



# CCSA Communicates

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*Child Care Services Association leads efforts to strengthen accessible and affordable quality early care and education by providing supports for families, communities and the workforce.*

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## From the President

**I**t's the beginning of a new school year, autumn is on its way, more people are getting vaccinated... yet throughout the country, economists are writing about a labor shortage, a tight market where employers face difficulties in hiring employees.

**It's time to talk about the workforce that supports all other workforces: the people working in child care.** To overcome hiring challenges, many employers have increased their hourly wages and are offering benefits. What's all this have to do with child care? Everything.

For decades, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) has surveyed and released reports on child care compensation and benefits. Over the years, wages have risen, but not by much. By any standard, they are still far below typical service sector jobs such as those in fast food or retail.

Child care is a business. Family fees are the biggest piece of the budget for child care programs. The largest expense for a child care business is related to personnel costs, which make up 70-80% of the overall cost of a child care program. Therefore, when community businesses increase wages, child care programs can't compete. They simply can't pay more, because they would have to charge families more, and families are struggling already to pay for child care. It's just one reason why public education is just that, paid for by the public.

Child care employers want to hire and retain a qualified workforce. Unless they can pay more competitive wages, individuals who otherwise want to work with children are lured by jobs where they can be paid more for less responsibility, stress or training.

**This is a market failure.** The early childhood workforce is essential to economic recovery. If families

do not have access to child care, they can't go back to work. According to a Census Bureau Household Pulse survey, there are 7.5 million individuals across the country that are not working currently because they are caring for children not in school or child care. In N.C., nearly 200,000 individuals are home because they are caring for children. Statewide, approximately 106,400 individuals have left the workforce (in addition to another 231,636 unemployed individuals).

The pathway to economic recovery in N.C., and in our country, relies on child care, which depends on child care workers. Child care is an in-person profession that cannot be done remotely. As a public good that supports economic recovery and expansion, there are solutions to help child care programs hire and retain the qualified workforce needed to support healthy child development (and employment of families).



It's been a busy summer here at CCSA. CCSA prepared a **step-by-step guide for families in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Korean](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#) and [Gujarati](#)** to ensure they receive the Child Tax Credit for their children. Thank you to Cetra for the translations. We also prepared this **step-by-step paper that shares ways to help**. We hope early childhood and housing programs will work with families to help them receive this crucial funding.

The Child Tax Credit in the ARP Act provides the largest child tax credit ever to America's working families. Experts estimate this will cut child poverty in half. Roughly 39 million households—covering 65 million children (nearly 90% of children in the U.S.)—will automatically receive the new Child Tax Credit. We want to make sure

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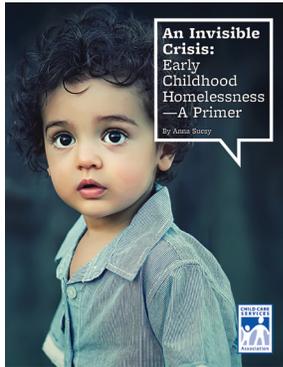
## From the President

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all eligible families sign up for the benefit.

The risk of becoming homeless as COVID-19 variants rise is a parent's worst nightmare. The nationwide eviction moratorium has ended, and renters will no longer have protection from eviction for non-payment of rent. We are still in the middle of a pandemic. Residents of several million households are concerned they will have to leave their homes due to eviction in the next month, according to recent Census Bureau data. That means more families with young children could be forced into the streets.

CCSA released a primer, [\*\*An Invisible Crisis: Early Childhood Homelessness\*\*](#), which explores the impact of early childhood homelessness across the U.S. on our young children, reviews available services and federal funding streams to support young children and families experiencing homelessness and offers recommendations to streamline early childhood and homelessness policy to better support young children experiencing homelessness. Together, early childhood policy and homelessness policy can help mitigate the negative impacts of homelessness on young children and support their development, health and well-being.



September is a month of mixed emotions for me. It is a month of personal loss, one of national loss for September 11th and even political loss with the passing of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Yet, it is also the Jewish New Year for many, and to me, it means a season of renewal. It is a period of reflection and a chance to begin a year full of hope.

The commemoration earlier this month of the 20th anniversary of September 11th reminds us of the horrible imprint trauma can have on our lives, and on our nation. There were powerful stories and videos once again revisited for those of us who remember that period. The babies and toddlers and young children of 9/11 have graduated from high school and may have graduated from college as well. It was not an easy road, yet communities came together; there was determination and commitment to make a better world for our young ones. Twenty years later, we again seek to emerge from another trauma that has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Will our infants and toddlers and young ones of 2020/21 be resilient? It is up to us, the adults, to support them and provide safety, security and nurturing early learning experiences. It is truly up to us to remember this every day.

I have strong hopes for better days ahead, and that keeps me going.

I look forward to seeing everyone again safely in person and to the possibilities ahead. I wish you all a safe and healthy autumn season! 🇺🇸

*Best,  
Marsha*

## CCSA Welcomes Sharon Hirsch as Board Chair this November



After six years on CCSA's board, CCSA is excited to announce **Sharon Hirsch** will become Board Chair in November 2021. Sharon serves as the president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina (PCANC), where she leads a team that focuses on making prevention a priority for N.C. and building capacity for communities to have the knowledge, support and resources to prevent child abuse and neglect. She has more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit and government agency management, public relations, advocacy and child well-being. At PCANC, she has led efforts to catalyze community prevention plans, increased staff capacity to provide support for evidence-based parenting programs and secured more than \$1 million in new investments in PCANC. We are overjoyed for her to take up the role of Board Chair. 🇺🇸

