

Policy Roundtable for Child Care & Development Commission

A graphic on the right side of the slide showing the silhouettes of three people's heads in profile, facing left, in shades of blue. The silhouettes are layered, with the front one being the darkest and the back one being the lightest.

December 13, 2023

Introductions: Name & Organization

Comments from the Chair

General Business

Consent Calendar:

3a. Approval of Minutes – November 8, 2023

**3b. Approval of Policy Roundtable Commission
Annual Report FY 2022-23**

Our Unified Strategic Plan in Motion

Planning in a Shifting ECE Landscape

An Update on the Infant/Toddler Blueprint and UPK LA



LA County Early Care and Education Strategic Plan

Comprehensive plan for infants, toddlers, preschool age children, and school age children



**Infant/Toddler
Child Care
Blueprint**

**Universal
PreKindergarten
ECE Mixed
Delivery Plan**



Increase parents' knowledge about early education choices

- Hired UPK Management Analyst on 12/04
- Established partnership with the Learning Policy Institute (LPI)
- Access/Parent Engagement Ad hoc will launch on 12/14 and meet with LPI about parent survey questions



Establish local partnerships between LEAs and ECE mixed delivery system

- CCALA is drafting a scope of work to support parent choice and local UPK collaboratives between school districts and ECE providers



Partner with early education stakeholders

- Input session with Long Beach Early Childhood Education Committee on 12/01
- Infant Toddler Policy Ad Hoc launched on 12/05
- Input session with Santa Monica Early Childhood Task Force on 12/05



Collaborate with the Department for Economic Opportunity

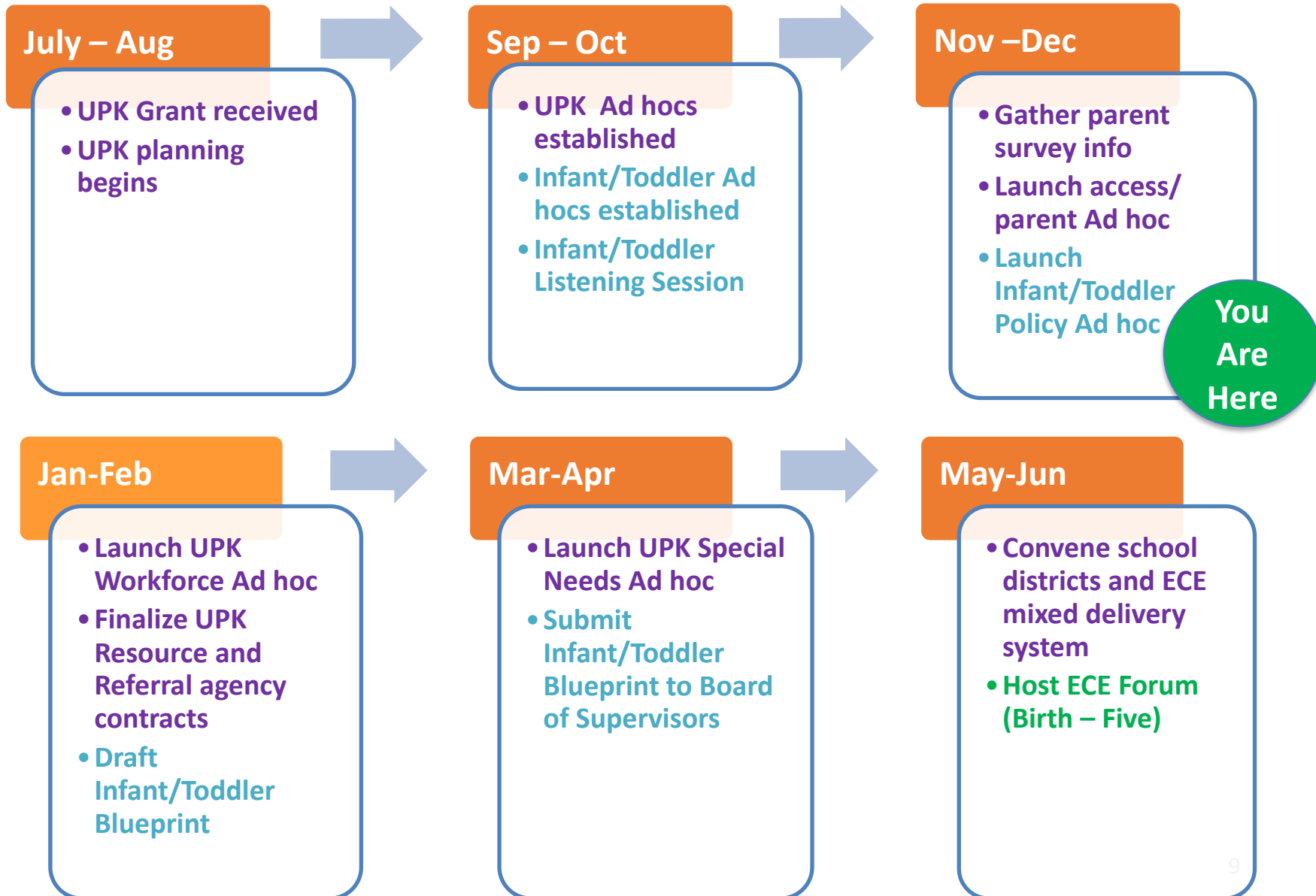
- Meeting with Department of Economic Opportunity scheduled for 12/20



