



Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Development

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN MARYLAND

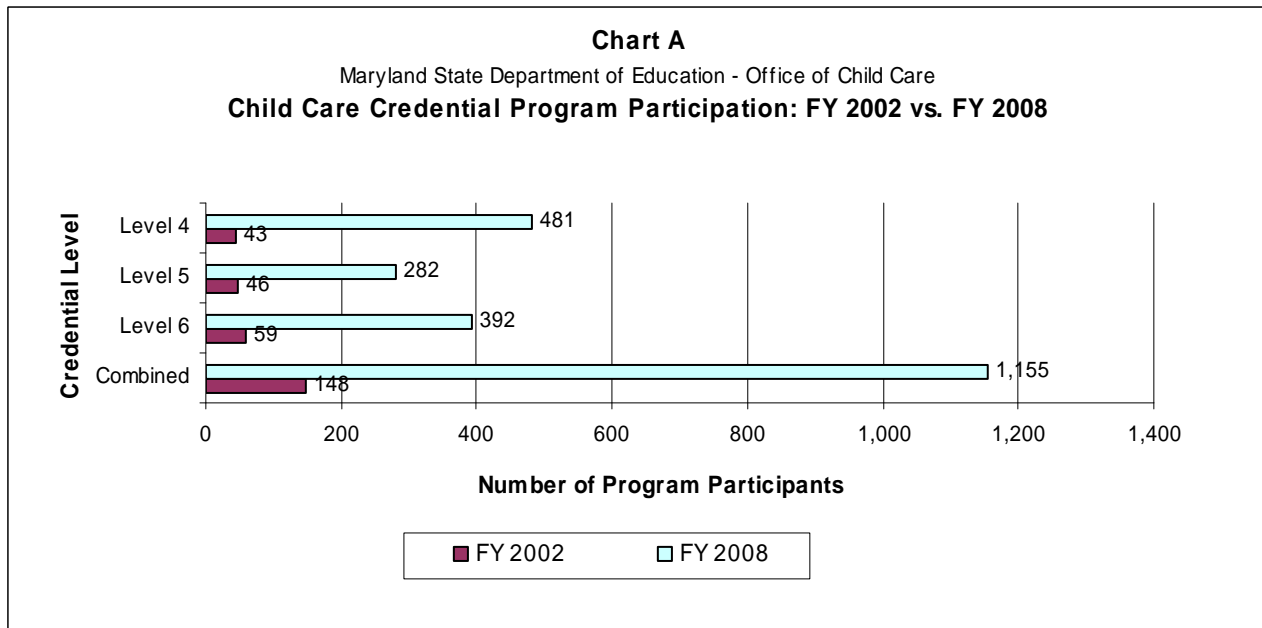
Fact Sheet 08-04 (July 2008)