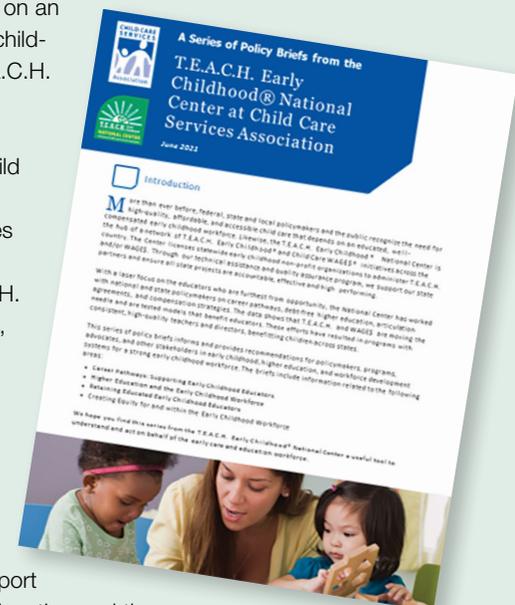


## A Series of Briefs from the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center at CCSA

More than ever before, federal, state and local policymakers and the public recognize the need for high-quality, affordable and accessible child care that depends on an educated, well-compensated early childhood workforce. Likewise, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center at CCSA is the hub of a network of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood and Child Care WAGES Initiatives across the country. The National Center licenses statewide early childhood non-profit organizations to administer T.E.A.C.H. and/or WAGES. This series of briefs, published by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Center at CCSA, cover the following topics:

- Career Pathways: Supporting Early Childhood Educators
- Affordability, Accessibility, Support and Compensation: Higher Education and the Early Childhood Workforce
- Retaining Educated Early Childhood Educators
- Creating Equity for and within the Early Childhood Workforce

[Read the briefs here.](#) 🇺🇸



# My Summer Internship with Child Care Services Association

By Anna Sucsy

I worked as an Early Childhood Policy Intern at Child Care Services Association from June to August 2021. Over the course of the summer, I worked on two major projects, one about early care and education and the other about early childhood homelessness policy.

The first project I worked on involved analyzing the impact of CCSA's COVID-19 Relief Fund grant on child care programs across North Carolina. I interviewed 17 of 42 grant recipients about the grant's impact, how their child care programs are faring one year after applying for funds and grantees' plans moving forward. I synthesized the interview data and [wrote a report](#) on how child care programs in North Carolina are faring one year post the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This project gave me the opportunity to use my position to amplify child care programs' voices. Having the privilege to share child care programs' successes, challenges and resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic was a remarkable opportunity.

**Anna Sucsy was an Early Childhood Policy Intern at Child Care Services Association with Marsha Basloe, President of CCSA, and is a Master of Public Affairs candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. At CCSA, Anna's work focused on early care and education and early childhood homelessness. Prior to joining CCSA, Anna worked for the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at The University of Texas at Austin where she researched policies relating to family economic security, maternal and child health, and early care and education. During the academic year, Anna works as a graduate research assistant at the Institute for Research on Poverty. Her primary interests include early childhood policy, inequality, poverty and family self-sufficiency, and translating research-based best practices to policy audiences.**

My work at CCSA also allowed me to apply my professional and academic skills to support infants and toddlers experiencing homelessness. Having previously worked in early childhood research and policy, I know the impact that young children's earliest years have on their lifelong health and well-being. I valued the opportunity to work on a project that supports some of

America's most vulnerable young children. I [compared](#) how homelessness programs and policies and early childhood programs and policies support young children experiencing homelessness. I also [synthesized literature](#) on the impact of homelessness on young children and the causes of child homelessness. Through my work on this project, I strengthened my ability to independently tackle a complex policy problem and gained a newfound passion for child and family homelessness.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

I will be moving to North Carolina in May 2022 following my graduation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Master of Public Affairs degree. I hope to find a full-time position where I can use my policy and research skillsets to make a meaningful difference in the lives of North Carolina's children and families. 



# Early Childhood Education Workforce Convening

Are you in a state that is focused on supporting the early childhood workforce? Do you have strategies to share at a national convening?

The [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> National Center](#) at CCSA is accepting workshop proposals for the **Early Childhood Education**



**Workforce Convening**, formerly the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> and Child Care WAGES<sup>®</sup> National Professional Development Symposium. The Convening will be held **April 20-22, 2022**,

at the William and Ida Friday Center at UNC-Chapel Hill. Proposals will be accepted until **October 15, 2021**. Learn more about the [Convening](#) and take a look at the 2021 [Program](#). The proposal application can be found [here](#).

This event brings together partners from across the country working on advocacy, policy, funding, strategy development and systems building in support of the education, compensation and stability of the early childhood education workforce. Attendees include staff of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> and Child Care WAGES<sup>®</sup> programs, state and national non-profit organization professionals, higher education faculty, state and national governmental agency personnel, funders and others working on early childhood education workforce issues. We hope you will join us. 



# Welcome to CCSA

## WELCOME DR. MARINA MENDOZA

CCSA is pleased to welcome Dr. Marina Mendoza as the senior director of our scholarship program. Dr. Mendoza joins the local leadership team for child care resource and referral services and will continue the commitment to ensuring that quality services are provided when, where and how families



need them, including the provision of services in multiple languages, based on community need. Dr. Mendoza will work collaboratively with our community partners to assist our family support services and will

be integral to helping shape the innovative Durham PreK program, a locally funded early education initiative.

Dr. Mendoza earned her B.A. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Detroit Mercy and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology/Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience. She was a recipient of the Administration for Children and Families Child Care Research Scholars Dissertation Award. After receiving her Ph.D., Dr. Mendoza became a Society for Research on Child Development Executive Branch

Policy Fellow who was placed at the U.S Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. While in Washington, DC, she focused on research portfolios related to exposure to violence and victimization across the life span.

Dr. Mendoza comes to CCSA from the Denver Preschool Program (DPP), a universal preschool program funded through a local sales tax. She hopes to continue building on her mission to ensure equitable access to high-quality preschool for all families regardless of race, income or neighborhood.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Mendoza to CCSA!

