

Let me begin by stating how fortunate I feel to be living and providing child care in the City of Madison. I have been caring for and teaching children in my home for over 22 years. I am a 5 star provider under Youngstar. I have been Nationally Accredited twice and City Accredited for 18 years. I was part of the DCF/Union group that worked many hours on creating Wisconsin's Youngstar. Unfortunately, the input the Union gave was not given much weight, otherwise the current Youngstar would look much more like the City Of Madison Accreditation: supporting, encouraging and ongoing quality improvement. I have heard from many providers outside of Madison that wish this program were statewide.

I believe in high quality care and education for all children, regardless of economic background. In fact, I have been committed to care for low income children for the past 22 years because I am passionate about helping children have the best possible start in life, so that they can reach their full potential. High quality programs should be rewarded for taking on the extra challenge of caring for low income families but instead they are financially punished. When I say challenge I am not talking about the children, I am talking about the extra paperwork, extended use of hours, parental support needed, and the scrutiny of the fraud prevention initiative.

Two years ago I started taking more private paying families. This was due only to the fact that DCF implemented the attendance based pay system and it didn't look like they were eager to get rid of it. This means family providers only get paid when children are in attendance, whereas group centers still get a fixed weekly rate. I find this practice to be highly discriminating and limiting parent choice: Parents either choose group centers or have a higher co pay or chose family care and force the provider to make up the difference. Because lets face it, if low income families had hundreds of dollars to make up the difference they wouldn't be eligible for subsidy child care in the first place. This is a huge blow to family child care providers and the families we serve. Many of my peers would be willing to take subsidy families but they simply can not afford to.

DCF believes families should make up the difference between county payments and providers rates, but this is just not possible. All low income clients I have, live pay check to pay check. When their child is sick and can not attend our program then the parent must stay home and loose their pay. None of the families I have served, have family members that can help out, they have all been single moms. I have attached a spread sheet showing exactly how significant the loss of income has been for me for the past two years. This is just not sustainable.

With the implementation of 4K, the reduction of the ability to care for funded families and the increased expectations of Youngstar we have seen a significant reduction in Family child care programs throughout the state. We need to focus on what we can do as a community to help sustain Family Child Care as an option for working families. Forcing providers to participate in Youngstar or expecting programs to continue to loose income while caring for subsidy families would be a step in the wrong direction.

Thanks you for your time!

Silke O'Donnell - Sunshine Family Day Care

To whom it may concern:

My name is Colleen McCabe and I am writing this on behalf of my children, my child care provider, and myself. My childcare provider deserves to be paid a fair living wage, including sick days, vacation, and to be able to put money away for retirement. Childcare is one of the most important businesses in the world, teaching and caring for humans in their most fragile and formative years. Why should the workers in this field be denied proper compensation and basic workers rights?

I am currently working 35 hours a week at a hair salon. I am the proud parent of five smart, happy children, all of whom have attended childcare at one point in their lives. I would not have been able to afford childcare without help from the county, and I was fortunate enough to have my kids be able to attend the best childcare ever. I honestly have no idea what I would have done without childcare assistance, and furthermore without my childcare provider working with me on my co-payments to make them financially feasible. More often than not, my co-payments were still so high they were completely unaffordable. Out of the kindness of her heart, my childcare provider took a loss out of her own pocket so my child(ren) could be in her care.

Now that I have finished school, and am working full time, I am able to make co-payments so that for once my childcare provider is getting paid her actual rates. After nine years, this must be a huge relief to her! However, she is STILL taking a loss from having my county-funded child. She only gets paid for the days that my child is physically in her care. When my child is sick, she doesn't get paid. When I am sick and not at work, my child doesn't go to daycare, so she doesn't get paid. When she goes on her well-deserved vacation, she doesn't get paid. Any national holidays when I am off work, she doesn't get paid. I am supposed to come up with the money to pay for all these missed days of care, but that is just not financially possible for me.

I hope that one day I am able to repay all the kindness that my childcare provider has shown me and my family. Until then, I hope that the county will change the way they pay these childcare providers who are shaping our future world. It's hard enough to get by in a low-income household, without the stress of not being able to find a childcare that is willing and able to take your kids.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Colleen McCabe

Hello,

I'm writting this letter to let you know or
who ever it concerns know how greatfull I am for
the things that Silke does by running an In home
Daycare. I'm greatfull for the flexible schedule
one provides ~~and~~ for me and my children, for taking
my kids early in the morning way before Daycare
centers open, so I can get to work. for the
flexibility to work with me on a tight Budget.
the hours and the no extra charge help me alot on a
super tight budget!

Thanks,
-Daphi

Mike Flocca <m_flocca@hotmail.com>

To

Silke ODonnell Michelle SEAY

Jan 22 at 6:22 AM

Here are the thoughts I have so far. . . .

1. Unequal payouts for FCC businesses verses group/center businesses. WI shares pay attendance for FCC and enrollment base to center which makes the FCC provider having to collect more co pay from the parent verses the co pay amount from a center.
2. Services, equipment and operating costs have risen in the years thus any business person, just to stay afloat needs to pass that increase onto the the people who use their services.
3. In every other profession when a person has increased their education/skills in that profession the person is rewarded by an increase in pay. Here you are saying that we need to decrease our pay which is a contradiction of why we work hard at increasing our skills.
4. Every child deserves the right to be in a program that supports their learning as every family needs to feel supported in that same way. Other ways need to be explored to encourage FCC providers to take low income families/WI shares families that would put those families on an even plain with other families entering the same program.

If I think of more I will let you know.

Mary Jo

Show original message

Sent from my U.S. Cellular® Smartphone

----- Original message -----
From: Denise Mirkin
<denisemirkin@gmail.com>;
Date: 01/29/2016 2:27 PM (GMT-06:00)
To: Silke
O'Donnell <silkeodonnell@yahoo.com>;
Subject: For the meeting next week

Silke can you please share my sentiments about how the funding system
affects me...

I have often worked with children who receive funding, but currently do not have any children receiving funding in my program.

The last family I had, the child was amazing and fitted well into the group. One parent was a student and did not communicate very well. He often missed days and did not notify me. Since this is all attendance based, I was put out by the loss of income. The family were not able to make up the difference, so I had to take the loss.

In the past, with other families, I have always had to reduce my rates for them or wait for months for families to make up the payment or just agree to loose that income.

This is not right that a small program like ours with a maximum of eight children, in Family childcare have to eat the costs of other families situations. Every child deserves high quality programs, but every program deserves to be compensated for their love, time, energy and commitment.

I would like to add that the extra paperwork should be taking into account as well - it all adds up.

Thank you,
Denise Mirkin