



Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

December 2018

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DCF is on Twitter! Watch @WisDCF for helpful child care information.

Training Corner

Sharpen your professional skills with new training opportunities!

SFTA Training Opportunities

<https://supportingfamiliesogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2018-Annual-Training-Calendar-6.29.18-For-SFTA.pdf>

WECA Training Opportunities

<http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/training/>

The Registry Training Opportunities

<https://www.the-registry.org/myregistry/>

Program Integrity Updates

Bureau of Program Integrity's Favorite Attendance Record Tips

Child care providers are required by the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program to keep accurate daily attendance records. The most successful child care providers use good record keeping. There is even an attendance record form available to download from the DCF website for your convenience. <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/doc/2438.docx>. While it may seem pretty simple, a little attention to detail can go a long way!

Name – Child (First and Last)	Age of Child	Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Parent Sign Off (signature)
		In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out			
1. [Redacted]	Under 2 2 or older School age															
2. [Redacted]	Under 2 2 or older School age															
3. [Redacted]	Under 2 2 or older School age															
4. [Redacted]	Under 2 2 or older School age															

Top 10 Tips for Keeping Accurate Attendance

1. Write the date or date range on the attendance record. For example Week of: January 7, 2019 – January 11, 2019.
2. Record times right away when the child arrives and departs, rather than times the child is scheduled for.
3. Keep in and out times accurate to the minute. For example: If Child A arrives at 9:39 a.m., **do not** round to 9:40 a.m.
4. Don't forget to include AM or PM when writing down times.
5. Make sure to write down the first **and** last name of children, date of births, and check the appropriate age of child box.
6. Remember that all enrolled children should appear on the record and you should indicate on the record if the child is absent.
7. Find a safe space for your records. Keep records organized, legible, on file, and available for at least three (3) years.
8. Remind parents at the end of the week to review the Daily Attendance Record form and sign their name to verify that the times are correct.
9. Think of ways to make record keeping easier to do: keep the records in an easy place to find, like the area children arrive and depart from. Remember to have a pen nearby!
10. Keep trying! The more you do something, the more it becomes a habit and easier to remember.

**It is your responsibility to maintain current, accurate daily attendance. Failure to do so may result in an overpayment or other sanctions. Maintaining records is not only beneficial to your business, but also a requirement for licensing and certification. Take your child care business to the next level by using our attendance record tips!



Important Wisconsin Shares Updates

New Wisconsin Shares Policies to Promote Continuity of Care

As a child care provider, you may have heard that things are changing for parents receiving Wisconsin Shares child care subsidies. What you heard is true! Wisconsin Shares implemented several new policies this fall that promote continuity of care for children in high-quality child care settings.

Changes in Eligibility Threshold

Effective September 1, we extended the financial eligibility threshold to 85% of the Wisconsin State Medium Income (SMI) for a family size. Previously, when a family's income reached 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), they would no longer be eligible to continue receiving Wisconsin Shares. Extending the income limit to 85% SMI allows families to continue receiving child care subsidies as their income increases. This helps families by creating a gradual phase-out of the Wisconsin Shares subsidy rather than abruptly ending such a critical work support. The phase-out process gradually reduces the subsidy amount as household income increases. The parent's share of the child care cost gradually increases until the parent assumes the full cost of care or exceeds 85% SMI. As the child care provider, it is important to make sure your parents understand the full cost of care for your services so that they can be prepared to pay you as their subsidy amount decreases.

See the Income Eligibility Requirements tab on the Eligibility web page. <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/eligibility>

New Temporary Break Policy

DCF also implemented a temporary break policy to help parents maintain child care during a difficult time. The temporary break policy allows families to continue receiving

Wisconsin Shares subsidies for up to three months if parents need to take a temporary break from their approved work, education, or Wisconsin Works (W-2) activity. Parents may take a temporary break if they need to care for an ill family member, recover from health issues, or are temporarily laid off from their job, but plan to return to the same approved activity. The Wisconsin Shares authorization may remain in place at the same number of authorized hours during the temporary break to allow the child to remain in consistent quality child care. During the temporary break, the parent must still remain employed if they were employed, enrolled in school if they were going to school, or enrolled in W-2 if they were in W-2.

