

# Child Care RESOURCE CENTER

**2009 CCRC Annual Report**

*Quality Care for Every Child*

# 2009 Annual Report

A publication of the



16 East 16th Street  
Suite 202 Tulsa,  
OK 74119

918.834.2273 (phone)  
918.834.9339 (Fax)

[Info@ccrctulsa.org](mailto:Info@ccrctulsa.org)



The Child Care Resource Center is a program of the Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa.



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# Child Care RESOURCE CENTER

## *Quality Care for Every Child*

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The mission of the *Child Care Resource Center* is to promote quality, affordable child care in Tulsa, Creek, Rogers and Wagoner Counties through information sharing, advocacy, training, service development, and education.

Note from Karen Smith, Director,

CCRC had some huge ups and downs in 2009. In March, the Read Now program closed. CCRC continues to support early literacy on many levels but on a much smaller scale utilizing work study students to read and tutor children. April through June was a whirlwind of activity beginning with the *Quality Care for Every Child Summit* hosted to gather ideas for ways to increase child care quality in our state and then hosting the *International Infant Toddler Conference*. June 18, was our first annual *Top of the Town* premiere event which was very successful. The following week, CCRC moved to our new location in Main Square towers. The physical location is 1601 S. Main Suite 100 (Resource and Referral and Library), Suite 102 (Offices and Bookstore), and 16 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 201 (Food Program). The official mailing address is 16 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 202, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119. Then in November, the economy and budgets again required a change and we had to reduce the Bookstore. We will still bring the Bookstore to conferences, provide books for programs to host book fairs and do special orders for programs, but our in-store inventory is greatly reduced. We hope for a successful 2010 for all our friends and colleagues in the early childhood arena.



# *Quality Care for Every Child Means...*

## *Promoting Access to Child Care*

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### **Helping Families Find Child Care through Resource and Referral**

**Resource and Referral** is part of the state and national Child Care Resource and Referral system and recognized nationally for quality assurance through National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA). **R&R** provides families referrals to safe, quality, affordable child care that meets their immediate child care needs, while offering tools that allow families to gain the information and knowledge necessary to evaluate child care options available.

Information and referrals can be received by phone, fax, email, mail, or in person. The CCRC website [www.ccrctulsa.org](http://www.ccrctulsa.org) provides information to parents and providers regarding quality child care, training programs available in the community and state. The website also provides access to an on-line child care search engine called Child Care Connector which is driven by NACCRRAware. This program enables parents to seek child care by location, type, or cost of child care through the Internet. **R&R** also administers three special projects: Health and Safety Enhancement Project (HSEP), Infant Toddler Enhancement Project (ITEP) and Hispanic Outreach Services. These services are funded through the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association with Oklahoma Child Care Services contracted dollars.

The referral service database currently lists 1,030 child care providers from the Tulsa Metropolitan Area available to receive referrals of potential clients. The database includes licensed and licensed-exempt child care centers, family child care homes, large family child care homes, nanny agencies, mother's day out programs, preschools, before and after school programs, Head Start and Early Head Start, summer camps and drop-in care. The referral service collects capacity data by age, transportation requirements, language issues and special needs care to determine shortages for care for specific ages and needs.

During 2009, CCRC received over 2,200 calls for child care. Six hundred of those parents called back for additional referrals. The following is an example of a 2009 referral call.

***Hispanic father called the Hispanic Referral Specialist in desperate need of care for three children ranging in age from 2-5. This father needed immediate care because his wife was caught in a traffic stop without proper documentation and was being deported. Mom had been the primary caregiver while dad worked, and the family had not used any state assistance, but suddenly immigration was breaking up the family and the children would be eligible for child care subsidy.***

Over the past four years, the percentage of families receiving child care assistance in the Tulsa Metropolitan Area has grown from 52% to 64%. Families can access child care assistance through the Department of Human Services subsidy program, Operation Child Care, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), tribal assistance, and sliding fee scale through individual programs. The following chart describes the increases in assistance from 2006-2009.

