



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
**Community Development Division**

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June 13, 2013

Eloise Anderson, Secretary  
Department of Children and Families  
201 E Washington Ave G200  
Madison WI 53703

Dear Secretary Anderson,

In March, 2013, The City of Madison's Early Childhood Care and Education Committee (ECCEC) hosted a forum that offered child care providers in the Madison area an opportunity to voice the challenges and concerns they have that impact a provider's ability to give care to children. The ECCEC writes to inform you of these providers' concerns so that the Department of Children and Families may consider them when deciding child care policies.

#### *Licensing*

Some providers find licensing to be inconsistent. For example, one regulator required that a provider meet a facility improvement standard in order to get licensed, but did not require that another provider meet facility standards. A few providers perceived these inconsistencies as unfair and punitive.

#### *Quality*

Some providers are concerned with finding ways to maintain quality staff and programs. The providers at the forum indicated that YoungStar's rating system holds them at a disadvantage. For example, these providers said they have more experienced staff than college-educated staff and thus, they receive a lower YoungStar rating. In their view, this difference in staff educational levels prevents them from achieving a higher YoungStar rating. In addition, many of the providers want to see a system for professional development put in place to address the educational issues related to recruiting and retaining a quality staff.

#### *Wisconsin Shares*

These providers find Wisconsin Shares challenging. The biggest challenge they face is the attendance-based authorization policy. Without pay for days when children are sick or on vacation, providers cite financial loss. Providers want to return to enrollment-based authorizations and an extension to notices, which gives providers time to make financial arrangements. Another challenge is educating parents about their cost and how the reimbursement process works. A third big challenge is covering the gap between Wisconsin Shares reimbursement and the actual costs to provide care. Some providers raised their rates to cover costs.

Given the license, quality, and Wisconsin shares issues, the ECCEC felt the Department of Children and Families could benefit from the information providers shared with us at the forum. The committee members hope that you will find it useful in making future policy decisions. If you have questions, please contact Scott Peters, Chair of the Early Childhood Care and Education Committee at [peters.scott.j@gmail.com](mailto:peters.scott.j@gmail.com) or (847)530-8437.

Sincerely,  
ECCEC Members

Linda Benzschawel  
Scott Peters  
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