

Birth to 3 Advocacy Institute

Paterson – September 27, 2018



Advocates for Children of New Jersey

Cynthia C. Rice, Senior Policy Analyst

Diane Dellanno, Policy Analyst



Meet & Greet



- **Your name**
- **Who you are....other than a child advocate!**
- **Name the one issue that made you want to come to this training**

Why ACNJ is Here....



Why Babies?

Babies' brains form **more than a million** new neural connections every second.

The impact of babies' early experiences lasts a lifetime.



Our Campaign



- Quality, affordable child care
- Supports for parents
- Healthy emotional development
- Strong physical health and nutrition



Recap on What Brought You Here

For parents:

- The cost of care for infants/toddlers
- The difficulty in finding quality care
- Inadequate hours
- Other . . .



Recap on What Brought You Here

For providers:

- The cost of doing business
- The subsidy reimbursement rate for infants and toddlers is too low
- Ever-increasing needs of children and families
- Other . . .



For Parents and Providers....



What or who would solve some of your child care problems??



Questions



- 1. Do you think that decision-makers understand the specifics of these problems?**
- 2. If yes, who is telling them??**

How Do We Know with Whom to Advocate?



It depends....

More questions to answer!

- 1. Where does the money come from?**
- 2. What agency is responsible for the program?**

Who represents YOU?



In Washington??



In Trenton?



NJ's United States Senators



Senator Robert Menendez



Senator Cory Booker



NJ's Members of the House of Representatives



What about Your Legislators in the NJ Senate and Assembly?



Who are NJ's Commissioners?



Human Services
Carole Johnson



Children & Families
Christine Norbut Beyer



Health
Shareef Elnahal



Education
Dr. Lamont Repollet



How exactly do we advocate??



Advocacy

The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, policy, or interests or active support of an idea or c

You've Got This ! ! !



- **No one is born knowing how to do this!**
- **We all have to learn and practice.**
- **It pays to prepare – don't wing it!**
- **YOU ARE SMART, POWERFUL LEADERS FOR CHILDREN!**

Identify Your Issue



Defining the Problem

- What is the problem or issue?
- Who is affected by it?
- Does it affect one person or a group of people?
- Who is responsible for the issue?



Defining the Solution



- **It's as important as documenting the problem**
- **Come up with a specific solution**
- **Develop strategies that can be used to fix the problem**

Now You Are Ready: Go Advocate!



Sometimes it's a phone call....



<https://www.facebook.com/ACNJforKids/videos/1144898632219665/>

Sometimes it's Using Social Media....



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1P5axkvoH0U>

Sometimes it's Using Social Media....



New Jersey has a shortage of quality child care for our babies.

— MORE THAN —
207,000 BABIES

LIVE IN FAMILIES WHERE ALL PARENTS WORK.



THERE IS ONLY SPACE FOR
1 IN EVERY 4

OF THESE CHILDREN IN
LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS.

FOR LOW-INCOME WORKING FAMILIES WHO RELY ON STATE SUBSIDIES TO HELP PAY FOR CHILD CARE,
FINDING QUALITY CARE IS EVEN HARDER.



The state legislature has not approved a subsidy rate increase since 2008.

At just \$4.00/hour per infant, the current rate is not enough to cover the true cost of caring for babies.

As a result, fewer providers can afford to accept such young children, limiting options for families.

New Jersey lawmakers must raise the state child care subsidy rate for infants.

ACNJ's Most Popular Facebook Posts



Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Published by Lana Chau [?] · June 27 at 11:19am · 🌐


Meet Peter. Watch how Peter is calling Governor Chris Christie to tell him that he supports funding for #prek expansion! TODAY, we need you to make that call too! Call 609-292-6000. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/295IJqo>.



