

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from the survey data that parents of young children are largely dependent on child care so that they can work to support their families. Most of these parents are using formal child care such as child care centers, family child care homes, and nursery and part-day pre-k programs.

When parents look for child care, they are concerned about quality and primarily consider the caregiver's attitude, and the cleanliness and safety of the setting. They are not generally checking the caregiver's qualifications (training, education, etc.), or the program's inspection record or licensing, as they quite logically assume that there are standards in place that are monitored and enforced. The reality, however, is that in most states caregivers are not required to have any training in early childhood development and funding cuts have led to severe reductions in program inspections. **So, while parents think that health and safety inspections of child care programs are conducted on a regular basis and caregivers have basic training in child development before they work with children, this is simply not true in many states.**

Parents want a safe environment for their children. They also want their children to be learning. As a result, parents strongly support policies requiring inspections of programs and training of caregivers. They want to ensure that their children receive learning experiences that will prepare them for school. They are willing to pay additional taxes to make these proposals a reality.

**Given this high level of support for enhancing the quality of child care, NACCRRRA calls on states to take the following actions to help ensure that children are safe and learning while their parents work:**

### Minimum Pre-Service Training:

- Require all caregivers to have a minimum of 40 hours of training in child development, guidance and discipline, first-aid/CPR, recognizing child abuse, and related health and safety issues *prior* to working with children.

### On-going Training:

- Require all caregivers to attend at least 24 hours of training in child development and related subjects on an annual basis (on-going training post-employment).

### Training Assessment:

- Require that on-going training be assessed on a regular basis using observational methods to ensure that part of the training relates to a caregiver's ability to interact effectively with children.

### Background Checks, Including Fingerprints:

- Require all caregivers to have background checks, including a fingerprint check, *prior* to working with children.

### Unannounced Inspections:

- Require all child care programs to undergo random, unannounced inspections on a quarterly basis and set a reasonable maximum caseload per inspector. And, require licensing standards and inspection results to be publicly accessible through the internet.

### Developmentally Appropriate Quality Standards:

- Require states to set quality standards that are developmentally appropriate for the age of the child for all types of child care (except for care provided by relatives) to help all children arrive at school ready to learn.