

North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education

# Activity 4.4: Task

## Force on Licensure

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

## Introduction

Each state applying for a Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge (RttT-ELC) Grant was required to include an activity that would increase Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) participation. Unlike most other states with voluntary QRIS's, North Carolina's QRIS is embedded in licensure. All licensed child care programs in North Carolina are a part of the QRIS, so meeting this requirement involved thinking about populations that are currently considered exempt from licensing: Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN), and Part-Day Programs. FFN is exactly as it sounds; it is child care provided by family, friend(s), and/or neighbor(s). Part-day programs are those that operate less than 4 hours per day.

North Carolina's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Activity 4.4, the Task Force on Licensure, was designed to gather information from these license-exempt groups about their attitudes toward licensure including perceived barriers and benefits. The original project design included five focus groups comprised of FFN and Part-Day providers at various locations across the state. The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) determined that at least 10 participants in each focus group would be necessary to gain the desired data, and justify meeting and travel cost. Although multiple attempts were made to schedule the focus groups, response from the targeted population was too low to support continuing in this vein.

## Method

DCDEE adopted a new strategy, and called upon the Lead Agencies of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) System. North Carolina's CCR&R system is structured by 14 Lead Agencies across the state. Each Lead Agency agreed to locate and survey one FFN and one Part-Day program. (See Appendix A.) Although this change necessitated a smaller than planned sample size of participants, it ensured that feedback from each region of the state was collected.

Data collection occurred during the month of September 2014. Twenty-eight participants from 13 FFNs and 15 Part-Day programs were surveyed. Providers were asked 4 questions. (See Appendix B for survey questions.) DCDEE contracted with an independent party to code data and compile results. Data was compiled in a master matrix (See Appendix C) and analyzed. Each participant was given a Unique ID. Questions 2 and 3 were coded by emerging, common categories. Questions were open-ended; therefore, some answers could be coded for more than one category. (See Appendix D for coding charts.)

## Results

### **How many children do you keep/serve including those related to you?**

Data collectors surveyed FFNs that provide care for 63 children. Approximately 35-37% of these children are being cared for by a person related to them (mother, aunt, or grandmother). Data collectors surveyed Part-Day programs that serve or have the capacity to serve between 785 – 820 children. Capacity is defined in this report by participants self-report of available slots in their program.

## What do you see as advantages to your current setting/arrangement over being a licensed child care program?

Ten common categories were identified. Those categories are as follows:

**Table 1:**

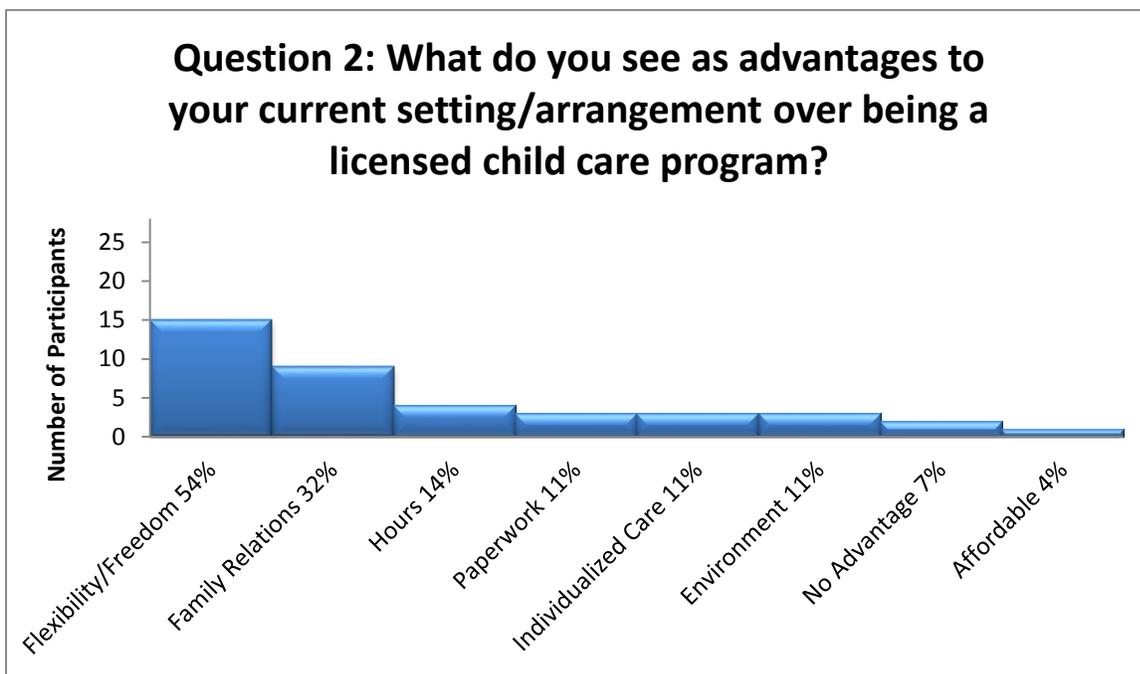
Category	As Defined...
<b>Freedom/Flexibility</b>	Freedom from regulation and guidelines, flexibility in activities and curriculum
<b>Family Relations</b>	Children are in settings with family members
<b>Hours</b>	Care provided during hours parents need or for number of hours parents desire
<b>Curriculum/Philosophy</b>	Programs use curriculum of their choice and operate in their own philosophy
<b>Paperwork</b>	Too much paperwork associated with licensing
<b>Individualized Care</b>	Individualized care provided to each child
<b>Environment</b>	Atmosphere, set-up of building, etc.
<b>No Advantage</b>	
<b>Affordable</b>	More affordable than licensed child care

