



Impact of Funding Reductions Enacted on Washington's CCR&R System

Like many other organizations who provide essential services for families around the state, the WA State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (CCR&R Network) has been subjected to significant funding reductions in the wake of the state's budget crisis. The 2010 legislature made cuts in CCR&R core services totaling \$293,000 (which was equal to half of our total state funding). **These cuts bring the total reduction to our network over the current biennium to nearly 28% of our total operational funding.**

The \$293,000 funding reduction came from 3 sources:

1. A \$212,000 cut made by the State Legislature to CCR&R core services
2. A \$60,000 reduction to Family, Friend and Neighbor caregiver services, implemented by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) in order to fund parent assistance staff that would otherwise have been lost to legislative cuts
3. A \$21,000 reduction to our core services in order to fund DEL contract manager staff

The impacts of these cuts play out differently in each local CCR&R program, but in every case the impact on their community is significant. Themes reported by local CCR&Rs were:

Reduction in Parent Referral Line: The CCR&R Network was forced to make the incredibly tough decision to reduce local parent referral line hours to a minimum of 20 hours per week, which restricts access to families in need of a phone counselor in order to find safe child care, particularly parents returning to the work force.

Loss of Staff: All but 1 CCR&R program has been forced to either reduce full-time staff to part time or implement layoffs. Additionally, all local programs report that they have had to eliminate the use of external consultants to some extent, drastically reducing the number of highly qualified experts working in the field that conduct provider trainings and onsite coaching.

Loss of Community Engagement Work: With drastic funding cuts have come the reality that CCR&R program directors are now forced to staff referral lines and conduct provider trainings and coaching themselves, reducing their capacity to work with community partners. This will have a lasting impact on initiatives like QRIS, DEL's infant/toddler effort, the work of community early learning coalitions, and countless efforts underway that are unique to the community where they are located.

NACCRRRA Quality Assurance At Risk: The CCR&R Network is in the process of becoming the first CCR&R statewide network in the country to complete the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies' (NACCRRRA) accreditation process: NACCRRRA Quality Assurance. We have made great progress using private resources bestowed on to our system through funders like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Boeing Company, and Thrive By Five WA. However, the cuts in public resources and loss of staff on the local level have jeopardized our ability to meet NACCRRRA QA standards. Despite the great progress and high marks our system has achieved so far, if NACCRRRA rules that our staffing is not adequate, we will be forced to start the entire effort over again, resulting in a significant loss of staff work and private funding invested over the past 2 years.