

Supporting Home Based Child Care Providers In the Greater Hartford Region of Connecticut

A look at the Supports Available

Prepared for Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative



Prepared by

Maria Sierra
Family and Child Care Matters

June 2015

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INTRODUCTION

This report was commissioned by the Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative. The Collaborative is a project of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG), and is committed to promoting and sustaining high quality child care in the 29-town Capitol Region of Connecticut, served by HFPG. The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative is committed to turning ideas and solutions into actions, getting results, and moving forward to ensure that every child has access to high-quality early childhood programs.

During the spring of 2015, the Collaborative commissioned an online survey and follow up telephone interview, as part of a comprehensive research project to examine the support systems in place for home based childcare providers (HBCCP), both licensed by the Office of Early Childhood and non licensed. The objectives of this report are four fold:

1. To better understand the services presently available to home based child care providers.
2. To get an accurate picture of the types of organizations and networks/associations that currently support HBCCP in the greater Hartford Region.
3. To identify the primary funding sources of community based organizations (CBO) and networks/associations supporting HBCCP.
4. To use the study to identify how to better support HBCCP, both through infrastructure and programming.

This research effort is part of the Hartford Foundation's increased focus on home-based child care providers as critical partners in supporting children's holistic development and learning, and as an essential component of the larger early childhood system.

For more information: collaborative@hfp.org, or 860-548-1888 ext. 1002.

DEFINING HOME BASED CHILD CARE IN CONNECTICUT

Home based child care providers are an essential part of Connecticut's early childhood system. Thousands of families in Connecticut depend on child care. Research shows that a large proportion of young children spend a considerable amount of time—about 30 hours per week—in HBCC.¹ A quality learning environment is critical to young children's development and future learning and success.² Many parents prefer the same group setting, consistent relationships and cultural responsiveness of home based child care providers. The convenience and flexible hours that home based child care providers offer are often critical to working parents. Families using home-based child care -both licensed and non licensed- are more likely to prefer this care for infants and toddlers.³

Home based childcare (HBCC) is one choice families can select. HBCC is a service wherein child care is delivered in a provider's home.

- HBCCP, whose homes are licensed by the Division of Licensing of the Office of Early Childhood, are able to care for up to six children and that includes the provider's children who are not in school full-time. HBCCP may have a maximum of two infants in their care. In addition to six full-time children, a HBCCP may have up to three school age children for up to three hours before and after school, during the regular school year only.
- A "group home" family child provider is licensed to care for a minimum of seven and a maximum of twelve children, and is required to have an assistant present during operating hours.
- License-exempt home based child care providers often referred to as "family, friends, and neighbors" (FFN)—are legally allowed to care for children to whom they are related in the provider's home or to provide the child care in the children's home.

HOME BASED CHILD CARE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

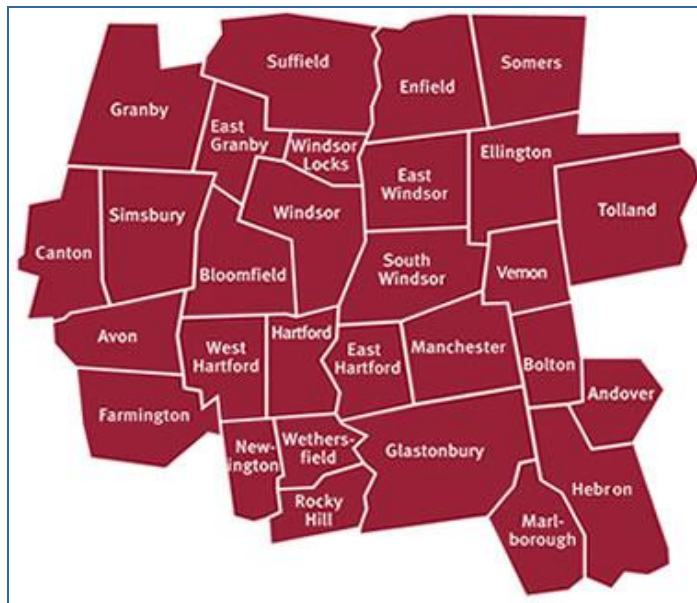
Community based organizations and home based child care provider networks/associations

