



The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

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New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council Hearing: New York's early childhood care and education system

Testimony Submitted by:

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Before the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

April 24, 2017 – Westchester Hearing

Good Afternoon, my name is Jocelyn Rodriguez and I am the Director for the Early Care & Education Institute with The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. - known by its acronym, CHCF.

Thank you to the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) for the opportunity to address you today about the importance of improving quality and access to New York's early childhood care and education programs.

The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families is a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency and one of four organizations that make up the New York City CCR&R Consortium. For over 20 years CHCF has worked with family child care educators, and managed a network for family child care. We are also the founding agency for the Latino Coalition for Early Care and Education where we advocated for the best learning models for English language learners from birth to eight years of age. Additionally, CHCF is a member of the NYS Early Care & Learning Council, a member of the Universal Pre-Kindergarten workgroup with Mayor De Blasio, members of the Infant Toddler Specialist NYC Region, and we are a previous ECAC member. Our experience in the early care sector, along with our years of experience running after school enrichment programs in elementary, middle and high schools throughout NYC- gives CHCF a unique perspective and the vantage point of bridging program and policy.

For the purpose of this hearing, my comments will focus on three central themes:

- 1) The critical role family child care providers and CCR&R's play in facilitating access to quality child care and recruiting and retaining a qualified and effective child care workforce. *[Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2)(b)];*
- 2) The detrimental effect the lack of data on early childhood and care programs have on the child care community, families and children- and the need for a state roadmap of its current system. *[Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2)(d)];* and
- 3) The need for the state to create a statewide comprehensive professional development and career advancement plan for early childhood educators that meets the needs of our

linguistically and ethnically diverse children and families. *[Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2) (e)]*.

I. The critical role family child care providers and CCR&R's play in facilitating access to quality child care and recruiting and retaining a qualified and effective child care workforce.
[Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2) (b)]

In order to achieve an aligned and cohesive early childhood care and education system for our youngest children and their families, it is imperative to clearly delineate the critical role of the Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) network as a resource to parents, service providers, the early education community including family child care educators, and agencies throughout New York.

Many states, including New York depend on Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) to spearhead local efforts to expand access to quality early childhood services. CCR&Rs are located in every state and most communities across the nation. Together, they serve parents and providers in over 99 percent of all populated zip codes¹.

CCR&Rs provide trusted guidance tailored to each family by phone, in person, and in other ways, such as through the Internet. CCR&Rs support families to raise healthy children by talking with parents one-on-one in their native language. CCR&R's understand the delicate balance of family life, particularly for families earning low incomes. CCR&R's enable families to make informed child care decisions, provide child care referrals and help families develop a child care plan. They understand that finding quality early childhood care is a critical step to raising happy and healthy children.

CCR&R's also provide an entry point into the child care education workforce sector. They help providers meet licensing and registration requirements; they support providers by offering low-cost or free training in diverse topics like health and safety, child development, dual language and sound business practices. CCR&R's also work with local and state governments and the private sector to leverage resources for building and maintaining the supply of quality early childhood care.

Even though for ten years, state funding for CCR&R agencies remained flat while costs steadily rose- CCR&Rs continued to improve the quality of early childhood by providing ongoing professional development opportunities to educators in their home language. CCR&R's have been integral players in the development of accreditation programs and quality rating and improvement systems, and they are advocates for families and the child care community.

CCR&R's ensure children enter school ready to learn.

¹ Child Care Aware of America (2007), *Covering the map: Child care resource & referral agencies providing vital services to parents throughout the United States* retrieved on February 23, 2015 from http://www.naccrra.org/sites/default/files/publications/naccrra_publications/2012/coveringthemap.pdf

CCR&Rs are uniquely positioned to ensure that family child care educators continue their value-add to our economic and societal well-being. Family child care educators bear an enormous responsibility and wear a wide variety of hats. They ensure the safety of any society's most valuable asset: our children. They play an integral role in establishing children's developmental foundation and they contribute to our city's economic engine by allowing parents to participate in the workforce².

Family child care programs have the benefits of flexible hours, lower costs, accessibility, and cultural compatibility. Family child care educators can give more individualized care to meet the needs of working families, are generally the most affordable childcare option, and offer greater flexibility in hours available for care. For example, some family child care educators may offer parents more flexibility with hours of operation such as evening, weekend, overnight, and before and after school care. In addition, family child care helps foster emotionally secure interpersonal relationships for everyone involved. The educators are able to communicate each day with parents on a personal level and share information about the development of the child. These educators care for multi-aged groups of children allowing children to remain with one caregiver for many years which helps children develop a sense of trust and security. Multi-aged settings allow children to learn from one another and allow siblings to stay together. For the vulnerable families that are facing a multitude of challenges such as homelessness, job and food insecurity, immigration, unemployment, non-traditional work hours and language barriers (just to name a few), family child care educators offer stability and consistency in the midst of chaos.

