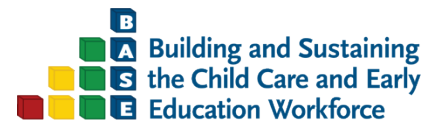


## TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT

# Supporting Family Child Care Homes in Colorado: Implementation Findings from the Family Child Care Home Benefits Pilot Program



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## Launching the Pilot Program

The pilot program was primarily designed and implemented by two staff members at the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) who had previously designed the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program Teacher Salary Increase Pilot, a salary increase pilot program for lead and assistant teachers in center-based child care settings.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the Teacher Salary Increase Pilot, which was executed by outside vendors typically used by the state, the majority of the Family Child Care Home Benefits Pilot program was implemented internally by CDEC. This included assessing provider eligibility, processing applications, calculating and verifying payment amounts, and monitoring providers' use of pilot funds. An outside payment vendor was used to transfer funds. As a result, CDEC staff members and participating providers had more personal and direct contact than is typical for a government-led initiative.

Eligible providers were invited to two online webinars led by CDEC that described the pilot program and answered questions. Providers were asked to complete an application. The application collected information about the provider and the Family Child Care (FCC) home setting, including funding sources, number of children who were served, and current and desired benefits. Thirty-nine providers who completed the application were enrolled into the pilot program and elected to participate.

To receive the monthly payments, participating providers were required to fill out a form (the attestation) on a monthly basis that logged the number of participating staff members and their intended use of funds. As part of the attestation, providers were also required to submit receipts documenting their use of the funds using an online file sharing system selected by CDEC. CDEC used the attestations to calculate the funds for each provider. To streamline the payment process, pilot funds were sent to providers, who were then responsible for distributing payments to their assistants, if applicable. CDEC quality-checked each payment file to ensure that every participant received the correct amount of money and completed a

<sup>1</sup> Maier et al. (2025).

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monthly attestation. After pre-authorizing the payment amounts, the payment vendor released payments to participants. CDEC also kept track of spending for each participant.

## The Study

### Research Questions

The study addressed several descriptive research questions related to the characteristics of participating FCC homes:

1. What are the characteristics of providers and assistants in the participating FCC homes, including demographic characteristics and professional credentials?
2. What are the characteristics of FCC homes participating in the pilot program, in terms of size, years of operation, funding sources, children served, and other factors?
3. What are providers' perceptions of the financial stability of the FCC homes, and what challenges do they face with respect to recruitment and retention of staff members?
4. What are the wages and benefits offered to assistants at participating FCC homes?
5. What is the economic well-being of providers and assistants?
6. What is the mental and physical health status of providers and assistants?
7. What are the home-based providers' and assistants' job demands and supports and levels of job satisfaction and stress? Do they plan to remain in the field?

The study also examined several research questions about pilot implementation:

1. How do participating home-based providers and assistants experience the pilot program? What are the barriers and facilitators to participating in the pilot program?
2. What is the implementation infrastructure for the pilot program? What are the challenges and facilitators to implementing the pilot program successfully?
3. What are providers' perceptions about the effects of the pilot program on providers' and assistants' job satisfaction and retention, economic well-being, and psychological well-being?
4. What are providers' perceptions about the effects of the pilot program on their staffing configurations, stability, functioning, and working conditions?

### Data Sources

The study used data from two sources: a survey and in-depth interviews.

**Survey.** A survey was fielded to all participating providers and assistants between May 2024 and July 2024, or about 10 to 12 months after the pilot program started. The surveys collected information on demographic characteristics and professional credentials, FCC characteristics, job characteristics (for assistants only), income, material well-being, job demands and supports, job stress, and job

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satisfaction. Although 39 providers started the pilot program, 5 had dropped out by the time the data were collected. The survey was fielded to the remaining 34 participating providers and 24 assistants. A total of 33 providers responded to the survey (for a response rate of 97 percent), and a total of 13 assistants responded to the survey (for a response rate of 54 percent). All assistants who were employed at the 34 participating FCCs were targeted for the assistant follow-up survey, regardless of whether they were working at the FCC when the pilot program started.

