



# Amador County Child Care Needs Assessment 2009

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## Summary of Findings

The Amador Child Care Council (ACCC) is an appointed body of child care consumers, service providers, public agencies, community representatives, and other discretionary members appointed jointly by the Amador County Board of Supervisors and the Amador County Superintendent of Schools. The members collaborate to assess and coordinate the delivery of quality early care and education services and programs in Amador County. The mission of the Amador Child Care Council is *to partner with the community to promote the early care and education of children*. The Council is committed to promoting affordable, accessible and high quality child care in Amador County.

Local planning councils are mandated by state law (CA Education Code Section 8499.5) to assess child care needs in California counties no less than every five years. The last needs assessment was completed in 2004, and this current report represents an update from the previous one.

The assessment must minimally look at the following:

- needs of families both eligible and ineligible for subsidized child care;
- the waiting lists for programs funded by the department and the State Department of Social Services;
- the need for child care for children determined by the child protective services agency to be neglected, abused, or exploited, or at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited;
- the number of children in families receiving public assistance, including food stamps, housing support, Medi-Cal, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF);
- family income levels of those with preschool or school age children;
- the number of children in migrant agricultural families;
- the number of children who have been determined by a regional center to require services pursuant to an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or by a local educational agency to require services pursuant to an individualized education program (IEP) or an IFSP;
- the number of children in the county by primary language; and
- the number of children needing child care by age cohort.

As well as the needs of the children and families, the needs assessment must also include information on supply, demand, cost, and market rates for each child care category in the County.

In addition to the information mandated by the state, the ACCC has attempted to get a local perspective on the need for early care and education in Amador County by utilizing a number of local sources for data and information.

### **Methodology**

The findings in this report were developed using a variety of statistical and anecdotal information, collected from a number of sources. Valuable data were provided by the United States Census Bureau, although these data are gleaned from the 2000 Census and are therefore quite outdated at this point. However, growth rates by zip code were supplied by the Center for Economic Development at the CSU Chico Research Foundation, California State University at Chico, to obtain an accurate estimate of current population by zip code in Amador County. In addition, a special census run commissioned by the California Child Care Coordinators Association was utilized for information on the need for child care of low income families in Amador County.

Local information was obtained from the Resource Connection (the child care resource & referral agency, formerly known as HRC Child Care Resources), the Amador County Office of Education, and the Amador County Department of Social Services. Additional data were gathered from a variety of local and national resources identified in Appendix A. The second component of data collection was accomplished through distributing and collecting surveys from families, child care providers, and employers. In addition, several key informant interviews were held from a cross section of community representatives. Those efforts, combined with research, enabled the Council to get a broad base of perspectives as well as statistical data regarding child care needs in Amador County.

### **Need for Care**

The Amador Child Care Council estimates that there are 3,898 children aged birth to 13 years with all parents in the workforce. However, the demand for licensed child care is not necessarily the total number of children with working parents. Many parents – especially those with infants – choose relatives or friends to care for their children.

The demand percentages used for various age groups is as follows:

- For children aged birth to 2 years: 37% demand
- For children aged 3 to 5 years: 70% demand
- For children aged 6 and up: 39% demand

These figures are based on a review of child care needs assessments conducted by Brion & Associates, as reported in a Memorandum dated December 19, 2005. The rationale is that parents of infants and toddlers will often choose license-exempt care – likely a relative or friend

– for their youngest children. By preschool age, many parents choose to enroll their three-to-five-year-olds in a licensed preschool program – be it Head Start, State Preschool, or a private program – to provide some socialization and to help their children prepare for entry into kindergarten. By the time children are beyond kindergarten age, and are attending school full time, parents may opt for a license-exempt after-school program, such as Amador County's Extended Learning Program, thus reducing the demand for licensed care for that age group.

These percentages constitute a more conservative estimate of the need for child care than has previously been employed. For example, the 2003-04 Needs Assessment for Amador County showed that only 24% of the children with parents in the workforce – and therefore needing child care – were able to find licensed child care spaces. This assumption was based on the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network's 2003 Child Care Portfolio. The most current 2009 Portfolio shows that there are licensed spaces for 31% of children needing care. However, the more conservative estimates used in this report show that the supply number is closer to 42%. This percentage is still woefully low in terms of the need for licensed, high quality child care in Amador County.

Based on estimates of children aged birth to 13 years with all parents in the workforce, we have a total of 3,898 children needing child care in all age groups. Applying the demand percentages outlined above, there are a total of 1,723 children needing licensed child care. The breakdown by age group is as follows: children ages 0-2 = 223 (37% of 623); children ages 3 – 5 = 502 (70% of 715); children ages 6 and up = 998 (39% of 2,560).

**Given that there are licensed spaces for 718 children, the unmet demand is 58%. In other words, about 1,005 children whose parents are demanding licensed child care must go without it, as there is no supply to meet that demand.**

The need for infant care continues to be the greatest concern. Currently, the one child care center specializing in infant care is inactive, further decreasing the supply. However, two family child care homes in the city of Jackson do provide infant care, which helps to fill the need slightly. It is difficult to say how many other family child care homes are caring for infants at any given time, as family child care homes are licensed for a specific number of children, not for children of specific ages. Additionally, the enrollment changes frequently, making the number of spaces for infants and toddlers difficult to pinpoint. Calls to the Resource Connection for families seeking child care continue to be highest for children aged birth to two years. Last year the referrals for care for children aged birth to two years numbered 161 out of the total referrals of 225, or 72%. Whether all of these families actually found care for their infants and toddlers – given the small number of licensed spaces available to them – is difficult to determine.

## **Child Care Supply**

The supply of licensed child care has fluctuated very little in Amador County over the past several years. In 2004, at the time of the last Needs Assessment, there were 727 child care spaces in licensed centers and family child care homes. The current supply is 718 spaces, a decrease of only nine over the past five years. In 2009 there were 14 licensed child care centers and 37 licensed family child care homes providing care.

Licensed centers include four state preschool programs, serving about 95 children, and three Head Start programs (one in Jackson and two sessions in Ione) serving about 60 children.

In addition to the licensed facilities in Amador County described above, there are another seven child care centers that are license exempt. These include six Extended Learning Programs at elementary school sites, and the Little Oak Learning Center (LOLC) at the Jackson Rancheria, serving children aged 18 months and up whose parents are employed by the Rancheria.

In Amador County in 2009 there were a total of 148 children from 88 families being cared for by licensed exempt providers, plus 282 children enrolled in the Extended Learning Program, and approximately 220 children enrolled in LOLC.

## **Subsidized Child Care**

The Resource Connection helps qualified families pay for child care through its Alternative Payment Program (APP). Families may qualify for subsidized child care if they are enrolled in CalWORKS, California's welfare-to-work program, or are earning less than 75% of the state median income. In the period July through December 2009, the APP served 306 children from 183 families. That number included: 29 infants up to 18 months; 55 toddlers aged 18 months to three years; 60 preschool aged children from three to five years; and 162 school-aged children. In addition to those families being served, many are qualified for subsidies but are not being served due to inadequate funding for the program. The Resource Connection maintains a Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) for children whose families qualify for subsidized care but for whom there is no funding. If other families cease to have a need for care, qualified families can then be enrolled in the program. In December 2009 there were another 187 children on the CEL: 42 infants and toddlers, 104 preschoolers, and 41 school-aged children.

## **Cost of Care**

For many families, such as those who are waiting for help on the CEL, the cost of child care can be prohibitive. The daily cost, depending on the age of the child, averages between \$22 and \$27. The cost for an infant can range up to \$1000 per month. The cost of care is highest for infants due to the need for a higher ratio of caregivers required for that age group, and is lowest

for school-age children. If a family has two or more children in child care, the cost can amount to a significant portion of the family's budget.

### **Employment and Poverty**

In 2009, the Federal Poverty Level was \$18,310 for a family of three. The state median income estimated for 2009 was \$47,125 for a family of three persons. According to U.S. Census estimates, the median annual income of families in Amador County in 2007 was \$54,903, and the median income in California was \$59,928. This demonstrates an increase of just over 9% above the 2000 Census levels, when the median annual family income in Amador County was \$51,226.

In December 2009 the Amador County Department of Social Services (DSS) reported a total of 414 cases, representing families receiving the following services: cases of one-parent families or needy caretakers; cases of two-parent families; cases with zero parents – meaning families of children being cared for by relatives and other caregivers; CalWORKs/TANF cases; CalWORKs Safety Net cases – cases where parents have timed out of CalWORKs and only the children are receiving cash aid; foster children; adoption assistance cases; children receiving aid for severe emotional disturbance; and children receiving emergency assistance.

All of the cases identified above resulted in a total of 698 children and 306 adults being served by DSS in December 2009. This total is comparable to other months during the same year.

### **Children with Special Concerns**

*Special Needs:* In Amador County, children with special needs receive services from two primary sources, the Amador County Office of Education (ACOE) and Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC). VMRC served only 10 children at the end of 2009, while ACOE was serving 578. These numbers represent a decrease in children served at the time of the last Needs Assessment, which showed 69 children being served by VMRC and 623 by ACOE.

*Migrant and English Learners:* No families in Amador County were identified as migrant families with children. However, there are a number of children who are English learners – that is, whose home language is one other than English. The California Department of Education reports that a total of 194 children were English language learners in the 2008-09 fiscal year. Of those, 181 or 93% were Spanish-speaking. Other languages were Cantonese, Hmong, Khmer, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Portuguese.

*Child Protective Services:* According to the Amador County Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services (CPS), a total of 246 children (unduplicated) received “family maintenance” services in the 2009 calendar year.

### **Family Survey Highlights**

Surveys were distributed by several means to families in Amador County. Due to the distribution methods – which included electronic mail – it is difficult to determine exactly how many were distributed. There were 228 surveys returned: 173 in English and 55 in Spanish.

Most of the respondents (94%) were female, and most – more than 85% – were in the 21-40 age group. Sixty-five percent were married, and 65% were White or Caucasian, while 30% were Hispanic or Latino. A large majority (69%) reported they spoke English and another 22% spoke Spanish in the home. However, 8% declined to respond to this question.

About one-third (33%) of respondents worked full-time, and more than half (51%) reported that two adults lived in the home. Fifty-eight percent said only one parent living in the home was employed. Thirty-five percent reported attending some college. In terms of household income, about half of families surveyed (48%) earned between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per year.

Almost half of the survey respondents, or 46%, had from one to three children in the home aged from birth to two years; 70% had children aged 3 to 5 years; 40% had children aged 6 to 12; and 14% had children aged 13 to 17 residing in the home.

The cost of child care was identified as the greatest barrier to obtaining care for their children. Only 25% reported receiving some type of assistance. One-quarter of parents reported having to go without care when needed for their child or children. About 28% have employers who allow some flexibility in work schedules to accommodate child care needs, particularly with sick children. Many (21%) had to stay home without pay when their child was sick.

Most parents who responded felt that the quality of child care was the most important factor when seeking care. Most who had children in care felt that their child was in a high-quality program. The reasons for this response varied from parents utilizing family members whom they thought provided high-quality care, to praising particular teachers or programs, to reporting that their children were “happy, healthy and learning.”

### **Provider Survey Highlights**

The survey was distributed to all Early Care and Education (ECE) professionals working in Amador County. Sixty-eight teachers and child care providers responded to the survey. Almost half of those (47%) were employed by Little Oak Learning Center (LOLC) at the Jackson Rancheria, and all respondents were female. That is not surprising as there are very few men in the field in Amador County.

Most of the respondents (61%) were married, and those under and over 40 years of age were about evenly divided. Eighty-four percent of the providers were White or Caucasian, and only

4% were Hispanic or Latina. (Several declined to answer this question.) Most providers (94%) speak English; only one reported being fluent in Spanish.

As noted above, almost half were employed by LOLC, and another 22% were family child care home providers. The remainder worked in Head Start, Amador State Preschool, other private centers, and the Extended Learning Program. Not surprisingly – as LOLC is located in Jackson – most respondents worked in that city, with another 13% working in Lone. More than half (59%) have worked in the ECE field for ten years or less; another 37% have worked with children between 10 and 35 years.

Most of the workforce has had at least some college: 57% have had one to three years, and 24% were currently enrolled in college classes. More than one-third (35%) held a Child Development Permit. This permit is required by workers in state-funded programs, but many others hold one due to requirements of the CARES program, which has awarded stipends to teachers acquiring college courses and professional growth hours.

The survey asked providers to state a range of income both from their work in the ECE field, and their total household income. Understandably, as most respondents were married, the total family income was higher than their ECE income. For example, 10% reported income less than \$10,000 per year from their profession, but no one reported that range for total income. Most respondents (62%) reported earning between \$10,000 and \$30,000 annually, which was more than four times the number reporting earning that amount for their household. Almost one-third (29%) reported a total annual household income of between \$50,000 and \$75,000, yet only two respondents (3%) reported earning more than \$50,000 from their ECE employment. These data support the widely-held view that many in the field of Early Childhood Education do not earn a wage that would sustain them without additional household income. In terms of employment benefits, about two-thirds did receive benefits such as sick leave, medical/dental, and retirement. Of course this means that fully one-third of our ECE professionals do not receive any benefits from their employment.

