

Child Care and Development Technical Report

Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan

December 15, 2007



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

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A. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Child care is a vital need for many families of the study area, but especially for the families affiliated with Fort Carson. During times of deployment, many families in effect become single-parent households that require adequate child care in order for the remaining parent to continue working or running a household effectively. Population and economic growth associated with the troop increase at Fort Carson will in turn increase the demand for child care programs. Broader demographic trends within the community, including the rise of two-worker households and single-parent households, further reinforces the need for quality, affordable child care services in the study area.

Research continues to uncover the link between quality child care, particularly in a child's early years, and educational and social development. As troops are reassigned to Fort Carson and parents continue to be deployed, a quality child care program can assist in smooth transitions and adjustment periods for the children. Well administered and supervised child care also improves the physical health of children, providing numerous cascading advantages. The provision of quality child care benefits not only the children involved, but also the family and the entire community by creating an economically healthy environment, including increasing the size of the skilled workforce. The availability of affordable, high quality child care is an attractor to families and businesses moving to the area, and accessible and adequate child care is a quality of life priority for the region and the Army.

The purpose of this technical report is to assess 1) child care issues relating to the Fort Carson troop increase and their relative importance to the community, 2) estimates of demand for child care (ages 0 through 9), 3) the available capacity of on-post providers, and 4) recommendations relating to capacity, affordability, and quality of child care as well as resources for training service providers. The listed recommendations apply more appropriately to providers and stakeholders, yet the result of their application will directly benefit military families and the community through increased capacity, elevated quality of care, and improved access to specialized resources for children in need.

Fort Carson's Child and Youth Services program is the military family's first step to finding child care. Data provided by the program were utilized to assess the installation's capacity to accommodate child care demand resulting from the troop increase. The analysis also includes the results of a review of state, federal, and non-profit training, funding, and resource referral programs in the study area that directly relate to child care issues, as well as a review of journal articles on best practices for providing child care to military dependents. The project team continues to conduct interviews with local leaders in the child care field to understand current community efforts, practices, and challenges.

Demographic Projection Summary

This section summarizes the demographic projections and assumptions as they relate to child care forecasts.

New troops, civilians, and dependents are beginning to arrive at Fort Carson as a result of directives on troop movements due to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS), and Army Modular Force (AMF). An estimated 12,600 military personnel were authorized for Fort Carson at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, with an



estimated 23,000 dependents living within the study area. Thus, the population of the Fort Carson community at the beginning of FY 2007 was approximately 36,000 persons.

A range, which establishes an "upper" and a "lower" number for the projected increase in military personnel, was established, referred to as the "Expected Growth Scenario" and the "Alternative Growth Scenario." The "Expected Growth Scenario" assumes 11,400 additional troops will be assigned to Fort Carson. A second scenario, referred to as the "Alternative Growth Scenario", assumes a reduction to 75% of the "Expected Growth Scenario" in troop assignments each year. The "Expected Growth Scenario" was based on information provided by officials at Fort Carson, and will function in this document as the projected total number of troops that will be authorized for the installation through FY 2011. Thus, total population growth associated with the troop increase at Fort Carson is expected to be roughly 33,800, consisting of approximately 11,400 newly authorized troops, 21,300 military dependents, 430 civilians, and 690 civilian dependents (see the Demographic Technical Report).

Two large surges of troop arrivals are anticipated through 2011. The first increase in troops, currently underway, is expected to add 4,700 troops by the end of FY 2007, which is equivalent to the end of September, 2007. The second increase, expected to occur before the end of FY 2009, will add an additional 5,200 new troops. FY 2008, 2010, and 2011 are expected to add 100, 700, and 700 new soldiers, respectively.

New population growth associated with the forecast troop increases (including military personnel, civilians, and all dependents) will add approximately 33,800 new persons to the study area population, and the total Fort Carson related population will make up over 8% of the total study area population by 2011.

These new residents will impact all aspects of the regional community, including the housing market, local school systems, state and local municipal services, quality of life, etc. The demographic forecasts provide the base assumptions used to create the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan.

B. KEY ISSUES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Child Care Delivery Factors - General Considerations

Quality, Accessibility, Affordability

In the child care arena, quality, accessibility, and affordability are inextricably linked. Efforts to address any one piece of the child care puzzle will affect other aspects. If quality is improved by increasing the minimum standards and professional qualifications, the cost of child care will rise, decreasing availability for working parents. Similarly, an exclusive focus on increasing the number of child care spaces may diminish quality, with children participating in programs that are underdeveloped and understaffed. Finally, even if both quality and affordability are addressed, working parents must be able to access these programs. With scarce time and money, as well as the probability of a parent in the family being deployed, parents cannot afford to make lengthy car trips to distant or multiple child care options. Child care subsidies that reward quality with higher reimbursement rates are a good example of addressing quality and affordability simultaneously. The provision of on-base, local, and neighborhood child care, or on-site after school care, as well as employer-based facilities, can also reduce the amount of

time parents spend shuttling children. Effective strategies should seek to address all of these issues in concert.

Child Care is a Public and a Private Good

It is important to note that child care is both a private and a public good. As a private good it benefits parents and employers, and as a public good it produces gains for all of society through related effects. Army parents have a stake in quality child care because it enables their participation in the workforce, supports their continued workforce participation while a family member is deployed, helps their children to make smooth transitions and stay healthy during times of stress, and establishes security and stability. The ability of quality care to strengthen child developmental and health outcomes and improve worker productivity suggests a strong and needed role for the public and private sector in promoting accessible, affordable, quality child care.

Economic Development and Child Care

Researchers in the economic development field have found that child care has three significant, distinct impacts on regional economies.¹ First, quality child care promotes child development and educational advantages, which have a number of important, mostly long-term economic impacts. Second, the quality and availability of child care helps to mobilize the adult Army and spouse labor force and maintains or increases its productivity, which is particularly supportive during times of deployment. And third, child care is a major industry in its own right, with a large private expenditure, many employees, and many establishments, which in turn invest in a wide variety of other industries and circulate money through the economy. An example of an important type of private industry related to Fort Carson is the establishment of on-post Family Care Centers which are child care facilities individually owned and typically run by spouses of enlisted Army personnel in their homes. Family Care Centers accounted for 21% of the total Fort Carson on-base child care capacity in FY 2007.

