



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Child Care

2025 State and Territory CCDF Administrators Meeting (STAM)

July 22–24, 2025

Hyatt Regency Reston
Reston, Virginia



Engaging Employers in the Child Care System

Erin Mewhinney, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance

Harriet Dichter, Child Care State Capacity Building Center

Anna Carter, Child Care State Capacity Building Center



Welcome and Introductions



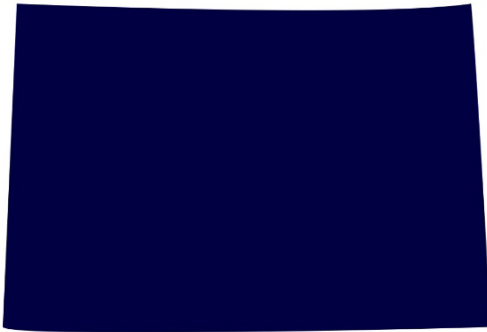


Objectives

- Gain an understanding of the various innovative strategies and funding mechanisms states have used to engage employers in the child care system.
- Share best practices and lessons learned from states that have successfully implemented employer-based child care strategies.



Colorado: Community-based partnerships



Rebecca Vlasin,
Early Childhood Workforce Division Director,
Colorado Department of Early Childhood

Michigan: Cost-sharing



Lisa Brewer-Walraven,
Child Development and Care Director,
Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential

Tennessee: Employer sponsorship and grants



Gwen Laaser,
Child Care Services Director,
Tennessee Department of Human Services

MI Tri-Share

CHILD CARE

History of MI Tri-Share

- FY21: one-time appropriation established pilot for 3 defined MI Tri-Share regions
 - Pilot managed by Michigan Women's Commission (LEO)
 - W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Ballmer Group added funding for 3 additional regions
- FY22-FY25: pilot, expansion, evaluation
- Transitioned from pilot to permanent
 - FY 24: Moved from Michigan Women's Commission to MiLEAP
 - Currently 12 regional facilitator hubs with one statewide administrative partner

How MI Tri-Share Works

Regional facilitator hubs promote program, recruit employers

Statewide administrative partner processes employee applications and provider payments

Parental choice for licensed care, including traditional child care (full- or part-time), preschool, before/after school care, and summer camps

Eligible employees have household income between 200-400% of FPL

MI Tri-Share Program Eligibility 2025

Household Size Minimum - Maximum Income

2 People \$42,300 - \$ 84,600

3 People \$53,300 - \$106,600

4 People \$64,300 - \$128,600

5 People \$75,300 - \$150,600

Household Size Minimum - Maximum Income

6 People \$86,300 - \$172,600

7 People \$97,300 - \$194,600

8 People \$108,300 - \$216,600

9 People \$119,300 - \$238,600

200% - 400% Federal Poverty Level - Effective May 1, 2025

Eligible employees have a household income between 200% and 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) relative to the number of individuals in the household. Families earning below these thresholds could be eligible instead for the Child Development and Care Program (commonly called CDC or the child care scholarship).

Latest MI Tri-Share Data



As of May 2025:

- 256 participating employers
- 843 approved families
- 702 active families
- 932 children served
- Over \$9.1 million total family savings since the start of the program



Stakeholder Benefits:



Employer

- Helps employee recruitment and retention
- Removes significant barrier to employment
- Develops and strengthens talent pipeline



Employee

- Reduces out-of-pocket child care costs by 2/3 (66%)
- Helps attain licensed child care that meets family needs
- Removes a barrier to seeking and/or maintaining employment



Child Care Provider

- Timely, reliable payments
- Promotion of child care services
- Providers may participate as employers



History, Funding, Reach

Benefits of Employer-Sponsored Child Care

- Employer-sponsored child care programs benefit families, employers, and Tennessee's economy. Research demonstrates that employers who invest in child care benefits for their employees gain the upper hand in talent recruitment and retention efforts while also boosting productivity and profits
- Labor force participation is significantly impacted by the presence or absence of affordable, reliable, high-quality child care, including before- and after-school care
- Child care partnerships between the public and private sectors can take many forms to best meet the needs of employers, employees, and communities, and TDHS is pleased to offer its support for employer-led efforts that bolster and expand Tennessee's child care system.

