
Health Needs and Human Services Commission Agenda

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 12:00 p.m.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Commission Members:

Rachel Worthey, Amanda Roberts, Annette Evans, Elise Davidson Kitka,
Woody Widmark, Crystal Duncan, and Paul Bahna
JJ Carlson (Assembly Liaison)

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES
- IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD (*not to exceed 3 minutes*)
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- VI. REPORTS
 - Chair
 - Commissioners
 - City Staff
 - Assembly Liaison
 - Other(s)
- VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- VIII. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Presentation by Early Childhood Coalition/Childcare Now
 - B. Discussions on 2024 Goals
 - C. Establishing Working Groups
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

Agenda items for the next meeting of March 20, 2024, at 1:30 p.m., Harrigan Centennial Hall

Childcare in Sitka Fact Sheet:

[Note: this is a work in progress!]

Q: What is the difference between a daycare, childcare center, and a preschool?

A: A daycare or childcare center is typically for infants and toddlers as well as often preschool, while a preschool is strictly for children ages 3-5.

Q: What is the difference between in-home care and center-based childcare?

A: In-home care facilities are operated in residential spaces. They can be licensed or unlicensed, and usually accept fewer babies or children than larger center-based childcare.

Childcare licensing regulations in Alaska:

For each age group, what are the rules on how many caregivers or staff per child? What are the rules on how many children you can have in one room? And how many rooms can you have?

These are legal child-to-teacher ratios and maximum group size per class to max # of teachers:

CATEGORY	AGE	Legal child-to-teacher ratio	Max # per room-to-teachers ratio
Infants	Birth-18mo	5:1	10:2
Toddlers	19-35mo	6:1	12:2
Preschool	3-5 yrs	10:1	20:2
School-aged	5-6 yrs	14:1	28:2
School-aged	7-12 yrs	18:1	36:2

[So for example, for toddlers, you have to have 1 adult for every 6 toddlers; you could have a maximum of 12 toddlers in 1 room, with 2 adults.]

How many licensed childcare facilities are there in Sitka (both in-home and center-based)?

- Betty Eliason Childcare Center (Infants, toddlers, and preschool, age 2mo and up)
- SJ Childcare Center (Toddlers and preschool, age 18mo and up)
- Kids First Day Care (Infants, toddlers, preschool, age 6wks-12 yrs)

How many licensed Preschool or age 3-5 facilities are in Sitka?

- 3-5 Preschool (Only does half day, either morning or afternoon; only 4 days/wk)
- Head Start Wooncheen preschool (Native preference, but not required); must be 3 by Sep 1st
- Mt Edgecumbe preschool (mostly half day programs; limited full day; only 4 days/wk)
- Betty Eliason Child Care Center
- SJ Child Care Center

How many afterschool programs/facilities are in Sitka?

- Ventures

Babysitting: 4H, with Jasmine Shaw, ran a babysitting training in 2022 for people ages 12+ and has a list of names for parents that need babysitters. Contact jdshaw2@alaska.edu or 747-9440) for a list or way to meet those babysitters.

Enrollment & Capacity [as of Spring 2024]:

Facility Name	Current enrollment	Potential Capacity	Goal Capacity	How many openings?	Comments or challenges faced
Age 0-18mo.					
Betty Eliason	9	10	10	0	Teachers
SJ	0	10	10	0	Not set up for this age
Age 19mo-3					
Betty Eliason	12	12	12	0	Teachers
SJ	5	12	8	0	Teachers, space
Age 3-5					
Betty Eliason	10	10	8-10	0	Teachers, space
SJ	20	30	25-30	n/a	All day
3-5 Preschool (half days)	8 AM 0 PM	25 AM 25 PM	25 AM 25 PM	0 AM 5 PM	Teachers [would need 4 teachers per ½ day]
Head Start (half days)	16 AM 0 PM	20 AM 20 PM	20 AM 20 PM	2 AM 0 PM	Teachers for afternoon
Mt. Edgumbe	28	30	28	0	
Age 5+					
Ventures	40	70	70	0	Teachers
Betty Eliason	0	28	14	0	Teachers
Multi-Age Licensed In-Home					
Kids First	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	Can't get ahold of them
Roots & Boots	??	n/a	n/a	n/a	Can't get ahold of them

Totals in all of Sitka:

Age group	Total # of kids currently enrolled in licensed facilities (approx.):	Potential children in Sitka of this age (est.):	% coverage
2-18mo (Infant)	9	120	7%
19mo–3yr (toddler)	17	120	14%
3-4yr (preschool)	82	160	50%
5+ (school-age)	40	640	< 1%

Children in Sitka of each age:

- Baranof School has 81 kindergarteners and 74 1st graders (as of 2022-2023)
- SEARHC estimates about 75-85 babies born each year to Sitka residents

***While not every child needs a daycare facility, there is a huge gap between the approximate number of children of each age (~75-85) and the number of childcare facility spots in Sitka.

