

Child Care Financial Assistance

Attachment C: Strengthening Families Grants

Center based programs will be offered a new opportunity to apply for a limited pool of funds which will be awarded annually by Child Development Division (CDD) as Strengthening Families Grants.

This program will be developed to ensure affordable access to high quality comprehensive programs for children and families challenged by economic instability and other environmental risk factors. They will also focus on maintaining a supply of high quality infant-toddler care. In SFY 2010 and 2011, the priority for this program is to ensure stability for those Licensed Centers transitioning from reserved spaces agreements and infant toddler grants into the new Financial Assistance Program structure and to ensure continuity of care for those children and families who traditionally have received services and assistance in reserved spaces.

In subsequent years the program will be open to all Licensed Centers who meet established criteria and agree to provide all or some of the comprehensive services requested by the CDD. In fall, 2009 Licensed Centers currently participating in either reserved spaces agreements or infant-toddler grants will be invited to apply for grants which will be awarded beginning January 2010. Those who meet established criteria and agree to provide requested services for children and families will receive funding allocations based on size, enrollment and capacity to deliver services.

Criteria: All programs must meet these criteria to receive a grant in this program

- Participation in Child Care Financial Assistance program
- Enrollment in STARS with rating of 4 or 5 stars
- Committed to an enrollment of Child Care Financial Assistance Program supported children as 30% of enrollment census – if this is not true at time of application, programs will be asked to submit an outreach plan to meet this goal
- Approved as Specialized Services Providers
- Provide full day/full year services

Priorities: These priorities will be considered in selecting grantees and allocating funds.

- Former participation in reserved spaces agreements or infant toddler grants
- Regional child care supply and demand
- Serve infants and toddlers
- Commitment to serve populations of children and families identified as at particular risk including refugee children and teen parents
- Ability to provide a range of comprehensive services to children and families
- Demonstrated commitment to primary prevention strategies that support and strengthen families

Requested Services: Participating programs must commit to provide some or all of these comprehensive services for children and families.

- Accept Child Care Financial Assistance Program Maximum Rate as full payment for child care services provided to families receiving 100% of Child Care Financial Assistance Program benefit
- Support continuity of care and regular attendance for enrolled children
- Engage families as active participants in early care and education and school age programs
- Empower families as informed caregivers and advocates for their children
- Support for children's health (including ensuring a medical home for every child) and mental health
- Collaborate with Registered Child Care Homes
- Nutrition services
- Engage in collaborative community relationships such as Building Bright Futures Regional Councils
- Collaborate with local Children's Integrated Services Teams and service providers
- Provide inclusive early care and education or school age services