Establishment Grant- Started 2021

- One-time grant award for start-up costs
- \$1,000 per slot of capacity, up to \$100,000
- Can be used for furniture, equipment, supplies, materials, and curriculum
- Eligibility requirements:
 - Participation in pre-licensure program
 - Completion of Small Business Academy
 - Acceptance of Child Care Certificate

NEW Care Partnership Grant

Growing Child Care Capacity in Tennessee



Non-Profit/Employer Workforce
(NPEW) Care Partnership Grants

Pilot partnerships between child care organizations and private employers to design and implement strategies that expand child care access and capacity to serve the partnering employer's workforce

Currently 4 funded projects

Background

- Child Care Improvement Act
 - Passed during regular legislative session 2023
 - \$15M year / three year commitment for pilot
 - Support was specific to non-profits*

*As enacted, creates the child care improvement fund, to be administered by the department of human services; creates a child care improvement pilot program to provide grants to **nonprofit** organizations to be used for establishing a new child care agency in this state or making improvements to, or assisting with staffing, recruitment, or salary gaps, at an existing child care agency in this state.
- Amends TCA Title 9; Title 37 and Title 71.*

Amended in Spring 2025 to expand to all TDHS licensed Child Care programs

Applicant Criteria

1. Applicant is a child care organization
2. Application should:
 - a) Demonstrate support of a private employer
 - b) Include a description of how the funds will be used to create new slots of capacity
 - c) Provide information about how the partnership will meet the needs of the employer's workforce, as evidenced by a letter of commitment from the employer(s)

Partnership Examples

Please note: These are examples. Creativity is encouraged!

New Construction/Renovation - the employer commits matching funds that go toward new construction or renovation of existing space in order to create new child care capacity in exchange for a specified number of slots being made available for the employer's workforce

Access to Existing Facilities – the employer makes available at no cost access to existing facility space that can be renovated or modified to create new licensed child care capacity in exchange for a specified number of slots being made available for the employer's workforce

Partnership Examples

Support for Operating Expenses – the employer commits a set dollar amount each month to go towards general operating expenses or commits to cover specific administrative costs such as rent, utilities, or salaries in exchange for a specified number of slots being made available for the employer's workforce

Paying for Slots – the employer commits to paying costs associated with a designated number of new slots with the expectation that those slots will be available to the employer's workforce. In months when those slots are filled, tuition is paid by the parents. In months when the slots are not filled, tuition is paid by the employer to ensure that access remains available for their workforce.

Additional Financial Supports

- Expansion Grant
 - Mirrors establishment grant criteria
 - \$1,000 per slot of increased capacity, up to \$100,000
 - Can be used for furniture, equipment, supplies, materials, and curriculum
- Support & Enhancement Grant
 - Available to licensed agencies annually
 - Base of \$4,000 with additional \$1,000 qualifiers:
 - Economically distressed counties
 - Completion of Infant Toddler Specialization credential through CCR&R
 - Seeking NAEYC or NECPA national accreditation
 - Participation in Child Care Certificate Program
 - Compliance or remediation of deficiencies requiring a Put on Notice letter
 - Additional grant funding for safety needs





Success Stories

Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

Tyson Learning Center



- 138 slots of capacity
- Gibson County
- Partnership with KinderCare
- Opened July 2023
- Operates five days a week, 4:30 AM to 6:30 PM

Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

Concrete Christian Academy



- 175 slots of capacity
- Rutherford County
- Supports Smyrna Ready Mix Staff
- Opened January 2023

Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

The Goddard School at Nashville Yards

- Around 250 slots of capacity
- Davidson County
- Supports employers located in Nashville Yards (including Amazon, Pinnacle, and Bass, Berry & Sims)
- Expected to open in spring 2025



Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

Little Learning Lab

- 168 slots of capacity
- Anderson County
- Supports Oak Ridge National Lab
- Opened October 2024



Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

Ballad Health Centers for Early Learning

- Five sites and counting!
- Washington, Greene, Sullivan, and Carter counties
- Discounts for Ballad employees
- Slots also available to community



Employer Sponsored Child Care Success Stories

Little Wonders

- Two sites & counting
- Davidson County
- Located in classrooms in charter schools to support educators; remaining slots available to community
- Receives funding support from Joe C. Davis foundation for first three years



Employer Based Child Care Grant Initiative

Dr. Rebecca Vlasin

Colorado Department of Early Childhood

STAM

July 2025



COLORADO

Department of Early Childhood

Employer Based Child Care Grants



Community Hospital site in Grand Junction

Employer Based Child Care (EBCC) provided grants to non-child care employers to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on- or near-site to its employees. The EBCC program was extended through Senate Bill 22-213. All EBCC Grant funds have now been awarded.