## WELCOME DENISE SQUIER

Please join us in welcoming Denise Squier to our Child Care Resource and Referral Council Management team as the new Regional Program Manager for CCSA. Although she needs no introduction, here is some background information about Denise and her wealth of experience and expertise in the field.

After spending 15 years working in non-profits focused on individuals experiencing homelessness—those with HIV/AIDS and children and families in shelters—and child abuse prevention and intervention, as well as two years in human resources, Denise began her work in the child care

resource and referral field in 2001.

Before moving to North Carolina in 2007, Denise served as the Contract Manager with the Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral Association, the management agency for child care resource and referral in Oklahoma, and as a quality assurance specialist with Quality Technical Support LLC, an organization that contracted with NACCRA to work on the national quality assurance process for consumer education and referral services.



Since 2007, she has served as the statewide consumer education specialist and as a vice president at Child Care Resources Inc. (CCRI). At CCRI, she was responsible for the consumer education and referral service, co-leadership of the training and technical assistance team with a primary focus on Region 6 and United Way contracts, department-wide management of the training and technical assistance components of WorkLife Systems and the transition to and overall administration of the statewide WorkLife Systems database.

We look forward to having Denise bring her expertise to our regions and the state!

## Lessons from the CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund: Planning for the Future

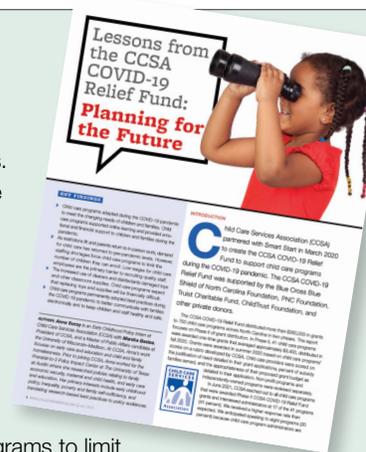
CCSA partnered with Smart Start in March 2020 to create the CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund to support child care programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. In June 2021, CCSA reached out to all child care programs that were awarded Phase II CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund grants and interviewed administrators at 17 of the 41 programs. Throughout the interviews, grantees remarked on the stress and challenges of the past year and expressed the gratitude they felt that CCSA acknowledged their contributions to communities and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report discusses key themes that emerged from the interviews, with a focus on the impact of CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund Phase II grants on child care programs, how grantees are faring one year after applying for funds and grantees' plans moving forward.

### KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE

- Child care programs adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic to meet the changing needs of children and families. Child care programs supported online learning and provided emotional and financial support to children and families during the pandemic.
- As restrictions lift and parents return to in-person work, demand for child care has returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, staffing shortages force child care programs to limit the number of children they can enroll. Low wages for child care employees are the primary barrier to recruiting quality staff.
- The increased use of cleaners and disinfectants damaged toys and other classroom supplies. Child care programs expect that replacing toys and supplies will be financially difficult.
- Child care programs permanently adopted better practices during the COVID-19 pandemic to better communicate with families electronically and to keep children and staff healthy and safe.

[Download and read the full report here.](#)



# Collaborations: Keys to Success

**D**urham PreK is a unique model for offering universal preschool services because of the strong emphasis on high quality and the collaborative work of all local partners. The 2020-2021 school year was met with many challenges due to COVID-19; nevertheless, efforts to ensure high quality learning environments had to continue. Throughout the summer, Durham PreK partnering agencies, Child Care Services Association (CCSA), Durham's Partnership for Children (DPFC), Durham Public Schools (DPS) and Families & Communities Rising (Head Start), created an integrated plan to support teachers. A collaborative approach was used to create the Summer Institute, which was pre-service training for all lead and assistant teachers working in Durham PreK and NC Pre-K classrooms. Directors and administrators were invited to attend.

The four PreK partner agencies meet on a monthly basis to align our work and streamline coaching and professional development for Durham PreK and NC Pre-K teachers. In June 2021, the partners reviewed feedback provided by teachers through surveys, small group meetings, informal check-ins and feedback

from administrators. This feedback drove discussions on how best to support design resources and support that would enhance teaching practices and learning environments.



In addition, the partners reviewed all of the professional development requirements for teachers from each partnering agency and collectively aligned professional development requirements to support individual teachers' needs based on education, teacher's license and years of experience. This streamlined process eliminated duplication of requirements and individualized support based on the needs of each pre-K teacher.



MY PRO PHOTOGRAPHER

The Summer Institute was a well-attended full-day training. The teachers gained a better understanding of their importance and connection to the success of Durham PreK. The CCSA and DPFC teams reviewed the resources and supports available to the teachers as part of Durham PreK. In addition, teachers received program updates, reopening classroom (health and safety) information, family engagement and Community of Practice opportunities. During the afternoon session, we defined technical assistance and teachers shared their "Why?" for doing what they do with preschool-aged children. Finally, the teachers learned about professional development alignment: North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development (NCFELD), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS<sup>®</sup>), North Carolina Teaching Standards and Creative Curriculum.

As a collaborative, we will continue to analyze data and feedback from Durham pre-K teachers to use for future planning. All of the partners are committed to on-going evaluation and discussions to strengthen the collaborative and our focus on enhancing support systems for pre-K teachers in Durham. [🔗](#)

## Federal Funding and the Rebuilding of American Child Care

**C**hild Care Exchange Press developed three videos on federal funding trends for Ed.Flicks, Exchange's video clip library. The videos feature child care directors and advocates from NAEYC, Child Care Aware, Early Childhood Education Consortium, Bipartisan Policy Center, NIEER, CCSA's T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> and First Children's Finance who discuss the impact of upcoming legislation to better serve programs and parents.

