwhelming majority of children today are in child care before entering school. In 1995, nearly 13 million of the 21 million children under the age of six were in child care. Only fourteen percent of children spend all of their first three years at home with their mothers. Research, however is showing that the quality of child care varies, with the majority of services providing mediocre to poor care. As a result too many children receive low-quality care.

- As recently as April 28, 2000 Sanford Newman, President of **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids**, a national anti-crime group whose membership includes police chiefs, prosecutors and victims, released a study underscoring the problems of parents and children in low-income families. "Much of the child care American's children are receiving is substandard", Sanford Newman reported, citing new studies that show one in ten preschool centers and four in ten infant care centers are of such poor quality they may jeopardize the child's development.
- A February 2000 report from the Growing Up In Poverty Project, **Remember the Children**,⁵ explores the experience of mothers in three states under Welfare Reform. "Welfare reform is built upon a central policy pillar: Women receiving cash assistance should find and hold down a job. This necessarily requires that their preschool-age child be placed in a child care setting." This federal mandate placed upon families receiving cash assistance begs the question: "Is welfare reform pushing children into sub-standard child care?" Their short answer is, "Yes", leading to a second question: "If most low-income women can only find bad-to-mediocre child care options in their neighborhoods, then is there not a fundamental public interest in expanding and improving the quality of these options?"
- An October 1999 report on child care, by the National Council of Jewish Women, **"Opening a New Window on Child Care"**, portrays a world much changed in thirty years in terms of need for child care services; and sadly

⁴ "Child Care Quality" Carollee Howes, University of California, Los Angeles. October 1999.

⁵ **Remember The Children** Growing Up In Poverty Project Wave 1 Findings—California, Connecticut, Florida, February, 2000.

unchanged in terms of the quantity and quality of child care services available to address the increase in need. “Studies suggest that child care needs to be more than just a custodial arrangement. The exposure of children to positive learning experiences is critical to their emotional, social and intellectual development in the first few years of their lives. The studies also suggest that high quality child care is not an issue that affects only low-income children or children considered at risk. Good child care is important to all children.”⁶

- A **1997 synthesis of research**, presented in a policy brief published by the National Center for Early Development and Learning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, showed that all the reviewed studies consistently rated quality of care below minimum levels, with infant programs rating below preschool programs.
- The **Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study**⁷ published in **1995** came to the same disturbing conclusions. Six out of seven child care centers provided mediocre to poor care and one in eight provided care that could jeopardize children’s safety and development.
- **1994 HHS Inspector General Study**⁸ found more than 1,000 violations in 169 child care facilities in five states.

⁶ Opening A New Window On Child Care, 1999. National Council of Jewish Women

⁷ Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study, 1995 & 1999. University of North Carolina, University of Colorado, UCLA and Yale.

⁸ Nationwide Review Health and Safety Standards at Child Care Facilities. 1994 HHS Inspector General Study.

What Constitutes High Quality Child Care

“Studies show that quality child care depends on good, long-term relationships between children and well-trained child care providers. However many child care workers receive poverty level wages and have no incentive to further their training. Children will not receive quality care until workers earn a decent wage and receive high quality training. Compensation must be linked to professional development”

*Statement of Principles National Council of Jewish Women
Opening A New Window On Child Care, October, 1999*

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development describes the best child care setting as characterized by **smaller groups, high adult-child ratios, less authoritarian** attitudes expressed by caregivers and physical environments that are **safe, clean and stimulating**. The quality of the time children spend in child care was found to be more important than the quantity of time they spent.

Quality child care is dramatically linked to the **knowledge and skill** of the care giver. Numerous studies underscore the link between really good results and the dedication, knowledge and compassion of the caregiver

- In an update of the Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes Study, 1999, research demonstrates that high quality preschool and child care programs improve children’s outcomes if **staff are adequately trained and compensated**.
- Dr. Carollee Howes, of the Department of Education, UCLA⁹ cites two consistent components of child care quality that best explain the links between child care quality and children’s outcomes. These are the **relationship between the child and the caregiver** and a **stimulating learning environment**. She finds that the most consistent and best predictor of high quality care is the work environment and compensation of the child care providers.

