



The Chicano  
Federation



WOMEN'S  
BUSINESS  
CENTER  
San Diego & Imperial

# Steps to Family Child Care Success (STEPS) Year 5

Chicano Federation Cohort 1  
Evaluation Report | September 2025

**SDSU** | San Diego State  
University



Center for Excellence in Early  
Development (CEED)

FUNDED BY:



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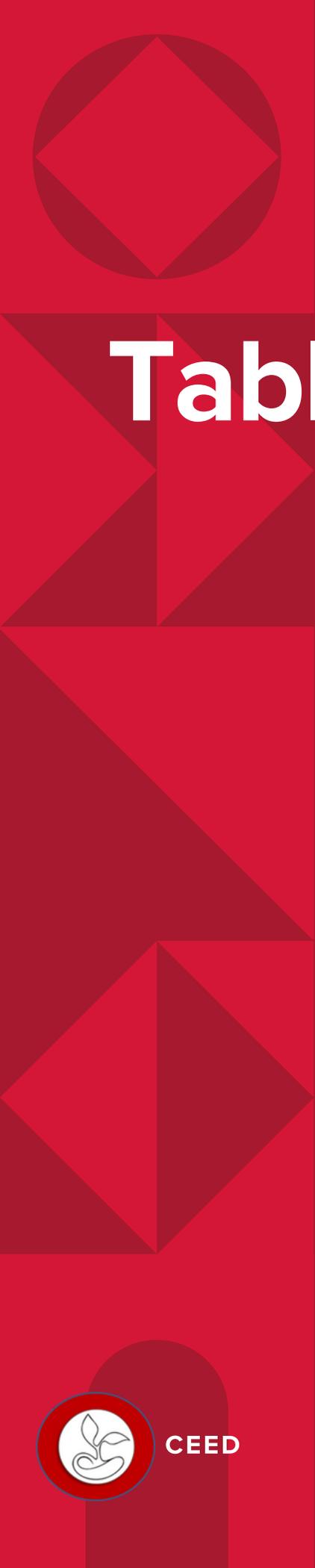
Center for Excellence in Early  
Development (CEED)



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# Partners



**The Chicano  
Federation**

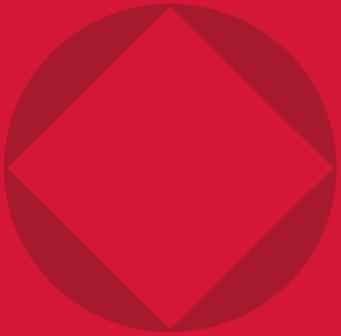
Chicano Federation’s (CF) mission is to cultivate opportunities and advocate for families and individuals for a more equitable community. Chicano Federation serves a diverse population with programs that help low-income children and families access vital and often life-changing services. Chicano Federation programs and services include subsidized care for infants and toddlers, early childhood education at a preschool in Barrio Logan, nutritious meals for children in family child care homes and affordable housing. For the past five years, Chicano Federation has partnered with the IRC, Horn of Africa and CEED to design and implement the STEPS program.



The San Diego & Imperial Women’s Business Center (WBC) works to secure economic and entrepreneurial opportunities for small businesses by providing training, mentoring, business development, and financial opportunities to entrepreneurs throughout San Diego and Imperial counties. For the past three years, Women’s Business Center has partnered with Chicano Federation to help deliver the STEPS training series.



Situated within San Diego State University, the Center for Excellence in Early Education (CEED) is a transdisciplinary, research-based training facility with a holistic approach to supporting early childhood development, mental health, and early childhood education. CEED faculty conduct applied research and engage in evaluation efforts aimed at the identification of promising practices that can be scaled up and shared with the broader research and educational community. For the past five years, CEED has helped design, implement, and evaluate the STEPS program, while also conducting research on the impact of the cultural navigators (Garrity et al., 2024).



# Introduction

The Steps to Family Child Care Success (STEPS) program was founded on the premise that Family Child Care (FCC) providers should be valued as entrepreneurs and small business owners and that supporting them not only improves their economic security, but can also increase the economic security of the families and communities they serve by providing high-quality, affordable childcare to working families. The goals of the STEPS program include helping FCC providers improve their financial literacy, knowledge of banking and credit systems in the United States, digital literacy, and increase their skills related to running a successful business. An additional goal is to increase provider enrollment and economic stability.

Originally funded in January 2020, the STEPS project is led by a partnership of three ethnic community-based organizations, Chicano Federation, Horn of Africa, and the International Rescue Committee. Together they have served over 300 providers throughout San Diego County focusing on neighborhoods in City Heights, Barrio Logan, East County, and South Bay.

In 2023, the County of San Diego funded the Shared Service Alliance (SSA), joining together the STEPS partners and the YMCA Child Care Resource Service and Child Development Associates. SSA and STEPS share similar goals and desired outcomes including supporting child care providers by helping them strengthen the sustainability of their businesses.

Chicano Federation aligned the STEPS program with the SSA to allow providers to access either program and to be able to transition STEPS providers to the SSA program if space or new openings became available. As part of this process, STEPS adopted the use of several of the tools used in SSA to assist in the transition.



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# STEPS Program Features

In August 2024, Chicano Federation (CF) received funding to implement the STEPS program to a cohort of primarily Spanish-speaking family child care (FCC) providers located in San Diego County. They partnered with Women's Business Center (WBC) to help deliver the training and business coaching. The Center for Excellence in Early Development (CEED) at San Diego State University created the evaluation plan, data collection process and compiled the final report. Price Philanthropies and San Diego Foundation, two local philanthropic organizations, provide funding for the project and continue to be thought partners and advocates.

A key feature of the STEPS program is the use of cultural navigators hired by ethnic-community based organizations (ECBO). A cultural navigator was hired by Chicano Federation to lead the FCC providers through the program. The cultural navigator represents the communities served in the program and is responsible for recruiting and enrolling providers, serving as a resource in child enrollment and parent relations, and acting as liaisons between providers and agencies responsible for subsidized care and licensing. Importantly, the cultural navigator also provides translation as needed and provides culturally and linguistically responsive services to support FCC provider success. The cultural navigator acts as an advocate for the providers by ensuring they complete the STEPS training and take advantage of the personalized business coaching component of the program.

## **Training Series**

As part of the STEPS program providers attend a 14-week comprehensive training series (14 sessions, 2-3 hours each delivered by WBC) provided in a virtual format. A list of training topics are listed in the table on the following page. Each training series covers core topics to support best business practices such as financial literacy, marketing, and tax preparation. Supplemental courses are additional training topics that are selected based on an assessment of the provider needs, such as understanding challenging behavior and brain development in infants and young children. All courses were offered in Spanish, the providers' primary language.

## **Business Coaching**

Following the completion of the training series, providers continued to receive support from the cultural navigator on all aspects of their business. The cultural navigator collaborated to support the providers to complete three business goals. They also received financial coaching from WBC which included the development of a business plan and the completion of a financial projection worksheet.

## **SSA Partnership**

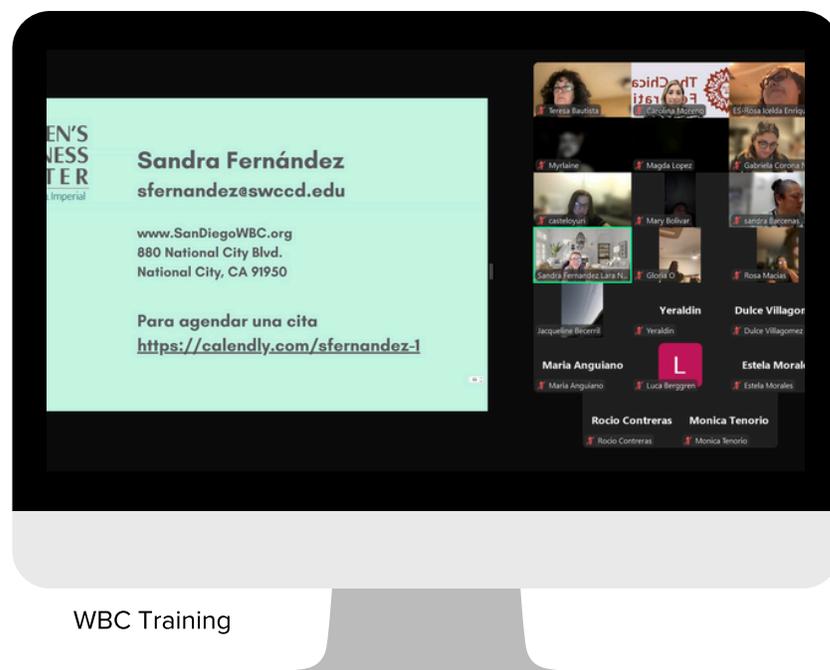
As a partner in the SSA, Chicano Federation incorporated the use of the SSA engagement plan to document the the goals that were set and the business coaching that occurred during STEPS. This would allow these providers to move directly into the SSA at the conclusion of the STEPS program

# STEPS Program Features

Course Name	Description
<b>Orientation – Gmail and Google Drive</b>	Overview of STEPS program expectations and available resources. Introduction to Gmail and how to use Google Drive for their child care business.
<b>Business Plans</b>	Introduction to purpose and importance of creating a business plan. Developed parts of the business plan, including executive resume, description of product and clients, future of the company and description of the business
<b>Finance 101: Budgeting and Banking</b>	Overview of business bank accounts and the different features offered. Budgeting process is introduced including how to calculate monthly income and expenses to for monitoring purposes.
<b>Finance 102: Credit</b>	Overview of the US credit system, including what is credit, why it is important, how to access a credit report and the dos and don'ts of the credit system.
<b>Business: Believe, Practice, Grow</b>	Best business practices for FCC providers, including business structure, child care license and regulation requirements, and parental contracts. The importance of business goals, financial projections, creating a marketing plan, and proper accounting. Taught providers how to utilize community and small business resources.
<b>Accounting Principles and Financial Statements</b>	Introduction to accounting practices specific to FCC providers, including how to categorize financial transactions, the importance of having a financial system, identifying business deductions, claiming expenses and calculating the time-space percentage for claiming expenses.
<b>Marketing 101</b>	Introduction to essential marketing strategies and tools and the creation of a marketing plan.
<b>Marketing 102</b>	Introduction to digital marketing including how to promote provider's business using social media. An understanding of branding basics such as choosing consistent colors, logos and messaging. Tips for creating engaging content, use of hashtags and stories to expand reach and increase engagement.
<b>Taxes &amp; Deductions</b>	Introduction of tax practices specific to child care providers, further explanation of the use of an EIN number, accounting methods for tax purposes, forms needed for businesses, and how to select a paid tax preparer.
<b>Legal Matters</b>	Review of labor law specific to child care businesses, including types of business entities, how to protect your business and belongings, advantages of having the right commercial entity for tax purposes and how partnerships might impact capital funding.

