



2005
child care and
early education
in Maryland

A guide to Maryland's child care system



The State of Maryland has a rich and long history of supporting child care, early education, and the families who use and need care for their children. Currently over 217,616 children and their families rely on licensed child care in order for parents to work, go to school, or attend training.

Not only does quality child care enable parents to go to work, school, or training, without worrying about their children, but child care is also a significant industry in the state of Maryland. The child care industry employs more than (to be filled in) individuals in group settings 24,860 and engages 10,176 family child care providers directly. As care and education service, child care generates more than \$1,016,836,077 in gross receipts, not counting payroll and secondary service benefits.

The state has provided a number of unique and innovative child care support vehicles for parents, child care providers, early educators, employers and communities.

This overview is designed to give the reader an understanding of the rich and varied landscape of child care and early education in Maryland.



safety



Child Care Regulation

The regulation of child care has been a central organizing theme in child care for a number of years. The responsibility for this activity lies with the Child Care Administration (CCA) in the Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR). CCA regulates family child care providers, who can care for up to eight children in their own home; small group centers which generally accommodate between nine and twelve children, and child care centers which accommodate larger numbers of children. Maryland's regulation of child care has been cited as one of the reasons that Maryland has been named one of the leading states for child care by *Working Mother Magazine* for many years. Maryland has incorporated a number of features into its regulatory system, including:

Key Indicators System

The Key Indicator System is a licensing instrument that focuses on areas of a child care program that have been identified as factors that predict compliance with the larger body of child care regulations. It is used in those settings that have already been identified as high compliance programs. The Key Indicators System is used for child care centers and family child care homes and is a shorter version of CCA's regular full-length inspection used to assess compliance with applicable regulations. Key indicators may only be used with providers who meet certain criteria. This system is less burdensome for high compliance programs, is based on a significant body of research, and allows CCA staff more time to work with operators who have difficulty in meeting the licensing criteria.

Non-expiring child care licenses

Effective January 1, 2005, Maryland moved to a system of non-expiring child care licenses. Under this system, providers may receive a permanent license after completing an initial two-year license period. By providing greater administrative efficiencies, non-expiring licenses enable more licensing staff time to be directed to conducting routine inspections of regulated child care programs. It also provides additional time for licensing staff to give technical assistance to child care program operators.

Letters of Compliance for church operated facilities

These enable the Child Care Administration to ensure that facilities operated by the faith community meet applicable health and safety criteria but do not carry any requirements regarding program content or staff qualifications.

Partners Newsletter

Published by the Child Care Administration and sent to each regulated provider, Partners addresses regulations, opportunities, health and safety concerns, and other issues of interest to providers.

The Child Care Administration Advisory Council

This body, composed of providers, agency personnel, advocates, and other community members, advises CCA on policies, procedures, and issues.

Established Adult-Child Ratios

Adult child ratios provide an accurate assessment of the amount of attention received by children in care outside of their own homes. In centers, the recommended adult child ratio is one adult caregiver for each three infants, with a maximum group size of six infants; one adult caregiver for each ten preschoolers, with a maximum group size of twenty; and one adult caregiver for each fifteen school age children, with a maximum group size of thirty. Maximum group size in each child care classroom is also determined by the size of the room and the amount of equipment and furniture. For a family child care provider, a typical setting is six to a maximum of eight children in care, with no more than two children under the age of two. *Office of Licensing, 410-767-7805.*

Local Regulatory Responsibility

In addition to the Child Care Administration's responsibility for regulating certain child care settings, there is also local oversight of child care settings through municipal zoning, health, and fire codes. Regional child care resource and referral centers (See list on page 5.) and CCA Regional Offices can provide information on this local oversight.



affordability

Purchase of Care Program

The Purchase of Care (POC) Program is a child care subsidy that assists low-income families with paying for child care. POC is funded by federal and state general funds through the Department of Human Resources (DHR) Child Care Administration (CCA) and is administered by local departments of social services (DSS). The local DSS office gives an eligible family a voucher for each child needing care. The family purchases child care directly from the provider, paying any difference between the actual cost of care and the amount that the voucher pays. In Maryland, 20,787 full-time child-care slots are fully or partially subsidized by the POC Program. Although this accounts for only 3% of the care in Maryland, its impact on the wider child care industry is significant. Interested parents should contact their local child care resource center for POC information (see listing, page 5). *Office of Program Development, 410-767-7840.*

