BUILDING THE FUTURE

A Countywide Plan for Child Care and Education: Birth to Twelve Years

Sonoma County 2016-2021









Acknowledgments, community partners, and acronyms

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Acronyms

4Cs	Community Child Care Council
CARES	Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards
CCPC	Child Care Planning Council
ECE	Early Childhood Education
QIRS	Quality Improvement Rating System - *Quality Counts* is Sonoma County's local QIRS program
RCCS	River to Coast Children's Services

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**There are several ways to refer to early childhood education and child care services provided to infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children. For the purpose of this document "Care and Education" will be used as an inclusive term.*

DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PLAN

Child Care Plan Development Process

THE PURPOSE:
A community process that would result in a countywide plan for child care and development services that represents the needs and values of families in Sonoma County.

THE HOPE:
A united community with a common vision; active participation by all constituents; community ownership of the plan's goals and strategies.





June 2014 – Child Care Planning Council Retreat establishes ad hoc committee of Council to address Child Care Plan development

January-March 2015 – Council Committee & staff develop process to gather input for the Plan through a community survey. Survey drafted

April 2015 – Work groups at Council meeting provide input on survey draft

April-May 2015 – Survey is disseminated to the community with 379 responses received

June 2015 – Survey results are compiled

October-December 2015 – Survey results reviewed and independent consultant hired to synthesize responses. Provided to staff & Executive Committee

January 2016 – Executive Committee & Facilitator develop goals from survey results

January-February 2016 – Child Care Planning Council and community partners convene to develop draft of strategies to meet goals

March-May 2016 – Plan draft created and presented to Council and community members

June 2016 – Child Care Plan completed. Dissemination to the community pending Board of Supervisor's approval



CHILD CARE PLANNING COUNCIL BACKGROUND

Child Care Planning Council of Sonoma County

THE MISSION of the Child Care Planning Council of Sonoma County is to convene and inspire the community through collaboration, leadership, and advocacy to promote and plan for quality child care and development for the benefit of all children (birth to 12), their families, and Sonoma County.

The Child Care Planning Council (CCPC) of Sonoma County was established in 1991 in accordance with state law Assembly Bill (AB) 2141 to provide a forum for the identification of local priorities for child care and to develop policies to meet the needs identified within these priorities. The Council received increased funding and expanded mandates in 1998 during the implementation of CalWORKS and AB 1542. Current mandates include:

- Conducting a local Child Care Needs Assessment at least once every five years
- Submitting a comprehensive countywide child care plan to the California Department of Education and the County Board of Supervisors
- Establishing and reviewing local priorities for child care funding, according to State policy and guidance
- Collaborating with all interested parties to foster partnerships designed to meet local child care needs
- Linking part-day programs such as Head Start and State Preschool programs with full-day child care programs
- Coordinating efforts to transfer funds as needed between subsidized programs according to California Department of Education guidelines

CCPC membership and reports are authorized by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and the Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools; and the Council is governed by State mandates, Council bylaws, and the Brown Act. Council members represent a cross section of the community including parents, child care providers, agencies serving children and families, public officials, and community members. CCPC meetings are held once per month and are open to the public. Standing committees include an Executive Committee, Membership Committee, and Finance Committee; ad hoc committees are formed based on the Council's annual goals and objectives. CCPC endeavors to convene all those concerned with child care issues in community forums and meetings in order to improve and sustain valuable, quality programs, and opportunities for families.

Vision, Values, and Priorities of the Child Care Planning Council of Sonoma County

THE VISION of the Child Care Planning Council of Sonoma County (CCPC) is that all Sonoma County children (birth to 12 years of age) in child care and development programs (including family child care homes, school-based child care and center-based care) will be cared for in programs that are safe and healthy, nurturing, stimulating, interactive, culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of all children.



CCPC VALUES

- CCPC supports nationally and locally defined standards of quality in the care of children, including best practices in child development and education environments. The Council also recognizes the challenges to accessible, affordable care and education; and the need for a variety of settings to respond to unique barriers and family demographics.
- The concepts of diversity and cultural responsiveness are important elements in the composition of CCPC membership, goals, meeting agendas, outreach efforts, community events, and in child care and development settings.
- CCPC serves to represent a broad constituency – all those concerned with the care of children and youth, birth to 12 years of age. We represent many diverse viewpoints in identifying the best interests of children and their families, and advocate at the state and local level for programs, best practices, and funding.