# STEPS Program Features

Course Name	Description
<b>Contracts &amp; Policies</b>	<p>Introduction to components of contracts and policies for child care providers and why both are crucial for protecting the provider and their clients. Providers learn key elements of a strong contract, including hours of operation, payment terms, holidays, and termination clauses. Recommended policies included sick child policies, late pick-up procedures, behavior guidance and emergency protocols.</p>
<b>Business Plan Review</b>	<p>Providers revisited and refined their business plans, integrating key concepts learned throughout the course. Providers created a comprehensive and realistic business plan that is aligned with the participant’s vision and business goals.</p>
<b>Understanding Challenging Behavior</b>	<p>Overview of challenging behaviors and solutions to managing behavior. Reviewed temperament and variables that affect behavior. Strategies to prevent challenging behaviors is introduced. Introduction of brain anatomy and how different parts influence young children’s behavior. Strategies to identify of the root cause of behaviors are presented so that effective strategies can be implemented</p>
<b>Brain Development in Infants and Young Children</b>	<p>Introduction to how the brain develops from birth through early childhood. Topics covered included: critical periods of child development, the impact of early experiences on child development, and practical methods to support cognitive, emotional, and social growth in young children.</p>



# Program Objectives

Program objectives were created to establish activities and services completed by Chicano Federation. Prior STEPS objectives included training participation, completion of the Business Practices Checklist and completion of goals including business plans and financial projections. To support the matriculation of STEPS providers into the SSA program, the completion of an engagement plan was added as a program objective.

The project period for Chicano Federations' STEPS cohort was August 2024 to July 2025.

Program Objective	Description	Evidence of Achievement
<b>1. STEPS Participation</b>	Enroll 20 providers to complete the 14-week STEPS training series and follow-up business coaching	<b>15</b> providers enrolled and completed the 14-week STEPS training series. 12 providers continued participating in 1:1 business coaching.
<b>2. Business Practices Checklist</b>	Complete the Business Practices Checklist with participating providers.	<b>100% (n=15)</b> of providers completed the Business Practices Checklist.
<b>3. Provider Business Plans &amp; Financial Projections</b>	WBC completed a business plan and a financial projection worksheet with each provider.	<b>93% (n=14)</b> of providers completed business plans. <b>93% (n=14)</b> of providers completed financial projections.
<b>3. Provider Engagement Plans</b>	Support 100% of providers with completion of an engagement plan.	<b>80% (n=12)</b> of providers completed an engagement plan.
<b>4. Provider Goals</b>	Support providers with the completion of 3 goals to improve their child care business.	<b>73% (n=11)</b> of providers completed goals from their engagement plan. One provider completed 1 goal and 10 providers completed 3 goals.

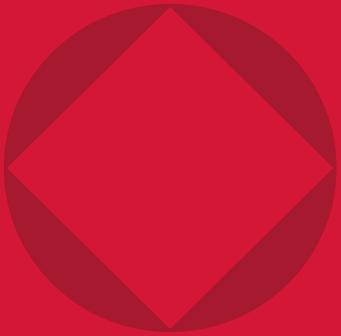
# Evaluation Methodology

CEED created an evaluation plan that included tools for data collection, such as intake forms and surveys to assess provider expectations and satisfaction. Program implementation tools, such as the Business Practices Checklist and Engagement Plans assisted the cultural navigator in documenting goals completed during 1:1 business coaching.

Phase	Timeline	Activities
Intake & Pre Program Data Collection	Aug - Sept 2024	Pre-program data is collected: Intake (demographics), Budget & Taxes Survey, Provider Pre-survey, Business Practices Checklist
Mid-program Data Analysis	Sept- Dec 2024	Provider demographic data and pre-survey was summarized in a mid-program report. Post-training surveys were analyzed weekly for immediate feedback.
Progress Monitoring	Dec 2024 - June 2025	Enrollment quick checks and engagement plans, are ongoing.
End of Program Data Collection	July 2025	End of program data is collected: Provider Satisfaction Survey and Post Survey
Reporting	Aug- Sept 2025	Full data analysis completed, and report generated.

# Evaluation Methodology

Tool	Timing	Purpose
<b>Baseline &amp; Need Assessment Measures</b>		
Intake Survey	Beginning of each program year	Captures provider demographic data, baseline of provider business characteristics, ongoing provider needs.
Business Practices Checklist	Beginning of each program year	Records utilization of best business practices for FCC providers.
Pre-Provider Survey	Once per program year	Surveys the needs, expectations and confidence of the providers prior to program implementation.
Financial Projections (in place of Budget & Taxes Survey to reduce duplication efforts)	Once per program year	Captures monthly income and expense projections for each provider.
<b>Program Implementation Measures</b>		
Quick Check	Monthly	Captures provider enrollment data, capital funding received and unexpected expenses.
Engagement Plans	Throughout program year	Working document used by the cultural navigator to track goals and the steps completed to achieve the goals.
<b>End of Training &amp; Business Coaching Data Measures</b>		
Post-Training Surveys	End of each training session	Surveys provider satisfaction of each training session. Final survey captures provider's perception of social support and includes reflective questions on their business practices knowledge.
Open-ended Questions at Graduation	End of 14-week training series	Providers are encouraged to share stories, successes and how the program can be improved.
Provider Satisfaction Survey	End of each program year	Used to gain feedback from the providers on program effectiveness.
Post Survey	End of each program year	Captures any changes in provider business characteristics.



# Program Demographics

This section presents and summarizes self-reported demographic data of the FCC providers, their business, and the children served during the project period.

A total of 18 providers were enrolled in the STEPS Year 5 training program. Three providers stopped attending the courses, could not be reached by phone or email, and were dropped from the program. The remaining 15 providers completed the 14-week training series. Three additional providers did not want to participate in the business coaching sessions. The remaining 12 providers set three goals in their engagement plan. Eleven providers completed their goals. Ten providers worked on these goals with support from the cultural navigator and WBC, and one provider completed goals as part of the SSA program.



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# Provider Demographics

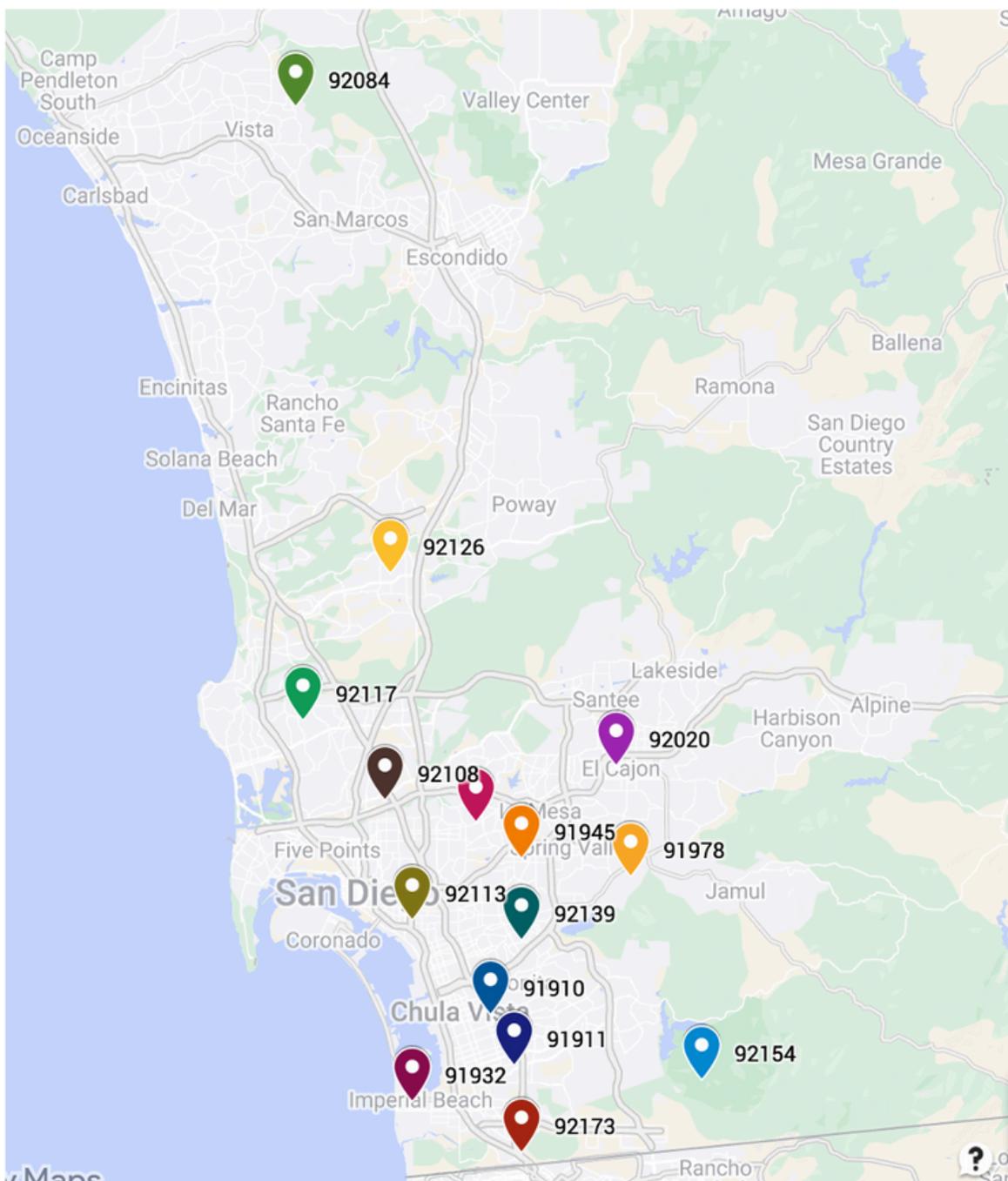
15 child care providers participated in the 14-week STEPS training series.