Employer Based Child Care Innovations

- Co-op models
 - Vail Valley Foundation: *“This nonprofit would operate... as an “employer-sponsored child care model, where local businesses can opt in, as a benefit to their employees, to subsidize a meaningful portion of their monthly child care expenses.”*
- Extended hours, infant-toddler care, workforce benefits
 - *addressed gaps in care for certain ages (infant and toddler)*
 - *hours established to better serve the families of first responders and others who don’t work typical hours*
 - *employees of the child care center have access to full benefits in addition to higher pay.*
- Subsidized rates
 - many employers chose to subsidize rates for employees as an added benefit

Grant Requirements



- A financial match (50% for profit and 25% non-profit)
- A commitment to remain open and operating for up to 5 years
- A commitment to serving families receiving CCCAP
- A commitment to obtain at least a Level 2 rating in the Colorado Shines

EXECUTIVES PARTNERING TO
INVEST IN CHILDREN

Employer Based Child Care Design Lab



8 hands-on learning
sessions and four
individual technical
assistance sessions

Topics cover feasibility,
planning and
implementation



Impact



Monte Vista School District

- 31 Awards
- 15 Counties
 - Alamosa, Boulder, Clear Creek, Custer, Denver, Eagle, Garfield, Jefferson, Mesa, Pueblo, Rio Grande, Routt, Sedgwick, Summit, Weld
- 2,415 total slots estimated to be created
- 804 currently licensed slots available currently



