

NYSB5 Final Report for the Southern Tier Region

Prepared by: Child Development Council of Central New York, Inc. (DBA: Child Development Council)

In collaboration with:

Family Enrichment Network

Delaware Opportunities

Chemung County Child Care Council

Child Care Aware of Steuben and Schuyler Counties (Proaction, Inc.)

Date: December 10, 2019

Attachments: A Snapshot of the Southern Tier
What Drives the Child Care Economy
Strategic Plan for Child Care
Voucher for Reimbursement

The Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council includes 8 counties, served by 5 different Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies. There are common themes across all eight counties with regards to the early care and education challenges and opportunities within the region. In July, members of the areas CCRR programs convened to begin a regional assessment of the child care strengths and challenges, developed baseline data for the REDC and met with two Committees (Executive and Workforce) to report on our plan to develop recommendations for the REDC.

Collaboration with the STREDC

Collaborative Goals:

- STREDC will report business development strategies and progress of economic development within the region.
- STREDC will identify child care data needed by county; GIS mapping may be provided demonstrating the availability of child care near major employers and along travel corridors.
- CCRRs will provide relevant data, including information on vacancy rates, changes in supply and significant child care deserts that coincide with business sites, progress on the development of infant care and care in rural areas.
- CCRRs will engage with employers within their counties to define the child care needs of their employees, examine models to support the development of child care, and assess opportunities for leveraging support for child care.
- CCRRs will assist the STREDC in exploring new and creative funding streams to support child care infrastructure.
- CCRRs and STREDC will identify innovative child care business development and workforce development techniques specific to the region.

Challenges and Strengths in the Southern Tier:

Minimal Supply/High Demand – All 8 counties have child care deserts in at least one of their census tracts (Defined as “more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than 3x’s as many children as licensed child care slots, Center for American Progress). The lack of supply of care is evident for all types of care, and all ages. Infant care is the hardest to find, however, and costs the most to deliver.

Within the Southern Tier, there are approximately 5,885 babies born each year; however, we only have 1,570 licensed/registered child care spaces (26.7%). It should be noted that the definition of infant in home-based care is age 6 weeks to two years of age, so it includes toddlers in the definition; only 43% of all potential spaces for infants are *dedicated* to infants only (child care centers slots).

Each of the five CCRR agencies report low vacancy rates. Vacancies are often part time slots, age specific (e.g. preschool slots where Universal PreK exists), and in the least accessible rural areas of the counties. In a recent survey of the area’s vacancies, it was noted that child care programs may reduce their overall slot capacity as a “best practice” resulting in higher quality care (desired capacity versus licensed capacity), but also phantom vacancies. *The role of Child Care Resource and Referral continues to serve as the foundation of child care in each county. Local solutions are built upon the strengths of our local relationships. Opportunities exist to build upon these successes into regional models in an efficient and effective way, while preserving local resources.*

Sustainability - Child care is experiencing high closure rates, especially in home based care where there are longer hours, isolation from peers (higher burnout), and a need for business skills along with early childhood experience. Yet, home-based care meets a specific need for extended day and evening care. They are more widely distributed throughout the county, whereas centers tend to be closer to the cities. And, home-based care offers smaller group sizes and accommodates siblings in group together. Opportunities have been identified within the region to increase the retention of child care homes, through increased coaching and support.

Existing Child Care Centers face aging infrastructures with minimal resources to upgrade for quality, safety and environmental improvements. A sizeable investment is needed to build new or expand child care centers that meet quality, safety and regulatory requirements. However, child care centers are more sustainable, likely as a result of having a more developed administrative structure. If adequate financing is identified, opportunities exist to expand existing child care centers as a significant way to increase the supply of child care.

Need to increase the child care recruitment, education and retention pipeline. Recruitment of providers/teachers is slow. Once interest has been piqued, a substantial investment in time and resources are needed to open a child care center or family or group family program, it is challenging to recruit new people into this highly regulated low-wage field, with few incentives.

Strengths exist in this area: several of the CCRR agencies have developed innovative approaches to recruit and retain child care teachers and programs. We must move from a pilot phase to creating systemic improvements to better meet our community needs.