Retention of well educated, skilled child caregivers provides the stability of caregiving and continuity of care that promotes the development of trusting, reciprocal social relationships and attitudes of experimentation and intellectual curiosity that are a necessary part of a child’s success in school and later life. In the 1999 Report, “Opening A New Window on Child Care”, the National Council of Jewish Women identifies three barriers to quality child care that need public policy attention:

1) High Staff Turnover: “In most industries the wages of workers rise when the demand for their services increases. In the world of child care, however, the demand for skilled child care workers has never been greater, yet wages remain

⁹ “Child Care Quality” Carollee Howes, Department of Education, UCLA October, 1999

extraordinarily low. And because the average child care worker cannot earn a living wage, turnover is high and the quality of care suffers.”

2) **Low participation in professional development and training:** “Low compensation, however, is not the only barrier to attracting and retaining quality child care workers. Another contributing factor is that relatively low numbers of employees are able to take advantage of professional development and training.”

3) **Shortage of child care facilities:** “We must consider the need to develop the capacity for our community to build appropriate facilities for the care and education of children. This will require a serious effort to link the local planning departments, financial institutions and redevelopment agencies with the child care community to expand the capacity to serve children and families.”

In order to improve the quality of care to Sacramento’s children, we must seriously consider two issues:

- How do we build a highly skilled workforce with the knowledge and passion necessary to raise healthy children?
- How do we build facilities that are designed for child care and enhance the quality of care for children?¹⁰

¹⁰ Opening A New Window On Child Care, 1999. National Council of Jewish Women

Child Care in Sacramento County

“The overarching principle guiding the development of this plan is the belief that children who are provided with opportunities to learn and be stimulated in accordance with their developmental stages while their parent are engaged in the workforce will be ready to learn and become self sufficient adults”
“Parents Earning Children Learning”
1997 Child Care Plan for Sacramento County

In 1997 the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council projected that there were almost 29,380 children under the age of five children needing licensed child care services.¹¹ Another 30,000 were identified living in families with a need for child care that probably relied on kinship and exempt care providers.

Child Care Supply: Child care in Sacramento County is provided by a broad range of licensed and unlicensed providers. There are 336 child care centers and 1,815 family child care homes licensed to care for approximately 24,000 under the age of five or about eighty percent of the need

- Three hundred and sixty one providers speak more than one language.
- Over 200 providers operate during non-traditional hours and days
- Less than thirty programs have earned accreditation for their programs that meets national standards for program quality.

Child Care Workers: It is estimated that approximately 2,221 directors, teachers and teaching assistants are employed by child care centers in the Sacramento community. Another 1,815 are self-employed as family child care providers, who employ an additional 454 assistants. The total child care workforce is upwards of 4,400 individuals.

- “Profile of the Sacramento County Child Care Workforce” (1998) reported that the average starting wage for teachers is \$13,108 per year, or \$7.24 per hour. Assistants earn an average starting wage of \$6.36 per hour.
- A family child care provider’s gross income in Sacramento County averages \$22,691 per year. After accounting business expenses, most providers yield low profits. For example after expenses, providers in Sacramento County clear an average of \$7,462 per year, or \$2.45 per hour.¹²

Educational Requirements: There are minimal requirements to become a family child care home provider, virtually no requirements for exempt providers and very structured coursework at the college level for child care center teachers

¹¹ “Parents Earning, Children Learning” Sacramento County Local Child Care Plan May, 1997

¹² “Profile of the Sacramento County Child Care Workforce”. Child Action, 1998

and directors. The courses are offered regularly through the Los Rios Community College District.