Montgomery County has created the Working Parents Assistance Program (WPA) to augment the state's Purchase of Care Program. The WPA commits county funds to the goal of helping parents meet the costs of child care and allows more Montgomery County families to receive a child care subsidy. *Working Parents Assistance Program, 240-777-1155.*

Judith P. Hoyer Blue Ribbon Commission on the Financing of Early Child Care and Education

The Hoyer Commission, which met during 2000/2001, was charged with examining the costs and availability of funding for early child care and education in Maryland. The Commission proposed a number of specific actions the State could take to bring more financial resources into the child care arena and make care more affordable for working parents.

Among other items, the Hoyer Commission recommended that the State of Maryland should:

- use public funds to close the salary gap between child care/Head Start workers and public school teachers/aides with comparable education and experience;

- subsidize half the cost of a child care worker purchasing health insurance;
- expand eligibility for the State Purchase of Care (POC) subsidy program from 50 percent to 70 percent of the State Median Income;
- reduce the POC co-payment amounts so that no family receiving a POC subsidy pays more than 10 percent of income toward child care;
- increase the value of the Maryland Dependent Care Credit to 100 percent of the federal credit;
- use a variety of approaches designated by the Commission to maximize financial support from the federal, state, and local government, as well as the private and non-profit sectors, with special attention to the expanded use of the child care resource centers as facilitators of public/private partnerships; and
- raise awareness of child care and early education issues among parents and the business community.

The recommendations of the Hoyer Commission were incorporated into *Achieving School Readiness: A 5-Year Action Agenda for Maryland* presented to the Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families by the Leadership in Action Program in October, 2002.

The Hoyer Commission Report is available in the Public Policy section of the MCC website, www.mdchildcare.org.

Maryland Earned Income Credit Campaign

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a tax benefit for low- and moderate-income individuals who work full-time, part-time, or part of the year. The EIC is a refundable tax credit designed to reduce the tax burden on low- and moderate-income families, supplement their incomes, and make work more rewarding than welfare. Working families in Maryland can benefit from both the state and federal EIC, and those in Montgomery County can claim the first-in-the-nation county EIC.

The EIC has the potential to help families achieve financial independence and stability. In 2004, a working parent supporting two or more children on a minimum-wage job could get as much as \$5,000 from the state and federal EIC. The collective impact on

families and local communities is substantial: in 2002, the federal EIC put over \$550 million into the pockets of working families and individuals in Maryland, and the refundable state EIC added another \$54 million.

Although the EIC can bring much needed assistance to low- and moderate-income families, many families do not claim it. Public education and technical assistance are necessary to ensure that the tax credit is widely used. Therefore, MCC convenes an annual outreach campaign, funded by the Department of Human Resources, to publicize the benefits of the

EIC. In this effort, MCC is joined by 150 partner organizations statewide, each of whom distributes EIC information to their constituents, clients, and/or employees through their unique organizational structures. A recent grant from PEPSCO has enabled the Maryland EIC Campaign to intensify its outreach efforts, and provide free tax preparation services, to residents of Prince George's, Montgomery, Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester Counties. *Maryland Committee for Children, 410-752-7588 x 226. www.mdchildcare.org/eic*

Day Care Financing Programs
Department of Human Resources Family Grant Program
The Subcabinet After School Opportunity Fund Program

availability



Day Care Financing Programs

Maryland's Department of Business and Economic Development provides financing to promote the development and/or expansion of quality day care facilities for children, adults, and disabled people of all ages:

- **The Child Care Special Loan Fund** provides direct loans up to \$10,000 to eligible providers at fixed or below market rates. The loans are for furniture, supplies and equipment, training, and upgrades to meet state and local licensing requirements or to accommodate people with special needs.
- **The Day Care Facilities Direct Loan Fund** is designed to finance up to 50 percent of the cost of the expansion or development of a child care facility. Loans may be used for construction, renovation or acquisition of real property, or to finance lease-hold improvements. The minimum amount that may be borrowed is \$15,000.
- **The Day Care Facilities Loan Guarantee Fund** provides loan guarantees for construction, renovation, purchase of land and building, equipment, supplies, and working capital. This is not a direct loan or grant, but a guarantee of up to 80 percent of a loan provided to the applicant by a commercial bank, thrift institution, or private lender.

*Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Division of Financing Programs
410 767-6347 or 1-877-821-0099*

Department of Human Resources Family Grant Program

The Child Care Administration of the Department of Human Resources administers the Family Child Care Provider Grant Program, which offers one time grants to ease the financial burden of family child care registration. Providers applying for renewal, or new applicants about to become registered, can be reimbursed for expenses up to \$500. Allowable expenses include: safety supplies, fees for medical examinations and criminal background checks, equipment, minor household repair, training costs, and expenses related to water, sewer, and health requirements. *Office of Administrative Support and Program Development, 410-767-3389.*

The Subcabinet After School Opportunity Fund Program

The Subcabinet After School Program is a state-funded initiative administered by the twenty-four Local Management Boards. After school programs are enrichment programs for school age children that are offered before and after school and on weekends, holidays, vacations and summer break. The diversity of after school programs encompass academic enrichment, leadership development, community service learning, recreational activities, and other youth development activities. The specific after school programs available in each jurisdiction were funded in response to a collaborative community needs assessment. *The fund is administered by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families 410-767-4160.*

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quality

Maryland Child Care Resource Network

The Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN) is a network of twelve regional child care resource and referral centers (listed on page) which provide leadership and services designed to improve the quality, availability, and affordability of child care throughout Maryland.

The MCCRN is an innovative public-private partnership which was proposed by the Maryland Employers Advisory Council on Child Care (MEACC) in 1988 and supported by two Governors, the General Assembly, the business community, labor, and child care advocates. Building on a successful pilot program, the current statewide MCCRN was established in 1998, and Maryland Committee for Children functions as the Statewide Coordinating Entity (SCE) under a contract with the Department of Human Resources.

The MCCRN's regional child care resource and referral centers (CCRCs) provide child care referral, training, and technical assistance to parents, child care providers, employers, and others. Each CCRC is focused on the needs of its particular region and implements programs in ways that meet community needs. CCRC core functions include:

- **Child Care Information and Referral.**

LOCATE: Child Care is a resource and referral service which assists parents in locating and evaluating child care. It helps families identify child care best suited to their needs, preferences, and ability to pay. LOCATE: Child Care is an education and support service that respects parents' rights to choose the child care most appropriate for the child and parent.

LOCATE: Child Care's Special Needs Enhanced Service provides enhanced child care resource and referral services to families of children with disabilities. This service serves children from birth to age 21.

LOCATE: Child Care services are available in both English and Spanish. In addition, substantial outreach efforts have been made to reach the growing Hispanic population of Maryland. This outreach has been facilitated by a Spanish-speaking LOCATE counselor and by the translation of brochures and other publications into Spanish.

Between September 1990 and June 2004, MCCRN and LOCATE: Child Care have assisted 333,568 parents in finding child care for 450,022 children.

- **Training.** CCRCs provide high quality training on a wide variety of topics for child care providers, parents, and employers. In particular, the CCRCs offer training for child care providers (such as three and six hours workshops to help providers meet basic CCA requirements) and workshops for parents and the community.

A partnership of the MCCRN, Maryland Committee for Children, and the Maryland State Department of Education conducts seminars on nurturing infant brain development and on developing emotional intelligence in children. Seminars are designed for early childhood consultants, mentors, and parent educators as well as child care trainers, human service providers, and others.

Between September 1990 and June 2004, MCCRN and Training Staff have trained 158,054 individuals who were interested in providing care, improving their programs, or bettering their parenting skills.

