



CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING

## FAMILY, FRIEND, AND NEIGHBOR CARE MESSAGE FRAMEWORK

### Strategic Imperatives

- Tell the story of family, friend, and neighbor care.
- Illustrate who family, friend, and neighbor care providers are, the kind of care they provide, and for whom they provide it.
- Underscore that family, friend, and neighbor care is essential for families in a wide variety of situations and in many different kinds of communities.
- Educate policymakers and the public about the realities faced by low-income working families—realities that make family, friend, and neighbor care an essential part of their support system.
- Demonstrate why family, friend, and neighbor care is deserving of support, including both public and private dollars.

### What Is Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care?

- Family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care is a vital component of the child care system in America, and of the larger system of supports for families.
- FFN care is a reality for families in communities across the country, from inner cities to rural areas—and it deserves our support.
- FFN care is familiar.
- FFN care is a more informal kind of home-based child care that is provided by someone who is often, but not always, a close relative (other than a parent) or family friend.
- FFN care enables parents to work outside of the home.
- FFN caregivers only care for a small number of children—or even just one child—allowing them the opportunity to provide one-on-one care and attention.

### Topline Message Points

- Family, friend, and neighbor care is a vital component of the child care system in America, and of the larger system of supports for families.
- Family, friend, and neighbor care is a reality for families in communities across the country, from inner cities to rural areas—and it deserves our support.
- Millions of families rely on family members, friends, and neighbors to care for their children every day while parents are at work.
- Family, friend, and neighbor care is a choice that millions of families make because the caregiver is a trusted figure who can provide safe, affordable care.
- In many cases, family, friend, and neighbor care is the only alternative because other, more formal options are unaffordable or unavailable where and when the family needs child care.
- We need to make supports and resources available to family, friend, and neighbor care providers to help them improve the quality of the care they provide, not cut them out of federal and state programs.

