

PARTICIPANT INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET

Sonoma CARES



California Department of
EDUCATION



Sonoma County
Office of Education

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WHAT IS SONOMA CARES QUALITY COUNTS?

Sonoma CARES Quality Counts is a professional development program targeting Early Educators working with young children. CARES is committed to **improving the quality of early learning programs, increasing teacher effectiveness, and helping teachers develop professionally by focusing on education, preparation, and retention of an effective and diverse workforce.** The program provides guidance, support, and compensation incentives to child care professionals, in order to raise the quality of child care programs and, ultimately, to improve young children’s learning and development outcomes in Sonoma County.

The program is administered by the Child Care Planning Council. Please review the program information carefully. The CARES Staff is available to assist you with any questions you may have.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Step 1: Submit an online application by visiting www.scoe.org/cares

Step 2: Submit a completed W-9 form via email to kmoore@scoe.org or by fax to 707-524-2666.

Step 3: Submit a completed CDE Confidential Profile via email to kmoore@scoe.org or by fax to 707-524-2666.

To access the W-9 and Confidential Profiles forms visit www.scoe.org/cares

Step 4: Submit an information release via email to kmoore@scoe.org or by fax to 707-524-2666.

Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The program is limited to the first 140 applicants. Priority will be given to educators working in sites that are participating in the QIRS Quality Counts Program.

To learn more about QIRS Quality Counts Program, visit <http://www.scoe.org/pub/htdocs/quality-counts.html>

ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT

In order to enroll and participate in the CARES program, participants must meet the following requirements:

1	Have access to a valid e-mail account
2	Be employed at a licensed center or licensed Family Child Care Home (FCCH) or <i>eligible</i> license-exempt child care center in Sonoma County in one of the following situations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. at least 50% of the children are five years old or younger <i>OR</i> b. the center or after-school program has a direct contract with the CA Department of Education (CDE), Early Education & Support Division (EESD) for child care subsidy <i>OR</i> c. the family child care home has a direct contract with the RCCS or CFC FCCH Education Network <i>OR</i>
3	Currently work directly with children a minimum of 15 hours per week. Supervising staff must also work directly with children a minimum of 15 hours per week.
4	Be currently enrolled in a minimum of 3 units of degree and/or CA Child Development Permit focused coursework
5	Earn less than \$60,000 (gross salary) annually from child care



IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR 2017-2018

- Sept. 29, 2017** Submit a copy of your Summer and/or Fall 2017 schedule to Sonoma CARES Quality Counts.
- March 30, 2018** Submit a copy of your Winter and/or Spring 2018 schedule to Sonoma CARES Quality Counts.
- May 18, 2018** Meet with an advisor/academic counselor for your Fall/Winter and/or Spring advising appointment.
- May 18, 2018** Submit verification of your academic or educational plan for Fall/Winter and/or Spring semesters.
- June 8, 2018** Complete a minimum of 6 stipend-eligible units with a grade C or better, and submit an unofficial transcript to the CARES office.
- June 8, 2018** *If you do not hold a CURRENT California Child Development Permit – Apply for, upgrade, or renew a California Child Development Permit.*
- June 8, 2018** Submit all required end of year documents (please refer to your End-of-Year checklist). End-of-Year checklist can be accessed by visiting www.scoe.org/cares

**Please check with your higher education institution to verify the last day that advising appointments are available each semester. Dates may be earlier than the deadline date.*

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2017-2018

- Nov. 8, 2017** Sonoma CARES Quality Counts Support Workshop at Santa Rosa Junior College, Call Center, Conference Room 3867. 4PM to 5PM
- May 2, 2018** Sonoma CARES Quality Counts Permit Support Workshop at Santa Rosa Junior College, Call Center, Conference Room 3867. 4PM to 5PM



“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.” – Albert Einstein

ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Participants must be working toward a degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE), Child Development, or a related field * AND/OR
2. A California Child Development Permit.
3. Participants must complete a **minimum of 6 academic units** with a “C” or better of degree-focused coursework that fulfill the requirements toward an Associate or Bachelor’s degree during our program year **(7/1/2017 through 6/8/2018)**.
4. Participants must complete an annual Sonoma CARES Quality Counts Survey online.
5. Participants must commit to remaining in an ECE teaching position for at least one year in Sonoma County
6. Participants are encouraged to apply for Certificates through the SRJC Child Development Department, if applicable.

* *Related field: Human Development, Psychology, Sociology, or other approved related major with 24 ECE units.*

Visit www.santarosa.edu or www.sonoma.edu for information about our local colleges.

Visit www.childdevelopment.org to find courses at Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP Aligned) Colleges for other options, including online.

STIPENDS

The Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program offers stipends for the completion of program requirements. In order to be eligible for a stipend, participants must complete all program requirements by the specified deadlines outlined in this booklet, and submit all verification by **June 8, 2018**.

The **maximum** total amount of stipends a single participant may receive is **\$2,000**. Stipend amounts **may** be pro-rated if not enough funding is available for all participants. Stipends are distributed once a year upon program completion (July-August).