## Ethnicity and Primary Language

- 4 providers identify as Hispanic or Latino/a and their primary language is Spanish.
- 1 provider identifies as Black or African American and their primary language is Creole.

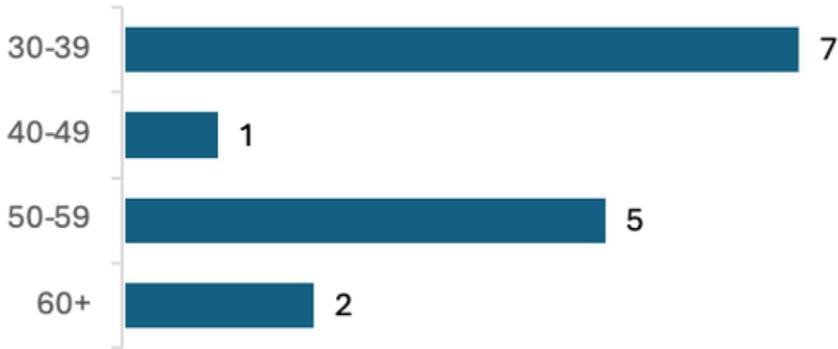
## Service Capacity.

- 9 providers have a small license, with a service capacity of 8.
- 6 providers have a large license, with a service capacity of 14.
- Total service capacity is 166 child care slots.

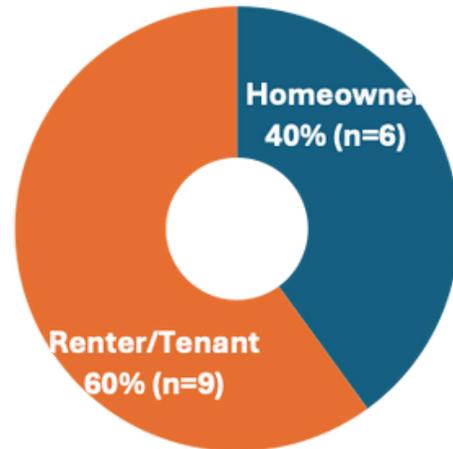


# Provider Demographics

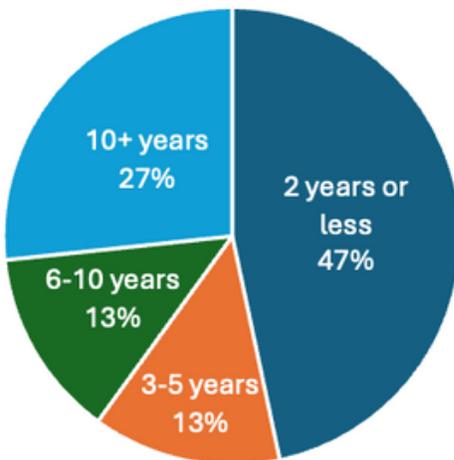
Provider Age Range



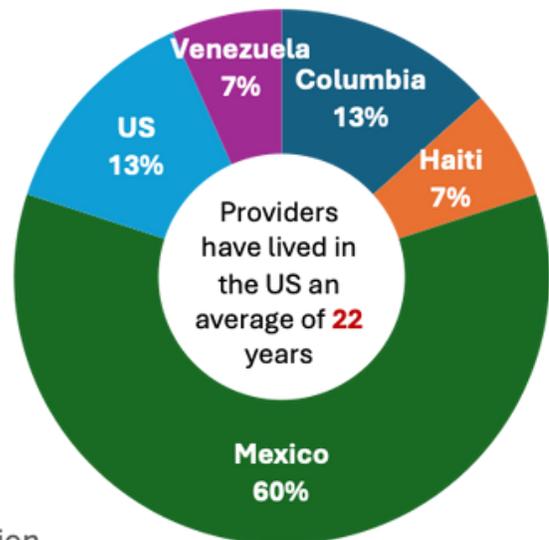
Homeowner Status



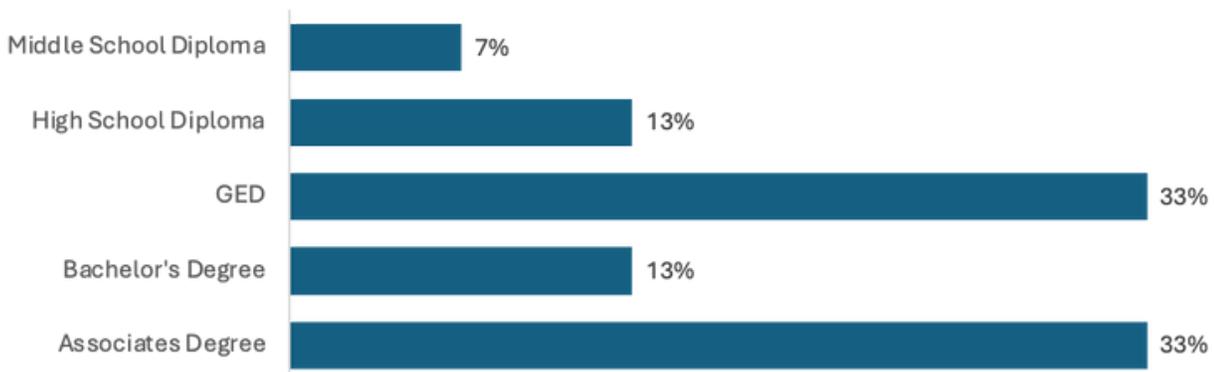
Years of Experience as a Provider



Provider's Country of Birth



Highest Level of Education



# Provider Operational Characteristics

Provider Hours: FCC providers often offer care during non-traditional hours to meet the needs of the families they serve. 53% (n=8) of STEPS providers offer care during non-traditional hours. For this report, non-traditional hours were defined as 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. weekdays and any hours on the weekend. Providers report working an average of 51 hours per week caring for children and another 50 hours per week on their business beyond caring for children. Examples of the work that they do beyond caring for children includes cleaning, preparing learning activities and meals, managing finances, grocery shopping, and sending invoices.

With the long hours caring for children and operating a business, providers employ full-time and part-time staff. 53%(n=8) of providers employ staff to help with their child care business. The average wage for part-time staff is \$17 and the average wage of full-time staff is \$18.25.

Number of Providers with Full or Part-Time Staff

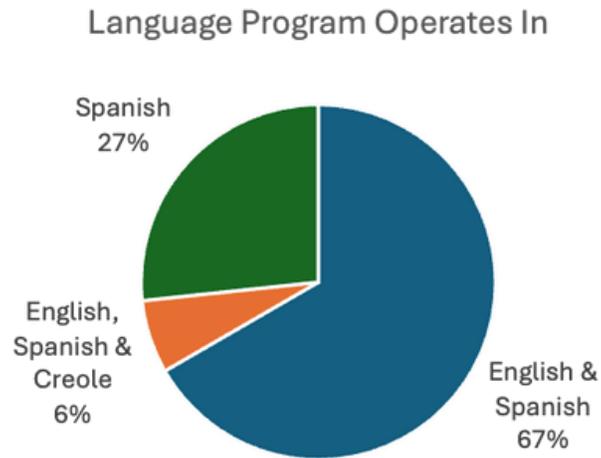


Provider participation in programs and networks for FCC providers offer support, resources and can be important for income generation. CACFP is a reimbursement program for the cost of food served to children. The San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative(SDQPI) is the local Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) that helps providers develop their programs to meet early childhood education standards. The local union provides resources to keep providers informed of policy initiatives and child care provider advocacy efforts. The California Early Care and Education Workforce Registry is a platform that tracks and promotes professional development training of early childhood educators. Provider participation percentages are reported in the following table.

