



Northern California Child Development, Inc.

SELF-ASSESSMENT 2020/2021

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Program description

Northern California Child Development, Inc. (NCCDI) is a non-profit agency operating Head Start and Early Head Start in Tehama County through center-based, family childcare, home-base, and locally designed options. Our program has sites in each of the larger populated municipalities in Tehama County, as well as serving families in more rural communities through home visitation and family childcare. While some of our classrooms are located at local public schools, most of our classrooms are located on commercial and private property. The program has strong ties to its local communities. Total enrollment for FY 2020 was 312; 197 Head Start and 115 Early Head Start.

On March 17, 2020, NCCDI ceased all Head Start and Early Head Start operations because of a state-wide shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While some staff returned to work in April 2020 to support resumed operations of other NCCDI programs, Head Start and Early Head Start staff remained at home with Teachers working remotely to provide distance learning services to children for the remainder of our regularly scheduled program calendar. In July 2020, NCCDI operated a 5-week Head Start summer program for children transitioning to kindergarten as well as children with disabilities.

While we planned to resume services, the way we would provide those services needed to be drastically different to respond to the impact of COVID-19. The purpose of our self-assessment process for the 2020/21 program year was to revise organizational policies and procedures within each of our management systems to re-open as safely as possible for the children and families we serve, our staff, and the community at-large. NCCDI resumed program-wide services on September 1, 2020.

Context for Self-Assessment

1. Prior to this year's Self-Assessment, NCCDI's management team began reviewing industry guidance provided by the California Department of Public Health to respond to COVID-19, local guidance from Tehama County Department of Public Health, guidance from California Department of Education, guidance from Tehama County Department of Education, and guidance from the Office of Head Start.
2. Starting in June 2020, NCCDI's management and key staff participated in a series of Self-Assessment Planning meetings.

3. Meetings focused on the COVID guidance, Head Start Management Systems Wheel, NCCDI policies and procedures for each service and management area, staffing plans, and re-opening plans for 2020/21.
4. NCCDI Policy Council and Governing Board received monthly updates.

Purpose & Overview

- ✓ Draft operational re-opening plan for the 2020/21 program year as well as COVID-related addendums to NCCDI policies and procedures.
- ✓ Update and suspend, if necessary, Program Goals in response to COVID-19.
- ✓ Identify funding, resources, supplies, technology, and facility upgrades needed to operate safely during the 2020/21 program year in response to COVID-19.

ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW CYCLE

ASSESS

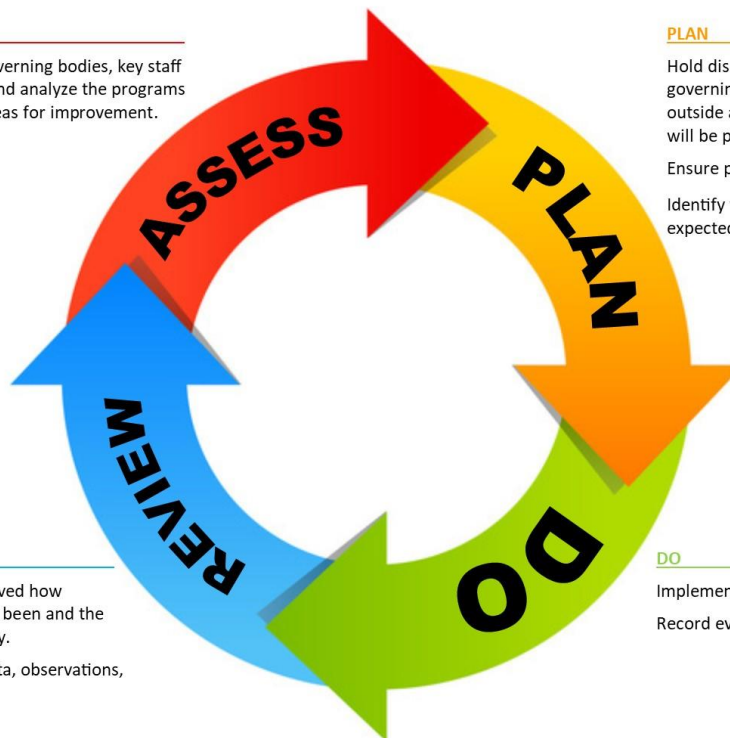
Hold discussions with governing bodies, key staff and parents to identify and analyze the programs needs, strengths, and areas for improvement.

PLAN

Hold discussions and meetings with governing bodies, key staff, parents and outside agencies who can support what will be put in place.

Ensure plan is outcome focused.

Identify the resources required and the expected impact on the community.



REVIEW

Discuss with others involved how effective the support has been and the impact on the community.

Analyze and compare data, observations, and planned outcomes.

DO

Implement the Plan.

Record evidence of support and progress.

