

A close-up photograph of a young child with dark hair, smiling broadly. The child is wearing a red, white, and black striped shirt. They are holding a black drawing board with white grid lines. On the board, there is a drawing of a person's head and shoulders, drawn with white chalk or paint. The background is blurred, showing other people in a classroom or community setting.

2022

**Tulare County Council
on Child and Youth
Development**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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With special recognition to:

- **Lorena Castillo**, Tulare County Office of Education, Early Childhood Education Program
- **Christina Saucedo**, First 5 Tulare County
- **Cheri Doria**, Director of Preschools, Lindsay Unified School District



TULARE COUNTY
BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS



Tulare County
Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

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This report can be found online at www.tularecountykids.org.

The external evaluation and report preparation for this project was led by Stergios Roussos and Maria Ocegueda from Community Initiatives for Collective Impact (Ci4Ci).

For more information or help with questions, please contact the Child and Youth Development Council Manager at 559-651-1723.

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Tulare County Council on Child and Youth Development

THE COUNCIL

Child care is an essential part of the nation's economic and social infrastructure.¹

"Quality care ensures that children receive critical academic and social-emotional support in their early years, and that they arrive in kindergarten ready to learn. It also results in a better-prepared workforce, a more stable society, and a country that is well-positioned to compete in a global economy. All Americans have a stake in these things."¹

- R. Moorthy & R. Rayan, EdSource, 2020

WHY?

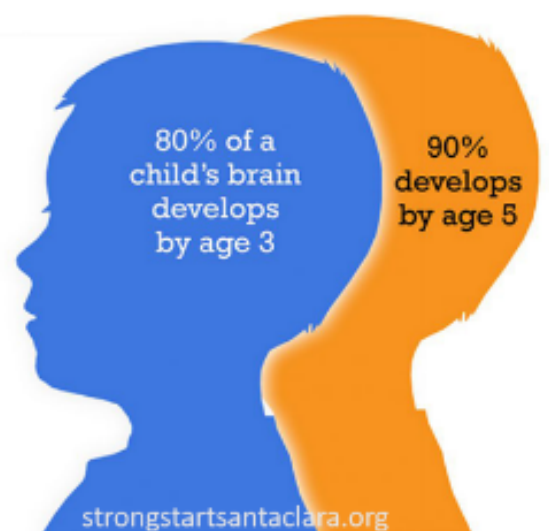
Why we do what we do

The Tulare County Council on Child and Youth Development ("The Council") helps Tulare County invest in and benefit from early learning and care for children from birth through age 12.

"Early learning and care" is the term used to describe this area of work. Early learning and care describes the caretaking and educational services a child receives while their parent or primary caregiver is working, going to school, or away. Over 55% of children ages 0-12 in Tulare County require some care while their parents are away.²

The Council works as the liaison between Tulare County and the state to identify local early

learning and care needs. The Council supports and advocates for high-quality care for all children.





Early learning and care is most important for children between birth and five years of age, the period of fastest and greatest development in their lives.

By age five, over 90% of a child's brain development has occurred and includes social, physical, and emotional growth that lasts a lifetime.³

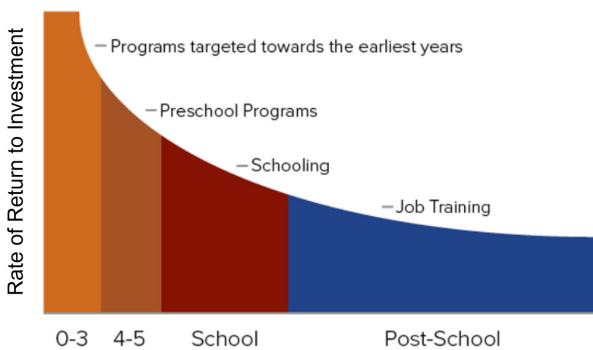
Economic research shows that early learning and care is the greatest investment a community can make (Figure 1).⁴ Long-term studies on the return on investment in early learning and care show a \$4 to \$12 return to society for every \$1 invested. Scholars in the Harvard Business Review report, "Child care is not a family issue. It is a business issue. It affects how we work, when we work, and for many, why we work."⁵ All of us have a reason to create and sustain our community's early learning and care system.