Participation in Provider Programs and Networks	
CACFP	80%
SDQPI	40%
Union – Child Care Providers United	47%
CA ECE Workforce Registry	60%

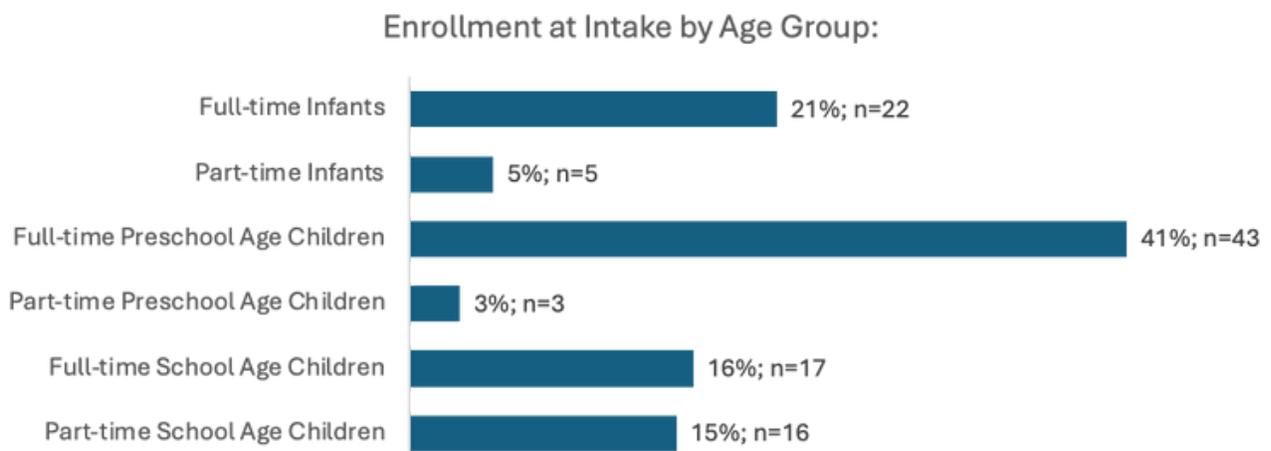
# Provider Program Characteristics

Families often choose FCCs because of their flexibility in their hours of care, however, families also might choose FCCs because the provider shares a language and culture that is similar to their clients. Providers were asked to report characteristics about their program. All 15 providers offered care in a language other than English with most providers (67%; n=10) operate their program in both English and Spanish.



Providers reported child enrollment by age category and part-time and full-time status. They also reported the number of children that share their same ethnicity and primary language. All 15 providers had children enrolled in their FCC home during the project period. The chart below is a snapshot of child demographic data at intake.

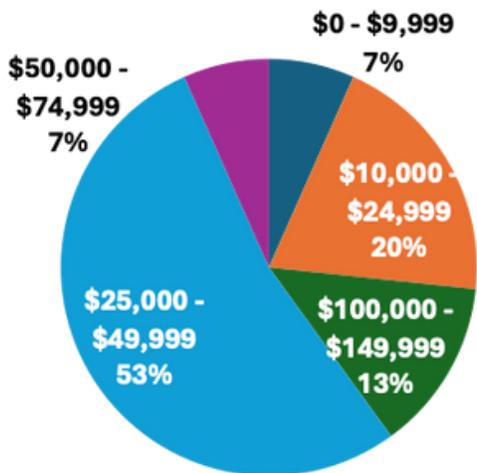
- On average 47% of children enrolled share a language with their provider’s primary language.
- On average 66% of children enrolled share an ethnicity with their provider.
- 77% of children enrolled attend full time, a minimum of 25 hours per week.
- The largest age group enrolled by providers is preschool age children (43%).



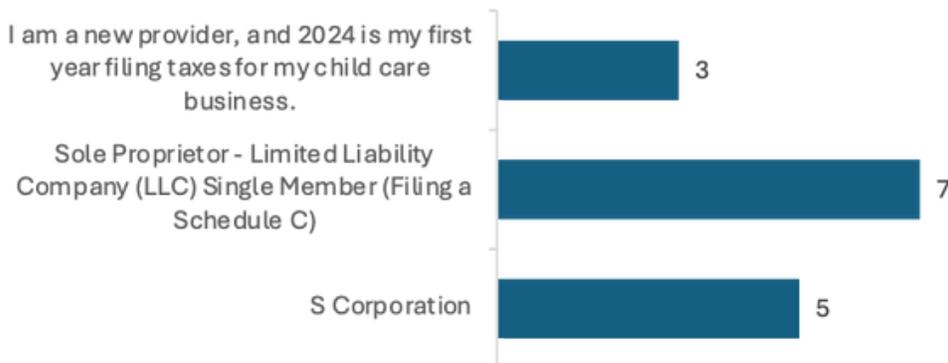
# Provider Financial Characteristics

Providers reported their personal income level in 2023 and information about how they filed taxes. Provider filing status is an indicator of strong business practices. Most providers begin their business filing as a sole proprietor and may later move towards filing as a corporation if there are advantages to protecting their personal liability and assets as their business grows.

2023 Personal Income Level



2023 Tax Filing Status

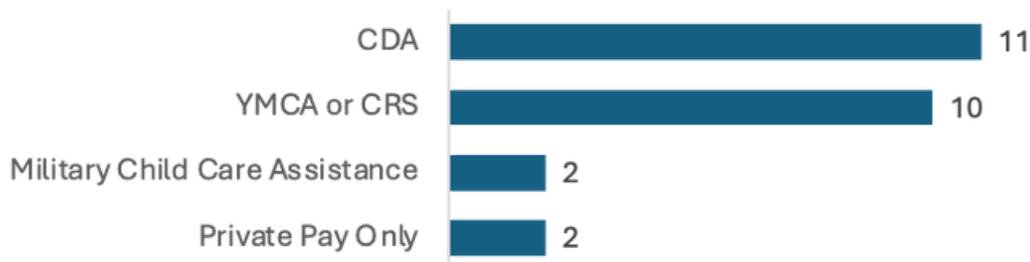


FCC providers are either paid privately by the family receiving care, or they are paid by agencies that disperse government funded subsidies for families that meet income qualifications. To cover the cost of care, some providers charge an additional copayment.

- 47% (n=7) of providers only have families that qualify for subsidies.
- 13% (n=2) of providers only have families that do not qualify for subsidies and pay privately.
- 40% (n=6) of providers have families that qualify for subsidies and families that pay privately.

Providers participate in the following local subsidy programs:

Provider Participation in Subsidy Programs



# Provider Financial Characteristics

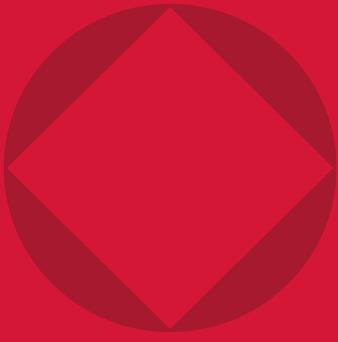
Provider's financial characteristics were captured using the financial projection worksheet the providers completed with WBC. The template provided by WBC helps providers forecast their future financial performance based on expected enrollment, their previous expense data and future cost trends. The tool gives providers a better understanding and projection of their cash flow over the coming year.

The table below displays the estimated annual average income and expenses reported by the providers in their financial projections. The three largest expenses for providers are salaries and wages, mortgage payment or rent, and food.

Estimated Annual Income (Average)	
CACFP	\$ 7,654.55
Tuition	\$ 101,614.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 109,269.13</b>

Estimated Annual Expenses (Average)	
Insurance	\$ 1,604.43
Salaries and Wages	\$ 13,268.57
Accounting	\$ 324.23
Mortgage Payment or Rent	\$ 19,743.71
Services & Internet	\$ 4,340.00
Marketing & Advertising	\$ 289.23
Food	\$ 13,469.23
Materials	\$ 4,107.86
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 3,512.31
Taxes	\$ 2,090.91
Licenses & Permits	\$ 114.07
Other Expenses	\$ 4,085.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 66,950.27</b>



# Impact Data

The impact of the training series was measured using post-training surveys and provider satisfaction surveys. The impact of the business coaching was measured using the qualitative data in the engagement plans. The overall impact of the program was measured using pre and post surveys and provider satisfaction surveys.



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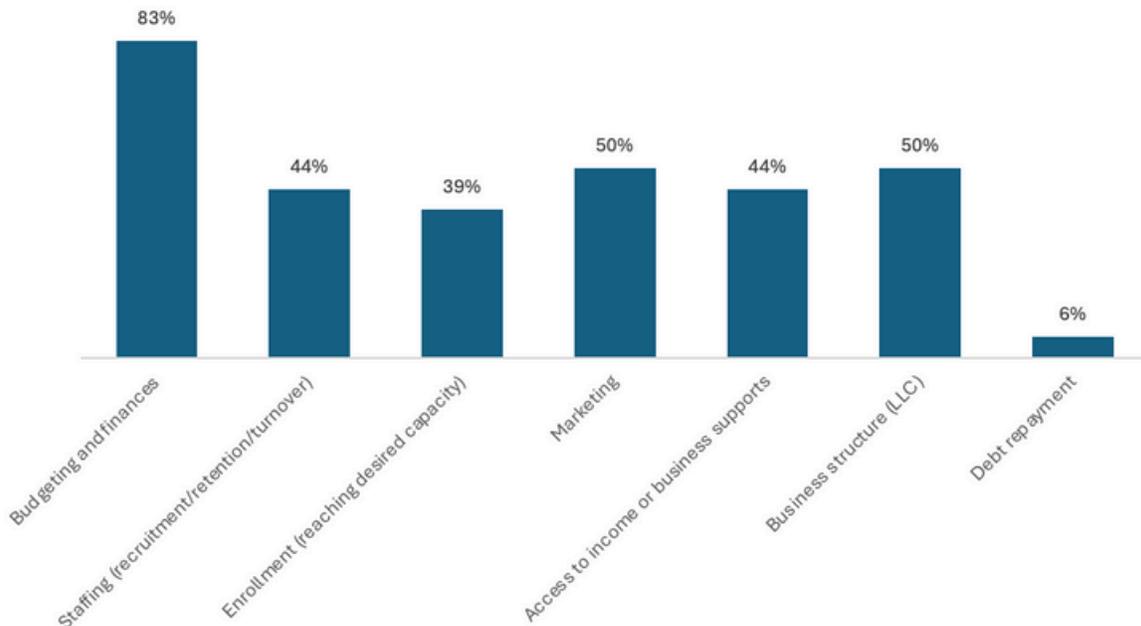
# Needs Assessment: Provider Pre Survey

Providers completed a pre-survey to understand their expectations of the STEPS program and topics that are of interest to them. Providers were asked to indicate which scheduled courses they were most looking forward to. The top three answers were Taxes and Deductions, Contracts and Policies, and Business Plan. Providers were also asked to select the top three challenges they face as child care providers that could be supported during coaching. Budgeting and finances was selected by 83% of providers as their top concern.

