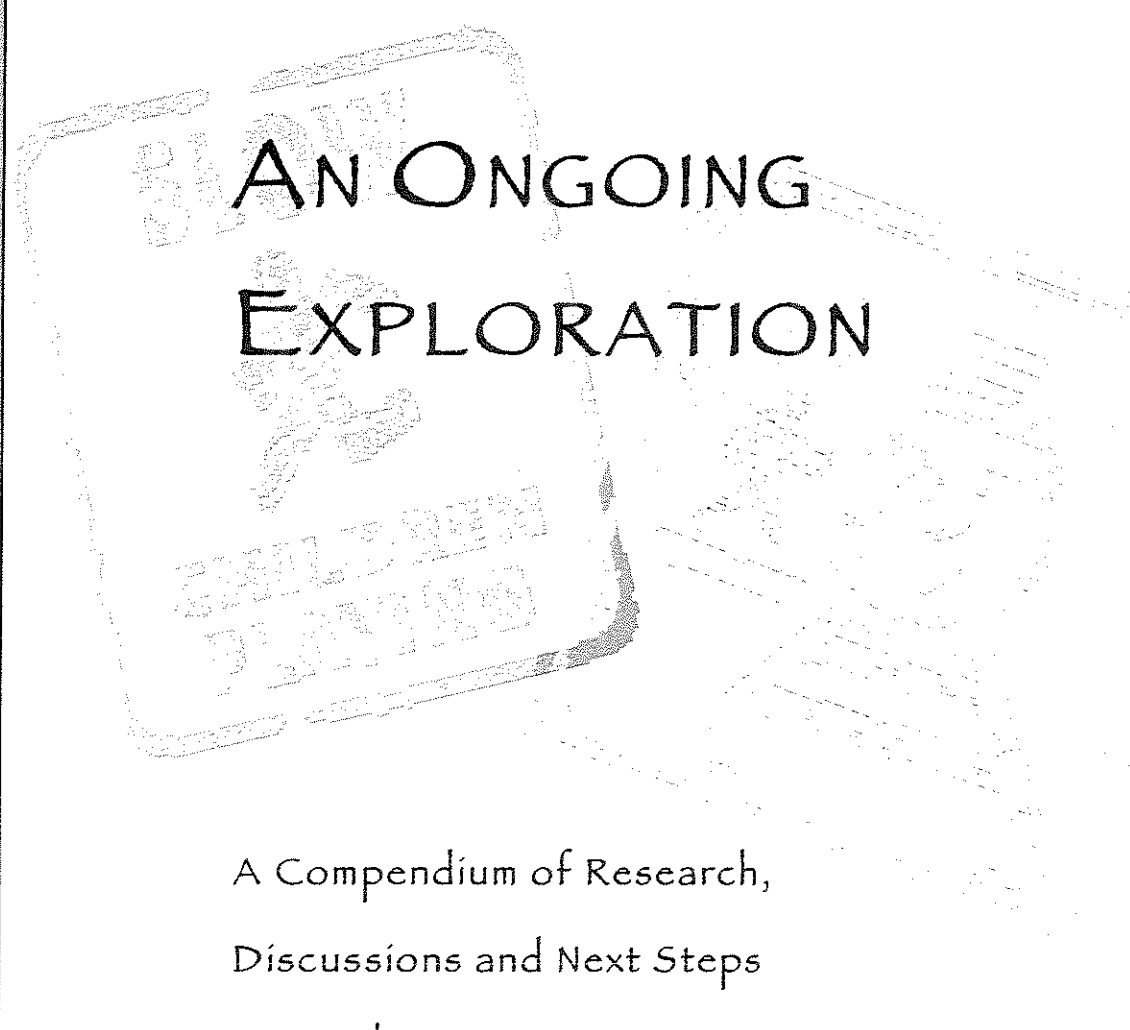


Jim Hopper



CONNECTING CHILD CARE + ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LINKING CHILD CARE, TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

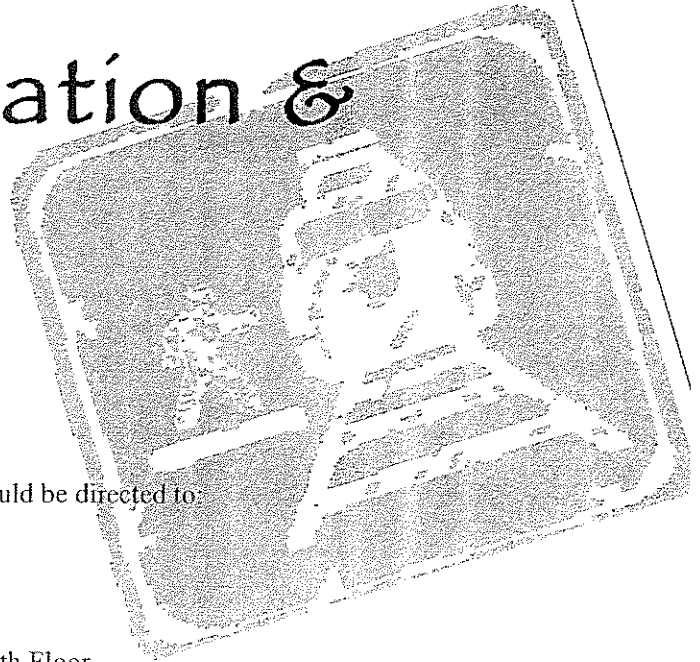


AN ONGOING
EXPLORATION

A Compendium of Research,
Discussions and Next Steps
—December 2005—

PREFACE

Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use



A

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LINCC is grateful to the many individuals and organizations that assisted in the preparation of these meetings and documents, with special appreciation to: Bruce Riordan, Elmwood Consulting; Noreen McDonald and Dorina Pojani; Louise Stoney, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance; and Candace Waage. This publication was made possible by funding from a Kellogg Venture Grant Initiative through the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center. Copies may be obtained through LINCC's website: www.lincc-childcare.com

INTRODUCTION



Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use

Included in this compendium are the following documents:

- *A White Paper—Linking Child Care, Transportation and Land Use: Local, State and National Obstacles, Opportunities and Next Steps*, by the Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) Project, September 2005
- *June 3, 2005 Meeting Summary: Linking Child Care, Transportation and Land Use*
- *A Literature Review: Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use, September 2005*, by Dorina Pojani, MCP, Transportation Researcher

The documents were developed because the Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) Project, a California collaborative coordinating child care infrastructure and other community planning, pursued and received a Smart Start grant to investigate the rationale and opportunities to better integrate child care and transportation planning. Local and regional transportation/land use planners and child care leaders were invited to attend a June 3, 2005 meeting in the Bay Area to discuss the integration of child care, transportation and land use planning.

LINCC's *White Paper*, the first document in this compendium, summarizes the meeting highlights and recommendations for the child care field and "non-local" audiences. It also includes Next Steps and an Action Agenda for Child Care Advocates, with suggestions on how to develop linkages appropriate to their communities.

The attached *Meeting Summary* identifies the participants and details the discussion—identifying the issues, barriers, solutions, priorities, funding possibilities and next steps toward achieving that linkage.

Additional information linking child care with transportation and land use planning/funding was identified as a priority at this meeting. LINCC commissioned transportation researcher Dorina Pojani to investigate. Her attached report, *Child Care, Transportation & Land Use: A Literature Review*, reviews current information which highlights the need to coordinate child care and public transit hubs. It documents how such coordination could have dramatic benefits for children, women, families (especially low-income families), communities, business, and the environment.

