

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Connecting Children and Their Families to Early Care and Education Programs



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The Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education is pleased to offer a series of handouts designed for organizations that work with children and families who need help accessing the early care and education system. The handouts may be duplicated and are available for download on the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education website at childcare.lacounty.gov – click on “Resources for Families and Communities” and then the link for “Strengthening Families – Connecting Children and Their Families to Early Care and Education Programs”.

Case Management: Connecting Families to Child Care and Development Services

Using Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Maximizing Resources: Navigating the Subsidized Child Care and Development System

Registration and Enrollment: Developing a Portfolio for Child Care and Development

CASE MANAGEMENT:

CONNECTING FAMILIES TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES

The array of choices and requirements for subsidized early care and education services is not easy for many parents or primary caregivers*. It is particularly challenging for families experiencing extraordinary stress, such as interactions with the child welfare and/or probation systems. Case management or guidance through the process of obtaining information, applying for early care and education services, enrolling in a program, and then meeting the ongoing eligibility requirements is essential for children and their families to fully reap the benefits of participating in an early care and education program.

The following is a list of key points in the process where support may be critical:

Identifying the Need for Early Care and Education

- What type of care is needed? Is it available? Is the family eligible? How does the family access their child care and development options?

Contacting the Appropriate Child Care Resource & Referral Agency (R&R)

- Refer to the *“Using Child Care Resource and Referral Services”* guide to help the parents or primary caregivers have the conversation with or to engage the R&R on their behalf.

Preparing for the Call to Enroll

- Assist the parents or primary caregivers in creating a portfolio of documents needed to respond to an invitation to enroll. Use the guide, *“Registration and Enrollment: Developing a Portfolio for Early Care and Education”*.
- Check with the parents or primary caregivers periodically about whether they have received anything in the mail or received a call relating to the availability of early care and education services. If parents or primary caregivers do not respond, they may lose their opportunity to enroll their child. Encourage them to respond quickly to any contact and to keep any appointments made with an early care and education agency or to call to reschedule ahead of time.

Maintaining the Subsidized Early Care and Education Services

- Check with the families periodically to see if the early care and education services are working well for them.

* Primary caregiver for the purposes of this document refers to relative caregivers, foster parents or legal guardians.

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USING CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SERVICES

Contacting the local Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Agency is a first step to searching for an appropriate early care and education program, including requesting referrals to subsidized programs. Eight R&R Agencies throughout Los Angeles County provide families with referrals. Families call the L.A. County R&R Consumer Education Line at 1-888-922-4453 and then follow the instructions to connect to your local R&R Agency based on where you live or work. Families also may search the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles at <https://www.ccala.net/> for links to their local R&R.

Organizations working with families needing early care and education services are strongly encouraged to build working relationships with the R&Rs in their service area. Ideally, identify a single contact within the R&R who is familiar with the work and personnel of the referring organization so that when a staff person calls on behalf of a parent or primary caregiver* or the parent or primary caregiver calls directly, there is a basic understanding of need and circumstances.

Requesting Referrals

If there is no one contact, ask for the R&R department when you call. You will be connected to one of several R&R specialists assigned to searching a database for early care and education programs based on the parent or primary caregiver's stated needs and preferences.

1. Explain the need of the family:
 - “The parent or primary caregiver needs child care in order to continue to work”; **or**
 - “The child needs a part-day program to support his/her development”; **or**
 - “The parent or primary caregiver needs part-day, intermittent care in order to participate in counseling and support services.”
2. Tell the R&R specialist up front if the family needs referrals to subsidized early care and education services.
3. The R&R specialist will request specific information from (or about) the family:
 - Ages of the children for whom care is needed
 - Home address and zip code
 - Hours, days early care and education services are needed
 - Why services are needed, e.g. parent or primary caregiver is attending school, working, or participating in job training or is seeking a part-day program for the child's enrichment and school readiness or other
 - Where the services are needed, such as near home, school, or work (city, zip code)
 - Special considerations (such as a child with disabilities or other special needs, transportation issues, family's language is other than English)
 - Type of care family prefers: center-based or family child care home, full-day or part-day

* Primary caregiver for the purposes of this document refers to relative caregivers, foster parents or legal guardians.

4. Based on your answers, the R&R specialist will provide you with a list of referrals to early care and education programs that will most likely have openings. Typically, you will receive the following information:
 - Name of centers and/or family child care home providers
 - For centers, the addresses and telephone numbers
 - For family child care homes, the nearest major cross streets and the providers' telephone numbers

Most referrals will be provided to you on the telephone the day you call. In some cases, the R&R specialist may call you later the same day or later in the week with a list of referrals.

5. When receiving resources and/or when contacting possible early care and education programs, ask about characteristics of the center or family child care home that may be important in working with the family. For example, ask about the training the child care provider or center staff has received in working with at-risk families. In addition, explore the willingness of the center or family child care provider to have contact with your organization for additional support in working with the child and the family. The R&R specialist may be able to provide this information, or you may need to request this information from the early care and education programs directly.
6. Ask for materials for evaluating the quality of the referred early care and education programs and providers during the telephone screening and visit.

