

# Five Year Strategic Plan 2005-2010

prepared for the

## Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties

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## **Five Year Plan 2005-2010**

### **Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties**

#### **MISSION**

The Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties is a public-private partnership of business, education, community, and governments. The mission is to serve as the focal point for the planning and development of accessible, affordable, quality child care programs for the children and families in Yuba and Sutter Counties.

#### **GOALS**

- \* To promote and enhance the quality and safety of child care and development services through public education, provider education, and provision of support services.
- \* To increase the supply and accessibility of quality child care and development services through a collaborative interagency approach.
- \* To develop and implement strategies to identify the changing child care needs of our community.
- \* To identify and understand all resources available to meet local child care needs.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **Ordered by Priority<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Accommodate Children with Disabilities**

1. Continue to support mentoring of providers.
2. Support efforts of the BEST Task Force to address issues of challenging behavior in children.
3. Survey providers to assess potential to increase capacity.
4. Enhance providers' capacity for early identification of special needs in children

#### **Build Capacity for Infant Care**

1. Find and target funding for provider/staff training.
2. Find and target loans and other financing for facility development.

#### **Build Capacity for Before and After School Care**

1. Continue to track Proposition 49 and other potential funding sources. Monitor legislation related to Community Learning Centers/21<sup>st</sup> Century funding.
2. Study costs of before and after school services, especially to determine impact on parents' ability to pay.
3. Encourage supportive services to enrich after school activities so that small and rural programs can share in enrichment and recreational programs.
4. Advocate for joint use of facilities and joint planning for services.
5. Provide tools for school-based needs assessments and surveys to determine parental and youth preferences for service.

#### **Build Capacity for Services for Migrant and Seasonal Families**

1. Continue to support staff development for bilingual and bicultural early childhood staff.
2. Continue to monitor needs and support efforts to develop new sites where needed.

#### **Consider Preschool for All as a Part of the System of Early Education and Care**

1. Continue a leadership role in developing PFA in both counties, by assisting with funding proposals, formation of planning groups, and public forums.
2. Continue to search for funding for staff development.
3. Work with Yuba and other colleges to ensure necessary workforce development including training and education leading to a BA degree.
4. Play a leadership role in the implementation of YPFA.

#### **Continue to Develop Child Care as a Health Resource**

1. Distribute health education materials for parents through child care providers.

#### **Work with the Private Sector to Increase Options for Working Parents**

1. Continue outreach to on site businesses, developers, and planning departments to assure sites for child care facilities.
2. Consider an annual "Best Place to Work" award for an employer, based on an annual Business Leadership survey or employee nomination.
3. Regularly and confidentially survey personnel practices to distribute with a handout on family friendly employment policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Attachment 1 lists the objectives by plan year.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE PLAN**

The Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties was established as one of 57 Councils in California to implement legislative mandates related to welfare reform (CalWORKs) in 1997. The plan reported here is another step in the Council's work to assess and address the child care needs of its communities.

This is the second plan to be completed by the Council. The first Five Year Plan, completed in 2000, referenced the needs assessment update completed in 1999. It also summarized the findings of a Strategic Collaboration Workshop that engaged other stakeholders working on behalf of children and families in the two counties, and concluded with a priority setting session by the Council itself. As a first effort at long range planning for the Council, the 2000 plan helped the Council define its role relative to that of other agencies and groups.

The plan reported here includes activities that are mandated by the California Legislature. The Council is a public agency that represents the Board of Supervisors and Superintendents of Schools of the two counties. As such, it must comply with open meeting laws and has fiscal accountability to the California Department of Education. In addition to these operating guidelines, there are programmatic mandates:

- Assess the child care needs in Yuba and Sutter Counties and develop a long term plan to meet those needs.
- Advise the Board of Supervisors and Superintendent of Schools on child care and development issues.
- Facilitate the exchange of information among part-day programs, including State Preschool and Head Start, with other child care to provide full-day child care.
- Assist the state in the development of a single application and intake form for all federal and state subsidized child care and development programs.
- Design a system to consolidate local child care waiting lists.
- Recommend priorities for child care funding from the California Department of Education, Child Development Division (CDD), when appropriate or requested.

