Making States and Communities Child Care Strong: The Role of Child Care Resource & Referral Organizations

A Position Statement by Child Care Aware® of America

Presenters

Ariel Ford

Senior Vice President, Program Impact

Child Care Aware of America

Susan Butler-Staub

Senior Director, Professional Development

Child Care Aware of America

Agenda

- What is the position statement?
  - Why now?
  - Purpose
- Community input process
- Document review and discussion
  - Effective CCR&Rs
  - Community-based organizations
  - State networks
  - Recommendations
- What's next?

Purpose

- To clarify the role and scope of practice of community-based child care resource organizations and state child care resource networks.

- To support policymakers and child care resource organizations and practitioners in determining, advocating for, and investing in comprehensive, integrated CCR&R strategies.

What the Position Statement Does

- Incorporates **new branding** and **value proposition**.

- Defines di**stinct roles of community-based child care resource organizations** and **state networks**.

- Asserts that **every state** needs a **well-resourced, community-based CCR&R** and **state network** with an ambitious but achievable vision for both.

- Asserts **community-based CCR&R must be**:
  - Full-service solutions
  - Grounded in community
  - Mission-focused for the public good

- Makes the case for **comprehensive, integrated solutions** that promote **access for every child, family, and community**.

- Distinguishes and describes **"core" and optional services**—focused on results.

- Recommends **actions for policymakers, state administrators, business & community leaders, and CCR&Rs**.

Community Input Process

- ✓ Established Position Statement Committee in April 2024/Met 3x

- ✓ Convened Joint Council at Symposium in May 2024

- ✓ Shared draft with CCAoA Board in September 2024

- ✓ Shared draft with Committee in October 2024

- ✓ Share 2nd Draft at Leadership Institute

- ✓ Lunch and Learn series in November 2024

- ✓ Open comment period closed December 2024

- ✓ Board adoption – February 2025

Effective CCR&Rs:

☑ Offer full service solutions for communities, impacting all parts of the child care system. They build the supply and quality of child care, grow the child care workforce, help families and business solve their child care challenges, and deliver on-the-ground information and solutions.

☑ Are grounded in community, respecting and honoring culture, building trust, and understanding needs and strengths.

☑ Are mission focused for the public good, offering accessible and inclusive services for everyone.

Community-Based CCR&R Services

Core Services

- Support family choice in child care services
- Build supply, quality, and diversity of child care options
- Grow and sustain a skilled child care workforce
- Provide real world data to inform community decision-making
- Influence policy and regulations, and help build solutions

Additional Services

- Deliver services for business and communities
- Foster children's healthy development
- Help families afford child care
- Support families in caring for their children

America has a broken child care system that is holding us back. Community-based child care resource and referral organizations and state networks turn a uneven patchwork of resources into a system that drives equitable access to inclusive, quality child care options for everyone.

- **Full-Service Solutions:** Conduct activities that promote and ensure productive relationships with other state-level organizations and leaders to identify and develop strategies to address gaps and coordination, equitable access, and public policy and funding concerns.

- **Statewide Coordination:** State networks coordinate with, gather data from, and support all community-based CCR&Rs within the state, enabling them to understand the full-range of child care conditions across the state.

State Network Services

Core Services

- Promote use of best practices statewide
- Provide real-world child care data
- Support statewide awareness of and access to CCR&R Services
- Influence policy and regulations and help build Solutions

Additional Services

- Ensure consistent services statewide
- Evaluate effectiveness of services
- Deliver direct services to families, child care providers, and/or businesses
- Provide real-world data to understand and grow the child care workforce

Recommendations

1. Policymakers & State Administrators

2. State Child Care Administrators

3. Business and Community Leaders

4. Organizations delivering CCR&R services

Recommendations

Organizations delivering CCR&R services

- Develop trusting relationships with state child care administrators and policymakers by focusing on solutions, delivering results, and finding common ground.

- Demonstrate impact by negotiating contracts and grants that lay out clear, impactful, and responsive deliverables aligned to the appropriate level funding and staffing necessary to achieve them. Measure and report on how work is making a difference within a community or state.

- Demonstrate data expertise by providing relevant, unbiased, reliable, and up-to-date data and reports for families, providers, policymakers, and community stakeholders.

- Evaluate and align your organization's policies, practices, and staff to reflect the many needs and populations you serve and contribute to better access to high-quality child care for all young children and families.

- Hold your organization responsible for promoting and operating programs that recognize the distinct needs of communities in rural areas, that are under-resourced.

- Proactively contribute to community and policy development and decision-making and advocate for targeted investments and improved policies informed by the communities you partner with and serve.

How do you see yourself using these recommendations in your community?

Next Steps

Toolkit Developed

- Identify opportunities to use the document with funders, policymakers, and other partners.

- Further define and outline roles of various types of state network

- Clarify the role of membership in relation to the information in the position statement.

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