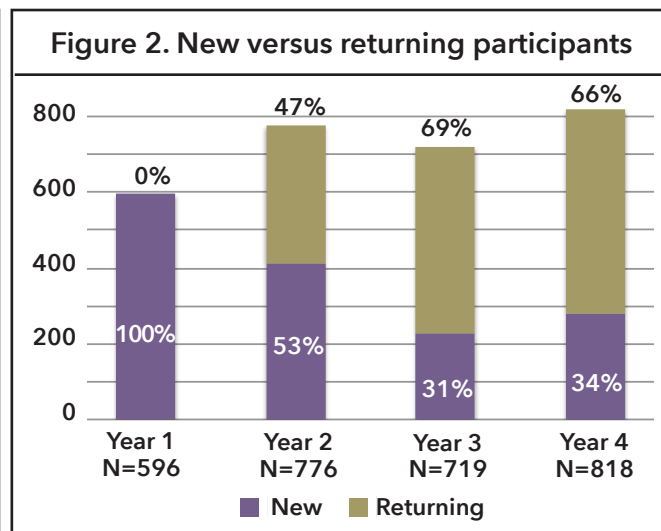
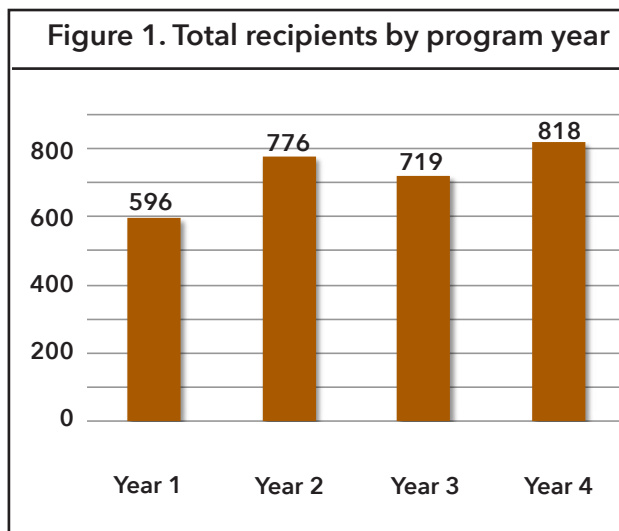


# CARES Plus Year 4 Highlights

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

The Santa Clara CARES Plus Program provides financial awards to early educators based on their educational achievement and the completion of professional development activities. These financial stipends have proven to be significant incentives to early educators towards furthering their education and enhancing their professional development. This report provides highlights from the fourth year of CARES Plus in Santa Clara County. Increasing scientific evidence shows that early educators can significantly influence early childhood learning<sup>1</sup>. When early educators are well educated, the children they teach are more successful in school and life<sup>2</sup>. Not only are well-educated early educators a key component to providing high-quality care to children, but better-educated teachers contribute to professionalizing the early education field.

A total of 818 participants received a stipend in Year 4 of CARES Plus program implementation. This is the highest number of stipend recipients compared to the previous three years. Roughly two-thirds are participants who have participated in one or more years of CARES Plus. See Figures 1 and 2.



Even with the increase in the number of recipients, there were no major shifts in the demographics of the participants from year 4 compared to the previous 3 years. See the E3 Institute Cares Plus website to view copies of previous years' reports: <http://www.e3institute.org/pub/htdocs/cares.html>.

1 Shonkoff, J, Phillips, D., Eds (2000). From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development. National Research Council Institute of Medicine Board on Children, Youth, and Families. National Academies of Science, National Academy Press, Washington, DC

2 Sammons, P. Elliott, K., Sylva, K., Melhuish, M, Siraj-Blachford, & Taggart, B. (2004). The impact of preschool on young children's cognitive attainments at entry to reception. British Education Research Journal, 30(5), 691-712

Participating early educators had the option of completing one of the four program components:

- Core Only
- College Coursework
- CDE-Certified Training
- MyTeachingPartner™

The majority of participants who returned to the CARES Plus program chose the Training component. See Figure 3.

