

**All Our Kin**  
**Annual Report 2015**

All Our Kin is a Connecticut-based nonprofit organization that trains, supports, and sustains family child care providers to ensure that children and families have the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life. Family child care providers care for small groups of children in home-based settings and play a critical role as educators of our youngest, most vulnerable children. In fact, the majority of infants and toddlers are cared for in family child care arrangements, and children with socioeconomic risk factors are the most likely to be in family child care settings.

All Our Kin's model supports family child care providers at every stage of their development, from parents and caregivers to professional educators and businesspeople. Beginning with our Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program, we 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. Upon licensure, providers graduate to our 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. Providers convene for monthly meetings, workshops and classes, and an annual professional development conference. A hallmark of the Network is the program visit, during which All Our Kin's educational consultants visit family child care programs to lead model lessons, demonstrate new strategies, and reflect with providers on their work. Providers in the Network also have access to a "warm line" they can call for advice at any time, zero-interest loans and grants, financial management and education training, and marketing and referral opportunities. All services are bilingual.

The result of All Our Kin's model is win-win-win: child care professionals succeed as business owners, building better lives for themselves and their own families; working parents find stable, high-quality care for their children; and children gain an educational foundation that lays the groundwork for achievement in school and in life.

With your support in 2015, All Our Kin served over 400 family child care providers across four Connecticut cities – Bridgeport, New Haven, Norwalk, and Stamford – and adjacent communities, who have the capacity to educate and care for 2,400 children. Through our Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program, we supported 78 family child care educators (46 providers, 31 substitutes, and 1 assistant) in obtaining licensure, creating 276 affordable, accessible child care slots. Through our Family Child Care Network, we provided training to 346 family child care educators, with the capacity to educate and care for 2,076 children, raising the quality of early care and education they give to our communities' children.

As a result of your investment, family child care providers will earn a better living, the supply of family child care will expand, the quality of family child care programs will increase, and children will receive the high-quality early learning experiences that prepare them for success in preschool, kindergarten, and beyond.

## **Programmatic Initiatives**

All Our Kin has developed a highly place-based model that is responsive to the unique opportunities and challenges present in the communities that we serve. Thus, in addition to offering a wealth of professional development opportunities through the Family Child Care Network in 2015, we launched community-specific initiatives that track with the key needs and goals of each community that we serve.

In New Haven, for instance, we piloted a Provider Showcase, responding to providers' eagerness to distinguish their programs on the basis of quality. The voluntary, strength-based program offers providers the opportunity to participate in an objective external rating system that aligns with quality standards set by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). As providers progress through the program, they receive training, technical assistance, and individualized coaching to reach new levels of quality. Providers who reach the highest levels of quality will be featured on All Our Kin's website beginning in 2016. Here, parents in the community will be able to access key information about the quality and supply of local child care options, supporting them in making informed decisions about where to place their children in care.

In Bridgeport, we leveraged Yale's RULER training, which rolled out across Bridgeport's schools and preschools, to build family child care providers' capacity to support children's social-emotional development. RULER is a research-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools, ensuring that children gain the skills and dispositions necessary for success.

In Bridgeport and Stamford/Norwalk, we secured funding to offer the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential to cohorts of family child care providers in 2016, raising their levels of education in the field of early childhood education. Through the CDA training, providers: 1) gain core knowledge in child development and learn best practices in early care and education; 2) demonstrate their professionalism and commitment to field, potentially leading to greater enrollment and higher parents fees; and 3) take a key step towards attaining an associate's degree in early childhood education or a related field.

By leveraging community-specific resources to build the quality of family child care programs, All Our Kin not only ensures that our communities' children spend their crucial early years in enriching, educational settings; we also link children, families, and family child care providers to local resources, programs, and services.

## **External Evaluation**

Despite the important work that family child care providers do for children and families, little research has been done on family child care or strategies for raising the quality of family child care. Through our many years of engaging with family child care providers, we have seen the tremendous impact that family child care providers can have – on children, families, and communities – when given resources, training, and support. While regular, internal assessments have given us a window into All Our Kin's impact on quality, we, for many years, lacked the resources necessary for conducting a rigorous external evaluation.

