Quality Counts

First 5 Alameda County
Commission Meeting
September 24, 2009

What is Quality Counts?

a systems change initiative that employs comprehensive needs assessments, resource integration, and relationship-based individualized supports

to increase the quality of
Early Care and Education in Alameda County

Objectives

1. To improve the existing ECE system by enhancing service delivery practices of Alameda County's child care agencies and providers

2. To build a coordinated Quality Support framework that integrates and innovates relevant supports for Alameda County's ECE providers

Philosophy

- Quality service delivery is attained and sustained through building an agency's internal *program reflection* and *problem solving skills*

- Lasting change is most likely when providers are *active participants* in identifying challenges and creating solutions

- Each situation is unique. Effective strategies build on the *strengths* and the *perspectives* of all stakeholders

Philosophy

- Quality improvement is more likely when the change agent holds a holistic view of the multiple, inter-related factors that shape an agency's practices

- On-going, *relationship-based* support helps individuals accomplish significant changes

Consultation Areas

- Program Structure/ Management

- Daily Curriculum

- Staff/Family Relations

- Staff/Child Interactions

- Individual Child Development Screenings & Referrals

- Individual Professional Development

- Indoor & Outdoor Physical Environment

- Health & Safety Practices

- Linkages/referrals to community resources and services

Program Overview

1. Collaborative Needs Assessment

2. Facilitated Discussion of Findings

3. Comprehensive Action Plan

4. Strategy Implementation

5. Evaluation

6. On-going Support & Resource Coordination

System Integration

Systems linkages include:

- Low Income Investment Fund

- Ohlone, Chabot, Merritt and Las Positas Colleges

- Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

- F5 AC Child Development Services

- Enhanced Mentor Program

- Partners in Collaboration (ECMH/ECE Partnership)

- City Slicker Farms/Alameda County Master Gardeners

- Child Care Health Program (CCHP)

Who Participates?

18-20 programs per year (10% of applicants)

   2008-09: 12 FCC Homes and 6 Centers (10 classrooms)

