

San Diego Cities Together for Child Care

Our cities across San Diego County have a role to play in reducing barriers to expanding access to affordable, high quality child care and education. Children First Collective (CFC) San Diego will develop and partner with local city leadership to implement new, data-driven, hyper-localized strategies to systematically and equitably increase access to affordable, high quality child care and early education.

Program Overview

The Children First Collective seeks to expand strategic thinking around policy and research to expand access to affordable, quality, flexible child care in the San Diego region.

While leveraging existing relationships, and cultivating new ones with diverse municipal leadership—using economic drivers including Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Councils—the CFC will help sustain a strong connection between cities and the early care and education (ECE) sector.

Eight cities in San Diego County will be featured in this project. Cities include: Chula Vista, National City, La Mesa, Oceanside, Encinitas, El Cajon, San Marcos, and Vista. Including current CFC work with the City of San Diego, this approach will enable half of the incorporated cities to have a greater concept of their local child care landscape, existing barriers, and tangible recommendations to address it. With increased capacity this project may be scaled to serve all incorporated cities.

With intentional relationship building, an evidence-based approach, and sound policy recommendations, this project will lend itself to a regional approach for San Diego County's solutions to the early care and early education crisis.

The strategy and approach includes four main components for each city, including:

1. A child care brief with information that addresses: big picture elements of the crisis, historical injustice tied to the issue, current federal and state discussions, and sharing from that city's families and child care providers;
2. Presentation of city specific ECE data including number and type of providers, data trends on the number and capacity of providers including snapshots of capacity vs. desired capacity, number of families with age-eligible children, number of families eligible for public child care subsidy, number of families receiving public subsidy for programs;
3. An analysis of existing municipal code and policy that may create barriers to expansion of high quality early care and education programs, including but not limited to:

- Overview of zoning restrictions;
- Cost of permits;
- Cost of business licensure;
- Cost of compliance with Fire Marshal requirements;
- Applicable grants available from jurisdiction to support early learning providers, and
- Other relevant policy information;

4. A presentation of tangible recommendations in policy and investment to address these identified barriers, in order to increase high quality early care and education programs, while simultaneously expanding the opportunity for entrepreneurialism for all ECE providers.

Program Strategies

In accessing unique data from CFC partners who are the region's child care subsidy providers and Child Care Resource and Referral, this project will access data pertaining to child care providers, children, and families in San Diego County. Utilizing contracted expertise in ArcGIS mapping this data will be distilled for individual cities and a user-friendly dashboard. This will be coupled with recent Census Tract data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

In designing the information and presentation for cities, existing research including USD's recent *Child Care Landscape Analysis* and The San Diego Foundation's *Workforce + Childcare & Change* report, will be shared in a comprehensive brief. Reporting from economic-based entities including Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Corporation will also be utilized.

Essential to the approach will also be an analysis of city municipal codes and policies pertaining to child care. As mentioned above, this will be leveraged through the revision of the research piece "Opportunities for Local Jurisdictions to Implement Policy Changes that Could Increase the Supply and Address the Cost of Child Care," that is already underway through the YMCA Childcare Resource Service.

Systems-Level Change

This project aims to approach the work of child care expansion from a city-specific level, which will also help inform a regional understanding of barriers and recommendations. In assessing and addressing local policy and municipal codes with evidence-based approaches, CFC helps address the public municipal systems that have historically not understood or deeply considered the child care crisis.

Within the scope of this project a final compilation will be drafted that summarizes the experiences, findings, and recommendations for the eight cities, as well as the City of San Diego and County of San Diego. This final compilation can help inform future mobilizing for measures to support children, families, and child care providers.

Summary of Expected Outcomes

Objective 1: Implement a strategy and schedule that engages city leaders and economic entities in at least two connection points during the project. The first during the first half of the project timeline, potentially hosted at a child care facility in the city, to help formalize relationships and give a high-level understanding of the child care crises. The second during the later half of the timeline will be a presentation that provides the local child care data, local municipal policy pertaining to child care, and recommendations.

S: Identify and email contact to schedule meetings at an identified point in the timeline.