- **Technical Assistance.** TECHNIC: Child Care provides technical assistance designed to support and expand child care in Maryland in the form of information and expert advice to current and prospective child care providers, both for family child care homes and child care centers. TECHNIC: Child Care provides a reference library and technical reference materials designed to support and expand child care service in Maryland. Basic technical assistance information is available at our website: www.mdchildcare.org in the “for providers” section. Individualized, hands-on technical assistance has, of necessity, been curtailed at most of the CCR&Rs but limited guidance is available in many areas of the state. *TECHNIC: Child Care, 410-752-7588.*

Between September 1990 and June 2003, TECHNIC: Child Care assisted 104,843 callers needing information on starting or expanding child care programs/resources, helped create 6,330 new family child care homes, assisted in the creation of 713 new or expanded child care centers, and increased the supply of child care by 62,653 spaces.

Administrative Services

The Statewide Coordinating Entity (SCE) offers a variety of services to the CCRCs. The SCE, which operated the MCCRN through the pilot phase, now provides oversight and administrative services to the MCCRN and the twelve regional CCRCs, including staffing the Network Advisory Board. The SCE provides technical assistance concerning LOCATE, TECHNIC, training, and public education. In addition, the SCE, housed at Maryland Committee for Children, has been prominent in the effort to assess the training needs and preferences of child care providers and to improve the quality of training available to them. Recently, the SCE, in collaboration with the CCRCs, developed and implemented a comprehensive Results Based Accountability System. This system allows the individual CCRCs and the SCE to evaluate program performance and improve service delivery.

The MCCRN’s Results Based Accountability evaluation for 2004 indicated that 99% of respondents rated the LOCATE: Child Care services as “very good or excellent,” and 97% rated training as “very good or excellent.”

Maryland Child Care Resource Network

Anne Arundel

Arundel Child Care Connections
77 West Street, Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-222-1720 LOCATE: 410-222-1728

Baltimore City

Baltimore City Child Care Resource Center
1645 Ridgely Street, Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21230
Phone: 410-685-5150 LOCATE: 410-539-2209

Baltimore County

Child Care Links
1101 North Point Boulevard, Suite 112
Baltimore, MD 21224
Phone: 410-288-4900 LOCATE: 410-288-5600

Frederick/Carroll

Child Care Choices
263 West Patrick Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Phone: 301-662-4549 Ext. 14 LOCATE: 301-695-4508
or 877-230-7422

Harford/Cecil

219 W. Bel Air Avenue, Suite 5
Aberdeen, MD 21001
Phone: 410-297-6590 LOCATE: 410-297-6592
or 888-297-1885

Howard

Howard County Child Care Resource Center
3300 North Ridge Road, Suite 380
Ellicott City, MD 21043
Phone: 410-313-1940 LOCATE: 410-313-1930

Lower Shore (Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester)

Lower Shore Child Care Resource Center
Power Professional Building, Suite 500
Salisbury University
Salisbury, MD 21801
Phone: 410-543-6650 LOCATE: 410-548-3279

Montgomery

Montgomery County Child Care Resource
and Referral Center
332 West Edmonston Drive
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: 301-279-1260 LOCATE: 301-279-1773

Prince George’s

Prince George’s Child Resource Center
9475 Lottsford Road, Suite 202
Largo, MD 20774
Phone: 301-772-8420 LOCATE: 301-772-8400

Southern Maryland

Southern Maryland Child Care Resource Center
29958 Killpeck Creek Court
Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
Phone: 301-290-0040; Toll free: 866-290-0040

In St. Mary’s County LOCATE: 301-290-0045
In Charles & Calvert LOCATE: 866-290-0045

Western Maryland

Apples for Children, Inc.
323 W. Memorial Boulevard
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Phone: 301-733-0000

In Allegany & Garrett counties LOCATE: 800-924-9188
In Washington County LOCATE: 301-733-6914

Upper Shore (Caroline, Kent, Dorchester, Queen Anne, Talbot)

Chesapeake Child Care Resource Center
Chesapeake College, P.O. Box 8
Wye Mills, MD 21679
Phone: 410-822-5400 LOCATE: 888-406-1453

Maryland Child Care Credential and Tiered Reimbursement

The Maryland Child Care Credential is a framework of requirements that identifies educational and experiential prerequisites for individuals working at all levels in child care. Providers enter the Credential program based on their current level of education and experience. From this starting point, they move through predetermined areas of study comprising a core body of knowledge. Designed to lead to greater professionalism, improved quality of care, and career advancement, this systematic approach allows providers to progress through six levels of achievement.