In the 2020 childcare assessment from STA, there were an estimated 1,222 children under the age of 13 living in Sitka. 13.32% of them are enrolled as tribal citizens of STA.

Costs:

Facility Name	Hours Open	Monthly cost full time	Monthly cost part time
Age 0-18mo.			
Betty Eliason	7:30-4:30	\$1400	Varies, \$525-1000
SJ	7:30-5:00	\$1240	\$750
Kids First	7:30-6:00	\$1180	\$735
Age 18mo-3			
Betty Eliason	7:30-4:30	\$1225	Varies, \$470-915
SJ	7:30-5:00	\$1182	\$655
Kids First	7:30-6:00	\$1075	\$655
Age 3-5			
Betty Eliason	7:30-4:30	\$970	Varies # days, \$360-710
SJ	7:30-5:00	\$1007	\$609
3-5	8:30-11:30 (AM) 12:20-3:30 (PM)	\$375	\$250
Head Start			
Mt. Edgecumbe	7:45-11:30 (AM) 12-1 (quiet time) 1:00-4:00 (PM) Fri 8:00-12:00	\$400-\$530 (AM or PM only) \$995-\$1060 (AM&PM) \$160 (Fri. outdoor school)	\$240-316 (AM or PM only) \$595-632 (AM & PM) NA (Fri. outdoor school)
Kids First	7:30-6:00	\$836	\$575
Age 5+			
SJ (Age 6-12)		\$987	N/A
Ventures			
Betty Eliason	??-4:30	\$580 (\$650 in summer)	Varies # of days \$370-600
Kids First	7:30-6:00	\$820	\$567

Resources used for this fact sheet and helpful for parents:

www.threadalaska.org

www.mtedgecumbepreschool.org

www.sitkakids.com

www.3to5preschool.org

www.becccsitka.com

www.headstartprogram.us/program/sitka

<https://www.sitkatribes.org/uploads/cms/CAC/2022%20STA%20Child%20Care%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf>

What you can do: COME TO EARLY CHILDHOOD COALITION MEETINGS TO LEARN MORE!

Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm, zoom; Contact Kari Sagel for the link: 752read@gmail.com

See something you want to fix/add/change on this sheet?

Let us know! Email lauren.a.wild@gmail.com

Take-home thoughts:

Needs:

More licensed facilities that can take infants and toddlers, as well as pre-schools and building the industry of workers in Sitka to allow existing facilities to operate at capacity.

Barriers:

THIS IS A PUBLIC SECTOR INDUSTRY THAT IS TRYING TO OPERATE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

**Revenue* is the main barrier to increasing & retaining a workforce and building infrastructure.

**Workforce & Wages* – centers can't pay employees what they're worth and a competitive wage so there's not much incentive to go into this industry. This isn't thought of as a career path, so middle and high school students are not thinking about it as a career to go into.

**Infrastructure* – There aren't enough slots or seats for our infants and toddlers and preschoolers in Sitka. However, it's so expensive to run facilities and find good and reliable employees that you can retain. It's not a profitable business model. They can't charge parents what they would need to in order to operate. Subsidies are needed.

**Benefits for employees* – these aren't benefited positions (except the federal Head Start Woonsocket program) so there aren't any incentives to attract employees/teachers/staff.

**Benefits for parents* – parents need employer provided childcare or childcare benefits.

Employers should provide their employees childcare stipends, benefits for childcare, and/or provide them childcare on site.

Solutions:

Workforce development: Build a career pathways program to promote workforce development at the high school level as well as the young adult level.

- Offer Child Development Association (CDA) credential class as an elective at SHS, MEHS, and/or PHS for students to get marketable and nationally recognized credentials. Can be hired with a CDA right out of high school
- Work with UA system to offer Occupational Endorsement (OE) programs in high schools through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.
- Center for Community Early Learning Program could apply for funds to operate a training center for young adults and continuing ed to get certificates/training?