12-Month Authorizations Promote Stability

In order to promote more stable authorizations and subsidy amounts, new policies were developed to encourage workers to write child care authorizations for up to 12 months if there is no expected change in the parent's approved activity schedule or the child care need schedule. If there is an expected change, the authorization may be written up to that point in time. If the parent's approved activity hours are reduced for any reason during the authorization period, parents may choose to maintain child care at the same number of hours until the next scheduled authorization assessment. As a child care provider, you

will need to ensure that parents know the full cost of child care that they have enrolled in, and the expected frequency of payment.

These new policies support families who receive subsidies by maintaining more stability for parents as they work towards economic security.

To learn more about the changes to the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy program, visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/eligibility>.



Important Wisconsin Shares Updates

Inclement Weather Hours Defined

Parents of a school-age child who have requested additional child care hours for days when school is scheduled to be closed for holidays, spring/winter break, or teacher conferences, will be provided 10 additional child care hours per month from November through March. These hours are automatically added to the child's authorization to be available when school may close due to inclement weather. These extra hours are made available to assist with the cost of child care when school is not in session due to inclement weather, such as snowstorms, below-zero conditions, hail, or ice.

Parents may utilize these extra hours and funds to help them maintain employment or another approved activity. These additional hours are subject to the same 90-day removal policy as all other funds. After the 10 hours have been used in a month, the parent must assume the cost of additional child care needed for inclement weather situations. For questions about the Inclement Weather Policy, parents should contact their local child care agency.



How Head Start and 4K Impact Wisconsin Shares Authorizations



An increasing number of child care programs across the state are partnering with their local Head Start agency and/or school district to offer child care along with Head Start and/or 4K programming. This collaborative approach reduces disruption in a child's day and provides continuity of caregivers. To support collaborative approaches, parents receiving Wisconsin Shares subsidies are sometimes able to receive an authorization beyond the child care portion(s) of the day, for the time that their child is receiving Head Start and/or 4K programming.

In order to determine whether Wisconsin Shares authorizations can extend beyond child care to fund Head Start and/or 4K program time, providers and families should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the family eligible for a Wisconsin Shares authorization – by participating in an approved activity – during any period of time that their child is participating in Head Start and/or 4K programming?
- Is the child care program in the same location as the Head Start and/or 4K program?
- Is Head Start and/or 4K programming offered in the child's classroom for four (4) or fewer hours each day?
- Is the family eligible for a Wisconsin Shares authorization totaling five (5) or more hours (including school program hours) per day?

If the answer to *all of the above* questions is "yes," the Wisconsin Shares subsidy authorization can cover the total time that a family is eligible for an authorization, including any time that their child is participating in Head Start and/or 4K programming.

If the response to *any* of the questions is "no," the child care subsidy authorization must not include the Head Start and/or 4K hours.

EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1, 2018: Because DCF recognizes that Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) and/or 3K funding does not provide support for direct classroom activities, the above requirements **do not apply** to authorizations for children receiving these support services. Children receiving only these support services should receive an authorization for care for the total time that his/her family is eligible.

- **Example 1:** Terra attends a program that offers Head Start from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in classrooms A, B, and C. Terra, however, is in classroom D and does not receive any Head Start services. Terra's authorization may be written to include the total time that her parents are engaged in their approved activity.
- **Example 2:** Jason attends the same program as Terra, but receives care from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in classroom A. Jason's authorization may only include the wrap-around child care hours because classroom A has 6 hours of Head Start programming daily. Jason's authorization must begin at 2 p.m., when the Head Start program has ended until 5 p.m., when Mom picks up Jason.
- **Example 3:** Kathy attends child care from 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. and participates in the 4K program, which is provided at the child care center from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Kathy's authorization may be written to include all of the hours that Kathy is in child care, 7:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
- **Example 4:** Mark receives support services at his child care program, funded by Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grants. Mark's authorization to his child care may be written to include the total time that his family is eligible.



