

Indicators of early care and education quality in the Rochester area

Baseline assessment for First Steps

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Summary

Introduction

Funded by the Rochester Area Foundation, this evaluation report is the baseline assessment of First Steps' early care and education system quality improvement efforts. It will be followed by a mid-initiative assessment in 2007, and a third report at the five-year point of the First Steps initiative.

This evaluation is designed to document and examine participation in early learning opportunities and improvements in quality of care in all the care-giving settings for children age 5 and younger in the Rochester area – their own homes, homes of informal caregivers, licensed family child care homes, and center-based programs. The evaluation places a special emphasis on low-income families (200% of poverty and below).

The evaluation provides repeatable information and a useful framework for holding First Steps accountable for results and for making informed decisions about whether to change the initiative to best meet the needs of children and families.

Sources of evaluation data

Child Care Resource and Referral, Inc. (CCR&R) in Rochester provided data on 21 licensed centers and 487 licensed family child care homes in the Rochester area.

Wilder Research completed surveys with 97 out of 117 (83%) family, friend, and neighbor caregivers registered with the Child Care Assistance Program determined to be currently caring for one or more children age 5 and younger (CCAP FFN). This telephone survey was conducted in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

Wilder Research also interviewed 210 low-income families and 100 families with income above 200percent of the federal poverty guideline. These families were randomly selected from lists provided by Rochester Public Schools, Head Start, and CCR&R. In each household, one parent answered questions about family life and child care arrangements for all children age 5 and younger and provided detailed information for one randomly selected child. Surveys were conducted in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish from November 2005 through January 2006 and had an overall response rate of 78 percent.

Key findings

Low-income families' engagement in children's early learning

Strengths

Low-income parents report usually being able to handle the responsibility of raising their children, and most (84%) have at least adequate emotional support. Most low-income parents in the survey (88%) have at least a high school diploma or GED.

Nearly all parents with children age 2 through 5 get their children together with other children at least some days (96%) and talk or tell stories to their children every day or most days (93%). Nearly all children age 5 and younger play outdoors most days or every day (96%).

Most parents report providing nurturance, praise, and emotional support to children frequently (94%); usually or always keeping a regular schedule for children (90%); and taking their children places to learn special things sometimes or frequently (87%).

Most parents with children in child care rate their primary arrangement highly (averaging 4.6 on a scale of 1 to 5), and say that their child is having a good experience and that they have a good relationship with the caregiver.

Gaps

About 24 percent of parents in low-income families have a college or graduate degree, compared to about 80 percent of parents in the middle to high-income families.

English is not the primary language spoken in 27 percent of the low-income family homes, although most of these families either rate their English language skills as good or excellent or say they are working to improve their skills.

About a quarter of low-income parents say that at least sometimes they feel so sad and hopeless that they are concerned about their ability to cope with personal or family concerns. About one-fifth usually or always feel their children are making too many demands on them, compared with less than 10 percent of middle to high-income parents.

Only about half of low-income parents and about a third of higher-income parents report they have adequate help in caring for, guiding, and disciplining their children.

Children age 1 and younger: Compared with higher-income families, low-income parents are less likely to “talk, soothe, or tell stories to children every day” (73% vs. 95%); “to tell

children the name of things every day” (61% vs. 83%), and to read to children most days or every day (57% vs. 85%).

Children age 2 through 5: Compared with higher-income families, low-income families are less likely to read to children every day (53% vs. 79%), but about equally likely “to help children read or learn stories or to sing songs” most days or every day.

Low-income parents are similar to higher-income parents with regard to parent education (half have participated in parent education training, classes, or workshops) and library use (39% report taking their children to the library at least once a month).

In low-income families, infants represent the largest percent of children age 5 and younger who use parental care only (46%), followed by 1 year-olds (41%), 2 year-olds (31%), 3 year-olds (22%), 5 year-olds (19%), and 4 year-olds (17%).

For low-income children age 3 to 5, 52 percent attend Head Start (15%) or a preschool, child care center, or school readiness program (37%) as their primary child care arrangement; followed by family, friend, and neighbor care (27%); and licensed family child care homes (21%). Combining Head Start and center-based care, those in low-income families and higher-income families tend to be similar with regard to center-based care as the primary arrangement, but low-income families tend to use FFN care more often as their primary arrangement for children age 3 to 5 than do higher-income families (27% vs. 11%).

Low-income parents who use FFN caregivers, compared with those using centers or licensed family homes, are less likely to say the FFN caregiver always or usually reads, tells stories, or sings to their child most days (76% vs. 93%).

1. Low-income families' engagement in children's early learning

Risks/assets	Percent reporting N=201
Parents report that raising their children is too much responsibility "never," "rarely," or "sometimes"	97%
Parents report having an adequate to high level of emotional support	84%
Parents have at least a high school diploma or GED (n=339)	88%
Housing situation rated as "very stable"	82%
Parents report that children are too demanding "never," "rarely," or "sometimes"	78%
Parents report usually or always having someone available to help them when they need it	76%
Parents report never or rarely feeling so sad or hopeless that they are concerned about their ability to function	74%
Primary language spoken at home is English	73%
Parents have at least adequate help caring for, guiding, and disciplining their children	46%
Parents have college or graduate degree (n=339)	24%
Home learning activities with children age 1 or younger	N=86
Parents sing songs to children most days or every day	79%
Parents talk, coo, or tell stories to children every day	73%
Parents tell children the names of things every day	61%
Parents read to children most days or every day	57%
Home learning activities with children age 2 through 5	N=176
Parents get children together with other children some days, most days, or every day	96%
Parents talk to or tell stories to children every day	93%
Parents read to children most days or every day	81%
Parents sing songs with children most days or every day	74%
Parents help children read/learn stories most days or every day	65%
Parents help children learn letters, words, or numbers every day	48%
Home learning activities with all children age 5 and younger	N=201
Children play outdoors most days or every day	96%
Children listen to music most days or every day	77%

1. Low-income families' engagement in children's early learning (continued)

Positive parenting	Percent reporting N=201
Parents provide nurturance, praise, and emotional support to children frequently (the most frequent response option on the scale)	94%
Parents usually or always keep a regular schedule for children	90%
Parents take children places to learn special things sometimes or frequently	87%
Children receive love and support from another, non-parent, adult frequently	76%
Parents have sufficient age appropriate books for children (11 or more)	71%
Parents spend time with children working on educational and creative activities frequently	68%
Children age 3 to 5 attend Head Start, preschool, child care center, or school readiness program as primary child care arrangement	52%
Parents have participated in parent education training, classes, or workshops	50%
Parents take children to the library at least once a month	39%

Family, friend, and neighbor care

Family, friend and neighbor (FFN) caregivers provide informal and legal non-licensed home-based child care. For this survey, the FFN caregivers are all legal non-licensed caregivers registered with Olmsted County Community Services to provide care through the Child Care Assistance Program; thus called CCAP FFN.

The CCAP FFN are primarily women (84%). Eighty-six percent are related to the child in some way (50% grandparents, 24% aunts or uncles, 6% cousins/relatives, and 6% siblings). Sixteen percent are friends or neighbors. The largest groups of FFN caregivers are White (46%) or Somalian (34%).

On average, CCAP FFN provide care for 34 hours per week. Forty-two percent provide care during evening hours (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) and 52 percent on weekends.

Strengths

All CCAP FFN caregivers in the Rochester area report consistently providing a variety of activities for children's social and emotional development, and nearly all report consistently providing a variety of activities for children's cognitive development.

About two-thirds of CCAP FFN caregivers are very interested (50%) or somewhat interested (14%) in getting licensed as a child care provider, which is a higher percentage than other CCAP FFN in Minnesota (31% very interested and 21% somewhat interested) and than FFN in Minnesota generally (7% very interested and 11% somewhat interested).

Gaps

Twenty-eight percent of the CCAP FFN caregivers say that their English speaking skills are fair or poor, and 26 percent say their reading and writing skills are fair or poor. These are all caregivers who do not usually speak English in their homes.

Twenty-eight percent of the CCAP FFN caregivers are not connected with other caregivers. That is, they do not have and make use of opportunities to learn from, gain support from, and share resources with other caregivers.

Twenty-five percent of the CCAP FFN caregivers are intentional caregivers, seeking out and using resources to improve their child care skills and encouraging children's participation in developmental activities most days or every day.

Sixteen percent of CCAP FFN caregivers in the Rochester area are trained caregivers. That is, they have been a licensed caregiver or a teacher's aide or teacher in a licensed facility and have participated in parent education, attended a child care training program, taken college classes in child development, or attended workshops on child development.

2. Quality of care index for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers (self-reported)

Attributes of FFN quality	Total N=97
Activities for social/emotional development	100%
Activities for cognitive development	97%
Literacy activities	84%
Strong caregiver-parent partnership	77%
Connected with other caregivers	72%
Intentional caregiver	25%
Trained caregiver	16%
Mean number of attributes	4.7 of 7

Licensed child care centers

Strengths

Ninety-five percent of the 21 licensed centers have written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care, and 76 percent use a lesson or program plan or curriculum.

Gaps

All three measures of staff training and experience are fairly low. In 39 percent of the centers, half or more of current staff have four-year bachelor's degrees or higher. In 38 percent of the centers, half or more of current classroom staff have completed early literacy training other than SEEDS; and 10 percent have at least half of current classroom staff who have completed SEEDS early literacy training.

Five percent of the licensed centers use SEEDS curriculum.

Two-thirds of licensed centers provide regular feedback to parents about their child's development, and two-thirds provide written reports to parents. Family members can have decision-making input through parent or advisory councils in 38 percent of the centers. Ten percent offer translated materials in the parent's language.

Twenty-four percent of the centers are accredited by a national association.

3. Summary of quality indicators among licensed child care centers

	Percent reporting N=21
Training and experience of staff at a center	
At least half of current staff have four-year bachelor's degree or higher	39%
At least half of current classroom staff have completed early literacy training (other than SEEDS)	38%
At least half of current classroom staff have completed SEEDS early literacy training	10%
Use of lesson plans and curriculum	
Uses lesson or program plans or a curriculum	76%
Uses SEEDS curriculum	5%
Accountability and responsiveness to parents	
Has written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care	95%
Offers food according to families' dietary preferences	76%
Provides regular feedback to parents about child's development	67%
Provides written reports to parents about child's development	67%
Family members can have decision-making input through parent or advisory councils	38%
Uses materials translated for parents in their language	10%
Accreditation	
Is accredited by a national association (NAEYC)	24%

Licensed family child care homes

Strengths

Nearly all (96%) of the licensed child care homes have written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care, and 62 percent have six or more years experience providing licensed care.

Gaps

Licensed family child care providers in the Rochester area have fairly low levels of training. Eleven percent have a child-related four-year degree or higher; 25 percent have formal training in early childhood development; 8 percent have completed SEEDS early literacy training, and 6 percent have completed another early literacy training.