Develop Blueprint to fortify the infant and toddler child care system and report to the BOS in 180 days

- OAECE developed 1st draft of recommendations

Planning Milestones FY 2023-2024



Comments, questions, and reflections



Public Policy



Improving the infant and toddler system of care in LA

December 13, 2023



A study funded by the
Conrad N. Hilton
Foundation



A recent Ready Nation study estimates that the infant toddler child care crisis now costs

\$122 billion

in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue every year.

The time is right for action.

- ❓ Prior to COVID, there was insufficient child care for infants and toddlers in Los Angeles County
- ❓ During COVID there was an acknowledgement that child care is an essential component of our economy
- ❓ The system of care for infants and toddlers is even more fragile now than prior to the pandemic



The need to focus on LA County's system is great.

7%



There is currently only licensed capacity to serve 7% of working parents with children under 23 months.

14%



Only 14% of eligible infants and toddlers who qualify for subsidies are enrolled in care.

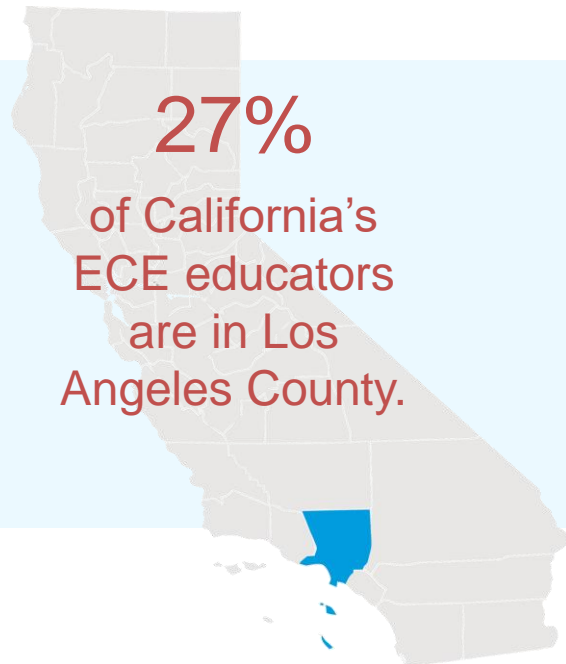
42%



of family child care providers participate in public assistance.



Who cares for LA's babies and toddlers?



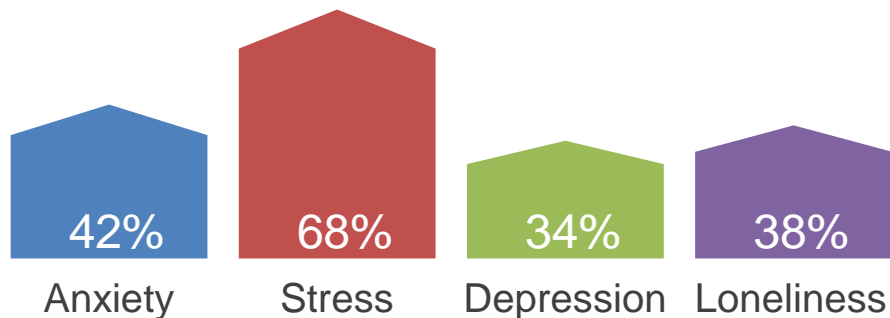
- ☐ They work in centers, FCCs, and private homes.
- ☐ Most are women of color.
- ☐ Many are Spanish speakers and immigrants
- ☐ Many are 50 or older.