Information about the support systems for home-based child care providers is not plentiful. Anecdotal information indicates that a broad collection of CBO and HBCCP networks/associations offer direct support to HBCCP in the region. Presently, state and local agencies, private foundations, CBO, and HBCC networks which offer support to the HBCCP are staffed and funded programs that provide direct support and services. HBCCP networks/associations tend to be volunteer- directed, peer groups led and organized by providers themselves without paid staff.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Study, design and delivery

The data collection process inquiry for this report primarily focused on CBO and HBCCP networks/association within the Hartford Foundation's region. These towns include: Andover, Avon, Bloomfield, Bolton, Canton, East Hartford, East Granby, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, Wethersfield, West Hartford, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.



Map source: www.hfpg.org

CBO and HBCCP networks/associations located within the 29-town Hartford Foundation region were identified, selected and invited to participate in the study. Participants and contacts for the study were located with the help of 2-1-1's provider database listings, internet listings of home based child care providers' networks, listings of state funded family resources centers, and by researching town websites. Telephone calls were placed to town and community personnel seeking contact information. Children's librarians, school readiness liaisons, early childhood instructors, family center directors, and city officials were identified through referrals, or via the internet. Telephone calls were placed to connect with CBOs and HBCCP networks and invite them to take a survey and encourage their participation. It is important to note, a significant number of the service providers invited to participate (thirty-three), did not do so, even after multiple follow up attempts were made to encourage their participation. In communities where limited or no information was available, additional outreach efforts via telephone conversations were conducted directly with home child care providers, in select towns, to help fill in the gaps about available support services. Of the seven associations identified on the 2-1-1 Statewide Family Child Care Association list as providing service within the Hartford Foundation region, two networks/associations participated in the survey. Of the remaining five associations: two associations have closed and no longer provide services; three associations did not respond to the survey invitation or phone calls.

An online survey using SurveyMonkey was created and administrated in the spring of 2015. The online survey was emailed to a combination of 65 CBO's and HBCCP networks/associations. Survey participants received the online survey and were asked questions related to their HBCCP support services. Survey participants were asked a series of 27 questions. Participants were asked to describe the services they provide, the goals for those services, the resources needed to expand these services and the challenges they face in service delivery. SurveyMonkey collected and analyzed the data. The responses to these survey questions have been compiled, analyzed, and are presented in this study.

Results of Home Based Child Care Provider Survey

Response by Town

Of the 32 participants who responded; only one participant did not meet the inclusion criteria and one participant did not self-identify. Inclusion criteria stipulated respondents must work directly with HBCCP within the 29-town Hartford Foundation region of Connecticut.

Table 1: Response by Town

Town	Number Received	Survey Participant
Andover	1	AHM Youth and Family Services, Inc
Avon	0	
Bloomfield	2	Laurel Family Resource Center, Prosser Public Library
Bolton	0	
Canton	0	
East Granby	1	East Granby Public Library
East Hartford	2	East Hartford School Readiness, East Hartford Family Resource Centers
East Windsor	1	East Windsor Family Resource Center
Ellington	0	
Enfield	1	Enfield Family Resource Center
Farmington	0	
Glastonbury	0	
Granby	0	
Hartford	9	Center for Latino Progress, Catholic Charities, City of Hartford, Capital Community College, RAMBUH Family Center, Burns FRC/Village for Families and Children, Inc, Sand School Family Resource Center, Family Life Education, Hartford Public Library
Hebron	2	AHM Youth and Family Services, Inc, Windham Area Family Child Care Association
Manchester	2	Manchester Family Resource Center, ECHN Family Resource Center
Marlborough	1	AHM Youth and Family Services, Inc
Newington	1	Lucy Robbins Welles Library
Rocky Hill	0	
Simsbury	0	
Somers	0	
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South Windsor	0	
Suffield	0	
Tolland	1	Tolland Family Resource Center
Vernon	1	Vernon School Readiness
West Hartford	3	West Hartford Public Library, Great By Eight, Family Resource Center at Charter Oak Academy
Wethersfield	0	
Windsor	1	Windsor Public Library
Windsor Locks	0	