- A **teacher** in a private child care center must complete 12 units of early childhood education. Those who work in publicly subsidized programs must complete 24 units of early childhood education and 16 units of general education to earn the Child Development Teacher Permit.
- A **Director** in a private child care center must complete an additional three units in administration. Directors in a publicly subsidized program must complete an additional 8 units in administration.
- **Family Child Care** providers must complete 15 hours of instruction in Health and Safety Practices including Pediatric CPR and First Aid. The community colleges offer coursework and certificates in Family Child Care, but college units are not required to become licensed.
- **Exempt Providers** by definition are not required to meet any educational standards. Those who care for children, whose care is subsidized by the government, must have a criminal records clearance.

In Sacramento County the provider community, both family child care providers and child care center teachers, are above the national average in their level of education and training. According to the “Profile on the Sacramento County Child Care Workforce”,¹⁰ the educational profile of teachers and assistants in Sacramento County reveals an well-educated work force with specialized training in early childhood education. Educational levels of Sacramento teachers are significantly higher than those of child care teachers national wide. Over seventy percent of the family child care providers have some college or a college degree or higher. Clearly, this reflects the policy of the Los Rios Community College District to develop and provide training that is meaningful and accessible to working professionals in partnership with community based organizations, local government and child care providers.

Child Care Support Services: There are other county and state funded support systems for child care providers and workers in the Sacramento area.

- The county currently administers two projects designed to **recruit 200 CalWORKS** recipients into **Careers in Early Childhood Education**. These projects, while preparing small cohorts of students to become teachers, also help child care centers in the assessment and development of program quality.
- The California Department of Education sponsors two state **Mentor Projects**. The Sacramento Chapter has evaluated and selected 15 exemplary teachers

and directors of child care centers to serve as mentors to new teachers and directors.

- Sponsorship by the Bank of America and Hewlett Packard created a fledgling **Family Child Care Mentor Project** in 1997, which has evaluated and selected 15 exemplary family child care mentors who are providing mentor support to over 75 new family child care providers.
- **WestEd Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers Trainer Program** was developed out of concern for the critical shortage of quality care for infants and toddlers. WestEd, in collaboration with the California Department of Education, created a comprehensive training system, The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers, for both center-based caregivers and family child care providers. The program's goal is to develop meaningful training materials that are based on sound theoretical principles and proven practices for caregivers who need comprehensive, on-site technical assistance and training in every aspect of infant/toddler care.

Each of these model programs provides quality support to the existing child care workforce in Sacramento County and could be expanded to serve more programs.

Recommendations of the Sacramento County Local Child Care and Development Planning Council

Sacramento County needs a coherent system of professional development and support for early childhood teachers, assistants and home providers that will enhance and improve their ability to care for children, support families and coordinate with local elementary schools and other family support services necessary to insure a child's success.

It is the belief of the Sacramento County Child Care and Development Planning Council that investments in the people, the facilities and the programs of the Sacramento child care and early childhood education community will greatly improve the health and welfare of young children in our community.

It is also the belief of the Sacramento County Child Care and Development Planning Council that investments made in the recruitment and training of exempt and non-English speaking caregivers will greatly improve the health and welfare of young children in our community.

It is our recommendation that the Children and Families Commission of Sacramento County improve the availability of high quality accessible and affordable child care services using five basic strategies:

- Recruitment and Retention of child care workers
- Professional development and support for child care workers
- Improvement of program quality in child care centers and family child care homes
- Expansion and enhancement of the facilities available for the provision of child care services
- Creation of partnerships between local child care providers and elementary schools that will prepare children for a smooth transition into kindergarten and set the groundwork for a successful school experience

Goals and Objectives

Improving Child Care Quality and Capacity

Sacramento County can improve its child care system and create a coherent plan for the recruitment, development and retention of qualified care givers that will benefit over 17,773 children under the age of five each year in the following ways:

- 1. Recruitment and Retention: Create incentives for staff to enter and stay in the child care profession which link improvement in professional skills with compensation and benefits**
 - a) Improve salaries and benefits through cash incentives for increased professional development through a **Child Development Corps**.
 - b) Establish a **Substitute Registry** for child care centers and family child care homes that will provide qualified caregivers when staff shortages occur.

