# Designing subsidy systems to meet the needs of families: An overview of policy research findings [1]

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Description:

Child care subsidies in the United States funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) can play a critical role in supporting low-income families' efforts to become stably employed, and in helping parents access stable, safe child care settings for their children. Yet research has found that some subsidy policies and practices can inadvertently make it challenging for families to receive and keep subsidies as they work toward self-sufficiency.

In recent years, state and local subsidy agencies have been redesigning their subsidy policies to better meet the needs of the families they serve, and to create more efficient and fiscally responsible systems. In many ways, these strategies reflect states' growing understanding of the dynamic nature of low-income families' lives and of the challenges they face as they move toward stable employment. This report synthesizes findings from a number of different sources&emdash;primarily from research conducted by the Urban Institute, but also research from other organizations&emdash;to lay out a number of key strategy and policy options states have been implementing to help eligible families access and retain subsidies. Given that this research base does not generally evaluate or assess the impact of these strategies for families, the policies described in this paper should be seen as promising ideas worth further exploration.

**Region:** United States [3]
**Tags:** subsidy [4]

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