CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

We ask that Congress increase CCDBG funding by an additional $5 billion in FY2020, in order to help states meet the 2014 requirements and increase the number of children served by the grant.

2019 Agenda

THE HISTORY OF CCDBG

Established in 1991, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary federal grant program that provides child care assistance for families in need. CCDBG is administered to states in block grants. States use the program to subsidize child care for working families with low incomes. Most of this assistance is administered through vouchers or certificates, which can be used by parents to select the high-quality provider or program that works best for their family.

Congress reauthorized CCDBG in 2014 with overwhelming bipartisan support. The CCDBG Act of 2014 improved child care health and safety standards, and provided funding to help make quality child care available to more families with low incomes. The 2014 law also mandated that states meet new requirements on comprehensive criminal background checks and disaster preparedness/response planning, among other critical improvements.

A JOB NOT FINISHED

Despite the reauthorization, Congress failed to provide sufficient funding to help states make quality child care available to millions of families that need it. Today, states use resources from other federal funding streams, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), to ensure families don’t lose critical access to child care.

The lack of adequate funding has hampered states’ ability to provide quality child care to working families. Currently, only 1 in 6 families who qualify for child care assistance receive it.

States continue to request and receive waivers from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to delay implementation of the new requirements, particularly background checks. Additionally, FY2016 saw the lowest number of children served by the grant in nearly 20 years.

![Average Monthly Number of Children Served in CCDBG in the United States (In millions)](chart.png)

Fewer than 1 out of 6 children eligible for CCDF are being served.

Source: HHS administrative data.

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Washington is facing a full-blown child care crisis. Care now costs more than tuition at our state’s universities. Child care educators rank in the 3rd percentile of all occupational wages, making less than pet groomers and parking lot attendants. This directly results in a 43 percent turnover rate amongst teachers. Less than half of all young children in the state who need child care (live in homes where all adults work) are accessing licensed, safe child care. Also, less than half of Washington’s entering kindergartners are prepared for success in school.

Increased CCDBG funding would address all of these issues! Low subsidy rates undermine the overall system, and currently Washington’s infant subsidies provide parents access to less than 20 percent of the market. This is a big driver of the opportunity gap are the communities and programs that are reliant on subsidy, which are much more likely to be people of color and whose primary language is not English. We thank Congress for the last increase to CCDBG, which had a stabilizing impact for many communities. Additional investment will expand access for vulnerable families, increase quality for children and help stabilize the workforce!

HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP IN 2019

CCDBG remains underfunded, despite the funding increase in FY 2019 of $2.4 billion. While this funding allowed states to begin the intense work of revising their child care systems to help thousands of children and families gain access to high-quality care, it did not fully meet the critical need for high-quality child care.

In fact, even with CCDBG’s historic increase, federal funding for child care is still $1 billion less than FY2001 levels, when adjusted for inflation.

Given the population growth since 2001, it is clear that states still do not have enough funding to meet the needs of families.

For this reason, we ask that Congress increase CCDBG funding by an additional $5 billion in FY2020. This will help states meet the 2014 requirements and increase the number of children served.