



**Lake County
Master Plan for
Child Care Development
2005-2010**

Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council

Vision

In Lake County, quality child care will be:

- *Recognized as essential to the community;*
- *Actively supported by local agencies and decision-makers;*
- *Accessible to all families;*
- *Staffed by individuals who are committed to children's well-being, appropriately trained, and fairly compensated for their services.*

Mission

The mission of the Lake County Child Care Planning Council is to ensure the availability and accessibility of high-quality child care for the families and children of our community.



The Council wishes to express its appreciation to the following people for their invaluable contributions to this document:

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Executive Summary

The Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council was formed in 1994 as a committee of the Lake County Child Abuse Prevention Council. Its primary task was to assess local child care needs and establish priorities for programs using federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds. These funds served the child care and development needs of low-income families.

Between 1994 and 1997, the LPC alternated between operating independently and as a committee of the Children's Council. The Welfare-to-Work Act of 1997, which enacted welfare reform in California, restructured local child care planning councils. This Act gave child care planning councils new responsibilities, formalized their structure, and authorized the County Superintendents of Schools and County governing bodies to appoint members.

The responsibilities of the Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Establish local child care priorities to ensure all child care needs in the county are met.
- ◆ Conduct an assessment of child care needs in the county no less than once in five years.
- ◆ Document information gathered during the needs assessment.
- ◆ Prepare a comprehensive countywide child care plan, designed to mobilize public and private resources to address identified needs.

The Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council developed the original *Lake County Master Plan for Child Care Development*, approved by the Lake County Board of Supervisors and the Lake County Superintendent of Schools in 2000, for the purpose of meeting Lake County's priority child care needs.

The desired results and goals identified in this second edition of the *Lake County Master Plan for Child Care Development* are based on lessons learned from the original master plan and on needs identified by the *Lake County Child Care Needs Assessment* published in December 2002 and the recently published *Lake County Child Care Economic Impact Report*.

The council identified four high priority ongoing child care needs:

- ◆ A continuing shortage of child care capacity.
 - including support services.
- ◆ Continuing variable program quality.
- ◆ The continuing high cost of child care and early education.

- ◆ The continuing need for information about the importance of the child care industry in Lake County.

The Master Plan identified four Desired Results to meet these needs:

- ◆ A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County.
- ◆ High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County.
- ◆ The community is committed to ensuring the availability of affordable child care and early education services for all families.
- ◆ Awareness of the importance of the child care industry is pervasive in Lake County.

The Master Plan calls the community to action. It identifies who needs to be involved, what will work and outlines specific strategies for the different segments of the community.

In addition the Master Plan identifies a detailed implementation plan with specific goals and, wherever possible, measurable outcomes. The implementation plan can be summarized as follow:

- ◆ Increased child care capacity including an increased range of child care options, such as multi-cultural environments, special needs skills, non traditional hours, more facilities, etc.
- ◆ Improved information access for providers, consumers, and agencies.
- ◆ Improved provider skills and professional development.
- ◆ Improved provider support.
- ◆ Funding and other resource development including child care subsidies, facility development funds, tax incentives, etc.
- ◆ Education and marketing campaigns, targeting the general public, communities, consumers, political bodies, etc.

This Master Plan understands that the community and the Council must work together to achieve the four Desired Results described. This Master Plan is a **CALL TO ACTION**. There are many opportunities for everyone in our county to become involved in achieving the goal of high quality child care and early education services that are affordable, available and equally accessible to all children in Lake County.

**Five Year Master Plan for Child Care Development
2005-2010**

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to present a plan that will guide Lake County towards the goal of ensuring that high quality affordable child care and early education is recognized as essential to the community; actively supported by local agencies and decision makers; accessible to all families; and staffed by individuals who are committed to children's wellbeing, appropriately trained and fairly compensated for their services.

This plan is directed to all members of the community who are concerned about children, families and the future of Lake County. It is the purpose of the plan to inform and educate elected and appointed government officials, business leaders, policy makers, community agencies, education leaders, parents and the early care and education community about the conditions and support systems that will promote the availability of high quality child care and early education.

**This is your opportunity to ensure that
high quality, affordable child care and
early education is available for all children
in Lake County**

Development of the Strategic Child Care Plan

The Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council developed the original *Lake County Master Plan for Child Care Development*, approved by the Lake County Board of Supervisors and the Lake County Superintendent of School in 2000, for the purpose of meeting Lake County's priority child care needs.

This second *Lake County Master Plan for Child Care Development* is a continuation, update and revision of the first plan. The desired results and goals identified are based on lessons learned from the original plan and on needs identified by the *Lake County Child Care Needs Assessment* published in December 2002 and the recently published *Lake County Child Care Economic Impact Report*.

Identified High Priority Needs

The following high priority needs were identified from the sources described above.

1. A Shortage of Child Care Capacity

- ✓ Lake County has two serious child care needs:
 - 1,357 regular spaces, based on an analysis of child care supply and demand.
 - 1,529 preschool, 757 kindercare, and 4,581 comprehensive after school spaces, based on a comparison of existing spaces with children in these age groups.

2. Variable Program Quality

- ✓ In addition to the lack of capacity there is a wide discrepancy in the quality of child care and early education in Lake County.
- ✓ Lake County's children deserve quality child care. Quality child care leads to positive outcomes in child development, including cognition, school achievement, behavior, and emotional health. Quality child care requires small groups, trained providers, and safe, stimulating environments.
 - For quality child care to be available throughout Lake County, providers must make a self-sufficient wage, with appropriate benefits, and professional development opportunities.

(See Appendix II for a definition of Quality Early Childhood Programs)

3. The High Cost of Child Care and Early Education

- ✓ Without subsidies, most Lake County families cannot afford child care. At a minimum, non-subsidized, licensed care costs at least \$5,200/year. More full-time, licensed, subsidized child care is essential for the social and economic stability and well-being of families and of the community as a whole.

4. The Need For Information About the Importance of the Child Care Industry in Lake County

- ✓ The Child Care Industry has a significant and positive impact on Lake County's economy.
 - Child care is a \$12 million dollar industry in Lake County. It has created at least 708 jobs, pays \$4,241,000 per year in wages and benefits, generates 401 additional jobs and \$17.7 million in sales. In addition, the child care industry brings over \$8,095,285 into Lake County in State and Federal subsidies.

- Quality child care is a small investment which produces major, long-term benefits, including significant cost savings:
 - At a minimum, quality child care saves \$2 for every \$1 invested.
 - When benefits to the participants are added, the savings can rise to \$5 for every \$1 invested.
 - When benefits from reduced crime, welfare, and remedial education costs are added, the return rises to \$7.16 for every \$1 invested.

