

National Website and Hotline Project – Child Care Resource and Referral Listening Session Summary

On February 26, 2016 CCR&R professionals from across the country participated in a listening session with the Administration for Children and Families to share their feedback, possibilities and recommendations for user friendly elements to consider in the design for the National Website and Hotline project.

This listening session was a part of a series aimed at gaining input for both the National Child Care Website and the National Parent Complaint Hotline from a broad range of early childhood stakeholders across the country.

Question 1: Thinking about the families that you serve in your communities...Are there specific user friendly features that you recommend for the design of the national child care consumer education website? For example: State specific licensing requirements; Language supports other than English and Spanish; Child Care Search by County (not just zip code); Connections to Provider Social Media pages; Parent sourced reviews of Child Care Providers

Answers and Comments:

- Language Considerations: Mandarin, Tagalog, Spanish, Chinese, other Multi-language supports (Local agencies have English and Spanish pretty much covered)
- Utilize social media as a way to categorize information
- It would need to be smartphone and tablet friendly
- Provide direct links to licensing database so that parents can review complaints and violations against facilities
- Provide State specific licensing requirements
- Provide direct links to Workforce Registry so that parents can review provider qualifications
- Provide links to the state website for families searching for child care
- Provide map of states that is interactive and links parents to CCR&R agencies in their State
- Consider an app for ease of use. It would be nice to have information available regarding what is being accessed to inform State CCR&R's as well
- Comments and Questions on the Inclusion of Parent Sourced Provider Reviews:
 - Parents absolutely use this type of research/ratings when making decisions
 - How do we manage these comments if they are negative or incorrect?

- Providers are going to be VERY nervous about parent reviews - what protects them from unsubstantiated negative reviews?; Parent reviews should only be provided after parents have seen the more objective information -- like monitoring reports
 - Who would monitor the reviews?
 - Parent reviews would be tricky...how do you verify reviews and what would process be from provider who is contradicting review or questioning accuracy or validity
 - May be more important to have QRIS Information versus parent sourced reviews
 - How will you use the parent sourced reviews?
 - How will you know that a negative review truly reflects that provider's practices/attitudes and was not a conflict with only one parent?
- Search by mile radius, zip code, address and county. Consider adding Defaults: Defaults allow people to do less work to get their results. For example: Adding a "near me" feature (in addition to a zip code or county)
 - Provide Information for families on what to look for in quality child care and questions to interview prospective providers
 - Include a straight forward, easy to understand, explanation of child care and then referrals to the local/State R&R
 - Ability to search by schools nearby or that the provider is willing to transport to or is on the bus route for
 - Consider offering an option for parents to send their search results to themselves via email
 - Have video or YouTube information on quality indicators and requirements of licensure from the State level

Question 2: Out of the recommended user friendly features mentioned earlier, what are those that you consider essential or should be prioritized to support the factors families use when selecting high-quality care? For example: State specific licensing requirements; Language supports other than English and Spanish; Child Care Search by County (not just zip code); Connections to Provider Social Media pages; Parent sourced reviews of Child Care Providers; Other

Answers and Comments:

- Diverse Language supports
- State licensing requirements and additional city requirements
- Search for Child Care by State, county, city, zip code and "near me"
- Ability to search according to child's age and age appropriate providers
- Families are concerned with cost and how that cost compares to similar programs/nearby programs and location from home or work

- It is essential that we provide education on what high-quality care is and what is available near to them and also need to show average cost for that area and providers
- Access to licensing inspections and complaint reports
- Information about available assistance to help with the cost of child care
- It will be vital for families to be able to connect and link back to their local CCR&R for additional resources
- The national website should share information that is the same regardless of where you live in the country and also explain that things like licensing standards are very different in different areas

Question 3: Providers may want to use the website as a way to increase the visibility of their program and services. What kinds of information should providers be able to include on the National Website that would help both themselves and parents? For example: Fees and Costs; Vacancies; Program Pictures

Answers and Comments:

- Information on the value and importance of Family Engagement- as a shared responsibility and a Family Engagement checklist available for providers and families
- A link to a copy of their contract or website
- Staff educational and experience and curriculum being used in their facility
- Providers should put the vacancies
- Specialty training they have completed - i.e. in autism, special needs
- Photographs of their environments along with written information about their program
- Languages spoken if speaking multiple language
- References from other families and parent testimonies
- If fees, costs, and vacancies are posted and a date next to when the information was updated
- Accreditation
- Links to provider's social media pages
- Specialty Services available from the child care program, such as transportation to and from preschool

- Daily schedules and meal plans
- Hours of care
- Program philosophy
- Participation in QRIS/food programs
- Years in business
- What types of assistance the program accepts: Subsidy participation, CACFP participation, scholarships available
- Summer camp listing, sliding scale fees, and scholarship opportunities
- Links or information about child care provider violations
- Opportunities for parent involvement
- An "accepting new children" feature that would help families determine which programs are available to them
- Comparison shopping feature for child care

Question 4: What specific types of information do you recommend are made available on the national child care consumer education website related to CCR&R services so that families are encouraged to seek local services and supports? For example: CCDF Child Care Subsidy application site; Parent training & services/how to find and afford early learning /support groups; Provider training & services / How to Start /Orientation training/ Business training/ market surveys/marketing/ shared services for FCC and Center based care/ Director support groups/ coaching and consultation.

