

Report Highlights abstracted by Molly Clark

- *In this project, it was important to:* 1) examine the extent to which child care providers in Nebraska currently serve children with special needs 2) identify barriers and limitations to providing such care 3) identify resources and supports to expand or enhance the delivery of quality child care services to children with special needs
- The goal of the survey was to obtain representative, comprehensive, valid and meaningful data about the needs of licensed child care providers and special needs children receiving licensed child care services in NE. The results will help to determine targeted training opportunities and contribute to quality improvement of child care provided to children with special needs
- The primary method chosen for the evaluation and needs assessment of Nebraska licensed child care providers caring for children with special needs was a mail survey. The total number of surveys returned was 682 for a 35% response rate
- Children with special needs who participate in quality child care programs grow and learn physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially alongside their peers in a “natural environment”
- In Nebraska, an estimated 62, 759 or 14.6 % of children have special health care needs, slightly higher than the national average
- Special needs can be defined as children with physical, developmental, mental, emotional, behavioral, or medical needs that requires different levels of care than other children their age
- Approximately 51% of children with special needs age 5 or younger in Nebraska attend childcare for 10 or more hours per week which is less than the 58% of children without special needs who attend childcare in Nebraska
- The results of this survey indicate the following:
- **The most frequent difficulties and/or barriers that were encountered in providing care to children with special needs included inadequate training or lack of training, fear of not being able to meet the child’s needs, and budget implications or issues of adequate personnel**

Child Care Provider Needs Assessment
Caring for Nebraska Children with Special Needs
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- **Financial assistance was the most often requested training/support needed in caring for children with special needs**
- **68.2% of directors reported lack of trained personnel as a barrier to accepting children with special care needs**
- **The most frequent medical conditions of ADD or ADHD, allergies and asthma identified by the child care providers was also identified as most frequent in Nebraska on the national survey**
- **Child care providers reported that 57% of children in their care experience learning, understanding, following directions, and attention problems.**
- **Child care providers reported that 45% of children in their care experience behavioral problems such as biting, temper tantrums, fighting, bullying, or arguing.**

The full report can be viewed at:

http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/lifespanhealth_childcarehealthconsultation.aspx