

ANNUAL REPORT



Child Care Council
of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.

Connecting Communities and Children

20
25



A Message from the Executive Director

2025 was a year of meaningful transition and continued impact for the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam Counties.

After decades of steadfast leadership, 2025 marked the retirement of our longtime Executive Director, Jeanne Wagner. Jeanne's dedication to children, families, and the early childhood workforce shaped this organization into the trusted, mission-driven resource it is today. Her leadership strengthened systems, built deep community relationships, and ensured that child care remained a critical part of local conversations about equity, workforce development, and family well-being. We are deeply grateful for the foundation she built and the legacy she leaves behind.



I stepped into the role of Executive Director in October 2025 with tremendous respect for that legacy and with gratitude for the warm welcome I received from our staff, Board of Directors, partners, and community stakeholders. Transitions can be moments of uncertainty, but they are also opportunities to listen, learn, and recommit to shared values. Over these first months, I have been inspired by the dedication of our team and the trust placed in the Council by families and providers across Dutchess and Putnam Counties.

Throughout 2025, the Council continued to support families in accessing quality child care, assist providers at every stage of their professional journey, and respond to a rapidly evolving child care landscape. From technical assistance and professional development to systems coordination and advocacy, our work remained grounded in the belief that strong child care systems are essential to thriving communities.

As we look ahead, we do so with both continuity and intention. We remain committed to honoring the Council's history while strengthening our capacity to meet current and future needs. Together with our Board and staff, I am focused on ensuring the organization is sustainable, responsive, and positioned to support families, providers, and the broader workforce for years to come.

Thank you to Jeanne Wagner for her remarkable service, to our Board for their stewardship, to our staff for their expertise and care, and to our partners and community members who make this work possible. It is an honor to step into this role and to carry this mission forward.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Himali Pandya". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Himali Pandya
Executive Director

Our Team

Jeanne Wagner – Executive Director (Jan–Oct)

Himali Pandya – Executive Director (Oct–Dec)

Kim Ciardullo – Day Care Registrar and Legally Exempt Specialist

Crystal Cooper – Legally Exempt and Referral Specialist

Wendy Cooper – Director of Professional Development

Mara Goulette – Day Care Registrar

Cyndie Hackett – Infant/Toddler Mental Health Consultant

Dawn Haecker – Assistant Child Care Assistance Coordinator

Carol Hand – Day Care Registrar

Tiffinie Helweg – Infant/Toddler Specialist

Kathleen Murphy – Director of Business Services

Nicole O’Leary – Child Care Assistance Coordinator

Nancy Owen – Council Clerk

Sarah Rokitowski – Director of Marketing and Outreach

Lorraine Scuccimarra – CACFP Coordinator

Rebecca Shaffer – Director of Registration Services

Deborah Taffe – Bookkeeper

Brianna Vigliotti – Day Care Registrar

Karen Walsh – Assistant Director

Megan Weber – Health Care Consultant

Child Care Referral Services

The Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.'s free referral service offers assistance in many areas pertaining to numerous aspects of early childhood education, including but not limited to, program referrals, summer recreation information, nursery schools, pre-k programs, cost and child care assistance information.

Parents supply information such as hours of care needed, location, school district, etc. to the Referral Specialist. Since referrals are not recommendations, the Referral Specialist encourages the parents to visit the programs and meet with the early childhood educator(s) before choosing a program and enrolling their child(ren).

Putnam County

Town	Total Slots Available	Vacancies	Request for Care Calls	Request for Care Online
Brewster	949	33	1	4
Carmel	134	17	25	9
Cold Spring	145	10	2	6
Garrison	16	0	0	0
Mahopac	919	112	4	8
Patterson	232	30	1	0
Putnam Valley	302	43	4	3

In December 2025, a single mother from Putnam County contacted our referral service seeking assistance in finding late-night child care. She was at risk of losing her job due to lack of available care options during her work hours. The referral counselor explained that while no regulated child care programs were currently available to meet her scheduling needs, legally exempt (informal) child care was an option because she was receiving Child Care Assistance. The mother was eager to learn more, and the counselor provided information about legally exempt care and the enrollment process. With this guidance, the mother was able to arrange care with the children's grandmother, who is now in the process of becoming their legally exempt provider.

