



CCSA Communicates

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Child Care Services Association works to ensure affordable, accessible, high-quality child care is available for all young children and their families.

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From the President

This was a year that started like many others, and in early 2020, all of our lives changed with the pandemic. I am extremely proud of our entire CCSA team's perseverance. We have all done a great job of truly living our core values in spite of the pandemic. You can see these efforts in our [Annual Report here](#). It is difficult to put into words the scope of all we do and even more challenging to share all that we took on during the pandemic. What I can easily share, however, is how grateful I am for the opportunity to lead our organization. Our unique CCSA community continues to make a difference in our communities, in our state and in our country.



The CCSA Board of Directors was to start the strategic planning process in March as the Governor closed much of our state. It seemed as though the best thing to do was to take a pause. That's just what we did. We talked with our Board and our consultant Staci Barfield from Armstrong McGuire, and we paused. Our Board stepped up as we develop our next strategic plan. We decided that Board members and officers would not rotate as might normally happen in order to have the group participate in the strategic planning development. One-third of CCSA's Board members are recipients of services, one-third are early childhood experts and one-third are community members at large. CCSA Board members work tirelessly to support systematic efforts affecting the field of early care and education. We look forward to finalizing a strategic plan for CCSA in this fiscal year.

CCSA had the opportunity to work with Smart Start and local partnerships as we rolled out Phase I of the

CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund. A process was developed and Smart Start and CCR&R agencies worked with child care programs to submit applications from those remaining open and serving essential workers. Phase



I was designed to provide small grants to 3-star or higher child care centers and family child care homes in North Carolina to help them purchase supplies and/or services needed to meet the stringent health and sanitation standards required by the NC Department of Health and Human Services. More than 700 programs received a small grant.

[See more information here.](#)

The CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund supports the immediate and long-term needs of child care programs as they serve children of families returning to work, as well as essential workers on the front lines. Phase II of the Relief Fund, with applications for more than \$1.5M, shows that child care needs our support more now than ever to survive the pandemic. Child care requires investment, time, attention and creativity to get through this crisis and help our state and its economy get back on its feet. We could not have done it without our generous funders.

The [CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund](#) provided more than \$260,000 in grants to child care programs in North Carolina. These funds were made possible by contributions from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, the PNC Foundation, Truist Charitable Fund, the ChildTrust Foundation and many private donations made to the CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund. View the Phase II report [here](#).

Child Care Services Association was thrilled to receive a [2020 Corporate Philanthropy Award](#) from the Triangle



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From the President

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Business Journal (TBJ) in November for our work on the Relief Fund as well as all our efforts to meet the needs of our families, educators and communities.

“Often, the level of corporate citizenry mirrors the quality of life in our communities,” said Jason Christie, publisher of TBJ. “The Triangle area is fortunate to have so many passionate and helping nonprofits and individuals that are being guided and supported by committed companies across all industries.” It was truly an honor to be part of this.

In 2020, we celebrated 30 years of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® (T.E.A.C.H.) and 25 years of Child Care WAGES® (WAGES). Both T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES are systemic strategies that serve as policy drivers at the state and local levels across the country resulting in increased funding for, and awareness of, early childhood workforce needs and more responsive workforce support and education systems. I recently had the opportunity to hold virtual conversations with our state leaders as we work on behalf of the early childhood workforce nationally. What an exciting opportunity! Soon you can read more about this national work in our National Center’s Annual Report.

This is the time of year when we ask you to spread the word that we will be holding our ASK Conference in February. The A.S.K. (Advancing Skills & Knowledge) Conference is going virtual in 2021 with a week of online learning for early care and school-age education professionals. From Saturday, February 20, 2021, through Thursday, February 25, 2021, you can choose what sessions you’d like to attend, but registration will cover the conference in full. [Learn more here.](#)

The invention of vaccines against a virus identified less than a year ago is extraordinary! The vaccine by itself cannot slow the difficult trajectory of COVID-19 we are now seeing, yet it can give us hope that the pandemic will end. When that happens, I believe we must take all the lessons we have learned and build on them. **Early care and education will never be the same.** Our efforts will help our communities and states meet the needs of families and children. We will ensure that quality is in the forefront so that we can support the K-12 educational system as we build the foundations of our youngest citizens. I am hopeful for 2021 and 2022 and beyond... There is work ahead, and our children, their families and their teachers are worth it.

Today, I want to celebrate and thank those who have helped us continue to work on behalf of N.C.’s youngest children and their families. In this season of gratitude, I thank

- past and current Board members of CCSA, including our board chair who has worked closely with me through this pandemic;
- our fabulous and dedicated staff members who have supported each other and not missed a beat while working remotely since March; and
- our funders who have not only supported us financially but also been stalwart partners and advisors.

Thank you all for being partners in this work.

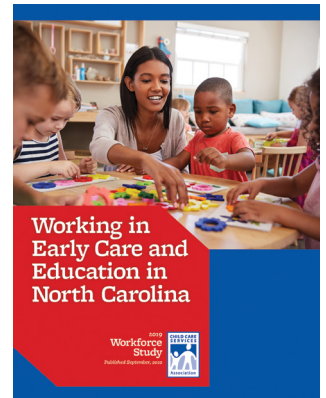
This year, celebrating the spirit of the season will likely mean different things to different people. Although everyone’s 2020 has been incredibly challenging, I wish you holidays filled with peace, joy and love. Let us all have a safe and healthy end to the year as we move into the next decade! 🌟

*My best,
Marsha*



CCSA Releases the 2019 North Carolina Child Care Workforce Study

The new study from CCSA gives context to the state of child care before the pandemic.