You can access this timely advice on tapping into this new funding in three practical videos on the Ed.Flicks platform in the series, "Federal Funding and the Rebuilding of American Child Care." They believe it is so important that they are making it available for [free to everyone](#). [🔗](#)



Stay in the know and follow CCSA





**ADRIANA MARTINEZ** opened Spanish for Fun Academy in Chapel Hill, N.C., with her sister in 2002, two years after she moved to the U.S. from Venezuela. She earned her associate degree in preschool education in Venezuela and worked as a preschool teacher for 15 years before she earned her bachelor's from UNC-Greensboro. Martinez has been a CCSA board member since 2008. She

will be retiring from the board at the end of this year, but her center will continue working closely with CCSA through its services. Martinez is married and has three children, now all adults. She is an avid reader of fiction and historical research in both English and Spanish, enjoys working out, spending time at the beach and traveling in her spare time.

**Q: What made you decide to join CCSA's board?**

**A:** Since we opened [Spanish for Fun Academy], CCSA has been beside us, helping and guiding us through the complex N.C. a ECE system and to become a better ECE center. Besides this being amazing for us, CCSA offered us their kitchen [spoonFULL] services. I participate in the Orange County child care directors' meetings where I learned part of what CCSA means for us as providers and for the ECE field locally, statewide and nationally. I met Sue Russell, CCSA's founding president, who has been an inspiration to me. When I was offered to be a part of CCSA's board, it was a huge honor that I was proud and happy to take.

**Q: How has COVID impacted your career as a child care provider?**

**A:** I would say that for my career as an early childhood professional, what doesn't kill you, makes you stronger. When the pandemic started and everything began to close down, my number one priority was to make sure that both the ECE center and our staff survived. Most of our staff rely on our paychecks as the only stable income for their families. After that, the toughest part has been making sure that we are as healthy and clean as possible to [ensure] the safety of both our teachers and students. I have lost a fair amount of sleep ensuring the safety of all involved. I still do to this day. All of these experiences have taught me that we are all vulnerable and must rely on each other and come together as a community to better our odds of getting through tough times.

I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of you that I have come in contact with over the last 12 years. You all have helped me grow as a person and a professional. My increased understanding of what CCSA does have also increased my appreciation and respect for everyone involved in the institution, including my fellow board members and the amazing staff that make all of this possible.

“All of these experiences have taught me that **we are all vulnerable** and must rely on each other and **come together as a community** to better our odds of getting through tough times.

—Adriana Martinez

**Highlight:**  
**Meet CCSA's Board**

**JENNIFER LACEWELL** is the Director of the White Rock Child Development Center in Durham, N.C. Lacewell has served young children and families for more than 16 years. She has been a member of CCSA's board of directors for three years, and is a member of the Durham County NC Pre-K School Readiness Committee, the Durham Pre-K Quality Subcommittee, the National Association for the Education of Young Children and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in family consumer science with a concentration in child development and family relations from North Carolina Central University and a Master of Education in Leadership, Policy and Advocacy in Early Childhood Education from the UNC-Wilmington. In her leisure, Lacewell enjoys spending time with family and friends, cooking, dining out, shopping, playing board games, traveling and singing.



will be retiring from the board at the end of this year, but her center will continue working closely with CCSA through its services. Lacewell is married and has three children, now all adults. She is an avid reader of fiction and historical research in both English and Spanish, enjoys working out, spending time at the beach and traveling in her spare time.

**Q: How has COVID impacted your career as a child care provider?**

**A:** As a child care provider, we basically had to re-envision our role as leaders, having to incorporate technology more into the program. We also became more of health educators to keep our staff and children safe...We really had to reinvent how we teach and operate. We did the hybrid schedule for the first time ever last year in my pre-K classroom. Half were at home, half in the classroom. We shifted

to doing virtual even before NC Pre-K and Durham Pre-K mandated it. It shifted our whole role, what it means to be in early childhood education. We've extended pre-K to more families virtually...It shifted how we engage with families and the community. Our program came out with a lot of resources, and we're geared and ready to go virtually and electronically moving forward to continue these practices. I'm proud to say my staff handled the transition exceptionally well.

I am proud, in this moment, to be an early education advocate. I'm grateful that legislators are starting to recognize how valuable early education and early intervention services are, and I'm starting to see how they are incorporating additional funding and they're sharing that with states because I think they finally get it. We're not by any means all the way there, but I'm glad to see early education is starting to get the attention that it deserves. I hope that we (other early education advocates and consultants) can continue to work together and show and share just how important and valuable we are as a resource, as a community, as a need for families and young children. I'm proud to be part of the Durham Pre-K Initiative, with creating universal pre-K, and that Durham County is on the right track. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve. Let's do more. 🙌

# Wrapping Up the Infant Toddler Intensive Technical Assistance Model Pilot Project

By Maggie Connolly, TA Manager at CCSA

The Infant Toddler Intensive Technical Assistance Model Pilot Project (ITITA) will end its three years of technical assistance and research on September 30, 2021. It has been an interesting, fulfilling, successful and—due to the pandemic—challenging, bumpy road.

The goal of the pilot project was to research a new design model of technical assistance that included intensive weekly TA to build strong relationships over a longer period of time (two plus years duration) with smaller caseloads (eight classrooms per TA specialist), utilizing technology as a resource for teacher reflection, focusing on a strength-based approach to build on best practices and improving teacher/child interactions resulting in better outcomes for children.

As the mentor leader on this project, I have had the privilege of coaching six technical assistance specialists in three different regions in the western part of North Carolina. What a novel idea to have a coach for the coaches!

Everyone benefits from the support of someone who can ask the right guided questions, model and mirror best practices in technical assistance and encourage the reflective process so an individual can identify for themselves better ways of doing things. I have watched them grow and gathered valuable skills as TA specialists using a reflective, strength-based approach in their coaching. They positively affected the lives of the teachers, directors, partner TAs and ultimately the children and families they served.