The survey also asked about details of the child development programs, including hours of care, how they spend their time, and the children in their care. Most programs are open Monday through Friday, although close to half of the respondents reported being open weekends also. This response again is attributable to the fact that close to half of the respondents worked at LOLC, which was open seven days a week. Other than LOLC, the earliest opening was 5:30 am and the latest closing was 11:30 pm. The numbers of children in care at the time of the survey varied from two in a family child care home, to 422 at LOLC.

More than half of the respondents reported having at least one child with a disability in their care. Of those, 73% had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). [An IEP provides services for children with developmental delays or other disabilities through the public school system.] The

most common disability was speech (35%), followed by autism (28%) and emotional disturbance (25%).

Most of those surveyed (81%) reported that they keep a waiting list for their program. Of those, 60% filled vacancies on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **Employer Survey Highlights**

A survey of Amador County employers was conducted to identify the needs, wants and desires of their employees that are related to child care, as well as barriers and issues that may inhibit employers from assisting or accommodating employees with their child care needs. The survey was mailed to 104 employers; 30 surveys were completed and returned, signifying a 31% rate of response.

As to the types of businesses, the largest number (27%) were in the hospitality business, including restaurants, hotels, and wineries. Seventeen percent were in the service sector, and 17% in retail, 10% in government, 7% were in banking and finance, and the same percentage in the health care industry. The size of businesses varied greatly, with the number of employees ranging from three to 450, with an average of about 34. Most of the businesses were open Monday through Friday, as early as 6 am and as late as 6 pm. Another 30% were open seven days a week, and another 10% were open six days a week. That means that about 40% of the businesses surveyed require their employees to work at least one weekend day, when there is little child care available.

When asked about employees with children, responses varied from none to 100% of employees, with an average of about 20% of employees having children in the home. About 40% of employers had experienced attendance problems due to the child care needs of their employees. The reasons given included lack of care before school, on non-school days that are not holidays, and lack of evening care. Employers also cited their employees' inability to pay for care or inability to receive child care subsidies.

Employers also were asked about benefits related to child care that they provide to employees. Fully 70% of the respondents said they allow flexibility in their employees' schedules to accommodate their child care needs. When asked if they had any plans to offer on-site or off-site child care for their workers, none said that they did. However, 10% said they would be interested in collaborating with other businesses to subsidize a local child care program.

### **Child Care-Related Trends in Amador County**

**The Economy:** The current economic downturn, which began in 2007-08 with the housing and mortgage crisis, continues to affect children and families in Amador County. We know

anecdotally that many families have moved out of the County due to the lack of employment opportunities. There has been an increase over the past few months in enrollment for both State Preschool and Head Start, which provide services for low-income families, and many families are waiting for services. The economic situation has also forced layoffs at the Jackson Rancheria, causing a cutback in staff and services at the Little Oak Learning Center.

**Early Head Start:** The Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA) was awarded expansion funds for Early Head Start, which serves infants and toddlers, in late 2009. These services will provide critically-needed services for low-income families, starting in 2010.

**Facilities Development:** In 2005, the Amador Child Care Council, in collaboration with the Calaveras Child Care Council, was awarded a Constructing Connections grant from the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF) to increase the child care center capacity in the County. While the ultimate goal is to expand existing or create new facilities, many of the accomplishments have been in the area of land use policy, working with the county and the cities to include language supportive of child care facilities in general plans and zoning ordinances.

**Inclusion of Children with Special Needs:** The ACCC has helped facilitate the Children's Inclusive Care Council of Amador & Calaveras since it grew out of the Transfer of Knowledge initiative in 2002. The CICC has produced a guide for parents and child care providers to help caregivers determine if a child may have a disability or other special need that requires services.

**State Budget:** The budget for the state of California has been a challenge for lawmakers in recent years, due to decreases in revenue from the economic downturn. Programs such as those offered by First 5 have been threatened, and many services to children and families have been cut. One such example is the Amador County CalWORKs funding for child care. Parents are no longer able to receive child care benefits if they are looking for work or going to school.

**Workforce Development:** In 2009, the Amador CARES program, which had provided stipends for teachers and child care providers who cared for children up to age five, lost its funding from First 5 California and First 5 Amador. Funding is still available through ACCC for stipends for teachers working in state-funded programs, such as State Preschool and Head Start. First 5 Amador also offers \$50 scholarships for workshops and conferences, up to \$250 per person per year. The Amador Child Care Council also has been working with Sacramento State University to develop a cohort for the B.A. in Child Development distance learning program. However, 20 students – all at transfer level – are needed to start a cohort.

Cosumnes River College (CRC) has been offering child development classes in Amador County since 2006. The ACCC has been working with the Amador Community College Foundation to

bring a full campus to the County, and also is a member of the CRC Early Childhood Education Department's Advisory Committee.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from this needs assessment process, it is recommended that the Amador Child Care Council focus on the following activities to support improvements in Early Care and Education throughout Amador County in the next five years:

- Promote and support the development of more infant care slots in licensed child care facilities. Care for infants continues to be the most pressing need in our communities.
- Continue to support the professional development of child care providers.
  - Collaborate to increase the availability of college coursework in Early Care and Education locally.
  - Advocate for increased wages and benefits on a statewide and national level.
  - Continue to support and promote professional development activities.
  - Advocate for increased supports for professional development on a statewide and national level.
- Develop partnerships with local employers.
  - Meet with local employers who are interested in collaborating to subsidize a local child care facility.
  - Meet with employers who would like to learn more about child care related issues, policies and benefits.
  - Collaborate with local businesses to develop and advocate for making higher education and child care related benefits more accessible in the county.
- Support providers to remain open for longer hours in order to bridge the gap for parents who need care in the early morning, evening, and weekends.
- Address the needs of special populations through the following activities:
  - Continue support and involvement in the Children's Inclusive Care Council.
  - Work with existing programs to promote more inclusion of children with disabilities and other special needs in child development programs.
  - Collaborate with other agencies, providers, families and local businesses to develop solutions to address transportation issues, especially for low-income families with children.
- Continue to work with housing developers and local governments, including elected officials and staff, to develop policies that support additional early care and education facilities to fill the existing and future needs of Amador County families.

# Introduction and County Demographics

## Amador Child Care Council

### History of the Council

Congress enacted the Child Care and Development Block Grant and the Title IV-A At Risk Child Care Program in 1990 with the purpose of increasing the availability, affordability and quality of child care throughout the United States. In July 1991, the California Department of Education offered funding to each county in the state to establish a local child care planning council with the purpose of developing county-wide priorities for child care and development services needed by low income families.

The Amador Child Care Council (ACCC) is a collaboration of consumers, service providers, public agencies, community representatives and other discretionary members working together to assess and coordinate the delivery of quality child care services and programs. The Board of Supervisors appoints one member within each category, and the County Superintendent of Schools appoints the other. The Council meets regularly most months of the year, and represents the needs and concerns of parents and providers as a member or participant on a number of other collaborative efforts at the local, regional, and state levels.

### Mission and Purpose

The mission of the Amador Child Care Council is *to partner with the community to promote the early care and education of children*. The Council is committed to promoting affordable, accessible and high quality child care in Amador County.

State Department of Education Code 8499 states that *"It is the intent of the Legislature that local child care and development planning councils shall provide a forum for the identification of local priorities for child care and the development of policies to meet the needs identified within those priorities."* To accomplish this, local planning councils are required to conduct an assessment of child care needs at least every five years. ACCC last completed a child care needs assessment in 2004.

Local planning council needs assessments must meet requirements specified in Education Code, Section 8499.5(b). Required areas of assessment include the following:

- ✓ The needs of families both eligible and ineligible for subsidized child care
- ✓ Waiting lists for programs funded by the State Department of Education and the State Department of Social Services and CalWORKs

- ✓ The need for child care for children determined by the child protective services agency to be neglected, abused, or exploited, or at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited
- ✓ The number of children in families receiving public assistance
- ✓ Family income levels of those with preschool or school age children
- ✓ The number of children in migrant agricultural families who move from place to place for work or who are currently dependent for their income on agricultural employment
- ✓ The number of children who have been determined by a regional center or a local education agency to require services pursuant to an individualized education plan or family service plan (IEP or IFSP)
- ✓ The number of children in the county by primary language pursuant to the department's language survey
- ✓ Special needs based on geographic considerations, including rural areas
- ✓ The number of children needing child care by age cohort

## Methodology

Data for this report was gathered in several ways. First, research was conducted to gather data from sources such as the U.S. Census, the Amador County Office of Education, the Employment Development Division, the Department of Finance, the Amador Chamber of Commerce, and Head Start. The Resource Connection (formerly HRC Child Care Resources) and the Amador County Department of Health and Human Services, which administers CalWORKs, also provided valuable data specific to this report. A complete list of resources can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Data were provided by the United States Census Bureau, although these data are gleaned from the 2000 Census and are therefore quite outdated at this point. However, growth rates by zip code were supplied by the Center for Economic Development at the CSU Chico Research Foundation, California State University at Chico, to obtain an accurate estimate of current population by zip code in Amador County. In addition, a special census run commissioned by the California Child Care Coordinators Association was utilized for information on the need for child care of low income families in Amador County.

The second component of data collection was accomplished through administering and collecting surveys from families, child care providers, and employers. Family surveys – in both English and Spanish – were distributed through parent groups and through local child care and

development programs. A total of 228 surveys were returned by parents and guardians, from which the information was used to create a major section of this report.

Provider surveys were distributed using the mailing list from the Resource Connection, and directly to staff at Head Start, the Extended Learning Programs, the Amador State Preschools, and Little Oak Learning Center. A total of 68 providers completed surveys for use in developing this report.

Finally, the Council developed a mailing list based on membership in the Amador Chamber of Commerce and through other sources. The Council staff mailed employer surveys to 104 selected employers in Amador County. Six of those were deemed to be undeliverable, and 30 employers returned surveys to the Council, for a return rate of 31%.

Additional anecdotal information was obtained through a number of telephone interviews of key contacts in the community, conducted by members of the Amador Child Care Council. The results of those surveys and interviews were then compiled and analyzed. Those efforts, combined with research and data analysis, enabled the Council to get a broad base of perspectives regarding child care needs in Amador County.

To estimate child care need, numbers of children by age cohort were taken from the 2000 U.S. Census. Then a growth factor was applied for the zip code areas in the County to determine an estimated number of children for 2009. Then the number of children with both parents in the work force was estimated, and a percentage of demand was applied according to industry-wide research. Supply numbers for licensed child care and development programs were then obtained by zip code from the Resource Connection. The supply of child care was compared to the demand number of children, thus showing the need for child care in all Amador County communities.

## **Amador County**

The County of Amador was officially established in June of 1854. During the Gold Rush, Amador was one of the state's leaders in gold production, second only to Nevada County. The county's economy now relies on government, education, legalized casino gambling and tourism for its income. Amador County is home to a growing number of award-winning wineries, which is one of the major attractions for tourists to the area. Visitors also come to enjoy the oak-studded hills, historic buildings, and wide array of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Amador is the smallest rural county in California covering almost 605 square miles, and ranging in elevation from about 250 feet in the western part of the County, to over 9,000 feet in the eastern part, which includes parts of the Sierra Nevada range.

The county has five incorporated cities which include Jackson – the County Seat – Sutter Creek, Lone, Plymouth, and Amador City; all other areas are unincorporated. The map below shows the proximity of each of these communities throughout the county.



Map courtesy of the Amador County Chamber of Commerce ([www.amadorcountychamber.com/map.html](http://www.amadorcountychamber.com/map.html))

## **Population**

As of 2008, the County's population was estimated to be 38,238, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The 2000 census numbered the population at 35,100. This indicates an increase of about 11%. By the year 2030, the California Department of Finance projects that Amador County's population will grow to 54,788, an increase of about 14% over the 2008 figures.

One challenging aspect of estimating the population of Amador County is the presence of Mule Creek State Prison and other smaller institutions, the population of which hovers around 5,000 annually. Therefore, it is important to note that the total residential population (excluding persons in institutional settings) in Amador County was 29,595 in 2000 and 33,238 in 2008.

The following table illustrates overall growth in population of Amador County between 2000 and 2008, according to figures from CA Department of Finance (<http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-4/2001-09/documents/E-42009%20Internet%20Version.xls>).

| Incorporated City | 2000          | 2008          | Percent Growth |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Amador City       | 196           | 211           | 8%             |
| Ione              | 7,129         | 7,451         | 5%             |
| Jackson           | 3,989         | 4,353         | 9%             |
| Plymouth          | 980           | 1,043         | 6%             |
| Sutter Creek      | 2,303         | 2,711         | 18%            |
| Balance of County | 20,503        | 22,266        | 9%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>35,100</b> | <b>38,035</b> |                |

The table below shows the total number of children projected to be living in Amador County in 2010, by age group according to the CA Department of Finance.