Research increasingly shows the importance of childhood care and education, yet the public does not invest nearly as much in early childhood as it does in school-age children. The benefits of quality childhood care can be difficult to measure quantitatively, and are usually considered long term benefits, however, documented benefits include reduced reliance on social services as adults, reduced rates of crime and delinquency, and better preparedness for schools and therefore savings in the public school system.² Various early childhood researchers have estimated the benefit-to cost ratio of investment in quality childhood care and education to be between 1:4 and 1:17, with an average of 1:7 – meaning seven dollars are saved for every dollar invested in quality childhood care.² The numbers are not currently available to estimate the percentage of Fort Carson education funds that are spent on child care through Child & Youth Services, but the post has voiced its commitment to funding needed child care services in addition to the six active school-aged child and teen programs currently in operation.

The quality and availability of child care also affect the availability and productivity of the adult workforce. Parents may choose to enter the workforce if affordable, quality child care is available, and they may choose to leave the workforce if these options decrease. Employers in

¹ Cornell Planning Department, Linking Economic Development & Child Care Research Project

² Miles K. Light, University of Colorado, The Economic Impact of Child Care in Colorado, 2004.

competitive, knowledge-based fields often offer child care benefits to attract and retain employees, and Fort Carson is keenly aware of the needs of military and contracted civilian families when a spouse is deployed. Nearly one-third of Fortune Magazine's Best Companies to Work For offered on-site child care centers. Fort Carson offers accessible on-post child care in the form of Child Development Centers and Family Care Centers that accommodate the schedule of parents working on-post. The availability of child care can also reduce employee turnover, lower absenteeism, and increase productivity. In short, quality child care can help a region, a company, or an installation attract and retain valuable employees.

The child care industry is a significant industrial sector of the economy in its own right. In 2001, more than \$1 billion was spent on child care related services in Colorado, and more than 18,000 Coloradans were employed by the child care-related industry. Money spent in the child care industry cycles through the economy, and some studies show that money spent on child care has a greater impact on the economy than other industries traditionally supported by economic development efforts. From 2000-2006, fifty eight states and counties have conducted studies of the impact of the child care industry on their economy, including the State of Colorado in 2004.

Child Care Issues Relating to the Fort Carson Troop Increase

Stakeholders identified the following issues and concerns relative to the troop increase.

- The need for early identification and intervention for children with special needs, such as developmental delays and/or disabilities, and the education of parents in this regard – combined with a lack of trained providers and affordable facilities to serve children and families with special needs.
- A deficit of providers and facilities for infant and toddler care, the corresponding affordability, and the proximity of those facilities that are qualified to care for infants. Care for infants and toddlers with special needs is in extremely short supply. With the demand for infant and toddler care so great that centers are able to fill all of their slots, many centers avoid accepting children with disabilities or other special needs even though centers cannot deny access to children simply because they have special needs.
- Parents who have children with disabilities or other special needs struggle to balance work and family, and benefit from respite care. However, the high cost and lack of parental respite child care for parents with children who have special needs makes respite care inaccessible to many parents, especially during spousal deployments.
- The lack of public awareness of the multiple options available for child care, including infant care, after-school care, and child care programs for children with special needs, and subsidy programs. This includes education for new parents coming on-post about the many child care resources available to them through both military and community programs. Lack of knowledge by parents as to the availability of federal Head Start and Early Head Start programs and the qualifications needed to take advantage of these programs. Subsidy and benefit programs, high quality child care, and other referral assistance are available to newly-assigned parents at Fort Carson.
- Competition for, and lack of dispersal of, professional development funding, as well as few career ladder opportunities encouraging professionals to further their education and training and remain in the child care field. The need for professionals trained to deal with children experiencing the effects of parental deployments.
- A potential strain on after school programs or child care centers overall. Specifically, there is a lack of capacity and distribution of child care providers in the Fountain, Security, and

Widefield areas that may receive the majority of new housing from the troop increase. A compounding issue is that child care facilities are rarely incorporated into housing developments (adjacent to source neighborhoods).

- Assisting all qualified parents in accessing high quality child care through the Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood subsidy programs for the use of off-post child care providers. The quality of off-post providers is an issue: If child care at a facility does not meet military standards, the subsidy cannot be awarded to the parents for care in that facility. This quality standard is a benefit to parents but may also be a limitation at the same time if there are no qualifying facilities in the parents' vicinity.

C. EXISTING INVENTORY

Various public and non-profit organizations provide critical resources and lead initiatives to support child care providers within the study area. Significant local, regional, state, federal, and non-profit resources are described in this section. An attempt was made at this time to focus primarily on advocacy and support organizations, such as referral agencies, rather than on child care service providers. Typically, financial and support resources are provided by federal, state, local, or non-profit groups and are administered to local child care providers through referral agencies, non-profit organizations, and government entities.

Federal Programs

Federal Programs include funding, programs, or support services offered or administered by any branch of the U.S. government, including the military forces. The following list describes federal programs that pertain directly to children and child care for families stationed at Fort Carson.

U.S. Army Child & Youth Services

"Our mission is to provide a seamless delivery of quality care and services for eligible children and youth (6 weeks through 18 years of age) that enhance readiness and well being of the workforce and their families reducing conflicts between parental responsibilities and their on-the-job mission requirements."

Fort Carson Child & Youth Services (CYS) works with multiple military programs to provide services to military children from the ages of six weeks through 18 years of age. Fort Carson CY is a first stop for information and services for many families on and off-post. Traditional child care services are available to children aged six weeks through kindergarten and are available through on-base Child Development Centers or Family Child Care facilities within on-post military homes. Before- and after-school child care for elementary school children is offered during the school year. Extracurricular activities and classes are available to military children of all ages and are available during after-school hours and summer sessions. Free child care is offered to families of deployed soldiers and consists of five free hours of care per child per month on 1st and 3rd Saturdays.

- Child Development Services - Serves children 6 weeks through Pre School Age (6 weeks – 4 years).
- School Age Services - Serves children from Kindergarten through 4th grade (5 – 9 years)

Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood, Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood, and Operation Military Child Care

The Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood program provides a subsidy for Fort Carson military families who use local child care providers. The program is notable in that it encourages military families who live off-post to use existing local child care services and existing resource and referral agencies, therefore strengthening the community system of child care provision. The subsidy provided depends upon total family income, geographic location, and Department of Defense policy, and makes off-post child care available at approximately the same price as on-post child care. The program also encourages quality child care because only nationally accredited services can receive the subsidy. The program requires the local child care resource and referral agency to provide enhanced service, in the form of additional contacts and confirmations to ensure that qualifying families have been able to find the child care they need.

