



# Opportunities for Family Engagement through Consumer Education Under CCDBG and CCDF



## Background

The November 2014 signing of the [Child Care and Development Block Grant \(CCDBG\)](#) reauthorized the [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\)](#). Administered by the [US Department of Health and Human Services](#), CCDF is the primary federal funding source allowing states, territories and tribal grantees to offer child care supports that enable families with low-incomes to work or attend school while promoting children's early learning and development. The CCDF Final Rule went into effect November 29, 2016 and outlines key focal areas for states to invest their efforts.

### Families are Central to CCDBG's Purpose in Helping States:

Develop and implement child care programs and policies that best suit families' needs;

Promote parental choice and empower working families to make child care decisions suitable to their needs;

Provide consumer education that helps inform choices about child care services and promotes parent and family involvement in the development of their children while in child care;

Deliver high-quality, coordinated early child care and education services that maximize parents' options and support families trying to achieve independence from public assistance;

Improve the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards;

Enhance child care and development of participating children; and

Increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings.

### How Does CCDBG Emphasize Family Engagement?

Themes of family engagement reverberate throughout CCDBG, particularly as it relates to consumer education (S. 1086). It highlights the role of consumer education to enhance parental choice and promote the role of families in the development of their children within child care settings (658A(b)(3)). CCDBG requires consumer information to emphasize early childhood development and meaningful parent and family engagement (658E(c)(2)(E)(i)(VI)). It also leverages professional development, training, and outreach as part of quality activities to promote family engagement in culturally and linguistically responsive ways (658G(b)(1)(E)). The law addresses consumer information and service coordination for children and families related to other family support programs (e.g., TANF, Head Start, developmental screenings, services under IDEA, WIC, etc.) (658(c)(2)(E)(i)).

The CCDF Final Rule elaborates on CCDBG provisions. In their CCDF State Plans, lead agencies are tasked with outlining the activities in place to adhere to the rule, including professional development and other support for child care providers around successfully engaging families (§98.16 (gg)).



## What Are the Projected Outcomes from CCDBG Investments in Family Engagement and Consumer Education?

### Important Dates

State Plans Due: August 31, 2018  
 Full Compliance By\*: October 1, 2018  
 Plan Period Ends: September 30, 2021

*\*States may request extension for background checks if certain milestones are met by September 30, 2018.*

**Children** –supported in their learning and development; enter school with the tools for success

**Families**– parent and professionals work together toward goals that families choose for themselves and their children; are supported in their role as decision makers and advocates; able to attend work or school; enhanced family wellbeing

**Programs**- enhanced workforce; supported in their effort to meet children’s developmental needs and engage families

**Communities** – greater supply of quality child care options; increased transparency of child care systems; families experiencing challenges such as homelessness are supported

## What Sections Address Family Engagement through Consumer Education and Outreach?

*States are called upon to provide families, providers, and the public with comprehensive child care information that is family-friendly, communicated in plain language and easily accessible with consideration given to diversity in language, ability and literacy levels.*

**Hotline for Parental Complaints (§ 98.32)** shall be established or designated by each state for parents to report complaints. Concerns received by the hotline should record health and safety complaints and make information about substantiated complaints public, when requested.

**State Child Care Consumer Education Websites (§98.33 (a))** help increase access to information about the child care system and prospective child care providers. Required website components are:

- State policies and procedures, including:
  - Explanation for how child care providers are licensed
  - Rationale for exempting certain providers (§98.49)
  - Process for conducting monitoring and inspections of child care providers (§98.42)
  - Policies related to criminal background checks on providers (§98.43), including offenses that prevent employment as a provider or to receive CCDF funds



