



**A report prepared for the  
Women's Community Revitalization Project  
by the  
Family and Children's Policy Collaborative**

**Building Better Child Care:  
An Evaluation of the Pennsylvania  
Child Care Challenge Grant Program**

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June 2006**

## **Acknowledgements**

“Building Better Child Care” represents research done by the Family and Children’s Policy Collaborative at Temple University at the request of the Women’s Community Revitalization Project (WCRP). We thank WCRP for the opportunity to conduct this evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program, and we thank the William Penn Foundation for supporting WCRP in this endeavor.

We thank Michelle Harmon for her help with questionnaire design, project coordination and for her role in the systems development of the research project. We thank Helen Marie Rosenbaum for her help with questionnaire design, preliminary research with grant recipients and for compiling pertinent literature. Finally, we thank Mary Graham of Children’s Village for her help and advice in our preliminary research about the program and for providing valuable information about program timelines.

## **Executive Summary**

This report describes the results of an evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program which the Family and Children's Policy Collaborative at Temple University conducted at the request of the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP).

In this report, we describe the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and its significance to the child care community, comparing the program to similar efforts in other states. Then we provide an in-depth evaluation of the program's implementation and outcomes from the application process to the long-term impacts, summarizing significant findings and their implications.

With \$10,000,000 each year, The Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program funded organizations to provide more high quality child care services in low-income and middle-class areas across Pennsylvania between 2002 and 2004. Program short-term goals were clearly accomplished: more children and more diverse children were served in higher quality settings. After the projects were completed, centers had better quality facilities, more teachers, and the head teachers were better paid. The centers were serving not just larger numbers of children, but also more children from low-income families and more children with disabilities. Prospects for meeting long-term goals appear excellent. After the grant projects were completed, more centers were better prepared to apply for accreditation and more likely to participate in professional development, more community development initiatives were initiated, and families, centers, employees and children were very satisfied with the child care improvements that the Challenge Grant Program had made possible.

Although most of the project representatives in our sample found the application process to be satisfactory, representatives from smaller centers with fewer resources reported difficulties with the application process and project administration. They were challenged by the need to obtain the 25% matching funds and the long turn-around time for project review. They had problems providing money up front for renovations as well as problems waiting for reimbursements for approved expenditures. These observations give us reason to believe that smaller centers with fewer resources may be dissuaded from applying for these Challenge Grants. If such centers are to benefit from a Challenge Grant Program, they will require increased assistance initiating and completing the application process as well as assistance accessing "bridge financing." Slight revisions in the grant administrative process would help to accommodate these smaller centers.

One issue that emerged in the first year of the grant program was whether for-profit centers as well as non-profit centers should be supported. In the initial year of the project, for-profit centers and those with more sponsorship support received on average larger awards than independent and non-profit centers. In subsequent years, for-profit centers were no longer eligible for Challenge Grants. Our interviews with representatives from for-profit and non-profit centers that received funding revealed that both types of centers had similar needs and

accomplished similar goals. This finding suggests that funding for-profit as well as nonprofit centers might be a reasonable expenditure of Commonwealth funds so long as centers are serving children from low income families.

In light of these findings, we offer the following recommendations.

- Reinststate the facilities grant program, focusing on improving the overall quality of existing centers.
- Depending on the needs within each neighborhood, fund applicants to expand as well as to improve existing centers. Similarly, the Commonwealth might want to consider the possibilities of funding the creation of new centers, the purchase of buildings, and for-profit centers in underserved neighborhoods.
- To ease the financial burden for smaller centers with fewer resources, we offer two complementary recommendations. First, we recommend providing a portion of the award upfront. This is because the experience of waiting for reimbursement after submitting documentation of expenditures was a great stress for smaller centers. An alternative possibility is to help applicants access low cost “bridge loans” that pay expenses until the agency can be reimbursed by the Commonwealth. In addition, we recommend either discontinuing the 25% matching fund requirement, another source of stress to smaller centers, or working with private foundations to dedicate a funding stream specifically dedicated as the match (either as a loan or as a grant) required by the Commonwealth. This could result in a beneficial public-private partnership around financing child care
- Technical assistance from state employees during the application and implementation stage was extremely helpful for large and small centers alike, but especially helpful to those applicants from smaller centers. This support should be continued. Support should also be continued for outside agencies to assist centers in preparing the applications and administrating the funded project.
- Allow 10% of project funds to be used for marketing activity. This marketing activity proved to be an important resource for informing community families of the additional space and quality improvements. It also helped with developing long-term marketing plans.
- Encourage projects that lead to collaborations with various resources in the community. Where this has already happened, there has been a multiplier effect, with children, families, centers, and cooperating institutions all benefiting.

# Building Better Child Care: An Evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program

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# **Building Better Child Care: An Evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of an evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program which the Family and Children's Policy Collaborative at Temple University conducted at the request of the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP).

In the following pages, we describe the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program and its significance to the child care community, and we compare the program to similar efforts in other states. Then we provide an in-depth evaluation of the program's implementation and outcomes from the application process to the long-term impacts, summarizing significant findings and their implications.

### **What was the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program?**

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) established the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program as a ten million dollar a year grant program to increase the child care capacity in areas of Pennsylvania where more service was in demand. During 2002, 2003 and 2004, the Collaborative actively approved applications from child care providers for project funding from the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program.

The program provided grant funds ranging from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$1,000,000 per fiscal year in the first year of the program and a maximum of \$500,000 thereafter. Each grant amount covered 75% of the project costs; the other 25% of the project costs had to be covered by the applicant. Applicants were able to receive more than one grant for additional projects in the same center during different years.

The program encouraged applications from child care providers that served children with disabilities, children from low-income families, and children during non-traditional work hours. The program guidelines specified that funds could be used for: staff development and recruitment, engineering and architectural costs, legal costs, interior renovations, furnishings and equipment, education material, closeout audits, consulting services, marketing costs, and other expansion costs as approved by DCED. New buildings could not be purchased with grant funds (DCED Program Guidelines, 2003).

The grant program was designed to encourage space expansion and interior renovations for child care centers that served families in need. The short-term goals of the program were to help child care centers provide more service to working families and to improve the quality of child care centers for at-risk children. The long-term goals of the program were to enhance the health, safety and school-readiness of Pennsylvania children, to create more employment opportunity for working families, and to encourage community development in low-income areas.

### **Significance of the Grant Program**

Children's physical surroundings affect their physical, emotional, social and mental development (LISC/NEDLC, 1997; MA Office of Child Care). Space and materials in child care settings support social interactions between staff, parents and children (Proccio, Sussman and Gillman, 2004; MA Office of Child Care). Child care centers with high quality space have been shown to increase the amount of time children interact with adults, lessen the number of distractions and interruptions that pull staff away from children, improve play interaction, lessen child conflicts, and advance school readiness for children (Bryant, 2003; Wasch, 2005; MA office of child care). These effects may be especially important for children below the age of three who are in the early stages of development and for children from low-income areas who might be struggling in less than adequate home environments (LISC/NEDLC, 1997). High quality child care also aids in community development, enabling parents to work more successfully and protecting children from the effects of neighborhood disintegration and potential violence (Proccio, et al., 2004).

Developing adequately safe and stimulating facilities has been the biggest challenge for child care providers (Gillman, 2004). The cost of designing and developing fully equipped child care space is estimated to be about \$15,000 per child (Gillman, 2004). The problem of high quality space is especially acute in low-income neighborhoods. Without the funds to develop or renovate space, providers in low-income neighborhoods often take advantage of local empty buildings, spending most of their revenue on basic operating costs, such as staff payments and necessary materials (Gillman, 2004; Proccio, et al., 2004). The result is that child care centers in low-income neighborhoods frequently have dangerously low quality infrastructure and inadequate operating space (Proccio, et al., 2004).

### **Similar Efforts in Other States**

Despite the importance of high quality child care space, and the difficulty of providing that space, relatively few state programs have been devoted to the specific improvement of child care infrastructure through grants or loans (Proccio, et al., 2004). The two states that have recently created programs most comparable to the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant are Rhode Island and Connecticut.

#### **Rhode Island**

In 1998 Rhode Island passed legislation that not only awarded child care subsidies to more low-income families but also required that the state provide more child care space.

Consequently, the Rhode Island Child Care Facilities Fund (RICCFF) was developed to help provide safe and healthy child care centers for low-income children (Bryant 2003). The RICCFF allowed existing centers to provide more space while improving their overall infrastructure and also made it possible to develop new high quality centers. The first wave of funding was distributed in 2002 with the following goals: 1) providing capital, 2) increasing capacity, 3) increasing training, and 4) providing technical assistance. The funding sources ranged from low-interest loans to small grants, depending on the size of the project. In February 2003, 9 grants and 3 loans had been approved, and renovations were starting to be made in the facilities (Bryant, 2003).

In 2004, the system was changed so that funds were given to non-profit organizations to distribute small grants to child care facilities (Rhode Island LISC, 2006). In 2004, these non-profit organizations distributed 86 small grants to child care facilities, ranging from \$200 to \$1,000. An additional \$100,000 was available for the continuation of this program in 2005 (Rhode Island LISC, 2006). This program is different from the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program in that it awarded a maximum amount of \$1,000 to recipients, whereas the Pennsylvania program awarded a maximum of \$1,000,000 to a recipient. No information is publicly available with regards to what was done with the Rhode Island money, and we are unaware of any program evaluation.

### Connecticut

The state of Connecticut focused specifically on child care and early education facilities in their attempts to improve early care and prepare children for academic success and work force demands. With the goals of developing additional space and supporting appropriate center design, in 2002 Connecticut expanded two existing funding programs. One program was a loan resource that allows non-profit pre-school centers to renovate their buildings (CHEFA/DSS Tax-Exempt Financing Program). The second program was a grant resource that aids in public school construction (SDE School Construction Grant Program) (Wasch, Sussman and Gillman, 2005).

Like the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program, the Connecticut program focuses on large renovations for early care centers. However, the programs differ. The Connecticut program offers loans; the Pennsylvania program offers grants. In Connecticut, funds may be used to purchase or build a new building; in Pennsylvania, funds may only be used to renovate a newly purchased or existing building. After accepting Connecticut loans, the centers must agree to secure National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation within five years. There are no NAEYC accreditation requirements for recipients of the Pennsylvania program.

By March 2005, the Connecticut loan program had been in existence for over three years and had distributed loans for 18 projects. The outcome was an additional 3,000 spaces created for Connecticut children (Wasch, et al., 2005). Connecticut plans to continue funding infrastructure improvements over the next few years, with a focus on facilities for three and four year old children (Wasch, et al., 2005).

## II. GOALS OF THIS EVALUATION

To our knowledge, this is the first attempt to evaluate a state child care infrastructure improvement program. Our goal was to learn about the successes and failures of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge grant, from the early procedures to the long-term effects. To help direct our questions and develop our measurement instruments for program evaluation, we designed a logic model. A logic model is a theoretical tool that helps researchers visualize the expected process and outcome of a given program. Our logic model is based on the information we had about the challenge grant program goals. It begins with expectations for program input, activities, and partners, and it ends with expected outcomes (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999). The specific logic model we designed for the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program can be seen in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1. Logic Model:  
Evaluation of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program**

<b>Partners</b>	<b>Application Process</b>	<b>Short Term and Intermediate Effects</b>	<b>Long Term Effects</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Representative(s) of child care agency</li> <li>◆ Commonwealth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Project development &amp; implementation</li> <li>◆ Application procedure</li> <li>◆ Securing external facilitation</li> <li>◆ Securing matching funds</li> <li>◆ Evaluation of process and program</li> <li>◆ Evaluation of external sources</li> <li>◆ Evaluation of matched funds</li> <li>◆ Application acceptance</li> <li>◆ Funds distributed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <u>Quantity Improvements</u></li> <li>Increases in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of total children enrolled</li> <li>- service to low income children</li> <li>- service to children with disabilities</li> <li>- number of employees</li> <li>- hours of operation</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <u>Quality Improvements</u></li> <li>- better facilities, furnishings, materials</li> <li>- more staff training, support, benefits</li> <li>- accreditation standards met</li> <li>- up-to-date marketing activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Community development</li> <li>◆ Enhanced school preparation for children in the community</li> <li>◆ Ability for center to expand and increase funding sources</li> <li>◆ Happy families, centers, employees, and children</li> </ul>



External influences that can impact program procedures and effects: unexpected expenses, changes in proposed plans, additional funding sources, changes in personnel, time management.

We developed this logic model to guide the formation of study questions. First, the model identifies the partners in the process. Second, it notes the steps of the application process that need to be evaluated. Third, it identifies the short term and intermediate effects. Finally, it lists the possible long-term effects based on the program goals. We measured the aspects of the program stages highlighted by the logic model by developing a standardized questionnaire administered to each grant recipient project representative. To elaborate on the information

contained in the standardized questionnaire, we conducted follow-up interviews for a sub-sample of the grant recipients. Information was collected only from grant recipients; no information was available from applicants who were not funded.

### **III. METHOD**

#### **Sample**

##### The Questionnaire

The Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) provided a list of grant recipients. A total of 56 projects were awarded grant funding in 55 grants between the years of 2002 and 2004. Fifty-three projects were eligible for our evaluation; three projects were not yet complete and were therefore dropped from the original sample of 56. Out of the remaining 53 projects, six projects were not included because the grant recipients representing those projects refused or were unable to participate in our evaluation during the time period allotted.<sup>1</sup>

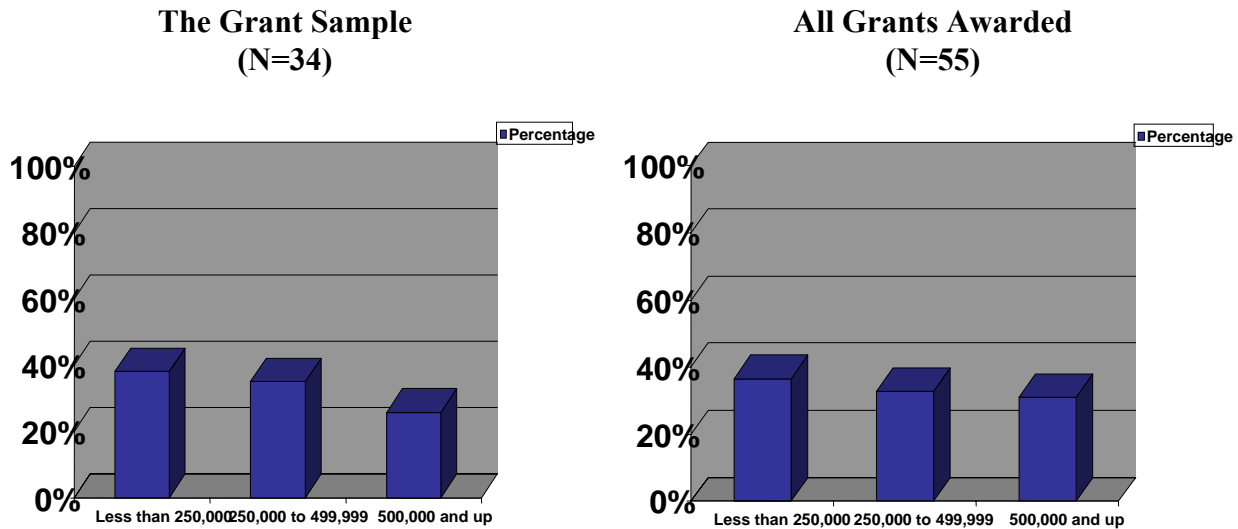
This left 47 projects with representatives who agreed to participate in our evaluation. These grant recipients were mailed personalized questionnaires for each project they funded with the challenge grant money. We received completed questionnaires for 35 funded projects. This is a response rate of 75% (35/47).

The grantees in our questionnaire sample are comparable to the total grantees awarded in various ways. For example, about 38% of the grants in our sample and 36% overall were less than \$250,000, about 35% of the grants in our sample and 33% overall were within the \$250,000 to \$499,999 range, and about 26% of the grants in our sample and 31% overall were more than \$500,000. Figure 2 below presents these data graphically.

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<sup>1</sup> Three of these six recipients were unable to participate because files were archived in another building or there had been a staff change and no one available knew anything about the grant that the center had previously received. Two of the remaining three project non-participants had representatives that originally showed interest in the evaluation but later became unreachable, and the last one of these projects had a representative who refused because the project was discontinued for not remaining in line with the facility's business agenda.

**Figure 2. Percentage of Grants by the Level of Funds Awarded**



The person *best* suited to complete the questionnaire ranged from the Center Director (29% of the time) to an Out of Facility Administrator (34% of the time) and also included people in positions like CEO of the sponsoring company. These people were the project representatives --those who knew the most about applying and receiving the grant and had access to records about the outcomes for their project(s).<sup>2</sup>

The amount of time the representatives had been affiliated with child care center employment ranged from two years to over 20 years; their level of education ranged from completing some college credits (no degree) to having a master's degree or beyond. In our sample, the majority of these people had bachelor degrees, often in business/accounting or early childhood education.

A pattern emerged with regards to the education level of the person *most* responsible for knowing about the grant and the size of the grant received. Comparing size of the grant awards with the years of education of the person most responsible for the grant showed a strong relationship between these two measures, with more educated respondents receiving larger awards. Because of the effects of a varying sample size and outliers (for example, one representative received \$1,000,000 for a project), comparing *median* instead of *mean* amounts of funds awarded by education level provided a less skewed and more conservative, yet still important, picture of the pattern. Overall, those respondents with less than a four-year college degree were responsible for smaller grants than those with a four-year degree or more. The difference in funding amounts between those respondents with and without any college degree at all is the most extreme.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In some cases one person was the representative for more than one grant. Because our sample consisted of projects but we collected information about the centers where they took place and the people who represented them, each representative was counted the number of times a grant was received.

<sup>3</sup> Funding calculations are based on the 34 grants that were used for 35 projects.

## The Follow-Up Interview

From the 35 projects in the questionnaire sample, we chose a sub-sample of representatives from 14 projects with whom we conducted follow-up interviews. The main point of the interviews was to gather more detailed information, particularly concerning the intermediate and long-term effects of the grant funds. Our goal was to interview respondents from 14 projects that were funded with varying amounts, representing small, medium and large project awardees.