Researching the Referrals

1. It is up to the parent or primary caregiver to contact the centers and/or family child care home providers to conduct telephone interviews and/or schedule times to meet with them and visit their programs. There are quality checklists that may be helpful in determining the best situation for the child and the family. The R&R specialist can provide the parent or primary caregiver with such materials.

If the parent or primary caregiver is not satisfied with any of the centers or family child care homes that have been contacted and/or visited, call the R&R agency for additional referrals.

2. An in-person visit, with the child, to any potential center or family child care home is strongly encouraged. If possible, a joint visit by the parent or primary caregiver, child and support organization staff may be valuable in determining the best situation and establishing a working relationship with the new center or family child care provider. Ask about staff education and training, policies on payment, absences, etc. Does the center or family child care provider conduct developmental screenings of the children? How does the program use the developmental screenings? To whom do they refer families following a screening, if needed? Ask for the name of a parent who has used the program to call as a reference.
3. When a family needs an early care and education subsidy to access any of the referred services, they may conduct the visits in order to understand their choices and what is available. If the need is critical and the family can pay the cost of early care and education services for a period of time on their own without subsidy, then they are able to move forward to enrollment.

MAXIMIZING RESOURCES: NAVIGATING THE SUBSIDIZED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

This document was developed for organizations that may be in a position to help low to moderate income families access an array of early care and education programs. Specifically, it is intended to help community-based organizations match families to the most appropriate program based on their income eligibility and/or other criteria by prioritizing programs from the most restrictive criteria for determining their eligibility to those with the least restrictive criteria. As an example, Table 1 (see page 2) compares income ceilings between the federally funded Early Head Start and Head Start programs and the California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division (CDE/ELCD) Programs with two scenarios for referring families.

The remainder of the document is organized as follows:

- Introduction
- Early Head Start and Head Start Programs
- California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division Programs (CDE/ELCD)
- Transitional Kindergarten
- California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Child Care
- Pregnant and Parenting Teens Programs
- School Age Programs

Introduction

Early care and education services are intended to meet two purposes:

- 1) Promote children’s optimal development while preparing them for school and life; and
- 2) Provide families with the support they need to gain and maintain economic stability through employment and/or education.

Navigating the early care and education system can be a complicated experience, particularly for low- and moderate-income families eligible for subsidized early care and education services. Their challenges are compounded by the lack of adequate federal and state government funding to support all of the eligible families. As a result, families are vying for limited resources that exist across most early care and education program types designed to serve them.

While some programs offer full-day, full-year services to support working families, others by design are purposely tailored to prepare children for kindergarten enrollment and success in school and are typically offered part of the day and part of the year. Ironically, there is a more generous supply of the part-day programs when most families are seeking full-day services to support their work schedules. Far from ideal, families unable to access full-day services due to the limited supply may find ways to create a patchwork of services that support parents while they work and contribute to their child’s optimal overall well-being.

The next sections are offered as a menu of options that may be available to the families you serve. Each section provides a brief description of the programs, a summary of the eligibility requirements and information on how to connect with the program.



Table 1. Comparing Income Ceilings Across Early Care and Education Programs

Family Size	Income Ceilings for Early Head Start and Head Start*				Income Ceilings for Continuous Eligibility in CDE/ELCD-contracted Programs ¹	
	Monthly Income (100% FPL)	Yearly Income (100% FPL) ²	Monthly Income (130% FPL)	Yearly Income (130% FPL)	Monthly Income (85% SMI)	Yearly Income (85% SMI)
1	\$1,040	\$12,490	\$1,353	\$16,237		
2	\$1,409	\$16,910	\$1,831	\$21,983	\$5,343	\$64,120
3	\$1,777	\$21,330	\$2,320	\$27,729	\$5,802	\$69,620
4	\$2,145	\$25,750	\$2,789	\$33,475	\$6,719	\$80,623
5	\$2,514	\$30,170	\$3,268	\$39,221	\$7,794	\$93,522
6	\$2,882	\$34,590	\$3,747	\$44,967	\$8,869	\$106,422
7	\$3,250	\$39,010	\$4,226	\$50,713	\$9,070	\$108,841
8	\$3,619	\$43,430	\$4,704	\$56,459	\$9,272	\$111,259
9	\$3,987	\$47,850	\$5,183	\$62,205	\$9,473	\$113,678
10	\$4,355	\$52,270	\$5,662	\$67,951	\$9,675	\$116,096
11	\$4,724	\$56,690	\$6,141	\$73,697	\$9,876	\$118,516
12	\$5,092	\$61,110	\$6,620	\$79,443	\$10,078	\$120,934

*Head Start determines family eligibility based on their annual income, not their monthly income; once the family is determined eligible, the child is considered eligible through the program year and the subsequent program year. For CDE/ELCD-contracted programs, a family’s adjusted monthly income must be at 85% of State Median Income (SMI). Families are required to report increases in income that exceed the 85% threshold.

Scenario 1:

- Family of four, two parent family with two young children.
- Family’s combined monthly income is approximately \$2,000; yearly income varies but is less than \$25,750.
- While the family may be eligible for Early Head Start and Head Start as well as a CDE/ELCD-contracted program, to maximize resources it is recommended that the family begin with exploring enrolling their child or children into an Early Head Start and/or Head Start Program depending on the ages of the children.

