



2008 Report on Child Care in Lincoln County

Family Care Connection, part of OSU Extension Service, is Lincoln County's Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agency. We provide a critical link for parents - to child care providers in their communities, information about available subsidies to help with the cost of care, and consumer education on the importance of choosing a high quality child care environment. In addition, our work with child care providers is focused on increasing the supply of quality child care through the provision of training, technical assistance, consultation and mentoring services. **As the CCR&R, Family Care Connection is the primary organization that works with and relates to all parts of the child care system – families, child care providers, educators, businesses and policymakers.**

The primary purpose of child care is that it provides an essential service for parents so that they can go to work. It is important to every demographic group and to every profession in every corner of the state, and in Lincoln County.¹

Child care is more than just a place for children to be while parents work. **Child care is education.** Research has shown that it is the early learning experiences that have the most profound effect on the healthy growth and development of young children and their ability to succeed later in life.

Child care is also vital to economic development. It enables communities and employers to attract and retain a talented productive workforce. And, because the economic success of communities is tied to a skilled and educated workforce, early childhood care and education becomes a vital link to our future workforce. Many distinguished economists believe that economic development goals are best met in the long run by investments in early childhood.²

This report contains updated information on the accessibility of child care in Lincoln County.

ACCESSIBILITY OF CHILD CARE

How much child care do we have? The supply of child care known to Family Care Connection as of June 30, 2008 (includes only programs enrolled on the CCR&R database) is detailed below:

Child Care Centers (care in a facility that meets code requirements, usually a commercial building)	
a. Full day centers	8
b. Part day centers (preschool and afterschool programs)	13
c. Child care slots at centers	636
d. Infant/toddler slots at centers (children under 30 or 36 months of age; for certified centers, this depends on which CCD regulations the center is operating under)	18

¹ *Child Care & Education: Building a Firm Foundation for Oregon's Families & Oregon's Economy* – Oregon Commission for Child Care Report to the Governor & the Legislature 2007

² *The Economic Development Effects of Early Childhood Programs* - Timothy J. Bartik, Senior Economist, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Family Child Care Providers

a. Registered Family Child Care (care is in the provider’s own home)	13
b. Certified Family Child Care (care is in a single family home, usually the provider’s)	3
c. Legally exempt family child care (provider is not required to be registered or certified)	31
d. Child care slots at family child care homes	224
e. Approximate number of infant/toddler slots at family child care homes (children up to 24 months of age)	88
Total number of all child care slots	860
Total number of all infant/toddler slots	106

How much child care do we need? The total need for child care is a reflection of the total population of children age 12 and under. The demand for child care is highest for working parents with young children, especially children ages 6 and under. As children start school the demand for full-time care decreases however the need for part-time after-school care increases.

According to population estimates there were 5718 children age 0-12 in Lincoln County as of July 1, 2007.³ Further breakdown of ages is as follows:

- 2094 children age 0-4 years
- 2134 children age 5-9 years
- 1490 children age 10-12 years

Family Care Connection receives calls from parents looking for child care, **which represents part of the need for child care. The requests for care do not reflect children already in existing child care slots.** During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, Family Care Connection provided child care related services to 688 parents. Comprehensive services including child care referrals were provided to 412 of these parents who needed care for 565 children. The requests for care show the following:

Ages of children needing care	Number of children	% of children needing care
Infant/toddler - Ages 2 and under	375	66%
Preschool - Ages 3 through 5	136	24%
School-age – Ages 6 and over	54	10%

Do we have enough child care? Overall we continue to experience a general shortage of child care in Lincoln County but specific types of child care are critically insufficient.

Infant/Toddler Care: The need for infant and toddler care continues to be a critical unmet need. Family child care providers have the most infant/toddler slots available, however state regulations only allow providers to care for two children less than two years of age, and their own children are counted in their licensed ratios. Caring for infants and toddlers requires more time and energy and specialized equipment that not all providers possess, such as cribs and high chairs. Child care centers are allowed more infant/toddler slots per facility; however, regulations require dedicated staff which can increase the cost of providing care. **During the 2007-08 fiscal year there were requests for care for 375 infants and/or toddlers made to Family Care Connection. As of June 30, 2008 there were only 106 infant/toddler slots available in the county.**

Non-Traditional Hour Care: Non-traditional hour care continues to be a critical need for our families who have to work evenings, weekends or rotating schedules. **Of parents calling Family Care Connection during fiscal year 2007-08, 41% needed care during early morning,**

³ Population Research Center, Portland State University – Population by Age and Sex for Oregon and Its Counties: July 1, 2007

evening, overnight and weekend hours on a regular basis. Of callers who provided information regarding employment, 42% reported being employed in hotel, restaurant, retail sales, tourism related or health care fields, where non-traditional hour care is typically required. Fourteen percent were in the process of searching for work, and needing to secure child care to make their job search successful. **Of all child care providers enrolled with Family Care Connection, about 35% offered care during some evening hours after 6:30 pm and about 21% offered care on either a Saturday or Sunday.** Providers who are willing to do non-traditional hour care fill up their slots quickly and often times burn-out due to the extended hours they work. Families needing non-traditional hour care face significant barriers in finding stable quality care for their children.

COMMUNITY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

In the Lincoln City area, Family Care Connection has worked with the nonprofit **ASK (Adults Supporting Kids)**. **ASK** is committed to increasing the number of quality, affordable child care options available in North Lincoln County. New public awareness activities are being planned to increase the level of understanding and support for child care issues in the business community and the community at large. The group is looking for both new board members and for cash donations to help further their efforts.

In the greater Newport area, Family Care Connection has worked with the **Newport Child Care Committee** and the nonprofit **Lincoln County Association for Family and Community Education (FCE)** in ongoing efforts to open a certified child care center that will care for infants and toddlers and be available to parents for care during nontraditional hours including evenings and weekends. Some grants funds have been received, other numerous local fundraising efforts have been accomplished, and the school district has offered space in Arcadia Elementary School in Toledo along with financial support to help with the first few months of rent. The current goal is to raise the remaining money needed to purchase equipment in order to get the center opened.

Donations to the nonprofits ASK and FCE are tax deductible. In addition there are numerous tax advantages available to employers who support child care for their employees. For more information please refer to the contact information below.

CONCLUSIONS

The largest portion of spending in the child care sector is from parent fees, which are also a significant portion of a family's expenditures. We must start now to develop a more systematic approach to providing quality early childhood care and education, and to ensure that all families in our communities have access to quality affordable child care. One approach I believe that would build sustainable quality child care is through local community coalitions - public-private partnerships that combine the efforts and resources of local stakeholders to develop comprehensive solutions. Employers and community agencies, civic minded community members and yes even those that do not have children all have a stake in the future. We all must participate in the solution.

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