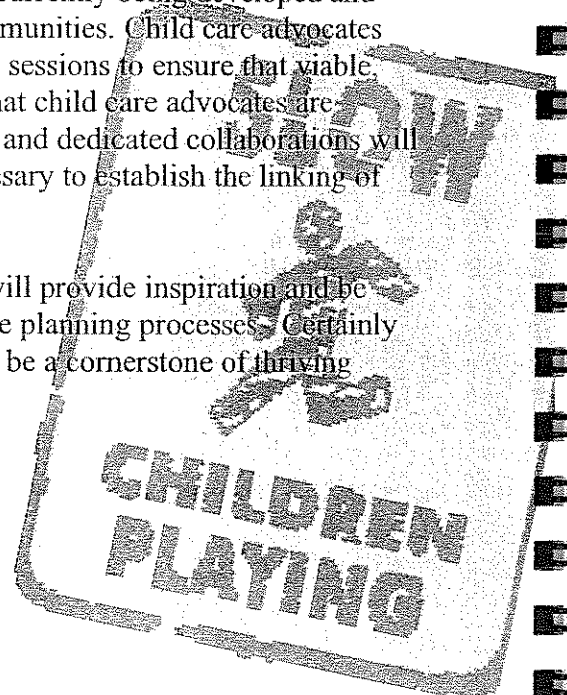
Each document is an important stand-alone piece that builds upon its predecessor, incorporating new ideas and information, and expanding the body of knowledge on the complex issues surrounding the linking of child care and transportation.

A Power Point presentation, *Linking Child Care and Transportation: Supporting Healthy Families and Livable Communities*, available for viewing on the LINCC website (www.lincc-childcare.com), is a companion piece to this compendium and provides a concise graphic overview of the subject. This website also provides LINCC contact information, should additional information be needed or questions arise.

New urban development designs such as Smart Growth, Livable Communities, and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) are the wave of the future, spurred by a variety of economic, demographic and environmental factors. Locating child care near transit hubs enhances such strategies, as research shows collocation can save time and money, avoid car-related travel hazards, and relieve traffic congestion and air pollution. Examples of child care at TODs are detailed in *Linking Development to Child Care: A Toolkit for Developers and Local Governments* available through www.lincc-childcare.com.

While some TODs are up and running today, policies are currently being developed and projects are underway for their development in many communities. Child care advocates need to actively participate in these urban design planning sessions to ensure that viable, flexible child care choices are considered. Recognizing that child care advocates are generally strapped for time and funding, creative thinking and dedicated collaborations will be essential in helping to bear some of the workload necessary to establish the linking of child care and transportation.

It is hoped that the three documents in this compendium will provide inspiration and be instrumental in helping other communities in their land use planning processes. Certainly coordination between child care and transportation should be a cornerstone of thriving communities.



A WHITE PAPER



Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use:

Local, State and National Obstacles,
Opportunities and Next Steps

This paper serves as a touchstone and model for communities interested in cultivating and strengthening planning, funding and policy work between the child care and transportation fields. It is based on a June 2005 meeting that LINCC convened in Los Altos Hills, California, with the support of a Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC) venture grant.

The paper outlines:

- Meeting Background and Rationale: Connections between child care, transportation and land use;
- Meeting Summary: Top issues, solutions, barriers, and ideas for future collaborative planning, research, funding and policy work;
- Suggestions for initiating dialogues about these issues in your own community or state;
- Ideas for Child Care Advocates.

Additional materials are available to supplement this White Paper:

- *June 3, 2005 Meeting Summary*
- *Child Care, Land Use and Transportation: A Literature Review For the Local Investment in Child Care Project, 2005*
- *"Linking Child Care and Transportation: Supporting Healthy Families and Livable Communities,"* Power Point, LINCC Project, 2005

——June 3, 2005 Meeting Background and Rationale——

The Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) program was established in California in 1997 with seed funding from The Packard Foundation to conduct leading edge work in the fields of child care and economic development. LINCC was designed to build an infrastructure that supports child care facilities development, renovation and expansion. LINCC works in seven counties—Alameda, Kern, Monterey, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Ventura—but is designed to have an impact at local, state and national levels.

LINCC pursues four strategies:

- Influence land use policy;
- Integrate child care into economic development;
- Support child care facilities development and improvement; and,
- Enhance business skills of child care providers.

And is now undertaking a fifth strategy:

- Fully integrate child care into a variety of exciting new urban development practices, including those described as "Smart Growth," "Livable Communities," and Transit-oriented Development (TOD). Such approaches share the goal of creating communities that reduce dependence on the auto, limit urban sprawl, save energy, promote health, reduce greenhouse gases and preserve open space.

In the next 20 years, a sea change is projected in demographics and housing demand nationally creating significant need for housing within walking distance of transit. Cities, transit agencies, private developers and community groups are now developing policies, programs and projects to meet this demand. As the national dialogue on Smart Growth, Livable Communities and TOD unfolds, the voice for child care needs to be informed, well researched and heard. To date, however, child care has been generally absent from the "environment, economy and equity" equation.

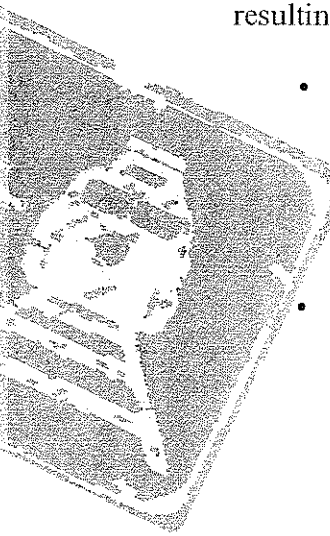
LINCC's June 3 meeting was also fueled by data reflecting the possible negative ramifications of poor integration of child care into transportation planning. A June 2005 Public Policy Institute of California report projected that 8 to 10 million more people will live in California by 2025 and that "the state is at a critical point" in planning for sufficient resources for education and transportation. It estimates that if current trends continue, commute times could increase by almost 50 percent by 2025. The January 2003 United States Department of Transportation National Household Travel Survey found that nationwide, young children averaged 65 minutes a day in cars. Data from the late 1980s quantified the extra miles a day parents added to their daily commutes to transport children to child care or school and the corresponding thousands of vehicle miles per year and auto

emissions.¹ LINCC posits that child care strategically placed near transit and/or otherwise better coordinated with parents' work commutes could help offset some of these social and environmental trends.

Additional research can be found in an accompanying literature review, *Child Care, Land Use and Transportation: A Literature Review, 2005*, that LINCC commissioned to supplement this White Paper as part of the Smart Start grant. It summarizes research supporting the view that child care near transit lines can: support low income families; support women; save time and money for working parents; avoid hazards related to car travel; and help relieve congestion and air pollution at peak commute hours.

The June 3 meeting was planned to engage local and regional transportation/land use planners with child care leaders to address these issues and determine how to better integrate child care, transportation and land use planning through five key questions. The meeting created an action agenda for data development, policy and financing that LINCC and other community leaders should pursue to produce significant benefits for children and families.