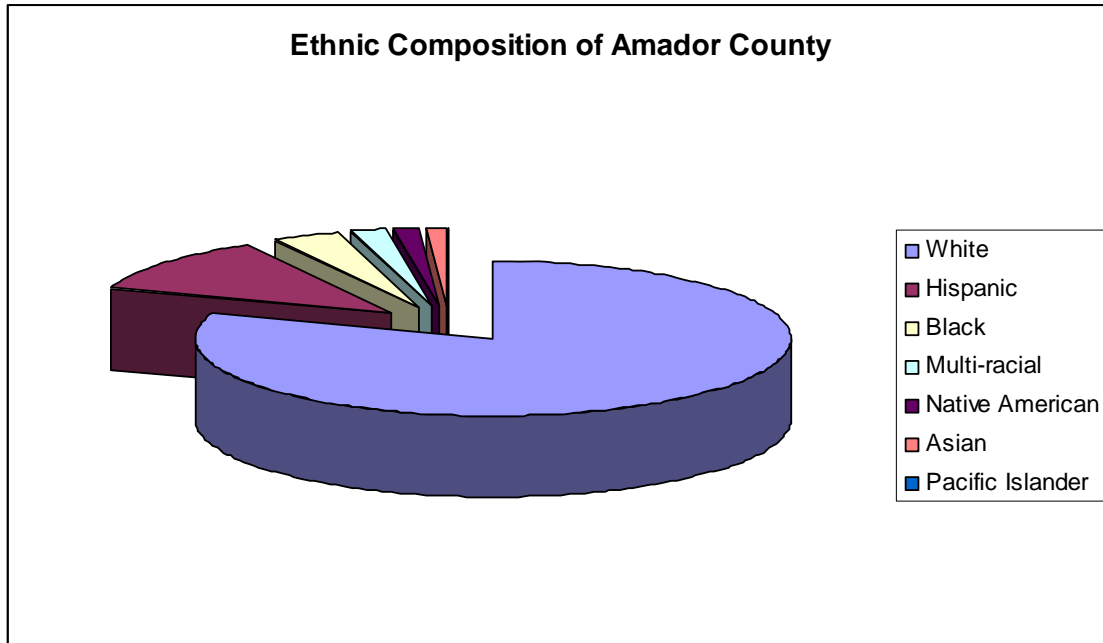
| Age Breakdown | Number of Children | Percent of the total Population |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Under 5 years | 1,700              | 4.2%                            |
| 5 – 9 years   | 1,382              | 3.4%                            |
| 10 – 14 years | 1,731              | 4.3%                            |
| 15 – 19 years | 3,034              | 7.5%                            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>7,847</b>       | <b>19.4%</b>                    |

Children under five years of age represent 4.2% of the total residential population, or approximately 1,700 children. The percentage is the same as the 2000 Census. Children ages 19 and under represent 19.4% of the population, or approximately 7,847. This number and percentage are lower than the 2000 census, which showed a total of 8,204 children 19 years of age and under, amounting to 23.4% of the total population.

### **Ethnicity**

Based on data from the CA Department of Finance, the population in Amador County is primarily White. In fact, 81% of the population in Amador County is White, and 12% is Hispanic, up from 9% in 2000. Just under four percent of the population is Black; about 1.5% is Native American; and 1% is Asian. Less than one tenth of 1% of the population is Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and about 2% is multi-racial. These figures represent the entire population of Amador County, including those who are institutionalized. Therefore, the non-White population may seem larger than it actually is among non-institutionalized residents.

The chart below illustrates the composition of the Amador population by ethnic group according to the CA Department of Finance. Please note that Pacific Islander, at .10% of the population, does not appear on this chart.



Based on data from <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/p-1/documents/P-1%20Report%20Tables.xls>

According to the Family Survey conducted for this Needs Assessment, 66% - were White or Caucasian; another 30% were Latino or Hispanic, 1.5% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and only one respondent – or less than 1% - was African American. Those percentages suggest that a higher percentage responded to the family survey conducted for this report.

### **Employment**

In recent years, due to the effects of the economic downturn in California, the unemployment rate has grown considerably in Amador County and in the state as a whole. The total estimated labor force for November 2009 was 17,880, and the number employed was 15,660. That resulted in an unemployment rate in Amador County as of November 2009 of 12.4%, only slightly higher than the California rate for the same period, which was 12.3%; both were quite a bit higher than the national rate, which was 10%. (All figures from [www.labormarketinfo.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.ca.gov); please note that these rates are not seasonally adjusted). The annual unemployment rate for Amador County in 1999, by comparison, was only 4.6%.

In recent years, many of the county's workforce has begun seeking employment in neighboring counties. The primary source of employment for Amador County residents remains government, with the Mule Creek State Prison in Lone and the Amador County Unified School District employing the largest majority. Jackson Rancheria Casino and Hotel is the largest

private employer in the county. Remaining employers are primarily service industries, manufacturers and retailers. Sources of employment in the county have not changed much in the past several years.

The economic downturn has affected all sectors of the economy. Many local businesses closed in recent months, including all of the County's new car dealerships. County government offices are closed on Fridays, and city budgets also have felt the effects, as have schools. The Jackson Rancheria – the County's largest private employer – recently laid off more than 6% of its workforce.

These layoffs and closures affect many families with young children, and they also affect child care providers, as workers lose their jobs and their need for child care, or they move elsewhere in search of employment.

The effects on the Jackson Rancheria have been profound. Child care – 24 hours a day and seven days a week – has been offered as a benefit to employees for many years at the on-site facility, the Little Oak Learning Center. Employees were charged a rate far below market rate for these services. School-age children of employees also were bused to and from school and the Center at no charge. The Tribal Council, the Rancheria's governing body, recently made the painful decision to cut back services to 16 hours per day, and will be open only from 1 pm to 5 am daily. This reduction in services has meant that many families have had to seek child care elsewhere in the community, most likely at a higher cost. It has also meant that 15-20 staff at the Little Oak Learning Center, which has been Amador County's largest employer of early care and education professionals, also have lost their employment.

### **Family Income**

In 2009, the Federal Poverty Level was \$18,310 for a family of three. The state median income estimated for 2009 was \$47,125 for a family of three persons. According to U.S. Census estimates, the median annual income of families in Amador County in 2007 was \$54,903, and the median income in California was \$59,928. This demonstrates an increase of just over 9% above the 2000 Census levels, when the median annual family income in Amador County was \$51,226.

Also according to the Census, 108 married-couple families with children under 18 had income below poverty level, plus 69 families with a male head of household only, and 257 families with a female head of household only. That results in a total of almost five percent of families in the County with children under the age of 18 living below the federal poverty level.

### **Social Services**

In December 2009 the Amador County Department of Social Services (DSS) reported a total of 414 cases, representing families receiving the following services:

- 167 cases of one-parent families or needy caretakers, representing 188 adults and 290 children;
- 49 cases of two-parent families, representing 95 adults and 116 children;
- 76 cases with zero parents – meaning families of children being cared for by relatives and other caregivers – representing 110 children;
- 18 CalWORKs/TANF cases with 23 adults and 41 children;
- 23 CalWORKs Safety Net cases – cases where parents have timed out of CalWORKs and only the children are receiving cash aid – with no adults and 60 children;
- 28 foster children;
- 50 adoption assistance cases;
- 3 children receiving aid for severe emotional disturbance; and
- 0 children receiving emergency assistance.

All of the cases identified above resulted in a total of 698 children and 306 adults being served by DSS in December 2009. This total is comparable to other months during the same year. This number represents an overall increase of 42% since the previous Needs Assessment was conducted. At that time there was a total reported caseload of 291 children.

According to the Amador County Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services (CPS), a total of 246 children (unduplicated) received “family maintenance” services in the 2009 calendar year. Family maintenance provides services to children in their own homes, aimed at preventing or correcting neglect and abuse, by providing services and supervision for the family. During the same period, the Resource Connection received 18 referrals for child care from CPS.

The number of children certified eligible for Medi-Cal in 2009 was not available; the most current number available from the state was for 2004, which showed 340 children aged birth through 13 eligible ([www.dhs.ca.gov](http://www.dhs.ca.gov)). The number of children receiving Healthy Family services during the year was 371.

### **Migrant Families with Children**

According to the California Department of Education Migrant Education Guide to Program Services in California, migrant workers are defined as those who seek temporary or seasonal work in agriculture, fishing, or related industries including food processing. Generally, they follow growing seasons across the country and are largely responsible for the cultivation and harvest of fruits, vegetables, and other food products. Migrant workers usually have an average income below the national poverty level.

In 2009, no families were identified as migrant families with children in Amador County. The county is not included in the regions established by the federal government where services for migrant families are needed.

### **English Language Learners**

The California Department of Education reports that a total of 194 children were English language learners in the 2008-09 fiscal year. Of those, 181 or 93% were Spanish-speaking. Other languages were Cantonese, Hmong, Khmer, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Portuguese.

### **Homeless Children**

The Central Sierra 2009 Point in Time Homeless Census reported that in Amador County there were 22 children with 73 homeless adults, plus an additional 39 children placed with relatives or agencies. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development advises counties to recognize that a one-night count may result in only 10% of the actual number of homeless persons being counted.

### **Children with Special Needs**

In Amador County, children with special needs receive services from two primary sources, the Amador County Office of Education (ACOE) and Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC).

As of the end of 2009, only ten children were receiving services from VMRC. That compares with 69 children according to the last Needs Assessment in 2004.

At the same time, ACOE reported that 578 children were receiving services for special needs or disabilities, from the age of one to the age of 21. The most prevalent diagnosis was Specific Learning Disability, accounting for 44% of the total. Next were Speech Language Disorder (27%), and Other Health Impairment (7%). Mental Retardation and Autism each accounted for about 4% of the total disabilities.

The family survey conducted as part of this report asked how many children aged birth to 17 with a diagnosed disability or special needs were living in the home. Twenty-six families, or about 11% of those responding, reported one or more children with a disability or other special need living in the home. The highest incidence reported was for 6 cases of ADD/ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), followed by learning disabilities (5) and children diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum (4).

According to the provider survey, more than half reported having at least one child with a disability in their care: 40 respondents or 59% answered in the affirmative. Of those, 73% had an Individualized Educational Plan or IEP. The most common disability was speech; 14 or 35% reported caring for children with that disability. The next most common was autism (11 or 28%), followed by emotional (10 or 25%), ADD/ADHD (7 or 18%), asthma, learning disabilities and food allergies (5 or 13% each), and last was diabetes (4 or 10%).

The tables below identify children in specific communities receiving services from Amador Schools, and the types of disabilities presented by those children.

### Children with Disabilities Receiving Services from Amador Schools by Age Group

| Community                           | Age 0-5   | Age 6-9    | Age 10-14  | Ages 15-19+ |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Jackson / Martell                   | 24        | 26         | 35         | 43          |
| Sutter Creek/ Amador City/ Drytown  | 5         | 23         | 22         | 21          |
| Pioneer/Buckhorn/ Kirkwood          | 8         | 18         | 28         | 15          |
| Pine Grove / Volcano                | 4         | 16         | 22         | 29          |
| lone                                | 23        | 37         | 43         | 42          |
| Plymouth / River Pines / Fiddletown | 13        | 21         | 26         | 19          |
| Other*                              | 2         | 4          | 7          | 2           |
| <b>Totals</b>                       | <b>79</b> | <b>145</b> | <b>183</b> | <b>171</b>  |

\*Other denotes children for whom no place of residence was given. N = 578

### Amador County Children with Disabilities by Diagnosis

| Diagnosed Disability          | Number of Children |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Autism                        | 23                 |
| Deaf/Blind                    | 1                  |
| Deaf                          | 4                  |
| Emotional Disturbance         | 19                 |
| Hard of Hearing               | 12                 |
| Mental Retardation            | 25                 |
| Orthopedic Impairment         | 16                 |
| Other Health Impairment       | 43                 |
| Specific Learning Disability  | 255                |
| Speech or Language Impairment | 156                |
| Visual Impairment             | 11                 |
| Unspecified                   | 10                 |
| Multiple Disabilities         | 3                  |

## Child Care Needs in Amador County

### Need for Care

The Amador Child Care Council estimates that there are 3,898 children aged birth to 13 years with all parents in the workforce. However, the demand for licensed child care is not necessarily the total number of children with working parents. Many parents – especially those with infants – choose relatives or friends to care for their children.

The demand percentages used for various age groups is as follows:

- For children aged birth to 2 years: 37% demand
- For children aged 3 to 5 years: 70% demand
- For children aged 6 and up: 39% demand

These figures are based on a review of child care needs assessment conducted by Brion & Associates, as reported in a Memorandum dated December 19, 2005. The rationale is that parents of infants and toddlers will often choose license-exempt care – likely a relative or friend – for their youngest children. By preschool age, many parents choose to enroll their three-to-five-year-olds in a licensed preschool program – be it Head Start, State Preschool, or a private program – to provide some socialization and to help their children prepare for entry into kindergarten. By the time children are beyond kindergarten age, and are attending school full time, parents may opt for a license-exempt after-school program, such as Amador County's Extended Learning Program, thus reducing the demand for licensed care for that age group.

These percentages constitute a more conservative estimate of the need for child care than has previously been employed. For example, the 2003-04 Needs Assessment for Amador County showed that only 24% of the children with parents in the workforce – and therefore needing child care – were able to find licensed child care spaces. This assumption was based on the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network's 2003 Child Care Portfolio. The most current 2009 Portfolio shows that there are licensed spaces for 31% of children needing care. However, the more conservative estimates used in this report show that the number is closer to 42%. This percentage is still woefully low in terms of the need for licensed, high quality child care in Amador County.

