LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN

AN UPDATE AND EXPANSION OF THE 1988 LWVOR STUDY

PRODUCED BY:

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OREGON

CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 4
INTRODUCTION 6
CURRENT CONDITION 7
LICENSING 9
RECENT LEGISLATION 10
WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS 11
- Impact of Early Learning Programs 11
- Impact of After School Programs 12

THE ROLE OF QUALITY 13
ISSUES 16
- Access 16
- Content 17
- Workforce 18
- Licensing 20
- Regulations 20
- Funding 21

WHAT PROVIDERS ARE SAYING 22
- Survey Design 22
- Themes 23

RECOMMENDATIONS 25
- Comprehensive Oversight and Planning 25
- Staffing 26

APPENDIX A – BACKGROUND – CHILD CARE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE 27
- Out-of-School-Time Care 31
  - United States 31
  - Oregon 33

APPENDIX B – LWVOR CHILDCARE POSITION 35
- Child Care Adopted March 1989 35

APPENDIX C – ERDC PROCESSES FOR PARENTS AND PROVIDERS 36
- Process for Parents Applying for Oregon ERDC Program - June 2022 36
- Process for Providers Applying for Inclusion in ERDC Program – June 2022 37

APPENDIX D - LWVOR SURVEY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 38
APPENDIX E – GLOSSARY 42
REFERENCES 45

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An effective childcare system benefits the entire economy. In Oregon, we have not done a good job of prioritizing child care needs and developing a strategic, coordinated childcare plan. Usually, the term "child care" suggests a picture of preschoolers in a classroom. This is quite different from the reality of what today's parents need so they can make ends meet and contribute to society.

Oregon has an elaborate K-12 education system. While the state has made piecemeal attempts to address early learning through Healthy Families, Pre-K (Oregon Pre-Kindergarten), Early Head Start, Head Start, PreK Promise, and Preschool Promise, the needs of young children before they start school are not being met before they start school. Families must bridge the gap between needs and availability on their own. The result is inequitable child care access. In addition, once children start in the K-12 system, they spend more time outside school than inside. Little coordination or support exists for after-school or summer care. In this realm, families are totally on their own. We see the consequences of this inattention in low academic performance (Hammond, 2022) and teen anxiety and suicide ideation (Perrine, 2022).

This report updates and expands on a 1988 League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) child care study – 34 years ago. Not only does this update focus on child care for young children, but it also focuses on the needs of school-age children during after-school and summer hours when they still need support and would benefit from additional opportunities for positive engagement. While there has been progress since 1988, the challenges are very much the same as they were over thirty years ago.

A history of child care and other out-of-school time (OST) programs in the United States and Oregon is included in Appendix C. A patchwork of mixed level of attention to the needs of children and families is apparent. History matters because it offers a context for what is currently in place and what was attempted but not realized. It also illustrates the current web of misaligned programs that families and providers are forced to navigate.

This report also summarizes research on the effects of child care and after-school and summer programs. Research shows that out-of-school-time (OST) programs influence the participants' success academically and in future careers. The programs even benefit future generations. The investment is worth it. Key findings indicate that although the current emphasis is on the benefits of early childhood programs during the period of most rapid brain development, the second most rapid period of development is during adolescence. The absence of programs and support during

that period mark a missed opportunity. Another key finding is the need for programs to be high quality if they are to achieve positive outcomes.

To round out the study, the committee engaged with Leagues across Oregon to survey childcare professionals in all corners of the state using a comprehensive series of interview questions. The resulting themes illustrate the challenges and frustrations that providers face when trying to deliver the service quality needed by the children in their care and still survive financially.

Recommendations at the end of the study call for a comprehensive planning effort to address the needs of children, youth, and families in the state, thereby serving all Oregonians. Other recommendations include:

- Coordinated training for providers.
- Consolidation and comprehensive review of licensing and regulations.
- Coaching and technical assistance offered to caregivers to increase program capacity.
- A dedicated funding source for these programs.

INTRODUCTION

This study is an update of the League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) 1988 Child Care Study. In that study the League focused on child care for children between the ages of 1-5. In this update we have described the status of child care for that age group and expanded the focus to look at care for infants and older children. Many families need care for infants to be able to return to work. In the current environment, older children also need supportive care while they are not in school and while their parents or guardians are working or engaged in other activities outside the home. We have taken into consideration that the needs of older children are different and have described the care as after-school and summer programs or youth enrichment. A glossary of terms is included in the Appendix.

To give context, Appendix A contains background information about the history of child care and Out-of-School-Time (OST) care (after-school and summer programs) in Oregon. The report includes a review of research regarding the impact of those programs on children and youth and the importance of program quality on impact. A review of the status of child care and OST care in Oregon follows. To add depth and insight to the update, the study group conducted a survey of providers throughout the state and noted themes that emerged from the survey.

The study group concluded that the March 1989 LWVOR childcare position remains viable (Appendix B). However, additional actions are necessary to realize the potential of Oregon children and youth. Thus, the update concludes with recommendations for support that should be implemented by the Oregon Legislature and state agencies.

The report concludes with recommendations for action at the state level. The siloed and uncoordinated systems that are in place for children and youth, their families, and the providers who serve them cause confusion and fail to support them. Therefore, a legislative task force should be formed to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that will support the development of all Oregon children and youth from birth through adolescence. The Oregon Department of Education, already tasked with K-12 and developing specific curriculum for those years, should not be charged with overseeing childcare. Additional recommendations focus on licensing and regulations, funding, and data systems. All recommendations take as a given that all children and youth need to be treated with dignity, respect, and attention to cultural context and individual needs.

"The state should help bridge the gap between what parents can afford and what providers need to have additional staff and be able to provide them with benefits they are willing to stay for."

- Owner of preschool and daycare center, rural Oregon

CURRENT CONDITION

The Oregon Legislature has focused on pre-K child care for several sessions. In 2019, the Legislature passed HB 2346 to set up a Joint Task Force on Access to Quality Affordable Child Care. Legislators, childcare providers, parents, advocates, and representatives of state agencies met in hearings and reported, "Raise Up Oregon," to the Legislature in December 2020. Some Task Force findings were:

- **Funding:** *"The system is chronically underfunded. Quality care is not uniformly available or affordable. System gaps cause disparities by race/ethnicity, language, geography, disability, and income, and these disparities compound the effects (i.e., the barriers to access are greater if you are Native American and live in remote, rural Oregon, than if you are Caucasian living in an urban area)."*
- **Governance:** State governance is split between several agencies and is confusing and inefficient. "*The state's largest child care program, Employment-Related Day Care (ERDC), and Inclusive Partners are both administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS), while the Early Learning Division (ELD) within the Department of Education (ODE) regulates child care, implements strategies to increase the supply of quality care, and administers Preschool Promise, Oregon PreK Head Start, and BabyPromise programs.*"
- **Supply:** Oregon does not have a way to collect data on the population of parents needing or looking for care. The methods for collecting data on the availability of slots are antiquated, often out of date, and do not include unlicensed or unregulated informal providers.
- **Affordability:** *"Child care is cost-prohibitive for most families. Oregon relies more heavily on parental funding and less on public financing than many other states. In Oregon, parents pay 70% of childcare costs. There are many who need financial aid, but they are above the income threshold to receive it. Only 11% of families who are eligible for federally subsidized care receive support. Even those families who receive a public subsidy often cannot afford the copay."*

In response to the Task Force's recommendations and earlier efforts, the Oregon Legislature authorized some funding to support childcare needs. It passed Preschool Promise (2015) and Baby Promise (2019). In 2019 it also approved legislation to tax businesses for the Student Investment Account (SIA), which allocates funding for early childhood services and for school districts to enhance teacher and counselor positions and provide after-school and summer enrichment programs. Legislation enacted in 2021 established a childcare agency, Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care, to begin operations on July 1, 2023.

In addition, the Legislature decreased copays for child care under the ERDC Program to $16 per month, reduced the family copay to $0 for families who make 100% or less than the federal poverty level (annual income of $21,000 for a family of three), and limited family copays to no more than $130 per month (Early Learning Division, 2021).Oregon is currently looking at the alternative rate methodology used by the District of Columbia and New Mexico.

In Oregon, the Employment Related Day Care program (ERDC) delivers funding for day care for low-income clients. All of Oregon's Child Care Development Block Grants (CCDBG) funds are allocated to the ERDC program. Eligibility for ERDC benefits includes these requirements:

- Be an Oregon resident.
- Be employed. If you are employed and going to school, you may still qualify for childcare assistance. In a two-parent family, both parents must be working. There may be exceptions if a non-working parent can't provide child care because of a medical or mental health condition, or if supervised contact is required by Child Welfare. HB 3073, passed and signed in 2021, will remove the work requirement for students by July 1, 2023.
- Need child care to stay employed. For a two-parent family, this means both parents must have all or part of their work hours overlap.
- Initial applicants can't be above 200% of the federal poverty level. See Income Limits below.
- Have a qualifying child or children. Qualifying children are:
  1. Under 13 years old who need care
  2. 13 to 17 years old who need care because of special circumstances
- Be U.S. citizens or qualifying non-citizens
- The childcare provider must be listed and approved by ODHS (Oregon Department of Human Services, 2021). By July 1, 2023, the ERDC program will be housed in the new Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC), which will assume responsibility for approving and listing providers.

Appendix C contains an illustration of this process, including the steps a caregiver must complete to be considered "listed and approved." Caregivers must follow a separate process to be licensed, depending upon the type of care they plan to offer. See page 7 of this report for details about licensing requirements.

The childcare provider has to qualify for the program and rates are set based on the area of the state, the age of the children and the type of childcare provider (licensed, certified, license exempt or family). Child Care licensing is administered by the Oregon Department of Education, Early Learning Division, Office of Child Care.

"ODHS requires license exempt providers, staff, and volunteers to complete a background check, take training, and test drinking water for lead. ODHS pays at the end of the month after being billed by the provider." (Oregon Department of Human Services, 2021)

ERDC is a subsidized federal program administered by the state, which means that the parents may have a copay, but it must be less than 7% of annual income.

