

Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council

PLANNING FOR QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION



2023-2028 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



**Siskiyou County Child Care
Planning Council**



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SISKIYOU COUNTY CHILD CARE PLANNING COUNCIL

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to plan for, promote and support quality child care and early education services that meet the needs of all Siskiyou County families.

Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council (also known as LPC) is a diverse, county-wide collaborative that ...

- > assesses child care and early education needs;
- > establishes and updates local priorities for maintenance, expansion and improvement of early childhood services;
- > prepares a strategic plan to coordinate and maximize local, state, federal and private resources;
- > supports local early care and education providers by coordinating trainings and incentive programs;
- > and provides information, resources and counsel to early care providers, community partners, local and state agencies.

Half of the members are appointed by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, while half are appointed by the Siskiyou County Superintendent of Schools.



PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS*

CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Tiffany Elliott, Montague Elementary CSPP, Montague

Daintry Zarzynski, Butte Valley Montessori Children's House, Dorris

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Karen Pautz, First 5 Siskiyou, Mount Shasta

Carla Charraga, Siskiyou Domestic Violence and Crisis Center, Yreka

Steve Bryan, Siskiyou Community Resource Centers, Yreka

CONSUMERS OF CHILD CARE

Ronya Merel, Yreka

Frieda Bennet, Quartz Valley Tribe, Fort Jones

PUBLIC AGENCY

Marlene Rodriguez, Karuk Tribal Head Start, Yreka & Happy Camp

Hilary Oiler, Shasta Head Start

DISCRETIONARY

Margaret Hoaglen, Siskiyou Child Care Council, Weed

Regina Weston, College of the Siskiyous, Weed

STAFF

Cathy Scott, Coordinator

* as of February 2024

INTRODUCTION

In **February 2023**, members of the Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council, as well as Community Partners from Siskiyou Child Care Council (our local Resource and Referral agency), Quality Counts Siskiyou and the Siskiyou County Office of Education attended a series of strategic planning meetings. The purpose was to discuss and update the three key areas that emerged from our 2020 Needs Assessment*; examine the current landscape of early care and education; and contribute ideas to develop a countywide Strategic Action Plan.

The Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council Strategic Action Plan for Child Care and Early Education Services fulfills the requirement of the California Department of Social Services to complete a countywide, coordinated plan for the improvement of early care and education services. The Plan builds upon the work of many individuals and agencies who have been working to carry out Siskiyou LPC's Mission and previous Strategic Action Plans.

This Strategic Action Plan is intended to guide Siskiyou County, the Siskiyou County Local Child Care Planning Council, its partner agencies, and others. It may be used by any organization, individual or grant writer for strategic planning or to advocate for additional services for Siskiyou County families and children.

*The 2020 Needs Assessment can be found at <http://www.siskiyoucoe.net/domain/64>.

KEY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

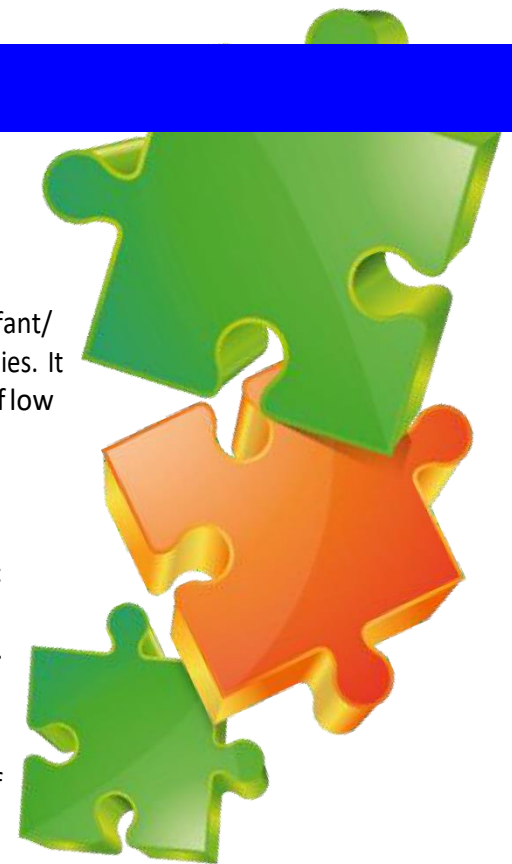
There are three key areas that emerged from our 2020 Needs Assessment:

1) ACCESS TO CHILD CARE/EARLY EDUCATION SERVICES

Access to licensed, quality child care/early education services in Siskiyou County is limited. There is an especially low supply of infant/toddler, full-time, flexible and non-traditional hours' care. In addition, the cost of child care is often a financial hardship for families. It is therefore recommended that efforts continue to both expand the number of quality child care openings (especially in areas of low supply) as well as improve quality and access for families. California's UPK mixed delivery system provides free transitional kindergarten and expanded learning services to all 4 year olds; providing quality supports and professional learning opportunities to support quality and access to these classrooms.

Creating and maintaining a quality and economically viable child care program is quite challenging, especially in difficult economic times. It is therefore recommended that efforts continue to support child care providers in both tangible and intangible ways. Linking providers to Quality Counts Siskiyou: Retention and quality improvement initiative is key to sustained engagement. Given the significant decrease in the number of family child care homes, retention efforts may be especially well spent in this sector.

