

Section Eight

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Results for County Total

Reason for Care:

- 73% of all respondents report needing child care to work/look for work. 69% want it for their child's growth and development, 50% to run errands/go to appointments, and 29% to attend school or training.

- Location of Care:
 - 66% of respondents preferred that child care be located closer to their homes, and 21% preferred it be located closer to their place of work.

- Future Need for Care:
 - 61% of respondents will have a need for child care in one year, and 59% in two years.

- Finding Care:
 - 52% of respondents state that it has been hard to find care when they need it.
 - 21% of respondents currently need child care.

- Current Care Status:
 - 51% of respondents had a child in care at the time of the survey.
 - 60% are happy with their current care.

Cost of Care:

39% of respondents state that child care costs too much. Affordability of care has often been identified as a significant barrier to obtaining and keeping child care. It was anticipated that more than 39% of the respondents would indicate that their child care cost too much. This result may be due to one of several possibilities: many respondents had subsidized care; respondents overall had higher income levels than those of other studies; respondents used informal unpaid care; and respondents rotated care with a partner or spouse.

Kinds of Care Preferred:

- The top three types of care preferred by all respondents are Small Family Care, Other Relative, and Child Care Center.

- Important Factors When Choosing Care:
 - The top five factors for all respondents in choosing care are safety, loving/caring adults, reputation of the program/center/caregiver, the kind of care, and the hours/days that care is available.

- Most respondents ranked caretaker language as of low importance. Spanish was the most preferred language countywide. In Eastern Humboldt there was a desire for caretakers to speak one of the Native American languages.
- Days and Times That Care Is Needed:
- Most care is needed during the typical workweek, Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This finding corresponds to the finding that most respondents need child care to work/look for work.
- Respondent Interest:
- 40% of the respondents (213) provided written comments/feedback on their child care needs.
- 43% of the respondents (229) provided contact information (name and telephone number) for follow-up with the LCCPC:
 - 91 respondents are interested in participating in a focus group
 - 138 respondents would like to have more information about the LCCPC.

Summary of Results by Area

Survey results were geo-stratified by the zip code of the area that respondents resided in. Areas were identified according to the region of the county in which communities tend to cluster and consist of the zip codes within that cluster. The results provided assess the respondents' child care needs based on the area in which they reside. The percentages of surveys returned are representative of the number and percentages of births for each area (see Table 1, page 4.)

The response rate for the County Total was 16%. Survey research practice recommends that when reporting descriptive statistics for small numbers such as the geographic areas of Southern and Eastern Humboldt county that the response rate be 20% or higher. Response rates for specific zip codes within these areas ranged from 0 to 50% for Southern Humboldt and from 10 to 21% for Eastern Humboldt. Given that the response rates for Southern and Eastern Humboldt were 14% and 12% respectively and these are smaller populations within the county, it is recommended that future research target these areas for further investigation of child care needs.

SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT

- 6% of the mothers who gave birth in Humboldt County 2004 to 2006 resided in Southern Humboldt.
- A total of 212 surveys were delivered and 29 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 14%.
- Zip code response rates within this area ranged from 0 to 50% with Garberville, which is the most populated city in the area at a 20% response rate.

- 6% of all deliverable surveys went to mothers residing in Southern Humboldt and 6% of all surveys returned were from Southern Humboldt.

Slightly more than half (52%) of the Southern Humboldt respondents were above the County median income level and there were no respondents in the lowest income level. Southern Humboldt respondents indicated that:

- 37% currently have a child in care.
- 33% currently need child care.
- 63% had difficulty finding care.
- 69% need child care in one year, 64% need care in two years.
- 44% were happy with their current care.

The preferred type of care was Small Family Care Home, with Early Head Start as the second choice and Other Relative as third choice. There are two licensed Small Family Care Homes available with a total capacity of 12 (Table 11, page 24). There are no licensed infant-toddler centers, and there are two licensed large Family Child Care Homes with a total capacity for 24.

Southern Humboldt respondents want care primarily to run errands and to go to appointments and had the lowest percentages of need for care to work/look for work or attend school/ training. Like all other areas, they prefer to have child care located closer to their homes. They had the second highest percentage of English as primary language and no preference for a caretaker second language.

FORTUNA AREA

- 21% of the mothers who gave birth in Humboldt County 2004 to 2006 resided in the Fortuna Area.
- A total of 702 surveys were delivered and 104 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 15%.
- Zip code response rates for this area ranged from 10% to 50% with Fortuna, which is the most populated city in the area at a 16% response rate.
- 21% of all deliverable surveys and 20% of all surveys returned were from the Fortuna Area.

Slightly less than half (49%) of the Fortuna Area respondents were above the County median income level. The Fortuna Area respondents indicated that:

- 47% currently have a child in care.
- 27% currently need child care.
- 54% had difficulty finding care.
- 57% need child care in one year, 53% need care in two years.
- 55% were happy with their current care.

The preferred type of care was Other Relative, followed by Small Family Care Home, then Early Head Start. There are 13 licensed Small Family Care Homes available with a total capacity for 78 (Table 11, page 24). There are no licensed infant-toddler centers, and there are 17 licensed large Family Child Care Homes with a total capacity for 204.

