



New Advocacy Group Promotes Importance of Quality Early Care and Education to Long Island's Economic Future

The Child Care Council of Suffolk's and Nassau's *Child Care Industry Report* garnered the attention of Long Island's business community, specifically the Long Island Association (LIA), about the important linkage of quality early care and education to economic development and also led to the launch of the Long Island Business Leaders Work Group.



Linda Army, SVP, Corporate Affairs, Bethpage Federal Credit Union, chairs the Group. Fannie Glover, director, Business Leader Engagement, Early Care & Learning Council, assists in helping the Group meet its goals. With about 15

members and growing, the Long Island Business Leaders Work Group compiled the following highly compelling information about why Long Islanders and businesses should care about quality early care and education.

Long Island's Businesses Need Employees Who Have the Skills Necessary to Work and Compete in a Global 21st Century Workforce

There is a solution, start early.

- The foundation of many skills needed for 21st century jobs is established in the earliest years.
- Young children's brains develop 700 synapses – neural connections that support learning and skills – every second.
- Quality early care and education has been shown to: decrease special education placement by 49%, grade retention by 50%, child abuse and neglect by 51% and juvenile arrests by 33%; and to increase high school graduation by 31%, college attendance by more than 80% and employment by 23%.

Investment in early care and education helps the current economy too.

- Early care and education is an essential part of the infrastructure for working families.
- The availability of quality child care options is necessary to attract businesses and new families to New York.
- Investments in early care and education have an immediate economic effect through spending on facilities, supplies and personnel, which have a multiplying effect.
- Early care and education professionals generally spend most of their earnings locally. States realize roughly \$2 in local spending for each federal child care dollar spent.

Working Together

When stakeholders work together to integrate child care into economic development, engage business and build a coordinated system of quality early care and education, they set up a win-win situation:

- Businesses win when they improve their bottom line.
- State and local governments win when they save money and improve quality of life.
- Child care wins when the industry is stable and meets the demands of Long Island's working families.
- Long Island wins when the economy is healthy and children are prepared to succeed in school and in life.

The Long Island Business Leaders Work Group is interested in new members who can help them to: promote early learning policies as part of the economic development agenda, encourage businesses to adopt policies that support working parents, communicate the evidence behind early education and its economic impact, and communicate directly with policymakers. Please contact Fannie Glover, fglover@earlycareandlearning.org or 518-690-4217, ext. 18, if you are interested in learning more or joining the Long Island Business Leaders Work Group.



Council Communications

Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc.

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Janet Walerstein, *Executive Director*

Child Care Council of Suffolk, Inc., is the not-for-profit planning and coordinating agency dedicated to making child care work for all of Suffolk County's diverse communities. Through advocacy, education and resource and referral, the Council takes a leadership role in supporting children, families, providers, employers and the public to ensure that quality child care takes its place as an integral part of society.

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Message from the Executive Director



Janet Walerstein
Executive Director

Child care keeps NY working; and in the case of our County, child care keeps Suffolk working. This tagline was developed by our New York State Council back in 1996, and it is even more relevant as we go forward in 2016!

Our *Child Care Industry Report* indicates that child care is an \$8.4 million industry across Long Island; and working families add more than \$10 billion per year to the Long Island economy. I know I continually write and state these facts, but **the truth is we need to pay attention to them as Long Island parents continue to struggle to pay for child care so they can remain active members of the workforce. It's as simple as that.**

Parents in all income brackets find it very challenging to pay for quality early care in a setting that not only is a nurturing, learning environment, but one that also is accessible and available. The extremely high cost of living on Long Island makes it very difficult for families with young children to meet all their needs comfortably. The Economic Policy Institute (EPI) stated that the annual cost of child care for an infant (which EPI defines as a one-year-old child for the purposes of its analysis) exceeded the average price of a year of in-state tuition at a public four-year college in 33 states (New York included) and the District of Columbia in 2014. The child care subsidy level in Suffolk County does not even come close to helping the general population with their child care costs. These realities "fly in the face" of the proven benefits to children, families, society and the economy of having quality early care and education for all of Suffolk County's diverse communities. It also is turning a blind eye to succession planning for economic development and retaining businesses, jobs and young families on Long Island.