The report that follows is intended to meet the requirements for the Child Care and Development Service Plan.

## **THE PLAN PROCESS**

The Planning Council began its second plan process having experienced the successful implementation of the first one. The process for the second plan was more direct, starting with the needs assessment completed in 2003. That needs assessment began with a summary of activities and achievements by the Council, including:

- Distributing copies of the first five year plan along with the needs assessment and results of a child care economic impact study. In the last year, these packets have been distributed to new home buyers via housing developers.
- Joining the Yuba Sutter Economic Development Corporation. This is part of a strategy that defines child care as a part of the economic infrastructure of a community, in which early learning has direct and measurable benefits.
- Developing a plan for training of providers to accommodate children with disabilities. Although the original funding for this training is no longer available, additional funding would be provided by SB 640 of 2005, now on the Governor's desk.
- Training to local planning officials on child care issues related to development. Most recently, this has resulted in the Council's participation in child care center development at the newly built Rio del Oro School.
- Continuing public education efforts through a variety of media, including the Council's web site.

The process incorporated a community based survey of parents, the end users of the Council's work. The Council also surveyed local firms regarding the availability of family support policies and needs among their employees. The results of the two surveys are included in Attachments to this plan.

The principal recommendations from the 2003 needs assessment were

- "Support and guide child care center development.
- "Continue advocacy for children with disabilities.
- "Continue to seek opportunities to work with the private sector.
- "Find new ways to encourage development of migrant child care and to address other rural needs.
- "Take a leadership role in implementation of Proposition 49 (which would fund after school child care programs).
- "Support continued outreach to families about Healthy Families."

To these, in 2005 the Council added

- Outreach to prospective providers and operators (both Family Child Care and Center)
- Outreach to FFN<sup>2</sup> providers in cooperation with Children's Home Society, to increase quality assurance
- Preschool for All
- Health issues related to child care
- Tracking funding and opportunities for both infant/toddler and before and after school care

As a final step, in October 2005 the Planning Council held a workshop to review and prioritize the objectives. Through this process, they identified the most important of the achievable objectives, and set some aside for further study. The following discussion includes some items

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<sup>2</sup> FFN refers to Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers, also called License Exempt.

that would need further study, or had merit but were not achievable in the five year time frame of the plan. Finally, the Planning Council put its priority projects into a five year time line, understanding that with finite resources, only so much could be attempted each year.

## **MOVING FROM GOALS TO STRATEGIES**

### **Accommodating Children with Disabilities**

The Council, with funding from SB1703, developed effective programs for provider training. With the passage of SB 640 in Fall 2005, there will be additional opportunities to expand on and develop training in this area. The Council identified the following as needs to address for children with disabilities:

- Address cultural issues, in particular language barriers
- Identify children needing accommodation as early as possible
- Survey providers to assess potential to increase capacity
- Provide mentoring of providers
- Address architectural barriers in homes, centers, and play areas.

BEST (Behavioral Excellence and Success Today) for Young Children Task Force has been meeting for over a year and recently surveyed local programs to determine the number of children with challenging behaviors and the impact they have on local programs. One of the unmet needs for children with disabilities has been the capacity to respond to children with challenging behaviors. Often these behaviors do not even fit a disability diagnosis, and they are the ones most often cited as being barriers to incorporating children in group care. The Task Force is using its findings to prepare a fact sheet for local policy makers and business leaders. They are also engaged in strategic planning to address this issue.

### **Building Capacity for Infant Care**

There are two constraints to meeting the need and demand for infant and toddler care. One is the unique facility requirements when children are to be served in center based care. Centers must provide the same indoor and outdoor space as for older children, and other features (furniture and diapering/hand washing) can add cost. The other is that infant care is very labor intensive. Best practices require no more than three infants per adult.

Developing capacity in infant care will include continued efforts in provider recruitment and training. Center based programs will need loans. The Yuba Sutter Economic Development Council has supported two centers in this way. Local and regional community development banks might also support such efforts.