Child Care Services Association (CCSA), with funding from the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education, has released the 2019 North Carolina Child Care Workforce Study. The purpose of this study is to help the State of North Carolina and local communities understand the early childhood education landscape by examining child care programs and the staff they employ. With more than 5,400 child care centers and homes serving N.C. children ages birth to 5 years old, child care providers are vital for the success of our children, our families and our economy.

[Download the full report, executive summary, series of briefs and county-level reports here.](#) 📄

Thankful for Early Childhood Educators in this Season of Gratitude

This year especially, CCSA is thankful for our early childhood educators (ECE). We’ve asked our staff, partners and friends to share why they’re thankful for ECE. If you follow us on social media, you’ve probably seen some of those reasons be shared around Thanksgiving. We

invite you to share why you’re thankful for ECE! Post on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn with the hashtag **#ThankfulForECE** and we’ll see it.

We thank you! 🌟





T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program Supports Early Education Workforce Diversity through Scholarship Access

"The nation's population is more diverse than ever before. Children of color are a majority among the birth to five population an approximately 32 percent of young children speak a language other than English at home. A growing body of research is finding that children benefit from having access to teachers that share their cultural, racial, and linguistic background and dual language learners experience long-term academic benefits from participation in programs that support the continued development of their home languages and English."

"The early education workforce, while almost exclusively female, is racially, ethnically, and linguistically more reflective of the children it serves than the K-12 workforce: 37 percent of center-based teaching staff are people of color and 27 percent speak a language other than English. In K-12 public schools, 77 percent of teachers are female and 80 percent are white."

—New America, Exploring Diversity in the Early Care and Education Workforce Webinar, May 2019


Throughout the course of its 30-year history, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® North Carolina Scholarship Program has demonstrated its commitment to achieving racial and ethnic diversity across its scholarship recipient base.

In 1993, Child Care Services Association used T.E.A.C.H. as a lever to help improve early education workforce diversity by ensuring that scholarships were universally available. Having established, long-standing collaborative partnerships with 58 community colleges and 20 selected

universities has allowed T.E.A.C.H. to serve more than 30,000 early educators from ethnically, racially and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Scholarship program outcome data indicate there has been equitable access to T.E.A.C.H. and its counseling services. The racial and ethnic distribution of scholarship participants closely resembles the racial/ethnic distribution of the general population. In FY 2020, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship recipients represented the ethnic diversity of both the early care and education workforce and the children in our state.

- 51% of the early care and education teacher workforce statewide are people of color (2019 Working in Early Care and Education in North Carolina).
- 53% of T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients were people of color, an increase from last year's distribution of 50%.
- Nearly 48% of North Carolina's population of children under 5 are children of color and is expected to increase over time (2018 Kids Count data).

As North Carolina's higher education system continues its efforts to become more responsive to the diverse needs of its early education workforce, so will Child Care Services Association through its administration of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program. Steps are currently underway to have additional program materials made available for ESL learners, most notably those who are primarily Spanish speaking. 

"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength."
—Maya Angelou

Stepping Back from the Edge with AWARD\$

"Working as an early childhood educator, I make very little money. I give my all to the children in my care. Yet, I can barely pay my mortgage and keep the lights on in my house. For dinner most nights, I eat popcorn or ramen noodles because I literally can't afford anything else," said Tonya Martin.

As an infant-toddler educator, Tonya struggles with critically low pay and works an additional part-time job to survive. It is a constant and ongoing challenge, but her passion for young children drives her.

Tonya remembers, "I've always known I wanted to work with children. When I was young, my mother ran an in-home child care and I was always helping in that arena. I loved being around the younger kids. As I got older, I would pretend my dolls were my students. I was always holding someone's baby or had a toddler on my lap."

When she went to college, she started as a psychology major, intending to serve children in that capacity. A class volunteer assignment put her on another path.

"I volunteered at a campus child care center. As soon as I stepped

foot in there, I knew it," she said. "I said [to myself], 'Tonya, what are you doing? You know you want to be in an early childhood classroom.' I changed my major right then and there."

She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and she grew as a teacher as a result.

"One of the main things I learned from my education at UNC-G was about child-directed activities and lesson plans. That really shaped how I maneuver as a teacher. I watch the kids first and see what they are interested in. I scaffold. I build on what they were doing the day before. There was already a seed in me, but my education helped that seed blossom," said Tonya.

She continues to learn as a teacher, especially now with all the changes COVID-19 has brought to the early childhood field.

"It has been a big change for everybody," Tonya said. "I work for Early Head Start and we've been able to evolve with the pandemic. We've been doing virtual learning and that's new for all of us. We had to hit the ground running and it's definitely different with toddlers. COVID-19 has turned everything into an experience and an experiment."

Read more [here](#). 



Infant-Toddler Educator
AWARD\$



Life Beyond Graduation: Three-Year Follow-Up Study of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Recipients—Year Two Report

Currently, T.E.A.C.H. scholarship programs operate in 23 states and D.C. The T.E.A.C.H. state programs are supported by Child Care Services Association's T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center (National Center). The National Center provides ongoing technical assistance and resources and accountability oversight to ensure that the state programs maintain fidelity to the basic design of the T.E.A.C.H. model.