Worker shortages - Area employers face a worker shortage; the lack of child care is a barrier for recruitment and retention of workers. Without an adequate supply of child care, we miss the opportunity to recruit new and expanding businesses to the Southern Tier. Our employment sectors are diverse, ranging from education to health care to industry, each presenting with different needs. As a region, it is important for the early care and learning system of child care to keep pace with changing and growing employer needs. Like area businesses, the child care sector also faces worker shortages. When a child care program is unable to meet the minimum staffing requirements, they decrease the number of children served. *The private industrial and educational sectors realize the impact of this worker shortage and offer new ways to address incentives and support for the recruitment of child care employees and teachers.*

Barriers to growth - Barriers to recruitment of more child care has economic, policy and structural challenges: child care centers have better economies of scale, but require hefty investments in the physical space; housing stock is inadequate to meet the physical specifications of child care, precipitating expensive home modifications; landlords do not always welcome home-based businesses. Planning for a multi-pronged approach, inclusive of all the needs in the 8-county region will result in a more robust economy in the Southern Tier. *The collaboration has identified that marketing and communication about the uniqueness of the child care economy would have greater success at a regional level.*

Most parents cannot pay the cost of care- Parents earning the median household income pay as much as 24% or more of their income on child care for one child. It is essential for the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council to understand how child care is financed and what contributes to the cost of care. The national standard is that no parent should pay more than 10% of their income for child care. Families with infants or more than one child under the age of six are quickly priced out of regulated child care.

What happens if they can't find and pay for care? A statewide survey of parents conducted by the Early Care and Learning Council in collaboration with CCRR agencies, showed that the annual cost of child care places a significant strain on family budgets and impacts their employment readiness: 23% cut back work hours or stopped working; 67% borrowed from friend/family/creditor and 56% compromised quality of care and their children's basic needs.

Child Care Resource and Referral in the Southern Tier - CCRR programs support families by helping them navigate complicated child care systems and by conducting initiatives that increase the quality, affordability and accessibility of child care. There are 5 CCR&Rs, serving the 8 counties that comprise the Southern Tier Economic Development Council. CCR&Rs create the conditions of success by providing the necessary infrastructure for child care programs in our local communities. Southern Tier CCRRs have achieved many significant accomplishments in the past five years, including: (1) NACCRR Quality Assurance and State Standards of Excellence, (2) a child care career pipeline, (3) an early childhood business alliance, (4) relationships with local Chambers, and (5) participation on child care work groups, locally, regionally, and statewide. Positioned firmly as a sector leader, CCRRs are ready to set a course for the next five years that builds on our organizations' strengths and focuses its resources on its most important, mission-focused work.

Southern Tier REDC Vision: The STREDC vision builds on a strong foundation of existing businesses and higher education institutions and uses a collaborative approach to leverage its globally competitive advantages to attract talent and investment for the development of industry clusters. The focus is on increasing the size and prosperity of the region’s workforce through new business creation based on high technology discoveries and other entrepreneurship activities, while ensuring healthy communities and protecting the natural beauty and resources of the region.

Child Care Strategy Recommendations for the Southern Tier REDC

GOAL #1 SUPPLY

The Southern Tier has a sufficient supply of regulated providers to meet the needs of its current and future workforce.

- Prioritize STREDC applications that will contribute to growth in the region’s child care supply including the expansion of regulated in-home care
- Create a pool of funds for child care center expansion and new center development
- Help to identify local matching funds for child care applications

GOAL #2 ACCESSIBILITY

- Utilize the GIS map of child care to identify high need/priority areas for support (proximity to care for workers)
- Monitor areas of new business development and communicate with CCRR Collaborative to assess child care needs

GOAL #3 AFFORDABILITY

- Prioritize child care applications that are financed without increasing parental fees
- Promote the tax credit for corporate contributions to child care and CCRRs
- Share innovative business practices that reduce the cost of operating a child care program or supplement parent fees (e.g. discounted purchasing, employer-specific emergency scholarship funds, etc.- see below)

GOAL #4 QUALITY

- Support the creation of innovative child care workforce preparation solutions, such as apprenticeships and shared substitute pools.