Scenario 2:

- Family of four, two parent family with two young children.
- Family’s combined monthly income is approximately \$6,000; yearly income is less than \$80,000.
- Family’s combined income makes them ineligible for Early Head Start/Head Start; however, based on income they may be eligible for a CDE/ELCD-contracted program.

¹ California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division. Management Bulletin 19-03. State Median Income and Income Ranking Table for Fiscal Year 2019–20. Retrieved on December 30, 2019 from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1903.asp>.

² Federal Register. Annual Update of the HHS Poverty Guidelines - 2019 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia. February 1, 2019. Retrieved on September 17, 2019 from <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/02/01/2019-00621/annual-update-of-the-hhs-poverty-guidelines>.

Early Head Start and Head Start Preschool Programs

Serving pregnant women, children ages birth to three and preschool age children

Program Descriptions

- **Early Head Start:** A “no cost to family” comprehensive early education program for low-income pregnant women and infants and toddlers from ages birth to three, including young children with disabilities. Services may be provided in the home of the family (home-based), a licensed family child care home, and/or a center. In addition to comprehensive early education services, other services include providing and linking families with health, mental health, disability, nutrition and social services. Early Head Start has a strong parent involvement component and services specifically designed for pregnant women.
- **Head Start:** A “no cost to family” part-day (3½ hours) or full-day (six plus hours) comprehensive child development program for low-income preschoolers ages three to five years old.³ Head Start generally operates from September to June. Some Head Start programs offer full-day programs that operate from 10 to 12 months. Children in foster care, families at risk and/or in crisis, families experiencing homelessness, and children with disabilities are prioritized. Additional selection criteria may be used to determine priority for services. Comprehensive services include providing and linking families with social services, health, mental health, disabilities, and nutrition services. Head Start also has a strong parent involvement component.

Income Limits

Families are eligible for Early Head Start and Head Start Preschool Programs if their families’ income is below the federal poverty level. Children in foster care, experiencing homelessness or with families receiving public assistance are automatically eligible regardless of income. Early Head Start and Head Start Preschool Programs may serve families with incomes up to 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) if space is available and the needs of all other eligible children are met. At least 10% of enrollment must include children with disabilities. Table 2 shows the yearly income caps at the FPL and up to 130% of the FPL by the size of the family.

Family Size	Family Yearly Income (100% FPL)	Family Yearly Income (130% FPL)
1	\$12,490	\$16,237
2	\$16,910	\$21,983
3	\$21,330	\$27,729
4	\$25,750	\$33,475
5	\$30,170	\$39,221
6	\$34,590	\$44,967
7	\$39,010	\$50,713
8	\$43,430	\$56,459

For families/households with more than eight persons, add \$4,420 for each additional person.

* Based on 2019 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Head Start determines family eligibility based on their annual income; once the family is determined eligible, the child will be considered eligible through the end of the program year and the subsequent program year. Early Head Start and Head Start Preschool Program services are free.

³ By 2019, 50 percent of Head Start center-based programs will operate at least six hours per day. By 2021, 100 percent of Head Start center-based programs will operate at least six hours per day.

How to Connect

There are seven Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (R&Rs) throughout Los Angeles County to provide families with referrals to early care and education programs, including referrals to Early Head Start and Head Start Programs. Families may call the L.A. County R&R Consumer Education Line toll-free at 1-888-922-4453 to be connected to their local R&R. For immediate access to information regarding Early Head Start and Head Start, contact the Los Angeles County Office of Education at (877) Pre-K-Kid (773-5543) or visit www.PreKKid.org.

California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division (CDE/ELCD) Programs

Serving children from birth to three, preschool age children and school age children up to 13 years old

Program Descriptions

The CDE/ELCD contracts with school districts, colleges/universities and organizations to provide early care and education services to children from low- to moderate-income families. The CDE/ELCD holds contracts for the following program types:

- **California State Preschool Programs (CSPPs):** Offer part-day, part-year developmentally appropriate child development services to three- and four-year old children from low income families living in the local community. Wrap around services available to parents presenting a need for full-day services. Families with case plans with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) receive priority for enrollment as space is available. CSPPs provide free meals and snacks, offer parent education, and encourage parent participation. Families are referred to health and social services, as needed. Families are assessed a fee based on their income for full-day services; families that become ineligible due to income changes are required to pay the full cost of care to remain in the program. The following describes the unique features of the part-day program and with the wrap-around component.
 - ☀ **CSPP Part-Day:** Free, part-day (3½ hours) comprehensive child development program for income eligible families that generally operates from August through June or September through June. Families establish income eligibility at the time of enrollment; the child remains eligible for the part-day program for the remainder of the year.
 - ☀ **CSPP with wrap-around:** Full day child development program for three- to four-year-old children from low-income families. To qualify for the wrap-around, parents must be working, seeking employment, enrolled in school or a vocational job training program, seeking permanent housing for family stability, or be incapacitated.
 - ☀ **Early Care and Education Centers:** Comprehensive child development program for low-income infants and toddlers (birth to three), and school age children (up to 13 years old) in a group setting. Centers may serve one age group or combination of age groups, separating children into classrooms by age group. The centers provide developmentally appropriate activities, nutrition, health screening, parent education, staff development and referrals to social services. To qualify, parents must be working, seeking employment, enrolled in school or a vocational job training program, seeking permanent housing for family stability, or be incapacitated.