SECTION 2. KEY INSIGHTS

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Always keep in mind the impact of COVID-19 on the population we serve:

- ✓ Increased unemployment because of COVID-19.
- ✓ Families living in rural areas of Tehama County with limited or no internet access.
- ✓ Families with older siblings may be impacted by K-12 school closures.
- ✓ Lack of medical, dental, and social service resources due to COVID-19.
- ✓ County and state-wide restrictions, specifically related to child care and schools.
- ✓ Monitoring health and responding to positive cases and/or close contact.

Factors from community assessment filtered into the following areas of focus:

- ✓ Parent Engagement
- ✓ Employment & Housing
- ✓ Health Services
- ✓ Child Care

Using the above community assessment factors, NCCDI identified gaps in meeting community needs and developed program goals to address these gaps.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT	
Barriers to Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No public gatherings. • All parent engagement activities provided virtually.
Provide & Promote Events that meet a need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of technology to provide and promote events • How to use social media and other communication tools to communicate with both non-Hispanic & Hispanics families. • Parent Choice Conference – need to plan for virtual event if unable to hold in person, or do we cancel. • What other engagement events can we modify, if possible.
Build Effective & Healthy Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relationships with staff when in-person contact is limited. • Lack of parent volunteers in classroom. • Turnover of staff during year. • Supporting mental health of families during pandemic.
Methods of Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More tech-based forms of communication.
EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING	
Qualified workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees unable to return to work due to COVID-19. • Not enough qualified applicants for jobs that are available.
Availability of childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of available on-site Childcare slots due to class size restrictions imposed on childcare facilities. • Families unable to use alternative childcare in the event of COVID-related facility closures.
Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How increased unemployment will impact homelessness in County.
Barriers to Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of contracting virus while at work. • Increased unemployment benefits due to COVID. • Children staying home due to school closures.
Barriers to Stable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High deposits are more than monthly rent. • Access to SHHIP resources during pandemic.
HEALTH SERVICES	
Lack of Access to Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families use the Emergency Room and walk-in clinics as their health provider. However, COVID restrictions limit the number of patients that can be seen and patients are referred to virtual or tele-health options if not deemed to be high priority. • Families use dental clinics as their primary dental provider. Due to COVID, dental clinics closed and provided virtual visits. • Virtual visits not an option for medical or dental care due to lack of internet in rural areas.
Insurance Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families lose insurance benefits due to job loss or choose not to seek needed medical services

CHILD CARE	
Lack of slots available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of available on-site Childcare slots due to class size restrictions imposed on childcare facilities. • Families unable to use alternative childcare in the event of COVID-related facility closures.
Industry Closures & Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families not working due to pandemic choose to keep children at home.
Safety Restrictions on Child Care Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families choose not to enroll children in center-based services due to health and safety restrictions such as face coverings, social distancing, inability to come into the classroom.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS

System	Questions to Consider
LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of current Governing Board & Policy Council membership and recruitment of new members due to COVID. • Use of technology to conduct virtual meetings. • Role of Governing Board and Policy Council Chairpersons during virtual meetings.
PROGRAM & STAFF EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of staff and program operations without on-site observation. • Communication with staff without in-person staff meetings? • Assessment of children served through distance learning in both center-based and home-based options?
FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes made to classroom environments to comply with industry, local, state, and federal guidance related to COVID. • How to utilize outdoor learning/working environments more during pandemic. • Facility repairs and modifications necessary to keep children and family safe.
TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifications to training and professional development plans using virtual platforms. • Modifications to coaching and coaching plans using virtual platforms.
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology needed to effectively communicate with staff, parents, and the community. • Establish communication with leaders at Tehama County Department of Public Health to be kept informed of COVID-related issues that could impact services.
TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology needed to effectively recruit and enroll children and families during pandemic. • Technology needed for staff to effectively provide remote and virtual services during pandemic. • Technology needed for staff to effectively work remotely from home, if necessary.

STAFF WELLNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family-friendly policies and initiatives to support staff working during the pandemic. • Providing mental health resources to staff and supporting mental health of staff during the pandemic. • Creating a safe and healthy work environment for staff.
HUMAN RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifying procedures for recruitment, hiring and on-boarding staff during the pandemic. • Implementing and complying with new employment regulations resulting from COVID. • Impact pandemic will have on staff’s ability to return to work. • Impact pandemic will have on staff recruitment and availability of qualified candidates.

SECTION 3. PROGRAM GOALS

Program Goals were developed for the Year 1 application through process of self-assessment and strategic planning based on data from community assessment, community partners, and NCCDI operations. While the goals did not change for Year 3 of this current 5-year grant cycle, the progress changed significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 1) Parent Engagement – Provide parents opportunities to acquire necessary information, knowledge, and skills to support their children’s education at home and at school.

Progress – NCCDI developed methods for distance learning for its Home-base option as well as children enrolled in our Center-base option that were unable to attend a classroom setting. NCCDI expanded its social media presence by using Instagram, Facebook for individual classrooms/centers, and creating YouTube channels for enrolled families. NCCDI purchased a Zoom subscription to provide distance learning, parent engagement activities, and for parent communication.

