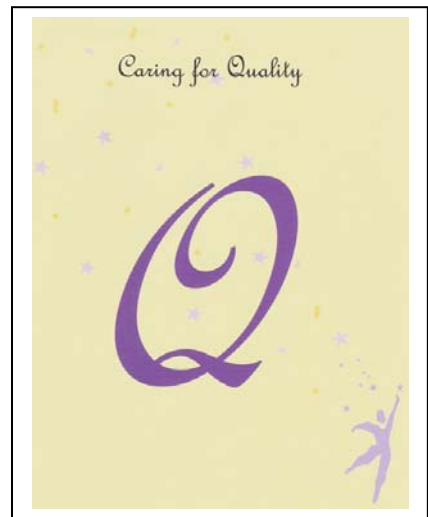


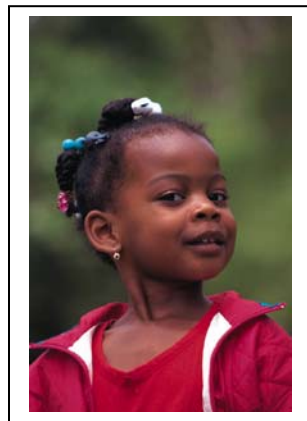
The Caring for Quality Project: Supporting and Connecting Home-Based Child Care Providers

Goal: The Caring for Quality Project supports and connects both registered and license-exempt (informal) family child care providers through home visits and networking meetings in order to increase the quality of care provided to young children.

Partners: This project is a joint effort of the Rochester Childfirst Network Family Child Care Satellites of Greater Rochester, Family Resource Centers of Crestwood Children's Center, and the Cornell Early Childhood Program. Funding is provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Monroe County Department of Human Services, Rochester Area Community Foundation, Rochester's Child, New York State Department of Health, and the Wegmans Food Markets.



Project Components:



Home Visits: Home visits take place twice a month for one year. Content is based on the Parents as Teachers Curriculum for family child care providers and the Family Development Credential. Home visits are provided by 5 expert staff (3 full time positions) from the Rochester Childfirst Network Family Child Care Satellites of Greater Rochester and the Family Resource Centers of Crestwood Children's Center.

Networking Meetings: Networking meetings provide support and information to providers. They are facilitated by the home visitors and occur once a month with small groups of no more than 6 to 7 family child care providers. Content, location, and time of the meetings are determined based on the needs and requests of the participating providers.

Evaluation:

This project involves an evaluation conducted by the Cornell Early Childhood Program. A pre-, post-test, random assignment design and a variety of measures are employed to assess project outcomes including: quality of the family child care home; provider characteristics (e.g. registered versus license-exempt status, utilization of the Child Adult Care Food Program and other services, job satisfaction, perceived social support, child rearing beliefs, and child development knowledge); and child cognitive and social development. A process study is also underway to document the challenges and successes of implementing the program.

"The Caring For Quality Program has given me so many new ways to play with the children. Also, I liked seeing how much they have grown throughout the program. I learned that children learn in different ways. I've seen my grandson grow in his vocabulary and social skills in so many ways. I feel the Program is a wonderful asset for people to use."
—Registered Child Care Provider caring for three grandchildren



Participants:

“I have enjoyed the program and I have learned something from every visit. I am really happy I joined!”

–Registered Child Care Provider

Participants in the project are 120 family child care providers (two waves of 60 providers each). These home-based providers include license-exempt (informal) and registered caregivers who provide care in the Rochester, NY area during day-time hours. Providers must have at least one child (age 0-47 months) in their care for at least 20 hours per week in order to participate. To enroll in the program, they must also expect to provide

care for at least 6 months and speak English. Two thirds of providers who qualify are randomly assigned to the program group and one third to the comparison group.

	Program	Comparison
Registered	40	20
Informal	40	20
Total in Project	80	40



*Child Care Provider Characteristics**

- 58% African American/Black; 33% White; 6% Hispanic; 2% Other
- Age Range: 25 to 65+ years; 29% between 25 and 39 years; 55% between the age of 40 and 54 years; 16% 55+ years
- 98% female
- 87% have at least a High School education
- 50% family income less than \$30,000 per year (before taxes)
- 57% care for children of no relation; 35% care for grandchildren; 25% care for children of a family member; 22% care for their own children; 16% care for children of a friend

*Child Characteristics**

- 54% African American; 28% White; 10% Hispanic; 6% Bi- or Multi-racial
- 5% under 1 year; 32% 1 to 2 years; 29% 3 to 4 years; 34% 5 years or older

Key Findings from Year 1:

What is the overall quality of family child care programs before CFQ participation?

