



Cristina Riggins | Oklahoma



Cristina's story

Cristina Riggins is a wife, mother of two, and a child care provider. She has been a provider for seven years and opened her own home child care center. Cristina opened up a child care home because she found herself unable to afford and find child care for her own children. She wanted to make an income, but didn't want to risk placing her children in an unsafe child care environment. By opening her own child care center, Cristina has been able to ensure her children's safety, continue to work, and help other parents feel more comfortable leaving their children with a child care provider.

As a provider she understands the importance of developing a relationship with children and their families. Cristina believes parents should be able to access affordable child care that also enriches the brain development of the child. As she juggles being a parent and a child care provider, she finds a lack of resources to use in her community that focus on child care. Cristina is a new advocate for early childhood education and wants to see an improvement in state regulations.

Child Care Stats in OK
The cost of center care for 2 children in Oklahoma is nearly \$4,000 higher than the annual cost of tuition at a four year college.

U.S. businesses lose approximately \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of child care breakdowns.

Child care workers in Oklahoma make an annual average of \$19,150 (that's more than \$3,000 below the national average!)

Congressional Request: 2017

CCAoA is requesting a \$1.4 billion increase (over the FY 2016 level) for next year to ensure that nearly 217,000 children and families don't lose access to care, and also to help states meet the requirements of the 2014 CCDBG law.

We ask that you co-sponsor the "Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act of 2017" (H.R. 947/S.337), which would:

- Provide up to 12 weeks of leave for working families
- Enable workers to earn up to 66% of their monthly income while on leave
- Cover workers in all companies, no matter size
- Be administered through the newly created Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave

We also ask that you co-sponsor the "Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act of 2017," which would expand and enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to reflect the realities of modern-day child care costs. The PACE Act would make CDCTC refundable and increase the credit rate, which would greatly benefit millions of working families struggling to pay their monthly bills as child care is the greatest expense after housing.