Number of Providers Most Looking Forward to a Course



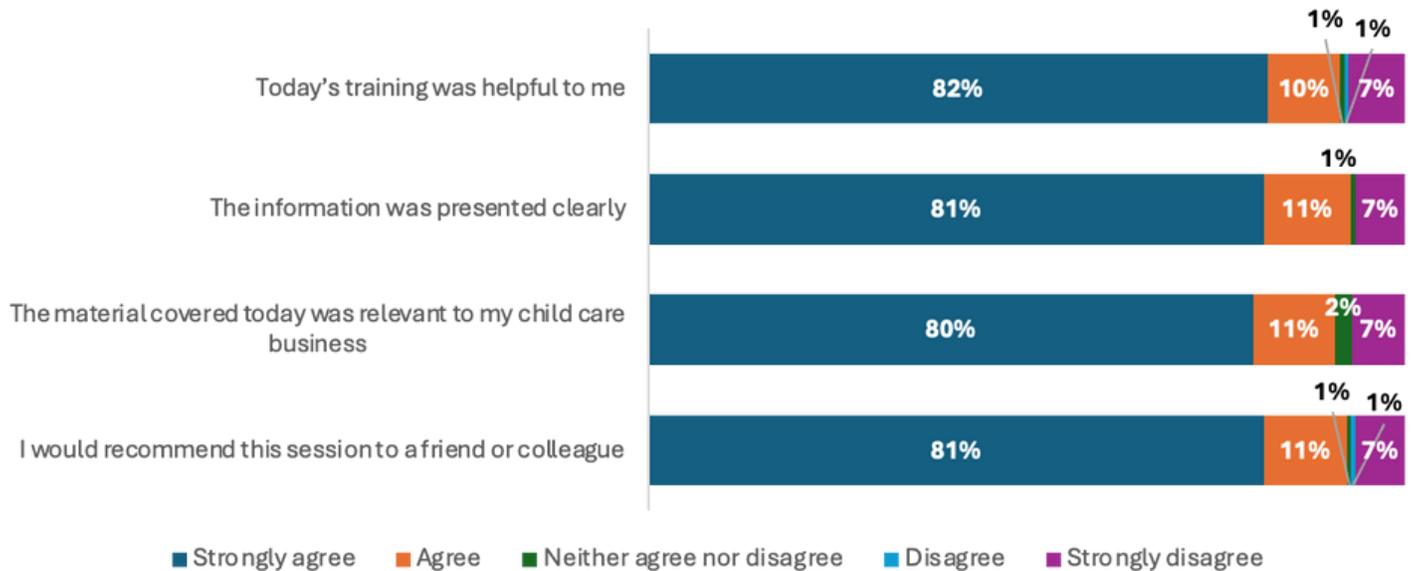
Provider Challenges that Can be Supported Through Coaching



# Training Series: Post Training Surveys

**Course Ratings and Feedback:** Providers were asked to complete a short survey rating their satisfaction with each course and the relevance of the course content. Providers were also given the opportunity to give open-ended feedback. Survey analysis was completed weekly so that the cultural navigator and course instructors could make changes or improvements based on feedback data. The Likert-style questions for all 14 classes is presented below, along with selected provider comments. Many comments highlighted the importance of taking courses together with other FCC providers.

**92%** of providers Strongly Agree or Agree with the following statements. (n=187)



# Training Series: Post Training Surveys

## Course Ratings and Feedback:

Business Plan: “Yes, making sure I always implement a clear business plan and mission that benefits my business. I also share and learn with other providers about strategies they implement in their daycare centers and what works and doesn't. Forming groups with my colleagues was very enriching as an additional learning experience.”

Contracts and Policies: Provider was asked if there were any lessons that they will apply to their business: “Yes, feedback on well-stipulated contracts and clauses, as well as sharing important points of my contract with my colleagues.”

Contracts and Policies: Provider was asked if there were any lessons that they will apply to their business: “Yes, feedback on well-stipulated contracts and clauses, as well as sharing important points of my contract with my colleagues.”

Legal Matters: “I loved the topic of the well-defined business contract and the employee contract with its very interesting policies.”

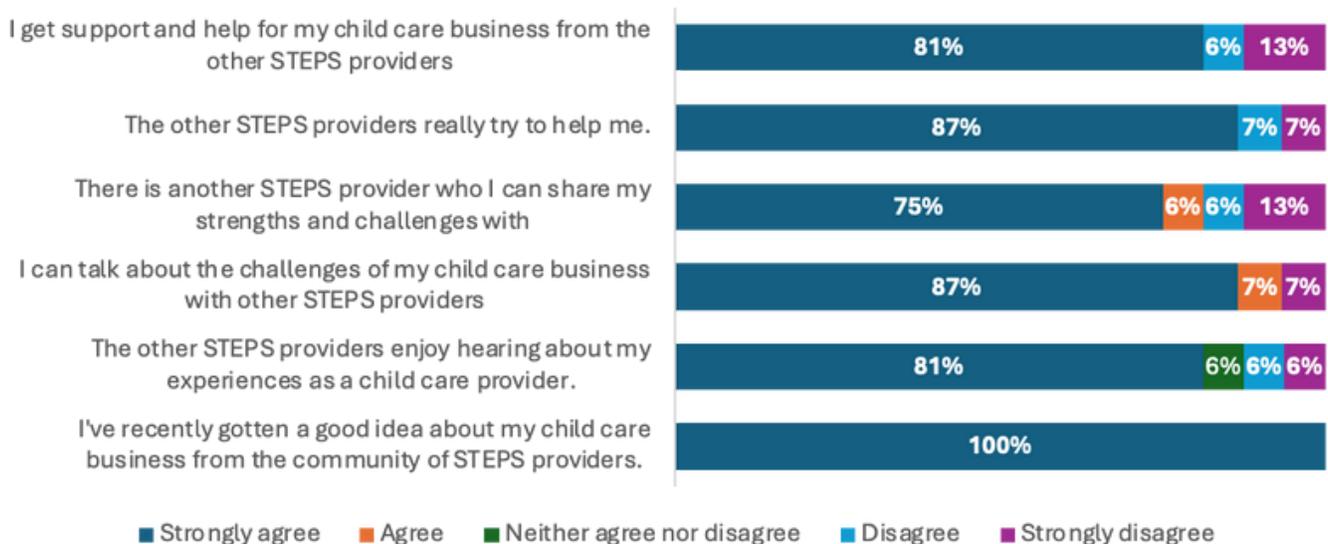
Business Plan: “Yes, making sure I always implement a clear business plan and mission that benefits my business. I also share and learn with other providers about strategies they implement in their daycare centers and what works and doesn't. Forming groups with my colleagues was very enriching as an additional learning experience.”

# Training Series: Post Training Surveys

**Provider Social Support:** The STEPS program is a cohort-based learning model. Providers take courses with a cohort of providers that share the same culture, ethnicity and language. Prior STEPS reports have highlighted the continued need for training and professional development in a provider’s primary language, reinforcing the need for continued language supports. Additional questions were included in the survey this year to understand how social support contributes to learning in shared cultural communities.

Providers were asked to rate six social support statements. Overall, 85% of providers strongly agree that social support is beneficial to them as child care providers.

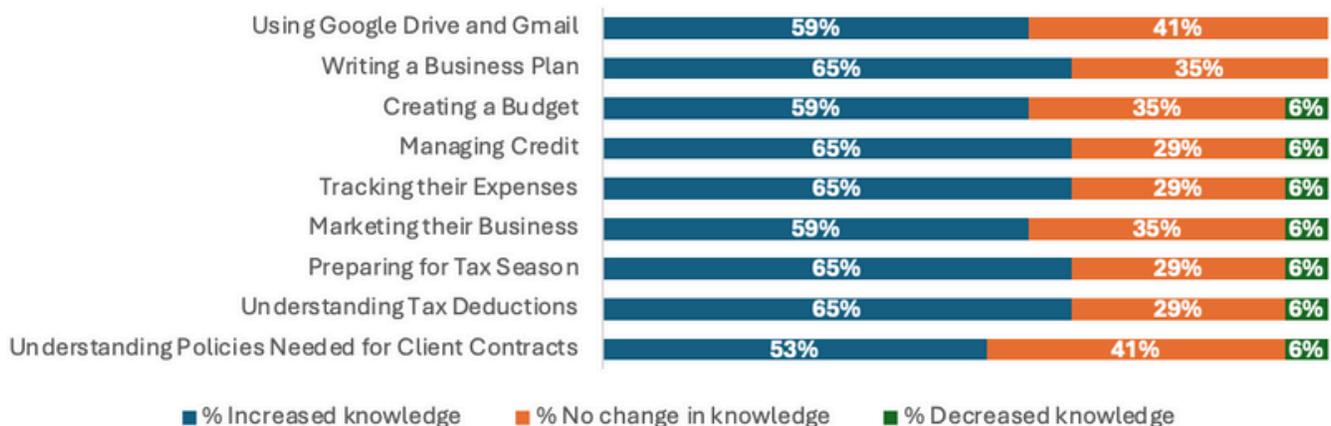
**100%** of providers strongly agree they have “gotten a good idea about their child care business from the community of STEPS providers” (n=17).



