Child Care & Development Block Grant in Wyoming

The Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary federal grant program that allows states to provide child care assistance to low-income working families with children under age 13. The majority of these funds serve children 6 years or younger, with the remainder supporting care for older children during out-of-school time.

Subsidies help remove barriers to affordable, high-quality child care, whether in center- or home-based settings. They give working parents the ability to access quality care and choose the type of care that works best for them. The majority of funds go directly to providing early learning experiences, but states can also use the funding to:
- Recruit and retain a well-qualified, fairly compensated, and effective workforce
- Support continuous quality improvement
- Meet the child care needs of families working nontraditional hours

How CCDBG Funds Flow
Using an established federal formula, states, territories, and tribal entities receive grant awards from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

- **Parents**
  - Families can use vouchers to help cover the cost of care if a provider/program agrees to accept them.

- **Providers**
  - Grants and contracts represent agreements between the subsidy program and child care providers to designate slots for subsidy-eligible children.

In Wyoming, 32% of children ages 0-6 are eligible for a CCDBG subsidy under federal rules on average each month. However, of these children, 84% are not served due to insufficient federal funding.

CCDBG by the Numbers in Wyoming

- **42,641** Children Under 6
- **59%** Population Under 6 with All Parents in the Workforce
- **1,924** Children Ages 0-6 Served by CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
- **499** Providers Accepting CCDBG Subsidies
- **74%** Children Currently Served by CCDBG Who Are Under the Age of 6
- **$12,720,707** CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
- **$2,367,860** CCDBG State Match
- **$63,972,581** CCDBG COVID-Relief Allocations: CARES | CRRSA | ARPA (CCDF + Stabilization)
- **$0** TANF Transferred to CCDBG

Income Eligibility
Given CCDBG is a federal block grant, state Lead Agencies have the flexibility to design their own subsidy programs in compliance with established eligibility and quality requirements and may choose to set their own additional requirements.

The Lead Agency in Wyoming is the Wyoming Department of Family Services.

Families that meet income eligibility and work/job training/education requirements can apply to the Lead Agency for a subsidy. Many families are required to pay a copay, but states may waive those requirements. Families who receive a subsidy may choose any participating child care provider, including center-based care (including faith-based programs), home-based care, and in-home care.

In Wyoming, eligibility is capped at 53% of State Median Income (SMI). This means that a family of 3 is eligible for a subsidy if they make: $3,030 or less per month ($36,360 per year).
Throughout the pandemic, there was strong bipartisan support for federal relief funding to keep the child care sector afloat. CCDBG was the primary mechanism for providing this relief to child care providers and ensuring access to child care for thousands of working families through CARES, CRRSA, and ARPA.

As of December 31, 2022:

420 child care programs in Wyoming received American Rescue Plan Stabilization support, impacting up to 15,100 children.

Providers in 100% of Wyoming counties have received funds, including:

- Most common use of funds: Personnel costs and keeping programs staffed.

American Rescue Plan Act Spending Spotlight

Funds have been used to stabilize and support the workforce, including through staff expansion and retention efforts, such as hiring incentives, bonuses, training and professional development, and benefits packages. A recruitment bonus of $500 was distributed to new staff and $750 each quarter for a 6-month grant period (2 payments) for staff working 30+ hours a week.

Federal pandemic relief funding, which buttressed an already struggling child care market, expires in September 2024. As this temporary funding expires, Congress must come together to strengthen and invest in our federal early learning and care programs so families can access the reliable, high-quality, affordable child care they depend on.

Wyoming reimburses at the federally recommended reimbursement rate. Higher payment rates are critical in supporting providers to stay financially afloat and provide high-quality learning experiences. They also help low- and middle-income working families afford quality child care.