



## ***Marin County Child Care Commission***

120 N. Redwood Drive-East Wing  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 473-3358/ Fax (415) 473-3333

---

### Memorandum

Date: April 22, 2010

TO: Marin County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Peggy Dodge, Commission Chair  
Tina Warren, Commission Coordinator

SUBJ: 2010 Annual Presentation – Marin County Child Care Commission

### Background

The Marin County Child Care Commission, which serves also as the state-mandated local child care planning council, is charged with advising the Board on child care issues. The Commission would like to update you on some of its activities and ask for your support on some upcoming key state and federal issues.

### Month of the Young Child

For the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Commission – in collaboration with many other providers and programs in the county – has celebrated April as the Month of the Young Child. This year, specific activities included: 1) A Family Festival and Small Size Farmer's Market at the Bay Area Discovery Museum, 2) "Wee Read – A Countywide Storytime" during which over 30 child care programs hosted local officials and other members of the public to be guest readers at their sites, 3) Marin Association of Young Children's Family Fair at Northgate Mall, 4) Parent's Place Puppet Workshop, and 5) Annual First 5 Marin Breakfast. Many families and their children across the county participated in these events. We want to thank the Board of Supervisors, as well as the County Board of Education, for their ongoing support of this event through its endorsement of April as the Month of the Young Child.

### Federal Issues

Early education (also called child care programs) has received increased attention and additional resources as part of the federal American Resource and Recovery Act ARRA). Head Start received an additional \$ 2.1 billion and the Child Care and Development Block grant received \$1.0 billion in one-time expansion funding for FY 2009 and FY 2010. In Marin, these investments resulted in an expansion of Early Head Start by 74 children (from 99 to 173 -- about 75% increase); new sites have been opened at San Rafael High School, College of Marin – IVC, Center Point, a home-based program with the Marin Community Clinic and the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, three state-funded infant toddler classrooms have been enhanced to provide more comprehensive services including health screenings and family support services. While the CCDBG expansion did not increase child care subsidies/vouchers statewide or locally, the state

maintained services that, without this federal support, would likely have been cut due to the state budget crisis.

In his FY 2011 budget, President Obama has recommended that these federal expansions be made permanent. He is calling for an increase of \$1.6 billion for CCDBG and \$989 million in Head Start funds. *We recommend that the Board of Supervisors support permanent federal increases in funding for Head Start and the Child Care and Development Block grant.*

### State Issues – Quantity and Quality

Similar to other education and social programs, child care faces serious financial challenges at the state level. While most funding for early care is supported with private parent fees, Marin currently receives an estimated \$13.2 million in child care funding from the state. Of these funds, \$7.5 million go directly to state-contracted child care centers; the remaining \$5.7 million are for parent subsidies/vouchers for use in any child care program. Of particular concern is a proposal to reduce provider reimbursement rates and to cut “Stage 3” child care subsidies targeted at working poor families. *We recommend that the Board oppose any reductions to existing state child care funding.*

Partly in response to federal incentives, the state has also been developing a quality rating system for child care programs. SB 1629 established the Early Learning Quality Improvement Advisory Committee to manage this process over a two-year period, ending in December 2010. Once the quality rating system is implemented state wide, child care programs would be rated according to a five star system on several different elements of quality, including group size and staff/child ratios, staff education levels, curricula and assessments, family engagement strategies, and program leadership.

### Local Issues

Locally, the Commission has revised the county’s Child Care Master Plan and begun working on several priority issues. Through your support, the Commission has continued its work to improve the quality of care. Through the Early Learning Program Enhancement Project (PEP), the Commission piloted this program in over 10 ECE sites/classes across the county. We are happy to report, as a result of the pilot’s demonstrated successes, that these services are likely to be continued through new funding from the Marin Community Foundation as part of its new Education Initiative.

Additionally, the Commission is working to strengthen the relationship between preschools and elementary schools. Research has shown that improving the alignment of program systems -- including curricula, assessments and standards – leads to improvements in children’s learning outcomes.

It is with that spirit that we are pleased to announce that the Commission will be moving its operations to the Marin County Office of Education as of July 1, 2010. We fully intend to continue our close relationship with the Department of Health of Human Services and the Board of Supervisors and would like to thank you for all of your support over the last 14 years that the Commission has been housed within the County system.