In response to the identified high priority needs, the Lake County Child Care Planning and Development Council identified four Desired Results with strategies and goals to help move the county towards the goal of having high quality, affordable early care and education is available for all children in Lake County.

Capacity

Desired Result #1

A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County

All segments of the community, elected or appointed officials, families, business and service providers acknowledge the need for and importance of access to quality child care, early education and support services for ALL children. Children's individual and special needs and their families' choice of care setting is respected and supported through access to a full range of quality licensed and license-exempt care options. These options should include center-based programs, family child care homes, in-home care, faith-based care, non-traditional hours of care, and care for mildly ill children.

Who needs to be involved?

The community at large, government, the business community and the child care and early education community.

What Will Work?

The county and local policy makers should be updated regularly on the status of quality accessible care. Measures should be recommended to support increased access to child care and early education services. Data and statistics about the availability of child care and early education services must be kept current by the Council in collaboration with other agencies. The community, local government and business must support and implement policies and practices that increase the availability of child care, early education and support services.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Strategies for the Community

Community at large

- ✓ Supports and advocates for the development and expansion of any quality child care, early education and support services.
- ✓ Supports and advocates for any funding that will serve to expand the availability of child care, early education services and support services.
- ✓ Supports any child care and early education retention programs such as CARES.

Government

- ✓ Supports policies that streamline the review and approval of permits for child care capacity building, expansion and improvement of child care and early education facilities.
- ✓ State and local bodies establish tax credits to support parent's use of child care and early care services.

Business Community

- ✓ County, city and other employers create family friendly policies such as telecommuting or flex work options.
- ✓ Refer families to the appropriate resource information for child care and early education services.

Child Care and Early Education Community

- ✓ Participates in all efforts to increase the number of quality child care and early education spaces available for all children.
- ✓ Continues to track the expansion and retention of providers.
- ✓ Actively supports and participates in surveys and other data gathering activities pertaining to child care and early education.
- ✓ Refer families to the appropriate resource information for child care and early education services.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Strategies for the Council

Outreach

- ✓ Work to educate the community about the continuing need for expanded child care, early education and support services.
- ✓ Work to educate the community on the how-to's of family friendly business policies and employer supported child care and education programs.
- ✓ Members seek appointment to local planning commissions.
- ✓ Members attend local planning commission meetings concerned with child care and early education issues and provide informative information.
- ✓ Outreach to migrant education and other programs that provide services to isolated populations.
- ✓ Serve as a clearing house for child care, early education and support services.
- ✓ Continue to update and distribute outreach materials and resource information.

Data

- ✓ Work with the child care and early education community to collect and analyze data to track the availability and need for services.
- ✓ Work with the child care and early education community to identify facilities which have had, or currently provide, services to children with special needs.
- ✓ Work with the child care and early education community to identify and document resources for families, child care and early education providers.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

<p>Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County</p>
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Goal 1: Recruit providers who are able to implement developmentally, culturally, and linguistically diverse child care

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Recruit providers from all communities including Native American, migrant, bilingual, etc.	Increase in the # of child care spaces in the county 10% multi-cultural providers/year	Same as outcome	ongoing	NCO/RCCC; LPC; DSS; LCOE; First5 of Lake County; Community groups; The Learning House
B. Recruit non-traditional care providers (e.g., non-traditional hours, on-call workers to serve as qualified substitutes for child care providers, court-centered care, alternative care, visitation, etc.)	One provider for evening/weekend care at each side of Lake County, etc.	# providers; # children using non-traditional hours, alternative care, etc.	ongoing	NCO/RCCC; LPC; DSS; LCOE; First5 of Lake County; Community groups; The Learning House
C. Provide resources (additional staff, specialists, mentors, facility improvements, etc.) to assist programs to accommodate diverse needs and special needs	Quality options for diverse and special needs care	# and type of resources; # programs enhanced; # children served	ongoing	ESNC; NCO/RCCC; LPC; First5 of Lake County; LCOE, The Learning House; etc.

Goal 2: Improve systems for sharing child care information

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Enhance and upgrade County-wide information system to improve access to subsidized child care services for all families	Collaboration; Increased access	Website; print resources	Within 1 year and ongoing	LCOE; LPC; DSS;NCO/RCCC; The Learning House
B. Develop consumer and provider access to child care information. e.g., parent education, insurance, provider ratings and specialties, subsidies, etc.	Increased access; Informed consumers	Increased use of resources Website; print resources	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; CCA; SLCS; LCOE; The Learning House

Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County

Goal 3: Support ongoing development of resources for families that will serve to connect them to support services

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Develop a system to link health, dental, nutrition, and mental health resources to child care and early education programs	Integrated system of health care, child care and early education programs	# providers trained in health and other issues; # consultations, assessments, etc.; # child abuse trainings and # attendees; Increased # of children and families utilizing child care food programs; increased food bank use	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; CCA; Public Health; mental Health; LCOE; Healthy Start; Easter Seals of N. CA; SLCS, WIC; Food Banks; NCO/RCCC; Schools, The Learning House; etc.
B. Enhance relationships between child care programs and family assistance programs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing informed child care consumer information to families on CalWORKS or other aid or transitioning off such assistance ▪ Providing Family Resource Guides, in Spanish and English, both in-print and on-line, detailing services available in Lake County for families ▪ Including parent education resources in the Family Resource Guides, in Spanish and English, both in-print and on-line, detailing services available in Lake County for families 	Consumers, child care providers, and aid agencies all have an awareness of the resources and constraints of family assistance	# Guides and Directories distributed or on-line "hits" recorded; information provided	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; DSS; SLCS; CCA; LCOE; NCO/RCCC; The Learning House; etc.

Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County

Goal 4: Develop linkages between child care providers and isolated communities, including agricultural workers, the migrant population, and populations in isolated areas of Lake County, e.g., rancherias and mountain communities

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Coordinate with programs such as Migrant Ed. who provide outreach services to isolated communities regarding available options to ensure access to child care, information and referral services, child care subsidies, and other family resources. Outreach will include on-line and in-print resources.	Increased communication and utilization of services	Same as outcome	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; DSS; LCOE; Migrant Ed; Yuba and Mendocino CC; CHDC; Tribal Councils; The Learning House; etc.

