

Solano Child Care Planning Council

Strategic Framework



January 2022

Introduction

On behalf of the Solano County Office of Education and the Solano Child Care Planning Council (LPC), we present the **2021 Solano Child Care Strategic Framework**. Each of the 58 counties in California has a Local Planning Council. The primary mission of LPCs is to serve as a forum to plan for, and address, the child care needs of all families in the community, for all types of child care, both subsidized and non-subsidized. Solano's council is comprised of 15 members in the categories of: child care consumers, child care providers, public agency representatives, and community representatives. All of the members live or work in Solano County. The Council is charged with specific requirements, and Solano's council has chosen to engage in additional activities. Some required and optional activities include: child care needs assessment and accessibility reporting, determining zip code priorities, collaboration with partner agencies, education and community outreach. The vision of Solano's council is:

Every child and family in Solano County has
equitable access to high quality, inclusive, affordable child care,
and supports that help them thrive.

In August of 2020, with the recommendation of the First 5 Solano Commission and the County Administrator, the Board of Supervisors designated the Solano County Office of Education as the legal entity for the Solano Child Care Planning Council (LPC), effective October 1, 2020. The Solano County Board of Supervisors recognized that the Solano County Office of Education had developed a strong and robust early care and education portfolio, including multiple, cohesively aligned programs and existing collaboratives, which would be an asset to the work of the Child Care Planning Council. The LPC contract with the California Department of Education was officially finalized in January 2021.

Solano's LPC collaborates with many partner organizations and agencies across the county, including First 5 Solano, Solano Family & Children's Services, Child Start, Inc. (Head Start/Early Head Start), Solano Community College, multiple County divisions, etc. This Strategic Framework has been developed with support from Applied Survey Research and with input from these partners and other community members, including families who responded to our survey to determine current child care needs, accessibility, strengths, barriers, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Solano Child Care Planning Council will use this 2021 Strategic Framework to identify and collaborate to address the child care needs of families in Solano County and better understand the types of providers and programs available to support access for children and families. This document provides a wealth of data to describe the diversity, child care needs, and resources for families in Solano County, along with informative explanations of each data set.



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2021/2022

Solano Child Care Planning Council Members

Council Coordinator: Bronwyn Kennedy, Solano County Office of Education

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Manuela Jacques, Vallejo City Unified School District Child Development Programs, Child Care Provider Representative

Andrea Calderon, Child Start, Inc., Child Care Provider Representative

Typhanie Ricci-Western, City of Vacaville, Parks and Recreation Programs, Community Representative

Dr. Zoe Bartholomew, ZMB Consulting, Community Representative

Jennifer Carpentier, Parent, Community Representative

Akon Walker, Solano County Office of Education, Public Agency Representative

Juanita Morales, First 5 Solano, Public Agency Representative

Kathy Lago, Solano Family & Children's Services, Discretionary Representatives

Anna Mansker, Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, Discretionary Representative

Dr. Lilibeth Pinpin, Solano County Office of Education, Discretionary Representative

*Solano County Office of Education is designated as the contractor with the California Department of Education and the administrative unit of the planning council.





Vision

Every child and family in Solano County has equitable access to high quality, inclusive, affordable child care, and supports that help them thrive.

Mission

Provide leadership and advocacy for the development of high quality, accessible, and affordable child care programs for every child and family in Solano County.

Priority Goals

As a result of Solano County's child care Needs Assessment, analysis of Priority Data, and the Strategic Thinking process, the following priority goals and actions have been identified:

- ✓ Support initiatives that advocate for quality, linguistically, and culturally appropriate individualized care
- ✓ Continuously update data and use it for education and advocacy
- ✓ Increase communication and community engagement

Background

High quality, accessible early care and education is an essential ingredient of a healthy community. It is the basis of positive outcomes for children in school and beyond and permits parents to be actively engaged in the workforce.¹ High quality early care and education supports the social fabric of a community by ensuring that the physical, cognitive, and social-emotional needs of children are met, and by providing the support needed by families. Parents whose children are in quality early care and education settings are available to work, thus contributing to the economic vitality of the community.

In 1991, the U.S. Congress established a Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Each state was allocated funds to assist low-income families with child care and

¹ Reynolds, A.J. Temple, J.A. Robertson (2000). A 15-year follow-up of low-income children in public schools, Madison Wisconsin: Chicago longitudinal study, University of Wisconsin

development services. ² In California, Assembly Bill 2141 was passed, providing suggested structure for Local Child Care and Development Councils. In 1995, the California Legislature created Local Child Care and Development Planning Councils in each of the 58 counties to assess local child care needs and identify existing gaps in services for children ages birth through 12. ³

In addition, each council is charged with developing a five-year local child care plan, identifying areas of priority for the California Department of Education to use regarding allocation of funds. In 1997, Assembly Bill 1542 was passed establishing welfare reform legislation (CalWORKS) that revised the membership and responsibilities of local planning councils. Assembly Bill 1542 continues to guide the structure of local planning councils. The Board of Supervisors and the Superintendent of Schools appoint members to the Local Child Care Planning Council, establish the terms of appointments, and review and approve needs assessments and local priorities for funding.

The Council's major responsibilities as outlined in Education Code are to:

- Conduct an assessment of child care needs in the county no less than once every five years.
- Prepare local comprehensive countywide child care plans designed to mobilize public and private resources to address identified needs.
- Identify local funding priority areas for child care services.
- Conduct local forums to encourage public input in the development of local priorities.
- Foster local partnerships with subsidized and non-subsidized providers, local and state Children and Families' Commissions, county welfare departments, human service agencies, regional centers, job training programs, employers, parent organizations, Early Start Family Resource Centers, family empowerment centers on disability, local child care Resource and Referral programs, the County Office of Education, and other interested parties.
- Coordinate part-day programs, including State Preschool and Head Start, with other child care and development services to provide full-day child care.
- Design a system to consolidate local child care waiting lists.
- Collaborate with local First 5 Commission and other entities to carry out child care staff retention initiatives.

According to Education Code, local planning councils are intended to serve as a forum for the identification of local priorities for early care and education services and the development of policies to meet the needs identified within those priorities.

The LPC is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders representing parents, child care professionals (home-based, center-based, private, state-funded, and non-profit), public agency representatives, community agencies and other discretionary community experts representing special populations. LPC membership may include Resource and Referral agencies, state-funded

² Administration for Children & Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, WA, DC

³ California Education Code, Chapter 2.3, Article 1, Section 8499 and Article 2, Sections 8499.3, 8499.5, and 8499.7

contractors, Head Start, City and County Coordinators, First 5, community foundations, tribal agencies, K–12 educators, and higher education institutions. Such diverse membership structure makes local planning councils a microcosm of the Early Care and Education (ECE) system. Local planning councils are responsible for supporting all types of early care and education programs representing the diverse ECE delivery system in the State of California.

Purpose of the Strategic Framework

The purpose of this document is to serve as a resource for community members, to provide current data regarding our local community needs, to assist policy makers in making decisions that will positively impact Solano County's families and children. This plan also serves as a blueprint for the activities for the planning council's projects and activities.



Context for our Work

Solano County is the northeastern county in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area region. It includes Dixon, Vacaville, Fairfield, Suisun City, Rio Vista, Vallejo, Benicia, and Travis Air Force Base. The county seat is Fairfield, and the largest city is Vallejo. As of the 2020 census, the population was 453,491 a 3.98% increase from 2015. But the population of children and youth is shrinking as a percentage of the whole population. Children under five were 6% of the population in 2015 increased to 6.7% in 2020. Children and youth aged five to 19 were 22.9% of the population in 2015 decreased to 18.8% in 2020.⁴



Types of Child Care Available in Solano County⁵

Licensed Family Child Care (FCC) Homes: Provided in an individual's home and offers care in a small group setting. This type of child care is usually licensed for up to eight or no more than 14 children. FCC homes are inspected by the Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing.

⁴ United States Census Bureau

⁵ Solano Family & Children's Services

Licensed Child Care Centers: Centers can be in a variety of public or private settings used specifically for child care. Such facilities can be operated by individuals, corporations, or public entities. They may be private and/or non-profit. These programs are typically more structured, with larger groups of children. Centers are inspected by the Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing.