The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood program only differs from Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood in that it applies to active duty soldiers in all military branches and does not require off-post residence. A similar program, Operation Military Child Care, provides child care subsidies specifically for deployed parents in the active duty military. This program can help the non-military spouse seek and keep employment while their spouse is deployed abroad.

Title I Services

In Colorado, Title I funding is used to support the operational costs of Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Programs, Head Start programs, and Even Start programs.

Child Care and Development Fund

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is managed by the US Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families. The purpose of this fund is to assist low income families in obtaining child care so that they can pursue work, training, or education. The program is administered by state agencies. States must create plans on how they plan to use the funds every two years, and these plans must be open to public input. At least 70% of the fund must be spent to assist low-income families with child care. Also, a minimum of 4% of funds must be used for improving child care quality. The federal government has performance measures against which it is benchmarking the performance of this funds, and some of these benchmarks may prove useful as models for Fort Carson families. Federal performance measures include:

- Improve school readiness among children from families under 150% of the U.S. poverty level
- Increase number of states with early learning guidelines
- Increase by 10% the number of accredited child care centers & homes
- Reduce the number of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) families without access to child care to 1%
- Maintain the proportion of children served by CCDF of those under 150% of the poverty level
- Increase the proportion of child care centers serving subsidized families

Nonprofit Programs

Several non-profit and military-based organizations, such as the National Military Family Association and Military OneSource, provide additional information pathways to child care programs and services available to Fort Carson families. Non-profit programs, further described

under Local and Regional Programs, contribute a major role in identifying community needs, coordinating community resources, providing referral services for parents, and supporting providers through training and advocacy. There are many non-profit organizations effectively operating together in El Paso, Fremont, and Pueblo counties, such as the Early Childhood Councils in each county.

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies is the national representative of all the state and local resource and referral agencies throughout the United States. NACCRRA is involved in professional development, parent education, research and advocacy on child care issues. NACCRRA is one of the best sources of information for current data on child care and state and federal policy. Current programming includes:

- Child Care Aware – A national program to promote parent awareness of child care options and information on selecting quality child care. The Child Care Aware website (described below) is part of this program.
- Quality Assurance Program – This program monitors and sets minimum standards for local and regional resource and referral agencies.
- Early Childhood Focus – This program consists of newsletters and e-news keeping child care professionals and parents up to date on the latest news on early childhood development.
- Military Programs – NACCRRA has several programs to promote quality child care provision to military personnel and collaborations with the Department of Defense.
- NACCRRAware – This is support software for child care resource and referral agencies that is only available to active members of NACCRRA.
- Wounded Warriors – NACCRRA also provides financial assistance for six months of child care services to families of severely injured military members. Extensions beyond six months are considered based on a physician's reassessment.

Child Care Aware includes a website created by NACCRRA for parents that serves as a resource clearinghouse on learning about child care issues. The website has a variety of publications and videos that educate parents on child care options, expenses, and quality. The website includes calculators that help parents budget for child care or make decisions about whether they should return to work. Child Care Aware provides information on how to select and review a child care provider. Information on other specific topics such as fatherhood and help for military families is also provided. Regular online publications are provided to engage parents in an ongoing understanding of their child's developmental needs.

National Military Family Association

A non-profit organization dedicated to the education of military families as to their rights, benefits, and available services, and as a source of information that may pertain to them. NMFA is also an advocacy group for military families in the legislation and policy arena.

Military Child Education Coalition

A non-profit organization that identifies the challenges that face the highly mobile military child, increases awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities and initiates and implements programs to meet the challenges. MCEC's goal is to level the educational playing field for military children wherever they are located around the world and to serve as a

model for all highly mobile children.” MCEC facilitates the sharing of relevant or pertinent information between transitioning parents, school systems, and military installations.

Qualistar Early Learning

Qualistar Early Learning is a state-wide non-profit organization that works with communities, families, child care providers, and referral agencies to improve the quality and accessibility of child care throughout the state. Qualistar Early Learning developed and maintains the Qualistar Rating, which measures the quality of child care in licensed child care centers and home-based facilities based on five components. The rating can be accessed by the public for programs that participate in the evaluation.

Colorado Association of Family Child Care

The Colorado Association of Family Child Care (CAFCC) is a non-profit organization that supports licensed family child care providers in the state of Colorado. CAFCC also assists families in locating child care by providing lists of referral agencies in their area.

Colorado Children's Campaign

The Colorado Children's Campaign is a statewide non-profit organization that leads in bi-partisan advocacy and legislation for children issues in the state, focusing on expanding access to quality healthcare, early childhood experiences, and K-12 education.

Colorado Child Care Association

The Colorado Child Care Association is a non-profit professional organization dedicated to providing support and guidance in the management and administration of child care centers. This is achieved through education, networking and legislative representation. As the state chapter of the National Child Care Association (NCCA), CCCA has become the second largest state child care association in the nation and represents over 500 licensed child care centers, preschools, and school-age programs, since being established in 1985. CCCA membership is comprised of licensed child care centers, encompassing single and multiple centers, profit and non-profit centers, faith-based and secular centers, preschool and school-age programs.

Colorado Child Care Association's objectives are as follows:

- To perpetuate licensed child care in private sector centers and programs.
- To encourage excellence, education and professionalism within the child care industry.
- To encourage uniformity and fairness within the child care regulatory process.
- To encourage and support creativity, individuality and innovativeness within the child care industry.
- To provide a forum for the free sharing of knowledge, ideas, experiences and resources.
- To educate the public and foster a positive image of early care and education.

State Programs

The Colorado state programs listed below include direct and indirectly funded initiatives and programs which are available to communities state-wide. Several of the initiatives are directed through the Colorado Department of Education, and many of the programs act as state-level dispersers of federal funds and grants. Fort Carson families would benefit from or access these programs through their local communities.

Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, is the State's lead agency in planning and implementing public child care policy. The Division of Child Care is responsible for the licensing and monitoring of child care facilities; managing the child care assistance program for eligible families; administering child care grants and quality initiatives; and serving as the lead in implementing federal child care programs. The Department is also the lead agency for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), which provides financial assistance for child care services to low-income families who qualify for the program. The program is administered directly through county social service departments, who also set the eligibility requirements for families.