<p>Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County</p>
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Goal 5: Increase communication between child care and recreation programs, public and private schools, higher education, school districts, and the Lake County Office of Education

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Identify and participate in school-based infant/toddler through adult education planning opportunities including but not limited to family literacy.	Education programs which sustain the benefits of quality child care and enhance provision of such care	# of planning sessions attended; articulation of curricula from infant care onward	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; etc.
B. Develop transition activities to ensure continuity between child care, recreation, and school programs, from preschool onward, e.g. Kindergarten transition activities	Education programs which sustain the benefits of quality child care and enhance provision of such care	# and types of transition activities	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; etc.
D. Advocate for utilization of public school and private school facilities during non-use hours and days for child care and recreation programs	Increased child care and recreation program resources	# of children served	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; etc.

Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County

Goal 6: Support and advocate for programs and funding that would help reduce financial barriers to operating child care facilities

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Develop, update and share information about child care funding sources, e.g., First5, public and private funders, and low-cost lenders	More child care facilities opened or improved	List of sources; # of facilities built, opened or improved	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; BOS; CDS; Lake Resource Center; SBDC; CCA
B. Advocate to State and Federal government to release funds for more child care for all families and for wraparound services	More subsidized spaces	\$ released; # spaces funded	ongoing	LPC; BOS, etc.
C. Explore and advocate for blended funding strategies to provide for comprehensive child care (all day or wraparound)	More co-located child care	# spaces added	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; LCOE; HEAD START; etc.

Quality

<p style="text-align: center;">Desired Result #2 High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County</p>
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Who needs to be involved?

The community at large, government, business, child care and early education communities.

The community and providers of child care and early education services recognize the importance quality plays in the delivery of services to all children. The goal is to make every choice a quality care choice. Children and families' needs are diverse, therefore a wide variety of quality care settings (programs, centers, homes, and exempt providers) must be available.

What Will Work

The achievement of quality early care and education services for all children requires the education and commitment of the child care and early education community and the education and support of the community at large. Child care and early education providers must receive community and professional support for their efforts to pursue and sustain program quality improvements. In addition, the community at large and those selecting care arrangements must be educated about the indicators of quality early care and education services. Implementation of the following strategies will make quality, developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive, early care and education services available for all Lake County families.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Strategies for the Community:

Community at large, Government and Business

- ✓ Actively support the efforts of the early care and education community to improve the quality of early care and education services.
- ✓ Work together to develop:
 - funds to help centers and family child care pay for national accreditation application and the steps necessary to complete accreditation.
 - financial incentives for centers and family child care homes that successfully complete the accreditation process and ongoing yearly self-study and renewal.
 - scholarship funds for the educational expenses of providers participating in program quality improvement.
 - incentives and scholarships for license-exempt providers to participate in additional training/educational opportunities.
 - affordable health insurance and other benefits for providers.

Child Care and Early Education Community

- ✓ Understands and implements developmentally appropriate practices.
- ✓ Participates in program quality improvement activities.
- ✓ Participates in professional development.
- ✓ Members becomes active in NAEYC, NAFCC or other nationally recognized professional organizations.
- ✓ Participates in training and professional growth activities.
- ✓ Professional associations work together to promote program quality improvement and/or national accreditation.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Strategies for the Council:

Outreach

- ✓ Work to support and coordinate early care and education program efforts throughout the county to improve quality and/or achieve accreditation.
- ✓ Work with Resource and Referral and others to increase number of license-exempt early care and education environments using developmentally appropriate practices.
- ✓ Work toward implementation of the California Child Development Permit Matrix in all centers.
- ✓ Work with the early care and education community to identify and address the problems that lead to attrition among providers.
- ✓ In collaboration with community groups coordinate educational workshops/training for providers.
- ✓ Provide information to providers about training and professional growth opportunities.
- ✓ Implement education campaign to educate all segments of the community about the indicators of quality child care and early education services.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Desired Outcome #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County
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Goal 1: Accredited child care programs that meet NAEYC requirements

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
<p>A. Increase awareness of the accreditation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide information about available resources, etc. ▪ Support, mentor and encourage programs to become NAEYC accredited. ▪ Explore the availability of sources of funding to support the accreditation process 	# of accredited programs	Same as outcomes	Within 5 years	LCOE; NAEYC; NCO/RCCC; The Learning House; First5 of Lake County; private providers, etc.

Desired Outcome #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County

Goal 2: All licensed child care providers will use a standardized rating scale for peer and self-evaluation

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Educate providers regarding the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), the School Age Childhood Environment Rating Scale (SACERS), and the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) and additional evaluative tools as identified	50% or more of FCCH will complete a standardized evaluation each year 100% of centers	# providers using scale	ongoing	NCO/RCCC; Yuba & Mendocino CC; CCA; LCOE; The Learning House; First5 of Lake County
B. Support the provision of incentives for providers to use the rating tools	50% or more of FCCH will complete a standardized evaluation each year 100% of centers	# of incentives given; # providers using tools	ongoing	NCO/RCCC; Yuba & Mendocino CC; CCA; LCOE; The Learning House; First5 of Lake County

Desired Outcome #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County

Goal 3: Increase the number of license-exempt providers who meet standards of licensure

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Continue the basic health and safety-plus orientation that NCO/RCCC is already providing	100% of new in-home license-exempt providers receive basic training	# of providers trained	ongoing	NCO/RCCC; LPC; First5 of Lake County, etc.
B. Support and advocate for the provision of incentives and scholarships to license-exempt providers to complete the 15-hour health and safety course plus CPR and First Aid	In-home license-exempt providers will be trained in basic health and safety plus CPR and First Aid	# of incentives and scholarships given; # providers completing course; # sessions given	Within 5 years	LPC; BOS; LCOE; NCO/RCCC, First5 of Lake County, etc.
C. Support and advocate for the provision of incentives and scholarships to license-exempt providers to become licensed	Increased access to licensed child care; 1% license-exempt providers become licensed annually	# licensed providers	ongoing	LPC; BOS; LCOE; NCO/RCCC, First5 of Lake County, etc.

Desired Outcome #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County

Goal 4: All providers will have access to multiple, ongoing opportunities for education and professional development

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Continue to maintain and update training calendar on-line and in print	More awareness of training opportunities	Existence of training calendar	Monthly and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE
B. Support the provision of professional development and incentives for child care providers to obtain training in all areas of professional development including but not limited to diverse needs and multi-cultural environments, e.g., Spanish language, ASL, disabilities, and others as recognized	Trained providers who are able to provide developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive care	# of trainings available and the # of providers attending trainings	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; DSS; First5 of Lake County, etc.
C. Child care providers will receive professional development through the Lake County Annual Child Care Conference (10/05 and ongoing)	Increased professionalism and networking among local child care providers	# attending each year	Ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; DSS; First5 of Lake County, etc.
D. Advocate at colleges for ECE classes to be available where and when needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urge colleges to develop the infrastructure that is needed for higher education in the ECE field ▪ Urge colleges to offer a wide variety of ECE classes for providers who work with all ages of children ▪ Coordinate with neighboring LPCs in this process 	Trained providers who are able to provide developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive	# and type of classes offered; # of providers who move up the matrix by increasing college education; # of providers who obtain degrees	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; LCOE; DSS; etc.