Revenue/wages - City can put it as a line item on their budget to go towards wage stipends for teachers; or can subsidize facilities to help them pay their workers a competitive wage to attract and retain a workforce (including sub pay rate competitive with SSD).

- Find a revenue stream within City of Sitka to add to line item in budget

Sitka Childcare Career Pathway (SCCP) Summit Results

September 8 & 9, 2023

The SCCP Summit was attended by thirty-seven people representing the Sitka School District, UAA, licensing and childcare support agencies, the State of Alaska, childcare providers, tribal governments, the City and Borough of Sitka, the Sitka Assembly, social service agencies, the Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce, the US Coast Guard, the Alaska State legislature, SEARHC, and 4-H.

After learning about the current childcare landscape in Alaska, we heard a presentation on early childhood education opportunities and support from Tonia Dousay, Dean of the UAA School of Education. Then we got down to the work of the summit – examining the feasibility of partnering with UAA to build a career pathway in Sitka schools. Our final goal was to form a working group to begin building a pathway for the 24/25 school year.

Opportunities

Education

Participants named Sitka's three high schools and their student populations as an excellent opportunity to implement a childcare career pathway. It was noted that many students come from multi-generational households and are already providing care to siblings and younger relatives. Others have gained experience through babysitting and working in childcare at Sitka's facilities. Many will go on to have their own children and families.

A childcare career pathway would build on existing career opportunities including the Discover Your Potential program at Blatchley Middle School and the internship program in the Sitka School District. Distance learning and dual credit are more available than in the past.

Participants commented that a childcare career is what some students are interested in pursuing and classes would provide industry exposure. A childcare career pathway would also provide the opportunity for all students to gain skills in caregiving and parenting and could lead to more males taking part in the childcare profession.

Licensed childcare providers

Sitka has childcare providers willing to provide lab opportunities and employment to students on the career pathway. Providers such as Wooncheen Tlingit Haida Head Start can offer further training and financial support as students advance along the pathway.

Career opportunities

There is a high need for childcare workers in Sitka, the state, and across the nation. It is a highly portable career much in demand. The career offers opportunity for advancement as workers gain training and further certifications. Opportunities for careers at local and state agencies

open the possibility of better pay and benefits. There is a need for a new generation of childcare workers.

University of Alaska Anchorage School of Education

Dr. Dousay introduced the many UAA classes and pathways for early childhood education, as well as the opportunities for dual enrollment and course delivery (e.g., online, distance, in-person). She then explained how a collaboration between Sitka area high schools and the University of Alaska Anchorage could provide a career pathway in early childhood through dual credit classes that could lead to degrees such as: occupational endorsements, certificates, associates, and bachelor's, and master's degrees. UAA is willing to work with Sitka to build that pathway; offer financial, technical, and instructional support; and work to reduce barriers for students and programs.

Other Organizations

Participants highlighted the potential of collaboration between governmental, city, and state organizations. The following organizations outlined existing support provided by their organization.

thread

thread Alaska can support childcare providers with licensing and regulations, professional development, and connecting to resources, such as consultants. Thread assists with those starting new facilities. They help parents locate appropriate childcare. They connect professionals with trainings, certifications, and professional development opportunities.

SEED

SEED can help students by monitoring their progress along a pathway. They can provide reimbursements to individuals for CPR training, some university courses at the beginning of the pathway, reimbursement for CDA expenses, and attendance/travel at conferences.

United States Coast Guard

The Coast Guard could provide informational opportunities: promoting employment and educational opportunities to Coast Guard spouses, promotion of the pathway to older students, and presence at education, employment, and activity resource fairs.

The Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit and Haida)

Employment with Tlingit Haida Head Start comes with required professional development and trainings. Head Start will pay for additional trainings, food licenses, CDA observation fees, training hours, conference and travel, and bonuses. Head Start has funds to support the pursuit of an AA or BA.

Challenges

Industry Compensation

A significant challenge is both the perception and realities of childcare as a low-paying career. Much discussion took place as to what would constitute a living wage in Sitka. While progress has been made to increase wages of childcare workers in Sitka, housing and childcare costs making living in Sitka challenging, especially for a single person, with or without children.

Funding for Pathway

Funding for education continues to be an issue for the Sitka School District and the cost of providing an instructor would be a barrier to implementation. UAA noted they could fund the cost of an instructor for some time, but not indefinitely.

Agency Alignment/Streamlining of Requirements

There were questions about existing programs and certification processes. Participants felt there could be better agency alignment regarding eligibility and requirements. They expressed hopes that the Governor's Taskforce might result in a reduction in "red tape."

