

Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council

PLANNING FOR QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION



2016 - 2020 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council

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This project was made possible by funding from the California Department of Education, Child Development Division and through a contract with Siskiyou County Office of Education.

SISKIYOU COUNTY CHILD CARE PLANNING COUNCIL

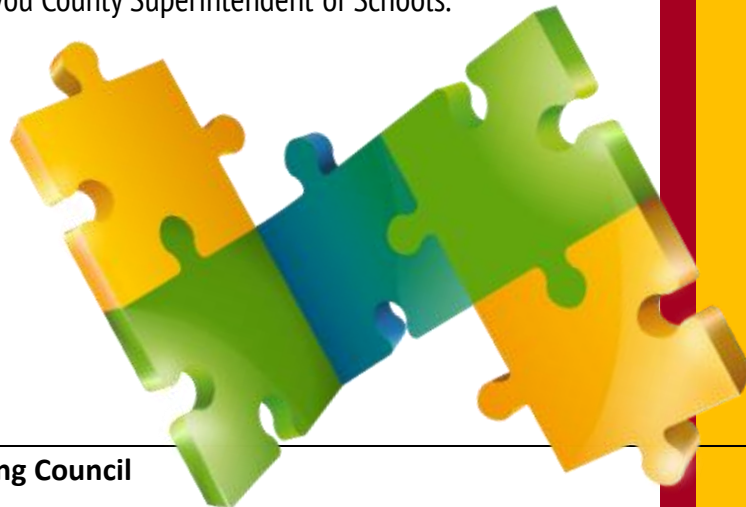
MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to plan for, promote and support quality child care and early education services that meet the needs of all Siskiyou County families.

Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council (also known as LPC) is a diverse, county-wide collaborative that ...

- > assesses child care and early education needs;
- > establishes and updates local priorities for maintenance, expansion and improvement of early childhood services;
- > prepares a strategic plan to coordinate and maximize local, state, federal and private resources;
- > supports local early care and education providers by coordinating trainings and incentive programs;
- > and provides information, resources and counsel to early care providers, community partners, local and state agencies.

Half of the members are appointed by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors, while half are appointed by the Siskiyou County Superintendent of Schools.



PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS*

CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Kathy Crossman, Lane Street Children's Center, Yreka
Doreen Healy, Chestnut St. Toddler Center/Preschool, Mt. Shasta
Daintry Zarzynski, Butte Valley Montessori Children's House, Dorris

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Patty Brown, Early Childhood Consultant, Montague
Paula Young & Reich, Independent Contractor, Etna

CONSUMERS OF CHILD CARE

Kim Knudsen, Mt. Shasta
Ronya Merel, Etna

PUBLIC AGENCY

Katie Eastman, Siskiyou County Public Health
(Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health)
Anne Mero, Shasta Head Start
Delores Virag, Siskiyou County Human Services

DISCRETIONARY

Ana Fisher, Ana's House Preschool/Child Care Center, Weed
Regina Weston, Family & Community Resource Center of Weed

STAFF

Emily Lacroix, Coordinator

* as of February 2016

INTRODUCTION

In February 2016, members of the Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council, as well as the Executive Director of Siskiyou Child Care Council (our local Resource and Referral agency), attended a Strategic Planning Retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to review and discuss the three key areas that emerged from our 2015 Needs Assessment*; examine the current landscape of early care and education; and contribute ideas to develop a countywide Strategic Action Plan.

The Siskiyou County Child Care Planning Council Strategic Action Plan for Child Care and Early Education Services fulfills the requirement of the California Department of Education to complete a countywide, coordinated plan for the improvement of early care and education services. The Plan builds upon the work of many individuals and agencies who have been working to carry out Siskiyou LPC's Mission and previous Strategic Action Plans.

This Strategic Action Plan is intended to guide Siskiyou County, the Siskiyou County Local Child Care Planning Council, its partner agencies, and others. It may be used by any organization, individual or grant writer for strategic planning or to advocate for additional services for Siskiyou County families and children.

*The 2015 Needs Assessment can be found at <http://www.siskiyoucoe.net/domain/64>.

KEY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

There are three key areas that emerged from our 2015 Needs Assessment:

1) ACCESS TO CHILD CARE/EARLY EDUCATION SERVICES

Access to licensed, quality child care/early education services in Siskiyou County is limited. There is an especially low supply of infant, full-time, flexible and non-traditional hours care. In addition, the cost of child care is often a financial hardship for both low and middle income families. It is therefore recommended that efforts continue to both expand the number of quality child care openings (especially in areas of low supply) as well as improve access and affordability for families.

Creating and maintaining a quality and economically viable child care program is quite challenging, especially in difficult economic times. It is therefore recommended that efforts continue to support child care providers in both tangible and intangible ways. Given the significant decrease in the number of family child care homes, retention efforts may be especially well spent in this sector.

