



YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY
**COMMUNITY
 WELL-BEING
 & BELONGING**

ENSURING TOMORROW'S CARE: ENHANCING BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

YMCA Childcare Resource Service (CRS) provides innovative services tailored to the unique needs of families and child care providers. Through one-on-one support, resources, training, and financial assistance, CRS works alongside child care businesses to enhance their operations. In fiscal year 2022-2023, CRS distributed over \$67 million in child care vouchers, conducted over 400 trainings, and supported over 100 individuals in becoming a child care provider.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

In developing a new suite of business support services, CRS conducted a needs assessment of child care providers in San Diego County in 2022. This assessment sought to understand providers' current practices, challenges, and resource needs. The following results reveal significant challenges that providers are still facing, which threaten the sector's sustainability in San Diego County. While CRS aims to bridge the gaps, additional assistance and investment are essential to sustain the child care sector and ensure its ongoing viability and ability to meet the evolving needs of our community.

FINDING #1: Providers are concerned about their program's financial health and their compensation.



OUR SUPPORTS:

- CRS expanded its business support services to include technical assistance, training, coaching, and resources designed to improve providers' financial well-being.
- CRS and partners assist providers with creating budgets, ensuring tuition covers expenses and is collected efficiently, accessing technology to collect payments digitally, and more.
- CRS Referral Advisors offer business intelligence to providers on what families are looking for and what tuition rates are competitive locally.

CALL-TO-ACTION:

- Create and advocate for equitable policies that prioritize fair compensation for child care providers through rate reform.
- Support sustainable business operations through stipends and incentives.
- Fund infrastructure for new providers as well as the growth among existing providers to care for more children.

FINDING #2: Providers are concerned about the long-term sustainability of their business due to the full phase-in of universal transitional kindergarten.



OUR SUPPORTS:

- CRS provides up-to-date data on the types of referrals requested in a provider's area so they can align to the populations needing care, including for infants, toddlers, pre-kindergarten, and school-age children.
- CRS offers targeted training, technical assistance, and resources to providers adapting to different populations.

CALL-TO-ACTION:

- Increase the state child care subsidy reimbursement rate for infant and toddler care to help alleviate the unfair financial strain on providers serving younger populations with much lower teacher-to-child ratios.
- Incentivize an expansion of child care businesses to care for infants and toddlers through increased resources including stipends, supply grants, and training opportunities to support providers with adapting to different populations.

FINDING #3: There is evidence of a shift in how families are finding and securing child care, which impacts how providers approach marketing efforts.



OUR SUPPORTS:

- CRS calls providers on behalf of families to curate referral lists of programs with open spaces matched to individual families' needs.
- CRS works with web and database developers to enhance the user experience with our online child care search system.
- CRS and partners train providers on how to do their own social media and digital marketing in alignment with current parent search practices.

CALL-TO-ACTION:

- Support enhancement of the free, publicly-funded referral system to ensure equitable access to information that helps families find and select providers that meet their needs.
- Require that all publicly-funded program information (including school-based programs) is provided to local Resource and Referral agencies for families to access in their child care searches.

NEXT STEPS

After piloting an innovative business support model with funding from [First 5 San Diego](#), [The San Diego Foundation](#), and [The Girard Foundation](#) in FY 22-23, CRS was able to expand service from 15 to 120 child care providers in FY 23-24. With investment from the County of San Diego and in partnership with [Child Development Associates](#), [Chicano Federation](#), [International Rescue Committee](#), and [Horn of Africa](#), CRS is delivering targeted business-focused supports like training, coaching, technical assistance, technology access, and cultural navigation in response to the needs identified by providers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Laurie Han
Associate Executive Director
YMCA Childcare Resource Service
lh@ymacsd.org

For child care providers interested in engaging in CRS's business support services, please email providersupport@ymacsd.org.

FINDING #4: There is tension between providers being overworked yet wanting to engage in professional development and networking.



OUR SUPPORTS:

- CRS provides most trainings via Zoom and in evenings or on weekends to be more flexible for providers.
- CRS holds Provider Forums and deploys regular provider communications.
- When possible, CRS provides training incentives, self-care resources, and discounted access to professional tools to reduce provider burdens.
- In collaboration with San Diego County Office of Education, CRS gives stipends to providers who complete professional development hours or college units.

CALL-TO-ACTION:

- Expand and sustain the County of San Diego ARPA-funded Child Care Workforce Investment Program and Shared Service Alliance to increase access and enhance culturally reflective coaching, technical assistance, and higher education for providers.
- Offer free or low-cost access to technology tools including tools to help with invoicing and receiving payments for child care services.
- Increase early learning compensation to allow for providers to invest in their businesses, including HR supports, benefits, and the purchase of professional services to reduce their administrative tasks to enable providers to spend more time accessing professional development.
- Ensure higher education and training opportunities accommodate provider schedules and primary language.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