- 2. Professional Development: Improve training and support opportunities for all child care programs, including exempt care and non-English speaking caregivers**
 - a) Provision of **training** in child development, infant mental health, health and safety, discipline and behavior problems, and/or working with children with developmental disabilities.
 - b) Expansion of **mentor programs** for centers and homes
 - c) Creation of **mentor support** for exempt and non-English speaking providers.

- 3. Program Quality: Improve program quality in child care centers and family child care homes through education, assessment and accreditation.**
 - a) Creation of incentives for the improvement of child care centers and homes which apply for and/or meet **national standards for excellence**.
 - b) Expansion of **Infant/Toddler Trainer Project**, which will provide support, technical assistance and training to providers and centers that is integrated within communities.
 - c) Assist **exempt providers** in becoming licensed and trained.

4. Facility Development: Enhance existing facilities and develop new child care capacity

- a) Site improvement grants to assist family child care homes or centers with **licensing facility barriers** or to improve the quality, health and safety of the environment.
- b) Grants for **playground improvement** to meet national safety standards
- c) **Child Care Facilities Fund** for development of technical and financial assistance to local child care providers, business and community organizations.

5. Community and School Partnerships: Enhance the linkages between child care centers, family child care homes, exempt providers and elementary schools to promote a child's success in school.

- a) Provide grants to school districts to develop partnerships with child care providers and principals and kindergarten teachers of elementary schools to plan for the **smooth transition from child care to elementary school**.
- b) Provide grants to school districts to develop developmentally appropriate **school readiness programs** for child care providers and parents that includes regular orientation and training for child care providers.

Enhancing Staff Recruitment and Retention

Goal: Recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce of child development professionals who will provide consistent, high quality care for Sacramento children and families.

Desired Results:

1. Ten percent reduction in child care center employee turnover by the end of each year.
2. Ten percent reduction in the number of family child care homes and child care centers operating over capacity due to staff shortages by the end of each year.

Outcome: Twelve thousand children will receive high quality care from a consistent, trained corps of adults with whom they have continuous, reciprocal, nurturing relationships.

Cost Estimate:

\$2,163,000

Recommendations:

I. Sacramento County Child Development Corps

The goal of the Sacramento County Child Development Corps is to create a **well-trained and adequately compensated Corps** of Child Development Professionals in our county.

Research consistently shows that the presence of such a workforce is key to increasing and maintaining the quality of services offered to children. This would be accomplished by providing incentives through cash stipends to enhance the salaries of teachers and providers whom:

- Have successfully completed the minimum requirement of 12 Units in Early Childhood Education that are required for the Child Development Associate teachers permit
- Have worked for one consecutive year in the same program
- Are actively continuing education and professional development activities

The Corps will be structured to offer financial resources to encourage child care teachers and providers to remain in the field and seek ongoing training and formal education. This incentive will be offered in the form of cash stipends made available to child development teachers and providers who have demonstrated their commitment to working in child development programs.

Cash Stipends will be awarded for two levels of successful completion of educational goals.

- **Level One** encourages participants to attain their Child Development Teacher Permit, 40 College units. There is a minimum requirement of 12 college units in Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD) and a completed full year of employment in one child care program. To remain in the Corps in the consecutive years following enrollment, members would be required to complete a minimum of 3 units in ECE/CD or equivalent hours of professional development. The stipend amount ranges from \$500 to \$1,250 and increases as Corps members complete additional education and maintain employment at the same child care program. This is in an effort to encourage stability of staffing in child care to offer the most consistent level of caregiving for children.
- **Level Two** encourages participants to continue their education towards Director permits and Associates and Bachelors degrees. The Corps would continue the theme of incentives for continuing education awarding stipends ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 based on academic levels of completion. The requirement to maintain employment in the same program for one-year minimum to be stipend eligible remains. In addition to maintain Corps membership there is a continuing education requirement of 21 hours of professional growth per year.

