



RESEARCH REPORT

Child Care Assistance for Parents in Education and Training

A Look at State CCDF Policy and Participation Data

Gina Adams

Caroline Heller

Shayne Spaulding

Teresa Derrick-Mills

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Executive Summary

In recent years, the economy has highlighted the issue of helping low-wage and low-skill workers advance in the job market. New economic realities have focused attention on how to best design workforce development strategies to help these workers succeed. Consequently, interest is growing in addressing the barriers that make it challenging for low-wage and unemployed individuals to successfully enroll in, participate in, and complete workforce development activities designed to support individuals' progress in the labor force and help them acquire jobs.

Lack of child care is one important barrier that can make it difficult for low-income parents to successfully participate in workforce development programs such as education, training, activities that help people find jobs, job-readiness activities, and supportive services. This paper is part of a larger Urban Institute project—Bridging the Gap: Understanding the Intersection between Workforce Development and Child Care—supported by the Ford Foundation, that examines the intersection between workforce development and child care. The paper focuses on one element of this intersection: the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the major federal and state child care assistance program. In particular, it examines CCDF eligibility policies and services for parents who need child care to participate in education and training activities. Some of the major findings are described below.

What Can We Learn about State CCDF Eligibility Policies for Parents in Education and Training?

The CCDF is a block grant that gives states broad discretion in setting priorities within federal guidelines. Consequently, states have flexibility in determining who is eligible for services and under what circumstances. However, limited funding for the CCDF means that being eligible does not ensure that families can get assistance if they apply.

To assess whether parents seeking child care assistance for workforce development activities are eligible for subsidies in different states, this analysis examines the CCDF Policies Database, which compiles and publishes CCDF eligibility rules.¹ Because teen parents and parents in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program are more likely to be able to get subsidies for such activities, this analysis focuses specifically on the eligibility of nonteen parents and parents not in TANF.²

The assessment finds that almost every state (49 out of 50, and the District of Columbia)³ allows these parents to be eligible for child care assistance for at least one of the following education and training activities: postsecondary education and training, high school or General Educational Development (GED) certification, and English literacy programs. However, eligibility varies somewhat across these different activities:

- Forty-seven states and the District of Columbia allow parents seeking child care assistance for postsecondary education and training to be eligible for CCDF subsidies.
- Forty-six states and the District of Columbia allow parents seeking child care assistance for high school or GED programs to be eligible.
- Fewer states (29 and the District of Columbia) allow parents seeking assistance for English literacy courses to be eligible.

Though the CCDF Policies Database does not include eligibility requirements for adult basic education, a review of policy manuals suggests that 22 of the 25 states that mention adult basic education identify it as an eligible activity for parents. It is not possible to ascertain the policies of the remaining states.

However, the CCDF database shows that over half of states (27) have established one or more additional eligibility requirements for these activities, though states vary widely in their type (and number) of requirements. Most of these additional requirements can be categorized as requirements that

- limit whether parents can get child care for postsecondary degrees to particular types of degrees or to a limited number of degrees (17 states);
- limit child care eligibility to parents seeking education and training to support activities that are most likely to lead to immediate employment (11 states);
- require parents to also work while participating in education and training to be eligible for child care assistance (seven states);
- limit the length of time parents can get child care assistance for particular workforce development activities and/or establish requirements as to how much time they must spend on the activity to be eligible (seven states);
- link child care eligibility to performance in workforce activities, such as grade requirements (four states); and

- limit subsidy eligibility to enrollment in workforce development activities that involve preapproved training vendors or institutions to assure quality (such as requiring use of an accredited program) (three states).

Some states have more than one of these requirements operating simultaneously. For example, some establish both degree limits and vocational requirements for child care eligibility for parents in postsecondary education and training programs.

A comparison of these additional requirements to what is known about (1) the realities facing low-income parents in workforce activities, (2) current promising approaches in the workforce development field, and (3) existing research on factors that support success suggests that though some of these requirements reflect the current knowledge about successful education and training strategies, others may inadvertently limit access and completion:

- Some state restrictions seem, at least initially, to reflect the workforce development field's concerns about maximizing the likelihood that education and training activities will support the parent's trajectory toward gainful employment. These include programs at approved institutions and requirements that subsidies only are available to support enrollment in programs likely to lead to employment in a particular occupation. A deeper examination of these requirements is needed, but in general, this kind of restriction appears to align with current practices in the public workforce system. If developed in concert with best practices in the workforce domain, such restrictions could support more successful outcomes.
- Other restrictions may inadvertently limit low-income parents' ability to succeed. In particular, policies limiting eligibility for workforce development activities to parents who also work, limiting eligibility to a particular period, or requiring that parents be in education and training a minimum number of hours, may create barriers for low-income parents to successfully attend and complete education and training programs. Specifically, we know the following:
 - » In late 2008 and early 2009, almost half of low-income parents who participated in education and training programs also worked while trying to raise their children (Eyster, Callan, and Adams 2014). This means that parents are likely to take longer to complete the activity and may be challenged to meet minimum hour requirements.
 - » Almost three out of five low-income parents face additional challenges of low education levels. In late 2008 and early 2009, the Survey of Income and Program Participation reported that 26 percent of low-income parents ages 18–50 had less than a high school diploma (Eyster, Callan, and Adams 2014), and another 32 percent had only a high school

diploma or GED.⁴ This means that they will likely need more time to achieve education and training goals, a reality that would be challenging with time limits for child care eligibility.

- » Research suggests that intensive, full-time programming may be most effective for families, but the realities facing families may limit their ability to participate at this level (Attewell, Heil, and Reisel 2012; Crosta 2013; Tanaguchi and Kaufman 2005). Requirements that limit child care assistance to those who work can create additional challenges (Ben-Ishai 2014; Ben-Ishai, Matthews, and Levin-Epstein 2014; Horn and Berkold 1998; Watson, Frolich, and Johnston 2014).

These facts suggest that to be effective, state child care eligibility policies should be designed to reflect these realities. Specifically, states might consider supporting parents' ability to participate in education and training activities full time if they can afford to do so (for example, by not imposing work requirements for families in these activities). However, they may also want to ensure that parents who have to juggle their education and training efforts with work and parenting or parents who may have low basic skills can take the time needed to successfully complete education and training courses (for example, by not imposing time limits or minimum levels of participation). States could, for example, look at data on completion rates and times for parents in education programs to understand how long it takes a low-income working parent to complete college or to attain needed credentials.

- Finally, other restrictions that seem reasonable may create challenges for some parents with legitimate education and training needs. For example, blanket limitations on child care eligibility related to the number of degrees a parent can get may not recognize that in some cases multiple degrees may be necessary (such as a parent who graduated from college several years ago with a degree in English who now desires a vocational degree). Similarly, requiring that parents get a particular grade can be useful in ensuring that resources are not spent on parents who are failing; for parents who have been out of school for a long time, however, some initial failing grades may be simply a measure of the challenges of adjusting to being a student again. In both these areas, it would be useful to explore potential strategies that would accomplish the state's reasonable goals without penalizing parents with legitimate needs.

Are Parents Who Get Assistance from the CCDF Doing So to Support Education and Training Activities?

A different way to look at the CCDF and education and training is to examine state data on the number and characteristics of the families states serve with CCDF funds. An analysis of 2011 data⁵ provides the following picture of families receiving CCDF assistance (these numbers include teen parents and at least some parents receiving TANF):⁶

- In 2011, 957,947 families received child care assistance from the CCDF in a typical month. Of those, 904,454 received such assistance because they were working or in education and training, and 47,557 families received such assistance because the child was in the protective services system. (These totals include some families reporting TANF income.) The remaining data for 5,935 families were invalid or not reported.
- Approximately one in five, or 19 percent, of the families receiving subsidies (including families reporting TANF income) received CCDF assistance because they were in some form of education or training program. About 11 percent were using it for education and training alone, and about 8 percent were using it for education and training coupled with work.
- About 18 percent of families getting CCDF assistance reported receiving income from TANF, which usually provides child care assistance to families who are required to participate in work-related activities; about half of these TANF families were using their CCDF assistance for education and training.
- Of the families who did not report receiving TANF, about 12 percent of parents were getting child care assistance to support education and training activities. Almost 7 percent were getting assistance for education and training alone, and almost 5 percent were getting assistance for education and training coupled with work. (A few states did not have capacity to capture parents who were receiving assistance for more than one purpose, so the latter category may be underrepresented.)
- However, all these patterns varied significantly by state. For example, the proportion of all non-TANF families receiving child care assistance who were receiving it for any education and training purposes ranged from more than 25 percent of families in the District of Columbia, Idaho, and Tennessee to less than 5 percent in Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin.

Clearly, though most states allow parents in education and training to be eligible for subsidies, they vary enormously in whether and how they use their CCDF funds to serve these families.

Conclusions and Next Steps

These data provide a glimpse into the CCDF and how it is functioning for low-income parents needing child care to participate in education and training. Though they suggest that at least some education and training activities are an allowable eligibility category for child care assistance in most states, they also suggest that there is enormous variation in whether states actually provide child care assistance to families for education and training purposes. The data provide some initial insights into whether child care experts and state policymakers understand the constraints and opportunities for these families and whether state eligibility policies reflect current understanding of education and training strategies. They also provide an important foundation for additional exploration into the full range of policies and practices, from the perspectives of both child care and education and training initiatives, that create barriers or opportunities for families.

The CCDF data also raise questions worth further examination. For example, though there often are smaller proportions using child care for education and training in states that clearly limit eligibility, the broad eligibility policies examined here do not seem to explain the variation in the proportion of state caseloads that get assistance for education and training purposes. Why? Do state variations reflect differences in demand (i.e., differences in whether parents seek child care assistance for these activities)? Do they reflect differences in how states operate their subsidy programs (i.e., variation in whether parents in education and training are lower priority, or whether subsidy policies make it easier or harder to get and keep subsidies for education and training)? Do they reflect conscious choices about allocating scarce state resources, or is it an inadvertent effect of policies designed for other purposes? Do they reflect different relationships between the child care and workforce development systems? Several of these issues are likely at play in different combinations and in different ways across states.