- 2) Employment & Housing – Build effective partnerships between workforce and housing resources in Tehama County that create economic self-sufficiency and a high quality of life for families we serve.

Progress – NCCDI participated in virtual job fairs sponsored by the Job Training Center of Tehama County. In addition, NCCDI was awarded a grant to provide financial support to families at risk of homelessness due to the pandemic.

- 3) Safe Communities - Bring individuals, agencies and organizations together to develop principles of practices in community safety and crime prevention in communities where families we serve live.

Progress – NCCDI was an active member of the Tehama County Administrative Oversight Team (AOT), appointed staff to serve on Tehama County Community Action Agency Tripartite Board, and worked with both the Red Bluff Chamber of Commerce and Corning Chamber of Commerce to develop county-wide health and safety initiatives to promote and implement practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Tehama County.

- 4) Health Services – Build effective partnerships with local healthcare providers to make healthcare affordable, high quality, and accessible for families we serve.

Progress – NCCDI worked in collaboration with First 5 Tehama, Tehama County Department of Education, Tehama County Public Health, Tehama County Job Training Center, and Rolling Hills Casino to distribute health and safety supplies to families throughout Tehama County to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In addition, NCCDI partnered with Tehama County Public Health to distribute oral education resources and oral health supplies to Head Start & Early Head Start children and families.

- 5) Child Care – Advocate at local, state, and national levels to ensure Tehama County has accessible, affordable, and high-quality childcare that meets the needs of families and prepares children for school.

Progress – NCCDI’s Executive Director is an active member of the Board of Directors for Head Start California Association, serves as the Chair for the Tehama County Local Child Care Planning Council, and is member of Quality Counts North State.

- 6) Education - Provide parents opportunities to complete a college education or career training and to equip them to be an engaged, self-sustained citizen.

Progress – NCCDI suspended efforts in this area for the 2020/21 program year to focus on other priorities.

- 7) Governance – Create a culture of effective program governance and practices.

Progress – NCCDI did lose two Board members during the year who were unable to continue their term. NCCDI currently does not have a Board member who meets the early childhood education expert requirements in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards. That positions remains vacant as recruitment for new Board members during the pandemic has been challenging.

- 8) Program Services – Provide program services and options that meet the most critical needs of the community and that NCCDI is most capable to deliver.

Progress – NCCDI re-opened center-based services on September 1, 2020. NCCDI provided distance learning services to children unable to return to the classroom due to COVID. Home Visitation services were provided virtually. Staff provided educational materials to parents in Distance Learning or Home Base either electronically or dropped off at family’s home. While NCCDI was unable to reach full enrollment through the date of this application, actual enrollment averaged 90% of our funded enrollment, with 90% of those children enrolled in a center-based option receiving on-site services.

- 9) Communication – Maintain a variety of social media outlets that effectively communicate with families we serve and the greater community.

Progress – In addition to utilizing our website and Agency Facebook page, NCCDI subscribed to the following platforms in response to COVID-19: Zoom, Facebook pages for each classroom/center, and School Messenger to provide ongoing communication via text message.

10) Facilities – Maintain quality facilities that provide healthy and safe environments for children and staff.

Progress – NCCDI upgraded heating and air conditioning units to improve ventilation, installed electric hand sanitizing units, purchased portable hand-washing stations, purchased dividers for cots, implemented regular sanitizing procedures for classroom environments and supplies, utilized outdoor areas when possible for classroom activities, rearranged classroom environment to effectively divide children into smaller groups, created outdoor parent information area for sign-in, sign-out, and health checks.

11) Human Resources – Provide NCCDI's programs with well-trained and well-motivated employees.

Progress – Utilized Zoom to conduct job interviews and orientation training for new hires. Implemented Fired Up Fridays for monthly staff meetings to maintain staff morale.

12) Technology – Invest in reliable technology that supports staff and program needs.

Progress – Upgraded server to allow remote access while staff working at home. Developing SharePoint site so organization-wide files can be stored and accessed via cloud. Purchased laptops and tablets for staff to effectively work from home.

13) Community Engagement – Engage with community partners resulting in positive family outcomes.

Progress – Maintained effective relationships with community partners as we communicated via Zoom.

14) ERSEA - Create awareness of the impact severe chronic absenteeism has on child outcomes.

Progress – NCCDI suspended efforts in this area for the 2020/21 program year in as we did not want parents to feel pressured to have their children to attend on-site classes if they did not feel comfortable doing so during the pandemic.

15) Program Management – Maintain a positive culture as organization leaders.

Progress - Management and key staff implemented temporary policy changes during the pandemic to provide staff with more flexibility if their job allowed, as well as, implementing family-friendly policies and practices during the pandemic.