

Executive Summary

The Partnership for Community Action (PCA), Robert Wood Johnson Center for Health Policy (RWJ) at the University of New Mexico, and Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) Education Programs collaborated to conduct a study of early child care providers and early childhood educators in Southwest Albuquerque, New Mexico. This study sought to understand the following research questions:

- How do child care providers in Southwest Albuquerque self-identify, within the existing Early Childhood Development, Education and Health landscape?
- What are the existing capacities, opportunities, and challenges to increasing quality of early child care for providers?
- What are the professional development and entrepreneurial needs of providers in Southwest Albuquerque?
- How can the Early Childhood program at CNM best meet these needs and improve access to professional and entrepreneurial development for providers?

PCA drew upon parent facilitators from the Abriendo Puertas (AP) Program and the early childhood cooperative, Korimí, to identify survey participants. Korimí conducted interview-style surveys in either English or Spanish in the following zip codes: 87105, 87102, 87103, 87104, and 8712. In total, 55 complete surveys were gathered between April 1st and April 17th, 2015. These findings will inform community-based organizations and education training programs about opportunities to target resources and maximize investments in quality early childhood education in New Mexico.

Key Findings

The Southwest Albuquerque childcare providers surveyed serve approximately 982 children. Providers and early childhood educators were asked how they would describe their child care setting; 80% of respondents identified as home-based child care providers and 20% identified as child care centers.

Key differences in professional development, entrepreneurship, and curriculum needs emerged between registered¹ and non-registered² providers. The key findings describe data from **overall participant responses** and **highlight the differences between registered child care providers (31) and non-registered child care providers (23)**. Of the 55 survey responses, 56.4% identified as being a registered child care providers, 41.8% as a non-registered child care providers, and 1.8% identified as N/A.

Overall, registered providers serve a higher number of children than non-registered. The majority of registered childcare providers surveyed cared for children who were between the ages of two and five (77%), while non-register providers cared largely for infants and school-aged children.

Child care providers in Southwest Albuquerque, identify as fluent Spanish speakers with limited English language proficiency and a long-standing commitment to provide childcare services and meet community childcare needs.

Nearly half (49.1%) of participants said they engage in early childhood services to support the needs of family or friends. Two-thirds of providers were related to at least one child they cared for. Approximately

¹ Registered child care providers are providers whom are registered with the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and may receive child care assistance funds and federal food assistance. These providers care for up to four non-resident children in private homes and are required to have a first aid and CPR certification, and attend six hours of training.

² Non-registered child care providers are family, friends and neighbors that do not participate in child care assistance or food assistance programs that care for children in private homes.

two-thirds (63.6%) of respondents care for children as their full-time job; and 32.7% (18) of respondents care for children as their part-time job. More than half of the respondents said they learned about child development from personal experience and participants overwhelmingly expressed an interest in increasing their early childhood education. Non-registered providers have strong established relationships with parents whose children they care for and rely on parent input to determine daily activities.

Overall the existing capacity opportunities and challenges to increase the quality of early childcare for child care providers are: **(1) a lack of formal early education training, (2) staff limitations, and (3) access to professional development opportunities that meet the providers' needs around finances, language, scheduling, and existing responsibilities.**

Many providers have cared for children for over 10 years. Southwest Albuquerque providers heavily rely on their own experience to assess child development. Many providers work alone limiting the ability of home-care providers to take on additional children and expand services. Non-registered providers were less likely to plan activities in advance, creating an opportunity for growth and professional development.

Non-registered providers offered significantly literacy opportunities for children than registered providers. Overall, children under the care of home-based providers spend most of their time having their basic needs met (i.e., playing, eating, and napping). The survey found that there is a need to connect childcare providers with public resources that have the potential to increase the distribution of resources to meet the needs of providers on Southwest Albuquerque.

Survey results indicated that home-based providers face challenges around accessing professional development and entrepreneurial resources. Providers were most interested in: (1) access to educational toys and materials, (2) being part of a group of childcare providers, and (3) having a mentor who has experience as a home-based childcare provider.

Overall the professional development and entrepreneurial needs for providers in Southwest Albuquerque include: **(1) assistance with state registration and licensing to develop their business, (2) increased access to public programs, and (3) increased exposure to professional development opportunities.**

Survey results indicated that providers face challenges around accessing professional development and entrepreneurial resources. Non-registered providers have drastically less exposure to professional development opportunities than registered providers and need assistance with state registration and licensing to develop their business. Registered providers have distinct needs with business efficiencies in accounting and advertising while those are not present in the non-registered providers. All providers face challenges in meeting professional development and entrepreneurial needs due to a lack of information, resources, or interest because they simply do not consider themselves a business. Provider personal education goals include: (1) learn about early childhood education, (2) gain language acquisition (both English and Spanish), (3) pursue further education/obtain a teaching credential, and (4) acquire a GED.

Community organizations and educational institutions can best meet needs and improve access to professional and entrepreneurial development for providers by **increasing visibility/marketing/advertising through community outreach and offering a bilingual early childhood educator/trainer home visiting program.**

The majority of childcare providers surveyed expressed an interest in furthering their education in early childhood. A lack of information and knowledge about course offerings emerged as a barrier to accessing professional development for providers. However, interest is high to participate in professional development that is geographically and linguistically accessible. By reaching out to providers through a bilingual early childhood home visiting education program, organizations like PCA and CNM can circumvent issues of language, time commitments, cost and transportation. There is an opportunity for PCA's partners Abriendo Puertas/Korimí Cooperativa to continue developing community-based leaders, increase community engagement, and establish a community network of early childhood providers.