SONOMA COUNTY DATA

Sonoma County Child Care Needs Assessment



The California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division, requires every county to develop a child care needs assessment for their jurisdictions. CCPC has prepared this report to help inform child care policies and priorities based on the current status of child care in the county. The data includes the following topics: supply, demand, gaps in services, costs, sources of child care subsidies, special populations, provider availability, and services.

To learn more about this report visit http://www.scoe.org/files/final-community-profiles-12-31-15.pdf

Greatest Unmet Needs

- Infant and Toddler care
- Affordable care
- Facilities located in areas of need

Sonoma Child Care Community Profiles - 2015 Percent of Demand Met by Existing Facilities in Each Community and High Risk Priority Area

Community/ High Risk Area	% of Infant Demand Met	% of Preschool Demand Met	% of School Age Demand Met
Santa Rosa	48%	79%	78%
Petaluma/Penngrove	61%	105%	83%
Sonoma Valley	34%	105%	42%
Rohnert Park/Cotati	63%	108%	60%
Sebastopol	50%	94%	49%
River Area/West County	78%	117%	10%
Windsor	73%	86%	59%
Healdsburg/Geyserville	24%	177%	105%
Cloverdale	36%	72%	114%
East Cloverdale	43%	96%	115%
Fetters Springs/Agua Caliente	18%	43%	125%
NorthWest Santa Rosa	32%	74%	50%
SouthWest Santa Rosa	63%	56%	14%
SouthEast Santa Rosa	20%	29%	35%

Source: Nilsson Consulting

Children Now

The 2016 California Children's Report Card provides a complete evaluation of the current status of California's kids to ensure that the state's leaders make sound policy decisions and keep kids a priority in 2016 and beyond. Unfortunately, California recently ranked 38th out of 50 states in children's well-being.

California spends 12 times as much on prisoners as it does on a part-time, school-year preschool program.



To learn more about this report visit www.childrennow.org/reports-research/2016CAChildrensReportCard.pdf

Cradle to Career

Cradle to Career is a partnership that connects all segments of the educational continuum – early childhood, K-12, college/technical training, careers – with a broad community support to improve educational, economic, and health outcomes for all Sonoma County youth. The framework consists of three major goal areas:

Goal 1: Every child enters kindergarten ready to succeed.
Goal 2: The academic success of every child is supported in and out of school.
Goal 3: Every young adult is prepared for and completes the highest level of postsecondary education or training to achieve their career goals.

To learn more about Cradle to Career visit www.C2CSonomaCounty.org

A Portrait of Sonoma County

A Portrait of Sonoma County is an in-depth look at how residents of Sonoma County are faring in three fundamental areas of life: health, access to knowledge, and living standards. Select findings include huge disparities that persist regarding levels of health, education, and standard living wage in our county. The report includes an Agenda for Action that highlights concrete actions that can be taken by the Department of Health Services and its allies to create a better Sonoma County. Potential actions include making universal preschool a reality and prioritizing on-time high school graduation.

To learn more about this report visit http://www.measureofamerica.org/sonoma/

Upstream Investments

Sponsored by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, Upstream Investments Policy seeks to eliminate poverty in Sonoma County. The three primary strategies they promote are: invest early, invest wisely, and invest together. As a community, they have developed four goals to guide their work.

Goal 1: The whole community is engaged in supporting the healthy development of children.
Goal 2: Community members have access to education and training and are adequately prepared for the challenges of the future.
Goal 3: All community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.
Goal 4: Sonoma County has a thriving diverse economy that produces economic security for all.

To learn more about Upstream Investments visit http://www.upstreaminvestments.org/

CHILD CARE PLAN: PURPOSE, USE, AND NEXT STEPS

Purpose and Use of the Plan

This comprehensive Countywide Child Care Plan explores current trends affecting children, families, and service providers; identifies five goals with corresponding indicators; recommends strategies; and identifies potential partners.