Students may miss financial opportunities if they do not know where the "pots" of money are, including reimbursement for dual credit costs.

Participants also wondered about alignment/partnering between UAA and UAS.

Adjunct/Teacher Qualifications

Discussion highlighted the need for local staff with adjunct/instructor qualifications and certifications. Participants felt the pathway would only be sustainable by finding and maintaining local capacity. There were questions about how high school teachers become certified to teach ECE courses.

Student Interest and Support

One challenge will be gauging and developing student interest in the pathway. There is no current assessment of student interest in early childhood education, including childcare. There is a need for coordination of career investigation through middle and high school. Student interest in early childhood offerings during DYP and in babysitting classes would suggest a strong interest could be developed. The state's AKCIS program might be another way to gauge interest. Student participation might initially be slow, especially if delivery is online.

Participants showed a preference for an in-person class and instructor. Online classes can pose a challenge to students. Ongoing support for students following this pathway would be beneficial.

Status of Childcare in Sitka

Sitka has a limited number of providers and hours available to families. Costs are high for families and equity is an issue for families with low incomes. Childcare providers face issues of space availability and retention of workforce. Providers often lose trained employees to better-paying employers, like the school district. Two other comments about the general status of childcare providers in Sitka are that providers need at least two CCAs to stay open and that some licensing does not increase capacity.

Changes

Expansion of Pre-K

Several discussions centered around including early childhood education for children ages 0-5 within the school district. This involves a shift in thinking – from the concept of childcare and daycare to the idea of early childhood education. Currently kindergarten education is optional for families. Pre-K could be similar.

Expanding the Pathway

There was recognition of the need for a variety of academic structures to meet the needs of diverse learners. One idea was for students to get an earlier start exploring careers including workforce and internship programs at PHS, SHS, and MEHS. Participants also discussed expanding a pathway model to include young adults and older people with an eye on Coast Guard spouses, stay-at-home parents, and family members who are presently providing childcare in unlicensed homes.

Valuing the Career

More discussion occurred about the need to change perceptions/attitudes about the value and viability of ECE as a career pathway. Language used included “valuing this profession, valuing student choices” and “valuing the passion” leading students into this career. Participants mentioned the health career pathway as a supported and existing pathway with similarities to a childcare career pathway. Another discussion included the possibility of incentivizing students to pursue this education.

In Person

There was more discussion about the need for an in-person instructor and support of students pursuing certifications. The “owl in a box” with an onsite teacher of record was seen as one method of delivery. Another would be having a qualified professional in Sitka be hired as a UAA adjunct teacher and go into the high schools to teach the class.

Resources

Resources Available

Agencies can help with licensing and capacity building. They can also help with understanding state level support, regulations, and opportunities. The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) can provide policy help and assistance with connections and convenings and support through the Health Needs & Community Services Commission. Care providers can provide opportunities for core hours and employment.

Commitment/Capacity

The proposed pathway would require a commitment from the Sitka School District, which has concerns about the financial implications of the career pathway, particularly instructor/personnel costs. Discussion of commitment included everything from grants, facilitating cross-building teaching, and inclusion of pre-K in the regular school program. Collaborating with the University of Alaska Anchorage would require an agreement to be in place.

A local instructor would need qualifications, capacity, and passion. Adjunct qualifications which would allow an instructor to teach undergraduate level dual enrollment classes would be ideal. Local adjuncts might include a Coast Guard spouse or retired childcare professional. Typically, adjunct instruction at a university requires a master's degree in the discipline of focus.

Effort would need to go into promoting the pathway to students and providing career and technical support along the way.

Funding and Partnerships

Funding could come from partnerships/community investment including schools, governments, large employers, and granting sources (state, federal, organization). Participants suggested using large employers for certain pathway requirements, for example, SEARHC or CBS providing certain HR functions such as fingerprinting and immunization documentation. Groups also discussed the possibility of a municipal ballot on childcare funding.

Economics

More discussion took place about the current economic situation in Sitka with both housing and childcare being barriers to thriving families. Ideas proposed were the possibility of employer sponsored childcare, health care and retirement for employees, and pay increases for the completion of trainings (Hearts Award in Juneau). There was also talk about the need for employers to be flexible when their employees face child needs due to temporary closures of providers.

