CHILD CARE AND COVID-19

FEDERAL RESOURCES & BEST PRACTICES FOR COUNTY LEADERS

June 17, 2020 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET | National Association of Counties (NACo)
AGENDA

HON. DEBBIE LIEBERMAN | Commissioner, Montgomery County, Ohio and Chair, NACo Human Services and Education (HSE) Policy Steering Committee

PAULA DANERI | Early Childhood Policy Professional Staff, U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor

CRYSTAL KELLY | Director of Strategic Initiatives, Children’s Council of Watauga County, N.C.

KARA WADDELL | President & CEO, Child Care Associates, Tarrant County, Texas

Q & A | Email questions to Rbrown@naco.org
PAULA DANERI

Early Childhood Policy Professional Staff

U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor
CRYSTAL KELLY

Director of Strategic Initiatives
Children’s Council of Watauga County, N.C.
WATAUGA COUNTY, N.C.
POPULATION: 53,421

Child Care and COVID-19
State Level Response

- Public School Closures: March 14th
- Department of Health and Human Services released a memo for Health and Operational Guidance: March 23rd
- Governor issued State Stay at Home Orders: March 27th
Local Response

- Pop-up childcare for hospital employees
- Landscape study to determine what centers were staying open
- Liaison between childcare centers and state/local resources
- Uninterrupted funding
Child Care – An Essential Service

- Child care centers must submit application to remain open and must meet enhanced requirements (about 66% in the state applied to stay open).
- State hotline created to connect families with child care programs that have agreed to meet updated health, safety and operational guidelines.
- For those essential workers who need it, financial assistance for emergency child care is available.
CARES Act Funding
$114 million through expansion to the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)
Key Concerns

“I feel like I’m at war right now, like I’m on the battlefield. Every day you’re hoping you don’t have a teacher who gets it, praying that you don’t get it, that none of the children have it, and that the parents understand all the new guidelines. I want to stand up and help my state and essential workers, but on the other hand, what is the incentive for me to continue to risk my life and my staff’s life everyday?”

Child Care Center Owner
Garner and Clayton, NC

“I have spent an overwhelming amount on cleaning supplies. Funding is needed because SAFETY is the greatest need. Please help.”

Child Care Center Director
Hope Mills, NC
Where do we go from here?

- Establishment of child care as an essential part of a healthy economy and infrastructure
- Continued advocacy for increased compensation for early childhood workforce
- Increased support and resources to ensure health and safety requirements can be met
- Public investments to sustain the early childhood system through this crisis and beyond
Tarrant County, Texas

- **Population of 2 million** residents including the 12th largest city in the U.S. (Fort Worth) and the 48th largest city in the U.S. (Arlington)
- **Local policies** included stay-at-home orders at state and local level, declared states of emergency and now the state is in Phase III of re-opening
- **The state of child care:**
  - The state created a Frontline Child Care Task Force – with agency leaders on one and advocates on another to guide response
  - Emergency child care rules – but pretty minimal.
  - Child care was open throughout COVID but only for essential workers
  - Re-opening child care for all families began on May 25
  - Suggested Texas Minimum Health Protocols
  - Child care subsidy covered all absences, all parent co-pays and eventually paid 25% higher rates when open for only essential workers
Tarrant County Child Care

• **Within days of declared state of emergency**, Tarrant County named a COVID-19 Child Care Task Force with child care licensing, county healthy, child care subsidy assistance program and Child Care Associates
  • Child Care Response Network – broadened to providers, nonprofits, community leaders and philanthropy
  • School-Age Care Network – for coordinating school-age care
  • City of Fort Worth – Education and Child Care Task Force *(after 4-6 weeks into COVID)*

• **Developed an early priority**: To ensure quality provision of care to children of essential workers
  • Decided to build on the existing infrastructure of qualified staff and child-designed facilities
  • **KEY: County Judge convened two critical superintendents and the child care task force – and we early on decided to not use schools for emergency care.**

• **Released a joint letter to groceries and big box stores** asking they allow child care providers to purchase 4x restricted amounts.
Coordinated COVID-19 Response for Child Care:
Former classroom coaches now at home were designated to make regular calls to child care providers to identify all available child care spots and submitting status updates using a common web-based form. Provider status and the aggregate status of current community capacity is being tracked in “real-time” on a web-based data tool.

The objective of the system is to be able to match-make capacity with need in our community for essential workers.

