

A Snapshot of the Family Child Care Landscape in Connecticut

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BACKGROUND

This report was commissioned by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood through a grant to All Our Kin, a Connecticut-based nonprofit 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.

Interviewees received a set of questions in advance and were notified that the interview would be anonymous and that none of the information they provided would be ascribed to them individually. To ensure that interviewees felt they could speak candidly, the interviewees were informed that All Our Kin would not receive any detailed information from the interviews, even though the organization had received a grant to conduct this study. The author analyzed the data and information provided by interviewees and is solely responsible for the contents of this report.

The report was designed to examine current efforts and future opportunities to support and enhance the quality of family child care across the state, particularly for infants and toddlers from low-income families. The following national and statewide research and trends served as the impetus for this report:

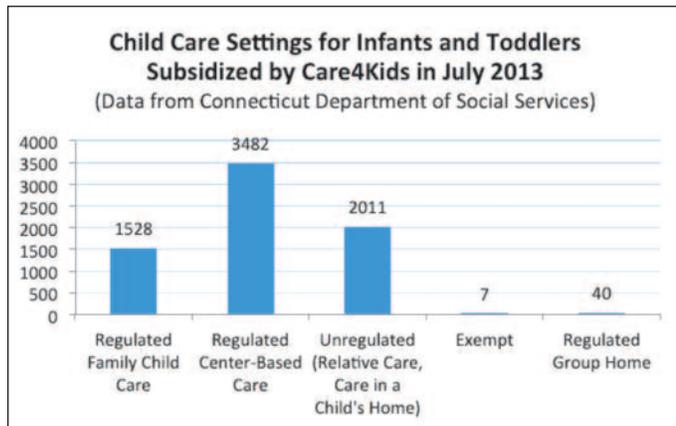
- Significant research, including Shonkoff and Phillips' *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* report, demonstrating that the experiences children have in their first years of life—from birth to age three—are crucial to shaping the architecture of their rapidly developing brains. In their earliest years, children develop cognitive, language, emotional, and social skills that prepare them for their future lives.¹
- The desire or the need of many families to have their infants and toddlers cared for in a family child care setting. Parents may prefer family child care settings for a variety of reasons, including affordability, proximity, cultural diversity, and flexibility for parents working nontraditional hours. National research indicates that low-income families are especially likely to rely on home-based child care arrangements, including family child care.²
- The continuing short supply of high-quality infant and toddler child care, despite evidence of the positive impact that quality care has on young children, especially on low-income children. It is also often unaffordable for those families that need it most.³
- Emerging federal regulations that emphasize child care quality, including forthcoming updates to the Child Care and Development Block Grant regulations.⁴
- Growing recognition among the early childhood community that the achievement gap begins in infancy when children are not afforded high-quality learning experiences and interactions that foster healthy brain development. Stable, nurturing relationships with adults are crucial to helping children enter kindergarten prepared to learn and succeed.⁵



The inquiry process for this report focused on communities that had a significant population of children under age five, high poverty rates, and a large number of licensed family care providers. These communities included: Bridgeport, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, Norwalk, Groton/New London, Stamford, and Waterbury. Telephone interviews were conducted with over 25 individuals representing community-based providers, Family Resource Centers, local community early childhood collaboratives, state agency staff, advocates and private foundations.

WHERE ARE INFANTS, TODDLERS, AND PRESCHOOLERS BEING CARED FOR AND WHAT IS THE COST?

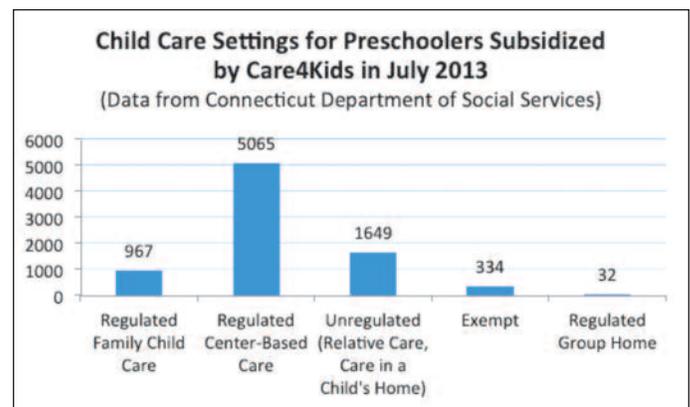
Across the state, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are being cared for in a variety of settings, including family child care homes, early childhood centers, family, friend and neighbor care, and in their own homes by their parents. For the purposes of this report, we define infants and toddlers as children up to 3 years and preschoolers as children ages 3 and 4.



Source: "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services.

