

# Child Care on the Front Lines: Sustaining through Crisis, Building for the Future



ALL OUR KIN



Our child care system is  
a non-system.



Child care is incredibly expensive; it is in short supply; and it fails to meet the needs of children and families.

Meanwhile, educators are underpaid and undervalued.

# Even before the pandemic, Stamford and the nation faced a child care shortage

“According to the Center for American Progress, Stamford is a so-called ‘day care desert,’ meaning there are three times as many children than licensed day care slots.”

--*Stamford Advocate*, October 2018





The consequences of our broken system

# One important part of the system: family child care

Home-based child care includes family child care and family, friend and neighbor care (sometimes called “listed” and “unlisted” care).

Around 45% (4.9 million) of all children under 5 whose mothers are working consistently spend time in a home-based child care setting.  
*(Laughlin, 2013)*

Infants and toddlers and children with socioeconomic risk factors are the most likely to be in home-based child care arrangements.  
*(Porter et al, 2010)*



Early childhood educators—especially family child care educators-- are frequently underestimated.

They are often left out of professional development initiatives and efforts to build child care systems.

In the process, we miss out on important opportunities to reach the children and families furthest from opportunity.



A woman wearing a patterned headscarf and a light-colored shirt is sitting at a table, looking down at a young girl. The girl is wearing a black shirt and has her hair tied up with pink hair ties. They are playing with various toys on the table, including a blue plastic box, colorful letter-shaped toys, and a metal tin. The background shows a wooden floor and some toys on a shelf.

All Our Kin's approach



# ALL OUR KIN

trains, supports, and sustains  
family child care providers  
to ensure that children and families  
have the foundation they need  
to succeed in school and in life.

# The Quality Highway



Licensing Support

Strength-based Coaching and Training

Business Training

All Our Kin's model is  
win-win-win:

child care providers build  
better lives for themselves  
and their own families;

parents succeed in  
the workforce;

and most importantly,  
children from all backgrounds  
have the chance to succeed.







The present moment: COVID-19



# Child care: on the front lines





Child care is more essential, and more fragile, than ever before

Child cares are closing across the country: 60% at last count

FCC educators are staying open in higher numbers (70% overall, 80% in AOK's networks) but operate on even thinner margins

As many as 50% of programs may close permanently; FCCS at greatest risk



Open or closed,  
child care programs are  
supporting children and  
families in great need.

Open or closed,  
child care programs  
are struggling.





# How to sustain; how to re-open & rebuild

- Health and safety
- Economic stability
- Child, family, and provider wellbeing





Working towards the future:  
A stronger system



# A Moment of Opportunity



*Tennille Smalls, All Our Kin Provider and Board Member. Photo by Christopher Capozziello for the New York Times.*

*“To make ends meet, she and her business partner have reduced their own salaries. ‘I’m nervous, but I’m not fearful,’ Ms. Smalls said. She hopes her new spacious location will reassure nervous parents. ‘Families will be able to tour it and say, “This is somewhere that I’m going to feel comfortable putting my most prized possession.””*

Child care is not in crisis because of the pandemic, but because of decades of underinvestment.

It's time to do things differently.





# What It Will Take

We need to...

- Create a flexible, inclusive, equitable system for children ages 0-12
- Value the labor of early childhood educators and fund the true cost of care
- Center educator voice
- Bring early childhood educators together with other stakeholders to build a comprehensive system of family support



A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair and a red shirt, laughing heartily. She is surrounded by two young girls, also laughing. The background is a bright, out-of-focus green field.

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