Due to the remoteness and low-population density of many areas in the county, it is recommended that non-traditional methods of delivering early education services to these communities be continued, developed, supported and expanded.



KEY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION (continued)

2) QUALITY

Given the known, cost-effective and research-based benefits of quality child care/early education, emphasis should be placed on quality enhancement efforts among all sectors of the caregiving/early education population (including, but not limited to, licensed and license-exempt early care and education providers, home visitors, parents, non-profit and public agency staff and pediatric care staff).

The following professionally recognized indicators of quality child care and early education should be used in planning, implementing and advocating for quality enhancement services and activities:

- > A well-educated, well-trained, well-compensated and stable childcare/early education workforce
- > Developmentally appropriate and optimally stimulating classrooms and child environments
- > Safe and healthy practices and environments for children
- > Culturally competent child care/early education services
- > Warm, positive, respectful and developmentally appropriate relationships and interactions between adults and children
- > Respect and accommodation for individual child needs and abilities
- > High level of family involvement

3) FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND LINKAGE TO SUPPORT SERVICES

Given the significantly higher rates of poverty, unemployment, child abuse and neglect within the county, it seems fair to assume that many Siskiyou County families experience high levels of stress. Additional family stressors may include isolation, lack of adequate transportation and difficulty in accessing services. It is therefore recommended that efforts to provide and/or link families to support services and family participation activities be continued, developed, supported and expanded.



DESIRED OUTCOME #1

Increased Access to a Wide Variety of Child Care and Early Education Services throughout Siskiyou County

Goal 1. Support all expansion and capacity building efforts across all sectors of our county's diverse, mixed delivery system of child care and early education services (licensed family child care homes, licensed centers, tribal centers and programs, home visiting services, license-exempt providers, Community/Family Resource Center playgroups, etc.).

Goal 2. Continue retention efforts by supporting existing ECE (Early Childhood Education) programs.



Strategies to promote access and retention:

- a) Participate in individual meetings, group meetings and/or collaborations with a focus on expanding the number of ECE providers, programs, and early education slots (e.g. planning, advocacy, recruitment activities, technical assistance, grant applications, etc.).
- b) Prioritize programs that will serve area(s) of high need; actively enroll underserved populations such as infants, toddlers and children with special needs; offer full-time, flexible or non-traditional hours care.
- c) Link all providers of child care and early education services to resources, trainings, opportunities and support that will encourage them to continue and thrive.

DESIRED OUTCOME #2

Increased Quality Across All Sectors of our County's Diverse, Mixed Delivery System of Child Care and Early Education Services



- Goal 1.** Create a coordinated, integrated Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system that includes all types of child care and early education services.
- Goal 2.** Encourage individuals and programs that provide child care and early education services to engage in CQI activities.

Strategies to increase quality of and engagement in child care and early education services:

- a) Continue to be actively involved in the development and implementation of First 5 Siskiyou's IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive) CQI model and QRIS (Quality Rating and Improvement System).
- b) Continue to be actively involved in the development and implementation of the six-county Regional Consortium's CSPP (California State Preschool Program) QRIS.
- c) Continue to expand the number of licensed (and tribal exempt) centers, Family Child Care Homes, and Family/Community Resource Centers engaged in CQI planning.
- d) Create a centralized, coordinated ECE professional development training calendar.

DESIRED OUTCOME #3

Increased Family Involvement and Linkage to Support Services

- Goal 1.** Develop a countywide system that links families throughout the county to community resources and support services, parent education opportunities, quality trainings and family engagement and strengthening activities.
- Goal 2.** Develop a system for improving the county's capacity to serve children with special needs (developmental, physical, cognitive, mental health, challenging behaviors, etc.)



Strategies to increase family involvement and linkage to support services:

- a) Create a Family Resources/Family Engagement/Family Strengthening packet and/or brochure.
- b) Secure commitments from a large number of “gateway” partners to distribute and/or link families they serve to the above-listed packet and/or brochure (either in person or online).
- c) Meet with key partners to assess and discuss current capacity, unmet needs, challenges, barriers, streamlining of services, potential (including “out-of-the box”) solutions, etc.).
- d) Develop a system for parents, teachers and child care providers of children with special needs to access professional support and/or resources.

A CALL TO ACTION

To achieve our desired outcomes, we will need the support and collaboration of numerous individuals, agencies, organizations, businesses, faith-based groups, service clubs, etc.

There are many opportunities for everyone in our community to become involved in our mission to plan for, promote and support quality child care and early education services that meet the needs of all Siskiyou County families.

Please join us by committing your time and energy to the implementation of this plan.
Contact Emily Lacroix at elacroix@siskiyoucoe.net or at 530-643-6002 to find out how you can get involved.