We **must** invest in early childhood education, particularly because research overwhelmingly has shown that 90 percent of brain development occurs from birth through five years of age when young children's brains develop 700 synapses – neural connections that support learning and skills – every second. The human brain is primed from birth to react to, and learn from, the environment and their caregivers. These interactions shape the personality, intelligence and behavior that children will carry with them into adulthood.

Fostering a healthy, successful, future workforce – which starts in the earliest years of life through quality early care and education – is essential to everyone's well-being.

CCCS on Social Media

Social media has become a vital communication tool. Please follow the Child Care Council of Suffolk's social media sites for information about important child care issues, advocacy efforts, events, trainings and more. Join the discussions to help us make this an educational, engaging resource for all!



PLI Leadership Summit Making the Connection



The Parent Leadership Initiative (PLI) held the largest Leadership Summit in March at the Child Care Council of Suffolk's Commack headquarters. Sponsored by the Long Island Unitarian Universalist Fund at the Long Island Community Foundation, the Summit welcomed PLI graduates from Babylon, Brookhaven, Huntington, Islip, Southampton and the Nassau County programs. Titled *Making the Connection*, it described the many ways PLI participants, alone and/or in partnership with local organizations, are making a difference in their communities.

Spanish PLI

The launch of the Spanish PLI program in February 2016 resulted from a need that was recognized primarily by Town of Islip PLI Coordinator Sandra Gil and PLI Director Danielle Asher. "There has been a very heavy demand for PLI from parents who are more comfortable learning in Spanish," Danielle described. "Many of these parents are working on learning English, but PLI has a lot of content that makes it very challenging to understand the translation." The need for a Spanish PLI program to teach parents how to become effective advocates was most apparent in the Towns of Islip, Brookhaven and Southampton – though there were requests in all five PLI program locations."

PLI received a Hagedorn Foundation grant and a member item grant from Assemblyman Phil Ramos to launch a pilot Spanish PLI program. Brookhaven 2014 PLI Graduate Reina Sorto was hired as the coordinator and Brookhaven 2015 PLI Graduate Irma Solis was hired as the facilitator for the new program. PLI held an information café the first week of January 2016 for all those who were interested in applying. "Though we only had 15 seats to fill, 40 people showed up," stated Danielle. "Overall, we had more than 50 people apply, and we accepted a class of 16."

The Spanish PLI program is held at the Patchogue-Medford Library. The participants have a variety of backgrounds from South and Latin America. The group resides primarily in the Town of Brookhaven, but there also are participants from other parts of Suffolk County. "The Spanish PLI participants already have been jumping on all the opportunities we have been able to provide," said Danielle. More than half the class attended the Child Care Council's Advocacy day in Albany as well as the PLI Leadership Summit.

Operation Cinderella

Huntington Station resident Laci Wright used her PLI training to create Operation Cinderella, a program that collects prom dresses and accessories for teens who otherwise would not be able to afford them. Laci began collecting dresses and accessories in January 2016 for the April giveaway and makeover day, which was held at Walt Whitman High School. Fifty-two young ladies and four gentlemen attended the event, which Laci described as "absolutely amazing. To see the smiles on the faces of those students who not only left with a dress for prom, a dress for graduation, some with shoes and accessories and the feeling that they had just been shopping in a boutique said it all for me."



In addition to Laci, volunteers from Stimson Middle School as well as the superintendent, assistant superintendent and Huntington Town Councilwoman Tracey Edwards helped the young men and women make their selections. "My volunteers were deeply touched," Laci said. "I think it gives people a brand new perspective on simplicity and purity in this time of the young students' lives." Please email Laci at ImTheFairyGodparent@gmail.com if you would like additional information about how to donate any formal wear or accessories going forward, because Laci is definitely "ready to do it all again"!