The final steps in data collection are underway, including post assessments of directors using the Program Administration Scale (PAS) and post assessments of teachers using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®). Here are a few lessons we learned that the research may not show us:

1. From Cohort 1 teachers (prior to pandemic), we learned starting and building a strong relationship in person is essential to good technical assistance and supporting those relationships through a virtual format is very manageable. Conversely, from Cohort 2 teachers that started during the pandemic, we discovered trying to start and build relationships through a virtual format was slower and did not produce as strong connections. As a TA manager, this leads me to believe there is no perfect substitution for direct face-to-face contact and modeling best practices for teachers.

2. We know from increased attendance and director's comments that monthly Directors Leadership Academies (DLAs) were useful prior to the pandemic but they were essential during the pandemic. With the many challenges they were facing, directors' time was scarce and commuting to an in-person meeting would not have happened. However, when DLAs went to a virtual format, directors prioritized those meeting to get questions answered and to share their own experiences. This virtual format was so well received in all regions that it is likely it will continue to be an option for DLAs going forward.

3. Technology tools can be used to reflect on best practices, but they are also invaluable as a means to stay connected with trusted individuals during challenging times. Before the pandemic, some teachers and technical assistance specialists struggled to

become comfortable with the use of technology for their professional growth, but during the pandemic, teachers embraced those same tools to allow TAs to continue to support them, assess their classroom interactions and receive professional development.

4. Even with good teachers using positive interactions, children still benefit from new learning materials. With the generous support of our funders (NCDCDEE), programs and classrooms were able to replace old and get many new materials

for the children to use. Research cannot show us all the happy smiles and excited faces of the many children and teachers who were the lucky recipients of these much needed resources.

There is no sense in asking whether this design model of technical assistance would have proven to be a more effective method of sustaining positive change in teachers' practices if the pandemic had not happened. With or without a global pandemic, what elements were the most impactful and how can we build on that in the future? The final research report will help us identify this important information. However, we know this project made a difference and we cannot help but wonder how much more it could have done. 🙏



# T.E.A.C.H. Participants Won't be Stopped by COVID-19

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship recipients and sponsors in North Carolina have shown determination and perseverance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As many different challenges arose, it was expected that some T.E.A.C.H. recipients may have to put their educational pursuits on hold due to the uncertainty of employment, quickly having to adjust to online courses and many other personal circumstances. However, T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients have shown that despite these many challenges, they will not let COVID-19 stop them from reaching their educational goals.

Here are some highlights from the [2021 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Annual Report](#):

- 2,108 scholarships were awarded to 2,064 early care and education professionals in North Carolina
- More than 10,600 credit hours were completed
- 108 recipients attained a degree
- 942 licensed programs had at least one T.E.A.C.H. recipient
- 48 early care and education organizations had at least one T.E.A.C.H. recipient

## Teachers participating on the Comprehensive Associate Degree Scholarship:

- Completed an average of 14 credits hour annually,
- 9% increased their annual earnings, and
- 91% of recipients retained their employment.

## Participants in the Comprehensive Bachelor's Degree Scholarship:

- Completed an average of 16 credits hour annually,
- 11% increased their annual earnings, and
- 95% recipients retained their employment.

T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients should be very proud of their accomplishments during these uncertain times. They were able to successfully complete coursework, moving further along a degree pathway. Some completed their degrees, overcoming obstacles to do so. Employers were able to retain educated teachers, and more than 58,000 children benefited by being enrolled in early care and education settings with at least one T.E.A.C.H. recipient pursuing higher education. COVID-19 has definitely put pressures on the early care and education workforce, but their momentum continues with the support of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program. 



## “We All Need a Chance to Succeed”

“W

hen we are children, we have dreams and goals of what we are going to become and I wanted to be a pediatrician,” said Arietha Brunson, a family child care provider in Guilford County, N.C. As she grew up, Arietha found herself teaching the young children of her friends and family members, and that sparked her desire to work in early childhood.

Her interest grew after she had her first son. “As I taught him, I wanted to learn more. He was exceling in pre-K and his teachers told me to keep doing what I was doing, and I realized that I wanted to offer that to other children as well,” she said. She obtained a Bachelor’s Degree in Human Development and Family Studies with significant early childhood coursework, but she didn’t want to stop there.

Arietha is now pursuing her early childhood master’s degree at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. “My child care program is in my home now, but I hope to open a center and have even more skills when I am leading others,” she said. “I learned that the [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®](#) scholarship was there to support a master’s and that was a huge influence in my continuing. I was elated to learn that T.E.A.C.H. offers scholarships to family child care providers. It has always been my desire to get higher education and to grow in the field.”

Education is important to Arietha because she understands the role she plays for children. “We are shaping their future,” she said. “We are inspiring and impacting their lives. I’ve given them the space to discover their skills and interests, and that knowledge has grown as a result of my education. I’m very proud that I’m getting my master’s. Getting in is hard. You just never know. It was a great feat to get that acceptance letter! I hope to even go further and get my Ph. D.”

Going to school during COVID-19 has meant more online classes, which Arietha appreciates because it promotes safety. She also has heightened awareness of health and safety as a family child care provider. “COVID has changed the world. We have to be so mindful and careful since the program is in our home. We have to ask parents about their health and practices every day. We are striving to follow the rules. It’s a different time that we are in,” she said.

Her biggest challenge, though, existed even before COVID-19 and has worsened during the pandemic. “We are overworked and underpaid, and that has always been true,” Arietha said. “Parents want the best for their children, we all do, but they just can’t always pay the costs of that care. I still give care like I would to my own children, even when parents can’t pay.”

That’s where [Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS®](#) comes in. Arietha said, “AWARD\$ helps mitigate financial stress that I face as an early educator. Compensation is a big issue. It is insufficient to meet the cost of living. It has helped me be more financially successful. When families can’t pay more, it helps balance that out. Seeing growth in the children keeps me going and it’s about the passion for children, but you still need fair compensation to be able to do this work.”

