

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding allows states to provide child care subsidies for low-income families with children under 13. The majority of funds serve children under 5, with the remainder supporting care for children ages 5-13 while they are not in school. These subsidies help remove barriers to affordable, high-quality child care—whether in center- or home-based settings. Further, the law allows states to pair state and federal funds to improve access and quality of child care available to families within existing state and local systems. In this way, CCDBG plays a critical role in ensuring young children are accessing the high-quality early learning experiences that support their healthy development and prepare them for kindergarten while their parents work or attend school.

Administration of Program

Discretionary funds appropriated for CCDBG are combined with mandatory funds under the Social Security Act into a single, federal child care funding stream known as the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The Administration for Children and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services administers CCDF dollars, which are allocated to states, territories, and tribal entities based on a formula. States then design their own subsidy programs in compliance with federal eligibility and quality requirements, with the ability to establish their own additional requirements.

At a Glance

■ **Created:** 1990

Who This Program Serves:

Families with children from birth to age 13 whose income is below 85% of the state median income.

(Average \$50,808 annually for family of 3.)

Number of Children Served:

Estimated 2.1 million children received child care subsidies monthly in FY 2015.

Percent Served Based on Eligibility¹:

15% of all children eligible under federal rules.

Delivery Method:

Eligible families can apply to the state's lead agency for a subsidy. Families who receive a subsidy may choose any child care provider that meets state health and safety requirements. In some states, providers receive a voucher or child care certificate from a parent. In others, they are paid directly through a contract with the state.

Current Federal Funding:

FY 2019: \$8.743 billion
(\$5.826 billion discretionary,
\$2.917 billion mandatory)

¹ FY 2015 (<https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/696930.pdf>)



● Ensuring Quality

A 2014 bipartisan reauthorization of the CCDBG Act made significant changes to improve the overall quality of care available and to make it easier for parents to find and maintain high-quality care. Key improvements include strengthening health and safety requirements for child care providers, increasing quality, and improving transparency so families are equipped to choose care that best meets the needs of their children. Meeting these important new quality and safety standards requires investment in provider and state-level systems capacity to deliver, support, and oversee quality programs that promote children’s development and learning, as well as to cover the costs of quality programs.



Meeting these important new quality and safety standards requires substantial investment in provider and state-level systems capacity to deliver, support, and oversee quality programs that promote children’s development and learning, as well as to cover the costs of quality programs.

■ Bipartisan Funding Investments

Fortunately, Congress recognizes the need for such investment. In fact, **a bipartisan funding bill for FY2018 increased discretionary funding for CCDBG by \$2.37 billion**—almost doubling the previous year’s funding level—bringing total funding to \$5.226 billion. This historic increase was followed by a \$50 million increase in FY2019 and a \$550 million increase in FY2020 for total discretionary funding of \$5.826 billion. This, combined with \$2.917 billion in mandatory funding, brings the annual total of the CCDF to \$8.743 billion. These crucial funding increases will allow states to continue implementing the improvements passed in 2014.

FFYF strongly supports the federal government’s efforts both to improve overall program quality and to provide long-needed funds to develop essential infrastructure and expand access to subsidies. Increased funding for child care would make a critical difference in ensuring children from low-income families are ready for school and success in college, career, and life.