**Interviews.** The goal of the interviews was to examine the implementation of the pilot program and gather insight from participating providers and program implementors at CDEC. The study team aimed to understand how providers perceived and experienced the compensation funding, investigate how providers and their staff members used the funding, and capture program implementors' experiences with the pilot program's implementation.

Provider interviews were conducted between May 2024 and July 2024 and collected information on implementation experiences with the pilot program, contextual information that may shape the viability and implementation of the pilot program, provider perceptions, and attitudes, beliefs and expectations about the pilot program and child care and early education (CCEE). Interviews with CDEC staff members collected information on implementation experiences with the intervention; state and local political, social, and economic contextual features; CDEC features; and staff members' experiences with the development, start-up, and implementation of the pilot program.

The study team targeted 25 providers for interviews; these providers were selected to represent different counties in Colorado and to capture FCCs both with and without assistants. Interviews were held with 23 of the 25 targeted providers, for a response rate of 92 percent. For the program implementor interviews, the team obtained information from CDEC on the staff members that were involved in the design, start-up, and implementation of the pilot program. The team interviewed both identified individuals.

## Methods

**Descriptive characteristics.** Data from the survey provide information on the demographic and professional characteristics of participating providers and their assistants as well as the characteristics of the participating FCC homes. Data are presented as averages or percentages. Although the survey was fielded after the pilot program started, the data that are presented here cannot show the effects of the pilot program because there is no comparison group or data on characteristics before the intervention.

**Implementation research.** The research team, which consisted of two analysts and a lead researcher, began qualitative analysis with a meeting to discuss potential themes. Analysts were already experienced with NVivo (a secure software platform for qualitative research) after conducting qualitative analyses of the Teacher Salary Increase Pilot program interviews using the software. The study team developed a preliminary thematic codebook based on research questions and interview protocols. The codebook included a list of codes, or labels, with clear definitions and descriptive examples of themes or topics of interest to the study. Before beginning the analysis, the study team revised the codebook to reflect initial themes that emerged during this meeting and to clarify the meanings of codes to ensure shared understanding among coders.

An initial set of two transcripts was used as a training batch coded independently by all research team members conducting qualitative analyses. These research team members then compared codes and discussed and reconciled differences. The codebook was updated accordingly.

Throughout the coding process, the study team met weekly to share emerging themes, discuss passages that team members were unsure about how to code, assess whether the codes were adequate to describe the data, and troubleshoot any issues that arose while using NVivo.

Once coding was complete, the research team met collectively to begin analyzing the interviews and identifying themes in the data. Research team members were assigned sets of codes to begin analyzing. To do so, analysts individually transferred excerpts into Excel files sorted by code and identified patterns, trends, and variation. Analysts summarized emerging themes and the study team met to discuss these themes and arrive at a shared set of findings that aligned with the research questions.

## Characteristics of Participating FCC Homes, Providers, and Assistants

As shown in Technical Supplement Table 1, nearly all providers in the study were female, with an average age of 55 at the time of the survey. About half of the providers were married, the majority were White, and 27 percent were of Hispanic origin. Just over 16 percent of providers had an associate’s degree and 29 percent had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Providers had an average of 23 years of experience in the CCEE field and 19 years of experience as a provider.

