



CHILD CARE LAW CENTER

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SUBSTANTIVE PRIORITIES APPROVED BY THE CHILD CARE LAW CENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS APRIL 10, 2006

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The Child Care Law Center works across many complex areas and responds to many needs with families facing barriers to quality child care as our primary clients. We work on overarching systemic issues and specific legal matters and issues, and we create and maintain linkages to assure that we are in touch with our core clients and emerging issues. We work on the local, state, and national levels and approach many opportunities with the aim of working collaboratively with other organizations.

CCLC will continue to utilize a significant portion of its staff and other resources on activities to effect systemic change and ensure that all its work contributes to building the child care system we envision.

While we wish to focus our work and establish priorities, there are numerous inter-related legal issues we must follow. While maintaining broad knowledge, we will also retain a significant capacity to respond to emerging legal and policy issues, for both the short and long-term.

CCLC will retain the ability to provide brief advice and service to diverse clients on a broad range of child care related legal issues. We will continue to have advocates available three days per week for a three hour period to answer questions, and we will continue to improve language accessibility.

I. Overarching, Systemic Change and Collaborative Work To Be Integrated Into All Substantive Areas

As well as working on specific legal issues, CCLC uses legal tools and our expertise to contribute to the development of a vision of accessible, affordable, high-quality child care, and works to achieve a comprehensive, quality child care system for all children in California and nationally. CCLC also recognizes that it is critical to ensure that we are integrating our work with that of other partners and building links that reflect the diversity of California and the country as we do all our work.

A. A Systems Change Approach to Child Care Includes Attention to:

- Quality of child care, as our first commitment is to ensure that all children have nurturing early care and education, which optimizes their cognitive, social and emotional development.
- Access for children, families and communities facing barriers, including low-income families and families with children with disabilities and other special needs.
- Access to developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate care.
- Building a comprehensive system with links to health, education, and child welfare.
- The structural underpinnings and infrastructure of child care.
- The real cost of child care and development of appropriate financing mechanisms.

B. Systemic Linkages and Integration:

- Parents and their communities
- Child Care Community
 - Infant and toddler and preschool programs
 - School-age programs, including recreation programs
 - Providers and staff, and provider/staff associations
 - Resource and Referral agencies
 - Other child care organizations
- Communities
 - Immigrant
 - Racial and Ethnic
 - Rural
 - Migrant
 - Tribal
 - Low-income
 - Moderate-income
 - Family violence survivors
 - Disability
- Other Organizations and Related Programs
 - Public schools, including special education
 - Non-child care TANF and CalWORKs advocates
 - Head Start and Early Head Start
 - Labor unions
 - Faith-based organizations
 - Community based organizations
- Public Interest and Related Legal Organizations
 - Legal services and other poverty law organizations
 - Civil rights organizations
 - Public interest law organizations
 - Pro bono lawyers and firms interested in child care issues
- Government
 - Legislators and executive branch staff who share our vision and commitment
 - Local government officials who share our vision and commitment
 - Local government planning organizations
 - The California Children and Families state and local commissions

- Family and Child Services
 - Early intervention services
 - Health, mental health, and dental care
 - Family support services
 - Child welfare services
 - Family violence programs
 - Work family benefit organizations
 - Housing, community development and transportation services
 - Food policy organizations
 - Health professionals and parent advocates

- Other Key Partners
 - Academic and research organizations working on children's and related issues
 - Foundations
 - Media

II. Substantive Priority Areas with Current Resources (CCLC has resources to significantly impact the following areas, although we need to develop additional resources to more fully meet the needs in many cases.)

- Development of child care as a comprehensive system with quality, affordability, and accessibility for every child in California.

- Implementation of welfare reform as it impacts child care in California and related policy development and advocacy, with a focus on the implications of TANF and CCDBG reauthorization.

- Child care law with a focus on subsidy and welfare related issues in coordination with California Legal Services Programs.

- Access to subsidies and other affordability strategies to ensure access to quality child care for all children in California with a special focus on training and technical assistance to parents and child care providers in our home city San Francisco.

- Access to quality child care for children and families with disabilities in California, including training and technical assistance, coordinated efforts with other state and local child care advocates, including resource and referral agencies, and intensive services to families in San Francisco.

- Regulation and licensing in California.

- Implementation of Preschool programs in California with a focus on strengthening the existing early care and education system and increasing access to quality care for children

0-5, particularly those facing barriers, including low-income families, immigrant families and children with disabilities.

- Increasing access to quality child care for infants and toddlers and linking services for all children 0-5.

