



Early Education and Childcare Needs Assessment

2022 PROJECT OVERVIEW

CHALLENGES FACING FAMILIES AND PROVIDERS

Communities throughout Cape Cod and the Islands have long contended with underlying challenges related to the provision of quality, affordable childcare and early education services. These dynamics have only been amplified by COVID-19, which has also produced novel complications for both families and providers. While these challenges have immediate effects within the childcare and early education industries, they also threaten broader repercussions for the region's economic recovery and the economic status of women, children, and families.

Building the Foundation for Improved Access to Services

Supported by \$200,000 in state funding, the Cape Cod Commission is collaborating with Barnstable County and the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy to conduct a survey-based needs assessment related to early education and childcare for Cape Cod and the Islands. Research will culminate in a report detailing existing levels of provision and needs, identifying any gaps in services throughout the region, and exploring potential strategies for mitigating gaps in services, providing a foundation for improving the accessibility of services in the region.

PROJECT ELEMENTS



Data and Document Review – Review existing data and research related to the state of early education and childcare in the region.



Survey and Sampling Plan Development – Compile two surveys, one for providers and another for families with young children, to assess the supply, demand, challenges, and preferences related to early education and childcare services.



Survey Outreach and Implementation – Promote surveys through a range of outreach methods and incentives for participants. Collect responses via a survey tool allowing for both digital and pen-and-paper options.



Focus Groups – Facilitate focus groups to increase the representativeness of research findings and to clarify survey results. Focus group participants will receive compensation from the Rennie Center.



Gap Analysis – Synthesize findings from data review, surveys, and focus groups to compare existing services to residents' needs and preferences. This will include identification of challenges to both providers and families and a spatial analysis identifying areas underserved by providers.



Identification of Strategies – Conduct literature review to identify methods for addressing core challenges revealed through the gap analysis. This will be paired with case studies of strategies in practice to highlight approaches for translating research into action.



Final Report – Develop a final report of research findings, strategies and case studies, relevant resources, and recommendations.