Parents of young children in LA face multiple challenges.



Caregivers who participated in the RAPID-California Voices survey in Los Angeles County reported significant negative impact on their wellbeing.



83%

of caregivers reported that their children aged 0 to 5 years old were fussy or defiant or were fearful and anxious.

Our approach was Culturally Responsive and Racially Equitable Evaluation.

- ❑ Considers culture, equity, structural contexts, systems change.
- ❑ Uplifts voices of participants with lived experience: Our intent was to provide a window into the experiences of participants closest to the LA county infant and toddler care system.
- ❑ We used CREE through all phases of our study.
- ❑ Worked with an Advisory Committee.

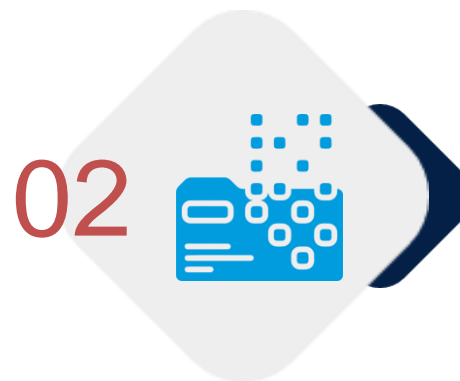


Three phases of our methodology



Design.

LA county partners and Advisory Committee members contributed to the design. We conducted a landscape analysis.



Data Collection.

We recruited and interviewed parents, teachers, FCC owners, center directors, and ECE leaders from across the county.



Analysis & Reporting.

Included a sensemaking session with our Advisory Committee. Thematic analysis of 65 interviews.

Who did we interview?

65 Participants

- 16 FCC Owners
- 15 Parents of Infants and Toddlers
- 12 Infant and Toddler Teachers
- 11 ECE Leaders
- 9 Center Directors
- 2 FFN Provider

Demographics

61% Latino 11% White 10% Black 5% AAPI

92% Female 8% Male

78% of interviews conducted in English
22% in Spanish



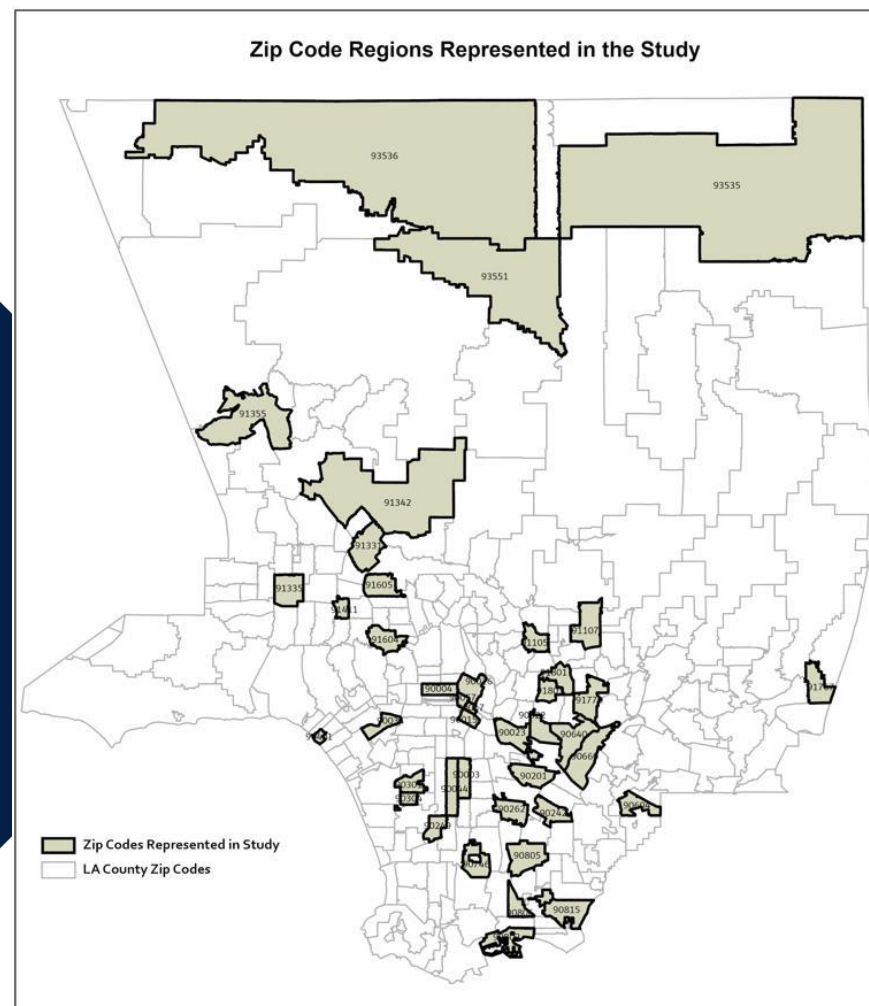
18.1 Average years in early care and education

