

From: Eileen Monahan <eileen@eileenmonahanconsulting.com>
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2021 4:51 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: ARPA Child Care Recovery Proposal
Attachments: ARPA Child Care COVID Recovery memo 5-28-21.pdf



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Dear Santa Barbara County Supervisors –

The consortium of partner agencies listed in this attached memo have been responding to the child care crisis created by the pandemic and recommend that 5% of American Recovery Plan Act funds from each of the Cities and the Counties be allocated to building a county-wide equitable and consistent emergency response infrastructure for child care, and to shoring up the child care industry.

This diverse group of agencies is highly experienced with the impact of the Coronavirus on the child care industry, knows specifically what is needed, and is committed to, and ready to continue the work.

Please consider this recommendation as you review, and decide upon, the most urgent strategies to be funded through ARPA.

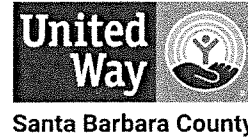
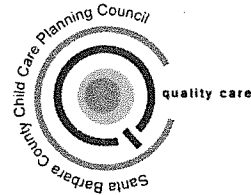
~ The Emergency Child Care Initiative Consortium members



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MEMO

To: The County of Santa Barbara and the Cities of Buellton, Carpinteria, Goleta, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and Solvang

Re: Pandemic Recovery and Rebuilding of the Santa Barbara County's Child Care Sector through the American Rescue Plan Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding

Child care is critical to Santa Barbara County's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This past year highlighted how child care is a pillar of our national and local infrastructure, and has exposed unsustainable vulnerabilities and inequities that existed pre-pandemic. Santa Barbara County's already fragile child care system needs a stronger infrastructure to ride out and recover from this pandemic as well as to ensure preparedness for the next emergency. It is imperative to our recovery that local governments work together to shore up the child care sector so children have safe, stable, and equitable environments to learn and grow and parents can return to work.



Recommendation: Invest 5% in the First 5 Years

The organizations endorsing this memo recommend that the County and cities of Santa Barbara County each contribute 5% of their American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) allocation towards building a strong child care infrastructure that will support the current systems of care, the ability for parents to return to work, and the preparedness of county-wide systems for future emergencies.

Problem

- ★ **Many working parents, particularly mothers, lost the ability to work due to lack of child care during this pandemic.** This created a mass exodus of women from the nation's workforce - an estimated 865,000 women (four times more than men) due to the demands of child care.^[i] Our economy cannot fully recover unless women fully participate in the workforce. Without access to reliable, equitable, and quality child care, parents cannot return to work, food and housing insecurity persist, child poverty is exacerbated, and the resulting family stress increases the incidence of child maltreatment, substance abuse, and family fracture. Investment in our child care sector is an essential prevention and recovery strategy that is critical to our community's overall recovery.

- ★ **Children have heightened critical needs due to the pandemic, and child care can help.** Extraordinary brain development occurs from birth to age 5 forming the bedrock for lifelong health, intellectual ability, emotional well-being, and social functioning. Many young children's social, emotional, and/or mental well-being has been impacted by the pandemic. Trauma faced during early child development may have long-term consequences across the lifespan.^[ii] Researchers expect a tidal wave of behavioral health needs, especially from children of vulnerable and marginalized communities. High quality, inclusive, affordable child care is critical to mitigating and addressing children's poor outcomes.

- ★ **The pandemic exacerbated the pre-existing shortage of needed child care, which cripples parents' ability to return to work and impedes on our local economic recovery.** In Santa Barbara County, there are an estimated 33,186 children 0-5 year olds, making up roughly 7.4% of the County's overall population.^[iii] Prior to the pandemic there were more than two children needing care for every space available and almost six children needing care for every infant-toddler space available.

