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Contact: Thomas McCarthy or Gina Paige, 608-422-7800 or dcfmedia@wisconsin.gov

Child Care Counts funding reaches 2,712 providers statewide

(MADISON) – The Department of Children and Families (DCF) finished distribution of \$51 million of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding through the Child Care Counts: COVID-19 Emergency Payment Program.

The Child Care Counts program consisted of three smaller programs: Funding to Care for Essential Workforce Families, Incentive Pay, and Support for Temporarily Closed Child Care Programs. Each individual program was developed in consultation with early care educators and advocates to address the most common challenges facing the child care sector during the early stages of the public health emergency. The funding was structured to cover the impacts of COVID-19 on child care service from March 12, 2020 to May 26, 2020.

“The public health emergency exposed to many how crucial safe, affordable, quality child care is to our families,” said DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson. “At the same time, it introduced many to just how fragile and vital that system of care is for providers, parents, children, child care workers, and Wisconsin’s workforce and economy. Child Care Counts funding managed to stabilize child care providers and workers through the early part of the pandemic, but many are still barely hanging on. As plans are solidified for the coming school year, we need an equally solid plan for our child care providers that keeps everyone safe and keeps their businesses afloat.”

Funding from Child Care Counts reached 2,712 providers. Payments allowed over 20,000 workers to receive pay and enabled nearly 80,000 children to continue their care during the pandemic.

Providers qualified for funding based on their eligibility criteria and ability to meet the [terms and conditions set by DCF](#). The department estimated payments for each program and related activity. Due to incredibly high demand, an overall proration rate of roughly 35 percent was required to stay within the \$51 million allocation. The Funding to Care for Essential Workforce Families program accounted for \$32.3 million of all funds, the Incentive Pay program accounted for \$14.6 million of all funds, and Support for Temporarily Closed Child Care Programs accounted for \$4.1 million of all funds.

To learn more about DCF, visit www.dcf.wisconsin.gov and follow @WisDCF on Twitter and Facebook.

NOTE: [Data on provider payments can be accessed online](#). The department recently launched an initiative to connect families with local child care, including [an interactive map](#) that displays open, available care and an application for families in need of child care.

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