GOAL #5 CONTEXT FOR EXCELLENCE

- Encourage and support ongoing collaborative efforts with regionally minded- locally driven Child Care Resource and Referral services.
- Support the growth of innovative technologies that enhance business and other operations
- Support a regional marketing campaign
- Engage with the private sector in supporting public policy objectives that improve child care operational conditions, reduce the loss of existing child care and support the growth of child care.

Innovations that build upon current local efforts, proposed at a regional scale:

1. Provider training and support/ talent retention and professional development – apprenticeships, mentorships and coaching
2. New business creation – creating group family child care networks, which provide business services training, shared resources and support (purchasing of back office services, use of new technologies for enrollment management and billing fees and food program management)
3. Regional marketing and outreach – gains the benefits of consistency and multiple sources of media coverage.
4. Facilities upgrades (regulatory) – Housing stock within the southern tier is not of sufficient quality to meet the child care requirements. Creating a dedicated program would provide incentives for the growth of regulated home-based care in high need areas; engage housing developers to include affordable housing/child care business sites
5. Universal Access – supplemental fees to help parents pay for quality child care so no family pays more than 7% of their income on child care, scaled based on income and eliminating the cliff effect that is created with the child care subsidies.

CFA Review Checklist

Southern Tier Regional Priorities for Child Care	YES	NO	Notes
<p>1. Expands infant care seats</p> <p><i>One new family daycare home can support 2 to 4 infants, one new classroom in center-based care supports 6-8 infants</i></p>			
<p>2. Creates more child care in a high need area</p> <p><i>GIS maps demonstrate deserts and travel corridors</i></p>			
<p>3. Has business and other partnerships to build sustainability</p> <p><i>Documentation provided</i></p>			
<p>4. Minimizes reliance on long term financing</p> <p><i>Less than 50% private financing Reduces the cost being shifted to the parent</i></p>			
<p>5. Identified as a local priority</p> <p><i>Input provided by CCRR and local economic development organizations</i></p>			

Recommendations submitted to STREDC

Every YES earns a point. A minimum of three points would be needed for consideration as a regional priority project.

CHILD CARE:



A SNAPSHOT OF
CHILD CARE/EARLY CARE & EDUCATION
IN THE
SOUTHERN TIER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGION



CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL (CCRR) AGENCIES

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Child Care Aware © of Steuben and Schuyler, a department of ProAction, Inc.

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Chenango County Office

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Norwich, New York 13815

Tioga County Office

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TYPES OF CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Registered Family Day Care home is a residence in which child care is provided on a regular basis, for more than three hours per day, per child, for three to up to eight children, depending on the ages, for compensation. A family day care must renew their registration every 2 or 4 years. The provider must also take 30 hours of training every two years. The provider is **self-employed**.

Licensed Group Family Day Care home is a residence in which child care is provided on a regular basis, for more than three hours per day, per child, for seven to up to 16 children, depending on the ages, for compensation. Such a home must be operated by a provider and have at least one assistant present during the hours that care is provided. A group family day care must renew their license every 2 or 4 years. The provider is **self-employed** with an Assistant.

Licensed Child Day Care Center is a child care program or a facility that is not a residence, in which child care is provided on a regular basis, to more than six children, for more than three hours per day, per child, for compensation. A child day care center must renew their license every 2 or 4 years. The centers are privately owned as a for profit or a not for profit agency.

Registered School-aged Child Care is a program that enrolls groups of 7 or more children under 13 years of age during the school year before and/or after school. School-age child care programs also may provide care during school holidays and those periods of the year in which school is not in session, including summer vacations. Care is provided in a facility that is not a residence. Registered school-age child care programs must renew their registration every 2 or 4 years. School age programs are privately owned for profit or not for profit agency.

Head Start is a federally funded, comprehensive program for 3-5 year old children from income-eligible families. All services are provided at no cost to the family. There is no fee to attend.

Pre-Kindergarten are state funded pre-school programs for 4 year olds operated by a school district or their contracted community based partner. Children must attend the UPK program located in the school district which the child resides. There is no fee to attend.