Based on estimates of children aged birth to 13 years with all parents in the workforce, we have a total of 3,898 children needing child care in all age groups. Applying the demand percentages outlined above, there are a total of 1,723 children needing licensed child care. The breakdown by age group is as follows: children ages 0-2 = 223 (37% of 623); children ages 3 – 5 = 502 (70% of 715); children ages 6 and up = 998 (39% of 2560).

**Given that there are licensed spaces for 718 children, the unmet demand is 58%. In other words, about 1,005 children whose parents are demanding licensed child care must go without it as there is no supply to meet that demand.**

The need for infant care continues to be the greatest concern. Currently, the one child care center specializing in infant care is inactive, further decreasing the supply. However, two family child care homes in the city of Jackson do provide infant care, which helps to fill the need slightly. It is difficult to say how many other family child care homes are caring for infants at any given time, as family child care homes are licensed for a specific number of children, not for children of specific ages. Additionally, the enrollment changes frequently, making the number of spaces for infants and toddlers difficult to pinpoint. Calls to the Resource Connection for families seeking child care continue to be highest for children aged birth to two years. Last year the referrals for care for children aged birth to two years numbered 161 out of the total referrals or 225, or 72%. Whether all of these families actually found care for their infants and toddlers – given the small number of licensed spaces available to them – is difficult to determine.

## **Availability of Child Care**

### **Licensed Child Care**

Current capacity of licensed child care in Amador County has decreased slightly, compared to the last Needs Assessment. At that time there were a total of 727 licensed spaces in both child care centers and family child care homes. At the end of 2009, the total capacity is 718, representing a decrease of only about 1% of total capacity.

The total number of spaces in family child care homes is 377, or 53% of the total; the remaining 47% of capacity – a total of 341 spaces – is in child care centers. There are fourteen licensed child care centers currently offering care in Amador County: four of these are State Preschool programs, located in Jackson, Lone, Plymouth, and Pioneer; two are Head Start programs, located in Jackson and Lone; and eight are private programs, with spaces for a total of 185 children. However, this does not mean that all spaces in licensed facilities are available to families. Some licensed providers prefer to care for fewer children than allowed by their license.

Most of the private centers, as well as the State Preschool and Head Start programs, care for children of preschool age, that is, three- and four-year-olds. That is the age group that has been shown to have the largest demand for child care and development services.

There is currently no infant center in Amador County. There are two family child care homes in Jackson that specialize in infant care, but they provide only up to four spaces each for all of the infants in the County: that amounts to a capacity of only about 1% for infants. While some other family child care providers may care for infants, it is difficult to assess the numbers because their licenses are most likely for a range of age groups. However, the capacity of care for infants

and toddlers will increase in the near future due to the awarding of an Early Head Start expansion grant to the Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA). This new program, due to start in the Spring of 2010, will serve a total of 36 infants and toddlers: 16 in centers in Jackson and Lone, and 20 through home visitation programs.

The table below shows the breakdown of licensed child care spaces in various areas of the County. You will find a comparison of supply and demand in the Community Profiles section of this report.

### **Availability of Licensed Child Care by Community**

| <b>Community</b> | <b>Family Child Care</b> | <b>Center Care</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Ione             | 84                       | 64                 | 148          |
| Jackson          | 104                      | 88                 | 192          |
| Pine Grove       | 52                       | 77                 | 129          |
| Pioneer          | 8                        | 64                 | 72           |
| Plymouth         | 49                       | 48                 | 97           |
| Sutter Creek     | 80                       | 0                  | 80           |
| <b>Totals</b>    | <b>377</b>               | <b>323</b>         | <b>718</b>   |

### **Availability of License-Exempt Child Care**

License exempt providers also include relatives, care in a child's own home (in-home care, such as a nanny), and TrustLine providers. The latter may care for the children from one family other than their own and must go through a background check (TrustLine) by the Department of Justice, with the exception of certain relatives to the children. In Amador County in 2009 there were a total of 148 children from 88 families being cared for by licensed exempt providers.

In addition, there were 282 children enrolled in the Extended Learning Program, which has six sites on elementary school campuses, and approximately 220 children enrolled at Little Oak Learning Center (LOLC) at the Jackson Rancheria, serving children aged 18 months and up whose parents are employed by the Rancheria. This number has declined due to recent service cutbacks. At the time of the Provider Survey there were 422 children being served, but not all were Amador County residents.

### **Subsidized Care**

The Resource Connection helps qualified families pay for child care through its Alternative Payment Program (APP). Families may qualify for subsidized child care if they are enrolled in CalWORKs, California's welfare-to-work program, or are earning 75% or less of the state median income. In the period July through December 2009, the APP served 306 children from 183 families. That number included: 29 infants up to 18 months; 55 toddlers aged 18 months to three years; 60 preschool aged children from three to five years; and 162 school-aged children. In addition to those families being served, many are qualified for subsidies but are not being served due to inadequate funding for the program. The Resource Connection maintains a Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) for children whose families qualify for subsidized care but for whom there is no funding. If other families cease to have a need for care, qualified families can then be enrolled in the program. In December 2009 there were another 187 children on the CEL: 42 infants and toddlers, 104 preschoolers, and 41 school-aged children. That means that only a minimum of 62% of children who are eligible for child care subsidies are being served. That number is likely to be a conservative estimate because not all families are aware of the existence of the CEL and have not enrolled onto the list.

#### **Children Eligible for Child Care Subsidies by Age Group**

| <b>Ages of Children</b> | <b>Number of Children Receiving Subsidies</b> | <b>Number of Children on the CEL</b> | <b>Total Eligible Children</b> |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 0 to 2 years            | 84  | 42                                   | 126                            |
| 3 to 5 years            | 60  | 104                                  | 164                            |
| 6 and older             | 162   | 41                                   | 203                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>306</b>                                    | <b>187</b>                           | <b>493</b>                     |

### **Cost of Care**

For many families, the cost of child care can be prohibitive. The daily average, depending on the age of the child, averages between \$25 and \$35. The cost for an infant can range up to \$1000 per month. The cost of care is highest for infants and is lowest for school-age children. If a family has two or more children in child care, the cost can amount to a significant portion of the family's budget.

The tables below show the maximum reimbursement rates paid by the CA Department of Education for subsidized centers, family child care homes and TrustLine providers, and the average cost of care for center-based and family child care in Amador County.

**Child Care Centers Maximum Reimbursement**

| Age Group          | Full-time Daily | Full-time Weekly | Full-time Monthly | Part-time Hourly | Part-time Weekly | Part-time Monthly |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Birth to 24 Months | 57.52           | 222.80           | 903.22            | 8.77             | 172.80           | 659.47            |
| 2 through 5 Years  | 38.07           | 160.22           | 646.29            | 6.33             | 155.23           | 630.07            |
| School Age         | 32.83           | 138.52           | 528.52            | 7.82             | 84.84            | 330.93            |

**Child Care Centers Average Rate**

| Age Group          | Full-time Daily | Full-time Weekly | Full-time Monthly | Part-time Hourly | Part-time Weekly | Part-time Monthly |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Birth to 24 Months | 43.40           | 191.22           | 780.14            | 6.86             | 143.03           | 560.84            |
| 2 through 5 Years  | 29.17           | 132.04           | 526.90            | 5.05             | 98.23            | 365.45            |
| School Age         | 24.18           | 112.22           | 423.50            | 5.98             | 65.15            | 258.81            |

**Family Child Care Homes Maximum Reimbursement**

| Age Group          | Full-time Daily | Full-time Weekly | Full-time Monthly | Part-time Hourly | Part-time Weekly | Part-time Monthly |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Birth to 24 Months | 32.46           | 152.91           | 616.41            | 5.89             | 143.41           | 507.29            |
| 2 through 5 Years  | 30.46           | 135.48           | 558.82            | 5.61             | 124.29           | 428.31            |
| School Age         | 29.24           | 132.19           | 540.41            | 5.36             | 96.92            | 370.16            |

**Family Child Care Homes Average Rate**

| Age Group | Full-time | Full-time | Full-time | Part-time | Part-time | Part-time |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|

|                    | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Hourly | Weekly | Monthly |
|--------------------|-------|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| Birth to 24 Months | 26.43 | 124.88 | 498.05  | 4.72   | 105.37 | 386.69  |
| 2 through 5 Years  | 24.09 | 114.71 | 466.86  | 4.40   | 80.22  | 317.54  |
| School Age         | 22.05 | 104.11 | 412.03  | 4.12   | 72.34  | 278.13  |

**TrustLined/Relative Care Maximum Reimbursement**

| Age Group          | Full-time Daily | Full-time Weekly | Full-time Monthly | Part-time Hourly |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Birth to 24 Months | 29.21           | 137.62           | 554.77            | 3.40             |
| 2 through 5 Years  | 27.41           | 121.93           | 502.94            | 3.01             |
| School Age         | 26.32           | 118.97           | 486.37            | 2.94             |

Source: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/cd/ap/index.aspx>

## Families of Amador County

### Family Survey Results

Families in Amador County were surveyed on several topics: family information, including gender, marital status, ethnicity, employment and income, and children's ages; and child care needs and services, including types of care utilized, cost of care, and barriers to accessing child care. There were 228 surveys returned to the Amador Child Care Council, but it is difficult to determine the response rate because of the methods for distributing the surveys. Some surveys were provided to parents with children enrolled in existing child care programs, and some were distributed to parent groups. Hard copies of the surveys were either made available at program sites or mailed, and some were distributed by electronic mail. Surveys were distributed in both English and Spanish. Of those returned, 173 were in English and 55 were in Spanish. In addition, 12 surveys were returned by families not residing in Amador County, and thus were not included in the survey results. For the purposes of analyzing the results here, all respondents will be referred to as "parents."

#### Family Characteristics

*Gender:* Almost all of the respondents – 94% – were female.

*Age:* Ages of the parents fell into the following categories: Less than 1% were aged 14-17 and the same was true for ages 18-20; 46% were aged 21-30; 39% were aged 31-40; 8% were aged 41-50; 3.5% were aged 51-60 and 1.5% were over age 61; the latter two categories accounted for grandparents raising their grandchildren. The results show that a large majority – more than 85% – of those parents responding were in the 21-40 age range.

*Marital status:* Most were married (65%); 28% were single, 5% were divorced, 1% separated, and less than 1% widowed.

*Ethnic background:* When responding to a question about ethnic background, most respondents – 66% - were White or Caucasian; another 30% were Latino or Hispanic, 1.5% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and only one respondent – or less than 1% - was African American. Another two percent (five respondents) declined to answer this question.

*Employment status:* Full-time workers accounted for 33% of those surveyed; 17% worked part-time, 7% were seasonal workers, 2% were retired, and 18% were unemployed. A full 17% chose "Other" and offered descriptions. Most of these were students; in fact, more described themselves as students than responded as "Other," meaning that many are students as well as being employed. Additional responses included stay at home moms or homemakers (11 or 29%

of the “Other” category); and others were self-employed or disabled. Six percent declined to answer this question.

*Place of residence:* Almost half of families responding to the survey (43%) reside in 95640, which includes the City of Lone and the area of Camanche Lake; another 21% resided in 95642, which is the City of Jackson and surrounding area; the next most frequent zip code was 95669 (Plymouth) with 12%; that was followed by 95666 (Pioneer) with 9%; Sutter Creek, or 95685 was the residence for 6%; Pine Grove and area, 95665 had 5%; Fiddletown (95629) and Volcano (95689) each had 2% and River Pines (95675) had only 1% of the respondents living in that zip code.

*Adults in the home:* More than half of the families (51%) reported two adults living in the home. A whopping 96% of the respondents reported that they were the parent of the children in the home. An additional 3% were grandparents, and 1% were foster parents. Of the families reporting, 71% had two parents residing in the home; 26% had one parent, and 2% had reported three parents in the home. Another 2% declined to respond to this question.

*Languages spoken:* A large majority of families (69%) most often spoke English in their home; another 22% spoke Spanish, one family spoke Russian, and 8% declined to answer this question.

*Ages of children:* The survey asked families to list the number of children living in the household for various age groups. Forty-six percent of families responding had from one to three children ages birth to two years residing in the home; 70% had children ages 3 to 5 years; 40% had children ages 6 to 12; and 14% had children ages 13 to 17 residing in the home.

*Children with special needs:* The survey asked how many children aged birth to 17 with a diagnosed disability or special needs were living in the home. Only 26 families (or 11%) reported one or more children in the home. The highest incidence reported was for 6 cases of ADD/ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), followed by learning disabilities (5) and children diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum (4).

### **Employment, Education, and Family Income**

*Employment:* Of the families reporting, 58% said that only one parent living in the home was employed; 26% of households had two employed parents, and 16% reported no parent was employed. Some of these non-working parents may be students and therefore may need child care services.

*Parent education levels:* Thirty-five percent of parents reporting attended some college. 22% of respondents had 1 to 3 years of college, of those, 12 had AA degrees. Another 8% had four years of college, with 24 having achieved a BA or BS degree. Another 5% attended

graduate school; seven had received graduate degrees. Eight percent of parents had attended a technical or vocational school, and for 28% a high school diploma or GED was the highest education level attained. Another 11% had only some high school, and 8% had reached only eighth grade or lower in their education.