What's Next

Form Working Group

The plan is to form a working group of high school staff and administration and other interested people to meet monthly to develop the pathway. Tasks include holding a first meeting in October; developing a timeline of tasks and meetings; meeting with necessary parties (SSD, UAA, partners); identifying assets and needs, including instructors and funding; outlining the pathway at each of the schools; and coming to agreements.

Commitments

We had more questions than answers here.

- How can ECC support working group and other next steps?
- Who can provide financial support?
- How do we get large employers involved?
- Could the Sitka Tribe of Alaska support this effort? Any Covid money available still?

One option is pursuing a ballot initiative to introduce a stable and sustainable funding source for the early childhood education industry in Sitka.

Outreach

There was fantastic participation at the summit! Participants identified the following groups/sectors for new and continued participation: all school programs, including BMS, SHS, PHS, and MEHS; childcare providers; students interested in the pathway; local, state, and federal stakeholders; the City and Borough of Sitka; Sitka Tribe of Alaska; Tlingit and Haida; UAS, UAA; Pioneer Home; Parks and Recreation; Center for Community; the United States Coast Guard; and social service agencies.

Develop Interest

Developing interest should begin early. Suggestions were to strengthen career exploration from middle school through high school. DYP would be an excellent opportunity for introduction into early childhood education with DYP offerings at childcares. 4-H is willing to offer more babysitting classes like their very popular recent offering. Career fairs are another opportunity to promote the pathway and bring exposure to the industry.

Further Information Gathering

More information is needed, especially about adjunct and other instructor qualifications. The Coalition is working to identify qualified instructors, including retired, special education, and other local teachers interested in this opportunity. There is a need to check in on the work of the Governor's Task Force, especially in removing barriers and aligning agency requirements.

Ideas Collected at the Community Café Feb 10, 2020 - Child Care Availability and Affordability in Sitka

CHALLENGES –

Participants prioritized three main areas; specific comments related to each are below the main topic

1) Space Available for Infants	2) Flexibility of options for seasonal/ part-time/self-employed families; Summer availability	3) Staff retention/ support for high-quality EC Educators	4) Other comments
Infant care/availability was listed by every group & highlighted/starred the most in reviews	Drop-in Care	<i>Availability of care for all ages is linked to staff turnover/retention</i>	Help with child care assistance
	Seasonal Work; Assistance programs not amenable to part-time seasonal job scene	Time for parents & staff to advocate or collaborate	Access & info about what is available; how to apply; no access in summer
	Different needs	Staff education & training – local options; credit options	Meeting needs of Coast Guard families
	Smaller employers	Consistency between different providers	Cost /Income/Price tag
	Only 1 or 2 facilities open for summer	Training & support for providers and their families	Coast Guard getting on lists too late to get spaces
	Options when centers are closed	Safe facilities	Potty-training constraints
	Not enough licensed home providers	ECMH Consultation & support for all providers	Overwhelmed parents
	Self-employed people can be disqualified from child care – discourages entrepreneurship	Wages of child care workers	Potential child care sites not ideal; location, condition, price
	Good babysitters	Fear that my child does not get good/safe care	Community doesn't understand benefits of early childhood education
	School-age child care		

STRENGTHS –

Sitka's qualities and other realities that will help us to address these Challenges

1) Strong Community	2) Economic Benefits of EC Investment	3) Good Conditions for Change
Tight-knit community; strong families who provide care (often unpaid); sense of community; help each other	Economic development/investment benefits are real; potential facilities are available; long-term and short-term benefits are defined at national and state level; we will soon have more local data to work with!	In-home care options; Consistent care & quality teachers at existing providers; shift to using "early childhood educators"; traffic/distance is not a challenge for most families; Fridays! :)

WE WONDER— ideas with 2 or more stars/highlights from review are in **BOLD**

- Where in Sitka might we add ECE/ECL facilities?
- If employers begin to offer child care, will that create inequity in the community, restricting these benefits to the larger employers w/ resources to do so?
- Even if we find ways to make wages equivalent to those of kindergarten teachers, requiring equivalent qualifications (4+years college ed & teaching credentials) would this pose barriers to filling positions, or... how do we prevent that?
- How do we create employee pipeline/ECL field interest?
- **Who are the employers in town that would have the resources to establish a child care facility?**
- **What is best way to educate employers, legislators, community at large about economic development/investment benefit?**
- How do we support new home-based licensed childcare option in town – increase quality, reliability, options?
- Could we have more baby sitter education, training, promotion to be responsible/prepared short-term care?
- Could we have more parenting classes?
- **What about a "Family Cooperative" (communal) option?**
- **Why doesn't SEARHC have a child care center?**
- If space was available, could people afford it?
- When centers are at capacity (infants) what is that #?
- Can new grads from SSD have incentive to work locally at child care centers? What training is available to them?
- Communities in schools - @ Keet and BES ? *(clarification?)*
- **How could we use AmeriCorps/Jesuit Volunteer programs?**

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY CAFE RESULTS



Use your phone to snap a pic of this QR code. Follow the prompt to our video.