To support this mission, the National Center created an extensive database primarily for use as a scholarship management system. That database includes extensive information obtained at the time of scholarship application. Scholarship recipients' records are updated while they participate in the program. Because this information is monitored regularly and examined by National Center staff, it is quite useful in developing high-quality data for research and evaluation studies.

However, individual scholarship recipients are not routinely tracked in the T.E.A.C.H. database after they complete T.E.A.C.H. contracts and retention commitments. Hence, it has been difficult to conduct systematic assessments of T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients' careers, especially those who graduated from early childhood education programs with a college degree.

This three-year study, initiated in 2018, was developed to fill this gap by surveying recent graduates who were supported by T.E.A.C.H. scholarships while completing two- or four-year degrees. These surveys, fielded every six months, inquire about employment, wages, career progress, professional development and other work and life situations. The resulting data allows a detailed description of T.E.A.C.H. graduates' accomplishments and experiences.

This report is the second in a series of reports. The first report summarized developments over the first year after graduation. This report summarizes the findings from the second year after graduation. This study will continue over a third year, although the impact of the pandemic may make data collection and interpretation more difficult.

[Download the full report here.](#) 📄



Mama Lissa's Tiny Tot University: Blessed During COVID-19 with WAGE\$

Child Care
WAGE\$
Program

I'm so grateful to everyone who has helped us out during this time," said Melissa (Missy) Hamrick, director of Cleveland County's Mama Lissa's Tiny Tot University. She says she knows her experience during the COVID-19 pandemic has been different than many due to the financial and personal support she and her staff have received.

"I'm very fortunate because I am an essential worker and I've been working since day one, and we are lucky that no one has gotten sick," Missy added.

Her Early Head Start and NC Pre-K teachers were sent home at the state's order, which meant her staff went from 15 to seven overnight. She let those seven teachers know that they were her top priority and she would only remain open if they felt comfortable doing so. They did, and her site became a service for the children of emergency personnel when the state closed child care to other families.

"We went from having 96 enrolled before closure to about 40 that were children of essential workers, but I still kept my teachers," she said. "I was able to get the PPP loan, and the state stepped in to give significant help. I had not raised my rates in years, so the amount they offered really enabled me to keep the teachers employed. I even gave my teachers that were here the whole time a temporary \$2 per hour raise, 'hazard pay' until end of June. We got a center grant from the state and the teachers received bonuses of \$950 for two months that made a huge difference.

Even having our consultant, Tracy Clark, call consistently in the first few weeks to see how she could help gave us more security in being open."

After receiving all this help, she tried to pay it forward by not charging two essential personnel who did not qualify for the emergency subsidy and by charging her regular parents half price to retain their slots. She's happy that her families have returned and they are at 100% of summer-level capacity. She knows this is not necessarily what the field is experiencing in general.

Despite being able to stay solvent with this assistance, the process hasn't been easy. They are carefully following all the state instructions and CDC guidelines. She feels like the environment she is offering is clean and safe, but she still has concerns about being open to the public.

"I get emotional thinking that I am putting my staff's lives on the line. I'm used to having the lives of children in my hands, that's the job. But now I'm responsible for the lives of my staff as well."

[Read more here.](#) 📄

“**My center is just blessed.** I don't know how else to say it.

—Melissa (Missy) Hamrick



SHARON HIRSCH is the president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina (PCANC), where she leads a team that focuses on making prevention a priority for N.C. and building capacity for communities to have the knowledge, support and resources to prevent child abuse and neglect. She has more than 25 years' experience in nonprofit and government agency management, public relations, advocacy

and child well-being. At PCANC, she has led efforts to catalyze community prevention plans, has increased staff capacity to provide support for evidence-based parenting programs and has secured more than \$1 million in new investments in PCANC. Sharon has been on CCSA's board for five years. This August, she and CCSA President Marsha Basloe wrote a joint three-part blog series, [**Connecting the Dots: Child Care, Child Maltreatment Prevention and a Thriving Economy.**](#)

supports for families are among the greatest strategies to prevent child abuse...CCSA is foundational to our understanding of what systems need to be in place to support that workforce."

HAROLD: "From an economic standpoint, the workforce needs to be educated to keep up with the rest of the country and globally. You cannot start teaching someone the importance of learning when they're 13 [or] 18-years-old. That's too late, it doesn't work. You start with them early and they develop these habits that they carry with them throughout their life, and therefore, North Carolina becomes a state which has an educated workforce that can deal with change. This is a subject you could go on for days and days of the importance of building that solid foundation, mentally, health-wise, socially."

Q: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AS THE CHILD CARE FIELD RECOVERS FROM THE PANDEMIC?



HAROLD G. SELLARS retired from Mechanics & Farmers Bank in Durham, N.C., in 2012 after 14 years as a senior vice president in the areas of credit and branch administration. He

began his banking career in 1977 with United Carolina Bank (UCB) in Whiteville, N.C. During his personal and professional growth years at UCB, he held several senior management positions in the areas of lending, mergers and acquisitions, regulatory compliance and community reinvestment. He is a U.S. Army veteran and has served on the boards of several professional, civic and nonprofit organizations, including the North Carolina Partnership for Children, the Executive Service Corps of the Triangle and the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation. He was founding board chair of the Columbus County Partnership for Children, and in 1996, he was elected to the Whiteville City Schools Board of Education. Harold has been on CCSA's board for two years.