The support of the Grossman Family Foundation enabled All Our Kin to partner with Toni Porter and Juliet Bromer, two of the country's leading researchers in family child care, to conduct a two-year external evaluation of All Our Kin's impact on child care quality (Year One) and child outcomes (Year Two). Year One and Year Two of the study compare All Our Kin family child care providers with a control group of family child care providers who operate programs in Connecticut cities that are beyond All Our Kin's service area yet similar to the cities All Our Kin reaches. Assessments were conducted by external observers who were "blind" as to whether the providers they observed were participants in All Our Kin's programs and services.

In 2015, we completed Year One of the study, which found statistically significant differences in quality between All Our Kin and non-All Our Kin providers. In fact, All Our Kin providers score over 50 percent higher on research-based measures of quality than non-All Our Kin providers. Not only do All Our Kin providers score higher than non-All Our Kin providers in the study's control group, they also exceed the scores of family child care providers in several other recent studies of quality, including a statewide study in Indiana and a county-level study in Washington. Most importantly, All Our Kin providers score highest in the areas that affect children's learning outcomes most, including: teaching, listening and talking, interactions, and support for cognitive and language development.

In the second half of 2015, we published [\*Examining Quality in Family Child Care: An Evaluation of All Our Kin\*](#), a report on the study and its implications, and began sharing it widely with stakeholders, policymakers, advocates, and community leaders. We also began observations for Year Two of the study with 23 All Our Kin providers, serving 62 children, and 10 non-All Our Kin providers, serving 28 children. We look forward to sharing Year Two findings with you in a report that we will publish in 2016.

## **Strategic Plan**

All Our Kin's mission to transform opportunities for children and families calls us to grow our reach by creating and sustaining high-quality, accessible family child care programs in new communities. Since All Our Kin opened its doors in New Haven in 1999, with an original group of six mothers and six children, we have expanded to serve Bridgeport, Norwalk, Stamford, and adjoining towns. Today, we reach over 400 family child care providers, who have the capacity to educate and care for 2,400 children.

In 2015, we embarked upon an ambitious strategic plan for the period of 2015 – 2021 to continue our growth trajectory by: 1) increasing our policy work at the state and national level to raise awareness around the crucial role that family child care providers play in our educational landscape and establish the political will to support quality in family child care; 2) growing our knowledge dissemination strategies to leverage and build upon existing infrastructure by training communities in All Our Kin's model and best practices; and 3) physically replicating at 3 – 5 additional sites to ensure that family child care providers have access to the resources, training, and support they need to provide exceptional early learning experiences to children in their communities. Our goal: to reach 10,000 children by 2021.

## **Awards & Recognition**

As All Our Kin grows and we gather increasingly compelling data supporting the effectiveness of our work, our model and management receive growing attention. In 2015 alone, All Our Kin received recognition from the [Pritzker Children's Initiative](#) and the [Stanford Social Innovation Review](#), who identified All Our Kin as a valuable investment for philanthropists seeking to transform opportunities and improve school readiness for at-risk children; All Our Kin's Chief Learning Officer received the [Yale-Jefferson Public Service Alumnus Award](#) in honor of her deep community-centric work; All Our Kin's Executive Director was selected for both the [Pahara-Aspen Education Fellowship](#) and the Ms. Foundation Public Voices Fellowship; and together, All Our Kin's directors were selected, among 2,000 nominees, as the Grand Prize recipients for the second annual [Roslyn S. Jaffe Awards](#), which recognizes pioneering individuals who have created innovative programs that transform life outcomes for women and children.

In one provider's words:

*For me, everything is about preparing the children. That's golden. Being sure that the children can succeed when they go to school. I want to be a person that can give the best to the children, and if there's something I can do to become better, to learn more, to be more inspired, I will do it.*