From a list of 55 total grants awarded for the 56 projects, we used basic calculations to place each grant into one of three categories. The total amount of funds awarded in all 55 grants of the program was \$19,263,309. The highest amount of grant funds awarded for a single project was \$1,000,000 and the lowest amount of funds awarded for a single project was \$50,935. The mean grant amount awarded was \$350,242; the median amount was \$293, 217.

Using these calculations, we developed three categories of grants: 1) those up to \$249,999, 2) those in the \$250,000 to \$499,999 range, and 3) those that were \$500,000 or more. Overall, there were 20 grants in category one, 18 grants in category two, and 17 grants in category three. For the 14 projects with representatives who participated in the follow-up interviews, five projects were funded with grants from the first category, four projects were funded with grants from the second category, and five projects were funded with grants from the third category. This enabled us to interview representatives of small, medium and large sized projects

## **Procedures**

We telephoned every grant recipient on the list provided by WCRP. During this introductory phone call, we confirmed that each center had received a Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant. We also explained the objectives of the study: to evaluate the effects of the grant program by collecting information about what the center was like before the grant project and what the center was like after the project was complete.

We asked each recipient if they would be willing to participate in the study. If the recipient said yes, we confirmed that the respondent was the best person to interview for the study by asking if they were knowledgeable about the application process, project implementation and the outcomes for the center. In some cases the best person to talk with was a center director, in other cases it was an out of center administrator, and in some cases multiple people agreed to work together as informants for different aspects of our studies. The person with the most amount of grant project knowledge affiliated with the center during the time of this study was enrolled as the “project representative.”

We designed a questionnaire to measure the short-term effects of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program. The questionnaire format captured a snapshot of the child care center one to four months before receiving the grant acceptance, and it captured another snapshot of the center approximately six months after the projects were complete. With the help of the respondent, we personalized each questionnaire during the introductory calls with these two

specific dates according to the center records and the project timeline. All dates had to match the aforementioned time period criteria. These two periods reflect times when records were available regarding the number of children, employees, and other relevant information at the centers where the projects took place.

During this process, we discovered that some centers were not yet open when they received the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant. These recipients used grant funds for projects that focused on start up costs and interior renovations after they had already purchased a building. For these projects, we collected information about what the center was like on the day it opened to the public. If there were no records at that time, new center information was collected that represented a date closest to opening within the first six months of business.

Our questions asked for specific dates and monetary amounts with regards to the grant process and program. To assure accurate data, we required respondents to refer to center files while completing the questionnaire. We mailed a personalized questionnaire to each enrolled representative along with a cover letter and pre-paid return envelope to return the completed questionnaire. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires, we mailed each respondent \$50.00.

Each person who was mailed a questionnaire was also informed that we would be contacting selected participants for a follow-up phone interview. The goals of the phone interview were to help us learn about the intermediate and long-term effects of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program. These interviews also gave respondents a chance to elaborate on questionnaire answers and to provide any additional feedback the program application, project implementation, and project outcomes.

## **Measures**

Using the logic model, we determined the areas of focus for our questionnaire and follow-up interview. The areas of focus were the six project components: 1) the grant application process and project implementation, 2) quantitative changes in the availability of center services, 3) changes in the quality of center services, 4) changes in center marketing activities, 5) changes in center staff development, and 6) changes in community development and satisfaction with the changes. We were not able to measure children's school preparation. Each of the components was evaluated in the newly opened centers and renovated centers, both before the grant projects began and within six months after grant projects were complete. Long-term changes were assessed based on follow-up interviews focused on the longer term effects of the grant changes.

### The Grant Application Process

To understand the grant application process, we asked center representatives to report the following information from data records: use of outside consultants or organizations to complete the application process and the frequency of contact with the state. We also asked center representatives about their center's experiences providing the 25% "matching funds." Finally, we asked them to rate the ease or difficulty of the actual application.

## Project Implementation

To understand the project implementation experience, we asked the center representatives to report the following information using data records: whether the transfer of grant money went as expected, whether there were any changes in the proposed or actual plans, whether all of the awarded funds were distributed, the impact of the timeline for spending grant funds. We also asked about any unexpected or external events that emerged during the implementation process.

## Changes in the Availability of Services

Pre and post project data were collected to assess changes in the availability of services associated with the challenge grants. We asked center representatives to report the following information using data records: the number of children enrolled in the center, the maximum number of children approved by the department of public welfare to be enrolled, the number of enrolled subsidized children, the number of enrolled children with disabilities, center hours of operation, details about specific groups of children or families most affected by the grant, and feedback about the demand for the center services. By collecting data from records six months prior to receiving the grant, six months after renovations were completed, and in some cases, current data, changes in the availability of services could be assessed.

## Changes in the Quality of Service

We measured changes in the quality of service by asking the center representatives to report the following information from data records: the state of facilities (such as lighting and ventilation), furniture (such as tables and chairs and diaper amenities), staff accommodations (such as administrative space), and materials (to aid in play and learning) within each center. We also asked center representatives about the ability to apply for National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation or School Age Child Care (SACC) involvement and about any reactions from families and children served by the centers. By collecting data from records six months prior to receiving the grant, six months after renovations were completed, and in some cases, current data, changes in the availability of services could be assessed.

## Changes in Marketing Activity

According to the grant criteria, up to 10% of awarded grant funds could be approved for use in marketing activities. For example, projects funded for \$500,000 were permitted to allocate up to \$50,000 for marketing activity. To measure outcomes of grant money used for marketing, we collected data about print brochures, website design, outside consulting, and other local strategies to create awareness of the centers and services six months before and six months after the renovations were completed.

## Changes in Staff and Employment

To measure grant project effects on staffing and employment at centers, we collected information before and after the grant projects about employee benefits for head teachers and

assistant teachers, the number of employees, any changes in employee training, and the hourly wages earned by head teachers and assistant teachers.<sup>4</sup>

### Community Relations

Changes in community relations are potential intermediate and long-term effects of the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant projects. We measured these effects by asking respondents how the changes within the center or opening of new centers affected the surrounding areas. This included any information about changes in physical surroundings, local job development, or ways the community around the centers shifted in terms of everyday social relations.

Copies of the Questionnaire and Follow-up Interview can be found in Appendix A and B.

## **IV. FINDINGS**

All findings in this report are based on a project sample of 35; 23 projects that took place in existing centers and 12 projects that took place in new centers. Unless otherwise specified, the sample size for each calculation never included more than a small number of “don’t know” responses that were left out. Also, “before and after” project comparisons were consistent for each topic; there was never a difference in valid responses across time periods that was greater than two. Therefore, unless otherwise noted, any “missing data” from “don’t know” responses are unreported and should have virtually no impact on the overall findings in this report.

### **The Projects Receiving Challenge Grants**

An overview of the 35 projects funded by the grant program is provided below. Table 1 summarizes the main goal of each project, based on the respondents’ descriptions of the proposal and work done, as well as the total amount of grant funds awarded for project completion.

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<sup>4</sup> The grant specifically allowed recipients to use funds for staff payment and training only up to six months after renovations were complete and funds distributed for reimbursement. Our criteria of collecting information about the centers six months after renovations were complete allowed us to collect information about new employment standards set with the grant funds while still limiting the effects of external influences. New centers were not evaluated in terms of staffing and employment because grant funds were used to help open these centers to the public. Therefore, we can evaluate the center to learn about the impact of its opening and added service possibilities, but the staffing at these centers would not be complete at the time of opening.

**Table 1. Overview of Projects**

<b>Project ID Number</b>	<b>Main Goal of the Project</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
101	Move children from child care set up in ill equipped room in a hospital that needed the space to a newly renovated child care building	193,756
102	Expand the current child care center capacity to increase the number of toddlers in the center	74,095
105	Increase capacity for low-income children	52,000
107	Renovations and quality upgrade in building	50,935
109	Renovate an area in a new work building to create on-site employee child care	264,000
110	Replace and enlarge original child care center	396,179
112	Renovate space, purchase equipment and cover space costs for a school-age center	57,904
114	Expand and upgrade; expand service to include infants and young toddlers. Add extra space for older toddlers to help absorb our waiting list.	500,000
115	New furnishings and equipment	250,000
116	Purchase center and playground equipment, a van, develop staff training and customize interior	147,631
117	Renovate and furnish 9,000 square feet of warehouse into a state of art child care facility	974,891
118	Open a child care center in a predominately poverty level town. The center is to assist families re-enter the work force with subsidized care and education for young children- infant to preschool	284,997
122	Quality upgrade; Significant renovations to aging building to include new HVAC, windows, flooring, electrical, plumbing, security system, classroom and kitchen equipment. New toddler playground, new school buses, children's tables, chairs, shelving for materials.	460,812
123	Renovate an existing area to allow more room for caring for more children and become licensed as a day care center.	113,495
124	Open a new center where only an outside shell of a building existed. The grant would pay for renovations, operating/working capital and equipment	271,170
125	Renovate a building for child care services, including installation of a the HVAC system	446,980
128	Create a new child care center to serve infants, toddlers and preschool children, including full day DOE kdg. Renovations, operating and supply/equipment costs	500,000
132	Provide "start-up" funds for a brand new center opened to serve homeless mothers and their children. Primarily to help pay staff salaries during the start-up period, purchase materials, furnishings and equipment, and develop marketing materials to boost enrollment.	326,605
134	Renovate an existing child care facility in order to expand the facility and bring the total space up to current code standards (building, fire ADA)	104,000

**Table 1: Overview of Projects continued**

<b>Project ID Number</b>	<b>Main Goal of the Project</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
137	Renovate new space to accommodate 40 preschool children. The renovations would include adding two classrooms, two children's bathrooms and one adult bathroom, new stairs as a second exit from the second floor, new heating, electrical, and fire safety systems and pay the architect fee.	100,000
138	Renovate the existing first floor child care center adding 4 classrooms for infants and toddlers a kitchen, foyer and office. Total construction of the second floor for preschool and school-agers adding 4 classrooms, recreational area, offices, and a small library.	750,000
140	Fund a portion of the "bricks and mortar" cost of a newly constructed 11,500 square foot preschool	500,000
143	The existing center had two floors, but the city would not approve service to children on the second floor without major renovations. Main goal was complete renovations and expansion to second floor service.	182,767
144	Renovate and open a large new center	1,000,000
145	Renovate a building into a new child care center for children ages 6 weeks to 4 years old	354,139
146	Renovate an abandoned building to create a new child care center	500,000
147	Purchase supplies and learning materials and pay professional fees for a brand new child care center	500,000
148	Make interior renovations to a building not currently in use that is attached to an existing center	207,930
149 156	Increase space at one site currently open and open new site in poverty level neighborhood, offering 2 preschool classrooms, computer lab, summer school and after school -- mostly subsidized care. Also, to add 2 classrooms to an existing center and improve accessibility by installing an elevator	399,131
151	Renovate 10,000 square feet of office space into child care space and purchase child care and office supplies.	420,912
152	Outfit the preschool and school age child care centers; start up staffing costs, child care furniture, toys and supplies, child care office supplies and administrative supplies.	390,956
153	Increase capacity for children from low-income families	152,000
154	Open a new high quality program as a community effort to contribute to the revitalization of area	500,000
155	Renovate unoccupied space into classrooms	179,229

## Centers Receiving Challenge Grants

Projects were funded in centers throughout the Pennsylvania region from 2002 to 2004. The centers varied; they were non-profit and for-profit, sponsored and independently owned, and existing as well as anticipated centers. On average, projects in for-profit centers received more funds than non-profit centers, projects in sponsored centers received more funds than independently owned centers, and projects in new centers with anticipated openings received more funds than existing centers.

During the first year, the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program awarded grant funds for projects in for-profit and non-profit child care centers, with non-profit centers given top priority. After the first year, only nonprofit centers were eligible for funding. In our sample there were three projects funded in for-profit centers and 32 projects funded in non-profit centers. Of the three projects in for-profit centers, two of the centers were part of a local chain and one was independently owned and operated. However, these three for-profit centers received larger awards *on average* than the 32 non-profit centers. The median award for the three projects in the for-profit centers was \$750,000; the median award for the 32 projects in non-profit centers was \$284,997.<sup>5</sup> This is a notable finding, but it is important to remember that there were only three projects in the for-profit group.

There were 20 projects (57%) funded in independent centers (not sponsored by institutions) and 15 projects (43%) funded in sponsored centers. Regarding the 15 projects that took place in sponsored centers, two took place in centers sponsored by universities (13%), one in a center sponsored by a religious organization (7%), three in centers sponsored by corporations or business employers (20%), and four in centers sponsored by non-governmental organizations (27%). In addition, three of the 15 funded projects (20%) that took place in sponsored centers were in centers sponsored by the YMCA, one project (7%) was in a center sponsored by a retirement community, and one (7%) in a center sponsored by an educational service organization. Projects implemented in centers that were sponsored were funded *on average* with about twice as much money as those projects implemented in centers that were not sponsored; the median amount awarded for projects completed in sponsored centers was \$396,179, while the median amount awarded to projects in centers that were not sponsored was \$207,930.

Although most grants were awarded to fund projects that renovated or physically expanded existing centers, some grants were awarded to fund projects in empty buildings to create a new child care center. In our sample, there were 23 projects (66%) funded to take place in existing centers and 12 projects (34%) funded to help open brand new centers. Projects to aid in opening new centers on average were funded with more grant money than projects based on renovating existing centers. The median amount awarded to projects to open new centers was \$395,043 and for projects in existing centers it was \$188,261.

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<sup>5</sup> Funding calculations are based on the 34 grants that were used for 35 projects. Some centers had received more than one of the grants to fund projects during different years. Therefore, each center was counted the total number of times a challenge grant project took place in the facility.

## **The Grant Application Process**

The majority of projects had representatives who found the application process relatively easy to navigate. The process seemed to be simplified by helpful state grant administrators. Representatives reported that they felt comfortable contacting state administrators with questions about the grant process. Five projects (14%) had representatives who hired outside organizations to assist in their application. Other respondents reported using multiple people *within the centers* working together on the application or using informal networks for help in preparing the application. Representatives at only three of the projects (9%) reported struggling with the application process.

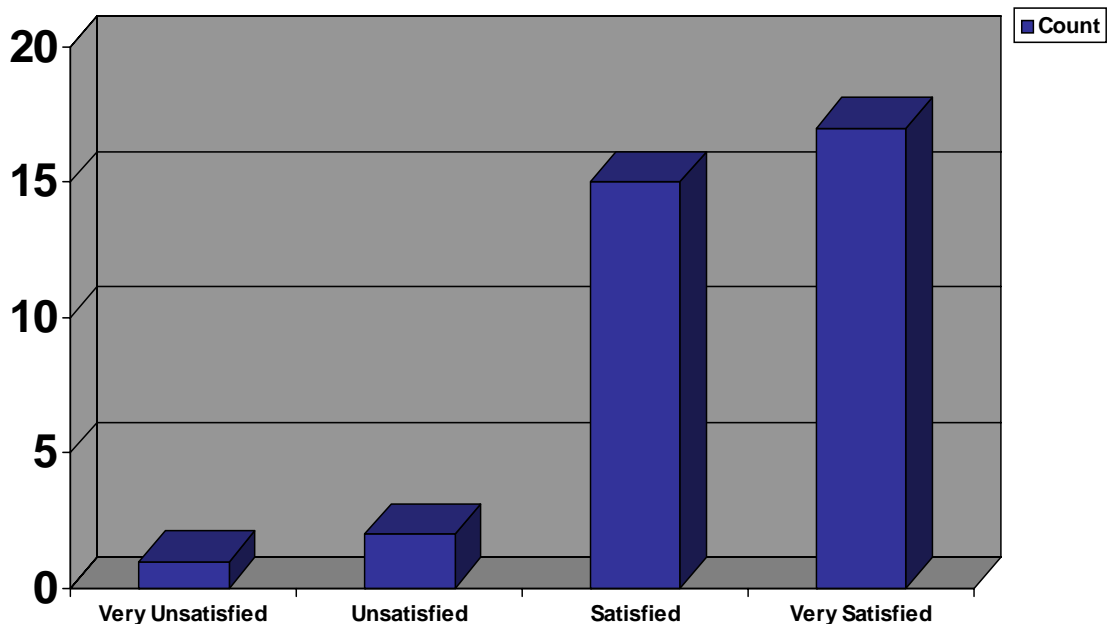
Those individuals who struggled with the application process had completed less education than those for whom the application process posed fewer difficulties. The three projects with representatives who reported being “unsatisfied” with the application process took place in non-profit centers. Two of the projects were in centers that had a sponsor and one was in a center that did not. One of the three projects was represented by a person with a B.A., and two of the projects by people with no college degree. Therefore, it seems that those with less education in smaller centers might have had a harder time with the application.

For the majority of projects ( $n = 22$ , 63%), representatives reported difficulty obtaining the requisite 25% matching funds. This was most commonly reported by smaller independent centers.

### Overall Satisfaction with the Application Process

The Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant application was a multi-purpose “Single Application for Assistance” from the Department of Community and Economic Development. Overall, 32 out of 35 (91%) of the projects had representatives that found the grant process to be satisfying or very satisfying. Three representatives (9%) reported unsatisfactory experiences with the application process for the grant. Figure 3 presents these data graphically.

**Figure 3. Representatives' Reports of Satisfaction with the Grant Application Process**



During the follow-up interview, those who were satisfied described the ease of the application process in more detail.

“It wasn’t so complicated [that] I couldn’t do it myself, especially with the person to look over the numbers. Some [applications] are so complicated you have to jump hoops and you don’t even understand what kind of hoops, so you can’t never get it. This one was straightforward: we want your budget, and this is what we want your budget to look like. You have to spend it this way. It was clear and understandable writing. Nothing tricky.”

“This was my first huge grant; I had only done small grants (\$10-20 thousand) in the past. I have to say that this process was sometimes easier than other foundations I applied to before.”