Town of Brookhaven Councilwoman Valerie Cartright kicked off the day with an inspiring and empowering Opening Address stating: "It takes a community effort to impact the lives of children (the future). Keep striving, reach farther than you believe you are able to and connect with people who you share a common goal with." The Summit also featured a Keynote Address by SUNY Old Westbury Associate Professor Dr. Jermaine Archer who encouraged the group to: "educate and interact with youth without judgement" and who also helped to build awareness of "how knowledge is produced and how it translates to systems of power."

"The Summit speakers and workshop presenters 'made the connection' to issues our PLI parents care about: presenting a campaign they can get involved with, leading by example by sharing the story of their projects, becoming an elected official, presenting skills that hone in on what they learned in their PLI training and more," described PLI Director Danielle Asher. In addition to educational workshops on informative and advocacy topics, PLI graduates shared their individual stories about how they are using their PLI training and skills in their own communities.

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News from the Child Care Council of Suffolk

CCCS Infant Toddler Specialist Colleen Farrell Becomes Elite Master Cadre Trainer of the NYS Pyramid Model

Colleen Farrell recently was named a master cadre trainer of the New York State Pyramid Model – a movement created to help support early childhood practitioners, parents and children across the state in learning positive social skills that will help avoid and eliminate most challenging behaviors for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Colleen has a Master of Science degree in Early Childhood Studies with a focus in teaching early childhood education to adults. She began working at CCCS in 2010 and is currently the regional Infant Toddler Specialist. She is a level III NYS credentialed trainer, a fully certified trainer in Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) and an approved Health and Safety trainer. “I am committed to this project because I believe that implementing the Pyramid Model in all child care programs will give early care professionals and families the skills needed to support children’s healthy development,” Colleen described.

Jenna Fortunato Joins CCCS Board of Directors



The Child Care Council of Suffolk is pleased to announce that **Jenna Fortunato** has joined the agency’s Board of Directors. Jenna is a benefits and human resources specialist at Flushing Bank in Uniondale, New York. She joined the bank as an intern in 2007 and then permanently upon her graduation in 2011. Jenna has a diverse background in human resources, including: training, recruiting, employee relations and benefits. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and a Master’s degree in Education from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. Jenna is looking forward to serving on the CCCS Board of Directors.

CCCS Welcomes New Personnel

The Child Care Council of Suffolk is pleased to extend a warm welcome to **Ana Maria Escalera** and **Kelly Brocato** and is very enthusiastic about the talent and the energy that they bring to the agency.



Ana Maria Escalera has joined CCCS as the director in the Registration and Inspection Department. She previously worked as the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program director for the Child Development Support Corporation in Brooklyn. She also worked with the New York City Child Care Resource and Referral Consortium as the special projects coordinator for the Day Care Council of New York. Ana Maria received a Bachelor’s degree in Professional Studies from the Audrey Cohen School for Human Services and Education, Metropolitan College of New York, and a Master’s degree in Public Administration from the Metropolitan College of New York.



Medford resident **Kelly Brocato** is excited to have an opportunity to serve and to advocate for families and early care professionals as a parent counselor in the Resource and Referral Department. Kelly previously was an assistant director of The Learning Experience in Medford. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from St. Joseph’s College in Patchogue, and currently is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Human Services – with a concentration in Non-Profit Leadership – from St. Joseph’s College.

CCCS Quality Assurance Accreditation Renewed by Child Care Aware

The Child Care Council of Suffolk is pleased to announce that the agency’s national Quality Assurance Accreditation was renewed by Child Care Aware. This accreditation recognizes that CCCS remains one of the leading child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) in the country. “We are extremely proud to have achieved Quality Assurance reaccreditation by Child Care Aware,” said Janet Walerstein, CCCS executive director. “Since 1985, we have been helping families in Suffolk County recognize, find and pay for quality child care and have been working with our community to identify child care needs and to create solutions. This national seal of approval proves that we are succeeding.”