As each new level is achieved, providers receive recognition, incentives, and support. They may be eligible for funding for training vouchers, and achievement bonuses. Training vouchers are available to assist providers taking workshops or classes. Achievement bonuses are awarded to providers after they have worked for one year at their new level, completed continued training, and participated in professional activities. These bonuses are currently set at rates that range from \$200 for level two to \$1,000 for level six.

Child care facilities (including licensed child care centers and family child care providers) can qualify for the tiered reimbursement program which provides higher levels of payment for child care vouchers through the Purchase of Care program. Differential payments range from an additional 10% to 44% depending on the age of the child and type of care. In order to qualify for this tiered reimbursement system,

- Family providers and child care centers which obtain, or are in the process of obtaining, state or national accreditation and meet other quality improvement criteria may apply to participate in the program.
- Family providers and child care centers must qualify at Tiered Reimbursement Levels two, three or four tiers in order to receive financial incentives.
- Family providers must be at level two or higher in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program;
- Child Care Centers must have 60% of lead staff credentialed at level 2 or higher in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program.

Office of Credentialing, Child Care Administration of the Maryland Department of Human Resources, 410-767-7852.

In its first three-and-a-half years of operation, the Office of Credentialing issued 2,947 Maryland Child Care Credentials. They approved 117 child care facilities to receive tiered reimbursement through the Purchase of Care program.

Child Care Provider Scholarship

The Child Care Provider Scholarship, run by the Maryland Higher Education Commission's State Scholarship Administration, helps potential child care providers pay for college. Specific criteria must be met to qualify for the scholarship, which provides monies for either a community college or a four-year institution. Students who accept the scholarship must be enrolled in an Early Childhood Education or Child Development program and agree to provide one year of child care services in Maryland for each year of scholarship support, or they must pay the scholarship money back with interest. Applications are available from the State Scholarship Administration. *Child Care Provider Scholarship, 410-260-4565.*

Local Scholarship Programs

Several local jurisdictions also offer assistance to providers to pay for specific training to meet regulations or to attain accreditation. The regional child care resource and referral centers (listed on page 5) and Child Care Administration Regional Offices can provide additional information on these programs.

Needs Assessment and Community Outreach

Each CCRC acts as a catalyst and clearinghouse in its region for assessing child care needs and bringing together stakeholders to develop appropriate responses. In this capacity, CCRCs collect data which document the child care needs of families and employers as well as data on the capacity of the regional child care delivery system. CCRC regional efforts contribute to MCC's statewide needs assessment initiatives which track the need for various types of care (infant, preschool, after-school, etc.) and for provider training and other technical assistance.

The Employer Tool Kit, published by the MCCRN, provides a practical framework for CCRC efforts to engage local businesses in assessing and addressing the work/life issues – child care, chief among them – facing their employees.

The MCCRN and its services are another one of the reasons, along with a strong regulatory framework, that Maryland has for many years been named by *Working Mother Magazine* as one of the leading states in the nation for child care.

Statewide Training Clearinghouse

The Statewide Training Clearinghouse provides a unique approach to addressing the training needs of the child care community. The Clearinghouse is funded by the Child Care Development Fund through the Child Care Administration of the Maryland Department of Human Resources.