Organizations and Networks which Provide Services in Addition to Home based Childcare Support

Ninety percent (90%) of responding organizations and associations/networks provide other services in addition to HBCC services. Ten percent (10 %) do not provide other services.

Table 2: Organizations and Associations/Networks that provide other services

Answer Choice	Responses
Yes	90.32%
No	9.68%
Total Respondents: 31	

Other services include:

- employment
- citizenship classes
- parenting classes
- parent/guardian education programs,
- parent leadership
- ESL and GED classes
- Raising Readers
- Triple P parenting class
- Parents as Teachers training
- Family literacy
- after school/enrichment activities
- preschool programs
- youth development programs
- parent and child advocacy
- prevention
- case management for families
- information about early care and health
- overseeing the town's School Readiness funding
- transitions for preschools
- data collecting on young children
- reading activities
- community workshops
- citywide system capacity-building,
- Diaper Bank
- Nurturing Families program
- mental health services
- basic needs support
- home visiting
- college course

Direct services to Home Based Child Care Providers

Participants were asked to check all of the direct services which they provide to HBCCP. Eighty three percent (83%) of the direct services provided by CBO and HBCCP networks/associations are specialized trainings and workshops in early care and education. These workshops include but are not limited to CPR and First Aid, and Medication Administration certification. Seventy percent (70%) provide free materials and resources. Fifty three percent (53%) indicate that home visits are made to support and promote health and safety and learning environments. Forty percent (40%) percent provide network and peer support. Other support services are listed below in Table 3.

Table 3: Direct Services

Answer Choices	
Workshops for providers to improve quality and skill building (child development, curriculum, etc.)	83%
Help providers to meet state licensing requirements	30%
Provide free materials and resources	70%
USDA's Food and Nutrition Services	3%
Visits to homes that support family child care homes environments (room arrangement, daily scheduling, modeling developmentally appropriate practices)	53%
Administer Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS)	3%
Provide on-site technical assistance or coaching to improve quality	20%
Network and peer support meetings	40%
Quality improvement grants	10%
Distance learning opportunities/Web-based services (on-line courses, etc.)	0%
Policy/advocacy on state and federal levels on behalf of home-based providers	10%
Financial management support (budgeting, personnel management, subsidy management)	10%
Small business training (help with taxes, recruitment and enrolling, etc.)	10%
CDA on line course	0%
Other	33%
Total Respondents: 30	

Other services include: collection and delivery of books to HBCCP's home, offering a resource library, Care4Kids application support, language translation for non-English speakers, playgroups, Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, and small business marketing initiatives.

Paid/Volunteer Staffing Ratio

Ninety percent (90%) respondents report their staff is paid and ten percent responded (10%) their association/network is volunteer led.

Table 4: Staffing

Answer Choices	Responses
Staff Led	90%
Volunteer Led	10%
Total Respondents: 30	

Frequency of services

Twenty one percent (21%) of survey respondents indicated services are provided weekly. Twenty eight percent (28%) provide services monthly. Forty one percent (41%) responded services are offered to HBCCP on an as-needed basis. Three percent (3%) report another time frame.

Table 5: Frequency of Services

Answer Choices	Responses
Weekly	21%
Monthly	28%
Every six months	0%
Once a year	0%
As needed	41%
Other	10%
Total Respondents: 29	

Other responses: Other time frames are based upon the offering and dates of special events such as field trips, workshops and program and monitoring duration period, and training dates.

