

Community
Child Care
Clearinghouse

OF NIAGARA

Annual Report

**July 1, 2020
to
June 30, 2021**



Administered by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.

United to Promote Quality

Each year nationwide businesses lose \$4.4 billion to employee absenteeism from child care breakdowns. On average, a parent or guardian will miss from 5 to 9 days of work due to a child care crisis. The work schedules for 67% of parents are affected by child care challenges.

Quality child care programs serve young children as well as parents/guardians who might be less effective in their jobs without access to quality child care programs for their children. In turn, employers benefit by the enhanced performance of their workers. Quality child care prepares young children for success in school, job training, employment and community life.

Quality child care is defined as high quality early learning experiences that help a child thrive. It is those events, activities, environments, relationships, and factors that have a positive impact on a young child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. Quality includes age-appropriate curricula, highly skilled staff, warm and responsive interactions, small class sizes and a language rich environment.

Quality child care is vital for young children, families and communities. The "United to Promote Quality" state wide initiative is intended to educate whole communities including families, early learning service providers, businesses, and community leaders about the importance of quality.

Quality awareness is the goal of the "United to Promote Quality" partnership between the Early Care and Learning Council and the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies in New York State. Quality awareness efforts within a community will demonstrate how quality promotes "robust brain development" over the first 4 years of life, gives "peace of mind" to parents/guardians so they can be more focused and productive employees, and "lays the foundation" for the future economic development of our communities, state and nation by better preparing children to become successful in school, work and life.

For more information on "United to Promote Quality", please visit <https://earlycareandlearning.org/our-voice-advocacy/> or contact the Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara at 716-285-8572 or 1-800-701-4KID.



United to Promote Quality

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNUAL REPORT

NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.

07/1/20 – 6/30/21

United to Promote Quality	1
Table of Contents	2
Message from the Board Chairperson.....	3
Message from the CEO.....	4
Board of Directors Listing.....	5
Current Employee Listing.....	6
An Overview of the Community Child Care Clearing- house of Niagara.....	7-8
Community Partners.....	9
Program Statistics.....	10
Program Budget	11
COVID-19 Grants	12
Policy and Advocacy.....	13

Message from the Board Chairperson.....

Affordable Child Care for Families

Improving access to affordable, quality child care is one of the goals of the national association Child Care Aware of America and the local child care resource and referral agency known as the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara. Child Care is a necessity for working parents. However, the high costs associated with child care strain family budgets and force parents to make compromises about the quality and safety of care they choose for their children.

Since 2000, the cost of child care has increased twice as much as the median income of families with children.

- Child care costs are high.
- Child care costs are rising.
- Child care costs are high compared to family incomes.
- Child care costs are high compared to household expenses.
- Child care costs are high compared to college costs.

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara and Child Care Aware of America recommend Congress to:

- Increase federal investments in child care fee assistance for eligible children and quality improvement efforts.
- Provide resources for planning and developing child care capacity to increase the availability of quality child care options for working families.
- Reduce barriers in the subsidy administration process that prevent families from accessing assistance.
- Require states to have more effective sliding fee assistance phase-out plans to ensure that parents who receive a modest raise do not lose all child care assistance.
- Provide child care assistance to families who do not qualify for current funding but who cannot afford the market cost of child care in their community.
- Require Health and Human Services to undertake a study of quality child care to assist all of working families.
- Ensure that public pre-kindergarten programs are designed to meet the child care needs of working families.
- Improve federal and state tax codes to help families at all income levels pay for child care.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Pecoraro
Board Chairperson
Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.

Message from the CEO.....

I am pleased to present to you Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.'s Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara's annual report for the fiscal year of July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

This report highlights the program's accomplishments. It is through the combined and collaborative efforts and resources that our agency has been able to provide services to Niagara County residents.

Our world and our country continue to face enormous challenges with far reaching consequences in years to come. Locally, our economy continues to struggle. The programs and services offered by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc. brought temporary relief and assistance to our County's struggling families.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to federal, state, and local grantors who have provided guidance and financial resources to facilitate the delivery of services to our families. Special thanks goes to the Board of Directors for their time, dedication, and support in setting policy and providing direction; to the employees who dedicate their efforts in providing the delivery of services; and to the many contributors, volunteers and organizations who have unselfishly provided their resources because they believe in the agency's mission. Your continued support over the past 50 years has been greatly appreciated.

If you have a question on the contents of this document or any program administered by Niagara Community Action Program, Inc., please contact me at 716-285-9681 x 103.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Shears,
CEO
Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2020-2021

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara would like to express our sincere appreciation to our Board of Directors for their continued dedication to the children and families of Niagara County.