Arietha is very grateful to the N.C. Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) for funding AWARD\$. She said, “I want to thank DCDEE so much for lifting the financial stress that early educators face and I want to personally thank them for contributing to my financial success.”

She also wants the same compensation opportunities for others in the field. She said, “Both WAGE\$ and AWARD\$ are helping to alleviate the financial burden that we have faced, and I would like to see WAGE\$ funded in every county because Guilford doesn’t have access to WAGE\$. We all need a chance to succeed.” 



“I think WAGES is important because it helps retain staff at their child care centers, which promotes a sense of stability for the children. It also makes the teachers feel appreciated for their work, dedication to the children and helps boost their income,” said Kimberly Elliott, a Cleveland County, N.C., teacher.



# WAGES Supplements Make Education and Retention More Possible

motivated her to move to a child care center where she could work with children from birth to 5. This same passion for young children also influenced her education pathway.

She is back in school, taking two courses a semester, in order to complete a bachelor's degree in early childhood. The **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program** is helping her do that. Kimberly said, “T.E.A.C.H. pays for my classes, which is an awesome thing. Other staff are asking me about classes and I explain T.E.A.C.H. to them too. Several of my coworkers are signing up on T.E.A.C.H. to take classes. I explain WAGES as well so they can benefit from both programs!”

Kimberly's coursework has helped her grow as a teacher. “Things change and you need to keep up. To refresh what you know. I've had really interesting classes and I love getting new ideas to use in my classroom,” said Kimberly.

When she first started working on her

degree, she said it was all “pen and paper.” She's proud that she has successfully adjusted to online classes. “Finding time for school while working full-time and taking care of my family has been a challenge, though,” Kimberly said. “I was struggling with time management, but now I've got it under control. I'm even getting my assignments done early.”

“WAGES encouraged me to get more education because my supplement increases and I'm explaining that to my coworkers because it really is a benefit,” she said. “I am grateful for this funding. It has helped me in so many ways. It is a cushion to fall back on. I was going to drive my old car until the wheels fell off, but it started having issues and WAGES helped me feel comfortable enough to get a new car! It has helped me personally and professionally. It helps retain early childhood educators. We don't make much and we love the children, so we want to stay and this helps make it possible.”

## Providing a Wealth of Information on North Carolina's Child Care and the Workforce

For decades, Child Care Services Association has been instrumental in providing public policy research to state and local leaders, child care providers, funders and other community members throughout North Carolina. Though based in the Triangle, early care and education data is gathered and presented for counties across the state. CCSA is committed to assisting state and local partners with a breadth of easy-to-access and easy-to-understand system-level information to help guide programmatic and funding decisions. CCSA's online data repository is one source of information gathered from a number of different sources.

CCSA's data repository includes five factsheets for each of North Carolina's 100 counties as well as the state. The factsheets provide comprehensive data from a number of different sources, including data from the Division of Child Development and Early Education, Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral, the Department of Public Instruction and census data. The information is divided into factsheets on different topics: Child Care in North Carolina, Young Children and their Families, Early Care and Education Use, Early Care and Education Programs and Infant and Toddler Care.

These early care and education factsheets are updated monthly, as

The collage features five factsheets with various charts and text:

- Child Care in North Carolina:** Includes a bar chart showing the number of children in child care by age group (0-2, 3-5, 6-12) and a pie chart showing the percentage of children in different types of care (center-based, home-based, etc.).
- Young Children and their Families:** Includes a bar chart showing the percentage of children in different age groups (0-2, 3-5, 6-12) and a pie chart showing the percentage of children in different types of care.
- Early Care & Education Use:** Includes a bar chart showing the percentage of children in different age groups and a pie chart showing the percentage of children in different types of care.
- Early Care & Education Programs:** Includes a bar chart showing the percentage of children in different age groups and a pie chart showing the percentage of children in different types of care.
- Child Care and Family Budgets:** Includes a bar chart showing the percentage of children in different age groups and a pie chart showing the percentage of children in different types of care.

data is available, allowing users to receive the most current information on various topics. Similarly, data is available at your fingertips for a look back at historic trends. Though data online is only available from 2014 forward, CCSA has produced factsheets similar to the Child Care in North Carolina factsheet since the 1990s and has this information available by request.

[Check out CCSA's online data repository today.](#)

# Wake County Mother: CCSA's Child Care Referral Central Makes Finding the Right Child Care “Easy Breezy”

By Peyton Kelly, CCSA Summer 2021 Communications Intern

Are you struggling to find appropriate care for your child? Are you or your child in a unique situation that makes it difficult to choose a program that fits your needs? Consuelo Martinez knows how you feel. Consuelo is a first-time mother who reached out to us in early June looking for guidance about choosing an appropriate program for her 2-year-old son. Her son, diagnosed with Down Syndrome, needs specific proper care for healthy development and socialization. Consuelo said, “Although [my son is] non-verbal, he can sign. He can communicate really well when he wants.”

Consuelo moved to Wake County, N.C., in March. Since her son's condition places him at high risk for COVID-19, the 2-year-old has been at home with just her the past few months. Consuelo shared, “[One] of our bigger concerns in getting him into [child] care is just for him to socialize with other peers... He gets therapy a couple times a week, so we already have those services. It was more for him to interact with other kids. We've noticed he models behavior very well. If he sees another child doing something, he ends up doing it a few minutes later, which, so far, has been good. We really just wanted him to be motivated, and at least now a good chunk of adults are vaccinated, so it just seemed like a safer time for him to go.”

New to the area, the Martinez family knew next to nothing about the various programs available to them. Consuelo shared, “Our vision for him is

to be a well-rounded member of the community, which includes everyone.”