2018 Annual Collaboration Survey

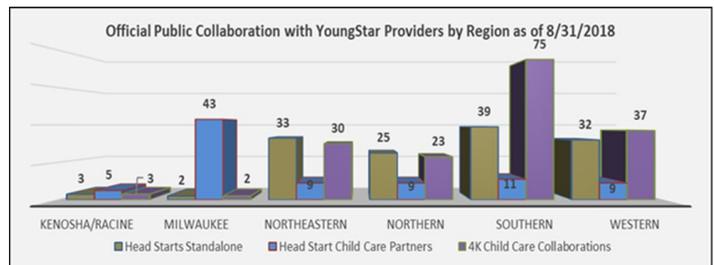
In September, DCF sent out their annual survey to child care collaborative programs and standalone Head Starts. The survey, which was sent to all child care programs currently recognized as participating in official public collaborations with 4K and/or Head Start, will collect updated information about these collaborations. Standalone Head Start programs were not asked to report any classroom information, but simply report if they participate in 4K collaborations.

Completing and returning the annual survey is mandatory for all programs eligible to receive Wisconsin Shares payments from families. Programs are also required to report any significant changes in public funding levels to DCF as they occur. The returned reporting document will be viewable by authorization workers and programs through the Provider Portal. There have been no changes to Wisconsin Shares policy because of the survey; however, reporting the information will help DCF identify service delivery needs throughout the state.

On the survey, child care programs were asked to list each classroom in operation, identify the ages of children served, record the maximum number of children, and detail the specific direct classroom funding hours for child care, 4K, and Head Start/Early Head Start. If a specific classroom offers only child care, the program should mark child care only. An example of a completed reporting document is shown below. The sample program has six classrooms with varying levels of 4K/Head Start funding.

From the survey information collected, DCF will report the official public collaborations monthly on the YoungStar website under Impacts (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/program/impact>). In the near future, collaboration information will be exported to the Child Care Finder (<https://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov>) so that it can be communicated to parents/families looking for specific child care collaborations in nearby locations.

Because DCF recognizes that Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) and/or 3K funding does not provide support for direct classroom activities, programs with just the EHS-CCP or 3K funding should mark "child care only" on their classroom surveys.



Required Reporting Document for 4K, Head Start, and Child Care Collaboration - During the School Year for Fiscal Year 2019						
Program Information			Classroom Detail			
Hours of Operation for Program <u>11</u>			If the classroom is child care only, put a <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the Child Care Only box. There is no need to complete Collaboration Detail if Child Care only.			
Complete for Each Operational Classroom Regardless of Type ↓	Ages of Children	Maximum Number of Children	Child Care Only?	Collaboration Detail for Average Daily Hours		
			If yes, place a <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (check mark) here.	Child Care Hours (eg. wrap-around care)	4K (Public Funded)	HS or EHS Funded Hours
Classroom 1:	0 to 2	8	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	0	6
Classroom 2:	2 to 3	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	7.0	0	3.5
Classroom 3:	2 to 3	12	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	0	6
Classroom 4:	3 to 4	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	7.0	0	3.5
Classroom 5:	4 to 5	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.5	2.5	3.5
Classroom 6:	5 to 12	34	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
* Copy this sheet and provide extra detail if you have more than 12 classrooms.						FY2019

Example of a completed reporting document.