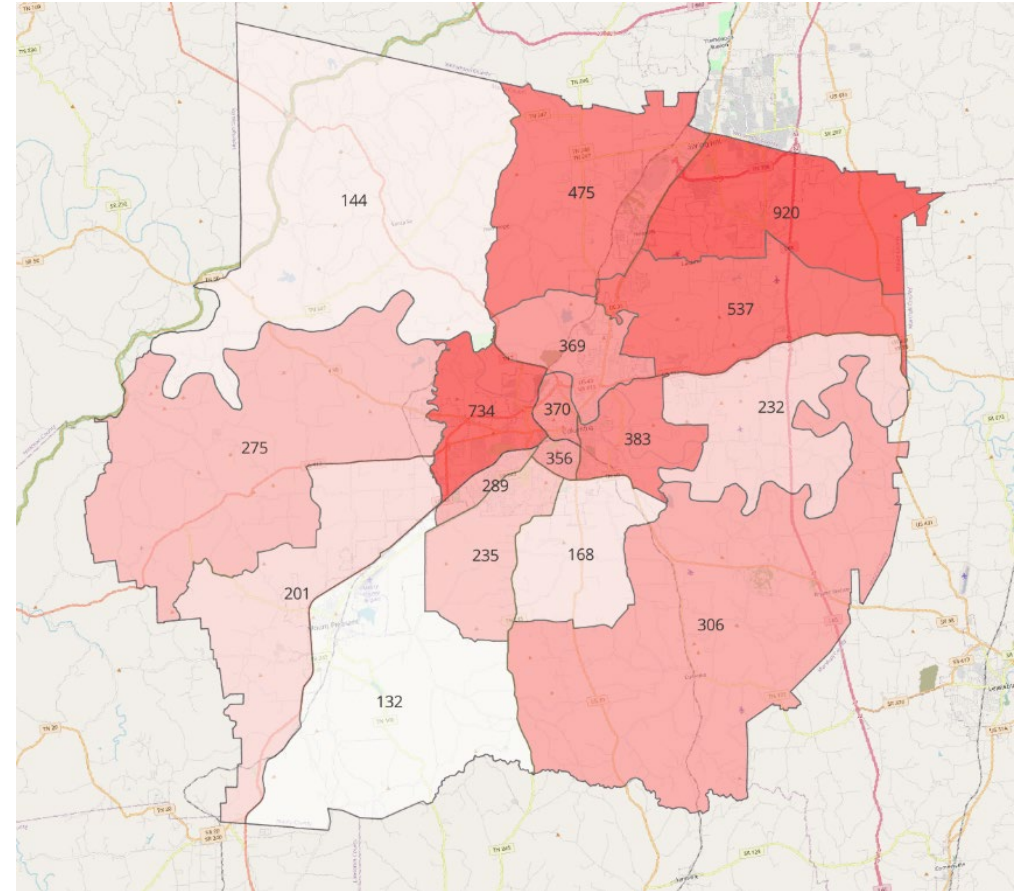
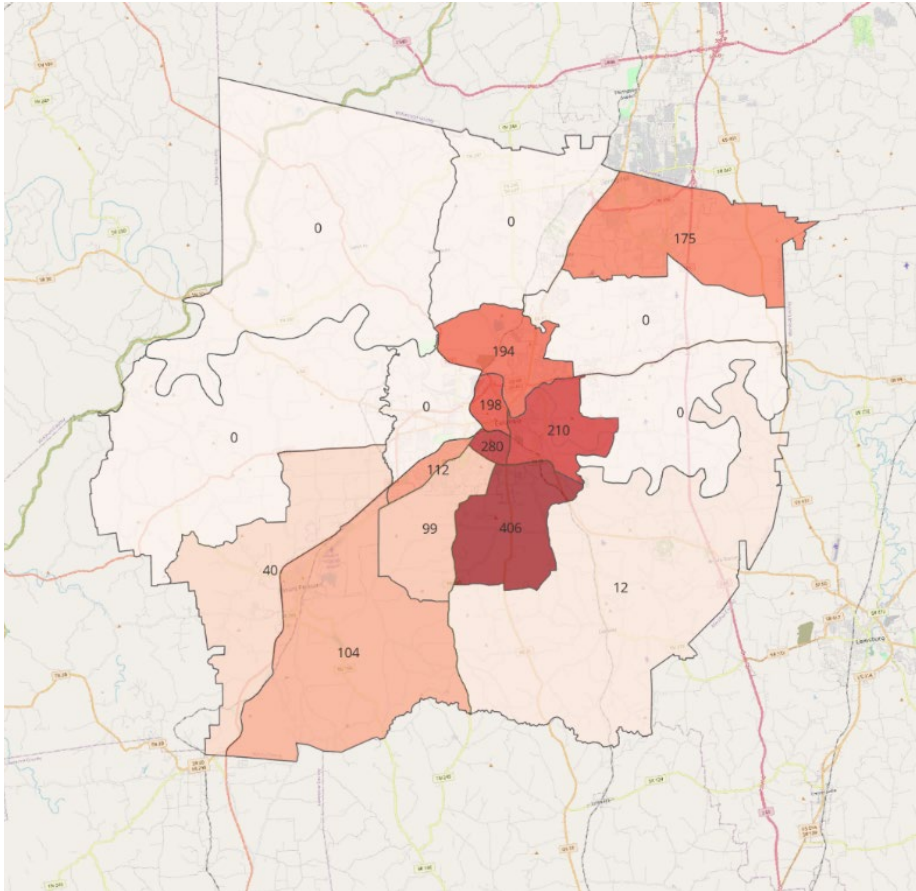
Replication

Pre-Licensure Unit

- Support new agencies throughout the child care licensing process
- Grow child care capacity across the state, particularly in rural areas
- Since implementation in 2021 there have been 39,386 new slots of capacity created
- Awarded 280 Establishment Grants totaling over \$12M
- To date, we have generated interest in all 95 counties and created capacity in 69 counties
- The unit is structured with 14 Program Specialists with boots on the ground supporting new agency creation.
- Outreach to communities and employers to facilitate interest in creating capacity



Data and Needs Assessments



Tools and Outreach

- Match-making Surveys
- Data to support supply, demand, need
- Partnerships with other State/Local Agencies
- Dedicated Staff to Facilitate Conversations through Outreach
- Specific funding for Operations Support, Capital Investments, Existing Resources such as Subsidy for eligible workforce





Follow Up?

Gwen Laaser
Director, Child Care Services

Gwen.Laaser@tn.gov



Tools and Resources

- [*Early Childhood Systems Building Resource Guide: Financing Strategically*](#) (2025), Office of Child Care
- [*Childcare Innovation through Public-Private Partnerships*](#) (2025), U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- [*Employer Guide to Childcare Assistance and Tax Credits*](#) (n.d.), U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- [*The Childcare Roadmap for Employers*](#) (n.d.), U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation



Questions and Answers





Technical Assistance Is Available

Please use this QR code or corresponding web link to request individualized technical assistance.





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