



**Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department
Early Childhood Council**



June 6, 2016

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Early Childhood
Council
City of Austin HHSD
P. O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

(512) 972-6216

To: Austin City Council

From: City of Austin Early Childhood Council

Re: Child Care Continuity Services

In April 2016, the City Council adopted a resolution instructing the City Manager to develop recommendations for Child Care Continuity Services to be considered for funding in the Fiscal year 2016-17 budget process. The City Council action was a response to a recommendation from the Early Childhood Council.

First, we want to thank you for supporting this important service, which provides up to 90 days of child care subsidies for parents who lose a job or complete job training, permitting their children to have uninterrupted care while they search for employment. Once they find a job, they are eligible for federally-funded child care subsidies.

Travis County has funded Child Care Continuity Services through Workforce Solutions since 2014. The program has served a diverse group of families, including 46% Hispanics or Latinos and 40% African-Americans.

Allocations to support this program should be seen as an investment rather than an expenditure. Support for these families at this critical time has been shown to return far-reaching dividends both tangible and intangible. The preliminary numbers in a report being prepared by the City Health and Human Services Department indicate that the program is an excellent investment leading to improved earnings and job stability for parents. The report also shows the substantial need families in our community have for this program. Members of the Early Childhood Council have been impressed by the evidence that program is a very cost-effective way to improve affordability and stability for these low-income families, and to substantially improve their prospects for long-term self-sufficiency.

The Early Childhood Council recommends that you allocate substantial funding for the program in the upcoming budget process. Child Care Continuity funding serves two generations to help break the cycle of poverty. It enables children to experience continued enrollment in high quality child care, which promotes child development and school readiness. It promotes quality of life for both parents and children.

Sincerely,

Larry Elsner, Chair

Cc: Shannon Jones, HHSD Director
Donna Sundstrom, HHSD Asst. Director