According to the Department of Social Services (DSS) Care4Kids July 2013 payment report, 6,973 of the infants and toddlers currently being cared for in out-of-home settings are low-income children whose care is subsidized by Care4Kids payments. An additional 7,858 preschool-age children receive out-of-home care subsidized by Care4Kids.⁶

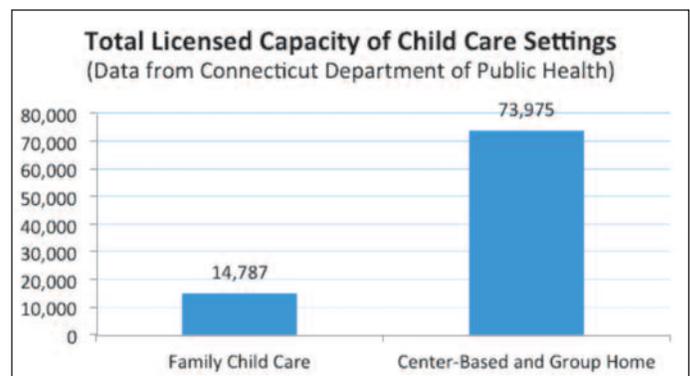
- DSS reports that 2,011 infants and toddlers and 1,649 preschoolers receiving care subsidized by Care4Kids are in unregulated family, friend and neighbor care. There may, in fact, be many more children whose care in these settings is unreported.
- Family child care providers care for 1,528 infants and toddlers and 967 preschoolers who receive Care4Kids subsidies.
- Overall, 50% of infants and toddlers and 33% of preschoolers receiving Care4Kids dollars are cared for in some kind of home-based setting.



Source: "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services.

Collecting accurate data on the capacity of child care settings, the actual enrollment and the vacancy rate for infant and toddler and preschool slots is a challenge, as some providers choose not to operate at full capacity and it is difficult to track children who have changed caregivers. Little is known about actual enrollment, particularly for children whose care is not subsidized by Care4Kids.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health maintains information on the licensed capacity of different child care settings. Its most recent information suggests that home-based providers have the capacity to care for nearly 15,000 children. Individual providers may care for a maximum of 2 children under the age of 2 at any time, unless they employ an assistant, which increases the limit to 6.

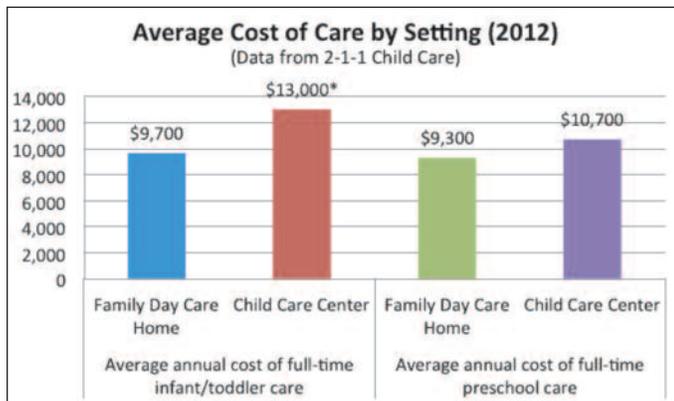


Source: "Child Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes Total by Date (Active)" and "Family Day Care Homes Total by Date (Active)," Connecticut Department of Public Health, Accessed September 13, 2013.

The 2-1-1 Child Care *Fall 2012 Child Care Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Report* provides another source of information on capacity and enrollment in Connecticut child care settings. Most of the data compiled by 2-1-1 Child

Care is self-reported, based on an annual provider survey. According to 2-1-1 Child Care, 15,357 infants and toddlers and 34,040 preschoolers currently receive care in out-of-home settings.⁷ (Since 2-1-1 Child Care defines infant/toddler and preschool age ranges differently for family child care and child care centers, data on numbers of children enrolled in each of these two settings is not comparable).

According to the 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, child care imposes a heavy financial burden on many families in the state. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that child care costs not exceed 10% of parental income.⁸ Yet in Connecticut, parents paying the average cost for full-time care for one infant can expect to pay 15% of the state's median family income, with the annual cost of care for an infant or toddler ranging from \$7,000 to \$20,000 in either a child care center or a family child care home.⁹ The average cost of full-time care for one infant and one preschool age child together totals 27% of median family income.



*This value is an estimate. According to 2-1-1 Child Care, the average cost of care is "just under \$13,000."

Source: *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, 2-1-1 Child Care, July 2013.

Family child care is significantly less expensive than center-based care. The average annual cost of full-time infant/toddler care in a family child care program is \$9,700, compared to just under \$13,000 in a child care center (a difference of 34%). The average annual cost of full-time preschool care in a family child care program is \$9,300, compared to \$10,700 in a child care center (a difference of 15%).¹⁰



In state fiscal year 2012, the Care4Kids program subsidized care for approximately 24,000 children. The average monthly child care benefit was \$593.¹¹ The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that provider payment rates be set at the 75th percentile of the market rate, meaning that parents would have a choice among 75 percent of providers within a community. However, Connecticut sets payment rates at only 60% of the market rate. Since Care4Kids reimbursement rates have not been adjusted since 2002, rates are currently set at 60% of the 2001 market rate.¹²

HOW ARE FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS CURRENTLY BEING SUPPORTED?