III. Substantive Areas to Monitor and Maintain Expertise and Provide Limited Services and Education with Current Resources

- Landlord/Tenant issues in California.
- Liability and Insurance law as it affects child care.
- Family Law in California as it affects child care.

IV. Substantive Highest Priority Areas for Development of Projects and New Resources in California (CCLC plans to begin development of work in the following areas, but needs additional resources to make a significant impact.)

- Access to quality child care for California families facing special barriers, including immigrant and migrant children and families.
- Child care related civil rights issues, focusing on barriers related to race, ethnicity, language, gender and sexual orientation.
- Finance, zoning, land use and housing law issues in California, with a focus on participation in the ABCD Facility Financing Initiative.
- Access to quality before and after school programs for low income children and children with disabilities and special health care needs
- The intersections of health and child care including ensuring barriers to participation in child care for children with health conditions such as asthma and initiatives to promote children's health.
- The intersections child care and environmental issues supporting initiatives to promote healthy green child care programs without placing undue burdens or expense on families and child care providers.
- Access to subsidies and other affordability strategies at a county level to ensure access to quality child care for all children in California in counties beyond San Francisco with a special focus on training and technical assistance to parents and child care providers in our home city San Francisco.

V. Substantive Highest Priority Areas for Development of Projects and New Resources Nationally (CCLC plans to begin development of work in the following areas, but needs additional resources to make a significant impact.)

- Access to quality child care for children and families with disabilities in additional states, including training and technical assistance, coordinated efforts with other state and local child care advocates, and preschool and infant and toddler initiatives.
- Facilitation of discussion, policy development and legal analysis on a national basis to increase access to high quality childcare and building integrated systems for both the working poor not connected to welfare and those connected to TANF.
- Child care advocacy on issues of subsidy policy and TANF in states beyond California with a focus on developing projects with existing state and local advocacy groups.
- Access to quality child care for families facing special barriers, including immigrant and migrant children and families in states beyond California with a focus on developing projects with existing state and local advocacy groups.
- The legal components of disaster preparedness for child care programs including subsidy policy.
- Child care advocacy in states beyond California in areas of our substantive priorities and expertise with a focus on developing projects with existing state and local advocacy groups.

VI. Substantive Areas Primarily Handled by Others

- Child care provider business practices, record-keeping and taxes (Tom Copeland)
- Analysis of federal child care regulations related to TANF (CLASP)
- Survey of licensing regulations (NARA)
- Monitoring national child care budget and legislation (NWLC, CLASP, CDF)
- Federal tax issues (NWLC)
- Head Start issues
- Employer-supported child care (Resource & Referral agencies and other organizations)
- Selected parent and provider issues in Los Angeles and Southern California (CWLC and Public Counsel)
- Nonprofit incorporation (other public interest law firms)

VII. Substantive Needs We Are Unable to Meet

- Law firm for Resource & Referral and AP agencies.
- Issues of church and state beyond TANF and CCDBG.
- Individual representation of family child care providers and child care centers, except in selected cases where representation is not at odds with the interests of families and will have broad legal, policy or organizational impact.
- Individual representation of parents and children. Except where cases will have broad legal, policy or organizational impact.
- Legal representation of providers in child abuse and licensing cases.
- Advice and representation regarding the Child Care Food Program. Do we want to make this III limited?

VIII. Criteria for Accepting Cases and Working on Issues

- Does this case or issue fall within our Mission and current Substantive Priorities?
- Does this case or issue have broad impact?
- Who is our primary client and does this present any conflict at this time or could it in the future?
- What impact will this case or issue have on increasing access to quality child care for the families and children we define as our primary client?
- Does this case have the potential to build the capacity of our staff and organization?
- Does this case have the potential to build the capacity of California legal services programs to serve clients within our priority areas?
- Does CCLC have the expertise to handle this case or issue?
- Are legal issues or legal analysis critical to the resolution or development of this case or issue?
- Is any other organization or attorney taking primary responsibility on this issue, or is there any other attorney or organization that could better take the lead on this issue?
- If CCLC accepts the case or issue, with whom can we collaborate and how will that collaboration be structured?
- Does CCLC have the resources and capacity to take on this issue or case relative to other priorities?
- In certain instances, as members of a coalition or in response to requests from key partners, we may take limited action such as writing a letter of support or a response to an inquiry. Such actions should be limited in scope, further our mission, and not be in

opposition to our substantive priorities and the interests of our clients. The Executive Director will have the authority to take such actions in consultation with the Policy Committee or Policy Committee Chair when necessary.