

**Forging the Future:
The Strategic Plan for Child Care and Development
for
Los Angeles County**



**Revised December 2007
Prepared by the County of Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee**



Outcome Area I: Consistently High Quality

Goal: Ensure standards of quality in early care and education and supervised school age settings.

Strategy 1.	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Facilitate the development and implementation of standards of quality that apply to all types of providers and which will help improve the quality of early care and education experiences for children.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure alignment of standards among Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), California Department of Education, Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) Desired Results for Children and Families, Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations, Preschool Learning Foundations, and national accreditation standards as the standards are further refined for Steps to Excellence Project (STEP). (2010) 2. Develop a statement of quality to be promoted with all school-age programs that emphasizes the whole child including social/emotional, physical and academic components. (2008) 3. Ensure wider access to supports for quality improvement through a variety of venues and sources, including state and federally funded training. (2008-11) 4. Develop recommendations for improving the quality of care provided by license-exempt individual providers. (2008-10) 	Enable all types of settings and program types to meet the higher standards.
Strategy 2.	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives(2013)
Develop an evaluation and certification process for centers and family child care homes based on accepted quality standards.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and evaluate the pilot implementation of STEP. (2009) 2. Fifteen (15) percent of centers and five (5) percent of family child care homes will meet 4 or 5 star qualifications or have obtained national accreditation. (2011) 3. Promote statewide support for a quality rating system. (2008-11) 4. Ensure an adequate supply of knowledgeable, appropriately trained, reliable, and objective reviewers using the standard assessment tools for quality rating systems. (2010) 	<p>Expand STEP participation to include at least half of centers and homes.</p> <p>At least half of all participating centers and homes will rate 3 stars or better. California has approved and funded a quality rating system that includes key components of STEP.</p> <p>The public is knowledgeable about the quality rating system for early care and education settings.</p>
Strategy 3.	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Create links between government subsidies for early care and education services and evaluation and certification results.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with stakeholders to develop a policy for linking funding to quality. (2008-2011) 	Enact legislation that implements and funds the recommended policy linking funding to quality which includes an appropriate appeals process.

Outcome Area II: Well Qualified and Well Compensated Workforce

Goal: Ensure that staff in early care and education, and supervised school-age enrichment programs are well-qualified and well-compensated.

Strategy 1	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Develop policies and initiatives that enable early care and education and school-age care personnel to earn wages comparable to workers in other fields with similar qualifications.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update and broadly promote the model compensation scale. (2008) 2. Using the model compensation scale and true cost of quality sample budgets, develop recommendations for appropriate government funding which recognizes levels of quality in early care and education services. (2008-09) 3. Conduct an updated compensation study to measure changes in compensation levels for child development teachers. 	<p>Enact legislation that implements and funds the recommended policy linking funding to quality.</p>
Strategy 2	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Facilitate standards and practices that enable early care and education and school-age care personnel to meet professional standards and demonstrate core competencies in their work with children.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to encourage alignment and articulation among colleges and between the two and four year college systems so that the number of child development students from community colleges who matriculate to four colleges is increased by twenty-five (25) percent. (2010) 2. Promote high quality training and education by working with the community colleges and other appropriate training partners to identify improvements toward greater academic and practical competency for students of child development, including: working with dual language learners; children with disabilities and other special needs; understanding of the Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations; and developmentally appropriate practice. (2008-2011) 3. Increase access to information on the Child Development Permit standards for providers/teachers and promote continuing education to upgrade permits. (2009) 4. Increase opportunities for eligible teachers and providers to become Professional Growth Advisors. (2008-2011) 5. Explore the feasibility of enhancing teacher and staff qualifications in Title 22. (2010) 6. Explore the feasibility of enhancing teacher and staff qualifications in Title 5. (2010) 	<p>Increase the number of early care and education staff with Bachelor or Art degrees working in centers by forty (40) percent.</p> <p>Ten (10) percent of Family Child Care providers will hold child development teachers permits</p> <p>Ninety (90) percent of all staff in CDE/CDD-contracted programs will have had training or coursework in: working with dual language learners; working with children with disabilities and other special needs; understanding of the Infant/Toddler and Preschool Learning Foundations; and in developmentally appropriate practice.</p>

Outcome Area II: Well Qualified and Well Compensated Workforce

Goal: Ensure that staff in early care and education, and supervised school-age enrichment programs are well-qualified and well-compensated.

