

## **Child Care Expansion Priorities for Santa Cruz County, May 2006**

Prepared by the Santa Cruz County Local Child Care Planning Council

The Child Development Division of the California Department of Education published Management Bulletin 99-21 in November 1999. It states that any expansion funds through the Department must comply with Assembly Bill 1857, which became effective in 2003. The new law requires that any new funds must go to the most underserved areas of California. In order for Santa Cruz County to be considered for child care/preschool expansion funding, the Planning Council must identify the most underserved areas in our county by zip code. In April 2003, the Child Development Division published Management Bulletin 03-05, which further clarifies the process to establish priorities. It states, "The amended statute specifies that by May 30 of each year, upon approval by the county board of supervisors and the county superintendent of schools, each LPC shall submit to CDD the local priorities it has identified that reflect all child care needs in the county."

Santa Cruz County's Priorities for Child Care Expansion reflect the relative levels of need for additional child care funding for State Subsidized Centers serving children aged 0-13. The only family child care programs included in these priorities are the homes which contract with Cabrillo College through the Casa Pequeña program and those that contract with GoKids Inc.

Need for child care is determined by Labor Force Participation Rates as shown in the 2000 US Census. Children with all parents working are deemed to need child care services. The Child Care Planning Council (CCPC) acknowledges some variation in a family's need for child care regardless of the working status of the parents. Some families with two working parents have staggered work schedules which allow for the parents to care for their children at home and not use outside child care while some families with a stay-at-home parent may choose to use outside child care for a variety of reasons. However, Labor Force Participation rates are currently the best tool we have to estimate the need for child care.

In addition to prioritizing the need for additional child care slots, the CCPC is also interested in the availability of high quality child development programs which are particularly crucial in many cases to counteract the risk factors faced by children and their families (such as poverty, level of education, English literacy and child welfare). In order to assess the relative need for

child care along with the relative level of risks faced by the children of Santa Cruz County, the CCPC utilized data from its 2006 Needs Assessment: *The Status of Children, Their families and Child Care Services: An Assessment of Need and Supply in Santa Cruz County* as well as data gathered and compiled by First 5 Santa Cruz County as part of their recent geomapping project. An overlay of these two data sets resulted in a near one-to-one match (with three exceptions which are detailed below), indicating that the need for child care slots and the need for high quality child development programs is, in most cases, consistent across geographic areas. Please see the attached combined risk factors map produced by First 5 Santa Cruz County for more details.

**Please note:** there are certain situations in Santa Cruz County that may skew an attempt to prioritize child care need by zip code:

- First, Cabrillo College (Santa Cruz County's only community college) serves children of Cabrillo students who do not necessarily live in the college's zip code, 95003.
- Second, the University of California at Santa Cruz serves children of UC students who do not all live in the University's zip code, 95064.

**Summary of changes since last prioritization:**

The following zip codes have moved up from Priority 2 to Priority 1: **95065**

The following zip codes have moved down from Priority 1 to Priority 2: **95018, 95073**

The following zip codes have moved down from Priority 1 to Priority 3: **95003, 95005, 95019**

The following zip codes have moved down from Priority 2 to Priority 3: **95066**

**2006 Priorities:**

Due to the severe lack of center-based slots for subsidized child care for infants and toddlers as compared to preschoolers and school-aged children, priority should be given to serve infants and toddlers in ANY zip code. The high cost of providing infant/toddler care is prohibitive. As stated in the 2005-2006 Needs Assessment for Santa Cruz County, higher State reimbursement rates for infant/toddler care are needed. Realistic State child care subsidies, based on actual cost of providing care to infants and toddlers, would attract more programs to provide these needed services and would thus help to close the gap between services available and services needed for this age group.

See next page for Priorities 1 through 3 for funding for preschool and school-age children by zip code.

**Priority 1: The 6 zip codes below are designated as first priority for funding for preschool-age and school-age children.**

<b>Area</b>	<b>ZIP CODE</b>	<b>% of Need for Child Care Currently Being Met:</b> Ranked in order from lowest to highest level of met need.	<b>Risk Factors:</b> High, Medium or Low Levels according to the attached Combined Risk Factors Map
Capitola	95010	19%	Medium
Live Oak	95062	26%	High
Boulder Creek *	95006	29%	Low
Santa Cruz Gardens	95065	38%	Medium
Santa Cruz City	95060	43%	Medium
Watsonville	95076	45%	High

\* Although Boulder Creek shows a low level of risk factors according to First 5's combined risk factors map (see attached), the need for child care slots in this zip code remains high. CDD funds should be dedicated to expanding available slots for child care in this zip code.

**Priority 2: The 4 zip codes below are designated as second priority for funding for preschool-age and school-age children.**

<b>Area</b>	<b>ZIP CODE</b>	<b>% of Need for Child Care Currently Being Met:</b> Ranked in order from lowest to highest level of met need.	<b>Risk Factors:</b> High, Medium or Low Levels according to the attached Combined Risk Factors Map
Felton	95018	56%	Low
Davenport	95017	61%	Low
Soquel *	95073	63%	Medium
UCSC	95064	65%	Low

\* Although the need for child care in Soquel is not as high as for those zip codes in Priority 1, the moderate level of risk factors faced by the children and families in this zip code area must be addressed through other resources focused on mitigating these risk factors.

**Priority 3: The 4 zip codes below are designated as third priority for funding for preschool-age and school-age children.**

<b>Area</b>	<b>ZIP CODE</b>	<b>% of Need for Child Care Currently Being Met:</b> Ranked in order from lowest to highest level of met need.	<b>Risk Factors:</b> High, Medium or Low Levels according to the attached Combined Risk Factors Map
Aptos	95003	80%	Low
Ben Lomond	95005	84%	Low
Freedom *	95019	103%	High
Scotts Valley	95066	129%	Low

\* Although the need for child care in Freedom is currently being met, the high level of risk factors faced by the children and families in this zip code area must be addressed through other resources focused on mitigating these risk factors.

# Combined Risk

This map illustrates the relative risk of all 10 risk factors combined per zip code.