30-32 additional programs/year receive follow-up support

Priorities

◆ Infants

◆ Special Needs

◆ Language

◆ Income

◆ School Readiness Areas
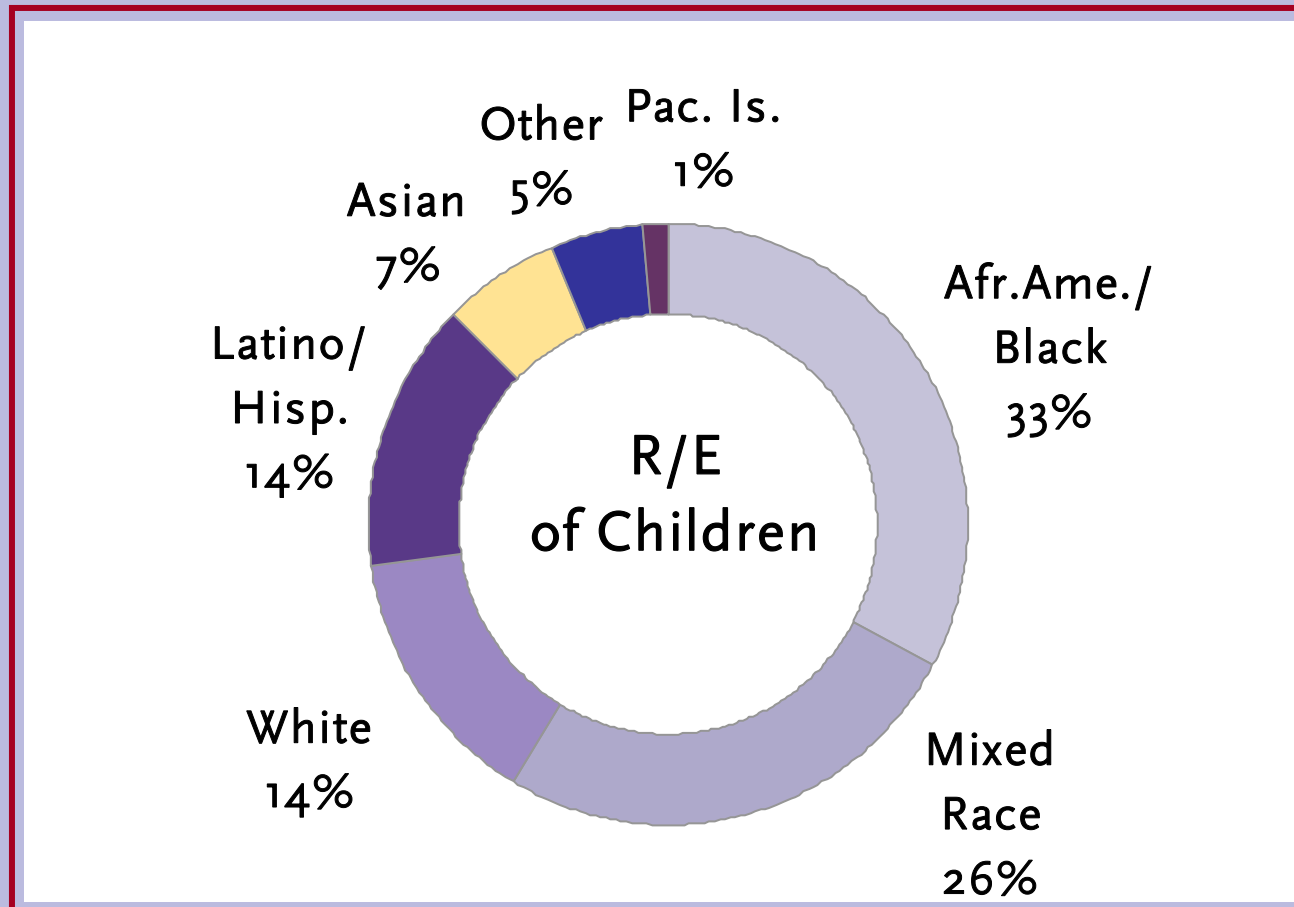
Who Participates?

2008-09 Quality Counts Sites
12 FCC Homes and 6 Centers (10 classrooms)

344 children served; 196 were subsidized

	0-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	Special Needs
Family Child Care total served: 98	55	43	11
Center-Based total served: 246	130	116	48

Who Participates?

2008-09 Children Served at QC sites

Pac. Is. 1%
Other 5%
Asian 7%
Latino/ Hisp. 14%
White 14%
R/E of Children
Afr.Ame./ Black 33%
Mixed Race 26%

Who Participates?

Primary Language Spoken by Children

	Number
English	232
Spanish	45
Cantonese/ Mandarin	6
Vietnamese	2
Farsi	1
Other	4

58 children spoke English as a second language

Results

- Coaching provided in Spanish, English and Cantonese

- Each site received on average 55 hours of on-site coaching over a six-month period (this does not include quarterly follow-up support)

- Referrals for 2007-09

R&Rs	22	Parent Kit & workshops	3
Enhanced Mentor Program	14	ECC MH/ Child Development Specialist	5
Child Care Health Program (CCHP)	6	High Scope Curriculum	1
Corps AA	8	CARD	1
Community College	5	Licensing	1

