

# Children's Center praised in report

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Cabrillo College Children's Center won praise for its innovative program that includes multi-culturalism and anti-bias curriculum.

The Center is one of five California child-care programs highlighted in a statewide report on child-care centers. The report, titled "Affirming Children's Roots," was prepared by Field Research Corporation.

California Tomorrow, a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, hired the firm to conduct the study, which reviewed 434 child-care programs across the state that provide services to children between infancy and 5 years old.

The study documents multi-ethnic character of child-care centers, the first time such a study was undertaken. Researchers studied the effects of immigration, bilingualism and ethnicity on the quality of care provided to children.

Researchers found that 96 percent of the child-care centers studied served children from two or more racial groups and 81 percent served children from two or more language groups.

Staffing, however, did not adequately meet the linguistic

needs of the children served, the study showed. Only 55 percent of the centers had a staff member that spoke Spanish and less than one-third spoke Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, or Tagalog.

At Cabrillo's Children's Center, two out of three staff members spoke both English and Spanish. The Center has also tailored its program to address the needs of the area's growing multi-cultural population, the study said. The program has incorporated an "anti-bias" curriculum.

Julie Olsen Edwards, director of the Early Childhood Education Program at Cabrillo, said in a written statement:

"Given that one out of nine children living in the United States is here in California, how we decide to provide child care is going to have an unprecedented impact on the future of this country. To pretend that the diversity of our children's lives and homes does not matter will be disastrous. At Cabrillo we have chosen to celebrate our differences while building a sense of mutual community."

— Emilio Alvarado