**Technical Supplement Table 1.** Demographics and Professional Background

| Characteristics   | Providers |                |     |     | Assistants |                |     |     |
|---|-----------|----------------|-----|-----|------------|----------------|-----|-----|
|   | Mean      | Number Missing | Min | Max | Mean       | Number Missing | Min | Max |
| <b>Demographic characteristics</b>  |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| Age (years)   | 55.3      | 2              | 27  | 83  | 38.1       | 2              | 21  | 78  |
| Marital status (%)  |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| Single, never married   | 19.4      | 2              |     |     | 66.7       | 2              |     |     |
| Married   | 48.4      | 2              |     |     | 25.0       | 2              |     |     |
| Divorced/widowed  | 32.3      | 2              |     |     | 8.3        | 2              |     |     |
| Female  | 96.8      | 2              |     |     | 83.3       | 2              |     |     |
| Race/ethnicity (%)  |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| White   | 75.9      | 4              |     |     | 91.7       | 2              |     |     |
| Multiracial   | 0.0       | 4              |     |     | 0.0        | 2              |     |     |
| Asian or Pacific Islander   | 6.9       | 4              |     |     | 0.0        | 2              |     |     |
| Black   | 17.2      | 4              |     |     | 8.3        | 2              |     |     |
| Native American/Alaskan   | 0.0       | 4              |     |     | 0.0        | 2              |     |     |
| Hispanic (%)  | 26.7      | 3              |     |     | 45.5       | 3              |     |     |
| Language (%)  |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| English only  | 80.6      | 2              |     |     | 83.3       | 2              |     |     |
| English plus another language   | 16.1      | 2              |     |     | 16.7       | 2              |     |     |
| Another language only   | 3.2       | 2              |     |     | 0.0        | 2              |     |     |
| <b>Professional background</b>  |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| Education level (%)   |           |                |     |     |            |                |     |     |
| High school diploma/GED or less   | 16.1      | 2              |     |     | 20.0       | 4              |     |     |
| Some college  | 38.7      | 2              |     |     | 60.0       | 4              |     |     |
| Associate's degree  | 16.1      | 2              |     |     | 20.0       | 4              |     |     |
| Bachelor's degree or higher   | 29.0      | 2              |     |     | 0.0        | 4              |     |     |
| Among those with an associate's degree or higher, degree is in an early childhood-related field | 50.0      | 19             |     |     | 50.0       | 12             |     |     |

**Technical Supplement Table 1** (continued)

| Characteristics                                       | Providers |                |     |     | Assistants |                |     |     |
|---|-----------|----------------|-----|-----|------------|----------------|-----|-----|
|   | Mean      | Number Missing | Min | Max | Mean       | Number Missing | Min | Max |
| Years at current Family Child Care home               | 16.5      | 31             | 7   | 26  | 3.0        | 3              | 1   | 10  |
| Years of experience in child care and early education | 22.9      | 2              | 1   | 41  | 10.0       | 3              | 1   | 33  |
| Years of experience as owner or provider              | 19.2      | 2              | 0   | 41  |            |                |     |     |
| Sample size (total = 47)                              | 33        |                |     |     | 14         |                |     |     |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

Assistants were 38 years old, on average, and the majority were single. About 45 percent of assistants were of Hispanic origin and 17 percent reported speaking English plus another language. Few assistants (20 percent) had a postsecondary degree, although 60 percent reported having completed some college. They had on average of 10 years of experience in the CCEE field.

## Setting characteristics

On average, the FCCs had been operating for 21 years, and 66 percent of them reported having assistants to help care for the children (as shown in Technical Supplement Table 2). Providers who responded to the survey reported receiving funding from a variety of sources. Eighty-one percent of providers reported that they received at least some private pay from families. Other common sources were Universal Pre-K Colorado (75 percent) and the Child and Adult Food Care Program (66 percent).<sup>2</sup> About a third of providers reported local child care subsidies as a funding source and 44 percent reported Head Start or Early Head Start.<sup>3</sup>

The providers served on average 13 children, with an average of 5 infants and toddlers (under age 3), 5 preschool-aged children (ages 3 to 5), and 1 school-aged child (age 6 and older). The majority of children attended full time. Providers were asked to report on the race and ethnicity of the children they served: on average, 25 percent of children were Hispanic, 14 percent were Black, and 41 percent were White. Providers reported on other characteristics of children, such as food or housing insecurity or having an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or other early intervention services. On average, they reported that “some or a few” of the children served experienced these issues. They reported that most children receive subsidies for care, which is expected given the eligibility criteria for the pilot program.

Although very few providers reported living with children they care for, about a third reported being related to at least one child in their care (as shown in Technical Supplement Table 3). Among providers who served

<sup>2</sup> Colorado’s Universal Pre-K (UPK) Program, operated by CDEC, provides free, high-quality preschool to children the year before kindergarten through a variety of licensed providers, including FCC homes, community-based programs, and school-based programs. Provider rates are set by local coordinating organizations and payments are made monthly, based on the number of children in the program. The Colorado Child and Adult Food Care Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, reimburses providers for healthy meals and snacks served to children and adults in various care settings, including child care centers and FCC homes.