A variety of local and statewide organizations currently support family child care providers across the state, including:

■ All Our Kin

All Our Kin is a non-profit organization that offers a wide array of programs aimed at helping individuals to obtain state licenses for family child care businesses, build business skills, and gain the knowledge and skills to deliver quality care that contributes to early childhood development. All Our Kin seeks to support child care providers at every stage of their development, from caregivers to professional educators and business people. Its four primary program services are the Tool Kit Licensing Program, which supports and guides individuals through the licensing process; the New Teacher Mentor Project, which supplies programmatic coaching to new providers through regular home visits; the Family Child Care Network, which is a staffed network that provides regular meetings with peers for professional development, mentorship, training, an annual conference, and one-on-one consultations to address educational, and business issues; and Early Head Start, through which providers receive intensive support to serve Early Head Start eligible children and meet Early Head Start's federal standards of quality. All services are offered in English and Spanish. All Our Kin was founded in New Haven in 1999 and currently works with family child care providers in greater New Haven and northeastern Fairfield County with potential plans for continued expansion.

■ 2-1-1 CHILD CARE

2-1-1 Child Care is a free, multilingual resource that helps families across Connecticut find child care arrangements to best meet their needs. 2-1-1 Child Care offers access to Child Care Referral Specialists who educate parents about quality child care; provides technical assistance for early care professionals; collects statewide child care data and statistical information; and maintains current listings of licensed and license-exempt child care options throughout the state. 2-1-1 Child Care also provides information on child growth and development to unlicensed child care providers; helps providers successfully start or improve their child care business by offering information on business practices, communicating with families, routines and scheduling and effective environments; provides early child care training for parents and providers on choosing quality child care, early literacy, oral language development, child development and emergency preparedness; and provides in-home educational visits to new providers through the Family Child Care Career Support Project.

■ Connecticut Family Day Care Associations Network, Inc. (CFDCAN)

Over 25 years ago, CFDCAN was established with support from the Connecticut Department of Social Services to connect local associations and the 6,500 family child care providers then practicing across the state into a statewide network for quality improvement and policy advocacy. At one point, the association had funding to support a paid staff person and a mentor program; however, these aspects of the association have been dormant for the last ten years. The association is currently being revived by a volunteer who last year organized a statewide conference that was attended by both family child care and family, friend and neighbor care providers.

■ Family Day Care Associations

2-1-1 Child Care lists 23 family day care associations serving approximately 110 communities across Connecticut; however, only a small percentage of these associations are active and able to reach out to and engage large numbers of providers.¹³ In most cases, these are informal, volunteer efforts to create networking and professional development opportunities for family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

■ Family Resource Centers

The State Department of Education funds 72 Family Resource Centers in 41 communities across the state.¹⁴ A required but limited role of the Family Resource Centers is to provide support and training for family child care providers who reside in the neighborhoods where the Family Resource Centers are located. Family Resource Centers offer training and technical assistance to family child care providers, serve as an information and referral system for child care needs, and coordinate with other community resources. Additionally, local foundations such as the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving fund community-based family resource centers that are not supported by the State Department of Education.

■ The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative

The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative is an initiative of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, a United Way Partner agency and a family child care association. The Collaborative promotes and supports high-quality child care with programs that have an educational component serving children under age 12. The Collaborative serves as a resource hub for over 40 communities in the Greater Hartford region. The Collaborative provides technical assistance, a child care resource library, and a networking forum; maintains statistical information on many aspects of child care; works to increase universal access to quality programs;

educates the public about the importance of high-quality child care; and enhances planning and coordination of child care services. Over 300 organizations and individuals are members of the Collaborative.¹⁵

HOW ARE LOCAL COMMUNITIES LOOKING AT FAMILY CHILD CARE?

With public and private support from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the State Department of Education and the Children’s Fund of Connecticut, 37 communities have developed comprehensive birth to age eight community plans through their local Early Childhood Councils as part of the Discovery Initiative.¹⁶ However, only 17 include strategies for improving the quantity and/or quality of licensed family child care.

The chart below displays the communities that have included family child care strategies in their comprehensive community plans based on an analysis by the Memorial Fund. The infant and toddler care data is from the 2-1-1 Child Care 2012 *Child Care Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Report*; the Care4Kids payment data is from the Department of Social Services July 2013 payment report; and the population data is from the Connecticut Data Collaborative (ctdata.org).

Local Early Childhood Council representatives report that they are doing all they can just to address their communities’ center-based preschool needs. Due to their lack of available resources and limited administrative capacity, few are implementing strategies to address family child care quality and availability.

School Readiness Councils across the state primarily focus on center-based programs, not family child care providers. Before statewide quality enhancement funding was transferred from the Department of Social Services to the State Department of Education (now under the purview of the Office of Early Childhood), School Readiness Councils were required to set aside 10% of these funds for family, friend, and neighbor care. At least some of these School Readiness Councils used these funds for professionalization efforts. For example, the New Haven School Readiness Council used these dollars to support the creation of the Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program.