Early findings from the second phase of the Urban Institute's Bridging the Gap project provide initial insights into some of these questions (Spaulding, Adams, and Heller, forthcoming). It appears that many other policies and practices—within both the CCDF and education and training programs—shape whether parents in education and training programs are referred to the CCDF and whether they can access and retain subsidies. Further exploration of these policies is under way to identify barriers and opportunities to facilitate participation for families needing child care for education and training.

Therefore, though these data provide a glimpse into the CCDF and how it is currently functioning for low-income parents needing child care to participate in education and training, additional information is needed to design more-effective systems. Some useful areas of inquiry include the following:

- To effectively target CCDF subsidies, more information is needed about the nature of the child care barrier for parents needing workforce development activities to succeed, as well as whom it affects and its implications for parents and children. Consequently, more work needs to be done to understand the nature, size, and implications of this unmet need, as well as how it varies across different populations. This analysis should include the implications for parents' ability to access and complete workforce development activities and the implications for parents' ability to ensure that their children are able to get stable, quality care that supports their development.
- Broader CCDF policies and practices (beyond the eligibility rules examined in this paper) are clearly supporting or hindering access to child care subsidies for families in workforce development programs. What are these policies, and are there promising strategies that can support parents' abilities to obtain child care assistance for education and training activities?
- Though the CCDF is a primary source of child care funding, it is not the only child care and early education program that can help meet the child care and early education needs of parents seeking to benefit from education and training or other workforce development activities. There are, for example, innovative efforts to support two-generation models based on Head Start and other early childhood education programs. How can the CCDF work with other early childhood programs and workforce development initiatives to best meet the needs of parents seeking advancement and their children's healthy development?
- What information and supports do child care and workforce experts need to help bridge the gap between their systems and to establish effective partnerships?

In conclusion, though more information is needed, these data suggest widely varying priorities, policy decisions, and implementation practices across states in this area. The information provided in this paper is just the beginning of our exploration of these issues. Much more information is necessary to create a strong, coordinated strategy that bridges the worlds of education and training and child care to meet the needs of low-income parents and their children.

Child Care Assistance for Parents in Education and Training

In recent years, the economy has put a spotlight on the issue of helping low-wage and low-skill workers advance in the job market. New economic realities have focused attention on how to best design workforce development strategies so as to help these workers succeed. Consequently, interest is growing in addressing the barriers that make it challenging for low-wage and unemployed individuals to successfully enroll in, participate in, and complete education and training efforts designed to support individuals' progress in the labor force.

One key barrier low-income parents face is ensuring their children are cared for while they improve their work skills and employability. The extent to which child care presents a barrier to participation in education and training efforts depends upon many things. These include the nature of the education and training activity (such as the timing, duration, intensity, and location of the activity), whether the parent is working at the same time, the parent's circumstances (such as financial resources, availability of family or friends to provide child care, access to transportation, number of children, and the type of child care wanted), the child or children's needs (based on age or special needs), and whether child care that meets this complexity of needs is available.

Though it seems obvious that child care would be an important service for some low-wage or unemployed parents seeking to participate in education and training programs, there has been no systematic assessment of the intersection between child care needs and broader workforce development efforts for low-wage workers. (One notable exception is the examination of child care for student parents conducted by the Institute for Women's Policy Research [Boressoff 2012; Miller, Gault, and Thorman 2011].)

With support from the Ford Foundation, the Urban Institute is undertaking a phased study of this intersection. This paper is one of several from the early phases of this project. It focuses on the extent to which the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the major federal and state child care assistance program, provides child care assistance to low-income parents participating in two specific types of workforce development activities, education (including adult basic education, English literacy, and enrollment in higher education) and training to prepare individuals for jobs. These education and training activities are sometimes funded through workforce systems and sometimes through education

systems. They often include a job placement component, and some are more workforce-oriented than others. For the purposes of this paper, this group of activities is referred to as “education and training.”⁷

This paper examines the following questions:

1. To what extent, and under what circumstances, do state child care eligibility policies allow parents who need child care assistance for education and training activities to be eligible?
2. Are parents who get assistance from the CCDF in different states doing so to support education and training activities?

To the extent possible, this analysis focuses on the CCDF’s availability to and use by parents who are (1) not teen parents and (2) not on cash assistance (i.e., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF]). Though both these groups also are important and do not always get the child care assistance they need, they tend to be higher priorities for CCDF assistance. For example, parents on TANF who need child care to participate in required work-related activities are often first priority for child care assistance. Therefore, as much as possible, this analysis focuses on nonteen and non-TANF low-income parents who could benefit from additional education and training, but whose access to child care assistance is less clear. This differentiation is not always possible—these situations are specified in the text.⁸

Section I. Understanding the Basics

Parents who are in education and training programs are likely to need someone to care for their children. The cost of child care is a barrier to many parents, but it can be particularly prohibitive for low-income parents. Challenges with child care—either finding it or paying for it—often impede successful completion of education and training programs (Eyster et al. 2012). Access to reliable child care could also make it more likely that parents are able to get limited workforce training program slots. Research has documented the tendency toward “creaming,” the practice in workforce programs of enrolling individuals with fewer barriers or greater likelihood to succeed, which can be driven by performance metrics that reward job placement and do not account for the service population (Barnow and King 2005). In this case, organizations might not enroll participants who do not already have their child care arrangements in order. Therefore, helping parents get child care can be critical to their participation in work, education, and training.

This paper focuses on what we know about how the CCDF serves families in education and training activities. Because this paper works to bridge two different domains, child care and education and training, we first provide a brief background on both systems for readers who may be unfamiliar with one or both areas. We begin with background information on the CCDF and then briefly describe the core education and training activities for which we have CCDF eligibility information: postsecondary education and training, high school and General Educational Development (GED) programs, English literacy programs, and adult basic education programs. (For a more in-depth overview of key elements of the intersection between child care and workforce development activities, see Spaulding, Adams, and Heller [forthcoming].)

Understanding the Child Care and Development Fund

The CCDF, also known as the Child Care and Development Block Grant, is the primary source of financial assistance for child care for low-income parents in the United States. In 2012, \$11.4 billion was spent using the CCDF, including funds transferred from TANF and \$2.8 billion spent directly from TANF. Though data are not available on the number of families and children served by the funds spent directly from TANF, the \$8.6 billion spent through the CCDF (including TANF transfer funds) served a monthly average of 1.5 million children (Matthews and Schmit 2014). The funds are largely targeted to lower-income families⁹ who need child care for work, education, or training,¹⁰ though states have significant discretion (within federal guidelines) in determining which families to serve. This assistance

is primarily provided as vouchers that parents can use in the setting of their choice (with some constraints).

A primary goal of the CCDF is to support low-income families who need child care to get or sustain employment and move toward self-sufficiency. Consequently, at the federal level, the CCDF is clear that states are allowed to use the funds to support low-income parents who are working and those in education and training. However, the CCDF is a block grant, so states are given wide latitude in defining which activities will make a parent eligible and whether there are restrictions on that eligibility. In other words, states can choose whether and under what circumstances families in education and training programs can be eligible for subsidies. Though anecdotal evidence suggests that low-income parents needing child care assistance for education and training activities are a lower priority for child care assistance than low-income working parents, we know little about how well states serve parents who need child care assistance to participate in education and training or about state policies in this area. This project is designed to begin to fill this knowledge gap.

There are three important caveats of the focus on the CCDF and the data in this paper. First, though part of the paper focuses on CCDF eligibility policies, being eligible for CCDF assistance under state law in no way guarantees that families will get assistance if they apply. The CCDF is not an entitlement, and it is funded at a level allowing it to serve a fraction of the eligible families. The most recent data, from 2009, estimate that the CCDF and “related government funding streams” serve only one out of four (28 percent) eligible families under state rules, and less than one out of five (18 percent) eligible families if all states set eligibility at the federal cutoff of 85 percent of state median income (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation 2012). Consequently, states face difficult trade-offs in determining who can get the scarce resources, and they have to target their services through a combination of establishing narrower eligibility requirements, prioritizing certain categories of eligible families, establishing waiting lists, and freezing intake. This means that states that choose to support greater access to subsidies for families in workforce programs may have to either increase their funding or reduce access for other families. Nonetheless, state eligibility policies do provide important insights into whether subsidies are potentially available to low-income families who need them to participate in education and training programs.

Second, this analysis does not examine other CCDF policies that may also affect the ability of parents in education and training activities to participate. These policies can affect whether there is a limit on the maximum number of hours for which families can get subsidies in a given week or month, whether they can get subsidies for study time or school breaks, and whether they can use multiple child care providers. This analysis also does not focus on those policies that can allow families to sustain

subsidies during transitions between activities or whether states facilitate the challenge of parents participating in more than one activity. All these issues can play a role in whether the CCDF functions to support families needing child care assistance for education and training activities, and they are part of the second phase of the Urban Institute study currently under way.