Families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the federal welfare program, often struggle to

access ERDC funding because of its work requirements. TANF allows states to use the funding to assist families within certain parameters. States can use 30% of this funding for early education programs (Child Care and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program 2020). Oregon also has created a Job Opportunity and Basic Skills Program (JOBS) to help TANF participants move toward employment. Through JOBS, TANF participants can access support for paying for child care while achieving goals. These goals can include educational opportunities, parenting classes, help in seeking stable housing, medical care, and more (Oregon Dept. of Human Services). Unfortunately, these opportunities are often sporadic or performed part-time, and the JOBS benefit will only pay for the specific hours when child care is required in the pursuit of these goals. Many childcare providers require children to be with them full-time. Low-income parents are often unable to afford care beyond their restricted JOBS program coverage, limiting their ability to find child care even further (First Five Years Fund., 2018) (Oregon Department of Human Services, 2022).

LICENSING

The current agency with oversight for child care is the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division. This agency is responsible for overseeing the health and safety of preschool and school-age children when they are enrolled in a childcare program. The state of Oregon recognizes five (5) types of child care, two of which are exempt from licensing requirements and three that require licensing. (Early Learning Division, 2021).

- **Exempt from Licensing** -
- Recorded programs, wherein providers are not eligible for state subsidy reimbursement through the ERDC program but background checks of staff and volunteers over age 18 are required. The types of programs include preschools that operate less than four hours a day. They also include programs for school-age children that only take place when school is not in session; parents must retain responsibility for their children. In most cases, programs for school-age children that offer youth-development activities and do not take the place of parental care are exempt from licensure but are required to be recorded.
- Regulated Subsidy Providers, wherein providers are eligible for state subsidy reimbursement through the ERDC program but are not required to be licensed. These providers include family, friends, and some programs with limited hours. In addition to required background checks for staff and volunteers, these programs are regulated for health and safety, which means allowing periodic inspections. Staff must participate in ongoing training as prescribed by the state.
- **Licensing Required** – The following programs have similar

requirements as Regulated Subsidy Providers in terms of background checks, recurring health and safety inspections and participation in ongoing training in child development. These requirements are more detailed, with more frequent inspections, and higher levels of ongoing training. In addition, providers are expected to:

- Keep attendance records
- Have planned educational activities
- Have a guidance and discipline policy
- Have a daily routine/schedule
- Be certified to handle food preparation
- Be trained in first aid and CPR
- Be trained in recognizing signs of child abuse and neglect

These programs differ in terms of the number of children they may care for at any time.

- **Registered Family Child Care** programs are home-based programs with up to 10 children.
- **Certified Family Child Care** programs are home-based programs with up to 16 children.
- **Certified Child Care Center** programs are those where the number of children allowed is determined by floor space and staffing levels.

Oregon's publicly funded child care and early education programs include Oregon Pre-kindergarten, Early Head Start, federal and tribal Head Start, Oregon Child Development Coalition, Preschool Promise, and Baby Promise. As of March 2020, these programs delivered approximately 20% of total available child care (Oregon Child Care Research Partnership, 2021). Families must meet the federal poverty guidelines. Oregon's Preschool Promise program serves families whose incomes do not exceed 200% of the federal poverty level.

RECENT LEGISLATION

The Student Success Act (SSA) was passed during the 2019 Legislative Session. It created the Student Investment Account (SIA) to include funding for early learning and K-12 education. Under SSA, 20% of the funds go into an Early Learning Account for birth to age 5. Some of these funds go toward pre- kindergarten and home visiting. In K-12 education, SSA delivers funding for school counselors and additional teachers and the possibility of funding after-school and summer programs. Each school district was allocated a portion of the funds. Due to longstanding school funding deficits for counselors and teachers, school districts rarely have funding left over for after-school and summer programs.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, the need to help children catch up with the learning they missed during the school year because of the pandemic became particularly pressing. Special funding was allocated from federal pandemic relief funds and state funds to support summer learning through partnerships. The Oregon Community Foundation was allocated special funding to make grants, and the Oregon Department of Education supervised disbursement of funding to school districts.

In 2022, state legislators introduced several bills to expand the level of support for early learning. At the same time, advocacy intensified to point out the childcare crisis in the state.

The Oregon Center for Public Policy hosted a podcast (Oregon Center for Public Policy, 2022) with Andrea Paluso, Family Forward Executive Director, and Mary King, Portland State University Economics Professor Emeritus, speaking about systemic needs to bolster Oregon's Child Care System. Our Children Oregon hosted a panel discussion (Our Children Oregon, 2022) shortly thereafter, featuring the political director from Family Forward and Washington County's director of the Child Care Resource and Referral agency. Participants echoed many of the same points and emphasized pending legislation to raise financial support for childcare subsidies and providers. Subsequently, the Legislature enacted several bills to tie up loose ends from the 2021 session and deliver budgetary support (Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care, 2022). Speakers emphasized that those funds were not enough to sufficiently increase access and to hire enough staff to meet the needs of children and families. The Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC) is working to establish the infrastructure and interagency agreements it needs to operate when it officially begins on July 1, 2023 (Chatterjee, 2022).

The Legislature also passed HB 4005 (2022) that increased reimbursement for childcare providers who offer child care for families receiving support from DHS programs of ERDC (Employment Related Day Care) and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). The increases were between 6% and 25%. The new rates went into effect June 1, 2022. The reimbursement rates are dependent on age of child and type of provider. Examples of the increase in the Salem area were from $518 to $611 per month for family care of a school-age child and from $973 per month to $1190 per month for an infant at a certified childcare center. There is a copay for families that earn above the poverty level, averaging $16 per month.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Impact of Early Learning Programs

During the 1990's brain research began to reveal the importance of early learning on child development. As accountability for programs increased, follow-up and longitudinal studies indicated that quality child care promoted academic and lifelong success. These findings have influenced efforts to increase funding for these programs nationally and locally. Early childhood is now recognized as the most crucial period of brain development in a child's life (Perry, 2004). The Perry Preschool Project longitudinal studies indicate that quality programs are effective. They promote higher levels of education, lower levels of criminal activity, and better health (Heckman, The Perry Preschoolers at late mid-life: A study in design-specific inference, 2019) (Garcia, 2021). The most recent longitudinal research available is clear: participation in early learning programs benefits not only the children who participate but also their children (Heckman, Intergenerational and intragenerational externalities of the Perry Preschool Project, 2019). A meta-analysis of studies that tracked children from pre-school into adulthood against a group of similar children found that participants in an OST program had lower rates of juvenile delinquency and

adult arrests, higher levels of academic success, and greater economic success. The independent RAND Corporation analysis established a return on investment at least double every dollar invested in the program (Cannon J. Kilburn R., 2017).

Self-directed play, including outside activity, has been shown to be particularly critical to brain development. Play can lead to changes in the molecular, cellular, and behavioral levels that promote learning and adaptive prosocial behavior. It is linked to social-emotional, cognitive, language, and self-regulation skills and stress management (Yogman, Garner, Hutchison, Hirsch-Pasek, & Golinkof, 2018).

Impact of After School Programs[i]

Recent research has revealed that the second period of rapid brain development is during adolescence, defined as typically between 10-25 years of age (UNICEF, 2017). However, there is wide variation among individuals, and it appears to be happening earlier and lasting longer in developed societies (Dahl, 2004). Most research regarding the effectiveness of OST programs has focused on elementary grades; yet the positive influence of OST programs, including those for adolescent youth, support further progress of participants academically and in life (Durlak, 2010) (Pierce, 2010). Studies find positive outcomes for the children who participate in after-school programs, and for their parents and communities (Small, 2005). For example:

- A recent study of elementary students participating in OST programs found they were more likely to graduate on time (LaTorre, 2019).
- An OST enrichment program helped close the achievement gap in math and English for gifted elementary students from economically disadvantaged and diverse cultural backgrounds (Hodges, 2017).
- Children from economically disadvantaged families who enrolled in OST programs: scored better than a control group in reading and math, repeated fewer grades, and were less likely to be placed in special education. By age 19, fewer had become parents. At age 21, they were more likely to be employed or in higher education. At 30, they were more likely to be employed full-time and in good health, and less likely to be using the social safety net system (Anderson, 2018).
- A follow-up study of youth who attended a comprehensive after-school program in a tenement in Chicago found almost all had graduated from high school and escaped poverty and so had their children (McLaughlin, 2018).

[i] **This section largely drawn from (Washington County Kids, 2019)**

- Studies focused on the efficacy of OST programs for middle and high school students led to similarly positive conclusions (MetLife, 2018) (Durlack J. W., 2011) (Oregon Community Foundation, 2021). Further, the effects are additive for students who participated in early learning programs and the positive effects persist (Vandell D.L., 2020) (CS Mott Foundation, 2021).
- Another study showed that investing moderate resources in OST programs compensated partially for a disadvantageous home learning environment and previous low school performance—even among 16-year-old students (Pensiero, 2017).
- A national study of Black students—traditionally underrepresented in STEM subjects and careers— who engaged in OST science activities participated in more advanced science courses in high school than their Black peers who did not. This proved to be especially true for female students (Young, 2018).
- OST programs encourage students, especially women and students of color, to complete high school, a significant precursor to gaining employment. Thus, OST programs not only improve the lives of low opportunity youths, but they also can avoid tens, even hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer burden over the lifetime of an unemployed person (Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative, 2016).
- Community school programs are a wise investment. A recent meta-analysis of 143 programs found that the return on investment (ROI) was up to $15 for every dollar spent on school-based wrap-around services (Maier, 2017). A study of Pennsylvania after-school programs found an ROI of over $6.69 for every dollar invested (Joint State Government Commission, General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2021).
- 72% of Oregon's parents agree that after-school programs help reduce the likelihood that youngsters will engage in inappropriate risky behaviors (Afterschool Alliance, 2014) (Afterschool Alliance, 2021). 79% agreed that after-school programs help children gain workforce skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking: deeper learning skills for which business leaders are clamoring (Afterschool Alliance, 2021).
- Summer presents a unique opportunity for enrichment; however, research results are mixed. Some research shows learning loss occurring during summer ("summer slide") (Huggins, 2013). Other research indicates that disparities exist before entering school, exacerbated by school participation rather than differences in exposure to summer programs (Kuhfield, 2020). No matter when disparities occur, summer programs have been shown to increase social and behavioral and academic outcomes (Huggins, 2013) (Vandell D., 2013) (McCombs, 2020).

THE ROLE OF QUALITY

In sum, OST programs work (Little, 2008) (Sabens, 2018). But do they all perform equally? Based on a review of ten years of studies, three conditions characterize programs that work well (Little, 2008):

- Access to and sustained participation

in the program. Not surprisingly, researchers identified gaps associated with income; children from families with higher incomes and more education were more likely to participate in OST programs, participated more frequently during the week, participated in a greater number of different activities, and were more likely to be engaged in enrichment than tutoring.