Outreach and Methods of Communication

Eighty three percent (83%) of respondents indicated telephone calls are the primary method used to communicate with the providers. Fifty seven percent (57%) report their preferred method is emailing. Almost half of organizations and networks- forty seven percent (47%) stated home visits are also a means of maintaining communication with HBCCP.

Table 6: Methods of Communication

Answer Choices	Responses
Telephone calls	83%
Emails	57%
Website	30%
Home visits	47%
Other	20%
Total Respondents: 30	

Other responses: Twenty percent (20%) of other responses included word of mouth, combination of all communication means listed above, early childhood meetings, social media, flyers, and mailing lists.

Language(s) in which services are provided

The vast majority of organizations and networks provide services in English and over a third of the responses offer services in Spanish.

Table 7: Language in which services are provided

Answer Choices	Responses
English	96.67%
Spanish	36.67%
Total Respondents: 30	

Licensing Status

According to survey respondents, eighteen responded they work with licensed HBCCP. Seventeen responded they provide services to Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) HBCCP. Nine responded they work with HBCCP who are in the process of securing licensing by the State of Connecticut. Four responded they provide services to HBCCP with licensed group homes.

Table 8: Licensing Status

Answer Choices	Responses
Licensed home based child care providers	18
Group home child care providers	4
Family, Friend and Neighbor child care providers (FFN)	17
Starting or in process of becoming licensed	9
Total Respondents: 27	

Care-4-Kids

Forty five percent (45%) of survey respondents report that more than half of the providers served accept Care4Kids child care subsidy. Thirty two percent (32%) report that less than half of their providers receive Care4Kids, and thirteen percent of responses indicate that all their providers accept Care4Kids subsidy.

Table 9: HBCCP who receive Care4Kids

Answer Choices	Responses
None	9.09%
Less than half	31.82%
More than half	45.45%
All	13.64%
Total Respondents: 22	

Funding Sources

Sixty four percent (64%) of the participants identified grants as their primary financial source. Thirty two percent (32%) identified sources other than the ones listed. Private foundation support composed twenty four percent (24%). School readiness quality enhancement funds were reported as program funding by twenty (20%) of the responses. Membership dues are a source of funding for eight percent (8%) of respondents.

Table 10: Funding Source

Answer Choices	Responses
School readiness quality enhancement	20%
Private foundation support	24%
Grants	64%
Membership dues	8%
Other	32%
Total Respondents: 25	

Other funding sources reported: HFPG Brighter Future Initiative, Federal CACFP funds, municipal, and state funding and FAFSA

Funding Requirements

Slightly over half (55%) of survey responses indicated they are required through organizational policies or funding sources to support HBCCP. Forty five percent (45%) indicate they were not required to support HBCCP.

Table 11: Organizations and networks/associations required to provide services to HBCCP

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	55%
No	45%
Total Respondents 29	



Goals of the organization/network in providing support to Home Based Child Care Providers

Survey respondents were asked to identify organizations and network/association goals.

- To provide education, quality care, and health and safety of children
- To ensure high quality care
- To support providers to succeed and provide great service to the families they work with
- To ensure compliance with CACFP requirements, promote healthy eating

practices, improve quality of learning experiences and promote networking among providers

- To provide support and networking and education
- To ensure high quality care
- To ensure positive outcomes for children, and support for providers
- To provide early literacy opportunities for the children in their care and to make the providers aware of what they can do in their settings, make known the materials available for their use and for the parents of the children in their care
- To collaborate with HBCCP
- To provide education to strengthen developmentally appropriate practices
- To provide books as needed to the providers
- To offer literacy enrichment to HBCCP

- To encourage best practices
- To obtain the national credential CDA
- To improve quality, and share ideas
- To ensure all children enter kindergarten on even footing with their peers, ready to learn
- To develop bilingual /bicultural licensed providers
- To provide support for them to maintain the quality of their programs and to enable them to network with other providers
- To improve the quality of their programs, preparing children to enter school ready to learn and succeed. Parents will strengthen their family functioning and increase their knowledge of early childhood development
- To provide training and support
- To provide excellent literature to children
- To support each other to enhance our daycares

