

February 21, 2002

In 2000, the Child Care Coordinating Committee commissioned a study to learn about child care provided by relatives, friends and neighbors. There was interest in knowing about this kind of care, because one-third of the children whose child care was subsidized by DSHS were being cared for by providers exempt from licensing.

Today, the University of Washington releases its findings recommending that the Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL) develop a training system to support these child care providers. At this time, programs and community-level activities available to licensed providers are being reduced due to significant constraints in the state's budget. This makes funding a new training program impossible at this time.

Despite the current budget situation, DCCEL will continue to fund core functions of the child care system: financing care for low-income families, licensing providers and professional development. I would like to emphasize the following points:

- DCCEL is committed to providing information to parents to help them make choices about who is best to care for their children. During the next year, we will be promoting policies to help parents make informed choices.
- Our community partners, including local child care resource and referral agencies, already receive funding to support child care providers. Usually these supports are available for all child care providers, including that provided by relatives, friends and neighbors.
- Some caregivers described in this report are required by state law to be licensed. DCCEL is anxious to provide licensing services and technical assistance to those providers. Licensed providers have access to scholarships to help pay for training and funds to help defray the costs of new or improved child care facilities.

Thank you for your interest in child care issues.

Sincerely,

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