The purpose and use of this plan include:

- Increasing awareness of the importance of quality child care and learning experiences for all children, families, and communities
- Providing all stakeholders with a common frame of reference for future action
- Expanding partnerships to implement strategies
- Providing a platform that will lead to coordinated planning, integrated action and advocacy for specific policy changes
- Mobilizing public and private resources to address identified needs and
- Recommending priority areas for development of programs and funding

The Role of the Child Care Planning Council and Next Steps

The community has created this instrument which places the welfare of Sonoma County's children at the forefront of all planning and development activities. The Child Care Planning Council (CCPC) is committed to helping the community reach its goals by convening groups and forums related to the goal areas, and continuing to seek active partners for the implementation of specific strategies. This plan is intended to be a "living document" that inspires community engagement and helps to unite various constituent groups toward our common vision. The CCPC hopes to mobilize public and private resources to address identified needs and to enhance and strengthen collaboration among children's advocacy groups and service agencies. Through a unified implementation of this plan, Sonoma County can become an environment that:

- Supports families and ensures that children have access to opportunities for healthy development
- Values child care professionals and educators
- Ensures that all children have access to high quality, affordable care
- Respects the diversity of cultures and needs represented in the community
- Provides cultural responsiveness to diverse family and individual needs
- Nurtures future workforce development and community economic stability
- Provides education about "children first" politics, policies, and investments

Community partners likely to support the implementation of this plan include: Businesses, government agencies, non-profit agencies, community members and volunteers, funders, law enforcement agencies, faith-based organizations, schools, and health providers.



GOALS OF THE CHILD CARE PLAN

GOAL 1

SONOMA COUNTY CHILDREN, BIRTH TO AGE 12, HAVE HIGH QUALITY CARE AND EDUCATION.

GOAL 2

SONOMA COUNTY FAMILIES HAVE AFFORDABLE CARE AND EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE 12.

GOAL 3

SONOMA COUNTY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS ARE HIGHLY TRAINED AND FAIRLY COMPENSATED.

GOAL 4

SONOMA COUNTY EMPLOYERS IMPLEMENT FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES.

GOAL 5

SONOMA COUNTY FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED IN THE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN.

GOAL 1

SONOMA COUNTY CHILDREN, BIRTH TO AGE 12, HAVE HIGH QUALITY CARE AND EDUCATION.



Numerous studies have shown that children's experiences in their early years influence future cognitive, social and emotional development, school readiness, and future academic performance. Quality care and education supports children's optimal growth and development in all these areas. These programs feature play-based learning and developmentally appropriate materials and practices. They provide opportunities for children to be immersed in reading, and engaged in rich language experiences and creative expression.*

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased access to quality care and education for all families, prioritizing target populations such as homeless families, families dealing with abuse, children with special needs, and dual language learners
- Increased development of new child care facilities to better reflect the current Child Care Needs Assessment
- Increased diversity of the care and education professional workforce

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Grow the capacity for a Quality Improvement Rating System (QIRS) beginning with the assessment process
- Agree upon a common definition for school readiness that is based on research, embraces a developmental perspective, and honors all children
- Advocate for higher licensing standards, including annual visits to all programs
- Develop and build collaborative efforts with Local Education Agencies (LEAs), the business community, and other appropriate community groups to expand care for target populations through the infusion of more funding and the creation of mentoring programs
- Advocate for a single funding stream in order to develop facilities and programs that meet Sonoma County's needs
- Work with city and county governments to reduce barriers (permits and regulations) for new facility development and expansion of existing sites
- Identify areas for new and/or additional facilities for children birth to 12 years, and advocate for facilities in every neighborhood that requires service
- Coordinate an outreach campaign targeting prospective ECE professionals who are currently under-represented in the ECE workforce (men, minorities)

*According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (the nation's largest child development and early childhood education professional organization), high quality care and education have the following characteristics in common: cultural sensitivity, healthy practices and safe environments, specialized staff preparation and adequate staff compensation and support, low staff turnover, small group sizes and a small number of children per teacher, an emphasis on parent involvement and sustained efforts to build close ties with families, while making sure all children's needs are met by linking families with comprehensive services.