Dutchess County

Town	Total Slots Available	Vacancies	Request for Care Calls	Request for Care Online
Amenia	83	15	0	0
Annandale-on-Hudson	46	16	0	0
Beacon	728	90	25	53
Dover Plains	48	7	2	4
Fishkill	501	151	14	12
Glenham	24	1	0	0
Holmes	160	0	3	0
Hopewell Junction	878	72	23	23
Hyde Park	342	40	26	32
Lagrange	16	8	0	1
Lagrangeville	187	25	9	21
Millbrook	100	18	0	2
Millerton	29	12	2	1
Pawling	142	59	2	1
Pine Plains	0	0	1	4
Pleasant Valley	90	9	18	19
Poughkeepsie (12601)	1,321	165	132	137
Poughkeepsie (12603)	1,353	277	70	141
Poughquag	72	10	7	14
Red Hook	248	6	8	18
Rhinebeck	231	40	3	9
Salt Point	48	20	1	0
Staatsburg	24	2	5	11
Standfordville	48	2	2	3
Stormville	64	15	1	2
Tivoli	0	0	0	0
Verbank	16	2	0	0
Wappingers Falls	704	117	34	27
Wingdale	257	5	1	1

In August 2025, a single father of two contacted our referral service seeking assistance in finding a before and after school program for his children. He had been struggling to locate a program with availability for both children that also aligned with his work hours. A few days after receiving our referrals, the father called back to express his gratitude. From the list provided, he was able to quickly find a program in Fishkill that met his needs exactly. He thanked the referral counselor for offering valuable guidance in navigating child care options and available financial assistance.



Dyson Scholarship

The Child Care Council of Dutches & Putnam, Inc. providers scholarships to qualifying families in Dutchess County to help pay for child care through a grant from the Dyson Foundation.

The Council was able to approve 12% of parent applications for the Dyson Scholarship in 2025 and provide financial assistance for 16 children.

Dutchess County	
Number of Families	12
Number of Children	16
Number of Providers	11
Total Scholarships	\$100,314.02

Child Care Assistance Program

In both Dutchess and Putnam Counties, a parent may qualify for child care assistance to help pay for child care. In Dutchess County, the Department of Community and Family Services and in Putnam County, the Department of Social Services handles the Child Care Assistance Program. In 2025, Dutchess and Putnam Counties eligibility levels to qualify for child care assistance were 85% of the State Median Income. This translates to a family of three earning up to \$95,396.83.

As of September 2025, both Dutchess and Putnam Counties have insufficient CCAP funds. As a result, Putnam County closed the Child Care Assistance Program for new applications and recertifications, effective September 15th, 2025. They continue to authorize assistance for families receiving Temporary Assistance. Dutchess County closed the application process for CCAP. They continue to open cases for families receiving Temporary Assistance and families who are recertifying will remain open if they are in the three federal priority groups (families experiencing homelessness, families under 300% State Income Standard, and those with children with special needs).

Legally Exempt

An enrolled Legally Exempt provider is an unlicensed, informal child care provider who cares for up to two unrelated children and receives payment from the Department of Social Services. Parents must be eligible to receive child care assistance, and the provider must meet certain criteria. An enrolled legally exempt group program is a non-residential child care setting that provides care on a regular basis but is not required to be licensed or registered with New York State Office of Children and Family Services, such as certain nursery schools, summer camps, or programs operating for 3 hours or less per day. These programs must enroll with the Child Care Council to receive child care assistance subsidies as payment.

Dutchess County

Number of Enrolled Providers	154
Number of Children Served	253
Inspections Performed	37

Putnam County

Number of Enrolled Providers	7
Number of Children Served	13
Inspections Performed	3



After several years without having a legally exempt group enrolled, the Child Care Council successfully facilitated the enrollment of a legally exempt group; an after-school program operated by a school district. Now that they are enrolled, the after-school program is able to accept Child Care Assistance subsidies as payment. As a result, four families have gained access to affordable and reliable child care services. Becoming a legally exempt group program requires significant effort, but the Child Care Council was able to guide the program through every step of the process. Expanding legally exempt group enrollments increases child care options for families receiving Child Care Assistance, particularly for those needing before- and after-school care, care on non-school days, or summer programs.

Child Care Registration Services

The Child Care Council oversees the registration of Family Day Care (FDC) and School Age Child Care (SACC) Programs. FDC and SACC Registrars perform inspections and provide support to these programs. They provide technical assistance to both programs and parents who may have questions or concerns and assist early childhood educators (ECE) with the registration and renewal process. Additionally, they work with our Director of Professional Development to arrange the best technical assistance ECEs* may need to improve their programs.