Legally- Exempt Family Child Care is child care provided outside the child's own home in a residence and is not regulated but must meet all state and local health and safety requirements for such child care. This caregiver is chosen and monitored by the child's parent or guardian. This type of care includes care for relatives within the third degree of consanguinity and up to 2 unrelated children. When caring for one unrelated child and related children, the maximum number of children in care at any one time can be 8, which includes their own children. The provider is self-employed.

Legally-Exempt In-Home Child Care is child care provided **in the child's own home** by a caregiver who is chosen and monitored by the child's parent/guardian and is not regulated but must meet all State and local health and safety requirements for such child care. This type of care requires the child's parent/guardian to provide the caregiver with all employee benefits required by the state and federal law and must pay the caretaker at least minimum wage.

Nursery Schools/ Pre-School Programs serve children ages 3-5 years old in a variety of settings including: public and private schools, churches, community centers and home residences. Programs meet anywhere from one to five days per week for less than three hours per session and often follow the school year calendar.

Camp Programs are day or overnight recreational programs that operate when school is not in session. Camp programs are regulated to some degree by New York State Department of Health.

Slot Capacity by Modality and County

Program/Age	Broome	Chemung	Chenango	Delaware	Schuyler	Steuben	Tioga	Tompkins
FDC – Infant & Toddler	68	98	44	40	14	104	18	46
FDC - Preschool	136	196	88	80	28	208	36	92
FDC – School Age	68	98	44	40	14	118	18	46
GFDC – Infants & Toddler	84	64	64	24	20	80	24	100
GFDC – Preschool	168	128	48	48	40	240	128	208
GFDC - SACC	84	64	64	24	20	80	24	100
Center – Infant	243	68	0	48	11	162	20	130
Center - Toddler	365	89	0	220	18	195	42	241
Center – Preschool	801	276	0	77	18	365	86	482
Center – School Age	379	86	0	10	0	184	78	66
School Age	1362	849	205	209	120	1343	217	1208

Vacancy Data by Modality and County

Vacancy data is a snapshot in time as it changes hourly/daily. Child Care Programs may also reduce their slot capacity as a “best practice” to best serve children and thus their programs have vacancies based on slot capacity but the vacancies will not be filled.

Program/Age	Broome	Chemung	Chenango	Delaware	Schuyler	Steuben	Tioga	Tompkins	TOTAL
FDC – Infant & Toddler	14	12	4	5	7	50	2	Combined with GFDC	
FDC - Preschool	19	37	11	12	4	31	4	Combined with GFDC	
FDC – School Age	13	21	0	3	2	32	0	Combined with Group FDC	
GFDC – Infants & Toddler	10	11	5	2	10	35	8	21	
GFDC – Preschool	23	22	8	12	2	18	8	50	
GFDC - SACC	18	13	1	2	3	17	0	89	
Center – Infant & Toddler	0	12	1	8	1	21	1	8	
Center – Preschool	40	32	12	58	4	26	17	37	
Center – School Age	25	70	8	10	0	18	7	Combined with School Age Programs	
School Age	1	25	1	112	2	38	1	92	

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM INCOME GUIDELINES – June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2020

This is a program to assist income eligible working families with the cost of their child care. The funding is from Federal, State and Local Governments. The program is administered by the local Department of Social Services except in Chemung (administered by the Chemung County Child Care Council); Delaware (administered by Delaware Opportunities and Steuben (administered by Child Care Aware © of Steuben and Schuyler). Income eligible parents pay a family share and make the decision for where their child is cared for. Counties are given allocations of maximum funding they will receive. If there are not enough funds there may be a waiting list or cases may have to close.

FAMILY SIZE	POVERTY LEVEL	125% <u>DELAWARE COUNTY</u>	200% ABOVE Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins
1	12,490	15,612.50	24,980
2	16,910	21,137.50	33,820
3	21,330	26,662.50	42,660
4	25,750	32,187.50	51,500
5	30,170	37,712.50	60,340
6	34,590	43,237.50	69,180
7	39,010	48,762.50	78,020
8	43,430	54,287.50	86,860
For families with more than 8 persons add \$4,420 for each additional person			

CHILD CARE MARKET RATES by Modality and County for [FULL TIME CHILD CARE PER WEEK]

The Market Rates are the maximum amount a County can pay a child care program for the care of children whose parents are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program. This IS NOT the ACTUAL COST OF CARE. The Market Rates are determined by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services via a survey that asks child care programs what they charge for care for different age groups. Each county has the option to require parents to pay a family share between 10% and 35%. Each county has the option to pay a higher rate for non-traditional hours care between 5% and 15%. Each county can decide if they elect to pay for “sleep time” care for children of parents who work the night shift. Details are provided in each county’s Consolidated Services Plan which is approved by NYS Office of Children and Family Services.