- Quality programming and staffing. Children in higher-quality child care were better prepared for school at age four than children in lower-quality care. At age 15, they were still performing slightly above their peers and experienced significantly lower levels of behavior problems compared with children in lower-quality care. Successful programs include sequenced activities designed to developtargeted skills, employ active experiential learning, include components for developing personal or social skills, and target explicit personal or social skills. Whether the activities involve art, sports, or academics, high quality OST programs foster a mind-set of proficiency, develop intrinsic motivations, and promote community among participants. Programs do not teach these capacities. Rather, they infuse them into educational experiences where participants have choices and engage in activities. Staff need to model preferred behavior, promote student proficiency in skills, listen attentively, provide individualized feedback, and set clear expectations. In low quality programs, staff engage in punitive interactions more than in supportive behaviors. High quality programs have activities that are sequenced, active, focused, and explicit (Durlack J. a., 2007) (Vandell D., 2013).
- Partnerships make stronger programs. Partnerships include students' schools, homes, and other community institutions; coordinated collaboration across all contexts where students are learning proved to be particularly effective.

From a more structured viewpoint, Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc. (4C) (What is Quality Child Care, n.d.), a non-profit referral organization in Wisconsin, uses the following key elements in determining quality of a care program:

- Child/Teacher Ratio and Group Size
- Staff Training and Education
- Status with Regulatory Agency
- Educational Environment
- Environment: Discipline
- Safety
- Design of space
- Appropriate materials
- Parental Involvement

The 4C program sponsors a system for Wisconsin care providers and parents called Youngstar (Youngstar is improving Wisconsin's Child Care, 2022). This tool offers coaching for providers on developing high-quality programs for children where parents can view ratings of the programs they are considering for their families.

While it is essential to understand how policy makers and providers define a quality childcare program, it is equally important, if not more so, to consider how users of these services think of quality. Much has been written about quality components of child care in a generic sense. For this study, a focus on after-school programs and their quality has the potential for significant impact

on the physical, social, and mental health of school-aged children. In 2013, Oregon After School Kids (Oregon ASK) commissioned a study that asked parents for their perspective on after-school care in the state (Coe, 2013). The study included parents from across the state, including urban, suburban, town, and rural communities. Demographically, the participants included a mix of Spanish-speaking and non-Spanish-speaking people. Approximately 30% were native Spanish speakers, with the remainder being predominantly White with some representation from Native American, Asian, and Black communities.
The study identified several key factors that parents consider in choosing after-school programs for their children:

- Adult-supervised safe place
- Social skills development
- Enrichment of education and development
- Reinforcement of school-day academic learning
- Engagement and enjoyment
- Physical fitness
- Arts
- Healthy snack or supper
- Science and engineering
- Parent involvement
- Community service
- Writing

Another key factor in choosing an appropriate program to meet their family's needs is availability of programs at times other than daytime school or business hours.

The Oregon ASK report found that:

Parents reported that the most valuable time for after-school programs to offer activities for youth is the period from the end of the school day until the end of the typical business day. The second most valuable time is on atypical weekdays during the school year when school is not in session at all or operates with late start times or early closure times. Almost 35% of Oregon schools now operate on a 4 day-per week schedule; although this may save money in district budgets, it leads to additional childcare costs and logistical challenges for parents, in effect shifting childcare and education costs to parents or to the after-school programs that fill this gap for working families. After-school program services during other hours, on holidays, or during the summer were important for some families as well, depending in part on whether youth activities were sponsored by other organizations during these times.

This theme was repeated in many of the groups; parent perceptions of the value of after-school programs and their recommendations for program improvements were linked to specific perceived deficiencies in the activities for children available through their local schools or other community organizations (Coe, 2013).

When parents understand the costs associated with childcare programs that meet their definition of content and schedule quality, they seem willing to pay for a portion of them. A variety of payment options were presented to the participants in the study to determine their level of interest. These options included sliding scale schemes based on income or number of children. Scholarships were also included in the list of options.

To summarize the discussion on quality of child care in the state of Oregon, users of these services, i.e., parents

and families, are looking for content that engages and stimulates their children – mentally, physically, and socially. They need these programs to be flexible and available to fill in the gaps between students' school schedules and parents' work schedules. From a policy standpoint, tradeoffs are clear. Either the state or local agencies must fund after-school programs in a consistent, sustainable way that supports all children, or they must ask parents to do so. That option opens the door for children whose families may have fewer financial resources to be left behind.

ISSUES

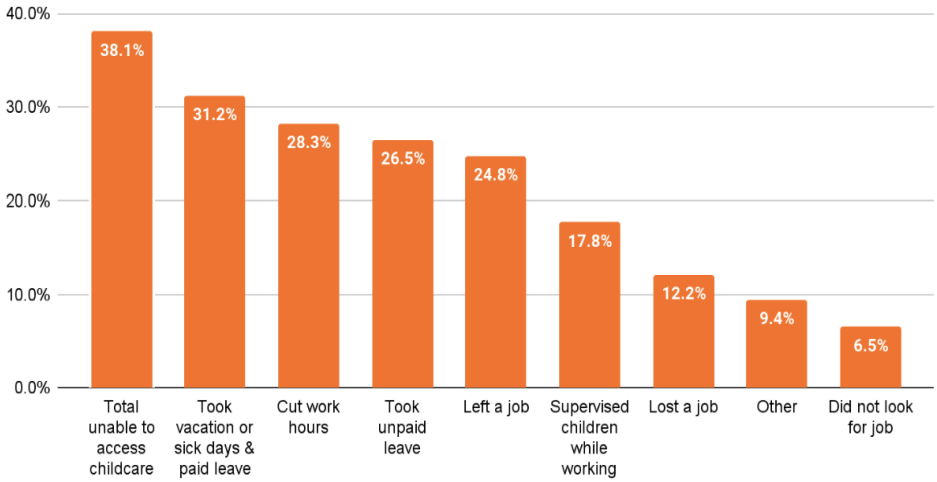
Access

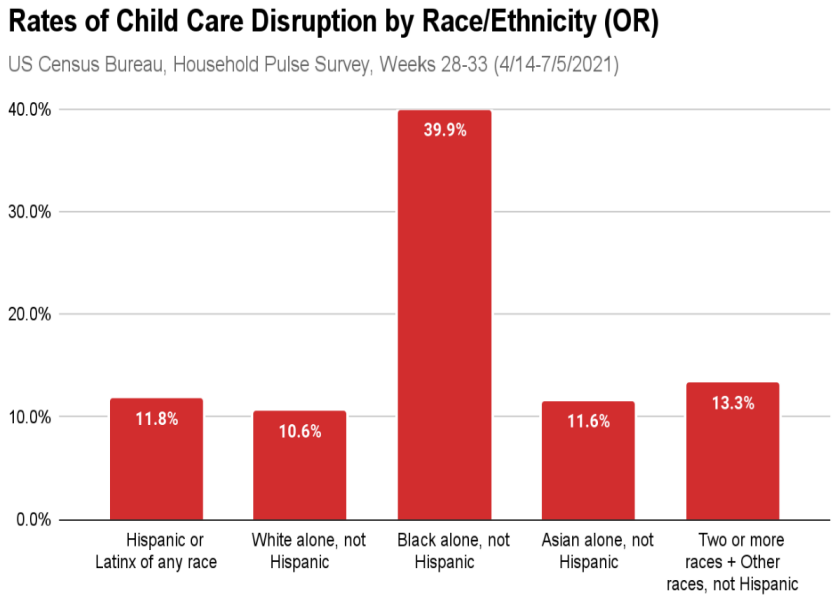
A particular area of interest is the potential of child care and OST programs to affect racial/ethnic disparities. Research indicates that socio-economic gaps tend to exist prior to entry into kindergarten (Workman, 2018), widen during school periods, and shrink during summer (Kuhfield, 2020). Since many studies have focused their research on racial/ethnic minority participants, the effectiveness of these programs in influencing potential upward mobility is encouraging. A focus on access to childcare and OST programs is, therefore, especially crucial.

Cost is the single largest barrier to access. Child care cost varies widely throughout the United States (Workman, 2018) with an average of approximately $10,983 per year for infant care (Child Care Aware of America, 2020). The Workman study shows that with Oregon's median income of $78,683, families that earn below the

Types & Rates of Child Care Disruption (OR)

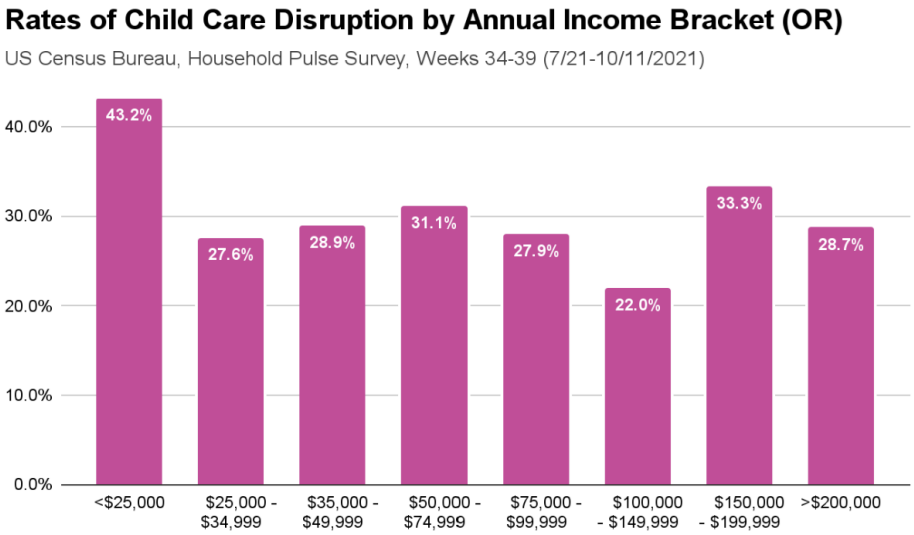
US Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 34-39 (7/21-10/11/2021)





median income and need care for infants will spend over 20% of their income on care that meets the state's minimum licensing standards. For the same quality of care, those families need to spend 18% of their income for toddlers. If parents consider a higher level of quality, they are faced with the prospect of spending up to 39% of family income for infant care and 33% for toddler care. The federal government defines affordable care for infant or toddler care as no more than 7% of the household income (Bishop-Josef, January 2019).