#### How Challenge Grants Compared to Other Grant Applications

Twelve projects (34%) had representatives who had received other grants for their center within a three-year period prior to receiving the challenge grant. These other grants they had received included the School Age Child Care Program (SACC) start up grant and grants from local foundations or from child care resource developers. Of the six representatives who were willing to compare the challenge grant application process to that of their previously received

grants, five of these representatives described the challenge grant application as “less difficult” than that of the previous grants the center received.

### Contact with State Representatives

Contact with state representatives appeared to ease the grant application process. In fact, 80% of the project representatives reported calling the provided state phone numbers during the application process. During our follow-up interviews, some project representatives mentioned specific names of people they worked with from the State who helped them navigate the application process.

“Well for us it worked out because since I filled out the grant myself there were some things I didn’t know, but they helped me through the grant...sometimes when you fill out these grants and you’re not sure how to do a certain thing, they won’t give you any information. They are, like, if you don’t really know how to fill it out, well it’s a competitive process and you’re on your own. I thought it was good they were able to help with specific questions to make it so we really could be competitive and could get the grant. That was very beneficial.”

“The ease in working with Debbie Barrett [was the best thing about the program]. She was my grant rep and anytime I had questions or, ah, just needed help with something she was always there. She never made me feel like I was asking a stupid question, and I know some of my questions had to have been stupid, but she was just wonderful; very helpful very, very willing to talk me through things, and it was a very good experience, all the way around.... The application process, the front part of the page was filled out and on the back it gave you instructions to fill out the next page, so you really couldn’t get lost, it was very well written and easy to follow. *The only difficulty I would say is that the application was used for all the community and economic development grants, so if you didn’t know you didn’t have to fill out all the parts that could get kind of confusing, because there were things on the application that I couldn’t really figure out what they even were, so I didn’t know if it applied to me or not and its didn’t say what grants needed to fill out what portion* [emphasis added]....Once Debbie told me I didn’t have to do those pages it made sense because they were agricultural questions and things like that.”

“When we applied, we originally wanted a small business loan and went to a training session to meet people from the state. It was very helpful. The woman’s name was Brenda Fried and she told us that the grant was what we wanted and communication with her was very good. She helped us along the way.”

“There was a woman that reviewed this from the state. Her name was Barbara Fried. ... I still remember her name because she epitomized quality service and government service and getting through the bureaucracy of decision-making. She was a tremendous asset to the review process and she just understood our need. She [Barbara] made the comment to me that if government money is not available for programs like yours then we shouldn’t have government money. I mean she found a way to say what we had to do to get us

approved but boy, I'll tell you, the application and decision making process was just the most compassionate and understanding of all the grant applications for programs I have been a part of! So I don't have any negative comments... I'd be a strong advocate that funding is restored, increased, or made available."

### Outside Resources

Out of the 35 projects in our sample, five projects (14%) had representatives who reported using outside organizations to aid in the application process. Outside resources used were Crossgates Inc. (used for two different projects), Diana T. Myers and Associates, WCRP, and Hildebrandt Learning Center. Hildebrandt Learning Center offered their help for free; the other organizations were paid from \$750 to \$3,600 dollars for their help. They did things like maintaining contact with the State office, project management, and writing pieces of the proposal.

Some respondents also mentioned that free help was provided through informal child care networks. A few representatives mentioned getting unpaid help from individuals they knew at other centers or from friends who worked in offices. For instance, one representative of a center that received two grants for two separate projects had a friend in the office of a Small Business Association who composed their budget spreadsheet as a favor.

"I know someone else who applied for the grant and I helped her do it; I helped her write it. That might be a little much for some of the smaller child care facilities that really need to upgrade the programs and their buildings."

### The Role of Center Size and Support

Many representatives reported multiple people within a center working on the application or the sponsoring institution providing resources. In fact, while they were satisfied with the application process, quite a few project representatives from larger centers were skeptical that smaller centers with few employees and without sponsors would be able to complete the application. They even wondered how representatives from small centers might learn about the grant opportunity.

"This child care center had a lot of support ...it had the whole college behind it. I'm in the fundraising department. It wasn't the child care director trying to write the grant and manage the construction project and run a child care center and do all those other things. I don't know – I prepared state grants before and this one did not seem to be very much more difficult than any other. It did not have more stringent standards than any other state grant that I prepared. But I don't know -- if it was just our child care director who had to do all these multiple things, if she would have felt she could complete that grant appropriately. I think that it would have been a challenge for somebody that did not have the level of support that we have here at the college."

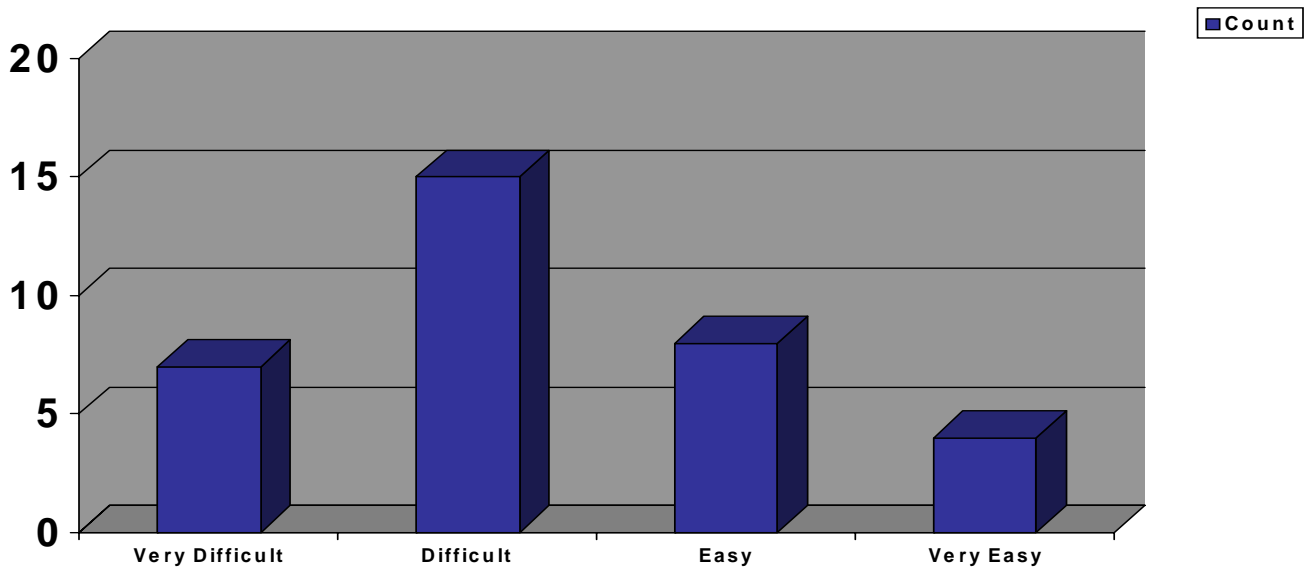
"The only thing worth noting is that some parties may need assistance writing the grant and that was not offered. Our center did not have any problems with that but a lot of

centers operate as mom and pop facilities and they may not have the resources for filling out the application thoroughly. Those centers might slip through the cracks.”

### Matching Funds

The majority of the project representatives found it difficult to obtain the 25% matching funds. See Figure 4 below. This difficulty was more pronounced in smaller centers. In our sample of 35 projects, the centers with outside support had more access to resources than smaller independent centers in low-income neighborhoods.

**Figure 4. Representatives Reported Difficulty Obtaining the 25% Matching Funds**



Many project representatives used the follow-up interview as an opportunity to elaborate on the difficulty of obtaining matching funds. While many talked about the difficulty, only some representatives went so far as to suggesting the requirement be withdrawn in the future.

“It was a bit difficult because we had to finance it. I had never worked with a grant that had a split before. Most of the other grants that we had applied for are 100 percent. We had to do the 75/25 and we had to do a bridge loan and all that kind of stuff so it was just a first time experience and tough.”

“Yes [there are things I would change]. For one thing, we were very grateful to get a large sum of money but it was hard for us to provide the matching part. “

“We were able to come up with 25%, but the average child care center might not be able to do that. We were able to figure out getting the money from different organizations -- you have to give them so much info to have them consider it. Some people might not be able to do that.”

“The 25% match I think is, I think, fair. I personally feel that the state should not subsidize entirely anything, y’ know. But to help somebody doing some good work or an organization doing good work get on their feet and do more good work in the community, I think is wise for the state to support that.”

The most prevalent source for finding matching funds was the facility providing its own funds; 21 of the 35 projects (60%) were in facilities that could provide at least some percentage of the required match with their own funds. The second most common source was foundation grants; 11 projects (31%) were in centers that used foundation resources. The remaining projects were in centers that obtained at least some of the matching funds from the following, in declining order: the Commonwealth, private or corporate investors, community development organizations, and “other” resources. One project was in a center that obtained federal funds for the match. About a third of the centers (34%) used a combination of resources to provide the 25% match.

## **Project Implementation**

During implementation, issues regarding timelines and unexpected expenses arose. While most representatives reported that the mandatory timeline for spending the grant funds was not a problem, the timeline for acceptance notification and reimbursement of funds was unsatisfactory. Subsequently, the amount of time that passed between creating a budget based on estimates and actually hiring contractors often resulted in an unexpected increase in material and service costs.

### Spending Grant Funds Timeline

While no projects had representatives who expected to be reimbursed with additional grant funds, three projects had representatives who reported receiving less money than they were originally awarded. At least one of these projects lost funding because the mandatory timeline for spending the grant funds was not met. Nevertheless, in the smaller group that we interviewed in more detail over the telephone, most found the mandatory timeline for *spending* the funds easy to abide by.

“Not at all [a problem] -- I think that the timeline should be contracted. You shouldn’t need 2 to 4 years to renovate a facility. You can renovate a facility in 4 months. It really ought to be a year or 18 months....I think it’s way too long.”

“We just knew what the timeline was and made sure we stayed with it. I don’t think it had any major impact on our timeline.”

“We were pretty lucky and organized. We really knew what we needed and wanted and we got people involved. I already knew how I wanted it designed. So maybe we were just lucky we didn’t run into a lot of problems. We also have an administrator who has an MBA in financing, so we bring a lot of different help – I’ve been in the business a long time.”

Those who did have problems with the timeline explained there was miscommunication or unexpected changes related to project implementation.

“I have a fax from February 2003 that says, “Oh, by the way, I hate to tell you this but the grant expires September 30, 2003 not June 30, 2004.” So suddenly we had to spend everything by September 30<sup>th</sup> of 2003! We were opening then...one of the things that were helpful was that it paid for some PR so we could help get some start up costs. But we had to have that all done quickly in a month since we opened in the early September and had to have it done by the end of September. So I think there was some confusion there in the contracting. I would say if you know those kinds of things way ahead of time that would be helpful. But I think because it was kind of new, they messed up there. Long story short: I think it’s doable if you have enough advanced notice.”

“Changes in costing. In our particular instance... we were working from estimates that our contractor gave us and all our budgets were based on them. When the project was sent to bid, the bids came back very much higher than what we had been originally told. So we had to go back and redesign the actual project. That meant that we probably did get a longer timeline, and we had to apply for an extension from the grant because it would have put us past the timeline. It caused a lot of anxiety and problems for us. What was good about it was that the staff at DCED were very understanding...They understood why we needed to do what we needed to do and that we couldn’t go forth with the project being it was actually twice what it was originally quoted to us, which was obviously not feasible in any way. So they were good about working with us to make sure that we could get something that would work out for them and for us.”

### Reimbursement Timeline

Overall, 30 projects (86%) had representatives who reported the transfer of grant funds went as they expected. Yet, they also reported that, while the reimbursement process was clear, they still found it financially challenging. Most representatives reported receiving their project funds as reimbursements after renovations began and receipts were submitted. Representatives often spoke about the difficulty of moving forward while waiting for the reimbursements or acceptance of the grant proposal.

“The only thing that made it a little bit difficult for us was that it took a long time to get reimbursed and we had to pay the expenses up front. The grant reimburses you 75% of the invoice but it took sometimes two months, sometimes longer, depending on when you submitted it to get reimbursed. And for small businesses -- small nonprofits, that’s hard for us to maintain. We can’t easily spend thousands of dollars and have to wait a couple months to be reimbursed. But we made do. We were able to use other grant funds and

just spend the money temporarily and reimburse it as soon as we got it back. So it worked. But that is the only thing that we would like to change.”

“It was a challenge to get reimbursed for expenses. When it comes to capital expenses you have to put out a lot of money out front. I went back through my invoices and it took an average of two months to get money. I would submit an invoice that I had already paid and I would have to wait about two months to get reimbursed. For nonprofits, for big chunks of money like that, it’s hard. It’s one thing if it is a five or ten thousand dollar grant but when it’s \$300,000 it’s harder. So I would suggest perhaps they can pay it in installments. Like four times over the year and have us provide proof of payment, but figure something out there. I know in other programs they will give you the money upfront and I’m not sure why this was distinguished that way.”

“...Restructure the way the disbursements are done cause it’s now done on an entirely reimbursement basis. So you need a bridge loan to facilitate any large contract or contractor who’s willing to hang in there until you can give them some money. And sometimes that could be three months. If there was able to be like a signing bonus or something to that effect or you’re looking at an advance when you start, that would be a good idea. It doesn’t have to be large but it could be 10% advance loan... A lot of times contractors want some good faith money cause you cannot necessarily execute a contract without trust. It’s one of those components, so it’s difficult.”

“We applied for the grant almost 12 months before we needed the money, but we weren’t approved until the day of settlement. We had a lender willing to finance the balance of the acquisition and renovation contingent upon the grant being approved. We couldn’t consummate our mortgage commitment until the day of closing. It put us at risk with the seller b/c we had to waive our mortgage contingency period. Therefore all the money we had on the deposit was nonrefundable. ... If they did not give us the grant money or if we got less than what we wanted, we would’ve lost our mortgage commitment, the property, and all the money we put down. So it was a risky venture; but it was a calculated risk. ...The timeliness of the responses [is critical], especially when you are dealing with a real property acquisition and renovations. I think DCED needs to honor [that]... When you’re saying you’re going to do something in the community, and we go out and put our best foot forward to try and make something happen, all these different parties get involved. And they all want to be paid no matter what. So it would be nice if things were done in a timely fashion. Four months for the review, that’s what I found to be the most painful part of the whole process.”

### Unexpected Expenses

Eighteen projects (51%) had representatives who reported unexpected expenses during project implementation. Most of these expenses were based on changes in contracting prices between the time of bidding and applying for the grant and the time of project implementation.

“Expenses were higher than anticipated, higher than we expected. We had someone come in and give us a price estimate, but when the actual contractors began and bills came in,

they were higher than expected, the cost of plumbing and heating, wallpaper and paint, especially the heating and cooling system.”

“Renovation prices have gone up; typical things that weren’t anticipated. Usually people allocate 10 to 20 percent for that, but I couldn’t because I couldn’t afford it. I had to readjust and do away with some of the things to pay for some of those expenses, mainly the renovation part of it.”

“What we found challenging about the grant program was that there was a time lag obviously between when we prepared our budget and outlined what we needed and when we actually ordered the equipment or when we actually had the renovation done. Sometimes, when there is a time lag -- especially when you are talking about equipment, prices can change. We were nervous that those changes in price – we didn’t change what we were doing or trying to do with the grant but it was a change in the price. So we had to adjust some of the things that we purchased, but keep it in line with the actual amounts of the grant. So that was a little nerve wracking. We didn’t want to be in violation of the grant, ... but it was difficult. There were several months before we started working on the grant and were able to get those funds [reimbursed].”

“The cost of materials went up and the contracts came back more expensive than were originally priced. It was stressful for us to accommodate the increases and also have to front the money. So if we were in a position to do one or the other, it would be better. They were small contracts. It’s not like we had lawyers reviewing them all. It was us and the contractors. We had paperwork, but we survived.”

Representatives who experienced unexpected expenses reported shifting around center costs or doing additional fundraising to pay for unexpected expenses. For example, one representative explained a very specific fundraising activity that helped the center stay on track with project expenses.

“We ended up doing a private fundraiser where we had floor tiles made... We sold the tiles for \$100 a piece and we were able to raise \$2,600 to help cover some of the expenses that came up. We put the tiles at the entrance of the child care center with a plaque commemorating everybody who sponsored a tile.”

Only three respondents (9%) reported changes from their proposed ways of spending the grant funds to the way the funds were actually spent. These three changes were generally small in scale and approved by the Commonwealth.

### **Changes in the Availability of Services**

The number of total spots available and the number of children enrolled in the centers increased after the grant projects were completed. More services were also available to low-income children, children with disabilities, and children in a variety of age groups. After the grant projects, more children took advantage of the increased spots. These increases are illustrated in a comparison of the *average* number of children and available space, as well as the

*total* number of children enrolled and the total new spaces created before and after the projects were completed. The increase in the availability of services took place in centers that offered non-traditional hours of care, and helped create new centers that do the same. We document these changes in more detail in the paragraphs below. Figure 5 presents a graphic picture of these changes separately within existing and new centers.

### Average Increases in Enrollment

#### *Already Existing Centers*

We measured center capacity by looking at the *average* number of children enrolled in centers before the funded project began and after the funded project was completed.<sup>6</sup> For the 23 projects at existing centers in our sample, the average number of children approved for enrollment in these centers by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) before the projects were implemented was 52.5; the average after the projects were completed was 82.

The DPW number reflects the maximum children the center can serve at a given time. The actual number of children enrolled is another way of measuring changes in the availability of the center services based on grant projects. For the 23 projects at existing centers in our sample, centers were generally operating at their capacity. The average number of children enrolled in these centers before the projects were implemented was 52.5, while the average after the projects were implemented was 70.

The average number of enrolled children with disabilities being served before the projects was five, while the average after the projects was seven. Likewise, there was an increase in the average amount of subsidized children served as well. Before the projects were completed, there was an average of 18 children per center; after, there was an average of 37.5.<sup>7</sup>

#### *New Centers*

Change in center capacity also took place as a result of projects focused on opening brand new child care centers. These can be measured by looking at the average number of children enrolled in new centers once they opened to the public.<sup>8</sup> Regarding the 12 projects that helped open new centers in our sample, the average number of children approved for enrollment in these centers by the Department of Public Welfare was 100.

