



## A GLOSSARY FOR PARTNERSHIPS

It is important when building and developing partnerships that each party have a common understanding of the terminology being used. In order to have productive discussions and a sound working relationship, it is imperative that everyone be on the same page. The definitions provided below offer a starting point for discussion. It may be helpful to add to this list as the partnership takes shape to ensure a common understanding.

**ACF (Administration for Children and Families).** The branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals and communities. ACF administers federally funded Child Care, Head Start, Community Services, TANF, and Child Support programs. ACF is comprised of 18 separate offices. Programs are administered through 12 regional offices across the country.

**Administrative Costs.** The costs of developing and administering a direct service program, which are separate from the costs of the services themselves. Administrative costs refer to central executive functions that do not directly support a specific project or service. Rather, administrative costs are incurred for common objectives that benefit multiple programs administered by the grantee organization, or the organization as a whole, and as such are not readily assignable to a particular program funding stream. What is considered an administrative cost may vary from program to program.

**Block Grant.** A mechanism for consolidating and streamlining federal funding streams, giving more authority to States and communities for the design, delivery, and oversight of services.

**Braided or Blended Funding.** A strategy for integrating various funding streams to enhance services to children and families. Even when funding is “braided,” the managing program continues to track each individual funding stream and adheres to each funder’s specific requirements.

**CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program).** A state-administered program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provides federal subsidies for meals and for income-qualifying participants in licensed nonresidential child care centers and licensed or license-exempt family or group child care homes.

**CCDF (Child Care and Development Fund).** Funding from HHS, ACF, Office of Child Care (OCC), integrating multiple funding sources for child care activities across the country. CCDF programs provide services to children and help eligible families obtain child care in order to work or attend training or school. In addition, services may be provided to children in need of protective services. CCDF makes funds available through block grants to States, Territories, and federally recognized Tribes. Subsidized child care services are available to eligible families through child care certificates or vouchers or contracts with providers. States and Territories determine eligibility for CCDF services within federal limits and also set payment rates for providers and sliding fee scales that determine parent fees. States and Territories must ensure that parents have equal access to providers and the same selection of providers as nonsubsidized parents.

**CCDF Plan.** A plan developed by the designated CCDF child care agency in each State, Territory, and Tribe. The plan serves as a guide for the administration of child care services and quality activities

under CCDF. States and Territories must promote public involvement in the plan development and review process, and submit the plan to the HHS, ACF, OCC for review and approval every two years.

**CDA (Child Development Associate).** A credential earned by an early childhood educator who has demonstrated his or her skills in working with young children and their families by successfully completing an established credentialing process. The CDA credentialing process is administered by the Council for Professional Recognition.

**Center-Based Child Care.** Programs licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services in a nonresidential setting.

**Child Care and Development Fund.** See CCDF.

**Child Care Certificate (or Voucher).** A certificate (which may be a check or other form of payment) that is issued by a State, Tribe, or Territory (or their designated entity) directly to a parent or provider to use as payment for child care services. This may be used by parents to access services through a child care provider.

**Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R).** An organization that provides parents with information about the early care and education services that are available in their communities. In addition, CCR&Rs advise parents about early care and education issues and may provide training for early care and education professionals, recruitment of providers, and advocacy for early care and education. CCR&Rs may be funded with both public and private funds.

**Community Action Agency (CAA) (or Community Action Program [CAP]).** Either a public or private nonprofit organization, funded by the state Community Services Block Grant, that administers and coordinates a variety of anti-poverty programs on a community-wide basis.

**Comprehensive Services.** An array of services that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and families enrolled in the program.

**Continuity of Care.** Provision of care to children by consistent caregivers in a consistent location throughout the day or year, to ensure a stable and nurturing environment.

**Co-Payment.** See Parent Fees.

**Cost Allocation Plan.** A systematic way, often a formula, of sharing costs among programs that are engaged in shared activities.

**Cost per Child.** For Head Start, an amount calculated by dividing the total program budget of the Head Start program by the number of children served. Because costs per child are determined by a range of variables (relative to program-specific services; geographic, historical, and community factors; and cost components), these figures are not always useful in making comparisons across programs.