The overall quality in observed family child care programs was *minimal* on average (Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale score=3.93 with a range from 1.91 to 5.94) at the start of the program.

How do family child care settings change when providers participate in the CFQ program?

FDCRS Observations

- The quality of family child care programs increases when providers participate in the CFQ project. In the program group, overall Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale (FDCRS) scores increased from 3.92 to 4.20. In contrast, there was a significant drop in overall FDCRS scores from 4.32 at Time 1 to 3.67 at Time 2 for the comparison group.

* Based on Year 1 Participants



- The largest increases for the program group were made on the language and reasoning, learning activities, and adult needs subscales of the FDCRS. FDCRS subscale scores for the comparison group tended to decrease from time 1 to time 2.
- Nearly ¾ (74%) of providers who were rated as being more engaged in the program by their home visitors showed an increase in their FDCRS scores. For providers judged to be less engaged, fewer than half (47%) showed an increase in their scores over time.



Home Visitor Observations

Home visitors recorded their observations of how providers changed as a result of their participation in the CFQ program. These qualitative findings highlight the diverse changes providers were able to make over the year-long program period.

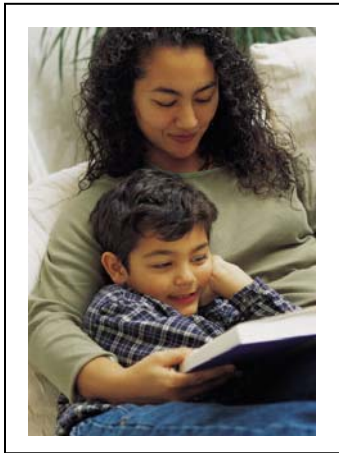
Area of Change	Illustration
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She moved her day care area from a semi-light room to a much lighter, brighter area. • Presence of children’s books in the environment. • Increased number of developmentally appropriate toys.
Importance of Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She learned the importance of actually playing with the children and doing hands on projects with them. • Greater understanding of importance of play for children; increased comfort and willingness to be playful. • Increased provider initiated learning activities with children.
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She learned that she didn’t need to be so controlling of the children’s play and activities. • Softening of disciplinary “strictness”. • Increased consistency with limit setting.
Meeting Individual Children’s Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She gave more individual attention to each child. • She was more aware of following the children’s lead. • She learned how to take an activity and make changes so it was usable for children of different ages.
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased sense of professionalism. • Continued professional development-provider indicated intent to earn CDA. • Developing concept of “program”. • Joined the Child and Adult Care Food Program. • Increased attendance at other workshops. • Clarifying reasonable work schedule (day care hours) to balance work and family demands. • Expanding her own activities and thinking ahead with plans. • Increased recognition of importance of routine and establishment of routine for children.
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [She] let down her defenses, opened up more, listened more. • Increased confidence, goal setting, and movement towards greater independence. • She became a little more flexible. • Increased awareness of her power as a positive role model.

How does program quality relate to informal versus registered status?

Focusing only on providers who participated in the program (no comparison providers), informal providers as a group scored lower on the FDCRS than the registered providers both before and after the program. However, *both the informal and registered providers showed significant increases on their overall FDCRS scores.* These findings suggest that the CFQ program increases quality for both informal and registered home-based child care providers.



What do providers like best about the program?



“[The opportunity for] regular interaction with early childhood professionals in Family Child Care.”

“It was nice having someone come to the home and share new ideas with me. I also thought the parent hand-outs were great.”

“The visits from [my home visitor]. The children responded well and seemed excited about it. It helped us to incorporate more creative activities.”

“My [home visitor]! I think I enjoyed visits from [her] as much as the children did.”

“It was interesting to learn what types of activities are educational to children that I didn’t realize.”

“I am glad to participate in this program- it definitely helped us build our daycare- and showed us new ideas. Thank you for offering us this opportunity!”

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