- **Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHENs):** Groups of family child care homes that operate under sponsoring organizations. The sponsoring organization, such as a center or local R&R, provide consultation, training, resource materials and support services to participating family child care providers and enrolled families. Participating family child care homes are licensed to serve up to eight or 14 children from birth through 12 years old. Services are offered full-day and year-round.
- **Alternative Payment (AP) Programs:** Subsidized child care provided primarily in private centers, family child care homes, or by a family, friend or neighbor (also known as license-exempt) to children from birth through 12 years old. In Los Angeles County, there are 11 agencies (including the eight R&Rs) that administer AP Programs. Additionally, the Department of Children and Family Services (see description unique to DCFS in next section) administers an AP Program.

Income Limits

Families must be at or below 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) to enroll in a CDE/ELCD-contracted program. Table 3 delineates the monthly and annual income ceilings by family size used to determine their eligibility for enrollment in a program contracted by the CDE/ELCD.

Table 3. Income Ceilings for Enrollment in California Department of Education Early Education and Support Division (CDE/ELCD)-contracted Programs		
Family Size	Family Monthly Income for Enrollment	Family Yearly Income for Enrollment
1-2	\$5,343	\$64,120
3	\$5,802	\$69,620
4	\$6,719	\$80,623
5	\$7,794	\$93,522
6	\$8,869	\$106,422
7	\$9,070	\$108,841
8	\$9,272	\$111,259
9	\$9,473	\$113,678
10	\$9,675	\$116,096
11	\$9,876	\$118,516
12	\$10,078	\$120,934

* Based on 85% of the 2019-20 State Median Income

Once enrolled, families remain income eligible until their adjusted monthly income exceeds 85% of SMI based on family size. Families are required to report increases in income that exceeds the 85% threshold. Families that become ineligible are required to pay the full cost of care to remain in the program.

Families enrolled in a full-day CSPP, early care and education center, AP Program, or a family child care home participating in a FCCHEN are required to pay a monthly fee on a sliding scale depending on their income unless they are exempt from paying fees.

Families exempt from paying fees are as follows:

- Families below 40% of the SMI do not pay fees.
- Families with children enrolled in part-day CSPP
- Families under the supervision of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) may be exempt from paying fees for up to 12 months when determined necessary by the DCFS Children's Services Worker (CSW).

- Families with children at risk of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation as determined by a legally qualified professional in a legal, medical, or social services agency or emergency shelter may be exempt from fees for up to a total of 12 cumulative months.
- Families receiving CalWORKs cash aid.

Fees may range from \$31 to \$265 per month for part-day or \$61 to \$529 per month for full-day depending on family size and income.⁴ Full day is defined as enrollment for 6 to 6½ or more hours per day. Fees are usually paid to the program; some AP Program agencies have the contracted provider collect the fees directly from the parents.

How to Connect

Families who may be eligible to enroll their child in a CDE/ELCD-contracted program should contact their local R&R for referrals. Families may call the L.A. County R&R Consumer Education Line toll-free at 1-888-922-4453 to be connected to their local R&R. The R&Rs provide referrals to licensed early care and education programs – centers and family child care homes – including to CDE/ELCD-contracted programs. For a listing of the CDE/ELCD-contracted early care and education programs by zip code, visit the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education website at childcare.lacounty.gov; go to “Resources for Parents and Communities”.

Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Child Care Assistance Program

Serving children from birth up to 13 years old

Program Description

DCFS administers an AP Program funded by the CDE to serve “at risk” children and families. “Home of parent” cases, relative caregivers, and teen parents under the supervision of DCFS and living with their birth parent, a relative, or in a licensed foster home may be eligible for subsidized child care for the duration of a child protective service plan. Families must use licensed early care and education programs. If the Children’s Services Worker (CSW) decides child care is a necessary part of the family’s case plan, the CSW will submit a child care referral form to the DCFS Child Care Unit. For more information, call (562) 345-6629.

⁴ California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division. Management Bulletin 19-04. Family Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2019–20. June 17, 2019. Retrieved on September 17, 2019 from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1904.asp>.

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Children in Foster Care

Provides time-limited, immediate access to child care services for foster children birth to five years old

Program Description

The Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles works in partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to increase the number of foster children successfully placed in home-based family care settings, increase capacity of child care programs to meet the needs of foster children in their care, and maximize funding to support the child care needs of eligible families. The program maintains three components: navigators to assist eligible foster care resource families with finding child care; time limited vouchers to help pay for child care costs for foster children birth through age 5 and their siblings on a temporary basis; and program access to trauma-informed care training and coaching. Referrals to the Child Care Bridge Program must be made through the resource family's Children's Social Worker (CSW) at DCFS.