Modality	Dutchess	Putnam	Total
Family Day Care	60	18	68
School Aged Child Care	41	8	49
Group Family Day Care	65	18	83
Day Care Center	71	26	97
Complaints Investigated	FDC	SACC	Illegal
Dutchess	4	3	3
Putnam	0	0	0

The Office began working with a prospective family day care provider who has a child with special health care needs. Through this collaboration, the program was successfully registered as a new family day care provider, allowing the provider to remain at home while meeting her child's care needs.

*ECE: Early Childhood Educator

Child Care Registration Services

The Registration Team actively seeks opportunities to share the value and joy of childcare with prospective providers through strong cross-collaboration with the Legally Exempt (LE) team. By working closely together, staff promote Family Day Care as a viable home-based business, resulting in increased interest among Legally Exempt providers. In 2025, this collaborative approach supported one Legally Exempt provider through the full registration process, culminating in the successful registration of her Family Day Care program in September. An additional Legally Exempt provider is currently nearing completion of the registration process. These outcomes reflect the strength of interdepartmental collaboration and a shared commitment to expanding high-quality childcare options.

The Putnam Network Group, consisting of Family Day Care and Group Family Day Care providers throughout Putnam County, received four in-depth professional development trainings in 2025. These trainings supported providers in meeting OCFS training requirements, strengthening child safety practices, and maintaining compliance with New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regulations. Collectively, the trainings contributed toward providers' required annual training hours necessary to remain in good standing.

Putnam Network Group

Date	Training	Attendance	Incentive	Total Spent
1-22-25	The 5 W's of Biting	7 programs 10 attendees	Wooden Activity Cube	\$483.77
2-26-25	Child Abuse & Maltreatment and Mandated Reporting	11 programs 13 attendees	Stress Relief Coloring Book, Stress Cubes, Meditation Cards	\$508.17
3-15-25	Stop the Bleed	9 programs 13 attendees	Kids Ice Packs, Travel First Aid Kits	\$476.28
4-17-25	Navigating FAMS 101	10 programs 13 attendees	Label Maker Kit, Label Maker Tape Refill	\$711.30
				\$4,199.03

Council Cluster

Date	Topic	Attendance
6-17-25	Business Basics	12
8-12-25	Flip It	10
11-12-25	Developmentally Appropriate Practice	8

The Dutchess County Council Cluster and the Putnam County Family Day Care Network provide home-based early childhood educators (ECE) training and the opportunity to come together to discuss issues in child care.

Professional Development

The Professional Development Department experienced strong growth and success throughout the 2025 calendar year by expanding both Intensive Technical Assistance (ITA) and professional development offerings. In 2025, training opportunities were revitalized through partnerships with Dutchess County Cornell Cooperative Extension, surrounding parent-focused trainings. The Directors Network created a collaborative space for SACC (School-age child care) and DCC (Day Care Center) directors to connect, network, and engage in shared problem-solving and professional growth. These initiatives have been met with enthusiasm and positive feedback.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are eager to build on this momentum by further expanding both initiatives. We have also enhanced our capacity to deliver trainings directly to educators through on-site offerings. This approach allows us to develop a deeper understanding of individual programs and to more effectively address specific challenges through targeted ITA guidance and customized training opportunities.

Our team remains committed to ongoing professional growth and actively pursues additional development opportunities to ensure we deliver relevant, meaningful, and impactful learning experiences for the educators in the communities we serve.

In New York State, all registered and licensed child care programs (Day Care Centers, Family Day Care, Group Family Day Care, and School-Age Child Care) must comply with mandatory training hours set by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Educators must complete thirty (30) hours of training every two years. The training must address the 10 OCFS required subject areas:

- Principles of childhood development
- Nutrition and health needs of children
- Child day care program development
- Safety and security procedures
- Business record maintenance and management
- Child abuse and maltreatment identification and prevention
- Statutes and regulations pertaining to child day care
- Statutes and regulations pertaining to child abuse and maltreatment
- Education & information on the identification, diagnosis and prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome
- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)



Karen Walsh, Assistant Director accepting her certificate for completing the 2025 Executive Leadership Program

	Dutchess	Putnam	Westchester
On-Site Training	5	5	1
Number of Attendees	47	36	36
Council Training	37	6	N/A
Number of Attendees	366	75	N/A
ITA Trainings	2	6	N/A
Number of Attendees	16	84	N/A

Infant/Toddler & Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Services

The Infant/Toddler Mental Health Consultant works in partnership with educators to strengthen children's social emotional development while addressing challenging behaviors early on before intervention is needed.

