

PATCH Hawaii Receives National Recognition for Serving Up Innovative Child Care Solutions

Nutritious, USDA-compliant meals delivered to Family Child Care programs allows providers to focus on nurturing keiki

SAN DIEGO, CA, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- TOOTRiS congratulates [PATCH](#) (People Attentive to Children) of Hawaii on being awarded the Bronze Award in the [2025 Wings of Innovation CCR&R Awards](#) for their initiative Fueling Keiki Minds, One Meal at a Time.

Family Child Care providers often juggle countless responsibilities — managing their programs, supporting families, and nurturing young learners — all while struggling with the daily demands of meal planning, preparation, and compliance. PATCH recognized that this burden was draining time and energy away from what matters most: the children.

Their innovative Fueling Keiki Minds program responds directly to this challenge by delivering nutritious, USDA-compliant meals straight to Family Child Care programs. By removing the stress of meal prep and paperwork, PATCH gives providers the freedom to focus more fully on teaching, guiding, and caring for keiki. Families, in turn, gain confidence knowing their children are receiving consistent, healthy meals that support their growth and development.

This approach not only lightens the daily load for providers but also highlights how small, targeted changes in the Child Care system can spark meaningful improvements. By focusing on meal prep and nutrition, PATCH has created a model that other communities can look to as a replicable way to strengthen Child Care from the ground up.

The award was announced during TOOTRiS' [Wind Beneath Your Wings Summit](#), which drew



Supporting Hawaii's Child Care Needs
Patch Wins Bronze Award at Wings of Innovation Awards

hundreds of Child Care leaders from across the nation to reimagine and strengthen the future of Child Care. As part of the Summit, the Wings of Innovation Awards spotlight bold, local solutions making a difference today and offering models for tomorrow. Other award winners included Child Care Aware of Missouri, Child Care Aware of Kentucky, Rural Pathways, Child Care Aware of Kansas, and MountainHeart South CCR&R.

“PATCH has shown how innovation doesn’t always have to mean technology or policy change,” said Alessandra Lezama, CEO of TOOTRiS. “By focusing on meal preparation and nutrition, they’ve tackled a critical — and often overlooked — piece of the Child Care puzzle with a solution that is both practical and transformative for providers and families alike.”

“Good food fuels learning, and we’re proud to bring that to Hawaii’s Child Care programs,” said Carol Wear, Executive Director at PATCH Hawaii. “By taking meal prep off providers’ plates, we give them more time and energy to pour into the children, which is where it belongs. Having this work recognized highlights the importance of nutrition as a vital part of quality Child Care.”

About PATCH

PATCH (People Attentive to Children) is Hawaii’s statewide Child Care resource and referral agency, connecting families to Child Care options, training providers, and delivering innovative programs that ensure children grow up healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Learn more at patchhawaii.org.

About TOOTRiS

TOOTRiS is the nation’s largest Child Care platform partnering with employers, providers, government agencies, and Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) organizations to strengthen local Child Care ecosystems, amplify the impact of community-based initiatives, and make care more accessible, equitable, and sustainable — empowering parents, supporting providers, and fueling economic growth. Learn more at tootris.com*.

* - <https://tootris.com/>

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