

Providing Early Care and Education (ECE) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Perspectives from Los Angeles County ECE Professionals

In Fall 2020, nearly 600 ECE professionals in Los Angeles County were surveyed about their COVID-related challenges and success strategies. Two focus groups were held with ECE professionals to further explore issues addressed in the survey.

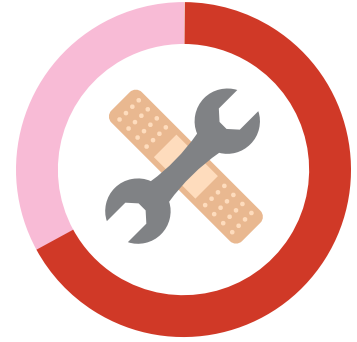
Survey Respondents:



74% center-based,
26% family child care
(FCC)



Nearly half provided both in-person
care *and* distance learning.



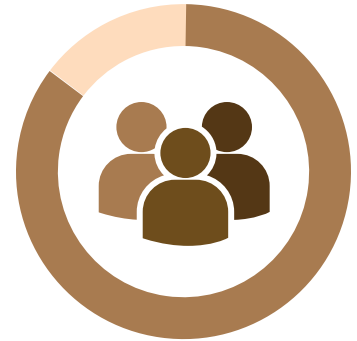
67% reported
serving children
of essential workers



364 providers,
220 teachers



84% served children who were
Dual Language Learners (DLLs)



Over 85% were
people of color

Findings

Respondents reported needing additional professional development in several areas:



Recommendations

Expand access to professional development trainings and higher education coursework on topics that will help educators support all children in their care. These topics include:

- Working with children with challenging behaviors
- Distance learning methods
- Social-emotional development
- Family engagement
- Supporting children with special needs
- Trauma-informed care

See reverse for additional findings & recommendations >>>

Respondents' most effective strategy for engaging with families from diverse linguistic backgrounds was having a bilingual staff member communicate with families in their primary language.

For 57% of respondents, a lack of staff training on second language acquisition and Dual Language Learner (DLL) strategies was one of the top challenges in serving DLLs.



Develop and implement strategies to recruit more bilingual candidates into the ECE workforce in order to support DLLs' home language development, family communication, and connections.

Offer more professional development (PD) trainings and higher education coursework on supporting DLLs and engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse families. Teachers' preparation to serve DLLs is crucial to children's academic success.

43% of respondents who offered distance learning reported that having children tune in to lessons was a challenge.

Over 50% of respondents believed that families' most significant unmet needs included:

- ↳ A stable and reliable internet connection • Technological devices (e.g. laptops or tablets) ←



Talk with families to assess their technology-related needs and determine the most feasible and effective digital home learning activities.

Particularly when digital learning is part of an ECE program's curriculum, work with public agencies, elected officials, and philanthropic partners to ensure each child has access to the following:

Most providers reported that revenue and reimbursement did not cover monthly costs.

Family child care (FCC) providers seemed to be hit especially hard. 73% of FCC providers were worried about rent or mortgage payments, and 71% of FCC providers were worried about costs for cleaning and PPE. Over 50% of all providers worried about being able to cover the following costs:

- ↳ Cleaning supplies • Personal protective equipment (PPE) • Facilities • Personnel ←



Increase provider reimbursement rates to ensure a livable wage that will hasten economic recovery, reduce high teacher turnover and stress, and recognize essential work.

To reopen, remain open, and safely serve families, ensure providers receive flexible funding to cover these and other costs:

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Access the full report here: <https://bit.ly/3nSBbqn>