



DCF Provider News: A Resource for Wisconsin Shares & YoungStar Providers

Summer 2017

Inside this issue

- Requesting and Possessing Client Materials1
- Child Care Provider Portal2
- Child Care Provider Prices.....2
- Child Care Provider Information for Parents2
- MyWIChildCare—New Way to Pay for Child Care3
- MyWIChildCare Billing Guidelines4
- MECA Corner4
- Inclusion Credential Classes4
- Support for Families Experiencing Homelessness5
- Wisconsin UNITES6
- Take Advantage of YoungStar Consultation Every Year6
- T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD6
- Wisconsin Parent Cafes7
- CACFP Meal Plan8
- MyWIChildCare Data8

Training Corner

Sharpen your professional skills with new training opportunities!

SFTA Training Opportunities

<http://supportingfamilies.together.org/wp-content/uploads/Annual-Training-Calendar.pdf>

WECA Training Opportunities

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

The Registry Training Opportunities

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

Requesting and Possessing Client Materials



Wisconsin Shares has received numerous statewide questions from child care providers regarding parent materials, and whether providers may or may not have client items within their possession. Below is an outline of the most frequently requested policy clarifications.



Providers May:

- Assist parent(s) to make payments, as long as the goal of the assistance is to teach the parent to use the system on their own. It is the parent’s responsibility to manage all of their payments using the MyWIChildCare EBT card. If assisting parent(s) with making a payment, provider cannot enter the parent(’s) account number, PIN, or payment amount.
- Provide billing statements to the parent so that the parent knows the amount to pay.
- Provide the due dates and frequency of payments.
- Provide a computer, phone, or point-of-sale (POS) device for parents to use to issue payments.

Providers May Not:

- **Hold on to parent’s MyWIChildCare EBT Card(s) or account number(s) even if the client asks the provider to do so**
- Write down the parent’s account number(s) and/or Personal Identification Number(s) (PINs)
- Request, write down, or have knowledge of the parent’s login credentials for issuing payments
- Require parent(s) to submit their Department and/or local agency notices. This is confidential information. However, parent(s) may voluntarily provide this.
- Have any form of representation of the above mentioned items – such as Client Authorization Notices or Parent Portal prints/screenshots, etc.

If a provider is in violation of the above policies, they have compromised the security and violated the confidentiality of the parents’ subsidy information. Any EBT card or authorization materials should be immediately returned to the appropriate client(s) and information obtained from these documents should be destroyed.





Important Wisconsin Shares Updates

Child Care Provider Portal

The Child Care Provider Portal is available to child care providers to access important information about the families who are enrolled in their program and receiving child care subsidy. Some recent enhancements to the Child Care Provider Portal can serve as a valuable resource during this transition period. The Department of Children and Families encourages you to log in to the Provider Portal and explore the newest features available to you.

To access the Child Care Provider Portal please visit <https://mywchildcareproviders.wisconsin.gov/>

Log in using the same User ID and password that you used for CCPI, and search by your Provider Number.

For assistance logging in please visit <https://www.dwd.state.wi.us/AccountManagement/Default.aspx>

For assistance requesting access, please visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/provider-portal/ccpp-access>

You will be able to access a variety of important information about your program. Here are just a few items you will be able to view about your program:

- Beginning and end dates of current authorizations
- Current child care prices as reported to local agency
- YoungStar adjustments
- Registry details
- Regulation details
- Correspondence that was sent to you

Child Care Provider Prices

The new EBT CSAW system requires licensed child care providers to submit both full time and part-time prices to their local child care agency. This is no different from the previous system, however many child care programs offer a discount price or scholarships to employees or families that financially qualify. It is important to notify your families if the price they are expected to pay is different from the full time or part-time price submitted to the local agency. If the families are provided with this information, they can then communicate it to their child care authorization worker. Families participating in the program are not generally aware of the provider prices that you submit to the local agency. This will prevent you from being overpaid and prevent the family from facing an overpayment.



