

State: Michigan

Grantee: Public Policy Associates, Inc.

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Partner(s): Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start; Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Michigan Child Care Subsidy Improvement through Research: Child Care Policy Research Partnership Grant

This collaborative research partnership joins policy researchers at Public Policy Associates with key staff from the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Great Start (MDE/OGS), which is the Michigan Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) lead agency, and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, which determines eligibility for the Child Development and Care (CDC) program on behalf of the MDE/OGS. The overarching goal of this work is the ongoing improvement of access to quality child care for families in need, in support of employment and child development outcomes critical for families and the state's social and economic vitality.

The partnership will examine the impact of policy change on the access to quality child care for disadvantaged families in Michigan. The research design includes understanding the efficacy of subsidy policy on the quality of provider and continuity of care, with particular attention to its results by racial/ethnic group, poverty level, and educational level. The research will also study the mediating role of local child care markets on child care access. In addition to looking retrospectively at state child care subsidy policy changes, the partners will identify new policy enhancements to apply and research.

The research questions will be addressed through ongoing examination of administrative data on subsidy application, approval, use, and renewal, as well as on TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) work-requirement participation and employment. The partnership will also engage key stakeholder groups about their experiences with program policies and processes and subsidy use. These stakeholders include case workers, child care providers, and parents receiving the subsidy. The data findings will inform ongoing Michigan child-care subsidy policy decisions and will contribute to the broader literature about the effects of changes instituted under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014.