13.7 Average years in infant and toddler care

Our participants lived, worked, or received child care across LA county.

- ☐ Antelope Valley
- ☐ San Gabriel Valley & Pomona
- ☐ San Fernando Valley
- ☐ Los Angeles Area
- ☐ East Los Angeles
- ☐ South Los Angeles
- ☐ Long Beach Area

Zip Code Regions Represented in the Study



Interview Findings





Our Parent Participants

All women;

87% Latina, 13% White;

11 accessed FFN, 4 center care;

75% interviewed in English,

25% in Spanish

Parent Perspectives

- ❑ Parents are struggling to meet the basic needs of their families
- ❑ Parents want safe, dependable, and affordable care, offered during extended and flexible hours
- ❑ Barriers to finding care include
 - High cost
 - Long wait lists or being turned away
 - Safety concerns
- ❑ Parents need help navigating the system

””

I did look at care.com, but I didn't feel comfortable because I didn't know the [providers], and people who I felt were qualified were really expensive. So, there's no point in me working if I am going to leave [all my pay for care.] It didn't make sense.

- Parent

””

Ideally, they'd have good hours, a lot of play space for running around outside and inside, good communication with parents, checking in throughout the day, a report of what kids did during the day, lots of classroom resources, books, toys, love for kids, energetic, engaged, happy, child friendly disposition.

- Parent

Who does the system need to serve?



The outdated mindset says only some families and under certain limited conditions. The reality is, nearly every family regardless of income, employment status, race, gender or geographic location wants support for their young children. That means child care needs to be universally accessible and not just for 3 and 4 year olds, but for infants and toddlers as well.” – WeVision Early Ed



FCC and FFN Perspectives

Challenges most commonly named by FCC & FFN providers.

- ❑ Earning low wages and receiving low subsidy payment rates.
- ❑ Inability to hire additional staff due to limited funding and low wages.
- ❑ Lack of access to employee benefits.
- ❑ Rising costs of child care.



Provider Participants

All women of color;
Half Spanish speakers;
Average 18.3 years in the field,
12.8 years working with
infants/toddlers

”

We don't have benefits. Other workers have retirement benefits. We do so much work so that other people can be in the workforce, and we have nothing. If we don't save money [we don't have funds to cover additional costs].

- FCC Owner

”

At this payment rate I can't make a profit .”

- FCC Owner

”

We can't invest in [our business] and provide better things because we don't have the money.”

- FCC Owner

”

When we get sick we have to keep working. We don't have health insurance and if we do have it it's really expensive. When we are sick all we can do is take a pill and try to show our best face. If we are not healthy, how can we take care of children?

- FCC Owner



Director Participants

 7 Female  2 Male

Majority BIPOC;
Half were in the field 20+ years

Center Director Perspectives

- ❓ Infant and toddler providers do not have access to sufficient funding to run their programs.
- ❓ Recruiting and retaining qualified staff is an ongoing challenge.
- ❓ There is a need for more training and professional development specifically focused on the care and education of infants and toddlers.
- ❓ Licensing requirements need to be updated to better support providers who are interested in serving infants and toddlers.
- ❓ Managing staffing challenges may negatively impact director wellbeing.



We could do it [expand services] because we have classrooms, but we don't have staffing. I've been having trouble hiring because of the low salary. Those of us working here are here because of our love of the work, not the pay.
- Center Director



Salaries of teachers make me nervous. If they get offered something more, they will leave. I worry about quality care, not just more bodies here.
- Center Director

Teacher Perspectives

Challenges most commonly named by teachers were...