If you have questions about the prices you submitted, or you need to verify your current prices, please contact your local child care agency, or visit the Child Care Provider Portal at <https://mywchildcareproviders.wisconsin.gov/> to view your submitted prices.

Child Care Provider Information for Parents



It is very important that parents provide their child care authorization worker with the correct information about their chosen child care provider so it can be entered correctly into the new MyWIChildCare system. The child care subsidy amount that is loaded onto the family's MyWIChildCare EBT card is payable only to the child care provider listed on the authorization.

It is helpful to your newly enrolled families to be provided with this important information in one localized area. One idea would be to present families with a "note card" that lists all of your child care program's critical information. Parents will need to know the following information in order to ensure they receive the correct authorization:

- Child care program name
- Program address
- Provider number and location
- Provider phone number
- Program FIS ID
- The price you are charging, if it is not the price that was submitted to the local agency

Child Care Program Name

Street Address, City, State Zip Code

Phone Number

Provider number and location _____

Program FIS ID _____

Price per day/week/month _____

Is price for full time or part-time care? _____





MyWIChildCare: The New Way to Pay for Child Care from Wisconsin Shares

The Department has empowered parents by enabling them to make child care payments using their MyWIChildCare EBT card, giving them the responsibility to manage their own child care subsidies. This new system allows child care providers to use the same billing frequency for subsidized families and private pay families, whether that is weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Child care providers are expected to set their prices for **all** families and inform parents of the total cost of child care.

The process works well when child care providers and parents agree to the terms of a child care arrangement (preferably a written agreement) that includes the price structure, specifies when the services are provided, what the total cost is, and when payments are expected. It is also a good business practice to provide an invoice or monthly statement to parents.

Factors That Affect a Child Care Authorization

The new authorization system collects information to determine a weekly average child care need, which is then extended to a base monthly need and subsidy amount. However, the parent's monthly subsidy amount may still vary based on several factors, including:

- During the months of November – March, additional hours per month can be made available for unexpected school closures
- Changes to the family's assistance group or household income
- School-age children often have a change in need when school is out for the summer, when they go back to school in the fall, and when the school schedule includes breaks for spring, fall, and the holiday season
- The age of the child could move the child to the next age group where the provider prices differ from the previous age group
- Changes in provider prices



How Can Providers Help Parents?

If parents have questions about their subsidy amounts, child care providers should direct parents to contact their local child care agency.

Parents are responsible for budgeting their child care payments. If they need assistance with this, they may contact their local University of Wisconsin Extension office regarding budgeting services: <http://www.uwex.edu/>

If parents and providers wish to work together to come up with a feasible budgeting strategy, they may do so, but the Department does not expect providers to offer this service.

The Department has MyWIChildCare **training videos** available on their website for parents and providers. Click on the Training Videos section of the links below to view the videos.

Parents -
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mywchildcare/parents>

Providers -
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mywchildcare/providers>

If parents have questions about their MyWIChildCare EBT card, they may call **FIS customer service at 1-877-201-7601**, or visit **ebtedge.com** to view their MyWIChildCare account and payment information.

Parents participating in the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program have certain rights and responsibilities. **Please direct parents to read more about this on the Rights and Responsibilities web page.**
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/parents/rights>

What is fraud?
Breaking the rules of the program or using the funds for anything other than the care of children is fraud.
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/progintegrity/fraud>



MyWIChildCare Billing Guidelines and Suggestions

The frequency and amount of child care payments should be determined by communication between the provider and the client. Payment frequency may range from being daily, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, etc. However, child care providers should **not require** parents using Wisconsin Shares to pay at a different frequency than their private-pay parents. Therefore, if your private pay parents pay weekly for care that was provided during the week, then parents using Wisconsin Shares should also pay weekly for the care provided during the week. If you allow your private-pay parents to select when to pay (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) then your parents using Wisconsin Shares should also be offered this decision. The Department recommends having the agreed upon frequency of payment stated in your Provider-Parent Contract and/or Agreement (if you have one).



The Department recommends having a written Provider-Parent Contract/Agreement.

