

Early Childhood Council of Kern Public Policy Platform 2010

Statement of Quality:

The Early Childhood Council of Kern believes that a high quality child care setting promotes:

Child development

- Enhancement of the whole child through physical, social, emotional, intellectual and creative development with respect to a child's ability and culture
- Frequent, positive, warm interactions appropriate to a child's age and development
- Varied learning activities appropriate to a child's age and development

Health and safety

- Healthy, safe, and nurturing environments
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Knowledgeable and skilled providers to respond to the needs of each child

Effective Program Administration

- On-going communication with families and opportunities for meaningful family involvement
- Opportunities for training and support for providers
- Implementation of an on-going, systematic evaluation process

(in no particular order)

1. Quality Child Development Programs

- Advocate for program practices which are developmentally appropriate for each age level and in all settings
- Advocate for a child care rating system that addresses and improves quality and is well structured, frequently monitored and sustainable.

2. Health & Safety

- Licensing –
 - a) Advocate for a fully funded child care licensing system which includes annual visits
 - b) Advocate for enforced health and safety standards as outlined in the Title 22, Child Day Care General Licensing Requirements, California Health and Safety Code
- Health & Nutrition
 - a) Promote adequate, healthy physical activity
 - b) Promote high standards related to the nutritional needs of young children including the delivery of healthy meals/snacks as well as safe serving practices
- Informal care
 - a) Advocate for legislation which would limit the maximum capacity for subsidized license-exempt providers to the capacity of a small licensed family child care home
 - b) Advocate for easy access to and timely processing of applications to the Trustline Registry system
 - c) Advocate for the requirement of CPR/First Aid and other child development training for all subsidized license-exempt providers

3. Emerging Early Education Programs

- Promote key program elements:
 - a) Program practices which are developmentally appropriate for all age levels
 - b) Parent involvement and input
 - c) Incorporates existing early care and education system
 - d) Funding for adequate teacher training and compensation
 - e) Input from the early care and education field
 - f) Inclusion of children with special needs and English Language Learners

4. Workforce/Administration

- Diversity
Promote the recruitment of culturally and linguistically diverse providers
- Education and Professional Development
 - a) Advocate for articulation between community colleges and 4-year institutions and alignment with Child Development Permit/Credential
 - b) Promote the importance of continued education and professional growth
- Compensation and Retention
Advocate for compensation which is commensurate with the level of education achieved

5. Availability/Access

- Subsidies for low income families
 - a) Advocate for the expansion of subsidies to fully fund all eligible families
 - b) Advocate for a regular update of the State Median Income (SMI) or an alternate measure that reflects up-to-date California income in order to maintain accurate eligibility for families
- Options for parents
Advocate for child care setting options for parents (i.e. center based, family child care, non-traditional hour, etc.)
- Special Needs
Advocate for improved access to child care for families with children who have special needs

6. Community Infrastructure

- Child care language in General Plans
Advocate for the inclusion of child care language in the County and all city General Plans
- Facilities
Advocate for facility development and/or improvement that includes accessibility and appropriate environments
- Funding
 - a) Advocate for increased availability of loan products for facility development and/or improvement
 - b) Promote the availability of grants and other funding sources for facility development and/or improvement