

# JEFFERSON COUNTY

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## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDERS TESTIMONIALS



HEALTHIER™  
COLORADO



OPEN™  
ANSWER

## PROVIDER 1

*Licensed home-based child care provider*

“ I’ve been serving families and providing quality child care and early education for more than 23 years. I started my child care journey as an “FFN” [family, friend, and neighbor] provider. Shortly after, I became licensed. Nowadays, I practice in Jefferson County and serve children through the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP).

Child care truly is a lifeline for families. It means the difference between a parent having the ability to go to work and becoming a contributing member of our community. The child, the family, and the entire community benefit when parents have access to affordable child care. But, first and foremost, the children benefit the most.

We need to make much-needed improvements and investments in our children, our families, and our child care providers, who are the pillars of support that we all depend on.”

## PROVIDER 2

*Licensed home-based child care provider*

“ As an at-home child care provider, I feel like we need more resources to keep learning and be better prepared for our children. A partnership with fellow providers and a coach-like relationship would be extremely beneficial for all of us.

We need to supplement the income of home-based childcare providers like myself. It is always challenging having to put my own money and resources into buying the supplies I need for my classroom. I don’t want to have to choose between buying groceries for my family or buying my kids the supplies that they need to properly learn.

Additionally, a pool of substitute teachers who are qualified to come in for the day or a couple of days would be especially beneficial so that we can take full advantage of the professional development training available to us. Most of the opportunities available for early childhood educators happen in the middle of the day, and we can’t make it because we are taking care of our kids.”

## PROVIDER 3

*Teacher at private center-based preschool.*

“ I love being a part of these young kids’ lives and helping them learn how to regulate their emotions. Watching them piece puzzles together, learn science and math, and overall helping them learn cognitive skills is the most fulfilling part of my job as an early childhood educator.

The cost of child care for parents is extremely high. Every day, we see parents struggling to keep up with the rising costs of care. Luckily, the center I work at does offer scholarships to help those who are not eligible for [other help], but even with this assistance, I know people who still struggle month to month.

Access to health insurance for providers like myself would be extremely beneficial. I know if it weren’t for my partner’s job, I would not have access to health insurance. Before I got married, I didn’t even want to go to the doctor. I dealt with many health issues that I had to figure out on my own because I didn’t have the money or resources to go to a medical professional.”

## PROVIDER 4

*Teacher at private center-based program*

“ I have been an early childhood professional in two other states besides Colorado. In my opinion, classroom ratios are great in Colorado, particularly here in Jefferson County. Having a smaller number of kids makes it more manageable so that we can provide kids with the best care they need.

I wish there were a resource or network for child care providers to share curriculum ideas, classroom setup ideas, and home self-care for teachers. This would be an incredible resource. Teacher pay definitely needs to be improved and should reflect all the time and effort we put into our classrooms. As a lead, I am making \$18/hr, and that’s not enough to keep myself afloat. On top of this, we lose out on a lot of good hires we could have because of the insufficient income this profession offers. In my own experience, pay is the biggest contributing factor to the shortage of early childhood educators. People want and deserve a livable wage. We ought to find the funding to pay our teachers and providers well.”

## PROVIDER 5

*Teacher at a center-based program*

“ We don’t have enough staff at the center where I work. Because we are trained professionals, there are very few people who are prepared and qualified to work with families, respond to a crisis, or even fill in for when there are teacher callouts. Being short-staffed has caused a lot of stress for me and my peers.

Teacher pay needs to absolutely change. We, as teachers, cannot get by with what we are currently earning. Getting adequate pay for providers and teachers alike would mean a lot for all of us working in the early childhood education field. Had we had better salaries, we would be able to focus more on permanent solutions instead of putting bandaids on things.”