\*\*Please note: participants' responses may reflect more than one category.

The most common answer was *Freedom/Flexibility*. Fifty-four percent (54%) of participants responded that they viewed freedom from regulation and flexibility in how they provide care as an advantage. This includes flexibility in their choice of curriculum and program-wide philosophy.

The second most common answer was *Family Relations*. Thirty-two percent (32%) of participants viewed being cared for by a family member as an advantage. Within this response, 4 participants viewed being able to stay home with their own child(ren) as an advantage. The remaining categories were coded and are reported in the following chart.

**Chart 1:**



In addition to the data above, two participants disclosed that they were previously licensed but are not currently. The response of another participant revealed a misunderstanding related to who can be licensed in North Carolina. Finally, three participants shared that they face financial barriers to becoming licensed.

## What is the #1 reason parents pick you over a licensed program?

Seven common categories were identified. The common categories are as follows:

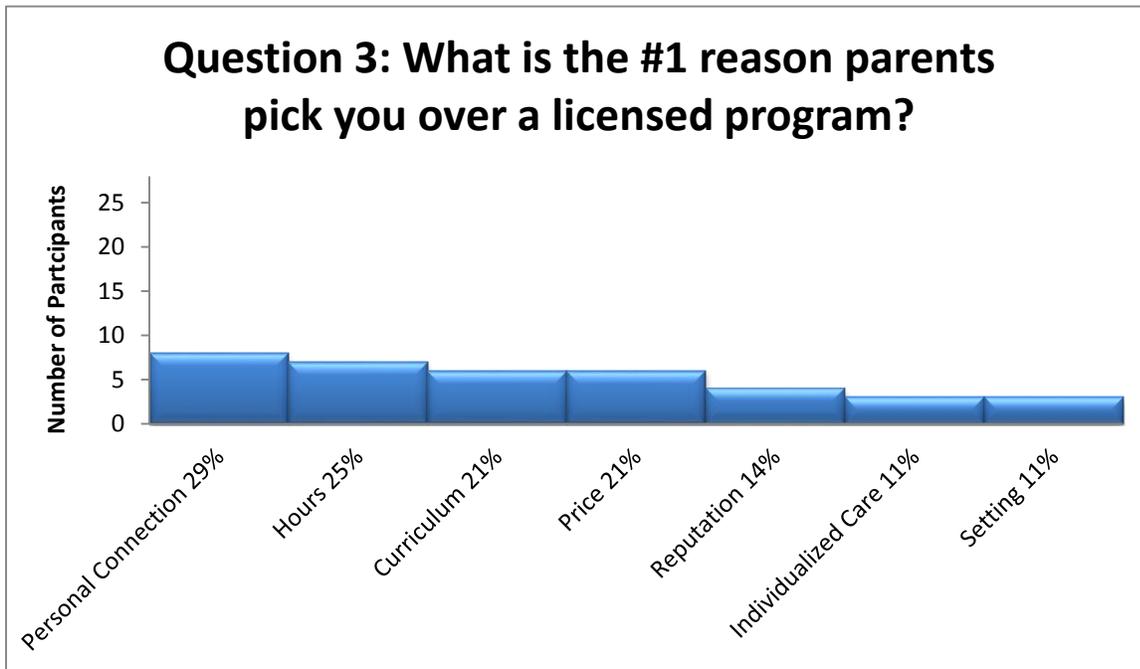
**Table 2:**

Category	As Defined...
<b>Reputation/Word of Mouth</b>	Reputation within the community
<b>Curriculum/Philosophy</b>	Programs use curriculum of their choice and operate in their own philosophy