<sup>3</sup> Colorado Child Care Assistance Program, funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund, is Colorado’s state child care subsidy program and provides child care assistance to families with low incomes (with income thresholds determined by the state).

at least some children who were not related to them, about a third reported that they had a personal relationship with at least some of those children’s families before they began caring for their children.

A majority of providers (63 percent) reported allowing parents to change their schedules from week to week, and fewer (43 percent) reported allowing parents to change their hours weekly and pay for however many hours of care they used. Most providers (77 percent) required parents to pay for scheduled days whether or not the child attends. Very few providers reported providing care outside of standard hours, including weekends (none), nights (7 percent), or overnight (none). Finally, providers were asked to consider the last time they were sick and what arrangements they made to care for their children. The responses indicate that most providers did not have other adults to rely on for care: only 40 percent reported having someone else care for the children, and 37 percent reported caring for the children even though the providers were sick.

**Technical Supplement Table 2. Provider Characteristics**

| Characteristics   | Mean | Number Missing | Min | Max  |
|---|------|----------------|-----|------|
| <b>Organization</b>   |      |                |     |      |
| Years in operation at current address   | 20.8 | 1              | 5.2 | 41.0 |
| Have an assistant to help care for children (%)   | 65.6 | 1              |     |      |
| <b>Funding source (%)</b>   |      |                |     |      |
| Head Start/Early Head Start   | 43.8 | 1              |     |      |
| Child care preschool program  | 3.1  | 1              |     |      |
| Child and Adult Food Care Program   | 65.6 | 1              |     |      |
| Military  | 6.2  | 1              |     |      |
| Private pay from families   | 81.2 | 1              |     |      |
| Local preschool program   | 6.2  | 1              |     |      |
| Local child care subsidy  | 31.2 | 1              |     |      |
| Universal Pre-K Colorado  | 75.0 | 1              |     |      |
| Nongovernmental community organization  | 0.0  | 1              |     |      |
| Other   | 3.1  | 1              |     |      |
| <b>Children served</b>  |      |                |     |      |
| Total number of children enrolled   | 12.5 | 1              | 5   | 24   |
| Number of infants/toddlers enrolled   | 4.7  | 1              | 1   | 11   |
| Number of preschool-aged children enrolled  | 4.7  | 1              | 1   | 10   |
| Number of school-aged children enrolled   | 1.3  | 1              | 0   | 11   |
| Number of children attending part time  | 1.2  | 1              |     |      |
| Number of children attending full time  | 9.4  | 1              |     |      |
| Race/ethnicity of children (%)  |      |                |     |      |
| Hispanic  | 24.7 | 4              |     |      |
| Black   | 14.3 | 4              |     |      |
| White   | 40.9 | 4              |     |      |
| Other   | 0.6  | 4              |     |      |
| Center does not collect this information  | 0.0  | 4              |     |      |
| Number of children experiencing the following:<br>(1 = none, 2 = some or a few, 3 = all/most) |      |                |     |      |
| Facing food insecurity  | 1.8  | 6              |     |      |
| Facing housing insecurity   | 1.7  | 10             |     |      |
| Receiving subsidies for care  | 2.5  | 3              |     |      |
| Have an IEP or other early intervention services  | 1.7  | 7              |     |      |
| Sample size   | 33   |                |     |      |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values. IEP stands for individualized education plan.