License-Exempt Centers and Individuals: This includes family, friends, neighbors, and nannies that you might hire to care for your children only. These caregivers may care for one family's children without being licensed. All nannies must be Trustline registered if hired through an agency in California. License-Exempt centers and individuals are not inspected by any state agency. To learn more about licensed child care, visit www.cclld.ca.gov.



Needs Assessment

A variety of data sources are included in this Framework. Much of the data was compiled and submitted by the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council to the California Department of Education in 2021. It is based on the most recently available census data at the time. In addition, data was gathered from the Solano Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA), Applied Survey Research, and the Solano Family & Children's Services Resource and Referral agency. The data is a snapshot in time and intended to be a source that can be used to inform planning council members, child care service agencies and organizations, consumers and local government officials about important service needs as well as potential policy implications. The data will be updated as it becomes available and will be used to inform any revisions to this Strategic Framework. As with any single study, this needs assessment is one of many important data sources that provide information about child care and early education in Solano County. The needs assessment data should be used in conjunction with other current data related to child care such as data on the work force, scientific investigations, and other community-based studies to paint the most accurate picture of child care and to understand our families and their child care needs. This is the recommended approach to appropriately allocate resources to meet those needs.

"To achieve our goals of educating bold and ambitious children, we must invest in enriching, quality early child care and learning. – Stacey Abrams

Community Engagement

An important component of this Strategic Framework is community engagement. We have tapped into a variety of convenings to hear from our community related to quality early care and education priorities in Solano County.

Solano Child Care Planning Council General Meeting

Over 25 people attended the October 2021 general Solano Child Care Planning Council meeting at which Christina Branom from Applied Survey Research presented a brief presentation of the needs assessment data to the members and community stakeholders.

Parent Voices Solano Meeting

Information regarding the needs for child care in Solano County was collected during a monthly Parent Voices meeting hosted by Solano Family & Children's Services on November 2, 2021.

Solano County Early Learning Consortium

The Solano Early Learning Consortium is made up of early learning stakeholders, including parents, providers, educators, child care professionals, community agencies, and institutions of higher learning. The IEEEP Advisory Team has merged with the Early Learning Consortium. A brief overview of the recent needs assessment data was provided, a summary of family child care needs was discussed, and stakeholder feedback was received on November 9, 2021.



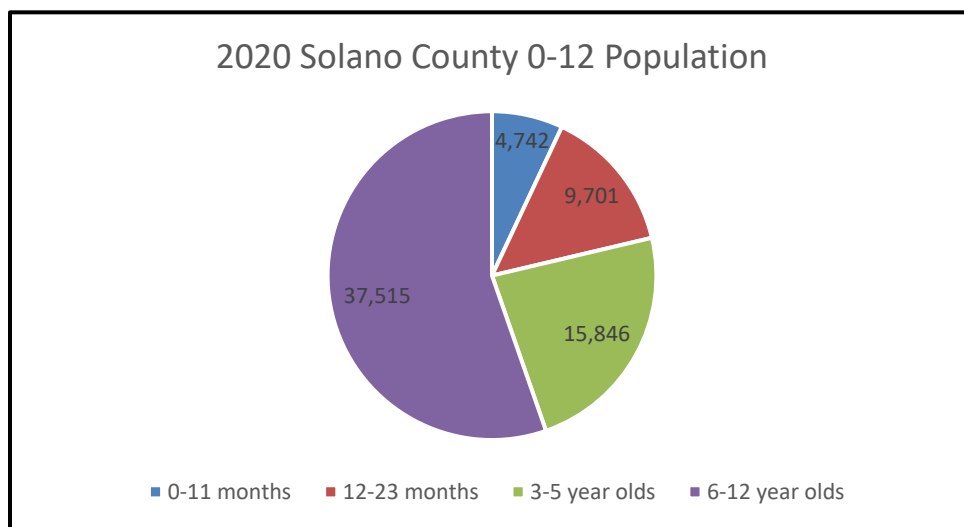
Number of Children by Age

The American Institutes for Research generates bi-annual estimates for child population, demand for early care and education, and enrollment in early learning programs at various geographic levels. The estimates are available from public resources, including but not limited to, the U.S Census Bureau, California Department of Social Services, and California Department of Education.

According to the most recent data, in the year 2020, there were an estimated 67,804 children ages 0-12 residing in Solano County. Of those children 4,742 (7%) were infants (children under one year of age), 9,701 (14.5%) were toddlers (children 12-35 months old), 15,846 (23.5%) were preschoolers, and 37,515 (55%) were school age children.

Number of Children	4,742	9,701	15,846	37,515	67,804

Source: California Department of Finance Population Projection Estimates 2020

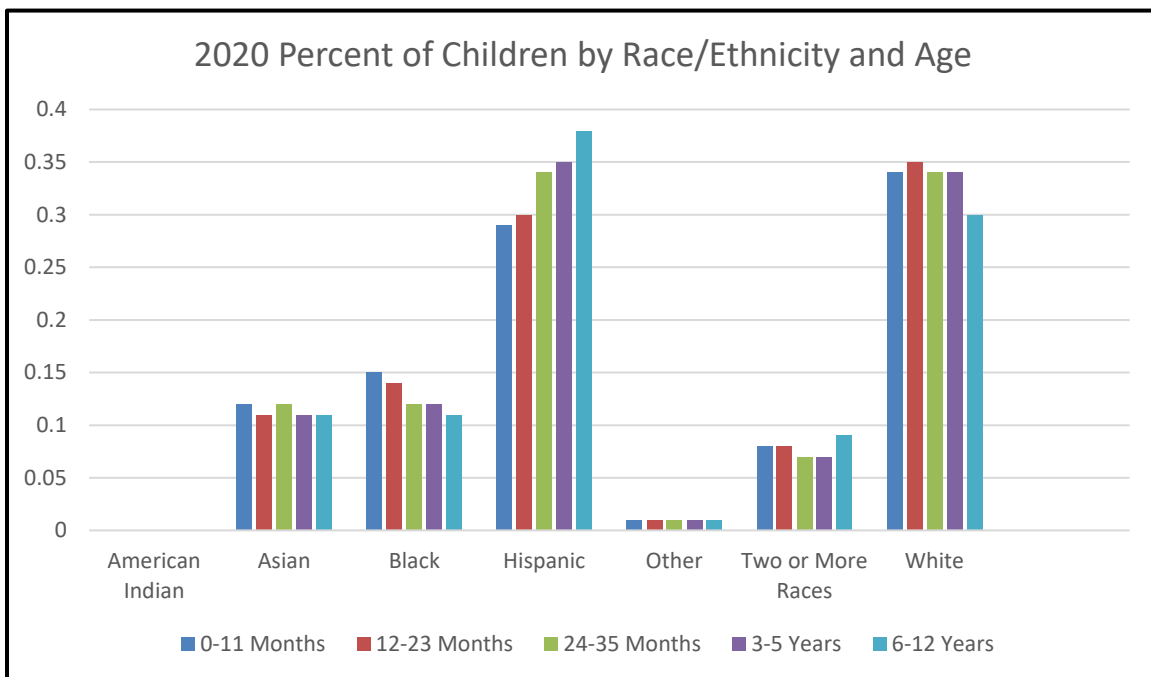


Percent of Children by Race/Ethnicity and Age

The table below provides estimates for the number and percent of children under five years of age in Solano County by race/ethnicity. An estimated 35% of children identified as Hispanic or Latino. The second largest subgroup was Caucasians at 32%.