Even if people can afford care for their children, there are not enough available openings. In 2020 the Oregon Early Learning Division reported that 72% of Oregon communities were considered "childcare deserts" with less than one regulated space for every three children. All Oregon counties are considered extreme deserts for birth to age 2 and



half are considered deserts for infants and toddlers (Early Learning Division, 2021).

There are other barriers to participation in OST programs including the influence of peers and family perceptions and activities (Scales, 2018). In addition, lack of transportation and variable parental work hours can be a problem (Washington County Kids, 2019).

It is estimated that only approximately 30% of children between the ages of 6 to 12 participate in an after-school program (Scales, 2018).

Lack of childcare and OST access also create a problem for employers. Parents frequently do not have time or resources to increase their education to improve their productivity. They also worry about being late, leaving early, and missing work due to family illnesses (Bishop-Josef, January 2019). The economy suffers by losing tax revenues from lower employee participation. A 2019 study by Ready Nation found that not providing child care for infants and toddlers alone costs the United States approximately $57 billion per year (Bishop-Josef, January 2019).

Content

As programs have moved away from simply doing babysitting, there has been a new emphasis on content. The need for young children to have unscripted play time and young children and youth to engage in recreation, especially in the outdoors, are recognized components of quality programs. Awareness has grown about the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACE's), and trauma-informed care has been emphasized. After-school programs have incorporated socio-emotional learning (SEL) to help children and youth develop positive relationships with others in preparation for using these skills in their careers and as adults. Research on after-school programs has shown success in development of SEL content (Durlak, 2010). The need for modeling positive adult relationships has led to recruitment of more diverse care givers, in both ethnicity and gender. Middle and high school programs have developed more opportunities for youth to decide on their own content and to lead program development, including community service projects (Malone, 2018).

Workforce

The workforce for child care, after-school, and summer care tends to be part-time and entry level with the challenges associated with those characteristics. Training to help meet the content needs outlined above is often short. Most staff tend to be white and female; however, a recent emphasis on recruitment of diverse employees and training in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is an effort to bridge differences. Staff who interact directly with children are frequently high-school or college students or people with

limited education. Pay is regularly entry-level and low (Gould, 2019). Staff with degrees in the field are often underpaid (Vandell D. a., 2016). The resulting high turnover diminishes the quality of care that children and youth receive. Young children are especially upset with change and consistency has a significant impact on quality (Vandell D. a., 2016).

In a study conducted by the Oregon Early Learning Division in June 2021, results indicated that COVID- 19 had a significant impact on the demand for and, to a much greater extent, on the supply of early child care (Pears, 2021). Educators of color are more likely to have experienced disruption in their employment due to layoffs or closures. Because they are more likely to be in assistant or aide job categories, they are more likely to have been laid off. On the demand side, this has a negative impact. Recent findings from the 2020 Household Survey showed that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) parents/caregivers cited finding a provider who reflected their cultural or linguistic background as one of the most challenging aspects of finding early childhood education (ECE) for their children (Burton, February 2020).

During 2019 through early 2021, the COVID 19 pandemic forced schools to operate virtually. After-school and summer programs still existed but were restricted to serving smaller numbers of children due to the need for social distancing between children and staff.

Congress allocated funding to support childcare needs on a temporary basis, and care organizations were encouraged to offer care for children of essential workers. Organizations that provided care could also apply for loans to pay their employees and service expenses. If employees continued to be employed, loans could be forgiven.

For many people who were forced to work from home to avoid exposure to the virus, few childcare slots were available, and costs were frequently prohibitive. Many women, who usually assume the largest share of responsibility for raising children, had to balance care for their children with their work from home (Arden, 2021) (Goldberg, 2021). An online survey of Oregon families in Fall 2020 found that 59.6% of families had their childcare disrupted by COVID, including almost 74% of Black families (Early Learning Division, 2021) (Shuler, 2021). Lack of child care is a key reason for women leaving the labor force, increasingly so during the pandemic. Between February 2020 to February 2021 approximately 2.4 million women left the workforce compared to 1.8 million men (Pew Research Center, 2021). An

> **"Educators should benefit by having trainings locally rather than driving long distances to earn their hours."**
>
> **- Early Childhood Educator at a rural Community College**

Oregon survey found that the majority of women reported that they could not afford to leave work (even though they had to leave work) due to childcare costs (RAPID-EC.). Economic recovery is dependent on women being able to return to work (Bishop, 2021).

A sizeable percentage of assistants and aides who have left the early childcare workforce since the pandemic began are either unsure whether they will return to the field (49.4%) or have decided not to return (12.9%) (Pears, 2021). Low wages or lack of benefits are the most frequent reasons stated for not returning to early childcare work. Study participants indicated that the median salary for an early childhood teacher in Oregon is between $25,000 and $35,000 (Pears, 2021).

The Reimagine Oregon Project (ReimagineOregon, 2021) has included two specific statements in their policy proposal to address this issue:

- Establish pay equity for early learning childcare providers
- Ensure affordable quality child care for all Oregonians

During the pandemic, many caregivers left the business or had drastically reduced income due to the smaller number of children who could be accommodated. In 2020 Oregon's Early Learning Division reported there was a 49% drop of registered family childcare providers (Early Learning Division, 2021). In Fall 2021 schools reopened and after-school programs were encouraged to expand. Those that expanded face problems in finding enough workers to care for children and navigating changing regulations to ensure children's safety. Federal funding for the American Recovery Program has enabled expansion of some after-school programs; however, the funding is temporary. Sustainable funding is still a concern.

While all sectors of the economy are facing staffing shortages, after-school care is having an exceedingly challenging time attracting and retaining workers. Providers are using a variety of strategies including raising wages, providing hiring and referral bonuses, and offering free child care to employees (Afterschool Alliance,2022). With these strategies come increased costs that do not always pay off. Waitlists are common. With less staff, fewer children and youth can be served, thus compounding the lack of access problem.

In an interview with Beth Unverzagt, Executive Director of Oregon After School Kids (Oregon ASK), (Unverzagt, 2021) it became apparent that the piecemeal approach to child care in Oregon is a significant challenge to ensuring a highly skilled childcare workforce. Depending upon a child's age, the child's

"Provide scholarships for staff to obtain their teaching degree to meet state licensing requirements. I have staff with $30-$40,000 loans that they have incurred due to the educational requirements."

- Program Director Private Preschool

care provider(s) could be required to have licensing or not. For example, providers of pre-kindergarten child care are regulated by the newly reorganized Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC). This agency oversees licensing and offers professional development for early childcare providers. On the other hand, providers of after-school and summer programs for school-age children may be governed by the state's ERDC program, part of the Department of Human Services. This program focuses on helping low-income families pay for child care while they work. Those who offer after-school programs must apply to be included on DHS's list of approved providers to be able to receive funding under ERDC. This responsibility will now be under DELC.

While Oregon is moving toward a less fragmented child care approach, there are still gaps. For example, the federal government has allocated over $11M to Oregon to help fund 21st Century Community Learning Centers. These funds are intended to be administered by individual schools or school districts. As Ms. Unverzagt indicated in her interview, because school districts oversee the funds, the result can be an inconsistent and siloed approach. Those families who could benefit most from availability of a full continuum of care from birth to graduation often have the least access, depending upon their school district.

Licensing

Unfortunately, the licensing process is a large barrier to encouraging more caregivers to enter the field. Because many providers do not apply for licensing, the state faces challenges to (a) oversee the quality of programs offered, and (b) quantify the services provided.

Regulations

The rules governing early childhood care and after-school and summer care can be quite different, thereby creating problems in caring for siblings who attend the same program.

(ERDC) "Everything is paper pencil mailing, no electronic component and the state support (due to staffing) if you call for a question I've never been on hold for less than 20 min. It's very cumbersome."

- School District Early Education Coordinator

> **"Create accessible programs…Families that aren't English speakers are usually in informal care and don't have access to ERDC…"**
>
> **- School District Early Education Coordinator**

Regulations for programs occurring in school buildings often differ between what happens during the school day and what happens during non-school time, confusing students. An Oregon task force is reviewing these issues and the approaches taken in other states such as Colorado and Washington. In addition, privacy regulations make it difficult to share student information between schools and childcare providers that could enhance effectiveness of both programs.

Funding

Child care offered in Oregon is largely funded by parent fees. Almost all programs entail a copay. In practice, very few school districts have opted to use Student Investment Act (SIA) funding for after-school and summer programs. However, in a unique arrangement the City of Hillsboro and the Hillsboro School District have partnered to use some of those funds along with funding from the City to create after-school program slots in all their elementary schools.

Other municipalities in Oregon have found ways to fund after-school programs. Nationally, community school and after-school programs have been funded by state or county governments, sales taxes, and property tax levies. Examples of these programs can be found in Florida, Seattle, Oakland, and Missouri. In Portland, Oregon, a Children's Levy was placed on the ballot by city councilors in 2002 (Portland Children's Levy, 2021). It passed and was subsequently renewed three more times (the last renewal in 2018 was approved overwhelmingly by 83% of the voters). Approximately $20 million is raised from the property tax measure each year, and overhead is capped at 5%. The program adopted a community school model where multiple children's services could be sponsored by the funds in different areas, including an after-school and partial summer program called Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN), early childhood programs, mentoring, hunger relief, and child abuse prevention and intervention. A five-member allocation committee recommends allocations for city council approval after a community review using published criteria of applications submitted in response to requests for proposals. Program staff review goals, strategies, and performance measures; results are published annually.

The Children's Funding Project (Children's Funding Project, 2021) is an organization that helps communities maximize the impact of available funding sources for child care and care for older children.

In 2022, ODE's Early Learning Division released the findings of a childcare study, which focused on the perspective of parents in historically marginalized

families including families whose children had been expelled from childcare programs, LGBTQIA+ families, and families identifying as African American/Black, Spanish speaking, Native American, or living in a rural area.

Their key findings across all groups emphasized the need for the following:

1. Affordable child care
2. Accessible, multilingual, and up to date systems to help find child care
3. Investment in diverse childcare infrastructure
4. Stabilizing childcare workforce through pay and support for professionals
5. Providing training for childcare providers to address aspects of care that are most important to families
6. Ensuring available training is available across all networks of child care, both formal and informal
7. Implementing a system-wide approach to eliminating discrimination and bias in childcare providers (Burton M. G.-R., 2022)

"We have chosen to fund our program entirely philanthropically, rather than deal with the complicated and constantly-changing certification and ERDC reimbursement process because our residents need access to safe, affordable, quality care"

- Director of non-profit providing services for homeless families including a childcare center

WHAT PROVIDERS ARE SAYING

To determine the effect of current policies and laws on individual childcare providers, the study committee asked local Leagues throughout the state to interview professionals in their communities, collecting localized information about child care and after-school experiences.