- ★ **Child care programs have struggled to maintain operations with decreased revenue due to enrollment restrictions and increased costs from COVID-19 health and safety requirements and are now faced with a limited workforce as they expand.** Child care businesses in financial stress need immediate funding to keep their doors open. Some programs will survive, however many may not, which will further limit access for parents and amplify the inequities among disadvantaged and higher risk populations. The greatest challenge in reopening to pre-COVID-19 enrollment levels is due to a staffing shortage - qualified teachers had to leave the field due to concerns about the virus, program closures, or to care for their own children. Without qualified staff, programs cannot reopen or return to licensed capacity.

Solution: Invest 5% in the First 5 Years

A 5% investment of ARPA funds in a sustained, coordinated county-wide emergency response system and infrastructure that includes child care is essential for COVID-19 recovery. A proactive approach will address current needs, rebuild the 0-5 child care sector and workforce, increase access to child care so parents can return to work, mitigate children's exposure to toxic stress, and provide early identification and interventions to children and families who are struggling.

The pandemic's effects on child care in Santa Barbara County has been crippling, however it could have been worse without the heroic efforts of child care providers and the Santa Barbara County Emergency Child Care Initiative, which was formed in April 2020 with the support of United Way of Santa Barbara County and a consortium of local philanthropic partners including The Natalie Orfalea Foundation and Lou Buglioli, Jane and Paul Orfalea/the Audacious Foundation, Linked Foundation, James S. Bower

Foundation, Ann Jackson Foundation, Zegar Family Foundation, Henry and Lola Monroe Foundation, and Santa Barbara Foundation, as well as local early childhood advocacy organizations including Children's Resource & Referral, First 5 Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council. The initiative's aim was to offer funding for emergency child care programs in response to the urgent need to provide safe child care for health care providers and essential food distribution employees. Through the initiative's efforts, a framework was created to begin developing and implementing a child care emergency response system.

It is now imperative to continue this work through a sustained funding effort at the city and county level. Future child care funding from the State and Federal Governments will not be enough to recover the stability of the child care sector, let alone prepare our local infrastructures adequately for future emergencies.

Strategies

An emergency response infrastructure that includes supports for children, families, and the child care field will include the following:

- Create data and communication emergency response infrastructure that integrates the child care sector.
 - Development and implementation of a unified, integrated, comprehensive communication and data system that coordinates with the Office of Emergency Management, LegacyWorks Group, Public Health Department, Community Care Licensing, Child Care Planning Council, and Children's Resource and Referral. This will include a data/communication component with emergency response and coordination capabilities for all of the 593 private and public child care sites across the county.
- Direct support to child care programs to help rebuild and revitalize the child care sector and promote an equitable buildup of capacity and operational stability.
 - Flexible spending grants for up to 492 private child care sites for specific recovery and emergency preparedness needs (e.g. sustaining and growing the workforce, retrofitting for emergencies, and strengthening operational capacity). Government funded child care programs have received strong financial support through the pandemic, however private centers and family child care have not, thus amplifying disparities.
 - Funding for technical assistance and resources to private and public child care programs aimed at recovery and sustainable business operations.

If the County continues to reopen and COVID-19 child care guidelines are lifted, with these supportive strategies, it is estimated that:

- **At least 5,000 closed child care spaces can be restored.**
- **Programs can sustain the 6,000 child care spaces that are currently open.**

In sum, in order to recover from the pandemic it is imperative that 5% of the ARPA across Santa Barbara County is invested in child care for the first five years.

For more information and ways to contribute, please contact Eileen Monahan at eileen@eileenmonahanconsulting.com or Holly Goldberg, PhD at holly@hgoldberg.com.

[i] <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/28/928253674/stuck-at-home-moms-the-pandemics-devastating-toll-on-women>

[ii] Loades, M. E., Chatburn, E., Higson-Sweeney, N., Reynolds, S., Shafran, R., Brigden, A., Linney, C., McManus, M. N., Borwick, C., & Crawley, E. (2020). Rapid Systematic Review: The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness on the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in the Context of COVID-19. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2020.05.009>

[iii] U.S. Census Quick Facts (2018-2019) and <https://elneedsassessment.org/NeedsAssessment.aspx>

de la Guerra, Sheila

From: School <School@allsaintsbythesea.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 7:41 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: FW: Caronavirus American Rescue Plan Act-please present at your meeting today!!!

