Our Three Pillars

1. Public Policy and Advocacy—Grassroots-inspired and research-based, we study the child care landscape while advocating for child care policies that improve the access and affordability of quality child care for all families.

2. Family and Community Engagement—We continually develop tools and resources for family advocates and create opportunities for them to engage with us and with providers.

3. Membership—Our members help us advocate for child care policies that improve the lives of children and families, fund programs that increase the quality and availability of child care, and support our ongoing efforts to raise awareness of child care in America.

This report provides a “snapshot” of Child Care Aware® of America’s (CCAAoA) work in 2018 to deepen relationships, report our reach and improve our tools and resources, all while maintaining a strong focus on the three pillars of our 2016-2019 strategic plan: Public Policy and Advocacy, Family and Community Engagement, and Membership.

Policy and Research

In April, during our Annual Day on the Hill, nearly 200 advocates were joined by CCAAoA staff, early education leaders, child care providers, community partners and others. Our advocates held more than 200 meetings with legislators during our Day on the Hill to talk about additional funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and share their personal child care stories.

Child Care Works Digital Action Centers are now active in 12 states. Massachusetts utilized their action network to successfully mobilize advocates for a $2 million increase in funding for CCDBG services. The Child Care Works team held a series of advocacy workshops for CCR&R staff, policy makers and parents to help support a state advocacy day in Massachusetts. Policy wins and proposals fuel our advocates to continue this critical piece of changing their communities and keeping their families safe.

CCAAoA published several major research reports in 2018.

- "The Cost of Child Care in America," a project led by the Child Care Policy Research Network, included a national survey of child care centers, family child care homes and providers. The report generated more than 47,000 page views, many directed toward the individualized state fact sheets.
- The unique “story map” of Alaska developed through the Mapping the Gap™ project, illustrating approximately 82% of infants and toddlers without access to licensed child care across the state.
- "The Cost of Child Care: A Review of Prices and Proposed Solutions for a Broken System" provided a review of child care as a sound return on investment and shared our policy recommendations for supporting families and child care providers. The report generated more than 30,000 page views, many directed toward the individualized state fact sheets.
- The “ Mapping the Gap” project continued with a special series on infant toddler child care shortages in Alaska, Delaware, New Hampshire and Hawaii.
- "Checking In: A Snapshot of the Child Care Landscape" provided a state-by-state overview of child care, including information about services provided by CCR&Rs, emergency preparations in states and child care supply for infants and toddlers. The report generated more than 200 page views, mainly directed toward the individualized state fact sheets.
- The "Policy and Research" section continues with a special series on infant toddler child care shortages in Alaska, Delaware, New Hampshire and Hawaii.

During our Annual Day on the Hill the CCR&R advocates partnered with CCAAoA staff, early education leaders, providers and community partners to meet with legislators to discuss additional funding for the CCDBG.
CCAoA partnered with the Center for the Study of Child Care Workforce based at UC-Berkeley to produce "Why Do Parents Spend So Much on Child Care, Yet Early Childhood Educators Earn So Little?" which has been viewed more than 23,000 times.

CCAoA proudly administers the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and National Geospatial Intelligence Agency’s child care subsidies. In the past year, more than 39,578 children were enrolled in our Fee Assistance Program, which resulted in more than 332,772 payments made. In addition to administering this subsidy, our Child Care Specialists answered a total of 74,481 military and 3,959 nonmilitary calls last year.

“Tremendous program! This is a huge benefit that I do not take for granted and I cannot thank the military enough for providing this service to military families. I look forward to working with you and your colleagues and finding a satisfactory solution for child care for my eldest daughter.”
— Fee Assistance Family

With more than 2,200 providers, our Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) served more than 7,000 Navy and Air Force children per year with up to 40 hours of respite care each month.

“Respite has made a huge difference in our family.”
— EFMP Respite Care Parent

CCAoA continues its exciting partnership with the Bezos Family Foundation focused on encouraging family engagement through a national initiative that empowers parents to turn everyday actions into brain building moments for their children. The importance of early brain development and Vroom strategies were shared with professionals during 11 national conferences and in a thriving community of practice.

CCAoA remains committed to providing cutting-edge consumer education and engagement materials to families, providers, community partners and CCR&Rs. In 2018, we launched the SMART Suite, a growing collection of innovative, customizable social media content and resources that support professionals in their outreach and messaging to families.

• Social media materials: More than 100 professionally designed graphics, optimized for social media, with research-based messaging across key topics
• Professional videos: More than 100 professionally recorded videos featuring CCAoA professionals and families
• SMART Suite Sharekit: An implementation resource for working with SMART Suite materials and honing outreach strategies

Through our Vroom partnership we’ve added materials with tips that help little learners (ages 0-5) build strong brains through positive adult-child interactions.

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Engage Community Stakeholders in Solving Child Care Issues: 89%
States with Community-based CCR&Rs: 47
States with State CCR&R Networks: 39
CCR&R Landscape

In 2018, CCAoA launched the Ignite Initiative, a multi-faceted strategy designed to inspire, empower and ignite the CCR&R field to evaluate and reinvent itself by elevating the relevance of CCR&R services in a rapidly changing world. The initiative kicked off with a 50-state functional landscape and ignited the CCR&R field to evaluate and re-invent itself by elevating the relevance of CCR&R services in a rapidly changing world.

First-year results found CCR&Rs continue to serve as the nation’s primary community-based child care system and its landscape is becoming more dynamic, evolving, and interconnected. The landscape analysis of State CCR&R Networks and local CCR&Rs across the nation is the foundation for engaging stakeholders and facilitating meaningful conversations about the future of child care. The Ignite Initiative has helped to catalyze a national conversation about how to build a child care system that is accessible, affordable, and high-quality for all children.

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Tools for Child Care Programs and CCR&Rs

As policy makers, government administrators and others work to identify solutions to America’s child care needs, they must not overlook the current CCR&R system as a starting point. Serving nearly every community – pressing for stronger child care licensing regulations, higher investments in child care systems, subsidies and greater recognition of the importance of high-quality child care for all children.

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As the demand for child care continues to increase in Southwest Washington and across the country, the number of quality care providers has dwindled, setting up a crisis for working families who are struggling to find and afford care for their kids,” said Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler (R – WA, 3rd District). “I appreciate Child Care Aware of America's leadership on this pressing national need, and am pleased to join my colleagues in Congress on multiple bipartisan solutions that would support working parents by helping increase availability and affordability of child care.”

—-U.S. Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler [R – WA, 3rd District]