**Chart 1 – Increases in child care assistance for families by percentages**

	2006	2007	2008	2009
DHS Subsidy	45%	46%	52%	55%
Operation Child Care	≤1%	≤1%	≤0%	≤0%
SSI	≤1%	≤1%	≤0%	≤0%
Sliding Scale	4%	5%	2%	6%
Tribal	2.5%	3%	4%	3%
Private Pay	48%	46%	42%	36%

*R&R* also sponsors *The Toy Lending and Resource Library* which is a lending service for Creek, Rogers, Tulsa, and Wagoner Counties. The library includes resource books and training videos on child care and child development, toy lending library “learning luggage”, and a “cut and create” work area to make inexpensive games and activities using die cut, laminating, and comb-binding machines.

**2009 Resource and Referral Statistics**

- 35,000 provider referrals were given to families
- 2,200 children were served
  - 23% of those children were under age 1
  - 48% were age 1-4
  - 29% were over the age of 4
- 2,500 searches were made by families using the online quick search for referrals
- 450 successful follow-ups were completed
- 25 families requested special needs care for their child
- 974 first time families received child care assistance
- 40 families needing child care spoke a language other than English
- 101 technical assistance visits to child care providers by the Child Care Consultant
- 20 child care centers were provided intensive health and safety training and technical assistance through Health and Safety Enhancement Project
- 15 child care centers were provided intensive infant toddler training and technical assistance through Infant Toddler Enhancement Project
- Over 800 Hispanic Families were reached through resource and community fairs
- 176 people checked out 1805 library items

*Quality Care for Every Child Means...  
Providing Resource Support  
to Providers and Children in Care...*

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**Supporting nutritious meals and snacks through the USDA  
Child and Adult Care Food Program**

*The Child and Adult Care Food Program* (CACFP) is an indispensable program which provides quality meals and snacks to children in family child care homes. Nutrition is an important part of good child care and a healthy lifestyle. The importance of healthy eating habits should be impressed on children early and often. Oklahoma has recently been identified as the 4<sup>th</sup> highest state in food insecurity (Hunger in America 2010) with most children



CaBrina Lindley, Nutrition Consultant is being honored at  
Tulsa Community College Best of Best Banquet

receiving only two meals per day. *CACFP* make certain that while these children are in child care they will receive the nourishment they so desperately need. The *Child and Adult Care Food Program* reimburses over \$600,000 annually for nutritious food served to children in their care. Averages of 1,500 children are served each month and close to 900,000 meals and snacks are served annually. Staff approves providers to participate in the program, provides training in nutrition, sanitation, health and safety, reviews the program by visiting each home multiple times per year, and processes and distributes monthly re-

imbursement checks. State Department of Education with a generous contribution by the Tulsa Area United Way funds CCRC's *CACFP*.

In 2009, the Food Program reimbursed 111 family home providers. Of these providers 105 are tier one status which reimburses at a higher rate. To qualify for tier one reimbursement, the provider must fall below the income guidelines, or the elementary school they are zoned for must have over 50% of the children on the free and reduced lunch. While most providers are located in Tulsa County (91) services are also provided in Creek (4), Osage (3), Rogers (5) and Wagoner (8) counties.

## **Supporting Programs to Become Accredited through the Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI)**

According to extensive research conducted by Smart Start North Carolina, the nationally-renowned early childhood initiative, raising the quality of child care environments can best be accomplished through intensive technical assistance and ongoing support. CCRC's **Quality Enhancement Initiative** (QEI) supports child care centers to achieve and sustain accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). QEI also supports family child care homes achieve and sustain accreditation through the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). George Kaiser Family Foundation and the Tulsa Area United Way are the primary funders of QEI.

During 2009, over ninety Tulsa area programs received technical assistance from the QEI. Forty-three child care centers and 44 family child care homes serving over 2000 children received QEI intensive support. Nine new family child care homes became accredited and one provider received renewal accreditation under NAFCC.

***Two family child care providers decided to remove their television sets. Both providers have reported fewer behavior issues with children and more involvement with games and developmentally appropriate materials.***

CCRC received \$30,000 in quality improvement funds from the George Kaiser Family Foundation to purchase large items for programs to help them improve quality. Programs used these funds to purchase appropriate shelves for classroom materials and safe cribs to replace "pack and plays". DHS minimum licensing standards allows child care programs to use pack and plays which research has demonstrated health and safety issues when using this form of sleeping device for infants and toddlers in group care. CCRC has been working to change this by purchasing cribs to replace pack and plays, as well as advocating for DHS to use stimulus dollars to purchase cribs for all providers who use pack and plays.

