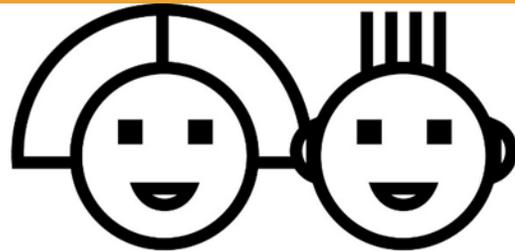


Development of Proposed Child Care and Education Accountability Act



new mexico early childhood development partnership

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Children in New Mexico

- 6.9% of the state's population (about 143,764) is under age five
- 31% of the state's children live at the federal poverty level, an annual income of \$23,550 for a family of four
- 62% of New Mexico's children (ages 3 and 4) are not attending pre-school
- Many children in New Mexico enter kindergarten without important pre-literacy skills
- 79% of New Mexico's fourth graders are not proficient in reading
- 33% of New Mexico's high school students do not graduate in four years

Importance of High- Quality Early Care and Education

High-quality child care helps children succeed in school

“Research indicates that children who receive a high-quality early childhood education have better math, language and social skills as they enter school, and as they grow older require less special education, progress further in school, have fewer interactions with the justice system and have higher earnings as adults.”

-Steve Barnett, National Institute for
Early Education Research

Importance of High- Quality Early Care and Education

“Children in low-income families have the most to gain from access to high-quality child care that prepares them for success in school and life. Access to high-quality child care is also proven to strengthen families’ economic security.”

-Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Return on Investment*

**As noted by the Ounce of
Prevention*

High need children who don't receive a high-quality early childhood education are:

- 25% more likely to drop out of school
- 40% more likely to become a teen parent
- 50% more likely to be placed in special education
- 60% more likely to never attend college
- 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime

The cost of remediation is significant.

Fast Facts: Child Care in New Mexico

- Types of Care
 - Unlicensed, Unregistered Family, Friends and Neighbors
 - Unknown number statewide
 - Unlicensed/Registered Home Child Care
 - 4,000 homes statewide
 - Licensed Child Care Centers
 - 700 licensed child care centers statewide

Fast Facts: Child Care in New Mexico

- Quality Efforts
 - Child care quality rating improvement system (QRIS) with five levels: ***Look for the STARS***. The higher the STAR level, the higher the level of quality.
 - FOCUS Implementation (next generation of STARS)
- Why is QRIS Important?
 - Defines a pathway on how to increase program quality and align compensation (tired reimbursement)
 - Defines aspects of quality related with learning practices, and positive child outcomes.
 - Provides families with a guideline for quality and supports family choice

Fast Facts: Child Care in New Mexico

- Funded by federal and state funds
- Largest sources of federal funds:
 - Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Head Start

Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

- Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary source of funding (sliding scale system) for child care assistance for low-income families in New Mexico.
- CCDBG is currently in the process of reauthorization.
- States are required to spend a minimum of 4% of funds on initiatives that improve child care quality.
- The federal government establishes requirements and broad basic health and safety parameters for child care.
- States determine policy decisions within these parameters to impact access, quality and supply of child care.

Child Care Assistance Goals

CCDBG in New Mexico is called Child Care Assistance

- Historical goal: help parents work or go to school.
- Secondary goal: support health, safety and development of children.
- As part of reauthorization, discussion of revising federal goals to require greater focus on quality, child development, school readiness, and improved coordination of early care and education efforts.

Federal Requirements

- Federal law establishes the following eligibility requirements:
 - Age of child: under 13; or under 19, in special cases.
 - Income requirements: Household income must be under 85% of State Median Income (SMI) for a family of the same size.
 - Work and education requirements: Parents must be working, engaged in education or training pursuits or caring for a child in need of protective services.
 - Citizenship status: children must be legal citizens.

Child Care Assistance in New Mexico

- Sliding scale system of child care assistance (contracts between CYFD and parents)
- Subsidized child care for low-income families
 - Families at the 150% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) served
 - 21,000 children currently served
 - 9,000 children on a waiting list
- Projected FY15 Spending (federal and state funds): \$97.8M
- Fiscal Year 2015: \$2.2 million increase in funding
 - \$1.3M to support infant care

NMECDP Child Care Statement of Principles

- Increase access to high-quality child care for low- and moderate-income families
- Maximize resources by supporting parent's work and children's development and education simultaneously
- Recognize and support teachers & providers
- Incentivize quality through tiered reimbursement rates
- Advance learning & development benchmarks
- Foster partnerships to support access to high-quality services
- Focus on program evaluation and return on investment

Why is a Child Care and Education Accountability Act Necessary?