Early Care Professionals Receive HighScope Curriculum Training

CCCS has engaged early care professionals to participate in an educational initiative to help increase the quality of child care programs in Suffolk County. Ten participants, including child care center directors, lead teachers and group family program owners, took part in the intensive HighScope Curriculum Course and Training of Trainers Program. These courses provided them with extensive training in the HighScope Curriculum and also gave them the skills necessary to train other CCCS early care professionals to implement this unique educational approach in their child care settings.

Research-validated and child-focused, the HighScope Curriculum uses a carefully designed process — combining “active learning” with a “plan-do-review” process — to achieve powerful, positive outcomes. The HighScope Preschool Curriculum not only helps young children excel in language and cognitive learning but also promotes independence, curiosity, decision-making, cooperation, persistence, creativity and problem solving — the fundamental skills that help determine success in adult life.

This is a curriculum framework that can be used from preschool through third grade.

It aligns with all learning standards for programs from preschool through primary education. “Extensive research tells us that children who experience a high-quality curriculum, such as the HighScope Curriculum, at the earliest ages succeed through later school years and in life,” stated CCCS Education Director Joan Rochetta. “Our vision is to see child care centers and public schools adapt this curriculum to provide continuity and a strong foundation for children throughout Suffolk County.”

“We are thankful to the Rauch Foundation for the funding in support of this initiative,” said CCCS Executive Director Janet Walerstein.



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PLI Leadership Summit Making the Connection

For example, PLI Graduate and Facilitator Dorothy Santana, of North Babylon, founded the Latina Moms of Long Island network. This group’s mission is to preserve the Latino culture and to support Latina & Non-Latina moms/families that are raising bi-cultural children. PLI Graduate Diana Andrade started a parent group in the Patchogue-Medford area called Parents as Partners, whose goal is to effect change in the school district. Diana was elected to Patchogue-Medford School District Board of Education where she maintains her connection with the community and has become their voice.

Please contact Danielle Asher, 631-462-0303 or dasher@childcarecouncil.org, if you would like more information about how you can get involved with the Parent Leadership Initiative.



The Child Care Council of Suffolk (CCCS) honored two Long Island champions: Dr. Frances L. Brisbane, former dean and professor of the School of Social Welfare at Stony Brook University, and Patrick C. McCarthy, partner at the law firm of McCarthy & Carbone, P.C., and president of the Michael W. McCarthy Foundation, at the *Champions of Children 30th Anniversary Luncheon*. Pictured here are (l to r): CCCS Executive Director Janet Walerstein, Dr. Frances Brisbane, CCCS Board of Directors President Linda Armyn, and Board of Directors Member Al Anastasi.

Child Care Provider Information Sessions

R.S.V.P. required, 631-462-0303

Child Care Council of Suffolk, Commack

(English Info Sessions)

9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday – June 14

Thursday – July 7, August 11, September 15, October 6,

November 10 and December 1, 2016

Child Care Council of Suffolk, Commack

(Spanish Info Sessions)

9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday – June 7, August 9, October 4 and December 6, 2016

SAVE THE DATE

2016 Annual Meeting of the

Child Care Council of Suffolk

Friday, June 10, 2016, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Touro Law School, Central Islip

Champions of Children Luncheon

Friday, December 2, 2016, 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Hamlet Golf & Country Club

One Clubhouse Drive

Commack, NY 11725

CCCS Offers Free Training and Resources to Help Young Children Build Resiliency

CCCS has partnered with the Association for Mental Health & Wellness to offer a variety of free resources to assist children who may be suffering from trauma and stress in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy or other traumatic event. The Suffolk Action for Empowering Resiliency (SAFER) series of free workshops have been developed to promote resiliency in children and to aid caregivers in maintaining a healthy environment for those affected by Superstorm Sandy and early childhood trauma. The program promotes social-emotional health for infants, toddlers and preschoolers through outreach to early care and learning providers, curriculum implementation and support services.

Please contact Meghan Collins, 631-560-3613, mcollins@childcaresuffolk.org, for more information. The SAFER program is offered under the leadership of the Child Care Council of Suffolk and funded through the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Superstorm Sandy Block Grant.



www.childcaresuffolk.org

Commack, NY 11725

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