<b>Hours</b>	Care provided during hours parents need or for number of hours parents desire
<b>Individualized Care</b>	Individualized care provided to each child
<b>Setting</b>	Small setting or home setting
<b>Cost</b>	Affordable cost of care, less than licensed programs
<b>Personal Connection</b>	Parents have a connection with provider (i.e. family or close friend) or provider takes the time to develop close relationships with each parent

The most common category was *Personal Connection*. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of participants felt that parents choose them either because they were related to them or were close friends. Of these responses, some participants also felt that parents choose them because the participants took time to develop personal relationships with the parents.

The second most common category was *Hours*. Twenty-five (25%) of participants felt that parents choose them because they either have flexible hours providing care at various times or because they provide care for a specific, limited number of hours per day. The remaining categories were coded and are reported in the chart below.

Chart 2:

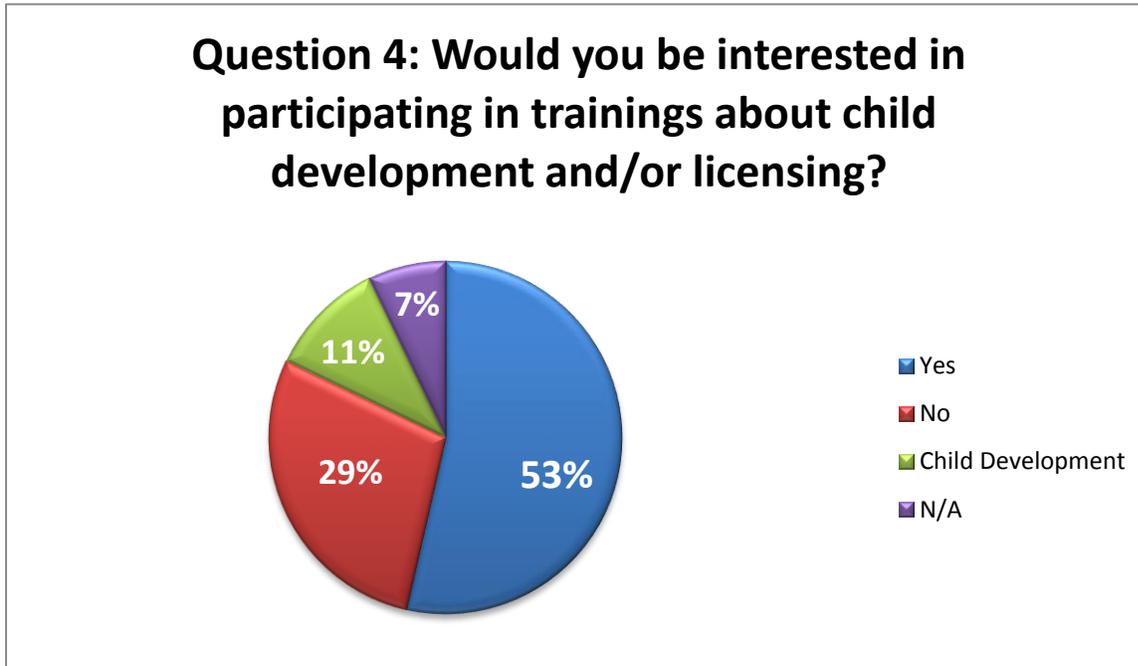


One additional response could not be coded within these categories. A participant reported that not many kids like a home setting.

