

FFN Sub-Committee 5/16/12

Proposed Definition:

Family, friend and neighbor (FFN) care refers to a broad range of child care arrangements provided in the home of the child or caregiver, by extended family members, nannies, friends, neighbors and other unrelated adults, for a fee, or free, while parents need to be away, go to work or go to school. Family, friend and neighbor care is also often referred to as *kith and kin*, *informal care*, *unregulated and license exempt child care*, or *relative care*. Particularly for children ages three and under, FFN care is often the child care of choice, based upon the caregiver's relationship and trust with the child and family.

(References: BUILD Initiative, CLASP, Families and Work Institute: Sparking Connections Report.)

Promising Practices:

Promising models in working with FFN providers are those that include some variation of the following components:

- In-home support for FFN caregivers: with some variations of duration and intensity, caregivers are visited in the home and supported towards individualized goals (quality safety, nutrition, etc.)
- Community-based training and professional development: Professional development through group meetings and trainings delivered in a series of ongoing sessions that will bring home-based providers together with qualified and experienced staff in a community setting to learn elements of quality care and safety and that are responsive to the needs and diversity among FFN care providers. Child care should be provided and the sessions should take place at a time convenient for the FFN providers.
- Playgroup opportunities: In socialization or "Play and Learn" models, caregivers and children participate together in activities in a center-like setting offered in different sites in the community with the spaces ideally equipped with a variety of activities that are intended to promote cognitive, language, and physical development. Staff facilitators, whose backgrounds range from early childhood to parent education, model interactions with children for the caregivers.
- A pathway to regulation: Additional resources and financial supports for providers who wish to become certified or licensed.

Within all models and approaches there should be consideration of and opportunities for the following:

- Distribution of or financial incentives to help purchase safety and quality improvement equipment/materials
- Resource and referral information on health and development of young children and resources available in the community
- Resource and referral information on being a regulated provider or obtaining certification related to early childhood education