



## Childhood Care & Education

The Oregon Commission on Children & Families is a key partner in the planning and development of a quality child care system. OCCF state staff work closely with the Childhood Care and Education Coordinating Council and the Oregon Commission for Child Care on efforts to build a statewide child care system, as well as providing technical assistance to Local Commissions around child care issues.

One of the high level outcomes that Local Commissions address in their community action planning process is “increasing child care availability as measured by the number of child care slots available for every 100 children under age 13.” OCCF receives federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) dollars for quality improvements through the Child Care Division. Most of these funds are allocated directly to local commissions to fund strategies identified in their action plan to address community child care needs. Some funds are retained at the state level for special projects that promote public awareness and systems building.

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***“I got the courage to attempt to open my second center. My office works now. I’ve also seen some positive changes in the classroom – in communication and how the teachers deal with the children.”***

– Participant, Child Care Center  
Director’s Certificate Program

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### 2007-09 Results



More than 60 percent of Oregon’s children are cared for by informal child care providers that are not regulated by the state. During 2005-07, some state-level CCDF funds were used to develop a collaborative system of supports for license-exempt Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) child care providers and began implementation in 2007-09. OCCF purchased Michigan R.E.A.D.Y. combo toolkits, which each include a selection of infant, toddler and preschool materials. The toolkit project aims to improve child outcomes by providing health, safety, child development and literacy materials to FFN caregivers enrolled in the Employment Related Day Care subsidy program, and to link them to supports and additional resources in their communities. Approximately 650 toolkits have been distributed by Resource and Referral agencies to FFN Caregivers. The toolkit focus is on supporting child development and school readiness rather than licensing.

State and some local CCDF funds continue to promote the Child Care Health Consultation Program. The program exists to help child care providers create safe, healthy and nurturing environments for children who are in their care through training, consultation, and on-site visits. Direct provider consultation services currently exist in Clackamas, Lincoln, Multnomah, and regionally in Eastern Oregon.

As a result of this project, children’s access to medical and dental care has increased and problem behaviors have decreased. Technical assistance and training are provided by the DHS Office of Family Health. An ongoing goal is to increase the availability of health consultation services through expansion projects in regions surrounding existing programs to impact the health and safety of more children in child care.

## 2007-09 Local Results

At the local level, Multnomah, Coos and Curry Counties participated in piloting the Child Care Quality Indicators (CCQI) Project, a public/private partnership with Child Care Division, the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network and private foundations. CCQI collects data on seven research-based structural quality indicators from child care centers, on a voluntary basis. The objective is to provide parents with information comparing characteristics of centers that are important to them in choosing child care. The project is in the process of going statewide.

Multnomah County continued their participation in the implementation of the Child Care Director Certificate originally developed in 2003-2005 through a collaboration with child care partners. Portland State University was contracted to develop the training and Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children in collaboration with Oregon Association of Child Care Directors to deliver the training. Scholarships were made available from several public and private partners. Four cohorts of participants have completed this training, which expanded from Multnomah County only in 2004-2005 to include Washington County in 2006 and currently is open to participants statewide. (see highlight below).

### **Highlight: Child Care Center Director's Certificate Program**

In 2005, the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Communities piloted a training certificate program for child care center directors. A 60-hour training curriculum, developed by the Oregon Center for Career Development at Portland State University was delivered by a training team through the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children (OAEYC) in collaboration with Oregon Association of Child Care Directors (OACCD). A team of trainers is used in this model to provide a variety of perspectives and expertise. All trainers must be Master Trainers on the Oregon Registry with experience as a child care director.

Twenty child care center directors participated in the first training, and an evaluation completed by the Center was very positive. In 2006, 20 directors completed a second training, jointly funded by Multnomah and Washington County Commissions on Children and Families. Two additional cohorts of 20 directors were completed in 2006-07 and 2007-08. One is currently in process, with child care center directors from across the state participating. Scholarship support for all trainings has also been provided by the John and Betty Gray Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation. College credit for completing the program is also available to participants through PSU or the community college system.

This initiative has begun to address the unique needs of child care center directors, most of who come into their positions with no formal training or experience in business or management. Research shows that child care centers with effective, well-trained directors have increased staff stability, high-quality child development services, and more stable child and family populations, resulting in a more viable center. Participants have consistently reported a higher degree of confidence in their capabilities as directors, as well as an enhanced support network as a result of the training.

To facilitate attendance from outside the metro area, the training now uses a class model that meets once a month, Friday afternoon and evening and all day on Saturday, for six months. To date directors from 13 different counties have received this training. Participants have been sponsored by Clackamas, Jackson, Multnomah, Umatilla, Washington and Yamhill County Commissions; the Child Care Enhancement Project in Lane County, the Child Care Improvement Project in Multnomah County; as well as the participants themselves and their employers.

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