

The Preconception to Age 5 Network

Our vision is to make Fresno County a place where the talent that exists in every household can flourish cradle to career.

To make this a reality parents need to be able to work and/or go to school and children need to be safe, healthy and ready to learn.

The key to unlocking this vision is access to affordable quality childcare.



City of Fresno American Rescue Plan Funding Proposal *Getting Families Back to Work*

Preconception to Age 5 Participating Members Include:

Fresno Cradle to Career
First 5 Fresno County
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools
Central Valley Children's Services Network
The Children's Movement of Fresno
Exceptional Parents Unlimited



The Preconception to Age-5 Network is part of the DRIVE Human Capital portfolio.



City of Fresno American Rescue Plan Funding Proposal

Getting Families Back to Work

April 2021

SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has put a heavy strain on families with young children due to job loss, child care site closures, and under-employment. **The American Rescue Plan is Fresno's chance to support the child care small business sector that ensures parents with young children can get back to work.** A network of agencies focused on supporting and advocating for the wellbeing of Fresno's young children and their families are jointly requesting **\$23,400,000** to respond to the impact of COVID-19 on the local child care infrastructure and the working parents that depend on it.

BACKGROUND

Let's get parents back to work, children in quality care, and our local economy back on track.

Employers need workers and workers need child care. Our ability to increase access to quality, affordable child care is foundational to our community's recovery and prosperity. When parents have access to quality child care, they can work, financially support their families, and contribute to our region's economy. All while preparing their children to enter school ready to learn. And yet, finding quality child care is impossible for many Fresno families as our need far outweighs the current supply.

Since February 2020, ninety-one (91) child care facilities in our Fresno community have closed their doors exacerbating the strain on an already fragile system. Today, a mere **23% of Fresno County children in eligible working families have access to child care** programs, leaving **77% of children without child care.** At the same time, for many middle-income families, programs are often cost prohibitive with the annual cost of child care averaging \$12,000 for infants and more than \$8,000 for preschool-aged children. While operating a child care space is expensive, those who care for young children remain among the lowest paid workers in the state.

A quality child care space is foundational in **preventing child abuse, reducing poverty, and supporting the prosperity of local economies.** As our city works to rebuild its economy, it is imperative that we invest in child care as essential to our infrastructure.

PROPOSAL

An inclusive and vibrant post-pandemic economy depends on a strong and sustainable child care system. During the recovery months resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must support **child care providers to stay open and reopen, encourage employers to creatively support parent employees, and address the mental health impact of the pandemic on young children and their families.** To answer this need we see three major priorities:

- 1) Provide business grants and training for the child care workforce and small businesses to stay open, reopen, and support new providers in zip codes with highest need.**

Child Care Business Grants: Funds will be used to support struggling and recently closed child care facilities that are not receiving government subsidies and to support the

launch of new child care small businesses, including onsite child care for parent employees. With an eye on equity, grants will prioritize zip codes with the highest need for child care based on the 2020-2021 Fresno County Local [Child Care] Priorities (approved by the Fresno County Child Care and Development Local Planning Council). Grants would range between approximately \$5,000 and \$10,000 and cover expenses for required safety equipment, mandatory meal costs for children in care, upstart costs, and other operational needs. **(\$4,500,000)**

Child Care Workforce Trainings: Funds to support the expansion of programs like the California Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) and the Quality to Pathways Grant to recruit, provide trainings and offer technical assistance to new and existing child care providers (\$4,500,000); and to ensure the child care workforce has the necessary qualifications to work in the child care field (\$1,000,000). **(\$5,500,000)**

Web-based Child Care Provider Clearinghouse: A website offering resources for prospective and current child care providers on steps to become licensed, indicators of quality child care programming, and guidance on securing new funding. **(\$250,000)**

Web-based Centralized Child Care Access List: Development and maintenance of a website to prioritize children with the greatest need for child care and coordinate enrollment across sites. **(\$1,250,000)**

Total Funding Requested: \$11.5 million to serve approximately 215 current/recently closed child care businesses, 240 new child care businesses, and trainings/resources for 300 individual child care providers.

- 2) **Support businesses to offer child-friendly options for employees.** A parent's ability to work depends on both the availability and affordability of child care. Unfortunately, child care is still out of reach for many families due to cost and there are not enough open centers/homes/programs to meet the demand. These funds would go to local employers to support the child care sites of their employees' choice to supplement per-child tuition costs traditionally expected to be paid by individual families as they financially recover from the pandemic. Up to \$300 per child would be allocated per month (for three months) based on family income and number of children served per site.

Total Funding Requested: \$9.9 million supporting approximately 11,000 children (1/3 of the City of Fresno's young children population ages 0 to 5).

- 3) **Mitigate the mental health impact on young children.** The COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating for our children and families. Many families have been pushed over the edge into poverty, and as parents and children return to workplaces and campuses in the upcoming months, experts are predicting greater trauma and toxic stress to surface. While trauma and behavioral interventions are covered through Medi-Cal for eligible families, these same services are very expensive for non-eligible families. Funding is needed for culturally-responsive screenings, interventions and trainings necessary to support children's social, emotional, and behavioral health and development. **(\$2,000,000)**

Total Funding Requested: \$2 million supporting a minimum of 2,000 families and professionals.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Priority Area	Description	Funding Amount
Business grants and training for the child care workforce	Child Care Business Grants to support struggling, recently closed and new child care small businesses. <i>(approximately 215 current/recently closed, and 240 new child care businesses)</i>	\$4,500,000
	Child Care Workforce Trainings to recruit and provide training and technical assistance to new and existing child care providers. <i>(approximately 300 individual child care providers)</i>	\$5,500,000
	Web-based Child Care Provider Clearinghouse a resource for child care providers on licensing, indicators of quality, and guidance on securing new funding.	\$250,000
	Web-based Centralized Child Care Access List to prioritize children with the greatest need for child care and coordinate enrollment across sites.	\$1,250,000
	Total \$11,500,000	
Support businesses to offer Child-Friendly Options for Employees	Funds to child care sites and local employers to supplement per-child tuition costs traditionally expected from families as they financially recover from the pandemic. <i>(approximately 11,000 children (1/3 of the City of Fresno's young children population ages 0 to 5))</i>	\$9,900,000
	Total \$9,900,000	
Mitigate the Mental Health Impact on Young Children	Interventions and supports to address and improve children's social, emotional, and behavioral health and development. <i>(a minimum of 2,000 families and professionals)</i>	\$2,000,000
	Total \$2,000,000	
Total Amount		\$23,400,000
Participating Implementation Agencies include: Fresno Cradle to Career First 5 Fresno County Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Central Valley Children's Services Network The Children's Movement of Fresno EPU Children's Center		