Transitional Kindergarten and Expanded Transitional Kindergarten

Serving four year old children

Program Description

- **Transitional Kindergarten (TK):** Established by the School Readiness Act of 2010,⁵ TK is intended to ensure that children are better prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. TK is the first of a two year kindergarten program that uses a modified curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate. The program is offered on a voluntary basis at every elementary or school district. Eligibility for TK is extended to children whose fifth birth falls on or between September 2nd and December 2nd of the academic school year.
- **Expanded Transitional Kindergarten:** A free, early education option children who turn five years old after December 2nd during the current academic school year offered by some school districts.

Income Limits

Transitional Kindergarten is free to all age eligible children regardless of income. Eligibility for Expanded Transitional Kindergarten may vary by school district.

How to Connect

Parents interested in enrolling their children in a Transitional Kindergarten or Expanded Transitional Kindergarten program should contact their local elementary school or school district. *Expanded Transitional Kindergarten is not offered in all school districts.*

⁵ SB 1381 (Chapter 705, Approved September 30, 2010).

California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Child Care

Serving children from birth up to 13 years old

Program Descriptions

CalWORKs provides temporary cash aid to families with children under the age of 19. For families with income and property, the amounts must be below the State limits. Most adults are limited to receiving up to 48 months of cash aid over a lifetime. Unless exempt, CalWORKs participants are required to participate in the Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) Program and engage in welfare-to-work activities, which will ultimately lead to self-sufficiency and independence from public assistance. Parents or caretaker relatives may be eligible for an exemption from participation in welfare-to-work activities if providing care for a child under 24 months old. Exempt parents who choose to volunteer to participate in welfare activities may be eligible for subsidized child care services.

For CalWORKs recipients participating in welfare-to-work activities that lead to employment and self-sufficiency, subsidized child care is available for their children up to age 12 and children with special needs and severe disabilities to age 18.

There are three stages of CalWORKs Child Care:

- **Stage 1 Child Care:** Stage 1 Child Care is funded by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and is locally administered by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) through contracts with the ten local AP Program agencies. Stage 1 Child Care begins with a parent's entry into a County-approved welfare-to-work activity or employment and is available until the parent terminates from CalWORKs cash aid or the parent's welfare to work activity or employment and child care arrangements are stable. Families may be eligible to continue Stage 1 Child Care assistance if there are insufficient funds in Stages 2 Child Care. Parental choice affords parents with the option to select from 1) licensed child care providers such as early care and education centers or family child care homes; or 2) license-exempt child care providers such as family, friends, or neighbors.
- **Stage 2 Child Care:** The CDE contracts with the local AP Program agencies to administer Stage 2 Child Care, which is available to CalWORKs cash-aided parents with stable welfare-to-work activities/employment and to former CalWORKs recipients. Families may be eligible for Stage 2 Child Care for up to 24 months after they stop receiving cash aid. Parents may select from 1) licensed child care providers such as early care and education centers or family child care homes; or 2) license-exempt child care providers such as family, friends, or neighbors.
- **Stage 3 Child Care:** The CDE contracts with the local AP Program agencies to administer Stage 3 Child Care. Stage 3 supports families as they move off of public assistance and into self-sufficiency and have exhausted their up to 24 months of eligibility for Stage 2. Families can continue to receive Stage 3 Child Care until they no longer meet the income eligibility requirements or their children exceed the age limit. Parents may select from 1) licensed child care providers such as early care and education centers or family child care homes; or 2) license-exempt child care providers such as family, friends, or neighbors.

Income Limits

- **CalWORKs Cash Aid:** Families with children may be eligible for CalWORKs cash aid if they meet certain eligibility criteria. Table 5 lists the CalWORKs applicant income limits for 2017-18; keep in mind that a number of other factors in addition to income are used to determine eligibility and grant amounts.

Family Size	Gross Income Limit
1	\$714
2	\$1,172
3	\$1,453
4	\$1,724
5	\$1,967
6	\$2,213
7	\$2,432
8	\$2,646
9	\$2,871
10	\$3,116
For family units with more than 10 members, add \$28 for each additional member.	

As of January 1, 2015, verification of school attendance is no longer required at the time of application and redetermination. As a result, the CalWORKs grant will no longer exclude the needs of the parent(s) or caretaker relative(s) of a child younger than 16 years old who is not regularly attending school. The needs of a child who is 16 years or older are excluded when the school district or county School Attendance Review Board (SARB) reports the child as a chronic truant, unless good cause.

- **CalWORKs Child Care:** Families receiving CalWORKs cash aid are exempt from paying child care family fees. Families no longer receiving cash aid will be required to pay a monthly fee on a sliding scale depending on their income, adjusted for family size. Families may be eligible for CalWORKs Child Care until their adjusted monthly income exceeds 85% of the most recent State Median Income (SMI) for their family size or until their regularly scheduled recertification date, whichever comes first. Families whose adjusted monthly income exceeds 85% of the SMI will have reached the exit threshold and are no longer eligible for ongoing subsidized child care services.

How to Connect

- **CalWORKs Cash Aid:** Families can apply at their local DPSS office or via the “Your Benefits Now” website at <https://dpssbenefits.lacounty.gov>. To learn more about CalWORKs including information on eligibility, time limits and location of the local DPSS, visit www.dpss.lacounty.gov or call 1-866-613-3777.

