



Local Jurisdictions Recognized for Efforts to Plan for Child Care in Orange County

The cities of Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Santa Ana and the County of Orange were recognized by the Child Care Connections collaborative at the Orange County Child Care and Development Planning Council's Fifth Annual "Celebration of Quality in Child Care" breakfast on April 23, 2009. The event was held at the Heritage Park Community Center Avenue in Irvine, CA. Local jurisdictions were selected for recognition for their policies favorable to developing additional child care facilities within their boundaries. Awardees met one or more of the following criteria:

- Developed a strategic plan to expand quality early care and education opportunities for children and families.
- Amended local zoning ordinances or developed policies to remove obstacles (such as permit, traffic impact and other fees) to the provision of child care (day care centers) facilities in all zoning districts, in locations that are appropriate and safe for children.
- Included provisions for child care facilities as permitted by right in one or more land use elements.
- Negotiated with developers and/or offered incentives to provide space for child care in all types of projects: residential, office, mixed use and commercial, including new construction and reuse.
- Altered local zoning ordinances to allow child care or family child care homes in locations convenient to neighborhoods and/or in public facilities such as schools, recreation and social service centers, and affordable housing projects.

Child Care Connections, a public private partnership organized in 2003, aims to create and implement land use policies to support the need for additional child care facilities. Child Care Connections has been working with planning, transportation departments, community development and other local government entities to improve permitting and zoning regulations and to develop a plan to overcome barriers to child

care facilities development. The 2008 Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County states “the quality, reliability, and availability of early care and education are factors that affect a parent’s ability to continue employment and remain self-sufficient.” As of 2008, there were 85,483 licensed child care spaces¹ in Orange County and more than 213,000 low-income children needing child care².

Child Care Connections Collaborative partners include nonprofit organizations and government agencies, such as the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, The Public Law Center, Children’s Home Society of California, Orange County Child Care and Development Planning Council, County of Orange Social Services Agency, The Kennedy Commission, and Orange County United Way. The collaborative works to enhance key system building elements to support the expansion of child care countywide. Child Care Connections is funded by Affordable Buildings for Children’s Development (ABCD) Constructing Connections, a program of the Low Income Investment Fund with major funding from First 5 California.

The Orange County Child Care and Development Planning Council are appointed by the Orange County Superintendent of Schools and the Orange County Board of Supervisors. The mission of the Council is to mobilize public and private resources and encourage partnerships to meet the child care and development needs of children, families, and child care providers of Orange County.

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¹ 2008, The 14th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County.

² 2008. (Orange County Child Care & Development Planning Council), Child Care Priorities Report.