Modality and Age of Child	Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, and Tioga Counties	Tompkins County
Day Care Center - Infants	\$220	\$280
Day Care Center – Toddler	\$206	\$264
Day Care Center – Preschool	\$195	\$245
Day Care Center – School Age	\$180	\$215
FDC and GFDC – Infant	\$180	\$190
FDC and GFDC – Toddler, Preschool and School Age	\$150	\$185 – Toddler; \$180 – Preschool; \$175 – School Age
School Age – 5 year old	\$195	\$245
School Age – 6-12 years old	\$180	\$215
Legally Exempt – Infant	\$104	\$124
Legally Exempt – Toddler, Preschool, and School Age	\$ 98	\$120 – Toddler; \$117 – Preschool; \$114 – School Age

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

➤ **Why is Child Care So Expensive?**

The cost of child care is one of the top 5 expenses for a family. The operation of a child care program whether in a person's home or in a center is a BUSINESS. They have all of the same expenses and requirements as other small businesses in addition to meeting and remaining in compliance with the NYS Day Care regulations that govern their modality of care. Although child care is expensive for parents the amount parents pay does not come close to the true cost of providing the service which means that child care professionals subsidize the cost by accepting low wages and minimal benefits.

➤ **Why is there not enough child care?**

It is difficult for CCRR's to recruit individuals who are interested in becoming home based child care providers or opening and operating a center. The child care industry is faced with the same challenges as most industries – finding qualified/trained/responsible workers. Salaries are low with most child care professionals earning minimum wage or slightly more despite having educational credentials. Most child care professionals do not have employer supported benefits such as health insurance, retirement, life insurance and most have limited sick and vacation days. Most home based child care professionals work 60-80 hour weeks which includes actual care time; program planning; cleaning the environment; shopping for food and program supplies and paperwork associated with the business.

➤ **How many children can someone care for before they need to be licensed in NYS?**

An individual can care for two children, other than their own before they need to be licensed in NYS. There are exceptions for care of children that are related to the child care provider.

➤ **If someone calls their local CCRR are they going to be able to find child care?**

Every CCRR maintains a databased of legal child care programs and regularly updates the vacancy data. The CCRR Child Care Referral Specialist will try very hard to assist an individual in locating child care and if there is not child care available will provide names of programs so that the parent can possibly be placed on the program's waiting list. The CCRR does not recommend any one child care program over another as it is the parent/guardian's right and responsibility to visit programs and interview the providers prior to making an informed decision about the best care for their child. The CCRR Referral Specialist provides parents/guardians with resources on what to look for in quality child care.

➤ **What are the reasons that parents cannot locate or secure child care?**

Reasons might include:

+ lack of reliable transportation

+ needing Infant/Toddler Care – there is a CRITICAL NEED FOR CHILD CARE FOR THIS AGE GROUP

+ geographic area where care is needed

+ evening, rotating shifts, weekends, multiple age group children, children enrolled at different public schools with different release dates

+ unable to afford the cost and is not eligible for the child care subsidy program

• **Why is the Quality of Child Care So Important:**

Children are our greatest resource. The provision of a quality early care and learning environment in their B-5 years is critical to their brain development; success in school and in life. Their caregivers must be not only warm and caring but also have the skills and knowledge to understand how children grow and develop and what they need in order to foster that development.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

CONTACT THE CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL (CCRR) PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY. THESE ARE LISTED ON THE FIRST PAGE OF THIS DOCUMENT.



What Drives the Child Care Economy?



Quality

Quality child care is critical to positive child outcomes, impacting school-readiness and child health, particularly for children who lack resources. Child care is also good for parents, enabling them to participate in the workforce. Factors that lead to quality child care include:

- The education and experience of the child care provider
- Child:Caregiver ratios, which differ by age group

Availability

The cost of care and low wages create little incentive to enter or remain in the field. Over the years this has resulted in a reduction of child care supply nation-wide.