Although monthly billing is allowed, **please be cautioned that requiring payments on a monthly frequency can result in overpayments** due to inaccurate authorizations and/or changing parent participation requirements. Additionally, monthly payments can create a burden on many families; therefore, it is encouraged that you discuss a payment frequency that the parent prefers.

Get the latest YoungStar, Wisconsin Shares, and MyWIChildCare updates by subscribing to our email list! Subscribe here:

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/email-signup>

MECA Corner

Accelerated Inclusion Credential Classes



Accelerated Inclusion Credential classes are available on Saturdays in Milwaukee.

The next class is ECE: Behavior and Emotional Challenges 9/16,

9/23, 9/30, 10/7,

10/14, 10/21 through the Special Needs Support Program in partnership with Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College.



For more information, contact Ann Farah at 414-289-6977. For T.E.A.C.H. scholarship information, call 1-800-783-9322. <http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/programs/teach/>

Milwaukee's Online and Paper Attendance Submission Deadline is June 30, 2017



With Milwaukee transitioning to MyWIChildCare as of April 2, 2017, Milwaukee Early Care Administration (MECA) will no longer accept online or paper Attendance Report Forms after Friday, June 30, 2017. Policy states that the local agency may refuse to process attendance that is submitted for a period that is more than 90 days in the past. Please be advised that this policy is based on the *issuance date* on the Attendance Report.

For further information regarding provider payments in Milwaukee, please visit us at 1220 W. Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53205, or contact us at 414-289-6842.





Support for Families Experiencing Homelessness



— NEW YoungStar Web Page

According to the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, over 50% of children living in federally-funded homeless shelters are under the age of six, with 10% of children under age 1. The impact of homelessness on young children can last a lifetime in terms of emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Chances are that you have worked with a family who may have been or was close to experiencing homelessness.

On April 1, 2017, DCF published a new web page, <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/homelessness>, to provide you with the resources necessary to support families who are experiencing homelessness.

The Department of Children and Families took a multi-generational approach when choosing resources to assist you with serving your communities. The [YoungStar Support for Families Experiencing Homelessness web page](#) provides links to resources for basic needs, job support, and medical care, and also includes printable tip sheets for providers. Since Milwaukee County has one of the highest rates of homelessness in the state, resources specific to this region have been provided. The Department of Children and Families is collaborating with other departments and technical assistance providers throughout the state to continue to develop and find resources for your use.

If you have any questions or would like to suggest resources specific to the needs of child care providers, please contact the Department of Children and Families at yshomelessness@wisconsin.gov.

10 Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care

Child care providers play a key role in assisting families with the difficult transition of going back to school or work after a new baby. The **10 Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care** is a 7-part, free, online training containing information about creating breastfeeding-friendly areas, shaping program policies, Wisconsin Child Care Regulations, and much more. Eligible programs may be recognized as Breastfeeding-Friendly through an additional free technical assistance process.

Please see the Wood County Breastfeeding Coalition web page, <http://www.woodcountybreastfeeding.org/breastfeedingfriendlychildcarecenters.aspx>, for more information about the training and to determine if you are eligible for free technical assistance.

Check out all of the new homelessness resources on the DCF website.

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/homelessness>

We also list resources specific to Milwaukee County residents.

The screenshot shows the YoungStar website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'YoungStar Program', 'YoungStar Parents', 'YoungStar Providers', and 'Find Child Care'. A message indicates that the DCF Website will be unavailable for a short period between 12:00 and 2:00 PM on Wednesday April 19, 2017, for system maintenance. The main content area features a section titled 'Support for Families Experiencing Homelessness'. This section includes a sub-header 'Homelessness Defined' and a paragraph explaining that the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homelessness as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It also mentions that Head Start prioritizes families experiencing homelessness due to loss of housing, natural disasters, or emergency situations. A small image shows hands holding a green house icon. Below the text, there is a link for 'Supporting Homeless Families' and a note that the Department of Public Instruction has compiled a guide with tips for supporting young children who are homeless.