⁶ Minimum Basic Standards of Adequate Care (MBSAC). Retrieved on December 30, 2019 from https://ca.db101.org/glossary_item.aspx?item-id=1372.

CalWORKs Child Care: Families currently receiving cash aid should contact their DPSS Eligibility Worker (EW) or GAIN Services Worker to request child care. The EW or GAIN Services Worker will forward the referral to the appropriate contracted AP Program agency to inform the agency of the family's need for child care services and to begin the child care eligibility determination process. Additionally, current and former CalWORKs recipients may directly contact any of the local AP Program agencies to initiate a child care request or to obtain information regarding subsidized child care program availability and eligibility requirements. Families may call the L.A. County R&R Consumer Education Line toll-free at 1-888-922-4453 to be connected to their local AP Program agency.

Pregnant and Parenting Teens

Serving pregnant and parenting teens and their children

Teen parents are encouraged to explore enrolling their children in one of the many programs listed in this handout, including Early Head Start and Head Start, programs holding contracts with the CDE/ELCD, and the programs listed in the school readiness section. Three programs specifically intended to ensure that teen parents receive the support they need to graduate from high school are summarized in this section.

Program Descriptions

CalWORKs Stage 1 Child Care for Cal-Learn Teens: Cal-Learn is a mandatory program for CalWORKs participants receiving cash assistance, under 19 years of age, are pregnant or parenting, and have not completed high school. Teens enrolled in Cal-Learn prior to their 19th birthday may volunteer to remain in Cal-Learn until they graduate from high school or turn age 20, whichever comes first.

Cal-Learn participants are required to enroll in high school or an equivalency program. The Cal-Learn Program provides payments for child care, transportation and school supplies, intensive case management through the Adolescent Family Life Programs (AFLPs); bonuses of \$100 up to four times per year for report cards with average grades of "C" or better, and no bonuses or sanction for report cards showing average grades of "D". Cal-Learn teens may also earn a \$500 bonus upon completing their high school education. Teens not making adequate progress in school or not submitting a timely report card without a good reason will be sanctioned up to four times per school year. The family's CalWORKs grant will be reduced by \$50 or \$100 depending on the reason for the sanction, i.e. late report card or not making adequate progress.

Pregnant and parenting teens under the age of 18 may qualify for cash aid if they meet one of the following conditions: 1) they do not have a parent or adult relative with whom to live (parents are either deceased or whereabouts unknown); 2) the teen parents or their child would be at risk for abuse, neglect or sexual exploitation if they lived with the teens' parent or relative; 3) the teens have lived apart from their parent or adult relative for at least 12 months before their child was born or before applying for cash aid; 4) they are married or legally emancipated; or 5) the senior parent or guardian does not allow the teen parent to live with him/her.

Teen parents participating in Cal-Learn may be eligible to receive Stage 1 Child Care; teen parents are not required to work, however they must attend school. The 48-month limit for cash aid does not begin until the teen parent has left Cal-Learn.

- **Adolescent Family Life Programs (AFLPs):** AFLPs provide intensive, in-home case management services to pregnant and parenting teens with infants up to 18 months old. Pregnant teens and mothers under 18 years old with children under 12 months old receive priority for participation as space is available. Among the services provided by AFLPs are: promoting self-sufficiency by assisting teens in meeting their educational and career goals; promoting healthy personal and family relationships; and assisting teens and their children with access to health care resources and social services, including resources for finding and selecting an early care and education program as well as increasing their parenting skills to help them raise healthier children.
- **School District Pregnant and Parenting Teen Programs:** Twelve school districts offer pregnant and parenting teen programs designed to support the academic success of pregnant and parenting teens, increase the availability of support services for enrolled students, and provide early care and education services to their children.

Income Limits

- **Cal-Learn:** If the teen parent lives at home, his/her parent's income will be counted to determine if the teen parent and the child are eligible. If his/her parent is receiving CalWORKs, the baby will be added to the parent's case. If the teen parent lives with a non-needy caretaker relative, the non-needy caretaker relative's income will not be considered in determining eligibility.
- **AFLPs:** There are no income requirements for teens to participate in the AFLPs. However, there are State determined entrance criteria. In order to be eligible for AFLP, teens must be under 18 years of age, pregnant or parenting, and have a child less than 18 months old.
- **School District Pregnant and Parenting Teen Programs:** There are no income eligibility requirements for teens to participate in the programs, some of which offer early care and education services.

How to Connect

- **Cal-Learn:** For more information about Cal-Learn, including the eligibility requirements and the services available under the program including child care, contact DPSS at <http://dpss.lacounty.gov> or 10866-613-3777, visit www.ladpss.org/dpss/calworks/callearn or call your local AFLP.