Survey Design

The study committee designed a questionnaire based upon the task force's review of literature and insights (Appendix C) and asked local Leagues in January 2022 to get information about child care in their communities. Members were asked to interview providers in early childhood and after-school settings and to return the results by March 15, 2022.

There are thirteen local Leagues in Oregon as of 2022; five participated. Some did interviews of up to eleven programs and two Leagues sent out a form by email for responses. While our study may not be completely representative, we believe the value of our study is in providing uniquely Oregon perspectives that reflect themes in recent childcare research.

The committee reviewed the responses to look for common themes in the challenges faced by providers and their recommendations for improvements in the current systems. Most of the information collected concerned early childhood providers.

Themes

Staffing

- Training - A frequent comment regarding training is that many learning opportunities are either not affordable or not conveniently scheduled for childcare staff. Staff who desire to attend, but cannot afford tuition for ongoing training, need scholarships to achieve their professional goals. Additionally, classes offered by Central Coordination of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R), a federally mandated program, are not available during evenings and weekends, when those who work regular business hours could attend. Training does not include specific attention to cultural, mental health, equity, and trauma-informed care
- Certification - Because different agencies oversee different childcare facilities based on the age range of children participating, it becomes particularly challenging to administer the certification process for staff if a facility supports children in different age groups. Providers expressed frustration with the lack of recognition of lived experience and accommodation for non-English speakers.
- Pay and Benefits - Because of the long history of child care as a non-professional career, many providers have struggled since the pandemic to find staff that meet certification requirements and are willing to work for the low pay that most providers offer. For example, several respondents gave anecdotal descriptions of losing staff members who chose to work in the fast-food industry, because they could earn more money with less stress.
- Childcare providers recognize a gap between agency forms, information delivered in the families' native language and provider staff's abilities to communicate with families.

Licensing

- The process to achieve licensing is cumbersome
- The standards are unreachable for the average provider, another barrier for rural and marginalized populations.
- Licensing and background checks are plagued with a lack of coordination and timeliness.

Regulation

- Oregon's childcare regulations have evolved in a piecemeal, ad hoc way over the years. Parents, who are consumers of childcare services, must navigate multiple agencies to (a) find child care that will meet their needs and (b) find the resources to pay for that child care. Childcare providers expressed frustration that they must navigate multiple agencies to (a) ensure their business plan meets safety requirements, (b) ensure they can get supplemental funding to close the gap between what it costs to deliver child care and what parents can pay, and (c) ensure their staff are well- trained and compensated fairly. The challenge of managing a business with the piecemeal regulations the Oregon childcare industry results in less-than-optimal sustainability, diversity, and equity.
- Current regulatory agencies and forms needed to obtain child care are difficult to access for families with barriers in computer literacy or non-

native English language proficiency.
- Lack of alignment in regulations between child care and the Department of Education and a desire for a single point of contact at the state level for parental and provider needs causes unnecessary duplication of effort and inefficiency. In 2022, the regulations were rewritten and aligned by the new Child Care Division of the Oregon Department of Education.
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Economic Planning

- To support Oregon's economy, we need to close the gap between the cost of providing care and families' ability to pay. One result of the pandemic has been the revelation that childcare consumers and providers present a labor force that has been challenged to support Oregon's economic goals. Pre-pandemic, parents and providers were able to "make things work." Post-pandemic, providers have had to curtail operations due to staffing shortages, resulting in parents having to postpone reentering the labor force until they can find adequate child care to meet their needs. Until policymakers consider child care as a strategic part of economic planning, Oregon's economic growth will be sub-optimal.
- Respondents struggled with the current ERDC reimbursement and mentioned that its ineffectiveness created barriers preventing parents and childcare providers from using it.
- Knowledge of and training in business practices is lacking for providers and presents a barrier for potential new providers.
- Startup funding for childcare providers is lacking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comprehensive Oversight and Planning

Oregon policy makers should develop a long-term strategic plan for supporting children and families into the future. It should emphasize what makes a child or youth successful and be responsive to diverse needs based upon equity, ability, and background. It should recognize the importance of availability of quality child care to Oregon's economy. The overview and plan should include:

- **Funding** – A dedicated funding source is needed that will fund programs, deliver services, and support coordination. In addition to fully funding DELC, funding for after-school and summer programs is also needed. This funding should not be part of the general fund, vulnerable to redirection when there is a new whim or state crisis. Funding should focus on:
  - Equity in salaries between non-

school and school employees
  - Subsidies for training staff
  - Start-up, forgivable loans to attract providers
  - Family subsidies taking into consideration the presence of multiple children at various stages of development
  - Subsidies considering the full cost of providing care including paying a living wage for providers, rent and utilities costs, providing safe transportation, and insurance
  - Policies that encourage and support employers to offer or subsidize child care for their employees and communities
  - Transportation to ensure participants travel safely to and from providers
  - Robust funding for child care for children older than age 5

- **Review of regulations** – A strategic, comprehensive, and equitable review of regulations should be conducted. Starting with a full understanding of the regulatory environment that diverse types of childcare providers face, the goal should be to develop a plan that considers the impact of regulations on all types of care, from family members caring for children in their home to childcare centers caring for children from birth to middle school and high school. In addition, when programs are housed in schools, there should be consistency in regulations of behavior during school hours and non-school hours. This process has been started.

- **Integrated data systems** – Data is needed for evaluation and planning. It should be coordinated with other agencies and school systems. The state CIO (Chief Information Officer) needs to be involved in planning and with educational researchers.

1. **Evaluation** – Long term evaluation of programs should be undertaken. Longitudinal evaluation is key to determining the success of programs.
2. **Content/Quality** – Success for all participants depends on assuring the content and quality of service. Delivery should have goals, guidelines, and oversight to promote continuing process improvement. Older youth need to be involved in planning to help them develop independence and responsibility. Equity, respect, and the needs of diverse cultures should be incorporated into planning and addressed so all children benefit.
3. **Space** – Many programs cannot expand because they lack space. Planning for subsidized housing and new school buildings should include space for child care.

Staffing

- **Licensing and certification coordination** should be in one office and should be comprehensively reviewed and aligned. Definition of the distinct characteristics of after-school programs, summer programs, and in-home care programs should help providers understand and meet regulatory requirements. Communication of requirements should be easily understandable. Licensing and certification should strive to be helpful rather than punitive. Building inspections, training reviews, etc., would benefit from providing coaching and

technical assistance.

- **Training for provider staff** – Staff should be compensated for training time due to the requirements needed to maintain employment. Applications and records should be online and maintained promptly. Training should be offered at a variety of times, at accessible locations or online, free, or subsidized, and available in additional languages. The latest research should be disseminated to provider staff. In formal education programs for providers, credit should be given for experience.

- **Background checks** should be conducted through one state office with an emphasis on efficient and prompt responses.

In short, Oregon needs comprehensive planning and coordination from the perspective of children and their families. That could go a long way to improving the execution and administration of policies that have long suffered from siloes, turf battles, and bureaucratic priorities. Children, youth, and their families have been paying the price. The Oregon economy also suffers. All Oregonians can benefit from addressing a missed opportunity by supporting all children in school and outside school. Put all Oregon's children first.

APPENDIX A – BACKGROUND – CHILD CARE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE[ii]

The Industrial Revolution in the United States, beginning in the 1790s but lasting through 1915, (Piha, 2019) created a need for child care outside the family circle, especially for poor working families. Often, older children took care of younger children; some children went to work. Benevolent groups emerged to work on solutions. Quaker women in Philadelphia founded the Society for the Relief and Employment of the Poor. Philanthropic women started the Boston Infant School, modeled after British infant schools. Other groups formed. But by 1850, the idea that women should stay home with their children permeated our society, and these institutions disappeared.

In the 1870s, inspired by the emerging American kindergarten movement, Pauline Agassiz Shaw, a Swiss immigrant, established and funded nurseries and kindergartens in the Boston area. Others followed. Frances Willard established the Women's Christian Temperance Union day-nurseries, free to poor mothers, but not open to all racial and ethnic groups or to children of unwed mothers. The Great Migration of immigrants and the movement of people from the southern to the northern states to fill industrial positions brought new challenges (Piha, 2019). The National Association of Colored Women established some day-nurseries for urban African American families. But, in general, organized child care was a last-resort measure used only in dire circumstances.

The federal government made a gesture toward universal child day care briefly during the Depression (1929-1939). The federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) ran a collaborative federal and state program of nursery schools to create jobs. This program disappeared when the United States entered World War II in 1941. Then the employment situation reversed. Every industry now wanted workers.

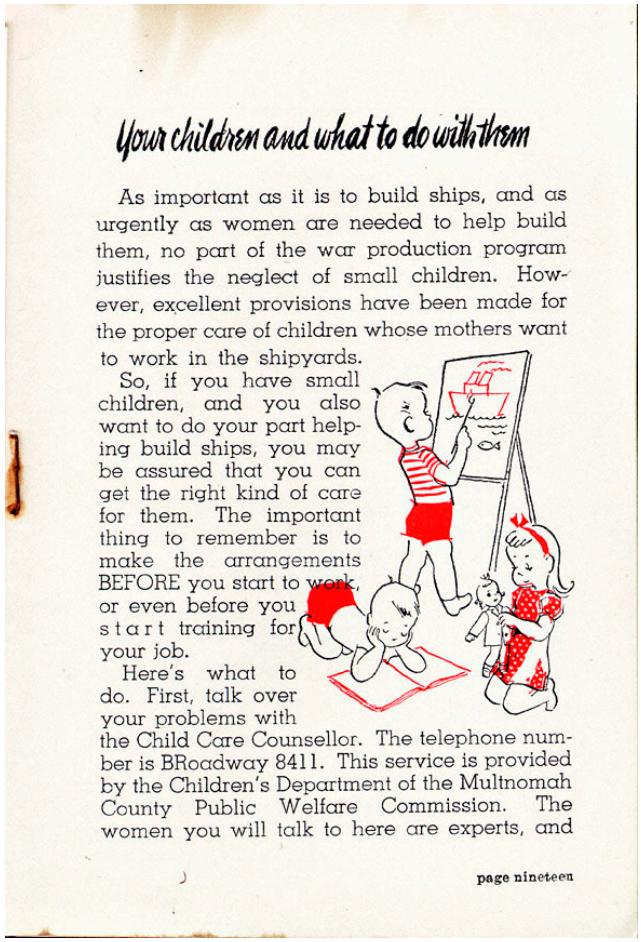
Recognition of the need for quality child care got its most visible boost in 1943. Henry J. Kaiser, encouraged by Eleanor Roosevelt, invited child development specialists to his shipyards in Richmond, California and Portland, Oregon. He wanted to create facilities and programs so workers could build ships without worrying about the safety and health of their children. The need was obvious. During the war, the number of working

These programs were considered innovative. But there were detractors. An editorial writer in The Salem Statesman (April 1943) was appalled: "Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt finally had her way. Down at Kaisertown (nee Portland) the government is going to spend a million dollars building nurseries for children of mothers who work in the shipyards. Eleanor prevailed with the maritime commission, so the job is ordered. This has been the Russian system of childcare; and we don't like it."