When the statewide quality enhancement funding was transferred to the State Department of Education, the 10% set-aside for family, friend and neighbor care was eliminated so that the 19 Priority School District School Readiness Councils would have full autonomy to respond to local needs. Over two-thirds of the 19 Priority School

Community Plans with Family Child Care Strategies						
	Population under age 5 ¹⁷	Children under 18 living in poverty ¹⁸	Number of family child care programs ¹⁹	Number of infants/toddlers supported by:		
				Care4Kids subsidies in unregulated home-based care ²⁰	Care4Kids subsidies in regulated family child care ²¹	Care4Kids subsidies in center-based care ²²
Bridgeport	10,731	10,469	125	189	230	437
Bristol	3,416	1,462	50	42	26	72
Colchester	892	150	19	1	3	9
Danbury	5,409	1,455	26	15	19	106
East Hartford	3,339	2,829	60	90	51	71
Hamden	3,179	743	52	27	40	43
Hartford	9,452	14,731	133	370	184	187
Mansfield	572	409	7	0	0	4
Meriden	4,090	3,036	47	69	26	117
Middletown	2,559	1,224	36	36	20	58
New Britain	5,043	5,102	40	130	49	118
New Haven	9,150	9,784	174	219	196	209
Norwalk	5,883	2,193	53	26	27	114
Stamford	8,309	3,278	67	45	37	58
Torrington	2,081	1,157	32	21	14	45
Waterbury	7,920	9,318	103	180	121	227



District School Readiness Councils have continued to use a percentage of their quality enhancement funding for family, friend and neighbor care and/or include family, friend and neighbor caregivers in their professional development activities.

HIGHLIGHTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY EFFORTS

BRIDGEPORT: Through the efforts of the Family Resource Centers and All Our Kin, 127 family child care providers participated in the Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) training and received in-program consultations. Bridgeport Family Resource Centers also provide targeted training to family, friend and neighbor caregivers. All Our Kin expanded into Bridgeport in 2012.

BRISTOL: The Family Resource Center provides six to eight trainings per year and offers financial incentives to participating family child care providers to buy materials for their programs. It also pays for family child care providers to attend national and statewide trainings sponsored by other organizations. Bristol has a very active family child care association and about 50% of providers participate.

HARTFORD: Key leaders and organizations in the city of Hartford have been working collaboratively for years to create a quality system of care for children birth to age five that includes family child care. Through the City of Hartford, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and

the Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative, a significant percentage of family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers have access to a range of training and professional development opportunities in the areas of literacy, child development, and health and nutrition. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, through the Brighter Futures Initiative, funds six community-based family centers. Of particular note, the Southside Family Center operated by Catholic Charities provides intensive in-program consultation to family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers through the HomeLinks project.

NEW HAVEN: Family child care has been a long-standing priority for the Early Childhood Council and its partners. The Council has worked closely with All Our Kin since 2002 to develop programmatic offerings for family child care programs: the Tool Kit Licensing Program was developed by the Council's Home Care Committee in partnership with All Our Kin and the Connecticut Children's Museum. The Council works to include family child care providers in its training and professional development opportunities. Initiatives specifically targeting family child care include Mornings at the Museum (educational visits to the Connecticut Children's Museum) and WORDS (a literacy coaching and enrichment initiative that includes both centers and family child care programs). Family child care providers are an integral component of New Haven's professional child care community.

NORWALK: The director of the Fox Run Family Resource Center has consistently made family child care and family, friend and neighbor care a priority both for the Family Resource Center and the broader community. Recently, the Early Childhood Collaborative held an evening meeting specifically to accommodate family child care providers. All Our Kin has begun providing services in Norwalk, and delivered a six-month long training on Growing Healthy Children in partnership with the Family Resource Center. The School Readiness Council allocates a portion of its quality enhancement funding to the Family Resource Center to provide programming for family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers. The Family Resource Center is also working with the Norwalk Housing Authority to explore family child care as an employment opportunity.

WATERBURY: Waterbury Bridge to Success and local funders are focused primarily on children birth to age three and on improving the quantity and quality of community supports. In the summer of 2013 All Our Kin partnered with Waterbury Bridge to Success, the Leever Foundation, Waterbury Youth Services and two family child care associations to provide Early Learning Guidelines training to providers.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE STATE LEVEL?

There are many system-building initiatives and professional development efforts underway at the state level with the potential to greatly impact Connecticut's family child care landscape.

System-Building Initiatives

The Office of Early Childhood

On June 24, 2013, Governor Dannel Malloy signed an executive order establishing the Office of Early Childhood as the lead agency to coordinate and deliver the state's early childhood services, which were previously spread across five state agencies.²³ The legislature allocated \$128 million to the Office of Early Childhood in the 2013-2014 budget, most of which was previously spent by other departments. The Office of Early Childhood will be responsible for many of the programs and funding that support family child care, including licensing child daycares, managing Care4Kids, and negotiating the 2-1-1 Child Care contract with the United Way of Connecticut. Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

QRIS is a method to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings.²⁴ A fully functioning QRIS includes the following components: (1) quality standards for programs and practitioners, (2) resources and an infrastructure to help caregivers meet such standards, (3) monitoring and accountability systems to ensure compliance with quality standards, (4) ongoing financial assistance that is linked to meeting quality standards, and (5) engagement and outreach strategies.²⁵ The goals of Connecticut's QRIS are to provide families with the information they need to make informed choices and to provide all early childhood settings with the tools needed to improve quality, so that all children statewide are provided with the opportunity to have high-quality early learning experiences. The Early Childhood Cabinet established a QRIS workgroup in the spring of 2012. In November 2012, the QRIS workgroup presented their recommendations, which included guiding principles for QRIS and recommendation summaries for governance, structure, standards, licensing, accreditation and approval, rating and monitoring, subsidy, incentives, and system phase-in.²⁶ The workgroup recommended the creation of a system that includes both center-based and family child care providers, with standards that are equivalent but reflect the differences across settings.

