

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
Phone 303-866-5700
www.cdhs.state.co.us



John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

March 4, 2014

The Honorable Dianne Primavera, Chair
Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
200 E. Colfax Avenue, Room 271
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Representative Primavera:

Enclosed please find a legislative report to the House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee from the Department of Human Services on the Child Care Resource and Referral System in Colorado.

Section 26-6-116 C.R.S. (2013) requires the Department to specify, at a minimum, the entity that the Department has currently designated to administer the system and the qualifications of that entity to serve in such a capacity, the types of services that are being provided pursuant to the system, the numbers and type of persons receiving such services, and the cost associated with the system by December 1st of each year.

The Department apologizes for the delay in getting this report submitted to the Legislative. This report deadline was not reflected on the Office of Early Childhood's "Legislative Report Submission Deadline Calendar" and was completed as soon as it was noticed. Since that time, all staff who manage programs have had this calendar shared with them to prevent this from happening in the future.

If you require further information or have additional questions, please contact the Department's Legislative Liaison, Sarah Sills, at Sarah.Sills@state.co.us or 303-866-3019.

Sincerely,

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

Enclosure

Cc: Representative Dave Young, Vice Chair, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Beth McCann, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Sue Schafer, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Jonathan Singer, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Max Tyler, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Amy Stephens, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Kathleen Conti, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Janak Joshi, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Lois Landgraf, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Justin Everett, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Representative Jim Wilson, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
Elizabeth Burger, Public Health Care and Human Services Committee Staff
Bettina Schneider, Budget Analyst, Office of State Planning and Budgeting
Katherine Blair, Health Policy Advisor, Governor's Office
Legislative Council Library
State Library
Nikki Hatch, Deputy Executive Director of Operations
Dee Martinez, Deputy Executive Director of Enterprise Partnerships
Melissa Wavelet, Director Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes
Clint Woodruff, Budget Director
Mary Anne Snyder, Director Office of Early Childhood
Sarah Sills, Executive and Legislative Liaison
Dan Drayer, Communications Director



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OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
Mary Anne Snyder, Director

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Reggie Bicha
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Child Care Resource and Referral System in Colorado Per 26-6-116. C.R.S. (2013) March 1, 2014

The Colorado Department of Human Services designed and developed a Child Care Resource and Referral system to assist in promoting availability, accessibility, and quality of child care services in Colorado. The Department has the authority to designate, and enter into a contract, with a private or public entity responsible for administering the system. On December 1st of each year, the Department is required to report to the Health and Human Services Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives concerning the Child Care Resource and Referral system. Pursuant to 26-6-116. C.R.S. (2013), the report is required to specify, at a minimum, the entity that the Department has currently designated to administer the system and the qualifications of that entity to serve in such a capacity, the types of services that are being provided pursuant to the system, the numbers and types of persons receiving such services, and the cost associated with the system.

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System Administration and Qualifications

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood currently contracts with Qualistar Colorado to provide for the administration and oversight of a statewide Child Care Resource and Referral system for Colorado's families and child care providers. Qualistar Colorado has been providing child care resource and referral services in the state for 20 years, originally as the Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies (CORRA). Qualistar Colorado is a member of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and uses its software, NACCRAware to track data regarding child care programs and referrals.

Services Provided

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies provide several services that support the entire child care system within Colorado. These services include:

- Providing parents with online and phone referrals to licensed child care facilities in their area;

- Providing parents of children with special needs with enhanced referral services. For example, the Resource and Referral specialist will call child care centers to see if they will take a child with various health or behavioral concerns, and provide services to the child care provider if needed;
- Providing information to parents on how to identify and find quality child care, such as materials on the indicators of quality;
- Maintaining a database of licensed child care facilities and updating the list twice a year through a phone call to the child care facility, and;
- Providing quality improvement supports (e.g. trainings and other resources) to child care facilities.

Qualistar Colorado coordinates and administers 17 regional Child Care Resource and Referral agencies in Colorado, covering every county in the State. All 17 agencies participate in provider updates and quality improvement activities. Twelve agencies also provide referral services for parents seeking child care. Often, smaller Child Care Resource and Referral agencies partner with larger agencies to more efficiently deliver referral services; however, most enhanced referral services are done at the local level. Enhanced referrals include assisting families in crisis to find additional resources they may need, including housing or food assistance.