### **Building Capacity for Before and After School Care**

The needs assessment noted that the gap between demand and supply is nearly as great for before and after school care as for infant care. In early 2004, a consultant for the Planning Council completed a survey of all school districts in Yuba and Sutter Counties. Of 120 contacted, 42 replied and provided information on their services. (One of the challenges of planning these services is the very large number of school districts; this makes coordination, or even communication, very difficult.) At the time of the survey, districts that had used federal or State

funds under the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Safe Neighborhoods program had either lost funds or were uncertain about the future of funding. (Some of the funds are still available, and legislation in the 2005 Legislature amends the formula for funding.) The passage of Proposition 49 in 2002 was intended to fill some of the gap. However, funding of Proposition 49 depends on meeting minimum requirements within the State budget.

In addition to tracking Proposition 49 and other funding opportunities, the consultant report for the 2004 survey recommended the following strategies:

- Provide tools for school-based needs assessments and surveys for parental and you preferences.
- Work on planning policies that will encourage joint use of facilities and joint planning for services.
- Encourage supportive services to enrich after school activities so that small and rural programs can share in enrichment and recreational programs.

### **Building Capacity for Services for Migrant and Seasonal Families**

Migrant child care services are provided by Yuba City Unified's Child Development Programs, as a State contract, and through a federal contract with E Center Migrant Head Start. Yuba City's program has had difficulty with low enrollment which primarily serves families that reside in Yuba City. For parents traveling to work beyond Yuba and Sutter Counties, the long commute would be a challenge.

The Council's 2003 Needs Assessment noted that

“Historically this population was believed to be undercounted...It includes families living at the very lowest income levels and with very limited access to social services. Outreach to migrant families, even by experienced providers such as E Center, is very challenging. The report [E Center's 2002 Migrant Head Start Community Needs Assessment] found that the population of children under 4...appears to be declining in smaller rural agricultural counties while diversity has increased.”

The challenges to assessing need include

- Program eligibility requirements: State funding is restricted by income level, Migrant Head Start by employment status only. Although seasonally employed families may be served by federal Migrant Head Start (with a lower priority for service), State funded migrant services are restricted to migrant families who fall below a specified income level.
- Transportation: Families are traveling very long distances to work and to find housing
- The nature of farm work: Changes from migrant to seasonal employment patterns, fewer jobs because of mechanization, and loss of seasonal employment because of closure of canneries. Loss of agricultural land because of urban development could also be a factor.

Migrant Head Start continues to show a need for care, both for migrant families and those who depend on seasonal employment. These families are not well served in year round programs,

which cannot accommodate fluctuating enrollments. Migrant Head Start has a long waiting list of qualified families, which includes families with seasonal employment as a lower enrollment priority. The program is seeking an additional site in Marysville and hopes to secure a larger site in Live Oak. Families need center based extended day care, transportation, and bilingual-bicultural staff.

### **Child Care as a Health Resource**

According to Sutter County's 2004-2009 MCAH Needs Assessment<sup>3</sup>, the incidence of children without health insurance is 9 percent, somewhat better than the rate for the State as a whole. According to Yuba County's MCAH Needs Assessment, however, nearly 4,200 children are eligible for Healthy Families, but are not enrolled "due to lack of knowledge or communication between families and Social Services"<sup>4</sup>.

The Council might play a role in meeting health needs and at the same time address some of the health issues in child care. Beginning with best practices in preventive health and hygiene for children in their care, child care providers might be the missing link in educating parents about health insurance options.

Another unmet need is for services when children are sick and recuperating from mild illness. Although the development of special programs is not feasible, new solutions may emerge as parents and providers develop better understandings of sources of childhood illness and adopt better methods of prevention. Of course, this scenario also depends on more adequate health insurance and more accommodating leave policies for employees.

The Sutter MCAH report ranked child care ninth out of 11 community priorities in a survey of 104 service providers and clients, and ninth out of 16 on a "key informant ranking sheet". The Yuba MCH report noted that lack of licensed child care services and their cost contribute to families' dependence on FFN or license exempt care.

### **Preschool for All (PFA)**

The Planning Council first became involved when it convened a PFA planning group in Yuba County. When the group received funding for a planning grant from First 5 California, the group was officially recognized as a part of the Yuba County First 5 Commission. The local planning group, with support and involvement from the Planning Council, followed up with an application for a pilot Preschool for All program. Although First 5 California did not fund the Yuba County application in round one, the PFA planning group will meet to consider whether to apply for round two of funding.