Finally, though the CCDF is a major source of funds for child care and early education, it is not the only source. Thus, being ineligible for CCDF assistance does not mean that a parent is unable to access other resources. Other funding sources include the following:

- **Federal and state early education programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and state prekindergarten programs:** These important supports have been used as a core element of intensive two-generational interventions (Mosle and Patel 2012); they may not be available to all parents, however, because they predominantly serve 3- and 4-year-olds (except Early Head Start, which is a smaller program serving younger children) and are often available on only a part-day or part-year basis.
- **Higher education institutions:** Some assistance for child care is available for students. In particular, a small amount of federal funds is available specifically for this purpose through the Child Care Access Means Parents in School program (better known as CCAMPIS), which provides \$14.9 million in funding to subsidize child care costs for students in community colleges, universities, and other higher education institutions (Miller, Gault, and Thorman 2011; US Department of Education 2014). Also, students who are receiving financial aid through the federal Pell grant program or receiving a loan to pay for college may use these funding sources to pay for child care or other expenses.
- **Workforce programs:** Some child care assistance may be available through some workforce programs. For example, through the Workforce Investment Act, state and local areas were allowed to spend money on supportive services such as child care, transportation, and other assistance aimed at helping participants stay in training programs.¹¹ According to data on the program from 2012, about 20 percent of adults receiving intensive services or participating in training also received supportive services. Little is known, however, about whether these funds were used for child care or the level of assistance provided (Social Policy Research Associates 2013). In addition, assistance might be available to individuals who have been laid off because of competition from foreign trade; these individuals can have access to resources to pay for training and education and have subsidies to cover living expenses such as child care.

Understanding Education and Training Activities and Definitions

A range of workforce development strategies and programs can help parents take steps forward on their career trajectory. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on four particular types of activities:

- **Training and postsecondary education programs** help individuals build job-specific skills (training) or earn college degrees and certificates. Because the definitions and terminology for these categories are often overlapping and unclear (box 1), they are combined here into a single category.
- **High school or GED programs** prepare students for a high school diploma, high school equivalency test (e.g., GED test), or another method of obtaining a certificate of high school equivalency.
- **English literacy programs** (also known as English as a Second Language or English for Speakers of Other Languages) improve the English language skills of adult speakers of other languages.
- **Adult basic education programs** build the basic literacy skills (literacy and numeracy) of students whose skills are assessed as below high school level.

Next, we provide more information on why each kind of activity matters for parents working to move ahead on their career path.

WHY POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING MATTERS

The importance of a college education is clear. Employment outcomes for college graduates are better than for those who lack college credentials. In 2013, the unemployment rates for people with a bachelor's degree and associate's degree were 3.7 and 5.4 percent, respectively, compared with 7.5 percent for someone with only a high school credential. In 2012, median annual earnings were \$57,590 for associate's degree holders and \$67,140 for bachelor's degree holders, compared with \$35,170 in annual earnings for someone with a high school diploma and \$20,110 for someone with less than a high school diploma (Employment Projections Program 2013).

There is also some evidence that professional certificates may improve program graduates' employment prospects (Carnevale 2012). Women, who are more likely to work in low-wage jobs, may particularly benefit from efforts to improve their access to higher-wage jobs through education and training (Entmacher et al. 2014). Though a college degree or a professional certificate may be important, there is evidence that the kind of degree or certificate someone earns also makes a difference (Carnevale, Cheah, and Strohl 2013; Carnevale, Rose, and Cheah 2011). Some vocationally

focused associate's degrees can yield more earnings than some bachelor's degrees, and some certificates can yield more than some associate's degrees (Carnevale, Rose, and Cheah 2011). Also, certain associate's degrees may yield more in the short term than bachelor's degrees, but the value of a bachelor's degree increases over time (Baum, Kurose, and Ma 2013).

Short-term job training can also offer opportunities for advancement. Though training programs tend to be shorter term (as little as a few weeks to several months), they can give program participants the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, which have value in the labor market (Carnevale 2012).

BOX 1

A Note about Terminology for Education and Training

One challenge in examining education and training issues is that the terminology is often unclearly defined. For example, commonly used terms for these activities—such as “education” and “training”—can sometimes be used to describe different activities and can sometimes describe the same thing (Mikelson and Nightingale 2004). Though training is typically defined by its focus on providing the skills needed for a job and is distinguished from education because training is often shorter-term, education programs often train people for jobs and can take longer to complete if part of a degree program.

Training can, for example, include vocational education or education in postsecondary institutions. Similarly, longer-term vocationally focused education programs—such as community college programs preparing students to be registered nurses—are often considered both education and training because they award degrees while providing individuals with the skills for a specific job. Sometimes these terms are used to describe the setting—education occurs in schools, colleges, or universities, and training occurs in other kinds of institutions—and in other cases the terms are used to describe the content or whether the program awards degrees.

This confusion is common across all the domains we examined, including within the workforce development literature, the child care policy references, and survey questions in national data collection.

WHY HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS MATTER

More than 24 million adults (age 25 and older) currently lack a high school credential (US Census Bureau 2013). Further, as noted earlier, data from late 2008 to early 2009 show an estimated 26 percent of the 21 million low-income parents ages 18–50 did not have a high school diploma or its equivalent.¹² Having a high school diploma or its equivalent is associated with a better labor market, in both likelihood of being employed and average earnings. In 2013, those without a high school diploma or equivalent had an unemployment rate of 11 percent, compared with 7.5 percent for those with a high school credential but no college education (US Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013). Though there are several ways an individual who has dropped out of school can earn a certificate of high school equivalency, the primary mechanism has been through the GED test. Though evidence is mixed on the value of passing the GED, the program has offered an important second chance for individuals who failed to complete high school by qualifying them for particular jobs, making them eligible for admission to many colleges and programs, and, most recently, qualifying them for federal financial aid.¹³ Recent changes to the ways that individuals can earn a certificate of high school equivalency may make it more difficult for students who fail to complete high school to obtain necessary credentials because new tests are expected to reflect higher standards, access to testing sites will be more limited (fewer sites and only available via computer in most states), and new tests will often cost more.

WHY ENGLISH LITERACY PROGRAMS MATTER

It is estimated that more than 13 percent of people living in the United States are foreign born. Approximately 19 percent of foreign-born individuals were living below the poverty level as of the 2010 decennial census. Though approximately half reported speaking only English at home or speaking another language at home but speaking English very well, the other half may benefit from English language instruction (Grieco et al. 2012). Many immigrants seek to improve their English language skills in order to improve their economic prospects. In program year 2010–11, about 42 percent of the more than 2 million individuals enrolled in adult education programs funded through grants to states under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Workforce Investment Act Title II, the main source of federal adult education funding during that period) were in English literacy programs (Office of Vocational and Adult Education 2013). The importance of English literacy is likely to only grow in future years because the proportion of the foreign-born US population is likely to rise; some estimates, for example, project that as many as one in five individuals in the United States will be foreign born by 2050 should current trends continue (Passel and Cohn 2008).

WHY ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS MATTER

Adult basic education programs improve literacy and numeracy for adults whose skills are below the high school level (Office of Vocational and Adult Education 2013). Of the more than 2 million people in adult education programs funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act in 2010–11, 42 percent were enrolled in adult basic education programs. According to recent research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Americans have lower basic skills on average than adults in other countries, suggesting the need for programs that help adults build their basic skills. Individuals with low basic literacy are more than twice as likely to be unemployed and face diminished educational and employment prospects (OECD 2013). Helping low-income parents build the educational foundations for further education and improved economic outcomes is an important use of available CCDF subsidies.

Section II. What Can We Learn about State CCDF Eligibility Policies for Parents in Education and Training?

This section reports our findings about state CCDF eligibility policies for parents participating in education and training activities, specifically postsecondary education and training, high school or GED programs, English literacy programs, and adult basic education. We first present findings about whether nonteen and non-TANF parents¹⁴ would be eligible for child care assistance for each of these activities. We then examine whether any additional requirements are attached to their eligibility for each activity.¹⁵ We conclude with a discussion of the implications of these requirements.

These data are mostly gleaned from the CCDF Policies Database. This database, developed by the Urban Institute and funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families at the US Department of Health and Human Services, uses information obtained from child care policy manuals to populate hundreds of variables capturing specific state policies across time. The data on three activities examined in this paper—high school or GED programs, English literacy programs, and postsecondary education and training—are from the project’s yearly Book of Tables publication, and were verified by the states.¹⁶ However, the data for the fourth activity—adult basic education—were not included in the database and were instead obtained by reviewing policy documents to understand eligibility policies. These data were not reviewed or verified by the states and are clearly noted as such.

CCDF Eligibility Policies

State CCDF eligibility policies for each of the four workforce development categories are examined in turn.

ELIGIBILITY POLICIES FOR PARENTS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As noted earlier, in this report we combine training with postsecondary education because the distinction between these categories is often unclear (see box 1 in the preceding section).¹⁷ Looking at this combined category, the CCDF 2012 data show that almost all states (47 out of 50) and the District of Columbia allowed clients participating in postsecondary education or training to be eligible for subsidies; Colorado allowed these activities at the discretion of individual counties (with some restrictions).¹⁸ The remaining three states (Connecticut, Delaware, and Rhode Island)¹⁹ did not allow eligibility for child care for postsecondary education or training for nonteen and non-TANF families.

However, only 20 of these 47 states (and the District of Columbia) allowed clients to receive child care for postsecondary education without any additional stipulations; the remaining 27 placed additional requirements on eligibility. For example, in 2012, the most common additional requirements for child care eligibility for parents in postsecondary education were degree limits, vocational requirements, and work requirements.

ELIGIBILITY POLICIES FOR PARENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS

In 2012, most states allowed nonteen and non-TANF parents to be eligible for CCDF child care subsidies to finish high school or earn an equivalent certification.²⁰ Specifically, 46 states and the District of Columbia allowed parents in high school or a GED program to be eligible for CCDF subsidies (including Colorado, which left it up to county discretion).²¹ Only three states (Connecticut, Nevada, and Rhode Island) reported that nonteen and non-TANF parents engaged in these activities were not eligible for CCDF funds.²² Oregon did not allow parents in high school or a GED program to be eligible for CCDF subsidies regardless of age.