Q: WHAT DOES THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION MEAN TO YOU?

SHARON: "It's foundational to good outcomes for kids and families over their lifespan. It's critical to their development, their social-emotional skills and the ability to learn and grow. Research now tells us it's critical for their health for a lifetime. It's also foundational to the workforce for moms and dads to go to work and know their kids are well taken care of. It's an economic support and a child development strategy too...The CDC cites access to affordable quality child care is a child abuse prevention strategy, because it fosters both a caring, stable, nurturing environment and reduces the risk of parents' economic stress to pay for child care. It's about quality and affordability. Child care and economic

Highlight:
Meet CCSA's Board

SHARON: "Child care is a primary child abuse prevention strategy and people don't often think about it that way. At PCANC, we help our partners put a prevention lens on the work that they do. We go upstream and focus on the cause of problems—address the root causes—trying to prevent the need for child abuse services in the first place... I'd like to see child care prioritized more in our public investments and awareness of how foundational it is not only to our kids but to our ability to go to work. I'd love to see child care professionals paid commensurate to our public education

workforce. They do really foundational work for our kids and should be compensated for it and get the health care benefits that they deserve."

HAROLD: "There needs to be some supplemental support from either the government or big businesses to support early childhood work. The early childhood workforce is paid little and most of the families they serve are also paid little. If you want good workers, then you [have] to invest in the development of those workers and that starts at birth. Support your workers now with their kids. Plan for that future. Investment in early childhood pays off. Invest in the future of this state, of this country, and that investment starts with early childhood. That ROI is measurable.

"We also need to look at early childhood differently. COVID-19 and so many other things have brought to light real issues with diversity, equity and inclusion. It's opened eyes to a lot of injustices. It wasn't always that they didn't care, they were just unaware. But now that we know, what are we going to do about it? Now we know there's systemic problems that keep people down...and benefit others excessively. Now that the curtain has been pulled back, let's call it what it is and do something about it. Over time, put things in place that are going to be beneficial and supportive of the things that we know are the right things to do—like investing in early childhood." 🇺🇸


A Community Takes Shape

For the past three years in Durham County, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) worked with 15 child care centers on improving health and wellness activities as part of [Shape NC](#), an initiative of Smart Start funded by the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS). The project incorporated three evidence based models (Go NAPSACC, Be Active Kids® and Preventing Obesity by Design) to improve center practices and children's attitudes to whole grain and adding more fresh vegetables to increasing the amount of time for movement and physical activity each day.

The Shape NC project invited child care directors, teachers and families to look at the ways in which we support the newest members of our society, those under the age of 5, in becoming healthy citizens. It was inspiring to see the willingness of center directors and owners to open their doors, invite CCSA's technical assistance team inside and work together to set goals that foster healthy habits in the children they serve. They steadily worked to achieve their goals to improve children's nutrition, begin school gardens, increase physical activity and play and turned their playgrounds into outdoor learning environments.

Each center has its own dynamic and culture. Throughout the process, the 15 Shape centers came together to form a larger community around the common goals of Shape NC. Centers offered resources, ideas and support to one another in an effort to raise healthier, more active children. The Shape project encouraged all to reach further and form connections with the people outside of their educational comfort zone. We collaborated with builders, plumbers, landscapers, church groups, store owners, lactation consultants, local chefs and yoga teachers to support our mission of instilling lifelong habits of health and wellness. This larger community enabled the centers to serve healthier meals, increase physical activity in the classroom and offer more nature-rich experiences on the playground.

Each center received a grant to implement improvements to the center's outdoor learning environments. Directors embraced opportunities to be creative and resourceful in order to stretch their Shape funds for the maximum benefit. They learned to repurpose old materials, harvest their own building supplies, use found and donated items, share recipes and engage parents and community volunteers. The families have shared their awareness of the impact Shape has and will continue to have in the lives of their children. Their words and actions tell us that they appreciate the efforts their center continues to make to tend to the health and well-being of their *whole* child.

Setting an intention, formulating goals and making an action plan around those goals created change that will last a lifetime! 




The Children of Estes Children's Cottage are not the Only Ones Who Enjoy spoonFULL's Meals

By Cathy Tuttle, owner of Estes Children's Cottage in Chapel Hill, N.C.



It is exciting to hear that Child Care Services Association (CCSA) is expanding its presence during this time of difficulty for those providing child care services and all who contribute to them. The [\[CCSA's spoonFULL\]](#) food program means many things to us as a small center-in-residence who has used the service ever since our inception. I was the opening director at a child care center in Chapel Hill in 2002 when I was introduced to this program. Three years later, with my daughter graduating and choosing to fulfill her lifelong dream of opening her own center, we actually relocated to Chapel Hill in part because of [\[CCSA's spoonFULL\]](#) program, which at the time was unique to Chapel Hill.

With so many items to address with the opening of a new center, it was nice to not have shopping and preparation of food, menus and USDA guidelines not be on that list. We are not on any federal reimbursement program because we are considered for profit, but the fact that they do so much of the paperwork for that is also a great advantage and timesaver. And lest we forget, the myriad of food allergies and requests that are taken care of automatically by the kitchen staff once we have a new child sign up is a lifesaver, even literally.

