

# Family Child Care: A Closer Look

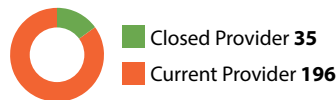


Family Child Care Homes (fcch) are a significant part of California's child care market. Compared to centers, FCCHs are more likely to offer flexible hours of care and are more affordable for families. However, FCCHs have been in decline since the great recession. We surveyed current and former fcch providers in the counties with the steepest decline in fcchs to understand challenges they face to sustain their business.

## Characteristics

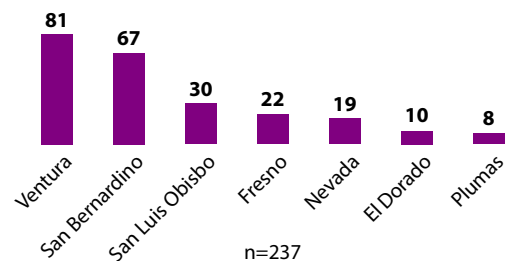


**97%** served children between 0-3 years old

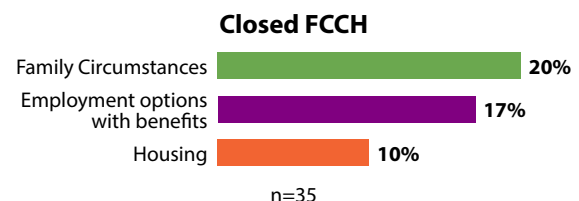
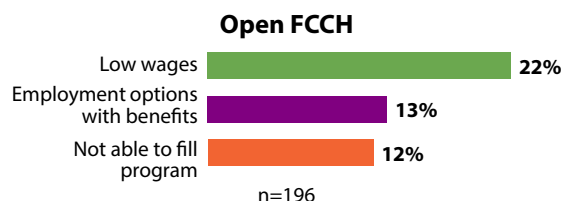


**51%** of providers had over 10 years of experience

## Respondents by County



## Top Challenges in Keeping Business Open\*



\*Percentage of respondents that ranked each as their top challenge

## Conclusions

Based on the survey responses and open-ended comments (see back) it's clear that family child care providers are doing a labor of love, and often receive very little in return. The top challenges that current providers face are all related to low pay, lack of benefits, and inability to fill the child care program. The cost of care is already unaffordable for families, possibly contributing to the difficulty in filling programs, so raising fees is not an option. Many providers expressed frustration with increased requirements and regulations, without funding, time, or respect in return. Additionally, large family child care homes need to hire an assistant and follow the minimum wage requirements, which are steadily increasing, which leaves little left for the main provider. Of the providers who have closed their business, the top two reasons (after family circumstances) are employment options with benefits and housing. At a time when both buying and renting housing is unaffordable, and in an economy where there are other jobs that offer more stability and benefits, running a child care business out of one's home is increasingly less feasible. Another common theme in the responses was the importance of social connections and support. Many providers expressed gratitude for family, friends, and associations/networks that supported them in this difficult line of work; however, those that didn't have these resources felt isolated and wanting for professional support and connection.

## Provider Insights

When asked if they felt supported during these challenges, 58% said “yes”, while 42% said “no”.

**Providers expressed feeling supported from their families/friends, parents of the children, child care associations, and trainers and R&Rs:**

“We had a family support system that was behind our decision to open a family childcare out of our home.”

“The help the specialist (CCIP Staff) gave me with training and materials. Their patience while I learned to complete documents. And the support from the agency with classes.”

“I have friends who are child care providers”

“The parents! They helped me feel safe/secure during the starting of my business.”

**Supports that would have been helpful are more trainings, more referrals, and financial and benefits assistance:**

“A network of substitutes who are background cleared and could work in any facility when someone is ill.”

“At the minimum paid sick days.”

“More in depth workshops for financial planning, cost of living increases, retirement, health care.”

“Access to Grants and or Fundraising for in home child care rather than having to be licensed differently to be able to access them”

“For most, in home child care is the owners livelihood, and often the owner has to make personal sacrifices to keep and pay employees.”

“Tips/help from previous child care providers.”



**Funded by First 5 LA, a leading public grant making and child advocacy organization, and managed in partnership with local child care resource and referral agencies**

- Small family child care homes (with 1 caregiver) are allowed to care for up to 8 children.
- Large family child care homes (with 2 caregivers) are allowed to care for up to 14 children.
- Other challenges: Startup cost, policies, access to required trainings, licensing process, natural disasters, different career interest/professional goals
- Surveys were conducted in October 2017 in both English and Spanish

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