WHAT?

What we do

The Council began in 1997, under the guidance of the California Department of Education as part of a network of Local Child Care Planning and Development Councils (LPCs). In 2021, LPCs became part of the California Department of Social Services. The Council is responsible for maintaining a membership that represents the diversity of stakeholders for early learning and care in the county (e.g., parents, child care providers, nonprofit, and business professionals). It regularly assesses the county's early learning and care needs and resources, providing information necessary to address the community's demand for early learning and care. The Council uses its assessments and data analyses to recommend priorities to the state on how to fund early learning and care programs for children ages 0-12.

Figure 1. Returns to a Unit Dollar Invested are Highest in Earliest Years



Source: Heckman.org

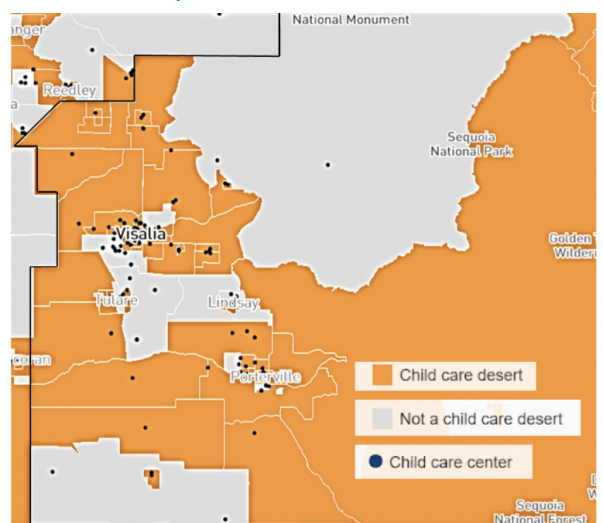


SOME EXAMPLES OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK:

The Council conducts a periodic comprehensive early learning and care needs assessment for Tulare County. The report is used by educators, policymakers, and other decision-makers to support children and families. In 2018, The Council's needs assessment report clarified the needs of families across child age groups (e.g., infant, toddler, preschool, school-age), income levels (e.g., low-income, poverty), and other characteristics. The assessment showed one of the most underserved groups of children (only 14% were served) were infants (ages 0-3 years) living in low-income families (earning less than 70% of the state median income).² The Needs Assessment used national research to understand "child care deserts" in Tulare County that may require more services, teachers, and support.

The Council synthesizes local data to support funding decisions for early learning and care throughout Tulare County. Each year, the Council produces data analyses that assist the California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services to prioritize the allocation of millions of dollars for early learning and care programs serving children ages 0-12 throughout Tulare County. The Council conducts local forums and meetings to encourage public input in developing its recommendations to the state.

Tulare County Child Care "Desert" Tracts, 2016⁶



*Although a map for 2020 could not be created, it parallels this 2016 map

The Council promotes the Quality Counts California (QCC) Workforce Pathway Grant for Tulare County. This grant provides substantial support (e.g., \$400,000 in 2020) for the early learning and care workforce seeking to advance professionally. This grant aims to increase the level of quality provided in all early learning and care settings throughout the county to better serve the children in their programs. Improving the early learning and care workforce is essential to increase the availability and quality of early learning and care in Tulare County.

The Council promotes the services provided by Resource and Referral (R&R) of Tulare County. R&R is the link between parents and early learning and care providers. R&R provides parents with facts about high-quality early learning and care programs and referrals to a variety of early learning and care options. R&R services are available to any parent, regardless of income. Information about this resource can be found at <http://www.tcoe.org/ECE/OtherPrograms.shtm>.