As written in the application, the Yuba County Office of Education (YCOE) would be the Local Education Agency to administer the grant. Yuba Preschool for All (YPFA) would be able to leverage funding from the CARES for staff development (already administered by YCOE), and also from School Readiness funding and the County's four Family Resource Centers.

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<sup>3</sup> Sutter County Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health Program. Five Year Needs Assessment, 2004-2009.

<sup>4</sup> Yuba County Maternal Child Health Five-Year Needs Assessment, June 2004.

The partnership to implement YPFA would include Harmony Health, Yuba County Department of Health Services, Children's Home Society of California, Yuba College, Beale AFB, E Center's Yuba Sutter Head Start, Marysville Joint Unified School District, Plumas Unified School District and Wheatland Unified School District. The YPFA 7-year plan would coordinate accessible and high quality facilities through expansion and upgrades so that a target group of 770 (77%) 4-year olds in Yuba County would ultimately have access to a preschool program on a free and voluntary basis. YPFA would incorporate a bridging program to provide support for family child care providers, parents, family members, friends and neighbors (FFN) who are providing care for 4-year olds in a home environment. These programs would be encouraged to participate in the CARES program and receive education incentives as appropriate.

A similar process, albeit at an earlier stage in development, is now proceeding in Sutter County. The Planning Council, in conjunction with the Sutter County Superintendent of Schools, has submitted a proposal to the Sutter County Children and Families Commission for a PFA planning grant. CARES funding has not been available in Sutter County, so workforce development and education will continue to be an issue there.

The Planning Council has taken the important first steps in seeing that PFA will be a part of the Child Care System in Yuba and Sutter Counties. Workforce development has been and must continue to be a major part of the Council's effort, to assure that there are staff for expansion of licensed preschool programs, and for the bridges in other programs that will support it. This year, the Council is also planning another PFA Forum and is publicizing this to the community.

### **Working with the Private Sector**

“Our community has a serious lack of quality child care...The centers get to choose the parents, and parents become the ‘at will’ employees, held hostage in fear of losing their child care. There need to be more quality options, more flexibility, and more centers willing to work with parents and accommodate the individual needs of each child.”

So wrote one of the managers who responded to the Business Leadership Survey distributed by the Council in August 2005. This manager may be speaking from direct experience as a parent, or from the perspective of an employer who has seen the impact of child care on workers' productivity and commitment to the job.

Yuba, and to a lesser extent Sutter County continue to be very constrained in terms of economic development opportunities. In an environment where a smaller share of the jobs are highly skilled or highly compensated, it is difficult even for managers who understand the value of child care to offer more than minimal support to their employees. The Council could focus on low cost and simple ways, as they have in the past, to educate and recognize efforts of employers:

- Consider an annual “Best Place to Work” award for an employer based, on an annual Business Leadership survey or employee nomination.
- Regularly and confidentially survey personnel practices to distribute with a handout on family friendly employment policies.

- Develop more options and improve the stability and quality of evening and weekend child care.
- Continue outreach to developers and planning departments to assure sites for child care facilities.

Four of the employers surveyed also reported that they found evening and weekend shifts were a challenge to hiring. The lack of available weekend and evening child care may be a contributing factor, and is often cited as one of the reasons parents choose FFN or family day care.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Objectives by Plan Year

