

Participant Notes from the Family Child Care Summit, Held June 12, 2020



The virtual meeting held on Friday, June 12th was to discuss the response and resources needed to support home-based child care in New Jersey not only during the pandemic and recovery periods, but also to identify what durable, long-lasting support is needed to create the family child care system providers and children need and deserve. To identify the policy responses, supports and resources needed to help realize a high quality, diverse and stable family child care system, small group discussions were facilitated during the meeting. Each small group consisted of a representative from each stakeholder group, a family child care provider, a child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agency Director or employee, a state department representative, a funder or foundation and a community stakeholder. The following is a summary of the public and private needs to support home-based child care now and in the future. Each group was asked to consider the following questions:

- *How can New Jersey create and sustain a high quality, diverse and stable family child care system?*
- *What do we need to realize this vision?*
- *What can we do right now to set New Jersey on a path to realize this vision?*
- *What opportunities exist in response to the pandemic to build trust, further develop relationships with providers and set New Jersey on this path?*

Financial Supports

- Create a pilot in child care deserts to incentivize registering unregistered providers and contracting for slots utilizing subsidy dollars.
- Need federal and state supports.
- What is the role of philanthropy in supporting family child care?
- Raise reimbursement rates and tie to tiered reimbursement.
- Has to be across the board – not just homes accepting subsidy.
- Collective bargaining agreements – why has it been delayed.
- Health and safety grants as a recruitment tool.
- Over the years there have been financial incentives for marketing, etc., yet we need more durable investments that require policy changes such as expanding the number

of enrolled children.

- FCCs need increases based on QRIS rating, like centers (don't just throw it back to the union – there are likely other mechanisms).
- Raise reimbursement rates.
- Need stronger investments in FCC – compensation related to quality, create a pipeline for FCC providers where they can get business supports to progress develop their program.
- Increase payment rates for registered family child care programs in the subsidy program (and set up tiered reimbursement for FCCs in the GNJK program).

Equity, Inclusivity and Cultural Competence

- Need policies, guidance, specifically the Manual of Requirements in additional languages.
- Ensure that procedures and expectations are clear and accessible, and feasible in the home-based child care setting and materials and staff support from the state and CCR&R are available in languages in addition to English (at minimum the Manual of Requirements should be translated into Spanish, the most prevalent second language of providers).
- Translate the revised Manual of Requirements into Spanish.

Family Child Care Networks

- Need linkages to each other and need a system of networks with strong ties to each other. There were networks years ago that were funded but now only informal relationships exists.
- Identify partnerships such as those in Passaic County for providers to partner with organizations such as Head Start partnerships.
- Shared resources – families have to pay own insurance, look to pool supports.
- Investment in family child care networks – valuing peer-to-peer support to reduce isolation – formalize these networks.
- Start partnerships with providers and organizations (centers) that support FCC provider with materials, information, guidelines, etc. Center for FCC resources (support this beyond what providers can assess themselves) – more support from the organization that are in the same field.
- Invest in formalized family child care networks for peer-to-peer support to reduce isolation.

- Invest in meaningful supports that reduce provider isolation in a challenging job.

Mandatory Registration

- Mandatory registration in the future. What are the next steps we can take to move FCC to this step? DCF could go out to unregistered homes. DCF could mandate that the home be registered as an interim step.
- Identify compensation and support for an incremental process towards mandatory registration.
- How can you retain those individuals who are interested in becoming a provider at orientations?

Larger Group Settings

- Creating a category for group family child care that may include 2 or more providers working together with an increased number of children (mini child care centers).
- Explore ratios – can we change BOCA regulations? Could larger FCC homes be an option? Can homes be financially stable with current ratios.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

- FCC participate in credentialing, professional groups, professional learning communities.
- Need business training.
- Use Zoom to get ore providers involved in professional development – support in how to use technology to connect with other providers and professional development – ongoing support is needed.
- OOL would like to identify strategies to develop messaging, consistent training programs for a stable FCC workforce.
- There are so many companies giving free virtual lessons.
- Invest in the relationship-based work of coaches, licensing specialists, infant toddler specialists, trainers and peer-led provider associations.

