**EL PASO COUNTY MONTHLY DATA TRENDS (MARCH 2021 – MARCH 2022)**

**ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

For the first time since June, there has been an increase in the number of early childhood education (ECE) programs! Unfortunately, this coincides with a loss in total licensed capacity for the first time since June. One year ago, we had 441 programs, and now we have 422 programs. These losses are primarily due to Family Child Care Homes (FCCHs). As I will show in later graphs, we have seen an increase in ECE centers. Due to this, the total licensed capacity of ECE programs has increased by 6.7%, despite the loss of programs. All numbers related to total licensed capacity should be considered with caution, as staffing will have a large impact on the true capacity of ECE programs, and some FCCHs may not want to be at full capacity. In terms of quality, the largest change percentage-wise has been in the number of Level 3 programs (21.1% decrease from March 2021 to March 2022). However, this is only a loss of four programs at this level. The number of Level 4 programs has increased by 15.0%, which puts us nearly at our peak for this time period.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS**

In March 2021, we started with 212 ECE centers, and we have largely seen a steady increase to 222 in March 2022. One center closed between last month and this month. Centers can serve more children than FCCHs, so this has driven our overall increase in ECE program capacity. There has been an 8.9% increase in center capacity. The number of centers at each quality level has fluctuated some. There has been a 23.3% increase in Level 2 centers and a 20.0% increase in Level 4 centers. There are no Level 5 centers, which seems like an area of opportunity for our county. In terms of raw numbers, we have nine Level 3 centers and 60 Level 4 centers. This indicates that when centers go through the quality rating process, they are largely achieving a high-quality level.

**FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

Since March 2021, we have seen a 12.7% decrease in the number FCCHs in El Paso County. This has coincided with an 11.6% drop in FCCH capacity. Currently, FCCH capacity accounts for 9.0% of our total licensed capacity in El Paso County. However, there has been an increase of four FCCHs since last month, so this is worth celebrating. Most of the losses are Level 1 (14.9% decrease) programs. Over the last two months, there was a 30.0% increase in the number of Level 2 programs. There are three FCCHs that consistently maintain top quality.

**COLORADO CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCCAP) PROGRAMS**

The number of CCCAP programs in our county has fluctuated since March 2021, but we currently have 117 CCCAP programs, an increase of 4.5%. We lost one program over the last month, which may have been the ECE center that closed. In future reports, I will be able to show trends regarding the number of infant and toddler slots in El Paso County. I expect to start including graphs of infant and toddler slots in May. Based on licensed capacity, there are 789 infant slots and 1965 toddler slots in ECE centers. The Colorado Information Marketplace Licensed Child Care Facilities report only includes infant/toddler capacity in centers, but a method of calculating infant/toddler capacity for FCCHs has recently come to my attention. Future reports will take that method into consideration, so do not be alarmed that the numbers reported over the last few months are not the numbers you will see moving forward.