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Dear County of Santa Barbara - Clerk of the Board

As a preschool director I want to let you know that as a school that reopened in December of 2020 and has remained open throughout this school year, I have taken a huge hit in the income of the school. By following the pandemic guidelines and continuing to pay our teachers their salaries, I would hope that in the future there is a coordinated effort for emergency financial support for licensed preschools is the Santa Barbara community. When we opened back up after closing the school during the worst of the pandemic, our parents were able extremely thankful for their opportunity to return to work.

Sincerely,
Padric Davis
Director
All Saints by the Sea Parish School
84 Eucalyptus Lane, Santa Barbara

de la Guerra, Sheila

From: Beth Hassenplug <bhassenplug@fpcsb.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 8:03 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Public Comment Board of Supervisors Meeting

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Public Comment

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing to you today to express my concern for the state of childcare in Santa Barbara. As a director of a medium sized, licensed childcare center serving children from the age of three months to five years, I can tell you that we are barely hanging on. It is very difficult to keep our doors open as a private non-profit. We closed briefly in the spring of 2020 and reopened at a reduced capacity in June of 2020. The center managed to provide care for 50 hours a week for 70 families throughout this past year. Our licensed capacity is 85 and as COVID restriction are lifted we will struggle to get back to our licensed capacity. The reason is a staffing shortage. It is very difficult to hire qualified staff and to maintain operations when operating each month at a deficit.

I know how committed you are to the children and families of Santa Barbara. Thank You for your continued support of working families.

Recommendation: Invest 5% in the First 5 Years

I recommend that the County and cities of Santa Barbara County each contribute 5% of their American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) allocation towards building a strong child care infrastructure that will support the current systems of care, the ability for parents to return to work, and the preparedness of county-wide systems for future emergencies.

Respectfully,
Beth Hassenplug

Beth Hassenplug
Director
First Presbyterian Early Childhood Center
Ph 805 687-6362

de la Guerra, Sheila

From: yvonne_lowe@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 8:11 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Comment to Board Members for Today's 10 am meeting

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

My name is Yvonne Lowe and I am the Preschool Director for St. Mark's in-the-Valley Episcopal Church and Preschool. I appeal to you today as you discuss the dispersal of funds recently received from the Coronavirus American Rescue Plan Act.

As you know at the dawn of the pandemic much confusion filled our country, state and county. Should businesses, schools, child care centers remain open or close. For safety reasons many business closed, including all child care facilities in the Santa Barbara county.

Upon reopening the guidelines offered to the child care businesses were contradictory and numerous, creating further confusion. These guidelines included a reduction of children a facility could care for and gave instruction as to how a center needed to keep children separate, redefining is spaces, classes and outside areas. This created a demand for more employees servicing or caring for a smaller group of children — rations went from 1:12 to 1:10 or less. All of these guidelines coupled with increased supplies for cleaning, disinfecting and masks, gloves etc. decreased revenue for individual centers, yet increased costs. To become healthy, financially sustainable businesses may of these independent and private child care providers need assistance during this reopening period

Now as our state seriously discusses a full reopening, more confusion has arisen regarding the health and well being of children as they and their families and child care centers navigate the new vaccinated and unvaccinated pandemic world. Which guidelines will continue, while will fall away? to properly respond to these questions and to avoid further confusion, the need for a stronger emergency response that offers solid and sound communication - coordinates and supports our counties child care providers would help.

It has become evident child care is an intricate component of our society and of our economy. To fully reopen all county citizens need to return to the work force and with peace of mind, knowing their children are being well cared for.

Please consider directing funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 toward the building of a strong child care infrastructure that will support the current systems of care, allow parents to return to work and toward the preparedness of county-wide systems for future emergencies.

Thank you,

Yvonne Lowe
Preschool Director

St. Mark's in-the-Valley Episcopal Church and Preschool

805 688-1815

Yvonne_Lowe@comcast.net