

Ohio's Early Childhood Programs and Services

Dec-09

Child Care Licensing- The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) are responsible for licensing preschool and school-age child care (SACC) programs in Ohio and assessing compliance with minimum health and safety standards.

Child Care Resource & Referral Services: Child care resource and referral service organizations , serving twelve service delivery areas, under contract/grant agreement with ODJFS the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) shall provide the following services: support providers of early care and education in increasing the supply and quality of early care and education services; assist families in accessing early care and education services that meet both the developmental needs of children and the employment -related needs of families; support community involvement in improving the early care and education system; and provide ODJFS policy makers and community partners with reports and statistics on early care and education.

County Departments of Job & Family Services Quality Allocation: Each of Ohio's 88 County Departments of Job & Family Services receive an allocation , based on a statewide funding formula, that can be spent to meet the goals of the Child Care Development Fund.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS): Early childhood comprehensive systems (ECCS) are collaborations implemented by states or localities, which aim to coordinate multiple early childhood services -including early care and education- to better promote child development by supporting families and communities. These comprehensive systems also seek to ensure that children are healthy and ready to learn at school entry by reducing disparities in access and quality of early care and improving services for those at highest risk. Efforts to form ECCS partnerships involve a range of public and private early childhood agencies, parents, and communities. The key components of these programs are: child health and the medical home; early care and education; mental health and social-emotional development; family support; and parenting education.*

Early Childhood Education: State funding for the Early Childhood Education (entitlement) and Early Childhood Education (formerly public preschool) programs is designated for school districts to provide education and comprehensive services for children of income-eligible families. Children eligible for these services must be at least age 3 and not yet age-eligible for kindergarten. Districts receive funding to serve families up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) Program: Ohio implemented the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) Program in 2000. The primary goal of ECMHC is to increase knowledge, awareness, resources and skills necessary for communities to meet the behavioral health needs of young children and their families. The program's objectives are to build protective factors in young children, increase skills of parents and promote the competencies of early childhood providers, especially for children ages birth to six years who are at risk for abuse, neglect and poor social and emotional health. ECMHC targets the healthy social and emotional development of all young children in Ohio to ensure they thrive and are ready for school.

Early Intervention Consultants: Early Intervention Consultants are employees of the DODD and assist the lead agency in providing technical assistance to and monitoring of local early intervention programs, including those provided through County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, as outlined in the ODH/DODD interagency agreement.

Early Intervention Specialist Certification: Minimum qualifications through registration and certification standards for staff working in early intervention specialist positions (including aides and supervisor) at county boards of developmental disabilities or their contract agencies. These standards apply to persons directly providing, supervising the provision of, or assisting in the provision of early intervention specialist services, who are employed by county boards of developmental disabilities or agencies contracting with a county board to provide early intervention services. The duties of the Early Intervention Specialist are defined in the Early Intervention program rule (5123:2-1-04) and mirror those in the Federal Part C of IDEA regulations for “special instruction.”

Even Start: This program offers grants to support local family literacy projects that integrate early childhood education, adult literacy (adult basic and secondary-level education and instruction for English language learners), parenting education, and interactive parent and child literacy activities for low-income families with parents who are eligible for services under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and their children from birth through age 7. Teen parents and their children from birth through age 7 also are eligible. All participating families must be those most in need of program services.

Head Start State Collaboration Office: The purpose of the collaboration project is to create a visible collaborative presence at the state level that can assist in the development of significant, multi-agency and public-private partnerships. The project coordinates federal, state and local policy to support an efficient, effective and coordinated early care and education system within a continuous improvement model by facilitating activities with the governor’s office, key state departments and early childhood agencies, associations and advocacy groups. Funding supports the Head Start community, the child care community and state agencies by disseminating information, assisting with data collection and promoting partnerships between Head Start and child care providers. The project also funds professional development activities, provides resources to the early childhood community and supports a parent information Web site, www.oh-pin.org. The Parent Information Network provides essential early care and education information to parents of young children from birth to age 6.

Healthy Child Care Ohio (HCCO): Offers training and technical assistance to all child care centers, preschools, home providers and afterschool programs nutrition and health-related issues. Technical assistance can be accessed via email, phone or onsite. This program reaches Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, and Union counties. Some topics that may be covered in a training or consultation can include: menu planning, healthy snacks, nutrition and physical activity in the classroom, food allergies, helping children with specialized diets such as those with diabetes or

Help Me Grow (HMG): Ohio's birth to 3 system that provides state and federal funds to county Family and Children First Councils to be used in conjunction with state, local and other federal funds to implement and maintain a coordinated, community-based infrastructure that promotes trans-disciplinary, family-centered services for expectant parents, newborns, infants and toddlers and their families. The Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Early Intervention Services (BEIS) is the lead agency administering HMG program in Ohio.

Preschool Special Education Units (GRF): For preschool special education unit funding to be approved, school districts and educational service centers are to submit staff and student data through the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Boards of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MR/DDs) are to submit staff and student data as of Dec. 1 to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) through a Web application.

Preschool Special Education Units IDEA, Part B, Section 619: Preschool Special Education Programs are designed to meet the needs of preschool children identified with a disability. The programs are a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Public Law 108-446 (IDEA); section 619 of IDEA addresses services for preschool children. Preschool special education programs serve children ages 3 through 5 years with eligibility based upon the child's age as of the age-entry date determined by the district (the date may be Aug. 1 or Sept. 30). In Ohio, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for preschool children with disabilities is provided through center-based and itinerant teacher service-delivery options. A preschool special education teacher and/or related service personnel may provide the services while the child attends an ELI program, Head Start, public or community preschool, or child care. Related services include, but are not limited to, speech/language therapy; occupational or physical therapy; orientation/mobility training; and audiology. Districts are to provide programs and services in accordance with Chapter 3301-51 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

Professional Development: The ODJFS supports a number of professional development activities with Child Care Development Fund quality dollars. These activities include but are not limited to: Ohio Professional Development Registry, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Ohio and technical assistance networks (infant and toddler and afterschool).

Ready School Initiative: Through a partnership between the ODE, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators and the Spark Ohio Initiative with funding support from the Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Ohio's developed a Ready School framework consisting of seven components. These components are based on an extended review of research and national initiatives as well as on survey information collected from Ohio's elementary school principals. While some components may evoke a greater sense of urgency than others for a particular school, all are important, interrelated and complementary. Thus, concerted efforts in one area are likely to bring improvements in other areas. Likewise, major gaps in one area may impede progress in certain other

build partnerships with local community organizations such as child care centers, schools, libraries, businesses, civic groups, and government agencies to extend the value of children's educational television. Ready To Learn stations conduct thousands of workshops annually for parents and early childhood professionals working with children birth to eight years old and distribute half a million books to children each year.

Step Up to Quality (SUTQ): Ohio's voluntary quality rating system designed to support and recognize early care and education programs licensed through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). Programs that exceed quality benchmarks above the minimum health and safety standards can earn one, two, or three stars. Benchmarks include Ratio/Group Size, Staff Education and Qualifications, Specialized Training, Administrative Practices, and Early Learning. The goals of SUTQ are to increase the number of high quality early care and education programs serving children; provide an easy to use tool for parents so they can choose high quality care and education for their children; and recognize and support programs that achieve higher levels of quality.