Trainings Provided

Support services for HBCCP include a variety of trainings. Seventy percent (70%) responded that trainings were focused on developmentally appropriate practices and learning activities. Fifty six percent (56%) provide nutrition training. Fifty two percent (52%) reported they offer family engagement training. Forty eight percent (48%) reported providing First Aid and CPR. Forty four percent (44%) report offering Health/Safety, child development assessment, and curriculum trainings. Twenty six percent (26%) offer mandated reporting trainings, and twenty two percent (22%) provide training to cover the requirements for State licensing.

Table 12: Trainings provided to support HBCCP

Answer Choices	Responses
First Aid/CPR	48%
Licensing process and requirements	22%
Nutrition	56%
Health/Safety	44%

Child abuse/mandated reporting	26%
Developmental appropriate practices and learning activities	70%
Curriculum	44%
Child development assessment tools (ASQ, Gold, etc)	44%
Family engagement	52%
None	0%
Other	
Total Respondents: 27	

Other trainings include: Kindergarten transition, Triple P Parenting, Early literacy, National Association Mental Illness Basics, Early Learning Development Strands (ELDS), Infant-Toddler Mental Health training, 1,2,3 Magic! Discipline training

Participant Outreach

When asked how HBCCP know or hear about their organization or associations/ network, eighty percent (80%) of survey participants responded they utilize community outreach efforts. The results also indicate seventy three percent (73%) of organizations and networks report HBCCP know about their services by word of mouth and forty percent (40%) of participants said HBCCP learn about organization or associations/ network through websites.

Table 13: Participant Outreach

Answer Choices	Responses
Website	40%
Community outreach efforts	80%
Word of mouth	73.33%
Other	16.67%
Total Respondents: 30	

Other responses include: pamphlet distribution, emails, and referrals by former clients.

Challenges Encountered When Providing Services to Home Based Child Care Providers

Survey participants were asked to identify any challenges they have encountered in providing services to HBCCP

Responses:

- Low attendance at activities
- Getting ECE to agree to home visits and participation
- HBCCP are not the targeted audience
- Hard to reach and engage providers
- Staffing turnover
- Restrictions of CACFP funds, not being able to purchase food for meetings, limited training
- Trying to increase membership to fill board of officers vacancies
- It is difficult to contact home care providers
- FFN providers fly under the radar
- Schedule: Finding times that work for child care providers,
- Time: Providers don't have time during day and don't want to be out at night
- Hard to get folks to come out at the end of a busy work day
- Travel arrangements to the library
- It is very difficult for providers to attend anything during the day. There are several providers who choose to not engage with opportunities directly so we do ask providers we know, to share with those they meet. At times I have met providers who are suspicious at first of the council's intentions.
- Encouraging them to participate in trainings
- Retention
- Funds: One of the biggest challenges at the moment is lack of funds to offer the program to more providers in the community. We struggle to offer materials and equipment to providers that are opening their business, with more funding the program can expand services.
- We used to have funding from the quality enhancement grant years ago when it was fully funded that also helped support them, and budget is always tight for FRC, so we have to do a lot of free or small cost events and trainings
- Making contact and connecting with home based child care providers to inform them of our services
- Providing speakers that are knowledgeable in family daycare

Expansion of Services

If organizations and associations/networks had the capacity to expand services for HBCCP, expansion of service(s) would include:

