

This Profile of Innovation is part of a series highlighting innovative initiatives implemented or planned by Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies. These profiles feature activities aligned with recovery priorities. Many were funded with federal coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) funds, including the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act; the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act; and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP Act) funds. The information was gathered during the [COVID-19 Recovery: Sharing Uses of Federal Relief Funds webinar](#) and from publicly available sources, and has been reviewed by the Lead Agency.

The Office of Child Care (OCC) has issued [information memoranda](#) (IM) for all the COVID-19 federal response and recovery funds. These guidance documents include an overview of the funds, details about the obligation and liquidation periods, allowable use of funds, administrative cost caps, and so on. OCC has strongly encouraged Lead Agencies to use these funds as part of a cohesive vision to implement policies that will better support children’s developmental and learning needs, meet parent’s needs and preferences with equal access to high-quality child care, and support a professionalized workforce that is fairly and appropriately compensated.

Overview of Idaho’s Use of Federal Relief Funds

Idaho’s CCDF Lead Agency in Idaho is the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW). The Idaho Joint Finance Appropriations Committee gave IDHW legislative authority for ARP Act stabilization and discretionary supplemental funding.

The Idaho Child Care Program and the Idaho legislature prioritized behavioral health supports and emphasized before- and after-school programs as sites to address learning loss and social-emotional support for children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery period.

Innovation

Concerned with closing the afterschool achievement gap, IDHW started the [Idaho Community Program Grant](#) in May 2021. The grant opportunity provides funding to organizations that elevate evidence-based programming addressing student learning, learning loss, and behavioral health supports for students ages 5–13 and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery period.

Based on results from quarterly community needs assessments with child care providers, the Idaho Child Care Program recognized that the state has a system of programs and organizations that are not direct child care providers but provide wraparound services before and after school and during the summer. Additionally, the Idaho legislature wanted to support before- and after-school programs and the behavioral health of students and their families in these programs.



Additional Details About Idaho’s ARP Act Recovery Funds

- [Idaho Wage Enhancement Grant](#)
- Investing in Pyramid Model and expanding infant mental health specialists
- Investments in business cohorts for providers

Primary Project

Funded with CARES and ARP Act federal dollars, the **Idaho Community Program Grant** supports the quality improvement of in-person educational learning loss (out of the classroom) by strengthening behavioral and mental health supports for students ages 5–13. These grants are available to organizations that are not child care providers, such as nonprofits serving kids ages 5–13 offering direct services around behavioral health supports and educational learning loss.

To ensure fair and equitable access to this opportunity, grants are based on coverage area. Examples follow:

- A **locally** funded nonprofit focused on counseling and providing behavioral health supports directly to families and for children ages birth to 13 in the school districts provided additional therapists for child care and to afterschool programs to support children who are having social-emotional challenges and extended services to the children and their families on evenings and weekends.
 - Such programs may apply for \$20,000 per period (local coverage area is limited to a single city, county, or municipal area).
- A **statewide** network of Boys & Girls Clubs that serve children in afterschool settings received grants to expand behavioral health supports in addition to their STEM and other curriculum activities to reduce summer learning loss.
 - Such programs may apply for \$500,000 per period (statewide coverage spans multiple regions throughout all parts of Idaho).
- Programs identified as **regional** offer coverage spanning multiple cities, counties, and municipal areas but fall within a single region or multiple neighboring regions.
 - Such programs may apply for up to \$250,000 per period.

The Idaho Community Program Grant is available to organizations that are not child care providers to support student learning, address behavioral health, and reduce learning loss for children ages 5–13.

Other Plans for ARP Act Discretionary Supplemental Funds

[Idaho's Wage Enhancement Grant](#) provides funding to create a temporary wage supplement for Idaho child care workers. Allowable expenses include staffing costs, wages, typical payroll expenses, staff taxes and withholdings, and any costs associated with grant participation, including state and federal taxes. An enhancement grant guide includes frequently asked questions and a how-to-apply video.

Because workforce development and sustainability of child care are a main concern and part of [Idaho's Early Childhood Care and Education Strategic Plan](#), Idaho has provided scholarships to help individuals in early childhood attain 2- and 4-year degrees. Over 200 students will become credentialed with either a 2- or 4-year degree in early childhood education in 2022, with another 200 early childhood professionals graduating in 2023.

Additional investments include supporting social-emotional development by acquiring more infant mental health specialists and investing in Pyramid Model development with the Idaho Department of Education.

Idaho is also developing resources for business cohorts to make child care businesses financially sustainable with technical assistance and coaching via OCC.

Would You Like to Know More?

Please contact the OCC Regional Office, the Child Care State Capacity Building Center's State Systems Specialist, or the Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response and Recovery team member for your Region to arrange a peer to peer opportunity with CCDF staff or request additional information.

