



2013-2015 Advocacy Priorities

December 2013

1. ACCESS

Child care costs are prohibitive for low-income families, and exorbitant for middle-income families. They compose a significant portion of families' budgets (as high as 25% to 34%, depending on the number and age of children and family income). 66% of children in Sonoma County who are eligible for subsidies are not able to obtain subsidized child care. All community areas in the County have shortages of child care spaces, particularly for infant and school age care.

The Advocacy Committee will engage in activities to a) increase existing sources of revenue and to diversify funding for child care and development programs, b) improve families' abilities to connect with Early Childhood Education resources, and c) increase child care slots in communities where needed.

2. QUALITY

Overwhelmingly, research shows that when children are in child care, the quality of that care is an important determining factor in their optimal growth and development. It is critical that we engage in ongoing community efforts to ensure that all children in Sonoma County are cared for in high-quality settings. In order to have high quality Early Childhood Education programs, the child care and development workforce must be highly trained, valued as professionals, and fairly compensated for their work, commensurate with professionals in comparable fields.

The Advocacy Committee will engage in activities to promote high-quality child care in Sonoma County programs.

3. VISIBILITY

Early Childhood Education is underfunded, undervalued and the workforce is underpaid. Increased community collaboration and support are needed to address the unmet needs of children and families. It is critical that CCPC and its members deliver this message to the community and serve as liaisons for Early Childhood Education.

The Advocacy Committee will engage in activities to a) increase recognition of the economic value of early care and education, Early Childhood Education teachers/providers and the community benefits of high quality Early Childhood Education, and b) develop community recognition and awareness of the Child Care Planning Council as a strategic leader, stakeholder and resource in the area of Early Childhood Education.