TOP THREE TOPICS FROM THE CAFE

Child care availability and affordability
Parent/caregiver self-care and support
Free and inclusive family activities

NEXT STEPS

Join our café meetings in January for top three topics
Dates and times coming soon
Investigate and activate solutions
Invite friends to join our efforts

CAFE NUMBERS

50 adult participants
36 children in childcare
45 staff and volunteers

200+ ideas

SITKA KIDS

Learn more at Sitka Kids Facebook page
Keep up on activities for families and kids
Like Sitka Kids on Facebook today!



#SitkaEarlyChildhood

#SitkaKids

#AffordableAndAvailable



Thank you families, Sitkans Against Family Violence, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sitka School District, Harrigan Centennial Hall, Gájjaa Héén Dancers, AmeriCorps, KCAW, KIFW, Pacific High School, Sitka Counseling, and the Early Learning Program.



WHAT SITKA WILL BE LIKE WHEN WE ACHIEVE THE DREAM

CAFE UPDATE ON:

AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY IN SITKA



TOP THREE PRIORITIES

- Availability of infant care
- Flexibility of child care options
- Staff retention and support

real-world
responsive adaptable
flexible individualized
accommodating
convenient

THANK YOU, FAMILIES

Thank you, families, for meeting to discuss child care solutions in Sitka. Together, we...

- Synthesized survey data from families and providers
- Learned what is working in other communities
- Worked in groups to identify strengths/challenges
- Reviewed top ideas from all groups

WORK GROUP FORMS

Thank you to those who are interested in the child care work group. Look for an email invitation from Mandy Evans for a March 11 meeting. Child care and snacks will be provided.

Work Group Meeting

Wednesday, March 11

11:00am-12:30pm

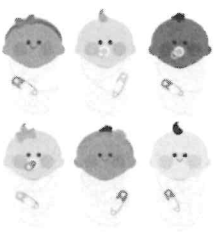
SEACC Bldg, 205 Baranof

Questions?

Call Mandy at 966-1266

PRIORITY: INFANT CARE

Families need options for high quality infant care. This was the



clear consensus that came out of our group work and idea sharing.

Infant care availability was listed by every group and highlighted and starred the most in the review of ideas.