Race/Ethnicity		0-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	3-5 Year Olds	6-12 Year Olds	Total
American Indian	Percent	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
	Number	19	21	16	57	136	249
Asian	Percent	12%	11%	12%	11%	11%	11%
	Number	562	542	600	1669	3807	7180
Black	Percent	15%	14%	12%	12%	11%	12%
	Number	712	687	576	1827	4018	7820
Hispanic	Percent	29%	30%	34%	35%	38%	35%
	Number	1385	1439	1667	5522	13233	23246
Other	Percent	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Number	43	38	33	121	229	464
Two or More Races	Percent	8%	8%	7%	7%	9%	9%
	Number	386	377	363	1188	3279	5593
White	Percent	34%	35%	34%	34%	30%	32%
	Number	1635	1639	1703	5468	10485	20930

Source: California Department of Finance Population Projection Estimates 2020



Language

In the 2020/2021 academic year 4,944 students were enrolled Kindergarten in Solano County public schools. Among those Kindergartners, 758 were classified as English Learners. As shown in the table below, most of the English Learner students speak Spanish (13%). The second most common language spoken by Kindergarten English Learner students were Punjabi.

Kindergarten 2020-21 Language Spoken	N = 4,944	Percent
English	4,186	84.7%
Spanish	641	13.0%
Punjabi	30	0.6%
Filipino (Pilipino or Tagalog)	18	0.4%
Arabic	10	0.2%
Vietnamese	10	0.2%
Other non-English languages	9	0.2%
Farsi (Persian)	7	0.1%
Urdu	5	0.1%
Cantonese	4	0.1%
Hindi	3	0.1%
Japanese	3	0.1%
Khmer (Cambodian)	2	<0.1%
Rumanian	2	<0.1%
Russian	2	<0.1%
Tamil	2	<0.1%
Telugu	2	<0.1%
French	1	<0.1%
German	1	<0.1%
Hmong	1	<0.1%
Mandarin (Putonghua)	1	<0.1%
Mixteco	1	<0.1%
Pashto	1	<0.1%
Portuguese	1	<0.1%
Thai	1	<0.1%

Source: DataQuest, Languages Spoken in Kindergarten 2020



Self-Sufficiency Standard Income

According to data reported by the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington, a family of four with two adults and two children under the age of six years, both residing and utilizing child care in Solano County, must earn \$91,961 annually to meet the basic needs of their household. A family fitting this description can expect to allocate approximately 30% of its salary to cover child care expenses.

Family Characteristics	Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard Income (SSSI)	Percent of Annual SSSI Allocated to Child Care
2 Adults, 2 Infants/Toddlers	\$102,680	33%
2 Adults, 1 Infant/Toddler, 1 Preschool- Aged Child	\$97,028	31%
2 Adults, 2 Preschool- Aged Children	\$91,961	30%
2 Adults, 1 Infant/Toddler, 1 School-Aged Child	\$92,326	28%
2 Adults, 1 Preschool-Aged Child, 1 School-Aged Child	\$87,259	26%
2 Adults, 2 School-Aged Children	\$82,396	22%

Source: The Self-Sufficiency Standard for California 2021, Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington

Families Receiving Public Assistance

Child care is essential to the success of the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program. CalWORKs is a public assistance program that provides cash aid and services to eligible families with children. Income and participation requirements do apply. CalWORKs is California's version of Federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. The CalWORKs child care program is administered by the California Department of Social Services in three different stages:

- Stage 1 is overseen by county welfare departments. Eligibility is reviewed every 6 months to determine when families can move into Stage 2.
- Stage 2 is for families who are in stable CalWORKs Employment Services activities, or who transitioned off cash aid.
- Stage 3 begins when an enrolled Stage 2 family has been discontinued from cash aid for 24 months. Families remain in Stage 3 until the family's income exceeds 85 percent of the state median income or until the children are age ineligible (13 years old or 22 years old with special needs) In Solano County, all three stages of voucher child care funding are administered by Solano Family & Children's Services, providing one-stop services to families as they move through the subsidy system depending on their situation.

Solano County also participates in the Foster Care Bridge Program which is a collaboration of the Child Welfare Services and Solano Family & Children's Services. The program provides Resource Families (formerly known as foster care families) with child care subsidies, resources, and child

care navigation, as well as trauma-informed care training and coaching. In addition, support is offered for the child care providers.

The counts in the table below reflect children in families that received CalWORKS Stage 1 cash aid as well as child care services. In June 2020, there were a total of 237 children ages 0-12 whose families received CalWORKs Stage 1 assistance. In June 2021, the number grew by 127% to 734 children.

Year	Children 0-2	Children 3-5	Children 6-12	Total
June 2020	59	113	65	237
June 2021	119	335	280	734
Difference	+60	+222	+215	+497

Source: California Department Social Services Child Care Monthly Report CW115 2021

The table below shows the number of children in Solano County that reside in households at or below 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) or Federal Poverty Level.

Ages	At or Below 85% of State Median Income (SMI)	At or Below 50% of Federal Poverty Level	At or Below 100% Federal Poverty Level
Infants/Toddlers	8117	1071	2384
Preschoolers	9933	1286	2312
School Age	23,984	1067	2686

Source: American Institutes for Research (2018)

Ages	Children in Families with Working Parents	Children in Families with Working Parents at or Below 85% State Median Income (SMI)
Infants/Toddlers	9159	4345
Preschoolers	11,766	7006
School Age	26,745	14,909

Source: American Institutes for Research (2018)

Regional Market Rates for State-Subsidized Care by Age/Setting

Rates collected through the Regional Market Rate Survey are used to set maximum reimbursement ceilings for state subsidized child care. Ceilings vary by setting type, age of the child being served, and hours of child care. Ceilings are set so that licensed providers are reimbursed up to the 85th percentile of the rates charged by private providers in the area who offer the same type of child care.

Maximum reimbursement ceilings for full and part time subsidized child care at licensed centers and Family Child Care Homes (FCCH) are in the table below. These data indicate child care through a licensed child care center is more expensive compared to similar care provided by a Family Child Care Provider, and infant/toddler care is more costly than preschool or school age care.

Setting Type (Monthly Rates)	0-24 Months	2-5 Years	School Age
Center Full Time	\$1,456.17	\$987.97	\$868.00
Center Part Time	\$965.25	\$629.94	\$505.07
FCCH Full Time	\$956.37	\$889.40	\$724.56
FCCH Part Time	\$721.54	\$658.51	\$548.61

Source: Regional Market Rate Ceilings: California Department of Social Services 2022

Unmet Need for State/Federally Subsidized Infant/Toddler Programs

Estimates for unmet need for state and federally subsidized infant/toddler child care by age group are provided in the table below. Child care supply and demand data indicated there were enough subsidized slots to care for 11% of income-eligible children ages 0-2 with full-time working parents.

		0-11 Months	12-23 Months	24-35 Months	Total
Eligibility	Total children	4118	5018	5955	15,091
	Income-eligible and qualifying need	1521	1757	2747	6025
	Percentage of children income-eligible and qualifying need	37%	35%	46%	40%
Enrolled /Served	Total enrolled in publicly subsidized programs	109	223	330	662
Unmet Need	Unmet need	1412	1534	2417	5363
	Percentage unmet need	92%	87%	88%	89%

Source: American Institutes for Research: Early Learning Needs Assessment Tool (2018)

Unmet Need for State/Federally Subsidized Preschool Programs

Estimates for unmet need for state and federally subsidized preschool child care by age group are provided in the table below. Child care supply and demand data indicated that there were enough subsidized slots to care for 35% of income-eligible children ages 3-5 with full-time working parents.