The 19 child care and transportation leaders who attended the meeting were selected to represent a variety of national and California geographic areas and organizational affiliations, resulting in attendees with:

- 
- **Geographic and Organizational Diversity:** The participants ranged from county level transportation agencies, to a regional transportation commission, to national policy and research organizations—the Center for Transit-oriented Development and a researcher from the University of California, Berkeley Center for Transportation Studies. Participants represented urban, suburban, and rural areas of California.
 - **Leverage Over Resources:**
Transportation: The participants work in agencies that have administrative or advocacy-related influence over transportation and child care planning and policy, and billions of transportation dollars. The Transportation and Land Use Coalition, for instance, consists of over 90 environmental, social justice, and community groups, and has helped influence the programming of \$12 billion from 11 transportation initiatives approved by San Francisco Bay Area voters from 2000-2004. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission coordinates the transportation network in the 9-county San Francisco Bay Area and oversees about \$1 billion annually in transportation-related funding. Other local agency representatives have similar local influence and were tremendous assets to the meeting dialogue.

Child care consumers, providers: The participants included planning agencies such as child care resource and referral agencies and child care planning councils at which LINCC Projects are housed, and child care facilities funding agencies. Participating city and county level child care agency representatives from the LINCC Project collectively work with hundreds of child care providers and thousands of parents annually. Two representatives of the Affordable Buildings for Children's

¹ For instance, according to a 1990 study by the California Department of General Services, working parents add five to six miles to their daily commute to transport children to child care or to school. This extended commute results in an additional 1,352 added vehicle miles per person per year, creating an additional 56 pounds of pollutants per year.

Development (ABCD) Fund of the Low Income Investment Fund also attended. (As of December 2004, ABCD had provided \$9.5 million in grants and loans to support 3,500 California child care spaces, and ABCD's community developer partners have nearly 1,500 spaces under construction.)

—Meeting Summary—

Context, key points, solutions, barriers, and proposals for future collaborative work in the areas of planning, research, funding and policy

The agenda focused on identifying top issues, barriers and solutions for better child care and transportation links for children and families, followed by a detailed discussion of how the transportation and child care fields can reduce barriers and reinforce linkages for joint planning. There are numerous detailed recommendations for both the child care and transportation fields as well as joint recommendations that can be found in the *June 3 Meeting Summary*, but they are summarized below.

In the introductory remarks, participants noted that weak child care and transportation connections coincide with several major negative social and environmental trends that impact families and children's development: thinning of social relationships and "thickening" of webs that promote economic opportunity (e.g., parents' decreased time with spouses, children and neighbors due to long commutes to jobs necessary to support a family in a high cost region); childhood obesity attributed to poor diets and less physical activity (e.g., driving a child to distant child care vs. being able to walk with them to convenient child care); and decreased air quality and global warming resulting from increased commutes. (Cars contribute to increased airborne particulates and an estimated 50% of the carbon dioxide problem in California.) LINCC posits that better transportation and child care connections with housing, employment and transit via transit-oriented development could help offset these trends and lead to stronger relationships, healthier children, and better air quality.

◆KEY POINTS:

- **Time is of the Essence for Organizing Child Care Links to Transportation Planning and Development:** Land use and transportation experts advised the child care field that this is a strategic time to integrate child care with land use and transportation planning because of development trends. Reconnecting America recently estimated that "over 14.8 million households are expected to want housing within a half-mile of 27 existing rail systems by 2025—more than double the number of households living there today."² They see a confluence of real estate developers, public agencies and communities in general reorienting themselves to the implications of this trend. In California's Bay Area, an "unprecedented number of new rail stations and bus rapid transit corridors will open in the next 15 years," according to the Transportation and Land Use Coalition. Additionally, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission plans to fund local station area planning and to condition some agency funding on the inclusion of housing near transit stations.

² "Hidden in Plain Sight: Capturing the Demand for Housing Near Transit," Reconnecting America's Center for Transit-Oriented Development, September 2004.



Participants also pointed to compelling examples of other special interest groups who have successfully organized around transportation issues, such as affordable housing and bicycle advocates.

➤ **Top Child Care/Transportation Issues:**

- The need for child care proximity to work, home and transit to minimize multiple problems such as: more parent driving and time away from families; children's increased time in cars impacting their health and development; and lower care quality or no care resulting from the family's need to accommodate transportation problems.
- The high cost of automobile transportation.
- Transportation safety concerns (driving, bicycling and walking).
- Lack of information for parents about transportation when determining their child care options at child care resource and referral agencies.

- **Child Care Needs to be Developed at Major Transportation Nodes and in Residential and Commercial Areas So That Parents Have Choices:** This theme came up repeatedly and was reinforced by a transportation planner's personal anecdote. She purchased a house close to a transportation node, intending to use the adjacent child care center. She ended up using neither when the child care was not appropriate for her family and there were no other transportation or employment-linked child care alternatives. Another planner noted that a child care center's proximity to transit would contribute to its use even if the immediately surrounding housing is not family-oriented.

Advocates are especially interested in child care's inclusion in one Smart Growth strategy, "transit-oriented development" (TOD), which produces higher-density, mixed-use communities at transit stations and on high-volume transit corridors. These developments are potentially excellent sites for new child care facilities that would serve both commuters and nearby residents. Yet market studies need to be done surrounding transportation nodes as new centers might not always fit local conditions and needs. For instance, flexibility could be an overriding issue—and is especially difficult for low income families. For child care to complement TOD effectively, there must be **flexibility** on the part of employers, families and child care providers especially in hours of operation.

Other solutions discussed fall into the categories of mobility improvements and information improvements:

- Mobility improvements include joint child care and transportation projects, such as: more effective carpooling programs designed specifically for child care transportation; more child-friendly public transportation; and walking and bicycling facilities that provide improved child safety. Other ideas include expanding and improving transit services, and improving families' access to automobiles.
- Information improvements include better integration of transportation and child care information. Child care resource and referral agencies could assist parents in finding child care facilities conveniently located along their commute path.

➤ **Barriers in Linking Child Care, Transportation and Land Use:**

- The lack of state governance structures and mandates for child care, transportation and land use sectors to do formal planning.
- The lack of data and a well-articulated child care advocacy case so that child care is not viewed by developers as yet another burdensome “required planning element.”
- The lack of resources (time and funding) for the child care field to pursue this work.
- The lack of organized parent support and engagement in the cause.
- The lack of transportation planning and funding knowledge within the child care community.
- The lost historic connection between transit hubs and community development.

◆ **NEXT STEPS: Research, Planning, Funding and Advocacy Strategies**

Ideas ranged from academic research to grassroots organizing. Some strategies can be pursued without further resources, but most strategies need funds to, at a minimum, allow existing program staff to dedicate more time to reorganizing existing resources. (The specific strategy recommendations are detailed in the accompanying *June 3 Meeting Summary*.)

- **Research** suggestions fell into roughly three categories:
 1. Developing child care/land use/transportation research leadership and new projects;
 2. Developing advocacy tools and information to use with nontraditional stakeholders, such as real estate developers and city managers; and,
 3. Forging better connections with transportation agency data managers to ascertain what existing transportation and commute information can be accessed for research and for parent information, what mapping capacities might be shared, and what joint future work can be undertaken.

A Literature Review was initiated as part of this Smart Start venture grant. It revealed that there is a dearth of recent research linking child care, land use and transportation patterns. A copy is attached.