Cost Estimates: \$1,883,000

Process: One thousand child care workers would receive an average grant of \$1,883 per year. This will effect approximately 12,000 children.

There is a strong potential for the receipt of **matching funds** for the Child Development Corps from the State Commission on Children and Families and the 2000/2001 state budget. The original legislation, defining the concept and structure of a statewide Child Development Corps, was introduced by Assemblymember Aaroner in the 1998 legislative session. The legislation has been amended in the 1999 legislative session to provide a state match to local efforts to implement a Child Development Corps.

II. Sacramento Child Care Substitute Registry

In 1997 the Local Child Care Plan, "Parents Earning, Children Learning", identified a critical staffing shortage in the child care industry. This shortage is a product of low wages and poor benefits which contribute to the 39% turnover rate for teachers in Sacramento County.¹³ The implementation of class size reduction in the K-12 educational system provided career advancement opportunities for many child development teachers who became elementary school teachers. It as well contributed to the shortage of child care workers. In the year 2000, these conditions have only worsened with the good economic times and low unemployment rates.

Child Care Centers have experienced increasing difficulty in finding qualified employees and maintaining the required staff/child ratios and thus, program quality. Substitutes are quickly employed as full-time workers. The Sacramento Community is in need of a recruitment and job placement program that can develop a pool of substitute workers that are available to work in local child care centers and homes.

The registry will recruit, screen, and place qualified employees with child care providers and centers. The substitutes will receive a wage and benefits attractive enough that substitutes may be able to stay in the registry rather than seek full time employment at a lower wage. child care centers and family child care homes will be charged a flat rate per hour for the substitute. Payment to the substitute will be made by the administering agency.

Similar substitute registries have been successful in the counties of Santa Clara and Alameda.

Cost Estimates: \$280,000
Start-up and operating costs necessary to maintain the substitute registry are based on approximately 100 substitutes averaging 20 hours per month and 100 centers and homes participating each month. Cost for administration of the registry is estimated at \$40,000 for the first year. This includes recruitment, training, fingerprinting, placement and fiscal services. Cost for implementation and stabilization \$280,000.

¹³ A Profile of the Sacramento County Child Care Workforce, 1998

Professional Development

It is the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council's belief that quality child care is dependent upon the continual professional development the people who provide the children's education and care. As we seek to stabilize and improve the wages and benefits for this profession, we also seek to establish clear career ladders, within the education and human service profession, that are associated with continual professional development and achievement.

Goal: Improve the quality of child care services through creation of professional development opportunities for child care providers within Sacramento County.

Desired Results

- Community based courses available in early childhood education are increased by ten percent each year.
- College coursework in early childhood education is provided in the first language of the student.
- Three hundred child care teachers, directors and family child care providers are counseled by an accredited mentor each year.
- One hundred exempt providers receive assistance and support from home visitation and mentor programs.

Outcome: Five thousand children each year receive care from trained providers who are participating in continued education and professional development activities leading to high levels of education and professional achievement.

Cost Estimate: **\$320,000**

Recommendations:

I. Expansion of Educational Opportunities

Develop and expand the ability of the Los Rios Community College District to provide collaborative, community based courses to early childhood professionals in the language most appropriate for the student.

It is our recommendation that the Commission provide funding to expand the ability of the Community College system to collaborate with community based partners and provide coursework in the first language of the student, in the community of the student, or at the workplace of the student.

- Child care training materials should be translated into the Spanish, Hmong, Russian, and other languages.