Answers and Comments:

- CCR&R should be featured prominently as localized experts all over the site
- If parents are seeking local help paying for child care, phone numbers to call their local CCR&R to understand how to get help paying for child care
- Information about the role of R&Rs – e.g. Express that the counseling services is the best service. It's can help you really figure out what is best for you; Parents who have children with special needs should be directed to the CCR&R for sustained support; CCR&Rs are resources for providers as well not just families; local CCR&Rs are familiar with the local providers and can offer more customized help; Information that enhanced referrals for children with special needs and families with infants and toddlers can be accessed through their local CCR&R
- Links to CCR&R Social Media accounts

- Local programs who are working with the CCR&R
- Average cost of care by county w/ local CCR&R agency contact information
- Links and information on parenting classes
- A child care checklist
- Parent training and training for FFN
- Child care scholarships outside of Department of Social Services – e.g. Car Seat programs, Lending Library
- Teaching parents how important 0-5 is, so they really look for quality care
- Child Care Awareness Orientation
- What local resource are available to help pay for child care
- A link to Child Care Aware of America will be critical the work performed by the CCR&Rs
- Family engagement activities and upcoming local activities & events
- Linking families to local entities because licensing standards are certainly different in different States
- Links to local resources – e.g. housing, food pantries, WIC, social emotional resources, special need resources, mental health services, healthcare, developmental screenings, immunizations, early intervention services
- Eligibility requirements for subsidy
- List of recalled items such as car seats
- Include the local CCR&R contact in the footer at the bottom of every page that says something like "Need help? Can't find what you're looking for? Call (#) to speak with an experienced child care referral specialist that can help match you with providers that meet your needs."
- Links to the Center for Disease Control
- Information on how licensing address parent complaints and violations
- Information on Pre-K and Head Start programs
- Stick to education on the site. Provide minimal provider information and link each provider record to the appropriate CCR&R and/or State regulatory agency for more specific, detailed info on the program. That way the referral component is getting appropriately dealt with by the

CCR&R

Question 5: How could the National Website potentially support staff working with families who are enrolling in subsidy programs?

Answers and Comments:

- Provide national information regarding subsidies and who to contact to at the State level
- Professional Development- links to free classes and career advancement
- The National website could direct parents to the local CCR&R programs so the staff could assist a parent with the enrollment process; What would help is really encouraging families to call the CCR&R directly or referring them to the CCR&R website; Because there is such a wide span of regulation in every State, just provide a list of all the CCR&R's by State
- If that parent is moving from another State provide what the requirements are in the local area
- Linking families to local and State resources would be helpful
- The State and National website could intuitively incorporate State specific subsidy eligibility criteria on the screen to raise to the parents or come up on the results screen when parents are searching for care
- We have an online application process and linking to that would be awesome
- Subsidy staff should be seeking support for child care referrals from their local CCR&Rs. Please don't provide so much provider data through the national site that subsidy staff then feel they can bypass the utilization of their local CCR&Rs
- Provide links and information to a variety of additional local financial assistance resources

Question 6: Are there specific barriers and/or opportunities to the implementation of a national consumer education website that you can identify, that would assist us as we enter the design phase?

Answers and Comments:

- Even though you state that this isn't duplication, it is many of the same things CCR&R's are and have done for a long time. I would want it to be different, not an enhancement of what we already do. If it is just an enhancement, then put the money into the CCR&R system
- The concern I have with providing referrals for families from the national website is that it will eliminate parents contacting their local resource and referral agency that can provide more current information, particularly if the child has special needs
- This is so different from State to State that it will be important to make this support targeted through the local CCR&R where all the information is available
- We have a subsidy waiting list in our State which can be frustrating to staff. Staff want to be

helpful and would appreciate having additional resources to link these families with