Read more [here](#). 



Thriving in Challenging Times: CCSA's 2020 Annual Report Reflecting on This Year

When we began the 2019-2020 fiscal year, none of us anticipated what a strange, challenging year it would be. The events of 2020 have shaken the world and changed our lives. COVID-19 has affected us all, directly or indirectly, and its impact will be felt for years to come.

With challenges come opportunities to thrive. Through it all, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) adjusted to meet the needs of children, families, child care providers and communities while also managing the needs of our own staff. CCSA is happy to share with you our 2020 Annual Report.

In this report, you will see the remarkable work that child care providers have done to give children the stability and certainty they need during a time when instability controlled every aspect of our lives. You will also see the efforts of our great CCSA staff to continue their work with children, families and child care programs through this unprecedented time.

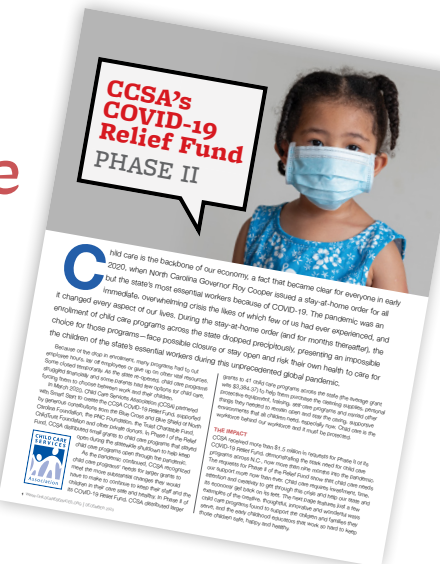
We had to adjust quickly to meet the needs of our constituents, and we did so with aplomb. We could not have done it without the support of our friends, donors and colleagues, and we truly appreciate the vital role you have played for CCSA this year.

[Read CCSA's 2020 Annual Report here.](#)

CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund Phase II Complete

In March 2020, in response to the pandemic, CCSA established its COVID-19 Relief Fund to support child care programs through this unprecedented challenge. Through two phases, CCSA provided more than \$260,000 in grants to 750 child care programs across the state, helping them get the resources they need to keep the children in their care safe and healthy. These centers are the backbone of our economy in normal circumstances, and this crisis has highlighted how truly important they are. View the Phase II report [here](#).

[Learn more here](#) about the CCSA COVID-19 Relief Fund and its impact on child care programs across North Carolina.



Support for Early Childhood State Systems through the Act Early Network

North Carolina received a one-year small state systems grant from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities: "Support for Early Childhood State Systems through the Act Early Network to Support Recovery and Strengthen Resilience Skills, Behaviors, and Resources of Children, Families and Communities." Congratulations to Dr. Sharon Loza, Dr. Becky Pretzel and Dr. Stephanie Fox (CIDD/UNC-CH) who coordinated this grant for N.C.



Funding from the grant is designed to support COVID-19 recovery and strengthen resilience skills, behaviors and resources for children, families and communities. Three primary activities are planned for the one-year project period: (1) developing and coordinating an Act Early State Team of key early childhood

stakeholders; (2) conducting a statewide needs assessment to identify impacts from COVID-19, barriers and opportunities within the early childhood system related to social determinants of health; (3) implementing a plan to improve the four stages of early identification with specific emphasis on parent-engaged developmental monitoring; and (4) designing and implementing strategies to support resilience in young children and their families. In addition, grantees are encouraged to share "Learn the Signs. Act Early." materials and messages within state systems.

Child Care Services Association is pleased to participate in this effort. Ginger Thomas, lead for the [Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project](#), will sit on the North Carolina **Act Early State Team**.


Stay in the know and follow CCSA



The 2021 ASK Conference is Going Virtual!

The A.S.K. (Advancing Skills & Knowledge) Conference is going virtual in 2021 with a week of online learning for early care and school-age education professionals! From **Saturday, February 20, 2021, through Thursday, February 25, 2021**, participants will be able to choose what sessions they'd like to attend, but registration will cover the conference in full.

Early bird registration is \$27.00 per attendee and ends January 5, 2021. After that, registration will cost \$35.00 per attendee and closes on February 1, 2021.

View the agenda and features of the 2021 ASK Conference [here](#) or read all of the conference workshop descriptions [here](#). 

A week of virtual professional development for early educators!

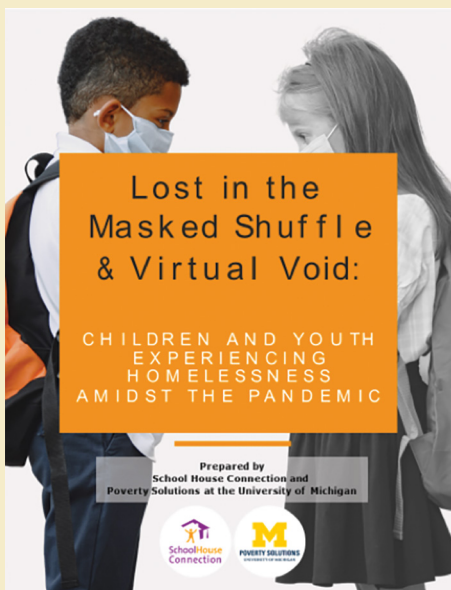
ASK

A week of
online learning
for child
development
professionals!