GOAL 2

SONOMA COUNTY FAMILIES HAVE AFFORDABLE CARE AND EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN BIRTH TO AGE 12.

Access to affordable care and education promotes both participation in the workforce and economic and social stability. Currently the annual cost of child care is comparable to public college tuition and is unsustainable for many families. Child Care Aware, a national resource hub for parents and child care providers, reports that in California, the average cost of infant care consumes 45% of the median income of a single parent and 9.3% of a married couple. Center-based four-year-old care costs 31% of a single parent's income and 10% of the income of a married couple. Transitional Kindergarten and scholarship programs serve as two examples that address this issue, but these programs have focused only on four-year-old children. The need is still very high for children ages birth through three years old.





DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased funding available for care and education for children birth to 12 years from a local children's fund
- Ensure that qualifying families have knowledge and support to access subsidies available to them

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Establish a local Children's Fund with the support of government and the business communities
- Outreach to families about the availability of subsidies
- Broaden income and need eligibility requirements to allow more access to subsidies



GOAL 3

SONOMA COUNTY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS ARE HIGHLY TRAINED AND FAIRLY COMPENSATED.

Highly trained and appropriately paid care and education professionals are essential to the future success of young children. Numerous studies have linked teacher qualifications and pay to the quality of services provided to children and families. Unfortunately these professionals remain underpaid and are too often minimally trained. As a result, staff turnover is a continuing problem. High quality programs feature continuity of care as a crucial element. This consistency provides a level of stability and security that children need in order to learn and develop. While the cost of care and education services has doubled since 1997, according to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, care and education professionals have seen a minimal increase in their compensation.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased recognition of the care and education profession including increased funding to support wages and professional development
- Increased retention of the care and education workforce
- Increased opportunities for shared training among care and education program staff, family child care provider, Pre-Kindergarten, Transitional Kindergarten, and Kindergarten staffs

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Develop and support an advocacy campaign highlighting the value of care and education professionals
- Compile and publicize data from a variety of sources, including higher education institutions and CARES, that highlight the impact of teacher training on the quality of care and education programs
- Advocate at the State level to increase reimbursement rates specifically to compensate for appropriate wages and work standards
- Advocate for higher teacher standards including a baccalaureate degree in child development/ECE (or related field) for lead teachers and administrators
- Implement Quality Counts CARES program to provide training needed for early childhood professionals to meet quality standards



GOAL 4

SONOMA COUNTY EMPLOYERS IMPLEMENT FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICIES.

Creating a work environment that helps employees balance the responsibilities of work and family is smart for businesses and is good public policy. Today's economy requires an investment in human capital. Employees are more satisfied and productive when their basic needs are met, including family leave policies, child care, flexible work hours, and an adequate wage. When employers participate, Sonoma County families have the necessary support and peace of mind to fulfill their responsibilities at work, in their homes, with their children, and in their communities. Sonoma County can become the most family-friendly community in California.





DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased family-friendly policies, including flexible hours, family leave, and benefits
- Increased employer-sponsored care and education

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Educate employers and human resources managers on the benefits of implementing family-friendly policies in their workplaces
- Connect businesses to financial resources that support employers' policies (vouchers, business loans, tax adjustments)
- Work with local legislative representatives to create policies that support and promote flexible work hours and expanded parental leave practices for Sonoma County employers
- Expand Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce's Worksite Held Employee English Learning (WHEEL) program. This program provides English classes at the worksite and supports parent involvement in their child's preschool and school education
- Advocate for the Sonoma County Chambers of Commerce to take formal positions on increasing family-friendly policies in the workplace
- Encourage employers to provide release time for parents to participate in their child's school activities
- Provide technical assistance and other resources in the establishment of family friendly policies, worksite child care or support to employee access to conveniently located child care through purchased slots/vouchers

GOAL 5

SONOMA COUNTY FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED IN THE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN.

