**All Our Kin, Inc. Annual Report 2011**

All Our Kin, Inc., a Connecticut-based nonprofit organization, trains, supports, and sustains community child care providers in order to ensure that children and families have the foundations necessary for future success. Since 1999, we have worked on behalf of children’s first teachers, including parents, licensed family child care providers, unlicensed caregivers, and relatives and neighbors who provide informal care to children. Today, we serve over 300 parents and providers who touch the lives of thousands of children. Our program has become a model throughout the state and, increasingly, the nation.

**Our History and Mission**

All Our Kin is the only organization in Connecticut—and one of a handful in the country—to address both workforce development and child care. Created as an innovative response to the welfare reform act of 1996, All Our Kin began by helping parents in New Haven, especially single mothers of young children, meet welfare-to-work requirements by training them to open family child care programs. In time, All Our Kin established both a licensing component, helping unlicensed caregivers meet health and safety standards necessary for state licensing, and a child care network, offering an array of support to licensed providers. In ten short years, we have become a leading voice in state policy circles.

As All Our Kin has grown in effect and reputation, many other cities in Connecticut have asked All Our Kin to replicate its work. Beginning our second decade, we have embarked upon an expansion that will, in the next three to five years, enable All Our Kin to build three to five regional networks in Connecticut, at the same time training other communities in the fundamentals of our work.

Our vision: children, regardless of where they live, their racial or ethnic background, or how much money their parents earn, will begin their lives with all the advantages, the tools, and the experiences that we, as a society, are capable of giving them. Parents will be honored and supported in their difficult work of caring for children, and have access to safe, loving, educational child care options when they go to work. And child care providers will have access to training and education opportunities; livable wages and benefits; and respect for a hard job done well.

**About All Our Kin**

All Our Kin, a nationally-recognized, Connecticut-based nonprofit, trains, supports, and sustains community child care providers to ensure that children and families have the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life.We invest in children’s first teachers, offering a teaching and learning model that supports child care providers at every stage of their development, from parents and caregivers to professional educators and businesspeople.

Our work makes it possible for children to receive excellent foundational learning experiences. We equip caregivers with the skills and resources to move out of poverty and open community child care businesses. We invest in neighborhoods, building the capacity, quality, and viability of local child care businesses. And we furnish working parents with resources to access quality child care.

All Our Kin has a proven track record of increasing the quality and viability of family child care programs in low-income communities. Our efforts have been recognized by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, Connecticut Voices for Children, the National Association for Family Child Care, and GreatNonprofits.org.

**Our Programs**

All Our Kin invests in children’s first teachers through innovative teaching and learning models that support and engage child care providers from all walks of life and at every stage of their personal and professional development.

***Step 1: The Tool Kit Licensing Program.*** All Our Kin provides materials, mentorship and support to help unlicensed family, friend and neighbor caregivers meet health and safety standards, fulfill state licensing requirements, and become part of a professional community of child care providers. When a child care provider becomes licensed by the state, we know that the program meets health and safety standards and operates under state supervision. The result: more children in greater New Haven spend the day in safe, healthy settings. Licensing is also transformative for providers. Their earnings increase; they gain pride and professionalism; and they are able to serve more children, and serve them better, with the equipment and training they need to provide safe, educational child care.

***Step 2: The Family Child Care Mentor Project.*** Once a participant receives her family child care license, she begins work with a skilled master teacher who visits her program and offers individual coaching and support specifically for new child care providers. The mentor covers a range of basic educational topics, including an overview of how children grow and learn, how to design curriculum, choosing appropriate materials, and family engagement.

***Step 3: The Family Child Care Network.*** The provider then transitions to the Family Child Care Network, which offers educational mentorship, professional development, advocacy and leadership opportunities, and a network of relationships with other family child care providers. The Family Child Care Network is a high-touch program built on best practices in early childhood consultation and teacher mentoring grounded in Connecticut Early Learning Guidelines. A hallmark of the All Our Kin network is the program visit, in which early childhood consultants visit family child care programs to lead model lessons, demonstrate new strategies, and reflect with providers on their work. Consultants bring books and materials, professional articles, and curriculum ideas, and offer suggestions to enhance children’s learning. Consultants and providers reflect together on the work and collaborate on setting goals for continuous improvement.

Providers in the Network also come together for monthly meetings, workshops and trainings, including Child Development Associate training, and an annual professional development conference. They have access to a “warm line” they can call for advice at any time. In addition, All Our Kin offers financial management and education training, together with a microcredit loan program for family child care providers. All services are bilingual.

**Recent Accomplishments**

*Early Head Start*

2011 has been a time of enormous growth for All Our Kin. As the economic hardship around us has deepened, we have been working to enlarge our program’s impact on children and families. In 2010, we began a new initiative, using Early Head Start funding to pay for slots in family child care programs, and setting up a system of comprehensive services that wrap around and support families. This has enabled us to enhance and/or replace child care subsidy funding for needy families; provide additional materials, training and support to participating family child care programs; and deliver comprehensive services to families. Our Early Head Start program is now part of a national demonstration project on EHS in family child care, raising the profile of family child care, opening the door for conversations with state policy makers, and enabling us to make a strong case for investment in quality family child care programs.

