The Marin County Child Care Commission’s vision is that Marin County has a coordinated early care and education and out of school time system in which every family has access to quality, affordable care and providers have access to the resources necessary to provide care in a high quality environment.
KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2014 – 2019 MARIN COUNTY MASTER PLAN

1. Many families are living below the County’s Self-Sufficiency Standard – the minimum income needed to cover basic living expenses. As a result, families must make difficult decisions about allocating their income between child care and other subsistence expenditures.

2. Many families earning between $50,000 and $100,000 annually in Marin County do not meet the Self-Sufficiency Standard, yet are not eligible for California State child care subsidy support as their income exceeds 70% of the State median income.

3. Children living below the Federal poverty level are concentrated in select “pockets” of the community, making targeting subsidized services for these children vital to their life-long success.

4. The number of licensed infant and toddler child care spots continues to decline, despite ongoing need as demonstrated through parent requests for services.

5. Access to high-quality child care – including infant/toddler care, preschool, and out of school time care – continues to be a challenge for families, as demonstrated by ongoing requests for care and the Centralized Eligibility Wait List.

6. Accessing County-wide, accurate information about children with special needs and their unique disabilities continues to be a challenge. This impacts the County’s ability to address the training and support needs of providers working with children with special needs.

7. In the absence of any comprehensive data collection and analysis, it is difficult to determine whether Marin County’s early care and education and out of school time workforce meet the emerging qualification, skill, and knowledge requirements of the State and Federal governments.

8. Providers need access to ongoing training, technical assistance, professional development, and peer support towards the goal of high-quality environments for all children.
While a desirable place to live, residing in Marin County poses significant challenges for families raising children. The cost of child care and limited State and Federal subsidies can easily strain a family’s budget and impact a family’s quality of life. In addition, indicators of well-being for Marin’s children show clear need for improvement in several areas, including areas critical to closing the education achievement gap. Child care providers struggle with their own self-sufficiency on account of low wages and low reimbursement for services, which impacts the County’s ability to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and caregivers.

RAISING A FAMILY IN MARIN COUNTY

While families continue to relocate to Marin County due to its reputation as a desirable community in which to raise a family, the cost of being self-sufficient far exceeds many Marin County families’ income. The median annual income of families with children under 18 years in Marin County is estimated at $114,591, which is approximately $9,549 per month. However, 45% of all families – with and without children under 18 years old – earn less than $99,999 annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Self-Sufficiency Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hourly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 Infant</td>
<td>$33.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 Preschooler</td>
<td>$33.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 School-Aged Child</td>
<td>$26.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 Infant, 1 Preschooler</td>
<td>$47.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Adult, 1 Preschooler, 1 School-Age Child</td>
<td>$39.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults, 1 Infant</td>
<td>$18.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults, 1 Preschooler</td>
<td>$18.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults, 1 School-Age Child</td>
<td>$14.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Adults, 1 Infant, 1 Preschooler</td>
<td>$24.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adults, 1 Preschooler, 1 School-Age Child</td>
<td>$20.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Families who earn less than 70% of the State’s median income are eligible for California State child care subsidies to assist with the cost of part-time and full-time care. However, none of the families who qualify for the State subsidy meet Marin’s Self-Sufficiency Standard. Parents often have to weigh the cost of child care against other vital family needs.
SELECT CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIN COUNTY CHILDREN

- Approximately 10% of children are living in poverty across Marin County. The majority of children living in poverty reside in Marin City, Novato, and San Rafael.
- Nearly 25% of Marin’s children are not read to every day.
- Nearly 20% of Marin’s children experience reoccurring neglect or abuse.
- One-quarter to one-third of Marin’s preschool population is not participating in preschool.
- Only 69% of third graders read at grade level.
- Only 42% of elementary and middle school students are supervised by an adult after school.
- Only 57% of children report feeling connected to their school.
- Nearly 20% of children are not in a healthy weight zone.

SELECT CHARACTERISTICS OF MARIN COUNTY’S CHILD CARE SYSTEM

- While the number of child care slots has increased over the past three years, there has been an ongoing decline in the number of infant and toddler licensed child care center spots in Marin County. 65% of parent requests for care are for children 2 years and younger.
- Demand for child care far exceeds supply. There are approximately 800 Marin County children waiting for subsidized child care at any point in time.
- The cost of care in Marin County remains significantly higher than the State average for infants and preschoolers. Families can expect to pay nearly $14,000 per infant and $10,000 per preschooler for center based care.
- At both the “high” and “low” end of the salary range, Marin County’s child care providers do not meet the Self-Sufficiency Standard to support their own families.
- There is insufficient data to determine how well the Marin County early care and education and out of school time workforce measure up against recommendations for best practice.
SUGGESTED USE OF THE MASTER PLAN
The 2014 – 2019 Master Plan frames the early care and education and out of school time challenges facing Marin and should be used by community stakeholders for a variety of planning and advocacy efforts including:

- Understanding county-wide and regional priorities

- Engaging key stakeholders in a common vision for quality child care programming in the County

- Alignment of organizational strategic planning efforts with County priorities

- Ongoing identification of opportunities to partner with the Marin Child Care Commission

- Ongoing identification of opportunities for those working in child care to intersect with other governmental entities including business development, health care, and housing

The complete 2014–2019 Master Plan is available online at http://marinschools.org/ECE/Pages/Child-Care-Commission.aspx