- ❑ Collaboration and communication with parents
- ❑ Lack of specialized training for working with infants and toddlers and working with children with special needs
- ❑ Understaffing or lack of other well trained teachers to help them in the classroom
- ❑ A general sense of overwhelm



Teacher Participants



11
Female



1
Male

All English speakers;

Average of 17 years in the field,
7.5 years of infant/toddler experience

”

I came from working at a restaurant and I took a pay cut, and it's crazy for me because you go to school and instead of making more money, you get a pay cut. It wasn't until I got a third raise that I [stopped] considering going to Starbucks or In and Out. I talked to my director about it, and she gave me a raise and talked about my future here. For a minute there, I was thinking of leaving the position because you need to pay bills.

”

We're expected to do so much by so many people. We're being pulled in so many different directions and not given a lot of time.

”

Even if they love it, even if it's their passion, it's not paying bills! And inflation it costs more and more to live in the United States. And to expect people to do one of the most important jobs, which is take care of young children, and to pay them no respect, no money, [and] not support them. [You can get to the point of] compassion fatigue. It is so important that there are people out there who continue to advocate and do research and try to support the profession.

”

I was excited the first time I got to go to a so called infant/toddler training, but they focused only on toddlers and went straight to preschool. I would raise my hand to say you skipped the infants!



Leader Participants

 9 Female  2 Male

Majority BIPOC;
10 to 40 years experience
in the field

ECE Leader Insights

- ❓ Providing infant and toddler care is often cost prohibitive.
- ❓ There is a shortage of qualified infant and toddler teachers.
- ❓ Fewer qualified teachers means fewer spaces for infants and toddlers.
- ❓ Providers need business supports to grow and maintain their programs.
- ❓ The implementation of TK expansion is having unintended negative impacts on infant and toddler care.
- ❓ There is a lack of understanding about the important role of infant and toddler care in the context of the community and society.



“I can’t count the number of advocates that didn’t understand the ripple effect of how UTK would impact the infant toddler system of care. Many advocates thought they were doing the right thing in advocating for UPK. It’s an ‘aha moment’ when people learn how it’s impacting care for infants and toddlers.”

- ECE Leader



“When it comes to lawmakers, I don’t think people know where infants and toddlers go when parents go to work. People forget about infants and toddlers.”

- ECE Leader

Well-being of the Workforce

- ❑ People enter the profession because they love children but end up feeling undervalued and underappreciated
- ❑ Lack of vital benefits creates additional worry and stress for a workforce that already carries a heavy load
- ❑ Half of the directors indicated that they are constantly worried about personnel issues, including turnover and staff morale
- ❑ Across participant type, there is a general sentiment that the general public and decision makers don't understand the infant and toddler system of care





I don't like disappointing people. Most negative things that happen, I take personally because I'm the captain of the ship. I probably shouldn't, but I do."

- Center Director



Sometimes I can't sleep at night."

- Central Director



Teachers need support emotionally, as humans."

- Teacher



It's very stressful to wonder if you're going to have to close a classroom because you don't have enough teachers available to meet ratio."

- Central Director

Key Takeaways

- ❑ Parents are struggling to find care for their babies and toddlers.
- ❑ A robust infant and toddler system of care must include a mixed-delivery approach that is responsive to the needs of the community.
- ❑ As a result of systemic oppression of women and people of color in the ECE system, teachers are receiving unfairly low wages and minimal benefits, and are suffering in stressful working conditions.
- ❑ Providers need materials and training tailored to the needs of infants and toddlers.
- ❑ The needs of families and ECE workers serving infants and toddlers are not top of mind for decision makers.
- ❑ Mindsets and public perceptions in general must shift.



Recommendations from the Field

- ❑ Continued focus on determining the true cost of care, with particular attention to the nuances related to caring for infants and toddlers
- ❑ Specialized training and professional development on topics such as infant and toddler development, early intervention, and engaging parents of infants and toddlers
- ❑ Examining licensing requirements through the lens of child safety and business viability
- ❑ Centralized resources that parents know about and can easily access
- ❑ County wide communications campaign that highlights the critical importance of high quality care during infancy and toddler years as well as the importance training, preparation and fair compensation for those who care for infants and toddlers.