Nine of the 47 states that allowed subsidies to go to parents needing subsidies to attend high school or get their GED set additional eligibility requirements, including allowing subsidies only if the parent also worked (work requirements), allowing subsidies for a limited time (time limits), allowing eligibility only if the parent participated for a minimum number of hours (hourly minimums), limiting eligibility to parents who enrolled in qualifying institutions, and limiting eligibility to levels of performance (performance requirements).²³

ELIGIBILITY POLICIES FOR PARENTS IN ENGLISH LITERACY PROGRAMS

In 2012, 29 states and the District of Columbia approved English literacy as an activity that would allow nonteen and non-TANF parents to be eligible for subsidies (including Colorado, which left it up to county discretion);²⁴ 20 states did not.²⁵ Of the states that allowed subsidies to support English literacy activities, seven established at least one additional eligibility requirement related to age limits, time limits, grade minimums, work requirements, hourly minimums, accreditation requirements, or limits on the number of parents. (CCDF regulations base eligibility on the immigration status of the child, so parents whose children are citizens or legal immigrants can qualify for subsidies.)²⁶

ELIGIBILITY POLICIES FOR PARENTS IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Adult basic education was not a published category in the CCDF Policies Database. However, an online scan of state CCDF plans, policy manuals, and other materials (such as the Administrative Code and Regulations Handbook) found that 21 of the 24 states (and the District of Columbia) that mentioned

adult basic education identified it as an eligible activity for subsidies. It was not possible to ascertain the remaining states' policies.²⁷

In looking at the manuals, there is great variation in how states define adult basic education. About half of the 22 states defined it as an educational activity, and about half defined it as a training activity. States also used many terms when referring to adult basic education, including remedial education, basic skills training, literacy education, basic literacy, and alternative basic education.

States that mentioned adult basic education established similar additional eligibility requirements for these activities as are discussed for the other education and training activities. Examples include time limits, work requirements, hourly minimums, accreditation requirements, grade or performance minimums, limits for two-parent families, and age restrictions.

What Additional Eligibility Requirements Do States Establish for Education and Training Activities?

As noted above, 27 states established additional eligibility requirements for one or more of the education and training activities for nonteen and non-TANF families (table 1):

- **Limits on the number or type of degrees:** Seventeen states set limits on the number or type of degrees for which parents could get child care assistance if they were in postsecondary education. Eleven of these states did not allow training or postsecondary education to support education beyond a bachelor's degree, six restricted the number of degrees a parent can obtain, five restricted participation based on previous postsecondary experience, three required that the activity culminates in a degree, and one did not allow participation in a degree program as an eligible activity.
- **Activities leading to maintaining or obtaining employment:** Eleven states limited child care assistance to postsecondary education or training activities that were seen as supporting parents in maintaining or obtaining employment.
- **Work requirements:** Seven states required parents who wanted child care assistance to work a minimum number of hours (in addition to their education and training) as a condition for getting assistance for one or more of the education and training activities examined in this report.²⁸ These restrictions often applied only to nonteen and non-TANF families. In some cases, states required families to qualify for child care assistance based on employment rather than to

qualify based on education or training activities. In these cases, once families qualified for child care assistance based on employment, their education or training hours were covered as well.

- **Time limits:** Seven states had limits on the amount of time a parent may get child care to participate in different education or training activities. These limits were usually established as a cap on the number of months (ranging from 20 months to 40 months), though some states set limits by semesters or training programs, which may prevent parents from losing the subsidy midprogram or midsemester.
- **Performance:** Four states required parents to meet certain performance requirements, such as maintaining a particular grade (e.g., a C average, or from a 2.0 to 2.5 GPA) to remain eligible for subsidies. A few states had lower performance requirements for working parents than those who do not work.
- **Accredited or certified institution:** Three states required parents to attend an accredited or certified institution for education and training activities to be eligible for child care. One of these states required this only for non-TANF parents, and one required that parents attend institutions that qualify for federal financial aid.
- **Other requirements:** There were some additional requirements established by individual states, including one state that required that parents participate in education and training activities for at least 20 hours a week to qualify for child care assistance and one state that limited eligibility for CCDF subsidies based on education and training activities to one parent in two-parent families. The state required that to be eligible for child care, the other parent must be working during the hours that one parent is in education or training.

Fuller information about the requirements and which states have these policies is provided in appendix A.

TABLE 1

Number of States with Additional Eligibility Requirements for Nonteen and Non-TANF Parents Seeking CCDF Assistance for Education and Training Activities, 2012 (by Type of Requirement and Education and Training Activity)

Type of requirement	Postsecondary education or training (of 48 states allowing eligibility) ^a	High school or GED (of 47 states allowing eligibility) ^a	English literacy (of 30 states allowing eligibility) ^a	Total number of states
Degree limits	17	NA	NA	17
Vocational requirements	11	NA	NA	11
Work requirements	7	5	3	7
Time limits	6	2	1	7
Performance requirements	4	1	1	4
Qualifying institutions	3	1	1	3
Other ^b	2	2	2	2
Total number of states with additional requirements	27	9	7	27

Source: Authors' analysis of the CCDF Policies Database 2012 (Minton et al. 2013).

Notes: NA = not applicable. Columns and rows do not add to the totals because states may be represented in more than one cell.

^aThe number of states allowing parents engaged in this activity to be eligible for child care subsidies. The total number possible is 51 because DC is counted as a state for the purposes of this analysis.

^bThis category includes requirements that are established by only one state.

Exploring Implications of Additional Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility requirements can serve many functions for state agencies. They can help the state target resources to particular groups of families to maximize desired outcomes for them, they can support efforts to use scarce funds in the most cost-effective way, and they can operationalize the challenging trade-offs that states must make on how to prioritize the allocation of scarce resources. In making these decisions, however, it is important to consider the constraints of the families seeking assistance and what is known from the workforce development literature about what factors are related to success. This section considers these issues for three additional kinds of eligibility requirements: those that seem designed to maximize the effectiveness of the education and training activity, those that seem focused on whether parents couple the activity with work, and other requirements.

REQUIREMENTS DESIGNED TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITY

The rationale behind allowing low-income parents to use child care subsidies is to support their participation in programs that are likely to lead to increased income or greater economic stability. This is, of course, the goal of the education and training field as well.

Two of the additional eligibility requirements established by states for the CCDF reflect this goal by ensuring that the training or education is likely to lead to employment and by focusing on the quality of the institution by requiring accreditation or certification. These policies reflect similar concerns from the education and training field. For example:

- The workforce development and education systems are concerned about the quality of education and training programs and activities. For GED programs, for example, there are approved testing centers and, in many cases, lists of state-funded or approved training providers. In the workforce system, states keep lists of approved training providers, and an accreditation system ensures the quality of colleges and universities.
- The workforce system also ensures quality by directing training dollars to programs preparing participants for in-demand occupations, based on labor market data and other local factors. States and localities keep lists of in-demand occupations based on labor market data and restrict use of training dollars to programs that prepare individuals for these targeted occupations.

This overlap in goals suggests that state and national links between the agencies that manage receipt of CCDF subsidies and the agencies that set standards for GED, college, and workforce programs could help ensure that the restrictions placed on CCDF subsidies are consistent with the goals and policies of the workforce and education agencies. This, in turn, could help both ensure that students have consistent information to make informed decisions about the programs in which to enroll and to ensure that federally funded programs are not working at cross purposes.

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING WORK, TIME LIMITS, AND MINIMUM HOURS

Some states have requirements that involve work requirements, time limits, and minimum number of hours of participation. While these requirements were likely imposed in an effort to improve outcomes for families, they may not reflect what is known about (1) the realities facing low-income parents working to improve their skills, (2) the current research about what can support success, or (3) the design of innovative workforce initiatives. Consequently, the subsidy policies may inadvertently create

challenges for low-income parents who need additional education and training to move ahead. Each of these three types of requirements is discussed below.

Work requirements: Requiring that parents in education and training also work in order to qualify for child care assistance reflects the movement over past decades to tie eligibility for social programs to work, most notably with the reform of welfare programs in 1996 through the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. Though these restrictions may be intended to encourage work, increase earnings for families, and reduce dependency on the state, there is evidence that such restrictions may have some unintended negative consequences on the likely success of education and training efforts. For example:

- There is evidence that working more than 15 hours a week can negatively affect academic performance (Horn and Berkthold 1998).
- There is also research showing the importance of early credit accumulation and full-time study as predictors of successful educational outcomes (Attewell, Heil, and Reisel 2012; Crosta 2013).

Interestingly, national data presented in a companion paper for this project show that many of the 1.8 million low-income parents participating in education or training also work. For example, data from the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation found that almost half of all low-income parents (with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) who were enrolled in education and training also worked; half of all parents who worked, worked full time (Eyster, Callan, and Adams 2014).

The challenge is, however, that graduation rates nationwide are very low: only about 20 percent of students seeking certificates or degrees at two-year degree-granting public institutions complete credentials within three years or less (National Center for Education Statistics 2013). Though evidence is mixed, some research has shown that being a single parent or having young children may suppress college completion rates (Goldrick-Rab and Sorensen 2010; Tanaguchi and Kaufman 2005). With this as a backdrop, requiring parents to work while trying to complete education and training and raise children may have the unintended consequence of making it harder for some low-income parents to complete programs and obtain the credentials necessary for improved employment prospects. In addition, there is increasing concern about the fluctuating work schedules often associated with low-wage jobs; these schedules can be hard to match with the scheduled hours required for education or training (Ben-Ishai 2014; Ben-Ishai, Matthews, and Levin-Epstein 2014; Watson, Frolich, and Johnston 2014).