Having just moved, and with another baby on the way just a week before their son's third birthday, the Martinez family had their hands full, including finding child care for their son. When discussing the situation with her son's Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) coordinator, Consuelo was referred to [Child Care Services Association's](#)

[Child Care Referral Central \(CCRC\) program](#) to help her with the process. Consuelo said her son's CDSA coordinator told her, “there's this service where you just call them and talk to them, and they help you find child care...’ I was like, ‘seriously? This is what I need.’”

The CCRC program at CCSA is a regional collaboration dedicated to helping families find affordable, high-quality child care appropriate for their children's specific needs.

CCRC has bilingual child care referral specialists available to help take the guesswork out of choosing care from the vast number of centers in **Alamance, Caswell, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Orange, Person, Vance and Wake counties in North Carolina.** When you contact CCRC, a specialist will provide information about the types of child care available in your community, educate you on the features of high-quality child care and offer a list of appropriate referrals to child care programs that meet the needs of you and your child/children.

[Read more of Consuelo's story.](#)





## NATIONAL NEWS

### CONSENSUS STUDY:

## Exploring the Opportunity Gap for Young Children from Birth to Age 8

This project is conducting a consensus study that addresses the research on the relationship between the opportunity and achievement gaps for young children from birth to age 8, and that makes recommendations on how to improve conditions and promote success for children—at home, in communities and in schools.

The committee has held four meetings to date. [Learn More.](#)

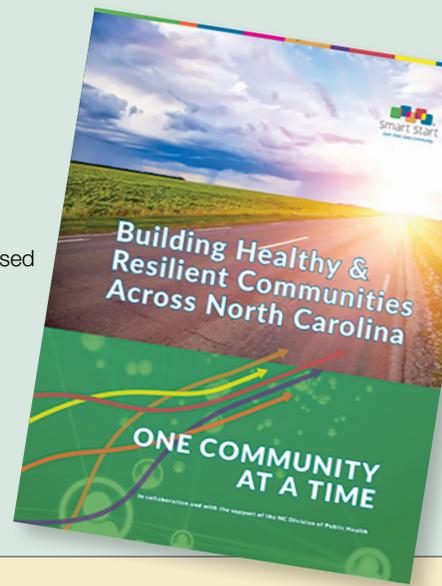
**Sponsors:** Administration for Children and Families, Bainum Family Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Brady Education Foundation, Foundation for Child Development, Heising-Simons Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



## NORTH CAROLINA NEWS

### NCPC Releases New Report

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) released [Building Healthy & Resilient Communities Across North Carolina: One Community at a Time](#), a landscape analysis that supports local coalitions and collaboratives working to address adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and build resilience across the state. Created with the support of the Division of Public Health, the new report is the culmination of the first phase of the [NC Healthy and Resilient Communities Initiative](#).



### Designing Early Childhood Educator Residency/Apprenticeship Programs: A Guide to Estimating Costs

Emily Sharrock and Courtney Parkerson from Bank Street College of Education released a new guide, [Designing Early Childhood Educator Residency/Apprenticeship Programs: A Guide to Estimating Costs](#). This guide was created to



support states, cities and communities in understanding the design and cost considerations associated with establishing high-quality residency or apprenticeship programs for early childhood educators.

### Early Care & Education Consortium Releases Paper

An affordable, accessible high-quality early care and education system is achievable by efficiently and effectively leveraging existing infrastructure with enhanced funding. This paper outlines specific policy recommendations that promote high-quality early care and education options for all children and families. These recommendations are interconnected, as the issues are linked, and tackling one alone will not address the changes that are needed to ensure a high-quality, sustainable early care and education system.

[Read the ECEC paper here.](#)



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### Opportunities Exchange

## VIEWING COMPENSATION THROUGH A SHARED SERVICES LENS

By Louise Stony  
July, 2021

In June 2021, NAEYC released an excellent brief, **Compensation Matters: How** that outlined why and how states should use funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to increase compensation for the Early Care and Education (ECE) workforce. The brief concludes that to achieve lasting increases in compensation for the sector, action needs to go beyond bonuses or hazard pay but include strategies for ongoing, sustainable wage increases. Additionally, NAEYC underscores strategies to increase access to benefits, enhance program stability and accountability, and prepare for mixed-salary success.

The action areas identified by NAEYC are spot on, and the more detailed policies recommended in the brief are key. However, there is one missing ingredient that Opportunities Exchange feels is essential: strategies to effectively scale the sector. Even with supportive public policy, most ECE businesses in the US are simply too small to implement the proposed actions. However, if these recommendations are viewed through a Shared Services lens, not only is access possible but the field can begin to position itself for incremental improvements over time.

**Shared Services**  
Wages for child care teachers have remained at poverty levels for years, despite numerous increases in public funding, on-site training and professional development initiatives, and increased focus on compensation. It's clear that at the state level, however, suggests that wages often vary significantly by supply. Classroom teacher wages are generally higher in non-profit programs and larger multi-state, and significantly higher in programs that receive Head Start funding or are sponsored by public schools. In other words, child care programs sponsored by, or in need of, organizations that offer scale are often able to pay higher wages.

Opportunities Exchange has direct experience with organizations focused on scaling administrative tasks so that maximum dollars can be shifted into teacher wages. When routine administrative functions are scaled via technology and contracted staff, centers not only find they need fewer managers or clerical staff, but overall revenues typically increase. Savings and increased revenues can boost teacher compensation and benefits alongside improved working conditions like paid time off and paid sick leave. When program leaders begin to explore new supervisory and staffing patterns, it also becomes possible to offer teachers innovative opportunities for peer leadership—which brings greater meaning to the work and boosts retention.

Home-based providers also benefit from scaled supports. In addition to scaling time their rights and resources spent on paperwork and finance, and money from access to bulk purchase discounts, home-based providers typically see revenue increase and cash flow stabilize when they have help managing the **Top 10 Risks of ECE Finance**.

## New Release— Understanding the cost of quality child care in New Mexico: A cost estimation model to inform subsidy rate setting

Recent significant positive changes in early care and education in New Mexico encouraged state leaders to seek federal approval to pursue alternative methodology for setting child care subsidy rates under the Child Care Development Block Grant.