- **Planning:**
 1. Transit-oriented Development is growing nationwide, so advocates should determine if there are “station area” planning processes in their communities.
 2. Developers, planners and transportation staff are critical collaborative partners. In the absence of multiyear funds to support child care advocate planning for centers in transit hubs, it is imperative to cultivate champions of child care within transportation agencies.
 3. Families must become informed and get involved in the collocation of child care and transit. Information about

transportation expenditures by households could fuel advocacy efforts. Living near transit can significantly reduce household transportation expenses and according to the USDA, transportation is now the largest expense after housing in most families' budgets. Understanding the economic advantages, families could become advocates, urging city councils to support the inclusion of child care in new projects. A well-known Berkeley infill housing developer allied himself with the disabled community by incorporating certain amenities in his developments. Due to their mobilization, he garnered support for his project at public meetings. The child care field could benefit from demonstrating similar coordination and strength.

- **Advocacy and Funding:**

1. Advocacy should be developed to help all families, but capital investments in low income neighborhoods should be a priority because they are more challenging developer investment targets.
2. Other ideas reinforced several strategies LINCC has already been pursuing—tapping into child care, transportation, and other revenue sources.
3. Transportation funding experts at transportation agencies need to be identified and approached by the child care field to explain the nuances of the funding processes and assist with creative thinking about funding strategies.
4. Research on transportation funding streams can use LINCC materials as a springboard: *Linking Development and Child Care: A Toolkit for Developers and Local Governments* by the LINCC Project includes an inventory of child care at transit-oriented development which references the known transportation funding streams supporting child care program development; the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission created a child care/transportation funding matrix for the June 3 meeting; and/or internet links for transportation funding information, listed under #24 in the *June 3 Meeting Summary*.
5. State or local programs could provide tax credits for housing or other developments.
6. Existing, unrelated child care facilities funds could be examined to see whether grant criteria could be reprioritized. For example, resource and referral agency funds which are designated to support the recruitment of family child care could be prioritized to incentivize programs on key transit corridors and at transit hubs.
7. Create and institutionalize child care developer fees like schools fees (see LINCC's *Developer Toolkit* as these exist in several LINCC counties).
8. Use federal funds that are available for sidewalks, signals, etc. in a targeted manner to support child care centers and schools.
9. Monitor transportation agency activities. Funding availability should be tracked and is often available on websites. Some California local transit agencies have Joint Development Programs



or real estate divisions which manage excess property, redevelopment of parking lots and other similar issues and are increasingly interested in “amenities” like child care.

◆PRIORITIES:

In September 2005 LINCC prioritized four of over 30 action and funding strategies produced by the June 3 meeting. LINCC hopes to focus efforts so that:

1. Planning staff at cities and transportation agencies will “champion” the integration of child care planning with transportation and land use planning.
2. Private and nonprofit developers will include child care services in their new developments.
3. State laws and regulations will be created or amended to require child care facility planning for projects at the local level.
4. A limited number of targeted new developments will include child care services, and the success of these projects will spur wider integration of child care, transportation and land use planning.

And in the near future:

- The Low Income Investment Fund/ABCD Initiative staff offered to host the next meeting of the June 3 transportation and child care group at their San Francisco offices.
- LINCC is applying for a Caltrans statewide research grant and planning a February symposium with presentations on child care and transportation/smart growth issues.

—Ideas for Child Care Advocates— Creating Child Care and Transportation Linkages in Your Own Community

- 1) If you have resources to plan a strategy meeting, which is helpful to cultivate a network to support additional work, look for planning assistance from a transportation expert with interest in and some understanding of the need for child care. Use the attached *Meeting Summary* as background for your conversation. Don’t be afraid to call on their experience as a parent in juggling these issues.
- 2) Is transit-oriented development relevant in your community? Read newspapers, talk to planners and transportation experts. (Remember that transit includes bus and rail systems.) Advocate for inclusion of child care in TOD projects during the earliest possible planning stages.
- 3) Transit-oriented development tours with child care and transportation experts and local elected officials are a great outreach strategy to promote the concept of child care at transit hubs and encourage networking. The field should also collect stories from parents, providers and others that graphically illustrate child care problems and solutions and convey a sense of urgency about the problem.

- 4) If transit-oriented development is not relevant in your community, focus coordination efforts on ideas like carpooling assistance or providing joint information on transportation and child care supply.

JUNE 3, 2005

MEETING SUMMARY



Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use

LINCC (Local Investment in Child Care) organized a meeting on June 3, 2005, to engage local and regional transportation/land use planners with child care leaders to determine how to better integrate child care, transportation and land use planning. The goal was to create a data development, policy and financing action agenda that will eventually produce significant benefits for children and families. The meeting took place at the Taaffe House in Los Altos Hills, CA, from 10am to 2:30pm.

The LINCC program was established in California in 1997 with seed funding from the Packard Foundation to conduct leading edge work in the fields of child care and economic development. LINCC was designed to build an infrastructure that supports child care facilities development, renovation and expansion. The program operates in seven counties—Alameda, Kern, Monterey, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Ventura—but is designed to have an impact at local, state and national levels.

LINCC has implemented four strategies:

- Influence land use policy;
- Integrate child care into economic development;
- Support child care facilities development and improvement;
- Enhance business skills of child care providers.

A fifth strategy is currently being added:

- To fully integrate child care into the exciting new urban development practices referred to as “Smart Growth” or “Livable Communities.”

Smart Growth communities save energy, promote health, encourage involvement, reduce greenhouse gases and preserve open space. In the next 20 years, a sea change is projected in demographics and housing demand nationally that will create significant need for housing within walking distance of transit. Cities, transit agencies, private developers and community groups are now developing policies, programs and projects to meet this demand.

Child care advocates are especially interested in one Smart Growth strategy, “transit-oriented development” (TOD), which produces higher-density, mixed use communities near transit stations and on high-volume transit corridors. These developments are potentially excellent sites for new child care facilities that would serve both commuters and nearby residents.

As the national dialogue on Smart Growth, Livable Communities, and TOD unfolds, the voice for child care needs to be informed, well researched and heard. To date, however, child care has been systematically left out of the “environment, economy and equity” equation.

The June 3 meeting was designed to address this issue through discussion of five key questions. The findings for each question are summarized below.

———Meeting Participants———

Kristen Anderson, Redwood City Child Care Coordinator/San Mateo County LINCC
Alix Bockelman, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Brentt Brown, National Economic Development and Law Center
Ellen Dektar, Alameda County LINCC
David Foster, Child Care Ventures
Jeff Hobson, Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC)
Noreen McDonald, UC Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies
Patty McWaters, Ventura County LINCC
Val Menotti, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)
Marcia Meyer, Child Care Ventures
Eileen Monahan, Santa Barbara Co. Early Care and Education
Shelley Poticha, Center for Transit Oriented Development
Karena Pushnik, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Maria Raff, Low Income Investment Fund, Affordable Buildings for Children's Development (ABCD)
Diane Stark, Alameda County Congestion Management Agency
Jan Stokley, 4C's of San Mateo County
Beth Thomas, San Mateo County Transportation Authority
Marie Young, Low Income Investment Fund
Bruce Riordan, Elmwood Consulting (Facilitator)

—QUESTION 1—

What are the top child care-related transportation issues for families and children?

(Numbers are for identification purposes only. No priorities have been set.)