Children thrive when their families are knowledgeable about child development and are able to participate and support their child's learning. Research from the evidence-based Strengthening Families framework indicates: "An understanding of parenting strategies and child development helps parents understand what to expect and how to provide what children need during each developmental phase." Additionally children with parents who are involved in their schools tend to have fewer behavioral problems and better academic performance, and are more likely to complete high school than those whose parents are not involved. Family engagement is an essential component of care and education programs.





DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased number of parents read regularly to their children
- Schools and care-providers offer increased opportunities for family engagement
- Increased parent participation in activities and decisions regarding their child's care and education

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Distribute easily understandable materials related to child development and the importance of parent involvement and reading
- Add Family Engagement component to the Quality Improvement Rating System (QIRS) by using a tool to measure family engagement
- Encourage schools and programs to offer a variety of parent education and engagement options, understanding that the school-parent partnership is a two-way street
- Collect information through surveys and other methods about barriers and supports to successful parent involvement
- Determine the best practices for communicating with parents
- Identify specific successful examples of parent engagement that ECE programs use
- Help programs facilitate parent-to-parent networking using methods such as Parent Cafes, Triple P workshops, and Parent Education workshops
- Ensure that parents are familiar with available resources that support young children and families

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

References

***Supplement to the 2014 Sonoma County Child Care Needs Assessment**, December 2015 Update*
http://scoe.org/files/final-community-profiles-12-31-15.pdf

2016 CA Children's Report Card by Children Now
https://www.childrennow.org/reports-research/2016cachildrensreportcard/

Cradle to Career Sonoma County
http://www.c2csonomacounty.org/

***A Portrait of Sonoma County 2014* from the Measure of America Series**
http://www.ssrc.org/publications/view/a-portrait-of-sonoma-county/

Upstream Investments of Sonoma County
http://www.upstreaminvestments.org/

Strengthening Families: A Protective Factors Framework
www.strengtheningfamilies.net

National Association for the Education of Young Children
http://www.naeyc.org/

***Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2015 Report* by Child Care Aware**
http://www.usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/reports-and-research/costofcare/

Resources

Alliance for Childhood; http://www.allforchildren.org
17 Oak Street, 2nd Floor, Needham MA 02492
(781) 444-7148; info@allforchildren.org

Bay Area Council; http://www.bayareacouncil.org
353 Sacramento Street, 10th Floor, San Francisco CA 94111
(415) 981-6600; dchristensen@bayareacouncil.org

California Association for the Education of Young Children;http://caeyc.org
950 Glenn Drive, Suite 150, Folsom CA 95630
(916) 486-7750; info@caeyc.org

California Child Care Resource and Referral Network;
http://www.rrnetwork.org/
111 New Montgomery Street, 7th Floor, San Francisco CA 94105
(415) 882-0234; info@rrnetwork.org

California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division; http://www.cde.ca.gov
1430 N Street, Sacramento CA 95814
(916) 319-0800

Child Care Law Center; http://www.childcarelaw.org
445 Church Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco CA 94114
(415) 558-8005; info@childcarelaw.org

Child Care Planning Council of Sonoma County;
http://www.scoe.org/ccpc
5340 Skylane Boulevard, Santa Rosa CA 95403
(707) 524-2639; ccpc@scoe.org

Child Parent Institute; http://www.calparents.org/
3650 Standish Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95407
(707) 585-6108

Community Action Partnership Sonoma County;
http://www.capsonoma.org/
141 Stony Circle, Suite 210, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 544-6911; info@capsonoma.org

Community Child Care Council of Sonoma County (4Cs);
http://www.sonoma4cs.org
131-A Stony Circle, Suite 300, Santa Rosa CA 95401
(707) 544-3077; info@sonoma4cs.org

Community Care Licensing; http://www.ccld.ca.gov/
101 Golf Course Drive, Rohnert Park CA 94928
(707) 588-5026

Early Learning Institute; http://earlylearninginstitute.com/
311 Professional Center Drive, Rohnert Park, CA 94928
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First 5 Sonoma County; http://www.first5sonomacounty.org/
490 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 203, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 565-6686

Insight Center for Community Economic Development;
http://www.insightcced.org/
1999 Harrison Street, Suite 1800, Oakland CA 94612-4700
(510) 251-2600; info@insightcced.org

Mission: Readiness; http://www.missionreadiness.org
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