Robert Pecoraro Board Chairman Public Sector	John Lombardi III Public Sector
Tim Beach Treasurer Private Sector	Andrea Haseley Secretary Private Sector
Owen Steed Member at Large Public Sector	Thomas Beachy Member at Large Community Sector
Andrew Kirsch Private Sector	Danny Sklarski Public Sector
Kimberly Meal Private Sector	Ann Printup Community Sector
James Pyra Member at Large Private Sector	Joyce Scott Community Sector
Dennis Stachera Community Sector	Pamela Stevenson Community Sector
Charles Walker Public Sector	

**NIAGARA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.
CURRENT EMPLOYEE LISTING BY PROGRAM**

-ADMINISTRATION-

SUZANNE SHEARS
PAUL WILSON
SUSAN PENNINGTON-BURNS
SARFRAZ RAZA

CEO
FISCAL DIRECTOR
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
ACCOUNT BOOKKEEPER

-WEATHERIZATION-

DAVID HARRIS
DANIEL RHINEHARDT
AUDRA JONES
GEORGE MOTT
NATHAN MCKENZIE
GLENN LAUZAU
C.J. JONES
Tyrone Marks
NICK ZARILLO

WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM SUPERVISOR
HEATING SPECIALIST/TECHNICAL ASSISTANT
PROGRAM MONITOR/PT
TECHNICAL DATA INSTALLER
CREW FOREMAN
FIELD ASSISTANT
FIELD ASSISTANT
FIELD ASSISTANT
CREW FOREMEN

RICK MACKENDRICK

RURAL PRESERVATION-
HOUSING COORDINATOR

-NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS-

JAQUINDA SMITH
LINDA HARRINGTON
Nicole Everett
NANCY MILLARD
RICHARD OLKA
AMBER LESTER
MARITZA GIACOMETTI

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT & NUTRITION SUPERVISOR
OUTREACH WORKER- NORTH TONAWANDA
OUTREACH WORKER-LOCKPORT
PROGRAM AIDE/PT
FOOD CENTER WORKER/PT
PROGRAM AIDE
OUTREACH WORKER-19TH ST.

-CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL-



ANGELA BURNS
CAROLYN JACOBS
BEVERLY MCARTHUR
DEBRA PERRICELLI
DONNA STRIFFLER
KIMMARIE BROWN
PARTICK CARR
ELIZABETH NOWAKOWSKI
KELLY JANESE

CHILD CARE SUPERVISOR
REFERRAL COUNSELOR
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST
LEGALLY-EXEMPT MONITOR
PROGRAM ASSISTANT/LEGALLY EXEMPT
LEAD REGISTRATION MONITOR
REGISTRATION MONITOR
REGISTRATION MONITOR
INFANT TODDLER SPECIALIST

-FAMILY DAY CARE-

LINDA NEWMAN
BETTY MCCARTHY

CACFP PROGRAM MONITOR
DATA ENTRY CLERK CACFP

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara **Program Overview**

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara is funded by the New York State Office of Children & Family Services and is a member of Child Care Aware of America the National organization of Resource and Referral programs and the New York State Early Care and Learning Council which is the State's network of New York State Child Care Resource and Referral programs.

The program year for the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara ran from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. The operating budget for the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara was \$224,978.00.

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara provides the following services to parents, providers, businesses and the community:

- Information and Referral Services
- Child Care Training, Education, and Technical Assistance
- Advocacy
- Community Education
- Start-up funds for family and group family day care providers
- Quality initiative grants for family and group family day care providers, day care centers and school-age child care programs
- Assistance with registration and licensing for family/group family child care providers, day care centers and school-age child care programs
- Enrollment for legally – exempt child care providers

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara is committed to ensuring high quality, equitable child care services that are available within our community and encourages everyone's support in joining our effort to promote this public policy initiative in our community.

The Early Care and Learning Council and our Child Care Resource & Referral network are committed to supporting the 2019-2020 public policy agenda that includes policies such as subsidy reform and quality child care which can make a difference in a child's ability to succeed in school and in life. Quality child care can also affect the social, emotional and physical health of children in child care settings.

It is important to note that provider training, technical assistance and on-site intensive technical assistance have a direct correlation to the quality of a child care program. The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara provides both technical assistance and on-site technical assistance to all registered, licensed and legally-exempt child care providers in an effort to improve the quality of child care in Niagara County.

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara also administers a Quality Initiative project that is available to registered and licensed child care programs in Niagara County. This project provides program assessments, program support, and quality incentive grants to registered and licensed child care providers.

The items included in the grant help to improve the curriculum and/or support the health and development of children enrolled in registered and licensed child care programs.

The program assessment includes an onsite evaluation of each program, assistance in creating an individualized quality improvement plan, site visits as necessary, and a re-evaluation of the program to measure the increase in the program's quality using a standardized quality rating assessment tool.

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara provides start-up grants to prospective child care providers who wish to open a family or group family child care program in their home. The items distributed through the start-up grant assist potential child care providers to bring the home into compliance with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services child day care regulations.

Health and Safety grants are also distributed to in-home child care providers that are exempt from licensing or registration (legally-exempt) to help improve the quality of care provided to the children in those child care environments.