1. Often there is little if any quality child care close to a parent's work or home. Parents therefore have to make an extra trip in addition to their home-to-work/school commute.
2. Parents are restricted in their choice of child care by their inability to travel efficiently between home, child care and work. Parents may choose lower quality child care simply because it is convenient.
3. Parents may take lower paying jobs because complex, time-consuming, home-child care-work trips must be simplified.
4. Parents may not enroll children in after-school child care because they cannot get their child from school to after-school care facilities.
5. Transportation to child care, work and school, by automobile and public transit, can be expensive, straining family budgets and restricting travel options.
6. Safety is a major transportation issue whether children are walking, biking, or riding in a car or bus to child care and school.
7. Parents may have difficulty getting information on transit services that are directly linked to their child care travel needs. At the same time, child care location information may not be linked to transit routes and schedules.
8. A lack of school busing can make travel difficult for both school-age children and parents.
9. Transportation and land use issues that are causing mobility problems for parents are also contributing to child health issues, including obesity and asthma.

—QUESTION 2—

Who is most affected by these child care transportation issues?

1. While all families can experience child care transportation barriers, low-income families who have less access to reliable automobiles have greater problems. Using public transit, even in well-served transit areas, can require significantly more time for child care trips and vital family support activities such as after-work shopping and recreation.

2. Other groups with increased child care transportation problems may include rural families, two-parent families where the parents work in widely separated locations, single parents, and parents with two or more young children.

—QUESTION 3—

What child care transportation “end products” can address the above issues? What programs and services should be developed to best serve families and children?

Facility development and location:

1. Child care centers at transit hubs and on major transit corridors.
2. Family child care in housing developments at transit hubs and on major transit corridors.
3. On-site child care at major destinations such as workplaces and colleges/universities.
4. High quality child care within walking distance of parents’ homes.
5. Collocating schools and child care centers, eliminating the need for transportation between the two activities.
6. Walkable and livable communities that include child care, other family services, and good transit access.

Mobility improvements:

7. Expanded and improved public transit services—trains, buses, vans, shuttles, taxis, ridesharing—and better connections between transit systems.
8. Improved automobile access—ownership, maintenance, costs, car sharing—for families.
9. Fiscal incentives and rewards to make child care transportation more affordable.
10. Improved integration of child care and transportation information.
11. Guaranteed ride home programs that can help parents who walk, bike or use transit to get to their children quickly in case of sickness or emergency.
12. More child-friendly public transportation.
13. Effective carpooling programs specifically designed for child care transportation.
14. Improved walking and biking facilities—bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.—that encourage biking/walking and improve child safety. Specific deficiencies and solutions can be identified by schools and families who then ask local jurisdictions to seek Safe Routes to Schools funding.

15. "Walking buses" organize parents and kids into safe school and child care walking groups.

——QUESTION 4——

What are the key barriers that have prevented the linking of child care, transportation and land use? Why don't we have more of the child care transportation programs/services listed above?

1. No statewide venue for the three sectors—child care, transportation and land use—to come together to do formal planning.
2. No requirements that cities or other local entities plan for child care as they must for housing.
3. Child care advocates have limited time and resources and this work is labor intensive even for those who know where to go, who to talk to, etc.
4. Adding child care to a development project may be seen as yet another burdensome "required planning element" rather than a selling point.
5. Many housing and commercial developers see child care as just another cost factor. Child care advocates have not articulated why it may improve a plan or make it easier to get a plan approved.
6. Lack of sufficient understanding among child care advocates about transportation planning and funding processes.
7. Lack of compelling data on demand, need, and other factors that will get the attention of local governments and developers.
8. Lack of organized parent interest. Parents are often too busy with their lives (including managing child care and transportation!) to organize and advocate for better child care transportation. City leaders may have heard from advocates that this is a major issue, but they usually have not heard from the families (voters) themselves. This is critical.
9. Historically, private street car companies developed communities around their transit services. It was profitable. Today, public transit agencies have lost sight of that relationship -- they don't see their role as "community development."
10. In suburban areas, rail systems are often not developed, bus services may not be organized around transit hubs, and infill development is not yet a priority.
11. Resident opposition to higher housing density proposals for transit villages or TOD.

12. Lack of data on trip reduction for transit villages and TOD. For example, BART found that people who live near transit are less likely to actually *use* transit if they have to make complex trips (work, school, child care).
13. In areas like the Bay Area, the number of different transportation planning and service delivery agencies (sometimes competing against each other) can make it very difficult for child care transportation advocates to be effective.
14. No known direct link between child care and land value as there is for schools.
15. Child care advocates focus too narrowly on *transportation* funding streams for child care transportation projects. The scope should be broad enough to include assessment districts, tax increment financing, developer fees, etc.

—QUESTION 5—

What strategies should we implement to link child care with transportation and land use planning/funding?

What should we do to overcome the barriers listed in Question 4?

Research:

1. Gather new data. Start by finding out what data will be compelling to cities, developers and others. Develop a prioritized set of data questions that need to be answered. (Example: How long are parents' trips to child care facilities?)
2. Find, understand and exploit existing data. Develop a good working relationship with transportation planning agency staff. Ask for their help. Let them "show off" existing work that may contain helpful data.
3. Collect and organize all data. Develop a working relationship with one or more key university researchers who can oversee data collection, provide graduate students, and bring academic credibility to the effort. Aim to develop an on-going relationship with a researcher who will make this a priority and become part of the "child care transportation team."
4. Learn about the GIS-mapping capabilities of local transportation agencies. Identify how GIS can help define child care transportation problems and solutions. (MTC has GIS mapping in the Bay Area. The Monterey Bay Area has GIS for their area. In other counties, either the transit agency or the transportation planning/funding agency probably has GIS capability.)
5. Compile and publish standardized data on child care users—income, age, locations, etc.—for advocacy and planning. Currently counties have very different levels of data. (Example: San Mateo County has excellent data from Field Poll on what parent's need/consumers demand.)
6. Calculate trips generated by child care similar to work done by the Institute for Transit Engineers for other trip generators.

7. Make sure that survey and data collection work done by local planning agencies includes child care and child care transportation questions. Develop relationships with these experts to facilitate this long-term.
8. Collect and use data, information and testimonials from Tamien Child Care Center (San Jose) and other existing child care/transportation/land use projects. (Example: How many child care families use transit at Tamien? How many walk to the center or from the center to work?) Survey other child care centers at transit hubs. Get "success story" testimonials from parents, child care advocates, transit agencies, city staff, etc.
9. Collect data and prepare reports showing child care transportation problems in various targeted communities. (Use TALC's *Roadblocks to Health* report as a model. This very effective report quantified transportation access to community clinics, grocery stores and recreation for 15 low-income neighborhoods and compared results to countywide access.)
10. Get data on housing and transportation combined expenditures by household. Use this to (a) build support for TOD by showing people how much they can save by living near transit, and (b) show local governments that child care will save residents money and should be an integral part of the infrastructure.
11. Collect and use human stories, not just data, to get attention for the issue and build support long-term. (Example: Column in *Oprah* or *Good Housekeeping* about the life of a working mom and why she chooses to live in a neighborhood that is diverse and connected to transit.)
12. Create an aggressive plan for disseminating research results. Do not just collect the information.

Planning

13. Identify and meet with top developers in the target area. Create relationships with them. Show how child care advocates can help them get their projects approved and make their projects more attractive to customers. Developers need to see how child care can help them. (Example: Patrick Kennedy, a Berkeley developer for infill housing, allied himself with the disabled community and got them to support a key project.)
14. Understand the local and regional planning processes. What are the time frames for general plans or specific area plans? Who runs each process? With limited resources, which of these would be the most important to focus on? What is coming up soon?
15. Develop good working relationships with key staff in each city. Land use planning in California happens at the local level. Ask each city what's coming on line. Use data

to show them why child care is important to their city—tax revenue, jobs, etc. Work with a city on a specific task that can build trust and get the city to see the benefits of the relationship *to them*. Show them what other similar cities are doing to advance child care transportation (the “peer influence approach”).

