

## Access Subgroup Discussion

**Members:** Sharon, Emily, Josie, Barb, Mary, Zelda, and September

**Goal of the Subgroup:** To identify Virginia’s highest priorities related to access to quality care and develop strategies for increasing this access.

### **Discussion of Features of an Accessible System**

- Affordability (impacted in part by subsidy eligibility)
- Demand for services
- Choice in provider/ provider-type
- Services for kids with special needs (language, behavioral, medical, developmental)
- Nontraditional hours for parents in shift-work
- Education of providers on taking subsidies (in with professional development as well)
- Transportation (public transit routes, vouchers for families to fix cars, etc)
- Zoning, HOA’s and Insurance – impact accessibility of child care in certain localities
- Differences in accessible vs. available care
- Expanded Access to Quality via existing systems – (i.e. VSQI – Accreditation, etc.)

### **Access Priorities and Preliminary Recommendations**

#### **1. *Underserved areas of the state***

- a. Conduct a Targeted Statewide Needs Assessment to determine:
  - i. Underserved areas of the state
  - ii. Where greatest need is for access is to infant/toddler slots, nontraditional hours, services for those that have special needs, are homeless, etc.

#### **2. *Affordability and Eligibility***

- a. Targeted research and analysis needed to look at competition between Head Start and VPI programs; make recommendations on adjusting age of slots available to better meet the demand.
- b. Analysis of “What is the true cost of quality care?” – (tool on cost of quality to determine cost), study on the impact of rates on the affordability and eligibility regarding child care subsidy families
- c. Support the work of DSS to improve access to quality for subsidy families

#### **3. *Expanding Access to Quality***

- a. Expand access to existing quality systems (VSQI, Accreditation, Licensure, etc)  
*(Additional discussion by subgroup(s) is needed to identify and develop strategies)*

#### **4. *Educating and Empowering Parents***

- a. Public awareness on “How to Choose Quality” and expanded access to quality via existing systems *(May fit in to planned discussion by full workgroup on parent education and engagement)*