Early Learning and Development Standards

In partnership with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, the State Department of Education is working to develop comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards for children birth through age five that are aligned with kindergarten through grade 12 standards in all areas of development. Once the standards are finalized and adopted, a dissemination and capacity-building process will be developed. The group working on the standards has been thoughtful about the need for strategies to disseminate the standards to parents, family child care providers, and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

Core Knowledge and Competencies

Core Knowledge and Competencies are a set of expectations that describe what early childhood educators should know and be able to accomplish. The Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency workgroup of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet presented a draft core knowledge and competency framework to the Early Childhood Education Cabinet in September 2013. The draft framework includes seven domains: building meaningful curriculum; using developmentally effective approaches for teaching and learning; promoting child development and learning; observing, documenting and assessing young children; building family and community partnerships; promoting health, safety and wellness; and professionalism. The framework also defines indicators and levels for each domain. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards that outline the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that children ages birth to age five should know and be able to do are woven throughout the domains. Work going forward includes outlining the competencies for multiple early childhood roles and developing technical assistance and professional development plans and evaluation measures.²⁷ The Core Knowledge and Competencies will be applicable to early childhood educators across settings, including family child care.

CSEA-SEIU Local 2001

In September 2011, Governor Malloy signed an executive order that gave family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers the ability to “meet and confer” with the state. In 2012, legislation was passed for full collective bargaining rights by the union. The union, through the leadership of home-based providers, is now in full negotiations with the state to increase caregivers’ compensation and the quality of care, particularly for those serving the most vulnerable children across the state. Providers are seeking to stabilize and retain an experienced and trained child care workforce, make family

child care affordable, expand access, and ensure that professional development and other work supports (e.g., paid sick time, substitutes) are routinely available. Once a contract is negotiated, the home-based provider leaders will form a union council and the 4,000 providers will be asked to sign on as members and pay dues. The union has been approved as a health care “assister” under the Affordable Care Act and will be working to enroll the estimated 2,000 home-based providers who do not have health insurance.

Professional Development Efforts

Early Learning Guidelines Training and Technical Assistance

In 2011, the Connecticut Department of Social Services invited All Our Kin to use a coaching and consultation approach to train family child providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers in the new infant and toddler guidelines. All Our Kin partnered with Family Resource Centers and other community-based organizations across the state to reach family child care providers. Two training series were offered in 2011 and 2012. Five hundred and fifty-two family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers in 31 communities were trained in the new guidelines and received in-program consultation visits (Appendix A). All Our Kin is conducting a new series of trainings in Spanish in the fall of 2013.

Raising Readers

In 2013, the Connecticut State Department of Education and Capital Region Education Council (CREC) developed a statewide Raising Readers pilot program specifically for home-based child care providers. The Raising Readers Parent Club Program is a nationally-recognized family literacy program. The Home-Based Child Care Providers Program was designed to give child care providers the skills and tools to foster literacy development. Providers received new books for their libraries and books to send home to the families of the children in their care. CREC trained facilitators from 16 agencies that represented approximately 15 communities across the state, and these facilitators in turn have trained 117 family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

Circle of Security

In the fall of 2013 All Our Kin began running five Circle of Security cohorts with family child care providers: two in New Haven (one English, one Spanish), two in Bridgeport (same), and one in Norwalk (English only). Circle of Security is a relationship-based caregiver education program designed to enhance attachment and relationship quality. Consultation from the Yale Child Study Center is supporting All Our Kin’s evaluation of the program’s effectiveness.

WHAT ARE THE GAPS AND CONCERNS ACROSS THE STATE?

A large number of interviewees commented on the need for more statewide attention to the quality of family child care, particularly because it is the primary care setting for a large proportion of infants and toddlers across the state. A majority of respondents expressed concern, given what we now know about brain development, that more resources are not devoted to enhancing the quality of family child care.

Several common themes emerged from the interviews with regard to the limitations of current program capacity:

1. Limited ability to reach family child care providers:

Establishing personal, trusting relationships with family child care providers is a prerequisite for quality improvement. Based upon the data provided by interviewees, approximately 25% of the licensed family child care providers across the state are being reached by existing local and state organizations and programs. Family child care associations provide informal networking opportunities but are not active in all communities and very few have paid staff. Those that are active only reach a small percentage of the licensed child care providers and friend, family and neighbor caregivers. The capacity across Family Resource Centers varies. As resources for Family Resource Centers decline,

so do the services for family child care providers. A 2009 evaluation report conducted by Yale University of the Family Resource Centers noted that the State Department of Education has put greater emphasis on Family Resource Center programs that target parents (e.g. Parent as Teachers). The report noted that 35% of Family Resource Center services are dedicated to Families in Training, 34.4% to preschool and school age child care, and only five percent to training child care providers.²⁸ As a result, many Family Resource Centers have become, at their core, home visitation and parent education programs.