Due to the remoteness and low-population density of many areas in the county, it is recommended that non-traditional methods of delivering early education services to these communities be continued, developed, supported and expanded.



KEY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION (continued)

2) QUALITY

Given the known, cost-effective and research-based benefits of quality child care/early education, emphasis should be placed on quality enhancement efforts among all sectors of the caregiving/early education population (including, but not limited to, licensed and license-exempt early care and education providers including transitional kindergarten, home visitors, parents, non-profit and public agency staff and pediatric care staff).

The following professionally recognized indicators of quality child care and early education should be used in planning, implementing and advocating for quality enhancement services and activities:

- > A well-educated, well-trained, well-compensated and stable childcare/early education workforce
- > Developmentally appropriate and optimally stimulating classrooms and child environments
- > Safe and healthy practices and environments for children
- > Culturally competent child care/early education services with a focus on equity
- > Warm, positive, respectful and developmentally appropriate relationships and interactions between adults and children
- > Respect and accommodation for individual child needs and abilities
- > High level of family involvement

3) FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND LINKAGE TO SUPPORT SERVICES

Given the significantly higher rates of poverty, unemployment, child abuse and neglect within the county, it seems fair to assume that many Siskiyou County families experience high levels of stress. Additional family stressors may include isolation, lack of adequate transportation and difficulty in accessing services. It is therefore recommended that efforts to provide and/or link families to support services and family participation activities be continued, developed, supported and expanded.



DESIRED OUTCOME #1

Increased Access to a Wide Variety of Child Care and Early Education Services throughout Siskiyou County

Goal 1. Support all expansion and capacity building efforts across all sectors of our county's diverse, mixed delivery system of child care and early education services (licensed family child care homes, licensed centers, Tribal centers and programs, Transitional Kindergarten, Expanded Learning Programs, home visiting services, license-exempt providers, Community/Family Resource Center playgroups, etc.).

Goal 2. Continue retention efforts by supporting existing ECE (Early Childhood Education) programs.



Strategies to promote access and retention:

- a) Participate in individual meetings, group meetings and/or collaborations with a focus on expanding the number of ECE providers, programs, and early education slots (e.g. planning, advocacy, recruitment activities, technical assistance, grant applications, etc.).
- b) Prioritize programs that will serve area(s) of high need; actively enroll underserved populations such as infants, toddlers, dual language learners, foster and homeless youth and children with special needs; offer full-time, flexible or non-traditional hours' care.
- c) Link all providers of child care and early education services to resources, trainings, higher education opportunities and support that will encourage them to continue and thrive. Incentivize these opportunities when resources are available.

DESIRED OUTCOME #2

Increased Quality Across All Sectors of our County's Diverse, Mixed Delivery System of Child Care and Early Education Services



Goal 1. Create a coordinated, integrated Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system that includes all types of child care and early education services.

Goal 2. Link individuals and programs that provide child care and early education services to CQI activities.

Goal 3. Support workforce development through professional learning opportunities and supports.

Strategies to increase quality of and engagement in child care and early education services:

- a) New initiatives and opportunities shall be integrated through partnerships and bridged through Quality Counts Siskiyou.
- b) Link providers to a centralized, coordinated ECE professional development training calendar, including the business side of childcare, educational supports, communities of practice and mentor/coaching.
- c) Provide connections resources that support early childhood educators to advance along the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) permit and credential matrix.
- d) Incentivize learning opportunities with a focus on best practices in social emotional learning, trauma informed care, play based learning, equity and inclusion and other quality markers that support high quality services for children and families.
- e) Continue to increase the quality in licensed family child care homes, licensed centers, Tribal centers and programs, Transitional Kindergarten, Expanded Learning Programs, home visiting services, license-exempt providers, Community/Family Resource Center playgroups, etc. by engaging in CQI planning.

DESIRED OUTCOME #3

Increased Family Involvement and Linkage to Support Services

Goal 1. Develop a countywide system that links families throughout the county to community resources and support services, parent education opportunities, quality trainings and family engagement and strengthening activities.

Goal 2. Develop a system for improving the county's capacity to serve children with special needs (developmental, physical, cognitive, mental health, challenging behaviors, etc.)



Strategies to increase family involvement and linkage to support services:

- a) Utilize the First 5 Siskiyou website**, to link Families to Resources. Use QR codes and social media to support family access to services.
- b) Secure commitments from a large number of “gateway” partners to distribute and/or link families they serve to the above-listed resources (either in person or online).
- c) Meet with key partners to assess and discuss current capacity, unmet needs, challenges, barriers, streamlining of services, potential (including “out-of-the box”) solutions, etc.).
- d) Develop a resource guide for parents, teachers and child care providers of children with special needs to access professional support and/or resources that support equity and inclusion.

A CALL TO ACTION

To achieve our desired outcomes, we will need the support and collaboration of numerous individuals, agencies, organizations, businesses, faith-based groups, service clubs, etc.

There are many opportunities for everyone in our community to become involved in our mission to plan for, promote and support quality child care and early education services that meet the needs of all Siskiyou County families.

Please join us by committing your time and energy to the implementation of this plan. Contact Cathy Scott at cscott@siskiyoucoe.net or at 530-643-6002 to find out how you can get involved.