Responses

- Home visits; more professional development
- More training workshops with food and onsite coaching
- We would love to have a stronger connection with the family home day care community to encourage members to take advantage of existing Great by 8 programming, and better address particular concerns / issues.
- We would schedule trainings at a higher frequency
- Bus small groups to the library and do more outreach to these small groups.
- More mentoring, encouraging more pooling of resources
- Courses for CDA Infant and Toddler
- We used to do more home visiting and working with them individually, plus more support for those attaining their license.
- A condensed version of hot topics on child development, warning signs, kindergarten readiness, and whatever the providers would feel would benefit them and the families they serve.
- Lending library of resources
- We will offer more trainings, workshops, materials and equipment to day care providers. We will be able to help or pay for low income non-licensed child care providers with the licensing process. We will be able to have more support by hiring other staff member to the program. We will be able to obtain more and variable materials for the children weekly activities improving the quality of the services.
- Would provide more of the same.
- Workshops. More visits and support
- Early learning and literacy in home programs

Resources and Support Needed To Expand Services

Eighty four percent (84%) of respondents indicated additional funding is needed to support service expansion. Additional funding would be used to cover expenses such as food for trainings, child care, facilities, materials for trainings, and stipends for provider attendance. Almost half reported they would use new funding for resources and materials. Forty four percent (44%) cited they would hire more staff. Thirty two percent (32%) reported that the development of evaluation tools to measure effectiveness of services would be instrumental in expanding services. Sixteen percent (16%) indicated additional technology would help support program expansion.

Table 14: resources and support need for expansion of services

Answer Choices	Responses
Professional development opportunities to build staff capacity to work with home based child care providers	28%
Funding for workshops and related expenses (food, child care, facilities, materials for training, stipends for provider attendance)	84%
Development of evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of services provided	32%
Program Coordination/Additional staff	44%
Resources/Materials	52%
Technology	16%
Other	20%
Total Respondents: 25	

Note: Other additional resources desired for program expansion include small van and driver for transportation.



Supporting Community Partnerships

Organizations and networks identified organizations they partner with in providing services to HBCCP's.

Responses:

- Early childhood Collaboratives
- Family Resource Centers
- Libraries
- Hospitals
- School Readiness Councils

- Child Care Union
- Statewide Supports,(Help Me Grow, All Our Kin, 2-1-1 Infoline, Care-4-Kids, CT-AIMH, EHDI)
- CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC)
- Philanthropy
- Higher Ed

Membership

Most of the participants, eighty six percent (86%) responded that they did not require membership in order to belong to the organization or association/network to receive the services. Fourteen percent (14%) did require HBCCP become members in order to access services.

Table 15: Membership requirement

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	14%
No	86%
Total Respondents: 29	

Cost to become a Member

The results of the survey show for sixty two percent of the organizations/ networks there is no cost for HBCCP to become a member. Seven percent (7%) of respondents affirmed there is a cost to become a member. Thirty one of the survey participants report this question did not apply to them.

Table 16: Membership Fee

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	7%
No	62%
N/A	31%
Total Respondents: 29	



Cost to Receive Services

Eighty six percent of 86% of the survey responses indicate there is no cost to HBCCP's to receive services or participate in activities. Fourteen percent (14%) affirmed there is a cost to receive services and participate in activities.

Table 17: Cost to HBCCP to receive services

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	14%
No	86%
Total Respondents: 29	

Note: Other comments include there are additional costs to participate in field trips, to attend workshops and training, and annual dues.

Number of Years Service Has Been Offered

Sixty eight percent (68%) of the responses indicate their organization or network has provided services to HBCCP for over ten years. Twenty percent (20%) answered six to ten years, and twelve percent (12%) have provided services up to five years.