2. Limited in-program quality enhancement supports:

Family child care providers tend to be isolated and operate as independent small businesses. Because they care for children full-time and rarely have access to substitutes, it is difficult for family child care providers to attend training and professional development opportunities during the day. Moreover, best practices in adult learning indicate that real time modeling, mentoring, and coaching is a more effective approach to improving quality. In Connecticut, only a handful of programs have the capacity to provide ongoing, in-program coaching and support, including All Our Kin and Southside Family Center.



3. Public perception of family child care:

Interviewees reported that much of the public still believes that family child care is babysitting, not quality early care. This has led many community leaders and parents to push for three-year-olds to be cared for in center-based settings, which they perceive as quality environments. Some interviewees posited that this perception may also be a result of lack of information about the quality of care in family child care programs.

4. Low compensation for family child care providers:

There has not been a rate increase in Care4Kids for eleven years. This creates financial challenges for providers and has contributed to an unstable family child care workforce. Besides parent fees, Care4Kids is the only source of revenue for providers. As more three-year-olds are served in center-based settings, family child care providers encounter additional financial challenges because licensing regulations require that family child care providers can only care for two children under the age of two, unless they employ a substitute, which raises their limit to six.

5. Limited family child care state-level policy and advocacy:

When the Connecticut Family Day Care Association Network (CFDCAN) was active and staffed in the early 1990s, family child care providers had a direct voice in public policy. CFDCAN provided substitutes and often arranged for transportation for family child care providers to attend state-level policy meetings and attend legislative hearings. As CFDCAN funding decreased, fewer providers were able to make their voice heard at the state level. Many of the interviewees noted that family child care issues and strategies to improve quality are not prominent on the agenda of statewide advocacy groups, which further contributes to family child care providers being overlooked. It was noted by several interviewees that All Our Kin has become the most visible proxy voice for family child care providers in a number of statewide efforts including the QRIS workgroup and the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance.



INTERVIEWEES' SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Overall, interviewees resoundingly supported any efforts to enhance the quality of family child care, especially for infants and toddlers. They often cited national research studies that indicate that effective programs include qualified and appropriately compensated personnel, language-rich environments, developmentally appropriate curricula, safe physical settings, and warm and responsive adult-child interactions.

Interviewees noted that statewide efforts to promote and implement a system of quality family child care are promising but fragmented, and not systemically supported by statewide policies or funding. Interviewees also noted that sustained outreach and in-program consultations are critical strategies to improve the quality of family child care and friend, family and neighbor care but that the majority of current programs do not have the capacity (staff or funding) or the skills to provide quality in-program consultation.

The following is a summary of interviewees' suggestions for creating a system of quality supports for family child care providers.

1 Identify a statewide quality enhancement intermediary:

This intermediary could serve as the statewide knowledge and resource broker that would systematically build local capacity by working with Family Resource Centers, professional development programs, day care associations and other community based organizations. The intermediary would be the single point for funding that could be allocated to community programs to increase their organizational capacity and skills. Intermediary staff would train others to deliver quality in-program consultations and would monitor the quality of the services provided. A significant amount of planning work would need to be done to identify and/or create an organization to function as this intermediary. Additionally, new resources would need to be secured to support and sustain the intermediary.

2 Create regional family child care networks: A report by Zero to Three indicates that staffed family child care networks are an effective strategy for enhancing the quality of family child care, particularly for infants and toddlers.²⁹ These networks typically offer one-on-one technical assistance and individualized professional development, conduct program visits frequently, and use formal quality assessment tools. They have at least one paid staff person who provides ongoing oversight and support to family child care providers across a particular geographic area, rather than an entire state. According to



this report, many states, including Connecticut, have a dearth of these networks. All Our Kin was cited as the only staffed family child care network in Connecticut. These networks would need to have staff on the ground in communities with the largest number of providers and have expertise in child development in order to provide quality in-program consultations and network-wide trainings. The network staff could either provide services directly, in partnership with Family Resource Centers, or both.

3 Increase funding to Family Resource Centers: Although Family Resource Centers are required to support family child care providers as a core component of their State Department of Education grant, this work is not a funding allocation priority for the State Department of Education.³⁰ Family Resource Center directors report that overall their funding has been declining and, as a result, Family Resource Centers do not have sufficient resources to hire qualified staff to work solely with family child care providers or the skill to provide in-program coaching and support.

4 Expand All Our Kin's Reach: The majority of interviewees noted that All Our Kin, more than any other organization, has the skills, knowledge and capacity to effectively reach out to and engage family child care providers. Several individuals and private funders noted that although it would take a significant infusion of resources, given the results that All Our Kin has had, it should consider expanding its reach and directly provide its quality services in more places.

In summary, there is still a lot of work to do in Connecticut to improve the quality of family child care, particularly for infants and toddlers. However, there is also much to build on both at the local community and statewide level. It seems the time is ripe to harness people's passion for focusing on our youngest children birth to age five, to break the cycle of poor child outcomes and to narrow the achievement gap for our low-income children.