Community Partners

In addition to the direct services provided to parents, child care providers, businesses and the community, the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara works together with the following community partners in an effort to further increase the quality of child care in Niagara County:

- Western New York Infant/Toddler Resource Network- provides information on the social, emotional and physical health of infants and toddlers to parents, child care providers, businesses and the community.
- New York State Infancy Leadership Circle Project of New York Zero-to-Three- provides resources and creates materials for parents, child care providers, businesses, and the community relating to the social, emotional, and physical development of infant and toddlers.
- Niagara County Department of Social Services- collaborates on all child care issues.
- Niagara University- collaborates on improving the quality of child care for day care centers in Niagara County.
- Pinnacle Services- collaborates through their home visiting program for parents.
- Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center- collaborates through a variety of programs designed to help the Niagara community with health coverage, housing, clothing and food assistance, prenatal care and diverse health issues.
- Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation
- Grigg Lewis Foundation
- John Oishei Foundation
- Small Business Development Center



The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara would like to express our sincere appreciation to all of our community partners for their continued dedication in improving the quality of child care in Niagara County and keeping our children safe and healthy.

Program Statistics

The COVID 19 pandemic had a tremendous impact on the services that were provided by the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara .Listed below are the contract milestones completed by the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara for the 2020- 2021 program year.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)	Number of Milestones Required	Number of Milestones Completed
Parents referred to registered and licensed child care providers	129	100
Parent accessing internet referrals	25	22
Basic Technical assistance to regulated child care providers	192	407
Intensive technical assistance projects hours to regulated child care providers	10	3
Health Care Consultant Services	26	26
Start-up grants distribute to potential family and group family child care providers	5	2
Health and safety grants distributed to legally-exempt child care providers	10	10
Quality incentive grants distributed to family and group family child care providers	14	14
Quality incentive grants distributed to day care centers and school-age child care programs	14	14
Trainings Held	-	70
Number of child care providers that received training	-	170
Legally-exempt child care providers enrolled	-	22 New Providers 21 Providers Re-enrolled

Program Budget
Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara
07/01/20 to 6/30/2021

Expense Category	Local Share Funds	Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Funds	Total Program Expenses
Personal Services			
Personnel	\$30,806	\$76,873	\$107,679
Fringe Benefits	\$9,858	\$24,599	\$34,457
Non-Personal Services			
Contractual Consultant	\$2,596	\$70,198	\$72,794
Staff Travel/Per Diem	\$0	\$950	\$950
Equipment	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Supplies	\$2,987	\$2,989	\$5,976
Other Expenses	\$4,489	\$11,912	\$16,401
Total Program Budget	\$53,756	\$187,521	\$241,257

COVID-19 Grants

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara was awarded grant monies to assist child care providers and essential workers during these unprecedented times.

Grant Name	Grant Amount	Funded Through
COVID-19 Essential Worker Child Care Scholarship Program	\$566,388	New York State Office of Children and Family Services
Reopening Grants	\$29,287	New York State Office of Children and Family Services
Temporary Operating Assistance Grants	\$91,658	New York State Office of Children and Family Services

The grant monies for these grants were provided through Federal stimulus dollars which were administered by New York State. The COVID-19 Essential Worker Child Care Scholarship Program grant was awarded to the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara, from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). The purpose of the grant was to pay child care costs for income eligible essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide personal protective equipment and food supplies to child care providers who were caring for children of essential workers.

190 parent applications from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Of the applications processed, 90 applications were deemed eligible and approved and 30 child care providers received child care payments for 138 children. The total amount paid to child care providers was \$566,388.

The Reopening and Temporary Operating Assistance grants provided child care programs with funds to reimburse for items necessary to remain compliant with the COVID 19 pandemic requirements mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and the New York State Health Department. Twenty-two child care programs received a Reopening Grant and 7 child care programs received Temporary Operating Assistance Grants.

Grant Name	Grant Amount	Funded Through
Small Grants for Small Children	\$108,000	Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr Foundation awarded Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.'s, Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara a Small Grants for Small Children grant totaling \$108,000. The grant provided funds to be used to assist registered and licensed home-based child care providers who were struggling with the changing and growing need for child care, with their own needs for reliable income and preventing exposure to COVID-19. The grant assisted 48 home-based child care providers throughout Niagara County.

Policy and Advocacy

Today, most young children in New York have no parent at home during the day. Families need affordable, high-quality options. Child care providers need professional development and working conditions that reflect the important work they do each day.

Friends and family, who provide care, need acknowledgement, support, and opportunities for growth.

Children who attend high-quality early childhood programs are healthier and perform better in school, and, as adults, are more likely to own their own home. They're less likely to smoke, abuse alcohol and illegal drugs, engage in risk-taking behavior, and be arrested and incarcerated.

Even parents and their employers reap the advantages of high-quality early childhood programs. Parents who feel confident about their early childhood program are more productive employees.

There are over 119,000 child care providers in 22,000 businesses across New York State. Child care services are responsible for generating \$4.7 billion in our economy and support the employment of over 750,000 parents. But quality child care can be costly, and universal access is not yet achieved. That's why we advocate across New York State and in Washington, D.C. to ensure that quality, affordable child care is available for all New Yorkers.

[Click here](#) to access the most recent Winning Beginning Legislative Agenda and to learn more about issues, find facts and figures on their resource pages, and begin to take action in helping us advocate for quality, affordable child care for all New Yorkers. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