**Technical Supplement Table 3. Provider Type, Schedule, and Children Served**

| Characteristic  | Mean | Number Missing |
|---|------|----------------|
| <b>Relationship with children who are served (%)</b>              |      |                |
| One or more children served live in household with provider       | 3.2  | 0              |
| One or more children served are related to provider               | 29.0 | 0              |
| For children not related to provider (%)                          |      |                |
| Had a personal relationship with families before providing care   | 29.0 | 0              |
| <b>Care schedules (%)</b>   |      |                |
| Parents allowed to have schedule that varies week to week         | 63.0 | 4              |
| Parents allowed to pay for and use varying hours per week         | 42.9 | 3              |
| If yes, percentage of children with variation in hours            | 17.9 | 19             |
| Paid for days that are scheduled but children do not attend?      | 76.7 | 1              |
| Care for unrelated or noncustodial children on weekends?          | 0.0  | 0              |
| Care for unrelated or noncustodial children between 7pm and 11pm? | 6.5  | 0              |
| Care for unrelated or noncustodial children between 11pm and 6am? | 0.0  | 0              |
| Last time provider was sick, who made arrangements for children   |      |                |
| Told parents you could not care for children                      | 23.3 | 1              |
| Had someone else come care for children                           | 40.0 | 1              |
| Sent children to different location                               | 3.3  | 1              |
| Took care of children anyway                                      | 36.7 | 1              |
| Have not been sick  | 16.7 | 1              |
| Sample size   | 31   |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

## Job characteristics

Twenty-three percent of assistants reported having another job in addition to their role at the provider (see Technical Supplement Table 4). Assistants reported an average wage of \$13 per hour, although a large number of assistants did not answer the wage questions. Among the seven assistants who did answer the wage question, over 40 percent reported a wage of less than \$13 per hour. Nearly all (90 percent) assistants work full time. In terms of benefits, 73 percent reported receiving paid sick days, and 50 percent reported receiving paid vacation. About half of assistants reported receiving discounted or free child care and a similar fraction reported receiving professional development benefits. Only 18 percent reported receiving a health or medical insurance plan.

**Technical Supplement Table 4. Job Characteristics, Assistants**

| Characteristic   | Mean | Number Missing |
|--|------|----------------|
| <b>Employment status (%)</b>                                 |      |                |
| Had more than one job in last week                           | 23.1 | 0              |
| <b>Characteristics of current job</b>                        |      |                |
| Average hourly wage (\$)                                     | 12.9 | 6              |
| Wage (%)   |      |                |
| Less than \$13   | 42.9 | 6              |
| \$13 to \$15   | 14.3 | 6              |
| \$15 to \$20   | 42.9 | 6              |
| \$20 or higher   | 0.0  | 6              |
| Hours worked per week (%)                                    |      |                |
| 1 to 19  | 0.0  | 3              |
| 20 to 34   | 10.0 | 3              |
| 35 or more   | 90.0 | 3              |
| Employer-provided benefits (%)                               |      |                |
| Paid sick days   | 72.7 | 2              |
| Paid vacation days   | 50.0 | 3              |
| Paid holidays  | 63.6 | 2              |
| Paid COVID-19 leave  | 30.0 | 3              |
| Dental benefits  | 8.3  | 1              |
| Vision insurance   | 9.1  | 2              |
| Retirement plan  | 18.2 | 2              |
| Health or medical insurance plan                             | 18.2 | 2              |
| Discounted or free child care                                | 45.5 | 2              |
| Other insurance  | 0.0  | 1              |
| Employee wellness and mental health resources                | 36.4 | 2              |
| Professional development                                     | 50.0 | 3              |
| Education stipend  | 20.0 | 3              |
| Career advancement opportunity if earn new degree/credential | 45.5 | 2              |
| Other expense reimbursement                                  | 50.0 | 3              |
| Bonus  | 16.7 | 1              |
| Other  | 20.0 | 8              |
| Sample size  | 13   |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

## Income, poverty, and material hardship

Providers reported a median monthly household income of just under \$4,000 per month, or \$48,000 per year, and assistants reported a median income of \$3,700 per month (see Technical Supplement Table 5). (Note that income data should be interpreted with caution, given the high number of respondents who did not report an income amount.)

For income sources, about 42 percent of providers and 44 percent of assistants reported having another adult earner in their household. In terms of benefits, 7 percent of providers and 10 percent of assistants reported receiving SNAP benefits. Medicaid receipt was higher: 27 percent of providers and 50 percent of assistants reported receiving Medicaid.

Twenty-six percent of providers and 20 percent of assistants reported a household income that is below the federal poverty line. These estimates are based on reported income and thus are not available for a large fraction of respondents. Finally, 30 percent of assistants reported having low or very low food

security, based on a series of questions about the adequacy of food in the household.<sup>4</sup> Nearly twenty percent of providers reported low or very low food security. Half of assistants reported enough savings to pay for a \$400 emergency, compared with 67 percent of providers.