16. Get involved in transit station area planning processes. Many projects will be starting up in the Bay Area over the next few years by BART, Caltrain and transit agencies in conjunction local governments. Since the “transit village” or TOD trend is growing nationwide, find out if there are similar “station area” planning processes in Ventura, Kern, and other counties. Get involved when station planning is just starting. These are usually open processes and anyone who is helpful is welcome.
17. Develop a more collaborative approach with transportation agency staff and city staff to deal with limited child care advocacy resources for these planning processes. It is vital to identify staff at those agencies that will champion this work and make it a bigger part of their jobs. It is unrealistic to think that child care advocates can do all of the time-consuming and long-term work that must take place to construct a child care center into a new development. These are multi-year processes. An alternative approach would be to secure grant funding to dedicate child care advocacy staff to the planning work. Since this whole approach parallels the affordable housing community battle, analyze what the housing community has done to make progress. How have they been successful?
18. Organize families. In the Bay Area, work with TALC on their community organizing project *“Win Transportation Access Now.”* Build a constituency of citizens who are interested in collocating child care and transit. Show people how this provides a more affordable lifestyle and an opportunity to build wealth for low income households. Show how much they can save (time and money) by living near transit. Show elected officials that convenient, quality child care saves residents money and therefore should be an integral part of the city’s infrastructure.
19. Create a strong working relationship between local transportation agencies and child care resource and referral agencies. Make sure local transportation agencies understand R&R agencies are their primary point of contact for child care information.

Funding

20. Identify the key transportation funding expert at the local transportation planning agency and/or transit agency. A strong relationship with this person can help generate the “creative thinking” required to identify potential transportation funding sources and understand how the complex funding process *really* works (beyond the written description).
21. Contact projects that have integrated child care and transportation to find out what funding they used (e.g., Fruitvale, Tamien, Watsonville). Also ask out about funding that they were unsuccessful in obtaining and why.

22. Visit [www.lincc-childcare.com/Featured Projects](http://www.lincc-childcare.com/Featured%20Projects) to view the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's *Possible Funding Sources for School/Child Related Transportation Programs*.
23. Monitor current transportation funding activities, including calls for projects at the web sites for local transportation planning. (In the Bay Area: www.mtc.ca.gov/funding/)
24. Get an overview of transportation funding by using the following on-line guides to federal and state funding sources:

Metropolitan Transportation Commission's *Moving Costs: A Transportation Funding Guide for the Bay Area*

www.mtc.ca.gov/library/funding_guide/index.htm

Transportation Funding Opportunities Guidebook: State and Federal Funds Available for Local Agency Projects

www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/tfog/tfog.htm

Transportation Funding in California (Charts)

www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ote/funding/fundchrt.htm

A Guide to Federal-Aid Programs and Projects

www.fhwa.dot.gov/programadmin/proggd2.pdf

Caltrans Local Assistance Program

www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/index.html

25. Identify any state or local programs that provide tax credits for child care in housing or other developments. (Examples: ABCD developed a guide for affordable housing developers on using Low Income Housing Tax Credits to help finance the development of child care collocated within their housing development. And, state law provides a density bonus for affordable housing, and enhanced density bonuses if child care is part of their development.)
26. Find out if the local transit agency has Joint Development Programs or a real estate division. These departments deal with excess property, redevelopment of parking lots, and other similar items, and are increasingly interested in "amenities" like child care.
27. Investigate and work to institutionalize the use of developer fees to fund child care facilities (like school fees).
28. Use child care resource and referral family child care (FCC) money in a strategically prioritized approach to increase FCC on key transit corridors and at transit hubs.

29. Use federal funds that are available for sidewalks, signals, etc., in a targeted manner to support access to child care centers and schools.
30. Design advocacy to help all families, but make capital investments in low income neighborhoods a priority because it is harder to get developers to invest there.

Other

31. Help child care communities set up effective ridesharing programs. Institutionalize carpooling for getting kids where they need to go. Make it easier for parents and groups of parents to set up carpools. Don't just "have" a local ridesharing program that consumers must hunt to find. Be aggressive in providing and sharing information and assistance.
32. Arrange TOD tours to show child care advocates existing projects to (a) advance their thinking about child care and transportation, and (b) meet local developers, transit officials and city staff.
33. Investigate ways to improve and expand insurance options for child care transportation providers.
34. Collect "stories" from parents, providers and others that graphically illustrate child care problems and solutions. Convey a sense of urgency about the problem.

——Post-Meeting Next Steps——

1. Produce the meeting transcript and summary.
2. Meet with key stakeholders to review the summary and to prioritize strategies into an Action Plan.
3. Experiment with continuing dialogue between meeting participants through electronic channels—blog, e-mail, etc.
4. Follow-up with Jeff Hobson (TALC) and Shelley Poticha (Reconnecting America) on possible future collaboration, including possible demonstration projects.

A LITERATURE REVIEW

Linking Child Care, Transportation & Land Use



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September 2005
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—Executive Summary—

This paper provides support for the view that child care facilities need to be located near transit lines in order to:

- 1) Support low income families;
- 2) Support women;
- 3) Save time and money for working parents;
- 4) Avoid hazards related to car travel; and,
- 5) Help relieve peak hour congestion and air pollution.

The research shows that:

- Low-income families are three to four times more likely to find full-time work when they have secure child care arrangements.
- There is a lack of licensed child care facilities.
- Most child-related transportation is by car.
- Mothers' have primary transportation responsibilities for children and spend, on average, 20 minutes per day picking up and dropping off children. Without auto access, time spent transporting children can be much higher.
- The relationship between child care and transportation has been understudied.

All of these findings point to a need to coordinate child care and public transit, particularly for low-income families. This report further documents the research findings, provides information on the transit-oriented development concept and related efforts and regulations in California, and provides recommendations for future research on this topic.

—Introduction—

The location of a family's child care arrangements can significantly affect a parent's commute pattern. As a result, planners should give weight to child care locations in the land use and transportation planning process, allowing child care facilities to be placed in areas that are adjacent to transportation corridors or hubs. To support this point, this report will outline existing research and data on travel patterns and the consequences of such patterns in households with preschool children.

Society should care about quality and accessible child care for two reasons: 1) to encourage employment of families with young children, and 2) to enhance child development. Society could also subsidize the general cost of bearing and raising young children whether or not parents are in the labor force.¹ If this last approach is unachievable at present, at least policy should focus on making quality child care accessible to parents.

While there are different types of child care available, in most California households, children are delivered to and picked up from an outside provider of care as part of the parents' commute trip.² Finding child care continues to be a challenge for parents, with an especially limited supply during the critical infant and toddler years, as well as during evenings and weekends, when an increasing number of parents are commuting or working.³

Transportation policy has not adapted to contemporary work/family experiences holding tenaciously to the old paradigm of "women at home as homemakers and men at work as breadwinners".⁴ Furthermore, data on parents' work commute patterns, current child care arrangements, additional miles traveled by parents to access child care, number of workers with child care needs including number of children and their ages, is old, limited, and not readily available. It is scattered among different agencies and organizations. Also, such data is not periodically organized into formal reports. Most available reports focus on school age children and their travel patterns to and from school.