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- The faith based community should be supported to develop partnerships with the local child care community to provide hubs of learning for both licensed and exempt care providers.
 - Coursework that expands the continuing education opportunities for existing providers and teachers of young children and focuses on the emerging needs of families and children should be offered at the neighborhood level. Subjects should include child development, infant mental health, health and safety, discipline and behavior problems and serving children with developmental disabilities.
 - Coursework that specifically trains substitute teachers, who could provide services to the child care community while they finish their education, should be developed and implemented in the colleges.

Cost Estimates:

\$200,000

II. Expansion of mentor programs for centers and homes and creation of mentor support for exempt and non-English speaking providers

There are currently three **Mentor Projects** operating in Sacramento County with a combination of state, federal and foundation funding.

- The Los Rios Community College District administers a **small Mentor Teacher and Mentor Director Project**.
- Child Action, Inc. administers a small **Family Child Care Home Mentor Project**.

These programs are based on the philosophy that qualified teachers, working in programs that meet quality standards and acting in the role of mentor, can provide the guidance and instruction to new teachers and family child care home providers. This assistance and support is key to helping new teachers and providers stay in the field of early childhood education and become quality caregivers.

Each mentor receives a stipend of \$500 per year and participates in professional development activities throughout the year. The combined number of mentors associated with these programs is not more than forty. However, the impact of the programs is much greater as each mentor guides and counsels from two to seven proteges who oversee the care and education of an estimated 1000 children.

It is our recommendation that these pilot programs be expanded to provide:

- Mentor teachers for 200 centers and 100 family child care homes.
- Mentors and/or child development specialists for 100 exempt providers

Cost Estimates:

\$120,000

Two hundred and forty mentors receive stipends of five hundred dollars per year.

Improving Program Quality

Goal: Improve the level of quality in Sacramento County child care centers and family child care homes.

Desired Results:

- Three hundred child care centers, family child care homes, and exempt child care providers will show improvement in the quality of their child care services each year.
- The number of accredited child care programs will increase by 10 percent each year.
- Fifty exempt providers will obtain family child care licenses.

Outcome: Six thousand children will experience an improvement in the quality of care they receive.

Cost Estimate: **\$865,000**

Recommendations:

I. Creation of incentives for the improvement of child care centers and homes which apply for or meet national standards for excellence

Research shows that programs, which receive national accreditation have a higher incidence of quality. It is recommended that Sacramento develop a system to provide assistance and technical support to improve the quality of the programs and financial incentives to help pay for the accreditation application and quality improvement grants to reward programs that achieve national accreditation.

It is recommended that the Commission provide quality improvement grants for licensed child care programs that apply for and achieve national accreditation.

- Grants of up to \$400 would be provided to 200 homes or centers applying for national accreditation fees.
- Grants of up to \$4000 would be provided to 100 centers and grants of up to \$1,000 would be provided to 100 family child care homes, which meet identified nationally recognized standards of quality and become accredited.

Cost Estimates: **\$580,000**

II. Expansion of the Infant/Toddler Trainer Project to provide support, technical assistance and training to child care providers and centers

To improve the quality of infant toddler care provided in exempt and licensed child care programs a community Infant/Toddler Trainer program should be implemented modeled after the nationally recognized WestEd Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers.

This program places certified Infant/Toddler trainers in communities to work with child care centers, family child care homes, exempt providers and family resource centers to improve the quality of care and the skills of caregivers caring for infants and toddlers. Initially they work collaboratively with child care center directors and staff to develop a technical assistance and training plan. They complete a pre and post assessment of the child care program and provide the appropriate technical assistance and training to the center. Each center or corps of providers received up to seventy-five hours of training and assistance per year.

It is our recommendation that initially, four infant toddler technical consultants be placed in Birth and Beyond Family Support Collaborative sites and other community based organizations to provide assessment, training and technical assistance to exempt and licensed caregivers and home visitor teams. This project once stabilized could be expanded in future years.