Colorado Early Childhood Councils

An association of statewide organizations which promotes collaboration between public and private stakeholders to ensure delivery of early care and education services to children aged birth to eight. Local early childhood councils operate 17 Community Consolidated Child Care Pilot Programs serving 30 counties in the state. The pilot programs provide services for early childhood professionals, families, and their children. The majority of the pilot funding comes from the federal Child Care Development Block Grant, with supplemental private and public funding sources.

More information about Early Childhood Councils for El Paso, Fremont, and Pueblo counties are found under Local and Regional Programs, below. The El Paso County Early Childhood Council is Alliance for Kids, described under Local and Regional Programs below.

Colorado Department of Education

The Colorado Department of Education is the lead administrator for early child education and development initiatives such as the Colorado Preschool & Kindergarten Program, Smart Start Colorado, Even Start, and federal Head Start programs. There are criteria for eligibility, and programs are available for specific age groups.

- Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program - This program was developed to serve four and five year old children who may lack learning readiness or be at-risk for school failure due to financial or family factors. The program provides funding for preschool and all-day kindergartens and is currently capped at 9,050 participating children.
- Smart Start Colorado - Smart Start Colorado is a state-wide initiative to maintain an association of early childhood education and child care partners working together to promote high quality programs and make them available to all children, from birth to eight years old.
- Colorado Even Start Program - The Colorado Even Start Program distributes Federal Even Start funds through early childhood education organizations across the state. The Even Start program supports children ages birth through seven.

Colorado Early Childhood Connections

The Colorado Early Childhood Connections (ECC) program enhances the development and education of developmentally-disabled or delayed children, aged birth to three. This interagency program is the State of Colorado's infant and toddler initiative under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Local and Regional Programs

Other than School District Programs (described below), and Fort Carson's Child and Youth Services programs, local and regional programs are parents' most direct link to available services and resources for child care in the Pikes Peak area.

El Paso County Early Childhood Council - Alliance for Kids

Alliance for Kids is a Colorado Consolidated Child Care Pilot and is El Paso County's early childhood council (ages 0-8 years), developed by the El Paso County Department of Human Services. Its mission is to serve as a vehicle that brings together organizations and individuals to work collaboratively on a seamless system of care for the young children (0-8 years) and families of El Paso County, Colorado.

The Alliance is implementing an extensive strategic plan with the involvement of more than 70 key stakeholders concerned with early childhood development. The Alliance works to positively impact the early childhood community by developing true collaborations, blending existing projects with new programs and initiatives, and drawing upon the strength of its community partnerships. As a Smart Start Colorado partner, Alliance for Kids addresses health, mental health, early care and education, and family support.

Fremont County Early Childhood Council - ECHO & Family Center Early Childhood Council

ECHO and the Family Center ECC is Fremont County's Early Childhood Council, sponsored by Fremont County School District RE-1. Its mission is to promote and sustain a comprehensive, high quality, early childhood system to support families and prepare children for success in school and life.

Pueblo County Early Childhood Council

Formerly the Pueblo Consolidated Child Care Pilot, Pueblo County's Early Childhood Council is sponsored by the Pueblo Community College and focuses on the following seven community needs: professional development, public awareness and engagement, mental health, community health, before and after school, infant and toddlers, and family support.

Community Partnership for Child Development

The Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD) organization provides the administration in the Pikes Peak area of the Federally-funded Head Start, Early Head Start, and Even Start programs, and the State-funded Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Programs. CPCD also assists families by directing them to appropriate services for their situations, including child care, medical, dental, and mental health services, early childhood education, nutrition, and transportation issues.

Child Care Connections

Child Care Connections is a child care resource and referral agency based in Colorado Springs and is the lead referral agency serving Fort Carson. They are a Qualistar Early Learning partner which serves Elbert, El Paso, Kiowa, and Teller counties.

Children First Child Care Resource & Referral

Children First Child Care Resource & Referral is a Qualistar Early Learning partner with offices located in Pueblo and Canon City. The agency serves Baca, Bent, Chaffee, Crowley, Custer,

Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, and Pueblo counties as a child care resource and referral agency for southeastern Colorado.

Pikes Peak Region Family Child Care Association

The Pikes Peak Region Family Child Care Association (PPRFCCA) assists families with locating available child care in licensed family care facilities in the Colorado Springs area and also supports family care providers who are members of the association.

School District Programs

All five of the school districts reviewed in the Education Technical Report provide some aspect of child care in the form of preschool or kindergarten programs, before- or after-school day care, or special programs such as summer day-camps. These education-based programs are important sources of child care coverage. There is public debate for universally-accessible all-day preschool programs which would affect the demand for and capacity of preschool private programs, as well as K-6 public school facility capacities.

Colorado Springs District 11

The District offers free full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools, including transportation, as well as traditional half-day classes at two of the elementary schools, without transportation. Expanded preschool services are offered in 34 elementary school buildings by the Early Childhood Office in partnership with Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD). Preschool is designed to serve children ages 3-5 who may lack overall learning readiness or have special needs.

- Blended preschool programs are available for morning and afternoon sessions four days a week, including transportation for children with special needs. These programs hold 15 students per session with a minimum of four special needs children per session.
- The CPCD partnership provides a Head Start program with morning sessions four days a week, including transportation. These programs hold 17 students per session including 3 to 5 children with special needs.
- The Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program (CPKP) provides funding for morning or afternoon preschool sessions, without transportation, serving 15 children per session, none of whom has special needs. The morning session is funded specifically for children who are determined as at-risk for educational issues. Wrap-around services are available for the morning sessions at eight locations. The CPKP also provides funding for full-day kindergarten in eight elementary schools and one charter school for five year olds who lack learning readiness.
- The Tesla Early Learning Center provides child care five days a week for seven hour sessions, without transportation. The Center serves twenty infants and toddlers of teen parents who are seeking high school graduation at district schools. Sixteen of the twenty children can qualify for Early Head Start services funding.
- The Early Childhood Office is partnered with Child Nursery Centers to provide two classrooms for full-day, full-year preschool programs for children at risk for school failure.

Widefield School District 3

- All nine of the District's elementary schools offer before- and after-school grades K-6 child care for a fee.

- Full-day kindergarten is available for a partial, tiered system fee, and at least one full-day program is available at each elementary school with a 12-seat minimum capacity.
- Preschool for 3-5 year olds is available at one preschool site and also at one elementary school.
- CPCD provides Head Start services in this school district.