This report will mainly consider parents living in urban areas as it might be unrealistic at this time to consider public transportation in rural areas. As far as child care is concerned, rural areas are better served by programs such as Wheels-to-Work (available in several states) that provide automobiles at no cost to families that need transportation for work and child care activities.

——Rationale for Locating Child Care Near Transit Lines——

Enhancing Children's Development

It is not only parents whose incomes, careers and amount of time available benefit from access to child care. Children's lives are enriched in quality child care increasing their chances for success in school and later life. But, when affordable and high quality child care is difficult to secure in convenient locations – or at convenient hours – many workers turn to informal arrangements, which can be difficult to arrange and of lower quality than licensed child care.⁵

While capacity of care in California varies by county and by communities within each county, overall licensed care is available to only about 25% of all children under 14 years old with parents in the labor force, to 7% of infants, and to 42% of preschoolers.⁶ Low-income children are less likely to be enrolled in before and after school programs than children from higher-income families. 22% of all children in working families are unsupervised in the afternoons. Just 14% are in after school programs, while the parents of 36% say that they would like to enroll their children in a program if one were available. Nationally, 31% of Caucasian, 25% of African American and Hispanic, and 21% of Asian children in working families are in self care in the afternoons.⁷

Supporting Low-Income Families

Child care and transportation are linked inextricably in the same way that housing and transportation are linked. Parents who cannot get their children to child care cannot work. Because transportation plays a key role in the lives of working families, accessibility is a major factor in their decisions related to employment and child care.⁸ Low-income families, who are transit-dependent, find it difficult if not impossible to use child care facilities that are not located near public transportation lines.

A major study examining welfare and barriers to work found that full time work is three to four times more likely when a family has secure child care arrangements. The two principal barriers for a single parent trying to work full time are child care and lack of transportation.⁹ Still, among married mothers, 24% work part-time while their child is in child care center.¹⁰

Even when parents work, housing, child care and car transportation costs combined are expensive. Statewide, the combined annual cost of rent (for a two-bedroom apartment) and child care (for one preschooler in a licensed center) is greater than the annual salary of a family at a minimum wage – \$14,040/year.¹¹ In addition, low-wage earners do not enjoy the

same benefits as those in white collar occupations. One study found that less than 5% of the sampled low income population was offered child care reimbursement by their employer, and 24% are allowed to pay for child care with pre-tax dollars.

Parents with small children favor shifts in work schedules that allow them to stagger their schedules and save on child care, but this arrangement has been cited to cause marital instability.¹²

As far as transportation costs are concerned, in metropolitan regions of the American West, two parent families spend more than twice as much on children's transportation as they do on children's health care. The lowest-income families in the urban West spend a larger chunk of their average household budget on child transportation than they spend on health care and child care combined.¹³

Most child-related transportation is by car. In California, Caucasian and Asian children (0-17) tend to make around 80% of their trips in a car while African American and Latino children are more likely to use public transit because their families are less likely to own a car.¹⁴ But, children from the lowest income households still make 53% of their trips in private vehicles.¹⁵ One study in the Los Angeles area indicated that, interestingly, the likelihood of driving increased for low-income workers with young children who had car access. This suggests that child care responsibilities contributed to auto-dependence for low-income parents who otherwise would have been expected to take transit to work.¹⁶

Government can create child care space located near transit lines. While government might be unable to affect the supply of private child care centers, it can facilitate their location. Locating child care centers near transit lines would allow parents to save on car transportation, thus improving their family budget.

Supporting Women

Women are the predominant transporters of children to child care arrangements. Also, they are the more active in child care decisions. This is true irrespective of the children's age and irrespective of personal income.¹⁷ Research shows that 65% of women with children under 6 link trips to work while 42% of men do so. When men link trips it is often for recreational purposes; women tend to combine passenger or household errands. In fact, surveys show that women make two-thirds of trips to drop off or pick up someone.¹⁸

While women represent the largest share of the market for mass transit (67%), once they have child care responsibilities the percentage of women using mass transit drops disproportionately.¹⁹ A 1988 study by the Department of General Services indicated that women who transport children to child care or school are 50% less likely to use public transit than women without these responsibilities.²⁰ This is due to need to have access to a car to respond to child care emergencies.²¹

Mothers' employment generates more travel than usually undertaken by the traditional housewife and which more fully resemble men's. The accompanying time pressure and tension felt by women is greater than the one felt by men.²² In addition, it influences women's choice of job location – women tend to live closer to work than men.²³

Time Savings for Parents

The average number of hours that the American family unit – both husband and wife – is working increased from 52.5 hours per week in 1970 to 62.8 hours per week in 1997. In addition, the percentage of couples that are working 100 hours or more per week increased from 3.1% in 1970 to 8.6% in 1997.²⁴ Now, 43% of employees have children under 18 living with them for at least half the year.²⁵ By 2002, according to national figures, 61% of women with children younger than 3 years old, 69% of those with children between 3 and 5, and 79% of those with children between 6 and 17 were in the workforce.²⁶ Among employed parents, 20% were single parents, who usually experience more time pressure than parents who live together.²⁷

In California, about half of preschoolers' parents are in labor force, but only 4% of child care centers offer care available during non-traditional hours.²⁸ Most child care providers parallel the hours of the standard work shift, extending their opening and closing hours only slightly to provide parents with a small window to travel between the child care provider and work. Penalties for missing that window can be high – late fees of \$1 per minute and up.²⁹ Parents with children in part-time programs must take their children from one early care and education setting to another in the middle of the day.

Employees with school or child care transportation responsibilities must add an average of 4.0 miles to their one-way commute trip if the child is 0-4 years and an average of 3.6 miles if the child is 6-11 years.³⁰ Thus the commute is extended 11-14 minutes in different regions of California. Parents spend about 20 minutes per day dropping off and picking up children from child care facilities.³¹

In the United States, based on empirical experiences, middle class commuters are twice as concerned about travel times as they are about travel prices. In the San Francisco Bay Area, while this differential is generally less for lower income commuters, experience suggests that low-skilled workers tend to make more intermediate trips such as dropping off and picking up kids at child care centers. This tends to elevate the relative importance of travel time for this group as well – particularly when using transit implies transferring and waiting. In metropolitan Sacramento as well, for many reverse commuters, including those with lower incomes and particularly those with child rearing responsibilities, travel-time expenditures weigh more heavily than monetary cost savings.³²

Money Savings for Parents

Child care consumes a large slice of a family's income even in families earning more than a minimum wage. For a family earning \$30,000/year, child care accounts for 22% of annual expenses; for a family earning \$53,025/year (poverty line) it accounts for 13% of annual expenses.³³

Meanwhile, families' transportation expenses have risen by more than 10% on average since 1990. Transportation is now the biggest expense category after housing in most families' budgets, according to USDA. The purchase, fueling, insurance, and maintenance of private

vehicles account for roughly 95% of the money spent by the average household on transportation. AAA's annual *Your Driving Costs* study shows the average cost of driving a new passenger car in 2004 is 56.2 cents per mile or \$8,431 per year.