Physical Activity Ideas for the Winter Months

Childhood obesity continues to be an issue across the United States. In Wisconsin, almost 15% of children ages 2-4 years old are considered obese, ranking Wisconsin 21st in the United States of children with obesity according to “The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America (<https://stateofobesity.org/states/wi/>). Children who are overweight have a greater chance of developing diabetes, heart problems, and various other health issues as they get older. Teaching children early about healthy eating habits, engaging them in physical activity, and helping them learn how to best take care of themselves gives them the best start in maintaining a healthy body as they mature.

Physical activity not only helps our bodies – our minds receive multiple benefits, too. Studies show that the more we move, the better our brain functions. The hippocampus, a small part of the brain that focuses on spatial reasoning and memory, has shown to increase in size after more physical activity (<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/09/100915171536.htm>). Decreasing anxiety, depression, increasing positive body image, and maintaining a healthy body are some of the added benefits of physical activity. Children need movement throughout the day to maintain focus and learn about their world.

We are fortunate in Wisconsin to have four beautiful seasons to enjoy. Unfortunately, the winter months can be difficult to engage in physical activity and the days in the early childhood classroom can become long and challenging. Outdoor play is still a necessity during these cold months, but what about those days that are just too cold to stay outside for long periods of time or are way too cold to even go out? What can we do to make sure that children are maintaining high levels of physical activity when the classroom is our only play area? Setting up the classroom environment to maximize movement and planning activities throughout the day are key to keeping children moving.

Activities to Get the Body Moving

- Yoga
- Running in place
- Jumping up and down
- Stretches
- Dancing
- Burpees
- Skipping
- Bicycle

Games to Play

- **Basket toss:** Using rolled up socks, find different sized containers and have children toss the socks into the containers
- **Sock volleyball:** Use a rope to divide the classroom, separate the group into two teams. Throw various socks on the floor on each side of the rope. Count to three, then have children grab the socks and throw them over the rope. After a designated amount of time, stop the game and see which team has the least number of socks on their side. This is the winning team.
- **Clothespin drop:** Make three lines down the longest length of the room with a small container at the end of the line. Divide the children into three teams. Give each child a clothespin. Children should walk, skip, walk back-

wards, walk sideways, or other creative ideas along the line and then drop the clothespin into the container.

- **Driving the car:** Have all children (and staff) sit on the ground with their legs in front of them. Sing the song “The Wheels on the Bus” while moving your body. When the wheels go round and round, children should use their arms and legs to scooch forward and backwards (do this movement for every other verse to get a good workout).



Set Up the Environment to Maximize Movement

- **Putting together the puzzles:** Set up puzzle pieces 15-20 steps away from the puzzle bottom. Child must walk over to pick up one piece at a time to add to the puzzle.
- **Filling the water table:** Fill up various sized lidded containers with water. Put the lid on the containers and set at one side of the room, opposite the water table. Have children carry the containers to the water table, dump them out, and then go get a new container. (Have a staff member near the water table to dry up spills immediately to avoid children slipping.)
- **Put platforms near windows** that children can step up onto to look outside (again, think of safety when setting up platforms).
- **Set up a yoga mat in the music area** and hang up yoga movement cards for children to mimic. Introduce a new yoga move during group time and then add this card to the yoga area.
- **Secure a ballet bar or towel holder to a wall** (make sure it can hold an adult's body weight). Teach children to hold onto the bar and lean backwards, stretching out the arms, both facing the wall and facing away from the wall.
- **Create a movement path around the classroom:** Add hopscotch squares pointing to the dramatic play area or curvy tape lines to balance on pointing to the book area. Put tunnels near openings to the block center to encourage children to crawl through to reach the area. Hang musical instruments from the ceiling to encourage children to reach up to shake them or hang activity cards near the door and encourage children to complete the activity each time they enter or exit the classroom.

Children are not built to sit still. Children need to move. Every muscle needs attention.

YoungStar asks providers to include at least 90 minutes of physical activity each day (for a program that operates more than 8 hours per day). With a little creativity, physical activity can be incorporated into almost all of the children's indoor and outdoor play time.