Again, the DPW number reflects the maximum children the center can serve at a given time. Yet, the actual median number of children enrolled in these centers as they started business

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<sup>6</sup> These averages were computed by looking at the median rather than mean, in order to account for the effects of some very large or very small centers.

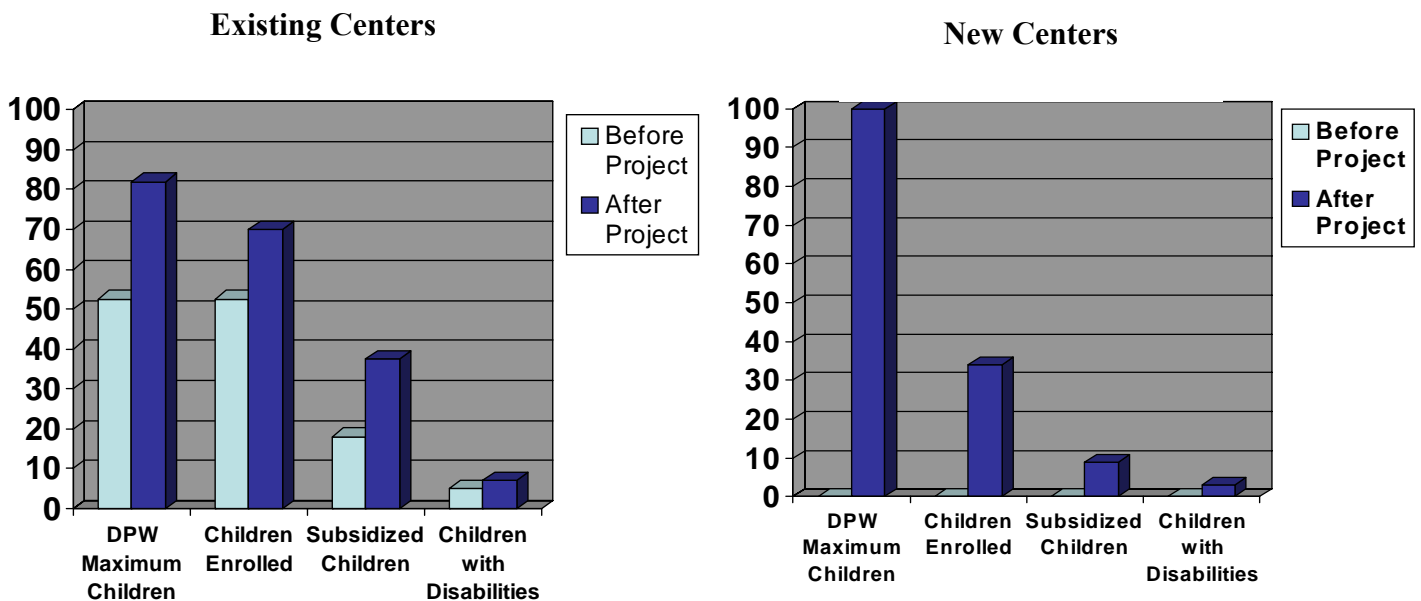
<sup>7</sup> Only 19 projects (out of 23) in existing centers were able to report the number of children with disabilities in their centers before receiving the grant. Only 17 projects (out of 23) in existing centers were able to report the number of children with disabilities in their centers after receiving the grant. Therefore, averages and totals for children served with disabilities in existing centers are based on these cases only.

<sup>8</sup> These averages were computed by looking at the median rather than mean, in order to account for the effects of some very large or very small centers. It is important to note however, that enrollment numbers for new centers are limited to the amount of children enrolled when the business first started.

is a good glimpse into immediate demand for these centers. The average number of children enrolled in new centers was 34.

Of these enrolled children, the median number with disability being served in the first few months was three, while the median amount of subsidized children served in the first few months was nine.

**Figure 5. Average Enrollment for Existing Centers and New Centers Before and After the Grant Projects**



Total Increase in Enrollment and Space

While the average number of children at the centers where each project took place is important, the *total number* of slots created in each of the categories as a result of all 35 projects is a good reflection of the number of *additional* children to whom the grant helped provide service. Table 2, below, summarizes the total number of enrolled children and new slots created.

*Already Existing Centers*

In centers that were already in existence at the time of the grant project, 1142 new slots were created as allowed by DPW standards. Six months after renovations were complete, 743

additional children were actually being served, including 419 more subsidized children and at least 48 more children with disabilities.<sup>9</sup>

### *New Centers*

After grant projects took place in new centers, an additional 1487 slots were created as allowed by DPW standards. In the early stages of operation, the new centers were actually serving 522 additional children, including 174 subsidized children, and 3 children with disabilities.

### *All Centers*

These overall increases in service amount to a total of 2629 new child care slots, an additional 1265 children being served within 6 months of project completion and new centers being open to the public. Of the 1265 new children served, 593 (or 47%) of them were subsidized, and at least 51 with mental or physical disabilities.

**Table 2. Total Increase in Childcare Services by Center Type and Overall**

<b>Service Increase by Grant Projects in Types of Centers</b>	<b>Effects of Projects in Existing Centers (N=23)</b>	<b>Effects of Projects in Newly Opened Centers (N=12)</b>	<b>Total Effects from Projects in All Centers (N=35)</b>
<b>Childcare Spots Created With Grant Funds (Determined by DPW maximum enrollment standards)</b>	<b>1142</b>	<b>1487</b>	<b>2629</b>
<b>Total Additional Children Served after Grant Projects</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>522*</b>	<b>1265</b>
<b>Additional Subsidized Children Served after Grant Projects</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>174*</b>	<b>593</b>
<b>Additional Children with Disabilities Served after Grant Projects</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>51</b>

\*Note: This is a conservative number, collected from new centers when they first opened to the public, or during the earliest time they had accessible records within the first 6 months operation.

### Hours of Operation

The centers' hours of operation are another important measure of quantifiable changes in the availability of center services before and after grant projects. The measurement of non-typical hours is important because centers with interests in opening or remaining open during non-typical times were specifically encouraged to apply for project funding.

<sup>9</sup> Only 19 projects (out of 23) in existing centers were able to report the number of children with disabilities in their centers before receiving the grant. Only 17 projects (out of 23) in existing centers were able to report the number of children with disabilities in their centers after receiving the grant. Therefore, averages and totals for children served with disabilities in existing centers are based on these cases only.

We measured the number of existing centers that were open during non-typical hours on weekdays and weekends. Before receiving the grant, close to 80% of the projects were in centers that were already providing services either before 7:00 am or after 6:00 pm during weekdays. No additional existing centers offered non-traditional weekday hours after the grant projects were complete.

Newly created centers were obviously not open for service before receiving the grant funds. However, after the grant projects were complete, about 75% of the new centers offered weekly hours before 7:00 am or after 6:00 pm.

Before the grant projects, no existing centers were open on weekends, but after the project one center was open on Saturdays from 6:00 am to 12:00 pm. Another center tried to have weekend hours but noted that “it didn’t work.” No new centers offered weekend care during their early months of business.

Overall, 18 projects were in existing centers that offered non-traditional hours before and after the grant projects. In addition, nine projects were in new centers that opened offering non-traditional hours. In total, 27 projects (77%) were in centers that offered non-traditional hours after project completion.

### Increased Services to Specific Groups

Another significant measurement of increased availability of services is information about specific groups or families that were most affected by the grant projects.

#### *Additional Age Groups*

Many times the projects enabled centers to provide services to children in additional age groups, such as infants, toddlers or school aged children.

“Before the renovation, we did not have any infant care whatsoever... [What] we were able to do was to put in an actual infant room specialized for the infants. It had not only safety features but also the washer and dryer that you need and the kitchen that you need and all those kinds of things ...”

“It allowed us to serve a hundred and some more children and increase our program to include school age kids. We were strictly an infant to 5 yr old center prior to the grant. Once we obtained the grant we were also able to open for before and after-school. So the families that would have had to make two stops to pick up their kids -- the preschool age stop here and then the school age at the school age site -- now only have to go to one location. We couldn’t have done it without the grant.”

#### *Low-Income Families*

Many project representatives noted that the projects enabled their centers to begin or continue providing services to low-income families.

“We were able to offer more care to more subsidized kids. We were able to offer definitely the school aged portion...Overall it was a wonderful experience for our organization. It allowed us to do things that we would have never been able to do without the grant money. It allowed us to not only fulfill our mission but to go above and beyond that and serve more people than we ever thought possible.”

“We did not want to close the center because of the financial need. Number 1 we have a 90-year history for serving children in [NAME OF CENTER]<sup>10</sup>. Number 2, the kids we were serving were among the lowest income kids in [INNER CITY URBAN AREA]. We just needed to make a commitment to those kids and to our history there. Yet the deficit was a real issue and the capital improvements needed to be made. We just couldn't fund those out of operations without running a deficit. So we went to the state and said we need help... Now we have gone from what was maybe 140 kids pre challenge grant to 161. ... Closing that deficit has also meant that we are now able to raise the bottom wages of the lowest paid child care workers that we have... None of it would have been possible without the child care grant.”

“Now that the daycare is actually in the building -- separate still close to it but separate from the shelter, we opened the daycare. We made daycare available to families that work in [NAME OF AREA] or that live in [NAME OF AREA]. They need child care, but they are not part of our homeless shelter. We were hoping to get a couple private pay and full pay clients... We are able to serve children from low-income families that are not part of our system. I don't think that would've happened before when we were on the second floor of the shelter.”

## **Changes in the Quality of Service**

The grant projects resulted in a tremendous increase in the quality of services available in existing centers. The grant projects also helped new centers open their doors with high quality materials and services. This change was sometimes enough to allow the center to apply for accreditation and participate in quality programs. In the long run, the effects were more quality care for children and more opportunities for center growth. We document these changes in more detail in the paragraphs and tables below. We also present some of the positive feedback concerning these issues from the families, children, and communities affected by the projects.

### Facilities, Furniture and Materials

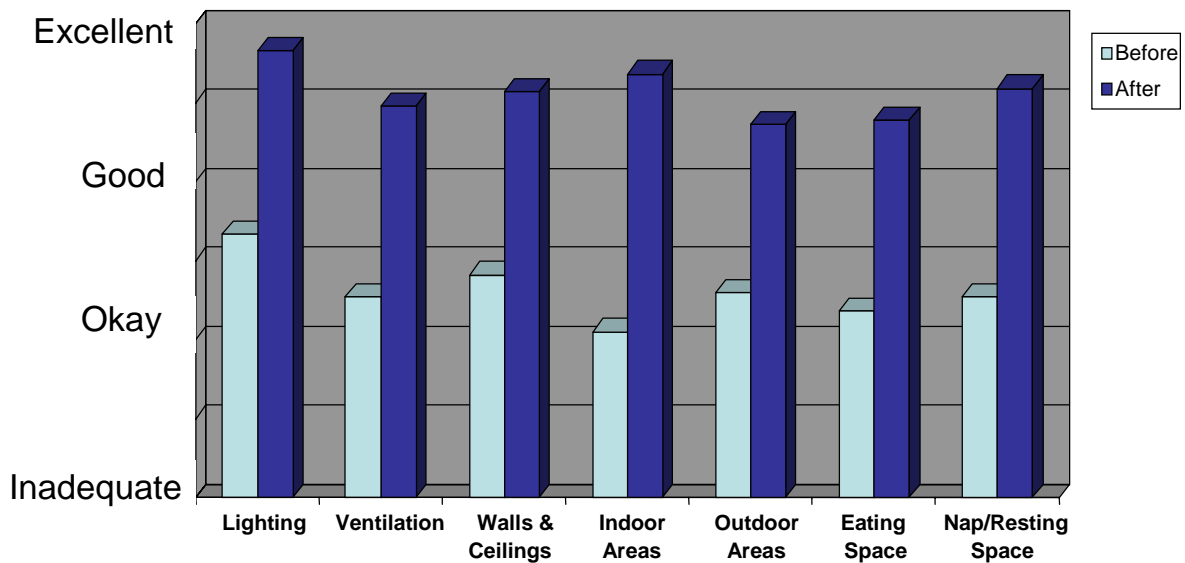
Changes in the quality of service provided by existing centers funded by the Challenge grant projects were measured by examining reports describing the condition of facilities, furniture, staff accommodations and materials before the grant projects were initiated and after the grant projects were completed.

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<sup>10</sup> Center names and identifying characteristics have been omitted to ensure participant anonymity.

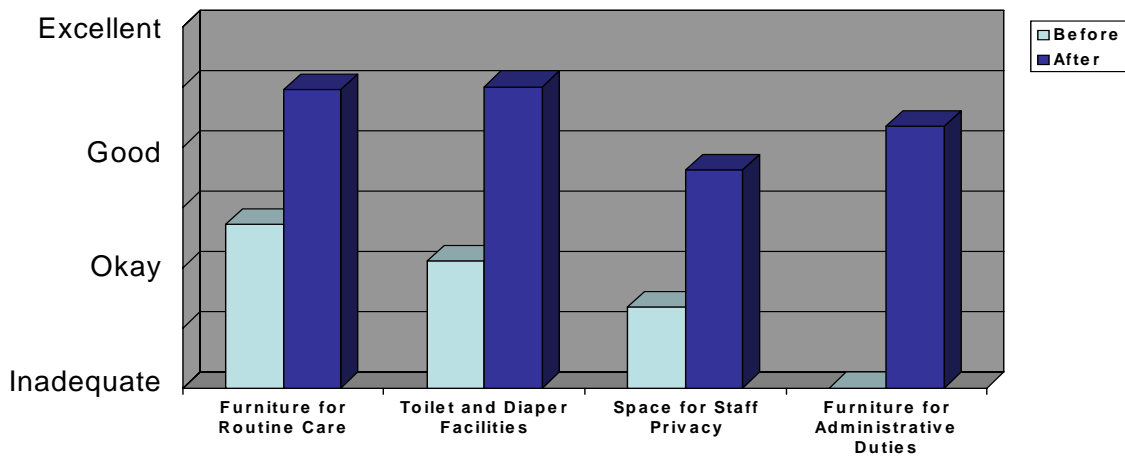
In the questionnaire, project representatives were asked to rate the adequacy of these center features one to four months before receiving the grant acceptance and again six months after project was complete. Quality of the facilities increased after the projects were completed. Figures 6 through 8 show the *average* score across centers for quality before and after grant projects were complete.<sup>11</sup> Improvements included quality changes in overall lighting and ventilation, children’s play space, eating space, toileting space, furniture, staff privacy, administrative operations, and children’s learning and play materials.

**Figure 6. Quality Scores for Facilities in Existing Centers Before and After Grant Projects**

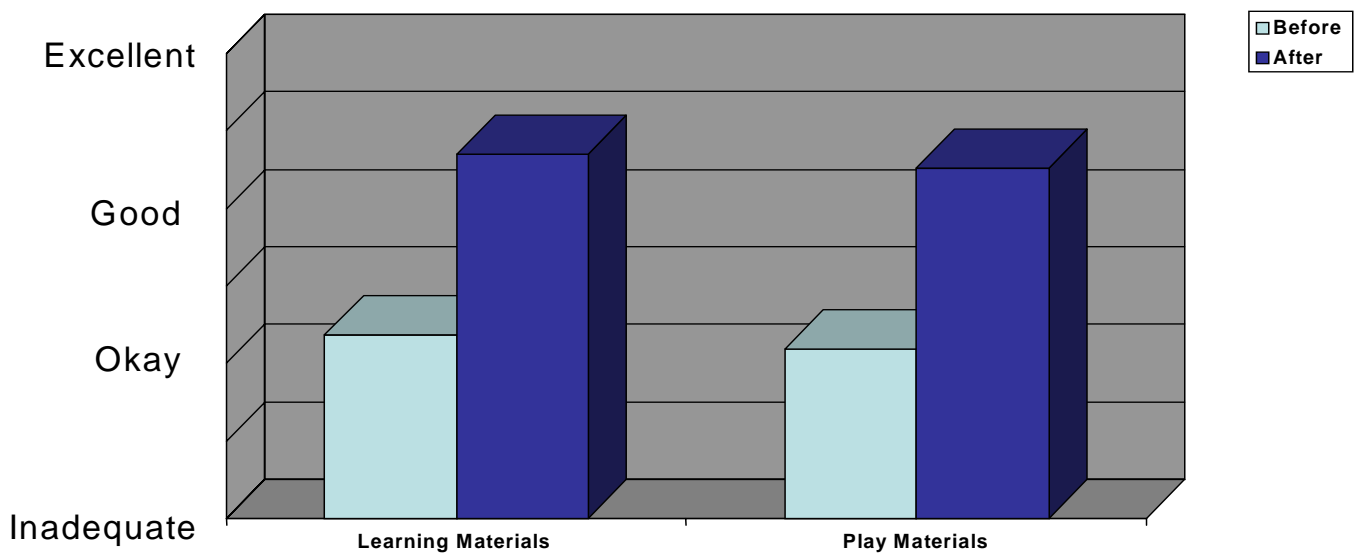


<sup>11</sup> We used the mean to calculate these averages because it was a four-point scale with no possible extreme outliers.

