

Investing in quality: A survey of state Child Care and Development Fund initiatives ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpt from press release: A new report finds that states are investing in child care quality, and not only exceeding the minimum funding requirements in many instances, but also launching initiatives with a set of objectives that research indicates can contribute to child care quality. There is substantial variation among states in terms of focus on specific objectives and target groups. However, this variation occurs within the framework of a relatively small set of objectives with grounding in research. Further, a consistent focus on certain goals emerges, such as improving health and safety and strengthening the professional development of the early childhood workforce. ...

According to Toni Porter, Director of the Institute for a Child Care Continuum at the Bank Street College of Education: "This report provides a valuable summary of current state investments in quality. An important next step will be to undertake evaluation studies to help identify the approaches that are most effective in improving the quality of care and helping children prepare for school."

BACKGROUND: The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is both a critical work support for low-income families, and a key component in national and state efforts to support early childhood development and promote school readiness. The program is structured as a block grant to states with combined federal and state expenditures of \$9.4 billion in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2004. States are required to set aside a minimum of 4 percent of their CCDF grant for initiatives to improve the quality and accessibility of child care, but federal law gives states broad discretion on how to invest quality funding. Initiated by state child care administrators, the current study attempts to create a more complete picture of quality expenditures and objectives undertaken in the states. The survey asked states to identify the objectives of their quality activities based on a list of 17 objectives that research suggests have the potential to enhance child care quality. The study also collected information regarding funding amounts and sources, target populations, and types and sources of data collected for each quality initiative. The resulting data, from 35 responding states, provide an examination of priorities across these states in terms of quality objectives and target.

Region: United States ^[3]

Tags: quality ^[4]

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Links

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