- In Tompkins County, the number of child care entities has decreased 68% since 2002
- There are enough child care seats for 1/3 of eligible children—waiting lists are long.
- Parents are faced with choosing care that may be less consistent, un-regulated with an unknown quality level and/or choose to leave work
- Children may be left home, supervised by an older sibling, or unsupervised



Cost of Care

The cost of care varies by age due to differing ratio requirements, caregiver wages and overhead costs. Almost all of the income for programs comes from parents in the form of tuition fees.

It is important to recognize:

- Child care is an undervalued career
- Child care wages remain low, the cost of turnover is high and incentive to enter the field is low
- The widening income spread has created a larger wedge, decreasing the number of families who can afford quality care
- It is common for parents pay an average of \$250-\$275/week = ~24% of their income to care for one child

**Southern Tier Regional Child Care Resource
and Referral Consortium**

2020-2025

**Child Care Now
Strategic Plan**

Introduction

More than 32,505 children younger than age five live in the Southern Tier, with 16,413 available child care seats, leaving a potential gap of need at 16,092. Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) agencies are a vital resource for families, child care professionals and communities. Located in nearly every community in the nation, CCR&Rs emerged over 30 years ago as a grassroots child care referral service to empower working families to make informed child care choices, and is embedded in federal legislation found in the Child Care Development Block Grant.

As a nationwide system with touchpoints at the local, state and national level, CCR&Rs support families by helping them navigate complicated child care systems and by conducting initiatives that increase the quality, affordability and accessibility of child care.

Today, more than 400 local CCR&Rs, (35 in NYS) along with their state CCR&R (NYS Early Care and Learning Council), are the leading voices for stronger child care licensing regulations, higher investments in child care systems, subsidies and greater recognition of the importance of high-quality child care for all children. *Source: Child Care Aware of America®*

There are 5 CCR&Rs, serving the 8 counties that comprise the Southern Tier Economic Development Council. CCR&Rs create the conditions of success by providing the necessary infrastructure for child care programs in our local communities. Southern Tier CCR&Rs have achieved many significant accomplishments in the past five years, including: (1) NACCRRA Quality Assurance and State Standards of Excellence, (2) a child care career pipeline, (3) an early childhood business alliance, (4) relationships with local Chambers, and (5) participation on child care work groups, locally, regionally, and statewide. Positioned firmly as a sector leader, CCR&Rs are ready to set a course for the next five years that builds on our organizations' strengths and focuses its resources on its most important, mission-focused work.

A robust child care system supports the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council's four priorities: *Build the Greater Binghamton Innovation Eco System, Invest in the Advanced Manufacturing Industry, Transform the Food and Agriculture Industry and the Promotion of the Southern Tier Innovative Culture.*

What is the answer?

The REDC in partnership with Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies will strive to increase the supply of child care by targeting the establishment of programs in locations that can meet immediate employer demand (near employment centers or along major travel corridors); support child care providers in starting new businesses and creating jobs; and increase workforce participation by fostering child care supply and workforce development across the region.

Goal #1 - AVAILABILITY

Outcome (#1): The Southern Tier has a sufficient, stable supply of regulated providers.

Strategy: Invest in and grow the impact of relevant “best practice” activities to recruit and retain child care programs.

Invest in and grow entrepreneurial benefits for child care businesses.

Align FDC/GFDC with center child definitions for age ranges with center based regulations.

Monitor and develop recommendations for growth in child care deserts.