Forty percent use lesson plans or curriculum other than SEEDS, and 6 percent use SEEDS curriculum. None of the providers are accredited.

Two-thirds of the licensed family child care providers offer regular feedback to parents about their child's development, and 21 percent offer written reports. Fifty-nine percent offer food according to families' dietary preferences, and less than 10 percent speak a language other than English or use materials translated for parents in their language. About a quarter (27%) maintain small group size (6 or fewer children per provider).

4. Summary of quality indicators among licensed family child care homes

	Percent reporting
Training and experience of family child care providers	
Has 6 or more years of experience providing licensed care (N=481)	62%
Has competence-based training, childhood development courses, or one-year certificate (N=481)	25%
Has child-related four-year degree or higher (N=481)	11%
Completed SEEDS early literacy training (N=487)	8%
Completed other early literacy training (N=487)	6%
Use of lesson plans and curriculum	
Uses lesson or program plans or a curriculum (N=481)	40%
Uses SEEDS curriculum (N=487)	6%

4. Summary of quality indicators among licensed family child care homes (continued)

	Percent reporting
Accountability and responsiveness to parents	
Has written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care (N=481)	96%
Provides regular feedback to parents about child's development (N=487)	66%
Offers food according to families' dietary preferences (N=481)	59%
Maintains small group size (N=481)	27%
Provides written reports to parents about child's development (N=487)	21%
Speaks language other than English (N=481)	8%
Uses materials translated for parents in their language (N=481)	6%
Accreditation	
Is accredited by a national association (N=481)	0%

Recommendations

These recommendations, based on the results of this study and discussion with the First Steps Results/Evaluations Committee, also build on recent Wilder Research statewide research and recommendations for supporting families with young children and improving early care and education.

1. Encourage families to use existing resources in the community and help them overcome possible barriers.

Low-income parents appear to be strong in providing nurturance and keeping regular schedules for their children but not doing as well with regard to the *frequency* of engaging their children in learning activities at home, particularly reading and other literacy behavior. Encourage parents to increase their library use. Support family literacy programs and other efforts to encourage parents to read or tell stories to their children every day or most, particularly for the relatively large number of families (27%) with home languages other than English.

Some parents appear to require support with their own mental health and emotional issues that may inhibit full and active participation in home learning activities with their children.

2. Develop the supply of high-quality, affordable child care options.

The supply of high-quality child care options could be improved by supporting specialized training for child care providers, by encouraging providers to participate and offering them incentives to improve the quality of their care, and by empowering parents to make informed decisions about their child care choices.

Ways to improve affordability of all child care options include increasing the use of child care tax credits, increasing access to pre-tax child care expense accounts through employers, increasing access to child care subsidies, and reducing co-payments or out-of-pocket expenses for parents receiving child care assistance.

3. Recognize and respect the inherent strengths of FFN care in all its diversity, while at the same time improving the quality of care by ensuring that child care quality improvement activities are open, inclusive and accessible to all FFN caregivers.

FFN care is a vital resource for families. CCAP FFN caregivers in the Rochester area provide care nearly full time (34 hours per week). This is almost twice as much care, on average, than FFN caregivers in Minnesota generally. First Steps should take care to respect cultural differences and to not harm the essential voluntary and personal relationships of FFN caregiving when working to improve the quality of FFN care.

Study results indicate strong interest among Rochester area CCAP FFN caregivers in becoming licensed family child care providers, much more interest than among Minnesota FFN caregivers generally and even higher than reported by other CCAP FFN. Provide support and incentives to enable CCAP FFN caregivers to participate in Minnesota's professional development system, the Child Care Resource & Referral system training and grant programs, and initiatives to support school readiness in child care settings.

Support targeted outreach efforts to CCAP FFN caregivers and the families who use them. Devise outreach strategies specific to Somali families, paying attention to language, culture and literacy issues. Statewide research found that framing the outreach around school readiness for younger children would resonate with CCAP FFN caregivers.

Facilitate peer support, providing opportunities for caregivers to socialize and to connect with other caregivers if they so choose. Early Childhood Family Education, for example, could tailor classes for CCAP FFN participants.

Introduction

Funded by Rochester Area Foundation, this First Steps evaluation report is the first of three reports for documenting and assessing First Steps' early care and education system quality improvement efforts over the next five years. This baseline assessment will be followed by a mid-initiative assessment in 2007, and a third report at the five-year point of the First Steps initiative.

First Steps' strategies and expected outcomes

First Steps' quality improvement strategies include educating parents and enhancing the care of existing child care through training, professional development, and curriculum support in order to strengthen care-giving environments universally, wherever children age 5 and younger are cared for.

First Steps' focal outcome is to achieve developmental readiness for a greater number of children entering kindergarten. That outcome is being measured and monitored by the Rochester Public Schools.

This evaluation addresses one of First Steps' strategic goals described in its Business Plan: Measure the quality of early care and education. It also documents and assesses two intermediate outcomes described in the First Step Business Plan that must be achieved in order to reach the focal outcome: (1) Increase participation in early care and education at all income levels, and (2) Increase family engagement in children's education at all income levels.

Evaluation purposes and methods

This evaluation is designed to document and examine participation in early learning opportunities and improvements in quality of care in all the care-giving settings for children age 5 and younger in the Rochester area – their own homes, homes of informal caregivers, licensed family child care homes, and center-based programs. The evaluation consists of baseline and repeated measures of participation and quality in all child care centers and licensed family child care homes in Olmsted County, a sample of FFN (family, friend, and neighbor) caregivers registered with the Child Care Assistance Program, and a sample of families with young children in the Rochester Public Schools district, with a focus on low-income families (200% of poverty and below).

The measures or indicators of participation and quality were developed and agreed upon through a guided discussion with the First Steps Results/Evaluation Committee led by

Richard Chase, Wilder Research consulting scientist. The indicators build upon indicators of child care quality Chase developed for and are used by the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network and the Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Care Development Grants program and quality indicators for informal providers used in recently completed survey by Wilder Research of more than 600 family, friend, and neighbor caregivers in Minnesota. In addition, indicators of quality in child care homes and centers from the parent's viewpoint were adapted from Art Emlen's 15-item parent scale measuring quality of child care (Oregon Child Care Research Partnership, Portland State University).

The evaluation provides repeatable and useful information for holding First Steps accountable for results and for making informed decisions about whether to change the initiative to best meet the needs of children and families.

Sources of evaluation data

Licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes

Data on licensed centers and homes were provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, Inc. (CCR&R), which worked with Wilder Research to add new quality indicators identified for this First Steps evaluation to its existing database that it routinely updates through surveys with providers.

Family, friend, and neighbor home care

In collaboration with Olmsted County Community Services, CCR&R provided contact information for the 309 FFN registered with the Child Care Assistance Program. Wilder Research randomized the list of FFN and called them to participate in a 15 to 20 minute interview. Of the initial 309 FFN, Wilder Research determined 192 were not currently providing FFN care or did not care for children age 5 and younger. Of the remaining 117 eligible FFN, nine refused to participate; 11 did not participate after repeated attempts, and 97 completed the survey for a response rate of 83 percent. Surveys were conducted in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The survey took place from October 2005 through January 2006.

Family engagement

Rochester Public Schools compiled an initial list of 7,043 preschoolers and asked a randomly selected portion of the list for parental permission to release their contact information to Wilder Research in order to conduct a telephone survey as part of the First Steps evaluation. The school list was stratified by zip code in order to provide higher probability of reaching low-income families residing in 55901 and 55904. The initial

school list provided to Wilder Research was supplemented with telephone numbers of low-income families participating in Head Start and/or receiving child care subsidies.

Wilder Research merged, unduplicated, and randomized the names and phone numbers. Interviewers screened families for eligibility based on income and age of children in the household. Out of 1,580 names or phone numbers randomly selected for surveys, 201 surveys were completed with low-income families (incomes of 200% of poverty guidelines or below); 100 surveys were completed with families with incomes exceeding 200 percent of poverty; 1,194 families were screened out based on having incomes above 200 percent of poverty or no children age 5 or younger; 14 refused to participate, and 71 could not be interviewed after repeated attempts. The overall response rate is 78 percent. Figure 5 shows the distribution of the 301 completed surveys by sample source.

5. Sources of completed family surveys

	Zip codes		Low-income programs	Total
	55901/55904	55902/55906		
Low-income sample	111	8	82	201
Middle to high-income sample	54	46	0	100
Response rate	86%	71%	69%	78%

Interviewers spoke with one parent, who answered questions about family life and child care arrangements and provided detailed information for one randomly selected child. Surveys were conducted in English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The survey took place from November 2005 through January 2006.

The low-income sample of 201 has a sampling error of plus or minus 7 percent. The middle to high-income sample of 100 has a sampling error of plus or minus 10 percent. The telephone survey method does not include the estimated 3 percent of households without telephones.

Report structure

The report describes results of the family survey for all low-income families and, depending on the type of question, by age group based on the age of the randomly selected child within the household. Results are rounded and reported as whole numbers.

The family survey analysis also examined if results for the low-income families differed from families with incomes above 200 percent of poverty.

- These differences by income are reported as bullets in this format at the end of each topical section.

The sections on family engagement and FFN care also include comparisons from three statewide studies completed by Wilder Research: *Child Care Use in Minnesota: Report of the 2004 Statewide Household Child Care Survey*; *Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers: Report of the 2004 Minnesota Statewide Household Child Care Survey*; and *Family, Friends and Neighbors Caring for Children Through the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program: A Survey of Caregivers and Parents*.¹ All three studies can be found at www.wilderresearch.org.

These comparisons with statewide findings are indented in this format at the end of each topical section.

¹ The third study is based on surveys with FFN caregivers registered with CCAP from two metropolitan area and three rural counties, not representing the entire state.

Family engagement in children's early learning

Respondent and family demographics

For this survey, “low-income families” are households with incomes at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines, while “middle to high-income families” are households above 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines. For a family of four, 200 percent of poverty is \$38,700.

Respondents' gender, age, race, and family size

As shown in Figure 6, the low-income parents who responded to this survey are primarily women (89%). One-fifth are under the age of 25, one-half age 25 to 34, and about one-third 35 and over. These parents primarily identify as White (61%), followed by Black or African American (10%), Somali (10%), Asian (9%), and Hispanic or Latino (8%).

About 70 percent of the low-income families surveyed have a spouse or partner in their household. Almost half have children over the age of 5, and 14 percent have relatives living with them. About 80 percent of these families have three to six people in their household (40% have three or four, 38% five or six).

Twenty-seven percent of low-income respondents say they are from an immigrant or refugee group. Just over half are Somali or East African. Laotian, Cambodian, Hmong, Mexican, and East Indian are among the other responses to this question. Only 5 percent of middle to high-income respondents say they are immigrants or refugees.