Child Care Credential Program Participation

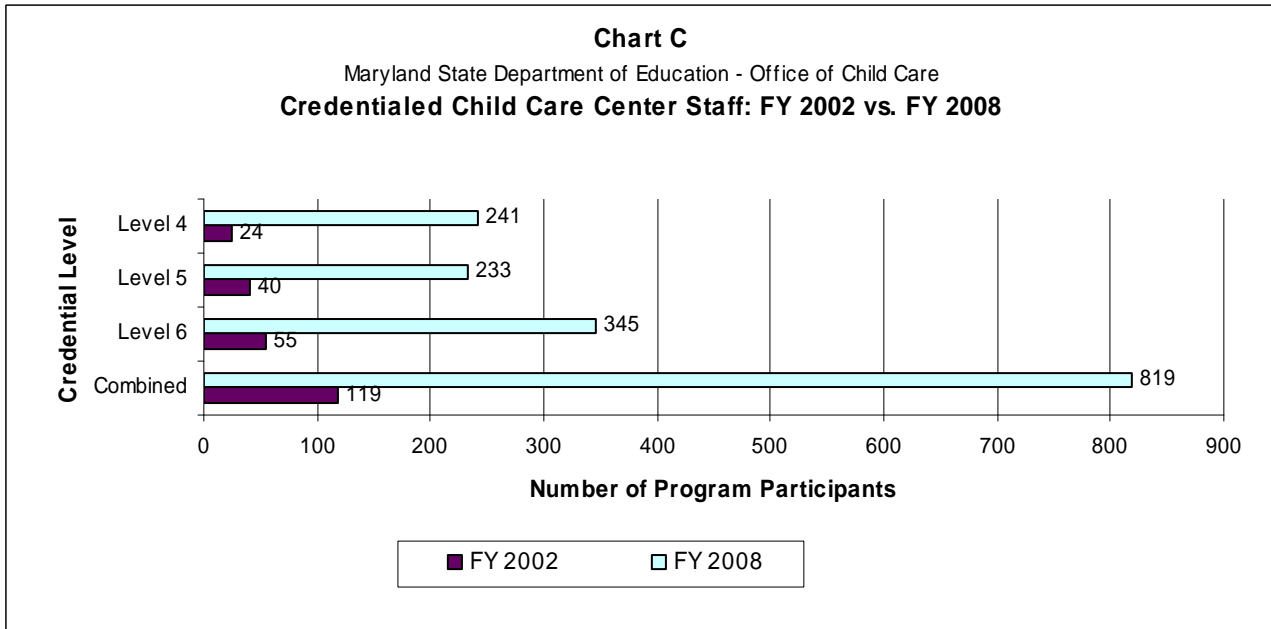
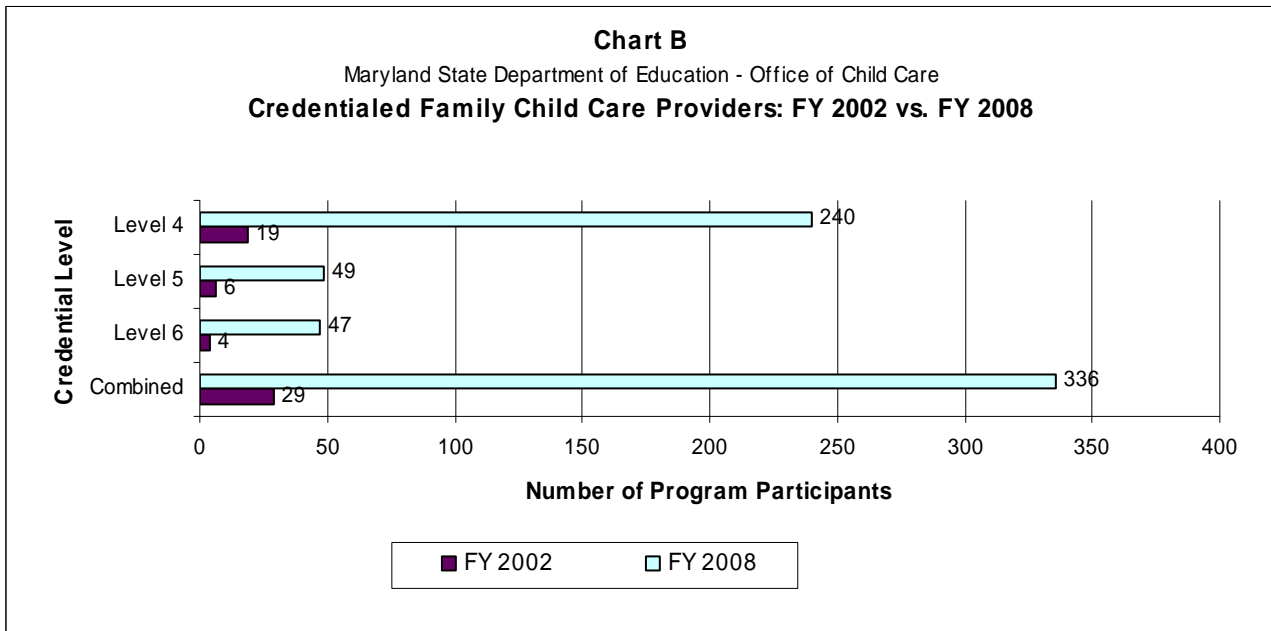
The Maryland Child Care Credential Program was established in July 2001 to help enhance the professionalism of child care providers and staff and improve the overall quality of Maryland's child care system. The program is voluntary, but all regulated family child care providers and child care center staff are eligible and encouraged to participate. The major goals of the Credential program are to:

- Promote a well-qualified workforce,
- Increase the overall quality of early care so that children enter school ready to succeed,
- Advocate for Improved status and increased compensation of child care providers,
- Provide recognition of for-credit and non-credit career preparation, and
- Establish a structure for professional growth through development professional competencies.

There are six main Child Care Credential levels* to recognize achievement of progressively higher levels of related training and education, work experience, and participation in professional activities. This Fact Sheet compares program participation rates during FY 2002 and FY 2008 at Levels Four, Five, and Six. Level Four participants must have at least 2 years of child care experience, have completed Maryland's Core of Knowledge child care curriculum, and be actively involved in professional activities such as mentoring. In addition to having more experience and professional activity involvement, participants at Levels Five and Six must also be enrolled in, or have completed pertinent coursework at the college level or higher. The following charts compare aggregate participation at those three levels and sub-aggregated participation by family child care providers and child care center staff.



* Levels One through Six are the main levels. In 2005, Level Four was modified to establish Level Four-Plus, which was designed to allow separate acknowledgement of providers achieving professional child care accreditation. Until mid-2005, accredited providers were counted as Level Four participants. For the purpose of this Fact Sheet, participation figures at Levels Four and Four-Plus are counted together and presented as a single figure.



As shown above, the combined participation rate across all three Credential levels was nearly eight times greater in 2008 than in 2002. Sub-aggregation of the data by family child care providers and child care center staff shows very great increases by both groups overall and at each level. However, family child care provider participation grew at a considerably faster rate (1,159%) than center staff participation (688%). The most significant Level-specific growth rate occurred at Level Six, where family child care providers outpaced center staff 1,175% to 627%.

Substantial as these increases are in all respects, and encouraging as the results are for the quality of Maryland child care, it must be noted that the number of participants still represents only a small fraction of the universe of Maryland child care providers and staff. As of the end of FY 2008, the combined total of 336 family child care providers at Levels Four, Five, and Six were only 3.8% of all family child care providers (8,916 as of June 30). The combined total of 819 center staff participants represented only about 4.1% of all center child care staff (estimated at an approximate total of 20,000 across 2,723 centers).