*Family income:* In terms of total household income, 17% earned \$5,000 or less per year; 11% earned between \$5,000 and \$10,000; 22% earned between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per year; 14% earned from \$20,000 to \$30,000; 12% earned between \$30,000 and \$50,000; 8% earned \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year; and 6% earned between \$75,000 and \$100,000. About 5% of the families had a total annual household income of more than \$100,000, and another 5% declined to respond to the question on household income. The results show that almost half of our families, or 48%, earn between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per year. While we are unable to determine median income of the respondents because a range of incomes was given, recall that the median income for the County in 20076 was \$54,903.

### **Child Care Services, Subsidies, and their Effects on Ability to Work**

*Child care subsidies:* Only 25% of families reported that they receive assistance with the cost of child care. Of those, 91% received assistance from the Resource Connection; another 7% had assistance from an employer, and 1% identified TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and Head Start, respectively.

*Commuting patterns:* Parents were asked if they commute to work to another county. Only 9% said they did so. When asked how far the roundtrip to their child's care facility was, parents' responses varied from ¼ mile to 111 miles. The average commute distance was 13.5 miles; removing the outliers (less than one mile and 100 miles or more) resulted in an average of about 11.75 miles round trip to the child care facility. Most parents drove their children to the facility, with only a few using buses or walking.

*Effects of child care need on employment:* Parents were asked if their employers allowed flexible schedules or other practices to assist them with their child care needs. About 28% answered that they did. Many parents were able to set their own schedules, to change or rotate shifts, and some were able to telecommute or otherwise work at home.

Parents also were asked what they did if their child was ill. Most of those responding (21% of all parents) stayed home from work without pay. Another 18% stayed home using sick leave, and 17% took the child to relatives or friends.

## **Unmet Need and Barriers to Child Care Services**

*Unmet need for child care services:* Thirty families, or 13% of those responding, reported that they have children in the home who need child care but are not getting services. Of those, 50% have children aged birth to two needing care; 60% have children aged 3 to 5 years needing care; and 43% have children aged 6 to 10 years who do not have needed care. The reason given most for children not being enrolled in child care was that there was a parent at home; families could not afford care; the parents were unemployed, or they could not find adequate care.

When asked if they had ever had to go without child care when they needed it, 25% responded that they had. The top reasons for not getting needed care were the care was unavailable (particularly infant care), they could not afford it, or the provider was ill. Other reasons were no care was available on holidays or during evening or weekend hours, or that the program closed.

How did families resolve the situation of having to go without child care? Most stayed home, took time off work, or were unable to work at all; some found a friend or other providers of child care; and some waited until they were enrolled in subsidized care. One parent responded to the question by replying "I haven't;" in other words, this family still does not have the child care it needs.

*Barriers to child care:* The survey asked parents to rank a list of potential barriers to accessing child care for their family. Items listed were cost of care, type of care offered (e.g., infant/toddler, before/after school), hours and days of care, location of care (distance from home or work, transportation, quality, and "other." The highest barrier, ranked as either large or very large at 41%, was the cost of care. Another 25% listed type of care as a large or very large barrier, and another 25% ranked quality of care as a large or very large barrier. However, more families (30%) reported that type of care was either not a barrier or a slight barrier, and 38% reported that quality of care was either not a barrier or a slight barrier. Other obstacles listed were lack of care for an autistic child, lack of care for a child who was not toilet trained, and lack of care early in the morning (6 to 8 am).

## **Quality of Care**

*Choosing child care:* Parents also were asked how they rank certain aspects of care from most to least important: cost of care, location of care, type of care setting, quality of care, provider's qualifications, or "other." The most important factor when choosing child care for most parents was quality; 41% or 94 parents considered it number one. Next was cost of care at 11%, then provider qualifications (10%), followed by type of care (8%), and finally, location of care at 6%. Other factors parents considered when choosing care were transportation, referrals from others, homework help, the educational aspects of a program, and the provider's experience.

*Quality of care:* When asked if they believed their child was in a quality child care setting, most parents – 48% or 109 – responded “yes.” However, 94 parents or 41% did not answer this question, so the percentage of those actually responding would be 81% “yes” and 19% who responded “no.” The survey also asked to explain why they thought the quality was high. Many parents praised their own family members, and some thought the teachers in a particular program were great. Some responses were more detailed, such as “the children are happy, healthy, and learning” or “he is happy & in a loving, structured, engaging and enriching environment.” It should be noted that many respondents did not recognize preschool or Head Start programs as being “child care” and therefore did not believe their child was actually enrolled in a child care program.

*Providers’ knowledge and ability:* Finally, parents were asked to rank the providers’ knowledge of and ability to provide a number of different services: information about child education and development needs; a safe environment; information about community resources/activities for children; information about financial supports and subsidies; link to public education teachers and system; and non-child care related referrals and/or resources. Respondents were asked to rank their providers as poor, below average, average, above average, excellent, or “don’t know.”

A high number of survey respondents failed to answer this question, which would skew the results if responses were compared to the total number of surveys received. Therefore, the percentages have been calculated based on the number of responses for each part of the question. More than half of the respondents thought their provider’s knowledge and ability to provide services in the following areas ranked either above average or excellent: 62% of those responding thought their provider ranked well in providing information about child education and development needs; 68% thought they provided a safe environment for their children; 65% thought they provided an enriching environment; and 60% thought they got good information about community resources and activities for children. The results for the other areas were not so favorable: only 46% of those responding to this part of the question thought they got above average or excellent information about financial supports and subsidies; only 48% thought they got links to public education; and only 38% thought they got non-child care related referrals or resources.

## Providers in Amador County

### Early Care and Education Professionals in Amador County

The survey was distributed to all Early Care and Education (ECE) professionals working in Amador County. Surveys were sent out to family child care providers and private center operators through the Resource Connection. Surveys also were distributed directly to staff at Amador State Preschool, Head Start, the Extended Learning Program, and Little Oak Learning Center. Sixty-eight teachers or providers responded to the survey. Of these, almost half (32 or 47%) are employed by Little Oak Learning Center. That number is significant due to its impact on the responses compiled and analyzed here.

#### Workforce Demographics

Demographic information asked of the survey participants included questions about gender, age, marital status, race and ethnicity, family composition, and income – both total household and employment income.

*Gender:* Of those who responded, all were female, although six declined to state.

*Age:* Of those taking the survey, seven or 11% declined to state their age. Of those who did, those under 40 years of age and those over 40 were almost equally divided (32% and 29% respectively). Providers in the 18 – 20 range equaled 3 or 4%; ages 21 to 30 were 11 or 16%; 31 to 40 number 18 or 26%. Of the over-forties, 13 or 19% were 41-50; 12 or 18% were aged 51-60; and 4 or 6% were aged 61 or over.

*Marital status:* The majority of respondents (41 or 61%) were married. Another 9 (13%) were single, 9 (13%) were divorced, and 9 (13%) declined to state. None of the respondents was separated or widowed.

*Race and ethnicity:* A large majority of respondents were White/Caucasian: 57 or 84%. Only 3 or 4% stated they are Latino/Hispanic, and only one (1%) was Black/African American and one was Native American. Six or 9% declined to answer this question, and none identified herself as Asian/Pacific Islander or Other.

*Family age groups:* The survey asked the number of children and adults living in the respondent's home in three age groups: 0-5, 6-17 and adults age 18 and up. Forty-nine indicated no children in the 0-5 age group; 13 had one child, five had two children, and 1 had three children aged birth to five living in their homes. For ages 6-17, 45 had none in the home,

seven had one child, 12 had two children, one had three, one had four and two had five children aged 6-17 in the home. The responses for the number of adults are unclear, as 11 answered zero adults in the home, so they may not have been counting themselves in that response. Seven indicated one adults, 35 indicated two, ten said there were three, two answered four and three responded that there were five adults aged 18 and up in the home.

*Household Income:* This question asked for income in ranges from \$0 to over \$100,000 estimated total annual income in the household. No one responded that their total was less than \$10,000. Six or 9% were in the \$10,000-20,000 range; four or 6% were in the \$20,000 – 30,000 range; 18 or 26% were in the \$30,000 – 50,000 range; 20 or 29% were in the \$50,000 – 75,000 range; 8 or 12% were in the 75,000 – 100,000 range; and three or 4% had total annual household incomes of more than \$100,000. Nine respondents or 13% declined to answer this question.

*Languages spoken:* Almost all providers surveyed, 64 or 94% were fluent in English. Only one (1%) was fluent in Spanish, two (3%) in American Sign Language, and one (1%) in Dutch. One provider listed Baby Sign Language as well.

### **Employment, Work History, Education & Training**

*Type of Service:* Of the sixty-eight respondents, eight or 12% were employed by Amador State Preschools; another eight worked for Head Start; two (3%) worked in the Extended Learning Program; 15 or 22% were family child care operators; and fully half - 34 or 50% - were employed by private child care centers. As noted above, 47% of that 50% worked at Little Oak Learning Center. One respondent declined to answer this question.

*Place of Employment:* More than half of the providers surveyed – 44 or 65% worked in the city of Jackson (Little Oak Learning Center is located in Jackson); nine of the providers or 13% worked in Ione; four (6%) worked in Plymouth and another four in Sutter Creek; only three of the respondents (4%) worked in Pioneer and two (3%) in Pine Grove. Two respondents or 3% declined to answer.

*Time in the field:* More than half of those surveyed have worked in the field of early care and education for ten years or less: 40 individuals or 59%. Twenty-five or 37% have worked between 10 and 35 years. To break it down further, 26 or 38% have been in the field five years or less; 13 or 19% have for between five and ten years; 10 or 15% between 10 and 15 years; 8 or 12% between 15 and 20 years; four or 6% between 20 and 30 years; and three or 4% have worked in early education for more than 30 years. Three or 4% declined to answer this question.

*Education levels:* Most of the workforce surveyed had at least some college. Only two or 3% do not have a high school diploma, and only 13 or 19% had high school only. More had some college than have degrees: 39 or 57% stated they had 1-3 years of college, and 6 of those (9% of the total) had AA degrees; 11 or 16% had four years but only eight of those had BA degrees; two respondents had been to graduate school and both of those received MA degrees.

*Current education:* Sixteen or 24% of those surveyed were enrolled in college classes. Of those who are not, eight or 12% gave the answer that their degree is complete; another four or 6% claimed that courses were unavailable, one said that transportation was an issue. Most who answered – 22 or 32% – said they do not have the time to attend college classes.

*Permits held:* More than one-third – 24 or 35% - of those surveyed hold Child Development Permits. Another 8 or 12% hold credentials from the California Department of Education.

*Paid work hours:* Eight respondents or 12% worked 30 paid hours or less per week; another 39 or 61% were paid between 31 and 40 hours; an additional 17 or 27% were paid to work between 41 and 50 hours per week. Four or 6% declined to answer this question.

*Unpaid hours:* Many in the field put in hours for which they did not receive compensation. More than half (51 or 75%) stated they worked up to ten hours without pay each week. Another four or 6% worked 11 to 20 hours, three or 4% worked 21 to 30 hours, and three or 4% worked more than 30 unpaid hours per week. Seven or 10% declined to respond to this question.

*Income from ECE:* In addition to total household income, the survey asked about gross annual income from working in the ECE field. As might be expected – due to the majority of respondents being married – income from the field was much lower than total income. Whereas no one reported total income less than \$10,000 annually, seven (10%) did for income as a teacher or provider. Only ten reported total income of between \$10,000 and \$30,000 per year, whereas 42 respondents or 62% reported earnings in that range. Another seven or 10% earned between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year and only two or 3% earned more than \$40,000 from their employment. That compares to 31 respondents or almost half (46%) who had total household income of more than \$50,000 per year. Nine of those surveyed or 13% declined to respond to this question.

*Benefits:* Most of those surveyed – 45 or 66% reported that they do receive benefits. Of those, most received medical, dental and retirement benefits (40 or 59% of the total; other benefits received were vision (36 or 53%), sick leave (35 or 51%), vacation (32 or 47%), and child care (24 or 35%). However, this means that more than one-third of those working in the ECE field do not receive any of the above benefits.

*Training:* When asked if they were compensated for training days, forty or 59% answered that they were. Twenty-four or 35% spent two to five days each year in workshops related to child care, another 11 or 16% spent 5 to 10 days, and seven or 10% spent more than 10 days per year in training. However, 16 or 24% reported no days spent in workshops or training each year.

### **Programs, Enrollment, & Children in Care**

The survey asked how many hours per week each respondent spent on certain activities, such as quality improvement, preparing curriculum, cleaning, purchasing, and other non-care activities.

*Quality improvement:* Fully half (34) responded they spend zero hours on quality improvement. Twenty-five or 37% spend 1 to 5 hours per week, and eight or 12% spend 6 to 15 hours per week on quality improvement.

*Curriculum preparation:* Almost half of the respondents (33 or 49%) spend 1 to 5 hours per week on curriculum preparation; another 11 or 16% spend 6 to 10 hours per week and 3 or 4% stated they spend 25 hours per week preparing curriculum. Twenty-one or 31% spend no hours on this activity.

*Cleaning and sanitizing:* Almost half (33 or 49%) spend 1 to 5 hours cleaning their facilities; 15 or 22% spend between 6 and 10 hours and 6 or 9% spend more than 10 hours on this chore. An additional 14 or 21% spend no hours on cleaning and sanitizing. We hope that there are co-workers who undertake this task.