[ii] **This section largely drawn from (LWV Lane County, 2020)**

"In 1943 Portland Public Schools produced a handbook designed to orient new women workers to life in the shipyards. One section dealt with the problems of childcare."

Image and text credit: Archives of the Oregon Historical Society Research Library, dated August 1943 (Aaron Ramsey, Kathy Tucker, 2002)



Your children and what to do with them

As important as it is to build ships, and as urgently as women are needed to help build them, no part of the war production program justifies the neglect of small children. However, excellent provisions have been made for the proper care of children whose mothers want to work in the shipyards.

So, if you have small children, and you also want to do your part helping build ships, you may be assured that you can get the right kind of care for them. The important thing to remember is to make the arrangements BEFORE you start to work, or even before you start training for your job.

Here's what to do. First, talk over your problems with the Child Care Counsellor. The telephone number is BRoadway 8411. This service is provided by the Children's Department of the Multnomah County Public Welfare Commission. The women you will talk to here are experts, and

page nineteen

women rose nationally by 57%, and in Oregon it tripled during 1942 alone. James L. Hymes, Jr., a child development scholar at Columbia University, was hired to oversee development of the Portland program. Katherine Read Baker of Oregon State College worked on Hymes' team. According to Hymes, "*Every day-care center, whether it knows it or not, is a school. The choice is never between custodial care and education. The choice is between unplanned and planned education, between conscious and unconscious education, between bad education and good education.*" Parents' Magazine awarded the Centers their medal for Outstanding Service to Children in 1944 (Kaiser Permanente, 2010).

The centers were located at the entrance to the shipyards so that mothers could drop their children off and pick them up conveniently. All centers were well-equipped and professionally staffed. Each 24-hour facility cared for up to 1,125 children between 18 months and six years of age. The government supplied the funds, but Kaiser managed the centers. The centers were open to any shipyard employee. Parents paid $5 for a six-day week for one child with a $3.75 charge for additional children. Centers included an infirmary for children with mild illnesses. Center staff called parents from work if their child became seriously ill or showed signs of communicable diseases. Centers offered immunizations and vaccinations.

The Defense Housing and Community Facilities Services of 1940 (Lanham Act) included funding for public works and

jobs. Because the onset of World War II created jobs, the focus was on providing child care for those in government jobs.

The Office of War Information, through broadcasts, newsreels, and a traveling photo exhibit, shared the story of the Kaiser centers internationally. They won awards, such as the Parents' Magazine medal for Outstanding Service to Children in 1944. These extraordinarily successful programs were closed after only 22 months of operation when the war ended. In time, the centers were dismantled.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson introduced what came to be known as the "War on Poverty" in his State of the Union address. "*Our aim is not only to relieve the symptoms of poverty, but to cure and, above all, to prevent it.*" Project Head Start was launched in 1965 as an eight-week summer program designed to help break the cycle of poverty for low-income families.

Head Start as we know it today emerged from the initiatives that followed. It began providing educational and family support during the year but operated only 2-3 days a week and did not deliver the support needed for families with working parents. (Berger, 2021). Government-supported child care for all families was still not available. In September of 1995, the first Early Head Start grants were awarded to serve pregnant women providing part-day care for families with children under the age of three. In 1998, Head Start was reauthorized to expand to full-day and full-year services for children from ages three to five years at daytime centers.

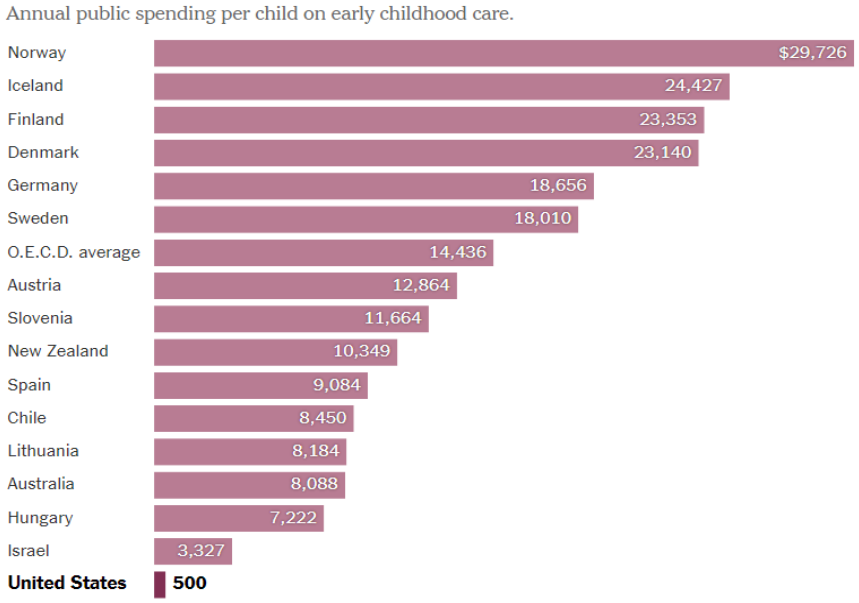
Various government agencies have managed Head Start. Currently, the Administration for Children and Families (CDF) in the Department of Health and Human Services acts as administrator. Over 1 million children, aged birth-5, have received a comprehensive program of early education, health, nutrition, and parent- involvement services.

Specialized versions of Head Start also emerged. Programs developed to support migrant farmworkers helped with child care for children aged six-weeks to 5 years and were often located in farmworker camps in empty housing set aside for that purpose. These full-day programs operated during hours that matched the needs of parents working in the fields. Late in the 1960's, Migrant Head Start joined the regular Head Start Bureau. Indian Head Start, a modified regular Head Start program, was culturally appropriate for native American children.

With federal funding, Migrant Head Start provided the basis for extending childcare services to other low-income families in the community. Churches housed many of these programs and advocated for community funding through city councils and United Way programs, providing scholarships for children of low-income families. Child Care Community Councils (4Cs), located in regions across Oregon, offered training and support to teachers in these programs and garnered extra funding from local charities and foundations to provide slots for children in non-profit centers. Non-profit childcare centers popped up across the state and continued to thrive through the early 80's until virtually dying out (Berger, 2021). To this day, non-profit childcare centers operate primarily with Head Start funding.

In 1971, a bipartisan Congress, still

HOW MUCH GOVERNMENTS SPEND ON CHILDCARE FOR TODDLERS



By The New York Times | Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and Elizabeth Davis and Aaron Sojourner for the Hamilton Project.

influenced by the Civil Rights movement and the War on Poverty, passed the Comprehensive Child Development Act (CCDA). It stipulated that child care and other services would be accessible to every family that wanted them. President Richard Nixon vetoed the bill, suggesting that it was a "communal approach" to rearing children that could undermine family values. However, Child Care Development Block Grants (CCDBG) were passed, and the first rules and regulations went into effect in 1992.

In 1989, the 101st Congress passed the Military Child Care Act (HR 1277). This bill directs the Secretary of Defense to make a specified portion of FY 1990 operation and maintenance funding available for military child day care only. The National Association for the Education of Young Children accredits all childcare facilities. In 2013, 98% of these centers were accredited with the rest in process. Four annual unannounced inspections are required to ensure compliance with standards for health, safety, and classroom environment, including class size.

The U.S. has a high-quality, universal childcare program – in the military. To date, nothing comparable is available for all other families. (Davis, 2021)

The United States lags far behind other nations in supporting child care (Miller, 2021). Funding for Head Start and Early Head Start is available for low-income families, but attendees must meet federal poverty guideline limits. These problems have been recognized by federal legislators such as Oregon Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici, who has supported and introduced legislation to address them. Legislation has been pending since 2017 (Bonamici, 2020).

In Oregon, the emphasis on early learning intensified in 2009-2010. Governor Kulongoski issued an executive order to establish an Early

Childhood Matters Advisory Council to make Oregon eligible for federal grants delivered by the State Advisory Councils on Early Childhood Learning and Care program (LWVOR,2015). The Legislature approved an Oregon Education Investment board in 2011 and created the new Early Learning Council (ELC), which replaced the Early Childhood Matters Council (and gave the new ELC statutory footing). Six priorities were established for an Early Learning Council. The Early Learning Division was established within the Department of Education in 2013 with the shift of funds from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families. The Early Learning Plan sent out requests for applications for regional accountability groups called Hubs. A Hub is a regional consortium devoted to promoting early learning. The first regional hub was contracted in 2014 with 16 hubs approved soon afterward (LWVOR, 2015). The Oregon Early Learning Council adopted a comprehensive plan to meet early childhood needs in 2019 (Oregon Early Learning Council, 2019).

Out-of-School-Time Care

United States

The after-school movement and the community school movement have occurred concurrently. After-school efforts have focused on both after-school and summer programs, which may occur within or outside a school. Community schools have focused on having wrap-around services for kids and community adult members including integrated student supports, enriched and expanded learning opportunities, family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices. These services are mostly located in schools and operate both during and after-school. Out-of-School-Time (OST) programs encompass care that may take place in schools or outside of schools but during time when school is not in session. Sometimes, it is referred to as "Expanded Learning." This history incorporates all programs that involve care of school-age children during non-school time.