Emerging Opportunities to Impact the System

- 1 Blueprint to fortify the infant and toddler system in LA county
- 2 Office for the Advancement of Care and Education ECE BT3
- 3 Stein ECD Birth to Age Three Child Care Communications Campaign
- 4 Ready2Teach training program for new teachers
- 5 Report on the True Cost of Care of Early Care and Education



- Reflections
- Questions
- Next Steps

Policy Roundtable Commission: Infant Toddler Child Care Policy Ad Hoc



Ad Hoc Commission Members

1. Luis Bautista
2. Fran Chasen
3. Jennifer Cowan
4. Ofelia Medina
5. Kanchi Tate

Ad Hoc Activities

- Reviewed infant/toddler issues, rationale, and data
- Shared current opportunities
- Provided recommendations

Category

1. Infant/Toddler Early Care and Education (ECE) **Capacity**
2. **Cost** of Infant/Toddler ECE
3. Infant/Toddler ECE **Workforce Compensation**
4. **Quality** Infant/Toddler ECE Programs
5. **Access** to Infant and Toddler ECE Services

Recommendations

Type of Policy Lever:

- Legislative
- Administrative
- Programmatic

Level

- Local Education Agencies
- County
- State
- Federal

Rationale

#1
**There is not
enough licensed
child care spaces
for infants and
toddlers**

Recommendations

1.1) County (Administrative)

Mandate all new **commercial and housing development** in Los Angeles County to **include space** for early care and education facilities that care for infants and toddlers

1.2) County (Programmatic)

Provide **fee waivers for start up costs** to open Family Child Care Homes (FCCH) or center-based care that serve infants and toddlers (e.g.: licensing fee, health and safety training, facility development fees, etc.)

1.3) School Districts (Programmatic)

Develop shared partnerships with **Local Education Agencies** to **utilize unused facility space** for infant/toddler child care services

1.4) County (Administrative)

Approve By-Right Ordinance that does not require centers that provide infant/toddler child care to obtain a Conditional Use Permit

Rationale

#2
Moderate-
Income
families have
difficulty paying
market rate for
Infant/toddler
ECE services

Recommendations

2.1) State (Legislative)

Increase income eligibility of California subsidized early care and education to include families of moderate income who have infants and toddler

(Note: Moderate Income defined by HUD 2023 = 120% of household income not exceeding 120% of county area median income. Family of 4 in LA County Moderate Income = \$117,840.)

2.2) County (Legislative)

Establish a local child care **voucher program for low-income to moderate income** families in Los Angeles County

2.3) County (Programmatic)

Increase **linkages between** infant and toddler child care **providers and family support programs** (e.g.: food, diapers, utilities, and insurance to reduce program operation costs)

Rationale

#3.1

**Wages
are low for
infant/toddler
child care
providers in
LA County**

#3.2

**Infant/toddler
ECE workforce
receives few
benefits**



Recommendations

**Will be discussed at
Policy Roundtable Meeting
1/10/24**

Rationale

Recommendations

#4

It is difficult for the infant/toddler ECE workforce to participate in professional development



Will be discussed at Policy Roundtable Meeting 1/10/24

Rationale

#5.1

It is difficult for parents to navigate the complex subsidy system, and as a result, many subsidized programs are experiencing low enrollment of infants and toddlers

#5.2

Age range for infants is not consistent across subsidy program definitions and licensing requirements which causes operational challenges when braiding funding

Recommendations

5.1 A) State (Legislative)

Align income eligibility requirements for subsidized infant/toddler child care across California programs

5.1 B) County (Programmatic)

Create a centralized, family friendly **website for parents to access information** about available infant/toddler child care, subsidy eligibility requirements, and the process to apply for subsidized child care

5.1 C) County (Programmatic)

Implement County-wide **public awareness campaign to promote subsidized infant/toddler child care** options for low-income families in under-resourced communities

5.2 A) State (Administrative)

Adjust infant/toddler age range definitions to be consistent across all California subsidized early care and education programs



Are we on the right track?



**Are there any other recommendations you have
or is there a recommendation missing?**



**Are there current efforts
you know of the
Ad Hoc and/or the OAECE
should explore or consider?**

Next Steps



Ad Hoc
refines
recommendations



Commission
provides input on
Workforce Compensation
& ECE Quality
recommendations



Ad Hoc
refines
recommendations



Commission
finalizes
recommendations
to include in
Infant/Toddler Blueprint

Jan. 2024

(date TBD)

Ad Hoc
Meeting

1/10/24

Policy Roundtable
Meeting

Jan. or Feb 2024

(date TBD)

Ad Hoc
Meeting

2/14/24

Policy Roundtable
Meeting

Creation of Ad Hoc

Announcements and Public Comment

Meeting in Review and Call to Adjourn



Policy Roundtable for Child Care & Development Commission