- Overall, low-income parents are younger (20% under age 25) than middle to high-income parents (0% under age 25).
- Low-income parents, in comparison to middle to high-income parents, are disproportionately people of color, including Black or African American (10% vs. 0%), Somali (10% vs. 0%), Asian (9% vs. 4%), and Hispanic or Latino (8% vs. 1%).
- Low-income families, in comparison to middle to high-income families, consist of more families of two (8% vs. 0%) and families greater than six (15% vs. 1%). Middle to high-income families are more likely to consist of three or four people (65% vs. 40%).

6. Respondents' gender, age, race, and family size

	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
Gender		
Female	89%	90%
Male	11%	10%
Age of respondent		
16-17 years old	2%	0%
18-20 years old	2%	0%
21-24 years old	16%	0%
25-34 years old	51%	56%
35-44 years old	29%	41%
45-54 years old	2%	3%
Primary racial/ethnic identification of respondent		
White or Caucasian	61%	92%
Black or African American	10%	0%
Somali	10%	0%
Asian	9%	4%
Hispanic or Latino	8%	1%
American Indian	0%	0%
Other African	2%	0%
Other Asian	1%	3%
Number of people in the household		
Two	8%	0%
Three or four	40%	65%
Five or six	38%	34%
Seven or more	15%	1%

Note: "Low-income" refers to families at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines, while "middle to high-income" refers to families above 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines. "Other African" includes three individuals who identify themselves as being African or Sudanese. "Other Asian" includes 4 individuals who identify themselves as being Pakistani or Eastern Indian. The total number of parents from low-income families providing the above information range from 199 to 201. Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Employment and income

About two-thirds of low-income parent respondents are currently working for pay; and about one-fourth are at home full-time (see Figure 7). The remaining 15 percent are holding a job but not working (6%), going to school (5%), looking for work (4%), in an unpaid job training program (1%), or unable to work because of a disability (1%). In families with a second parent, about three-fourths of these parents are currently working for pay, and about one-tenth are home full-time.

- Responding parents of low-income families are slightly more likely to be working for pay than in middle to high-income families (58% vs. 56%), whereas low-income spouses or partners are less likely to be working (76% vs. 88%).

7. Work activities of parents during the previous week

	Low-income families	Middle to high-income families
Work activities of respondent	N=200	N=100
Working for pay at a job (including self-employed)	58%	56%
Holding a job but not at work (vacation, jury duty, sick)	6%	6%
Looking for work	4%	0%
Going to school	5%	0%
In an unpaid job training program	1%	0%
At home full time	27%	38%
Unable to work because of disability	1%	0%
Work activities of second parent if there is one	N=140	N=99
Working for pay at a job (including self-employed)	76%	88%
Holding a job but not at work (vacation, jury duty, sick)	4%	3%
Looking for work	5%	0%
Going to school	6%	1%
In an unpaid job training program	0%	0%
At home full time	9%	8%
Unable to work because of disability	0%	0%

Note: Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

About three-fourths of the low-income families have an annual income below \$35,000; including 42 percent with an annual income below \$25,000 (see Figure 8).

- Almost all low-income families have an annual income below \$50,000, while 90 percent of middle to high-income families have annual incomes above this range.

8. Family income for the previous year

	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
Under \$25,000	42%	0%
\$25,000 to under \$30,000	23%	0%
\$30,000 to under \$35,000	11%	0%
\$35,000 to under \$40,000	11%	2%
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	10%	6%
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	1%	29%
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	1%	26%
\$100,000 or more	0	35%
Missing/refused/don't know	2%	2%

Note: For a family of four, 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline is \$38,700. Family size affects poverty status, so low-income families with middle to high-incomes have many family members. Also, some incomes may have been higher in previous years and are lower now, making it possible for these families to be eligible for child care subsidies. Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Children age five and younger

About one-fifth of the low-income families have a child under age 1, 31 percent have a 1 year old, 35 percent a 2 year old, 33 percent a 3 year old, 38 percent a 4 year old, and 26 percent a 5 year old (see Figure 9).

As shown in Figure 10, low-income families most commonly have one child age 5 or younger (42%), followed by two children (36%), three children (20%), and four or more children (2%).

In total, the 201 low-income families surveyed have 366 children age 5 or younger (see Figure 11). The ages of the children are fairly evenly distributed from age 1 to age 4 (17%-21%), with fewer children under age 1 (10%) and age 5 (14%).

- Low-income families are more likely to have more than one child age 5 or younger (58%) than middle to high-income families (45%).

9. Families with children age 5 or younger by age of child

Age	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
<1	18%	12%
1	31%	32%
2	35%	39%
3	33%	26%
4	38%	25%
5	26%	26%

Note: Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

10. Number of children age 5 or younger in family

Percent of households with...	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
One child age 5 or younger	42%	55%
Two children age 5 or younger	36%	31%
Three children age 5 or younger	20%	13%
Four or more children age 5 or younger	2%	1%

11. Ages of all children age 5 and under

Age	Children in low-income families N=366	Children in middle to high-income families N=160
<1	10%	8%
1	17%	20%
2	19%	24%
3	18%	16%
4	21%	16%
5	14%	16%

Note: Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Risks and assets in the home learning environment of surveyed families

Parents' education

Twelve percent of low-income parent respondents have less than a high school education (see Figure 12). Eighty-nine percent completed high school or their GED, including 70 percent who went on to receive at least some post-secondary education (23% obtained a college or graduate degree). For two-parent households, the second parents' educational histories are similar.

- A little over one-tenth of responding parents and second parents in low-income households have not completed either high school or the GED. In contrast, all parents in the middle to high-income households completed either high school or the GED.
- About 24 percent of parents in low-income households completed a college or graduate degree, compared to about 80 percent of parents in the middle to high-income households.

12. Parents' education

	Low-income families	Middle to high-income families
	N=199	N=100
Education level of respondent		
Eighth grade or less	6%	0%
Some high school	6%	0%
High school diploma or GED	19%	1%
Some college, including two-year degree or technical college	47%	19%
College graduate (bachelor's)	17%	39%
Post-graduate work or professional school	6%	41%
Education level of second parent if there is one	N=140	N=99
Eighth grade or less	4%	0%
Some high school	9%	0%
High school diploma or GED	27%	3%
Some college, including two-year degree or technical college	35%	14%
College graduate (bachelor's)	11%	48%
Post-graduate work or professional school	14%	35%

Note: Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

English language skills

As shown in Figure 13, for about three-fourths of low-income families, the household's primary language is English, followed by Somali (11%), Spanish (6%), and Hmong (3%). Of those for whom English is not the primary language used at home, 24 percent rate their English speaking skills as excellent, 35 percent good, 24 percent fair, and 17 percent poor. In total, 41 percent of low-income parents who speak English as a second language at home (representing 11% of all low-income parents surveyed) rate their English speaking ability as fair or poor. Similarly, 20 percent rate their English reading and writing skills as excellent, 35 percent good, 24 percent fair, and 20 percent poor. In total, 44 percent of low-income parents who speak English as a second language at home (representing 12% of all low-income parents surveyed) rate their English reading and writing skills as fair or poor. About three-fifths of parents who rate their English speaking or writing skills as fair or poor say they are working to improve these skills.

- Low-income families are less likely to speak English as their primary language (73%) than middle to high-income families (94%).
- A little less than 60 percent of low-income parents that speak English as a second language at home rate their English speaking skills and their English reading and writing skills as good or excellent. In contrast, all six of the middle to high-income parents who speak English as a second language at home rate their English speaking skills as excellent and their reading and writing skills as either good or excellent.

13. English language skills

	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
Primary language in the home		
English	73%	94%
Somali	11%	0%
Spanish	6%	0%
Hmong	3%	0%
Arabic	1%	0%
Other	6%	6%
For those whom English is not the language spoken most in home, rate English speaking skills		
	N=54	N=6
Excellent	24%	6
Good	35%	0
Fair	24%	0
Poor	17%	0

13. English language skills (continued)

	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
For those whom English is not the language spoken most in home, rate English reading and writing skills	N=54	N=6
Excellent	20%	5
Good	35%	1
Fair	24%	0
Poor	20%	0
If has “fair” or “poor” speaking and writing skills, parent is taking a class or working to improve language skills	(N=24) 58%	N/A

Note: For categories with an N less than 10, cells show numbers rather than percents. For categories with an N of 10 or more, total may vary from 100% due to rounding. Other languages spoken by low-income families in the home include Balada, Tigrina, Sudanese, Dinka, Laotian, Cambodian, Hindi, Punjabi, Thai, Vietnamese, and Bosnian. Other languages spoken by middle to high-income families are Urdu, Hindi, Turkish, and Bengali. Total for each column may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Housing stability

Eighty-two percent of parents from low-income families describe their living situation as very stable, 15 percent somewhat stable, 2 percent somewhat unstable, and 2 percent unstable (see Figure 14). Half own their own home. Eighty-one percent say they have lived at the same residence for more than a year. Due to rounding and possibly respondents’ inconsistency in answering a follow-up question, a slightly higher percent (24%) report having moved at least once in the last 12 months.

- Parents from low-income families are less likely than parents from middle to high-income families to define their living situation as “very stable” (82% vs. 97%).
- Low-income families are less likely than middle to high-income families to own their own home (50% vs. 97%) and are more likely to have moved in the past 12 months (24% vs. 7%).

14. Housing stability

	Low-income families	Middle to high-income families
Description of current housing	N=200	N=100
Very stable	82%	97%
Somewhat stable	15%	3%
Somewhat unstable	2%	0%
Very unstable	2%	0%
Does family own their own home?	N=201	N=100
Yes	50%	97%
No	50%	3%
Length of time living at current residence	N=200	N=100
Less than one month	1%	0%
More than one month, but less than a year	19%	6%
1-5 years	61%	58%
More than 5 years	20%	36%
Number of times family has moved in past 12 months	N=198	N=95
0	77%	93%
1	18%	7%
2	5%	0%
3 or more	1%	0%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Social and emotional support for parents

When asked about the level of social and emotional support, 85 percent or more of low-income parents say they have at least adequate support, except in the area of sharing parenting duties (see Figure 15). In regard to sharing parenting duties, 46 percent of low-income parents say they have adequate help caring for, guiding, and disciplining their children.

When asked about frequency of social and emotional support, 86 percent of low-income parents say they usually or always have friends and relatives available to listen to their concerns; 79 percent always or usually can count on their friends and relatives to provide helpful advice and information; and 76 percent always or usually have a friend, relative, or neighbor they can count on when they need help.

- Low-income parents are less likely than middle to high-income parents to report usually or always having friends and relatives that they can talk to about personal or family matters (86% vs. 98%) and that they can count on to provide helpful advice or information (79% vs. 94%).