During the early industrial revolution and the great immigration, children were exploited as laborers. Child labor began to be addressed in the early 1900's (Piha, 2019). People also became aware of the need to supervise children when they were not in school and to socialize immigrant children. Jane Addams founded Hull House with Ellen Gates Starr in 1889, launching the settlement house effort, which incorporated youth programs (Hull House, 2021). Other programs were founded by organizations including the YMCA's and Boys and Girls Clubs. The Fair Labor Standards Act was passed in 1938, prohibiting children under the age of 16 from working.

In the early 1900s John Dewey noted that it was important for the community to support services in schools (Campbell-Allen, 2009). Influenced by these developments, Charles Mott was instrumental after WWII in founding community schools in Flint, Michigan with multiple programs such as recreation, health, and social services (Campbell-Allen, 2009). Society began to recognize these services as part of the public school system. The Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) of 1965 included funding for out of school programming for schools that served students in poverty. This

was also the same year that Head Start was founded. These legislative acts reflected a growing awareness, described in the James Coleman report, that the external environment had a greater impact on child development than the schools (Campbell-Allen, 2009). The Community Schools Act of 1978 delivered a mechanism for states to create more community schools, which continued to expand into the 1990s. With funding, new interest arose in accountability and evaluation research (Russell, 2017). Non-profit organizations, such as the Coalition for Community Schools, the National Community Education Association, and the Children's Aid Society emerged. Their mission was to coordinate and promote their efforts in the 1990's (Jacobsen, 2019). The Coalition for Community Schools, located within the Institute for Educational Leadership (Jacobsen, 2019), was asked to coordinate a community school movement (Blank, 2005) (Campbell-Allen, 2009).

The US Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative began in 1994. It is the only federally funded program for after-school, before school, and summer programs. Guidance was last established in 2003 but new non-regulatory guidance is under development. States receive funding based on their Title I allocation for low-income students. The enrichment programs are offered for students in high-poverty, low-performing schools to help them meet achievement standards. The program was reauthorized as Title IV, Part B of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in 2002. The U.S. Department of Education's After-School initiative falls under this program. This initiative encouraged schools to stay open longer and to respond to problems created in communities by parents working longer hours, spending more time in daily commutes, and having less time to supervise their children. Federal support for after-school programs financed through the No Child Left Behind Act has fluctuated in keeping with general budget allocations. Although the 21st Century program includes a large amount of funding (approximately $1.25 billion), it does not serve all low-income children, is competitive, phases out over the grant period (5-years in Oregon; the time period varies by state), and must have a new focus or location if it is renewed in the same school. Funding was last reauthorized in 2015 under the "Every Student Succeeds Act." It is currently being proposed at a higher level for 2023 (Afterschool Alliance, 2022).

In the latter part of the 1990's, positive youth development emerged as a focus, as opposed to prevention of deficits resulting from gang activity and being home alone (Simpkins, 2018) (Intrator, 2014). Children were also starting to be viewed as contributors to programming. As brain research progressed, programs for after-school and summer began to be viewed as having increasing importance for youth development.

With the absence of widespread federal support, cities, counties, and states have adopted local funding to offer care for school-age children during non-school hours. In the 1970's, Florida passed the Community Schools Act, the Full-Service School Act in 1990, (Campbell-Allen, 2009), and founded the Afterschool Network in 2002 (Florida After School Network, 2021). Florida counties can pass local funding mechanisms to support these programs. In 2002 California passed the After School Education &

Safety Program/Proposition 49, which provides for academic enrichment and safe, constructive alternatives for students in kindergarten through 9th grade. The Oakland School District converted to a systemwide community school effort in 2010 (Jacobsen, 2019) (Blank, 2005).

Oregon

Oregon's approach to caring for school-age youth has reflected national trends. In Oregon, the Legislature formed the Juvenile Services Commission in 1973 to prevent youth 10-18 years of age from entering the juvenile justice system (Lansing, 2021). In 1989, the Legislature changed the name of the commission to the Oregon Community Children and Youth Services Commission to focus on prevention for the full age range of 0-18 (Lansing, 2021). A Children's Agenda was developed in 1988, based on a plan from every county with a top priority of early childhood services. The name of the commission was again changed in 1993 to the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (the Healthy Start Program, now called Healthy Families Oregon, was created the same year). Each county had its own commission that received a portion of the federal funds sent to the state for improving the status of children and families in their area. The statewide office held a conference on community schools in 2009. However, due to the widespread emphasis on early brain development, the Legislature reallocated funding toward early learning in 2011 and the commission was disbanded in December 2013 (LWV Lane County, 2020). Most of its funding redirected into early learning "hubs" that covered regions of the state. A small amount of funding ($500,000) went toward a Youth Development Council Division within the Oregon Department of Education, which focused on funding a limited number of equity initiatives.

Oregon Afterschool & Summer for Kids Network (Oregon ASK), established in 2005 by former Governor Kulongoski, was one of the first (8) state programs in the C.S. Mott Statewide Afterschool Networks. Now all 50 states have Mott-funded Networks. The Wallace Foundation's Summer Programs (Wallace Foundation, 2022) and the National Summer Learning Association teamed up and with the support of the National Conference of State Legislatures conducted a survey (Oregon ASK Network, 2022) of program providers who receive general funds through the state ($40 million). The survey found that while many children participated in the programs and partnerships leveraged unique resources, the short notice added to challenges for providers. These challenges included staffing shortages and bureaucratic delays in background checks, space needs, and direct payment to providers. Pandemic-related last-minute changes in guidance regulations added to their problems. Furthermore, no in-depth evaluation component was included to determine the final impact (Oregon ASK Network, 2022).
The national C.S. Mott Network created a Compendium of after-school and summer research and program descriptions, a powerful collection of nearly 70 articles, presenting bold and persuasive evidence—along with examples of effective practices, programs, and partnerships—that demonstrate how opportunities after-school and during the summer are yielding positive outcomes for authentic student, community, and family engagement in learning (Expanding Learning, Expanding Minds, 2013).

APPENDIX B – LWVOR CHILDCARE POSITION STATEMENT

Child Care Adopted March 1989

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that child care is a social and economic issue that reaches beyond the family into the community. Quality child care needs to be available, accessible, and affordable to all families for children of all ages and with differing needs.

The League of Women Voters supports a diverse childcare system to accommodate different parental choices and needs. Such a system may include day care centers, group homes, and family day care homes.

The State of Oregon should establish appropriate standards to ensure that high quality care exists in all settings. For centers and group homes: these standards should address facilities, staff qualifications, and number of children served. Program, parent/care giver communication, administration and transportation should be included for centers and may also be considered for group homes. There should be flexible guidelines for day care homes because of the unique character of these facilities.

The State of Oregon should enforce mandatory regulations by funding enough inspectors. The State of Oregon should set requirements for adequate training for care givers and ensure those training opportunities are available. This could include state provision of training and/or state incentives for others to provide training. City and county governments should participate in enforcing health and fire standards.

Affordable child care should be available and accessible for children with differing needs and in various age groups. While parents have the primary responsibility for choosing child care, a coordinated effort between parents and government, together with providers, employers, and private groups is necessary to deliver quality child care at an affordable price.

The State of Oregon should:

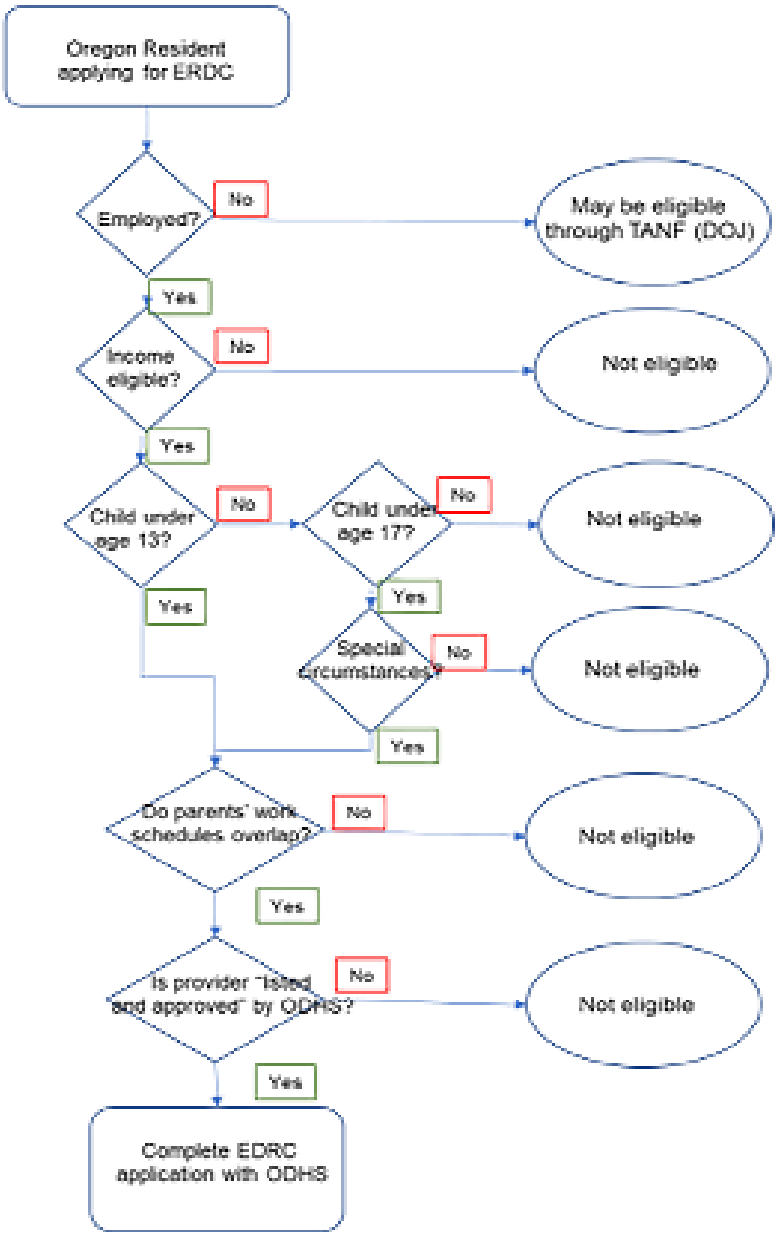
- Provide financial assistance for childcare expenses to low- and middle-income families based on need. Such assistance could include tax credits for parents with a ceiling based on income.
- Support resource/referral programs.
- Encourage employer involvement in the childcare system Encourage development of school-age childcare programs.

Parents in job training, in school, with special-needs children and/or needing respite care services should be eligible for financial assistance for child care based on demonstrated need.