		3 years	4 years	5 years	Total
Eligibility	Total children	5720	5761	5572	17,053
	Income-eligible and qualifying need	2390	2710	2411	7511
	Percentage of children income-eligible and qualifying need	42%	47%	43%	44%
Enrolled /Served	Total enrolled in publicly subsidized programs	775	1516	336	2599
Unmet Need	Unmet need	1615	1194	2075	4912
	Percentage unmet need	67%	44%	86%	65%

Source: American Institutes for Research: Early Learning Needs Assessment Tool (2018)

Unmet Need for State/Federally Subsidized School Age Programs

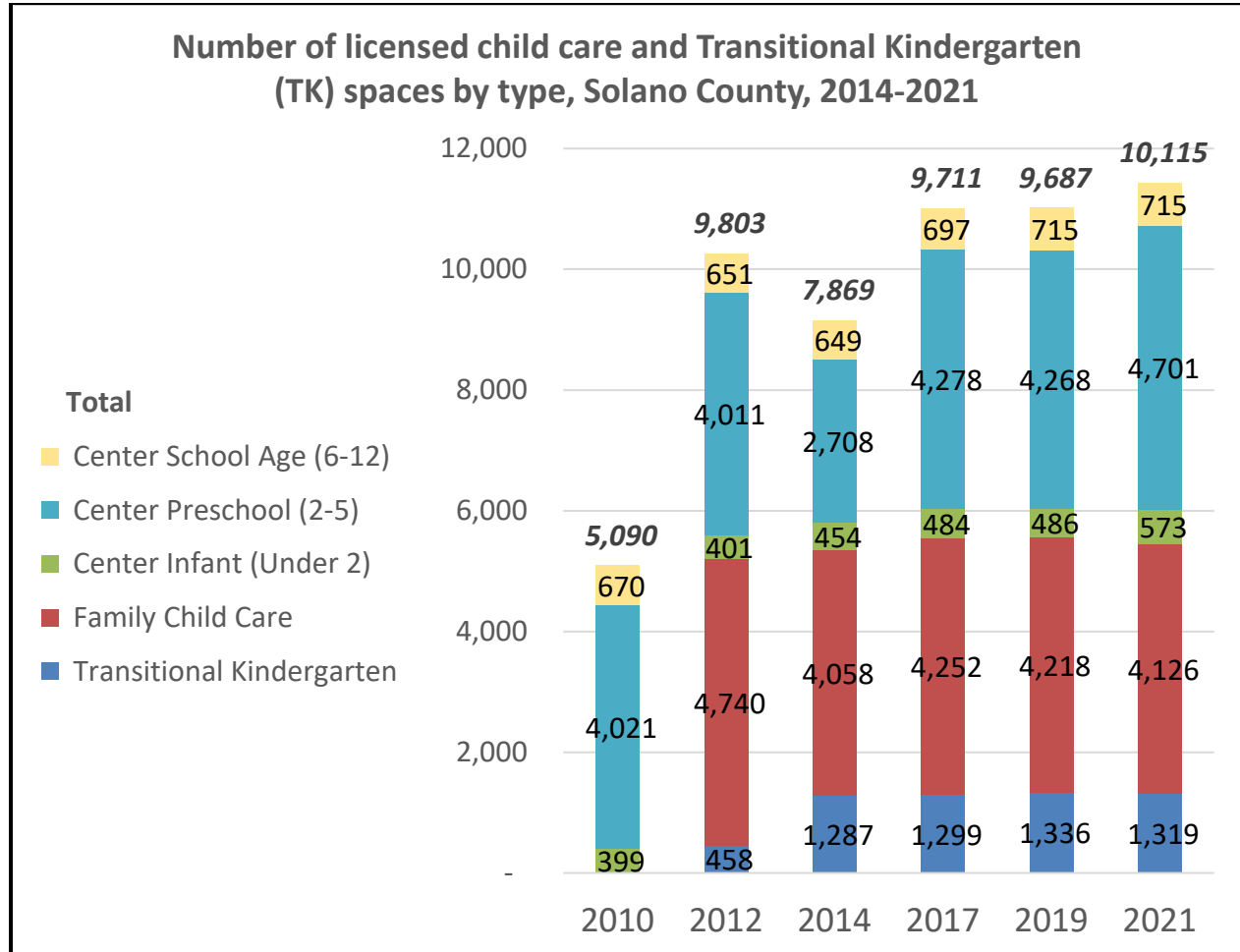
Estimates for unmet need for state and federally subsidized school age child care by age group are provided in the table below. Child care supply and demand data indicated that there were enough subsidized slots to care for 7% of income-eligible children ages 6-12 with full-time working parents.

		6-12 years
Eligibility	Total children	39,290
	Income-eligible and qualifying need	17,300
	Percentage of children income-eligible and qualifying need	62%
Enrolled /Served	Total enrolled in publicly subsidized programs	1176
Unmet Need	Unmet need	16,124
	Percentage unmet need	93%

Source: American Institutes for Research: Early Learning Needs Assessment Tool (2018)

Enrollment

Child care capacity and vacancy data have been provided by Solano Family & Children's Services (R&R). The data, summarized by the table below, shows the number of licensed child care and Transitional Kindergarten spaces by type in Solano County from 2014-2021. As of September 2021, Solano County has the capacity to serve 715 school age children in a licensed center, 4,701 preschool children in a licensed center, 573 infants (under two) in a licensed center, 4,126 children in a licensed family child care home, and 1,319 students in Transitional Kindergarten.



Sources: California Department of Education, California Childcare Portfolio, Solano Family & Children's Services 2021

Wait List

Currently, a comprehensive, countywide waitlist is not available for Solano County since the numbers of children waiting for access to care are added to multiple wait lists throughout the county. However, wait list data is collected by Solano Family & Children's Services, Solano County's Alternative Payment Contractor. As of September 2021, a total of 2,150 children were on the Alternative Payment Program wait list.

Age Group	Number on Wait list
Infant/Toddler	531
Preschool	738
School Age	881
Total	2150

Source: Solano Family & Children's Services 2021

Increasing Access

Equitable access to child care is a top priority in Solano County. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the county experienced a shortage in child care due to temporary and permanent program closures. Increasing the number of child care providers in Solano County has become essential to the community, and Solano Family & Children's Services is leading an outreach campaign to retain current child care providers and recruit potential providers. Outreach efforts include hosting informational meetings to the public on becoming licensed, technical support for individuals completing the licensing process, hosting workshops and trainings, and organizing various networking opportunities, including provider cafés called Snack & Chat.

Quality Counts Solano supports rural early learning programs in the Dixon area including the Dixon and Davis Migrant Education Programs. Solano Family & Children's Services is working to recruit and support early learning and care professionals in Dixon and Rio Vista which are higher child care desert areas in Solano County, as well as provide monthly Snack & Chat meetings in English and Spanish.

Meeting Early Learning Facility Needs

The Vallejo First 5 Center is the result of a multi-year community planning and engagement process, which started with a decision by the First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission in 2017 to revise its funding strategy to utilize an equity lens—targeting funding to the communities most in need, rather than funding by population. The Vallejo First 5 Center opened on February 13, 2020, with a grand opening that hosted nearly 400 community members, families, funders, and policy makers. Families have access to a wide variety of age-appropriate parent and child engagement classes to participate in with their infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Classes focus on nutrition, development, early learning, school readiness, and more, all through a lens of play and creativity. Evidence-based parent education and peer to peer activities support parents in their new role, while a parent leadership team helps to guide improvements in center services. During the first year of opening 369 families enrolled in services for a total of 1,111



individuals. 88% of the families served by the center live in Vallejo, with over 40% living in the local zip code of 94590. Out of the remaining families, 29% live in the 94591 zip code, and 19% live in the 94589-zip code. 13% of Center families live outside of Vallejo or have zip codes that are unknown.

Source: First 5 Solano



Quality Counts Solano

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) are used across the United States to improve and support the quality of early care and education programs, including family child care homes and all forms of private and public licensed and license-exempt child care settings serving children ages 0-5. Each of California's 58 counties operates a QRIS. Studies show that when children receive high quality care and education during their early years of life, they are better prepared for school, better readers, and are more likely to graduate high school. These outcomes benefit every child and family in the community.

Quality Counts



The primary goal of the Quality Counts Solano is to improve the quality of early care and education so that more children with high needs have access to quality programs. Quality Counts Solano enables early care and education providers to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in their programs and aims to improve outcomes for children who attend child care throughout Solano County. Quality Counts Solano participating sites have access to a wide variety of customized supports, including professional development, on-site coaching, training, technical assistance, quality improvement resources, and additional materials and incentives.

Quality Counts Solano is funded by the California Department of Education California State Preschool Programs (CSPP), the California Department of Social Services Quality Counts California Block Grant, First 5 Solano and First 5 California's Improve and Maximize Programs so All Children Thrive (IMPACT) Grant and is administered by the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE).