### Would you be interested in participating in trainings about child development and/or licensing?

Fifty-three percent (53%) of participants answered “Yes” to Question 3. Twenty-nine percent (29%) responded “No”, and 11% responded that they would be interested only in training related to child development. The remaining 7% (2 participants) responded with answers that were non-applicable to the question.

Chart 3:



In conclusion, common themes emerged throughout the state related to the 4 survey questions. Based on this limited data, the license-exempt child care providers in North Carolina (FFN and Part-Day programs) value freedom from regulation because of the flexibility it provides while caring for children. This population also identifies personal connections as a high priority for why parents choose them for child care. Finally, we see that the majority of participants would like training either about child development, licensing, or both.

Moving forward, North Carolina can utilize trainings, particularly training in child development, as a way to provide information to this population on how personal connection (family engagement) and other high priorities reported by participants (i.e. curriculum/philosophy, hours of operation, individualized care, etc.) can coexist with North Carolina's QRIS.

## APPENDIX A

### Information/Instructions:

- Contact one (1) Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care setting and one (1) Part-Day preschool. Please keep in mind that this is for the Early Learning Challenge and target FFN and Part-Day programs that serve children ages Birth-5.
- Complete a data collection sheet for each setting/program using the attached script.
- Surveys can be completed in person or by phone.
- Please record the participants' direct response. If they are unfamiliar with licensure or DCDEE, please record their response. If they would like more information, please refer them to our website ([www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov))
- Also, inform participants that we are asking for their mailing address for the sole purpose of distributing their books. They will not be placed on a mailing list.
- The purpose of this survey is to learn more about non-licensed programs/settings across the state.
- Data collection will run through the end of September 2014. Please turn both data collection forms (Part-Day and FFN) into your Regional Program Manager by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please keep record of participants and addresses.
- DCDEE will provide a box set of children's books as a token of appreciation for participation in the survey. We will send each Lead Agency 3 box sets - one for the FFN, one for the Part-Day Program, and one for the Lead Agency's Resource Room. Upon receipt of box sets, please distribute to participants.

## APPENDIX B

Hello, my name is (insert your name). I am calling from (insert R&R name) on behalf of the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The Division is seeking feedback from Part-Day programs as well as friends, family, and neighbors who care for young children. We are gathering feedback through a short survey. The Division will send a box set of children’s books to those who participate. Would you have a few minutes today to answer 4 brief survey questions to receive your free box set of children’s books? Or could we schedule another time for a quick conversation?

Participant’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Information

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Type:  FFN  Part-Day

Questions:	
How many children do you serve/keep including those related to you?	
What do you see as advantages to your current setting/arrangement over being a licensed child care program?	
What is the #1 reason parents pick you over a licensed program?	
Would you be interested in participating in trainings about child development and/or licensing?	

Thank you for your participation in this survey. The Division of Child Development and Early Education greatly appreciates your time and participation as they learn more about non-licensed programs and other types of child care arrangements in our state. As stated before, the Division would like to send you age appropriate children’s book collection a token of appreciation. Which age range of books, birth through age 2 or ages 3-5, would best suit the children for whom you care? Your books will be mailed directly to the address you provided.

