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## CHILD CARE REALITY CHECK FACT SHEET

### How bad is the child care crisis?

- There are almost 14.5 million children under the age of 6 who need child care because their parents work. But there are only 10.8 million legally operating spaces to service not only these young children, but also school age children.
  - Travis County's existing licensed, registered and listed providers have the capacity to meet just 36.5 percent of the need for non-parental care for children younger than 14. Local providers have the capacity to meet just 87.7 percent of the estimated demand for non-parental care of children younger than 5 years of age.
- Given this dearth of supply, it is probably not surprising that the cost of child care can be higher than the cost of attending public university. For example the average annual tuition at a public university is \$6,585, while parents often may put more than double that amount for the full-time care of an infant in a child care center.
- The average family with two children spends \$12,445 per year on child care, 14% of their annual income.
- In every state, monthly child care fees for two children at any age exceed the median rent cost, and are nearly as high as or even higher than the average monthly mortgage payment.
- In Texas, the average annual fees paid for a full-time center care for an infant are \$7,176, compared to the U.S. average of anywhere between \$4,560-\$15,895.
  - In Travis County it is \$9,768
- In Texas, the average annual fees paid for full-time center care for a 4-year old are \$6,084, compared to the U.S. average of anywhere between \$4,056 - \$11,678.
  - In Travis County it is \$7,775
- More than 12 millions children in the US under the age of 6 are in child care arrangements every week.
- On average, children under the age of 6 of working mothers spend 37 hours a week in child care.



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- About 1/3 of these children are in multiple child care arrangements cobbled together by parents to meet the demands of working hours.
  - The quality of care varies greatly, and many working families struggle with the costs.
    - In Travis County only 22% of the programs are accredited (an indicator of quality), and many of these programs do not provide child care that supports parental employment (i.e., during traditional work hours).

### **Why does the quality of care matter?**

- Research on the brain shows that the first years of life are critical for intellectual, social and general development – 80 percent of the brain develops by age 3.
- It is essential that children receive high-quality, developmentally appropriate care. More than 6 in 10 young children are cared for regularly by someone else other than their parents.

### **The Parent Disconnect: What parents think is happening with care and the reality is very different.**

- Almost 8 in 10 parents polled assumed caregivers have training to work with children. But, only 13 states require training in early childhood education before someone can lead a classroom in a child care center.

In TEXAS the only requirements are that you be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and complete 8 hours of pre-service training.

- More than three-quarters of parents believe that most child care programs are inspected regularly. Yet, only 11 states license all child care programs, and 8 states inspect licensed programs (Including building and fire safety inspections) less than one time a year.

In TEXAS licensed child care centers and homes must have an unannounced inspection 1x/year. Registered homes must have an unannounced inspection only once every 2 years, and listed homes are not required to have any inspections at all.

- Most parents believe that child care programs are licensed and that caregivers undergo a background check and are trained in first aid, CPR and in recognizing



and reporting signs of child abuse. This often is not the case and the situation varies widely.

In Texas, all caregivers must undergo a background check. Only 1 caregiver or employee per child care center is required to have CPR training. Only 1 caregiver per group of children is required to have current training in first aid with rescue breathing and choking. Pediatric first aid is preferred, but not required.

- 45% of families with two working parents have indicated that their caregiving responsibilities for their children have negatively impacted their work performance or career progress (or their spouse's/partner's).

**IN AUSTIN – NURTURE MY CHILD is doing their part to help families make smart decisions that are in line with their child care and family requirements.**

ABOUT NURTURE MY CHILD:

Headquartered in Austin, Texas, Nurture My Child helps families discover early care and education strategies that complement their life. Founded by Rebecca Cole, Nurture My Child launched in September 2009 with a number of happy clients already singing the company's praises. From preschool and mothers' day out to nanny and in-home care, Nurture My Child walks families through their options, providing customized research and recommendations to guide them to their ideal solution. The company also offers a corporate benefit package for companies wishing to help employees locate the best childcare. Learn more about pricing and packages at [www.nurturemychild.com](http://www.nurturemychild.com).

\*All statistics from the National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)