Quality Counts Solano Participation Targets (by FY 2022-2023)

First 5 CA IMPACT Site Target	Quality Counts California Preschool Development Site Target	California State Preschool Program Site Target	Total
44	34	14	93

Prioritized Funding

Parent Voices Solano is a parent-led, parent-run grassroots organization working to make quality child care accessible and affordable for all families. Parent Voices Solano coordinates its advocacy efforts with the support of the statewide Parent Voices. To strengthen advocacy, Parent Voices conducts trainings on strategic organizing, leadership development, advocacy skills, and other relevant issues. Following are the Parent Voices Priorities:

- Increase reimbursement rates for child care providers
- Expand access to child care for families through the Alternative Payment Program
- Update the state median income to current levels to ensure access for working families to child care subsidies
- Waive family fees

“It’s the community in action that accomplishes more than any individual does, no matter how strong he may be. “– Studs Terkel

Children with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that all students with disabilities, between the ages of 0-22 years, be provided with specialized settings or interventions beyond the scope of services offered by general education programs. SCOE provides special education services for students from birth to 22 years of age. Children under three years old with developmental delays or other disabilities are eligible for an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). Individuals with disabilities between the ages of 3-22 are eligible for an Individual Education Plan (IEP). As shown in the table below, as of December 2018, a total of 99 children under the age of three were reported to have an IFSP, while 28 children between the ages of 3-5 were reported to have an IEP.

Age Group	Children w/IFSP	Children w/IEP	Total
0-2	99	NA	99
3-5	NA	708	708
Total	99	708	807

Source: Dataquest Special Education 2018

Inclusive Early Childhood Education

There is an identified need across the state of California, including Solano County, to increase access to inclusive early learning and care settings for children with disabilities. Through funding provided by the California Department of Education, SCOE was awarded the Inclusive Early Education Expansion Program (IEEEP) grant. IEEEP enhances and redesigns how early learning and special education teams work together to provide high quality instruction and environments for children to be able to fully access and participate in inclusive classroom environments.

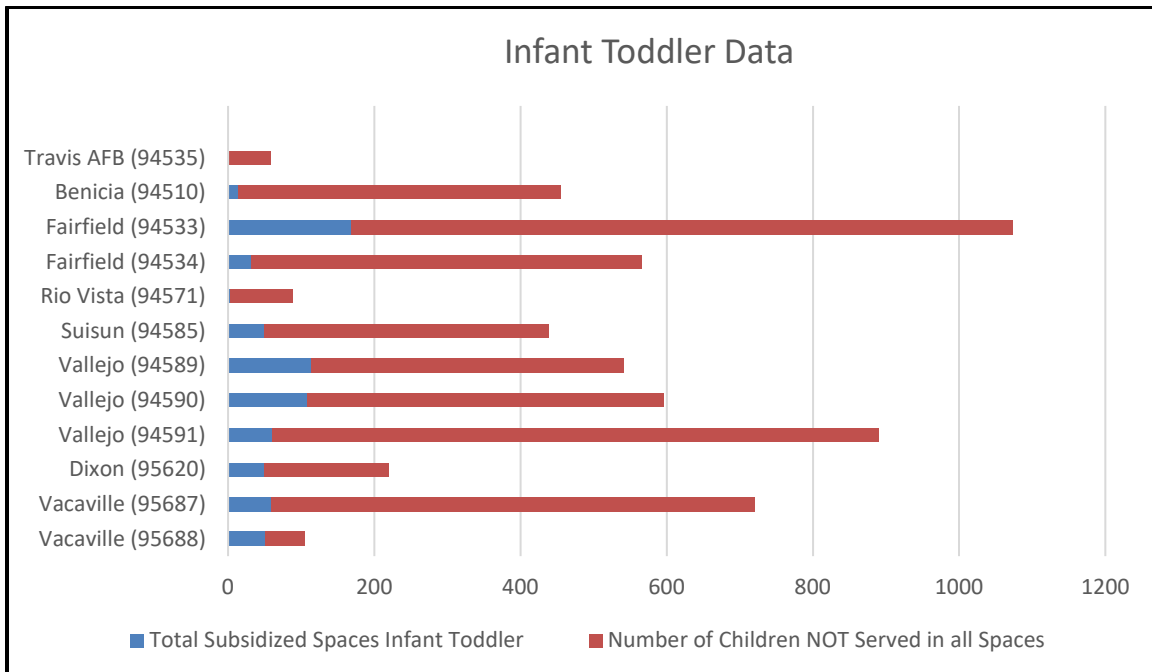
The IEEEP grant offers funding in three areas: (1) facilities modifications, (2) materials adaptation and accommodations, and (3) professional learning for teachers, administrators, specialists, and staff of early learning programs. SCOE has been awarded funding in all three areas. To support classroom accommodations and adaptations, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) kits were curated with input from early learning and care providers, administrators, and specialists. These UDL kits have been distributed and are being implemented in preschool and infant/toddler classrooms to increase access to activities, materials, and classroom environments for full participation by all children, including children with moderate to severe disabilities. Evidence-based inclusion-focused professional learning workshops are available to teachers and providers throughout Solano County. Through these workshops, participants learn inclusive practices and classroom strategies that increase access for children with special needs, and practices that are good for all children.

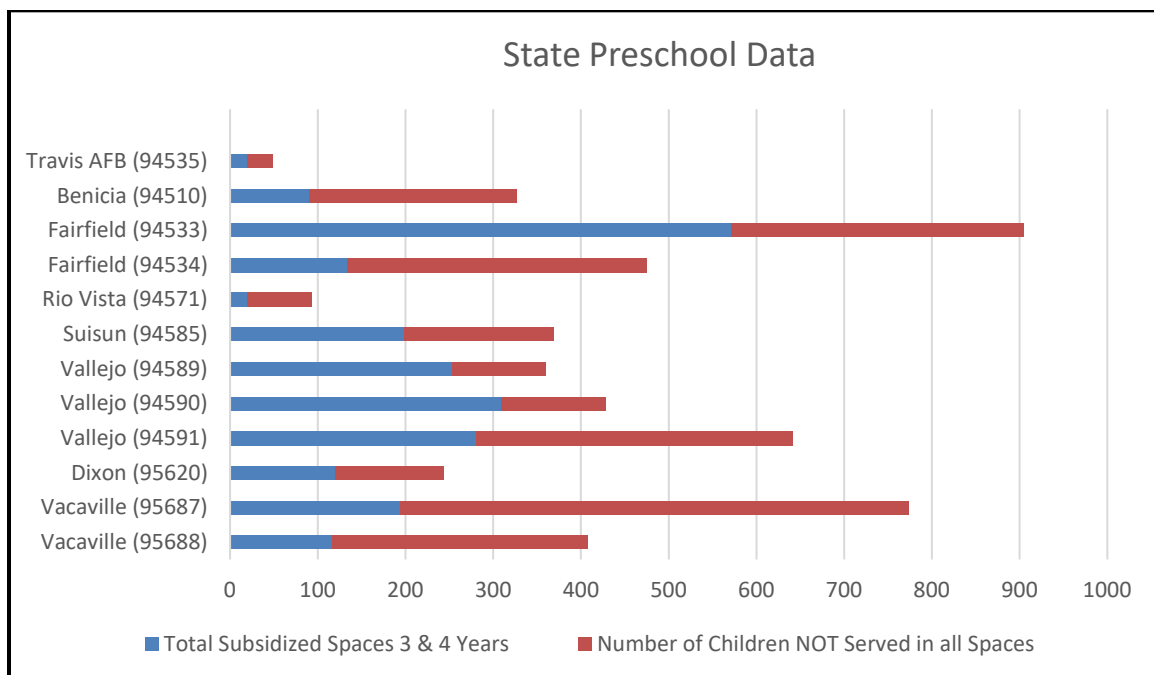
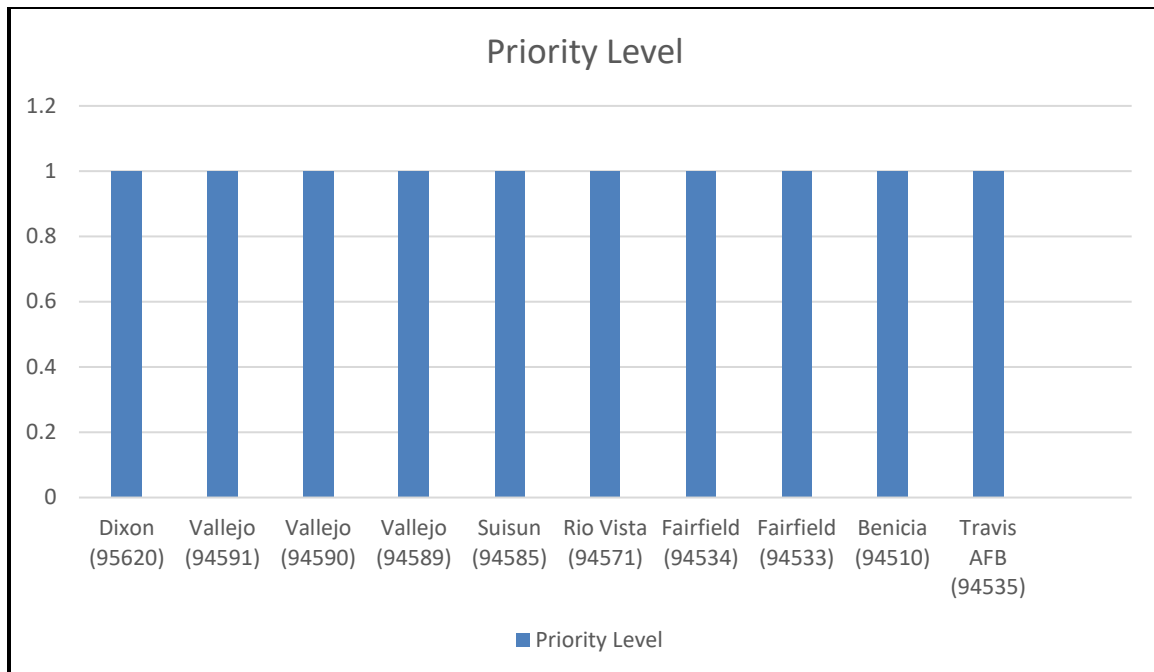
To support early learning and care providers with implementation of inclusion practices, SCOE is also focused on providing inclusive coaching to providers. This coaching bridges the practices learned in the professional learning series and supports the implementation in the classroom. Everyone benefits when child care programs include children with a range of needs and abilities. Typically developing children, along with children with disabilities benefit from these practices.