AFLPs: Four organizations administer AFLPs that serve pregnant and parenting teens within their geographic area:

ALTAMED Health Services Corporation

Youth Services Division
512 South Indiana Street
Los Angeles, CA 90063
(323) 307-0160

Satellite Office:
711 East Wardlow Road, Suite 203
Long Beach, CA 900807
(562) 595-8040

El Nido Family Centers

Administrative Offices
10200 Sepulveda Boulevard, Suite 350
Mission Hills, CA 91345
(818) 830-3646

2152 West Manchester Avenue, Suite 4
Los Angeles, CA 90047
(323) 971-7360

12243 Glenoaks Boulevard
Pacoima, CA 91331
(818) 896-7776

Foothill Family Services

Teen Family Services
1801 Huntington Drive
Duarte, CA 91010
(626) 993-3000

Project NATEEN

Children's Hospital Los Angeles
5000 Sunset Boulevard, 7th Floor, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90027
(323) 361-5981

School District Pregnant and Parenting Teen Programs: Twelve school districts throughout Los Angeles County a program as follows:

ABC Unified School District
Teen Parenting Program
(562) 926-7136 x22200

Baldwin Park Unified School District
Cal-SAFE Program
(626) 962-3311 x5953

Bassett Unified School District
Teen Parenting Program at Nueva Vista
(626) 931-3114 or (626) 931-3177

Charter Oak Unified School District
Virtual Academy for Pregnant Teens
(626) 966-8331

Glendale Unified School District
Young Parents Education Program
(818) 247-4805

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
Cal-SAFE Program
(626) 933-8879

Los Angeles Unified School District
Teen Parenting Program

- Cleveland High School - (818) 845-3670
- Locke High School - (323) 755-0102
- Ramona High School - (323) 266-7650
- Roosevelt High School - (323) 780-6535

Montebello Unified School District
Pregnant and Parenting Program
(323) 728-0121 or (323) 887-7946

Pomona Unified School District
Cal-SAFE Program
(909) 397-4740 x5636

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District
Infant/Toddler Care and Santa Monica High School
(310) 395-3204 x71167

Whittier Union High School District
Teen Parent Program and Infant Development Center
(562) 698-8121 x1297

** Los Angeles County Office of Education does not offer Cal-SAFE, however does provided education services to pregnant and parenting teens; very limited child care is available. Call (562) 940-1864.

School Age Programs

Serving school age children from kindergarten up to 13 years old or through 12th grade

Families frequently face challenges seeking services for their children before and after school and when schools are not in session. This section describes two of the larger programs – the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the After School Education and Safety Programs - targeted to school age children from kindergarten through 12th grade. It is not comprehensive in that the availability of school age programs is often determined by the offerings available through school districts, cities and local community-based organizations. Local schools are an excellent starting place for information about resources for school age children, some of which may be based on the school site, or at a community-based organization. While not intending to omit information on how individual school districts administer and operate their school age programs, special consideration is given in this section to Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) as it is the largest school district in the county as well as the state and among the largest in the country. Local libraries and County and City Park and Recreation Departments are other potential sources of services for school age children.

In addition to the programs listed in this section, income eligible families with children from birth through 12 years old may enroll in a CDE/ELCD-contracted program as funding and space is available (see section on California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division (CDE/ELCD) Programs, specifically the Early Care and Education centers, Alternative Payment Programs and Family Child Care Home Education Networks).

Program Descriptions

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC):** Provides before and after school programs for disadvantaged kindergarten through 12th grade students (particularly students attending schools in need of improvement) with academic enrichment opportunities and supportive services to help the students meet state and local standards in core content areas. The 21st CCLCs also focus on family literacy and related educational supports. Some programs operate during vacation and summer breaks.
- **After School Education and Safety (ASES) Programs:** With funding from the CDE, schools and local community resources partner to provide literacy, academic enrichment and safe constructive alternatives for students in kindergarten through eighth/ninth grade (elementary and middle schools). Program elements include: 1) education and literacy through tutoring and homework assistance in academic subjects; and 2) education enrichment that includes recreation and prevention activities. ASES Programs operate for a minimum of 15 hours per week and at least until 6:00 p.m. on regular school days. Before School Programs operate one to two hours per day. Some, but not all, programs operate during vacation and summer breaks.

· **Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD – Beyond the Bell Branch):** LAUSD, through its Beyond the Bell Branch and as the grant recipient and administrator of their district's 21st CCLC and ASES Program funds, contracts with a number of community-based organizations – such as LA's BEST, Woodcraft Rangers, LA Conservation Corps, Afterschool All-Stars, and more – to deliver before and after school services throughout their district. LAUSD also provides services directly through units such as the Youth Development Program (YDP), Youth Services Plus (YS Plus) and "Ready, Set, Go! – Before School Program". As such, LAUSD provides funds for the operation of the following programs that are designed to ensure that school age children have access to high quality, safe and supervised educational, enrichment and recreational programs:

🔔 **Beyond the Bell Branch:** An administrative department of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), ensures that all students within the district have access to high quality, safe and supervised educational, enrichment and recreational programs that engage and inspire learning and achievement beyond the regular school day. Beyond the Bell Branch connects students and youth to their home, school and community through a variety of programs that are provided and operated by the school district and its partner agencies before and after school and on weekends. Beyond the Bell programs offer academic intervention programs, before and after school programs, and free tutoring.