How to Call Gov Christie about Funding Prek Expansion
00:22

Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Published by Lana Chau [?] · May 12 · 🌐

The National Institute for Early Education Research just released the State of Preschool 2015 Yearbook. Get the scoop on the latest stats. Let's bring Pre-K Our Way to all New Jersey children. #prekforall



State of Preschool NIEER Report
01:02

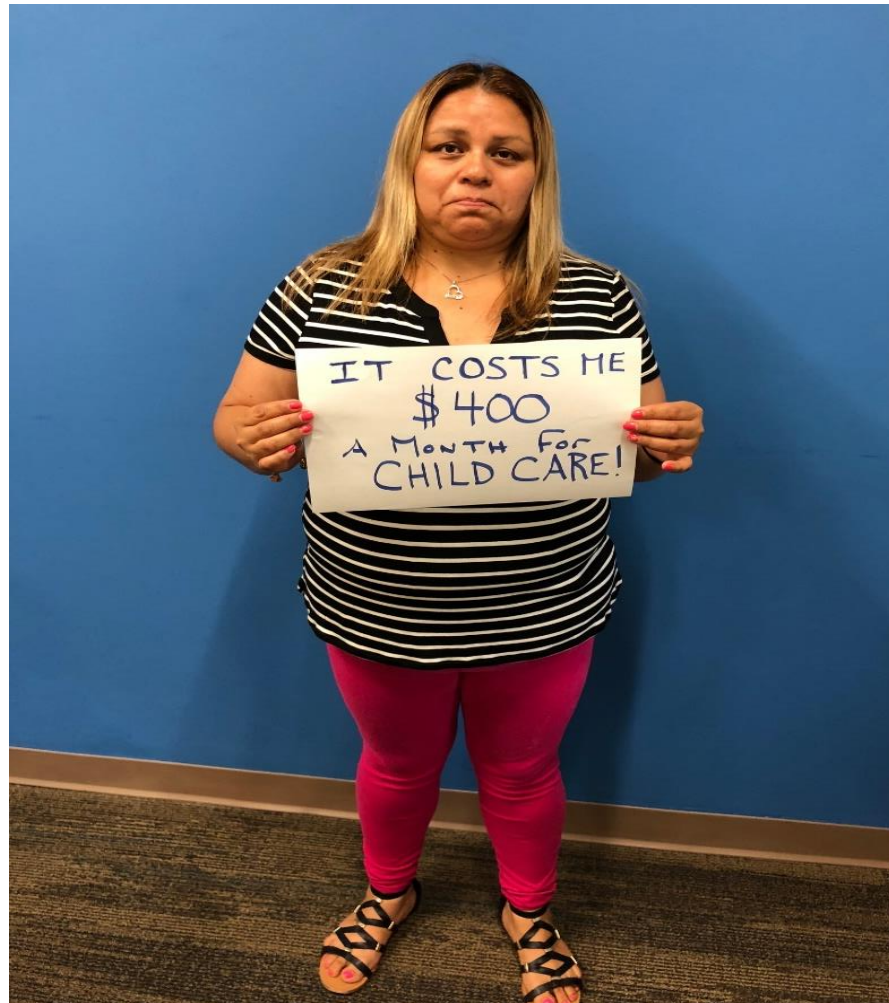
9,167 people reached

[View Results](#)