Desired Outcome #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County

Goal 5: Centers will implement the Child Development Permit Matrix

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Urge all centers to implement the Child Development Permit Matrix	# of centers implementing	Same as outcomes	ongoing	LCOE; NCO/RCCC; The Learning House; First5 of Lake County; private providers, etc.

Goal 6: Facilitate informed decision-making by families, employers and the community

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
Continue to implement a marketing campaign to educate parents and agencies using child care on what to look for in quality child care	Parents and agencies choose quality child care	Presentations, etc., made; increased utilization of quality providers	Within 2 years	

Affordability

Desired Result # 3:
The community is committed to ensuring the availability of affordable child care and early education services for all families

The community recognizes the importance of quality, affordable child care and early education services for families. A commitment is made to ensure the availability of affordable services for families.

Who needs to be involved?

The community at large, government, the business community, child care and early education communities and service providers.

What Will Work?

Community leaders, business leaders and policy makers must work together to develop additional local child care and education subsidy programs for low-income families and local employers must implement family friendly business policies.

Strategies for the Community:

Community members, government and business work together to support legislation, policy and funding decisions that:

- ✓ Increase the number of child care subsidies available to low income eligible families.
- ✓ Provide local tax incentives to businesses that implement family friendly business policies and practices.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Government

- ✓ State, county and local governments work to establish incentives to local employers and businesses to assist employees with child care and early education services.

Business Community

- ✓ Provides employee subsidies for child care and early education.

Strategies for the Council:

Advocacy

- ✓ Develop and implement community education campaigns about the need for affordable child care and early education services for all families.
- ✓ Work to assess the desirability and feasibility of voluntary universal preschool.

Legislative

- ✓ Inform council of state and national initiatives affecting subsidies and other financial support for child care and early education.
- ✓ Inform and update legislatures about child care and early education financial issues.

Desired Result # 3: The community actively supports the availability of quality, affordable child care and early education services for all families

Goal 1: Support and advocate for programs and funding that would help reduce financial barriers to families needing child care and early education services

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Advocate to State and Federal government to release funds for more child care subsidies for low income families	More subsidized spaces	\$ released; # spaces funded	ongoing	LPC; BOS, etc.
B. Educate agencies (including County of Lake) and private employers about the benefits of employer-sponsored child care options, both in association and individually, such as: vouchers, co-pay plans, group-sponsored centers, or pre-tax child care benefits	More child care options; improved employee performance	# of child care spaces created or supported by employers	Within 5 years	LPC; CDS; BORT; SBDC; Lake Resource Center; business associations; private businesses

Goal 2: Support and advocate for programs like Universal Preschool that would provide free early education services for all Lake County preschool aged children

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. In collaboration with First5 continue the study of the desirability and the feasibility of preschool for all in Lake County and release the results of the report	The published report	The published report	Within 1 year	LPC; First5;etc.

Information

<p style="text-align: center;">Desired Result #4 Awareness of the importance of the child care industry is pervasive in Lake County</p>

Who needs to be involved?

The community at large, government, the business community, child care and early education communities and service providers.

Child care and early education providers are recognized as contributors to the overall strength of the community as educators, providers of care and education for the children of employees, and as businesses and employers that contribute to the community's economy. The availability of quality child care and early education services, accessible to all families needing service, is viewed by the community and elected officials as a key indicator of the overall well-being of Lake County.

What Will Work?

The community at large, government and the business and community service providers, must recognize the importance of quality child care and early education. The council and the child care and early education community must lead a comprehensive public relations campaign to educate the community at large, as well as individual policy makers and business about the contribution of child care and early education services to the economic and social well-being of Lake County. The resulting recognition will lay a foundation for the adoption of policies and practices that promote quality child care and early education and support families.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Strategies for the Community:

Community at large

- ✓ Actively encourages government and businesses to keep child care and early education issues at the forefront of their agendas.

Government

- ✓ County and city governments address child care and early education issues in their planning.
- ✓ County and city governments include child care and early education data as indicators of the economic and social well-being of the community.

Business Community

- ✓ The business community includes the child care and early education community in their network of activities.

Service Providers

- ✓ Health care and other service providers support awareness of the connection between quality child care and early education services and increased child health outcomes.

Source: [Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005](#)

Strategies for the Council:

Outreach

- ✓ Work with local government to include the state of child care and early education as an indicator of the economic and social well-being of the county.
- ✓ Seek appointment of members to countywide committees or commissions to educate and advocate for quality child care and early education.
- ✓ Members advocate for quality child care and early education whenever they attend countywide committees or commissions.
- ✓ Invite County committees and commissions to become active members of the Council.
- ✓ Work with the child care and early education community and others to lead a comprehensive public relations campaign to educate the community at large, as well as individual policy makers and business about the contribution of child care and early education services to the economic and social well-being of Lake County.

Source: Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2000-2005

Desired Result # 4: Awareness of the importance of the child care industry is pervasive in Lake County

Goal 1: Update and implement a public education campaign to raise awareness of the professional status and worth of child care providers and to raise awareness of the economic importance and long-term social benefits of quality child care to Lake County

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Update and implement a public education campaign, using media, newsletters, and BOS presentations, etc. on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic Impact ▪ Wage scales and equity ▪ Skills and education required of providers ▪ The value of quality child care and early education 	Support for child care providers and facilities, e.g., use permit changes, tax incentives, employer support, etc.	# of articles, presentations, etc.; copies of proclamations	Ongoing	LPC; LCOE; NCO/RCCC; DSS; Lake Resource Center; CCA, etc.
B. Organize child care provider recognition events	Public recognition of value of child care	Recognition events held	Annually	LPC; LCOE; NCO/RCCC; DSS; Lake Resource Center; CCA, etc.

Desired Result # 4: Awareness of the importance of the child care industry is common in Lake County

Goal 2: Facilitate cooperation among cities, counties, towns, and agencies to enhance the development of quality child care resources

Implementation Strategies	Outcome	Measures of Success	Timeline	Implementers
A. Educate local groups, neighborhoods and elected officials on the value of quality child care, the positive economic impact of quality child care and the realities of child care facilities operations	Reduced opposition to neighborhood facilities; Child Care friendly regulations regarding use permits, etc.; annual proclamations in support of child care	Regulations; proclamations	Within 1 year and ongoing	LPC; NCO/RCCC; CCA; CDS; BORT; SBDC; Lake Resource Center; LCOE
C. Work with Transportation Coalition, and transit providers, to address needs of child care and youth programs in transit planning	Increased utilization of programs by parents and youth	# children and parents using programs; # new stops and routes located near programs; # new transit programs initiated	Within 1 year and ongoing	BOS; LCT; LPC; LCOE; CCA DSS, etc.