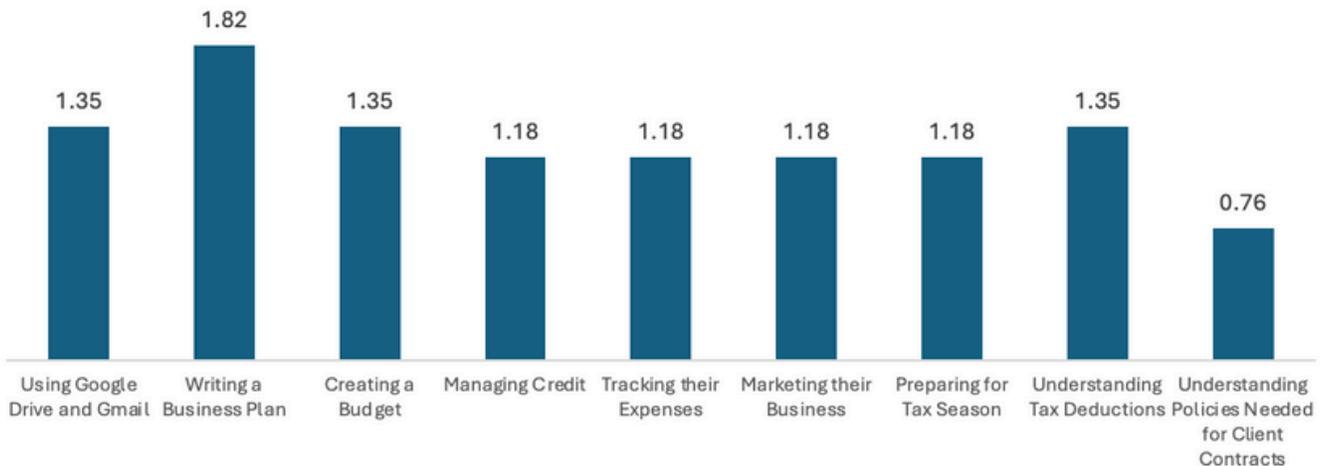
# Training Series: Post Training Surveys

**Provider Knowledge:** Providers were asked to reflect on their knowledge of the course content and rate their perceived knowledge before and after the training series on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest. The majority of providers, 61%, indicated that their knowledge increased and 34% of providers indicated that their knowledge did not change. It should be noted that four providers rated their knowledge on all topics a 5 both before and after the training series. This indicates no change in knowledge, however given their perceived knowledge was high to begin with, more advanced coursework may be needed in future cohorts.

On average, **61%** of providers indicated their knowledge increased on the course objectives and **34%** indicated their knowledge did not change (n=17).



Perceived knowledge increased by an average **1.26** points (5-point scale; n=17).



# Training Series: Open-Ended Feedback

Chicano Federation held a special zoom session to celebrate the providers completing the 14 weeks of training. Providers were asked to share more about their experience in the program and their ideas for future trainings and support.

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**What is one thing you learned from the STEPS training series that you now use in your FCC business? Or want to use in your FCC business?**

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One provider implemented a strategy in her business that allows her to modify her social media platforms in order to gather feedback about her work, helping her continually improve and better serve the parents.

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"I'm very grateful to all the teachers who taught us, and to Carolina for inviting us to this training."

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"I've learned so much about contracts and I'm currently modifying mine to benefit the parents. I also learned how to manage my accounting and finances, and how to plan for future projects."

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**What additional training or support would you like for Chicano Federation to offer? What classes from the training would you like to have additional training on?**

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"I would love for there to be training on autism and mental health for children. Everything we were taught was excellent, but I would really enjoy learning more about this topic, especially since the number of children with autism has been increasing. This way, we could better assist them and their parents."

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"I wish Chicano Federation could have helped us understand how to establish our LLC."

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"I'm interested in learning more about children with autism."

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**Was it helpful to attend class with other family child care providers? Why?**

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"The experience was very positive. It was great to interact with other providers and see familiar faces because, whether we're just starting or have been in the child care industry for a longer time, we can always stay updated and listen to recommendations from other providers."

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**Would you recommend the STEPS training series to other providers? Why or why not?**

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"I am new with my daycare license, and I would definitely recommend this program because it opened doors for me to learn more about marketing, child behavior, and even tax deductions that I didn't know about. As a new provider, it's important for me to know these things."

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"I would definitely recommend it, not only for those of us who have experience as child caregivers, but I feel that this is an essential and important course."

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"It's a 14 training course that I've already recommended to other providers who didn't manage to enroll in time. I believe it should be a requirement to take these courses as soon as you plan to open your business of day care."

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**Is there anything about the STEPS program that is different from other training you have participated in?**

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"It was a different experience, as it was the first time I took a finance course. I have always taken classes more focused on child care. She is very grateful for this opportunity to learn so much more about the business."

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# Business Coaching: Engagement Plans

Over the course of the program, providers had multiple opportunities to participate in 1:1 business coaching. WBC worked with the providers to complete a business plan and a financial projection worksheet. Providers were also invited to write an engagement plan and set three goals to be completed with the help of the cultural navigator.

Almost all providers, 93% (n=14) completed a business plan and a financial projection worksheet. The business plans were analyzed and similar themes were found. More than half, (57%; n=8) of the providers are concerned about the impact of transitional kindergarten on their enrollment. Also, the majority of providers, (57%; n=8), want to grow their business by either increasing their license capacity or by expanding their physical space. The financial projection worksheets were summarized in page 18. The worksheet operates as a budgeting tool to help providers make future financial decisions by outlining their income and expenses over a specific period of time.

Twelve providers wrote an engagement plan, and 11 providers completed goals on their engagement plan. Ten providers worked to complete their goals through the STEPS program. One provider was also enrolled in the SSA and wanted to complete the STEPS training series, but continue to complete their goals through the SSA program. Twenty-eight total goals were completed. Nine providers completed three goals, and one provider completed one goal.

Some providers were able to fully achieve their goals during the program. For example, four providers applied for and completed the requirements for the San Diego County of Education Workforce Pathways Grant and another provider promoted their business on social media and subsequently increased their enrollment to achieve full capacity. Other providers were not able to achieve their goals during the program period, but had made progress toward completion at the time of this report. For example, one provider completed the application for a large license, but the licensing agency was still in the process of reviewing it. Another provider started working on their CDA credential and had not yet completed all of the coursework required. The chart below displays the goals completed or those that are in-progress and are organized based on the constructs within the Business Practices Checklist (the Checklist has been updated and revised and is now called the FCC-Strength and Sustainability Index).

28 Total Goals Completed or In-Progress



# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Program Data

**Financial Management Systems:** Providers were asked about their financial management systems and their projections for income. Providers reported more optimism regarding their future income. By the end of the program, 9 providers thought their income would increase in 2025. Providers were also given the opportunity to assess their financial management systems by the end of the program. All 11 providers reported that they filed taxes, created a budget and had a savings account for their business.

## Provider Income Projection

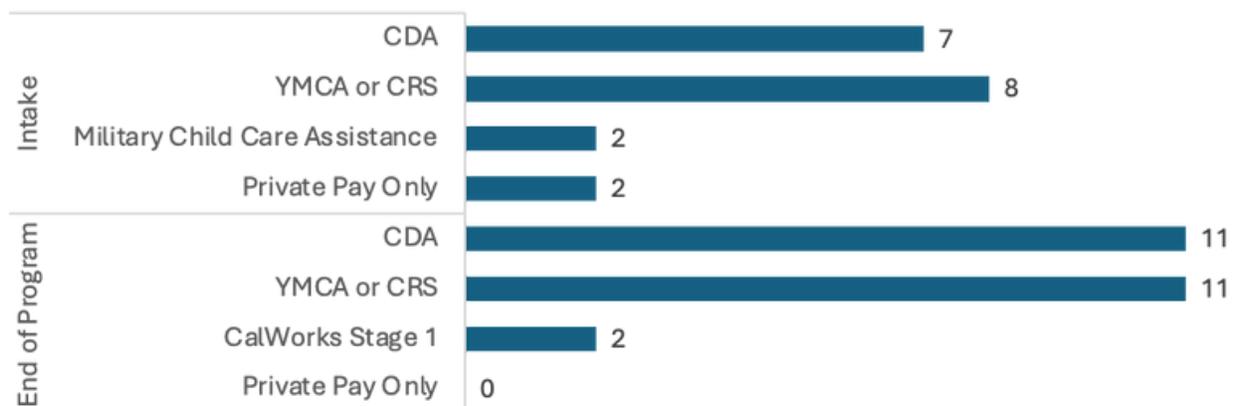
	Intake	End of Program
Income will increase	4	9
Income will stay the same	5	2
Income will decrease	2	0

## Financial Management

	Intake	End of program
# of providers that filed taxes for their business	9	11
# of providers that have a system for budgeting and cashflow	5	11
# of providers that have financial reserves or a savings account for their business	6	11

More providers were participating in subsidy programs by the end of the program. There was also more participation in provider networks. Two additional providers joined CACFP and SDQPI, and four providers joined the ECE Workforce Registry Program.