## **Supporting programs through Annual Day of Caring**

Each year CCRC matches 12-20 child care programs with local companies to participate in Tulsa Area United Way's Annual **Day of Caring**. During 2009, a total of 123 volunteers from 10 companies completed 11 projects for eight child care centers, five family child care homes and packet stuffing for CCRC. These projects included building and filling sandboxes for one Tulsa center, one Broken Arrow family child care home, and four Tulsa family child care homes, playground updating and painting for four child care centers in Tulsa, and one child care center in Wagoner, building a puppet theater for one child care center in Tulsa, and reading to children at one child care center.



BOK volunteer building a sandbox for a family child care home



Attendees at the Program Administrators Scale training

## Supporting the child care community through training and professional development

Professional development plays an important role in supporting caregivers transition from custodial care roles to qualified early care and learning professionals. CCRC remains on the cutting edge by bringing current research and training opportunities to providers. CCRC publishes quarterly newsletters and training calendars which list current training opportunities throughout Tulsa Metro Area. CCRC's website and newly developed facebook page provides current events, training opportunities and advocacy information.

In 2009, CCRC sponsored a three day Program Administrators Scale (PAS) Training for QEI staff, programs, and the early care and learning community. In April, CCRC co-sponsored ***Dismantling the Cradle to Prison Pipeline*** with Tulsa Mayor's Office featuring Marion Wright Edelman. CCRC and JumpStart Tulsa sponsored ***Quality Care for Every Child Summit*** to push seven points for quality child care forward.

In April, CCRC and JumpStart Tulsa sponsored the first ***International Infant Toddler Conference***. Over 550 participants attended this event from countries around the world including Australia, Mexico, Canada, China and France. Participants were immersed in the Pikler Approach to infant and toddler caregiving. Following the conference, CCRC developed a blog to keep connected to the participants in order to continue ongoing support.

In October, CCRC partnered with the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa Early Childhood Education Institute's annual Leadership Institute for early childhood teachers. Over 150 teachers and caregivers attended this event focusing on early language and English language learners.

Over the course of 2009, CCRC hosted monthly Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect, a Zero to Three curriculum, trainings to child care providers and the community. The average attendance each Saturday was 25 participants. As a result, CCRC is holding these classes again during the 2010 year.

## Seven Points of Quality Care for Every Child

**Point 1:** An overall plan for state investment in quality “Zero through Eight” experience that addresses providing support for both an effective workforce and quality developmentally appropriate early care and learning. **Outcomes:** Expand early childhood definition to include “Zero through Eight”. Establish a single definition of early care and learning rather than education, Head Start, and child care. Support a single agency to coordinate early childhood strategies at the state level.

**Point 2:** Consistent and coordinated program guidelines across all early care and learning programs. **Outcomes:** Implement a cohesive framework of guidelines for all early care and learning settings that include the domains of social-emotional, speech-language, physical, cognitive, and family support using early childhood developmental theory.

**Point 3:** A meaningful and consumer friendly quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for all early care and learning programs should be implemented. **Outcomes:** QRIS monitoring on all early care and learning sites (Head Start, child care and public schools) for children 0 through 8 years old.

**Point 4:** A Stars program covering additional levels of quality and accurately reflecting level of quality of the early care and learning site. **Outcomes:** Mandatory Star participation by all early care and learning sites with reimbursement levels for subsidized child care increased to 90<sup>th</sup> percentile to maintain quality in the sites.

**Point 5:** Significant increase in funding and an integrated funding approach to support early care and learning. **Outcome:** Parity in early care and learning sites for like quality of care.

**Point 6:** Effective, stable early childhood workforce development for all early care and learning environments. **Outcome:** Workforce adequate to meet the demands of the early care and learning environment in Oklahoma.

**Point 7:** Effective communication with families regarding the importance of early care and learning and how best to access it. **Outcome:** Parents engaged in early care and learning selection for their children, transition and learning activities.

# *Quality Care for Every Child Means...*

## *Screening Children in Child Care through the LINK Project*

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The **LINK Project** provides free developmental, hearing, vision, speech, and social-emotional screening on-site in Tulsa County child care programs. The LINK team works closely with the family and agencies in the community to provide appropriate referrals for intervention and support in any area identified as a need or a concern. In 2009 screening services were provided for 1019 children at 38 child care centers and family child care homes.

