

# COVID-19 RESPONSE: CHILD CARE COUNCIL ON THE FRONT LINES

**The Child Care Council remained “open” and active from day 1 of the coronavirus crisis, serving as a vital resource to child care providers and to essential workers who needed a safe place for their children despite school closings.**

**For working parents, we addressed a variety of concerns:**

## **FINDING CARE**

- Maintained a list of open child care providers, both center and home-based, throughout Westchester, and updated it weekly
- Provided customized referrals to parents looking for child care, and offered enhanced “concierge” service for first responders and essential workers; all free, as always

## **PAYING FOR CARE**

- Secured grants from the Westchester Community Foundation and RXR’s Covid Relief Fund to launch the CCCW First Responders and Essential Workers Child Care Scholarship Fund for income-eligible families
- Administered the NYS CARES Act scholarships for income-eligible essential workers
- Assisted families with the Westchester County DSS subsidy application, something few parents know about and most find difficult to complete properly

## **ACTIVITIES AT HOME**

- Created and shared a cultivated list of quality online educational and entertainment resources for at-home use

## **ADDRESSING FOOD SHORTAGES**

- Connected with Feeding Westchester and distributed truckloads of food to families through their child care providers

**Child Care Providers have relied on us for many things, but they fall into two broad categories:**

## **INFORMATION**

This pandemic is uncharted territory for child care providers. In the beginning, we helped them navigate the confusion of whether they could or should remain open. Since then, we have walked them through every change and stage, to the best of our ability, to help them stay safe, maintain compliance, and restore profitability.

- Hosted weekly Q&A calls to discuss health and infection control, regulations, subsidies and more
- Offered webinars about new federal grants and loans
- Shared strategies for PPP Loan Forgiveness

## **SUPPLIES**

- Collected and distributed diapers, hand sanitizer and infant feeding kits to hundreds of child care programs, then through the CARES Act purchased and distributed more than \$325,000 worth of PPE and cleaning supplies.

**During the months of this crisis, our dedicated staff has also maintained their commitment to our core mission: to improve the quality of care available in Westchester and make it accessible to every child. And, we have raised the voices of child care providers to our county, state and federal leaders, trying to demonstrate how very essential this industry is, that it is now imperiled more than ever, and that more public investment is quickly and desperately needed.**



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