Time limits: Limiting the length of time that parents can get child care to participate in education and training can inadvertently create challenges for low-income parents in two ways. First, as described above, many low-income parents are working while enrolled in education and training programs. For those that work full time or nearly full time, full-time enrollment—equivalent to 12 to 15 credit hours a semester at a typical college program—may not be possible. Students who attend part time will take longer to complete programs, and time limits may interfere with successful completion. The intention of such restrictions may be to encourage intensive study and program completion. Though this is an important goal, it may be beyond the reach of the many low-income parents who do not have the resources to attend school or training full time. This possibility is corroborated by research that has documented the wide variation in community college students' attendance patterns (Crosta 2013). These issues suggest that time limits may create challenges for the many low-income parents who juggle work, children, education, and skills improvement.

Second, time limits could create challenges for individuals who are entering into education and training programs with low skills. Skill level at entry also has been shown to influence the length of time it takes individuals to attain educational credentials—whether it is passing the GED, getting a certificate, earning a college degree, or finishing a program. Research suggests that low basic skills are a common reality:

- As discussed earlier, recent data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development show that one in six US adults have only basic or lower levels of literacy, and almost one-third possess basic or lower levels of numeracy (OECD 2013).
- Approximately 36 percent of first-time freshman at undergraduate institutions enroll in remedial coursework, suggesting that they have not acquired the skills in high school to succeed in postsecondary education (Aud et al. 2011). Research has shown that students often get stuck in remedial coursework (Hodara, Jagers, and Karp 2012).
- Research also suggests that test takers in adult education programs may take several years to build the skills needed to pass the GED or other equivalency tests (OECD 2013).
- Similarly, data from the National Reporting System for Adult Education Programs shows that, in program year 2010–11, 44 percent of students saw gains in at least one educational level; but, given that near 50 percent of students started with a beginning level of literacy, many will need more than one year of instruction to achieve English language competency.

These data suggest that time limits may interfere with the ability of low-income or low-skill students achieving desired educational gains, and time limits may be particularly challenging for those with the lowest skill levels.

Minimum hour requirements: Though only one state required that parents participate in education and training for a minimum number of hours to be eligible for child care, it is worth noting that this presents similar problems. Specifically, though it may be desirable to support families in engaging in education and training intensively, many families may not have that option because they also have to work to support their families. For these families, this restriction could inadvertently make it impossible for them to participate in part-time education and training activities while employed.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Finally, other requirements may inadvertently create challenges for some parents with legitimate education and training needs. For example, limitations on child care eligibility based on the number of degrees a parent can get are clearly designed both to discourage parents from becoming perennial students and to distribute a scarce resource to those most in need. On the other hand, such restrictions may not recognize that for some people multiple degrees may be necessary; for example, a parent who graduated from college several years ago with a degree in English who now desires a more job-related degree. Similarly, requiring that parents earn a particular grade to remain eligible can be useful in ensuring that resources are not spent for parents who are failing; however, for parents who have been out of school for a long time, some initial failing grades may reflect the challenges of being a student again. In both these areas, it would be useful to explore potential strategies to accomplish the reasonable state goals without penalizing parents with legitimate needs.

Section III. Are Parents Who Receive Assistance from the CCDF Doing So to Support Education and Training Activities?

The second question examined in this paper is to what extent the CCDF currently serves families who need child care assistance to support any education and training activities. For this purpose, we looked at administrative data on CCDF recipients that states submit to the federal Administration for Children and Families. These data reflect patterns for an average month in federal fiscal year 2011.²⁹

The data reported here reflect state information on the reasons parents need child care assistance. Specifically, states must select one of the following reasons when reporting on child care subsidies:

- employment
- education or training (education and training)
- both employment and education and training³⁰
- whether the child is in the care of protective services

In this section, we examine the data states provided about those families whose “reason for care” is either education and training only, or both employment and education and training. This analysis combines these two groups, referring to the combined group as “any education and training.”

The universe for the data reported in this section differs slightly from the preceding section because parents reporting TANF income and teen parents are included in the totals, though we pull out the TANF parents where possible. (These data do not include parents on TANF whose child care is paid for directly by TANF, because they are not reported to the Administration for Children and Families; these data do, however, include parents on TANF whose care is paid for by TANF funds transferred to CCDF.) Teen parents are included in all analyses and are not presented separately.

Nationwide in fiscal year 2011, 957,947 families received child care subsidy assistance through the CCDF in an average month to help pay for the care of 1.6 million children. Of these families, 904,454 received such assistance because they were working or in education and training and another 47,557 received child care assistance because the child was in the protective services system. (These totals include some [but not all] families on TANF.)³¹ A closer look at the data on the reasons families need child care assistance, and specifically the extent to which families receive child care assistance for any education and training, provides useful insights into both how CCDF serves families across the United

States in any education and training and the variation across states. (See table 2 for state-by-state data on CCDF recipients and education and training.)

HOW MANY FAMILIES USE THE CCDF TO SUPPORT ANY EDUCATION AND TRAINING?

When looking at all families, including those on TANF, we find that nearly one in five (18.9 percent) of these 957,947 families were reported as using the subsidy to support any education and training activities. However, the proportion of families (including families on TANF) who received support for any education and training activities varied substantially by state, ranging from 60 percent in Tennessee (with the District of Columbia next-highest at 37 percent) to less than 10 percent in Connecticut, Iowa, New Hampshire, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

DO FAMILIES (INCLUDING THOSE REPORTING TANF INCOME) USE CCDF ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING ALONE, OR FOR A COMBINATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING WITH WORK?

Looking separately at whether the 957,947 families with CCDF assistance, including those on TANF, were in education and training only or combined education and training with work, we find the following for the average month in fiscal year 2011:

- Over 11 percent of the families receiving CCDF assistance used it to support education and training only. This ranged from about one-third of the families in the District of Columbia (34.4 percent) and Tennessee (32.4 percent) to less than 5 percent in Arizona, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin.
- Almost 8 percent of families receiving CCDF assistance received the subsidy to support their combined education and training and employment needs. Though four states do not report this combined category, the proportion of families served for this reason by the remaining states ranged from at least 20 percent in Colorado, Michigan, Tennessee, and Washington to less than 3 percent in Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, Mississippi, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, and Vermont.

DO NON-TANF FAMILIES USING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE USE IT FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING?

Because states have workforce development requirements for TANF recipients and often provide child care assistance to families who need it to meet their work and training requirements, it is useful to disaggregate the patterns above for TANF and non-TANF families.

- About 18 percent of the families receiving CCDF child care subsidy assistance reported TANF income. About half the TANF recipients were supported to participate in some education and training activities (either education and training only or a combination of employment and education and training). The share of TANF families receiving support for some education and training activities ranged from 90 percent in Colorado to 5 percent in Iowa.³²
- About four out of five (81 percent) of CCDF families did not receive TANF. Of these families, about 12 percent received child care assistance to participate in any education and training activities. Again, states varied widely: more than 25 percent of non-TANF families in the District of Columbia, Idaho, and Tennessee, but less than 5 percent of non-TANF families in Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Wisconsin, received child care subsidies to support any education and training activities.
- These patterns varied when looking at whether non-TANF families were getting assistance for education and training alone or in combination with employment. The data for an average month in fiscal year 2011 are as follows:
 - » Nationally, 7 percent of non-TANF recipients receiving child care assistance through the CCDF did so for education and training only. The District of Columbia had the highest proportion of families participating in education and training only (28 percent); four states had less than 1 percent in this category (Arizona, Connecticut, Utah, and Wisconsin).
 - » Nationally, 5 percent of non-TANF recipients receiving subsidies through the CCDF did so for a combination of education and training and employment. Tennessee had the highest proportion of families participating (19 percent); four states had less than 1 percent (Connecticut, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Utah), and four states did not report on this category (Iowa, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and Wyoming). (This category may be underrepresented because some states did not report on it.)

A quick assessment of these data by other characteristics, such as age of child and the use of other forms of care, did not provide any easily discernable patterns or insights. More in-depth analyses are warranted.

TABLE 2

Types of Families Served by Child Care and Development Fund by Reasons for Receiving Care

State	Non-TANF Families			TANF Families			All Families Receiving Subsidies ^a		
	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total non-TANF	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total TANF	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total all
AL	5.4	4.5	10,664	50.5	3.4	3,841	17.4	4.2	14,505
AK	5.7	7.1	2,338	16.9	4.8	295	6.9	6.8	2,633
AZ	0.1	1.8	12,882	0.1	38.3	3,452	0.1	9.5	16,334
AR	11.1	4.6	4,639	47.5	0.0	920	17.2	3.9	5,558
CA	9.1	3.9	67,869	42.4	8.0	9,826	13.3	4.4	77,695
CO	11.2	2.9	7,416	1.3	90.4	2,449	8.7	24.6	9,866
CT	0.3	0.0	5,757	46.0	11.5	793	5.8	1.4	6,551
DE	6.4	4.9	3,077	19.5	3.6	815	9.2	4.6	3,893
DC	28.3	2.9	804	66.8	4.8	154	34.4	3.2	958
FL	3.5	2.0	57,010	10.1	73.8	5,384	5.7	8.0	63,429
GA	5.4	2.7	32,187	51.8	8.2	1,785	7.9	3.0	33,972
HI	4.9	8.8	4,149	22.5	34.4	1,150	8.8	14.3	5,299
ID	12.5	16.6	3,829	58.4	2.8	85	13.5	16.3	3,913
IL	9.9	1.7	33,515	51.8	4.5	2,351	12.6	1.9	35,868
IN	10.8	10.8	13,633	22.0	22.8	3,261	12.9	13.1	16,894
IA	7.4	0.0	8,166	5.0	0.0	875	7.1	0.0	9,041
KS	1.0	3.4	9,968	2.9	35.0	982	1.2	6.2	10,984
KY	3.6	8.0	16,032	20.1	3.9	223	3.8	8.0	16,255
LA	3.6	12.0	21,115	51.0	6.2	1,913	7.2	11.0	24,122
ME	6.0	11.4	1,684	14.8	9.3	100	6.5	11.3	1,784
MD	12.1	8.6	11,209	41.7	11.6	3,503	19.1	9.3	14,712
MA	5.1	2.7	16,691	33.4	0.2	4,954	11.6	2.1	21,645
MI	1.2	13.7	20,636	2.4	61.9	7,737	1.5	26.9	28,373
MN	4.4	12.1	11,612	12.9	11.4	5,785	7.3	11.8	17,397
MS	5.7	3.5	10,054	82.7	0.2	2,880	22.9	2.8	12,933
MO	11.9	2.3	23,089	55.2	1.8	3,699	17.9	2.2	26,788
MT	3.7	14.3	2,340	75.4	12.9	434	14.9	14.1	2,774
NE	8.3	4.5	5,254	7.3	5.3	1,654	8.1	4.7	6,908
NV	4.8	4.7	2,374	4.6	6.2	2,035	4.7	5.4	4,410
NH	9.1	0.0	2,128	11.3	0.0	1,121	9.1	0.0	3,502
NJ	5.9	4.2	20,901	41.6	0.0	4,267	11.9	3.5	25,169
NM	13.1	11.1	9,759	47.2	9.4	2,466	20.0	10.8	12,225
NY	3.5	1.0	47,481	29.1	5.1	30,687	13.5	2.6	78,601
NC	9.2	0.0	34,624	26.7	0.0	1,510	9.9	0.0	36,134
ND	7.4	6.2	1,878	35.5	11.3	437	12.7	7.1	2,315
OH	4.9	8.6	22,731	30.5	18.4	4,027	8.8	10.1	26,758