15. Social and emotional support

Level of support	Low-income families N=201			Middle to high-income families N=100		
	Low level of support	Adequate level of support	High level of support	Low level of support	Adequate level of support	High level of support
In general, apart from your children, how many other relatives do you have that you feel close to? That is, people you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, and can call on for help.	13%	70%	18%	3%	70%	27%
In general, how many close friends do you have? That is, people you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, and can call on for help.	15%	73%	12%	13%	69%	18%
How many people (including other parent) share parenting duties with you? That is, regularly help you care for, guide, and discipline your children?	54%	46%	0%	65%	34%	1%
How many people do you have near you that you can readily count on for help in times of difficulty?	10%	75%	15%	6%	76%	18%

Frequency of support	Low-income families N=200					Middle to high-income families N=100				
	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
How often are friends and relatives willing to listen when you need to talk about personal or family matters?	2%	2%	12%	26%	60%	0%	0%	2%	25%	73%
How often can you count on friends or relatives to give you helpful advice or information about parenting?	2%	3%	17%	26%	53%	0%	0%	6%	38%	56%
If you need help for any reason, how often do you have a friend, relative, or neighbor you can really count on?	1%	4%	19%	22%	54%	0%	2%	12%	31%	55%

Note: Responses of 0 to 1 are categorized as "low level of support," 2 to 9 categorized as "adequate level of support," and 10 or more categorized as "high level of support." N for low-income families and middle to-high income families varies by one person for some questions. Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Parents' mental health and stress

Parents were asked questions related to their mental health and level of stress. Eighty-three percent of low-income parents say they usually or always feel loved and cared for; 17 percent sometimes, rarely, or never do (see Figure 16). About four-fifths say they sometimes, rarely, or never feel their children make too many demands on them; one-fifth feel this way usually or always. About three-fourths say they rarely or never feel so sad or hopeless that they are concerned about their ability to cope with personal or family concerns; 22 percent feel this way sometimes, and 4 percent usually or always. Ninety-seven percent sometimes, rarely, or never, feel that raising their children is too difficult or too much responsibility; 5 percent usually or always feel this way.

- Low-income parents are less likely than middle to high-income parents to usually or always feel loved and cared for (83% vs. 100%).
- Low-income parents are more likely than middle to high-income parents to usually or always feel their children are making too many demands on them (22% vs. 8%).
- Low-income parents are also more likely than middle to high-income parents to sometimes, usually, or always feel so sad and hopeless that they are concerned about their ability to cope with personal or family concerns (26% vs. 7%).

16. Parents' mental health and stress

Frequency of support	Low-income families (see left hand column for N)					Middle to high-income families N=99				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Usually	Always	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Usually	Always
How often do you feel loved and cared for? N=201	2%	3%	12%	15%	68%	0%	0%	0%	20%	80%
How often do you feel your children make too many demands on you? N=194	11%	29%	38%	9%	13%	5%	33%	54%	6%	2%
How often do you feel so sad or hopeless that you wonder if you are able to cope with personal or family worries or concerns? N=199	43%	31%	22%	2%	2%	55%	38%	6%	0%	1%
How often do you feel like raising your children is way too difficult or too much responsibility? N= 200	58%	24%	15%	2%	3%	64%	26%	9%	0%	1%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding. N for middle to high-income families varies by 1 person for some questions.

Home learning activities

Parents were asked the frequency with which they do various activities with their child that promote child development. As shown in Figure 17, for low-income parents with a child age 1 or younger, the most frequent activity is talking, cooing, or telling stories to the children, with 87 percent saying they do so every day (73%) or most days (14%). Seventy-nine percent say they sing songs to their children every day (57%) or most days (22%). Seventy-five percent report that they point to pictures or things and explain or name them every day (61%) or most days (14%). The least common activity is reading to the children, with 57 percent saying they do so every day (34%) or most days (23%).

For low-income parents with children age 2 to 5, the most frequent activity is talking or telling stories to the children, with 93 percent doing so every day (72%) or most days (21%). Eighty-two percent teach their children letters, words, or numbers every day (48%) or most days (34%). Eighty-one percent read to their child every day (53%) or most days (28%). Seventy-four percent sing to their children every day (53%) or most days (21%). Sixty-five percent have their children read along with them or help their children learn stories every day (32%) or most days (33%). Parents least frequently get their children together with other children, with 55 percent of parents doing so every day (21%) or most days (34%).

Ninety-six percent of low-income parents, regardless of their young child's age, have their child play outdoors with toys or games every day (86%) or most days (10%). Seventy-seven percent of parents have their children listen to music every day (60%) or most days (17%).

- Low-income parents and middle to high-income parents are about equally likely to report having their child play outdoors; getting their children together with other children; and teaching their children letters, numbers, and words.
- Low-income parents are less likely than middle to high-income parents to engage their children in all of the other learning activities noted.

17. How often parents do various learning activities with their children

Percent of parents who say they do this activity with their children	Low-income families				Middle to high-income families			
	Every day	Most days	Some days	Not at all	Every day	Most days	Some days	Not at all
children ages 1 or younger	N=86				N=40			
Read to your child(ren)	34%	23%	38%	5%	55%	30%	15%	0%
Talk to, coo, or tell stories to your children	73%	14%	13%	0%	95%	3%	3%	0%
Sing songs to your children	57%	22%	16%	5%	73%	23%	5%	0%
Point to pictures or things and say what they are or name them	61%	14%	19%	6%	83%	13%	5%	0%
children ages 2 through 5	N=176				N=90			
Read to your children	53%	28%	19%	0%	79%	17%	4%	0%
Talk to or tell stories to your children	72%	21%	7%	0%	87%	12%	1%	0%
Sing songs with your children	53%	21%	21%	6%	59%	27%	14%	0%
Have them read along with you, or help them learn stories him/herself	32%	33%	32%	3%	44%	27%	20%	9%
Teach them letters, words, or numbers, such as saying ABCs, or playing counting games, or doing puzzles	48%	34%	18%	1%	51%	34%	14%	0%
Get them together with other children to play	21%	34%	41%	5%	19%	31%	49%	1%
children ages 0 to 5	N=199				N=100			
Your children listen to music	60%	17%	15%	7%	63%	24%	11%	2%
Your children play outdoors with toys or games or other play materials, including everyday household items that they play with	86%	10%	4%	1%	97%	2%	1%	0%

Note: Parents were asked if they do a given activity in a typical week. "Most days" means 3 to 6 times per week, "some days" means once or twice a week. Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding. N for low-income families varies by 1 or 2 people for some questions.

Positive parenting

Nurturing children

In terms of showing children love and affection, 94 percent of parents from low-income families say they compliment, support, comfort, encourage, praise, or show affection to their children frequently; 6 percent say sometimes (see Figure 18). Seventy-six percent say their children receive love, comfort, and support from at least one non-parent adult frequently; 19 percent say sometimes.

Regarding educating their children, 68 percent of the parents from low-income families say they work on educational and creative activities with their children frequently; 31 percent sometimes. Twenty-eight percent say they take their children into the community to learn special things frequently; 59 percent sometimes.

In terms of providing their children with structure, 54 percent of parents from low-income families say they always keep a regular mealtime and bedtime schedule for their children; 36 percent usually do.

- Parents from low-income families are somewhat less likely than parents from middle to high-income families to report that their children frequently receive comfort, love, and support from a non-parent adult (76% vs. 86%); and less likely to report frequently taking their children places in the community to learn special things (28% vs. 45%).

18. Nurturing children

	Low-income families N=200				Middle to high-income families N=100			
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Frequently	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Frequently
How often do you compliment, support, comfort, encourage, praise or show affection to your children?	0%	1%	6%	94%	0%	0%	1%	99%
How often do your children receive love, comfort, and support from at least one NON-parent adult?	2%	5%	19%	76%	0%	1%	13%	86%
Spend time with your children working on educational and creative activities?	1%	1%	31%	68%	0%	1%	25%	74%
Take your children places in the community to learn special things?	2%	11%	59%	28%	0%	6%	49%	45%

18. Nurturing children (continued)

	Low-income families N=200					Middle to high-income families N=100				
	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Usually	Always	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Usually	Always
How often do you keep a regular mealtime and bedtime schedule for your children?	1%	3%	7%	36%	54%	0%	1%	7%	44%	48%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding. N varies by 1 person for some questions.

Encouraging child literacy

In the past year, 18 percent of low-income parents took their children to the public library at least weekly, 21 percent about once a month, 18 percent three to six times, 18 percent one or two times, and about one-fourth not at all (see Figure 19).

Almost half of low-income parents have more than 20 age-appropriate books at home for their children, 39 percent have 6 to 20 books, and 17 percent five or less.

The median number of age-appropriate children books at home is lower for low-income families (20 books) than for middle to high-income families (30 books), but still fairly high.

19. Encouraging child literacy

	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
In the past 12 months, number of times you and your children visited the public library		
0 times	24%	18%
1 or 2 times	18%	17%
3 to 6 times	18%	26%
About once a month	21%	28%
About once a week	16%	11%
Almost every day	2%	0%

19. Encouraging child literacy (continued)

	Low-income families	Middle to high-income families
Number of books per child, on average, they have that are right for their age or stage of development	N=196	N=100
0 books	1%	0%
1-5 books	16%	2%
6-10 books	13%	9%
11-20 books	26%	21%
21-30 books	15%	20%
over 30 books	30%	48%
Median	20 books	30 books

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Parenting education and resources

Regarding their own education as parents, about half of low-income parents, similar to middle to high-income parents in the Rochester area and to parents of young children statewide, have participated in parent education training, classes, or workshops.

About 90 percent feel they have enough resources and information to prepare their children to do well in kindergarten. Low-income parents do not differ from middle to high-income parents in either regard.

Nonetheless, parents did express interest in additional resources. When low-income parents were asked what additional help or resources they are looking for, most common responses include that they would like to understand stages of child development and how to know if they are “ready for kindergarten” (n=8); how and when to register their children for programs or school (n=6); information about what programs and schools are available (n=6). Middle to high-income parents are looking for the same kinds of information.

Children's participation in early care and education

Parental care only

Sixteen percent of low-income families and 17 percent of middle to high-income families do not use any regular child care arrangement (see Figure 20).

For perspective, 26 percent of parents with children age 12 and younger statewide do not use any regular child care. The statewide study does not have comparable data for parents with children age 5 and younger.

Twenty-eight percent of all children ages 5 and younger of low-income families do not use any regular child care arrangement (see Figure 21). Infants represent the largest percent of children age 5 and younger who use parental care only (46%), followed by 1 year-olds (41%), 2 year-olds (31%), 3 year-olds (22%), 5 year-olds (19%), and 4 year-olds (17%).

Number and type of child care arrangements for all children

About half of low-income people (48%) have one child care arrangement for their children; 32 percent have two, and 4 percent have three or more. Low-income families who use some kind of non-parental care arrangement, on average, use one or two arrangements.