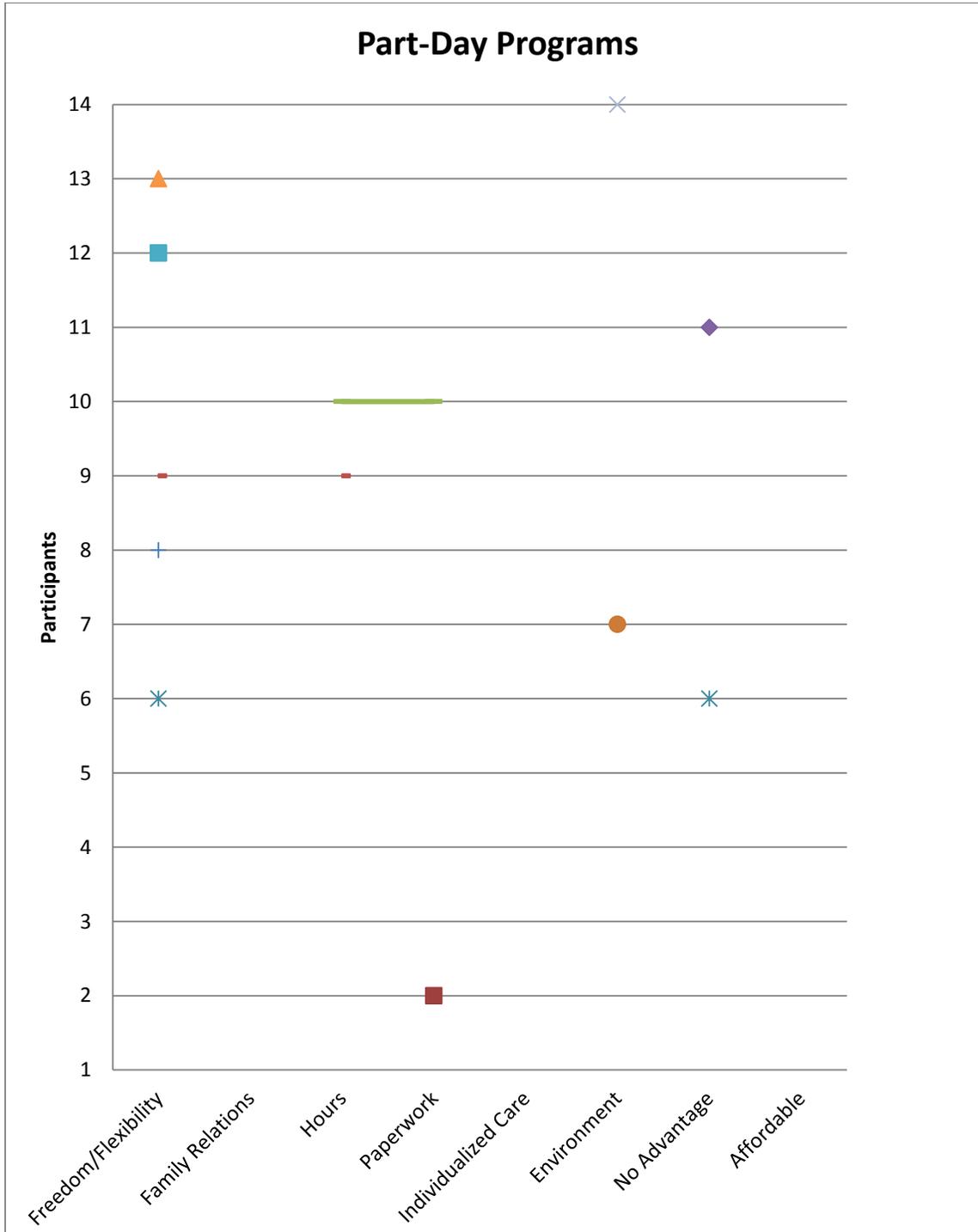
For additional questions, please contact DCDEE representative Maria Bailey at 919-527-6546.