List of Implementers

<u>Acronym or Abbreviated Name</u>	<u>Name or Category</u>
N/A	Agencies providing or using child care
Arts Council	Lake County Arts Council
BOS and political bodies	Board of Supervisors, City Councils, State legislators
BORT	Business Outreach Response Team
N/A	Businesses, business associations, employers
CDE	California Department of Education
CHDC	California Human Development Corporation
CCA	Child Care Provider Association
N/A	Child care provider (centers, licensed, exempt, after school, etc.)
Children's Council	Lake County Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council
CDS	Community Development Services
N/A	Community groups, Tribal Councils, etc.
N/A	Consumers/volunteers
DSS	Department of Social Services
ESNC	Easter Seals of Northern California
EDD	Employment Development Department
First5	Children and Families First Commission (Prop 10)

Food Banks	Food Banks
N/A	Head Start
Health Care Providers	Public and private, including: Department of Health Services, Public Health Nursing, Public Health Education, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services; Tribal Health, etc.
N/A	Healthy Start
N/A	Latino Coalition
LPC	Lake County Child Care Planning Council
LCCAA	Lake County Community Action Agency
LCOE	Lake County Office of Education
LCT	Lake County Transit
N/A	Lake Resource Center
Libraries, etc.	Lake County Public Library, Families for Literacy, Even Start
N/A	The Learning House
N/A	Migrant Education
N/A	Migrant Head Start
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NCO/RCCC	North Coast Opportunities/Rural Communities Child Care
NCO/R&R	North Coast Opportunities/Resource and Referral

SBDC	Small Business Development Corporation
N/A	School districts and schools (public and private)
SELPA	Special Education Local Planning Area
SLCS	Sutter Lakeside Community Services
Tribal Health	Lake County Tribal Health Consortium, Inc.
WIC	Women, Infants and Children
YAPA/Diversity Dance	Young Adults for Positive Achievement/Diversity Dance
Yuba and Mendocino Colleges	Yuba College Mendocino College

Evaluation

In order to determine whether Lake County has achieved the goals set forth in this plan outcome indicators were developed for each goal. Because the Council understands the importance of quantifiable outcomes, whenever possible, measurable outcomes were established. Each goal has one or more outcome described below.

Desired Result # 1: A wide variety of quality child care, early education and support services are available and accessible throughout Lake County

Goal 1: Recruit providers who are able to implement developmentally, culturally, and linguistically diverse child care.

Outcome: Increase in the # of child care spaces in the county; 10% multi-cultural providers/year.

Goal 2: Improve systems for sharing child care information.

Outcome: Collaboration; increased access; Website; print resources

Goal 3: Support ongoing development of resources for families that will serve to connect them to support services.

Outcome: Integrated system of health care, child care and early education programs.

Goal 4: Develop linkages between child care providers and isolated communities, including agricultural workers, the migrant population, and populations in isolated areas of Lake County, e.g., rancherias and mountain communities.

Outcome: Increased communication and utilization of services.

Goal 5: Increase communication between child care and recreation programs, public and private schools, higher education, school districts, and the Lake County Office of Education.

Outcome: Education programs which sustain the benefits of quality child care and enhance provision of such care.

Goal 6: Support and advocate for programs and funding that would help reduce financial barriers to operating child care facilities.

Outcome: More child care facilities opened or improved; more subsidized spaces; more co-located child care.

Desired Result #2: High quality child care and early education are the norm in Lake County

- Goal 1: Accredited child care programs that meet NAEYC requirements.
Outcome: # of accredited programs.
- Goal 2: All licensed child care providers will use a standardized rating scale for peer and self-evaluation.
Outcome: # of providers using scale.
- Goal 3: Increase the number of license-exempt providers who meet standards of licensure
Outcome: # of license exempt providers attending trainings and/or becoming licensed.
- Goal 4: All providers will have access to multiple, ongoing opportunities for education and professional development.
Outcome: # and type of training offered; existence of training calendar.
- Goal 5: Centers will implement the Child Development Permit Matrix.
Outcome: # of centers implementing matrix.
- Goal 6: Facilitate informed decision-making by families, employers and the community.
Outcome: # and type of presentations, etc.

Desired Result # 3: The community is committed to ensuring the availability of affordable child care and early education services for all families

- Goal 1: Support and advocate for programs and funding that would help reduce financial barriers to families needing child care and early education services.
Outcome: \$ funds released, increase in families served.
- Goal 2: Support and advocate for programs like Universal Preschool that would provide free early education services for all Lake County preschool aged children.
Outcome: Published report.

Desired Result # 4: Awareness of the importance of the child care industry is pervasive in Lake County

Goal 1: Update and implement a public education campaign to raise awareness of the professional status and worth of child care providers and to raise awareness of the economic importance and long-term social benefits of quality child care to Lake County.

Outcome: # of articles, presentations, etc.; copies of proclamations; recognition events held.

Goal 2: Facilitate cooperation among cities, counties, towns, and agencies to enhance the development of quality child care resources

Outcome: Reduced opposition to neighborhood facilities.
Child Care friendly regulations regarding use permits, etc.; annual proclamations in support of child care.

Appendices

Recommendations: From the Lake County Child Care Needs Assessment

1. Recruit and train more child care providers for all types of care.
2. Create more child care options, including sick-child care, court-centered child care, and employer-supported care.
3. Increase the number of comprehensive before and after-school child care programs, plus kindercare.
4. Create a “universal system” of affordable, quality child care for all children that makes comprehensive services available in all child care settings, integrating multiple services, e.g., health care, with child care.
5. Make “universal preschool”, i.e., free, enriched preschool for all children, a Countywide goal.
6. Make full-day care available for all preschool-aged children, including the half-day of structured, enriched preschool activities provided by universal preschool.
7. Increase compensation and benefits for, and continue to provide training and support to, all types of child care providers, to establish a stable professional child care work force.
8. When funding is available, support development of a centralized eligibility list for all child care programs which is linked to an effective system to track child care use and need.
9. Prioritize ways to meet the child care needs of working and/or low-income families, special needs children, and foster parents.
10. Increase the number of *full-time* subsidized spaces for children of all ages.
11. Increase the availability of quality care by: (a) supporting providers who obtain accreditation, training, and/or continuing education; and (b) educating all stakeholders, including parents and policy-makers, on the benefits and cost-effectiveness of quality child care.
12. Advocate at the local, state, and national levels for increased funding to meet fully all local child care needs, including improved compensation and benefits for child care providers.
13. Obtain a study on the Economic Impact of Child Care in Lake County.
14. Educate the general public, businesses, and local governments on the importance of child care to economic development.
15. Collaborate with local transit authorities to increase access to child care, work, and other activities.
16. Plan and provide child care services tailored to the unique needs and distinctive character of each community, so that each community is able to meet its own child care needs.