The most common type of non-parental child care arrangement is informal care by a family member, friend, or neighbor age 18 or older (Figure 21). Forty-six percent of children in low-income families and 36 percent of children in middle to high-income families use FFN care. On average, low-income children in FFN care spend 17 hours a week in this arrangement.

- On average, children in low-income families spend more time than children in middle to high-income families in FFN care (17 hours vs. 11 hours).

As seen in Figure 22, most FFN caregivers are grandparents (65% for low-income families), a relative such as an aunt or cousin (15%), or siblings (5%). Less than one-third are friends, neighbors, or nannies (29%).

- In lower-income families, the FFN caregiver is less likely to be a non-relative than in middle to high-income families (29% vs. 48%).

Center-based care is the next most common type of arrangement (29% for children in low-income families and 35% for children in middle to high-income families). Low-

income children spend an average of 19 hours each week in this arrangement. For purposes of this survey, center-based care is licensed care and includes child care centers, nursery schools, preschools, pre-kindergarten programs, and school readiness programs. In addition, 10 percent of children in low-income families are in Head Start, peaking at age 4 (26%).

- Among low-income families, children age 3 to 5 are more likely than younger children to be in center-based care (41% vs. 16%) and less likely than children age 3 to 5 in middle to high-income families (60%).

Fifteen percent of children in low-income families are using licensed family child care homes; and, on average, children spend the most time in this arrangement each week (29 hours for low-income families).

Altogether, children in low-income families spend, on average, 26 hours in some type of child care, compared to 20 hours for children in higher-income families.

A statewide perspective: Children age 5 and younger in child care are there, on average, 27 or 28 hours per week.

20. All types of child care arrangements (all children)

Number of child care arrangement types used	Low-income families N=201	Middle to high-income families N=100
None	16%	17%
One	48%	54%
Two	32%	27%
Three	3%	2%
Four	1%	0%
Mean number of arrangements of families using some type of arrangement (non-parental care)	1.5	1.4

21. Use of parental care only and use of all types of child care arrangements (all children)

Type of care	Low-income families			Middle to high-income families		
	Total <1 to 2 years	Total 3 to 5 years	Total N=366	Total <1 to 2 years	Total 3 to 5 years	Total N=160
Parental care only	38%	19%	28%	34%	21%	28%
FFN care	50%	43%	46%	42%	30%	36%
Mean hours per week in FFN care	17	17	17	12	10	11
Child care center, nursery, preschool, pre-Kindergarten, or school readiness program	16%	41%	29%	12%	60%	35%
Mean hours per week in center care	26	17	19	17	11	12
Head Start	0%	18%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Mean hours per week in Head Start	0	10	10	0	0	0
Licensed family child care home	13%	16%	15%	25%	20%	23%
Mean hours per week in licensed family child care home	31	28	29	28	25	27
Total mean hours per week in all child care arrangements	27	25	26	22	18	20

Note: Multiple responses allowed. Total mean hours does not include parental care.

22. FFN caregiver's relationship to child (all children in FFN care)

FFN caregiver	Low-income families N=169	Middle to high-income families N=58
Child's grandparent	65%	60%
Non-relative	29%	48%
Another relative (aunt, cousin, etc.)	15%	8%
Child's sibling	5%	5%

Note: Multiple responses allowed.

Primary child care arrangements

As shown in Figure 23, when parents were asked which of these arrangements they use most often for their children, center-based care is cited as being the most common primary arrangement for both low-income and middle to high-income families (37% and 43%). One-third of low-income families use FFN care as their primary arrangement, and 21 percent use licensed family child care homes. Ten percent use Head Start as their primary arrangement.

Family, friend, and neighbor care is the most common primary child care arrangement for children age 2 or younger in low-income families (44%); followed by child care centers (29%); and licensed child care homes (27%). For children age 3 to 5, child care centers are the most common primary arrangement (37%); followed by family, friend, and neighbor care (27%); and licensed family child care homes (21%), and Head Start (15%).

- Low-income families are less likely than middle to high-income families to use licensed family child care homes as their primary arrangement (21% vs. 34%).
- For children age 3 to 5, combining Head Start and other center-based care, those in low-income families and higher-income families tend to be similar with regard to center care as the primary arrangement, but low-income families tend to use FFN care more often as their primary arrangement for children age 3 to 5 than higher-income families (27% vs. 11%).

For perspective, in the statewide household child care use study, the primary arrangement during the school year for children age 2 and younger is FFN care (48%), followed by center-based care (33%) and licensed family child care (18%); and for children age 3 to 5 it is center-based care, which includes Head Start, (60%), followed by FFN care (27%), and licensed family child care (12%).

23. Families' primary child care arrangements by age of child

Type of care	Low-income families			Middle to high-income families		
	0-2 years n=48	3-5 years n=108	Total N=156	0-2 years n=28	3-5 years n=46	Total N=74
Child care center, nursery, preschool, pre-Kindergarten, or school readiness program	29%	37%	37%	11%	63%	43%
FFN care	44%	27%	32%	43%	11%	23%
Licensed family child care home	27%	21%	21%	46%	26%	34%
Head Start	0%	15%	10%	0%	0%	0%

Note: Shows all types of care used at least once per week in each of the last two weeks for at least 5 hours per week.

Indicators of quality in child care settings from the viewpoint of parents

This next section includes only parents who have one or more child care arrangement for a total five or more hours per week on a regular basis. In families with more than one child, parents were asked about their primary arrangement for one child selected at random.

When asked about how much they know about their child's care setting, the provider, and the care their child receives, 87 percent of these low-income families feel they know a lot, 12 percent say they know some, and only 1 percent say they know a little.

- A slightly higher percent of middle to high-income parents say they know a lot about their child's primary care arrangement (96%).

Parents were also asked a series of questions regarding their perception of the quality of the child care arrangement and their satisfaction with it (Figure 24). With the exception of two questions, 90 percent of all parents say that their child always or usually has a good experience with the caregiver and that the parent has a good relationship with the caregiver. Thirteen percent of low-income parents said that the caregiver sometimes, rarely, or never reads, tells stories, or sings to their child.

The statement that got the greatest range of responses relates to parents receiving helpful parenting or child development advice from their child's caregiver. Sixty-seven percent of low-income families and 56 percent of middle to high-income families say they always or usually get helpful advice.

- Low-income parent ratings overall are similar regardless of the type of primary arrangement, averaging 4.6 on a scale of 1 to 5.
- Those who use FFN caregivers are less likely to say the caregiver always or usually reads, tells stories, or sings to their child most days, than those using centers or licensed family homes (76% vs. 93%).

The statewide household child care use survey found that families with younger children and higher incomes tend to report higher ratings than other parents.

24. Parents' quality and satisfaction ratings for primary arrangement

	Low-income families (see left-hand column for N)					Middle to high-income families N=73				
	Always	Usually	Some- times	Rarely	Never	Always	Usually	Some- times	Rarely	Never
My child feels safe and secure. (N=154)	88%	10%	1%	1%	1%	89%	11%	0%	0%	0%
My child gets a lot of positive, individual attention. (N=154)	57%	34%	7%	2%	1%	57%	38%	5%	0%	0%
My child likes the caregiver or provider. (N=154)	77%	18%	4%	1%	1%	81%	19%	0%	0%	0%
The caregiver or provider is happy to see my child. (N=151)	89%	8%	3%	1%	0%	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
The caregiver or provider is warm and affectionate toward my child. (N=154)	82%	12%	5%	1%	1%	91%	7%	1%	1%	0%
The caregiver or provider and I share information about my child. (N=154)	76%	16%	5%	3%	1%	76%	20%	3%	1%	0%
The caregiver is supportive of me as a parent. (N=153)	75%	18%	5%	1%	1%	84%	16%	0%	0%	0%
Most days the caregiver reads, tells stories, or sings to my child. (N=150)	65%	21%	9%	3%	1%	76%	18%	5%	1%	0%
It is an interesting place for my child. (N=154)	70%	20%	7%	2%	1%	73%	23%	3%	1%	0%
My child is treated with respect. (N=154)	83%	16%	1%	0%	1%	93%	7%	0%	0%	0%
It is a healthy place for my child. (N=154)	84%	13%	3%	1%	0%	93%	5%	1%	0%	0%
My child is safe with this caregiver. (N=152)	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	96%	4%	0%	0%	0%
The caregiver handles discipline easily without being harsh. (N=150)	77%	17%	4%	1%	1%	82%	15%	1%	1%	0%
My caregiver or provider shows she or he knows a lot about children and their needs. (N=153)	80%	15%	5%	0%	0%	88%	11%	1%	0%	0%
The caregiver is open to new information and learning. (N=145)	75%	19%	5%	1%	0%	76%	23%	0%	0%	1%
The caregiver gives me helpful parenting advice or information about how to encourage healthy growth and development for my child (N=154)	43%	24%	19%	6%	9%	26%	30%	36%	4%	4%

Note: Respondents' reports about self-identified primary arrangement for their randomly selected child. N varies slightly for some items.

Family, friend, and neighbor care

Definitions

Family, friend and neighbor (FFN) caregivers provide informal and legal non-licensed home-based child care. FFN caregivers include grandparents, aunts, siblings, cousins and non-relatives age 18 or older. For this survey, the FFN caregivers are all legal non-licensed caregivers registered with Olmsted County Community Services to provide care through the Child Care Assistance Program; thus called CCAP FFN. They were providing care for one or more children age 5 and younger at least once a week in each of the two weeks prior to the survey.

Profile of FFN caregivers and their households

Respondents' gender, age, race, and family size

As shown in Figure 25, the family, friend, and neighbor caregivers who responded to this survey are primarily women (84%). Eighty-six percent are related to the child in some way (50% grandparents, 24% aunts or uncles, 6% cousins/relatives, and 6% siblings). Sixteen percent are friends or neighbors.

Thirty-eight percent of FFN caregivers are under the age of 40, 21 percent are 40 to 49 years old, 24 percent are 50 to 59 years old, and 18 percent are over 60. The largest groups of FFN caregivers are White (46%) or Somalian (34%), followed by Black or African American (9%), Hispanic or Latino (7%), and Asian (3%).

Over half of surveyed FFN caregivers have no children age 5 or younger in their household, and 27 percent have only 1 child age 5 or younger.

Forty-five percent of FFN caregivers have a paid job in addition to caring for children.

The CCAP FFN in the Rochester area are similar demographically to FFN in Minnesota generally, except with regard to racial or ethnic group, which is more similar to CCAP FFN in Hennepin County.