Marketing and Communication

- Marketing registration to parents.
- Need to engage in a communication plan to raise up the profession (just because care is taking place in the home does not mean less quality).
- A lot of parents do not even know it is an option.
- Communication – a lot happens through email, but many providers are elderly, some are Spanish speaking.
- Trying to stay open while catering to my community was too much. I didn't know how to answer their questions, respond to their frustrations. It was overwhelming that there was no place we could pick up the phone and get answers – like a hotline.
- We know CCR&Rs are overwhelmed too, but we weren't getting answers fast enough. Need a hotline, need staff that speak multiple languages, need rapid response.
- Parent perspective – it was hard to find list of FCC when looking for care, need help getting word out about FCC availability.
- Organizations and state need constant reminders and ability to collaborate so they can include FCC in opportunities.

- Parent educational campaign about the program – foundation is there for a system not currently easily recognizable – implementation of GNJK has helped quantifying the quality.
- Perception can't happen in the home – changing hearts and minds.

Grow NJ Kids (GNJK)

- Quality rating program – too much paperwork.
- Lack of incentives to participate in GNJK.
- Create a GNJK parent education program that is specific to family child care.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

- CACFP waivers – but not everyone is aware of all of their options.

Pandemic Response, Support and Needs

- Mental health and wellness supports and training for providers and families.
- Guidance and instructions must be clearer and differentiated for all types of child care including family child care.
- Families may want smaller settings due to the pandemic.
- Jobs are in questions, so people will need more flexibility.
- Family child care may be perceived as safer.
- Small home environment better for COVID situation – need to message this.
- Even though we have grants to purchase health and safety supplies, we can't find everything, not reimbursed for certain things (example, bought a vacuum, only one I could find said "pet friendly" – because it said that, they wouldn't reimburse me).
- Supply reimbursement checks were mailed, not direct deposit – taking too long.
- PPP – we had help filling out the application through the CCR&R, but when I asked about forgiveness application, they said they weren't funded to help with that. I was worried about getting stuck with a loan, so I didn't finish the process.
- Identify additional partners such as the Department of Labor to understand their use of CARES funding and the utilization of unemployment benefits.
- Counties and local municipalities need to include family child care providers in emergency management plans inclusive of business supports.
- Identify enrollment and bonus payments as families are selecting family child care more often.
- Connect Child Care Health Consultation and New Jersey School Age Child Care Afterschool Network to family child care in a more direct and purposeful way for training and technical assistance.
- The pandemic has strengthened the relationships between the county CCR&R agencies and the family child care providers through direct communication, technical assistance and support – how can we continue to build on these relationships .

- Provide flexible grants to both CCDF and non-CCDF family child care programs to support wages, the purchase of food and supplies, and to compensate for the risk and effort of operating during the public health crisis and recovery periods.
- Explore virtual approaches to inspections, review methods that other states may be using, and collaborate with stakeholders to implement inspections successfully in New Jersey during the pandemic and recovery periods.
- Offer virtual approaches to continue compliance and quality support from state staff and CCR&R.

Other

- Need to launch innovative projects. Family child care opportunity zones.
- Group together with other providers to provide family-centered activities and community events similar to micro-centers, however, identify funding that can help support these events.
- Data is hard to get a hold of especially about providers who are registered – a way of bridging that, get on a path.
- Include the Department of Community Affairs to discuss and identify strategies for secure housing for providers
- Include the Small Business Administration in conversations about family child care.
- There needs to be more union representation in future meetings and planning.
- Use intentional surveys and data collection to inform about needs, resources and supports.

- Include public housing organizations in conversations about home-based child care.
- Need a unified system – create cohesive statewide experiences for home-based child care providers.
- Expedite processes and minimize paperwork for providers, families, state staff and CCR&R, and transition to online processes to the extent practical.

Additional Resources:

- Visit <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdkeWDCumDNt9QquckR9uM3DWQ00Io4R> to view a complete recording of the Family Child Care summit meeting.
- Help us improve our webinars! Fill out our survey at <https://acnj.org/family-child-care-summit/>



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