## Provider Participation in Subsidy Programs (most providers participate in more than one subsidy program)

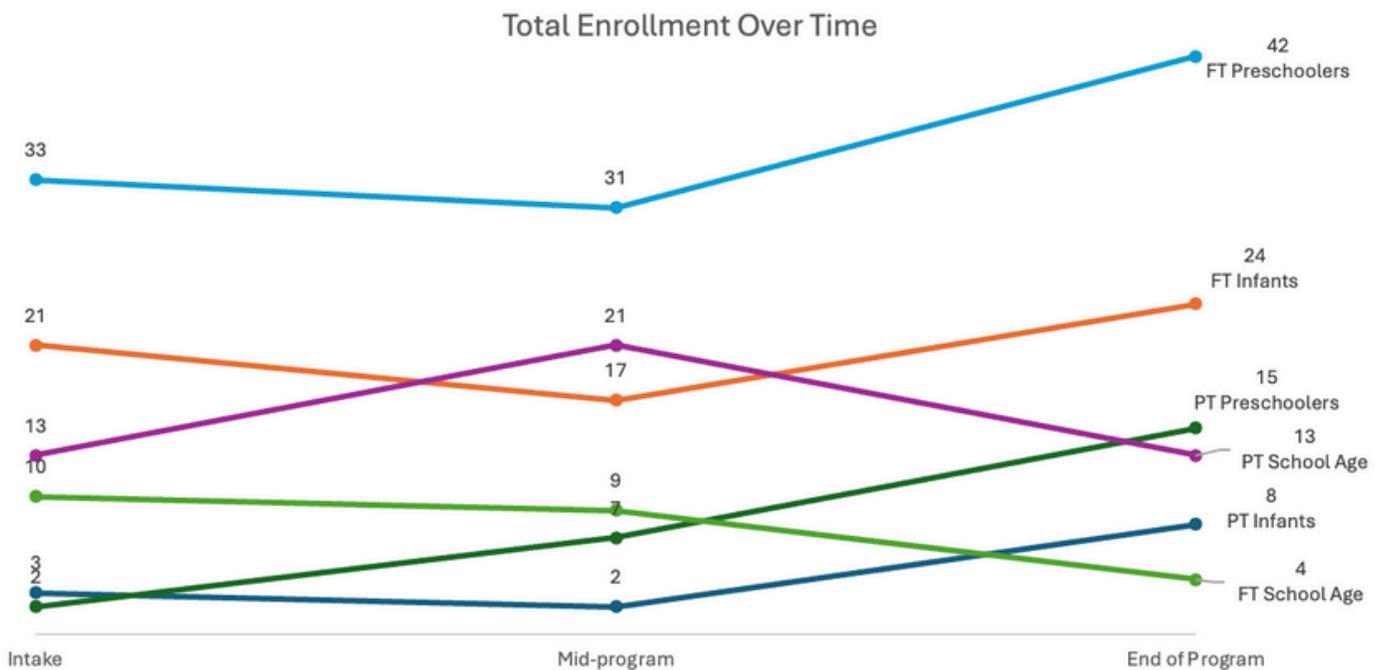
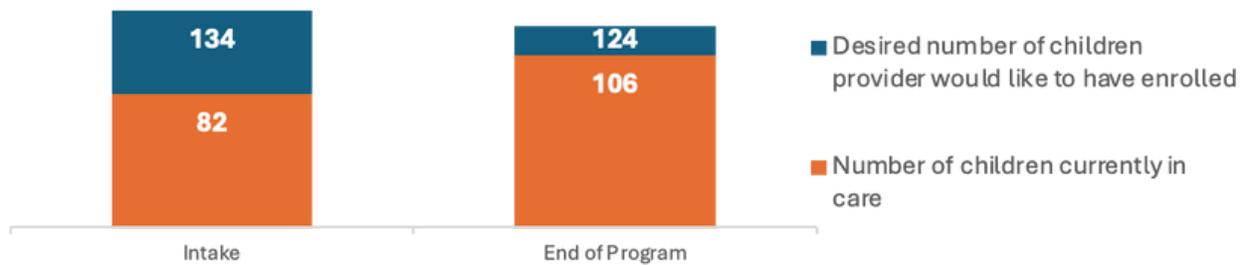


# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Program Data

**Enrollment:** Enrollment was measured throughout the project period. For analysis purposes, only the 11 providers that completed the entire program are included in the charts below. Enrollment increased by 32%. Eighty-five percent of child care slots were filled by the end of the program, a 14% increase.

The percentage of full-time preschoolers increased by 27% (n=9). The percentage of part-time preschool age children increased by 12% (n=13). The percentage of full-time school age children decreased by 8% (n=6). As transitional kindergarten in California begins at the start of the 2025 school year, FCC providers are expecting a shift in enrollment as the school year approaches.

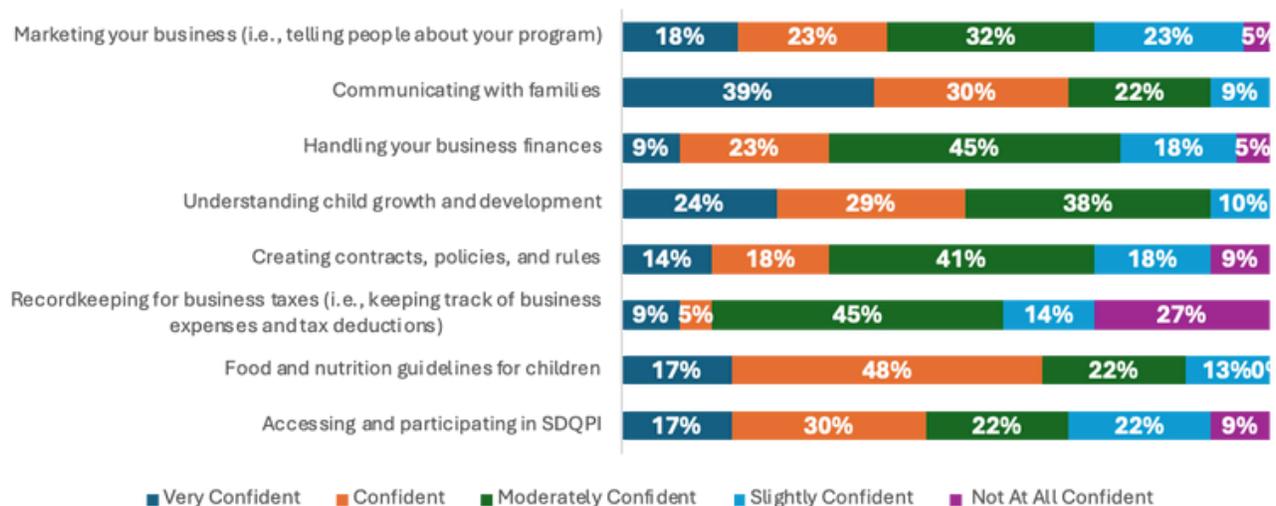
61% of child care slots were filled at intake.  
85% of child care slots were filled at program end (n=11).



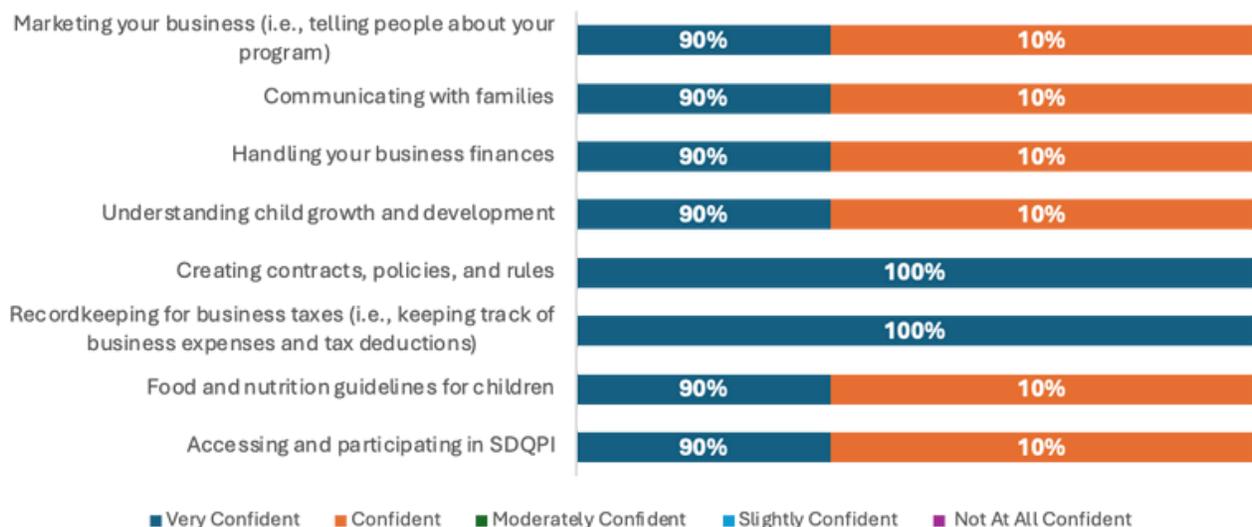
# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Survey Results

**Provider Confidence:** Providers were asked to rate their confidence in implementing business practices prior to the start of the program and at the end of the program. The pre-survey response rate is high because the survey was sent out to all providers that signed up for STEPS prior to training. Those that finished the program completed the post-survey. Overall confidence increased across each of the measured constructs. There is the possibility for bias in the results of the post-survey because the cultural navigator administered the survey over the phone with the providers. The cultural navigator called the providers to complete the survey because there was concern that the response rate would be low if the survey was self-administered. The cultural navigator’s administration of the post-survey impacts the validity of the results because it is possible that providers may not have answered as truthfully as they would have if the survey was anonymous.