**Technical Supplement Table 5. Income, Poverty, and Material Hardship**

| Characteristic   | Providers |                | Assistants |                |
|--|-----------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|  | Mean      | Number Missing | Mean       | Number Missing |
| <b>Income (\$)</b>   |           |                |            |                |
| Household income in previous month                           | 4,899.1   | 14             | 4,234.7    | 9              |
| Median household income in previous month                    | 3,900.0   | 14             | 3,749.5    | 9              |
| <b>Income sources (%)</b>                                    |           |                |            |                |
| Other adult earnings   | 41.9      | 2              | 44.4       | 5              |
| SNAP   | 6.5       | 2              | 10.0       | 4              |
| SSI or SSDI  | 19.4      | 2              | 20.0       | 4              |
| WIC  | 0.0       | 2              | 20.0       | 4              |
| Unemployment insurance                                       | 0.0       | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Workers' compensation  | 0.0       | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| CCCAP  | 32.3      | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Energy assistance  | 0.0       | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Housing choice voucher                                       | 0.0       | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Veteran's benefits   | 6.5       | 2              | 10.0       | 4              |
| Child support  | 16.1      | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Medicaid   | 26.7      | 3              | 50.0       | 4              |
| Cash assistance or welfare, not including WIC or food stamps | 6.5       | 2              | 0.0        | 4              |
| Other government source                                      | 0.0       | 4              | 10.0       | 4              |
| <b>Poverty</b>   |           |                |            |                |
| Household income below federal poverty level (%)             | 26.3      | 14             | 20.0       | 9              |
| Household income as percentage of federal poverty level (%)  |           |                |            |                |
| Less than 50 percent   | 5.3       | 14             | 20.0       | 9              |
| 50 to 100 percent  | 21.1      | 14             | 0.0        | 9              |
| 100 to 200 percent   | 26.3      | 14             | 20.0       | 9              |
| 200 percent or higher  | 47.4      | 14             | 60.0       | 9              |
| <b>Material hardship (%)</b>                                 |           |                |            |                |
| Low or very low food security                                | 19.4      | 2              | 30.0       | 4              |
| Could pay over \$400 for an emergency                        | 66.7      | 3              | 50.0       | 2              |
| Sample size (total = 47)                                     | 33        |                | 14         |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

Household income as a percentage of the federal poverty line was calculated using poverty thresholds relevant to a given teacher's household size.

SSI/SSDI = Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

CCCAP = Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Food security was assessed via five items asking about eating less or not eating when hungry because there was not enough money or because they could not afford enough food, or because they could not afford to eat balanced meals. If a respondent responded affirmatively to two or more items, they were considered to have low or very low food security.

<sup>4</sup> The questions are from the USDA developed food security module. Five items in the survey assessed food security: They asked teachers "did you ever eat less than you felt you should...", "...were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food," and "I/we couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." If respondents answered affirmatively to two or more items, they were considered to have low or very low food security. U.S. Department of Agriculture (2024).

## Mental and physical health

Based on the self-rated health scale, a commonly used scale to assess physical health, providers and assistants reported good health, with an average of about 3 (out of 5) for both groups (see Technical Supplement Table 6).<sup>5</sup> Approximately a third of providers (36 percent) and assistants (30 percent) reported being uninsured.

Information on mental health was obtained from the Center for Epidemiologic Studies depression scale (CES-D) and the Kessler-6 Psychological Distress scale.<sup>6</sup> Providers and assistants reported very few depressive symptoms, with the result that none are “at risk for depression,” based on their scale score. Psychological distress was measured only for assistants, who reported an average scale score of 2.6. The scale has a possible range of 0 to 24, with values of 13 or higher indicating serious psychological distress.

