



2024 BUDGET ASK

LEADING THE WAY IN EARLY EDUCATION: *Funding the workforce behind the child care workforce*

Affordable, quality child care is essential for parents to be able to work and contribute to the economy. Yet, finding care is not an easy feat. For thousands of families, providers and employers throughout the state, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies are a key support in navigating the complex child care system. CCR&Rs assist parents in their search for care; help to open new child care programs; provide technical assistance to providers; and meet the mental health care needs of babies and toddlers in child care settings. In short, CCR&Rs are the workforce behind the workforce. Early Care & Learning Council (ECLC) is the membership agency for the CCR&R network. ECLC provides resources and strategic thinking, all geared toward building sustainable early care and education systems throughout the state. Together, ECLC and CCR&Rs advocate for a quality, affordable, equitable early care and education system.

DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION AND BELONGING (DEIB) OFFICERS

\$1.5 Million Annually

Funding is needed to address and mitigate racism and unconscious bias in the early care and learning system. For example, to help reduce the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of young children of color.

Add seven Equity Officers around the state.

An Equity Officer will be hired at one CCR&R within each of the seven OCFS regions to cultivate environments where culturally responsive early care and education is available to all children and families.

The Equity Officers across all regions will collaboratively be responsible for the development and implementation of anti-racist curriculum, as well as partnership with the Division of Child Care Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) committees to eradicate systemic and institutionalized forms of discrimination.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

 Jessica Klos Shapiro at jklos@earlycareandlearning.org

 www.earlycareandlearning.org

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Additional \$4.5 Million Annually

Early Care & Learning Council (ECLC) and the Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) network launched the Infant Toddler Mental Health Consultation (ITMHC) project in 2019. With a workforce of 42 consultants, the ITMHC program, albeit impactful, has not reached all communities in New York state. ECLC requests funding to increase services to child care providers and children to ensure that our youngest children benefit from nurturing and responsive caregiving in child care settings, prompt identification of developmental and behavioral challenges, and timely referrals and receipt of additional services.

- **Add 14 positions across upstate New York and suburban downstate New York:** Classrooms served by Mental Health Consultants show significant improvements across multiple measurements, including social-emotional learning and developmentally appropriate practices.
- **Add 12 positions in New York City:** The complex regulatory landscape coupled with the density of home-based child care providers in NYC requires a larger network of ITMH Consultants. A larger team of consultants will improve service reach and support the building of trusted relationships--which form the foundation of successful consultations.
- **Add ten supervisors for ITMH Consultants and data coordinators** (Four in New York City and six rest of state). The work around Mental Health requires Reflective Supervision to be implemented. There is a need to expand mental health expertise in the CCR&Rs and hire supervisors from Mental Health disciplines (LCSW, LMHC, Psychology, or related fields).
- **Expand the ITMHC Database** to allow for expansion of MHC services into new age groups as interest and capacity are identified within the CCR&R Network.

Each of these requests will ensure mental health professionals work in collaboration with educators to make certain that trauma informed practices are being utilized in classrooms and that appropriate social emotional strategies are implemented through trauma informed and racial equity lenses.