2005	<p>Continue a leadership role in developing PFA in both counties, by assisting with funding proposals, formation of planning groups, and public forums.</p> <p>Continue to search for funding for staff development. Work with Yuba and other colleges to ensure necessary workforce development including training and education leading to a BA degree.</p> <p>Play a leadership role in the implementation of YPFA.</p> <p>Continue outreach to onsite businesses, developers, and planning departments to assure sites for child care facilities.</p> <p>Continue to support mentoring of providers in caring for children with special needs.</p> <p>Support efforts of the BEST Task Force to address issues of challenging behavior in children.</p> <p>Enhance providers' capacity for early identification of special needs in children.</p>
2006	<p>Survey providers to assess potential to increase capacity for caring for children with special needs.</p> <p>Plan approach to health education materials for parents through child care providers.</p> <p>Do public recognition of "Best Place to Work" through "Best of Yuba Sutter" contest.</p> <p>Regularly and confidentially survey personnel practices to distribute with a handout on family friendly employment policies.</p> <p>Find and target loans and other financing for facility development for infant care.</p> <p>Find and target funding for provider/staff training for infant care.</p> <p>Continue to track Proposition 49 and other potential funding sources to expand before and after school programs. Monitor legislation related to Community Learning Centers/21<sup>st</sup> Century funding.</p> <p>Study costs of before and after school services, especially to determine impact on parents' ability to pay.</p> <p>Advocate for joint use of facilities and joint planning for services for before and after school programs.</p>
2007	<p>Distribute health education materials for parents through child care providers.</p> <p>Do public recognition of "Best Place to Work" during the Week of the Young Child.</p> <p>Continue to monitor needs and support efforts to develop new migrant child care sites where needed.</p> <p>Continue to support staff development for bilingual and bicultural early childhood staff especially for migrant care centers.</p> <p>Encourage supportive services to enrich after school activities so that small and rural programs can share in enrichment and recreational programs.</p> <p>Provide tools for school-based needs assessments and surveys to determine parental and youth preferences for service.</p>

## ATTACHMENT 2

### Membership and Staff Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter County

Category/Appointment	Yuba County	Sutter County
<b>Child Care Provider</b>		
Superintendent of Schools	<b>JoAnne Aiello</b> , Program Director E Center/Yuba Sutter Head Start	<b>Eva Teagarden</b> , Director YCUSD Child Development Programs
Board of Supervisors	<b>Kathy Woods</b> , Director MJUSD Child Development Programs	<b>Linda Granger</b> , Executive Director Live Oak Child Care Center
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<b>Public Agency Representative</b>		
Superintendent of Schools	<b>Sally Sokoloski</b> , Assistant Superintendent Yuba County Office of Education	<b>Roberta Huffmaster</b> , Lead Nurse/Infant Program Coordinator, Sutter County Superintendent of Schools
Board of Supervisors	<b>Carol Newsom</b> , Program Manager Yuba County Human Services	<b>Lola Schroeder</b> , Employment Services Supervisor, Sutter County Employment Services
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<b>Community Representative</b>		
Superintendent of Schools	<b>Valli Elliott</b> , Health Education Specialist Yuba County Public Health	<b>Maria Arvizu-Espinoza</b> , Associate Director, Migrant Education, Area 3
Board of Supervisors	<b>Roberta D’Arcy</b> , RN-Team Leader Harmony Health Family Resource Center	<b>Tresia Filby</b> , President Bi –County Day Care Association
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<b>Discretionary</b>		
Superintendent of Schools	<b>Lena Westman</b> , Director Kids Country Careland	<b>Gaileen Bumgarner</b> , Program Administrator II, Children’s Home Society of California
Board of Supervisors	(Vacancy)	<b>Sharen Dowdall</b> , Child Development Behavioral Specialist, Sutter County Health Department
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<b>Parent Consumer</b>		
Superintendent of Schools	<b>Jodie Keller</b>	<b>Kathy Tamez</b>
Board of Supervisors	<b>Terry Biladeau</b>	(Vacancy)

Staff	Position
Jorgine Allan Rogers	Child Care Coordinator
Mary Pa Hang	Program Assistant
Rebecca Canada	Program Specialist

## ATTACHMENT 3

### Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties Summary of Findings for Parent Survey August 2005

In late spring 2005 the Planning Council initiated a parent survey as part of the update process for its Five Year Plan\*. The survey was planned to distribute to families at a Children's Fair to be held in Yuba City. The fair was cancelled, and the survey was distributed by agencies representing a diverse variety of families and parents, from several ethnic groups, income levels, locations, and service types\*\*. The following summarizes the results of the survey for 457 respondents.

#### **Family Type**

The survey represents a variety of family types, with a preponderance being two-parent families. Although the survey asked for use of child care services defined broadly to include a variety of options, 350 reported that a parent at home with the children was the only or primary form of care. In addition, 49 families identified themselves as some form of extended family, often with primary care by a grandparent or other relative.