Harrison School District 2

- The Harrison School District offers before and after-school child care for a fee at seven school locations. The services provided vary by location.
- Extended-day kindergarten (two longer half-day sessions) is offered at two school locations for a fee.
- The school district offers summer day camp programs on a weekly fee basis.
- The District has partnered with Child Nursery Centers to provide classroom space for the Sand Creek Family Center with Child Nursery Centers providing services on a sliding fee scale.
- CPCD provides Head Start services in this school district.

Fountain – Fort Carson District 8

- Preschool services are available at four schools to 3-5 year olds with educational disabilities.
- CPCD provides Head Start Services in this school district.

Cheyenne Mountain District 12

- Three early-intervention preschools are available without cost for 3-5 year olds with educational disabilities. Two of these schools also accept non-disabled children for a fee.

D. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Dependent Forecast

As described in the Housing and Demographics Technical Reports, forecasts are calculated for children generated from growth at Fort Carson, as well as baseline growth in population that would occur regardless of Fort Carson troop increases. Baseline numbers are based on projections made by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

Forecasts for the number of children are based on demographic projections, adjusted for existing apartment locations, future housing developments, and input provided by local stakeholders. The calculation for the children of military families is derived from the number of troops and dependent multipliers and can be found in the Demographic Technical Report of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan. Housing units and multipliers are used as the basis to estimate the number of children that can be expected. As with all forecasts, these forecasts are subject to change based on variable factors such as troop deployment, changes in military assignments, overseas conflicts, rebuilding of brigades, etc.

Child dependents will be generated from three primary areas: military personnel living on-post, personnel and civilians living off-post and renting, and military and civilians living off-post and owning homes. Over 14,800 child dependents will be added to the local community from both

baseline and Fort Carson growth. Table 1 presents the allocation of total dependents, ages 0 through 24, by housing type, and the proportion from baseline or Fort Carson troop growth. An estimated 757 dependents will come from military families on-post, 5,060 from military and baseline growth in rental units, and 9,013 from military and baseline growth in single family (and townhome style) homes. Thus, an estimated 14,831 dependents will be added to the region over the next five years due to growth in the Fort Carson study area (i.e., baseline and Fort Carson growth).

Table 1. Child Dependents Generated by the Troop Increase in the Fort Carson Study Area

Years	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
On-Post Children	266	69	423	0	0	757
From Rentals						
Baseline	304	298	299	301	303	1,504
Direct Growth from Fort Carson	1,237	0	1,706	306	306	3,556
Subtotal - From Rentals	1,541	298	2,004	607	609	5,060
From Homes						
Baseline	716	691	692	698	702	3,489
Direct Growth from Fort Carson	2,227	94	2,489	372	372	5,525
Subtotal - From Homes	2,933	784	3,152	1,070	1,074	9,013
Total Children	4,740	1,151	5,579	1,677	1,684	14,831

Source: RKG Associates, Inc.; EDAW, Inc.

Child Care Demand Forecast

Data from the Department of Defense suggests that over 32% of military children dependents are under the age of 5, possibly requiring child care and preschool programs, and 29% are ages 5 through 9, possibly requiring kindergarten and after-school programs. The number of child care-aged military and baseline children, ages 0 through 9, projected from the increase in troops on Fort Carson, equals an increase of approximately 8,573 children through FY 2011. This number of child care-aged children is approximately 58% of the total dependents predicted for the study area, just a few percentage points lower than the DOD average of 61%.

For consistency, the following forecast tables classify children ages 0-1 as infants, ages 1-2 as pre-toddlers, ages 2-3 as toddlers, ages 3-5 as pre-school, and ages 5-9 as school age children. These age classifications are consistent with those used by Fort Carson Child and Youth Services. Table 2 displays the total number of children arriving from baseline and Fort Carson growth. Table 3 displays the total number of children matriculating (i.e., maturing through the system) each year by age class.

Table 2. FY 2011 End-State Summary of Forecasted Child Care Age Dependents from Baseline Growth and Fort Carson Troop Increase.

	Infants 0-1	Pre-Toddlers 1-2	Toddlers 2-3	Pre- Schoolers 3-5	School-Age 5-9	Total
BASELINE ONLY						
Total	265	265	265	514	1,253	2,562
FORT CARSON GROWTH ONLY						
Total	659	659	639	1,240	2,814	6,011
TOTAL GROWTH						
School District						Total
Total	924	924	904	1,754	4,067	8,572

Source: RKG Associates, Inc., EDAW, Inc.

Table 3. Annual Matriculation of Child Care Age Dependents from Baseline Growth and Fort Carson Troop Increase

Age	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Infants, 0-1	303	63	360	98	99
Pre-Toddlers, 1-2	303	367	423	458	197
Toddlers, 2-3	296	366	717	520	556
Preschoolers, 3-5	574	358	712	813	616
School-Age, 5-9	1,320	1,648	3,246	3,766	4,300
Total	2,797	2,803	5,458	5,656	5,767

Source: RKG Associates, Inc.; EDAW, Inc.

It is challenging to quantify the current rate of child care utilization in the Fort Carson study area. Experience suggests that for the general public, approximately 20% to 30% of children will be enrolled in child care annually. For military families at Fort Carson, anecdotal evidence indicates that child care enrollment can experience dramatic fluctuations annually, from 30% to 50% depending on the frequency and length of deployments, spousal employment, the duration of the current Global War on Terror, and other compounding factors. Stakeholders noted that the high enrollment variability limits the ability of child care providers to anticipate and invest in long-term facility expansions.

According to CYS, approximately 52% of active-duty spouses at Fort Carson are employed, suggesting a high ratio of increased demand for child care programs as troop numbers rise at Fort Carson. Should 30% to 50% of new families utilize child care, between 2,558 and 4,264 additional children would enter the child care system by 2011.

On-Post Child Care Facility Capacity

Child care is provided on-post by the Fort Carson Child and Youth Services at Child Development Centers (CDC) and Family Child Care homes (FCC). CYS staff estimates that approximately 50-60% of off-post parents that need child care use on-post CYS services. With six on-post CDC facilities, Fort Carson had an operational capacity of 782 spaces in 2006, based on square footage and ratio requirements, as shown in Table 4. This number does not include Head

Start, State Universal Pre-School Spaces, or other agency spaces. Of these operational spaces, 674 (or 86%) were actually filled (paid enrollment) 85% of the time during 2007.