Proposed REDC Strategies:

- Prioritize STREDC applications that will contribute to a growth in the region’s child care supply, including infant care.
- Create a pool of funds for child care center expansion and new center development (URI)
- Identify local matching funds for child care applications

Activities: (Mission-level)

- Ensure adequate staff capacity to proactively recruit new providers into the regulated market
- Influence the demand for high quality care for families of all economic levels
- Effectively retain existing providers in the regulated care market
- Continue work to improve quality in all care settings, with a special emphasis on legally exempt care settings and Infant/Toddler care
- Advocate for employer-sponsored child care; on-site or through the provisions of incentives to programs
- Create a fund for sign on and retention bonuses for individuals coming into the system
- Increase supply through intensified outreach and augmented business development support
- Promote the conditions for success through a regional communication and marketing plan
- Engage the REDC in policy and advocacy work

Activities: (Agency-level)

- Equip staff with resources to perform their functions efficiently and effectively
- Ensure adequate CCRR staff to carry out strategic imperatives
- Conduct exit surveys

Measurement Indicator:

- Net annual gain of providers and/or slots in the regulated market
- Number of new CCRR staff throughout the region
- Number of exit surveys to assess primary reasons for closure

Resources: CCR&R Staff

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)
- Appropriate staff training and development

Goal #2 - ACCESSIBILITY

Outcome (#1): Parents are connected with child care options that meet their complex needs.

Outcome (#2): Child care programs are in proximity to workforce centers, travel corridors, and/or locations preferred by parents.

Strategy: Invest in and grow the impact of relevant “best practice” activities to assist parents in making a child care plan.

Proposed REDC Strategies:

- Utilize the GIS map to identify high need/priority areas for support
- Monitor areas of new business development and communicate with CCRR Collaborative to assess need

Activities: (Mission-level)

- Broaden parent usage of CCR&R service
- Develop innovative responses to families’ complex needs that exceed current offerings
- Work with local Department of Social Services to ensure stable care settings for children care who are placed because of a family member use of opiates and/or experiencing homelessness

Activities: (Agency-level)

- Tracking system that captures data to generate necessary insight to improve accessibility through the CCR&R service
- Tracking system that provide accurate data on child care deserts in the Southern Tier
- Increase the number of families who use regulated care

Measurement Indicator:

- Increase the number of parents who use CCR&R service
- Increase the number of parents who find care using CCRR services
- Increase the number of programs in proximity to workforce/travel corridors

Resources: CCR&R Staff

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)

Goal #3 - AFFORDABILITY

Outcome (#1): *No parent/household will pay more than 10% of their household income on child care.*

Strategy:

Invest in and grow “best practice” CRRs activities to strengthen a parent’s ability to pay for quality early learning experiences for their children

Engage all sectors in financing and supporting child care programs and CCR&R infrastructure

Create a consistent stream of resources that is delivered to parents paying for child care on a graduated scale

Proposed REDC Strategies:

- Prioritize child care applications that are financed without increasing parental fees
- Promote the tax credit for corporate contributions to child care and CCRRs
- Share innovative business practices that reduce the cost of operating a child care program or supplement parent fees (e.g. discounted purchasing, employer-specific emergency scholarship funds, etc.)

Activities: (Mission-level)

- Work with businesses to underwrite center based operational gap

Activities: (Agency-level)

Measurement Indicator:

- Number of child care programs that are directly subsidized by employers
- Number of CCR&Rs supported by employers

Resources: CCR&R staff

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)

Goal #4 – QUALITY

Outcome (#1): Sufficient critical resources are available to foster child care quality.

Strategy: Invest in and grow the impact of relevant “best practice” activities within CCR&Rs to ensure quality.

Implement paid apprenticeship programs in centers and group/family child care programs with the focus of a clear educational pathway for advancement

Activities: (Mission-level)

- Increase program’s participation in quality assessment and improvement activities offered by CCR&Rs

Activities: (Agency-level)

- Increase the number of CCR&R staff who are NYS credentialed coaches and trainers
- Provide professional development so that all adults in care settings develop relationships and capabilities to model self-regulation, provide nurturing care and developmental experiences.
- Increase the number of program assessments and quality improvement plans
- Increase effectiveness of TA services through bi-monthly check-ins
- Increase effectiveness of training sessions by establishing an agreement with Registrars and Licensors to enforce Plans of Action
- Expand access to CACFP

Measurement Indicator:

- Increase to 85% the percentage demonstrating that quality improvement occurred.
- Increase number of programs participating in QualitystarsNY
- Increase the number of mental health specialists in Southern Tier CRRs
- Expand the number of home based providers who are trained in and implement research based/research informed curriculms.