System Costs

Of the \$784,365 federal funds allocated through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to the Child Care Resource and Referral system in Colorado, \$600,492 is distributed to local agencies. The remaining \$183,873 is used by Qualistar for administrative and support expenses (staffing, marketing materials and annual meetings for Child Care Resource and Referral directors). Local agencies receive between \$12,713 and \$147,942, based on both the number of child care facilities in their service area, the number of families with young children in their area, and the number of referrals from previous years. The majority of local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies operate as private non-profits, however a few are governmental agencies. See Appendix A.

Child Care Resource and Referral

Description of Service: In addition to their function of offering referral services to families, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies work with child care providers to increase the quality of care, professional development and assist with staff retention. Because CCDBG funding only covers a small portion of services other than referrals and these services are primarily funded through other dollars, Qualistar Colorado does not track the number of trainings or other services provided by local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to child care providers. The Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood is working with the vendor to develop a system to track the number of resource services offered through local agencies, and expects it to have this created by May 2014.

The services offered by Child Care Resource and Referral agencies are targeted to mothers between the ages of 18 years and 34 years who work outside of the home, with incomes up to \$75,000. Online referral service users are not required to report demographic information; however, phone referral users do share that information. Seventy-eight percent of phone referral users are women. Of the total phone referral users, 45% are between the ages of 20 years and 29 years, and 51% are single-adult households. The majority of phone referral service users (57%) are Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) recipients.

The following three tables demonstrate the volume of referral calls that Child Care Resource and Referral agencies fielded during state fiscal year 2013.

FY 2012-2013 Internet Referrals	
Internet Referral Users	8,137
Internet Referral Searches*	95,328

**Individual users often perform multiple internet referral searches. The system does not require users to sign in, so this number may reflect more than one search per individual.*

FY 2012-2013 Telephone Referrals	
Telephone Referral Users	7,262
Enhanced and Special Needs Telephone Referral Users	633
Total Telephone Referral Users	7,895

FY 2012-2013 Enhanced Child Care Referrals**					
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Total
Special Needs Referrals	79	34	36	75	224
Other Enhanced Referrals	197	85	49	78	409
Total Special Needs/Enhanced Referrals	276	119	85	153	633

***Enhanced Child Care Referral is defined as a referral requiring additional work on the part of the referral specialist. Most enhanced referrals involve services to families with special needs children. However, enhanced referrals may also include assistance to families with special language needs or emergency needs (e.g. the needs to begin child care within 24 hours or less)*

Conclusion and Next Steps

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies serve a valuable role in Colorado that continues to evolve to support changing community needs, as well as support the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood strategic plan.

The agencies provide individualized family child care referral, coaching and training to child care providers, recruitment of new infant/toddler child care providers and information for parents on quality ratings.

As we move forward into SFY 2015 and complete SFY 2014, a system to document the referral activities, such as trainings, individual technical assistance, and grants that Child Care Resource and Referral agencies provide to child care providers, is expected to be implemented.

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies are one of several quality initiatives supported with federal Child Care and Development Fund dollars. The Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood is working with key stakeholders to ensure future alignment of these initiatives with the Office of Early Childhood strategic plan.

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March 4, 2014

The Honorable Irene Aguilar, Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
200 E. Colfax Avenue, Room 346
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Senator Aguilar:

Enclosed please find a legislative report to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee from the Department of Human Services on the Child Care Resource and Referral System in Colorado.

Section 26-6-116 C.R.S. (2013) requires the Department to specify, at a minimum, the entity that the Department has currently designated to administer the system and the qualifications of that entity to serve in such a capacity, the types of services that are being provided pursuant to the system, the numbers and type of persons receiving such services, and the cost associated with the system by December 1st of each year.

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Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

Enclosure

Cc: Senator Linda Newell, Vice-Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Jeanne Nicholson, Health and Human Services Committee
Senator John Kefalas, Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Ellen Roberts, Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Kevin Lundberg, Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Larry Crowder, Health and Human Services Committee
Dave De Novellis, Health and Human Services Committee Staff
Melodie Beck, Budget Analyst, Office of State Planning and Budgeting
Kelly Perez, Human Services Policy Advisor, Governor's Office
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