Progress on Assessment Recommendations

1. Create a “universal system” of affordable, quality child care . . . that makes comprehensive services available in all child care settings.

- ◆ Health Linkages, offered by the Lakeport program of Easter Seals of Northern California, brings on-site health care training and services to centers and Family Child Care Homes (“FCCH”) which voluntarily agree to participate
- ◆ Healthy Start now serves the state preschools
- ◆ Head Start and Early Head Start provide comprehensive services to the families they serve
- ◆ The School Readiness Program provides referrals and information about comprehensive services to the families that they serve

2. Make “universal preschool” . . . a Countywide goal.

- ◆ The LPC is co-sponsoring a *Preschool For All Feasibility Study*, scheduled for completion in March 2006, by providing funding and serving as the Advisory Board

3. Make full-day care available for all preschool-aged children.

- ◆ The LPC continues to explore many approaches of combining child care services and or programs, but funding, regulations, and other barriers block achievement of this recommendation
- ◆ North Coast Opportunities has successfully combined three Head Start and State Preschool programs in the county
- ◆ Yuba college offers a full day pre-school program
- ◆ With the new Early Reading First funds LCOE will offer one full day pre-school program in Clearlake Oaks

4. Increase compensation and benefits for, and continue to provide training and support to, all types of child care providers to establish a professional child care work force.

- ◆ The LPC and North Coast Opportunities/Resource & Referral offer the AB212 and CARES education incentive programs which pay stipends to providers who stay in the field and continue their education or professional growth activities
- ◆ NCO/R&R created entry-level stipends in CARES to encourage Family, Friend and Neighbor (“FFN”) providers to participate in training and increase their capacity to provide quality care
- ◆ The LPC organizes an annual Child Care Conference, held every October
- ◆ The LPC provided mentoring and supports the Child Care Provider Association, which serves Family Child Care Homes
- ◆ Health Linkages operates a Health Line for child care providers, linking them directly to a Registered Nurse who can answer questions and provide on-site training and technical assistance

- ◆ LPC administers a periodic Salary and Working Conditions Survey to all licensed child care providers, including Head Start, state preschools, Early Head Start, private centers
 - ◆ LCOE provides staff development training and CPINN offers training on best practices three times per year
5. **Recruit and train more child care providers for all types of care.**
- ◆ NCO has dedicated a position to this effort, funded by First5 of Lake County and through the Early Learning Opportunities Act (“ELOA”) grant
6. **When funding is available, complete . . . a centralized eligibility list (CEL).**
- ◆ Funding for a CEL has been included in the state budget for Fiscal Year 2005-2006. According to the proposed budget, CEL funds will be allocated to Alternative Payment programs or R&Rs. The LPC will contribute to CEL planning and implementation as fully as possible.
7. **Prioritize ways to meet the child care needs of working and/or low-income families, special needs children (“children with special needs”), and foster parents.**
- ◆ The state preschools have adopted a full inclusion policy, with 100% integration of special needs children available.
 - ◆ LPC members have created resources for providers to help them serve special needs children:
 - Child Find, a partnership between NCO/Rural Communities Child Care and Easter Seals of Northern California, to locate children at risk of developmental delay.
 - AB 1703 (now completed), implemented by Easter Seals, which provides training, technical assistance, and immediate response services to FCCH serving special needs children. New legislation has been proposed to re-fund this program through the R&Rs.
 - Easter Seals provides Special Needs training at the annual Child Care Conference and at other venues, as requested.
8. **Create more child care options, including sick-child care, court-centered child care, and employer-supported care.**
- ◆ The LPC and its members have concentrated on increasing the supply of culturally competent child care for the general population and children with special needs.
9. **Increase the number of comprehensive before and after-school child care programs, plus kindercare.**

- ◆ Despite funding instability, the number of comprehensive after-school child care programs has been sustained; there are no comprehensive before-school child care programs.
10. **Increase the number of *full-time* subsidized spaces for children of all ages.**
- ◆ No additional funds have become available for subsidized care, but expansion of funds have come into the county
 - LCOE has received expansion funds for state pre-school, latchkey and general child care
 - EHS has doubled it's classroom size since 2002
 - There have been increases in CALworks child care subsidies in stages 1, 2 and 3
11. **Increase the availability of quality care by: (a) supporting providers . . . ; and (b) educating all stakeholders . . . on the benefits and cost-effectiveness of quality child care.**
- ◆ As noted, AB 212 and CARES provide stipends and incentives to providers who stay in the field and obtain training and/or continuing education.
 - ◆ The ELOA program also reimburses tuition and other costs of continuing education.
 - ◆ The LPC recruited two child care providers to undergo the NAEYC accreditation process.
12. **Apply for a waiver to allow NCO/R&R to disclose a provider's training . . . if asked.**
- ◆ No such waiver exists. The LPC tracks all child care-related legislation. It will support legislation that permits disclosure of accredited or otherwise identified quality providers.
13. **Obtain a study on the Economic Impact of Child Care in Lake County.**
- ◆ The LPC commissioned an *Economic Impact Report*.
14. **Educate the general public, businesses, and local government on the importance of child care to economic development.**
- ◆ The *Economic Impact Report* will be a user-friendly, clear, quantified analysis of the economic value of child care to Lake County.
 - ◆ The LPC has organized public education and marketing campaigns on the economic benefits of child care, including a cost-benefit analysis of quality child care; the *Assessment* is part of this process. Activities include: periodic reports to the Board of Supervisors, City Councils, service organizations, newspaper articles, a Lifestyles section, radio ads, etc.
 - ◆ LPC members successfully appeared before the Clearlake City Council, resulting in the passage of a pro-child care zoning ordinance.

15. **Collaborate with local transit authorities to increase access to child care, work, and other activities.**
 - ◆ The LPC Coordinator and other LPC members attend meetings of the Lake County Transportation Coalition, now Social Services Transportation Coalition.