☀️ **LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) After School Enrichment Program:** In a unique partnership with the City of Los Angeles and LAUSD, provides a safe haven for children, ages 5 to 12, at 200 elementary school sites each day during the critical hours after school at no cost to parents. LA's BEST provides its students with homework assistance, a cognitively-based enrichment activity (i.e. science club, math club, literacy activity), a fun recreation activity of their choosing (i.e., dance, sports, art, cooking), and a nutritious snack. In addition to daily core activities, LA's BEST has several enhanced programs in the arts, fitness, science and technology, typing, or literacy. LA's BEST also offers a Summer Learning Program at select school sites throughout LA to decrease the summer learning gap.

Income Limits

- **21st CCLC and ASES:** Every student attending a public school operating an ASES Program is eligible to participate as space allows. Any school and public or private organization operating a 21st CCLC must provide opportunities for the participation of both public and private school students in the area as space allows.
- **Beyond the Bell Branch:** The before and after school programs operated under Beyond the Bell Branch are available by application to students attending that particular school site as space is available. The free tutoring is available only to students eligible for free and reduced lunches and attending need to improve (Title I) schools.
- **LA's BEST:** Open to children who regularly attend a school where the program is located and at no cost to parents. Students are enrolled on a first come, first serve basis with some spaces reserved for special referrals by principals and counselors of students whom they feel are in great need of such a program.

How to Connect

- **21st CCLC and ASES:** The R&Rs provide referrals to school age programs including 21st CCLCs and ASES Programs. Families may call toll-free 1-888-922-4453 to be connected to their local R&R. Families are also encouraged to check with their child's school to find out if a 21st CCLC or ASES is hosted on the school site. If the school does not offer the services, contact the family's school district to find out if there are programs on other school sites and whether their child may enroll in the program.
- **Beyond the Bell Branch:** For more information about Beyond the Bell and its programs, visit <http://btb.lausd.net> or call (213) 241-7900.
- **LA's BEST:** Visit <https://lasbest.org> to learn more about the program offerings; to locate a school offering a LA's BEST program, go to <https://lasbest.org/find-a-site/>. For those without Internet access, call (213) 978-0801.

Change is constant. Please feel free to contact the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education by telephone at (213) 639-6202 with updates to the information contained in this document.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT:

DEVELOPING A PORTFOLIO FOR SUBSIDIZED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

The California Department of Education/Early Learning and Care Division-contracted early care and education programs require documentation to verify family and income status as well as work and school/training status of parents or other primary caregivers*. If there is more than one parent or primary caregiver in the home, or more than one adult with some responsibility for the care and shelter of the children, then documents for that other adult must also be maintained.

The following documents are important to collect and maintain in a safe place for easy reference and duplication when needed. Note that a number of items are relevant only when the child is under the custody of the parent.

- Copy of each child's original birth certificate.
Verifies the relationship between parents and children and to verify family size.
- Contact information for the employer: name and address of business, name of supervisor or manager, telephone number or e-mail address.
Used to contact the employer to verify employment and work schedule. Other methods may be used if contacting the employer would pose a risk to the parent or primary caregiver.
- Copies of other documents verifying income sources and amounts. Examples:
 - Copies of SSI, unemployment, or Workers Compensation checks for a month or more
 - Copies of child support checks*Used to document types of income other than from employment.*
- Work schedules, if the parent or primary caregiver works variable schedules from week to week or month to month. The schedule may be from work or the parent or primary caregiver may develop a record of past schedules by marking a calendar.
Verifies the hours and days care is needed.
- Copies of college or job training enrollment forms; transcripts or other grade/progress reports issued from the college or training institution; class or training schedules.
Verifies that the parent or primary caregiver's need for early care and education services is due to participation in education or training.

If the child is residing under the custody of the parent(s):

- Copies of two to three months of pay stubs for each working parent in the family. The pay stubs should state gross and net income as well as the hours of work for the pay period if parent is paid by the hour. The dates on the pay stubs should be current. As new stubs are available, old ones may be discarded.
Verifies income for working parents.
- Copies of business licenses, tax returns, business cards or ads, space rental agreements, business invoices and receipts. In some instances, client appointment lists may be required.
Verifies that an individual is self-employed, their income from the self-employment or business, and the hours of work.

* Primary caregiver for the purposes of this document refers to relative caregivers, foster parents or legal guardians.

- Copies of legal separation or divorce papers, or rent receipts or rental agreements, utility bills, or other records that identify the head of household (applying parent or primary caregiver). The address on the records should match the address used by the parent to apply for care. Child support documentation or court orders may also be used to verify single parent status.

Necessary when the applying parent indicates they are a single parent and head of household.

Information needed when enrolling a child in an early care and education program. Many of the same records or documents will be needed when children enroll in elementary school.

- Copy of each child's original birth certificate with name, date of birth and gender.
- Parent or primary caregiver's contact information, including name, address and telephone numbers (e.g., home, work, school, and/or cell).
- Names and contact information of individuals who could be called in an emergency when parent or primary caregiver is unavailable.
- Physical form (provided by the early care and education program) with current TB clearance completed by a doctor. For your home records, keep forms from visits to pediatrician.
- Copy of each child's current Immunization Record (update annually).
- Any information about the child's food restrictions and allergies.
- Contact information, including the name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor, in case of emergency.
- Record of current medications, including the name of the doctor and instructions for providing the medications to the child.
- Rent receipts or utility bills to verify residence within a particular service area or school district.