APPENDIX A: All Our Kin Early Learning Guidelines Participant Data 2011–2012

Community	Number of Family Child Care Providers Trained	Community Partners
Ansonia	6	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Beacon Falls	3	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Bloomfield	21	The Alliance for Bloomfield’s Children
Bridgeport	127	Roosevelt and Cesar Batalla Family Resource Center, Dunbar Family Resource Center, Barnum Family Resource Center
Bristol	24	Parent & Child Center at Bristol Hospital, Bristol Family Resource Centers
Clinton	2	Second Homes Family Child Care Association
Derby	3	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Enfield	20	Alcorn Family Resource Center/Enfield KITE
Hartford	67	Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford, Southside Family Center
Hebron	5	Today’s Child Care Association
Madison	1	All Our Kin, Second Homes Family Child Care Association
Meriden	9	Meriden Family Resource Centers
Naugatuck	2	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
New Britain	16	New Britain Family Resource Center
New Haven	25	All Our Kin
New London/Groton	5	Child & Family Agency of SECT
Norwalk	39	Fox Run Family Resource Center, Norwalk Early Childhood Council
Norwich	24	Norwich Human Services
Old Lyme	11	LEARN’s Pawcatuck/Stonington, Family Resource Center
Oxford	1	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Plainville	6	Plainville Family Resource Network
Seymour	9	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Shelton	8	Family Centers
Southington	21	Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington
Stamford	45	Family Centers
Stratford	15	Stratford Public Schools, Stratford Parents’ Place, A division of the Stratford Health Department
Tolland	18	Family Resource Center at Birch Grove
Torrington	3	The Family Resource Center at Vogel-Wetmore Elementary School and The Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative
West Hartford	8	West Hartford Public Schools, The Bridge Family Center
West Haven	8	All Our Kin, West Haven Family Day Care Provider Network

TOTAL

552

Prior to 2011, All Our Kin conducted Early Learning Guidelines training for 23 New Haven providers and 7 from neighboring communities. In addition, All Our Kin has conducted two trainings in Waterbury for 46 providers with more locations scheduled for the fall of 2013.



APPENDIX B: Statewide Family Day Care Associations

FAMILY DAY CARE ASSOCIATION	TOWNS SERVED*
All Our Kin	Bethany, Bridgeport, East Haven, Fairfield, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Norwalk, Orange, Shelton, Stratford, Trumbull, West Haven, Westport, Woodbridge
Asociación de Proveedoras Profesionales Hispánicas	Waterbury
Bolton Providers Network	Bolton
Brass City Child Care Providers	Bethlehem, Cheshire, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Thomaston, Waterbury, Watertown, Wolcott, Woodbury
Casa Otoñal	New Haven
CFDCAN	Statewide
Child Care Providers of West Hartford	West Hartford
Child Care Resources of Central CT	Bristol, Burlington, Farmington, Harwinton, Litchfield, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington, Wolcott
Family Child Care Providers Association	Andover, Bolton, Colchester, Coventry, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Willington, Windsor, Windsor Locks
Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative	Andover, Avon, Bloomfield, Bolton, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks
J.P. Vincent Family Resource Center	Bloomfield
Kid Kare	Hartford
Love-n-Learn Child Care	Beacon Falls, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, Waterbury, West Haven
Lower Fairfield County Family Day Care Association	Stamford
Northwest CARE	Barkhamsted, Goshen, Harwinton, Litchfield, New Hartford, Northfield, Torrington, Winchester
Professional Child Care Network	Bridgeport, Derby, Fairfield, Monroe, Shelton, Stratford
Second Homes Child Care Association	Branford, Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haven, Essex, Guilford, Killingworth, Madison, North Branford, Westbrook
Southington Day Care Providers	Berlin, Cheshire, Plainville, Southington
Today's Child Care Association	Colchester, Coventry, East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Marlborough, Portland, Salem
Valley Child Care Providers	Andover, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton
West Haven Family Day Care Provider Network	West Haven
Wethersfield Family Child Care	Cromwell, Glastonbury, Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield
Windham Area Child Care Association	Andover, Canterbury, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Franklin, Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon, Mansfield, Scotland, Sprague, Windham

*Note that this information is provided by 2-1-1 Child Care. The towns served by individual Family Day Care Associations have not been independently verified.

APPENDIX C: State Department of Education Family Resource Centers (2012–2013)