25. FFN caregiver demographics

	Total N=97
Gender	
Male	17%
Female	84%
FFN caregiver's relationship to selected child	
Grandmother/grandfather	50%
Friend of family	10%
Aunt/uncle	24%
Neighbor	4%
Cousin/other relative	6%
Sibling	6%
Age	
18-19	3%
20-29	18%
30-39	17%
40-49	21%
50-59	24%
60-64	6%
65-69	7%
70-73	5%
Mean age of FFN caregivers	45 years
Racial or ethnic group	
White or Caucasian	46%
Somalian	34%
Black or African American	9%
Hispanic or Latino	7%
Asian	3%
Number of children ages 5 and younger living in their household	
0	53%
1	27%
2	16%
3	4%
4	1%
Paid job or jobs, in addition to taking care of children	
Yes	45%
No	55%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Respondents' background and language

As shown in Figure 26, just over half of FFN caregivers were born in the United States (53%), and their native language is English (51%). Thirty-six percent of FFN caregivers surveyed in the Rochester area are from Somalia and 37 percent speak Somali. Other countries of origin include Laos, Cambodia, Mexico, and Germany. A third of those born outside the country have been in the United States for five years or less. The average amount of time in the United States for those who are not American-born is nine years.

On average, FFN caregivers have lived in Olmsted County for 17 years, but almost one-fourth have lived there less than three years.

When asked what language they speak at home, 55 percent of FFN caregivers speak English in their home and 34 percent speak Somali. Five percent speak Spanish and 2 percent speak Arabic. FFN caregivers who do not speak English in their home were asked about their English language speaking, reading, and writing skills. Almost two-thirds (representing 28% of all FFN caregivers surveyed) say that their English speaking skills are fair or poor, and 59 percent (representing 26% of all FFN caregivers surveyed) say their reading and writing skills are fair or poor.

26. FFN caregiver background and language

	Total
Country of origin	N=97
United States	53%
Another country	47%
Somalia	36%
Mexico	2%
Laos	2%
Other	7%
How long caregiver has lived in the U.S. (for those not born in U.S.)	N=46
0-2 years	17%
3-5 years	20%
6-9 years	26%
10-15 years	24%
Over 15 years	13%
Mean number years in US of those not born in US	9 years

26. FFN caregiver background and language (continued)

	Total
How long caregiver has lived in Olmsted County	N=96
0-2 years	23%
3-5 years	21%
6-9 years	11%
10-15 years	8%
Over 15 years	36%
Mean number years in Olmsted County	17 years
Native language	N=97
English	51%
Somali	37%
Spanish	6%
Hmong	1%
Other	5%
Language caregiver usually speaks at home	N=97
English	55%
Somali	34%
Spanish	5%
Arabic	2%
Hmong	1%
Other	3%
Caregivers who do not usually speak English in their home rate their English speaking skills	N=44
Excellent	16%
Good	23%
Fair	30%
Poor	32%
Caregivers who do not usually speak English in their home rate their English reading and writing skills	N=43
Excellent	16%
Good	26%
Fair	33%
Poor	26%

Note: Other native languages spoken by caregivers include Laotian, Khmer, Creole, and German. Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Respondents' household income and home-ownership status

In terms of income, Figure 27 shows that 42 percent of FFN households have annual incomes below \$25,000. Over three-quarters of FFN households earn less than \$50,000.

Forty-four percent of FFN caregivers own their own home.

27. Household income of FFN caregivers

Household income before taxes from all sources and all members	Total N=97
Under \$25,000	42%
\$25,000 to under \$30,000	17%
\$30,000 to under \$35,000	7%
\$35,000 to under \$40,000	6%
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	4%
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	3%
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	3%
\$100,000 or more	2%
Don't know/refused	15%

Profile of children in FFN care

This section describes the sample of children in FFN care, based on information about one randomly selected child per caregiver.

As legal non-licensed providers, FFN caregivers are limited to caring for relatives or children from one other family, but without a limit to the number of children being cared for at the same time. FFN caregivers who are registered with a county in order to be eligible for reimbursement through the Child Care Assistance Program are required to pass a criminal background check. Otherwise, FFN care has no restrictions.

Children's gender, age, and race

As shown in Figure 28, almost half of the randomly selected children are boys, and just over half girls. About half of the selected children are 2 years old or younger, and half are between the ages of 3 and 5.

Thirty-eight percent of the children are White, 34 percent Somali, 10 percent Black or African American, 7 percent Hispanic or Latino, 6 percent Asian, 4 percent multi-racial, and 1 percent American Indian (see Figure 29).

About 44 percent of children have families who are from an immigrant or refugee group from Africa, Asia, South or Central America. Thirty-six percent identify as being Somali.

28. Gender and age of randomly selected children in FFN care

	Randomly selected child N=97	All children in care N=183
Gender		
Male	49%	48%
Female	52%	53%
Age		
<1	7%	14%
1	16%	16%
2	28%	22%
3	20%	16%
4	14%	16%
5	16%	14%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

29. Race or ethnicity of randomly selected children in FFN care by child's age

	Total N=97
Child's race or ethnicity	
White or Caucasian	38%
Somali	34%
Black or African American	10%
Hispanic or Latino	7%
Asian	6%
American Indian	1%
Multi-racial (Black and White)	4%

Language spoken in children's home

As shown in Figure 30, over half of the randomly selected children speak English in their home (56%) and also with their FFN caregiver (57%). More than one-third speak Somali in their home (36%) and also with their FFN caregiver (37%).

30. Languages spoken by children in FFN care (selected child)

Language child speaks at home and with caregiver	Total
Language child speaks at home	N=97
English	56%
Somali	36%
Spanish	5%
No language yet	2%
Hmong	1%
Language child speaks with caregiver	
English	57%
Somali	37%
Spanish	5%
Hmong	1%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Special needs

About 12 percent of FFN caregivers say that the randomly selected child they care for has special needs (medical, physical, emotional, developmental or behavioral) that affect the way they take care of the child.

For perspective, 16 percent of FFN in Minnesota report caring for a child age 5 or younger with special needs.

Profile of FFN care

This section describes when and where FFN care is provided, how often and at what cost. The 2004 Minnesota household child care survey, as well as other studies of informal care, found that FFN care is often used at times of the day and week when licensed care is not readily available and when the cost of licensed care is too high for lower-income families.²

Most FFN care, when paid for, is paid by parents. However, families receiving child care assistance can choose to use FFN care. To receive payment under the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), an FFN or legal non-licensed provider must be registered with a county, must limit the care to relatives or children from one other family and must pass a criminal background check. FFN providers' care is paid for on an hourly basis and is 80 percent of the maximum reimbursement available to licensed family child care providers. Parents are responsible for CCAP co-payments and charges that exceed CCAP reimbursement rates.

Number of children in FFN care and payment for care (all children)

Three-quarters of FFN caregivers are taking care of one (44%) or two (31%) children age 5 and younger on a regular basis (see Figure 31). On average, FFN caregivers are caring for just under two children. When FFN caregivers are caring for just one child, that child is usually 2 years old or younger.

Most FFN caregivers receive payment for taking care of children on a regular basis (87%). On average, FFN caregivers are paid to care for one or two children age 5 or younger.

² Chase, R., Arnold, J. and Schauben, L. 2005. *Family, Friends and Neighbors Caring for Children Through the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program, a Survey of Caregivers and Parents*. St. Paul: Wilder Research and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Susman-Stillman, A. 2004. *Family, Friend and Neighbor Care: Promoting Quality Care and Children's Healthy Development*. Sacramento: First 5 California and ETR Associates.

31. Number of children in FFN child care (all children)

Number of children age 5 or younger that FFN caregivers usually care for on a <i>regular</i> basis	Total N=97
1	44%
2	31%
3	19%
4	4%
5 or more	2%
Mean number of children in FFN care on regular basis	1.9
Number of children that FFN caregiver is paid to care for (including vouchers or payments from county)	
0	13%
1	41%
2	30%
3	12%
4	2%
5 or more	1%
Mean number of children FFN caregiver is paid to care for	1.5

Note: “Regular” child care involves caring for children at least once per week in each of the last two weeks. Includes only children age 5 and younger.

Care schedule for all children

In a typical week, over half of the FFN caregivers provide care for 40 hours or more, and 20 percent provide care 20 hours or less (see Figure 32). On average, FFN caregivers are providing care for 34 hours per week.

- Almost half of children age two or younger receive FFN care for 40 to 50 hours per week, as compared to 25 percent of children age 3 to 5.

The average of 34 hours per week for CCAP FFN caregivers in Rochester is similar to other CCAP FFN caregivers in Minnesota (38 hours per week) and is higher than FFN caregivers in Minnesota generally (19 hours per week).

The usual place of FFN care for all children is primarily in the FFN caregiver’s home (66%).

32. Child care times and places (all children)

Number of hours providing FFN care in a typical week	Total N=97
Less than 5	0%
5-10	12%
11-19	8%
20-29	13%
30-39	12%
40-49	37%
50 or more	16%
Mean hours per typical week	34
Usual place of care	
In FFN caregiver's home	66%
In the child(ren)'s home	34%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Care schedule for randomly selected children

Over half of FFN caregivers have been caring for the selected child a year or less, including one-fifth who have been providing this care for six months or less (see Figure 33). Twenty-six percent have been caring for the child on a regular basis for one to two years.

In a typical week, on average, FFN caregivers provide care to the randomly selected child four or five days per week for eight hours per day.

These averages are similar to other CCAP FFN caregivers in Minnesota and higher than FFN caregivers in Minnesota generally, who average two or three days per week for six or seven hours per day.

Eighty-four percent of FFN caregivers provide care to the randomly selected child during standard weekday hours (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.). Forty-two percent provide care in the evenings (between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m.), and over half provide care on the weekends (52%).

This schedule is fairly typical of FFN care, which is provided when other types of care may not be available.

33. Profile of FFN care by age of randomly selected child

<i>Length of time</i> has provided care for selected child on a regular basis	Total N=97
0 to 6 months	21%
7 to 12 months	30%
13 to 24 months	26%
25 to 36 months	10%
More than 3 years	13%
Mean number months has cared for selected child	21
In a typical week, number of <i>days</i> care is usually provided for selected child	
1 day	4%
2 days	5%
3 days	8%
4 days	12%
5 days	59%
6 days	5%
7 days	6%
Mean days per typical week	4.6
In a typical week, number of <i>hours</i> per day care is usually provided	
Less than 5 hours	7%
5-10 hours	84%
11-19 hours	6%
20-24 hours	3%
In a typical week, average hours per day care is usually provided	8.2
Times of the week care is usually provided (multiple responses allowed)	
Standard weekday, any time from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (includes after school)	84%
Early mornings before 7:00 a.m. (after the children wake up)	20%
Evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	42%
Late nights after 10:00 p.m.	28%
Weekends	52%

Note: "Regular" child care involves caring for children at least once per week in each of the last two weeks. Includes only children age 5 and younger. Totals for categories showing frequency distributions may vary from 100% due to rounding

Experience and training of FFN caregivers

Experience of FFN caregivers

As shown in Figure 34, 16 percent of FFN caregivers have been providing FFN child care for less than a year, 30 percent for one or two years, and 24 percent for three or four years. On average, FFN caregivers have been providing FFN child care for just under five years.