[View report here.](#)



Understanding the cost of quality child care in New Mexico: A cost estimation model to inform subsidy rate setting

Jeanna Capito  
Jessica Rodriguez-Duggan  
Simon Workman

June 2021




**Early Head Start Programs, Staff, and Infants/Toddlers and Families Served: Baby FACES 2018 Data Tables**

OPRE Report 2021-92  
June 2021

## Understanding Key Information About Baby FACES

This report shares key information about the Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (Baby FACES), including the design, methods and findings from the 2018 wave of data collection. It includes information about the Early Head Start program, center-based and home visiting services and staff, the families served, how children and families are doing in important areas of child and family well-being and a snapshot of how Early Head Start programs support responsive relationships between infants/toddlers and their parents and caregivers.

[Read the Report.](#)

## Opportunities Exchange: Viewing Compensation Through a Shared Services Lens

New paper by Louise Stony who says that not only is success possible but the field can begin to position itself for incremental improvements over time.

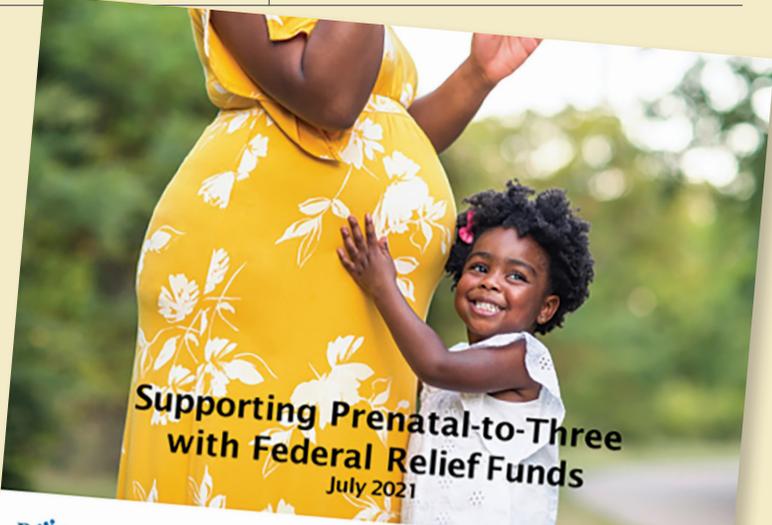
[Read the paper here.](#)

## Supporting Prenatal-to-Three with Federal Relief Funds

BUILD Initiative, in collaboration with EducationCounsel, Center for Law and Social Policy, Georgetown Center for Children and Families and Linchpin Strategies, released *Supporting Prenatal-to-Three with Federal Relief Funds*. This report is designed to respond to the strategies that prenatal-to-three networks have identified as core to their goals and support coalitions as they leverage the range of federal relief funds going to state and localities to support priority strategies for each prenatal-to-three coalition.

[Read the report here.](#)

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**Supporting Prenatal-to-Three with Federal Relief Funds**  
July 2021

Build  
EducationCounsel  
CLASP  
Congressional Health Policy Institute  
Linchpin Strategies  
National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers  
Early Childhood HUB



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## Small Steps for Big Vision: An Eye Health Information Tool Kit for Parents and Caregivers

The National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness partnered with the National Head Start Association to create an online resource—[Small Steps for Big Vision: An Eye Health Information Tool Kit for Parents and](#)

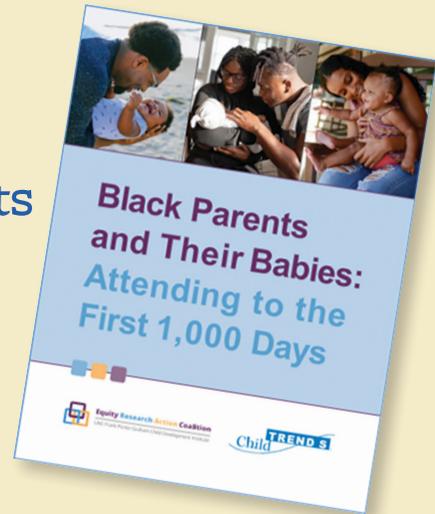


[Caregivers](#)—to provide parents and caregivers with the information, suggested actions and assistance they

need to be empowered partners in their children’s vision and eye health and to care for their own vision and eye health.

The tool kit was designed for use by Head Start and Early Head Start programs, as well as any early childhood education and care program. [View the toolkit here.](#)

## Black Parents and Their Babies: Attending to the First 1,000 Days



The University of North Carolina’s Equity Research Action Coalition, in collaboration with Child Trends, just released the first-ever Black families and babies report, using data from the RAPID-EC project.

[Black Parents and Their Babies: Attending to the First 1,000 Days](#) is focused on identifying the strengths-based programs and policies that support the well-being of Black families. It emphasizes that Black families are best supported when there is an intentional focus on designing systems and implementing programs, interventions and strategies which build upon their cultural assets and strengths.



## SUPPORT CCSA

Whether through helping low-income families afford quality child care, child care referrals, salary supplements for our underpaid early childhood educators or educational scholarships to allow the workforce who teach our young children to continue their own education, CCSA’s vision is that all children have equitable access to affordable, high quality early care and education to lay the foundation for successful life outcomes. We can’t do it without you!

Please consider giving to CCSA online at <https://www.childcareservices.org/donate> or by calling Kara Shultz at (919) 969-1927. Checks may be mailed to CCSA, PO Box 901, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Thank you!



## CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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The CCSA Communicates newsletter contains links to other web-sites and news articles. These links represent just a few examples of the numerous reference materials currently available to the public. The opinions expressed in any articles or web pages do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of Child Care Services Association. The inclusion of resources should not be construed or interpreted as an endorsement of any private organization or business listed herein.