ADVANCING SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Saturday, February 20, 2021 – Thursday, February 25, 2021

EARLY CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS NEWS



Lost in the Masked Shuffle & Virtual Void


420,000

Based on [a new report](#) from SchoolHouse Connection and Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan, that's how many fewer children and youth experiencing homelessness have been identified and enrolled by schools so far this school year. What about our youngest children?

New: Early Childhood Homelessness State Profiles: 2013-14 to 2017-18




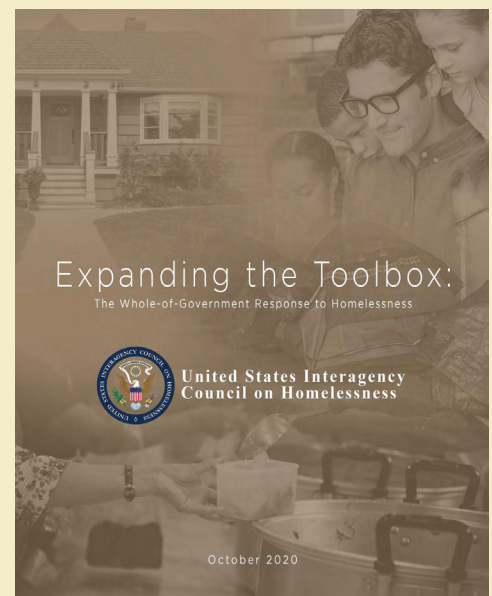
Early Childhood Homelessness State Profiles: 2013-14 to 2017-18 (2020) compiles five years of data from multiple sources from the 2013-14 school year to the 2017-18 school year to provide information on the extent of early childhood homelessness and the availability of federally funded early childhood education for young children experiencing homelessness across the United States.

Read the Trend report [here](#). 

Expanding the Toolbox

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) unveiled its new strategic plan, [Expanding the Toolbox: The Whole-of-Government Response to Homelessness](#). The strategic plan emphasizes addressing the root causes of homelessness and prioritizing trauma-informed care to support the success of each individual and family experiencing homelessness. The plan also focuses on the importance of promoting self-sufficiency across federal agencies as a way of ending the cycle of homelessness and dependency.

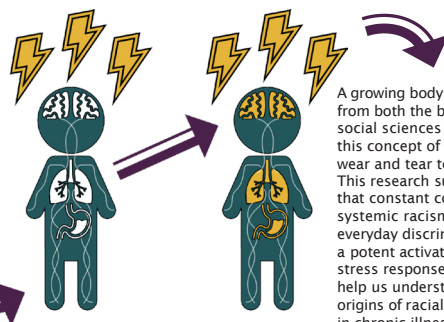
Expanding the Toolbox makes clear that homelessness is on the rise and real reforms are needed. Policies that do not address the real root causes of homelessness combined with high housing costs in overregulated markets have exacerbated the homelessness condition in America. 



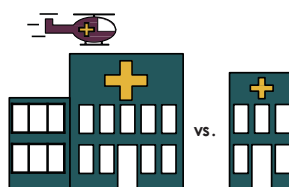


Harvard Study: How RACISM Can Affect Child Development

Years of scientific study have shown us that, when children's stress response systems remain activated at high levels for long periods, it can have a significant wear-and-tear effect on their developing brains and other biological systems. This can have lifelong effects on learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health.¹

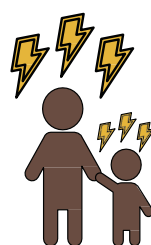
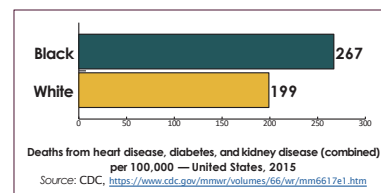


A growing body of evidence from both the biological and social sciences connects this concept of chronic wear and tear to racism.² This research suggests that constant coping with systemic racism and everyday discrimination is a potent activator of the stress response. This may help us understand the early origins of racial disparities in chronic illness across the lifespan.



The evidence is overwhelming: Black, indigenous, and other people of color in the U.S. have, on average, more chronic health problems and shorter lifespans than whites at all income levels.³

People of color receive unequal treatment when they engage in systems like health care and education, and also have less access to high-quality education and health services, economic opportunities, and pathways to wealth accumulation.⁴ All of these reflect ways in which the legacy of structural racism in the U.S. has created conditions that disproportionately undermine the health and development of children and families of color.



Multiple studies have documented how the stresses of everyday discrimination on parents or other caregivers, such as being associated with negative stereotypes, can have harmful effects on caregiving behaviors and adult mental health.⁵ And when caregivers' mental health is affected, the challenges of coping with it can cause an excessive stress response in their children. But we can prevent lasting harm if we work together.