	Dutchess	Putnam
Home Based	25	5
Day Care Centers	50	10
Number of Children Served		76

The Infant/Toddler Specialist (ITS) assists educators in maintaining quality environments, learning materials for infants and toddlers, early childhood development, and teacher and administrative standards in programs.

In May of 2025, the Infant Toddler specialist was contacted by a Dutchess County Day Care center director regarding a child who was exhibiting some biting behaviors in a classroom where proactive measures proved to have led to much resolution after months of quality improvement planning and implementation. Unfortunately, one of the families did not agree with the administrative decision to allow the toddler to remain in the program, despite extensive effort to assure their child's safety, and contacted the center's board of directors. The child was expelled. After meeting the child's family, she discovered that this situation was keeping the family from getting to work. The ITS contacted the center's board of directors to appeal this decision on behalf of the family and the center. The ITS was able to provide information about typical toddler development and behavior, what is being done and what more could be done to ensure safety and best practice. After several zoom meetings with the ITS, it was decided by the board of directors that the child would re-enroll in the program that this child already knew and loved. Now, the child is currently there, happy and thriving while Mom and Dad are able to provide for their children worry-free.

Outreach

In 2025 the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc. attended five local tabling events and co-hosted two events. CCCDP worked with Fidelis to host a Community Baby Shower and Tiffinie Helweg, Infant Toddler Specialist; worked closely with the Infant Toddler Center at Vassar to host a conference.



Health Care Consultant

The Health Care Consultant on staff at the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam County helps early childhood educators by:

- Answering questions about common childcare health issues such as illnesses or immunizations;
- Assisting with the development of health care policies and in the creation of the program's health care plan;
- Helping childcare providers accommodate children with special needs by offering program specific training as well as collaborating to create Individual Health Care Plans;
- Conducting onsite reviews of programs, annually for MAT programs and biennially for non-MAT programs, to monitor implementation of health care plans, policies and procedures;
- Providing Medication Administration Training, MAT, according to NY State standards and certify those individuals who successfully complete the class.

Medication Administration Trainings 2025

Independent Study: 6 classes

3rd Skills Renewals: 7

	Dutchess	Putnam
Family Day Care	5	1
Group Family Day Care	7	2
School Age Child Care	1	3
Day Care Center	27	13
Non-MAT Day Care Center	14	2

A group family non-MAT program contacted me and informed me that a toddler that they had in program had recently been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. They had been caring for this child since infancy and wanted to continue but were unsure and apprehensive about what to do. To ensure continuity of care we quickly scheduled for the program to become MAT certified. They even closed the childcare for the day to complete this training. Then, because the administration of injectables requires additional training, we had collaborative training with the child's mother, the daycare provider and me the Health Care Consultant. This training involved prepping and administering subcutaneous injections, calculating doses of insulin based on blood sugar levels and carbohydrate intake, signs and symptoms of hypo and hyperglycemia, as well as glucagon auto-injector administration for critically low blood sugar. It was no small undertaking but with this team-oriented approach we were able to ensure that this child's diabetes could be managed, and the parents could go to work knowing their child was in the best of hands. It was a unique opportunity to see true community in action.

Business Services

The Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc. offers the skills and tools needed by ECEs to help build and maintain a sustainable program. These services include technical assistance, business training, and a business lending library.

In 2025, CCCDP Child Care Business Services focused on providing Technical Assistance (TA) and training for all modalities of care and for prospective providers. TA ranged from developing parent contracts to employee handbooks. Training offered included the ECLC Core Business Series, Tom Copeland's Family Child Care Business Curriculum, Team Building, and Affective Communication.

Business Related Technical Assistance	136
Business Related Trainings	10
Prospective Provider Assistance	3

CCCDP is also available to support business in the community with their child care needs. CCCDP can help employers with their employee child care needs through our Referral Specialist and can work with employers who wish to open a child care program onsite.