16. **Plan and provide child care services tailored to the unique needs and distinctive character of each community, so that each community is able to meet its own child care needs.**
 - ◆ The LPC participated in Robinson Rancheria's planning process for an on-site preschool and is continuing to provide assistance to the preschool program.
 - ◆ The LPC and its members collaborate to analyze, plan, and provide such child care to Lake County's diverse communities.
 - ◆ The Lake County First 5 Commission and NCO also provide training and technical assistance, plus other support to quality child care efforts throughout Lake County.

Research Findings

Child care is important. Parents, teachers, child care providers, economic developers, business owners, law enforcement, governments, and the general community all have an interest in finding out what helps children grow up healthy, happy, able to learn, and on the road to happy, healthy adult lives. Because quality child care requires significant up-front investment with a delayed pay-out, demonstrating its cost-effectiveness has become increasingly important. Researchers have examined child care programs from a number of perspectives. Their conclusions are remarkably consistent.

Quality child care is defined.

During the last decade, extensive research has produced a clear consensus on the factors producing quality early childhood care and education programs which are linked to both short-term and long-term positive outcomes for children. Summarized, they are:



➤ **Well-trained and well-compensated providers**

- Workers are trained and educated in child development: they know what to expect from, and how to respond to, the children they serve
- Workers are “warm, friendly, respectful, affectionate, and sensitive” to the children
- Workers receive satisfactory pay and benefits, leading to stability

➤ **Low ratios of children to each provider**

➤ **Parent involvement**

- Parents are welcome to observe, participate in activities, and to make policy
- Workers talk to the parents about their children
- Workers respect family culture

➤ **Links to comprehensive services**

- Programs have access to multiple services, including health
- Workers refer families to services, e.g., health

➤ **The environment is “safe, healthy, comfortable”**

- Developmentally appropriate curricula, with both individual and group activities that promote cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development
- Stimulating materials and equipment
- Safe structures and furnishings
- Clear, strong hygiene policies

(California Working Families Project, *Understanding Child Care*, 1999)

Quality child care requires quality caregivers. One of the chief determinants of quality care is the quality (education, training, experience, personal characteristics) of the provider. The “most significant factor compromising overall quality of care is poor compensation of child care staff (*California’s Child Care Crisis*, p. 17). Compensation affects recruitment and retention of child care providers. Many child care workers report high satisfaction with their jobs, despite the lack of adequate wages and benefits. According to the 2002 Child Care Center Salary and Working Conditions Survey, however, the twelve-month turnover rate among workers was 38% for assistant/associate teachers, 37% for teachers, 35% for teacher-directors, and 0% for administrative directors. Inadequate compensation compromises quality of care by forcing workers to leave the child care field to make a living wage. At the same time, providers risk pricing themselves out of the market if they want to compensate their staff adequately or offer full benefits to employees and their dependents.



Quality child care has long-term positive effects. The positive effects of quality child care have been confirmed by a series of longitudinal studies over the last decade. The corollary, negative effectiveness of poor quality child care, has also been well-documented. The outcomes of the studies of the positive effects of quality child care and the negative effects of poor quality child care are consistent among the studies.

The *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers Study* (“CQ&Q”), originally published in 1995, followed over 800 children into second grade and found:

- High quality child care is an important element in achieving the national goal of having all children ready to learn when they come to school
- The quality of child care classroom practices was related to children’s cognitive development, including language and math
- The nature of the preschool teacher-child relationship influenced children’s social development through the early school years
- High quality child care continues to positive predict children’s performance well into their school years.

Even as early as 1995, longitudinal studies were establishing that quality child care:

- “Can produce large effects on IQ in the early childhood years . . . “
- Can have continuing, measurable effects on achievement, grade retention, special education, high school graduation, and socialization

Researchers found that “the evidence for [positive] effects on grade retention and special education is overwhelming”. The evidence for positive effects on high school graduation and delinquency was “strong” (Barnett, W.S. *Long-term effects of early childhood programs on cognitive and school outcomes. The Future of Children: Long Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs*, vol. 5, No. 5, W 1995, p. 43).

More recent longitudinal analyses of quality child care (early childhood education) have been able to quantify positive outcomes, some of which are sustained well into adulthood. The positive effects of quality child care include:

- Improved cognitive development
- Reduced rates of special education and grade retention (one study found a 20% reduction)
- Enhanced rates of school readiness and success:
 - Better language and math skills, sustained from preschool into elementary school
 - Better classroom social and thinking skills, language ability, and math skills from preschool into elementary school
 - For children with less educated mothers, better child care quality is more strongly linked to better math skills and fewer behavior problems
 - Better cognitive and social skills in 2nd grade
 - Better relationships with peers in 2nd grade

(_____, *The Children of the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study Go to School*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999).

Other studies confirm that high quality child care provided to children almost from birth until kindergarten has positive effects sustained at least until age 21. Early childhood education “significantly improves the scholastic success and educational achievements of poor children even into early adulthood”. Significant differences between the preschool intervention group and the control group favored the preschool group:

- The full-scale Weschler intelligence test and verbal intelligence test
- Math and reading scores
- Average years of education by age 21 (12.2 vs. 11.6 years)
- Percent attending or having attended a four-year college (35.9% vs. 13.7%)
- Percent having become teenaged parents (26% vs. 45%)
- Percent self-reporting marijuana use within the past 30 days (18% vs. 39%)
- Percent indicating they were regular cigarette smokers (39% vs. 55%)

(Campbell, F. *Early childhood education: Young adult outcomes from the Abecedarian Project*, *Applied Developmental Science*, vol. 6, No. 1, 2002, pp. 42-57; for additional reports and detail, see <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/%7Eabc/index.htm>).

Quality child care is also associated with improved socialization (i.e., learning and using “socially accepted values and behavior”) Barnett, W.S. *Long-term effects of early childhood programs on cognitive and school outcomes*. *The Future of Children: Long Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs*, vol. 5, No. 5, W 1995, p. 41). The Perry Preschool study provides a long and intensive follow-up study of the effects of quality child care, following children from preschool to age 27. Socialization effects included:

- Increased commitment to school
- Better relationships with friends and neighbors
- Higher rates of employment; reduced welfare dependency

- Higher earnings (children's earnings by age 27 were 60% higher than the control group's earnings – other CITE)
- For girls, increased marriage and fewer out-of-wedlock births (and also higher graduation rates)

(Weikert, D.P., Bond, J.T., and McNeil, J.T. *The Ypsilanti Perry Preschool Project: Preschool years and longitudinal results through fourth grade*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1978; Schweinhart, L.J., Barnes, H.V., Weikart, D.P., et al. Significant benefits: *The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 27*. Monographs of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. No. 10. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. 1993; Barnett, W.S., Young, J., and Schweinhart, L.J. *How preschool education contributes to cognitive development and school success: An empirical model*. Paper presented at the Rutgers Invitational Symposium on Education. New Brunswick, NJ, October 28, 1994.