The average of almost five years is lower than other CCAP FFN caregivers in Minnesota (about seven years) and less than half the average of FFN caregivers in Minnesota generally (11 years).

34. Number of years providing FFN child care

Number of years caring for children of family, friends and neighbors	Total N=97
Less than 1 year	16%
1-2 years	30%
3-4 years	24%
5-7 years	12%
8-10 years	8%
11 or more years	10%
Mean number of years caring for children of family, friends and neighbors	4.9

As shown in Figure 35, 11 percent of FFN caregivers were previously employed as a teacher's aide or child care teacher in a licensed child care center or program.

Eight percent of FFN caregivers are either currently licensed (2%) or were licensed in the past (6%) as family child care providers.

35. FFN caregivers' professional child care experience

Ever been employed as a teacher's aide or child care teacher in a licensed child care center or program	Total N=97
Yes, currently	0%
Yes, in the past	11%
No	89%
Ever been a licensed family child care provider	
Yes, currently	2%
Yes, in the past	6%
No	92%

FFN caregiver training and education

In terms of highest level of education, almost two-thirds of FFN caregivers have completed high school or received a GED, including 34 percent with some college education or a college degree (see Figure 36).

In terms of formal education and training, 44 percent of FFN caregivers have participated in parent education (see Figure 37); and 24 percent have participated in a child care training program through a church, community organization or government agency. Thirty-two percent have taken college classes in child development, nutrition or health and safety; and 30 percent have gone to workshops on those topics.

The percentages of CCAP FFN in the Rochester area with parent education and formal child care and child development training is *lower* than FFN in Minnesota generally and *similar* to other CCAP FFN in Minnesota. For example, more than half (56%) of FFN in general have ever had parent education, 38 percent have had child care training, and about half have ever taken classes or workshops on child development topics.

From a list read to them, FFN caregivers most commonly report using the following informal resources to learn about child care: educational television (63%), the public library (56%), fact sheets or pamphlets (50%) and child care or teacher magazines (33%).

36. FFN caregiver education

Highest level of education completed	Total N=97
Eighth grade or lower	19%
Some high school	17%
High school graduate or GED	28%
Some college (includes two-year degree/technical college)	29%
College graduate (BA, BS)	5%
Post-graduate work or professional school	0%
Don't know	3%

Note: Total for column varies from 100% due to rounding.

37. FFN parenting and child care training and education

	Total N=97
Formal classes	
Ever participated in parent education, either Early Childhood Family Education or another program	44%
Ever participated in a child care training program through a church, community organization or government agency	24%
Ever taken any college classes in child development, nutrition or health and safety	32%
Ever attended workshops on those topics	30%
Resources caregiver has used to get information about children and their needs	
Educational TV	63%
A public library	56%
Fact sheets or pamphlets	50%
Child care or teacher magazines	33%
The Internet	32%
A doctor or clinic	30%
Health fairs	19%
A college or university library	12%
A bookmobile	12%
A child care outreach program	13%
An 800 number for caregivers	8%

Note: Multiple responses allowed.

FFN interest in licensing

Two percent of FFN caregivers are currently licensed family child care providers. Of those not currently licensed, 64 percent are very interested (50%) or somewhat interested (14%) in getting licensed as a child care provider (see Figure 38).

A higher percentage of the CCAP FFN in the Rochester area are interested in becoming licensed child care providers than are other CCAP FFN in Minnesota (31% very interested and 21% somewhat interested) and FFN generally (7% very interested and 11% somewhat interested).

38. FFN caregivers' interest in getting licensed as a child care provider

How interested is the caregiver in becoming a licensed child care provider?	Total N=95
Very interested	50%
Somewhat interested	14%
Not very interested	7%
Not at all interested	30%

Note: Total for column varies from 100% due to rounding.

Caregiver's partnership with parents

Interaction between FFN caregiver and parents

As shown in Figure 39, 88 percent of FFN caregivers say they frequently share information with parents regarding the child. Seventy-seven percent say they frequently talk about the child's daily activities and health and well-being with parents; 73 percent say they frequently discuss the child's development and learning, and 64 percent say they frequently plan activities with parents for the child.

The percentage of FFN caregivers who say they frequently plan activities with parents for the child (64%) is higher than other CCAP FFN (47%) and higher than FFN in general (41%).

Strength of relationship between FFN caregiver and parents

As shown in Figure 40, most FFN caregivers (94%) report that they and the parents cooperate and work together very well to make sure the child gets what he or she needs.

Most FFN caregivers strongly agree (69%) or agree (24%) that they would watch the child for as long as the parents wanted.

39. Interaction between FFN caregivers and parents by age of randomly selected child

In the past month, how often did caregiver and the parents...	Total
Share information about child	N=97
Frequently	88%
Occasionally	11%
Seldom	1%
Never	0%
Plan activities for child	N=97
Frequently	64%
Occasionally	19%
Seldom	10%
Never	7%
Discuss child's development and learning	N=96
Frequently	73%
Occasionally	23%
Seldom	2%
Never	2%
Talk about child's daily activities, such as what he/she does every morning or afternoon	N=97
Frequently	77%
Occasionally	19%
Seldom	2%
Never	2%
Discuss child's health and physical well-being	N=97
Frequently	77%
Occasionally	19%
Seldom	3%
Never	1%

40. Strength of relationship between FFN caregivers and parents by age of randomly selected child

	Total
How well caregiver and parents cooperate and work together in making sure child gets what he/she needs	N=97
Very well	94%
Somewhat well	6%
Somewhat poorly	0%
Very poorly	0%
Caregiver would watch child for as long as the parent wanted	N=92
Strongly agree	69%
Agree	24%
Disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	1%

Activities for children’s cognitive, social and emotional development

Caregivers were read a list of activities appropriate for the age of the selected child and for the informal setting. The list includes activities for learning words and numbers as well as for fostering curiosity, imagination and healthy relationships.

These are not intended to represent all the selected child’s developmental activities. It is also important to consider that caregivers may not have to offer each of the activities; for example, a caregiver might not read to the child or have the child play with others if those needs are being met at home, at other activities, or through other child care arrangements.

FFN caregivers report performing and encouraging a wide range of activities to encourage children’s cognitive, social, and emotional development (see Figure 41). Cognitive development activities include: reading, singing, playing games, doing creative activities, practicing language and math skills, doing puzzles and teaching about nature and science. Activities that promote social and emotional development include hugging and kissing the child, arranging for the child to play with other children, passing on family or cultural values and traditions, encouraging games requiring pretending and imagination, and allowing the child to help the caregiver around the house. Other developmental activities include having the child go on outings to a tot area, park or playground; playing with toys or household items that can help them learn eye-hand

coordination; playing outdoors, like running, climbing, jumping or playing sports, and participating in physical activities or lessons through a local business or organization.

For children under age 2, the most common development activities (daily or most days) are hugging and kissing the child (100%), playing games like peek-a-boo (100%), talking or cooing, telling stories or singing to the child (97%), and pointing to things and naming them (95%).

For children age 2 to 5, FFN caregivers most often encourage the child to play with toys or household items that can help them learn hand-eye coordination (91% daily or most days); talk, tell stories, or sing to the child (86%); or play counting games or do puzzles with the child (83%).

41. Children’s developmental activities by age of randomly selected child

Children ages 0 to 1

For the days that caregiver cares for child, how often does he or she... (N=22)	Every day	Most days	Some days	Not very often
Hug and kiss	96%	5%	0%	0%
Talk or coo, tell stories or sing to child	86%	9%	5%	0%
Play games like peek-a-boo or games with child’s fingers and toes	82%	18%	0%	0%
Point to pictures or things and say what they are	77%	18%	0%	5%
Read to child	41%	14%	32%	14%
Get together with other children	18%	23%	27%	32%
Go on trips or outings, like to a tot area, park or playground	9%	32%	27%	32%
Go with caregiver when he or she visits with other adult friends/relatives	18%	18%	23%	41%
Play with baby toys or household items such as plastic bowls or cups	77%	18%	0%	5%

41. Children’s developmental activities by age of randomly selected child (continued)

Children ages 2 to 5

For the days that caregiver cares for child, how often does he or she... (N=75)

	Every day	Most days	Some days	Not very often
Talk, tell stories, or sing to child	63%	23%	9%	5%
Practice language or math with child, such as saying ABCs, or playing counting games or doing puzzles	57%	26%	10%	7%
Have child sing or read along with him or her, or help child learn the songs or stories him/herself	52%	26%	16%	6%
Read to child	51%	27%	19%	3%
Do creative activities with child like drawing, painting or making something with household items	38%	30%	20%	12%
Help child learn something about nature, like watching bugs, looking at leaves or gardening	41%	23%	22%	15%
Pass on family or cultural values and traditions through stories, songs, dances or history	30%	26%	23%	22%
Play “pretend” games by using things like toys, dolls, dressing up or his/her imagination to act out roles or stories	42%	31%	19%	8%
Play with toys or household items that can help children learn hand-eye coordination	45%	46%	8%	1%
Play with other children	51%	24%	13%	12%
Play outdoors, like running, climbing, jumping or playing sports	47%	30%	16%	7%
Help around the house	42%	30%	14%	15%
Have child go with caregiver when visiting other adult friends/relatives	37%	19%	25%	19%
Go on trips or outings, like a library, park or playground	30%	27%	29%	14%

Note: Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

FFN caregiver supports

FFN caregivers were asked whether or not they access certain resources (other caregivers, people, and places) as sources of information and support (see Figure 42). Respondents were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to each source of information or ideas. Nearly two-thirds of FFN caregivers (63%) say that they have access to a library or family center where they can get information, books, learning materials, or training about taking care of children for yourself, and can borrow children’s books, videos, toys, or supplies. Forty-five percent say they use this resource.

Fifty-eight percent of FFN caregivers say they have access to friends, neighbors, or relatives who help each other out by watching the children in each other's care; 51 percent use this resource.

Forty-nine percent say they have access to a place where they can connect with other caregivers for socializing, support, and information sharing, *and* can bring the children so they can play and learn together; 34 percent use this resource.

42. FFN caregivers' usual sources of support

Sources of support	Percent reporting "Yes" N=97
Do you have access to a library or family center where you can get information, books, learning materials, or training about taking care of children for yourself, and can borrow children's books, videos, toys, or supplies that could help?	63%
Do you use it?	45%
Do you have access to friends, neighbors, or relatives who help each other out by watching the children in each other's care?	58%
Do you use it?	51%
Do you have access to a place where you can connect with other caregivers for socializing, support, and information sharing, <i>and</i> can bring the children so they can play and learn together?	49%
Do you use it?	34%

Note: Questions were answered as Yes/No.