- We would like a chat feature staffed by local CCR&R - in general not just subsidy
- Include vacancy information if done on local level
- Will there be efforts to connect with CCR&R in States that do not actually administer the child care assistance?
- Provide links to State legislative info to encourage families to advocate for additional subsidy
- Consider the cost of local data procurement
- Is the National Workforce Registry Alliance also involved in the creation or development of the site?
- Ease of use for the parent will be key
- Timeliness of updates will be critical to the success of the system. Child care providers and programs change quickly and updates will be critical to the usefulness of the site
- Consider lack of Internet services in local areas
- Would you pull our data, would we import? How would you connect to our websites to get the data?
- The cost is a huge barrier
- Who is responsible to update the national website as States and CCR&R change/update information?
- Who is going to design each State site?
- There could be confusion where providers post on national and not on local
- We are looking at social media as a means to categorize some of the consumer education. I believe categorizing things in a consumer friendly way that limits the number of clicks that people have to do to obtain the information that they need will be challenging
- How to maintain a current database as States implement new rules, definitions?
- It would be great to have some tracking of the site traffic, searches, pathways to State sites, etc. that we could integrate into our own analytics
- I believe this is an excellent opportunity to promote child care and has a great deal of potential. How will you collaborate and inform CCR&R's on the progress of this site?

- If there are programs or resources listed that are not available in every State, list the specific States that have access to these programs or sites. Make sure updates are frequent, information on QRIS and the availability of QRIS programs in every State may help parents become more familiar with QRIS and become advocates for QRIS
- I would assume that all information about providers will be checked for accuracy and validity of data. Entries should be sourced from regulatory agencies
- Consumer friendly vis a vis language; avoiding phrases or initials that are common in the field but not understood by parents
- I believe the licensing piece will be challenging as many States aren't reporting in the way that the federal plan would like
- Users will want to feel as if this national website reflects them and where they live, consider languages, the look and feel, etc.
- The Website will likely have CMS and Search feature. Offering an organized sitemap that is user-friendly so that families can quickly find the information that they need
- Will local CCR&R databases be connected to the national database so that they can support families moving from one community to another?
- Just concerned that information is current and what is considered current
- How would you ensure that any licensee that is revoked or on probation gets taken off the national website immediately?
- When you are talking about high-quality and helping families choose this - how will you ensure that all data from all States is standardized and can be comparable across all providers in the database?

[National Hotline Discussion Questions and Answers/Comments Summary](#)

Question 7: Does your CCR&R currently receive complaints related to suspected child abuse and neglect or health and safety violations in child care settings? How have you handled those complaints?

Answers and Comments:

- Questions and complaints are directed to the State 800 number
- Most of our members will take complaints; however our State just opened a centralized complaint call center
- We document complaints and submit to State regulatory agency, encouraging parents to also call in complaint

- We do receive these. We report them to the appropriate organization (i.e. child care regulation violations to licensing, suspected child abuse and neglect to Protective Services). We also remove provider information from our database until resolution
- CCR&R takes complaints about violations and investigates or sends the complaints to the Department of Children and Families. Child Abuse is referred to the child abuse hotline or to the Department of Children and Families
- Suspected abuse is reported to the abuse hotline. Health and safety violations are reported to local licensing organization
- We sometimes receive complaints, however, these are referred to Child Care Licensing and/or the Division of Children, Youth and Families...depending on the call. If we are notified by licensing with an issue regarding a licensed program we have the option to place a program on non-referral status
- As a local CCR&R we are responsible for receiving complaints about issues in the Family Child Care setting. We are then responsible for investigating the complaint, making site visits and determining validity and level of violation
- Of course a referral to the licensing agent is also included; once again, the intent is referring to the best result for the family
- We have taken those and made the reports for parents or given them info to make the report on their own
- We don't take the complaints to take away from the agency that is supposed to take them, however we've found that parents don't always follow-up with the appropriate agency, so we make sure to pass on the information as well
- It's typed on a FCC provider's license, where a parent can call with a complaint (MN)
- We have a clearly defined process on how to take complaints to appropriate investigative people. We also clearly inform and help parents make personal contact with investigators
- Complaints about child care centers are referred directly to the State
- Yes. And we handle them as they come in and refer them to licensing
- They've done both. They call the CCR&R a lot more than the State as they already have a relationship with the CCR&R through subsidy or referrals
- The incidence of parents contacting us is of as many reasons as you stated - first contact; one of many, etc.

Question 8: Using your experience, what are the essential design features and protocol inclusions for a national parent complaint hotline that will connect users to a Lead Agency point of contact in States and Territories? For example: Required training for National Hotline Staff; Types of information included in call intake documentation.

