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Legislative Committee Services
State Capitol Building
Salem, Oregon 97301
(503) 986-1813

Background Brief on...

Child Care

Prepared by: Sandy Thiele-Cirka

Background

Child care has become an important component in Oregon's efforts to provide services that support low-income families and their efforts to find and retain employment. In 1996, Congress enacted the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (**PRWORA**). PRWORA created two block grants: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (**TANF**), which provides states with the funding and the flexibility to design programs and choose services that best support low-income families, specifically welfare recipients, moving into the workforce, and the Child Care and Development Fund (**CCDF**) which provides low-income working families with child care assistance and helps states improve the quality of child care.

Approximately 165,000 children in Oregon (27 percent of all children under age 13) spend an average of 26.5 hours each week with a paid, child care provider. In 2000, 65 percent of families with incomes less than the state median spent more than 10 percent of their income on child care.

Child Care Facilities

There are three types of child care:

Child Care Centers are facilities that are certified to care for 13 or more children and are not located in a building constructed as a single-family residence. There are approximately 1,000 licensed child care centers in Oregon, caring for approximately 70,000 children.

Certified Family Homes are located in a building constructed as a single-family residence (provider's residence) that is certified to care for no more than 12 children on a full-time basis. There are approximately 250 certified family homes throughout the state caring for approximately 2,500 children.

Registered Family Child Care Homes are located in a building constructed as a single-family residence that may care for a maximum of 10 children (six full-time, four part-time) at any one time. There are approximately 5,000 registered family child care providers in Oregon, caring for approximately 45,000 children.

A license from the Child Care Division (CCD) is required for child care facilities that care for more than three children for more than one family, for more than four hours per day.

Child Care Resources in Oregon

Oregon's Business Community – Oregon employers invest in child care for their workers as a strategy to recruit and retain a quality workforce. On-site child care centers are one solution for some large businesses while other employers invest in resource and referral services to assist employees in finding quality child care, and some offer child care benefits as part of a cafeteria-style, benefit plan.

Child Care Division – The Child Care Division is part of the Oregon Employment Department and is responsible for the regulation of child care providers and facilities in Oregon. CCD's duties include:

- Ensuring that families have access to child care information and services
- Administering federal child care funds
- Establishing licensing standards for child care facilities
- Inspecting child care facilities and investigating complaints
- Coordinating the efforts of agencies and organizations to build Oregon's child care infrastructure

Children, Adults and Families (CAF) – CAF is part of the Oregon Department of Human Services. CAF administers the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program under a contract from the CCD. ERDC provides child care subsidies for over 12,500 low-income families monthly, which impacts over 25,000 Oregon children.

Child Care Resource and Referral Network – In 1989, Oregon began building a system to provide child care resource and referral services to improve child care accessibility to all Oregon families. Resource and referral agencies provide assistance to parents seeking child care, providers seeking clients or wanting to upgrade the quality of their services, communities assessing and recruiting for underserved child care needs, and employers assisting employees in locating or providing child care. The Child Care Division contracts with the Oregon Child Care Resource and Referral Network to maintain a statewide system of services. Currently, Oregon's resource and referral system serves nearly 35,000 children and provides services to all 36 counties through 17 agencies.

Commission for Child Care

The Commission for Child Care is an 18-member body charged with advising the Governor and the Legislature on the issues, problems and solutions critical to the development of accessible, affordable and quality child care services. The Commission holds regular public meetings and produces a biennial report to the Governor containing the concerns and issues the Commission is working on.

Staff and Agency Contacts:

Oregon Employment Department
Child Care Commission
503-947-1891

Oregon Employment Department
Child Care Division
503-947-1400

Sandy Thiele-Cirka
Legislative Committee Services
503-986-1286