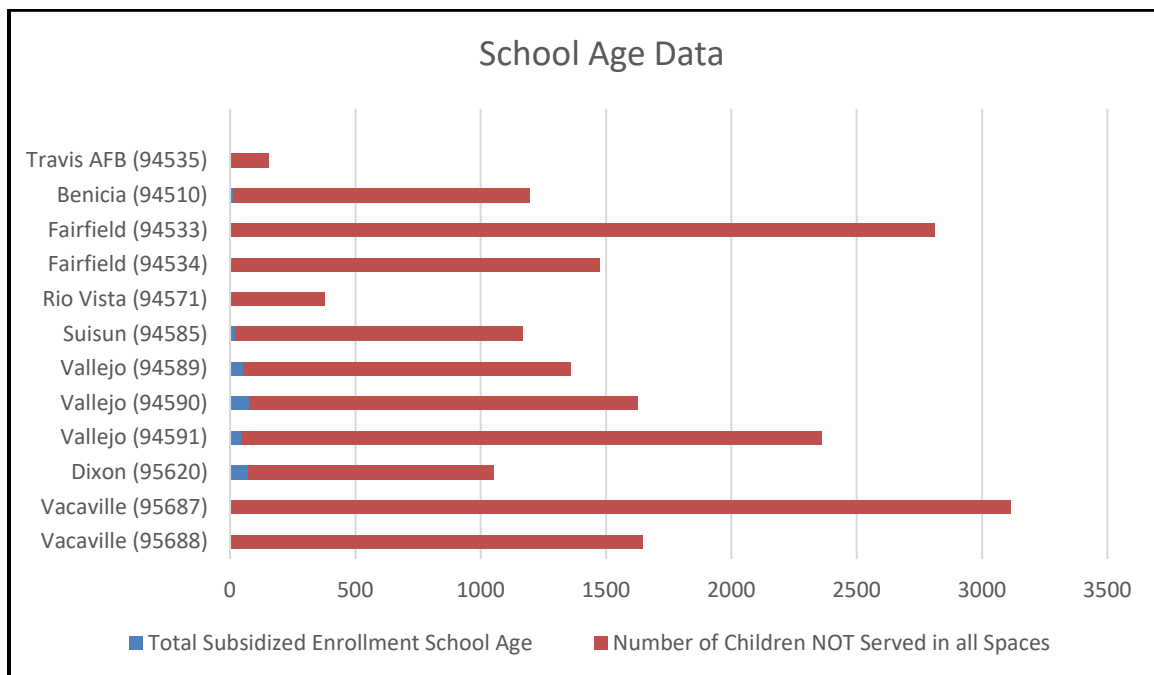
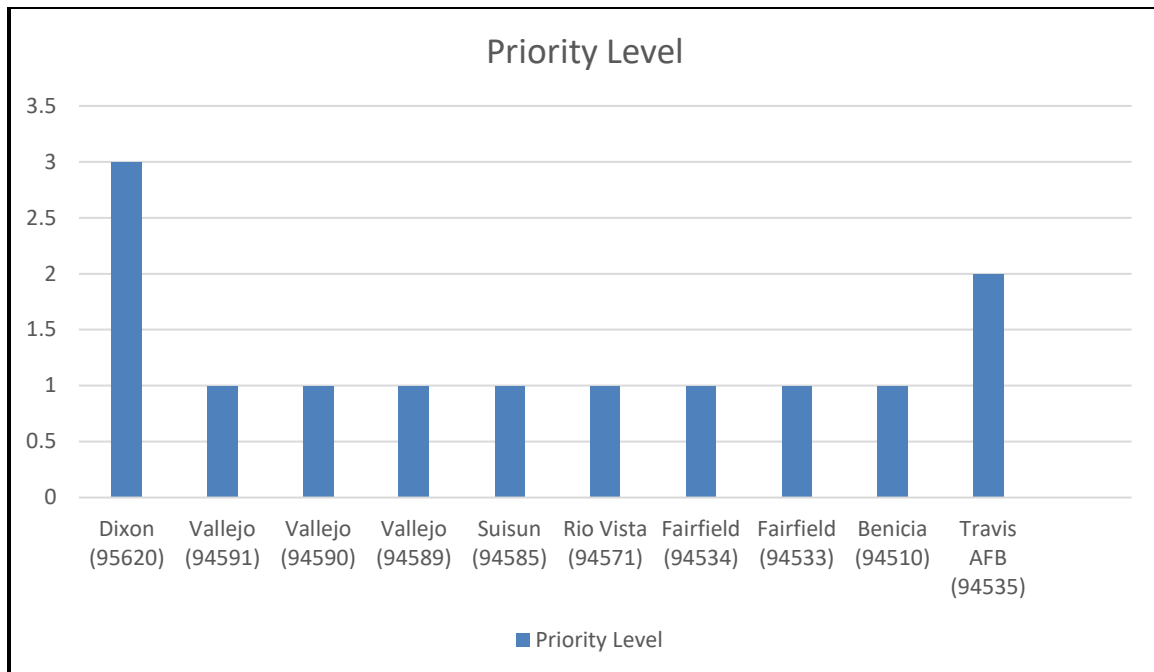
Priority Data Based on Zip Code

