



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FINDINGS OF INFANT/TODDLER CARE AND EDUCATION SURVEY**

### ***TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES and RAISING TEXAS***

In August 2007, the Texas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (TACCRRA), in partnership with the Raising Texas Initiative of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, conducted a statewide survey on infant and toddler care and education. The objective of the survey was to give policy makers and other stakeholders a better understanding of the characteristics of this care and to identify strategies to support the care of infants and toddlers.

The survey was developed by TACCRRA. The survey design incorporated suggestions from Raising Texas staff and implementation group members and child care resource and referral agencies.

This survey was web-based through zoomerang.com, with links in English and Spanish sent to e-mail distribution lists of licensed child care centers and licensed and registered family child care homes maintained by the seven child care resource and referral agencies across Texas. These agencies are: Camp Fire USA First Texas Council (Ft. Worth); Child Care Group (Dallas); Children's Connections (Lubbock); Collaborative for Children (Houston); Family Connections (Austin); Family Service Association (San Antonio); and YWCA El Paso Del Norte (El Paso). These agencies serve a combined total of 165 counties with over 80% of the State's population.

369 people completed and submitted the survey, of which 64% identified themselves as center-based providers and 36% as home-based providers. 33% identified themselves as owning, directing or working for a program in an urban area, 57% in a suburban area, and 10% in a rural area. Findings include the following:

- ✓ 24% said that they had at one time cared for children in one or more infant/toddler age group but no longer cared for children in the age group(s).
- ✓ 15% said that they had discontinued care for one or more infant/toddler age group due to low enrollment, parents not able to afford the cost of care or other economic considerations.
- ✓ 85% said that they typically have more requests for care than they are able to serve in one or more infant/toddler age group.
- ✓ 19% said that the staff caring for children under the age of 3 had received no specialized training in caring for infants and toddlers (other than shaken baby syndrome and infant CPR).

- ✓ 82% said that their child to staff ratios were typically lower (better) than State requirements in one or more infant/toddler classroom.
- ✓ 52% indicated that the average length of time teachers/caregivers in their program had worked with a specific infant/toddler age group was 5 years or more. 22% had worked with a specific infant/toddler group 2 years or less.
- ✓ Most respondents indicated that they used a combination of one or more of the following to plan services for infants and toddlers: observation; formal assessments; purchased curriculum; individualized daily activity plans; and talking with parents about the child's development.
- ✓ A majority of respondents indicated a need for training in each of the following: developmental stages of growth; care of infants and toddlers; guidance and discipline; supervision; infant CPR; language and literacy development; resources for children and families; and building relationships with parents.

Survey findings indicate the economic issues in caring for infants and toddlers and the problem of requests for care exceeding capacity. Findings also indicate a great need for more training of infant/toddler caregivers and teachers.