The Clearinghouse, through its collaboration of trainers, agency staff, child care providers, higher education representatives, and others has:

- convened the Training Advisory Committee (TAC), a group of trainers, community and government representatives, child care providers, and interested others, which developed *A NEW BEGINNING: A Blueprint for a Career Development and Training Plan for Maryland's Child Care Professionals*, which identifies the issues, goals, and barriers related to high quality training and the retention of well-qualified, caring staff. TAC continues to provide leadership in exploring and developing ways in which to improve the training offered to child care providers.
- developed and initiated Training of Trainers Workshops, a Professional Development Roundtable for trainers, and an annual conference designed to improve the quality of training available to child care providers;
- created a training calendar, published three times a year, that gives child care providers information on training opportunities available in their licensing region;
- formulated a "Core of Knowledge," a cohesive framework of training topics that serves as the basis for the Maryland Credential and helps providers gain a more thorough understanding of children and improve their child care settings;
- continued to support work which emphasizes the needs of families, particularly the importance of fathers in the lives of their children and families; and
- funded training on topics and in regions of the state that have been under-served by traditional training programs and training entities. *Statewide Training Clearinghouse, 410-752-7588.*

Statewide Training Clearinghouse programs have served over 14,000 child care providers and trainers to date.

Maryland Model for School Readiness

MMSR is an assessment and instructional system for adults who work with children which incorporates best practices in various aspects of early childhood education – observation, assessment, individualized instruction, and communication with parents and kindergarten teachers. MMSR is not a curriculum. Rather, it is an approach that trains early childhood teachers and caregivers to observe children individually and objectively and to tailor their curriculum – whichever it is – to the school-readiness needs of each child. School-readiness goals are clearly elaborated within the MMSR framework. Further, the Work Sampling System promoted by MMSR allows early childhood teachers and caregivers to communicate clearly with parents and kindergarten teachers about each child's school readiness. MMSR implementation in programs

across Maryland increases the likelihood that children will be better and more consistently prepared for kindergarten.

Started as a collaboration among Maryland State Department of Education, Villa Julie College, Head Start of Maryland and Maryland Committee for Children, the pilot MMSR program trained 50 providers and was funded through a grant from Baltimore Gas and Electric. Subsequently, MCC received funding from the Knott Foundation to assist MMSR graduates with the process of gaining accreditation. That pilot found that participants improved their learning environments at statistically significant levels.

In 2002, funded by a grant from the Child Care Administration, Maryland Committee for Children provided MMSR training to 200 child care providers from across the state and trained more than 45 new MMSR trainers statewide. The MMSR project also offers on-site technical assistance to program participants.

In both pilot projects, providers who completed the training showed growth in their classrooms environments (as measured by outside evaluators using the Environmental Rating Scale Assessments) that were statistically significant. In both pilot programs, growth was observed in almost all of the seven sub-scales including the areas of learning activities, basic care, social development, language and reasoning, space and furnishings and personal care routines.

MCC is currently conducting MMSR training for college credit as a result of funding from the Judith Hoyer Enhancement Grant. Additionally, under funding from the Judith Hoyer Enhancement Grant, MCC is offering OUNCE Scale Training. The OUNCE Scale is an infant and toddler assessment tool that allows infant care providers an opportunity to assess infant and toddler development, and provides information and direction for caregivers and providers of care in the developmentally appropriate activities and connections that can be done with those young children.

Program components and concepts from MMSR are being incorporated into the work of many child-serving programs including home visiting programs, family support centers, Head Start programs and other early learning environments. *Maryland Model for School Readiness, Training and Technical Assistance Department, Maryland Committee for Children, 410-752-7588.*

Judith P. Hoyer Child Care and Education Enhancement Program

The Judith Hoyer Program funds a number of initiatives designed to enhance early care and education and improve the school readiness of Maryland's children:

- Judy Center grants to local school systems to establish centers that provide coordinated, integrated services for children from birth through age six and their families,
- enhancement grants to local school systems to allow them to contract with accredited child care programs for pre-kindergarten services and for wrap-around services for three- and four-year olds, designed to establish all-day, year round early care and education services through a collaboration between LEAs and child care providers.
- enhancement grants to allow child care providers to pursue either state or national accreditation, and
- the Early Childhood Accreditation Project, which promotes a common set of quality standards for child care.

Maryland State Department of Education, 410-767-0342.