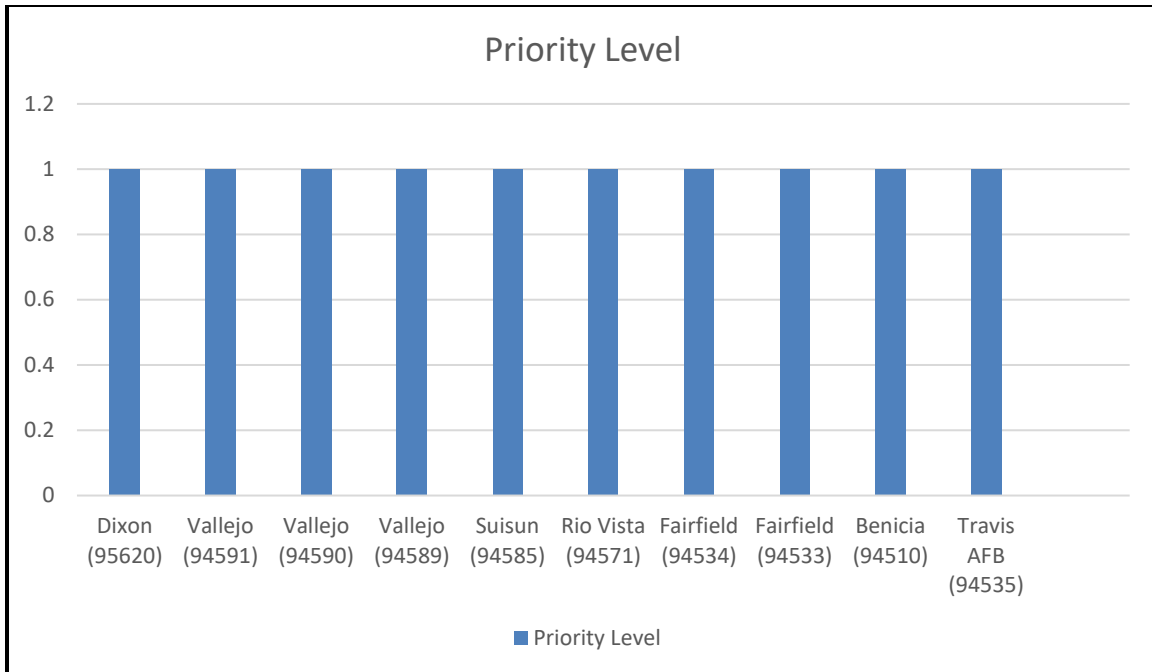
Based on the number of children eligible for State Preschool (85% of 2018 State Median Income) the following communities have been identified as priorities for need based on zip code.





Source: American Institutes for Research (2018)



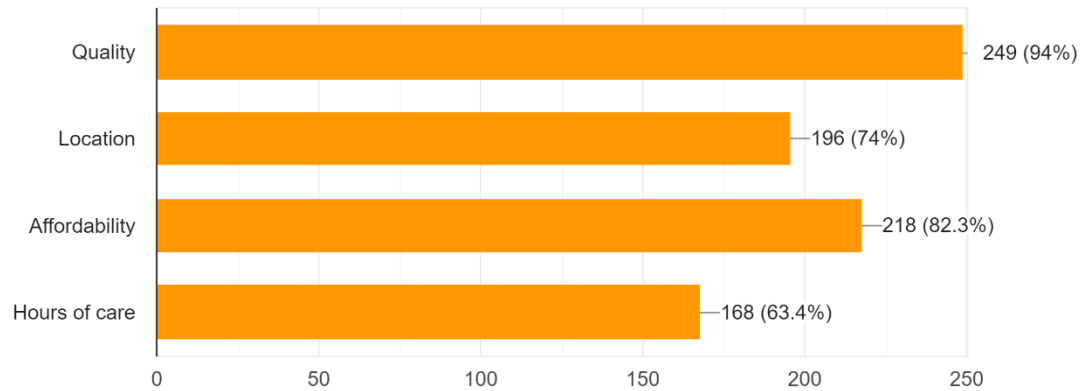
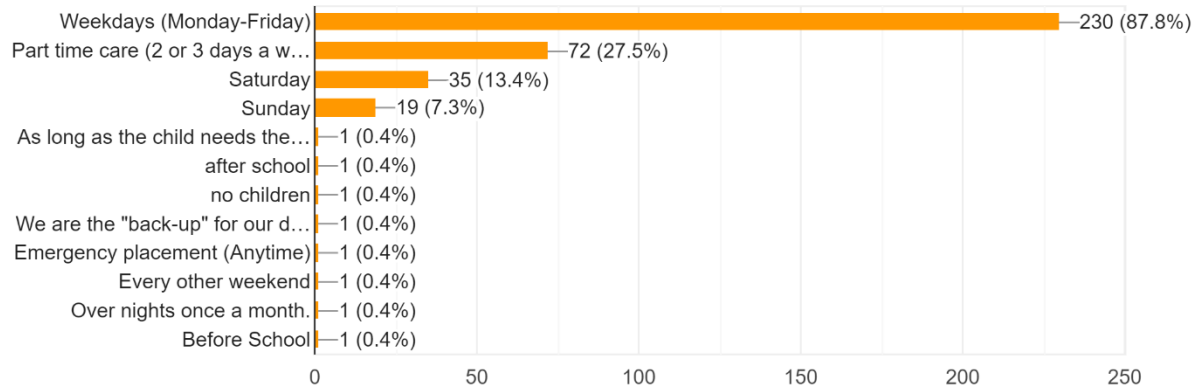


Source: American Institutes for Research (2018)

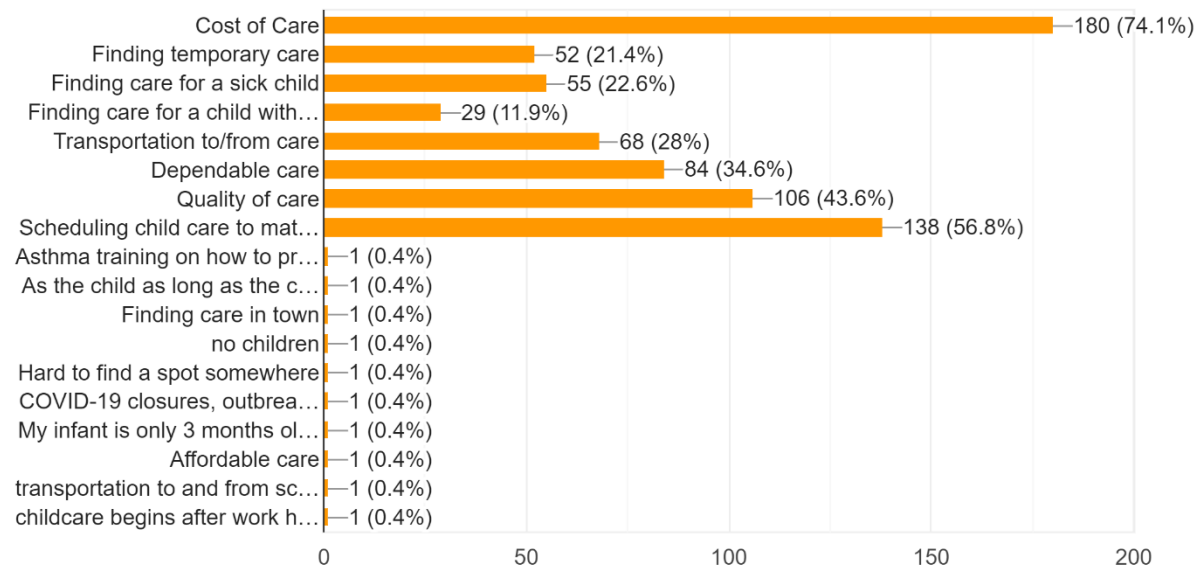
Addressing Parent Needs and Concerns

The Solano County Child Care Needs 2021 Survey was sent out to families throughout the county. This survey was promoted on social media platforms, shared with Solano County's major employers, child care providers, Solano Child Care Planning Council, and other members of the community. Out of 275 survey responses, 90% of families had a child under 12 years of age at home. 19% of responders had a child between 0-18 months, 14% had a child between 19 months and 2 ½ years, 48% of responders had a child between 2 ½ and 5 years, and 59% of responders had a child between 6 and 12 years old.

When looking for child care, 87% of responders were seeking full time care, 27% of responders were seeking part time care, and 20% of responders were seeking alternative care, such as weekends or overnight care.



