



G HOME GROWN

Biden-Harris Transition Memo: Supporting Home-Based Child Care to Ensure America's Recovery

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Introduction

Home Grown commends President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris and their team for setting out an ambitious vision for expanding access to high quality child care and early learning. **We wholeheartedly agree that this vision can only be achieved if there is both immediate action to sustain the child care sector** via additional relief funding and ongoing investment in early childhood education and child care, specifically home-based child care.

SECTION 1

About Home Grown

Home Grown is a funders collaborative investing to improve access to and quality of home-based child care. The collaborative is backed by 13 funders, including: the Bainum Family Foundation, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, Gary Community Investments, Heinz Endowments, Heising-Simons Foundation, Imaginable Futures, Klingenstein Philanthropies, MAEVA Social Capital, David and Laura Merage Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Pritzker Children's Initiative and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Home Grown launched in 2019 with a laser focus on the 7 million children ages 0-5 having their early childhood education experiences in home-based child care. This form of care is under-valued, under-researched and grossly under-resourced. Despite this, during the pandemic home-based child care has been the mainstay ensuring essential workers can be on the frontlines keeping our communities safe, healthy, fed and connected. Home Grown relies heavily on our Provider Advisors and the voices of providers and caregivers across the country to guide our work.

Home Grown is eager to support the Biden-Harris Administration in its work to improve support for this sector as it seeks to assure that all young children and their families have access to quality care.

SECTION 2

Support for the Biden Plan: Alignment between Home Grown and the Biden Plan

We applaud many aspects of the Biden Plan for Mobilizing American Talent and Heart to Create a 21st Century Caregiving and Education Workforce, including the guiding principles of ensuring access to high-quality care and treating caregivers and early educators with respect and dignity.

Specifically, we strongly support the Biden Plan to:

“Save families money by helping them with child care costs.”

We support your calls for expanded subsidies to ensure affordability. While home-based child care is often the most affordable option for families, providers’ earnings and working conditions are limited by parents’ ability to pay tuition for high quality child care. Increased support to parents will improve providers’ working conditions and in turn the quality of home-based child care.

“Invest in quality child care standards and a well-trained and well-compensated child care workforce.”

We support your calls to ensure that funding reflects the true cost of care and to invest in and support early childhood educators. We agree that quality begins with supporting the workforce of providers and educators. The science of early child development and decades of research show that children who have high quality early childhood experiences thrive. Every American child deserves this. Children whose families choose home-based child care should have the same access to fiscal and quality resources offered in other settings. By including home-based child care in pre-k, Head Start, and other public programs, we will ensure that every young child has the resources needed to thrive.

“Expand access to care that works for working parents.”

We commend your plan to ensure care during early mornings, evening, and weekend hours and in child care deserts. Home-based child care providers often fill these needs in their communities and are the mainstay of childcare for rural communities and families needing care during nontraditional hours, as well as for babies and toddlers, Black and Latinx families, for children with special needs and those living in homes with low-incomes. Home-based child care is a crucial component of the national supply of child care and often the environment of choice for working families.

“Reward caregivers and educators with the benefits and protections they deserve, including increased pay.”

We support your call for increased pay and benefits for providers. **Home-based child care providers are over 97% women, 50% women of color, and most live in or near poverty while providing a critical service to children, families and communities.** Additionally, during the pandemic, as school and center-based child care and early learning programs closed, over two thirds of home-based providers continued to operate to ensure that essential workers could continue to work. Home-based child care providers deserve access to health care and compensation that recognizes and values the critical service they provide.

SECTION 3

Support for the Current Work of the Department of Health and Human Services

We appreciate the work to date of the federal government on home-based child care providers, including:

The critical research and resources that have been developed by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) and Administration of Children and Families (ACF), specifically the publications: [A Conceptual Model for Quality in Home-Based Child Care](#) (April 3, 2019) and [Addressing the Decreasing Number of Family Child Care Providers in the United States](#) (September 2019).

We also applaud the Office of Head Start including prioritization for grantees who partner with family child care providers in the recent Head Start funding announcements from July 2020.

SECTION 4

Home Grown's Recommendations

Now is a critical time to prioritize the needs of home-based child care providers and the children and families that rely on this care. This includes acknowledging and ensuring that systems include various home-based child care opportunities in the full continuum of early care and learning support, including licensed family child care (FCC) and family, friend and neighbor (FFN) caregivers.

We offer these recommendations for consideration as you prioritize and include home-based providers in the solutions you have laid out:

1. Continue to take action to stabilize the child care industry.

While deep, systemic reforms will take months to devise and implement, it is critical that immediate action occur to sustain the existing supply of child care, including home-based child care, through the pandemic and economic recovery. These providers have supported essential workers through the pandemic and will support others as they return to work in-person or re-enter the workforce. We are encouraged by the Administration's American Rescue Plan pushing for an additional \$40 billion in relief and recovery funding for the child care sector.

2. Increase dedicated funding for home-based child care sector.

Increase payments for providers to sustain their operations and serve more families. We recommend increasing base rates that guarantee a sustainable home-based child care business model and the use of contract funding with predictable, consistent funding levels that do not penalize providers for temporary shifts in attendance. More funding is needed to improve provider payment rates and raise wages and quality. We encourage increasing investments and expansion of Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships in family child care.

3. Fund and create the conditions for Networks as essentials infrastructure for home-based child care.

Networks provide the connective tissue between providers, families, and resources. Comprehensive [networks](#), which may also be known as staffed family networks, support providers in three key ways: enhancing providers' business operations and sustainability, including automation and economies of scale; improving quality of services; and connecting providers and families to community services, including mental and physical health. We recommend funding for networks in the CCDBG and Head Start/Early Head Start allocations as well as dedicated federal research and technical support funds to develop deeper knowledge of networks and to support states and communities in creating effective networks.

4. Pursue statutory changes to improve conditions for home-based child care.

In addition to your strong support for increasing resources, we draw to your attention the opportunities to make statutory changes to support home-based child care and the families who choose it. In particular is there an opportunity to use a funding set aside in the Child Care Development Block Grant to ensure more meaningful and less discretionary action on compensation, support and inclusion of home-based child care. While there is a general purpose quality set aside, there could be a particular set-aside to build infrastructure and quality in home-based care and we hope this will be considered in the administration. Additionally, there are opportunities within Head Start/Early Head Start to require the inclusion of home-based child care programs that serve eligible children. A first step would be to give priority or additional points for new/expansion applications for Head Start that include home-based child care partners. Similar actions or incentives could be developed to encourage pre-k systems to include home-based child care in their implementation models.

We are ready to support your efforts to expand and improve the early learning sector with intentional focus on home-based child care. We welcome opportunities to develop public-private partnerships and to bolster your efforts to include and support home-based child care providers.

Additional Resources:

- [Home-based Child Care Fact Sheet](#)
- [Federal Policy: Recommendations to support home-based care](#)
- [Home-Based Child Care Providers Need Improved Access to Federal Loans Now](#)