STIPEND AMOUNTS

Up to \$2,000 per participant

Participants will receive a stipend if they complete the requirements by their specified deadlines as described on page 3. Stipend amounts are based on the number of stipend-eligible units (minimum 6 units) completed with a grade “C” or better at an institution of higher education accredited by CDE-accepted regional accrediting bodies. **Classes must be degree and/or permit applicable.**

- \$100 per unit for all ECE units
- \$200 per unit for GE,ESL, or Basic Skills units
- \$300 per unit for BA level classes completed when enrolled in a BA program
- \$500 degree attainment bonus

SUPPORT SERVICES

The following support services are available to Sonoma CARES Quality Counts participants:

BOOK LOAN PROGRAM

In collaboration with the Child Development Training Consortium (CDTC) a limited number of Child Development Textbooks are available for loan at SRJC’s Doyle Library on a first-come, first-served basis. Sonoma CARES Quality Counts participants attending SRJC will receive a **Book Loan Card** and must present that card at Doyle Library’s Reserve Desk, along with their student ID. To view book availability online, visit www.santarosa.edu. If you have any questions, please contact the Child Development Department Administrative Assistant at (707) 527-4315.

TEXTBOOK VOUCHER

Sonoma CARES Quality Counts participants attending the SRJC or SSU will receive a \$100 voucher to use toward the purchase of textbooks for degree- and/or permit-applicable courses. Participants are encouraged to buy used textbooks, when available, and to purchase ECE textbooks.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

The Sonoma CARES Quality Counts Advisor/Administrator will offer one Bilingual Permit Workshop a year, in English and in Spanish, to support those participants applying for a Child Development Permit. The CARES Administrator will also be available, by appointment, for one-on-one support upon request.

Those participants applying for, renewing, or upgrading a Child Development Permit are strongly encouraged to attend the Permit Workshop offered in the Spring.

SUPPORT MEETINGS

Students are encouraged to attend support meetings to network with other ECE professionals. Support meetings are offered once per year, dates to be determined. Participation is optional and there will be no additional financial incentive for attending these meetings.

PROGRAM COMPLETION PROCESS

In order to receive a stipend (if awarded), Sonoma CARES Quality Counts participants (who were **accepted** into the program) must complete the program requirements by their specified deadlines and submit the required verification. You will be receiving a “welcome letter” with detailed information once you are accepted into the program.

Participants are responsible for making sure that all required supporting verification/documentation is complete and received by **4:30pm on June 8, 2018**. Incorrect or incomplete paperwork will not be processed. Sonoma CARES Quality Counts is not responsible for missing or incomplete information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Does Sonoma CARES Quality Counts have an assigned advisor that I need to meet with?

No, all participants must meet with a counselor from their higher education institution and submit a copy of their educational plan for each semester (Summer, Fall, and Spring).

2. Will the classes I complete in the 2016-2017 school year count toward the new program year (2017-2018)?

No, all Stipend-eligible classes must be completed between 7/1/2017 and 6/8/2018 (during Summer 2017, Fall 2017, and/or Spring 2018 semesters).

3. Do I need to apply for a CA Child Development Permit if I already have one?

*All participants must hold a **CURRENT** CA Child Development Permit and/or APPLY for a new one by June 8, 2018.*

4. I take care of my friend’s children. Can I participate in the Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program?

No. In order to participate, you must work at a licensed center, Family Child Care Home, or at an eligible license-exempt child care center.

5. I work in an afterschool program. Am I eligible for the CARES program?

If you work at least 15 hours/week at a CDE subsidized after school program, you are eligible for the CARES program. Extended Child Care Programs are an example of this.

6. When are stipend checks issued?

Stipend checks are issued at the end of each academic year (in July or August).

7. Do I pay taxes on my Stipend?

Yes, the stipend you receive is compensation for completing the program requirements, not financial aid. If your stipend was \$600 or more, a 1099-MISC will be sent to your home address in January in accordance with 1099 reporting regulations. It will be reported in Box 7 “Non-Employee Compensation”. Please take this into consideration when planning and preparing your annual tax returns. It is your responsibility to notify Sonoma CARES Quality Counts of any change of address to ensure that you receive proper tax information.

8. To be eligible to participate in the Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program, participants cannot make over \$60,000 a year. Is this the gross or net amount?

It is the gross amount; participants cannot make more than \$60,000 gross salary per year. We only consider the participant’s individual gross income, not their household gross income. However, if you are a Family Child Care Provider, we will verify your income using the Schedule C, Profit and Losses pages of your tax return and look at the net profit.

9. If I am a Family Child Care Assistant, am I able to participate in the Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program?

Yes, if you are a Family Child Care Assistant in a licensed Family Child Care home, you are able to participate as long as you meet the other eligibility requirements.

10. What is an Employment Verification form?

It is a form provided by the Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program to verify the completion of employment and income requirements.

The Employment Verification Form is used to verify that the participant has worked in an eligible child care program (see page 2) for at least 15 hours per week for a minimum of 9 months within the program year earning less than \$60,000 per year from child care.

Family Child Care Home owners are also required to submit a copy of the Family Child Care license and a copy of the “Profit and Loss” pages of their tax return for the current fiscal year.

11. Which centers qualify as “eligible license-exempt”?

A child day care program that:

(A) is a public recreation program operated by a government or school district or

(B) offers temporary child care services to parents and which satisfies both of the following:

1. The services are provided only to parents and guardians who are on the same premises as the site of the child day care program.

2. The child day care program is not operated on the site of a ski facility, shopping mall, department store, or any other similar site identified by the department by regulation.

Please contact us to verify that your site is eligible.



Sonoma CARES Quality Counts
Child Care Planning Council • Sonoma County Office of Education
5340 Skylane Blvd • Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 524-2639 • Fax: (707) 524-2666
<http://www.scoe.org/cares>

The Sonoma CARES Quality Counts program provides equal opportunity to all qualified individuals, and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic group, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, age or any unlawful consideration.