In early 2009 an important component was added to the LINK screening program; an on-site training program called **LINK Connections**. The **LINK Connections** team is available to work with centers focusing on specific topics ranging from speech/language enrichment activities to classroom arrangement. A grant from the Children's Medical Charities Association has enabled the **LINK Connections** team to purchase equipment to be used during on-site trainings, which may then be left with the center for their ongoing use.

### **Some 2009 LINK Statistics**

- 31.6% of those screened displayed one or more concerns on their developmental screening
- 23% received a speech screening or evaluation and referred for speech therapy services
- 59% had a history of ear infections by parent report
- 37% had abnormal tympanograms at time of screening
- 23% reported PE tubes

In June the Autism Center of Tulsa (ACT) approached the LINK Project regarding collaboration. The Autism Center had been receiving a large volume of calls from parents of young children inquiring about where to take them for developmental screening if they had a concern. Many said they had already visited with their doctor or school system, however were not satisfied with the “wait and see” answer they received. ACT requested that a LINK Project team be available one day a month, on-site at the ACT offices, to provide developmental, hearing, speech and autism screenings by appointment. An agreement was signed and one of the LINK teams began providing services in August.

## **One Mom tells her story ...**

*We want to express our gratitude towards The LINK Project. My 5 ½ yr. old son was in a local pre-k program. They offered the LINK testing program to their students, so we had our son tested.*

*During the evaluation, one of the observers noticed that our son might have a problem with his left eye and told us we might want to get it checked out. We scheduled an appointment. To our surprise, we were told he had “intermittent exotropia” and needed eye surgery. During one test in the doctor’s office, his doctor showed us how at that time, he wasn’t even using his left eye. We were shocked; however, after the diagnosis, we started noticing that our son didn’t ever look at us with both eyes when he talked to us. He had his eye surgery in June. Nine hours after his surgery he stood at the table and started moving his eyes back and forth. We asked him if he was okay and he said, “Mom, I can see you now with both eyes”. I asked him what he was seeing before and not knowing anything different, his brain was seeing one direction with one eye and one direction with the other eye. He never knew what it was like to see straight with both eyes. Our entire family could not get rid of the smiles that were permanently kept on our faces for days. My son has a whole perspective of seeing that he never knew existed – All thanks to The LINK Project.*

*The next morning our son woke up and said, “Mom, I LOVE my new vision!” Our family cannot thank you enough for everything you have done. If it had not been for The LINK Project, our son would have started kindergarten seeing things differently and his brain would have eventually stopped using his left eye. Your program is a true blessing to us and many people.*

# Quality Care for Every Child Means...

## Promoting Literacy

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The **Early Childhood Literacy Initiative** supports community initiatives that improve literacy, language and communication skills of children, promotes shared reading time with children, and educates the community on skills young children can learn to prepare them to become successful readers. The **ECLI** maintains the **Early Childhood Bookstore** which offers children's books, curriculum, and resource books at off-site events and book fairs.

At the beginning of 2009, this program's goal was to recruit volunteers to read to children in child care. Over the past several years, it became increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers to commit to weekly reading, but program demonstrated success recruiting volunteers to support special read-a-thon events. Throughout 2009, **ECLI** evolved into a project that promotes incorporating literacy throughout the daily activities of the early childhood day. CCRC collaborates with Spartan College of Aeronautics to provide volunteers to read with and tutor children in child care programs and elementary schools. Six work study students planned and implemented a *Read Across America* event reading to 200 children in five child care programs and the Children's Hospital at St. Francis. This event included Tulsa World Media, students dressing up in Dr. Seuss characters, distributing Dr. Seuss books to the children, and doing art projects with the children as story stretchers.

CCRC also participated in Tulsa's Annual Week of the Young Child Fun Fair hosting "Mother Goose on the Loose" Obstacle Course. Over 412 Dr. Seuss books were given to children going through CCRC's obstacle course. Over 2000 people attended this event which featured over seventy different booths for families. Sixty-six children were immunized by volunteers from the Immunization Coalition.



