

Access to and Quality of Child Care and Preschool Subgroup

Shared Vision

Every child in the Commonwealth will have **access** to **quality** programs, which will be measured by their basic health (reduced deaths) and their PALS scores in kindergarten

Conceptual Framework

What is quality, what factors/actions contribute to quality, what are our highest priorities for moving forward? This could be a summary paragraph that describes why we are focusing on the areas we have selected

Activities to Date

Brief description of activities undertaken that can be updated as we proceed

Review JLARC study to identify elements that continue to make sense and warrant attention.

The state should begin to count all related children when determining the total number of children in care within a family day care home

Child care services should be defined as any care of one or more children which meets the following criteria:

- Care is provided by one or more individuals who are not the parents or guardians of all children in care;
- Care is provided on a part-day basis (not 24 hour care)
- There is a contractual agreement with the parents of the children in care
- The provider is expected to be responsible for the whereabouts and well-being of the children while in his or her care; and
- Care is available on an ongoing, regular basis. (page 60)

<http://jlarc.virginia.gov/reports/Rpt108.pdf>

Review JMU Needs Assessment to identify elements that continue to make sense and warrant attention.

Evaluate what other efforts are underway in Virginia and how they might affect our thinking, ie the CCDBG reauthorization, federal preschool expansion grant, Head Start grants, etc

Potential Recommendations

Definition of Quality

- Ensure Virginia has a clear definition of “quality” that has meaning across the range of early childhood programs and contributes to the Commonwealth’s ability to measure program quality
- What data collection goes with that definition?

Professional Development of the Early Childhood Workforce

- Role of CCCS given failure of Sen Favola's bill setting up VCOY workgroup?
- Collect better information and develop a clearer picture of the professional development needs of Virginia's early childhood practitioner community
 - Identify common data elements to be collected across the fields
 - Either establish an early childhood professional database or ensure that relevant information can be extracted from existing databases (Consider NC, MD, PA models)
- Establish a competency-based professional development framework for early care and education practitioners in Virginia. The framework would inform the requirements and guidelines for pre-service education, in-service education and training for practitioners in all early care and education settings.
 - Reflects best practices as well as federal and state requirements/expectations
 - Emphasis on social emotional development of young children
 - Possible training and trainer approval systems
 - Obtain insight and technical assistance through participation in NAEYC's Early Childhood Workforce Systems Initiative project on indicators for measuring and guiding states in their early childhood professional development systems
- Implement an early childhood professional development registry (status update from DSS)
- Explore all measures of quality including accreditation and credentialing. Should Virginia consider a certification/licensing process for child care providers and or directors similar to cosmetology, nail technicians, massage therapist, etc.?

Expand Children's Access to Quality Programs

- Increase the reach and impact of Virginia's Star Quality Initiative (VSQI)
 - Roll out the revised VSQI
 - Increase the number of VPI and Head Start programs participating in VSQI
 - Increase linkages between Virginia's Child Care Subsidy Program and VSQI
 - Increase the number of Subsidy providers that participate in VSQI
 - Increase the number of children participating in the Subsidy Program that receive care at VSQI rated programs
 - Target Subsidy vendor programs to receive Infant and Toddler training and technical assistance
- Apply for competitive grants promoting innovation in the Child Care Subsidy System
 - The President announced on 1/21/15 his intention to invest \$100 million in new competitive grants to develop, implement and evaluate models of providing child care to address the unmet needs for families who face unique challenges to securing child care. These pilots could be used to develop promising practices for families in rural communities or have children with disabilities, parents who work non-traditional hours, and other families who struggle to find and use high-quality child care.

Strengthen outreach and education to Virginia parents regarding quality early care