2006-09 Pre-Post Overall
QII Sites Environmental Rating Scale Scores
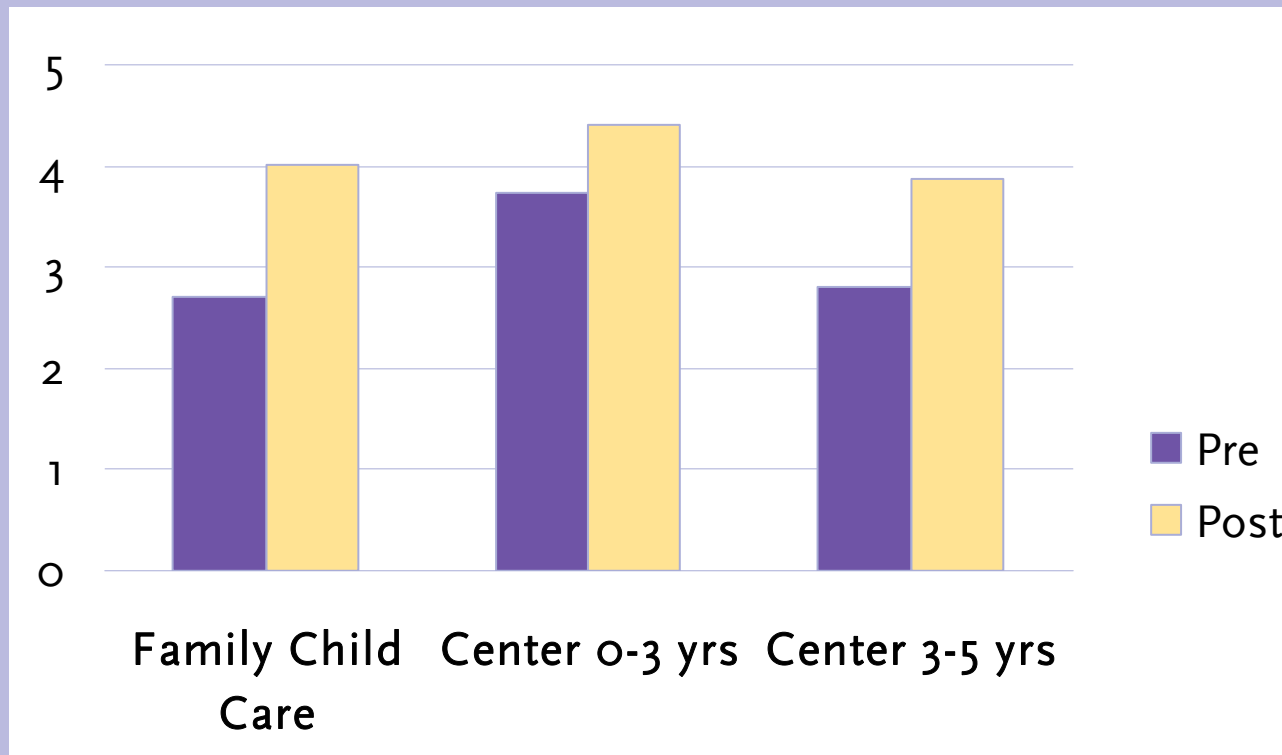
Number of sites Assessed 2006-09:
17 Family Child Care; 4 Centers 0-3 yrs; 7 Centers 3-5 yrs

Family Child Care sites results had the most change
(also had lowest "pre" scores)

Strength-Based Approach

"I viewed the Specialist's positive and specific feedback about my child care as validation of the good work I do, which has inspired and motivated me to continue making improvements to my program."

2008-09 Family Child Care provider

Professional Development

"[The provider] is preparing 2 or 3 weekly questions for the staff [to] encourage them to become more reflective about their practices, e.g. 'Please list 3 strategies you are using this week to encourage the children to develop their language skills' "

2008-09 Child Care Center provider

Challenges

- Challenge for child care staff to find time to meet with QC Coach

- Limited supply of coaches who have necessary skills and experience for this intensive work

- Breadth and depth of issues facing child care programs can make change incremental, and sometimes requires more support than is currently available

- Teacher turnover can complicate implementing and sustaining change

What's Next?

1. Integration of more in-depth assessments of targeted areas

2. Increase community capacity to provide coaching services

3. Further integration of specialized business, management, and specific child development consultation

Every Child Counts