

Summer Programs and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)



Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ document is designed for summer program providers who serve children from low-income families and may be interested in serving families who use child care subsidies, but who are not overly familiar with CCDF. A basic introduction to the CCDF program follows, as well as links to online sources so summer programs can learn more about their eligibility to serve children whose families use subsidies to pay for their summer child care.

What is CCDF?

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), authorized by the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act, is a federal funding source that provides low- and moderate-income working families with financial assistance to help offset the cost of child care. The program also helps to improve the quality of child care programs and promotes coordination among early childhood development and afterschool programs. CCDF generally serves children from birth through age 12

and helps to support the participation of school-age children (ages 5 through 12¹) in afterschool and summer child care. [State, territory](#), and [tribal](#) lead agencies administer the program and establish policies governing family and program eligibility, payment rates and practices, quality improvement activities, and consumer education efforts, among other aspects of CCDF administration. CCDF subsidies are typically distributed through vouchers, or certificates, that parents use to pay child care providers.

¹ CCDF also supports children with special needs who are under the age of 18.



Are summer programs eligible to enroll in the CCDF program?

Eligibility requirements for programs vary by state, although all programs must meet basic health and safety and other requirements set forth in the CCDBG Act. Some states allow only state-licensed programs to enroll in the CCDF program, while others allow license-exempt programs to enroll. Summer programs, including academic-focused programs, recreational summer camps, and other enrichment programs, may be eligible depending on the program eligibility requirements set by the state. Some states may require that programs operate year-round in order to enroll in the CCDF program, while others may allow summer-only programs to participate as long as they meet other eligibility requirements.

To find out if your program is eligible to accept children whose parents use CCDF subsidies to pay for their care, contact the [child care licensing agency](#) in your state. There has been a number of recent changes to the CCDBG regarding licensing, monitoring, and other requirements. Your state's licensing agency can help you understand whether your program complies with the current federal and state requirements related to background checks for staff, health and safety rules, and other regulations for programs participating in the CCDF system.

How can participating in the CCDF program help my organization?

Serving families who rely on CCDF subsidies to pay for their school-age children's care during the summer months can help your organization reach a greater number of high-need families. Connecting with these families can help your organization fulfill its mission to serve children in need of academic support and enrichment opportunities, as well as provide school-age children with experiential learning opportunities that extend beyond what they might have access to during their school-year programs. Your organization

would also be able to access training and technical assistance through CCDF supports that can help you achieve your quality improvement goals.

In addition, [the National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment \(NCASE\)](#), which provides training and technical assistance to state CCDF lead agencies and their networks, offers training materials and resources that can help your program with quality improvement efforts in targeted areas. These include the online [Resource Library](#) and [Consumer Education Toolkit](#). The Resource Library contains a wealth of information on topics related to school-age care, such as family and community engagement, school and community partnerships, summer learning, and quality improvement.

My summer program is free for families. Are we still able to serve families who use CCDF vouchers to pay for child care?

The CCDF program is designed to provide families with financial assistance to pay for care at eligible child care programs. If your program offers services free of charge to families, you would not receive reimbursement from the CCDF lead agency. However, you can help ensure that families using CCDF are aware of your free summer programming, so they can decide whether it would be a good placement for their school-age children. Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies operate within each state to provide consumer education and help match families with eligible child care providers.

How can I learn more about Child Care Resource and Referral agencies in my state?

You can contact the [CCR&R](#) agency nearest you to find out whether they can include your program information among the eligible programs they share with families. You can also connect with other key referring entities, such as school guidance counselors and community center staff, for assistance in reaching



families that use CCDF to make them aware of your summer programming.

What other organizations can help me understand more about CCDF and summer programs?

You can contact the [statewide afterschool network](#) or the [National AfterSchool Association state affiliate](#) in your state to find out more about how CCDF relates to afterschool and summer programs. Many of these networks and affiliates work closely with CCDF lead agencies to provide training, technical assistance, and other resources to programs serving school-age children, including summer programs.

How else can I learn more about summer programs and CCDF?

The following resources can help you make connections to CCDF to further your summer learning efforts.

[Office of Child Care Fact Sheet](#) This fact sheet provides an overview of CCDF and its history. It also highlights key components of the 2014 CCDBG Reauthorization.

Child Care and Development Fund lead agencies:

- [CCDF Grantee State and Territory Contacts](#)
- [Tribal CCDF Contacts by State and Title](#)

[National Database of Child Care Licensing Regulations](#) The database is a tool for finding state and territory licensing regulations and agency contact information.

[National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment](#) NCASE is one of nine National Centers

that make up the [Administration for Children and Families' Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System](#). NCASE provides training and technical assistance to support state, territory, and tribal CCDF lead agencies and their networks.

Resources include the following:

- [Out-of-School Time \(OST\) Resource Library](#) This collection contains resources on a variety of topics, such as family and community engagement, school and community partnerships, summer learning, quality, health and safety, and workforce development.
- [School-Age Data Profiles Database](#) This database offers national, state, and territory profiles on the characteristics of school-age child care supported by CCDF, as well as relevant resources and contact information. The data profiles include information about the percent change in the number of children served through subsidies during the summer months.
- [School-Age Consumer Education Toolkit](#) This toolkit is designed to inform agencies, providers, and families on what to look for when selecting a child care program for school-age children. The toolkit has three sections: (1) physical health and development, (2) social and emotional health and development, and (3) parent and family engagement.
- [State Child Care Licensing Regulations for Summer Programs and Camps](#) This document provides an overview of some general characteristics of state child care licensing regulations for summer programs and camps based on a scan of regulations in 17 states. The information was drawn from the National Database of Child Care Licensing Regulations (listed above).