Table 4. On-Post Child Development Center Capacity for 0 through 4 Year Olds

Bldg #	Bldg Name	Infant	Pre-Toddler	Toddler	Pre-school	Total Capacity
6058	East CDC	32	65	54	120	271
6060	West CDC	24	55	63	120	262
7790	SouthWest HC	8	15	14	50	87
2766	SouthEast CDC	12	15	14	40	81
4355	North CDC	12	15	14	40	81
						782

Source: RKG Associates, Inc.; Fort Carson Child and Youth Services

At the time of this analysis, current plans for expansion of the Fort Carson child development center program include proposals for additional capacity on-post:

- three modular units to accommodate 215 infant to five year olds in FY 2009,
- one 195 space school center for 6-10 year olds in FY 2011, and
- one 303 capacity center for 0-5 year olds in FY 2012.³

These proposed facilities would create a total 1,495 operational spaces by FY 2012. Proposed CDC facilities such as these have been included in capital improvement plans since the troop increase was announced. However, the construction of additional child care facilities is dependent on other competing capital and operational demands, as well as funding authorization by Congress. These projections should be updated as facilities are approved and completed.

Family Child Care (FCC) is a U.S. Army program locally administered by each post's Child and Youth Services division. The FCC program provides child care in homes of military personnel or contractors, run as private businesses, which are licensed by the state and certified by the post. FCC homes provide quality child care to children between the ages of four weeks and 12 years old, and often offer flexible schedules, a home-like environment, and smaller groups for parents who prefer this environment. The Fort Carson Family Child Care program offered a total of 210 daily child care spaces in FY 2006 and had an average attendance of 78 children (Table 5). Although two-thirds of the available child care was in on-post homes, the majority of FCC use was in off-post locations. Child and Youth Services (CYS) back-up homes had a capacity for 30 additional children (six children per home) but were not used in FY 2006.

At the time of this printing, the number of family child care homes is predicted to increase to 45, including the back-up homes, in FY 2007. The FCC program is strongly affected by the deployment schedule on Fort Carson, and the number of providers may fluctuate during the

³ Jan McConnell, Fort Carson Child and Youth Services, personal communication.

year because providers with deployed spouses often feel pressure to close their businesses in order to take care of their family's needs.

Table 5. Family Child Care Operational Capacity and Attendance FY 2007

Date of Census	On-Post FCC and QCCS Satellite Homes	Off-Post FCC Homes	CYS Back-up Homes	Total FCC Homes	Attendance in On-Post Homes	Attendance in Off-Post Homes	Total Attendance
March 2007	19	11	5	35	29	47	76
Feb. 2007	18	9	5	32	32	39	71
Dec. 2006	18	10	5	33	37	47	84
Oct. 2006	19	8	5	32	45	36	81

Source: Fort Carson Child and Youth Services

The above analysis suggests that forecasted demand for child care (ranging between 2,558 to 4,264 new children) will outpace existing and proposed on-post CDC and FCC capacity of approximately 1,600 operational spaces by FY 2012. The additional child care demand created by the troop increase at Fort Carson may increase strains on a limited on-post system, with child care openings becoming more scarce and competitive. Stakeholders in the child care industry and child advocates are concerned about adverse consequences within the community and the impending need for the balance of the additional demand for child care spaces to be borne by the broader community.

Off-Post Child Care Facility Capacity

According to statistical records maintained by Child Care Connections in Colorado Springs, licensed child care capacity in El Paso, Kiowa, Elbert, and Teller Counties is approximately 24,500 children, and overall, 80% of that capacity is filled. For children aged 0-12 months, capacity is at 85%; for children 1-2 years capacity is 90%; and for children 2-5 years capacity is 79%.⁴ Most providers target 85% to 90% as the optimum capacity, which allows for increases without requiring additional facilities. These numbers are estimates due to constant fluctuations in enrollment numbers and operating service providers, as well as reporting inconsistencies.

At an overall average of 80% capacity, 4,900 child care spaces are available off-post within the four-county area if every available space were utilized. Such a scenario would be undesirable and unrealistic, as demand is significantly affected by location, with many providers currently at 100% capacity in prime locations or price points. Together, travel distance, cost, and quality affect utilization of specific providers. For this reason, stakeholders describe the current system's early care capacity as "severely strained."

⁴ Deana Hunt, Outreach Specialist, Child Care Connections, Colorado Springs, CO. Personal communication, Dec. 2007.

Several current legislative initiatives under consideration in the State of Colorado, such as all-day kindergarten or smaller ratios of supervisors to children for infant and toddler care, would affect the area's capacity in ways yet to be determined.

Accurate child care enrollment and capacity data for school-aged children (aged 6-12) is difficult to gather due to the multiple types of after-school and child care services that are offered throughout the community.⁵ The types of available school-aged care range from public after-school programs to private child care services and programs. In El Paso County, after-school programs are at approximately 50% capacity; however, the specific capacity of individual providers can range from just over 1% to almost 100%, depending on the location of the provider. The availability of transportation to after-school programs is a limiting factor for the use of private services, and programs that include transportation or chaperoning, or are located very close to elementary schools, are typically at capacity. The popularity of private services is reported to be mostly due to their use of age-specific programs and provision of high-quality facilities.⁵

In summary, as the supply of on-post child care is estimated to be surpassed by demand, the ability of off-post providers to accommodate child care aged children will be affected by travel distance, cost, and quality. At current utilization rates, it is likely that off-post providers will be able to accommodate short-term increases for select age classes, but long-term capacity may become a critical issue that should be addressed, not only by providers, but also by Fort Carson, economic development interests, School Districts, and the broader community.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

ISSUE: A POTENTIAL DEFICIT OF SUFFICIENT CHILD CARE FACILITIES.

RECOMMENDATION: CONTINUE AN OPEN DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND OFF-POST PROVIDERS, AND INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF OFF-POST PROVIDERS.

Off-post providers expressed hesitancy to invest in staffing or facility expansions due to the traditionally high variability in military family child care needs. The variability is due primarily to frequent and unanticipated changes in spouse employment which often depends on length and frequency of deployments, the length of the current war, and disabled partners. Spouse employment numbers often directly relate to the need for child care, and family situations may change monthly. Specifically, Fort Carson should have representatives participate on the Fremont, Pueblo, and El Paso County Early Childhood Councils. With continual updates on expected troop increases and an understanding of the potential demand for child care, providers can better evaluate facility and staffing expansions. Off-post providers should have more material about on-post services and the military should continue to provide resources or support to community referral agencies during peak troop increases and deployments.