CHCF commends ECAC for holding these public hearings and we urge ECAC to continue to ensure that CCRR's and Family Child Care educators are at the decision making tables to include the voice and suggestions of the most vulnerable children, families and communities. This is a critical time for our children and families -and CCRR's are integral in developing a culturally informed and relevant quality early childhood care and education system.

II. The detrimental effect the lack of data on early childhood and care programs have on the child care community, families and children- and the need for a state roadmap of its current system. [Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2) (d)]

In order to ensure that public dollars are being appropriately invested, the state needs to ensure that policies, mandates and regulations are based off of culturally appropriate and relevant, statistically valid and representative data across the state.

Past practices have not been inclusive or have failed to acknowledge the strengths and assets that Dual Language Learners (DLLs), emergent Bilingual and English Language Learners (ELLs) bring to communities. Currently, DLLs and ELLs are underserved by the state and city education systems. Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, provides that no

² Villanueva, M. (2015). Unleashing the Economic Power of Family Child Care Providers. New York: The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

person shall "on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Therefore, recipients of federal funds must provide meaningful access to persons with limited English language proficiency.

All children deserve appropriately-funded and professionally supported early childhood care and learning programs that promote their optimal development. Policy should be based on what works for all children, including emergent bilinguals/DLLs. Policy must also include the research that demonstrates positive impact of programs on low-income communities and children, ELLs, and young Latino and African American boys and girls. Giving all babies a strong start in life increases graduation rates, improves the quality of the workforce, improves health, and reduces crime, all of which lead to a more productive nation in the future.³

Therefore, CHCF urges ECAC to create an early childhood care and education system roadmap, outlining all of the federal, state and local agencies involved in funding, coordinating and/or delivering early childhood care and education services. This road map should include, but not be limited to, program/agency types, capacity vs. children enrolled, eligibility of children vs. access into the programs, funding amounts, and attributes of the children in the program including, but not limited to race, ethnicity and home language, etc.

Following this road map, a needs assessment of the local communities should be collected to highlight where access and quality are barriers and where they are not. This road map and cross walk with needs assessments will ensure that all of the decision makers, advocates and communities have equitable information regarding the numerous, interrelated and interconnected systems that families must navigate in order to access early childhood care services throughout the state. This roadmap will also ensure that we appropriately invest in what has the greatest impact.

III. The need for the state to create a statewide comprehensive professional development and career advancement plan for early childhood educators that meets the needs of our linguistically and ethnically diverse populations. [Pursuant to Social Services Law § 483-g (2) (e)]

The future of improved education for English Language Learners (ELL) begins with young children. Latino ELL children have been underserved by the New York education system due to limited access to quality, culturally- and linguistically-competent early childhood education programs; placement of inexperienced teachers in school districts with large Latino communities; school overcrowding in Latino neighborhoods; the marginalization of parents with limited English proficiency due to school correspondence and meetings being conducted exclusively in English; and a lack of effective ELL-focused academic support services. New York

³ National Zero to Three (2016), America's Future Depends on Quality Child Care Infographic retrieved on April 24, 2017 from <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1220-america-s-future-depends-on-quality-child-care-infographic>

State has an opportunity to reverse these negative trends, as ELLs are concentrated in the lower elementary grades, with more than 50% of ELLs in grades K-3⁴.

CHCF urges ECAC to establish an advisory committee on ELL/DLL instruction and practice as part of the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council. CHCF also urges ECAC to require that its membership and governance be representative and inclusive of the linguistically and ethnically diverse populations throughout the state.

NYS must also require pathways and equitable access opportunities for affordable training and credential-building options for culturally and linguistically diverse early childhood care educators, as well as for aspiring dual language/bilingual educators (as part of their required professional development). ***CHCF recommends that NYS require mandatory professional development that includes working with DLL/emergent bilingual children and their families. Additionally, that as a state we require train-the-trainer models and curricula for bilingual/multi-language instruction.***

CHCF acknowledges that New York needs significant additional funding for implementation of these recommendations. Without additional resources, States will have to do more with less, making hard choices such as cutting the number of children and families receiving reliable, affordable child care assistance or reducing payment rates to already low-paid child care educators.

Conclusion

The purpose of these hearings is to obtain input on how to improve the quality and access to New York's early childhood care and education system to enable low-income and vulnerable families to work or pursue education and training so that they may better support their families while promoting the learning of their children. This is a right that all of our families and parents have, regardless of culture, language, or geography. When our most vulnerable families find a way out of devastating circumstances, as a community, we are all better for it. Likewise, when our early care and education system fails, it fails us all. These are not just basic human rights but an investment in the future of our state and city. Our hope is that ECAC will take a good hard look at whether our communities are getting the return on that investment.