Strategy 3	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Collaborate with other stakeholders to develop and implement workforce initiatives that increase the numbers and qualifications of early childhood professionals.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminate the results of the workforce analysis for Los Angeles County, which includes careers in infant, preschool, and school-age programs. (2008-09) 2. Support and collaborate with workforce initiative efforts through First 5 LA, LAUP, Head Start and Early Head Start, and the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles. (2008-2010) 3. Initiate or assist with efforts to recruit appropriate personnel for the expanded school-age programs. (2009) 	Any one interested in pursuing work in early care and education or school-age care will have easy access to information about career paths, competencies, and requirements.
Strategy 4.	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Increase access to health care coverage for staff of early care and education and supervised school age programs, and for family child care providers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support efforts to expand availability of affordable health care coverage for all. (2008-2011) 2. Support pilot initiatives that appropriately address health care coverage needs of early education staff and providers in the short term. (2008-2010). 3. Conduct and update compensation survey to collect data on health care coverage. (2010). 	All early care and education and school-age personnel and providers have access to affordable health care.

Outcome Area III: Access to a Sufficient Supply

Goal: Ensure that all families in the County have access to a sufficient supply of quality early care and education and supervised school-age enrichment options for children from birth to 13.

Strategy 1	Objectives (2008-2013)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Increase the supply of facilities in Los Angeles County with special consideration for children with disabilities and other special needs, and for the cultural and linguistic diversity of families.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue working to reduce barriers due to zoning regulations and expensive permit requirements in cities throughout the County. (2010) 2. Facilitate a coordinated system of technical assistance for new or expanding center or home-based child care. (2010) 3. Include child care language in the general plan for county unincorporated areas. (2010) 	<p>The shortfall in licensed care reported in the 2006 Needs Assessment will be reduced by up to half.</p> <p>Half of all Los Angeles County cities will include child care language in their general plans.</p>
Strategy 2	Objectives (2008-2013)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Increase the availability of and access to appropriate options for children with disabilities and other special needs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the integration of Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP) services into ongoing child care resource and referral (R&R) activities and support necessary funding to maintain SNAP specialists in each R&R. (2008-09) 2. Encourage integration among systems which serve children with disabilities and other special needs, including R&Rs, regional centers, and school districts. (2008-11) 3. Identify and encourage the development of model programs and family child care homes serving children with disabilities and other special needs. (2008-11) 4. Establish more connections between child care providers and early intervention specialists, mental health specialists, and other therapists to enable providers to work effectively with children with special needs in typical early care and education settings. (2010) 5. Maintain links from the Office of Child Care Web site to helpful resources and information on programs and services related to working with children with special needs available to early care and education providers and the families they serve. (2009-10) 	<p>Half of all early care and education and school-age enrichment options will have the capacity to serve children with disabilities and other special needs.</p> <p>Seventy-five (75) percent of Los Angeles County colleges will offer unit bearing training to work with children with disabilities and other special needs, either through specific classes or through embedding special needs curriculum into core courses.</p> <p>Half of the specialists in early intervention, mental health, etc., throughout the County will have worked directly with licensed child care providers/programs.</p>

Outcome Area III: Access to a Sufficient Supply

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Strategy 3	Objectives (2008-2013)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Increase the availability of before and after school programs on school sites.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor the increases and closures in school-based care. (2008-10) 2. Develop a campaign to promote on-site school-age care to school districts that have not made after-school care available. (2008-09) 3. Assess the family needs for before school child care in public schools. (2009-10) 	<p>Ninety-five (95) percent all public elementary school campuses will offer after-school care and, where there is a need, offer before school care as well.</p>
Strategy 4	Objectives (2008-2013)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Increase the retention rate of Family Child Care Home providers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that potential family child care providers continue to receive technical assistance prior to licensure. (2008-2011) 2. Continue to support training and technical assistance through R&Rs, the media, and other sources to improve the quality and viability of family child care. (2007-11) 3. Support efforts to expand availability of affordable health care coverage for all. (2008-11) 	<p>Seventy-five (75) percent of family child care providers will have an average tenure of five or more years.</p>

Outcome Area IV: Access to Affordable, Quality Care

Goal: Ensure access to quality early care and education and supervised school-age care for all families.