Don Farr, Read Now  
Coordinator's, last day with CCRC



Five work study students from Spartan School of Aeronautics developed an aviation club for school aged children. These students presented this club at one community school and one after-school program with the goal to repeat the club at out-of-school programs throughout the Tulsa area. The club culminated in a field trip to Spartan.

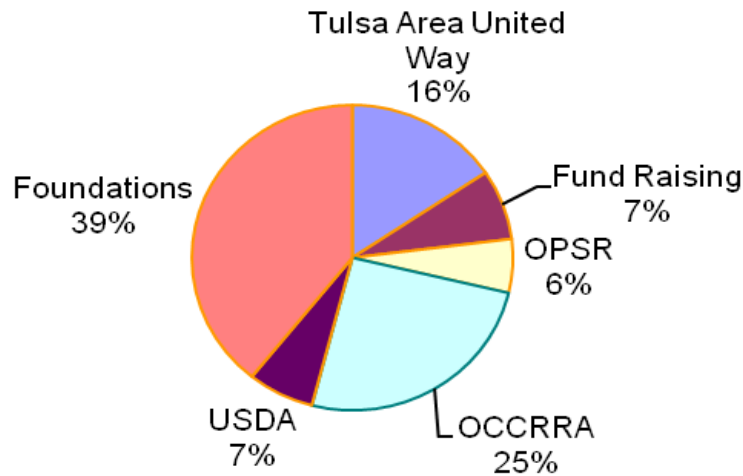
Read Across America Day:

# Quality Care for Every Child Means...

## Resources for Success

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Chart 2: Funding:



## Top of the Town

In June, CCRC hosted the first annual Top of the Town event netting just less than \$11,000. A total of 623 people attended this event which featured five downtown Tulsa Buildings, five restaurants and a brand new downtown winery. In addition to the money raised, the community learned about CCRC through exposure on TV, radio, newspaper and attendees.



Francie Day, Karen Smith and Ashli Sims preparing for Top of the Town 2009

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## Advocating for Change

CCRC staff is actively involved in the National policy agenda. Staff presented at two National conferences during 2009 on state and local policy changes, hosted the International Infant Toddler Conference in April, took a bus load of parents and providers to the state Capital to learn how to be advocates, and have been promoting 7 points of quality care and learning for every child across the state. A child watch tour was hosted in Rogers County which enabled their leadership to experience the lack of child care in their community.

## Advisory Council 2009

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Anita Carwile  
Stacey Finnerty

Belinda McGee  
Ashli Sims

Francie Day  
Anisa McDade

## 2009 CCRC Staff

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Lindsey Asher, Accreditation Specialist  
\*Heather Been, Food Program Monitor  
Melinda Belcher, Resource and Referral  
Coordinator  
Dee Ann Brown, Referral Specialist  
Janna Cooney, Community Health  
Consultant  
\*Marilyn Cundiff, Toy Lending and  
Resource Library Coordinator  
\*Don Farr, Read Now Coordinator  
Aubrey Fick, Referral Specialist  
Allison Finch, LINK Project Audiologist  
Lesley Gudgel, LINK Project Coordinator  
\*Kirsten Hilsheimer, LINK Project Speech  
Pathologist  
Hope Hooks, Administrative Assistant  
Stephanie Howard, Literacy Specialist  
CaBrina Lindley, Food Program Monitor  
Erma Lee McMinn, Accreditation Specialist  
Shauna Meador, Accreditation Specialist  
Kendra Morgan, LINK Project Child  
Development Specialist  
Casey Moore, Food Program Coordinator

Ellie Newby, Child Care Consultant  
Amy Krueger Peters, Communications and  
Literacy Coordinator  
Cyndy Purgason, LINK Project Registered  
Nurse  
\*Stefanie Robison, Referral Specialist  
Jessica Ruggles, Infant Toddler Specialist  
Joyce Reynolds, Child Care Health Consultant  
Retta Seger, Accreditation Specialist  
Karen Smith, Director  
Marlene Smith, Accreditation Specialist  
Mary Beth Smith, LINK Project Child  
Development Specialist  
Debi Spencer, LINK Project Psychometrist  
Samara Stephenson, Hispanic Outreach  
Referral Assistant  
\*Erin Strobel, Infant-Toddler Specialist  
Sue Trimble, Library Assistant  
Paige Whalen, Quality Enhancement Initiative  
Coordinator

\*Left CCRC in 2009