The Council collaborates with the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), known in Tulare County as Early Stars. Early Stars provides coaching, training, materials, supplies, and other incentives to early learning and care programs throughout the county. Early Stars helps ensure that early learning and care programs in Tulare County meet and exceed standards of quality. Information on this resource can be found at www.tcoe.org/EarlyStars/.



The Council hosts an annual event to promote financial investments and support to the early learning and care field. The Annual Inclusion Collaborative Event facilitates collaboration between families and educators. The event raises awareness in the community about the importance of inclusive early learning and care programs for all children and staff.

The Council creates opportunities that raise awareness and educate policymakers, elected representatives, and other decision-makers on how crucial early learning and care is to the development of children. The Council's Annual Legislative Event highlights the latest policies and mobilizes local action on behalf of early childhood education.



Collaboration
Advocacy
Data
Support
Community Forum
Events
Needs Assessment

The Council

Education Inclusion

HOW?

How we make a difference

The Council achieves results by serving as a trusted hub for collaboration and sharing of ideas, relationships, and resources for the greater good of all Tulare County children and families. The need and demand for early learning and care programs far exceed supply. The Council advances solutions by providing a forum for all people and groups interested in improving the early learning and care field. This includes private and public child care providers, local and state commissions for children and families, county welfare departments, human service agencies, regional centers, job training programs, employers, parent organizations, early start family resource centers, family empowerment centers on disability, local child care resource and referral programs, and others with interest in early childhood education.

WHO?

Who is in our team

The Council makes it a priority to recruit and engage members and partners representing the full diversity of voices and resources of Tulare County. As guided by the California Department of Social Services, the Council membership ensures ethnic, racial, and geographic composition reflective of Tulare County. The Tulare County Board of Supervisors and the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools appoint members representing required groups and discretionary members that reflect the county. Council members include parents and caregivers, child care providers, public agency representatives, community representatives, and other child advocates.

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

Elvira Barron, Tulare County Office of Education Early Childhood Education Program

Stephanie Caldera, Tulare County Office of Education Bright Start Parent Infant Program

Lorena Castillo, Tulare County Office of Education Early Childhood Education Program

Cheri Doria, Director of Preschools for Lindsay Unified School District

Amanda Ergo, Discretionary Member

Sherri Glenn, Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency

Amanda Guajardo, Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council

Jessica Hernandez, Lindsay Unified School District-Family Resource Center

Brenda Larson, Tulare County Office of Education

Maribel Magana, Family Child Care Provider

Barbara Newman, Central Valley Regional Center

Rebecca Ortega, Director of Preschools for Porterville Unified School District

Monica Pilkinton, Early Childhood Education Consultant

Melissa Prado, Consumer

Timberly Romero, Parenting Network

Zeina Rousan, VDA Inc.

Christina Saucedo, First 5 Tulare County

Tiffany Stark, Tulare County Office of Education Special Services

Amy Sullivan, Director of Preschools for Visalia Unified School District

Dianne Young, Early Childhood Education Consultant



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

All of us have a responsibility to make sure Tulare County has an effective, high-quality early learning and care system for all children. Each of us has a role in strengthening our county's early learning and care system. What do you feel is important to ensure this goal is accomplished? What do you want to see improved? The Council welcomes your ideas, recommendations, and participation. We invite you to join us at our Council meetings, consider joining the Council, or share your ideas by contacting us. The Council looks forward to working together for the success of all children and families in Tulare County.



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We believe that all children and families deserve **quality care** and **education**. The Council supports quality care and education by providing the **link** between the **needs** and the available **resources**.



REFERENCES

1. Moorthy R & Rayan R. America's economic recovery will stall without child-care relief. *EdSource*. <https://edsource.org/2020/americas-economic-recovery-will-stall-without-child-care-relief/639943>. Published September 17, 2020. Accessed August 5, 2021.
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