Answers and Comments:

- Having qualified staff to respond to these types of calls is essential
- Staff should have active listening skills
- California went to a State hotline and there was fidelity with staff training
- This is going to be tricky as States have different regulations. How will call center staff know if a parent concern is a licensing violation vs a contract dispute, etc.?
- Whomever are taking these calls should be trained to be empathetic and respond to families given the needs
- This is very State specific. In New York we are the investigating agency so calls to us are the appropriate way to make contact. This may not be true in other States
- Mandated reporter training
- We advise the parent/person making the report to write down the 6 W's first, Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How – And to then make the call so that there then is a removal of emotion from the report
- In most cases they call us and we have a policy in place to help parents make the connection with the State. We are obligated to make the call ourselves if it is a call of a serious nature
- Training from the local DCP&P (DYFS), training in identifying child abuse and neglect and training in protective factors for CCR&R staff
- Understanding of child development and early childhood
- If it's a situation that is truly dangerous for the children, how will info get routed immediately to investigatory agencies?
- It would be good to give parents some guidelines for what constitutes a complaint that can be addressed in a licensing (or informal) care setting. A personal complaint against style of care; or something regarding care policy vs a complaint of suspected abuse would be one example
- Often parents do not understand the difference between health/safety violation vs. what is allowed per State policy and regulation
- Clear expectations that all information is shared with State regulators. It is up to the State/lead agency to decide if it is a complaint to be pursued

- Policy features include various types of complaints/ violations and specific steps to take regarding reporting of each type of violation: who they need to contact; is it actually a violation in our State
- For areas with a hotline already, what do their number of calls look like?
- Staff will need to know intimately, State specific approach and supports; Parents need to understand what the follow-up will be and how that will follow-up will be made to the family, if any
- An explanation to the caller of what will happen with the complaint after it is made
- Are parents going to be required to restate their complaint after making their report on the national hotline, for example, is there an expectation that states will contact the parent to obtain the complaint information first hand - specifically around child abuse and neglect?
- The ability to access the training needed for mandated reporters is difficult at best. How can some of the funds that are earmarked for this initiative can be funneled to the CCR&R's to be up to speed?
- Will we have to report out to the National website?
- How will staff keep current? Ongoing professional development for these important people

Question 9: Are there specific barriers and/or opportunities to the implementation of a national parent complaint hotline that you can identify, that would assist us as we enter the design phase?

Answers and Comments:

- Fear of reporting
- Privacy and confidentiality
- A Q&A template for a parent to complete might be helpful. The questions might screen the parent's situation for the detail needed to refer that parent most appropriately
- Offering multiple languages
- How do you engage tribal communities?
- Due process
- How to localize the info
- Tracking the complaints to resolution from the national site to the local agency may be difficult
- If this is limited to CCDBG funded programs, can anyone report or only those using subsidy?

- There should be a disclaimer of the timeline of handling the call. Sometimes parents assume that once they call something will happen immediately
- The more open this hotline is to any information, the better the States will be able to determine a course of action
- Will the staff serve or should they serve specific regions?
- One question you may want to ask is if they have reported it to another entity
- Simple enough to take all information in enough detail to eliminate the need for the parent to keep repeating the complaint information. It is stressful enough for them to do this once

Additional Questions and Comments

- What is the timeline for launch of the website?
- What is the timeline for launch of the hotline?
- Will this website link to existing CCR&R referral databases or need data from CCR&R's?
- How do databases already in existence that will be absorbed?
- Will local CCR&Rs be required to provide data?
- Have you considered communications with NAFCC to connect with State/local provider associations?
- Where will you get the provider information from?
- How will you verify if providers are licensed, certified, and/or meet the regulatory requirements in each State?
- This looks like a duplication of the services CCR&R currently provides, how is your search different from what we are currently offering?
- Is participation by CCR&Rs mandatory? I.e. providing access to local data?
- Will States get a report of families using the site that live in their State?
- How to get the information out to the military and connect them with local providers once they leave the service?
- Will there be efforts made to market this site nationally?

- Will this site integrate with NACCRRRA Suite of Data Services?
- Will you have some of us do a pilot run when the design is nearly complete?
- What happens with the hotline complaints?
- Just wondering, if there is a parent complaint, how will that be shared with the CCR&R, especially if there may be an issue of abuse and neglect where action must be taken immediately? Or will that be shared with the regulatory agency first?
- Will the hotline also utilize a chat function?
- What will be done to clarify the purpose of the hotline? I see the opportunity for lots of confusion.
- This is not a question but a comment; we are an Ohio CCR&R -- parents sometimes contact the CCR&R to present an abuse complaint; we listen, and refer to the local children's services unit; in some situation, especially for a report against a provider, we may also contact Children's Services. Our first intent is to provide info for parent to make that report themselves.
- I'm sure there's a reason for creating this, but do they REALLY need another access point? Reports go to Licensing, and this will just take longer to get there.