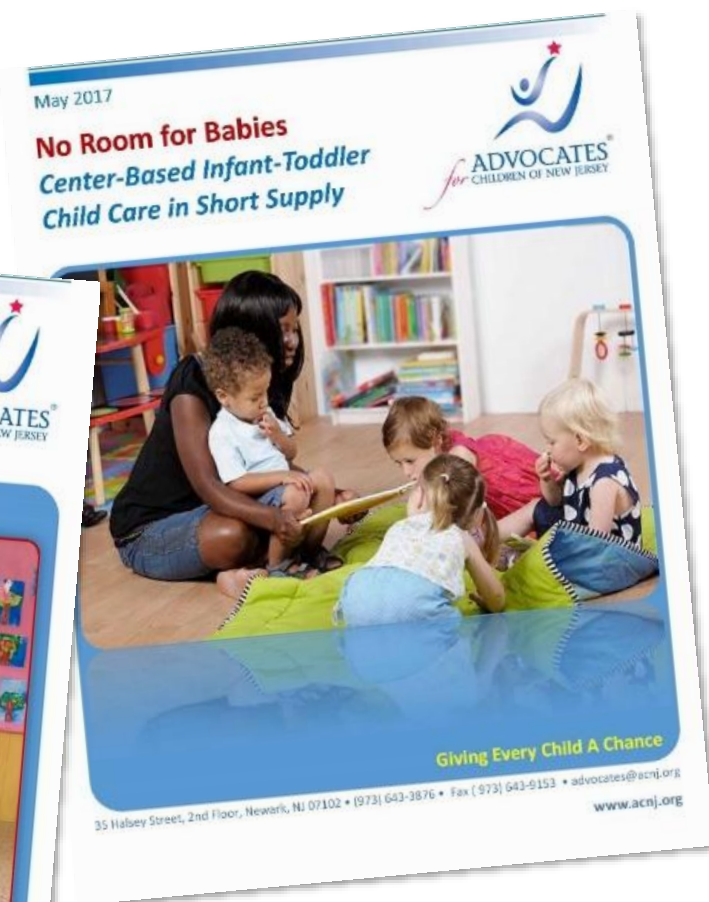
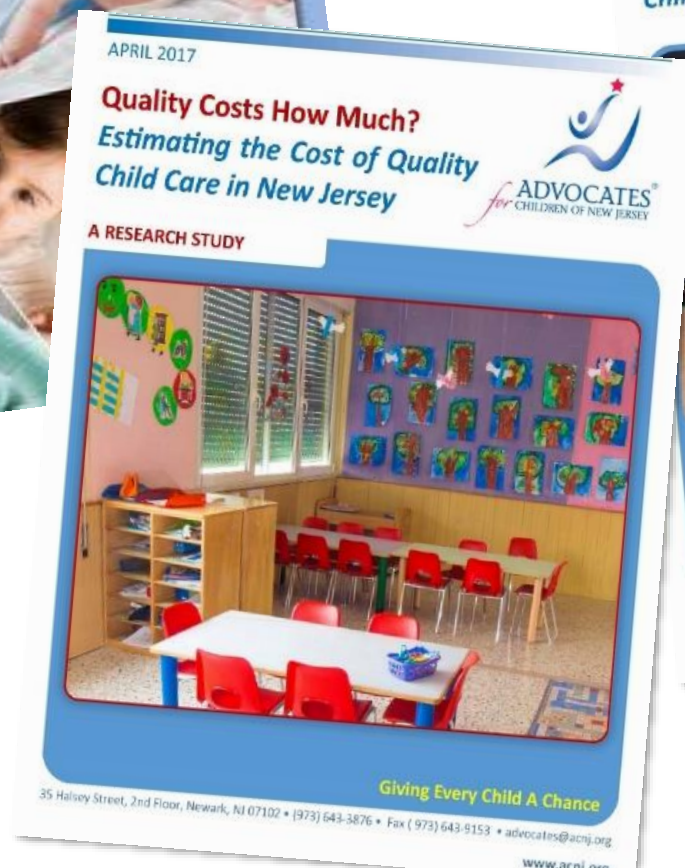
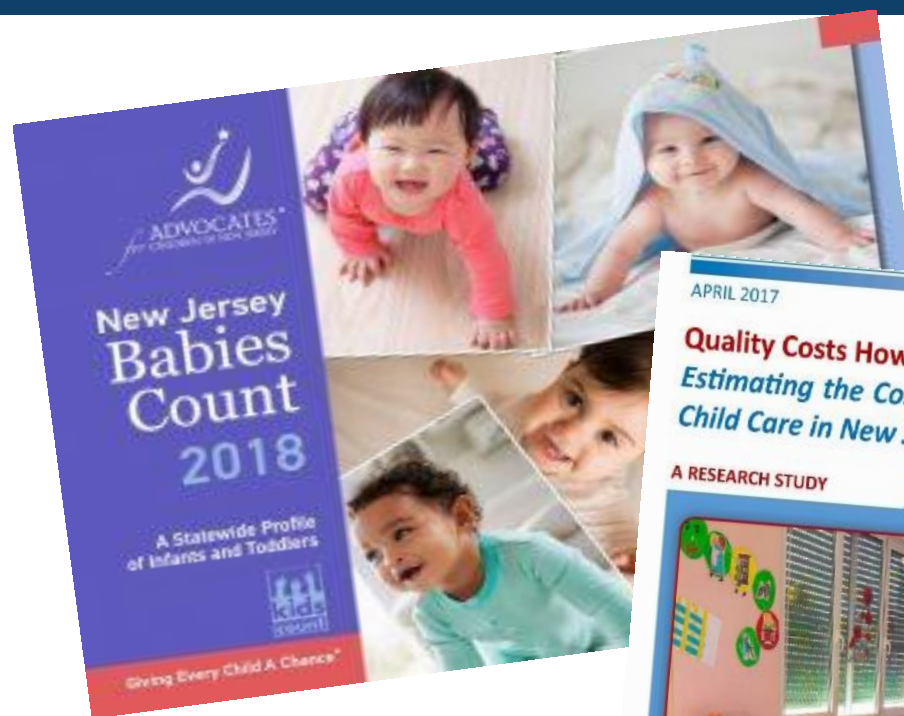
👍❤️😮 22