To address these challenges, we must not only provide needed services for all young children and families, but also create new strategies to address "upstream" inequities that systematically threaten the health and well-being of young children of color and the adults who care for them.⁶

This means actively searching for and reducing unseen, restrictive biases in ourselves and in economic and social policies through initiatives such as fair hiring and lending practices, housing and home ownership programs, anti-bias training, and community policing initiatives.⁷



It's clear that science cannot address these challenges alone. But science-informed thinking combined with expertise in changing entrenched systems and the lived experiences of families raising young children under a wide variety of conditions can be a powerful catalyst of more effective strategies.⁸

Yale Study: Child Care Providers Show "No Elevated Risk" for Contracting COVID-19

A national study by Yale University of more than 57,000 child care programs ([Covid-19 Transmission in U.S. Child Care Programs, Pediatrics](#)) found that providers who continued working in the first three months of the pandemic had no increased risk of contracting COVID-19 in their facilities. This is the first major study of its kind in the nation and shows that child care's virus "mitigation efforts" kept providers safer. "This study tells us that as long as there are strong on-site measures to prevent infection providing care for young children doesn't seem to add to the provider's risk of getting sick," said lead researcher, Dr. Walter Gilliam of Yale.¹ This is a reassuring report for families who depend on child care as well as the child care workforce whose programs are suffering from the pandemic. With more families working from home during the virus many licensed child care programs are often unable to keep their doors open. Lynnette Fraga of Child Care Aware of America, a partner in the study said, "This study shows that to be open safely, child care providers will need to practice mitigation and prevention strategies which cost money. And, at times, it may not be safe for child care to be open if community transmission rates are high. To stabilize an industry facing additional costs and ongoing, public health-related closures, significant funding is needed."² Results do not pertain to school age care because groups do not remain consistent throughout the day and move throughout buildings.

Child care facilities in North Carolina were proactive combating the virus through preventative measures such as symptom-screening at the door, mask-wearing, smaller group sizes, handwashing, frequent sanitizing, no outsider entrance to facilities, and social distancing. Information on North Carolina's child care response to COVID-19 may be found [here](#).

More information on the report can be found [here](#).

¹ www.nbcnewyork.com

² www.nbcnewyork.com

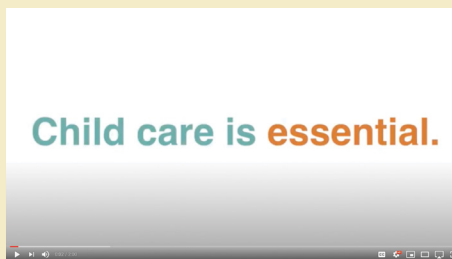


NORTH CAROLINA NEWS

Have you seen these two videos from the NC Early Education Coalition?

Watch them now!

<https://youtu.be/GcdrtI9RSEk>



<https://youtu.be/qL2bD1zcG68>



Thank you, Families First NC

CCSA would like to thank **Families First NC** (FFNC) for mentioning our child care referral services in their most recent newsletter. Their mission of nurturing children, empowering parents and strengthening families aligns with CCSA's mission of ensuring affordable, accessible, high-quality child care for all children and families. What we do is crucial to a child's development, more now than ever, and with partnering organizations such as FFNC working toward the same goal, we're one step closer to ensuring a happy and healthy foundation for all children in North Carolina.

NATIONAL NEWS

Ounce of Prevention has a New Name: Start Early

The Ounce of Prevention Fund, a national nonprofit with nearly 40 years of experience advancing quality early learning and care to help close the opportunity gap, has changed its name to Start Early. With its new logo and tagline, Champions for Early Learning, Start Early continues to focus on the idea that



starting early and nurturing the attachments between children and adults builds strong foundations and are essential to a child's present and future well-being. "The pandemic has exposed the long-standing need to invest more in our early learning and care systems," said its president, Diane Rauner. The need for equitable, quality early learning and care is more urgent than ever before. The new brand will serve as a rallying cry, helping elevate the issue in public conversations and reaching new audiences.

New Book Highlights Opportunities for the New Generation

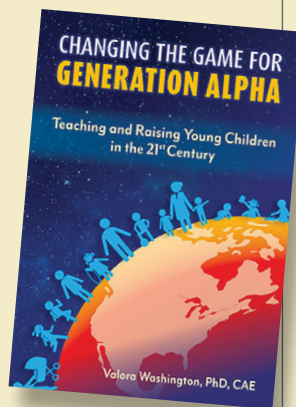
—Valora Washington

How young children are cared for and educated is an essential consideration when envisioning the future of early childhood education. **Changing the Game**

for Generation Alpha by Valora

Washington looks at how this generation of young children presents new opportunities, challenges and supports, and informs the two principal groups of adults in children's lives—their families and early childhood educators.

"Generation Alpha" is defined as children



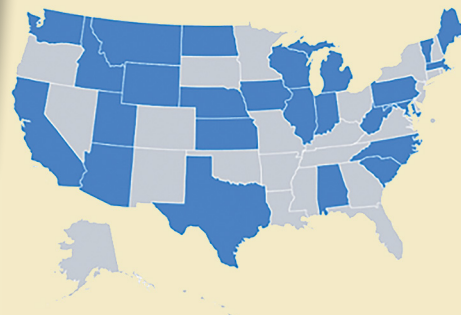
born between 2011 and 2025. There are at least six megatrends that define this generation: Alpha children live in an era in which the population of the United States is aging. They will live in smaller, complex and constantly evolving families and have unparalleled engagement with technology tools. They will inherit, grow up in and navigate a world with dramatic shifts in global power and world-wide demographic change. And, within the United States, diversity will be their signature; the new American portrait reveals an aging White population alongside growing numbers of racially diverse youth. As adults, Alphas may be better yet differently educated as online and nontraditional certification options become available at every stage of their development. The book explores strategies to help early childhood educators advocate for and influence the trajectories of this next generation.