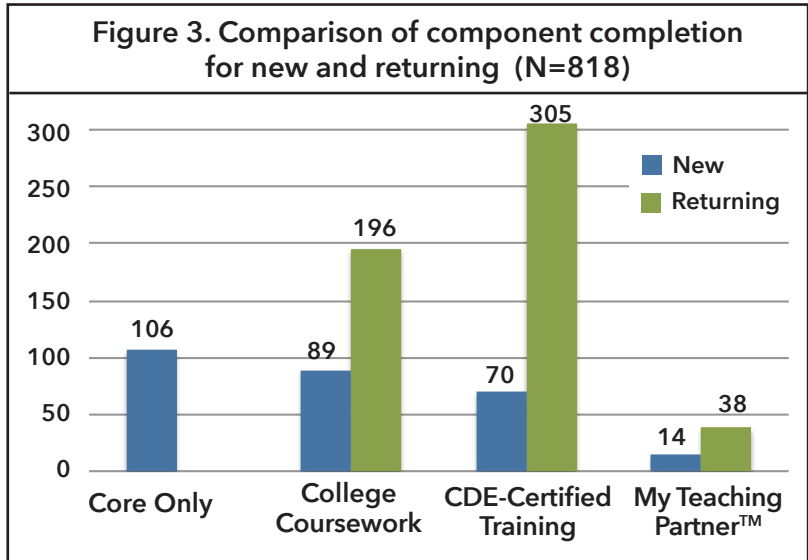
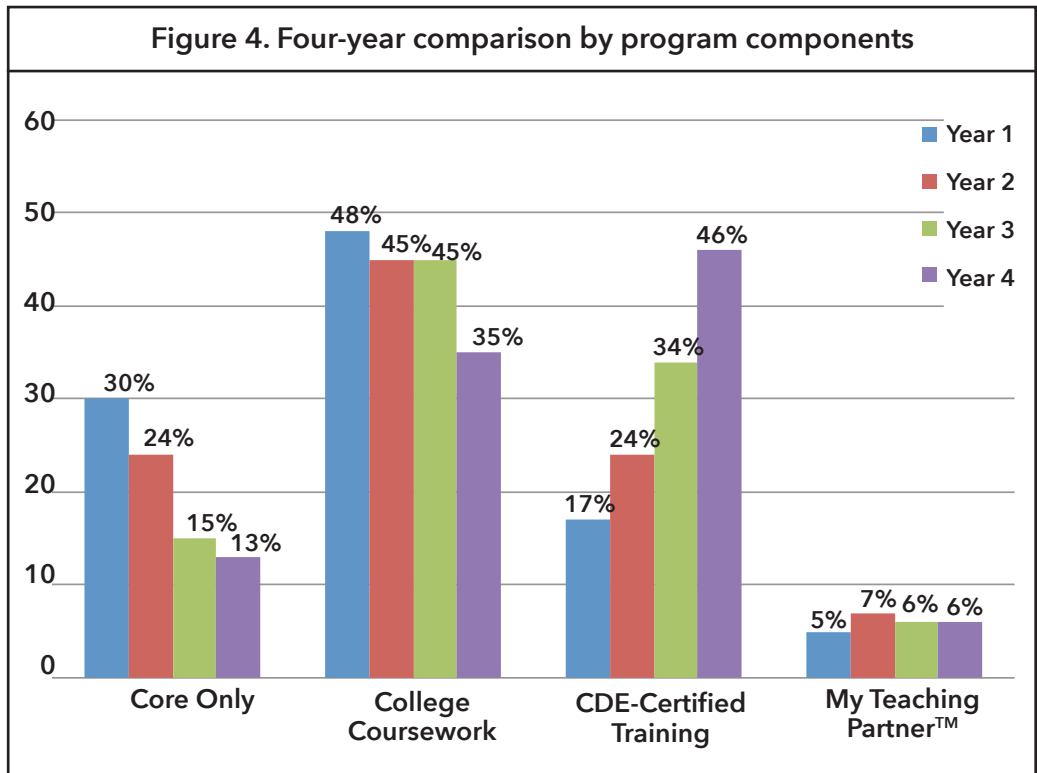


Figure 4 shows the four-year comparison of the program components completed by participants.

This is the first year the Training component was the most popular choice. It doubled from Year 1 to Year 3, increasing to 46% this year. This increase is attributed to the following reasons:

- First 5 California and the Child Development Division of the California Department of Education launched additional training opportunities and established a process allowing local training to be approved.

- Those who choose Core or MTP™ components can only complete the component once, and the majority of the returning participants chose the Training component.