*Purchasing:* More than half (36 or 63%) spent no time on purchasing activities for their programs. Thirty or 44% of respondents spent 1 to 5 hours per week, and only two or 3% spent more than five hours per week on this activity.

*Other activities:* Eleven respondents or 16% spent additional non-care time – between one and 30 hours per week – on administrative work, paperwork, child assessments, planning and scheduling, and interacting with parents.

*Days & hours of operation:* Most programs were open Monday through Friday: 90% were open Monday; 97% were open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; 96% were open Friday. Close to half were open Saturday (51%) and Sunday (47%). This response is likely to be attributed to the fact that 32 of the respondents were employed by Little Oak Learning Center, which was then open seven days a week, 24 hours per day. In fact, 32 did respond yes to being open 24 hours. Hours varied among other programs: the earliest opening was 5:30 am and the latest closing was 11:30 pm. Several programs opened between 6 and 8 am and closed between 4 and 6 pm.

*Closing:* The reasons given for program closures were holidays, vacation, sick days, training, and planning. Most programs did not close for vacations: 74% responded that they did not. Forty-one percent closed for only one holiday per year. Fifty-seven or 84% do not close for sick days; 90% do not close for training and 96% do not close for planning.

*Children in care:* The numbers of children being cared for by the survey respondents varied from 2 in a family child care home to 422 at the Little Oak Learning Center (LOLC). It is difficult to determine an average number of children in care due to the large number responding from LOLC. Since the recent cutbacks in service that were made after the surveys were collected, that number is lower by about 200 children who were being cared for during daytime hours that no longer are available.

*Children with disabilities:* More than half of the providers surveyed reported having at least one child with a disability in their care: 40 respondents or 59% answered in the affirmative. Of those, 73% had Individualized Educational Plan or IEP. The most common disability was speech; 14 or 35% reported caring for children with that disability. The next most common was autism (11 or 28%), followed by emotional (10 or 25%), ADD/ADHD (7 or 18%), asthma, learning disabilities and food allergies (5 or 13% each), and last was diabetes (4 or 10%).

*Waiting lists:* Fifty-five respondents or 81% said they keep a waiting list for their program. Most had between one and five children on those lists waiting for care. Of those keeping waiting lists, more than half (60%) filled vacancies on a first-come, first-served basis; 42% enrolled based on matching hours needed to hours available; another 24% enrolled siblings of children already in care; only 4% (2 respondents) used the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) to fill openings.

*Supports for families:* The survey asked: what are the top three services that families most often request? The top three were: 1) questions about other care, such as before and after school, weekend care, drop-in care, and care beyond the parents' work time for errands and outings; 2) questions about child development, including curriculum, kindergarten readiness, behavior issues, potty training, speech therapy, and parenting classes; 3) questions about food, including food bank and other programs, food allergies, and ideas for meals and snacks. Other services requested included transportation, homework help, medical and dental insurance and services, care for infants and toddlers, and help with the cost of care.

*Support from the Amador Child Care Council (ACCC):* The final question providers were asked was "How could the ACCC best support you as a provider?" The top three responses were: 1) more local college classes, including general education and ECE; 2) workshops, trainings and guest speakers; 3) provide information. Other responses included educating parents and the community on the importance of ECE, and help paying for curriculum.

## **Employers in Amador County**

### **The Characteristics of the Amador County Workplace**

A survey of Amador County employers was conducted to identify their employees' needs, wants and desires related to child care, as well as barriers and issues that may inhibit employers from assisting or accommodating employees with their child care needs. The survey was mailed to 104 employers in Amador County. Six were returned by the post office, and 30 surveys were completed and returned in the postpaid envelopes supplied. The returns signified an approximate 31% rate of response.

#### **Types and Size of Business, Employee Pay, & Hours of Operation**

Of the 30 respondents, 17% were in the service sector, another 17% were in retail, 7% were in banking and finance, 7% were in health care, 10% were in government, and 27% - the largest sector – were in the hospitality business, which includes restaurants, hotels, and wineries. Another 8% categorized their business as “other;” among those were a newspaper, a golf course, a mining operation, a title company, and a special district.

The size of the businesses who responded to the survey varied greatly: the range of employees was from three to 450. The total number of employees employed by the responding businesses was 1,015, resulting in an average of about 34 employees per business. Full-time employees ranged from none to 95; part-time ranged from none to 39; and seasonal employees ranged from none to 23 workers.

Employers were asked to state the pay range for entry level employees. Salaries ranged from minimum wage to up to \$24 per hour. The lowest starting pay, perhaps not surprisingly, was in the service and the retail sectors. The highest entry level pay was in the government sector.

Days and hours of operation varied, generally according to the type of business. Nine respondents – about 30% - said they were open seven days a week; another three were open six days per week, resulting in about 40% of employers requiring their employees to work at least one weekend day. The local hotels who responded are open 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Most of the respondents are open Monday through Friday, from as early as 6 am to as late as 6 pm.

#### **Child Care Needs of Employees**

The Employer Survey asked respondents to estimate the percentage of their employees who had children under the age of 12 years. Again, the responses varied greatly, from none to

100%. The average number of employees with children was about 20%. Employers also were asked the number of employees with children aged 13 and under who had their children in some form of child care: with relatives, in private homes, or in licensed centers or family child care homes. About half of the respondents had children enrolled in some type of child care.

Forty percent of the employers had experienced attendance problems as a result of their employees' child care needs. The reasons include children's illness, lack of before-school care and evening care, lack of care when school is out for non-holidays, and the parent cannot afford to pay and is not qualified for child care subsidies.

### **Child Care Policies and Benefits**

The Employer Survey asked Amador County businesses to provide information on what kind of policies and/or benefits related to child care are offered by their organizations. A full 70% of employers answered that they allow flexibility in their employees' schedules to accommodate for child care needs and availability. When asked to describe how they make such accommodations, employers said they try to schedule around parents' needs, rotate shifts when necessary, or vary shifts around school functions. One employer – a restaurant operator – even said they pay for child care on occasion. Another employer – one of the city governments who responded – put it most succinctly: “We work it out.”

Only two of the employer respondents answered that they provide any benefits beyond what is required in the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Simply put, the FMLA was created in 1993 to provide up to 12 weeks of excused absence each year to employees of companies with 50 or more employees. It should be noted that the majority of employers responding to the survey would not fall into that size category.

Respondents also were asked if they currently have any plans to offer on-site or off-site child care, either independently or in collaboration with other businesses. None said that they currently had any plans to do so, and none was interested in offering on-site care. However, three replied that they would be interested in collaborating with other businesses to subsidize a local child care facility. Those three employers, plus an additional two, said they were interested in learning more about child care related issues, policies, and benefits.

## Key Informant Interviews

Members of the Amador Child Care Council conducted interviews with targeted members of the community – particularly early care and education professionals, employers, representatives of the faith-based community, and realtors. Below are selected comments from some of these interviews.

### **Child Care Providers**

Many providers have experienced challenges due to the economic downturn in recent months. One said that parents have cut down on the number of days of care, do not bring lunch for their children, and avoid extra charges. Others said they have had problems with parents paying, such as paying later in the month; others have reported problems with NSF checks. Jennifer Millington, owner of Sweet Pea Educare, stated that “parents have lost child care subsidy, but are working around it to cover costs.”

### **Employers**

As noted in the employer survey, some Amador County businesses have experienced problems if their employees cannot find adequate child care. Joan Lozano, of the Wal-Mart Human Resources Department, reported that “... a lot of times there is no night or weekend care available. I think this affects who can accept a job during the different shifts.” Melody Mauk, Employee Benefits Manager for the Jackson Rancheria, stated that even though the Rancheria has supplied care for employees’ children aged 18 months to 12 years, “The lack of infant care is an issue....”

### **Faith-Based**

As with other providers of supports to families, particularly in difficult economic times, members of the faith-based community tend to report increased need for services. Danise Kaps, Pastor at Sutter Creek Church of the Nazarene, responded thus when asked if she knew of any families having difficulty finding child care: “Yes, I am working with five families right now where the parents have been laid off and are trying to attend job interviews. They have lost their child care resource due to being unemployed but they need ‘drop in’ care available for them to utilize while they are seeking and interviewing for jobs. This resource is not available so it makes it very difficult for people to go through the process of finding new employment.”

### **Realtors**

Most realtors responded to questions about child care need by stating that their client lists were generally made up of older or retired home buyers, but one said, “I am fairly new to real estate, but I can tell you that my first client was very concerned about child care; that was their first priority in looking in the area. Before they put an offer in on a house they wanted to make sure there was ‘good’ child care nearby....”

## **Additional Trends Affecting Child Care in Amador County**

### **Early Head Start**

The Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency (ATCAA) was awarded expansion funds for Early Head Start, which serves infants and toddlers, in late 2009. These services will provide critically-needed services for low-income families, starting in 2010. The new Early Head Start program will serve 16 children in centers in Jackson and Lone, and will provide home visitation services to another 20 families with infants and toddlers.

### **The Economy**

- The current economic downturn, which began in 2007-08 with the housing and mortgage crisis, continues to affect children and families in Amador County. We know anecdotally that many families have moved out of the County due to the lack of employment opportunities.
- There has been an increase over the past few months in enrollment for both State Preschool and Head Start programs, which provide services for low-income families, and many families are waiting for services.
- The economic situation has also forced layoffs at the Jackson Rancheria, causing a cutback in staff and services at the Little Oak Learning Center. In December 2009 the center, formerly open 24/7 for the children of employees, is now open only from 1 pm to 5 am daily. Since the provider survey, which counted 422 children enrolled, there are now only about 220 children from 131 families receiving care. In addition, there are now only 29 employees, reflecting layoffs of 15 to 20 staff persons.
- The 2010-11 state budget proposes possible cuts to CalWORKs funding for child care.
- Another victim of the economy is the Child Care Law Center, which has provided invaluable information and advocacy to parents, child care providers, and others in the field of child development for 20 years. They shut their doors in December 2009 due to lack of funding.

### **Economic Impact of Early Care and Education**

Through funding from ABCD Constructing Connections, the ACCC was able to develop an Economic Impact Report of the Early Care and Education industry in Amador County. The report findings show that the industry generates about \$4.9 million annually for the County. This estimate is conservative as it does not include revenue for related programs such as the Amador Child Care Council, First 5 Amador, and the child care Resource & Referral program. In 2008, the industry employed 217 full-time equivalent jobs. Gross receipts from ECE are higher than for field crops, and more people are employed in ECE than are in the construction

industry. The full report, published in June 2008, is available from the Amador Child Care Council.

### **ELQIS and ELAC**

California's Early Learning Quality Improvements System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee was authorized by SB 1629 (Steinberg, 2008). CAEL QIS is a new State advisory body that will develop the policy and implementation plan for an Early Learning Quality Improvement System to improve the quality of early education programs. It is also charged with developing an early learning quality rating scale that includes features that most directly contribute to high quality care, and a funding model aligned with the quality rating scale. Such a system would significantly impact ECE programs around the state, and hopefully would lead to increased funding and compensation for workers. The CAEL QIS must submit its recommendations to the legislature by the end of 2010.

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 required governors of each state to create an Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) to advise governors, legislators, and state agencies on how to best meet the needs of young children and their families. This Council is a requirement for eligibility for funding from the Early Learning Challenge grant and in late 2009 Governor Schwarzenegger authorized the ELAC for California. It will likely be an extension of the CAEL QIS Advisory Committee.

### **Facilities Development**

In 2005, the Amador Child Care Council, in collaboration with the Calaveras Child Care Council, was awarded an ABCD (Affordable Buildings for Children's Development) Constructing Connections grant from the Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF) to increase the child care center capacity in the County. Amador County is one of 11 counties selected for this grant, with major funding from First 5 California.

While the ultimate goal is to expand existing or create new facilities, many of the accomplishments have been in the area of land use policy, working with the County and the cities to include language supportive of child care facilities in general plans and zoning ordinances. To date, child care language has been approved in the cities of Lone, Jackson, and Plymouth. The County of Amador has draft language in its General Plan and Vision Statement, which is yet to be approved.

The project has generated several reports, including a Child Care Facility Needs Assessment, an Economic Impact Report (see above), and a Land Use and Community Capital Assessment. There is a website that includes a Resource Catalog for potential child care center operators which can be found at [www.amadorcalaveraschildcare.org](http://www.amadorcalaveraschildcare.org).

### **Federal Funding**

Federal funding for children and families has begun to increase with the election of President Barack Obama. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) – also referred to as stimulus funds – has made an estimated \$85 billion available to the state of California. Some of these funds are dedicated to early care and education programs, such as Head Start and Early Head Start expansion. However, some of the federal dollars have been used to backfill cuts made by the state. For example, funding for AB 212, the stipend program for teachers in state-funded program, came in part from the ARRA monies.

Other federal initiatives that will impact children and families include: the Early Learning Challenge Grant, which is a competitive grant for states and has not been authorized at the time of this report; health care reform, which could increase the availability of health insurance for children and families; the Race to the Top Fund, targeted at improving school systems to make U.S. students more prepared for the global economy and for which 40 states have applied; and the upcoming reauthorization of the TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Block Grant and the Child Nutrition Act.

