



Facts about... **Child Care and Transportation**

Each year, important decisions regarding child care and community development are made at the city and county levels – every elected official and staffperson should know these facts:

Children spend increasing amounts of time in cars:

- ❑ “Three fourths of children age five and younger ride in private cars daily. **Nationwide, young children average 65 minutes a day in cars.** 6-18 year olds average 61 minutes, not including time in a school bus. Traffic experts blame much of the increasing congestion on people driving farther and making more trips.”ⁱ
- ❑ Mothers are now spending more time driving than the average parent spends on primary child care.ⁱⁱ

Commutes to child care increase traffic on roads:

- ❑ Working parents add five to six miles to their daily commute to transport children to child care or school. This extended commute results in an additional 1,352 vehicle miles per person per year, creating an additional 56 pounds of autoemissions per person per year.ⁱⁱⁱ Other studies suggest that women who transport children to child care or school are 50 percent less likely to use public transit than women without these responsibilities.

Low income women frequently don’t have access to cars:

- ❑ Over 90 percent of former welfare recipients have no access to a car.^{iv}

Communities are solving these problems by...

Collocating child care and transit and/or employment centers to increase transit ridership (and decrease traffic congestion, children’s time in cars, and toxics in the air):

- ❑ The 126 capacity child care center at the Tamien Lightrail Station in Santa Clara County is also served by three bus lines. Of the 83 percent of center parents responding to a survey, 100 percent rank the quality of care as good or excellent, and while three percent of the overall Santa Clara County population uses public transportation, 25 percent of the parents who pick up or drop off children at the center use public transit.^v

Successfully Siting Child Care at Transit Oriented Development:

- ❑ In addition to the Tamien center, Northern California examples include child care centers at Fruitvale BART, “The Crossings,” (a mixed use development near CalTrain) in San Jose, Ohlone-Chynoweth Commons near lightrail in San Jose, and centers are being developed at the Watsonville Transit Center in Santa Cruz County and the South San Francisco Transit Village at BART.

On average, 300 affordable and market rate housing units surround the four identified centers which are sited near housing at Transit Oriented Development.

(Over)



Supporting Child Care Center Development with Transportation Funding Streams:

- Many of the noted child care models have been financed with transportation funding streams, including federal TEA funding and Air Quality and Congestion Management funds. Locally, child care capital expenditures are authorized uses under both the Transportation for Livable Communities and LIFT programs. Transportation agencies may also provide instrumental support to child care by providing the land for the child care center at a nominal lease rate and by creating policies which require considering child care in development or give incentives for child care at Transit Oriented Development.

ⁱ United States Department of Transportation National Household Travel Survey released in January, 2003, as cited in "The Road Too Much Traveled, For Many Children, Drive Time Just Keeps Going," Katherine Shaver, *Washington Post*, 1/27/03.

ⁱⁱ Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey, 1995 and Robinson, John P. and Goodbey, Geoffrey, "Time for Life: The Surprising Ways Americans Use Their Time", Pennsylvania Press, as cited in "Transportation and Social Equity," California Alliance for Transportation Choices.

ⁱⁱⁱ Department of General Services, cited in California Health and Safety Code Section 1597.70.

^{iv} Federal Transit Act of 1998, Sec. 3037, Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants as cited in "Transportation and Social Equity," California Alliance for Transportation Choices.

^v Nccic.org/ccpartnerships/profiles/tamien.htm