Resources: CCR&R Staff

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)

Proposed REDC Strategies

- Support the creation of innovative child care workforce preparation solutions, such as apprenticeships and shared substitute pools.

Goal #5 – CONTEXT FOR EXCELLENCE

Outcome (#1): Child Care businesses realize internal organizational conditions for success.

Strategy: Develop an internal culture of excellence and support it with necessary resources.

Attract and retain child care talent through the earning of a living wage and access to fringe benefits.

Activities: (Agency-level)

- Increase the number of Center Directors who obtain the Director's credential.
- Increase the number of Center Directors who participate in professional development in business, budgeting and setting fee structures
- Encourage child care programs to utilize a shared services model
- Ensure that home-based programs have access to Tom Copeland Business Essentials resource library
- Support career pathways through increased progressive education attainment
- Promote Shared Services ECNY

Measurement Indicator:

- Number of credentialed Directors
- Number of Directors attending professional opportunities
- Number of centers utilizing a shared services model

Resources: CCR&R Staff (Lead Person: Director)

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets)

Outcome (#2): Through the engagement of new community partners a vision of child care that nurtures the whole child, supports families and promotes workforce participation will be obtained.

Strategy: Elevate child care as a primary concern within the entire community.

Activities: (Mission-level)

- Cultivate a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the importance of the child care sector as an integral part of the economic development success in the region by developing a regional campaign of the importance of child care.
- Increase parent demand for high quality early care and education
- Heighten the sense of value child care practitioners see in the role their work has in fostering school readiness, success and future prosperity.
- Conduct a regional marketing campaign

Proposed REDC Strategies:

- Encourage and support ongoing collaborative efforts with regionally minded- locally driven Child Care Resource and Referral services.
- Support the growth of innovative technologies that support business and other operations
- Support a regional marketing campaign
- Engage with the private sector in supporting public policy objectives that improve child care operational conditions, reduce the loss of existing child care, and support the growth of child care.

Measurement Indicator:

Resources: CCR&R Staff (*Lead Person: Director*)

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)

Outcome (#3): Create the conditions for success.

Strategy: Marshall public/political will to engage external stakeholders as advocates for policies—and backers of initiatives – that advance a strong early care and education system.

Ensure CCR&R success in their role as a local child care system’s infrastructure through adequate funding

Activities:(Mission-level)

- Leverage relationships to cultivate a group of “champions” to take action in support of public policy objectives that increase affordability, availability, accessibility or quality in child care and address pay inequity among low income families to reduce the need of public dollars for child care fees
- Engage external stakeholders in the community as supporters of defined projects that increase affordability, availability, accessibility, or quality
- Ensure adequate staffing for CCR&Rs
- Review, update, and develop a regional Public Policy plan

Activities: (Program-level)

- Southern Tier CCR&Rs become members of the ECLC advocacy mobilization or policy committee
- Southern Tier CCR&Rs mobilize as one to visit legislators in the districts and in Albany
- Invite child care champions from the community to advocate
- Invite legislators to visit CCR&Rs, child care centers, family child care homes and parent meetings.

Measurement Indicator:

- Track levels of engagement in terms of number of third party funders supporting work and/or number of individuals agreeing to participate as “champions” for early care and education.
- Regional plan
- Number of visits to programs by legislators
- Number of visits to legislators by CCR&R staff

Resources: CCR&R Staff (Lead Person: Director)

- Supplies – office supplies
- Space – office
- Technology – computer hardware/software, email, internet, website
- Other equipment – printer, copier, fax
- Financial – budgets (staff time, supplies, filing cabinets, share management drive)

Summary:

Increasing the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of child care in local communities works and is cost-effective within the existing infrastructure of local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies. Economic development investment, in the work of CCR&Rs would further build on and advance their work. CCR&R work dually benefits the formal economic participation of child care providers and the workforce participation of parents who, with child care available, can accept opportunities for work. At the same time, it improves quality in the provision of child care, which creates an opportunity to foster the healthy social, emotional cognitive and physical development of young children, laying the foundation for their later success in school and subsequent workforce preparedness. With existing funding outreach and support would happen only occasionally, and the results would not materialize at the scale needed to have an impact to meet the gap in child care seats.