Envisioned a searchable platform for FINDING care “real-time” while also providing critical DATA needed to assess the capacity of child care
Find! Website
https://find.bestplace4kids.com/families
# Daily Status Report

All information as of 4:00PM on June 15, 2020

## Reporting Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Reporting</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>22%</td>
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## Provider Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider Status</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open, providing care</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not operating</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Applications by Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local State Govt.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant, Grocery, Food</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Responder</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Station</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare worker</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Delivery</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leasing Agent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Non-essential worker application*

## COVID19 Applications and Enrollments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apps</th>
<th>Denied*</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>Pending</th>
<th>Enrolls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2020</td>
<td>1,101</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2020</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>1,466</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,371</td>
</tr>
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*Available Slots at Open Sites*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tarrant County sites</th>
<th>slots</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>1,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>2,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years old</td>
<td>3,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-aged</td>
<td>2,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>9,839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Building the Dashboard

County-level data aggregated into live dashboard
On March 24, 2020, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) authorized Tarrant County Workforce Board to implement emergency child care in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 using its current Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding. This assistance will help support the cost of direct care for workers deemed essential during the COVID-19 emergency for a three-month period. (Ended June 1, 2020)

CCA-CCMS processed over 1,900 applications with 1,375 children of essential staff successfully placed in emergency child care with three months of free child care.
Distributing PPE for child care providers

Coordinated delivery of COVID-19 Response Care Packages for Child Care:
Designated staff to organize deliveries and pick up times for child care provider. Care packages included gloves, hand sanitizer, digital thermometers, spray bottles and other hard to find PPE.
CARES Act Funding

Our organization put forward a request for both city and county funding for:

- Economic supports for child care business sustainability
- Health, sanitation and PPE
- Diapers & formulas for families in need
- Support for families in need of child care
- Leadership and management of the child care response

Organizational Background:

Child Care Associates (CCA) has served our communities’ child care and early education needs since 1988. Formed by the United Fund in response to emerging community needs, Child Care Associates was designed to be a community agency responsive to changing issues of child care facing families in Tarrant County. In 2016, CCA directly delivered early education and care services to 2,400 infants, toddlers and preschoolers living at federal poverty levels. CCA also served 12,458 children through child care subsidy assistance funding (CCMS) to help low-income working parents cover the high cost of child care.

As the largest child development agency in Tarrant County, Child Care Associates is the de facto voice of child care in the region managing the supply of child care available for families and helping improve the quality of child care operators across the county. CCA operates the Texas Rating Star (TRS) program that systematically improves and assesses the quality of child care subsidy providers. Tarrant County now has nearly 200 licensed, quality child care programs with a TRS star-rating.

COVID Response:

Child Care Associates has been well positioned to coordinate and support the 1,334 licensed child care providers in Tarrant County during the COVID-19 response period.

When asked by the county and city officials to step up its leadership, CCA immediately launched the Tarrant County Child Care Task Force with the purpose of ensuring a quality supply of child care services during COVID and to help restore child care to meet the family demand for child care post-COVID. CCA has highlighted the critical response we coordinated during COVID-19 to date (see Appendix 1).

Urgent Community Need for Child Care:

Quality child care is needed to support the developmental needs of young children and the occupational needs of working parents. In recent years, Tarrant County child care providers, already experienced a loss of critical revenue as the free or reduced-price meal programs negatively impacted the child care revenue previously derived from providing child care to preschoolers. During COVID, child care has responded to the child care needs of essential workers but forced to operate at a loss for months with the increased need for sanitation, smaller group sizes to prevent children and staff revenue from working parents. As our economy reopens, child care is a critical link needed to ensure Texas families are able to return to work. However, experts predict a slow return of child care, demand to child care programs' operational loss. As a community, we need to help stabilize supports and economic development to ensure programs at sufficient levels to offset these losses.
COMING SOON!!

High-touch business support for child care businesses

• Pairing up resources at the Small Business Development Center

• SBDC partners with the U.S. Small Business Administration, Tarrant County College and governments to build businesses

• Pairing up child care mentors and business mentors to hand-hold business supports and maintain our supply of quality providers
COUNTIES FOR KIDS

Counties Getting Started: A Prenatal-to-Three Guidebook

Prenatal-to-Three County Leader Toolkit

The National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers

THE ABCs OF PRENATAL-TO-THREE FOR COUNTY OFFICIALS

Questions for County Leaders to Consider:
- Is there strong leadership for infants and toddlers in your county? The local county needs a strong coordinator, and even if the state has a coordinator, that person needs to be known in the community; if not, further engagement is needed to build local awareness.
- Does every county have an active early childhood leadership group/committee or center? The county needs a strong, broad-based community support, and at least one coordinator or county leader to engage parents, employers, citizens, county officials, and other key stakeholders to develop and implement the initiative.

COUNTIES FOR KIDS

Learn More

Tools & resources for counties to support the well-being of young children
Q & A

• Email questions to Rashida Brown, Associate Program Director of Children, Youth and Families, National Association of Counties (NACo): rbrown@naco.org
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

• National Association of Counties COVID-19 Resources