22 Shares

Using Social Media to Tell Your Story!



Sometimes it's Providing Data

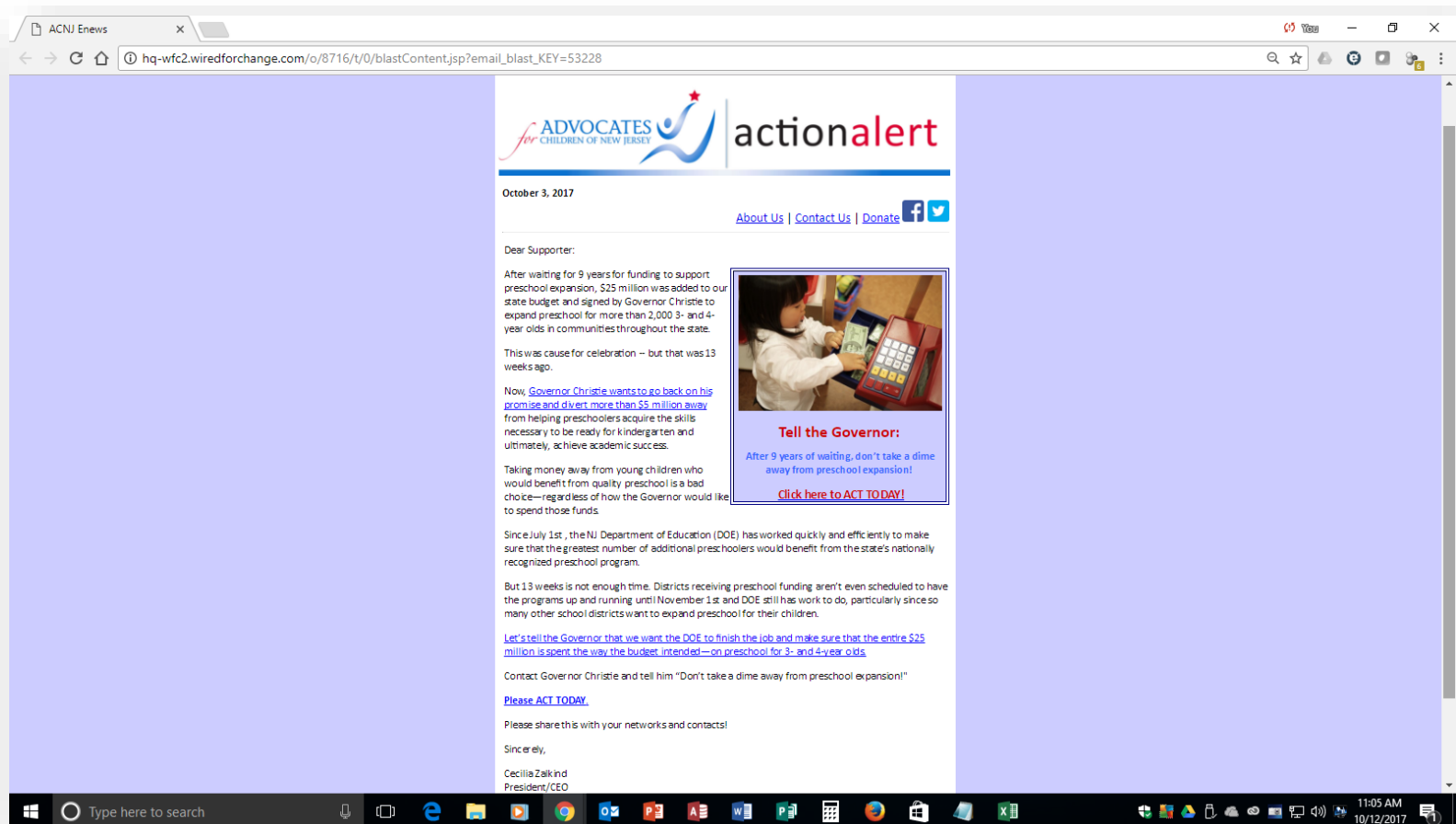


Sometimes it's Providing Data

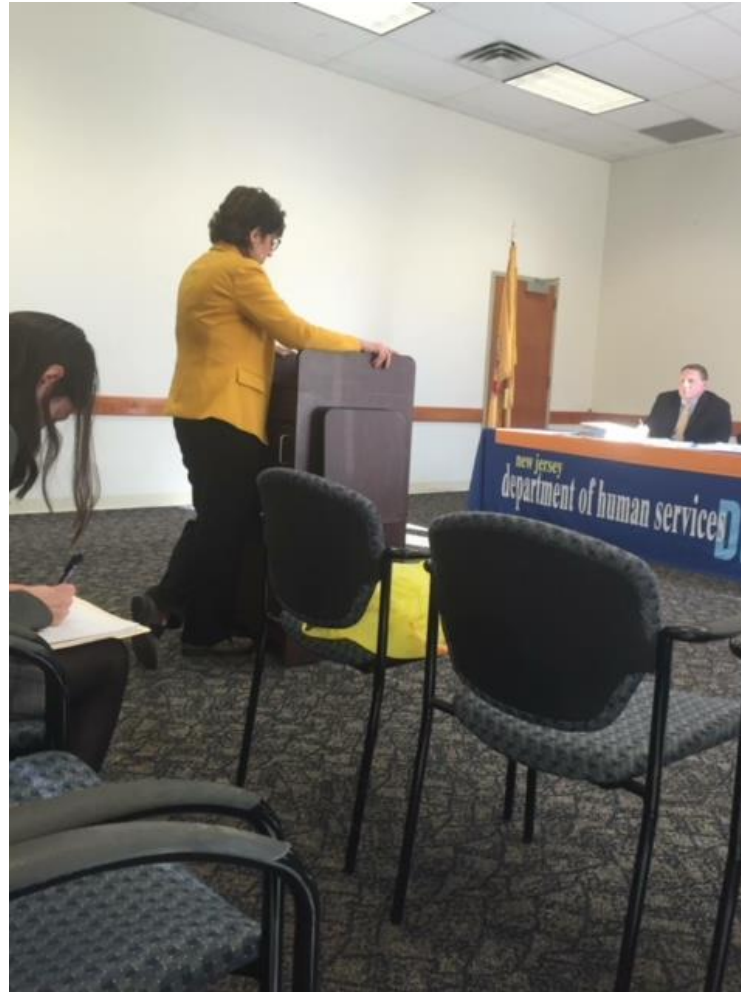


grow
nj kids

Sometimes it's a Letter/Email



Sometimes it's Testifying



Sometimes it's Writing to the Newspapers



WORKING FAMILIES Ignoring rising child care costs puts infants at risk

Jennifer Santana and Cecilia Zalkind
Guest Columnists

It might not happen today, and it might not happen tomorrow, but a baby will face serious harm at a New Jersey child care center. It's just a question of when and where. And if preventive action isn't taken quickly, the responsibility, ultimately, will rest with the New Jersey Legislature. Though New Jersey's child care system faces many challenges, the most urgent is the inadequacy of the state child care subsidy. Each year, the state provides financial assistance in the form of subsidies to help pay for child care for approximately 80,000 children from low-income families, enabling parents to participate in the workforce.

The Legislature has not increased the subsidy for infant care since 2008, as we have reminded them repeatedly in letters, policy papers and testimony. Today's infant care subsidy is the same \$32.12 a day established nearly a decade ago. But now, that barely covers the costs of keeping care doors open, like staffing, supplies, rent and utilities. And it leaves nothing to cover repairs, let alone invest in quality improvements like facilities upgrades, staff training and professional development or parent engagement initiatives. In fact, New Jersey's infant care reimbursement is an alarming 40 percent below national standards for quality care.