*Expanding Our Impact*

With the support of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, we expanded our reach and replicated our Toolkit Licensing Program in two new cities—Hartford and Norwalk. We also began preparations to replicate our Tool Kit Licensing program in Bridgeport, which will launch in January of 2012. At the same time, we were asked by the Connecticut Department of Social Services to train twenty communities across the state in our best practices of coaching and consultation for family child care providers, using the state’s new Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers as a tool. This project enabled us to use our strength-based model of adult learning to reach not only the family child care providers themselves, but the agencies and staff who work with them. It was a great opportunity to foster relationships between family child care providers and agencies in other areas, and to extend our reach without compromising our deep commitment to our work with providers and children New Haven. Through this work, we have come to understand our own practices more deeply, and refine our models and strategies even as we teach others. We are very excited to continue with this project and launch another series of trainings around the Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers in 2012.

All Our Kin has also expanded our efforts as advocates and changemakers, partnering with statewide and national organizations to educate and champion the public about the importance of investing in our infants and toddlers. We are working to demonstrate, here in the United States, what international funders and policymakers have long known; that investing in women as entrepreneurs and community leaders can have an enormous impact in low-income communities.

*Evaluating the Economic Impact of Our Work*

In 1999, All Our Kin first opened its doors in a New Haven housing project with two staff members, six mothers, six children, and one core belief: all children deserve access to high-quality early learning opportunities. Our work grew out of the conviction that parents should not be forced to choose between their families' economic survival and their children's safe, healthy development. Today, in these difficult economic times, All Our Kin understands that it is more important than ever that families have access to affordable, high-quality child care.

That is why we are tremendously excited about an economic evaluation of our Family Child Care Licensing program completed by the University of Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis. Not only does it demonstrate that our program helps low-income families get the child care they need to enter the workforce, but that it actually gives our economy a boost when it so desperately needs one. The study shows that 60 percent of providers earned $5,000 more the first year after licensure and 45 percent of providers earned at least $10,000 more the second year. Moreover, by increasing the availability of flexible, affordable, high-quality child care, the program also enables more low-income parents to work; the study estimates that for every child care provider licensed through the program, four to five parents entered the workforce.

Between 2006 and 2009, All Our Kin’s program generated $18.4 million in additional tax revenue and $15.2 million in gross regional product (GRP) – for New Haven alone. The study finds that for every $1 invested in All Our Kin, $15-20 are returned to the state in macroeconomic benefits. Our proven model improves the state economy, ensures child care professionals succeed as business owners, and gives low-income parents the support they need to work.

*Awards and Recognition*

In 2011, Citizens Bank named All Our Kin a Champion in Action. All Our Kin’s executive director was awarded the Soroptimist Ruby Award for Women Helping Women, Soroptimist International, Northeastern Region. And All Our Kin’s work was highlighted in the “Field Notes” section of the most recent issue of the journal Zero to Three, in an article co-authored by Walter Gilliam and All Our Kin’s directors Jessica Sager and Janna Wagner. Additionally, All Our Kin’s model was shared with state child care administrators across the country as part of a webinar from the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, “Family Child Care Staffed Networks: Supporting and Improving Quality for Infants and Toddlers.”

**Recent Press**

[Early Childhood Program Provides Economic Boost](http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/early_childhood_program_provides_economic_boost/)

CT News Junkie

[Op-Ed: Thinking About Job Creation? Look Close to Home](http://www.ctmirror.org/node/14640)

The Connecticut Mirror

[A Winning Strategy for Kids, Parents, Child Care Providers – and CT](http://www.publicnewsservice.org/index.php?%2Fcontent%2Farticle%2F23495-1)

Public News Service

[All Our Kin: Creating High-Quality, Sustainable Family Child Care Programs](http://streaming.yale.edu/cmi2/opa/podcasts/humanities/sager_wagner_102811.mp3)

Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy

[Jessica Sager on WICC600](http://www.box.com/s/t2qymqg30ujkejgimmpe)

WICC600

[New Haven Nonprofit that Trains Child Care Providers Delivers Strong Return, UConn Analysis Shows](http://www.nhregister.com/articles/2011/11/14/news/new_haven/doc4ec198f6b26f8512485152.txt)

New Haven Register

[No Job? Make Your Own. Here are 7 Ways to Get Help](http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Making-a-difference/Change-Agent/2011/1006/No-job-Make-your-own.-Here-are-7-ways-to-get-help?cmpid=addthis_facebook#.To8qFIgeVR4.facebook)

Christian Science Monitor

[All Our Kin on Connecticut Style](http://www.wtnh.com/dpp/ct_style/community/all-our-kin-august-2011)

Connecticut Style

[Connecticut Makes Some Progress, but Serious Child-Health Issues Remain](http://www.nhregister.com/articles/2011/08/18/news/doc4e4c749b616bc244881959.txt?viewmode=fullstory)

New Haven Register

[All Our Kin is a Champion in Action](http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=1966761608878&set=vb.159838744038567&type=2&theater)

WTNH

[Balancing Business at Home: Home-Based Daycare Provides a Living, and Some Challenges, For One Hamden Woman](http://www.yourpublicmedia.org/node/10817)

Your Public Media

[Child Care Businesses Grow at Home: State Challenged to Improve Pay and Quality in Home-Based Care](http://www.yourpublicmedia.org/node/10817)

Your Public Media

[Family Child Care Providers](http://www.box.com/shared/lg8ecfl90c)

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Thank you for partnering with us to support the children and families of greater New Haven!