



A ROADMAP FOR DELIVERING
**CHILD CARE IN
AGRICULTURAL
COMMUNITIES**



National Children's Center
for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

MIGRANT CLINICIANS NETWORK



WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Making sure the children of workers are kept safely away from dangers on the farm can improve productivity, reduce absenteeism, and improve public relations. You are most likely reading this because you have noticed a problem - child care services in your community for the children of farm workers are inadequate. Now that you recognize this, it's important that your community does too.



• Most farm workers **(89%)** are more likely to choose a job in a location with accessible child care services.



• Almost all farm workers with children **(98%)** report having missed work in the last six months due to childcare issues.

This workbook is designed to help you identify challenges and assets in your community, as well as help you understand how these factors play a role in accessing child care services. This workbook also offers important resources you can use to overcome common barriers and suggests where to find more information.

Think of this workbook as a roadmap that will lead to accessible child care...



RECOGNIZING THE NEED

Children deserve a healthy, nurturing and safe environment while parents are working. For farm workers, child care services are sometimes nonexistent, cost prohibitive, or not available during the hours needed. Language differences, poverty and lack of transportation can also be problematic. Ensuring adequate child care services for farm workers is beneficial to both employers and workers. Child care providers, growers and farm worker parents can collaborate to improve access to child care services.

BUILDING A TEAM

Building a team is the first step in addressing a lack of child care services. When you think about the landscape of agriculture and child care in your community, key players may come to mind. They could be a community liaison at a local Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Center (MSHS), a human resources associate at a farm, or a farmworker parent that can provide key information on child care needs and challenges.

Identify a Champion

Finding the right person to promote and lead this effort is key for project success and sustainability. Could you be the champion of this important cause, or is there someone else who could effectively lead? They should be someone who strongly believes in the project – and they must truly “see the need” for accessible child care services.

Adding Stakeholders

Once a champion is identified, they should begin to build a team.

- Start small: Who do you need to assist with the project’s initial stages, such as a needs assessment?
- Who will be important to have “buy-in” from? Political and financial support are both important considerations.
- Add to the team as you identify more needs, or other appropriate and willing team members.

Things To Consider



Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and other community-based organizations can be a great place to begin gathering information.

Phone | 202 - 223 - 9889
Web | www.nmshsa.org/

Learn more about child care services in your state:
<http://childcareaware.org/resources/map>



Are there any local parent groups or grower associations that you could reach out to?

CONDUCTING THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

It is often helpful when starting any community-based project to identify needs and resources by conducting a needs assessment specific to your area and project. Questions to consider:

- What is your goal?
- What could be done in your community to make child care more accessible?
- What child care services already exist in your community?
- What hours are child care services needed?
For what ages?
- What are the challenges to accessing these services?

More information on conducting a needs assessment is available at:

Child Welfare Information Gateway

www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/assessment/community/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/chinav/tools/assess.html

University of Minnesota

<https://cyfar.org/sites/default/files/Beadle,%202000.pdf>

Explore Model Programs

Model programs can provide examples of what an ideal child care program for your community could look like. They can also be valuable sources of information and best practices as you take steps toward your goal.

There are examples across the country of collaboration between child care providers, growers, and community-based businesses and organizations. Some of these innovative solutions may be a good fit for your community!

Visit <http://childcareaware.org/resources/map/> for centers in your area.

Determine what strategies will work in your area

Now that you understand the challenges in your community, what are reasonable goals for your project? Remember to keep goals SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound. For information on writing smart goals, visit:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/resources/phqitoolbox/objectives.html>



Some common challenges

- Lack of transportation
- Child care hours not compatible with farm schedule
- Language differences

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

This model program has successfully worked with growers in the community to ensure that child care services meet the needs of farm workers. They have also diversified their funding sources to ensure that all children are able to enroll in care.

For more information visit rcma.net

IDENTIFYING FUNDING

Depending on the needs in your community, funding may be required to achieve your goal. How much funding is necessary? Are any of the key stakeholders willing to support your goal financially or with in-kind donations of land or other resources?

There may be community members that have knowledge of funding resources. Many city and county governments have grant writers on staff that might be able to help or suggest resources to assist you. Churches or other philanthropic organizations may also be able to help.

[Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and [foundationcenter.org](https://www.foundationcenter.org) have information about potential grants. The Grantsmanship Center has grant resources information by state:
<https://www.tgci.com/funding-sources>

Things To Consider

- Community block grants and other grant opportunities can be used to support child care and programmatic needs.
- Employers may be able to donate land and/or funding to help build new or supplement existing child care centers.
- Consider setting up a “laundry list” of funding ideas and options.
- Try to identify the average “costs” (e.g. cost per child, cost to build a facility, etc.). Existing programs may be able to help.
- Offering high-quality subsidized child care can attract workers to areas facing labor shortage, so growers may want to partner with local childcare providers to offer services to their workers as an employee benefit.



Block Grants

Block grants are funds the federal government provides to state and local authorities to be awarded as grants. Block grants can be used for a wide range of services, such as community development or social services.

For more information, see <https://blog.grants.gov/tag/what-is-a-block-grant/>

Agri-Business Childcare Development

ABCD was founded from growers' desire to make sure that farm worker children were safely enrolled in child care while their parents worked on farms. Growers continue to serve on their Board of Directors, which helps foster collaboration between child care providers and the agricultural community.

For more information visit abcdny.org

IMPLEMENTING THE SERVICES

What needs to happen to move your project from an idea to reality? Consider contacting child care centers with model programs or partnering with existing programs to access their expertise.

Building a Center

- Locate a site.
- Identify a project manager and contractors.
- Consider operational requirements (e.g. inspections and permits, local/state health regulations, insurance coverage, lunch/food support programs).
- Identify potential center staff (e.g. staff should be bilingual and understand “the need”).
- Explore options for providing transportation.

Expand Existing Services

- Identify existing services.
- Explore options with current facility.
- Establish new partnership.
- Expand existing services (e.g. staff, transportation).
- For older children, investigate after school programs or other existing programs (e.g. Migrant Education Program).



Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County

This program is a trusted pillar in the community, committed to the professional and personal development of farm worker parents. They specifically foster an in-home child care model led by farm worker mothers that helps to cultivate strong communities-- benefitting families as well as growers, who enjoy retaining an experienced labor pool.

For more information visit capslo.org

For more information about child care licensing and services in your state, visit www.childcareaware.org.

MARKETING

It's important to get the word out about your program and services to ensure it benefits as many people as possible. How will you get the word out about your accomplishments? Keep in mind that information spreads faster when it is available in both print and online formats.

- Create a website and use social media.
- Identify parent and school organizations.
- Work with national organizations such as the National Council of Agricultural Employers or the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association.
- Add your organization to existing child care websites.
- Explore the use of mobile apps.
- Identify local growers' associations and umbrella child care provider organizations in your community to help spread the word locally.



Marketing Resources

- Weebly is a free, user-friendly tool which can be used to create a website. For more information, visit www.weebly.com.
- Facebook pages are a commonly used form of social media. To create a free business page, visit www.facebook.com/business/pages/set-up.
- Having a marketing expert on your team from the start allows you to maximize their expertise throughout the project and may be well worth the cost.

REACHING YOUR DESTINATION AND EVALUATION

Now that you've found a solution or helped address child care service needs, it's helpful to evaluate the process. There are always important lessons learned or things to improve. Consider bringing the team back together to ask some of the following questions: How well did you succeed in getting child care services established or utilized? How well did the process work? What needs to change? What needs to stay the same? The CDC has a website with useful evaluation tools:

<https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm>

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Policy and Legal Considerations

While the road map focuses largely on the nuts and bolts of establishing needed child care services, there are other ways to address child care needs for farm worker families, and input from consumers and businesses can be helpful. One strategy that may offer important benefits is addressing relevant policy and legislative effort. For example, funding to support child care services, such as Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS), is one of the biggest policy issues we face. MSHS funding has remained flat, making it difficult to start new centers, maintain current services and offer wrap around services such as extended hours and transportation. Other policy and legislative issues include:

- The federal poverty level is "defined" so low that many migrant parents are not able to qualify.
- Federal definitions of migrant/seasonal workers are too narrow.
- Immigration laws and/or documentation required for child care centers are too onerous.
- Relief is needed from liability concerns for employers wanting to pursue on-site child care services.
- Tax breaks/benefits for child care are minimal. Changes could include an increase in the child care credit and/or redesigning it to be similar to health care deductions.
- Funding and/or tax incentives for programs for older children are needed, as many child care programs are available only for children under six years of age.
- More support is needed for non-monetary benefits (housing subsidies, health care assistance, etc.).



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For more information



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