Table 18: Number of years services have been provided

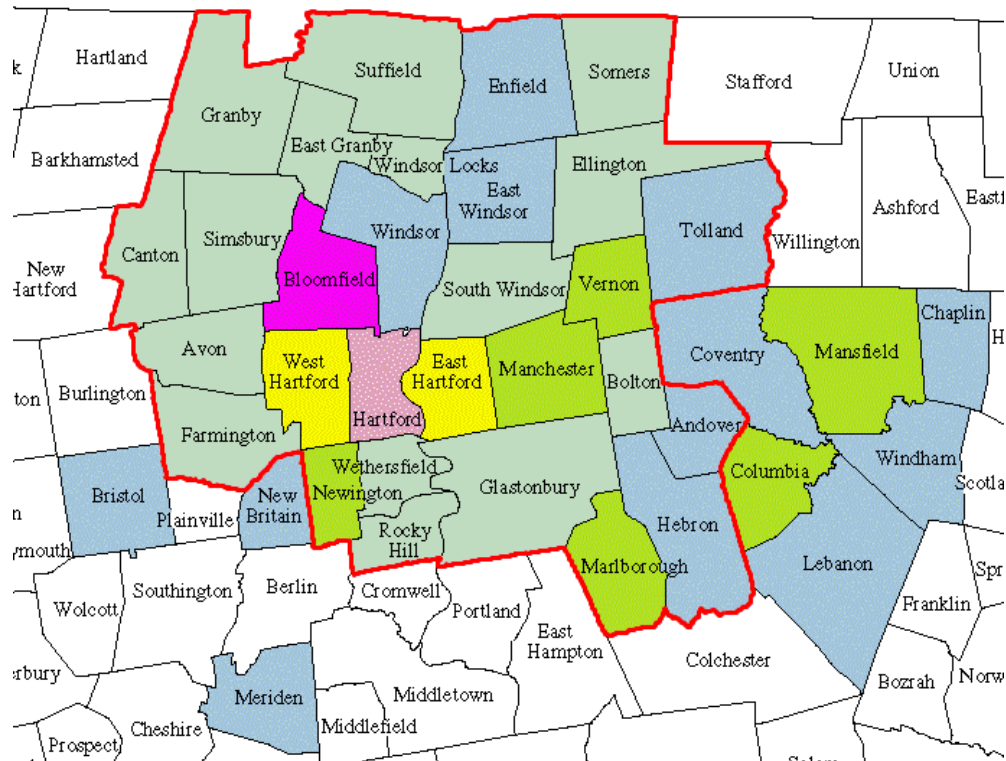
Answer	Number of Years
0-1 year	0%
2-5 years	12%
6-10 years	20%
10 years or more	68%
Total Respondents: 25	



Cities and towns where service is offered

Survey respondents were asked to identify the towns and cities where their services to HBCCP are offered within the Hartford Foundation region. The following map identifies the areas which correspond to survey responses. See Table 19.

Table 19: Cities and Towns where Services are provided



Map of the 29 town Hartford Foundation Region

Key to Map:

Grey: Information not available

Blue: 1 organization/network/association

Green: 2 organizations/network/association

Purple: 3 organizations/network/association

Yellow: 4 organization/network/association

Pink: 11 organizations/network/association

Town	Number of Organization/Network/Associations in town that responded
Andover	1
Avon	0
Bloomfield	3
Bolton	0
Bristol	1
Canton	0
Chaplin	1
Columbia	2
Coventry	1

East Granby	0
East Hartford	4
East Windsor	1
Ellington	0
Enfield	1
Farmington	0
Glastonbury	0
Granby	0
Hartford	11
Hebron	1
Lebanon	1
Manchester	2
Mansfield	2
Marlborough	2
Meriden	1
New Britain	1
Newington	2
Rocky Hill	0
Simsbury	0
Somers	0
South Windsor	0
Suffield	0
Tolland	1
Vernon	2
West Hartford	4
Wethersfield	0
Windham	1
Windsor	1
Windsor Locks	0
Total Respondents: 29	

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Greater Hartford HOME BASED CHILD CARE SUPPORT

Based upon the responses of the 32 survey participants, the majority of support services available for HBCCP come from a variety of staffed community organizations and a limited number of volunteer home based child care provider networks/ associations, within the Capitol Region. Most of the community organizations responding are centrally located, in-and-around Hartford, while the networks/associations are located in the outlying areas of the Capitol region.

