

A Dual Generation Approach: Examining the Impact of the CCDBG 12- Month Eligibility Period on Child Care Continuity and Parental Employment for Families Receiving Wisconsin Shares

Organization: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

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As the Lead Agency for administration of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides child care assistance to approximately 45,000 families each month through the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (CCDBG) has resulted in substantial policy changes, including implementation of the required 12-month eligibility period for families receiving Wisconsin Shares. The purpose of this proposed Phase I project is to develop a research and evaluation plan to determine how the 12-month eligibility period impacts access to and continuity of child care, parent selection of high-quality child care, and parental employment trends and outcomes for families receiving Wisconsin Shares. One of DCF's priorities is to utilize a whole family, or dual generation, approach to serving families. This project will take a dual generation approach by developing a research plan to better understand how implementation of the 12-month eligibility period has impacted both children and their parents receiving Wisconsin Shares.

The objectives of this Phase I project are to: 1) conduct a thorough review of the literature to inform our project plan; 2) develop a rigorous research and evaluation plan to examine the impact of the 12-month eligibility change on child care access and continuity; on parent selection of high-quality child care based on YoungStar, Wisconsin's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS); and on parent employment; 3) develop the design for a data warehouse that will combine administrative data from existing data systems to answer the research and evaluation plan questions; 4) develop an action plan to increase collaboration among researchers and policymakers at DCF to increase the utility of research results for informing policy. When the objectives of Phase I are complete, DCF will be well positioned to apply for Phase II funding. If funded, the goal of the Phase II project will be to carry out the research and evaluation project from Phase I and use the results to improve outcomes for families receiving Wisconsin Shares. Specifically, study results will be used to increase access and continuity of care for children, encourage parent selection of high-quality child care, and improve employment outcomes for parents through collaborative efforts among DCF researchers, DCF policymakers, and other Wisconsin stakeholders.