When asked about barriers families have had when finding child care, 74% of families stated that cost of care was a barrier, 56% stated that finding child care that matched their work schedule was a barrier, and 44% stated that finding quality care was a barrier.



Of those who responded, 54% of families reported that their child care was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. When asked to explain how their child care was impacted, these are some of the responses provided:

- “Every time one of my kids has a symptom, has quarantine period and denial of care. Even if normal allergies or common cold.”
- “Frequent closures due to COVID-19 fears, exposure, and positive test results.”
- “Lost my job and had to relocate my child's school from the city. When I was employed school will keep my child the same hours I work, and I get off.”
- “Daughter's daycare was closed Mar-June 2020 and I had to work from home with her.”
- “She couldn't go to school or engage regular activities. Academic and social skills suffered.”

Survey responders ranged in age, 65% between 21-40 years old, 28% between 41-59 years old, and 5% over 60. Responders ranged in race of 48% White, 16% Latino, 10% Black, 22% more than one race, and 6% Asian. The primary language spoken by survey responders was 97% English and 6% Spanish.

Emergency Preparedness

The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the need to be prepared during an emergency. The pandemic provided an opportunity for the community to highlight child care as an essential service that offers support for the children of other essential workers in the county. SCOE provided over 500 early learning backpacks filled with children's books, supplies, and literature on community programs and services in Solano County. These backpacks were distributed through child care providers, community events, and during diaper drives held across the county.

Additionally, First 5 Solano and SCOE have supplied providers with personal protective equipment (PPE) and resources to support health and safety practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. Solano Family & Children's Services provided health & safety information and updates regarding COVID protocols and licensing updates/changes to child care providers throughout the pandemic and continues to distribute PPE to providers in collaboration with First 5 Solano and the California Department of Education.

The Solano County emergency pop-up child care was coordinated by First 5 Solano and SCOE at the request of the Solano County Office of Emergency Services. This pop-up child-care program supported healthcare workers and first responders, disaster service workers, and essential employees. The pop-up child care provided services for infants through school aged children in Vallejo and for school aged children in Fairfield. Services were provided in various locations including the Vallejo Unified School District Child Development Program, and a family child care home.



At the beginning of the pandemic, Solano Family & Children's Services began weekly contact with all licensed providers. Providers reported the availability of spaces dwindled and providers closed due to health concerns, lack of clients, and county/state mandates. Also, an enhanced referral process was implemented to assist families who needed the more personalized navigation to locate the care that would meet their needs.

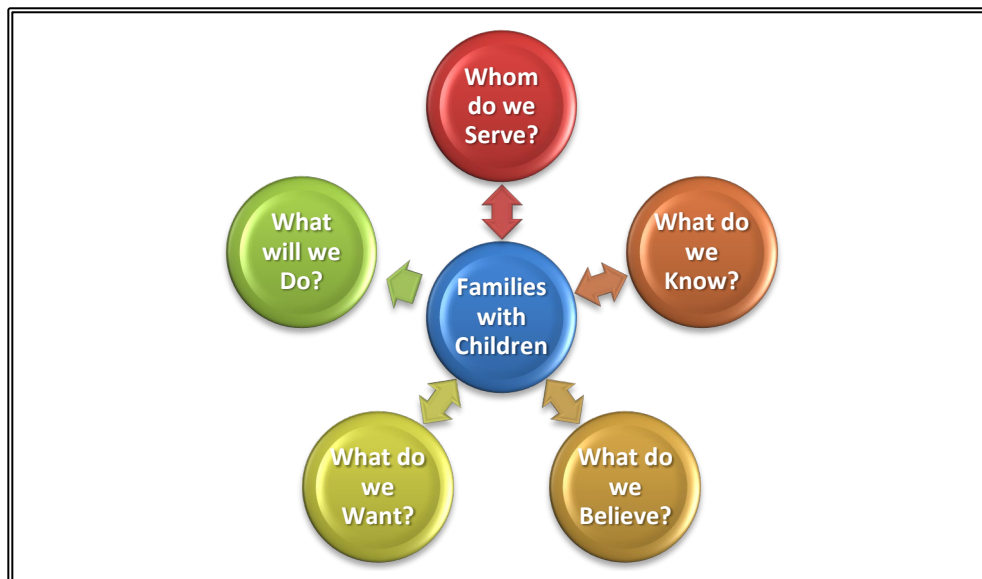
The Solano County Library provided over 75 laptops and hot spots for families and child care providers throughout the county to increase access for distance learning and other necessities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The library also provided 50 thematic curriculum kits for child care providers to check out through the Quality Counts Solano program, to enhance instruction and learning environments during the pandemic and post pandemic.

"Child Care is an invisible part of the economy."
— Ellen Galinsky

Solano Child Care Planning Council Priorities

The Local Child Care Planning Council engaged in a Strategic Thinking⁷ Process in the spring of 2021. Strategic thinking is a process that defines the way people think about, assess, view and create the future they want to see realized. Strategic thinking also allows us to start with the whole, understand better the context under which we are operating, spot trends and see where we need to go in the future. We utilized the Strategic Thinking Process to surface our goals and priority actions that are aligned with our mission while being mindful of the ever-changing context in which we are operating. In April of 2021, we revisited the strategic thinking process to review our progress, analyze our successes and challenges, and determine goals and priority actions moving forward.

STRATEGIC THINKING PROCESS QUESTIONS



“A first-class system of early childhood education is the hallmark of a caring and civilized society. – Andy Hargreaves

⁷ Strategic Thinking Defined, Githens, Greg, January, 2013; Thinking Strategically, Harvard Business School Press, 2010; Leading with Strategic Thinking; Four Ways Effective Leaders Gain Insight, Drive Change, and Get Results, Olson, Aaron K and Simerson, Keith B., John Wiley & Sons, 2015

Priority Goals

As a result of our Needs Assessment, analysis of Priority Data, and the Strategic Thinking process, we have identified the following priority goals and actions:

- ✓ Support initiatives that advocate for quality, linguistically and culturally appropriate, individualized care.
- ✓ Continuously update data and use it for education and advocacy.
- ✓ Increase communication and community engagement.

Providing high quality, affordable child care that meets the various needs of families is a critical investment in the future of Solano County. This Strategic Framework is a call to action for the ongoing collaboration and other interested community stakeholders to continue to focus on building a **strong** child care system that promotes the optimal learning and development of **all** children.

Annual Summary of Activities July 2021

Successes

- Engaged in the appreciative inquiry process.
- Revitalized the current vision and mission statement of the Solano Child Care Planning Council
- Recruited new members to the Local Planning Council from a variety of community programs that will bring fresh ideas, new partnerships, and further collaborations to the LPC.

Challenges

- During the 2020/2021 program year, the Solano Child Care Planning Council worked with the child care community (parents, providers, and partners) and agencies to identify the needs and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. When identifying these needs, the LPC helped support a pop up child care, distribution of much needed PPE supplies, one on one support, and other various needs of the community.

Collaboration Efforts

- The Solano Child Care Planning Council facilitates monthly early learning contractor meetings to discuss the needs in the child care community. Directors and partners are all invited to discuss recent management bulletins, policy changes, licensing, and legislative action.
- The Solano Child Care Planning Council has a longstanding collaboration with First 5 Solano and its partners in the community.
- The Solano Child Care Planning Council has supported the local Resource & Referral agency (Solano Family & Children's Services) with recruitment and retention of child care providers.
- Members of the council work closely in the development and implementation of the Quality Counts California ECE Workforce Development Pathways Program.
- Quality Counts participants received COVID relief and quality improvement incentives.
- LPC members participate in a variety of councils and committees throughout the county, including Inclusive Early Education Expansion Program (IEEEP) advisory team, Solano Kids Thrive meetings, Child Abuse Prevention Council, Solano College Child Development Family Studies advisory committee, Solano Home Visiting Community Advisory Board, Solano Oral Health Advisory Council, and Head Start's Policy Council, to name a few.

"California should ensure that every child, from early childhood through adulthood, has access to rigorous, engaging, and relevant learning experiences, taught by effectively supported, skilled educators, in safe environments."

-Children Now 2020 California Children's Report Card