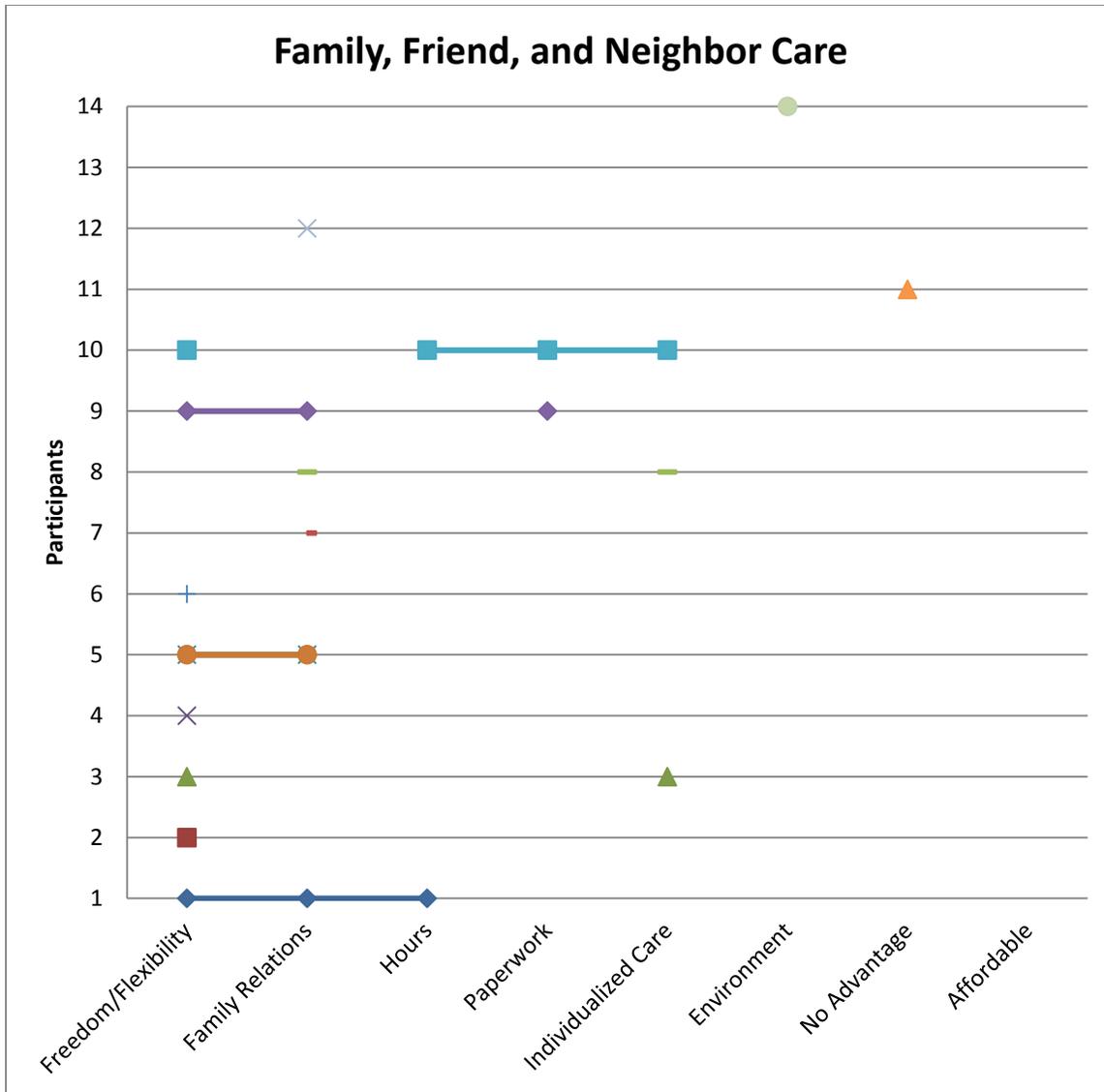
## APPENDIX C

NO	# Childen Served	What do you see as advantages to your current setting/arrangement over being a licensed child care program?	What is the #1 reason parents pick you over a licensed program?	Would you be interested in participating in trainings about child development and/or licensing?
1A	44	We were going toward being licensed when we started. We do a lot of good stuff here. It is not that we won't eventually, but it has not happened yet. Sometimes changing leadership affects things. I have also been licensed in the past for 6 years. I am able to be home with my own children and keep children for only 4 hours a day as opposed to a full day. I make the same money because I can keep more children. I stay within ratio because I care about the children.	Word of mouth. They hear how friendly we are. It is a warm, safe place. Very good educationally. Also, many choose us because we are faith based.	Yes, probably. We would look into that. We have worked through some teacher issues and road construction problems. It would be a good thing.
1B	9 +1 Related	We are able to make our own "curriculum". There are not so many guidelines, though the guidelines are important. It's nice to have your own guidelines.	I think most licensed programs are full day. In our area many parents only want part day. I also have my degree in EC and that gives me an advantage.	I am interested. Several years ago I went to (a) NAEYC conference. The Partnership offers some things that I have attended.
2A	31 with some open slots	All I went through before (she used to be licensed) wasn't hard, just too much paperwork. I want a place where parents and children are comfortable. I want to help with homework, have small snacks and put trust into the parents.	The parents and staff like being a private pre-school. It's a small school with small class size and has a family feeling.	I would be interested in child development training.
2B	2 children in the evening	She felt that this question was difficult to answer being that the Weekday Early Education program was not eligible to be a licensed child care program since it is a half-day program. She felt that there were a few advantages to being a non-licensed provider. Being that she is non-licensed, she can provide more individualized care for children in a smaller setting. She does not have to use harsh cleaning chemicals such as bleach, instead she can use gentler cleaning agents such as peroxide or vinegar. There are also financial aspects such as utilizing her 4 ft. outside fence instead of replacing it with a regulated 6 ft. fence.	It's a smaller setting and one-on-one care with a focus more on the children.	Yes!
3A	195 average	She believes that since they are a half-day program, the Weekday Early Education program attracts parents who work full time but also have very involved family members (grandparents, aunts/uncles, nannies). Therefore, the parents do not need full time care but would like for their child(ren) to have age appropriate interaction and socialization.	She believes that since they are a half-day program, the Weekday Early Education program attracts parents who work full time but also have very involved family members (grandparents, aunts/uncles, nannies). Therefore, the parents do not need full time care but would like for their child(ren) to have age appropriate interaction and socialization.	Yes, the Weekday Early Education program is always interested in trainings and staff development. They require staff to obtain contact hours. They are members of ChildLinks and the NC Baptist Church Weekday Education Association. They utilized both of these resources for trainings and conferences.
3B	3 to 4	She believes parents choose her home childcare because she is very flexible with her availability and the fact that their children will receive more individualized care in a small setting.	She believes parents choose her home childcare because she is very flexible with her availability and the fact that their children will receive more individualized care in a small setting.	Yes, she is very interested in participating in trainings about child development and licensing.