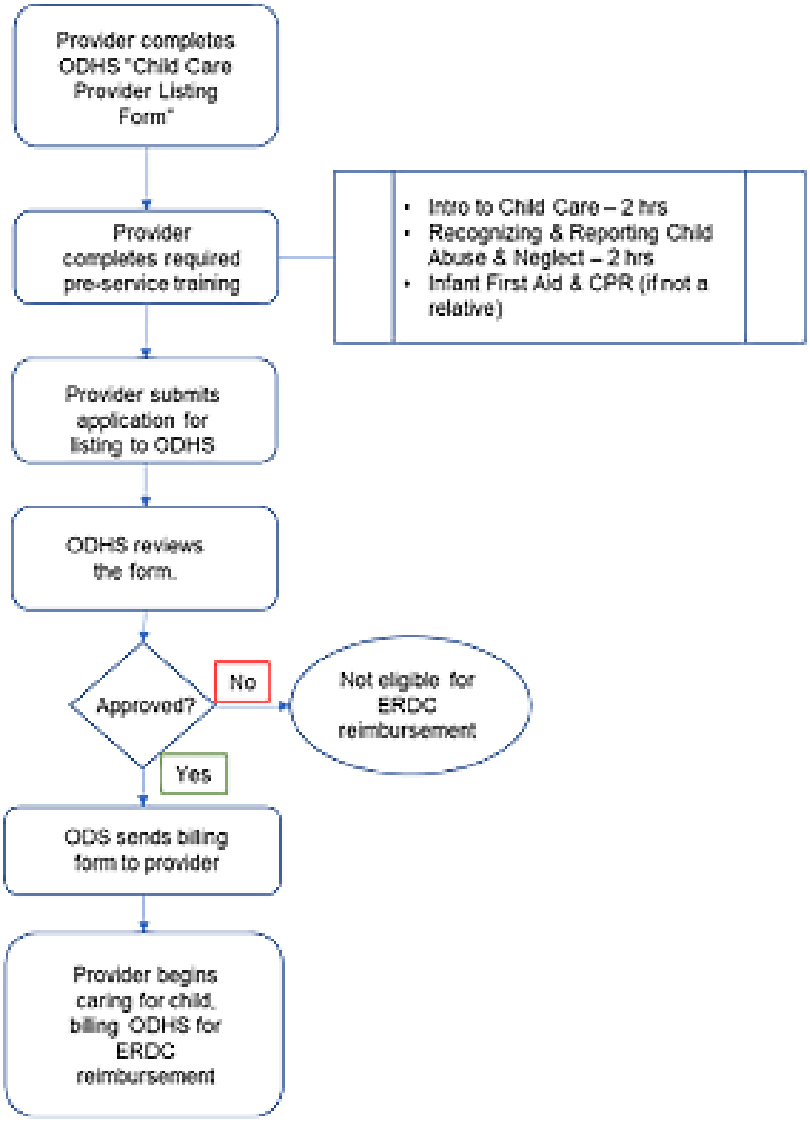
Child caregivers should be awarded recognition commensurate with their responsibilities. The State of Oregon should take a leadership role in elevating the professional status of child caregivers and ensuring adequate compensation. National Position (adopted in 1988): "Support programs, services, and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it, in order to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty."

APPENDIX C – ERDC PROCESSES FOR PARENTS AND PROVIDERS

Process for Parents Applying for Oregon ERDC Program - June 2022



Process for Providers Applying for Inclusion in Oregon ERDC Program – June 2022



APPENDIX D - LWVOR SURVEY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Cover Letter - Introduction and Instructions

As part of the Child Care Update Study for the League of Women Voters of Oregon, we are asking local Leagues to find out a little about child care in their area.

We would like volunteers from your League to interview principals from a few child-care providers in your area.

If possible, interview one school-age before and/or after care program and one program that accepts infants or toddlers or is a preschool program. We would welcome information from as many providers as you are willing to interview.

You may find programs in your area using the "Find Child Care Oregon 211" website as a guest. Note that you can search for licensed and licensed-exempt centers and homes. Another way to find programs to interview is to contact local grade schools to see if they have before and after-school care programs, ask any working parents that you know who they use, and check local message boards.

We would like to have the questionnaires returned to us by March 15, 2023.
The questionnaire begins on the next page.

If you have questions or problems, contact Kathleen Hersh.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ON CHILD CARE FOR OREGON LOCAL LEAGUES

Interviewer Information
Date of interview:
Persons doing the interview: Contact email:
League:
Participant Information

- Name of Organization:
- Address:
- Length of time (# of years) providing child care:
- Hours of operation:
- Open on weekends? Y/N
- Operate during school vacations, teacher prep days, summer, etc.? Y/N
    1. Birth to kindergarten?
    2. Kindergarten to age 10?
    3. Age 10-Age 15?
- Current number of children
    1. Birth to kindergarten
    2. Kindergarten to age 10
    3. Age 10-Age 15
- Special needs support? Y/N

Funding Source Mix – Choose all that apply. Indicate percentage of funding from each source.

- Nonprofit
- For profit
- Proprietary
- DHS subsidized
- Religious
- Employer-sponsored
- Sponsoring organization name:
- Licensure:
- Recorded Program
- Regulate Subsidy Program
- Registered Family Child Care Provider
- Certified Family Child Care Provider
- Certified Child Care Center

Ethnic/racial groups served – Choose all that apply. Indicate approximate number of clients in each category.

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or another Pacific Islander
- All of above

Application Process

- Family relationship:
- Limit on # of children from one family? Y/N
- Priority given to siblings? Y/N
- Waiting list? Y/N
- Number of children on waiting list:

Current Operations

- Staffing - Current number of caregivers
  1. Full time
  2. Part time
- Currently looking for staff? Y/N
- Credentials – number of caregivers by category
  1. Certified by state
  2. Uncertified
  3. In training
- Facility:
  1. Rented?
  2. Owned?
- Costs:
  1. Scholarships or grants:
  2. Stipends:
  3. Rent/mortgage month to month (agreements with property owners, employers, or schools)
  4. Subsidies (source?)
- Current rates per child, per month
  1. Birth to kindergarten
  2. Kindergarten to age 10
  3. Age 10-Age 15
- Do you receive support from the state of Oregon through ERDC (Employment Related Day Care), Early Headstart or another program?

- Yes:
  1. If so, how does the program(s) work for you?

- No:
  1. Drop in allowed?
  2. Part-time allowed?
  3. Outside children allowed (if employer or organization supported)?
  4. Sick children allowed?

Comments

1. How has the pandemic affected your operations?

2. How can Oregon strengthen its programs and services to support children's learning and development?

3. What can Oregon do to enhance educator competence and professional development?

4. How can Oregon use program standards and proven practice to strengthen childcare programs and the childcare workforce?

5. How can Oregon leverage funding to increase equity and expand opportunities?

6.What administrative changes might streamline procedures and increase equity?

APPENDIX E – GLOSSARY

Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACEs - traumatic experiences during childhood that influence behavior, health, and life chances into adulthood. Experiencing multiple ACEs has a cumulative negative effect.

BIPOC - Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

Care Provider/Caregiver – Operator of a childcare business; one who works with children in a childcare setting.

Child Care – Caring for children not your own. May include care in the home by relatives or others (paid or unpaid), care in another home, care in centers.

Day-Care Center – Full-time childcare facility for thirteen or more children. CSD licensing is required.

Day-Care Group Home – Offers full-time care for 7 to 12 children, including caregiver's own under age 13, in a private home. CSD licensing is required.

DEI - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Emphasis on treating people with diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, genders, and abilities with respect and working toward systemic change that ameliorates past inequities.

Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) – A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) is a pre-tax benefit account used to pay for eligible dependent care services, such as preschool, summer camp, before or after school programs, and child or adult day care.

Early Learning Division (formerly Oregon Commission on Child Care) – In 2013, the Early Learning Division was created and based in the Oregon Department of Education to direct early learning initiatives in the state. The Division consolidates a number of early learning services, including Oregon Pre-kindergarten, Healthy Families Oregon, and the Office of Child Care, which were spread across several state agencies. All programs and units were put together to focus on the future of children.

Employment Related Day Care Program (formerly Children's Services Division (CSD)– State agency in the Department of Human Resources responsible for regulating childcare facilities and programs.

Family Day Care Home – Offers full or part-time care for up to six children at a time, plus caregiver's own, in a private home. Up to ten children are allowed under special conditions. Registration with CSD is voluntary.

Flex-time – Job in which the employee can select the time at which he/she will be at work, usually within specified limits.

Full-service school/community school - Wrap-around services are offered during school hours and non-school hours. The school is the center of the community. Services are offered to members of the community and students. They can include before/after school, classes for immigrants, food pantry, clothes closet, health services, etc.

Information and Referral Service (I&R) – Telephone bank providing parents with names and addresses of day care providers and information on choosing child care.

Job-sharing – Job usually performed by one person is shared by two or more people.

Licensed Day Care – Mandatory licensing administered by CSD requires compliance with health, safety, supervision, and nutrition standards. Annual renewal. Applies to day care group homes and centers that care for seven or more children.

Mindfulness - Awareness of internal bodily reactions to external stimuli.

On-site/Near-site Child Care – Employer-sponsored childcare facility at or near parent's place of work.

Opportunity Kids - Children and youth in the foster care system.

Out-of-school time (OST) programs - Any programs occurring outside school hours. Can include early learning, after-school, and summer programs.

Preschool – School for young children. Not day care licensed if it is a part-time educational program. Pre-K usually refers to care to prepare 3 and 4 yr. old children for kindergarten.

Resource and Referral Service – Expanded I&R service. Includes training and support services to providers, education and consultation for parents, links with the business community, and reporting of data to community organizations. In Oregon it is called Child Care Resource and Referral.

School-age Child Care – Programs designed specifically to supervise school-age children during non-school hours.

Social emotional learning (SEL) - focus on kids increasing their interpersonal skills.

STEM/STEAM - Science, technology, engineering, and math. Art is often added. Focus of training on activities and skill building to prepare for careers in the fields noted.

Subsidized Child Care – Cost of child care is partially or fully paid by an organization or person other than the parent.

Trauma-informed care - Consideration during care giving that the child may have been exposed to trauma and should be treated accordingly.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program – The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that delivers reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in after-school care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities.

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NOTES

[i] This section largely drawn from (Washington County Kids, 2019) (Found on page 12)
[ii] This section largely drawn from (LWV Lane County, 2020) (Found on page 27)