**Figure 7. Quality Scores for Furniture and Staff Accommodations in Existing Centers Before and After Grant Projects**

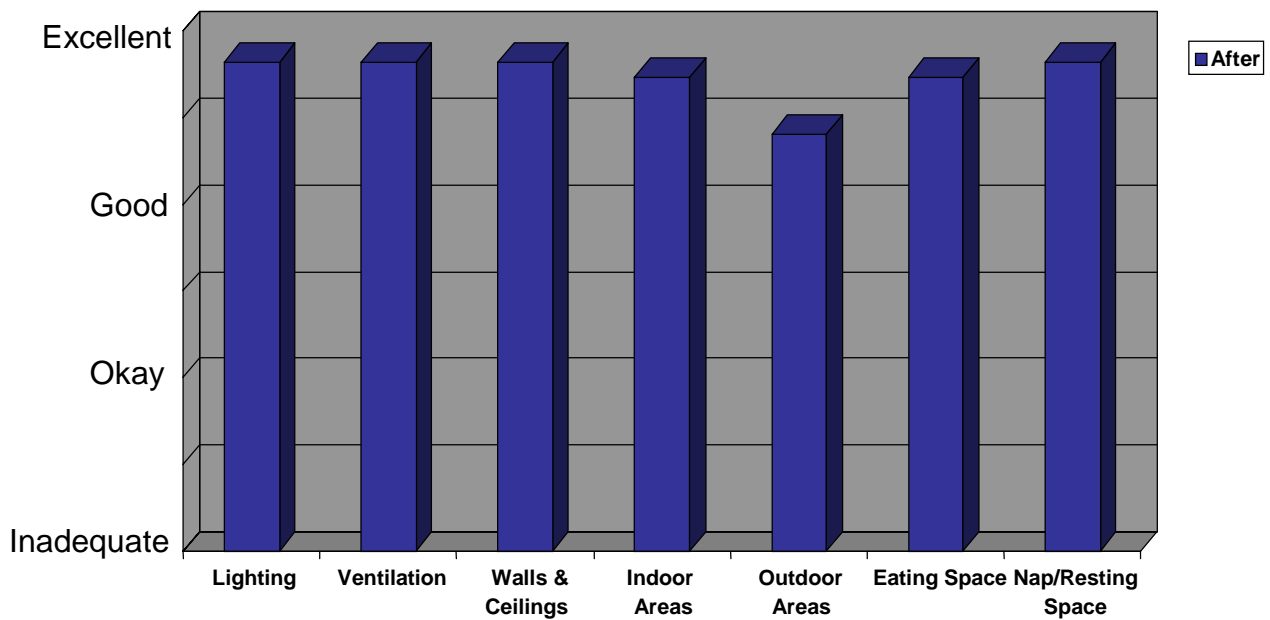


**Figure 8. Quality Scores for Materials in Existing Centers Before and After Grant Projects**



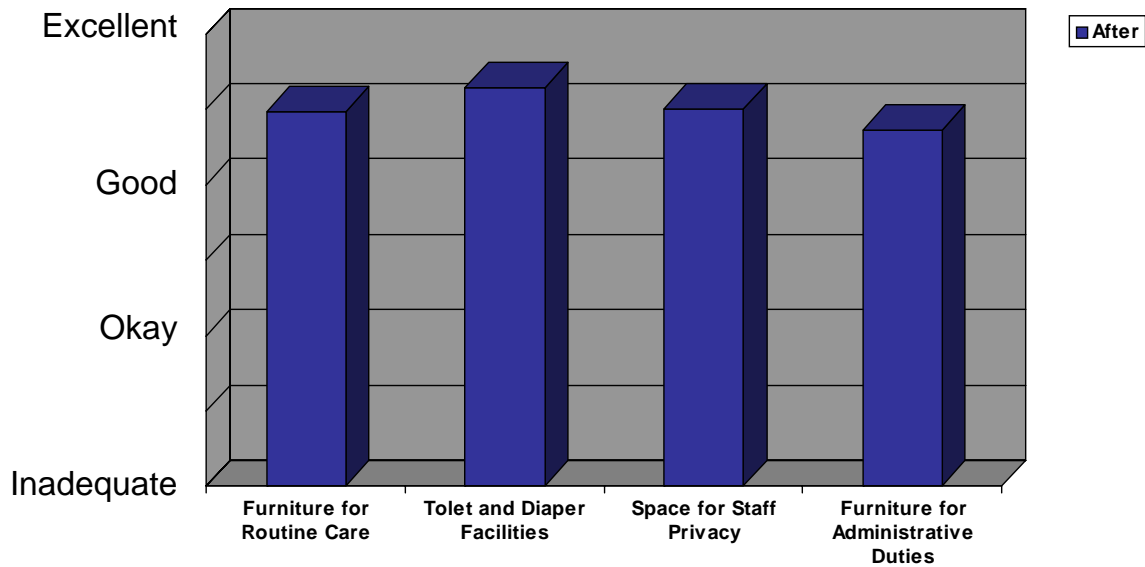
New centers were also evaluated in terms of the quality of facilities, furniture, staff accommodations and materials installed in the center. After the grant projects were completed, these centers were able to open their doors with high quality facilities, furniture, staff accommodations, and materials to aid in providing the best possible service. Figures 9 through 11 show the average score for the quality of these items in new centers.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 9. Quality Scores for Facilities in New Centers After Grant Projects**

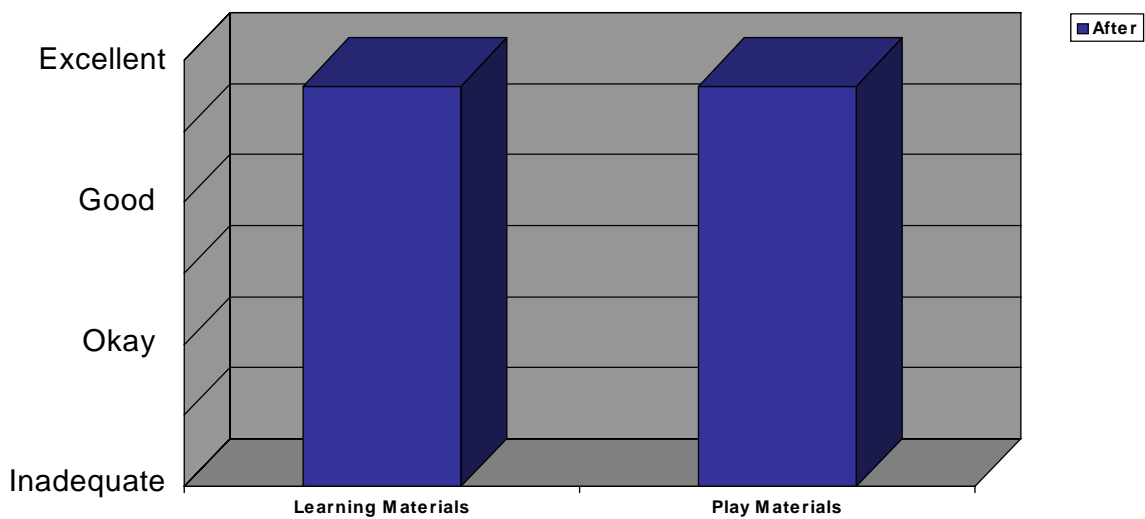


<sup>12</sup> We used the mean to calculate these averages because it was a four-point scale with no possible extreme outliers.

**Figure 10. Quality Scores for Furniture and Staff Accommodations in New Centers After Grant Projects**



**Figure 11. Quality Scores for Materials in New Centers After Grant Projects**



## Accreditation

Many centers talked about how the project changes would enable them to apply for accreditation and eventually take part in a variety of quality rating or accreditation programs like those run by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National After School Association (NAA), the School Age Child Care Program (SACC) and Pennsylvania's Keystone Stars.

Of the projects that took place in existing centers, 87% of them were in centers not accredited by NAEYC before or six months after the projects were complete. About 9% of existing centers were in the process of applying for accreditation both before and after the projects were complete.

Despite most centers not being accredited six months after the projects were complete, in the follow-up interviews representatives of projects talked about the ways the changes enabled by the challenge grant constituted the first step in being able to apply for accreditation.<sup>13</sup>

“Prior to fixing the building there is no way any accrediting body would have accredited our program no matter how good of a program we were operating. The physical plant just didn't support quality. A lot had to do with air conditioning, because it wasn't air-conditioned. We even lost children in the summertime, because ... there's a lot of children with asthma. On very hot days, we had to stay indoors, and it was even hotter inside. The mandates of accreditation are maintaining a level temperature year round, and we could not do that at all in the summertime. Once we had the physical plant significant majority of the issues resolved, we were able to then go ahead and say, “Lets get accredited!” So that was a two-year process. Today we are accredited by NAEYC. That puts us up to the four star Keystone Star level ... what we're offering is a very high quality product or service and program.”

“Around the time we opened the center we were applying for NAEYC [accreditation], and we now currently have our NAEYC accreditation for that building.”

“The goal of the renovation was ... [to] make the space we wanted to expand into accessible so we could expand our capacity and serve more children. The summary of it all is that we engaged in a contract with a contractor and mandated it be accessible so we could meet the current building requirements. The facilities capacity went from 17 children to 56 children as a result of that. We've been at capacity with a waiting list at this location ever since. Once we expanded the capacity we were able to make a full time job for some people. Then we got them engaged in a quality model and we aspired towards national accreditation, so we became the first and only school aged program in Philadelphia that's nationally accredited by the National After School Association (NAA).”

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<sup>13</sup> Because the Keystone Stars is relatively new, at the time of evaluations for the 6 months after project completion, this program was not an option for centers receiving grants earlier in the program.

## Client and Community Reactions

Changes in quality were often met by reactions of satisfaction from the community, families and children served at the center. Many representatives talked about these reactions in the follow-up interviews.

“Because we were able to have new equipment and the whole layout of the space was redone so it’s all new and shiny, we had our first waiting list of people wanting to get in. We were much more able to market that facility than our other existing facility. It’s one level...it’s easy drop off...there is an outdoor playground...It was able to help us reach more children and to have a model for a very stable preschool center that continues to serve lower income families and yet be able to have it full so we could financially support the center.”

“The families liked the changes that were made. They were happier with the new stuff and happier families make happier children.”

“It was phenomenal! It made the workspace so much better. We have been here since 1994 and I mapped out a design for the building, and I worked with an architect to make it child friendly, parent friendly, and community friendly. So when you walk in the door you have to be buzzed in, and then we have a corridor in the building which leads from the front to the back, and low walls so the parents can see their children without having to access the classroom. That adds to security -- the children aren’t walking out without being escorted by parents. We added extra bathrooms, extra staff bathrooms, an office, a full kitchen for the cook, locker space for teachers, the children have more accessibility to the toys, lighting much better. We put bright colored paint on the walls; it is just beautiful -- light blues and tangerine. It’s beautiful, a big difference, and it’s made the work environment for everybody a lot better. The families love it, and enrollment tripled because of it. It was really needed in the community. Of course, the children loved it -- it’s designed for them. Every room as designed with each age group in mind.”

“The families...thought it was the best thing that could have happened for our center because it gave their kids a multi-purpose room. In the winter time kids can now go upstairs and run around and have almost like a gym-type place indoors...I remember the first time we took the three to five year olds upstairs to see their new gym room- the giggles and the screeches that came from them as they just ran from one end to the other just back and forth.”

“The families love the facilities and are happy their kids can come here. Without it I’m sure they would have to find an alternative. What that is I can’t really speak to. It will be less than what we have, because we’re the only accredited one in the area”

## **Changes in Marketing Activity**

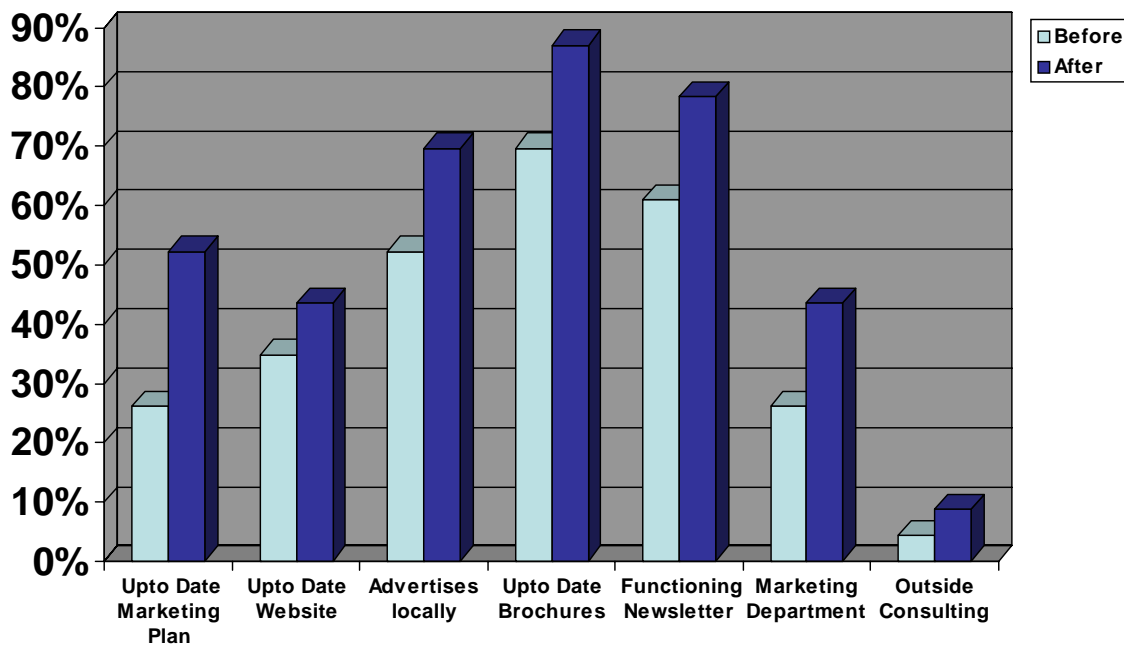
Overall, centers were able to increase local marketing activity and advertise new spots and services to the surrounding communities after the projects were complete. Data also

indicated that centers were able to invest more in long-term marketing with the grant projects. The percentage of existing centers with marketing plans doubled after the grant projects were completed. The majority of new centers were able to develop marketing plans as well.

Up to 10% of the awarded project grant funds were available for use in developing center marketing. We measured the impact of the grant projects on any changes in marketing activity by collecting data about such activity shortly before and after grant projects took place.

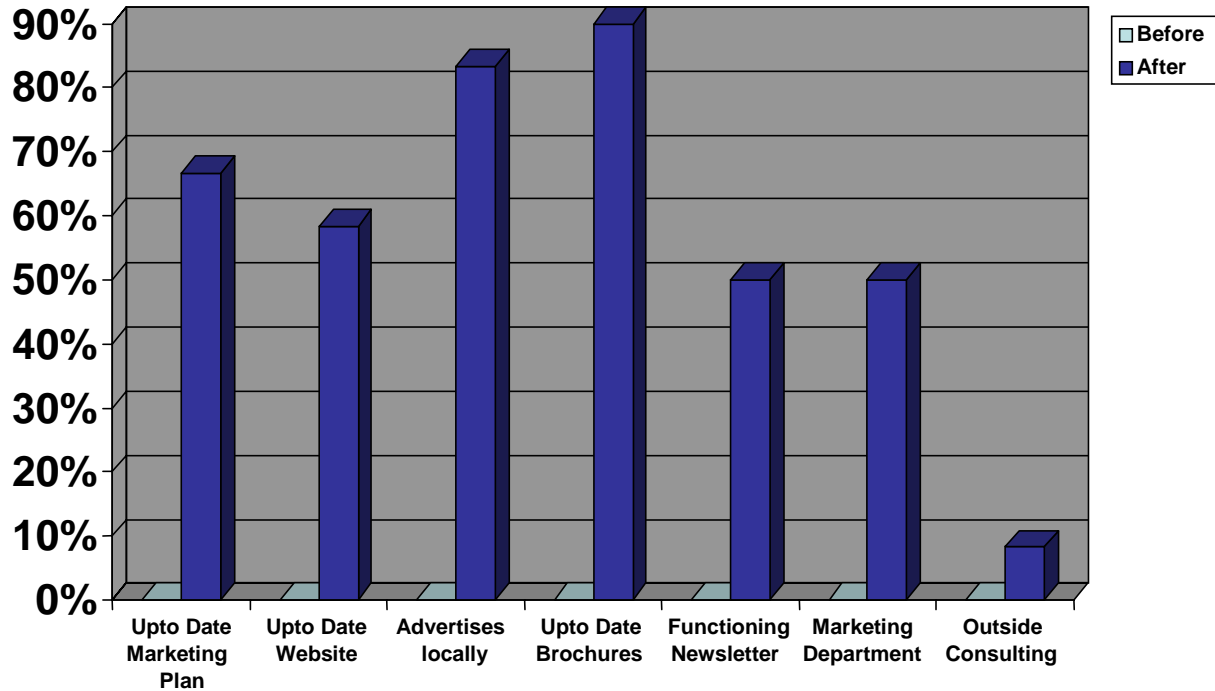
In the existing centers where 23 of the projects took place, the overall percentage of centers with active marketing increased. One of the major increases was that a higher number of centers where the projects took place were able to develop a marketing department and marketing plan after receiving grant money. Figure 12, below, presents these data.

**Figure 12. Percentage of Existing Centers with Marketing Activity Before and After the Grant Projects**



To measure the effects of marketing development for new centers, we collected data about the percentage of projects in new centers where marketing actions were implemented *when the center opened to the public*. Many new centers were able to develop print brochures, advertise in local resources, and design marketing plans after receiving grant funds. This kind of activity allows new centers to advertise new openings and services to the surrounding community. See Figure 13 below.

**Figure 13. Percentage of New Centers with Marketing Activity After the Grant Projects**



These experiences ranged from being pleased with help from the State to being annoyed with the level of proof of marketing necessary for reimbursement.

“The other thing I liked was that DCED paid more attention to PR about the grant than other grants I had gotten from the state...They had their staff come down to our grand opening, and they helped do some press releases about it. I thought that was a good thing.”

“It was cumbersome; the backup was not just the copy of the invoice. For instance, we had purchased some radio ads to try to get people to sign up for the new center and they said well, I see the invoice but I want to actually see the script. It’s like, come on; all it is something typed out. So I think that that was a bit cumbersome. So that is one thing I would change.”