### **Inclusion of Children with Special Needs**

The Amador Child Care Council has helped facilitate the Children's Inclusive Care Council of Amador & Calaveras (CICC) since it grew out of the Transfer of Knowledge initiative in 2002. The CICC has produced a guide for parents and child care providers to help caregivers determine if a child may have a disability or other special need that requires services. The manual is about to go into its third printing, and has been made available to families and early care and education professionals in both counties. The CICC continues to meet every other month.

### **Mental Health Services**

In 2004, California voters passed Proposition 63 – the Mental Health Services Act – which imposed a 1% tax on wealthy taxpayers to fund mental health services for children, youth, adults and seniors. In early 2009, a steering committee was formed with participation from the Amador Child Care Council to develop the county plans. Steering committee meetings and community input meetings have been held through 2009, and the plan for Prevention and Early Intervention is to be released for public comment in early 2010. Proposed services for young children include intervention for anxiety and depression. Children suffering from mental health or behavioral issues are at risk for delayed learning. In fact, we know that even preschoolers are sometimes expelled from child development programs due to behavioral issues. Services for young children have been lacking in Amador County and new supports for families and children are greatly needed.

### **Outdoor Play**

Much attention has been focused recently on the need for children to spend more time in unsupervised, outdoor play. Increased rates of obesity and related illnesses, behavior problems, and lack of connection to nature have been cited as results of increased time spent in classrooms, increased “screen time” (use of computers, video games, and televisions), and decreased time spent outside playing. Children learn through play; and outdoor, unstructured play is vital to their healthy development. The Amador Child Care Council joined a group of other concerned community members in 2009 to form Amador Children in Nature. Activities have included a community forum, workshops, parent surveys, and a “Prescription for Play.” Through its Constructing Connections project, the ACCC brought Eric Nelson, Director of the Outdoor Classroom Project, to Amador County in March 2009 for a workshop attended by representatives of nine counties. One result was the institution of an outdoor classroom model by Head Start in Amador County.

### **Playgroups**

The Resource Connection has been offering playgroups for children under age 5 in various areas of the County for the past several years. The playgroups, operated with funding from First 5 Amador, served 372 unduplicated children who visited 176 playgroups a total of 2,107 times in the 2008-09 fiscal year. At the time of this report, playgroups were offered in Jackson, Pine Grove, Camanche, and Plymouth. This has been a great benefit to children who may not otherwise experience group play and developmentally appropriate activities.

### **State Budget**

The budget for the state of California has been a challenge for lawmakers in recent years, due to decreases in revenue caused by the economic downturn. Programs such as those offered by First 5 have been threatened, and many services to children and families have been cut. One such example that has impacted us locally is the Amador County CalWORKs funding for child care. Parents are no longer able to receive child care benefits if they are looking for work or going to school. Other impacts include a reduction to funding for Healthy Families, and broad cuts to the budget of Amador schools. Child development programs have fared better than some other programs on the state level, but the current proposed budget again includes a reduction in funding to some statewide programs.

### **Transportation**

Transportation continues to be an issue for Amador County families, particularly those in outlying communities. The Amador Rapid Transit System (ARTS) provides busing along the major transportation corridors in the county. Adults, teens and even younger children use the system at times to get from one place to another. Additionally, child care centers have been known to use the ARTS buses for field trips. However, the schedules can be limited, resulting in long waits for buses. Because transportation funds are reliant on sales tax revenues, the

economic downturn has also affected bus services. An example is that the bus service to River Pines was recently cut. However, we do have new funding in Amador County for a Mobility Management Center. The mission for this new initiative is to “create mobility solutions for the unmet transportation needs of the citizens of Amador County.” The vision is to create a one-stop shop to help individuals access our community’s public transportation and alternative travel options and to provide a personal navigation service that delivers safe, cost-effective and environmentally sound mobility.

### **Unspent Child Development Funds**

The California Department of Education, Child Development Division (CDD) has been working with the California Child Care Coordinators Association (CCCCA) to implement a new policy, starting in July 2009, to reduce the amount of funds returned to CDD each year by child development contractors who are unable to earn their full contract amounts. The local child care and development planning councils in each county have been charged with facilitating a process to match “under-earning” and “over-earning” contractors. Contractors of like type within the county would enter into a “Voluntary, Temporary Transfer of Funds” that would take affect within the fiscal year to ensure that the maximum number of children receive services in the state. This affects only two contractors in Amador County, but should have a greater effect in other counties in California. There are two opportunities to transfer funds within a fiscal year, in November and in May.

### **Use of Unlicensed Care**

Utilization of unlicensed care continues to be high in Amador County. License exempt providers include relatives, care in a child’s own home, TrustLine providers, some public recreation programs, on-site care at schools and care in a provider’s home when care is provided for one or more children from the same family. Legal license exempt status is a category of available care resulting from Federal and State mandates requiring parental choice regarding the care of children. License-exempt centers include the six Extended Learning Program sites at local elementary schools, and Little Oak Learning Center, which is exempt due to its location on tribal land.

### **Workforce Development**

- In 2009, the Amador CARES program, which had provided stipends for teachers and child care providers who cared for children up to age five, lost its funding from First 5 California and First 5 Amador. Funding is still available to the Amador Child Care Council for its AB 212 CARES Program. This program awards stipends for teachers working in state-funded programs, such as State Preschool and Head Start, which has a state-funded component. First 5 Amador offers \$50 scholarships for workshops and conferences, up to \$250 per person per year.

- The Amador Child Care Council also has been working with Sacramento State University to develop a cohort for the B.A. in Child Development distance learning program. We need a minimum of 20 students at transfer level to start a cohort.
- Cosumnes River College has been offering child development classes in Amador County since 2005. The ACCC has been working with the Amador Community College Foundation to bring a full campus to the County, and also is a member of the CRC Early Childhood Education Department's Advisory Committee.

## Community Profiles

### Jackson/Martell

Jackson is the County Seat and provides most of the employment in Amador County. It has a Head Start program, a State Preschool Program, a Parent Cooperative Preschool that meets three part-days per week, a small private center, and 10 family child care homes. Of those, four are large and six are small; two provide infant care.

In addition to the licensed care, Jackson is also has an Extended Learning Program, several unlicensed (TrustLine) providers, and the Little Oak Learning Center, which provides services only to employees of the Jackson Rancheria. However, it is not included here in the supply for this community because it also serves families who reside outside of Jackson, and outside of Amador County, as well as serving children of employees only.

#### Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in Jackson/Martell:

| Age Group     | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5 and up | Total |
|---------------|-----|-----|----------|-------|
| # of Children | 43  | 116 | 147      | 306   |

#### Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:

| Age Group & Program | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5+ | Undetermined |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|--------------|
| Head Start          |     | 20  |    |              |
| Co-op Preschool     |     | 20  |    |              |
| State Preschool     |     | 24  |    |              |
| Private Center      |     | 24  |    |              |
| Family Child Care   | 8   |     |    | 96           |
| Totals              | 8   | 88  |    | 96           |

**Total licensed spaces = 192; total need = 306 children; supply = 62%; gap = 38%.**

#### ◆ Unlicensed care:

- ELP: Capacity of 75 children; current enrollment = 68
- TrustLine providers: Jackson has 15 providers

## Pine Grove / Volcano

Pine Grove has three private child care centers, with a total capacity of 77 children. It also has three small family child care homes, and two large family child care homes, with a total capacity of 52. There is no state preschool or Head Start program in this area, nor are there services specifically for infants and toddlers.

In addition to the licensed care, Pine Grove also has an Extended Learning Program, and several unlicensed (TrustLine) providers. There are no licensed child care centers or homes in the community of Volcano.

### Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in Pine Grove / Volcano:

| Age Group     | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5 and up | Total |
|---------------|-----|-----|----------|-------|
| # of Children | 38  | 101 | 208      | 347   |

### Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:

| Age Group & Program | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5+ | Undetermined |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|--------------|
| Private Center      |     |     |    | 77           |
| Family Child Care   |     |     |    | 52           |
| Totals              |     |     |    | 129          |

**Total licensed spaces = 129; total need = 347 children; supply = 37%; gap = 63%.**

- ◆ Unlicensed care:
  - ELP: Capacity of 75 children; current enrollment = 26
  - TrustLine providers: Pine Grove has 5 and Volcano has 1

## Pioneer/ Buckhorn /Kirkwood

These communities are located in the easternmost area of the County, at elevations of 3,000 feet and above. Transportation is a challenge in these communities, because of the sparse population centers as well as winter weather conditions.

In Pioneer, there are two private child care centers, with a capacity of 40 children, and one small family child home that can serve up to eight children. There is a State Preschool program at the Pioneer Elementary School but there is no Head Start in Pioneer. There is an Extended Learning Program as well as license-exempt TrustLine providers. There is no licensed child care in Buckhorn. There is one private seasonal center in Kirkwood which is not included here in the supply figures, as it is not in the referral data base and seems to be aimed at skiers, with cost at about \$100 per day for care.

### **Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in Pioneer / Buckhorn / Kirkwood**

| <b>Age Group</b> | <b>0-2</b> | <b>3-5</b> | <b>5 and up</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------|------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| # of Children    | 23         | 41         | 162             | 226          |

### **Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:**

| <b>Age Group &amp; Program</b> | <b>0-2</b> | <b>3-5</b> | <b>5+</b> | <b>Undetermined</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Private Center                 |            | 40         |           |                     |
| State Preschool                |            | 24         |           |                     |
| Family Child Care              |            |            |           | 8                   |
| <b>Totals</b>                  |            | 64         |           | 8                   |

**Total licensed spaces = 72; total need = 226 children; supply = 32%; gap = 68%.**

◆ **Unlicensed care:**

- ELP: Capacity of 55 children; current enrollment = 37
- TrustLine providers: There are no such providers in this area.

## Plymouth/River Pines/Fiddletown

Residents of these communities have a large range of incomes, from low-income families to the very wealthy. Many people living here commute long distances to work. Transportation can be an issue for some, as there is a lack of social services available.

There is a State Preschool program and an Extended Learning Program offered at Plymouth Elementary. This community is a wine and tourism center, and there is a large Spanish-speaking population working in the Shenandoah Valley vineyards.

### **Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in Plymouth / River Pines / Fiddletown**

| Age Group     | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5 and up | Total |
|---------------|-----|-----|----------|-------|
| # of Children | 21  | 68  | 173      | 262   |

### **Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:**

| Age Group & Program | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5+ | Undetermined |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|--------------|
| Private Center      |     | 24  |    |              |
| State Preschool     |     | 24  |    |              |
| Family Child Care   |     |     |    | 49           |
| Totals              |     | 48  |    | 49           |

**Total licensed spaces = 97; total need = 262 children; supply = 37%; gap = 63%.**

◆ **Unlicensed care:**

- ELP: Capacity of 40 children; current enrollment = 27
- TrustLine providers: There are 8 in Plymouth and 1 in Fiddletown.

## **Sutter Creek / Amador City / Drytown**

Residents of Sutter Creek and surrounding areas tend to be more affluent than in many other areas of the County. There are a higher proportion of stay-at-home mothers, but there are also many who commute to work in surrounding counties.

There is currently no licensed child care center in this area, nor is there State Preschool or Head Start. There is an Extended Learning Program at Sutter Creek Elementary School. Sutter Creek is also home to Sutter Creek Primary and Amador High School.

### **Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in Sutter Creek / Amador City / Drytown:**

| Age Group     | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5 and up | Total |
|---------------|-----|-----|----------|-------|
| # of Children | 48  | 79  | 149      | 276   |

### **Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:**

| Age Group & Program | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5+ | Undetermined |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|--------------|
| Center              |     |     |    |              |
| Family Child Care   |     |     |    | 80           |
| Totals              |     |     |    | 80           |

**Total licensed spaces = 80; total need = 276 children; supply = 29%; gap = 71%.**

#### ◆ Unlicensed care:

- ELP: Capacity of 100 children; current enrollment = 58
- TrustLine providers: There are 6 providers in Sutter Creek

## **lone/Camanche/Buena Vista**

The presence of several correctional facilities in lone creates a need for off-hour care. Many residents also commute to other counties for work.

lone has no private child care center, but it does have a Head Start program and will have an Early Head Start program starting in 2010. lone Elementary offers both State Preschool and an Extended Learning2 Program. Additional assets in lone include the Indian Health Alliance and the Family Learning Center.

**Estimated need for licensed child care compared to supply in lone / Camanche / Buena Vista:**

| Age Group     | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5 and up | Total |
|---------------|-----|-----|----------|-------|
| # of Children | 50  | 97  | 227      | 374   |

**Current capacity of licensed care in Jackson/Martell:**

| Age Group & Program | 0-2 | 3-5 | 5+ | Undetermined |
|---------------------|-----|-----|----|--------------|
| Private Center      |     |     |    |              |
| State Preschool     |     | 24  |    |              |
| Head Start          |     | 40  |    |              |
| Family Child Care   |     |     |    | 84           |
| Totals              |     | 64  |    | 84           |

**Total licensed spaces = 148; total need = 374 children; supply = 40%; gap = 60%.**

◆ **Unlicensed care:**

- ELP: Capacity of 66 children; current enrollment = 66
- TrustLine providers: There are 11 providers in lone.