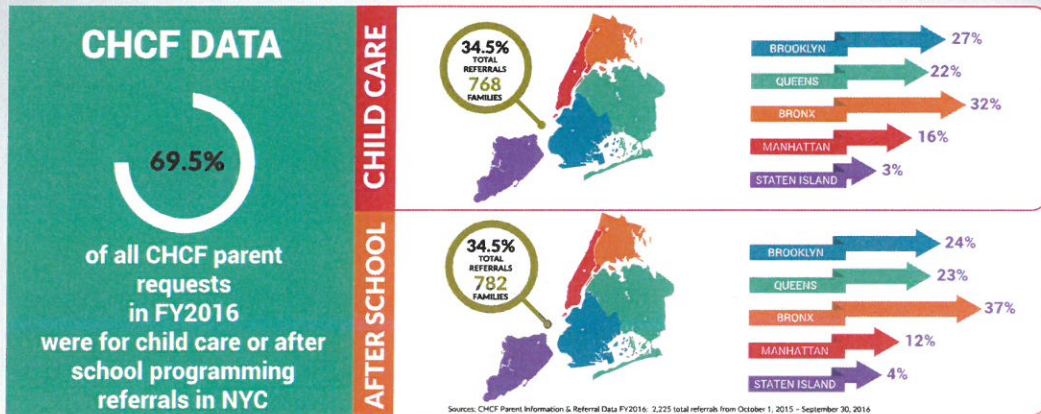
For questions about our recommendations related to early care and education, please contact Diana Noriega, Chief Program Director at dnoriega@chcfinc.org, or Jocelyn Rodriguez, Director for the Early Care & Education Institute at jrodriguez@chcfinc.org.

⁴ New York City Department of Education (2013), Office of English Language Learners, 2013 Demographic Report: New York City Department of Education's Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners retrieved on April 24, 2017 from http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/FD5EB945-5C27-44F8-BE4B-E4C65D7176F8/0/2013DemographicReport_june2013_revised.pdf



The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

Poverty & (In)accessibility in NYC: The Educational Services Gap for Latino families



Data2GO.NYC DATA

shows that Latino families and children are **MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY**



Correlation does not equal causation, however correlations over 10% demonstrate a strong relationship between variables



**Child Poverty is defined in Data2go.nyc as children under the age of 18 in households with income below the federal poverty line
***Disconnected youth- young people ages 16-24 who are neither working nor enrolled in school



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

What other data is needed to assess the gap between existing accessible services for young children and the need for these types of services?

What are immediate action steps that mitigate the effect of poverty on access to educational services for Latino families and youth?

What are long term solutions?

Let's keep the discussion going. Share your thoughts at www.chcfinc.org

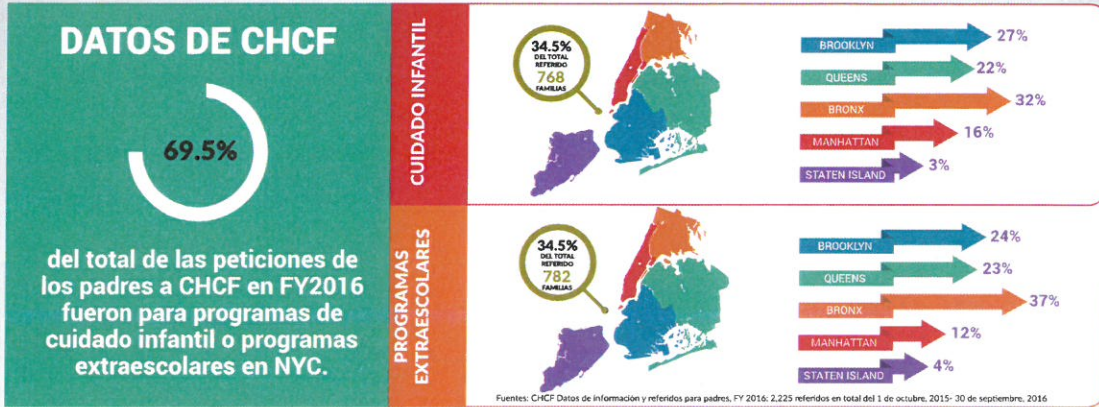
Data used for this project are available on DATA2GO.NYC, a free, online mapping and visualization tool with 360 indicators on human need and well-being in NYC.

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El Comité para Niños y Familias Hispanas, Inc.