## **Changes in Staff and Employment**

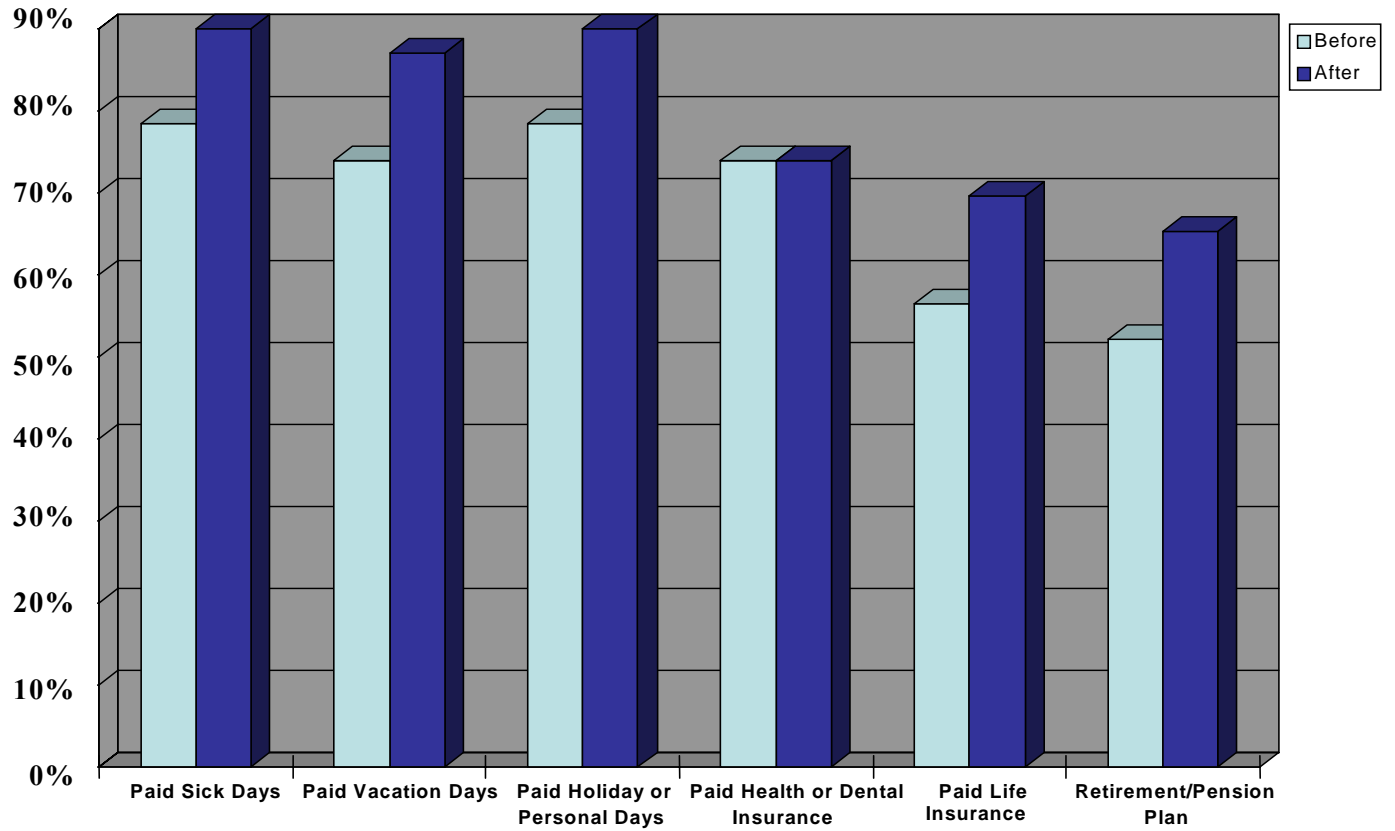
The grant projects led to an overall increase in employee benefits and the number of employees at the existing centers where the projects took place. The average hourly wages for both head teachers and assistant teachers increased, but they only increased substantially for those at the high end of the salary range in each category. Those at the low-end of starting salary ranges did not see any real increase in wages. The general increase in employment quality can also be seen in responses to the grant project changes, from being able to work with high quality materials to taking pride in more advanced training programs.

The Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant allowed funds to be used for staff development and training, as well as for staff recruitment and salaries for six months after the expansion or opening of the centers. By collecting employment data six months after the projects were complete, we captured information about a time when staff changes were implemented and any new standards or staff additions were in place.

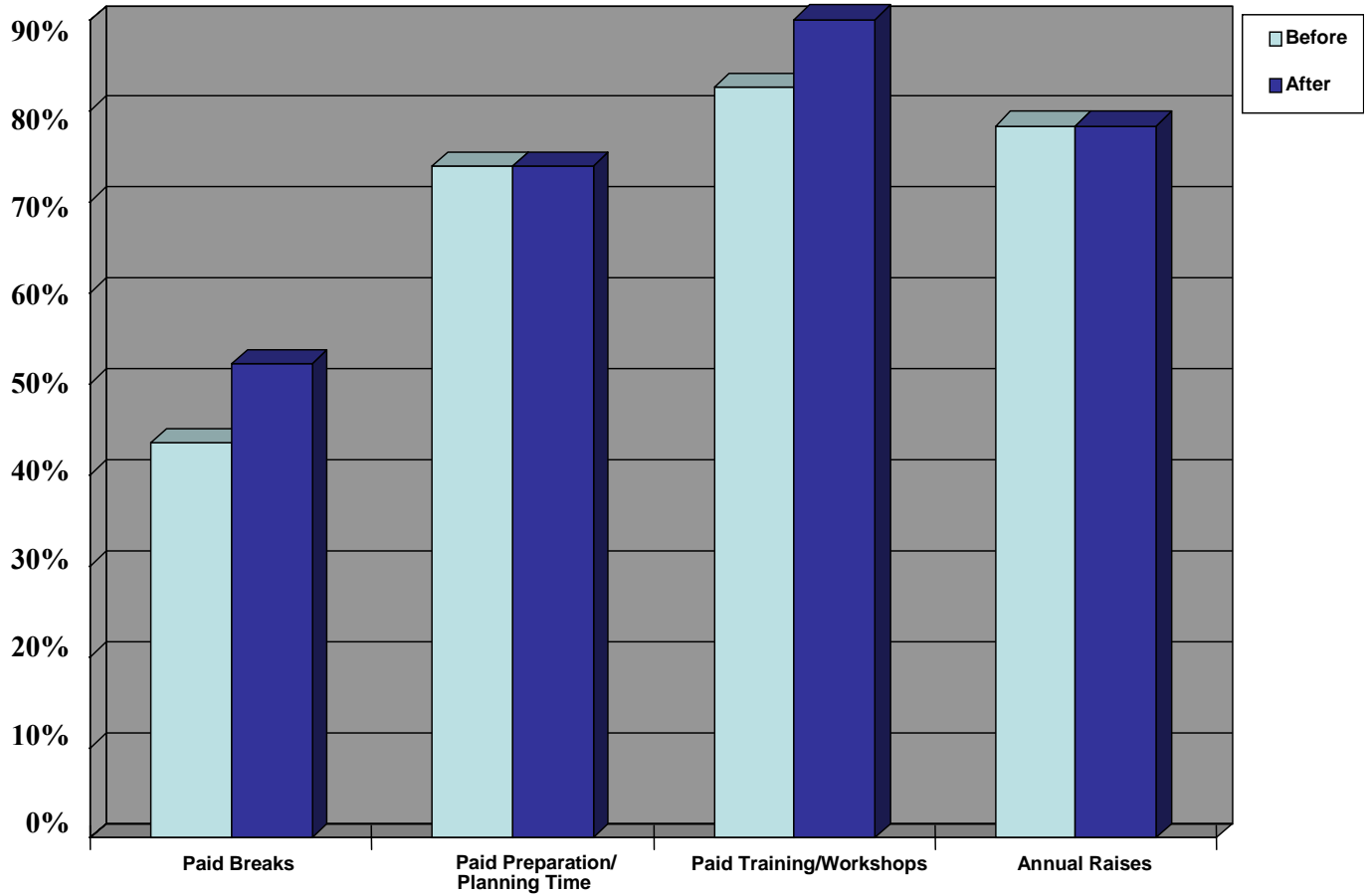
We collected information about head teachers and assistant teachers for the existing centers before and after the 23 projects took place. Information about the number of staff, benefits and hourly wages in new centers was not relevant because the new centers had just opened at the target time of data collection and were not yet fully staffed.

In existing centers, the percentage of head teachers receiving employment benefits increased in a variety of areas from paid sick days to paid life insurance. This included sick pay, paid vacation days, paid holiday/personal days, paid life insurance, and retirement and pension plans. In addition, they also received more paid breaks and increase number of paid training workshops. Areas with no change included paid health or dental insurance, annual raises and paid preparation time. No head teacher benefits decreased after the grant projects were complete. This information is presented graphically in Figures 14 and 15.

**Figure 14. Percentage of Existing Centers Offering Benefits to Head Teachers Before and After the Projects**

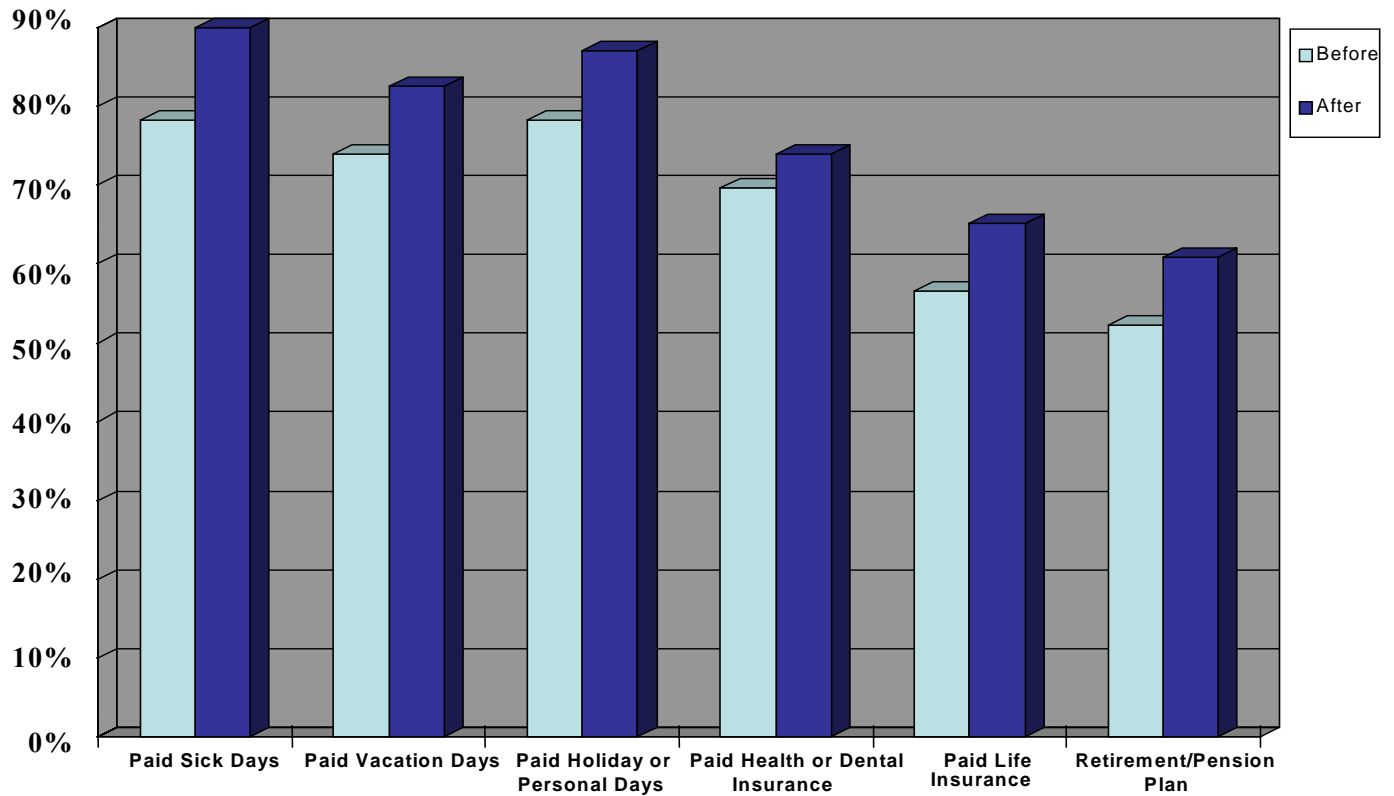


**Figure 15. Percentage of Existing Centers Offering Benefits to Head Teachers Before and After the Projects**

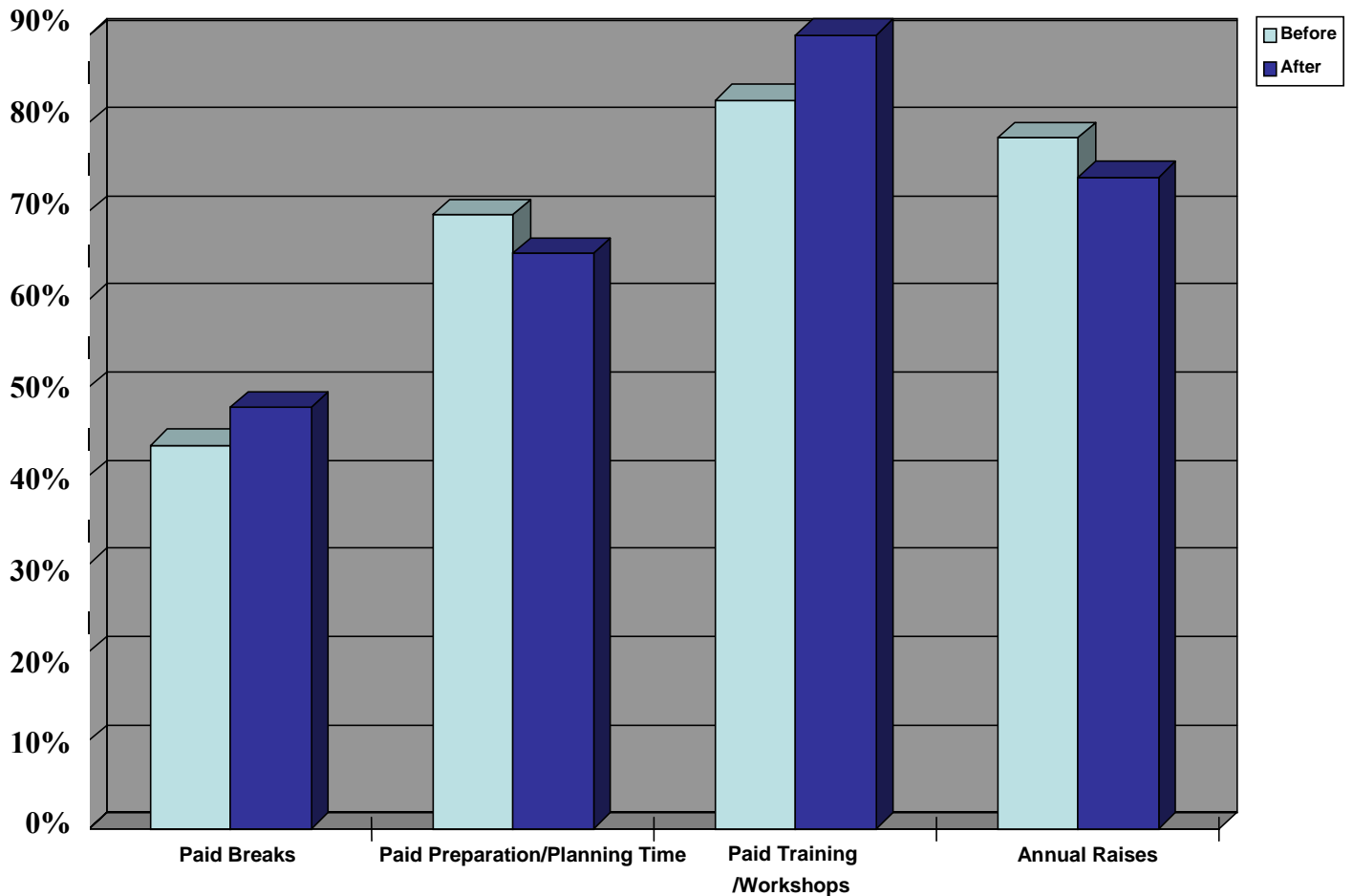


In existing centers the percentage of assistant teachers receiving employment benefits increased in a variety of areas, from paid sick days to paid life insurance. These include paid sick days, paid vacation days, paid holiday/personal days, paid health/dental insurance, paid life insurance, and retirement and pension plans. In addition, they also received more paid breaks and paid training workshops. However, many of the areas that showed no change for head teachers, like paid health or dental insurance, annual raises and paid preparation time, actually showed slight decreases for assistant teachers after the grant projects were complete. This is detailed in Figures 16 and 17.

**Figure 16. Percentage of Existing Centers Offering Benefits to Assistant Teachers Before and After the Projects**



**Figure 17. Percentage of Existing Centers Offering Benefits to Assistant Teachers Before and After the Projects**



### Hourly Wages

We also collected information about hourly wages for head teachers and assistant teachers.<sup>14</sup> In the existing centers, there was an increase in the average hourly pay for the *highest paid* head and *highest paid* assistant teachers. In both cases, the increase in average hourly wage was difference of about \$5.

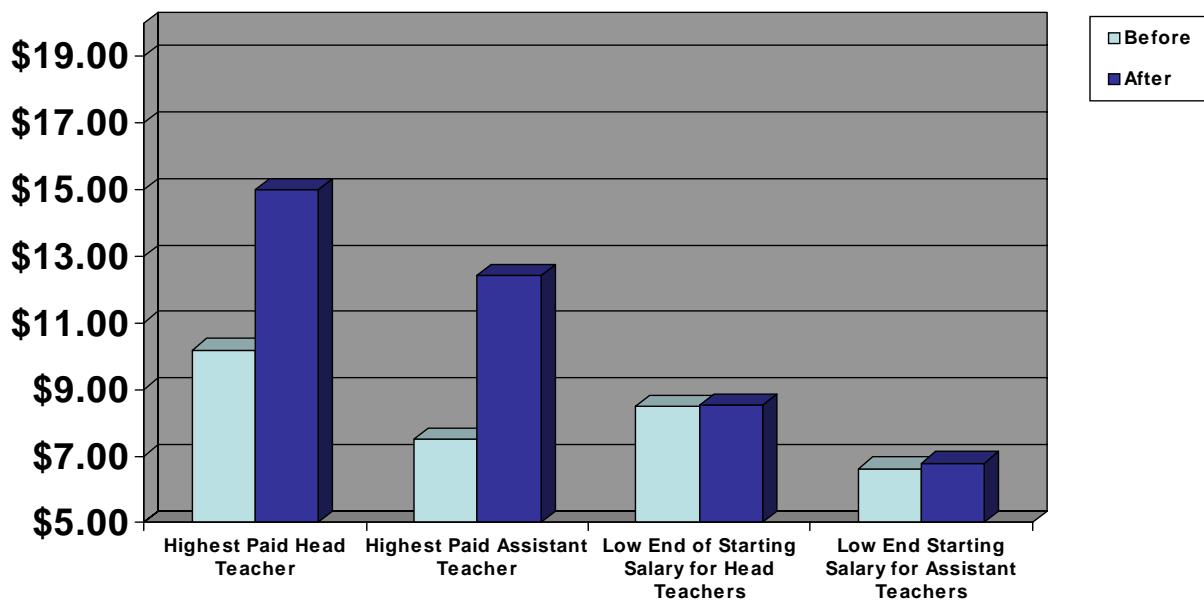
We also collected information about the *low-end of starting salaries* for head and assistant teachers. The average salary for *low-end of the starting range* for head teachers remained virtually the same before and after the 23 projects were complete (increase of only \$.04

<sup>14</sup> We calculated average hourly wage by looking at the means from our sample, since the range of payment did not contain any extreme outliers.

between averages), as did the average for *low-end of the starting range* assistant teachers (increase of only \$.17 between averages).