The Fortuna Area respondents need care primarily to work/look for work and prefer to have child care located closer to their homes. They had the lowest percentage of English, and the highest percentage of Spanish, as the primary languages spoken in their homes. They indicated a greater interest in Spanish as preferred caretaker second language.

EUREKA AREA

- 40% of the mothers who gave birth in Humboldt County 2004 to 2006 resided in the Eureka Area.
- A total of 1,349 surveys were delivered and 226 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 17%.
- Zip code response rates for this area ranged from 5% to 18% with Eureka, which is the most populated city in the area at a 18% response rate.
- 40% of all deliverable surveys went to mothers residing in the Eureka Area and 43% of all surveys returned were from the Eureka Area.

There were 57% of the respondents above the County median income. The Eureka Area respondents indicated that:

- 52% currently have a child in care.
- 18% currently need child care.
- 44% had difficulty finding care.
- 56% need child care in one year, 55% need care in two years.
- 61% were happy with their current care.

The main choice of care was Small Family Care Home, followed by Child Care Center and Other Relative. There are 42 licensed Small Family Care Homes available with a capacity for 252 (Table 11, page 24). There are 2 licensed infant-toddler centers with a total capacity for 41, one at the local high school for teenage mothers and another at the local community college that gives students first priority. There are no infant-toddler centers available for non-subsidized care. There are 30 licensed large Family Child Care Homes with a total capacity for 360.

The Eureka Area respondents want care first for their child's growth and development, and second to work/look for work. Like other areas, they prefer to have child care located closer to their homes. English was the primary language spoken in their homes, though at a lower percentage than any other area except Fortuna, and they expressed a desire for Spanish as a second caretaker language.

ARCATA MCKINLEYVILLE AREA

- 27% of the mothers who gave birth in Humboldt County 2004 to 2006 resided in the Arcata McKinleyville Area.
- A total of 864 surveys were delivered and 168 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 19%.
- Zip code response rates ranged from 0% to 26% for this area with McKinleyville, while unincorporated having the zip code with the most population of the area, at a 19% response rate.
- 26% of all deliverable surveys went to mothers who resided in the Arcata-McKinleyville Area and 32% of all surveys returned were from the Arcata-McKinleyville Area.

There were 55% of respondents above the County median income level. The Arcata-McKinleyville Area respondents indicated that:

- 58% currently have a child in care.
- 14% currently need child care.
- 54% had difficulty finding care.
- 67% need child care in one year, 63% need care in two years.
- 67% were happy with their current care.

The preferred choice of care was Small Family Care Home, followed by Child Care Center and then Playgroup. There are 34 licensed Small Family Care Homes available with a total capacity for 206 (Table 11, page 24). There are 2 licensed infant-toddler centers with a total capacity for 59, one of which prioritizes enrollment for students, faculty and staff and the other, which must serve state-subsidized parents first. There are 12 licensed large Family Child Care Homes with a capacity for 146.

The Arcata-McKinleyville Area respondents need care primarily to work/look for work. Like the other areas, they prefer to have child care located closer to their homes. The primary language spoken in their homes was English, and they preferred various second languages for their caretakers.

EASTERN HUMBOLDT

- 6% of the mothers who gave birth in Humboldt County 2004 to 2006 resided in Eastern Humboldt.
- A total of 241 surveys were delivered and 31 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 13%.
- Zip code response rates for this area ranged from 10% to 21% with Hoopa, the most populated location of the area, at a 10% response rate.
- 8% of the all surveys were delivered to Eastern Humboldt and 6% of all surveys returned were from Eastern Humboldt.

This area had the highest percentage of respondents below the County median income level (63%) and the lowest income level of all areas. The Eastern Humboldt respondents indicated that:

- 37% currently have a child in care.
- 47% currently need child care.
- 80% had difficulty finding care.
- 63% need child care in one year, 80% need care in two years.
- 43% were happy with their current care.

Eastern Humboldt respondents identified Early Head Start as the primary means of care, and the first choice in types of care. Child Care Center was the second choice, and Small Family Care was third. There is one licensed Small Family Care Homes available with a total capacity for 6 (Table 11). There are no licensed infant-toddler centers, and there no licensed large Family Child Care Homes. There is license-exempt tribal child care available in this area.

The primary reason care was needed was to work or look for work—the highest percentage of all areas. There was also a greater need for care to attend school or training, and a greater preference to have the care at the school/training location. Eastern Humboldt had the highest percentage of English as the primary language spoken in home, and indicated an interest in Native American languages for caretaker second language.

Recommendations

- Prioritize and focus efforts to build child care capacity in the areas where the need is the greatest.
- Conduct follow-up focus groups or other studies to further assess the child care needs of the high-need areas identified by this study.
- Strategize ways to work with the Small Business Development Center, economic development entities and other child care entities to encourage residents in high-need areas to consider opening up Small Family Care Homes, and other child care resources that serve infants and toddlers.
- Target recruitment efforts for LCCPC membership from high-need areas to increase representation from those areas.
- Partner with existing child care service organizations to assist them with providing outreach of services to areas with high need, such as publicity campaigns to increase awareness of services available.