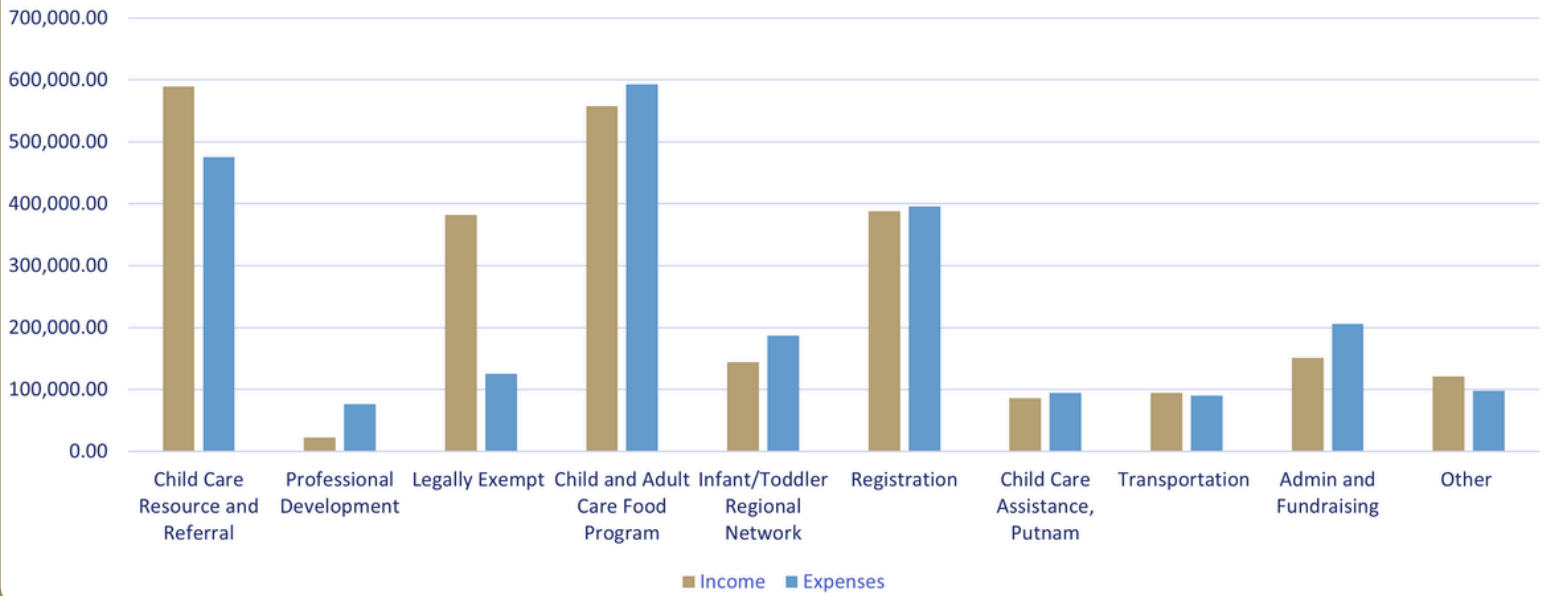
Empire State Family Child Care Collaborative

The Empire State Family Child Care Collaborative (ESFCCC) is specialized and personalized services from local CCRCs for licensed family day care homes or group family day care homes in good standing with OCFS. CCCDP is proud to be able to facilitate this new initiative for Dutchess and Putnam Counties. We currently have 12 members participating in the collaborative and will continue to recruit additional members in 2026.

Members receive free child care management software (CCMS), business coaching to help launch and use the CCMS, calculate time-space percentage, organize recordkeeping, create an operating budget, access to CACFP supports, and monthly meetings with other providers to help build community, facilitate peer learning, and drive advocacy.



2025 Income and Expenses



At the time of printing, 2025 audit was not yet completed.

	Income	Expenses
Child Care Resource and Referral	\$589,133.86	\$475,082.70
Professional Development	\$22,830.39	\$76,417.08
Legally Exempt	\$382,281.10	\$125,351.89
Child and Adult Care Food Program	\$558,132.76	\$592,579.91
Infant/Toddler Regional Network	\$144,343.44	\$187,607.14
Registration	\$388,027.87	\$395,449.24
Child Care Assistance, Putnam	\$85,727.00	\$94,319.52
Transportation	\$94,625.96	\$90,279.63
Admin and Fundraising	\$150,964.08	\$205,878.01
Other	\$120,722.17	\$98,024.67
Total	\$2,536,788.63	\$2,340,989.79

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