#### **Ages of Children and Out of Home Care Arrangements**

The preponderance of children in the responding families were in the age group two to five years (459 children) although large numbers were also reported for infants (children under two, 159 children) and school age (children 5 to 8 and 9 to 12 years, total 368 children). The ages reported are not surprising, given that many families use child care centers, Head Start, and Family Child Care homes for out of home care. A family member, neighbor, or friend provided out of home care for 123 of the children.

#### **Family Income, Child Care Cost, and Subsidies**

Without directly asking families to state their incomes, the survey asked questions related to the impact of cost of services.

Child care cost was the most frequently cited problem among those families who reported difficulty. For families who reported paying for care, the median weekly cost was \$85. Cost of care may also be a reason for not using out of home care, or for using a less preferred form of care. This would be one explanation for families who use no out of home services, and who report that cost is a problem in finding or using care.

Families were asked to identify whether they receive assistance in paying for care, and if so what the source of assistance is. Nearly one fourth of the families (116) reported that they received help from the government in paying for care. Only one family reported that an employer helped pay for their care.

#### **Other Barriers to Care**

In addition to cost, the most frequently mentioned "problems in finding or using early care and education" were difficulty in finding the desired form of care, or a long waiting list (64 families), transportation (62) and location (51). Especially in combination with cost, these factors may result in families simply not using out of home care or settling for less desirable care.

Among families using out of home care, 140 reported having changed their child care arrangements at least once in the last year (25 reported having changed 3 or more times). Continuity of care is important for young children's development, so changes are not to be taken lightly. The fact that parents opted for a change in care probably reflects inability to find the desired arrangement on the first attempt. It also may reflect changes in employment status of parents and developmental needs of children.

### **Choosing Child Care**

The most frequently cited source of information about child care was “Family or Friends with Children” (209 respondents). Both the public schools (66 respondents) and Children’s Home Society Resource and Referral (57 respondents) were also cited, but many fewer identified these options.

### **Children with Special Needs**

Only 40 of the 457 respondent families reported a having child with a disability. This is lower than what would be expected for the whole population based on the Census. Among those who stated that they had a child with a disability, most indicated that they currently have no problem in finding services for their children.

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\*A copy of the survey may be requested from the Planning Council, 1010 I Street, Marysville, CA 95901.

\*\*All licensed child care centers including Marysville Joint Unified Child Development programs, Live Oak Child Care Center, Yuba Sutter Head Start, and New Adventures Preschool; Sutter County Employment Services; select Family Child Care providers; and ABC, Harmony Health, and Leaves of Learning Family Resource Centers.

## ATTACHMENT 3

### Summary of Results Business Leadership Survey

The Child Care Planning Council of Yuba and Sutter Counties sent a one page survey\* to major employers in the two counties. Eleven employers responded, ranging in size from 7 to 1,022 employees, with the median number of employees (full time equivalent) being 215.

The firms included one county government, one health provider, one agricultural processor, three banks, three manufacturers, and two retail businesses.

The average age composition of the workforce for the responding firms was

% 18 - 35	47
% 35 - 50	39
% 50 - 65	20

Nine firms reported that they have multiple sites, including six with sites outside of Yuba and Sutter Counties. Only one firm anticipated significant growth in employment; that firm expected to double its workforce in the next year.

Firms were asked about barriers to hiring. Nine cited lack of qualified candidates, six a competitive business climate. Four need (and have difficulty finding) workers for night and weekend shifts. Only two cited high turnover or retention as barriers to hiring.

All of the firms reported they comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act. In addition, three offer some form of flexible spending account and three offer group insurance as a benefit.

When asked about reasons for adopting family friendly policies, five noted that “innovation in human resource practices” was a motivation. Some identified more symbolic benefit of “investing to prepare for a future workforce” (4 respondents) and “meeting a documented community need” (2 respondents). The potential impact on tax liability was an incentive, either the “deduction of benefits as a business expense” (4 respondents) or “deductible contribution to a qualified nonprofit”(2 respondents)

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\*A copy of the survey form may be requested from the Planning Council.