- 16% of those who originally chose the college coursework did not meet the requirements to receive a stipend under the College component and moved to the Training component.

Figure 5 shows the highest-level education for participants in each program component.

Figure 5. Year 4 participants' education level by program components				
	Core Only	College Coursework	CDE-Certified Training	My Teaching Partner™
Some College or less	54%	60%	36%	31%
Associate's Degree	15%	22%	24%	19%
Bachelor's Degree	27%	13%	34%	38%
Master's or above	4%	5%	6%	12%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

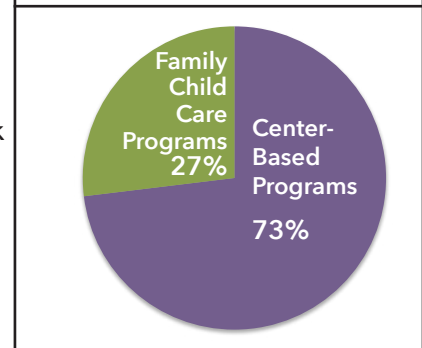
MTP™ and the Training component attracted participants with varying levels of education.

### MTP™ Continues to be Effective

MyTeachingPartner™ offers the opportunity for early educators to receive direct feedback on their practice from a coach by utilizing videos taken in their own classrooms without having to leave their classroom or home. Many returning participants chose this CARES Plus component because they were seeking other innovative approaches to receive professional development and had heard positive feedback from previous MTP™ participants. Directors are also recommending this option to their teachers after seeing positive results with previous MTP™ participants.

MTP™ continues to appeal to a broad range of early educators, attracting participants with varying levels of education; 78.8% of MTP™ participants are teachers, directors and family child care owners who are responsible for the daily curriculum in the classroom. In total, family child care programs represented 27% and center-based programs represented 73%. See Figure 6.

Figure 6. MTP™ participation by program types (N=52)



*“I have owned my family child care program for ten years and have taken courses and attended workshops through the CARES program. When I heard about MTP™ as an additional component of CARES Plus, I was interested in the one-on-one coaching. I wanted to give it a shot because it seemed tailored to the busy professional who cannot attend workshops during the work day.*

*The first year I participated in the MTP™ program focusing on toddlers. I was fortunate enough to participate in it again because I also work with preschool-aged children. I learned appropriate teaching methods with each age group. I see the children learning more and I have been able to manage behavior issues better because of my experiences in MTP™. Parents are excited and supportive of my professional development through this coaching and children are staying with me longer now.”*

—Returning FCC Provider Who Participated in the MTP™ Program in both age groups

## Reflections

- CARES Plus participants took advantage of new online and in-person training opportunities as well as additional local training opportunities offered during Year 4 of CARES Plus making the Training component the most popular choice.
- MTP™ participation remained steady. MTP™ continued to attract participants of varying levels of education with 27% from family child care centers.
- Participants engaged in the Coursework component continued to struggle to complete six semester units within the required time frame. With the newly added option of accepting unit-bearing courses to meet the 21-hour professional development requirements, 16% of those originally in the Coursework component moved over to the Training component.
- Text messaging was included as an additional method to communicate with participants this year.

## Looking Ahead to Year 5 of CARES Plus

- Additional efforts will be made to support early educators interested in enrolling the ECE Workforce Registry.
- Text messaging will be added as a permanent feature for those who prefer to receive information via text message.
- A video tutorial will be created to help guide participants on how to access their participant summary.
- A software program will be put in place to track and report website traffic to shape recommendations for future website development.
- Students will graduate from the second Bachelor of Arts Degree cohort program with a degree in Child and Adolescent Development from San José State University December 2015.

*“I want to thank the CARES program for helping me reach my educational goals. I have been a CARES participant since it started in our county. Over the years the CARES stipends have covered my expenses for course work, transportation fees, books, and miscellaneous supplies. My CARES college representative, Katherine Moore-Wines, has given me professional guidance, support, and encouragement. I am currently taking my last ECE course and planning to complete my general education courses by 2017. That seems like a long way off, but with working full time and supporting my own kids through their college years, I am willing to sacrifice my immediate goals for a long-term achievement. One day it will be my turn to be a college graduate. Among the many people dear to me, the CARES representatives played a huge role in making it all possible. Thank you for your support.”*

—Teacher from center-based program who participated in the College component



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