Since its inception in 2000, the Judy Hoyer Program has provided funding to 24 Judy Centers in 21 jurisdictions. In addition, through the Enhancement Program Grants, the Hoyer Program has helped fund improvements in 450 programs and assisted 6 local school systems in purchasing early care and/or family support services from accredited providers.

State-Funded Pre-kindergarten

The State supports funding for prekindergarten for 4-year olds in 24 local school systems. In school year 2003-04, there were 21,300 prekindergarten children enrolled in public schools, approximately half of them funded through the state Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP). The funding for the remainder comes from Federal sources (i.e., Head Start funding in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, and Title 1 in the rest of the state) or the school system's general funds. These programs are located in elementary schools whose student population, as determined by the local school system, has the greatest educational need. Participation in prekindergarten programs has been linked to significant progress in the achievement of young children. A longitudinal study of students attending the prekindergarten programs indicates that the early learning experiences in the programs had long-term effects on school success. Prekindergarten programs are regulated by MSDE. *More information about pre-kindergarten can be obtained from the Early Learning Office at MSDE by calling 410-767-0335.*

Head Start in Maryland

Head Start, a nationwide federally-funded program, provides comprehensive early childhood services to low-income preschoolers and their families. Components include education, health, social services, parent involvement, and disability-related services.

In Maryland, the majority of the Head Start programs are administered by nonprofit community service agencies in classroom-based programs serving three and four-year-olds. In 2003, over 260 programs served 12,869 children. All Head Start programs provide the children with at least one hot meal per day and several provide transportation. Innovative Head Start programs abound throughout Maryland, including parent-infant and transition programs, special family literacy projects, full-day, full-year child care programs, family support centers, and several unique collaboration projects with other programs and agencies. Early Head Start programs extend Head Start services to 984 children ages birth to three and 224 pregnant women, offering classroom experiences and home visits. Collaborative efforts between *Head Start and other early childhood programs are facilitated by the Maryland Head Start Collaboration Office in the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Instruction, Early Learning Office, 410-767-0140.*

Friends of the Family

Friends of the Family is a non-profit intermediary that develops community-based family support programs in collaboration with public and private funders. Friends of the Family provides funding, training, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation to the statewide network of 26 Family Support Centers in Maryland, seven of Centers are Early Head Start programs. Serving young parents with children from birth through age three, these Centers provide comprehensive, preventive services related to child health, early identification of and referral for developmental delays, improved parenting skills, increased use of family planning, and family self-sufficiency and self-advocacy. In addition to its coordination of Family Support Centers, Friends of the Family trains hundred of participants from numerous agencies statewide and sponsors seminars and workshops that feature experts in various aspects of family or infant development. Friends of the Family operates a lending library for early childhood practitioners and those working with adolescent parents. *Friends of the Family, 410-659-7701*

During the year ending June 30, 2004, the Family Support Centers served 6625 parents, young children, and non-parenting participants in Center-based activities. In addition, 452 families received intensive services in their homes.

Quality Initiatives – Child Care Administration

With support from the Child Care Development Fund administered by the Child Care Administration, local and regional quality initiatives are also available to child care providers. *Call 410-767-7128.*

commitment



Child Care Advocacy and Professional Organizations

Maryland is fortunate to have a number of organizations that advocate for children, families, child care and early education, and child care as an industry in its myriad forms.

- The **Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC)** is a statewide organization affiliated with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which is at the forefront of the movement to recognize child care providers as educators.

MDAEYC provides: continued training, an annual conference, a Week of the Young Child celebration, a video loan program, and NAEYC book and poster sales. Some local affiliates provide grants for centers or schools undergoing the NAEYC accreditation process. *Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children, Ann Byrne, 301-929-5826.*

- The **Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)** is a statewide professional association of registered family child care providers and advocates organized in 1983. Local associations in all thirteen Child Care Administration licensing regions, representing approximately 2,000 providers, are members of the MSFCCA. The organization informs local family child care associations about pending legislation and regulations, holds an annual conference and leadership summit, and educates parents about and promotes quality regulated child care. *Maryland State Family Child Care Association, Karen Knabe, 301-776-5247 or karenskare@comcast.net; www.msfcc.org*