4A	15 to 20	Wishes to apply for child care license. They have talked with the licensing consultant to start the process but the current building is mixed use, which means that major renovations would have to occur. Now having to wait because of cost.	Convenience and do not have to pay full weekly rate.	Yes
4B	2	Extra cash and not having to deal with regulations	They know me personally	No, because I have done that in the past.
5B(1)	5 grandchildren	The flexibility to be able to enjoy all activities with my grandchildren. I pick them up from school, and take them out to eat sometimes. Then after homework is complete, if my daughters have not arrived, I take them to their sport practice, and then my other grandchildren and I play at the park there at the rec.	I am their grandmother, and I am VERY affordable. Plus my daughters know it's hard for me to tell them no. So I am able to work with their family's needs, if they are unavailable.	If available, I would be interested in trainings about child development.
5B(2)	3	My hours are flexible and I'm able to stay at home with my kids and homeschool my oldest.	In-home care and the fact their child will get one-on-one attention.	I've thought about it, would like more information.
6A	96 preschoolers, 25 school age	Affordable options for parents, less requirements for teachers (we use many of our parents for volunteers and substitutes)	Many of our families have a parent that is not working, and they want them to have some social interaction and preparation for Kindergarten, but they do not want them in care all day long. We have other families that use us for a portion of their care and have other family members or friends watch them in order to save some money.	Yes
6B	4	I don't have anyone telling me what to do or how to care for the children in my care.	Cost, licensed child care is much more expensive than unregulated care.	Not at this time. 3 of the children that I watch will be going to school next year and will no longer be in my care.
7A	57	The set up of our building is an advantage as well as a lack of a kitchen, the parents are able to bring lunch for their kids.	Reputation. Our parents are mostly full time but work out a schedule with grandparents so they are able to bring their children to our facility.	Not in licensing, but we are always interested in trainings about child development.
7B	Grandchildren - 3 school age and 5 babies	I help my children to take care of their children. Freedom to choose our own curriculum & our approach to teaching children. Biblical integration & freedom to teach, & minister to the mind, spirit, and the body. Flexibility in class size and structure.	The children are my grandbabies. I know them better.	I take some classes offered to Latinos by The Children's Resource Center. One is First Aid and CPR.
8A	12	My last two children have been in my home unlicensed program. I feel that the smaller numbers allow my child more one-on-one time. There are only two children and the care giver is able to focus on the individual needs of the two children.	Faith based	I would be interested in hearing about upcoming trainings so that we can choose the ones we are interested in. We are seeking our license through the Association of Christian Schools International.
8B	4 children in my family	Only a preschool setting in a church, and provide learning opportunities for children within the church. I feels that this is the perfect place for parents to be able to bring their children to get the education and social interaction they need on a part time basis.	I do not like the fact that programs have up to 10 or more babies in a room. (Too many) children to meet the needs of.	No