Strategy 1	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Increase availability of publicly funded subsidies for child care.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review CDE allocations for all CDE/CDD contract types for Los Angeles County in order to recommend more effective use of CDE resources to the Board of Supervisors. (2008-2010) 2. Periodically report on Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL) families. (2008-2010) 3. Distribute the results of the Economic Impact Study to promote investment in early care and education services. (2008) 4. Review and revise cost estimates for serving all eligible families in Los Angeles County. (2009) 5. Using all reports and data, set priorities for growth in public support and develop plan for affecting public policy related to support for early care and education subsidies. (2010) 6. Support increasing income eligibility level for families to qualify for federally funded child development programs such as Head Start. 	With key stakeholders sponsor and/or promote legislation that would fully fund early care and education and school-age care services for all eligible children and families.
Strategy 2	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Increase the role of employers/business in assisting with the cost of child care.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate and promote the County's model of contributions to the Dependent Care Spending Account for low/moderate income employees. (2008-10) 2. Encourage unions, in negotiations with employers, to include child care support as part of the benefit package. (2009-11) 3. Encourage employers to include child care supports as part of benefit menus offered to employees. (ongoing) 	Twice the current numbers of employers/businesses are contributing to the support of child care costs for their employee/parents.
Strategy 3	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
Increase involvement by cities, community organizations, foundations, and others to develop and maintain alternative financial supports and scholarships for families who do not qualify for government child care subsidies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify alternative financial support models (e.g. sliding scale fees) that assist in underwriting the cost of quality child care for families who do not qualify for government child care subsidies. (2008-09) 2. Disseminate information on these models of alternative financial support and encourage their use. (2009-11) 3. Use appropriate reports/data to encourage cities, community organizations, foundations, and other groups to develop financial supports available to families who do not qualify for government child care subsidies. (2010-2011) 	Twice the current numbers of alternative financial support initiatives are available to families who are not eligible for government child care subsidies.

Outcome Area V: Customer-Focused Infrastructure

Goal: Ensure that the child care and development infrastructure of Los Angeles County will be customer-focused, providing quality services and information leading to appropriate care arrangements based on the needs of families.

Strategy 1	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Implement a comprehensive outreach plan to inform potentially eligible families about the LACEL.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a public outreach plan directed at eligible families to improve access to LACEL. (2008-10) 2. Link the LACEL to other County services that families may need/be eligible for through mechanisms such as LACountyHelps! (2008) 3. Develop and implement a quality assurance plan to ensure that LACEL data is current and accurate. (2008-2009) 4. Work to develop the capacity for parents to self-register on LACEL. (2009-2011) 	<p>Los Angeles County parents are familiar with LACEL and able to register themselves.</p>
Strategy 2	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Monitor impact of new policies and regulations governing the subsidized child care system related to administrative and program costs, provider participation, family access to services, and continuity of services for families.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When needed, advocate for changes in rules, regulations, and contracting processes that improve access and continuity for families eligible for subsidized child care. (2008-11). 	<p>CDE/CDD contractors have greater flexibility in implementing contracts to meet the specific needs of families and children within their service areas.</p>
Strategy 3	Objectives (2008-2011)	Long Term Objectives (2013)
<p>Improve customer service standards of all agencies that provide information, monitor regulations, administer subsidies, and offer other support to families and child care providers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminate Los Angeles County customer-service standards as a model. (2008-09) 2. Research National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation statements and California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) statements related to center/provider customer service standards. (2008-08) 	<p>All early care and education and school-age services agencies have published customer service standards which are fully implemented.</p>

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Strategy 4	Objectives (2008-2013)	Long Term Objectives(2013)
<p>Increase the connections between early care and education and school-age care providers and other health and social services providers to ensure that children's developmental needs are met within the context of the family and the child's child care environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with countywide groups of service providers such as ICARE to increase linkages between early care and education and school-age care service providers who provide services to children with special needs (see Outcome Area III, Strategy 2). (2008-2011) 2. Work to integrate a child screening and referral process into typical early care and education and school-age care settings, including use of screening tools that are valid and reliable. (2010) 3. Ensure that the Los Angeles County Plan for Prevention and Early Intervention Services through the Mental Health Services Act includes services for children 0-5 in early care and education settings. (2010) 	<p>Half of all specialists in early intervention, mental health, etc., throughout the County will have established working relationships with licensed home and/or center-based child care providers.</p> <p>Half of all licensed early care and education settings will have integrated regular child screening and referrals to services into their normal operations.</p>

Key to Terms and Acronyms

Commission on Teacher Credentialing	State board that certifies teachers and grants child development permits.
Desired Results for Children and Families	A system of child and program assessments required of all CDE/CDD-contracted child care and development contractors.
ICARE	The Infant Childhood and Relationship Enrichment is a network of early mental health and child development professionals.
LACEL	The Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List is a database of low income families seeking child care subsidies.
National accreditation	References the quality assessments and certifications conducted under the auspice of various national professional organizations: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), National Institute of Out of School Time (NIOSST.)
R&Rs	A service funded by the CDE to assist families in finding appropriate child care. There are 10 R&Rs in Los Angeles County.
SNAP	Special Needs Advisory Project administered by the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies of Los Angeles County to support child care providers who serve children with special needs and to assist families with children with special needs in finding child care.
Training partners	May include: California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN), West Ed Center for Early Development, Head Start, Program for Infant/Toddler Care, Early Start Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, etc.