These CBO's and networks/associations universally focus their efforts on improving the quality of home based child care provided in these communities by offering workshops, materials, and site visits to help build HBCCP's knowledge of, and skills in replicating, best practices in the areas of curriculum development, learning activities, family engagement, nutrition and First Aid/CPR, to help providers improve care. It should be noted that less than one-third of these support organizations focus their efforts on helping providers meet state licensing requirements (while reporting that about 33% of clients served are working toward licensing). Of great significance is the uniform absence of any anecdotal evidence of direct services being offered to monitor, formally measure and assess improvements in child care quality among individual providers served by these organizations or networks/associations.

Funding for organizations, mandated to provide services to HBCCP's, comes primarily from federal, state and local government and private grants. Funding includes federally supported USDA Food and Nutrition services, Department of Education school readiness programs for family resource centers, private grant funding for the Brighter Initiative for Family Centers, and local municipal funding for public libraries and specific town initiatives. The two networks/associations responding to the survey, receive membership dues, and count dues as an important funding stream. In addition, it appears that

associations are able to apply for quality improvement funding if they belong to a town with a school readiness grant. Almost half of the HBCCP's who receive services from community organizations and networks receive Care 4 Kids funding.

When asked to identify the biggest challenges in achieving the goals of their organization, to help home based providers improve the quality of their care, these organizations consistently pointed to the difficulty in contacting, meeting with and maximizing the utilization of services by the providers in communities they serve. Another ongoing challenge for most community and network/associations is securing additional funding. Community based organizations expressed frustration with the lack of funding available.

“One of the biggest challenges at the moment is lack of funds to offer the program to more providers in the community. We struggle to offer materials and equipment to providers that are opening their business, with more funding the program can expand services”

~ Community based organization staff member

Research also reveals another challenge is a lack of support services for providers in the rural suburbs. As one HBCCP in Canton, expressed “I would love to have an organization located nearby which would allow me to meet up with other providers and have the opportunity to bounce things off other providers.” Another HBCCP, located in Suffield commented “I do not know of any organizations that support HBCCP in my area. I am even thinking of closing down my program. It is getting harder to find the trainings that I need.” Specifically trainings, peer support and in- home program visits to providers in these towns are lacking.

Creating a better service network

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered to Hartford Area Childcare Collaborative.

1. Conduct additional research to gain an accurate picture of the organizations and networks serving HBCCP’s in HFIG’s Greater Hartford Region not participating in this study (especially those in the rural suburbs).
2. Create and/or support development of a centralized clearing house or website to provide more effective HBCCP support, by connecting efforts of CBO’s and networks/associations to offer consistent quality assessment tools, a one-stop-shop website for providers, sharing information about available funding, area training schedules, LIVE Webinars on licensing, curriculum, staff development, and a complete and updated list of organizations, networks/associations and home based child care providers throughout the region.
3. Advocate for increased public and private funding for Family Resource Centers
4. Establish four sub-regional associations and host four sub-regional leadership forums annually, to bring funders, CBO’s, network/associations and HBCCP’s together to discuss critical challenges to offering quality home based child care.
5. Fund a “circuit rider” position to establish regular contact with the sub-regional associations to ensure effective communication and information sharing; on-going coaching & mentoring; building local provider networks/associations and funder advocacy.

*“We used to have funding from the quality enhancement grant years ago when it was fully funded that also help support them, and budget is always tight for FRC, so we have to do a lot of free or small cost events and trainings.” ~
Family Resource Center Staff member*

The evidence compiled in this report indicates, however, that CBO’s and existing network/associations are offering a broad range of critical services to HBCCP’s to assist them in providing quality care and education for young children in these communities.

Renewed commitment to strengthening a coordinated network of home based child care services, and additional funding from both public and private sources in support of the unique role of HBCCP's in shaping our future leaders, is a vital investment necessary to ensure that every child and family has access to high-quality early childhood programs.

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