Municipalities and counties can assist in this effort by incorporating planning for child care into comprehensive plans and economic development plans for local governments, recognizing the crucial role child care plays in quality of life, workforce availability, and educational preparation. Municipalities and counties should encourage developers to partner with child care providers to build facilities in new housing developments and the facilities of major employers. Based on stakeholder comments, the community should focus on ensuring the availability of quality child

care programs in the Fountain, Security, and Widefield areas where facilities are currently lacking, and where the majority of growth is forecast to occur.

Increasing the capacity (i.e., funding) of off-post providers will require a comprehensive approach by local governments, developers and economic development interests, employers, School Districts, child care providers, and non-profit programs, and a variety of options are provided due to the diversity of programs in the three-county study area.

To coordinate child care facilities into housing developments and major employment facilities, local governments and child care providers should pursue the following:

- Include child care as an element in local government comprehensive plans
- Revise land use regulations that make it difficult to locate family day care facilities in residential areas
- Incorporate child care facilities into new for-profit and publicly-subsidized housing developments
- Use child care providers and advocates to train residential developers on how to integrate child care facilities into their developments
- Promote local government incentives such as density bonuses and housing subsidies to support the development of child care facilities
- Make family centers, especially infant and toddler rooms, a standard component to new school buildings

To increase funding for child care, economic development interests (Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporations, etc.), child care providers, and non-profit programs should pursue the following:

- Advocate for additional on-post Child Care Centers, especially for infants and toddlers
- Increase parental investment in child care
- Increase employer investment in child care by publicizing best child care benefits among employers and creating matching public incentives
- Coordinate local initiatives with state and federal funding programs in order to maximize eligibility and competitiveness for grants and make sure providers are aware of funding programs
- Develop resources to support child care grant writers
- Research possible foundation support for child care affordability or quality initiatives
- Fully fund Head Start and Early Head Start programs (Federal) or increase local school investments in these programs
- Increase use of income subsidies for credentialed child care professionals (T.E.A.C.H.)
- Encourage employers to adopt best practices for providing the following child care benefits:
 - On-Site Child Care
 - Back Up Child Care
 - Sick Child Care
 - Resource and Referral Service

- Non Standard Hours Child Care
- Child Care Discounts and Subsidies

Similarly, School Districts, employers, local churches, and child care providers should pursue strategic partnerships to offset or avoid the capital costs of new facilities. To overcome the challenge of financing child care facilities, pursue the following:

- Encourage child care providers to seek out low interest loans for new facilities or facility improvements or expansions and the Small Business Child Care Grant Program for start-up costs, training, scholarships, or other related activities
- Seek Office of Economic Adjustment funds to help finance the large one-time cost of constructing new child care facilities
- Use Smart Start Colorado fund to create a low-interest revolving loan fund for new and improved child care facilities
- Extend all-day preschool programs to all of the area's public elementary schools
- Introduce or expand infant and toddler programs to area public elementary schools and churches
- Consider impact fees on new housing in order to create a child care facility trust fund
- Build public-private partnerships by encouraging employers to create their own daycare facilities as a benefit to employees, e.g. School Districts and hospitals.

ISSUE: CONCERNS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF OFF-POST PROVIDERS.

RECOMMENDATION: PROMOTE AWARENESS OF ALL QUALIFIED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

With multiple referral agencies, on- and off-post programs, and focused need services available to parents, child care stakeholders in the community should continue to make a concerted effort to educate parents on the availability of the myriad of child care funding and facility choices. Lack of knowledge by parents as to the availability of federal Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and the qualifications needed to take advantage of these programs, should be addressed by both referral agencies and providers.

Information on ways to access additional services related to child care, such as childhood physical and behavioral health, parental literacy, or school-related services should be offered to parents by applicable agencies when parents request information about child care.

If child care at a facility does not meet military standards, the Army Child Care in Your Neighborhood subsidy cannot be awarded to the parents for care in that facility. This quality standard is a benefit to parents but may also be a limitation at the same time if there are no qualifying facilities in the parents' neighborhood. CYS should continue assisting all qualified parents in locating high quality off-post child care providers. If the subsidy cannot be awarded to the parents' chosen facility because it does not meet military quality standards, on-post councilors should make all attempts to assist with finding a provider that qualifies and is accessible to the family.

ISSUE: SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, AND DEMAND FOR SPECIALIZED PROVIDERS.

RECOMMENDATION: PROMOTE EARLY INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Early identification of children with special needs should be made a priority for all children enrolling in child care services. Early intervention can accurately assess a child's situation and place him or her appropriately in the best child care program to meet the child's needs. Education of parents for the need for assessment should occur prior to or during enrollment. Currently, many identification programs are provided free of charge or at little cost to the parent, and assessment participation should be highly encouraged for all potential at-risk children.

The Army recently recognized the emerging need identified by local stakeholders for parental respite child care for parents with children who have special needs, especially during deployments. Using Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) funds, the Army has distributed additional funding for up to forty hours a month of free respite care for each registered Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) child. Fort Carson families must find a provider that meets established criteria for this service in the community, and the program pays for it. Capacity for this type of service within the community should be assessed in more detail.

Funding for special needs child care programs should be continually pursued to provide children with the highest quality care available to meet their requirements. These funding programs should include provisions for offsetting the additional costs for these special programs so that parents on limited budgets can utilize child care for the same time and extent as regular programs.

Once a child's needs are accurately diagnosed, parents are often challenged in finding providers qualified to provide specialized care, due to the high costs and demand for trained providers – especially for infant and toddlers, evening, overnight, and parent respite care. Early Childhood Councils in each county should work to highlight this community need, recruit and train specialized providers, increase affordability or offset special needs costs, and strengthen relationships with universities to increasing enrollments in early childhood education and other applicable fields.

For more information on special needs, refer to the Social Services Technical Report.

ISSUE: NEED FOR ADDITIONAL STAFF, CAREER LADDER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING.

RECOMMENDATION: PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AND EDUCATION IN THE CHILD CARE FIELD.

Military issues about the availability of community-wide quality child care are directly related to the insufficient recruitment, education and training, and retention of child care professionals. Support for professional development and advanced or technical education funding, as well as the promotion of career opportunities, will encourage child care providers to advance personally and professionally, in turn providing higher-quality child care within the community. Strengthen relationships with universities to increasing enrollments in early childhood education degree programs, or to initiate early care (infant and toddler) programs that are absent in the

area. One of the most important advanced child care services currently needed is for professionals trained to deal with children from military families experiencing the effects of parental deployments. This need can be met by recruiting military spouses transferring to Fort Carson from other regions.