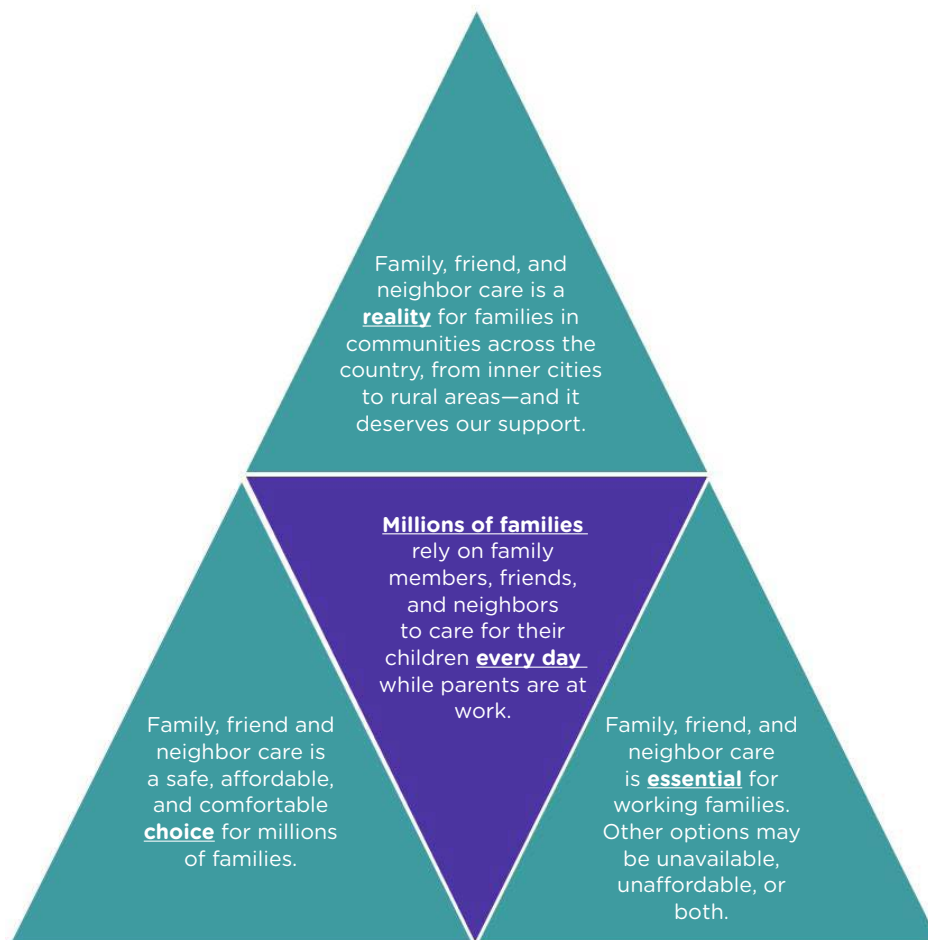
### Audiences

- Governors and state legislators
- Mayors and other local officials
- Members of Congress
- Funders

### Potential Messengers

- Policy experts
- Economists
- Family, friend, and neighbor care providers
- Family, friend, and neighbor care utilizers
- Organizations working with family, friend, and neighbor providers





### Who Chooses Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care—and Why?

- Millions of families rely on family members, friends, and neighbors to care for their children every day while parents are at work.
- FFN care is a choice that many families make because the caregiver is a trusted figure who can provide safe, affordable care.
- Many parents simply prefer that a trusted neighbor or relative, such as a grandparent, care for their young child or infant.
- Many parents choose FFN care because they are most comfortable with a provider who shares their culture and language.
- In many cases, FFN care is the only alternative because other, more formal options are unaffordable or unavailable where and when the family needs child care.
- Many low-wage workers—who often work unpredictable, early morning, late evening, or weekend hours—rely on FFN care because it is the most affordable and flexible option.
- Families with children who have special needs may prefer FFN providers because they can offer one-on-one attention to the child.

- Working parents who spend hours traveling on public transportation each day just to get to work often use FFN care because it is a convenient option that is close to home.

### What Can We Do to Support Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care?

- We need to embrace a variety of strategies to support and improve FFN care.
- FFN providers can encourage children’s learning and development. A number of initiatives now being implemented across the country are working to support FFN providers in doing this.
- Initiatives that support FFN providers are key to improving the experiences of millions of children in FFN care.
- Families receiving child care assistance through state and federal child care programs should be able to choose FFN care.
- We need public and private investments in bolstering the quality of FFN care.
- FFN care providers are frequently isolated, making outreach and support efforts particularly valuable.



### **Additional Resources:**

- National Women’s Law Center: [Strategies for Supporting Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care Providers](#) (2016)
- National Women’s Law Center: [Nearly One in Five Working Mothers of Very Young Children Work in Low-Wage Jobs](#) (2017)
- Illinois Action for Children: [Cook County Parents, Nonstandard Work and Child Care](#) (2016)
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation: [Informal Child Care in California: Current Arrangements and Future Needs](#) (2015)
- Urban Institute (María E. Enchautegui, Martha Johnson, and Julia Gelatt): [Who Minds the Kids When Mom Works a Nonstandard Schedule?](#) (2015)
- Illinois Action for Children: [Choices in the Real World: The Use of Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care by Single Chicago Mothers Working Nontraditional Schedules](#) (2013)
- Urban Institute (Ajay Chaudry, Juan Manuel Pedroza, Heather Sandstrom, Anna Danziger, Michel Grosz, Molly Scott, and Sarah Ting): [Child Care Choices of Low-Income Working Families](#) (2011)
- Mathematica Policy Research (Toni Porter, Diane Paulsell, Patricia Del Grosso, Sarah Avellar, Rachel Hass, and Lee Vuong): [A Review of the Literature on Home-Based Child Care: Implications for Future Directions](#) (2010)
- University of Washington, Human Services Policy Center (Richard N. Brandon): [Enhancing Family Friend and Neighbor Caregiving Quality: The Research Case for Public Engagement](#) (2005)