Regardless of being a head teacher or assistant teacher, on average those who were earning more from seniority or experience gained the most from the increases in pay, while those just starting out saw no real increase on average in the low end of the starting salary range. This is graphically presented in Figure 18, below.

**Figure 18. Average Hourly Wages at Existing Centers Before and After the Grant Projects**



Number of Employees

The average number of assistant teachers in the existing centers before the grant projects was five. After the grant projects were completed, that average increased to six and a half. The average number of head teachers working in the existing centers before the grant projects was three; and after the projects were completed it was five. So, the average existing center hired one to two new assistant teachers and two new head teachers within the six months of project completion.

Employee Responses

In some of the follow-up interviews, project representatives noted the reaction of employees to the changes in the existing centers. From the better quality materials they had to

do their jobs, to an increase of wages or training, the employees in existing centers had very positive reactions.

“Everybody’s very pleased with it -- the employees and the kids and the clients. Everybody loves the facility. It is 180 degrees from where they were before. The old facility was the second floor of an old church. There were all stained glass windows so we couldn’t even open them for fresh air. There was no air-conditioning in the summer. It was really one giant room so we couldn’t even separate the kids appropriately by their ages. The new facility is air conditioned, and there is a separate room for each of the different age groups. There is even a playroom, activity room and after schoolroom so everyone is thrilled with it. The employees absolutely love it. We had limited kitchen facilities before and now we have a full kitchen which allows the staff to prepare meals and snacks onsite without having to pay for it or have stuff brought in.”

“It has elevated our staff to help them realize that they too are professionals simply because for the first time they’re doing their own professional development program and reassessing their quality and where to go from there. That makes our staff feel more important than being called a “babysitter.” Now you are a viable professional and getting more training which helps the quality of the program and the staff’s own self worth.”

“It created a lot of full time positions for my employees, so they were grateful. It created more shifts that were available, obviously with the addition of classroom spaces, provided areas where the staff could eat lunch and that kind of thing and gave them a better quality of work.”

“I think the employees were really very pleased with the expansion. The center was previously not really ideal. The employees said that the changes allow them to do their job better and really better care for the children... more focused on teaching and not just play.”

“Now that we’re able to increase the wages of many of our staff, they’re thrilled. It’s going to help us retain staff and that will help us be able to recruit staff when we need to. There is a high amount of turnover in daycare staff... We have about 26 staff members and for people who were here over five years or more we are close to 300 years of service for 26 staff members AND THAT’S JUST WITH SERVICES OF FIVE YEARS OR MORE (emphasis in her tone). We have 12 staff here that are here 10 yrs or more and then the rest are five yrs or more and so our retention is very good and that is good for the children and the families... We build a bond with these parents knowing that their children have stable staff.”

## **Community Relations**

One of the major goals of the program was to fund projects that would affect communities, not just a child care center within a community. Although the impact of grant funds on community relations may not be quantifiable just six months after grant projects were complete, many of the representatives foresaw growing changes in collaborations with

educational resources, local job development, physical surroundings, and the well being of families in the communities where they took place. These changes in community relations included alliances built with other schools and other programs, community revitalization, increasing the neighborhood job opportunities, and better serving working parents.

#### Collaborations with other educational institutions in the community

Quite a few project representatives discussed ways their center became more involved in working with educational resources in their area in the long run, due at least in part to the challenge grant.

“With us operating under the quality model, we are easily engaged by the education institutions in the area. We’ve been able to create linkages between school and after school [programs]. We are not even on site, but we’re a community partner serving almost 20 grade schools in [Place 1] and [Place 2]. Now we’re able to provide the full time jobs and serve those children. After school is only a few hours a day, but during the summer it is full day. ...They [center employees] find ways to help improve these children’s outcomes. We’ll look at how they’re doing in school, and we’ll go out and work with a school teacher to find out if there are ways we can complement what is happening within the school. So indirectly it’s not so much that the grant set up that process, so much as it allowed us to get to a capacity that allowed us to afford to be able to do that.”

“We did a big grand opening celebration and I know that a lot of peer organizations came from other centers and that they were really pleased to see the expansion and were very impressed with what we are doing. Also, because we’re college based, our center can now be used as the laboratory site for our early childhood education students. So I guess that is community related in that now we have these students that are coming in. Before we’d have to send them to other people’s child care centers because we weren’t up to the standards they needed. They [the students] are doing observation and also working in the center.”

Another representative explained how the grant funds enabled her center to purchase school busses which their school district did not provide. The busses made it possible for the center to transport children back and forth between the schools and the center. There were also representatives that noted their centers were eventually able to provide space for Head Start children, and they are now working with that program.

#### Job Creation

Many centers noted the opportunities they have been able to provide in the surrounding area based on job creation. Some centers noted not only the benefits of increasing direct employment within the center, but the ways the center can indirectly affect neighborhood employment. A representative of a newer center explained,

“Right now I can only speculate about the community effects, but this is in a community where there are many people trying to get GEDs or in job training programs to get out of the welfare system. I can speculate that this center has a positive effect in helping the neighborhood. The neighborhood is also going through renovations all around as part of an overall gentrification process.”

Said a representative from an established center,

“One of our goals in opening a child care facility is that our center has been around for 20 years, and our director was here from the beginning. One of the things he started noticing about five or six years ago was that we were starting to see the children of clients we had served 20 years ago. That got us thinking that this is a vicious cycle, and we have to work harder towards ending it. We concluded that one of the ways to do that was to start working with the kids at a very early age so that the children of our current clients don’t become our clients. That’s one of the great things about having the child care facility. We’re starting kids as early as 6 years old; they’re able to stay all the way through until they’re in the after school program! I’m hoping that will provide wonderful outcomes and great long-term effects by providing these facilities with computers or job training and skill training and having the kids being brought up in a much safer environment that what they were used to that these kids won’t become our clients some day.”

### Physical Surroundings

New centers also often noted their impact on community revitalization efforts in the surrounding community.

“I think definitely community relations improved because we are able to supply services outside of our clients. Also, we did a lot to improve the neighborhood. There were several blighted houses that were on that block that were torn down in order to make way for the facility; I think that the community revitalization part of it is also a very helpful and very effective thing.”

“So we were able to convert this small program into a viable one. We got a full time staff, trained them, implemented this quality model and the borough of [NAME OF BOROUGH] (which is a priority for the state of Pennsylvania for economic revitalization) was in need of a program like this. We acquired a facility that required renovations, and we asked the Department of Community and Economic Development to subsidize some of the renovations. It was approximately a \$2 million project ...It is already up and running and is in the process of getting up to capacity and getting accreditation.”

### Family Well-being

While the majority of representatives were satisfied that grant allowed their centers to serve more low-income communities, a few centers that were on-site at businesses or served

slightly higher economic brackets also noted the importance of being able to better serve dual earner families in need of child care, easing the stress of balancing work and family.

“As far as the community goes we are currently five minutes from the border of [another state], and we’re growing very rapidly here. The need in the area for child care. I do an assessment every year. Since we opened this center, there have been three other centers that opened in this area. Everyone is operating between 90 and 100 percent capacity, so there is still a need to continue expanding services. Many of the people ... are dual income parents looking for child care.”

“Our feedback has been absolutely fantastic. The employees love it and the people are thrilled. A lot of older people like myself have come to me and said ‘boy if there was only a place like this when my children were young.’ So, it’s really been good for the morale. People noticed a difference in just the general environment, especially in the first floor where the center is located. You just cannot help but walk by the center and see the children out and not respond in a positive light. It made people feel much more comfortable. It took away some of their stress to be able to stop and smile and say hi to their children for a little bit.”

Overall, many representatives we interviewed reported long term effects of the challenge grant in community relations. Of course, the challenge grant was an early stepping-stone, yet it often opened the door for other external factors that helped improve centers and communities.

## **V. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

Between 2002 and 2004, the Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Program funded organizations to provide more high quality child care services in low- and moderate-income areas across Pennsylvania. Program short-term goals were clearly accomplished: more children and more diverse children were served in higher quality settings. After the projects were completed, higher quality centers were serving more children; in particular, they were serving more children from low-income families and more children with disabilities. There were more teachers, and head teachers were better paid. Prospects for meeting long-term goals appear excellent. After the grant projects were completed, more centers were better prepared to apply for accreditation and more likely to participate in professional development, more community development initiatives were initiated, and families, centers, employees and children were very satisfied with the child care improvements that the Challenge Grant Program had made possible.

Although most of the project representatives in our sample found the application process to be satisfactory, representatives from smaller centers with fewer resources reported difficulties with the application process and project administration. They were challenged by the need to obtain the 25% matching funds and the long turn-around time for project review. They had problems providing money upfront for renovations as well as problems waiting for reimbursements for approved expenditures. These observations give us reason to believe that smaller centers with fewer resources may be dissuaded from applying for these Challenge Grants. If such centers are to benefit from a Challenge Grant Program, they will require

increased assistance initiating and completing the application process. Revisions in the grant administrative process would help to accommodate these smaller centers.

One issue that emerged in the first year of the grant program was whether for-profit centers as well as non-profit centers should be supported. In the initial year of the project, for-profit centers and those with more sponsorship support received, on average, larger awards than independent and non-profit centers. In subsequent years, for-profit centers were no longer eligible for Challenge Grants. Our interviews with representatives from for-profit and non-profit centers that received funding revealed that both types of centers had similar needs and accomplished similar goals. This finding suggests that funding for-profit as well as nonprofit centers might be a reasonable expenditure of Commonwealth funds so long as centers are serving children from low income families.

In light of these findings, we offer the following recommendations:

- Reinstating a child care facilities grant fund, focusing on improving the overall quality of existing centers. The overwhelming majority of project representatives were satisfied with the overall grant program. Several representatives even said they would be willing to participate in lobbying activity to see the program reinstated. When asked if there was anything the respondents would change about the program, the most common first response was “bring it back”. Based on the short and long term success of this program, we agree that the program be reintroduced.
- Depending on the needs within each neighborhood, we also recommend that future funding continue to encourage applicants to expand as well as to improve existing centers. Similarly, the Commonwealth might want to consider the additional possibility of funding the creation of new centers, the purchase of buildings, and the possibility of funding for-profit centers in underserved neighborhoods.
- To ease the financial burden for smaller centers with fewer resources, we offer two complementary recommendations. First, we recommend providing a portion of the award upfront. This is because the experience of waiting for reimbursement after submitting documentation of expenditures was a great stress for smaller centers. An alternative possibility is to help applicants access low cost “bridge loans” that pay expenses until the Commonwealth reimburses the agencies for expenditures. Second, we recommend either discontinuing the 25% matching fund requirement, another source of stress to smaller centers, or working with private foundations to dedicate a funding stream specifically dedicated as the match (either as a loan or as a grant) required by the Commonwealth. This could result in a beneficial public-private partnership around financing child care.
- Technical assistance from state employees during the application and implementation stage was extremely helpful for large and small centers alike, but especially helpful to those applicants from smaller centers. This support should be continued. Support should also be continued for outside agencies to assist centers in preparing the applications and administering the funded project.

- Allow 10% of project funds to be used for marketing activity. This marketing activity proved to be an important resource for informing community families of the additional space and quality improvements. It also helped with developing long-term marketing plans.
- Encourage projects that lead to collaborations with various resources in the community. Where this has already happened, there has been a multiplier effect, with children, families, centers, and cooperating institutions all benefiting.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Questionnaire**

ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

# **PENNSYLVANIA CHILDCARE CHALLENGE GRANT QUESTIONNAIRE**

A study conducted by Temple University

For the most accurate information, we ask that you refer to your files when completing this questionnaire packet. Starting on page 11 (light yellow paper), we ask for information about your center prior to receiving the grant. Starting on page 20 (dark yellow paper), we ask for information about your center at a point in time after you received the grant.

Please return this packet in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided by \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_. If you have any questions or feedback about this questionnaire, please contact Tina Armando at (215) 204-7327.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

## Start of Questionnaire

### Section 1: About the Grant Timing and Funds

*Please answer the following questions about the timing of the grant process and the funds.*

- 1.) What is the current date (on which you are filling out this questionnaire)?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(month) (day) (year)

- 2.) On what date did you submit your application for the PA Childcare Challenge Grant?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(month) (day) (year)

- 3.) Briefly describe what you **proposed** to do with the PA Childcare Challenge Grant funds.

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- 4.) On what date did you learn the application was accepted?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(month) (year)      \_\_\_ Do not know      \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

- 5.) On what date did you begin receiving PA Childcare Challenge Grant funds?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(month) (day) (year)      \_\_\_ Do not know      \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

6.) Did the fund transferring process go as you expected?

- Yes                       Do not know  
 No                             Prefer not to respond

7.) Exactly how much grant money were you awarded?

- Total amount awarded: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Do not know  
 Prefer not to respond

8.) Exactly how much grant money have you received to date?

- Amount received: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Do not know  
 Prefer not to respond

9.) Are there additional funds you are expecting to receive from the grant?

- Yes                             Do not know  
 No                               Prefer not to respond

10.) Did the way you spent the funds differ from the way you **proposed** to spend them?

- Yes **[Continue with #11]**  
 No **[Skip to #12 on page 3]**

11.) Briefly describe what you **actually did** with the PA Childcare Challenge Grant funds.

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12.) Please record the allocation of the grant funds below.

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>	<b>Amount Actually Spent</b>	<b>Date Improvements Were Completed</b>
Staff development/training			
Staff recruitment			
Staff payment			
Engineering costs			
Architectural costs			
Legal costs			
Building lease for expansion			
Interior renovations			
Furnishings and equipment			
Educational Materials			
Marketing costs			
Closeout audit			
Other approved costs: _____ _____			
Additional costs: _____ _____			

13.) Did any **unforeseen** expenses arise from the time of the proposal to the actual implementation of changes?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

**Section 2: About You and Your Center**

*Please answer the following questions about **you and your center.***

1.) How long has your center been in existence?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months \_\_\_\_\_ Do not know \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

2.) Is your center for profit or not for profit?

\_\_\_\_\_ For Profit [**Continue with #3**]

\_\_\_\_\_ Not for profit [**Skip to #4**]

3.) Is your center:

\_\_\_\_\_ Independently owned and operated [**Skip to #5**]

\_\_\_\_\_ Part of a local chain of child care centers [**Skip to #5**]

\_\_\_\_\_ Part of a national chain of child care centers [**Skip to #5**]

4.) Does the center have a religious affiliation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

5.) Is your center **sponsored by** a corporate, religious, or other type of institution?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #6**]

\_\_\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #7 on page 5**]

6.) Is your center sponsored by any of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ church/religious group \_\_\_\_\_ corporation/business/employer

\_\_\_\_\_ university/college \_\_\_\_\_ state or local government

\_\_\_\_\_ public school \_\_\_\_\_ non-government community organization

\_\_\_\_\_ private school \_\_\_\_\_ other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ do not know

7.) What is your position at the center?

- Center Director
- Center Assistant director
- Center Administrator
- Center Administrative assistant
- Out of facility administrator
- Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

8.) What is the highest education level that you have completed?

- Some high school or less
- High school diploma/GED
- Early Childhood Certificate
- CDA Credential
- Some college credits
- Associate's degree  
Area of concentration: \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelor's degree (BA/BS)  
Area of concentration: \_\_\_\_\_
- Master's degree (MA/MS)  
Area of concentration: \_\_\_\_\_
- Post Master's work  
Area of concentration: \_\_\_\_\_

9.) How many years experience have you had in professional Childcare work?

\_\_\_\_ Year(s)    \_\_\_\_ Month(s)    \_\_\_ Do not know    \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

10.) How long have you worked in your current position at this center?

\_\_\_\_ Year(s)    \_\_\_\_ Month(s)    \_\_\_ Do not know    \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

11.) How long have you been at this center?

\_\_\_\_ Year(s)    \_\_\_\_ Month(s)    \_\_\_ Do not know    \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

**Section 3: About your experiences obtaining the PA Childcare Challenge Grant**

*Please answer the following questions about your experiences with the grant process.*

1.) Did any *person* **within your center** help prepare the application for your facility?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #2**]

\_\_\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #3**]

2.) Please describe the type of help they provided.

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3.) Did any *person* **outside of your center** help prepare the application for your facility?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #4**]

\_\_\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #5**]

4.) Please describe the type of help they provided.

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5.) Did any outside organization(s) help prepare the application for your facility?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #6 on page 7**]

\_\_\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #8 on page 7**]

6.) Please list the name of the organization, describe the type of help they provided and how much it cost to receive their help.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Type of Help Provided</u>	<u>Amount</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

7.) Would it have been possible for your facility to complete the grant application without assistance from outside resources?

- Yes                       Do not know  
 No                          Prefer not to respond

8.) Had you received any other grants for your facility in the three years prior to \_\_\_\_\_?  
(date received grant funds)

- Yes [**Continue with #9**]     Do not know [**Skip to #11 on pg 8**]  
 No [**Skip to #11 on pg 8**]     Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #11 on pg 8**]

9.) Which grants did you receive?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10.) How did the process for this PA Childcare Challenge Grant compare to *the last grant* you received?