- The **Maryland State Child Care Association** is a statewide, membership organization for owners, operators and staff of licensed child care centers and group programs. The association sponsors an annual three day conference in Ocean City for owners/operators, directors, child care staff, as well as a second conference in the fall addressing licensing, policy, and funding issues. MSCCA also sponsors a scholarship program for members, a legislative briefing and reception, and many other activities. *Maryland State Child Care Association, 1-800-974-5400.*

- **Maryland School-Age Child Care Alliance** is a membership organization formed by school-age child care professionals. Membership benefits include a newsletter, networking opportunities, training information, and membership in the National After School Association. *Maryland School-Age Child Care Alliance, 410-484-6220.*
- **Maryland Committee for Children, Inc. (MCC)** is a private, non-profit advocacy and educational organization that has been in operation since 1945. In addition to operating the Maryland Child Care Resource Network, the Statewide Coordinating Entity, and the Statewide Training Clearinghouse; Maryland Committee for Children serves the community in other ways. The Public Policy Committee is composed of over four dozen children's advocates who are professionals and volunteers in the public and private sectors. The group develops annual priorities and has advocated such diverse programs as: federal child care funding, the Americans With Disabilities Act, federal welfare reform legislation, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and other public programs which directly impact the lives of families and children.

MCC also directed a comprehensive research project on salary and compensation for child care professionals in Maryland, developed a pilot mentoring project (S.M.I.L.E), which provided mentoring and high quality training to child care providers; initiated the Maryland Model for School Readiness, which trains child care providers in observation and program development skills; OUNCE Training, which offers training in the assessment tool for infant and toddler caregivers to use; and created the *Employer Tool Kit*, an employers' guide for implementing work/life programs.

Recently, MCC published *Achieving Quality: Maryland's Early Care and Education Programs – A Proposal for Ages Three Through Kindergarten*. Focusing on accreditation as a key to quality care, Achieving Quality articulated the rationale for an integrated approach to the delivery of high-quality early childhood services and subsequently informed the development of the Judith P. Hoyer Early Childhood Initiative. *Maryland Committee for Children, 410-752-7588.*

health & nutrition



Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides cash reimbursement for meals served at eligible, licensed, child care centers and family day care homes. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch.

Currently there are approximately 250 child care centers and 4500 family day care homes participating in the CACFP. *For more information, call 410-767-0214 or visit the Program website at www.eatsmartmaryland.org*

Additional resources from Maryland Committee for Children

Child Care Demographics provides annual data for components of the child care system (demand, supply, cost, wages) for the state and separately for each of the 23 counties and the city of Baltimore.

Trends in Child Care 2005 provides a summary of the critical components of child care (demand, supply, and cost) from 1999 to 2008.

The Maryland Child Care Resource Network Training Calendar, published three times a year, provides a listing of training opportunities for child care providers statewide.

Child Care for Children with Special Needs reports on a survey of child care providers relating to the availability and quality of child care for children with special needs.

Young Children's Mental Health - Policy Conference 2002 reports on the current state of knowledge about existing services for early childhood mental health and a vision of an appropriate and attainable system of mental health services for young children.

Identifying Childhood Mental Illness: How Child Care Providers Can Help offers a checklist of behaviors that indicate the need for professional evaluation and suggests ways providers might discuss this with parents.

Conversations on Curriculum explores best practices in assessment and curricula in early childhood education. The full report and an executive summary are available on www.mdchildcare.org, under the section entitled "For Child Care Providers."

LOCATE: Community Resources Assistant (also known as the Community Resource Database) is a service provided through the Maryland Child Care Resource Network and the Maryland Committee for Children.

LOCATE: Community Resources Assistant provides information on resources available to the child care community, parents and families, and others. Maryland Committee for Children, 410-752-7588.

Information on after-school care, including user searches by county and neighborhood, is available at www.mdafterschool.org.

For other publications and information about child care in Maryland, visit the MCC website at www.mdchildcare.org.

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