**Delegate Agency.** An agency to which responsibility is delegated by a Head Start grantee for the operation of the Head Start program, or at least a significant portion of it.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP).** A concept of classroom practices that reflects knowledge of child development and an understanding of the unique personality, learning style, and family background of each child. These practices are defined by the National Association for the

Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in its book, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*.

**Early Care and Education Partnerships.** Two or more early care and education providers or funding sources blending resources to provide and enhance services or expand the day and year for children and families.

**Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC).** These councils were called for in the Improving Head Start Act of 2007 to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of programs and services for children ages birth to 5 years. The councils are charged with developing recommendations to increase access to high-quality early care and education programs; conducting periodic needs assessments of the quality and availability of programs; and advising state policymakers on the development of a comprehensive early childhood data system, a statewide professional development system, and research-based early learning standards.

**Early Head Start (EHS).** A comprehensive model for the delivery of services to pregnant women, infants, and toddlers and their families that was created by Congress as part of the 1994 Reauthorization of the Head Start Act. Children remain eligible for EHS services from enrollment until they are 3 years old.

**ED (United States Department of Education).** The federal agency responsible for programs dealing with education.

**Even Start.** The U.S. Department of Education's Even Start Family Literacy Program provides parents with instruction in a variety of literacy skills and assists them in promoting their children's educational development. Its projects must provide participating families with an integrated program of early childhood education, adult basic education, and parenting education.

**Family Child Care.** Child care for children from infancy through school age that most often occurs in a provider's home or place of residence.

**Full Day, Full Year.** Schedule of operation of early care and education services that meets the needs of parents who are employed or in work training. Full-day programs generally operate at least 9 hours a day and at least 50 weeks of the year.

**Grantee.** A public or private legal entity that receives federal funds to operate a program. The Office of Head Start funds local providers as grantees; OCC funds state- or tribe-designated entities as grantees.

**Head Start Act.** A public law passed by Congress and signed by the president that authorizes the appropriation of funds and specifies the intent of the program, priorities, and types of services to be provided. The Head Start Act of 1998 authorizes program operations for five years and highlights several new areas, including increased expansion of EHS and Head Start, research on Head Start's effectiveness, child literacy and numeracy competencies, and partnerships.

**Head Start Program Performance Standards.** Federal Head Start regulations that establish the agency programmatic functions, activities, and facilities required to meet the objectives and goals of the Head Start program as they relate to children and their families. Revised standards were implemented in January 1998.

**Head Start–State Collaboration Grants.** OHS grants awarded to each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico to create partnerships at the state level to support multi-agency and public-private partnerships. Head Start State Collaboration offices assist in developing collaborative initiatives, structures, and mechanisms and for creating linkages between Head Start and other state initiatives, service systems, and priorities.

**IM (Information Memorandum).** A document by which ACF transmits information about programs other than a proposed regulation or policy. An IM is effective for four years.

**In-Kind.** A contribution of property, supplies, or services that are contributed by nonfederal third parties without charge to the program. Can be part of the nonfederal share requirement.

**LEA (Local Education Agency).** The public education entity (school) or its designee for the city, town, or county.

**Lead Agency.** The state, territorial, or tribal entity to which a grant is awarded and which is accountable for the funds provided.

**Licensing or Regulatory Requirements.** Requirements necessary for a provider to legally operate child care services in a State or locality, including registration requirements established under state, local, or tribal law.

**Market Rate.** The price charged by providers for child care services offered to privately-paying families. Under CCDF, state lead agencies are required to conduct a market rate survey every two years to determine the price of child care throughout the State. In the CCDF plans, lead agencies are required to describe how the rates they pay to child care providers serving subsidized children ensure access to the child care market. This should include a description of how payment rates are adequate, based on the local market survey.

**MOE (Maintenance of Effort).** In order to receive their full share of CCDF, each year States are required to expend on child care an amount of state funds equal to the amount that they spent during a designated base period.

**MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).** A written agreement between two or more parties that is not legally binding, but is more formal than a verbal commitment. It states their intent to work together toward a common goal. Many companies and government agencies use MOUs to define a relationship between departments, agencies, or closely-held companies.

**Nonfederal Share.** Cash or in-kind resources that a Head Start grantee is required to generate that benefit Head Start and are contributed by nonfederal sources without charge to the program. Twenty percent of the total Head Start grant award must consist of a nonfederal match (that is, there must be \$.25 in nonfederal funds for every \$1.00 of federal support). (This term may also be used for other federal grants.)

**Office of Child Care.** Division of ACF, HHS, that administers the CCDF to States, Territories, and federally recognized Tribes.

**Office of Head Start (OHS).** Division of ACF, HHS, that administers the Head Start program. OHS develops and oversees regulations based on the Head Start Act, Head Start Program Performance Standards, and other legislation.

**Parent Choice.** Accessibility by parents to a range of categories or types of child care and types of providers, according to the CCDF requirements.

**Parent Fees.** A parent's full or partial payment to cover child care services (also called co-payment). The amount a parent pays for CCDF-subsidized child care is determined by the state's or tribe's sliding fee scale. States may choose to waive parent fees for families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the poverty level.

**Part B (of IDEA).** Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates special education and related services to children of school age (ages 3 – 22 years).

**Part C (of IDEA).** Part C of IDEA mandates early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities (ages birth – 3 years).

**Partnership Agreement.** A detailed written document based on a jointly developed plan, describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner to blend or share resources and provide enhanced services to children and families.

**PI (Program Instruction).** A document by which ACF transmits information to grantees other than a proposed regulation or policy.

**Policy Council.** A decisionmaking body, required by the Head Start Program Performance Standards, that oversees the delivery of services to children and families in Head Start programs. Councils must include community representatives, and at least 51 percent of the members must be parents of currently enrolled Head Start children.

**PreK (Prekindergarten).** State-funded early childhood initiatives to provide education-related services to children younger than age 5 in the years before they enter school. Most preK programs are funded through state budget appropriations to a state agency (usually the state education department) to administer a defined program to be operated by school districts directly or by other entities in communities.

**PRWORA (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996).** A central component of welfare reform, sections of this bill provide for block grants to States to fund Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and CCDF services.

**Quality.** NAEYC defines a high-quality early childhood program as one that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and adults involved in the program.

**RFP (Request for Proposals).** The formal system whereby the federal government or other funders solicit bids from agencies and institutions.

**School Readiness Initiatives.** State-funded initiatives for preschool-age children that are designed to prepare them to enter and succeed in school.

**Sliding Fee Scale.** A formula for determining the amount of child care fees or co-payments to be paid by parents or guardians, usually based on income. Families eligible for CCDF-subsidized care pay fees according to a sliding fee scale developed by the State, Territory, or Tribe. Fees may be waived for families with incomes at or below 100 percent of poverty level.

**State Child Care Administrators.** State administrative staff responsible for overseeing state child care programs for the CCDF through the lead agency.

**State Child Care Plan.** See CCDF Plan.

**Subsidy (or Child Care Assistance).** Payments typically made (by the state agency that administers CCDF funds) to local child care providers to cover a portion or the total cost of child care for parents and children who meet state subsidy eligibility criteria. May be provided through contracts with providers, child care certificates, or cash payments to parents.

**TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).** This block grant to States and some Tribes covers benefits, administration, expenses, and services to low-income families transitioning off public assistance. Each State or Tribe determines eligibility, benefit levels, services, and time limits for low-income families. (Federal law stipulates that the time limit shall not exceed five years.) Many states transfer TANF funds to finance child care programs or other services.

**Title I.** Part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act legislation of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section A of Title I describes how funds under this Act may be used to provide early care and education development services to children from low-income families through a LEA. These services may be coordinated or integrated with other preschool programs.

**Voucher.** See Child Care Certificate.

**Welfare Reform.** Changes in the 1990s to the federal welfare system. A central objective of the redesign is to move recipients, usually single mothers, off public assistance and into employment. Many of these objectives, as well as the requirements of people who receive public assistance, are described in the PRWORA.

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