Family Child Care Network

STAFFED FAMILY CHILD CARE NETWORKS have paid, specialized staff members who provide services and resources to family child care educators*. Networks offer educators opportunities to develop a continuing, long-term professional relationship with a network coordinator or a family child care specialist and a place to connect with other educators, creating strong peer networks in an otherwise isolating profession.

CRITICAL COMPONENTS

- **Vision for engaging and serving FCC educators**: Articulated vision for what the network wants to accomplish in partnership with FCC educators including how network services impact educator, child, family, and community outcomes.

- **Guiding Principles/Values**: Establish guiding values/principles that are integrated into all aspects of the network and reflect a commitment to equity, put relationships first, and ensure FCC educator voice is centered.

- **Holistic and responsive programming**: Professional learning opportunities are offered across education and business domains, including group sessions, one-on-one in-home coaching, and community building and networking with multiple points of entry and equitable access for all educators.

- **Supportive funding and policies**: Sustainable multi-year funding that is committed to supporting all elements of the robust network and a favorable policy context.

- **Knowledgeable and dedicated staff**: Staff reflect the community, have knowledge of adult/child learning and development, are committed to family child care, receive ongoing learning opportunities, and have the necessary dedicated capacity to sustainably serve educators in the network.

- **Grounding in a Strengths-based, Relationship-based approach**: Centering equity, elevating educator leadership.

*Licensed family child care educators as well as their staff and applicants in the licensing process*
Over the last 20 years All Our Kin (AOK) has seen direct impact with the educators and communities engaged in our networks. These results have informed our Critical Components. We have worked with researchers to both capture and to inform our work, so that we can support other FCC communities to grow, to achieve powerful outcomes, and to drive systemic change.

All Our Kin Staffed Family Child Care Networks have seen Increases in:

- **Quality of family child care.**
  AOK educators score more than 50% higher on research-based measures of quality than non-AOK educators.1

- **Educator earnings and significant economic returns in our communities.**
  Nearly 60% of Toolkit Licensing participants reported earning at least $5,000 more the first year after licensure. In the second year, over 45% reported earning at least $10,000 more. Each newly licensed educator made it possible for 4–5 parents to enter the workforce. This combination of the program’s impact resulted in $15–$20 of macroeconomic benefits for every dollar invested.2

- **Supply of licensed family child care in the community.**
  Between 2000 and 2011, Connecticut lost 34% of its licensed FCC programs. During that same period, the number of licensed FCC programs in our service area increased by 74%.3

- **Health and safety in family child care programs.**
  Comparing rates of health and safety violations, AOK educators had lower risk of violations and were significantly less likely to have violations in the areas of Child, Family, and Staff Documentation (43% vs. 54%), Emergency Preparedness (27% vs. 33%), and Indoor Safety (36% vs. 43%).4

- **Educators who identify themselves as professionals.**
  Over 50% of Licensing Toolkit program graduates went on to achieve an Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education or a CDA credential.5 50% of All Our Kin educators intended to stay in the field of family child care “as long as possible,” compared to 7% of the comparison providers.6

Data from other Networks also Support the Critical Components

- **Opportunities offered across domains.**
  A quasi-experimental study of licensed FCC educators participating in 35 different networks in Chicago, found that educators who were affiliated with staffed networks that delivered a combination of on-going support services were more likely to offer higher quality care than unaffiliated educators.7

- **Community building and networking.**
  Qualitative studies find that networks help to mitigate some of the barriers, such as isolation, that educators face, by connecting them to training opportunities and other educators.8

- **Relationships first.**
  Focus groups with educators in 9 professional development networks in Washington, found that educators cited relationship-based support, networking opportunities with other educators, and respect for FCC as benefits of network participation.9

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3 Ibid.


5 Hill et al. (2011). The Economic Impact of All Our Kin Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program.

6 Porter et al. (2016). Quality in Family Child Care Networks.

