



QSLA Story Bank

Graciela Ceja, Educator/Owner

Ceja Family Child Care

Quality Start LA Provider - East Los Angeles

Story Objective: Increase expansion of QSLA across LA County

In East Los Angeles, where Graciela Ceja, owner of Ceja Family Child Care, lives, high-quality childcare and preschool options for families are limited. And yet, high-quality early learning programs are critical to helping children be ready for school, especially in high-need communities like East Los Angeles.

Ceja Family Child Care is one of those programs. Graciela participates in Quality Start LA, which supports early learning programs to provide high-quality early care and education through coaching, professional development, and other resources.

But her work to give the children in her neighborhood the best start possible doesn't end with her own program. Graciela is doing her part to increase access to high-quality care in her community by helping others open their own family child care homes.

She mentors other women in her community through the licensing process and shares lessons she's learned about creating high-quality early learning environments through Quality Start LA.

Her home is a gathering place to exchange information about the early learning field, trainings, funding resources, and Quality Start LA.

Graciela and her colleagues also have created communities of practice where they come together to learn from and help each other be the best they can be for the kids and families that they serve. Together, they are a small but mighty group of educators caring for children and working to improve their community in East Los Angeles.

Graciela is a vocal advocate for family child care and high-quality early learning in high-need communities. She says, "We deserve to be noticed, to be seen as a quality program, as a quality person, I would say. I'll keep doing it until I retire—to give kids a place to grow and a place to develop in a healthy way."

Graciela is building a stronger voice for kids, one high-quality provider at a time.