PRIORITY: FLEXIBILITY

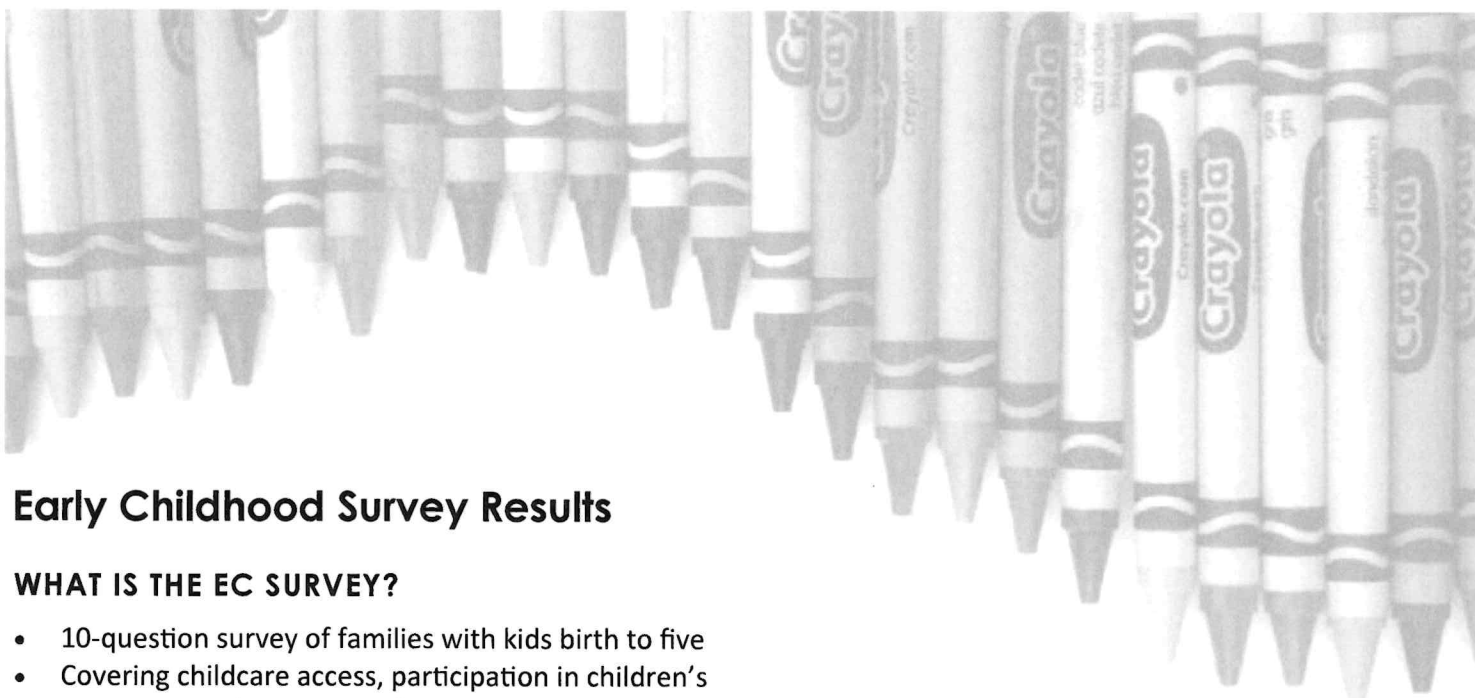
Options need to fit the needs of working families, including:

- Drop-in care
- School age child care
- Summer options
- Good babysitters
- Increase in licensed home providers
- Options for seasonal, part-time workers
- Assistance that honors self-employed and entrepreneurs

PRIORITY: STAFF RETENTION/SUPPORT

- Time for parents and staff to advocate and collaborate
- Staff education and training: local options, including credit
- Consistency between providers
- Training and support for providers and their families
- Safe facilities
- Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) consultation and support for all providers
- Wages and benefits of child care workers
- Assurance of good and safe care





Early Childhood Survey Results

WHAT IS THE EC SURVEY?

- 10-question survey of families with kids birth to five
- Covering childcare access, participation in children's programs, and access to information
- 24 survey events: daycares, bazaar, parent-teacher conferences, Woon. een parent meeting
- Alaska Association of School Boards analyzed results

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY?

- 233 families took the survey
- Parents, foster parents, grandparents, step-parents
- 74% of households had two adults in the household
- Families reporting number of children in the household: 1 child in household (37%), 2 children (34%), 3 children (19%), 4 or more children (10%)

WHAT EVENTS DO FAMILIES ATTEND?

Most families attend child-friendly events monthly. 22 families said they had not attended events in the previous 2-3 months. Reasons for not attending? Time conflicts and lack of information.

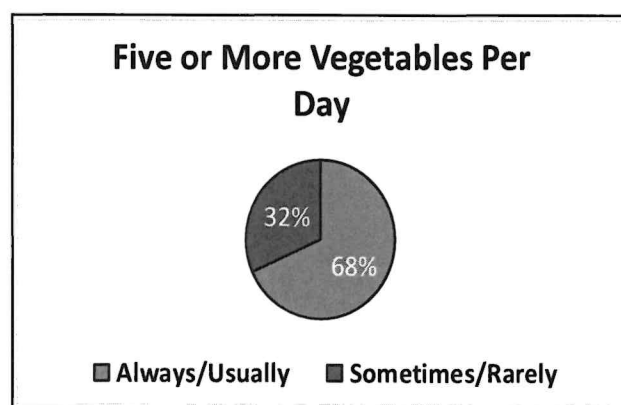
POPULAR EVENTS:

- Seasonal events like carnivals
- School events
- Sitka Public Library activities
- Imagination Library events
- Babies and Books events
- Playgroups



THE MOST CONCERNING QUESTION?

While the survey was private and anonymous, many people who took the survey made comments aloud when it came to the vegetable question! Apparently it is not easy to get children to eat their vegetables.



Here's the good news. Serving sizes for children are quite small. For example, a half of an apple may be a serving size for your little one.

WHERE DO FAMILIES GET INFORMATION?

