

Choices
for Children



CHILD CARE, EDUCATION AND
SUPPORT SERVICES

A Snap Shot of Childcare

- Jennifer Lawrence, Director

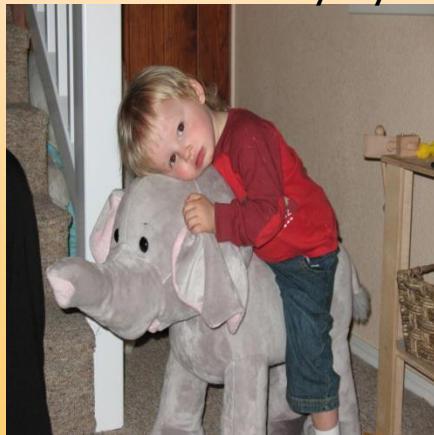




HISTORY

In 1995 the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors proclaimed April the Month of the Child El Dorado- I believe both Supervisors Sweeney and Nuttting were here at that time. Then again in 2003 another Proclamation was given for Month of the Child adding several collaborative partners to the proclamation.

Over the years the Board of Supervisors has been very supportive of the child care industry by: Assisting to eliminate the special use permit for large family child care programs has helped keep the cost of doing business down and as a direct result helps retain child care providers.



Your efforts as the legislative authority to our Early Care and Education Planning Council has achieved a tremendous amount of proactive community wide planning for child care. I am one of your appointed designees. Additionally, you have provided local support for statewide policy issues with letters to the Assembly and Senate. Thank You!!!



CHILD CARE DATA

- ❖ Many of our children are using child care, which is an essential component to our county's economy.
- ❖ Quality childcare is important to developing productive self sufficient citizens.
- ❖ 28,345 children in El Dorado County under the age of 13.
- ❖ 237 Licensed childcare programs caring for those children.
- ❖ 83 are childcare centers
- ❖ 154 are family child care homes.
- ❖ 30 licensed exempt childcare programs.





CHILD CARE CAPACITY

- We have a large number of children being cared for by family, friends and neighbors, this number has grown due to the economy and lack of ability to pay for child care.
- CFC has noticed that calls for care has taken a dramatic dip in the past year but recently calls have gradually increased which is positive.
- 5,071 Licensed Child Care slots
- We currently have an average vacancy rate of 30% county wide.
- These high vacancy rates are due of course to the high unemployment rate which has been very challenging
- We are working with this issue and carefully monitoring it in the Child Care Community.





COST FOR CARE

- ❖ The cost for child care is very high and on an average is second only to family housing expenses.
- ❖ Cost for care varies from one community to the next.
- ❖ The average rates in El Dorado County:
 - ❖ Full time preschool is \$630.00 per month in a licensed center.
 - ❖ Full time preschooler with a family child care home is \$720.00 per month.
 - ❖ Full time infant care in a Center is \$887.18 per month.
 - ❖ Full time infant care with a family child care home is \$780.00 per month.



California is ranked among the 10 least affordable states in the country for infant/toddler and preschool care. (NACCRRA 2008).



The good news is as an industry, we have received National Recognition and there have been both state and federal funding available to invest in resources, training and support for the child care field.

➤ At this point, I am not asking you for anything specific, I just want you to be informed. We will likely be coming back to you for support during this legislative session.

➤ Our Early Care and Education Planning Council is currently preparing an Economic impact report that will be presented to you this spring which will provide you with a complete detailed report.





SERVICES



- Choices for Children is your local Child Care Resource and Referrals Agency. We are a non-profit organization and our services are free to the community. In order to remain centrally located, we operate three offices: South Lake Tahoe, West Slope in Cameron Park and Markleeville in Alpine County.
- Choices for Children serves 32,805 families annually. We are funded by the State Department of Education, USDA, and by First 5.
- High quality child care and development is our goal at Choices for Children. To reach that goal, we offer a variety of services that put families at the center of support services.
- Choices for Children just celebrated the 25th Annual Kids Expo which was held at the Fairgrounds last weekend, it was a very successful event. We continue to be amazed by the support from so many community members.

Choices for Children



Programs



- **Subsidized Child Care**-Child Care Reimbursement to low income eligible families who are working, seeking employment, in school or at risk.
- **Centralized Eligibility List**- Determined by gross monthly income and family size, families with the greatest need are served first. Currently 410 families are waiting for a slot with one of the 33 subsidized child care programs.
- **Referrals** to Child Care-We provide a variety of choices for parents to select from while encourage them to carefully research their choices and look for quality indicators such as- qualified staff who love caring for children, family involvement and staff that consistently provide a caring, healthy, nurturing and safe environment.
- **Parent and Provider Education**- Community wide Parenting Classes and Play & Learn Groups-This year we started Aprende Jugando which has been vary popular and Play & Learn targeting families who need additional support services.
- **Child Care Food Program**-State and Federal Reimbursement to child care providers for nutritious meals. Nutrition education is provided. We do unannounced program visit three times per year. Which is actually more visits 7 than community care licensing.



Mission

- Our mission is to enrich children's lives through innovative support, education and enhanced family and provider services. Our programs put families at the center of a community of support services.
- Please encourage those who could use our services to visit our website and contact us at www.choices4children.org