**Technical Supplement Table 6.** Physical and Mental Health

| Characteristic                              | Providers |                | Assistants |                |
|---|-----------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|   | Mean      | Number Missing | Mean       | Number Missing |
| Self-rated health (1 = poor; 5 = excellent) | 3.3       | 2              | 2.8        | 2              |
| Type of health insurance coverage (%)       |           |                |            |                |
| Private through employer                    | 10.7      | 5              | 10.0       | 4              |
| Private through exchange                    | 21.4      | 5              | 10.0       | 4              |
| Other                                       | 32.1      | 5              | 50.0       | 4              |
| None or uninsured                           | 35.7      | 5              | 30.0       | 4              |
| Depression scale score (0 to 21)            | 3.2       | 3              | 3.8        | 2              |
| At risk for depression (%)                  | 0.0       | 3              | 0.0        | 2              |
| Psychological distress (0 to 24)            | -         | -              | 2.6        | 2              |
| Sample size (total = 47)                    | 33        |                | 14         |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

The depression scale score is the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale Short Form (CES-D-SF), which includes seven items rated on a four-point scale from 0 = rarely or none of the time to 3 = most or all of the time.

An individual is considered at risk for depression if the CES-D score is 16 or higher.

Psychological distress is assessed using the Kessler-6 Psychological Distress Scale, which includes six items on a five-point scale from 0 = none of the time to 4 = all of the time.

## Job satisfaction and stress

Providers and assistants reported relatively high rates of job satisfaction, with a score of 4.8 on a scale that runs from 1 indicating dissatisfied to 5 indicating satisfied (see Technical Supplement Table 7). Assistants reported generally being satisfied with benefits and wages (with scores of 3.9 and 3.8, respectively). Some assistants (17 percent) reported requesting a raise in the previous year, and half of those who did received the requested amount.

Both groups reported moderate levels of job stress. Providers have an average score of 3, on a scale from 1 (very stressed) to 5 (not stressed). Assistants reported an average score of 2.5. Providers reported

<sup>5</sup> Stanford University SPARQtools (n.d.).

<sup>6</sup> Radloff (1977); Kessler et al. (2002).

experiencing challenges with the regulatory requirements of running an FCC home, with particular challenges around overwhelming paperwork and abiding by multiple standards, which may reflect the requirements of various funding sources.

**Technical Supplement Table 7. Job Satisfaction and Stress**

| Characteristic  | Providers |                | Assistants |                |
|---|-----------|----------------|------------|----------------|
|   | Mean      | Number Missing | Mean       | Number Missing |
| <b>Job satisfaction and stress</b>  |           |                |            |                |
| Overall job satisfaction scale (1 = dissatisfied, 5 = satisfied)          | 4.8       | 2              | 4.8        | 2              |
| Satisfaction with selected job features (1 = dissatisfied, 5 = satisfied) |           |                |            |                |
| Benefits  | -         | -              | 3.9        | 2              |
| Wages   | -         | -              | 3.8        | 2              |
| Requested raise in past year (%)  | -         | -              | 16.7       | 2              |
| If requested raise (%)  |           |                |            |                |
| Received requested amount   | -         | -              | 50.0       | 12             |
| Received less than requested amount                                       | -         | -              | 50.0       | 12             |
| Did not receive raise   | -         | -              | 0.0        | 12             |
| Job stress (1 = not stressed, 5 = very stressed)                          | 3.0       | 2              | 2.5        | 2              |
| <b>Job demands (%)</b>  |           |                |            |                |
| Often or always experience the following challenges (%)                   |           |                |            |                |
| Overwhelmed by paperwork needed to comply with regulations                | 77.4      | 2              | -          | -              |
| Confused by requirements needed to comply with regulations                | 54.8      | 2              | -          | -              |
| Many requirements/regulations don't make sense to me                      | 37.9      | 4              | -          | -              |
| Many of the requirements/regulations are conflicting                      | 42.9      | 5              | -          | -              |
| Abiding by multiple standards increases administrative burden             | 63.3      | 3              | -          | -              |
| Hard to keep track of multiple standards need to follow                   | 53.3      | 3              | -          | -              |
| <b>Future job plans (%)</b>   |           |                |            |                |
| Likely to be operating a Family Child Care home                           |           |                |            |                |
| One year from now   | 87.1      | 2              | 83.3       | 2              |
| Two years from now  | 86.7      | 3              | 83.3       | 2              |
| Likely to be working in child care early education field (%)              |           |                |            |                |
| One year from now   | 90.0      | 3              | 66.7       | 2              |
| Two years from now  | 90.3      | 2              | 75.0       | 2              |
| Sample size (total = 47)  | 33        |                | 14         |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

A large majority of providers expected to be operating an FCC home both one and two years from now (87 percent), and also to remain in the CCEE field (90 percent). Somewhat fewer assistants expected to be working in the CCEE field in the next one to two years (67 percent and 75 percent, respectively).

