

Early Childhood Education

BY AGE FIVE, 90% OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT HAS OCCURRED. This makes the 0-5 age range a critical time for providing a child with the emotional, intellectual, physical and social foundation they need for a strong start. Early learning activities stimulate a child's rapidly growing brain and lay the foundation for developing knowledge and understanding as they start school. Without these fundamental building blocks in place, a child is much more likely to struggle in school and in life.

Child Care in Nevada:

- The average annual cost of care in licensed centers in Nevada ranges from \$10,324 for an infant to \$8,792 for preschoolers (age 3-5). Compared to the average annual cost of UNLV/UNR tuition for an in-state undergraduate student which is \$6,943.
- A family with an infant and preschooler making \$48,500 annually (200% of poverty) would have to spend 39.4% of their income on center-based care for their children.
- 63.6% of families with children under the age of six have all available parents in the workforce.
- Nevada's Early Education and Care capacity meets 34% of the need for child care for children ages 0-5 with all parents in the workforce.

Child Care Subsidies:

- Provided to families with children – up to age 13 – living in poverty – up to 75% of Nevada's median income.
- Two types of subsidies provided to families, mandatory and discretionary.
 - Mandatory subsidies are provided to children who have a parent participating in the New Employees of Nevada (NEON) Program; the state is required to provide subsidies to all NEON families who apply.
 - Discretionary subsidies are provided to all other eligible at-risk families based upon available funding.
- Nevada serves 1.9% of low-income children (<200% of poverty) on Subsidy, which is the lowest in the nation followed by Maine (2.1%), California (2.9%), and Idaho (3.6%).

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization:

Since its reauthorization, the CCDBG has broadened its focus to not only assist parents with funding, but also to ensure the children who receive the subsidies attend high quality early learning programs. Overall, the following four mandates will largely affect the State's child care subsidy program going forward:

I. Protection for Working Parents

- Extends the timeframe in which a family is re-determined for eligibility from 3-months to 12-months
- Requires the state, during the redetermination period, to take into account parents irregular fluctuations in earnings.
- Establishes – before termination of benefits – a graduated phase-out of care for families whose income does not exceed 85% of the state median income.

II. Payment Practices

- Requires Nevada to reimburse providers based upon a child's fixed schedule and delinking provider reimbursement rates from an eligible child's occasional absences due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness.

Cost Comparisons

- **\$61,081:** Median Family Income (with children under the age of 18)
- **\$10,324.:** Annual average cost for infant center care in Nevada
- **\$8,792:** Annual average cost for preschool center care in Nevada
- **\$6,943:** Average annual cost of UNLV/UNR tuition for an in state undergraduate student

III. Payment Rates

- Nevada currently sets its provider reimbursement rates at 2004 market rate levels.
- Nevada must certify that payment rates for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to child care services that are comparable to child care services in the state.

IV. On-site Inspections and Background Checks

- Nevada must now conduct background checks and on-site inspections for all providers receiving subsidy.
- Child Care workers will be required to receive a state background check in each state where they have resided during the preceding 5 years.

Short-term Business Benefits:

- Increase in labor force participation rates of 25- to 54-year-old women by 4.4 percentage points.
- Estimated ROI of \$3 for every \$1 spent on child care subsidies from a decrease in net welfare expenditures.
- Having access to stable and reliable high quality child care increases employee:
 - Attendance
 - Morale
 - Productivity

Long-term Community Benefits:

Participation in high quality early childhood education is shown to increase:

- High school graduation
- College attendance
- STEM knowledge
- Lifetime wages and tax revenue

While also decreasing:

- Instances of violent crimes
- Teen Pregnancy
- Reliance on social welfare programs

2017 Children's Advocacy Policy Priorities:

- Increase the **child care development fund contribution** to allow more working families access, including the use of current market rates to determine subsidy reimbursements.
- Support and enhance the development of the **Silver Stars Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)** and integration with subsidy reimbursements to provide a quality accountability structure.
- Develop and expand **pre-kindergarten programs** offered in both public and private sectors through inclusion in the state education **funding formula**, the development of **public/private partnerships** and support for **innovative financing models** such as Social Impact Bonds.
- Increase recruitment and retention of **licensed and endorsed early childhood teachers**.
- Create **child care tax credits** for businesses that provide or give resources to early learning families.
- Enact provisions to ensure appropriate **background checks** for licensed and unlicensed child care providers pursuant to the reauthorization of the Child Care Development Fund.
- Revise provisions regarding the number of children who can be served by an **unlicensed child care** provider.



Children's Advocacy
ALLIANCE

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