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- Searchable list of local providers, including specific information related to the child care provider:
  - Licensure or license-exempt status
  - Substantiated reports of serious injury or death due to health and safety violations
  - Quality information for each provider, if available, which may be attained through QRIS participation or another research-based quality system
- Monitoring and inspection results, going back 3 years, on CCDF eligible child care service providers. This includes both licensed and license-exempt providers, but excludes, at the state CCDF lead agency's option, providers that only provide care to relatives.
- Aggregate data, organized by child care category or licensure status, that reports on the number of deaths, serious injuries and instances of substantiated child abuse in CCDF-eligible child care each year, including total number of:
  - Children in child care;
  - Deaths of children in child care; and
  - Serious injuries in child care.
- Referrals to local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies, including their contact information and website address
- CCDF lead agency's contact information, or another designee's, for families wishing to contact or ask questions

**Additional Consumer Education (§98.33)(b)** to families, the public, and when applicable, child care providers about:

- Child care services under CCDF and other early childhood education programs, such as Head Start, Early Head Start, State Funded Pre-Kindergarten
- Other assistance programs, including those that support families working nontraditional hours (e.g. TANF, SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, CHIP, CACFP, etc.)
- Programs for children with disabilities under IDEA (Sect 619 & part C)
- Research and best practices concerning:
  - Child development
  - Meaningful parent and family engagement
  - Health, nutrition, and physical activity
- Social-emotional related behavioral health information, especially about policies that prevent expulsion



### **Developmental Screening Information Shared During Intake and Outreach (§98.33(c))**

with families, the public and providers.

### **Consumer Statement (§98.33(d))** for families receiving CCDF assistance including:

- Health and safety requirements met, licensing or regulatory requirements met and the date of last inspection as well as any violations noted and corrective actions taken
- Quality standards met
- Background check information for caregiver(s)/teachers
- Information about the parental complaints hotline

### **Prioritized Access and Outreach to Children and Families (§98.46):**

- With very low incomes
- With special needs
- Experiencing homelessness (§98.51), as defined by [McKinney-Vento](#)
- Living in child care deserts with high concentrations of poverty and unemployment

## **Opportunities for Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Systems**

The CCDF Final Rule suggests that CCR&R agencies “should assist lead agencies in meeting the expanded requirements to provide information to families and help meet the new purpose of increasing family engagement” (§98.52). While every CCR&R is different in their scope and service offerings, the summary below offers some suggestions for ways your agency can apply family engagement and consumer education to support the implementation of CCDBG and CCDF State Plans.

- Help build awareness of CCDF-related programs and benefits by:
  - Creating and distributing messaging/communications related to quality child care, family engagement, and family support programs, such as those available in Child Care Aware® of America’s [Consumer Education and Engagement SMART Suite](#);
  - Outreach and engage families, providers, and the public at all touchpoints around Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) (§98.53); and
  - Sharing parental complaint hotline information via websites, during referral calls, via community outreach materials and encourage providers to post the hotline number.



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- Partner with lead agencies to:
  - Become a designee to engage families, provide child care consumer information or administer subsidy on behalf of the Lead Agency;
  - Employ data systems, such as [National Data System \(NDS\)](#) for child care, that tracks provider information suggested under §98.33 (a)(2) including contact information, enrollment capacity, years in operation, and caregiver education and training;
  - Establish workforce capacity to engage families (e.g. training, technical assistance, and resources) using internal training or those offered through the [Training Academy](#);
  - Incorporate validated family and community engagement measures into QRIS, such as those discussed in the [State of Family Engagement in QRIS Efforts brief](#); and
  - Tap into readily available resources that support the work of lead agencies and CCR&Rs, such as:
    - [Early brain-building with Vroom](#);
    - [Serving Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness](#);
    - Consumer education information available for [families](#), to support [providers](#), and related materials for CCR&Rs; and
    - Materials found on the Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System (CCTA), which includes a section devoted to [Family Engagement and Consumer Education](#).
- Leverage relationships within communities to:
  - Facilitate strong public-private partnerships (§98.14 (a)(4)) that strengthen child care and early education delivery systems and contribute solutions to meet the needs of families and communities;
  - Implement outreach and engagement strategies to populations prioritized under CCDF;
  - Identify gaps between quality child care family supply and demand; and
  - Use a networked systems approach to guide your family and community engagement strategy, such as the [Parent, Family and Community Engagement for Early Childhood Professionals](#).