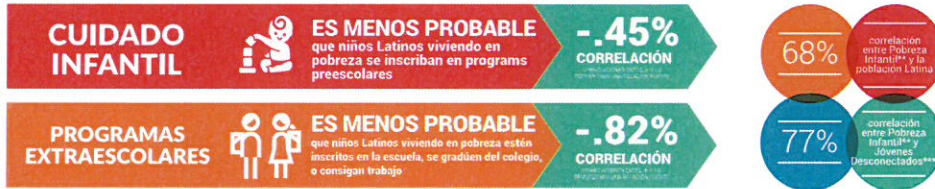
Pobreza y falta de acceso en NYC: La necesidad de servicios educativos para familias Latinas



Data2GO.NYC muestra que las familias y los niños Latinos tienen **MÁS PROBABILIDAD** de vivir en pobreza



La correlación no es igual a la causalidad, sin embargo las correlaciones superiores al 10% demuestran una fuerte relación entre las variables



**Según Data2Go, Pobreza infantil se define como los niños menores de 18 años en hogares con ingresos por debajo de la línea de pobreza federal
***Según Data2Go, Jóvenes Desconectados son jóvenes de las edades entre 16 a 24 años quienes no trabajan ni asisten a la escuela



PREGUNTAS PARA DISCUSIÓN

¿Qué información falta para evaluar la gran necesidad de servicios educativos para niños pequeños?

¿Cuáles son algunos pasos inmediatos que moderan el efecto entre la pobreza y acceso a servicios educativos para familias y jóvenes Latinos?

¿Cuáles son algunas soluciones de largo plazo?

¡Seguimos hablando! Comparte sus ideas en www.chcfinc.org

Datos usados por este proyecto están disponibles en DATA2GO.NYC, un base de datos gratis con 360 indicadores sobre el bienestar y necesidades humanas en NYC.



The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

Early Care and Education Institute

About

The Early Care and Education Institute provides culturally-informed, bilingual professional development to Family Child Care educators, to strengthen the quality of early care and learning to children in New York City.

Our Vision

A future where Latino children, youth, and families have equitable access to opportunities to succeed, are empowered to realize their full potential, and are affirmed in their culture.

Our Mission

CHCF combines education, capacity-building and advocacy to strengthen the support system and continuum of learning for children and youth.

Facts

The number of children that are in providers care during the day.

6,118

2,607 Children
Parents

The number of parents that have access and use providers for child care.

Providers 1,357

The number of providers ECEI trains and has interactions.



Parent/Family Assistance

Bilingual child care referrals and information

Development child care plans

Assist parents with finding child care, summer camps and afterschool programming throughout NYC



Our Services

Family Child Care Professional Development

Child Development Associate (CDA) Training & Portfolio creation

NYS Health and Safety & Medication Administration Training

Supplemental trainings in early childhood development, early literacy, trauma-informed practice, business development, health and nutrition

Family Child Care Enrichment

Distribute start-up and business grants

Provide coaching and home visiting to maintain quality of child care business

Develop Health Care Plan for programs



The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

El Instituto de Cuidado Infantil y Educación Temprana

Acerca de

El Instituto de Cuidado Infantil y Educación Temprana del Comité para Niños y Familias Hispanas provee culturally-informed, (competencia cultural) y desarrollo profesional bilingüe para los educadores de Cuidado Infantil Familiar, para fortalecer la calidad de la educación temprana y el aprendizaje a los niños en la Ciudad de Nueva York.

Nuestra Visión

Un futuro donde los niños, jóvenes y familias latinas tengan acceso equitativo a las oportunidades para el éxito. Empoderar a las familias, conociendo su potencial y afirmando su cultura.

Nuestra Misión

El Comité para Niños y Familias Hispanas combina la educación, y la construcción de capacidades. Abogando para el fortalecimiento de un sistema de apoyo y el aprendizaje continuo para niños y jóvenes.

HECHOS

Número de niños que se benefician de los servicios de CHCF

6,118

2,607 Niños
Padres

Número de padres que se benefician de los servicios de CHCF

Proveedores 1,357

Número de proveedores de cuidado infantil con los que CHCF trabaja a través de capacitaciones y desarrollo profesional



Asistencia de Padre/Familia

Proveer referencias bilingües e información para el cuidado de niños

Desarrollar planes de cuidado de niños

Asistir a los padres con la búsqueda de cuidado infantil, campamentos de verano y programas después de la escuela en la Ciudad de Nueva York



Nuestros Servicios

Desarrollo Profesional del Cuidado Infantil Familiar

Asociado en Desarrollo Infantil (CDA) y la creación del portafolio

NYS Salud & Seguridad, Entrenamiento de Administración de Medicamentos

Entrenamientos adicionales sobre desarrollo infantil, literatura, trauma infantil, desarrollo de negocios, salud y nutrición

Enriquecimiento de Cuidado Infantil Familiar

Distribución de subvenciones (becas) de inicio para su negocio

Proveer asistencia y visitas al programa para mantener la calidad del negocio del cuidado infantil

Desarrollar Planes de Salud para los programas