Quality of FFN caregiving

To get an overall picture of the quality of FFN care, Wilder Research created an index of seven self-reported attributes of quality appropriate for an informal setting: intentionality of the caregiving; extent of caregiving training; the FFN caregiver's connection to other caregivers for support and information; strength of the partnership between the FFN caregiver and the child's parent and the extent of natural teaching and other activities for literacy, cognitive development, and social/emotional development. Figure 43 shows the percentage of FFN caregivers with each self-reported attribute.

On average, FFN caregivers report 4.7 of 7 attributes on the quality index.

CCAP FFN in Rochester, compared with FFN caregivers of children age 5 and younger generally in Minnesota, tend to have higher percentages who are intentional caregivers (25% vs. 15%) and a lower percentage who are connected with other caregivers (72% vs. 85%). The percentage who are intentional caregivers is also higher than other CCAP FFN caregivers of children age 5 and younger in Minnesota (11%).

The quality index score of 4.7 is similar to other CCAP FFN in Minnesota (4.6) and FFN in general (4.7).

43. Quality of care index (self-reported)

Attributes of FFN quality	Total N=97
Intentional caregiver	25%
Trained caregiver	16%
Connected with other caregivers	72%
Strong caregiver-parent partnership	77%
Literacy activities	84%
Activities for cognitive development	97%
Activities for social/emotional development	100%
Mean number of attributes	4.7 of 7

Quality of care index definitions:

“Intentional caregivers” use a place to get information, resources and support or have other caregivers who help each other; use a place for socializing and information sharing; and use other resources to get caregiving information. In addition, they provide developmental activity every day or most days, and agree they will watch the child as long as the parent wants.

“Trained caregiver” is someone who is currently licensed or was licensed in the past; or is or was a teacher’s aide or child care teacher in a licensed facility, and ever participated in parent education or a child care training program, or has ever taken college classes in child development, or has attended workshops on child development.

“Connected” means the caregiver uses a family center or other support or place to connect with other caregivers.

FFN caregivers and parents with “strong partnerships” frequently share information about the child, plan for or talk about daily activities and cooperate very well.

“Literacy activities” include reading, reading along or practicing language and math skills daily or most days.

“Activities for cognitive development” include stories, singing, naming pictures, creative drawing, learning about nature, pretending games, daily or most days.

“Activities for social/emotional development” include cooing, peek-a-booing, hugging and kissing, getting together with or playing with other children or visiting, pretending, passing on cultural values or helping around the house, daily or most days.

Indicators of quality in licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes

This section of the report describes Olmsted County's 21 licensed child care centers and 487 licensed family child care homes in regard to the following indicators of quality: accreditation, education and training of staff, use of curriculum and lesson plans, and accountability and responsiveness to parents. Information is derived from Rochester Child Care Resource and Referral agency's annual survey of licensed providers.

Quality of licensed child care centers

Accreditation

Of the 21 licensed centers in the Rochester area, 24 percent are currently accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

■ For perspective, 19 percent of child care centers in Minnesota are accredited.

Education and training of current staff

In 14 percent of the licensed child care centers, none of the current staff have a four-year bachelor's degree. In 24 percent, about one-fourth of current staff have at least a four-year bachelor's degree; in 29 percent, about half of the staff do; and in 10 percent, about three-fourths of the staff do. None of the centers report all staff having at least a four-year bachelor's degree. Twenty-four percent of the centers did not provide this information.

In regard to SEEDS early literacy training, specifically, over half of the centers have no classroom staff with this training. In 14 percent, about one-fourth of staff have SEEDS training; and in 10 percent, half to three-fourths of the staff have SEEDS training. None of the centers report that all current staff have SEEDS early literacy training. Twenty-four percent of the centers did not provide this information.

In regards to other forms of early literacy training, 10 percent of the centers have no classroom staff with other early literacy training. In 24 percent, about one-fourth of staff have other early literacy training; in 19 percent, about half of staff; in 14 percent, about three-fourths of staff, and in 5 percent, all staff. Twenty-nine percent of centers did not provide this information.

44. Licensed Child Care Centers: Education of current staff

Percent with four-year bachelor's degree or higher	Centers N=21
0% of current staff at a center	14%
25% of current staff at a center	24%
50% of current staff at a center	29%
75% of current staff at a center	10%
100% of current staff at a center	0%
Missing	24%

Note: "Current staff" includes all staff members except the cook and driver. Total for the column varies from 100% due to rounding.

45. Licensed Child Care Centers: Early literacy training of current classroom staff

Percent who have completed SEEDS early literacy training	Centers N=21
0% of current classroom staff at a center	52%
25% of current classroom staff at a center	14%
50% of current classroom staff at a center	5%
75% of current classroom staff at a center	5%
100% of current classroom staff at a center	0%
Missing	24%
Percent who have completed other early literacy training	N=21
0% of current classroom staff at a center	10%
25% of current classroom staff at a center	24%
50% of current classroom staff at a center	19%
75% of current classroom staff at a center	14%
100% of current classroom staff at a center	5%
Missing	29%

Note: "Current staff" includes all staff members except the cook and driver. Total for each category may vary from 100% due to rounding.

Use of curriculum and lesson plans

Five percent of the licensed child care centers use the SEEDS curriculum. Seventy-six percent use other types of curriculum or lesson plans, including High Scope (14%) and Montessori (10%).

46. Licensed child care centers: Use of curriculum and lesson plans

Use of curriculum and lesson plans	Centers N=21
Uses SEEDS curriculum	5%
Uses other curricula or lesson plans	76%
High Scope	14%
Montessori	10%
Other Curriculum	62%

Note: *Bolded category is unduplicated total of unbolded categories below.*

Accountability and responsiveness to parents

Ninety-five percent of the licensed child care centers have written policies regarding expectations of and decisions about children's care. Seventy-six percent of the centers offer food according to family dietary preferences. Two-thirds of the centers provide regular feedback to parents about their child's development; each of these centers provides the feedback in writing. Thirty-eight percent have parent councils or advisory councils that include parents so that family members can have input in decision-making. Ten percent offer translated materials to parents who speak English as a second language.

47. Licensed child care centers: Accountability and responsiveness to parents

Accountability and responsiveness to parents	Centers N=21
Has written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care	95%
Offers food according to family dietary preferences	76%
Provides regular feedback to parents about child's development	67%
Provides written reports to parents about child's development	67%
Family members can have decision-making input through parent or advisory councils	38%
Uses materials translated for parents in their language	10%

Quality of licensed family child care homes

Education and training

In terms of highest level of education achieved, ninety-four percent of the 481 licensed family home child care providers have a high school diploma or GED. Twenty-one percent have completed coursework and/or competence-based training related to child development plus 4 percent have a one-year certificate related to child care/child development; 5 percent have a two-year degree, and 10 percent have a four-year degree. One percent has a degree in special education. Nine percent have a bachelor's degree not related to child development, and 2 percent a Masters or Ph.D. in another field. In addition, 2 percent have a nursing license.

The 25 percent with child development training or a one-year certificate is higher than the Southern District overall (19%) but lower than the Minnesota total for licensed family providers (29%).

Licensed family home child care providers report most commonly being trained in CPR (71%) and first aid (69%). About half of the providers participate in 12 or more hours of child care-related training each year. Twenty-six percent have completed Module One of the Infant Toddler Training Intensive (ITTI) Program, 19 percent have completed Module Two, 15 percent Module Three, and 13 percent all four modules. Eleven percent have completed the Building Cultural Connections training which assists providers in supporting children of other racial and/or cultural backgrounds. Three percent have completed Project Exceptional 1 training, and 1 percent Project Exceptional 2 training; both focus on children with special needs.

The 26 percent with ITTI Module One training is higher than the percentage of licensed family providers statewide (16%).

In regard to early literacy training, 8 percent of the providers have completed SEEDS training, and 6 percent another program.

48. Licensed family child care homes: Education of providers

Family child care providers' level of education achieved	N=481
HS Diploma/GED	94%
Child Development coursework or competence-based training	21%
1 Year Certificate	4%
Child-related Degree - 2 year	5%
Child-related Degree - 4 year	10%
Special Education Degree	1%
BA/BS or higher - not Child-related	9%
MA or Higher - Child-related	2%
RN or LPN License	2%

49. Licensed family child care homes: Formal training of providers

Family child care providers' training in early childhood development	N=481
CPR within 2 Yrs	71%
First aid within 2 Yrs	69%
12 or more training hours per year on child care related-topics	49%
Infant Toddler Training Intensive Program - Module 1	26%
Infant Toddler Training Intensive Program - Module 2	19%
Infant Toddler Training Intensive Program - Module 3	15%
Infant Toddler Training Intensive Program - Module 4	13%
Building Cultural Connections	11%
Project Exceptional 1	3%
Project Exceptional 2	1%
Family child care providers' training in early literacy curriculum	N=487
Completed SEEDS early literacy training	8%
Completed other early literacy training	6%

Note: *N varies because responses are derived from two different surveys.*

Years of experience providing licensed child care

Seventeen percent of licensed family home child care providers have less than three years of experience providing licensed care. Seventeen percent have three to five years of experience, and over half have six or more years of experience providing licensed care.

50. Licensed family child care homes: Providers' years of licensed child care experience

Providers' years of experience providing licensed care	N=481
<1 Year Experience	6%
1-2 Years Experience	11%
3-5 Years Experience	17%
6-10 Years Experience	22%
11-15 Years Experience	13%
16-20 Years Experience	10%
Over 20 Years Experience	17%
Missing	3%

Note: Total for column varies from 100% due to rounding.

Use of curriculum and lesson plans

Six percent of the licensed family home child care providers use the SEEDS curriculum. Forty percent use, in addition or instead, other types of curriculum or lesson plans, including Montessori (2%), High Scope (1%), and Reggio (<1%).

51. Licensed family child care homes: Use of curriculum and lesson plans

Use of curriculum and lesson plans	Percent
Uses SEEDS curriculum (N=487)	6%
Uses other curricula or lesson plans (N=481)	40%
Montessori	2%
High Scope	1%
Reggio	<1%
Other Curriculum	37%

Note: Bolded category is unduplicated total of the unbolded categories below.

Accountability and responsiveness to parents

Ninety-six percent of the licensed family home child care providers have written policies regarding expectations of and decisions about children's care. About two-thirds provide regular feedback to parents about their child's development; 21 percent do so in writing. Fifty-nine percent offer food according to family dietary preferences. Twenty-seven percent maintain a group size of six or fewer children per provider. Eight percent speak a language other than English. Six percent offer translated materials to parents who speak English as a second language.

52. Licensed family child care homes: Accountability and responsiveness to parents

Accountability and responsiveness to parents	N=481
Has written policies regarding expectations and decisions about children's care	96%
Provides regular feedback to parents about child's development*	66%
Offers food according to families' dietary preferences	59%
Maintains small group size (6 or fewer children per provider)	27%
Provides written reports to parents about child's development*	21%
Speaks language other than English	8%
Uses materials translated for parents in their language	6%

Note: These Ns are 487.