



Child Care and Development Fund

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) made available \$5.2 billion to States, Territories, and Tribes in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012. CCDF is authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act and Section 418 of the Social Security Act. CCDF assists low-income families in obtaining child care so they can work or attend training/education. The program also improves the quality of child care, and promotes coordination among early childhood development and afterschool programs.

Child Care Services Funded by CCDF

Subsidized child care services are available to eligible families through certificates (vouchers), or grants and contracts with providers. Parents may select a child care provider that satisfies any applicable State and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements. These requirements must address prevention and control of infectious diseases, including immunizations; building and physical premises safety; and minimum health and safety training.

Quality Activities

A minimum of 4 percent of CCDF funds must be used to improve the quality of child care and other additional services to parents, such as resource and referral counseling regarding the selection of child care providers. Consistent with prior years, the fiscal year 2012 appropriation includes additional funding for targeted purposes: (1) approximately \$291 million for quality expansion activities, of which almost \$107 million is to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers; and (2) \$19 million to improve school-age care and Child Care Resource and Referral Services, of which almost \$1 million is for a national toll free hotline and website for consumer education.

To improve the quality of available child care, CCDF Lead Agencies provide training, grants and loans to providers, improved monitoring, compensation projects, and other innovative programs. Many Lead Agencies are making systemic investments, such as developing quality rating and improvement systems and professional development systems. Tribes may use a portion of their funds to construct child care facilities provided there is no reduction in the current level of child care services.

Coordination of Resources

The CCDF allows States to serve families through a single, integrated child care subsidy program under the rules of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act. States coordinate CCDF with Head Start, pre-k, and other early childhood programs. States can also transfer a portion of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars to CCDF, or spend TANF directly for child care.

State and Tribal Child Care Plans

All States, Territories and Tribes must submit comprehensive plans every two years and conduct public hearings to invite public comment.

Research

Fiscal year 2012 funding includes approximately \$10 million for child care research, demonstration, and evaluation activities. These funds are increasing the capacity for child care research at the national, State, and local levels while addressing critical questions with implications for children and families. Funds have been awarded to support individual project areas, including policy research, research partnerships, research scholars, and a web-based archive called Child Care and Early Education Research Connections.

Technical Assistance

One-fourth of 1 percent of the total CCDF program is used by the Office of Child Care to provide technical assistance to address the needs of States, Territories, and Tribes administering the CCDF program. The TA network includes the following projects:

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
Child Care & Early Education Research Connections
Child Care Communications Management Center
Child Care State Systems Specialist Network
Healthy Child Care America
National Center on Child Care Data and Technology
National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives
National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement
National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability
National Center on Tribal Child Care Implementation and Innovation

Project descriptions are available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/ta/cctan.htm>.

Updated March 2012