TOP SOURCES:

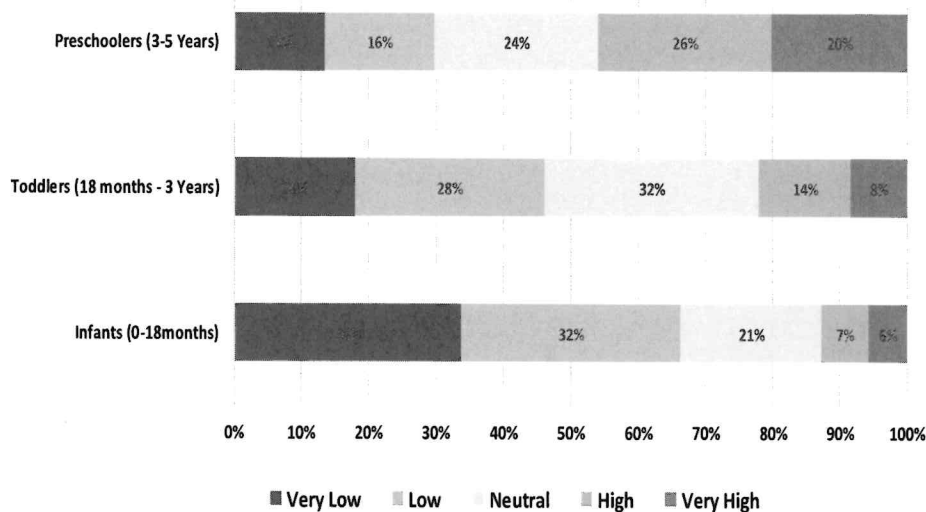
FAMILY: 68%

FRIENDS: 75%

FACEBOOK: 47%

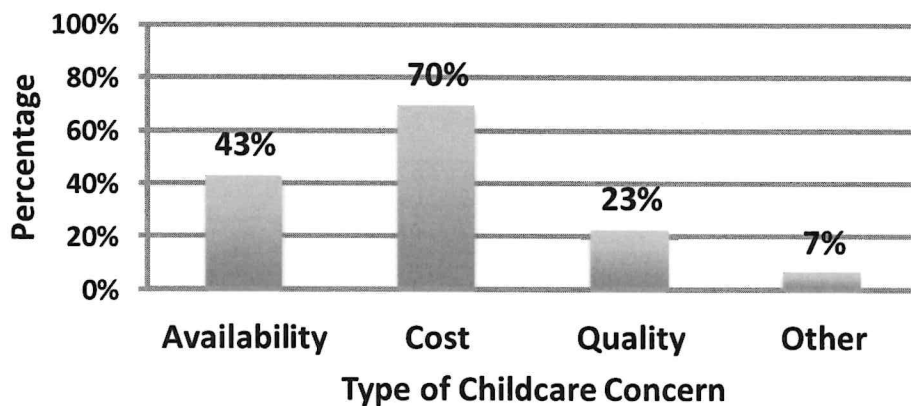
3 F's

Satisfaction with Childcare in Sitka



Families Not Satisfied with Affordable Quality Childcare

Percentage Indicating Area of Concern



- The satisfaction question asked about childcare in general: babysitters, families and friends, parents at home, pre-schools, licensed in-home care, the school district, and Head Start were "lumped" together.
- The survey results cannot identify if some types of childcare are considered more satisfactory than others.
- Childcare is a concern for families.
- Satisfaction with childcare increases with the age of the child.
- Only 34% of families report neutral to very high satisfaction with childcare for infants.
- 70% of families report neutral to very high satisfaction with childcare for preschoolers (children aged 3-5) with 46% percent reporting high to very high.
- The cost of childcare is the biggest concern.
- The availability of childcare is also a concern.
- Only 23% of families not satisfied with childcare expressed quality as a concern.

We Need ADULT Reading Buddies!

Buddies meet a first or second grade student at Sitka Public Library to read for one hour per week

Fill the registration form* out and return it to the library by May 17

The program runs from June 8 to August 10 with time off for vacation if needed.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- We will continue to look at the survey results for trends and areas of concern.
- This spring and next fall, we will continue to communicate the results to families and the community.
- In the fall, we will hold a number of community events to hear your ideas for addressing early childhood and childcare concerns.

Want to know what is happening around town? Sitka Kids is a Facebook page created to post secular family-friendly events for kids. The KCAW Calendar is another good source of information. Go to www.kcaw.org and click on Community Calendar.