The increase in child shuttling has contributed, along with the use of bigger cars, to a 14% rise in annual per child transportation cost since 1980 among families in the urban West. In the mid-1990s it was found that residents in low density suburban neighborhoods spent far more money in driving-related expenses than people living in denser urban areas with services readily available.³⁴

State and federal government tax laws help working parents by offering income tax breaks for child care costs and by encouraging employers to make child care benefits part of the employees' overall compensation package. Also, they provide some income tax credits to help cover the costs of child care for working parents.³⁵ But, if people don't have access to mass transit and keep driving cars, these type of supports will never satisfy the increasing need of households with children.

Business Benefits

Most parents think that the ideal child care arrangement would be at work.³⁶ But workplace policy no longer reflects the changing American family structure. Only 3/10ths of parents with preschool children report using an employer sponsored/operated child care center while at work.³⁷ Only 9% of companies provide child care at or near the worksite.³⁸

Nearly one third of working adults experience at least one work disruption per week as a result of care giving issues, mainly (42% of cases) children-related.³⁹ Traffic congestion while parents are driving children to child care might cause them to be late to work. Or, parents must leave scheduled work time to take children from one part-day program to another.⁴⁰ The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 allows employers to require workers to put more than 40 hours per week at higher pay. While parents welcome the extra money, the requirement can upset child care arrangements, especially if these are located at an inconvenient distance.⁴¹

In these cases, parents are less productive, and feel stressed at work. Among companies offering child care benefits, 36% think that the benefits of these programs outweigh their cost.⁴² Employers who offer some form of child care benefit for employees have found that job turnover was reduced by as much as 57%, absenteeism dropped as much as 72%, work attitudes improved 55%, and the recruitment advantage and employee morale increased.

If public transit systems are improved, and adjacent child care is made accessible, businesses can benefit significantly from the increased productivity of working parents.⁴³

—Rationale for NOT Transporting Children in Private Cars—

Injuries in Car Travel

One reason that most parents prefer to have child care providers located closer to home is because they do not like to commute with children in the car. However, some parents prefer child care arrangements closer to work because they consider the commute to be quality time together.⁴⁴ According to a recent survey by the California Department of Transportation, children under the age of 18 now make almost three-quarters of all their trips in private vehicles, while public transportation accounts for less than 2% of their total trips.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children 2 years of age, and for people of every age from 4 to 34 years old. In 2002, 459 child car occupants from birth to age 4 were killed and 58,525 were injured in the U.S. Even with the use of occupant restraints, some crashes are so severe that occupants do not survive; in some instances the effectiveness of child restraint is compromised by incorrect use; and occupants in the 0-4 age group are among the most fragile.⁴⁵ Injuries and death suffered by children riding in private vehicles in California cost more than \$1.8 billion in 2001, if medical treatment, work loss, and quality of life expenses are taken into account.⁴⁶

For school age children, school buses are the safest travel means – no passenger deaths were registered in California in 2003.⁴⁷ California's school transportation system is the largest mass transportation system in the state, funded at almost 50% by the state government. But this service is unavailable or unpractical for preschoolers.⁴⁸ Programs that transport children have met with great success, but they are expensive to operate, especially in insurance and personnel costs. These costs may be prohibitive for small transportation companies or child care programs.⁴⁹

Car Driving Causes Congestion and Air Pollution

Parents driving their children to school and child care make up 20-25% of the morning commute in California, and about 10% in the San Francisco Bay Area. A National Safe Kids Campaign survey found that nearly 60% of parents and children encounter at least one serious hazard on their route to school.⁵⁰

According to a study by the California Department of General Services in 1990, working parents add five to six miles to their daily commute to transport children to child care or to school. This extended commute results in an additional 1,352 added vehicle miles per person per year, creating an additional 56 pounds of pollutants per person per year.⁵¹ The Golden State now has what is arguably America's worst air pollution.⁵²

Car Driving Prevents Socializing and Development of Spatial Relationships

Nationwide, children under 18 spend an average of more than 45 minutes a day in cars. "Mobile child care" has become a way of life for working parents who bring their children along in the car because other child care options are unavailable.⁵³ Children that are driven to school and after school care away from their neighborhood are unfamiliar with their

neighborhood, isolated from people and the environment. In addition, they do not acquire traffic skills critical to their own safe mobility.⁵⁴ These children are often unable to draw basic maps of their communities, create associations with their daily surroundings, and give or understand given directions.⁵⁵

Habits formed early are hard to break. Children who do the majority of their traveling by car while growing up may continue that behavior into adulthood and may be more reluctant to travel by alternative transportation modes.⁵⁶

The rise of the taxi-parent has coincided with a diminished quality of life for many families, as parents and children both spend more time in cars and less time at more rewarding activities, like family dinners, homework, and relaxation. Working parents struggle to maintain a balanced life, and often must plan their schedules around children's transportation needs.⁵⁷ 23% of Californian parents report that the extra commute to child care adds stress to their lives.⁵⁸

—Transit-Oriented Development—

Numerous studies have shown that average trip distances are shorter and people are more likely to walk and ride public transit in traditional urban settings that support a mix of homes and businesses than in neighborhoods with low-density suburban design characteristics. New design policy guidelines issued by the Federal Highway Administration and adopted by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recommend that state and local planners and road builders design all street and transportation facilities from the start with pedestrians in mind.⁵⁹

Interest in clustering housing and commercial development around rail transit stations has gained momentum in recent years, resulting in “transit-oriented developments” – or “transit villages.” This urban design concept emphasizes that where transit facilities are in place or planned to be put in place, there should be a mix of commercial, retail, residential, and civic uses within close proximity to the facilities designed for the best possible interface.

Several states – including California – have provided transit authorities expedited permitting authority in the siting of regional transit facilities, granted density bonuses to transit-oriented developments, and/or authorized transit-oriented developments through tax exemption programs. Some cities and counties provide that an application can be approved if the owner has agreed to include in the development one or more design elements benefiting the general public – including child care facilities.⁶⁰

Related Regulations

- In spite of the large theoretical body supporting transit-oriented development, requiring the inclusion of child care facilities in a transit village is not a widespread practice. Often, having a child care center is recommended but not required. In fact, the inclusion of other land uses might be sufficient for a plan to qualify as “transit-oriented.” According to the California Government Code Sections 65460.2 through

65460.10⁶¹, plans at all levels should direct new development close to transit stations to increase transit ridership and reduce car traffic. A city or county may prepare a transit village plan – extended to more than a quarter mile of the exterior boundary of the rail station parcel – that includes child care centers among other features. These villages shall be eligible for available transportation funding.

- A 2002 bill (SB 1521) required the State's Office of Planning and Research to develop a statewide plan for land use and growth. It aimed to provide financial incentives for cities and counties that preserve open space and encourage mixed-use development around existing infrastructure and public transit lines. Unfortunately, the bill failed to win approval in the state legislature.⁶²
- 1993 Cal. Stats. Chap. 792 provides that space in publicly owned transportation facilities may be leased by competitive bid to licensed child care operators in order to meet the child care needs of employees and users of the transportation facility.
- 1991 Cal. Stats. Chap. 417 provides child care services in state-owned transit facilities for children of state employees and facility users and authorizes space to be leased, by competitive bid to private operators.⁶³

——Future Research Recommendations——

- Perform trip pattern analyses for parents that drop off/pick up children to/from child care. These analyses should include information such as the amount of extra time spent, the type of family (parents living together or single parents), and family income.
- Research the link between public transit and child care by surveying parents at child care facilities to find out whether these parents use public transit, and the reasons for their transportation choices.
- Include child care and child travel questions in all travel surveys to make information on this topic readily available to policymakers and planners. "What gets counted counts."

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