State	Non-TANF Families			TANF Families			All Families Receiving Subsidies ^a		
	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total non-TANF	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total TANF	ET only (%)	ET and work (%)	Total all
OK	13.7	3.7	15,317	53.9	1.0	1,674	17.7	3.5	16,991
OR	2.6	0.2	7,299	4.9	65.2	3,249	3.3	20.2	10,548
PA	1.9	7.5	47,472	47.0	17.8	11,578	10.7	9.5	59,050
RI	1.2	0.0	2,929	67.2	4.5	460	10.1	0.6	3,389
SC	0.0	0.0	0	27.8	2.3	7,929	24.3	2.1	10,905
SD	4.0	12.6	3,283	84.0	0.9	277	10.2	11.7	3,560
TN	11.3	18.8	6,956	40.7	32.1	17,680	32.4	28.4	24,635
TX	15.9	4.4	73,361	18.7	2.0	595	16.0	4.4	73,956
UT	0.7	0.4	5,499	60.8	0.1	935	9.4	0.5	6,433
VT	20.2	1.9	2,980	33.9	1.5	168	20.9	1.9	3,148
VA	5.8	4.0	10,245	20.4	16.8	4,697	10.4	8.0	14,942
WA	2.0	9.9	20,592	7.5	75.2	5,424	3.2	23.5	26,016
WV	9.9	9.6	3,796	29.3	16.2	480	12.1	10.4	4,276
WI	0.3	3.7	14,844	3.0	17.8	1,903	0.6	5.3	16,747
WY	8.2	0.0	2,144	9.5	0.0	7	8.2	0.0	3,151
Total	6.9	4.9	777,211	30.7	19.8	174,908	11.4	7.6	957,947

Source: Unpublished data compiled by the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, FY 2011 CCDF Data Tables.

Notes: ET = education and training. Reasons for receiving care include education and training only, education and training and work, work only, protective services, and invalid or not reported.

^a All total numbers account for all reasons of care (education and training only, education and training and work, work only, protective services, and invalid or not reported).

Section IV. Conclusions and Next Steps

Child care clearly is an important service for low-wage and low-income parents seeking to improve their skills and advance in the labor market. This analysis of state CCDF eligibility policies for parents in education and training, and of whether families receiving assistance from the CCDF are in education and training activities, provides some important insights into the role that child care assistance plays in supporting low-income families efforts to move ahead and highlights many important questions that need further exploration.

Some insights are particularly important:

- Most states (49 out of 50) and the District of Columbia allow child care assistance for families in at least some education or training activities. However, states vary in the types of education and training activities for which parents can receive child care subsidies: fewer states allow eligibility for parents needing English language skills.
- Many states set additional eligibility requirements for at least one type of education and training activity. Some of these restrictions—such as requirements around eligibility for child care assistance being tied to using accredited institutions or programs that are likely to lead to employment—seem to reflect the public workforce system’s goal to support access to education and training that will be more likely to lead to employment. However, other restrictions, such as limiting child care eligibility through work requirements, time limits, and minimum hours, do not reflect current understanding of the realities facing low-income parents and what is needed for successful education and training efforts. These restrictions may inadvertently undermine parents’ ability to succeed. It is unclear whether these additional requirements are caused by states lacking sufficient resources to meet the demand for child care assistance, thus forcing them to make trade-offs about allocating those scarce resources.
- Nationally, about one in eight non-TANF parents served by the CCDF use child care assistance to support any education and training. But this proportion ranges widely across states: a few states report more than one-quarter of their non-TANF families using the CCDF for any education and training, but eight states report that less than 5 percent of non-TANF families used the CCDF for this purpose.

The data raise additional questions that are worth further examination. For example, though there often are smaller proportions using child care for education and training in states that clearly limit eligibility, the broad eligibility policies examined here do not seem to explain the variation in the

proportion of state caseloads that get assistance for education and training purposes. Why? Do state variations in the proportions of families receiving assistance for education and training reflect a difference in demand (i.e., differences in whether parents seek child care assistance for these activities)? Do they reflect a difference in the way the states operate their subsidy programs (i.e., variation in whether parents in education and training are a lower priority, or variation in whether subsidy policies make it easier or harder to get and keep subsidies for education and training)? Are they caused by conscious choices that states make about allocating scarce resources, or an inadvertent effect of policies designed for other purposes? Do they reflect different relationships between the child care and workforce development systems? Several of these issues are likely at play in different combinations across states.

Early findings from the second phase of the Urban Institute's Bridging the Gap project are providing some initial insights into these questions. Specifically, it appears that many other policies and practices, both within the CCDF and within education and training programs, shape how often parents in education and training programs are referred to the CCDF as well as the extent to which they can access and retain subsidies. Further exploration of these policies is currently under way and is essential in identifying barriers and opportunities to facilitate participation for families needing child care for education and training.

Though these data provide a glimpse into the CCDF and how it is currently functioning for low-income parents needing child care to participate in education and training, many questions remain to be explored. These include the following:

- To effectively target CCDF subsidies, more information is needed about (1) the extent and nature of the child care barrier for parents needing workforce development activities to succeed, (2) who the child care barrier affects, and (3) the barrier's implications for both parents and children. Consequently, more work is necessary to understand the nature, size, and implications of this unmet need and how it varies across populations. This analysis should reflect the implications for parents' abilities to access and complete workforce development activities and the implications for parents' abilities to ensure that their children receive stable, quality care that supports their development.
- Broader CCDF policies and practices (beyond the eligibility rules examined in this paper) are clearly functioning to support or hinder access to child care subsidies for families in workforce development programs. What are these policies, and are there promising strategies that can support parents' ability to obtain child care assistance for education and training activities?

- Though the CCDF is a primary source of child care funding, it is not the only child care and early education program that can help meet the child care and early education needs of parents seeking to benefit from education and training or other workforce development activities. There are for example, innovative efforts to support two-generation models based on Head Start and other early childhood education programs. How can the CCDF work with other early childhood programs and workforce development initiatives to best meet the overall needs of parents seeking advancement and promote their children's healthy development?
- What information and supports do child care and workforce experts need to help bridge the gap between their systems, and to establish effective partnerships?

In conclusion, though more information is needed, these data suggest widely varying priorities, policy decisions, and implementation practices across states in this area. The information provided in this paper is just the beginning of our exploration of these issues. Much more information is needed to create a strong coordinated strategy that bridges the worlds of education and training and child care.

Appendix A. State Details on Additional CCDF Eligibility Requirements for Education and Training Activities, by Eligible Activity

Below are more details on state eligibility limits for different education and training activities. For more information on all these data, see the report by Minton and colleagues (2013).

Postsecondary Education and Training

Requiring Work

- **Work requirement:** Seven states (Illinois, Kentucky,³³ New York, Oregon,³⁴ Utah,³⁵ Washington, and Wisconsin) linked eligibility for child care assistance for nonteen and non-TANF clients in postsecondary education or training to employment in some way. In some states, these work requirements were only for non-TANF, nonteen parents or parents who were not in the state work program. Other states required that the parents initially qualify for child care based on employment activities, so they must meet a minimum work requirement. In other situations, parents were required to meet a minimum work requirement in addition to education or training activities, or they were required to work after participating in the program for a certain number of months.

Requiring Minimum Number of Hours or Establishing Time Limits

- **Time limit:** Six states enforced time limits on postsecondary education or training. Four of these states (Alabama, Nevada, North Carolina, and Wisconsin), measured these restrictions in months, ranging from 20 months to 40 months. Two states (Indiana and New York), however,

provided time limits measured in semesters or number of training programs. This type of measurement may prevent students from losing their subsidies midsemester or midprogram.

- **Hourly minimum:** One state, Florida, required that clients needing child care for postsecondary education must be in their education activity at least 20 hours a week. The Pell Grant program considers students taking a course load of 12 credit hours to be in full-time study. It is unclear whether Florida considers only one's credit hours to be an educational activity or if other related activities (such as homework) count toward the 20-hour requirement.