With that \$32.12 stretched thinner and thinner by rising costs, the shortfall has compromised staffing and training, driven up turnover, and begun to undermine providers' ability to meet critical safety and care standards. A review of recent child care center violations revealed numerous basic safety concerns, like leaving babies unattended or in cribs in unsafe conditions. A shocking 34 percent of centers were cited for not having staff Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background checks on file, which is required by the State of New Jersey.

Providers understand the stakes and they've demonstrated amazing creativity and tenacity to continue serving New Jersey's working families. They've leaned on each other and shared resources and ideas. They've built partnerships with community-based organizations and, so far,

Ten years has been more than long enough to wait for action on this life-and-death priority.

they — and we — have been lucky. But eventually, something has to give. And though we understand that the risks are greater for babies who require more intensive attention and care. Better than most, providers understand that it is now just a question of when our luck will run out. That's why child care providers are working with us to sound the alarm.

Leadership from Trenton on this important issue is long overdue and the silence has been deafening. Increasing the infant care reimbursement rate must be an urgent priority for the Legislature and New Jersey's incoming governor. Just one incident resulting in serious harm to a baby would certainly result in a crisis of confidence in our state's entire child care system. With more than 400,000 children in New Jersey child care centers, the impact on working families and their employers would be alarming.

For a small fraction of the funding earmarked for the State Capitol renovation project, the Legislature could increase the infant care reimbursement rate to a point that would allow providers to meet basic staffing and training standards. That's not enough to ensure quality care, but it would reduce the likelihood of an avoidable tragedy. And it would serve as an important down payment on quality child care that keeps working parents on the job, keeps kids safe and prepares them for success in school.

Ignoring a problem and hoping for the best is no way to make public policy. Ten years has been more than long enough to wait for action on this life-and-death priority.

Jennifer Santana, president, Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators. Cecilia Zalkind, president and CEO, Advocates for Children of New Jersey.

Op-ed

Sometimes it's a Meeting



Sometimes it's an Invitation



Sometimes it's a Rally



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWZSW76v01c>



for **ADVOCATES**
CHILDREN OF NEW JERSEY



Remember to: Follow Up on Your Success



- Always acknowledge your champions and leaders
- *Review whatever* change you helped bring about
- Monitor any implementation changes
- Assess your lessons learned
- Learn from your mistakes

Remember:
Advocacy is not for the Faint of Heart!



IF AT FIRST
YOU DON'T
SUCCEED
.....
TRY TRY TRY
AGAIN

NOTHING Happens Overnight!



Always, Always, Always, Make it About the Babies....



One More Thing: Some additional advocacy tips....



- **Be patient**
- **Be persistent**
- **Stay informed**
- **Keep your friends/
colleagues informed**
- **Be open to different
ideas**
- **DON'T GIVE UP!**



And Sometimes...You Get A Champion!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94N-TOmdKs4>

Are You Ready to Run Away Yet?



So What's Next?



Use ACNJ's [Advocacy Toolkit](#) to guide your next steps!

We Need ACTION!!



From the Small Business

2016 Edition

Action Plan Template

Use this Action Plan Template to identify specific steps you need to take in order to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in your business plan. This tool can also be used to create the action plan that will accompany your marketing plan.

Tip: Make each action step as simple and specific as possible, breaking down complex actions into single steps.

Goal:

Action Step <i>What needs to be done?</i>	Responsible Person <i>Who should take action to complete this step?</i>	Deadline <i>When should this step be completed?</i>	Necessary Resources <i>What do you need in order to complete this step?</i>	Potential Challenges <i>Are there any potential challenges that may impede completion? How will you overcome them?</i>	Result <i>Was this step successfully completed? Were any new steps identified in the process?</i>

©2016 Small Business Bonfire

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this document may be translated, reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission of the author.

Don't be afraid to Contact Us!



Cynthia Rice: crice@acnj.org

Diane Dellanno: ddellanno@acnj.org

Patricia Canning: pcanning@acnj.org

Hannah Korn-Heilner: hkornheilner@acnj.org



973-643-3876