M: Eight cities and associated economic entities.

A: Each city assigned a CFC contact.

R: Both meetings scheduled and attended, possibly located at a child care provider's facility in the city.

T: Within the first six months.

Objective 2: Create meaningful and compensated opportunities to intentionally incorporate parents and provider* expertise and experiences to the documentation created.

S: Quotes, stories, and idea-sharing specifically from parents and providers.

M: Parent and provider input in all eight documents.

A: Providers and parents identifiable through CFC partners, or through parents/providers engaging on CFC's social media project.

R: Includes first-hand perspective immediately to decision-makers.

T: Upon deliverance of each municipal document.

Objective 3: Support relationship building with at least two providers* and parents with city leaders in each of the eight cities.

S: Direct connection made through in-person or virtual meeting.

M: Two providers and/or parents—at minimum—across eight cities, so 16 engagements total.

A: Providers and parents identifiable through CFC partners, or through parents/providers engaging on CFC's social media project.

R: Strengthens each city's direct connection to the impacted community.

T: Upon completion of eight municipal meetings.

Objective 4: Produce a final compilation of experiences, findings, and recommendations for the eight cities, as well as the City of San Diego and County of San Diego. In the spirit of collaboration, relationships will be stewarded, and ongoing recommendations will be shared with the cities over time.

S: Experiences, findings, and recommendations across eight cities.

M: One finalized document.

A: Either through collaborative document sharing with CFC partners, or a consultant.

R: Shareable with The San Diego Foundation, the County of San Diego, CFC partners, and more.

T: Upon completion of the project.

*The term “provider” throughout this document references providers with fewer than 20 staff agency-wide, and individuals or entities which are *new* to the advocacy space.

Project Timeline

- 1-3 months: Begin municipal data collection and policy reviews for each city.
- 3-6 months: Facilitate initial outreach with staff from identified municipalities.
- 6-9 months: Provide presentations to municipal staff on analysis and findings.
- 9-12 months: Offer follow-up meetings for additional questions staff may have. Conduct outreach and advocacy training for parents and child care providers for public advocacy opportunities with cities as needed.
- 12th month: Complete compiled research document encompassing findings and recommendations for all cities engaged in the project.
- Ongoing: Maintain relationships with cities to continue sharing recommendations, new funding opportunities, and insights on state and federal policy decisions related to the issue.

Community Focus

Galvanized by the recent release of the The San Diego Foundation sponsored USD Child Care Landscape Analysis and the prior [TSDF’s Workforce + Child Care](#), as well as the COVID-19 pandemic’s disproportionate impact on low income communities, our region’s political leaders, media outlets, and economic influencers are now activated about the importance of high quality child care and education to our region’s economic growth and to families’ income mobility.

This project capitalizes on this momentum through intentionally working with the described incorporated cities to suggest strategies for reducing barriers, expanding access to child care and education, and ultimately supporting children, families, and child care providers in important



ways. These cities have been selected based on [COVID-19 impact data from the County of San Diego](#), as well as the [County of San Diego's Self-Sufficiency Dashboard](#). They include municipalities that have poignant socio-economic identifiers for low-to-moderate income communities, high trends of young children, high trends of family units, historic inequalities in housing, healthcare, and child care, and ample representation of the child care mixed-delivery system.

Additionally, this project includes first-hand experience from parents and providers in each municipality, further bridging the gap between policymakers and those impacted by policies.

Leadership

CFC has two co-facilitators who help organize the connection across partners and community. Through structured weekly meetings with partners, and monthly town halls with the community, the co-facilitators also define and track policy strategy for local advocacy goals.

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Children First Collective San Diego Working Group Partners include:

Child Development Associates
The Chicano Federation
Child Care Provider Union (UDW CCPU)
Educational Enrichment Systems (EES)
First 5 San Diego
Kids on the Go
MAAC Project
Miren Algorri, Family Child Care Provider
Mission Driven Finance
Neighborhood House Association
Parent Voices San Diego
San Diego for Every Child
San Diego County Office of Education
Social Advocates for Youth (SAY San Diego)
YMCA of San Diego County, Childcare Resource Service