



# SHARING THE NEWS

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*This newsletter is for child care providers caring for children in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, a program which helps low-income families pay for regulated child care while participating in work activities.*

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## YOUNGSTAR FOR PROVIDERS

Wisconsin is moving forward with a child care quality improvement rating



system (QRIS). The Legislature approved a series of quality benchmarks, established a technical assistance fund to help providers improve, and set up a plan to tie Wisconsin Shares payment rates to the provider's quality rating. A more complete description is available on the Internet at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/default.htm>. You will want to check this site often, since it will be updated as the program develops.

Right now, there are a number of options for training and technical assistance for providers to improve their quality. There are 12 target counties where new resources are available. Providers in other counties can use many of these resources on-line. There is more detail on the YoungStar Training and Technical Assistance Web Page: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/training/default.htm>.

The Child Care Information Center is available with resources to improve quality and work with your specific issues at <http://dpi.wi.gov/ccic/>.

YoungStar will not impact Wisconsin Shares provider rates at this time. The earliest possible date for tying rates to quality "stars" is July of 2011. Stay informed by visiting the YoungStar website.

## PROVIDER PRIVATE PAY PRICES

Licensed providers are responsible for keeping current and accurate price information on file with their local agency. These prices are an important part of the formula for Wisconsin Shares payments

to the provider. In general, the provider is paid the lower of their private price or the county maximum, minus the parent co-payment. For accredited providers, the payment is the lower of the private price or the county maximum plus 10%, minus the parent co-payment. Some examples for full time enrollment authorizations are:

Little Ducklings, a group center in Dunn County, charges \$130 per week for two-year olds. The county maximum for two-year olds is \$145. Payments to Little Ducklings for two year olds will be \$130 per week minus the parent co-payment.

The Rain Forest, an accredited group center in Dunn County, charges \$155 per week for two-year olds. The county maximum for two-year olds, is increased by 10% because of the accreditation, making a maximum of \$159.50. Payments to The Rain Forest for two-year olds will be \$155 per week minus the parent co-payment.

The subsidy cannot pay a provider more than what the provider charges private pay parents. If your private prices are different from those reported to Wisconsin Shares, you should update your prices. To do so, submit a current price sheet to your child care coordinator or liaison.

Certified providers do not file price information. State law requires that the subsidy pay certified providers a percentage of county maximum, based on level of certification and whether or not the provider is accredited. Regularly certified providers earn 75% of the county maximum rate; provisionally certified providers earn 50%.

*[Counties will not be conducting rate surveys for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program this year. DCF will use prices collected by the Supporting Families Together Association instead of the survey.]*

## MECA: MILWAUKEE EARLY CARE ADMINISTRATION

### Authorization Questions

Milwaukee County Child Care providers please direct parents to call 1-888-947-6583 with questions and/or concerns regarding their child care authorization. It is the parent responsibility to request child care authorization and communicate number of hours needed and time period in which care must be provided.

### In/Out Mode Paper Report

Child Care Providers who are assigned to report attendance on In/Out Mode please remember to indicate “AM” or “PM” for each daily time reported. Also, use all four boxes for school aged children. Do not record in/out times in one single box; you must indicate arrival time for “in” box and departure time for “out” box and if child returns indicate time in next set of boxes located on paper form.

### 4C's Record Keeping Classes

Milwaukee County Providers may contact 4C's to register for record keeping classes to explain how to report and record attendance correctly on paper attendance report forms. To register call (414) 562-2652 ext 3427.

## PROGRAM INTEGRITY

**40% Rule:** State law says that we cannot pay providers if more than 40% of the children in care are the subsidized children of the provider's employees. DCF identifies providers where more than 40% of the children authorized to the provider are the children of employees. With this information in hand, the local agency will deny additional employee authorizations until this number drops, or the provider demonstrates that there are enough private pay children in care to bring the proportion below 40%.

Example: Mimi's Mites is a licensed family provider with 10 children authorized for Wisconsin Shares. 4 of those children are the children of a Mimi's employee. When the employee attempts to get an authorization to Mimi's for her 5<sup>th</sup> child, the authorization will be denied.

Local agencies will also evaluate reports monthly to identify situations where more than 40% of authorized children are the children of employees. Providers will be given a grace period to reduce the number of children of employees or increase the number of children of non-employees in care. If the provider does not comply within the grace period, the authorizations for employees will be terminated.

### **Payments suspended for Reasonable**

**Suspicion:** DCF may refuse to pay a child care provider if DCF reasonably suspects the provider is violating any provision of the Shares program. DCF does not make this decision lightly and considers many factors in determining reasonable suspicion. A few examples include:

1. Intentional program violations established through investigations by local agencies;
2. Revocation actions taken by the DCF licensors or county certifying agencies related to fraud or attendance related violations;
3. Evidence of improbable attendance reporting, or a provider offering valuable incentives to enrollees.
4. On-site visits that find no access visit; very few children in care, attendance records not readily available and attendance related licensing/certification violations.

These are examples. There may be other factors in finding reasonable suspicion.

When DCF finds reasonable suspicion, the provider may continue to provide child care, but does so at his or her own financial risk. If further investigation results in provider reinstatement, withheld payments may be released to the provider.