A multi-year study of the children of single mothers in California and Florida who entered the workforce after 1996 due to welfare reform confirms the positive effects of quality child care on poor preschool children. The cognitive growth and school readiness skills of preschoolers who attended child care centers were up to six months ahead of children who remained in home-based care. Children sent to high-quality centers with a stable college-educated staff showed an additional two months of accelerated growth. Children who moved from home- to center-based care also exhibited positive effects. As one author put it, "Public investments to improve access to quality child care appear to be paying off in spades" (Loeb, S. et al. *Child care in poor communities: Early learning effects of type, quality, and stability*, Child Development, February 10, 2004).

Finally, quality child care is correlated with unexpected benefits. For example, children in the Perry Preschool Program committed fewer delinquent or criminal acts; if committed, the acts were less severe; and the children were less likely to be chronic offenders than control group children. They had significantly fewer arrests, including fewer arrests for drug-making or drug-dealing crimes. (Yoshikawa, H. *Long-term effects of early childhood programs on social outcomes and delinquency*, The Future of Children: Long Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs, vol. 5, No. 5, W 1995, p. 59).

More recent research agrees. A compilation of studies comparing 1,000 children ages 3 and 4, both in and out of child care programs found that children in quality child care were half as likely to be arrested. Brazelton, T. et al. *America's child care crisis: A crime prevention tragedy*. Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2000). Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a 700-member bi-partisan coalition of police chiefs, sheriffs, and crime victims. (For more information, see www.fightcrime.org.)

Agreement on the positive benefits of quality child care crosses disciplinary and agency lines. A poll of California sheriffs, police chiefs, and district attorneys found that 90% agreed: "If American does not make greater investments in after school and educational child care programs to help children and youth now, **we will pay far more later**, in crime, welfare, and other costs" (George Mason Survey 2000, as quoted in:

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California, *California's Child Care Crisis: A Crime Prevention Tragedy*, 2001.

Benefits also accrue to mothers, others not directly served, and society as a whole. Benefits to mothers include:

- Better employment outcomes (i.e., both higher rates of employment and higher paid employment)
- Reduced welfare dependency (excluding Medicaid)
- Reduced likelihood of child abuse
- Fewer additional births
- Better nutrition and less smoking
- Higher high school graduation rates
- Have lower drug and alcohol use
- Engaging in fewer criminal acts

(Lynch, R. *Exceptional returns: Economic, fiscal, and social benefits of investment in early childhood development*, Economic Policy Institute, 2004).

Benefits to individuals not directly served are largely unmeasured. They include the tangible and intangible benefits of not being a victim of crime (loss of property, personal injury, emotional pain and suffering, loss of time at work, medical costs, etc.) Finally, society in general benefits. Governments receive higher taxes collected on the higher income generated by the children served (long-term) and their parents (short-term). These two benefits alone accounted for **\$24,000** in savings per family in the Perry Preschool Project (*Investing in our children: What we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions* RAND, 1997).

Research also confirms the corollary: participation in low quality child care has sustained negative effects on children's development ". . . young children receiving poor quality child care were less prepared for school and tended to have less success in the early phases of school than students who received high quality child care in their preschool years." . CQ&Q Study, **1999 Update**)

Quality child care is cost-effective.

- At a minimum, quality preschool child care saves at least \$2 for every \$1 invested
- When benefits to the participants are included, the savings can rise to \$5 for every \$1 invested
- When benefits from reduced crime, welfare, and remedial education costs are added, the return rises to \$7.16 for every \$1 invested.

(*California's Child Care Crisis*, pp. 29-30; RAND, pp. 91-92, 116-119.)

More recent research confirms that investment in high-quality early childhood development programs "consistently generate benefit-cost ratios exceeding 3-to-1 or more than a \$3 return for every \$1 invested. Providing high-quality early childhood

development programs to all 3 and 4 year-olds in the United States who live in poverty would generate a net budget savings of \$31 billion dollars within 25 years (in 2004 dollars). Such government-wide budget savings would help offset some of the fiscal costs anticipated due to the impending retirement of the baby boom generation. The barrier that confronts planners, communities, and funders is that the initial \$1 investment in quality child care is made up front, while the benefits are realized 3-24 years later. Nevertheless, increasingly rigorous research and multidisciplinary consensus strongly underscore the value of, and the urgent need to invest in, quality care for all children (QUOTED FROM ASSESSMENT p74)

Are there risks to children from participating in child care?

There are a number of negative outcomes for children who receive low quality child care. Children served since infancy in such programs are less able to stay on task, are more distractible, more aggressive, and less cooperative. Their socialization is less advanced. They may be less considerate of others and/or have difficulty with peers. Their development of language and cognitive skills has also been shown to be less advanced. (Mendocino Child Care Needs Assessment, 1999, p 55, quoted in Assessment, p. 73).

One concern which appears to be recurring is the issue of aggression among children served. Older studies found increased aggression at school entry for children who began child care as infants, but also found no evidence that the aggression persisted (Muffin, T.E. *The neuropsychology of conduct disorder*, Development & Psychopathology (1993) 5:135-52; Kolvin, I., Miller, F.J.W., Fleeting, M., & Kolvin, P.A. *Social and parenting factors affecting criminal offense rates*. British Journal of Psychiatry, (1988) 152:80-90; Schweinhart, L.J., Barnes, H.V., Weikart, D.P. *Significant benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study through age 27*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1993). Two of the three studies found that participating children had better classroom behavior later (Muffin, T.E. *The neuropsychology of conduct disorder* and Kolvin, I. et al. *Social and parenting factors affecting criminal offense rates*). Two other studies found that the children were rated by their elementary school teachers as better adjusted socially (Leadbeater, B.J. and Bishop, S.J. *Predictor of behavior problems in preschool children of inner-city Afro-American and Puerto Rican adolescent mothers*, Child Development (1994) 65:638-48).

A very recent study refuted two studies published in 2003 that appeared to link longer hours in child care to increased behavior problems. The study examined social and cognitive development, seeking to replicate the negative results and could not do so. They did not find a negative effect on social development from center-based care. It is true, however, that the new study is based on poor children, while the 2003 reports focused on a middle-class population (Loeb, et al., cited above).

Conclusion: Quality child care has significant benefits to the children, their mothers, and society as a whole. It is a cost-effective use of public money that can, over time, significantly affect the fiscal soundness of communities and even the nation as a whole.

References to be Inserted