Increase access to high-quality child care for low- and moderate-income families

In New Mexico:

- 53% of children are cared for in a 2-STAR child care setting.
- 25% of children are cared for in a 5-STAR child care setting.
- 13% of children are cared for in 3-STAR child care setting.
- 9% of children are cared for in a 4-STAR child care setting.

Why is a Child Care and Education Accountability Act Necessary?*

**Information Provided by CLASP*

There is an opportunity to influence state policy

- States determine eligibility requirements.
- States set income eligibility and prioritize low-income families and groups.
- States define work, education and training requirements of parents.
- States set how care is authorized.
- States set provider payment rates and methods.
- States determine sliding fee scales of payment.
- States determine policies and practices.

Why is a Child Care and Education Accountability Act Necessary?

- Not all child care providers accept child care assistance.
- Only 22% of children under age 6 from low-income families who are eligible for child care receive assistance.
- The average length of stay in child care for a child receiving child care assistance is short (national average is 3 to 7 months).
- Loss of child care assistance is often related to state policies.
- Frequent changes among recipients of child care assistance led to inefficiencies in program management.

Why is a Child Care and Education Accountability Act Necessary?

Building an Effective Early Learning Workforce in New Mexico

- Child care is an important part of a high-quality early childhood system.
- Workforce infrastructure development:
 - Recognition of the importance of the child care and education workforce is essential.
 - Support of professionals currently in the field (in-service, training, consultation and technical assistance, scholarships for coursework and degrees and embedded professional development)
 - Develop plans for future members of the workforce (pre service/preparation coursework and required degrees)

An Opportunity for Policy Change

- Fully advance the New Mexico early learning guidelines to provide a set of outcomes and performance measures for child care in New Mexico
- Continue to implement quality improvement initiatives and strategies to support early education
- Review process for setting tiered reimbursement rates for child care providers and co-payments for parents
- Support workforce infrastructure development
- Examine ways to blend and braid funding to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of child care and education programs

An Opportunity for Policy Change

- Simplify access and retention of child care assistance for eligible families
 - Alter eligibility and authorization processes
 - Change income requirements
- Facilitate efforts to support working parents
 - Extend job search period so that parents searching for a job are eligible for child care assistance for a longer time period
 - Allow parents to use child care assistance at high-quality programs that operate during non-traditional work hours
- Streamline service delivery, improve efficiency, and reduce administrative burden for child care staff and staff across agencies.
 - Direct contracts with child care providers
- Align child care assistance with other work supports
 - Use SNAP simplified report for SNAP and child care assistance

Developing the Child Care and Education Accountability Act

- Acknowledge the state's commitment to children and child care and education professionals
- Research and analysis
- Engagement of stakeholders
- Identification of need
- Mapping of high-quality child care services
- Development of principles
- Agreement on goals of the act
- Drafting of legislation
- Targeted advocacy

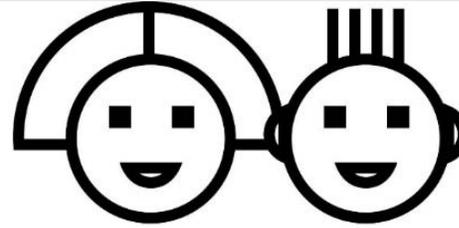
Child Care and Education Task Force

- Respectfully engage a variety of stakeholders to build consensus
- Research best practices on implementing quality efforts in child care and education settings
- Analyze policy levers to improve the quality and accountability of child care and education
- Develop policy recommendations to include in legislation (Child Care & Education Accountability Act) to be proposed during the 2015 legislative session
- Present recommendations to interim legislative committees and other interested stakeholders

Lessons From Other States

- North Carolina
 - Multi-year process to establish Smart Start
 - Advanced a high-quality, comprehensive, accountable system of care and education for every child beginning with a healthy birth
- Colorado
 - House Bill 1317: Child Care Assistance Program Changes
 - Increases the affordability of child care
 - Eases burdens for working parents
 - Cuts red tape for small business child care providers
- Washington
 - House Bill 2377: Early Start Act
 - Promotes quality for children
 - Enhances support for families and early learning professionals

Thank you!



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