Cost Estimates: \$260,000
One trainer is assigned 25 centers or 100 family child care/exempt providers. Four mentor trainers would provide services for 50 centers and 200 family child care home providers, exempt providers and home visitor teams.

III. Quality improvement grants for exempt care providers

In Sacramento County it is estimated that 51% of all child care is provided in exempt care situations. However, national studies have shown that the level of quality in exempt care is poor. Many exempt providers do not speak English and are often excluded from the licensing process due to language barriers.

It is our recommendation that exempt providers receive information on licensing and incentive grants to help them with costs of licensure as family child care home providers.

Licensing information and applications should as well be translated into appropriate languages for this population.

Cost Estimates \$25,000
One hundred exempt providers will receive licensing incentive grants of \$200 to cover the cost of licensure and health and safety equipment necessary for licensing.
Translation fees are estimated at \$5,000.

Enhance Existing Facilities And Develop New Child Care Capacity

A significant barrier to the provision of quality child care services is the shortage of facilities to house child care programs. The Class Size Reduction Act, while improving the quality of education for elementary school children, has reduced the availability of classrooms on school campuses for preschool and child care programs. Child care centers and family child care providers, who could expand their operations, are often unable to obtain the financing or loans necessary to renovate existing facilities to increase capacity. There is an emerging role for community, business and faith based organizations to provide facilities for the provision of child care services.

Goal: To increase the number of appropriate facilities for the care and education of young children.

Desired Results:

- Expand the capacity of 100 existing child care centers and family child care homes to serve 1,000 additional children.
- Maintain existing outdoor capacity of 300 child care centers through provision of playground improvement grants.
- Create 800 new spaces for children in 50 new family child care homes and centers through startup grants.
- Build or renovate two new child care centers serving over 200 children through provision of financing and/or loans.

Outcomes: New child care capacity will be created for 2,000 children and maintained for over 15,000 children.

Cost Estimates: **\$ 1,300,000**

Recommendations:

Site Improvement Grants for centers and homes

Lack of an appropriate facility is a barrier to expansion for many potential and existing family child care providers. Site improvement grants of up to \$2,000 can be used to upgrade many health and safety concerns or licensing issues which may include: mold and mildew carpets, chipping paint, broken fences and gates, fireproofing, door locks, fencing, heat and air, or storage facilities.

Cost Estimate: \$200,000

One hundred potential or existing providers will receive \$2,000 grants for renovations and repair leading to expansion of child care capacity.

II. Grants for Play Ground Improvement:

New legislation has mandated that all public access playgrounds, including private child care programs, meet new state requirements for playground safety. The state has included funds for publicly subsidized programs to assist in the cost of meeting the pending regulations. However private child care programs do not have such a fund available to them.

This proposal would allow 300 child care centers access to up to \$2,000 per renovation, if needed. It is anticipated that many programs will be faced with larger than \$2,000 renovation costs.

Cost Estimates: \$600,000

III. Sacramento County Child Care Facilities Fund

Establish a **local facilities fund** that would ensure direct investment of resources into Sacramento County based child care and development services. Grants and loans would be used to enhance structural quality of homes and centers providing services to young children. This fund would provide an excellent resource to insure all Sacramento's child care setting were well maintained. Special consideration would be offered to applicants serving low-income communities/families, Local Planning Council priority areas and leveraging other funding sources. A lending institution will be recruited to manage the financial obligations of this program.

- **Family Child Care Assistance Program:** Grants and loans for one time start-up capital, equipment purchases and remodeling would be provided to 50 family child care home providers to create or expand child care services.
 - Quality Grant: \$2000
 - Loans from \$5,000 to \$10,000
 - Eligibility: New or existing family child care providers located in Sacramento County

- **Child Care Centers Assistance Program:** Grants and loans for one time start-up capital, equipment purchases and remodeling would be provided to ten centers to create ore expand child care services.
 - Quality Grant: \$10,000
 - Loans form \$25,000 to \$300,000
 - Eligibility: new or existing, non-profits, for profit licensed child care centers located in Sacramento County.