Requiring Accredited Institutions or Activities Likely to Lead to Employment

- **Qualifying institutions:** Three states (Massachusetts, Indiana, and Oklahoma) limited CCDF eligibility for parents in training or postsecondary education by whether they are at accredited institutions, referring to such institutions as “accredited college or university,” and “certified or accredited secondary or postsecondary training organization.” One state enforced this restriction on non-TANF families only. Another state required that the training program qualifies for federal financial aid from the Department of Education.
- **Vocational requirement:** Eleven states (Alabama, Arizona, Georgia,³⁶ Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Vermont, and Wisconsin) required that postsecondary education or training support parents in maintaining or obtaining employment.

Requiring a Certain Level of Performance

- **Grade minimum:** Four states (Arizona, Illinois, Missouri, and Wyoming) required that students maintain a particular grade average or GPA while in postsecondary education or training. The GPA requirements typically ranged from a 2.0 to 2.5, depending on whether the student was in education or training or working. One state required that in programs that do not use grades, the students must meet “comparable requirements of the education or training program.”

Other Requirements or Restrictions

- **Number of parents allowed to participate:** One state, Oklahoma, limited child care assistance for postsecondary education and training to only one parent in the household. The state also required that one parent work during the hours the other parent is in training.
- **Degree limits:** The most common limitation for CCDF eligibility for postsecondary education and training—employed by 17 states in 2012—limited the number or type of degrees that parents could seek. They took different approaches to these limits:
 - » **Limit to a bachelor's degree:** Nine states, (Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, North Carolina, and Vermont) did not allow postsecondary education above a bachelor's degree. Four of these same states (Alabama, Colorado, Indiana, and Vermont), did not allow training above a bachelor's degree. Some other states (Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Ohio) only allowed postsecondary education beyond a bachelor's degree under certain circumstances, such as if it was necessary to maintain employment, certification, or licensure or if the parent was a part of the state's employment plan.
 - » **Number of degrees:** Six states (Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming) limited the number of degrees a participant in postsecondary education can receive.
 - » **Previous postsecondary experience:** Five states (Illinois, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Ohio) restricted participation in postsecondary education based on previous postsecondary experience. One of these states also restricted training based on previous postsecondary experience.
 - » **Degree requirements:** Three states (Massachusetts, North Dakota, and Oklahoma) required that postsecondary education lead to either a certificate or degree. Two of these states also required that training lead to a certificate or degree.
 - » **No degree program allowed:** One state, Georgia,³⁷ did not allow postsecondary education to include a degree program, though it reports that “participation in vocational programs at colleges and universities is an approved activity.”

High School or GED Restrictions

Requiring Work

- **Work requirement:** Five states (Illinois, Kentucky, Utah,³⁸ Washington, and Wisconsin)³⁹ had some form of work requirements for non-teen and non-TANF families in a GED program or high school to be eligible for child care assistance.

Requiring a Minimum Number of Hours or Establishing Time Limits

- **Time limits:** Two states (New Mexico and Wisconsin)⁴⁰ placed restrictions on how long a parent could receive subsidies for high school or GED activities. These restrictions ranged from 12 to 24 months.
- **Hourly minimum:** One state, Florida, required that the student participate in the education activity at least 20 hours a week (more than full time in a traditional college program).

Requiring Accredited Institutions or Activities Likely to Lead to Employment

- **Accredited institution:** One state, Indiana, required that “for non-TANF families, activities must be completed through a certified or accredited secondary or postsecondary training organization or institution.”

Requiring a Certain Level of Performance

- **Grade minimum:** Illinois required that students maintain a C average, or in cases where grades were not used, meet comparable requirements of the education or training program.

Other Requirements or Restrictions

- **Age-related restrictions:** Three states (Connecticut, Nevada, and Rhode Island) only allowed subsidies for high school or GED programs to go to teen parents (and thus are classified for this analysis as not allowing this category).
- **Limited to one parent in two-parent families:** One state, Oklahoma, only allowed one parent at a time attend GED or English literacy classes.

English Literacy Restrictions

Requiring Work

- **Work requirement:** Three states (Illinois, Utah,⁴¹ and Washington) reported having work requirements for English-literacy clients. Parents were required to work because of their age (over 21 or nonteen parent, depending on the state), because of their length of participation in the program, or because the parent had to qualify based on employment, rather than education or training. The number of hours required a week ranged from 15 to 20 hours.

Requiring Minimum Number of Hours or Establishing Time Limits

- **Time limit:** One state, Wisconsin, limited eligibility for child care for English literacy programs to 24 months.
- **Hourly minimum:** One state, Florida, required that the student participate in the education activity at least 20 hours a week.

Requiring Accredited Institutions or Activities Likely to Lead to Employment

- **Qualifying institutions:** One state, Indiana, required that activities for non-TANF families had to be completed through a certified or accredited secondary or postsecondary training organization or institution.

Requiring a Certain Level of Performance

- **Grade minimum:** As noted above for high school and GED programs, one state, Illinois, required students to maintain a C average or comparable performance for programs that do not use grades.

Other Requirements or Restrictions

- **Limited to one parent in two-parent families:** One state, Oklahoma, limited child care for purposes of supporting English literacy or GED programs to one parent in two-parent families.

Notes

1. For a description of state and territory policies under the CCDF, see Minton et al. (2013).
2. As much as possible, the analyses focus specifically on whether parents who are not teenagers and who are not on TANF would be eligible for child care subsidies under state eligibility policies. This focus is because teen parents and parents on TANF are often a higher priority for getting subsidies. This analysis does not provide insights into whether these policies are also applicable to teen parents and parents on TANF.
3. The total number of states for the CCDF analysis is 50 states and the District of Columbia.
4. Urban Institute tabulations of 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation, which covers December 2008 to March 2009.
5. These data are taken from the administrative data states submit monthly to the Administration for Children and Families at the US Department of Health and Human Services. The data are unpublished and were supplied to Urban Institute researchers by the Office of Child Care. These data cover their child care subsidy expenditures, including how many children and families were supported, the ages of children, whether the families were also supported by TANF, reasons for care, and the type of child care supported. The Administration for Children and Families uses these data to compile information about program participation for an average month. These data are from the fiscal year 2011 CCDF case-level administrative data reported by states to the federal Office of Child Care on the ACF-801 form. The figures provided in this section have been calculated using the federal fiscal year 2011 ACF-801 data for an average month. They focus on (1) the total number of parents where the reported reason for receiving child care assistance was to support education and training (either alone, or coupled with work) and (2) data on characteristics such as whether families are receiving TANF, information about their children, and about the type of care they use. Note that state definitions of education and training may differ.
6. These totals include all parents served with CCDF funds and funds transferred from the TANF program to CCDF, including families receiving TANF income. These families are subject to CCDF rules and regulations. However, the totals do not include parents on TANF whose child care is paid for directly by TANF without being transferred. No data are available about the numbers of families in this latter group.
7. Workforce development activities can encompass a broad set of activities, including participating in education and training programs, job search, job readiness and supportive services to help individuals participate in training and work.
8. We cannot always easily disentangle these groups. For example, the data on CCDF recipients includes both teen parents and parents on TANF, though the latter were analyzed separately. Second, when examining eligibility policies, states use many terms and cutoffs for younger parents: “teens,” “minors,” “under age 20,” and “under age 21.” Though not precise, we categorize eligibility policies focusing on any of these ages as being in the “teen parent” category and thus exclude them from our analysis.
9. States may use federal funds to provide assistance to children whose household income does not exceed 85 percent of the state median income for a family of the same size. States may set income eligibility anywhere below that ceiling. State median incomes vary across states. In 2013, 85 percent of the state median income, averaged across states (not weighted by state population), was \$53,648 for a family of three, or approximately 275 percent of the federal poverty level. See Adams and Matthews (2013).
10. Children must reside with parents or guardians who are working or in education or training or who are in need of or receiving protective services. States define protective services and determine what activities qualify as work, education, and training. They determine whether gaps in the eligible activity are allowed, for example, in the case of job loss. States also determine whether a minimum number of hours of the activity is required or whether families may be eligible for combinations of activities and what rules might apply (for example, for a student who is also working). See Adams and Matthews (2013).
11. In 2014, the Workforce Investment Act was replaced by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
12. Urban Institute tabulations of 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation, which covers December 2008 to March 2009.

13. Studies of educational outcomes for those who have passed the GED indicate that these individuals may face greater difficulty completing college programs (CUNY, FL, WI, Others). The availability of the GED test as an alternative to completing high school may induce some high school students to drop out of school. See Heckman et al. (2008).
14. Note that this analysis focuses on whether parents who are not teenagers and who are not on TANF would be eligible under state eligibility policies. It does not provide insights into whether these policies are also applicable to teen parents and parents on TANF. This is because though the CCDF Policies Database often captures different requirements for eligibility for nonteen and non-TANF parents, the database does not systematically look at how the policies may vary for these two subgroups. Consequently, some policies may still apply to teen parents and TANF recipients if states don't set different policies for those families.
15. Certain eligibility rules only allow parents in education and training activities to receive subsidies for these activities if the parent is also working; the education and training activity doesn't confer eligibility on its own. For purposes of this study, we categorize states with these employment requirements as allowing the education and training activity with a work requirement because parents can technically get assistance for the activity if they are employed.
16. The only exceptions are (1) in the case of Connecticut (where the data was unverified for the period in question), (2) when our analysis led to a different answer because of our focus on nonteen and non-TANF parents, or (3) when it regarded work requirements. Each situation is discussed in the notes.

Also, a decision to limit the population to nonteen and non-TANF parents led to some situations where the data reported here differ from those reported in the CCDF Policies Database. Specifically, in some cases an answer that would appear as "yes" in the database (e.g., "yes, teen parents in GED are eligible") would appear as a "no" for the population of focus. In these situations, changed information is discussed in the notes to clarify that there is a difference from what is reported in the CCDF Policies Database and that the information has not been verified.