9A	52 Preschool children	S doesn't want the hassle of the paperwork to become licensed, and enjoys her freedom of making up her own rules. She plans to get a full time job in 2 years when her child goes to kindergarten. She has 2 other children in school at this time and wanted to spend some extra time with her youngest while she can she states.	They have a reputation in the community and their church. They offer a Bible-based and Letter land curriculum that have been very successful.	No
9B	2 children per day in her home	Because we have a desired hours of parents who want their children to be in a setting with other children p/t and also the price. Some parents just want a few days a week.	One parent chose her because she is the aunt of the child. The other parent chose her because she is a close friend and she wants her to be (in) a setting that isn't so big.	No
10A	141 slots, 130 enrolled	The advantage is that they determine the hours, some children may not progress as quickly as others and they (provider) can give the child individual attention. I don't have to keep a strict schedules. I used to work in a child care and it was all about the money.	We have the hours they desired vs. fulltime program...but want the children in a social environment. They want a faith base program.	Not interested, not setup structurally. Go to Western NC Preschool Conf., SSFC, and Paeyec and thur WRFC for training. Our ratio's are usually better than those required by the state. We are well aware of the regulations. Definitely believe in a research based program for our children.
10B	Only keeps children on her day off, 4 children and the schedule varies	There is not an advantage.	Flexible rate of pay For them it is easier for them to come when they want to. Sometime they like having someone they trust on a personal level. I sit down and talk to the parent about what is going on.	I don't know, not sure at the moment.
11A	9	None- Disadvantage is cannot accept vouchers.	Not many kids like a home setting atmosphere.	Both
11B	2	The fact that we are Reggio inspired, things that are looked at differently in licensing, also the space we currently have is a suite, within an art studio, and the space would make it challenging (bathrooms down the hallway, etc.) Right now, we don't have the ability to add those to the classroom. It also gives us the opportunity to give stay at home moms and others a half-day socialization program.	Because I tell them about my program, Really open and give them tours.	Yes
12A	10	It's a friend, we're very close friends. I also kept her other daughter when she was a newborn. We don't want the newborn babies out in daycares, they catch something, etc. Best to keep them at home where they won't get sick.	Right now we are still getting started, but I hope it would be the high-quality we are putting into our program. Both my partner and I know what 5 star is and we put a lot of that into our program. We keep a low ratio; we even go above NAEYC standards, etc. Smaller group setting, personal touch with care of children, our care and education goes above and beyond.	Sure.
12B	1 + 1 related	Flexibility in how we do things. Not bound by restrictions	Don't want them to get sick, my friend relies on me and trusts me as a friend, knows I'll do a good job.	No. I've been asked to keep other children, but that's not what I want to do.
13A	60-90	Less paperwork	Location - we are in a rural area. Parents who don't need full time care, just preparation for kindergarten, often kids who stay with their grandparents while parents are working.	Yes
13B	2 preschool, 5 school age, mostly family	A more relaxed atmosphere.	My parents know me personally and so it's a trust thing. They don't care about a license.	No
14A	38	More one to one, offer a home-like environment, as well as accommodate various schedules	We incorporate Montessori into our curriculum.	Yes, I would.
14B	4		Cost. The price I charge is less than what they pay in child care centers.	Yes, I would.

## APPENDIX D

Question 2: What do you see as advantages to your current setting/arrangement over being a licensed child care program?





Question 3: What is the #1 reason parents pick you over a licensed program?