There are many non-profit, state, and federal programs dedicated to advancing the education and training of child care providers which should be promoted and utilized whenever possible. Examples of these types of training programs can be found in the Appendix under Education Information.

APPENDIX

Websites

State and Federal Government

- Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program, http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprevention/pi_colo_preschool.htm
- Colorado Department of Education, Early Childhood Initiatives, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/early/early.htm>
- Colorado Department of Education, 2006-2007 Even Start Map and Directory, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdecare/esdirectory.htm#Colorado%20Springs>
- Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/childcare/CCCAP_home.htm
- Colorado Department of Human Services, Early Childhood Connections, <http://www.earlychildhoodconnections.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.main>
- Fort Carson Child & Youth Services, <http://community.carson.army.mil/CYS/>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Child Care Bureau, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/index.html>
- U.S. Army MWR, Child and Youth Services, Community Care Resources, <http://www.armymwr.com/portal/family/childandyouth/resources/default.asp>
- U.S. Army and Fort Carson Child & Youth Services, October 2004, Parent Handbook: The First Choice for Military Families
- U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program, <http://aw2portal.com/VAResources.aspx>

School Districts and Education

- Harrison School District 2 Child Care Information, HSD2 Day Care Information, <http://www.harrison.k12.co.us/finance/Daycare/ChildCareInfo.htm>
- Cheyenne Mountain School District 12, Special Education, Early Intervention/Preschool Services, <http://www.cmsd.k12.co.us/sped/default.html>
- Colorado Community Colleges Online, Early Childhood Education program, http://www.cconline.org/courses/cert_ece.htm
- Colorado Springs School District 11, Division of Operations & Instruction, Early Childhood & Preschool, <http://www.d11.org/DOI/earlychildhood/index.htm>
- Colorado Springs School District 11, Division of Operations & Instruction, Kindergarten, <http://www.d11.org/DOI/kindergarten/>
- Widefield School District 3 , District Programs: Child Care, <http://www.wsd3.org>

Non-Profit & Advocacy

- A CareGiver Network for Child Care Professionals, Professional Development webpage, <http://www.caregivernetwork.org/training.htm>
- American Business Collaboration for Dependent Care, <http://www.abcdependentcare.com/docs/index.htm>

- Child Care Aware, <http://www.childcareaware.org/en/>
- Child Care Connections, <http://www.childcareconnections.net/>
- Children's Defense Fund, <http://www.childrensdefense.org>
- Children First Child Care Resource & Referral, <http://www.pueblocc.edu/CommunityOutreach/ChildrenFirst/>
- Colorado After School Network, <http://www.coloradoafterschoolnetwork.org/index.asp>
- Colorado Association of Family Child Care, <http://www.coloradochildcare.com/>
- Colorado Children's Campaign, <http://www.coloradokids.org>
- Community Partnership for Child Development, <http://www.cpcdheadstart.org/Default.aspx>
- Cornell University: Linking Economic Development and Child Care, <http://government.cce.cornell.edu/doc/reports/childcare/>
- Council for Professional Recognition, <http://www.cdacouncil.org/>
- El Paso County Early Childhood Council - Alliance for Kids, <http://www.allianceforkids.org/>
- First Children's Finance, <http://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/>
- Fremont County Early Childhood Council, <http://projectecho-familycenter.com/index.htm>
- Low Income Investment Fund, <http://www.liifund.org/index.htm>
- Military Child Education Coalition, <http://militarychild.org/Index.asp>
- National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, <http://www.naccra.org/> and <http://www.naccra.org/MilitaryPrograms/>
- National Military Family Association, http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=reus_childcareintro
- Pikes Peak Region Family Child Care Association, <http://www.coloradospringschildcare.com/>
- Project Bloom, <http://www.projectbloom.org/about.htm>
- Pueblo County Early Childhood Council, <http://www.pueblocc.edu/CommunityOutreach/ChildrenFirst/>
- Qualistar Early Learning, <http://www.qualistar.org/>
- Smart Start Colorado, <http://www.smartstartcolorado.org/>

Reports

"Children with Disabilities and Other Special Needs: Opportunities to Participate in Quality Programs Must Be Expanded." Children's Defense Fund, 2003.

"The Economic Impact of Child Care in Colorado," Colorado Children's Campaign, Miles K. Light, University of Colorado, December 2004.

"Linking Child Care Development and Housing Development: Tools for Child Care Providers and Advocates," National Economic Development & Law Center, September 2002.

"Meeting the Needs of Today's Workforce: Child Care Best Practices," US Department of Labor, 1998.

"Partnerships for Quality: Improving Infant-Toddler Child Care for Low-Income Families." D. Paulsell, J. Cohen, A. Stieglitz, E. Lurie-Hurvitz, E. Fenichel, and E. Kisker. (March 2002). Washington, DC: Zero to Three and Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

FY07 Child Space Allocation Accountability Report for Fort Carson, Point of Contact: Jan McConnell.

Education Information

- Training and professional development offered through A CareGiver Network.
- El Paso County School Readiness Project, Early Care, and Education Conference, grants for child care professional development, and infant toddler supervisor training, and others offered by El Paso County's Early Childhood Council.
- Child Development Associate training sessions and credentialing for early childhood educators offered by the Council for Professional Recognition.
- Training and technical assistance to states, territories, tribes, and local communities through the federal Child Care Bureau's Child Care Technical Assistance Network.
- Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) scholarships for college education funding assistance to earn early childhood credentials and degrees.
- Connecting with Connections "Summer Sessions" provided by Child Care Connections to assist childcare providers and staff to fulfill their training requirements and gain knowledge in specific subjects.
- The Colorado Community College system offers web-based training through the Early Childhood Online Distance Learning Program.
- Free training offered to caregivers by the Colorado Department of Education to increase the quality and availability of infant toddler care.
- Military Child Education Coalition Transition Counselor Institutes offer training courses "to prepare education and installation professionals to recognize and address school transition issues that impact mobile military students" and Special Education Leaders Institute offers similar training for children with special needs.
- Conferences, workshops, and peer-to-peer training organized by the Pikes Peak Region Family Child Care Association.
- An on-line training calendar maintained by Qualistar Early Learning lists all published professional development opportunities in each state.
- The Office of Professional Development at Smart Start Colorado provides services and support to enhance the knowledge and skills of child care and education professionals.
- Project Bloom, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Human Services Mental Health Division, offers training to providers to improve the quality of service given to children with social, emotional, and behavioral needs.