## Sustainability and Staffing

The majority of providers (72 percent) reported that their FCC home's financial situation was better than last year (see Technical Supplement Table 8). The survey was fielded to providers between May 2024 and July 2024, or about 10 to 12 months after the pilot program started. Over 80 percent reported being able to afford the items they needed to run their FCC home. At the same time, 72 percent reported not having enough money for improvements, and 59 percent worried about having enough money in the future. Consistent with this finding, 53 percent of providers reported being only somewhat confident that they will have enough money to continue providing care in the long term.

**Technical Supplement Table 8. Sustainability and Staffing**

| Characteristic   | Mean | Number Missing |
|--|------|----------------|
| <b>Sustainability</b>  |      |                |
| Agree with following statements: (%)   |      |                |
| My family child care home's financial situation is better than last year                     | 71.9 | 0              |
| I worry about my family child care home having enough money in the future                    | 59.4 | 0              |
| I can generally afford to buy the things I need to run my family child care home             | 84.4 | 0              |
| There never seems to be enough money to improve my family child care home beyond necessities | 71.9 | 0              |
| Confidence in having enough money to continue providing child care in the long term          |      |                |
| Not at all   | 0.0  | 0              |
| A little   | 6.2  | 0              |
| Somewhat   | 53.1 | 0              |
| Quite a bit  | 25.0 | 0              |
| Extremely  | 15.6 | 0              |
| <b>Staffing (%)</b>  |      |                |
| How many people helped you care for children last week (%)                                   |      |                |
| None   | 34.4 | 0              |
| One  | 28.1 | 0              |
| Two or more  | 37.5 | 0              |
| If have assistants, hours worked in last week  | 27.5 | 0              |
| If have assistants, regularly paid   | 91.9 | 0              |
| Frequency experiencing challenges related to the following: (1 = never; 5 = always)          |      |                |
| Not enough help with care for children   | 2.2  | 2              |
| Hiring qualified assistants  | 2.8  | 5              |
| Not enough other help (for cooking, buying supplies, etc.)                                   | 2.6  | 5              |
| Assistant turnover   | 2.0  | 7              |
| Conflicting or confusing funding and regulatory requirements                                 | 2.6  | 2              |
| Reduce assistant's paid work hours when children are absent?                                 | 27.8 | 13             |
| Typical time to fill open position (%)   |      |                |
| Less than one month  | 62.5 | 23             |
| One to two months  | 12.5 | 23             |
| Two or more months   | 25.0 | 23             |
| In past year, had to accept fewer children because could not find assistant (%)              | 9.5  | 10             |
| Hours spent in the following hiring and onboarding activities to fill one position           |      |                |
| Marketing, advertising, and outreach for open positions                                      | 4.1  | 11             |
| Screening and reviewing applications and résumés   | 3.7  | 11             |
| Scheduling and conducting interviews   | 3.3  | 11             |
| Preparing and making offer of employment   | 2.4  | 11             |
| Onboarding new employees   | 6.3  | 11             |
| Providing or finding professional development/training for new hires                         | 4.4  | 11             |
| Sample size  | 32   |                |

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the BASE follow-up survey.

NOTE: Sample sizes vary because of missing values.

About a third of providers reported having no assistants to help with care. Those with an assistant reported that the assistants work 28 hours per week on average, and nearly all are paid regularly.

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Providers reported that they sometimes experienced challenges related to staffing, such as finding qualified assistants and assistant turnover. When considering the time it takes to fill an open position, a slight majority (63 percent) of providers reported less than one month, although a large number of providers did not respond to the question. Only 10 percent of providers reported having to accept fewer children because they could not find an assistant. Providers reported spending many hours hiring a new assistant, such as four hours for marketing and outreach and six hours for onboarding.

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