Cost Estimates: \$500,000

Community and School Partnerships

Goal: To insure that each child enters Kindergarten ready to learn.

Desired Results:

- Four school districts will implement school readiness programs in partnership with child care centers, family child care providers and exempt providers within their districts.
- One hundred child care providers will implement a school readiness curriculum at their centers or homes in cooperation with the local elementary school.

Outcome: All children entering kindergarten will have participated in a school readiness program.

Cost Estimates: **\$200,000**

Recommendation:

I. Provide grants to school districts to develop school readiness programs that insure every child a smooth transition to kindergarten and a successful school career.

Currently there is much focus in California on making schools accountable to the children and families they serve. The Sacramento City Unified School District has launched a major campaign, **Vital Signs 2000**, to insure that children arrive at school ready for success.

The first Vital Sign is “**Readiness for Kindergarten**”—By 2001 all children entering kindergarten will have been enrolled in a program or will have scored 85% proficiency on readiness criteria.

School readiness also involves getting schools prepared for children. Sacramento City Unified School District has created a partnership between the district’s elementary schools, child care providers, parents and the community to work together to create early and lasting school success.

Cost Estimates: \$200,000

Four grants of \$50,000 will be awarded to school districts to build partnerships, create transition plans and provide child care providers with orientation and training in school readiness programs.

PROPOSED FUNDING

I. Recruitment and Retention of Child Care Workers		\$2,163,000
Child Development Corps	1,000 @\$1,883	\$1,883,000
Substitute Registry		\$ 280,000
II. Professional Development		\$ 320,000
Community Based Training		\$200,000
Mentor Stipends	240 Mentors @ \$500	\$120,000
III. Program Quality		\$ 865,000
Quality Improvement Grants (Accreditation)	200 Sites @ \$400/Site 100 centers @ \$4,000 100 homes @ \$1,000	\$580,000
Mentor Trainers & Technical Assistance		\$260,000
Exempt Provider Training and Translation	100 Exempt Providers @ \$200 \$5,000 translation	\$25,000
IV. Capacity Building		\$1,300,000
Site Improvement Grants	100 sites @ \$2,000	\$200,000
Playground Improvement	300 Sites @ \$2,000/Site	\$600,000
Quality Improvement Grants and Loans)	50 Fcch @ \$2,000 10 CCC @ \$10,000 2-5 loans 10,000-\$150,000	\$500,000
V. Community and Schools Partnerships		\$200,000
Grants for School Readiness Programs	\$50,000 per school	\$200,000
Total Requested		\$ 4,848,000

Sacramento County Child Care and Development Planning Council

The Sacramento County Child Care and Development Planning Council is authorized by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Board of Education and mandated by state legislation to assist in the planning and development of child care and development services within Sacramento County.

Specifically it provides the following services to the Sacramento Community:

- ◆ Provide a forum for the planning of child care services that meet the diverse needs of families
- ◆ Promote public participation in the planning process
- ◆ Advocate for the needs of families in Sacramento County with respect to child care
- ◆ Advise the two Boards with respect to child care needs
- ◆ Serve as a forum for discussion of community child care issues

This report to the Children and Families Commission was developed by the members of the Sacramento County Local Child Care Planning Council in an effort to guide them in their development of a strategic plan for child care and development services.

Local Child Care and Development Planning Council Members

Judy Amodeo
Ed Condon
Marilyn Geraty
Alix Hall
Chelle Johnson
Allyson Kurtz
Judy Randall

Marjorie Beazer
Pamela Costa
Roy Grimes
Doris Hamilton
Norma Johnson
Dexter McNamara

Toni Colley
Debra Finch
Walter Grubbs
Phyllis Jacobsen
Tami Kint
Ralph Pettingell
Jane Talbert

Child Action, Inc. provides the administrative support for the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council