



Early Learning Division | 775 Summer St NE, Suite 300, Salem, OR 97301

Phone: 503-373-0066 | Fax: 503-947-1955

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**May 15, 2017**  
**Senate Human Services Committee**  
**HB 3068A**

HB 3068A comes to you to advance two principles:

- ✓ Parents need a comprehensive system to find and access child care and early learning services.
- ✓ Providers need increased opportunity and access to professional development and supports that include culturally relevant, racially and economically diverse training opportunities.

The Division oversees a network of 12 child care resource and referral agencies currently charged with meeting those principles through three core tasks:

- ✓ Support, training and professional development for child care providers.
- ✓ Support for families seeking child care.
- ✓ Data collection for the state.

To most effectively support families in need of quality child care and the quality of early learning providers, the Division sponsored two workgroups to develop a model to ensure families are able to find and enroll in services they need, and to create a professional development system to meet the needs of the diverse early learning workforce.

Each workgroup developed recommendations that identified short-term and long-term outcomes which define how the systems and services should operate. The workgroups also identified key strategies essential to make the needed improvements.<sup>1</sup>

Following on those strategies, the Division is building upon the professional development supports provided through Oregon's Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&R). CCR&R's have strong relationships and trust with child care providers in their communities and offer relationship-based professional development through face to face trainings and Quality Improvement Specialists. Additionally, CCR&R's have qualified Early Childhood Education trainers on staff. Their partnerships and collaboration with community colleges creates a seamless pathway for continued professional development and higher education in ways that meet the needs of our

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<sup>1</sup> Parent Referral and Enrollment Services and Provider Support and Professional Development workgroups: Development, Process and Recommendations. Report to the Early Learning Council, May, 2015.

early learning workforce. CCR&R's support and lead providers in attaining Quality Rating and Improvement System tier levels throughout the state.

To allow CCR&Rs to focus on their strengths and expertise in professional development for our early learning workforce, and to ensure families are able to find and enroll in services they need, the Early Learning Division has partnered with 211Info to provide parent referrals.

211Info is a clearinghouse that helps people identify, navigate and connect with the local resources, and is now available in all counties in Oregon. By simply dialing 211, the parent or caregiver is able to receive child care referrals along with secondary community referrals for comprehensive services. As a trusted repository for updated information, 211Info is positioned to serve all segments of the population, including people experiencing poverty, professionals seeking resources for clients, individuals looking for rapid assistance in navigating early learning and health care systems, and partner agencies.

The lines are open Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. PST/8 a.m. – 12 p.m. MST and Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. PST/9 a.m. – 9 p.m. MST. Parents can also request referrals via email, text and web. CCR&Rs, the Division, Department of Human Services, and 211 will work together as partners to strengthen our efforts throughout this next year. We believe in these changes and are committed to effectively supporting parents seeking child care and providers in continual quality improvement and professional development.

#### Need for HB 3068A

The current definition of “resource and referral agencies” and the detail of requirements in statute limit the Division from entering into agreements with a diverse group of entities that can best serve the diverse needs of parents, guardians, and providers.

The Early Learning Division will be working with committee staff to draft an additional set of amendments to:

- Define the “Child Care Resource and Referral system” to provide supports for parents, guardians, and child care professionals widening the range of entities the Division can partner with for specific child care resource and referral services.

- Direct the Early Learning Division to implement the Resource and Referral System, including eligibility requirements, the duties and responsibilities of resource and referral entities.
- Conforms language in ORS 329A.340.