TOWN	FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
Bloomfield	Laurel School
Branford	Indian Neck School
Bridgeport	Cesar A. Batalla Elementary School, Dunbar School, Roosevelt School, Barnum School
Bristol	South Side School, West Bristol School, Greene-Hills School
Danbury	Mill Ridge Intermediate School, Morris Street School
East Hartford	Silver Lake School, Hockanum School, Franklin H. Mayberry School
East Haven	D.C. Moore School
East Windsor	Broad Brook Elementary School
Enfield	Enfield Street School
Groton	Catherine Kolnaski Magnet School
Hamden	Church Street School, Ridge Hill School
Hartford	Ramon E. Betances School, Martin Luther King Jr. School, America's Choice at SAND, Latino Studies Academy at Burns, Maria Sanchez School, Clark Street School
Hebron	Gilead Hill School
Killingly	Goodyear Early Childhood Center
Manchester	Washington Media Arts Magnet School
Meriden	John Barry School, Roger Sherman Elementary, Benjamin Franklin School
Middletown	Commodore Macdonough School, Farm Hill School
Milford	Mathewson School
New Britain	Jefferson School, Smalley Academy, Smith Elementary
New Haven	Wexler/Grant School, Katherine Brennan School, Hill Central School, Fair Haven School, Ross Woodward Classical Studies Magnet School
New London	Jennings School, Nathan Hale School
North Branford	Jerome Harrison Elementary School
Norwalk	Fox Run Elementary School, Side by Side Charter School, Naramake Elementary School
Norwich	Wequonnoc School, John B. Stanton Elementary
Plainfield	The Early Childhood Center
Plainville	Linden Street School
Plymouth	Plymouth Center School
Stonington	West Broad Street School
Stratford	Stratford Academy/Johnson House
Tolland	Birch Grove Primary School
Torrington	Vogel-Wetmore School
Vernon	Maple Street School
Waterbury	H.S. Chase School, Woodrow Wilson School, Jonathan Reed Elementary School
West Hartford	Charter Oak Academy
Putnam	Putnam Elementary School
Stafford Springs	West Stafford School
Stamford	Rogers International Magnet, Westover School
West Haven	Savin Rock Community School
Winchester	Batcheller Early Education Center
Windham	North Windham School, Natchaug School
Windsor	Oliver Ellsworth School

Endnotes

- ¹ Stephanie Schmit and Hannah Matthews, *Better for Babies: A Study of State Infant and Toddler Child Care Policies*, Center for Law and Social Policy, August 2013: <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/BetterforBabies2.pdf>, citing Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, eds., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000.
- ² Diane Paulsell, Toni Porter, and Gretchen Kirby, "Supporting Quality in Home-Based Child Care." Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., March 31, 2010. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/supporting_brief.pdf
- ³ Stephanie Schmit and Hannah Matthews, *Better for Babies: A Study of State Infant and Toddler Child Care Policies*, Center for Law and Social Policy, August 2013, citing Shonkoff, et al., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods*, 2000.
- ⁴ "HHS announces actions to improve safety and quality of child care," U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, May 16, 2013. <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2013pres/05/20130516a.html>
- ⁵ "The Science of Early Childhood Development: Closing the Gap Between What We Know and What We Do." National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, January 2007. http://developingchild.harvard.edu/index.php/download_file/-/view/67/
- ⁶ "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services, <http://www.ctcare4kids.com/files/2013/09/July-2013.pdf>
- ⁷ "2012 Child Care Availability Survey Summary by Age Group, Region, and Service Type: Fall 2012," 2-1-1 Childcare. This is the most recent report available from 2-1-1 Childcare. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/Capacity2012/2012Statewide.pdf>
- ⁸ 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013, citing Child Care Aware of America, *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care*, 2012.
- ⁹ 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, citing Care 4 Kids, Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting, 2012.
- ¹² 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013.
- ¹³ "Statewide Family Day Care Associations." 2-1-1 Child Care. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/associations.asp>. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁴ "Connecticut State Department of Education Family Resource Centers 2012-2013 (Revised 1-25-13)." Connecticut State Department of Education. <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Family/FRC/FRCcontacts.pdf>. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁵ "Who We Are." Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative. http://www.hacc.info/matriarch/OnePiecePage.asp_O_PageID_E_16_A_PageName_E_WhoWeAre. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁶ Discovery is an initiative of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund that works to improve the early school success of young children. The Discovery Initiative is in the ninth year of a 14-year investment. Discovery offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Discovery communities are creating comprehensive birth to age eight local action plans. The plans enable communities to remain focused and to measure their progress toward school success for every child.
- ¹⁷ "Total population, Under 5 Years, Number (2010)," Connecticut Data Collaborative, ctdata.org.
- ¹⁸ "Total population, Income in the past 12 months below poverty level, Under 18 years, Percent (2006-2010)." Connecticut Data Collaborative, ctdata.org.
- ¹⁹ "Annual Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Survey for Family Day Care Homes: 2012," 2-1-1 Child Care. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/Capacity.asp>
- ²⁰ "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services, <http://www.ctcare4kids.com/files/2013/09/July-2013.pdf>
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ Kathleen Megan, "Malloy Creates New Office of Early Childhood," *The Hartford Courant*, June 24, 2013. http://articles.courant.com/2013-06-24/news/hc-early-childhood-office-0625-20130624_1_executive-order-executive-director-legislation Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ²⁴ QRIS National Learning Network, glossary of terms <http://www.qrisnetwork.org/>
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ "A Quality Rating and Improvement System for Connecticut: QRIS Workgroup Recommendations to the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet," QRIS Workgroup, June 2013.
- ²⁷ The Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework draft report, the Early Childhood Workforce Workgroup to the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, September 2013.
- ²⁸ Matia Finn-Stevenson, Ph.D., *Evaluation of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program*, Yale University, 2009.
- ²⁹ Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, *Staffed Family Child Care Networks: A Strategy to Enhance Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers*, 2012.
- ³⁰ Matia Finn-Stevenson, Ph.D., *Evaluation of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program*, Yale University, 2009.