Pre-Program: How confident do you currently feel about the following?  
(n=23)



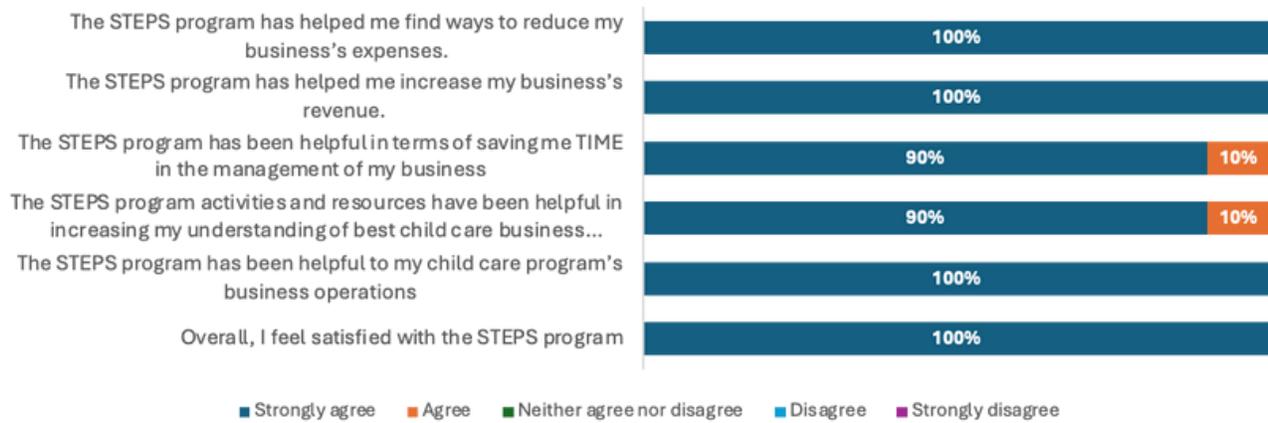
Post Program: How confident do you currently feel about the following?  
(n=10)?



# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Survey Results

**Program Satisfaction:** At the end of the program, providers were asked to rate their satisfaction with STEPS and were also asked to provide open-ended feedback. Overall, the providers were satisfied with the help they received. There is the possibility for bias in the results of the post-survey. The cultural navigator was concerned about the response rate and called the providers to complete the survey over the phone. The cultural navigator’s administration of the post-survey impacts the validity of the results because it is possible that providers may not have answered as truthfully as they would have if the survey was anonymous.

Provider Satisfaction with STEPS



**If you feel that the STEPS program has had an impact on your business, please share an example**

STEPS helped me better understand the administrative side of my daycare. I didn't know how to properly manage my paperwork before, but now I have clear systems and feel much more organized and confident.

Thanks to STEPS, I learned how to present my program more professionally to families. I redesigned my parent handbook and policies, and since then, I've noticed increased parent trust and more consistent enrollment.

The program gave me tools to improve the quality of care I provide. I now include more intentional learning activities, and parents have told me how much their children are learning and developing.

STEPS made me feel empowered as a business owner. I no longer see my daycare as just a job, but as a professional business, and that has given me the confidence to raise my rates and communicate the value of my work.

Thanks to what I learned, I was finally able to create proper contracts and a record-keeping system. This has saved me time and protected me from misunderstandings, especially regarding payments and support.

It helped me improve communication with families. I now hold monthly meetings and send out newsletters, and that has created a much stronger relationship of trust and community.

After the program, I was able to create a marketing plan for the first time.

One of the most valuable things I learned was the importance of self-care as a provider. I incorporated small wellness habits that have helped me be more patient and present with the children.

STEPS encouraged me to apply for support and funds that I didn't know I could ask for. Thanks to that, I was able to buy new materials and improve my space, making it more attractive to children.

STEPS gave me confidence in areas I previously avoided, such as budgeting and document control.

# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Survey Results

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**Do you have any suggestions about ways to improve the STEPS program? If yes, please share them.**

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It would be very helpful if you offered some sessions on the weekend

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Add autism class

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check the information again later

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At times, the pace was a bit fast. I suggest allowing more time for questions or having optional review sessions for those who need more support.

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I wish there was more personalized feedback or one-on-one meetings to apply what we've learned to our specific cases.

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Adding a mentoring component with an experienced provider would be great, so you can ask questions and receive practical advice.

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Improving our presence on social media and creating a website would be very useful to make ourselves known.

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communication tools with parents

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Sometimes there was too much information in a short time.

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I liked all of the classes

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**Are there any future coaching needs that you have or topics that you would like to see incorporated?**

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I would like a session on time management for providers, as it is difficult to balance daily care with paperwork and planning.

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A training about children with autism would be very important to know

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Training to support children with special needs or developmental delays would be invaluable in providing a more inclusive service.

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I am interested in learning how to create a safe and stimulating environment for infants and toddlers as I look to expand my service.

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Social-emotional development is an essential topic. I would like to have more strategies to help children manage their emotions.

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A workshop on how to hire and train assistants would be ideal for those of us who want to grow beyond individual work.

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I would be interested in training on how to promote diversity and inclusion within childcare spaces.

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Learning how to write proposals to obtain funding or scholarships would be very useful to be able to invest more in our programs.

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I would greatly appreciate training on how to handle difficult conversations with parents, especially when it comes to setting limits.

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Tips for building a good reputation in the community and online

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# Overall Impact: Pre and Post Survey Results

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**Is there anything that you would like to share about your experience?**

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I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate in STEPS. I've grown so much professionally and personally, and now feel like I belong to a supportive community.

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The team of Sandra, Esther and Carolina was always very kind and willing to answer questions.

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What I valued most was that all the topics were relevant to the real challenges we face as suppliers.

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This program reminded me why I love working with children. It inspired me again and gave me new ideas for my daily routine.

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Even though I've been in this field for a while, I learned a lot. It helped me identify areas where I could still grow and improve.

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STEPS gave me a clear direction. Before I was just going about my day, I had goals and now I know how to work toward them.

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I've already recommended this program to other providers. It's invaluable, especially for those who are just starting out and feel lost.

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Thank you for creating a space where we feel heard, supported, and valued. That's often lacking in this profession.

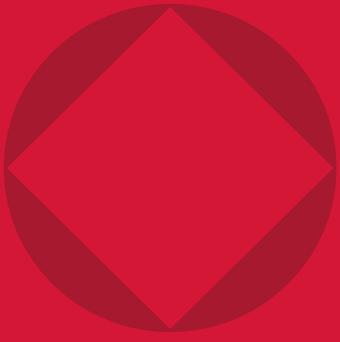
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I would love for this program to continue and grow, because many providers can benefit from the resources and guidance it offers.

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The balance between business and childcare issues was perfect. They touched on both necessary aspects of being a provider.

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# Key Findings

# Recommendations & Reflections



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# Key Findings

- 92% of providers strongly agree or agree that the training was helpful, information was presented clearly, and material was relevant.
- A cohort-based model encouraged social support between providers. 100% of providers strongly agree they received a good idea about their child care business from other STEPS providers in their cohort. Overall, 85% of providers strongly agree that social support is beneficial to them as child care providers.
- 61% of providers indicated their knowledge of course objectives increased.
- 57% of providers stated in their business plans that they were concerned about the impact of transitional kindergarten (TK) on enrollment.
- 28 total goals were completed.
- By the end of the program, all 11 providers reported that they filed taxes for their business, created a budget, and had a savings account for their business.
- Enrollment increased by 32%. 85% of child care slots were filled by the end of the program.
- 100% of providers increased or sustained their enrollment.
- The percentage of part-time preschool age children increased by 12% (n=13). As transitional kindergarten in California begins at the start of the 2025 school year, FCC providers are expecting similar changes to occur to enrollment as the school year approaches.

# Recommendations & Reflections

- Chicano Federation noted that they had difficulty sustaining enrollment in STEPS. They had 20 providers that were interested, 18 started the program, 15 completed the training and 11 completed the goals on their engagement plan. Some attrition has occurred in prior STEPS cohorts, however during informal conversations with the cultural navigator and Chicano Federation program leader it was mentioned that providers may need an incentive to encourage engagement.
- The partnership between Chicano Federation and WBC is important. WBC provides additional business coaching and resources beyond the training to support the cultural navigator and providers.
- The number of enrollment data check-ins was inconsistent. Some providers reported their enrollment 5 times throughout the course of the program and other providers only reported their enrollment 3 times. The cultural navigator prefers to submit enrollment data less frequently.
- To receive a good response rate, the cultural navigator completed some surveys on the phone with providers. Given the bias in results, we recommend future evaluation plans should consist of one survey at the end of the program.
- Qualtrics was used for data collection. It is recommended that reports and provider links within Qualtrics or spreadsheets generated by Qualtrics are used in future cohorts to allow cultural navigators to update data when needed.
- The Business Practices Checklist has been updated and is now the Family Child Care Strength and Sustainability Index (FCC-SASI). Evaluators can create a digital version of the SASI in Qualtrics that can be updated at the end of the program to better track business practices and goals completed.
- Evaluators should confirm with the cultural navigators if providers are hesitant to provide any of the demographic data collected given the current political climate.
- Data collection plans should continue to evaluate provider income by working with providers to create an operating budget. Income data will be accurate because the provider has a vested interest in completing the spreadsheet accurately as it will then become a tool they can use to better manage their finances.