Child Care in 25 States: What We Know and Don't Know

On October 26, the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) released a new report, **Child Care in 25 States: What We Know**

and Don't Know, an interactive map that quantify the supply of, need for and gaps in child care in 25 states. There is strong bipartisan support for policies that increase access to child care for all working families. However, an important underlying question has yet to be answered: "How much additional child care does the country

need?" In working with state officials, BPC has collected the most comprehensive data to date on the supply of child care in 25 states and has produced an analysis that offers a starting point from which the country can work to close the child care gap.



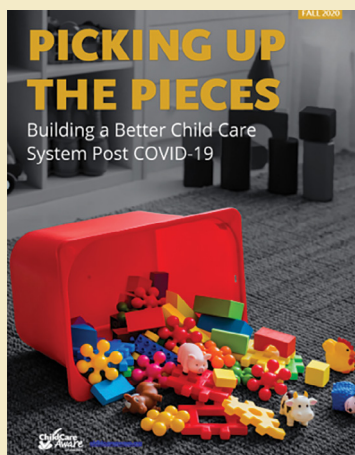
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Picking up the Pieces from Child Care Aware

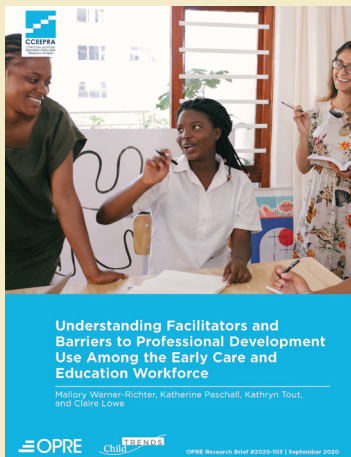
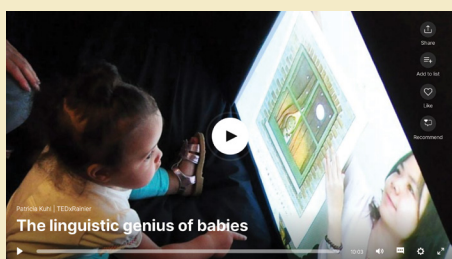
Child Care Aware's out with their latest annual landscape scan, [Picking Up the Pieces](#), comparing the child care system pre- and mid-pandemic. The report is organized into three chapters that explore the impact of COVID-19 on child care access, affordability and quality.



The Linguistic Genius of Babies

Patricia Kuhl shares astonishing findings about how babies learn one language over another—by listening to the humans around them and “taking statistics” on the sounds they need to know. Clever lab experiments (and brain scans) show how 6-month-old babies use sophisticated reasoning to understand their world.

[Hear this amazing Ted Talk.](#)



New Report from OPRE


The goal of early care and education (ECE) professional development (PD) is to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of teachers and caregivers to improve child and family outcomes (Sheridan et al., 2009). A growing body of research suggests that factors at the individual, program and system levels are important for determining whether an individual ECE teacher or caregiver will participate in PD activities.

[Read Understanding Facilitators and Barriers to Professional Development Use Among the Early Care and Education Workforce.](#)

Healthy Holidays Messaging and Activity Toolkit

This year, the holidays will be different for many families. Staying safe during COVID-19 as the weather gets colder will require more time indoors and adjustments to traditional family gatherings. However, the holidays offer unique, new experiences, and each day is always a new



opportunity to talk, read and sing. *Too Small to Fail* has shared a toolkit of resources to help engage and support parents this holiday season—including key messages, activity ideas and social media tools. They've also included new CDC guidance for holiday gatherings. [You can access the toolkit here.](#) 

Young Children in Deep Poverty

This report by National Center for Children in Poverty presents data and graphics to illustrate the variation of young children in deep poverty by race and ethnicity and health and development, including low birth weight, physical impairments, intellectual disability and developmental delay, participation rates in early intervention and special education, child behavior, lack of health insurance, obesity and elevated blood lead levels.

Young Children in Deep Poverty: Racial/Ethnic Disparities and Child Well-Being Compared to Other Income Groups

Uyen Sophie Nguyen | Sheila Smith | Maribel R. Granja
October 2020



NCCIP National Center for Children in Poverty
Bank Street Graduate School of Education

HAPPY Holidays



SUPPORT CCSA

Whether through helping low-income families afford quality child care, child care referrals, salary supplements for our underpaid early childhood educators or educational scholarships to allow the workforce who teach our young children to continue their own education, CCSA is dedicated to ensuring that our children grow up happy, healthy and ready to succeed. We can't do it without you!

Please consider giving to CCSA online at <https://www.childcareservices.org/donate> or by calling Kara Shultz at (919) 969-1927. Checks may be mailed to CCSA, PO Box 901, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Thank you!



CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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 (919) 967-3272

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www.childcareservices.org



The CCSA Communicates newsletter contains links to other websites and news articles. These links represent just a few examples of the numerous reference materials currently available to the public. The opinions expressed in any articles or web pages do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of Child Care Services Association. The inclusion of resources should not be construed or interpreted as an endorsement of any private organization or business listed herein.