17. For example, Georgia defines training as "enrollment and attendance in an established, instructor-led vocational program leading to a specific job, career or certification. This does *not* include enrollment in degree programs at colleges or universities, but can include certified vocational programs at a college or university." See Georgia Department of Human Services (2013). In contrast, Florida defines educational activities as including "vocational education, GED preparation, compulsory education, on-the-job training, job readiness training or postsecondary education." See Office of Early Learning (2013). Unlike Florida and Georgia where the definitions overlap, Maine separates education from training: "A job training program means vocational training, field training, on-the-job training and other recognized job readiness training programs focused upon the acquisition of knowledge and skills that prepare the participant for employment. An educational program means a program at an elementary or secondary educational institution, a program that provides for completion of a secondary diploma or GED, a vocational education program, or postsecondary undergraduate institution." See Office of Child and Family Services (2009).
18. Colorado allows counties to choose whether to include training and education as an eligible activity. However, "activities can lead to an associate's degree or a bachelor's degree but they are limited to a first bachelor's degree." See Minton et al. (2013).
19. No information was found on whether Rhode Island allows postsecondary education.
20. At the time of this analysis, the CCDF Policies Database reported eligibility policies for high school and GED programs together. Thus, this discussion reports these two categories together. The database has updated how it captures eligibility policies for different types of education and will provide greater detail in time for the release of the October 2014 data.
21. Colorado allows counties to choose whether to include training and education as an eligible activity. However, "activities can lead to an associate's degree or a bachelor's degree but they are limited to a first bachelor's degree." See Minton et al. (2013).
22. All three states (Connecticut, Nevada, and Rhode Island) did allow subsidies for this purpose for teen parents.
23. The states that only approve it for younger parents, Connecticut, Nevada, and Rhode Island, are not included in the 47.

24. Colorado allows counties to choose whether to include training and education as an eligible activity. However, “activities can lead to an associate’s degree or a bachelor’s degree but they are limited to a first bachelor’s degree.” See Minton et al. (2013).
25. No information was found on eligibility for parents in English literacy programs in Rhode Island.
26. Children must be citizens or qualified noncitizens to receive assistance. States are required to verify immigration or citizenship status of recipients of federal public benefits, including CCDF-funded child care. Federal law establishes that the child is the primary beneficiary of the child care services; thus, states may only consider the child’s immigration status, not the parent’s, when determining eligibility. See Matthews (2010).
27. Unlike the policy information provided in the rest of the categories, this information was not verified by the states, and it ranges in date from 2008 to 2014.
28. In the CCDF Policies Database, eligibility rules that limit eligibility for education and training to families who can only participate based on employment are categorized as “no” to capture that education and training activities do not confer eligibility, but rather families must be employed to be eligible and then may also receive coverage for education and training activities. For the purposes of this analysis, these are categorized as “yes” because individuals can get assistance for the particular education and training activity if they are employed.
29. These data are taken from the administrative data states submit monthly to the Administration for Children and Families at the US Department of Health and Human Services. The data are unpublished and were supplied to Urban Institute researchers by the Office of Child Care. These data cover their child care subsidy expenditures, including how many children and families were supported, the ages of children, whether the families were also supported by TANF, reasons for care, and the type of child care supported. The Administration for Children and Families uses these data to compile information about program participation for an average month. These data are from the fiscal year 2011 CCDF case-level administrative data reported by states to the federal Office of Child Care on the ACF-801 form. The figures provided in this section have been calculated using the federal fiscal year 2011 ACF-801 data for an average month. They focus on (1) the total number of parents where the reported reason for receiving child care assistance was to support education and training (either alone, or coupled with work) and (2) data on characteristics such as whether families are receiving TANF, information about their children, and about the type of care they use. Note that state definitions of education and training may differ.
30. Four states—Iowa, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Wyoming—only report a primary reason for care and thus do not use the combined category of both employment and education and training. Consequently, the counts of families receiving care for the purposes of education and training may be underestimated in those four states because some parents who receive child care to support both work and workforce development may show up as only using it to support work.
31. These totals include all parents served with CCDF funds and funds transferred from the TANF program to CCDF. These families are subject to the CCDF program’s rules and regulations. However, they do not include parents on TANF whose child care is paid for directly by TANF without being transferred. No data are available about the number of families receiving child care assistance directly from TANF.
32. These numbers also varied when breaking it down for those who received child care to only support education and training, or for a combination of work and education and training. South Dakota had the highest proportion of families participating in education and training only at 84 percent, while Arizona had the fewest at less than 1 percent. Colorado had the highest proportion of families participating in education and training and employment at 90 percent, while six states had less than 1 percent (Arkansas, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, South Dakota, and Utah). (Four states do not report on the combined work and education and training category [Iowa, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and Wyoming].)
33. Kentucky was categorized as “no” for postsecondary education and training in the database. However, because parents can qualify for postsecondary education based on employment, they are counted as “yes” for postsecondary education in our sample.
34. Oregon is categorized as a “no” for postsecondary education and training in the database. However, because parents can qualify for postsecondary education based on employment, they are counted as a “yes” for postsecondary education in our sample.

35. Utah is categorized as a “no” for postsecondary education and training in the database. However, because parents can qualify for postsecondary education based on employment, they are counted as a “yes” for postsecondary education in our sample.
36. Georgia is categorized as a “no” for postsecondary education in the database because it does not allow participation in a degree program. Participation in vocational programs at colleges and universities is an approved activity. For our sample, we considered postsecondary education to be approved in Georgia.
37. Georgia is categorized as a “no” for postsecondary education in the database because it does not allow participation in a degree program. Participation in vocational programs at colleges and universities is an approved activity. For our sample, we considered postsecondary education to be approved in Georgia.
38. Utah was a verified “no” for supporting high school and GED programs because you can only qualify based on employment, but for our purposes we counted it as “yes.”
39. Illinois, Washington, and Wisconsin only have work requirements for older parents.
40. Wisconsin’s restriction applies only for older parents.
41. Utah was a verified “no” for supporting English literacy because parents can only qualify based on employment, but for the purposes of this analysis the response was categorized as “yes.”

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About the Authors

Gina Adams, a senior fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, is a national expert on factors that shape the affordability, quality, and supply of child care/early education services, and the ability of low-income families to benefit from them. Since the mid-1980s, she has worked on a range of child care and early education programs, including child care subsidies, Head Start/Early Head Start, state prekindergarten, two-generation models, and quality initiatives. She led seminal research on how families, providers, and agency staff experience the subsidy system that supported state and federal efforts to create subsidy systems that are family-friendly and fair to providers.

Adams is codirector of Urban's Kids in Context initiative. Her current research interests include working across program siloes to address challenges that instability and insecurity create for children's healthy development, helping states simplify their child care systems to align them with SNAP or Medicaid, examining the intersection between child care and workforce development strategies, exploring factors that affect whether children of immigrants participate in state prekindergarten programs, examining absenteeism in early childhood programs, and assessing two-generational models. She has led major multistate or multisite qualitative studies and mixed-method studies. She also has extensive experience in public speaking, technical assistance, and publishing for a wide-ranging audience.

Before joining Urban in 1999, Adams directed child care research at the Children's Defense Fund, and worked as a child care teacher for infants and as a home visitor for low-income Latino families.

Caroline Heller is a research assistant in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Since joining Urban in 2013, she has contributed to research focused primarily on early childhood, including early childhood education, child care, and home visiting. In addition to early childhood, Caroline is interested in a broad set of issues affecting the well-being of women and children.

Before joining Urban, Heller worked as a research analyst at a market research firm and interned for the Women’s Bureau at the US Department of Labor as well as for a financial advisory firm.

Heller graduated summa cum laude from Tulane University with a BS in economics and international relations in 2012. Her thesis focused on the social, political, and economic determinants of maternal mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa and received the Senior Scholar Award for Research in Economics.

Shayne Spaulding is a senior research associate in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where her work focuses on the evaluation of workforce development and postsecondary education programs. She has spent nearly 20 years in the workforce development field as an evaluator, technical assistance provider, and program manager. Her research has included studies of programs for young noncustodial fathers, sectoral employment programs, social-purpose staffing agencies, faith-based programs, and other workforce development topics.

Before joining Urban, Spaulding was the university director of Workforce Development for the City University of New York (CUNY), the nation’s largest public urban university system, where she oversaw a \$20 million Trade Adjustment Act Community College and Career Training grant from the US Department of Labor involving eight colleges operating career pathway programs for adult students. She was also the principal investigator for the CUNY Jobs Task Force, which examined trends in five industry clusters and how universities could better prepare graduates for available jobs. From 2001 to 2009, Spaulding worked for Public/Private Ventures, where she was a senior program director.

Spaulding serves on the board of the Workforce Professionals Training Institute and the advisory board of the New York City Labor Market Information Service at the CUNY Graduate Center.

Teresa Derrick-Mills is a senior research associate at the Urban Institute. She assists in the management of and researches to develop performance and outcome measurement tools for PerformWell, an online database of resources. She is the

project director and co-principal investigator of the Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System and the Head Start Leadership, Excellence, and Data Systems projects. She is also a team member of the Child Care and Workforce Development: Bridging the Gap project.

In her 20 years of research and management experience prior to joining the Urban Institute, Derrick-Mills contributed to early childhood systems-building in North Carolina through her executive-level work in a nonprofit where she designed and managed programs; provided technical assistance and training; conducted policy research; and served as a member of the Child Care Resource and Referral Council. She also spent a year in the federal government designing a new system of performance measurement for the Corporation for National and Community Service. Her research focuses on performance measurement and performance management, the intersection of nonprofit organizations and government, child-care and Head Start policies and provision, workforce development, and citizen engagement.

Derrick-Mills holds BS degrees in sociology and political science from Florida State University. She serves as an adjunct faculty member of the School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she earned her MPA, and she holds a PhD in public policy and public administration with a specialization in program evaluation from the George Washington University.



2100 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

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