## Appendix A: Resources for Report

2000 Census Reports: found at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

*The 2009 California Child Care Portfolio – Amador County*, a Project of the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Amador Chamber of Commerce: [www.amadorcountychamber.com](http://www.amadorcountychamber.com)

Amador County Department of Social Services

Amador County Office of Education, Extended Learning Program & Special Education Department

Amador County Transportation Commission, Mobility Management

Brion & Associates Memorandum, December 19, 2005

California Department of Education: [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

California Department of Finance: [www.dof.ca.gov](http://www.dof.ca.gov)

California Employment Development Division: Monthly Labor Force for Cities and Census Designated Places found at [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov)

Center for Economic Development at the CSU Chico Research Foundation, California State University at Chico

Central Sierra 2009 Point-in-Time Homeless Census

The Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Amador and Calaveras Counties, June 2008

Head Start Community Assessment 2008-11, Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency

Little Oak Learning Center

Private party interviews conducted by members of the Amador Child Care Council

The Resource Connection, Early Childhood Programs and Resource & Referral

## Appendix B: Types of Child Care Services in Amador County

The following definitions were provided by the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network.

### **Child Care Center**

A facility that is licensed to provide care of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and/or school-age children all or part of the day. Centers may be large or small and can be operated independently or by a church or other organization. Most centers are licensed by the state Department of Social Services (DSS).

### **Family Child Care Home**

Care offered in the home of the provider. Small family child care homes usually care for up to eight children, depending on their ages. Large family child care homes have at least two adults and can care for up to 14 children, depending on their ages. Family child care homes are licensed by the DSS.

### **Head Start/Early Head Start**

Head Start is a federally funded program for low-income families with children aged three to five years. Early Head Start provides services for children from prenatal to two years. In addition to child care and early learning programs, these programs offer health care and parent training. Head Start programs are licensed by DSS.

### **Infant/Toddler Care**

Care for children who are under 24 months of age.

### **In-Home Care**

A full-time or part-time child care arrangement where a friend, relative, or nanny cares for a child in the child's home.

### **License-Exempt Care**

Child care which does not require a state license, it is sometimes referred to simply as "exempt care." License-exempt care includes care at the provider's home (if all of the children are from one family), in-home care, and certain centers for school-age children or military child care programs regulated by other agencies.

### **School-Age Care**

Care for elementary and middle-school students which may be provided in homes or center-based settings, sometimes on school grounds.

**State Preschool**

California State Preschool is a three-hour per day, parent/child education program (expanded day programs offered in some locations) that is free to families whose gross monthly income does not exceed the income ceilings established by the California Department of Education. Enrollment in State Preschool is open to children three to five years of age.





21. If so, from what source?

- Human Resources Council -Child Care Resources     
  Family member     
  Employer     
  Other \_\_\_\_\_

22. Do you commute to work to another county? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If so, is your child in care in Amador County? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

23. How do you get your children to the child care setting? \_\_\_\_\_

How far (in miles) is the roundtrip to your child's facility? \_\_\_\_\_

24. For each of your children in care, please fill out the requested information below. (Use additional pages if necessary.)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Age of Child #1 _____<br>Days needing care _____<br>Hours of Care: From _____ To _____   | Age of Child #2 _____<br>Days needing care _____<br>Hours of Care: From _____ To _____   |
| Amount <u>per month</u> paid for child care for Child #1<br>\$_____  | Amount <u>per month</u> paid for child care for Child #2<br>\$_____  |
| Are there any hours you need care for this child that it is unavailable? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br>If yes, what day(s) and times? _____<br>_____ | Are there any hours you need care for this child that it is unavailable? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br>If yes, what day(s) and times? _____<br>_____ |
| Age of Child #3 _____<br>Days needing care _____<br>Hours of Care: From _____ To _____   | Age of Child #4 _____<br>Days needing care _____<br>Hours of Care: From _____ To _____   |
| Amount <u>per month</u> paid for child care for Child #3<br>\$_____  | Amount <u>per month</u> paid for child care for Child #4<br>\$_____  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Are there any hours you need care for this child that it is unavailable? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><br>If yes, what day(s) and times? _____<br>_____<br>_____ | Are there any hours you need care for this child that it is unavailable? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><br>If yes, what day(s) and times? _____<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |
|---|--|

25. Have you ever had to go without child care when you needed it? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_ No

26. If you answered yes to question #25, what was the reason you went without care? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

27. How did you resolve the situation described in question #25? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

28. Does your employer allow flexible scheduling or other practices to help work around your child care needs?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No If so, what

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

29. If your child is ill and cannot attend child care, what do you do?

\_\_\_ Stay Home Without Pay \_\_\_ Stay Home Using Paid Sick Leave \_\_\_ Take to relative or friends  
 \_\_\_ Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

30. Please indicate the degree to which the following items are barriers to accessing child care for your family.

|   | Not a Barrier            | Slight Barrier           | Average Barrier          | Large Barrier            | Very Large Barrier       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Cost of care   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Type of care offered (infant/toddler, before/after school, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Hours and days care is offered                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Location of care (distance from home/work)                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Transporting children to/from care                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Quality  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Other (please describe)<br>_____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

31. How would you rank your provider's knowledge of and ability to provide each of the following services?

|   | Poor                     | Below Average            | Average                  | Above Average            | Excellent                | Don't Know               |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Information about child education and development needs        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) A safe environment for your child(ren)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) An enriching environment for your child(ren)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Information about community resources/ activities for children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Information about financial supports/subsidies                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Link to public education teachers/system                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Non-child care related referrals/resources                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

32. Please indicate the order of priority you place on each of the following when choosing child care. (Number 1 is most important, 2 next in importance, etc.)

Cost of care   
  Location of Care   
  Type of Care Setting   
  Quality of Care  
 Provider's Qualifications   
  Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

33. Do you believe your child is in a quality child care setting?    Yes    No

If so, why \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for taking time to complete this survey!***

**Provider Survey**

**Instructions:** Please check the box or boxes for each question that best fit your situation and opinions. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. The results of the survey will be used to plan for child care services and supporting the early care and education profession in Amador County.

**Personal Information** Questions 1 through 10 are about you and your background. Your responses will provide a picture of the provider community's living situation(s), which can then be used to chart changes, and identify additional improvements and supports necessary to meet your needs.

1. Your gender:  Male  Female    2. Your age:  18-20  21-30  31-40  
 41-50  51-60  over 61
3. Marital Status:  Single  Married  Separated  Divorced  Widowed
4. Ethnic / Race background:  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  
 Black/African-American  
 Latino/Hispanic  
 Native American  
 White/Caucasian  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of people living in your residence (please write number for each item):  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of children age 0-5  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of children age 6-17  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of adults age 18 and up
6. Estimated annual total income of all adults living in household:  
 \$ 0 - 5,000  
 \$ 5,001 - 10,000  
 \$ 10,001 - 20,000  
 \$ 20,001 - 30,000  
 \$ 30,001 - 50,000  
 \$ 50,001 - 75,000  
 \$ 75,001 - 100,000  
 More than \$100,000
7. Work zip code: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Your education level:  
 8th grade or less  
 Some high school  
 GED / High School Diploma  
 1-3 years of college    Degree \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No  
 4 years of college    Degree \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No  
 Graduate School    Degree \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No  
 Technical School    Degree \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
9. Check any of the following permits/credentials you hold that are current:  
 Child Development Permit  
 CDA Credential  
 California Dept. of Education Credential  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. Languages you are fluent in:  English  Spanish  American Sign Language  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Provider and Service Information** Questions 11 through 27 are about you as a provider, your income, including benefits, and the services you offer.

11. How long have you worked as a provider?    Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months \_\_\_\_\_
12. How many **paid** hours do you work each week?  
 5-10     11-20     21-30     31-40     41-50

13. How many **unpaid** hours do you work in child care each week?

- Less than 5       5-10       11-20       21-30       more than 30

14. How many hours **each week** do you/your staff spend doing each of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Quality improvement activities    \_\_\_\_\_ Preparing curriculum    \_\_\_\_\_ Cleaning/sanitizing facilities/home  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Purchasing food / supplies    \_\_\_\_\_ Other non-care activities (Please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

15. What is your **gross** annual income as a child care provider (excluding benefits)?

- \$ 0 - 5,000                                       \$ 10,001 - 20,000                                       \$ 30,001 - 40,000
- \$ 5,001 - 10,000                                       \$ 20,001 - 30,000                                       More than \$40,000

16. Do you offer or are you offered benefits?

If yes, check all benefits you offer or are offered:

- Yes    No                                       Dental    Medical    Vision    Vacation
- Sick Leave    Child care    Retirement    None

17. Are you compensated for training days?  Yes  No

18. What type of service do you provide:

- School district program/special education       State Preschool       Private center       Head Start
- Before/after school program       Family child care

19. Please indicate the average number of days each year that you close for each of the following reasons:

Holidays \_\_\_\_\_ Vacation \_\_\_\_\_ Sick Days \_\_\_\_\_ Training \_\_\_\_\_ Planning \_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you maintain a waiting list?

26. If yes, about how many children are on the list?

- Yes    No                                      \_\_\_\_\_

21. When a space becomes available, how do you most often fill the opening? (Check one)

- First on waiting list       CEL    Siblings of children in care    Hours/type of care needed
- Children with subsidized care    Other \_\_\_\_\_

22. What days of the week do you provide care? (please check all that apply)

- Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday    Friday    Saturday    Sunday

23. What are your hours of operation? Open \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. Close \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

24. How many children (not your own) do you care for? \_\_\_\_\_

25. How many of these children have diagnosed disabilities? \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do they have an IEP/IFSP?  Yes  No

27. Please list the types of disabilities present in the children for whom you care (Physical, emotional, learning, etc.)

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**Resources, Training, and Supports** Questions 28 through 31 gather information about needs, barriers, and opinions related to resources, training and/or other supports.

28. What are the top three services that parents/families most often request?

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

29. How many days each year do you spend in workshops or trainings related to child care? \_\_\_\_\_

30. Are you currently enrolled in any college level courses?       Yes  No

31. If not, why not?    \_\_\_ degree complete    \_\_\_ courses unavailable    \_\_\_ don't have time  
     \_\_\_ transportation is an issue    \_\_\_ Other (please describe)

31. How could the Amador Child Care Council best support you as a provider?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Use additional sheets if necessary.

***Thank you for taking time to complete this survey!***

**Employer Survey**

The Amador Child Care Council is conducting this survey of Amador County businesses and agencies to identify needs, wants and desires related to child care, as well as barriers and issues that may inhibit employers from assisting or accommodating employee families with child care needs.

**Instructions:** Please check the box or boxes for each question that best fit your organization and experience. Where indicated please provide your best estimate regarding the answer to some questions.

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**Business Information:** Questions 1 through 3 are about your business. The responses will provide a picture of employers in Amador County and will be used to establish baseline data and track changes over time.

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- 1) Type of Business:    \_\_\_ service            \_\_\_ retail            \_\_\_ banking/finance
- \_\_\_ manufacturing            \_\_\_ health care            \_\_\_ government
- \_\_\_ education            \_\_\_ hospitality (restaurant, winery, hotel, etc.)
- \_\_\_ Other: Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

2) Business Name (optional):

3) Number of Employees:

Full Time:

Seasonal:

Part Time:

---

**Employee Information:** Questions 4 through 8 are about your employees. The responses will provide a picture of the percentage of employees in Amador County who need and/or use child care services, and will be used to establish baseline data and track changes over time.

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4) Please estimate the percentage of your full time employees with children under age 12? \_\_\_\_\_

Part time employees with children under age 12? \_\_\_\_\_

Seasonal employees with children under age 12? \_\_\_\_\_

5) Please estimate the number of your employees who have their children under age 12 in some form of child care (i.e., relatives, in licensed centers or family child care homes, or in private unlicensed homes) \_\_\_\_\_

6) What is the pay range for entry level employees? \_\_\_\_\_

7) What are your days and hours of operations? \_\_\_\_\_

8) Have you experienced attendance problems as a result of employees' child care needs?  Yes  No If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

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**Child Care Policies and Benefit Information:** Questions 9 through 14 are about your child care policies and/or benefits your business provides. Your responses will be used to establish what type of benefits and/or policies are currently offered in Amador County. Your responses will also assist the Amador Child Care Council in determining what kind of information employers are interested in learning more about.

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9) Do you allow flexibility in employee schedules to accommodate for child care needs and availability?  
Yes No If yes, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

10) Do you currently have any child care policies or benefits beyond FMLA\* mandates? Yes No If yes, please check all that apply:

Employer Funded Child Care     On-site Child Care     Off-site Child Care

Dependent Care Reimbursement Account     Parental Leave

Other: Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

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\* *The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) applies to companies that employ over 50 employees within 75 miles of the worksite, and at least 50 of those employees work 20 or more work-weeks per calendar year.*

11) Do you currently have any plans to offer on-site or off-site child care either independently or in collaboration with other businesses for your employees? Yes No

Please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

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12) Would your company be interested in offering on-site care? Yes No

13) Would your company be interested in collaborating with other businesses to subsidize a local child care facility? Yes No

14) Would you be interested in learning more about child care related issues, policies and benefits?  
Yes No

*If so, Please provide contact information below.*

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for taking time to complete this survey! Your information is very important to the Amador Child Care Council in helping us to assess child care needs and to plan to meet the needs of the children and families of Amador County.***