- \_\_\_\_\_ This process was less difficult than the last one
- \_\_\_\_\_ This process was more difficult than the last one
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do not know
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

11.) How did you provide the required matching funds for the Challenge Grant? Please list the **percentage** of all sources that apply. **The total should equal 100%.**

Funding Source	Percentage of Total Matching Funds (Total should equal 100%)
State funds	
Federal funds	
Local government	
Community development organization	
Private investor/benefactor	
Foundation	
Facility provided its own matching funds	
Other, specify:	

12.) How long did it take to obtain the matching funds?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Months      \_\_\_\_\_ Weeks      \_\_\_\_\_ Days
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do not know      \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond      \_\_\_\_\_ Not Applicable

13.) How would you assess the **ease or difficulty** of meeting the 25 % matching funds requirement for the PA Child Care Challenge Grant? (Please **circle** the number that best represents your answer.)

- Very Difficult      Difficult      Easy      Very Easy
- 1.....2.....3.....4

14.) If you had not been successful in receiving the PA Child Care Challenge Grant, would you have made the changes to your facility?

Yes [**Continue with #15**]     Do not know [**Skip to #16**]

No [**Skip to #16**]                       Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #16**]

15.) If you had not been successful in receiving the PA Childcare Challenge Grant, how would you have paid for the changes in your facility?  
(Please check all that apply.)

Apply for alternative grant(s)

Use other recent grant funds

Apply for loan(s)

Use childcare facility revenue

Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

16.) After receiving grant funds, did you have any communication with the state about the grant?

Yes [**Continue with #17**]     Do not know [**Skip to #18**]

No [**Skip to #18**]                       Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #18**]

17.) How many times did you communicate with the state after receiving grant funds?

Number of times     Do not know     Prefer not to respond

18.) Did you call any of the provided state phone numbers for any reason during the application process?

Yes

Do not know

No

Prefer not to respond

19.) Overall, how satisfied would you say you were with the Childcare Challenge Grant **application process**? (Please **circle** the number that best represents your answer.)

Very Unsatisfied      Unsatisfied      Satisfied      Very Satisfied

1.....2.....3.....4

20.) Overall, how satisfied would you say you were with the Childcare Challenge Grant **program in general**? (Please **circle** the number that best represents your answer.)

Very Unsatisfied      Unsatisfied      Satisfied      Very Satisfied

1.....2.....3.....4

**Section 4: About your center prior to receiving the grant**

*In this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_ . This is the date we chose over the phone that will help us understand what your center was like **before** receiving the PA Childcare Challenge Grant. Please answer all of the questions in this section for your center on \_\_\_\_\_ .*

**Section 4a: Childcare Service Information**

1.) What was the maximum number of children you could possibly have enrolled in your facility according to DPW?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_      Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_

2.) How many children were actually cared for at your center?

Number of full time children: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of part time children: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_

- 3.) For this date (\_\_\_\_\_), please provide the following information about the children served: number of classrooms per age group, number of children per class, and number of adults supervising per class.

Age Group	# of Classrooms	# of Children per Class	# of Adults per Class
Birth to 12 mos. (Infants)			
13 mos. to 24 mos. (young toddlers)			
25 to 36 mos. (older toddlers)			
3 years to 6 years (preschoolers)			
Older than six years (school age)			

**Section 4b: Hours and Fees**

Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(date prior to receipt of grant)

- 4.) Please list the facility’s hours of operation during that time:

Weekdays

Weekends

- 5.) Please enter fee information from that time in the chart below. If you have a sliding scale policy, please briefly describe it in the space provided below.

Fee Category	Rate Dollars	Please circle the rate time below		
Full Time				
Infant		per day	per week	per month
Toddler		per day	per week	per month
Preschool		per day	per week	per month
Part Time				
Infant		per day	per week	per month
Toddler		per day	per week	per month
Preschool		per day	per week	per month
Other:		per day	per week	per month
Other:		per day	per week	per month

Sliding Scale Policy:

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6.) On this date (\_\_\_\_\_), how many children were receiving **subsidized** care?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_

7.) On this date, did you care for any physically, emotionally, or psychologically disabled children in your center?

\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #8**] \_\_\_ Do not know [**Skip to #9**]

\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #9**] \_\_\_ Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #9**]

8.) On this date, how many children with disabilities did you care for?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know: \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4c: License and Accreditation**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*

(date prior to receiving grant)

9.) On this date, was your center licensed by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Do not know  
\_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

10.) On this date, was your center accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, but we were applying  
\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know  
\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

11.) Was your center involved in any training with the School Age Childcare Project (SACC)?

Yes                                       Do not know  
 No     Prefer not to respond

12.) Was your center involved in the Keystone Stars program?

Yes [**Continue with #13**]     Do not know [**Skip to #14**]  
 No [**Skip to #14**]                       Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #14**]

13.) On this date, what was your star level?

Star level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4d: Childcare Facility Structure**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*  
(date prior to receiving grant)

14.) What was the total square feet of the indoor childcare area?  
(This area includes classrooms, storage for classroom supplies, and nap/rest space. It excludes hallways, bathrooms, offices, kitchens and locker rooms.)

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

15.) What was the total square feet of the outdoor and indoor childcare play space?  
(This area includes space allocated for gross motor play only.)

Outdoor square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Indoor square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 16.) What was the total square feet of the administrative area?  
(This area includes office space, lounges, adult bathrooms, resource rooms or reference libraries, and any adult recreational space)

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 17.) What was the total square feet of the food preparation area?

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 18.) In the questions below, you are asked to use a scale from 1 to 4, which represents a rating system of inadequate (1) to excellent (4). Please refer to the following definitions when selecting your answers about the adequacy of each topic below. If a topic is not applicable to your facility, please check off 'not applicable.'

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b><u>Inadequate</u></b>	<b><u>Okay</u></b>	<b><u>Good</u></b>	<b><u>Excellent</u></b>
It was not acceptable. Was unsafe or unhealthy	Room for improvement. Not perfect, but not a problem.	Close to perfect It was sufficient for our needs.	It was perfect No changes needed, top of the line.

<b>Item to be rated</b>	<b>1 Inadequate</b>	<b>2 Okay</b>	<b>3 Good</b>	<b>4 Excellent</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Lighting					
Ventilation					
State of walls and ceilings					
Indoor areas					
Outdoor areas on center grounds					
Snack / eating space					
Nap / resting space					
Learning materials					
Play materials					
<b>Item to be rated</b>	<b>1 Inadequate</b>	<b>2 Okay</b>	<b>3 Good</b>	<b>4 Excellent</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Furniture for routine care					
Toilet and diaper facilities					
Space for staff privacy					
Furniture for routine administrative duties					

**Section 4e: Marketing Activity**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*

(date prior to receiving grant)

19.) Did the center have an up-to-date marketing plan?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

20.) Did the center have a reasonably up-to-date website?

- Yes
- No
- No website for center
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

21.) Did the center run any advertisements in local publications?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

22.) Did the center have up-to-date print brochures?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

23.) Did the center have a functioning newsletter?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

24.) Did the center have a specific employee or department dedicated to marketing?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

25.) Did the center hire any outside marketing consulting at this time?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

**Section 4f: Staffing**

Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.

(date prior to receiving grant)

26.) How many people were working for the center?

Position	Number of People
Head Teachers	
Assistant Teachers	

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

27.) How many **unfilled** positions did you have?

Position	Number of Openings
Head Teachers	
Assistant Teachers	

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

28.) What was the **range** of *starting salaries*?

Position	Amount (specify per hour or year)
Head Teachers	
Assistant Teachers	

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

29.) What **hourly wage or yearly salary** did the *highest paid* people receive?

Position	Amount (specify per hour or year)
<b>Highest Paid</b> Head Teachers	
<b>Highest Paid</b> Assistant Teachers	

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not know

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

30.) Did the teachers in your center belong to a labor union or did they belong to an employee association like a union?

Yes                       Do not know  
 No                             Prefer not to respond

31.) Did any of your teachers receive employment benefits?

Yes [**Continue with #32**]     Do not know [**Skip to #33**]  
 No [**Skip to #33**]                       Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #33**]

32.) Please place a check next to the benefits that were offered to employees in the following positions:

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Head Teachers</b>	<b>Assistant Teachers</b>
Paid sick days		
Paid vacation days		
Paid holidays and/or personal days		
Partial or fully paid health or dental insurance		
Reduced or free tuition		
Paid parental leave		
Life insurance		
Retirement/pension plan		

33.) Please place a check next to items that were offered to employees in the following positions:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Head Teachers</b>	<b>Assistant Teachers</b>
Paid breaks		
Paid preparation/ planning time		
Written contract		
Formal grievance procedure		
Payment for attending staff meetings		

Paid time for attending training/workshops		
Annual raises		

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**DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CENTER AFTER RECEIVING THE PA  
CHILDCARE CHALLENGE GRANT**

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**Section 5: About your center after receiving the grant**

*In this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_ . This is the date we chose over the phone that will help us understand what your center was like **after** receiving the PA Childcare Challenge Grant. Please answer all of the questions in this section for your center on \_\_\_\_\_ .*

**Section 5a: Childcare Service Information**

- 1.) What was the maximum number of children you could possibly have enrolled according to DPW?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond\_\_\_

- 2.) How many children were actually cared for at your center?

Number of full time children: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of part time children: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know\_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond\_\_\_\_\_

- 3.) For this date(\_\_\_\_\_), please provide the following information about the children served: number of classrooms per age group, number of children per class, and number of adults supervising per class.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b># of Classrooms</b>	<b># of Children per Class</b>	<b># of Adults per Class</b>
Birth to 12 mos. (Infants)			
13 mos. to 24 mos. (young toddlers)			

25 to 36 mos. (older toddlers)			
3 years to 6 years (preschoolers)			
Older than six years (school age)			

**Section 5b: Hours and Fees**

Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.

(date after receiving the grant)

- 4.) Please list the facility's hours of operation during that time:

Weekdays

Weekends

- 5.) Please enter fee information from that time in the chart below. If you have a sliding scale policy, please briefly describe it in the space provided.

Fee Category	Rate Dollars	Please circle the rate time below		
Full Time				
Infant		per day	per week	per month
Toddler		per day	per week	per month
Preschool		per day	per week	per month
Part Time				
Infant		per day	per week	per month
Toddler		per day	per week	per month
Preschool		per day	per week	per month
Other:		per day	per week	per month
Other:		per day	per week	per month

Sliding Scale Policy:

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6.) On this date, how many children were receiving **subsidized** care?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond\_\_\_\_

7.) On this date, did you care for any physically, emotionally, or psychologically disabled children in your center?

\_\_\_\_ Yes [**Continue with #8**] \_\_\_\_ Do not know [**Skip to #9**]

\_\_\_\_ No [**Skip to #9**] \_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #9**]

8.) On this date, how many children with disabilities did you care for?

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know: \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 5c: License and Accreditation**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*

(date after receiving the grant)

9.) On this date, was your center licensed by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW)?

\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_ Do not know  
\_\_\_\_ No                        \_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

10.) On this date, was your center accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)?

\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_ No, but we were applying  
\_\_\_\_ Do not know  
\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to respond

11.) Was your center involved in any training with the School Age Childcare Project (SACC)?

Yes                       Do not know  
 No                          Prefer not to respond

12.) Was your center involved in the Keystone Stars program?

Yes [**Continue with #13**]     Do not know [**Skip to #14**]  
 No [**Skip to #14**]                 Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #14**]

13.) On this date, what was your star level?

Star level: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 5d: Childcare Facility Structure**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*  
(date after receiving the grant)

14.) What was the total square feet of the indoor childcare area?  
(This area includes classrooms, storage for classroom supplies, and nap/rest space. It excludes hallways, bathrooms, offices, kitchens and locker rooms.)

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

15.) What was the total square feet of the outdoor and indoor childcare play space?  
(This area includes space allocated for gross motor play only.)

Outdoor square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Indoor square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Do not know \_\_\_\_\_  
Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 16.) What was the total square feet of the administrative area?  
(This area includes office space, lounges, adult bathrooms, resource rooms or reference libraries, and any adult recreational space)

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 17.) What was the total square feet of the kitchen food preparation area?

Total square feet: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond \_\_\_\_\_

- 18.) In the questions below, you are asked to use a scale from 1 to 4, which represents a rating system of inadequate (1) to excellent (4). Please refer to the following definitions when selecting your answers about the adequacy of each topic below. If a topic is not applicable to your facility, please check off 'not applicable.'

<u>1</u> <u>Inadequate</u>	<u>2</u> <u>Okay</u>	<u>3</u> <u>Good</u>	<u>4</u> <u>Excellent</u>
It was not acceptable. Was unsafe or unhealthy	Room for improvement. Not perfect, but not a problem.	Close to perfect It was sufficient for our needs.	It was perfect No changes needed, top of the line.

Item to be rated	1 Inadequate	2 Okay	3 Good	4 Excellent	Not Applicable
Lighting					
Ventilation					
State of walls and ceilings					
Indoor areas					
Outdoor areas on center grounds					
Snack / eating space					
Nap / resting space					
Learning materials					
Play materials					
Furniture for routine care					
Toilet and diaper facilities					
Space for staff privacy					
Furniture for routine administrative duties					

**Section 5e: Marketing Activity**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*

(date after receiving the grant)

19.) Did the center have an up-to-date marketing plan?

Yes                       Do not know  
 No                             Prefer not to respond

20.) Did the center have a reasonably up-to-date website?

Yes  
 No

- No website for center
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

21.) Did the center run any advertisements in local publications?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

22.) Did the center have up-to-date print brochures?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

23.) Did the center have a functioning newsletter?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

24.) Did the center have a specific employee or department dedicated to marketing?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

25.) Did the center hire any outside marketing consulting at this time?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to respond

**Section 5f: Staffing**

*Please remember that in this section, we are collecting information about your childcare facility on \_\_\_\_\_.*

(date after receiving the grant)

26.) How many people were working for the center?

<b>Position</b>	<b>Number of People</b>
Head Teachers	



31.) Did any of your teachers receive employment benefits?

Yes [**Continue with #32**]     Do not know [**Skip to #33 on pg 28**]

No [**Skip to #33 on pg 28**]     Prefer not to respond [**Skip to #33 on pg 28**]

32.) Please place a check next to the benefits that were offered to employees in the following positions:

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Head Teachers</b>	<b>Assistant Teachers</b>
Paid sick days		
Paid vacation days		
Paid holidays and/or personal days		
Partial or fully paid health or dental insurance		
Reduced or free tuition		
Paid parental leave		
Life insurance		
Retirement/pension plan		

33.) Please place a check next to items that were offered to employees in the following positions:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Head Teachers</b>	<b>Assistant Teachers</b>
Paid breaks		
Paid preparation/ planning time		
Written contract		
Formal grievance procedure		
Payment for attending staff meetings		
Paid time for attending training/workshops		
Annual raises		

**Section 6: Last Words**

If you would like to spend a few more minutes, we would be happy to hear what you have to say about the following question.

- 1.) Are there any specific children, families, or groups of children or families who you would say have been most affected by the changes that took place due to the PA Childcare Challenge Grant?

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- 2.) In what ways have they been affected?

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire packet.

Please return the packet in the self addressed stamped envelope provided.

If you need another envelope, please contact  
Tina Armando at (215) 204-7327.

## **Appendix B**

### **Pennsylvania Child Care Challenge Grant Follow-up Interview**

## PA Child Care Challenge Grant Follow-up Interview Questions

### **◆ Questions that will be asked of every participant:**

**-Briefly describe what did with the money- just to recap.**

-I'd like to start off by asking you about any feedback you may have received about any changes that took place due to the Child Care Challenge Grant. Can you tell me about any feedback you received:

From the employees?

What about from the families?

And what about from the children served?

-Tell me about any changes in community relations that you feel are related to changes in your facility that were funded by the child care challenge grant?

-Is there anything you would change about the grant program?

-Is it likely that you would apply for grants through this program again? Why or why not?

- What was the best thing about the grant program?

-Based on your questionnaire, I see you spent grant money on (list categories respondent checked off) \_\_\_\_\_.

Can you explain what activities you did in each of those categories? What is the current outcome of each activity?

-Can you tell me about any ways the mandatory timeline for using the grant funds may have impacted your facility's proposed changes. Please describe any ways the mandatory timeline for using the grant funds may have impacted your facility's actual changes?

-Sometimes unexpected events take place while a project is underway that can have an influence on a project outcomes. Did anything unrelated to the grant occur during the renovation period that you think might have had an impact on your facility's changes for better or for worse?

**◆ Questions that will be selected and asked based on each participant's specific questionnaire responses:**

-If there are any questions with rating scales in which the respondent replied with an extreme response (i.e., “very dissatisfied”, “very difficult”, “very satisfied”, “very easy”) regarding the grant application process, the following question will be asked:

\*From your questionnaire responses, I see your experience with \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_. Would you like to elaborate more on why it was \_\_\_\_\_?

(\*Note: The above question may be repeated based on the participant's responses to each scale question.)

- From your questionnaire responses, I see that the receipt of your awarded funds did not go exactly as you expected, can you tell me a little bit about that?

-In your questionnaire, you noted there was a difference in your proposed use of funds and your actual use of funds. What happened that caused the change from the proposed use to the actual use?

-You indicated in your questionnaire that you encountered unexpected expenses in the process of changing your facility. Would you like to elaborate on what those expenses were? How did they affect you? How did you move past them?

-In your questionnaire you mentioned that a specific group(s) of people benefited most from the grant funding (list)\_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me more about that/those group(s) and how you think they benefited?

-In your questionnaire, you indicated that your facility used [NAME OF PERSON / ORGANIZATION] to help with the application process.

How did you decide on using this [PERSON / ORGANIZATION]?

-Is there anything else you would like to share about the experience of working with the outside resource(s)?

-Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the PA CCC Grant?

**To all participants after completing the interview:**

Thank you for completing this final stage of our Pennsylvania Childcare Challenge Grant Study. We greatly appreciate your help with this study, and we hope you enjoyed participating. In the future if you have any questions concerning the study, please feel free to contact me. Tina Armando – 215-204-7327.