New Wisconsin UNITES Online Training Modules



Wisconsin UNITES: Understanding the Need for Inclusive Training and Educational Support is a set of five training modules intended to inform, support, and assist child care providers as they look to implement more inclusive practices into their programs. The modules were created with a number of questions in mind, such as “Why Inclusion?” and “What can we do to support inclusion?”. Our answers to these questions become the framework for these training modules:

- Module 1: Foundations of Inclusion
- Module 2: Applying What WE Know
- Module 3: Supporting Inclusion in Your Child Care Program: Administration
- Module 4: Supporting Inclusion in Your Child Care Program: Staff
- Module 5: This is High-Quality Inclusive Child Care

We are excited to begin rolling out the completed modules within the YoungStar section of the DCF website. You'll find the first module posted on the YoungStar Early Childhood Inclusion training web page (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci/trainings>).

The rollout dates for each subsequent module will be posted on the website. We hope you will take time to

explore the new Wisconsin UNITES modules and the many functional resources that each contains.

This new resource was developed by DCF as part of the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant.

Take Advantage of YoungStar Consultation Every Year



Programs participating in YoungStar are now required to be rated every two years. This gives programs more time to improve their quality between ratings. It also allows YoungStar ratings to be more similar to accreditation rating timelines.

Programs may, and are encouraged to receive annual on-site coaching support to continue their quality improvement efforts. Thus far, about 72% of actively participating programs that are not required to complete a rating in 2017 have requested to participate in this optional on-site consultation. Make sure your program selects to receive these optional services as well!

News from WECA

Free Professional Development Advising

Did you know that WECA counselors can assist you in exploring your goals and interests? Despite the current waiting lists for T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, counselors can connect you to additional training and educational resources, and answer questions related to the waiting list, your T.E.A.C.H. application, and federal financial aid. Professional Development Counselors can also help you discover:

- What your short and long-term learning goals are
- How your previous work and training experience may qualify for college credits
- How to find free or low-cost trainings

For more information, call 608-240-9880 option 3, or email professionaldevelopment@wisconsinearlychildhood.org

Update on T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD Waitlists

Many of you know firsthand that the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship and REWARD Stipend programs have

implemented waiting lists. For both programs, applications have exceeded available funding for this fiscal year.

However, both T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD are funded in the proposed state budget for 2017-2019. This will help meet future scholarship and stipend awards. In the meantime, here's key information for navigating the current funding gap:

- No additional new scholarship awards or renewals will be made for the remainder of the spring or the summer 2017 semesters.
- Funding for fall 2017 scholarships is being assessed, with more details to come early this summer.

Despite the waiting list, applications are still encouraged. Once awarding begins again, it will help if you have a place in line.

For more information, please call or email T.E.A.C.H.: 608-240-9880 option 3 and/or email teach@wisconsinearlychildhood.org. Both T.E.A.C.H. and REWARD post updates on the WECA website as well – wisconsinearlychildhood.org





Wisconsin Parent Cafés in Action



“A father came to the first Parent Café session out of obligation to his wife; he thought it was only for women. He was planning on not talking, but when the questions at the table started some interesting conversations, he began to talk and share his experiences. He was very touched with the honesty of other participants with regard to the table questions, and realized that the issues he struggles with in his own family are the same issues that many families struggle with. He was listening and talking about life issues for the first time without judgment from others. He was so moved by his experience that he even invited two of his brothers to the next sessions. Both this father and his brothers are now going to be Parent Hosts during the next series.” - Brown County Parent Café Team



Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA), with member Child Care Resource & Referral agencies and Family Resource Centers, is implementing Parent Cafés across Wisconsin with funding from the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant through the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF).

What are Parent Cafés?

Parent Cafés guide parents to explore the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors through peer-to-peer learning and individual self-reflection in a small group setting. Parents enhance their social and emotional skills and learn how to proactively respond to challenging situations while cultivating leadership skills.

Expansion

In 2015, SFTA hosted a Be Strong Families Parent Café Training Institute, and staff from 11 teams attended to learn how to start Parent Cafés in their communities. Due to the initial success, SFTA partnered with DCF and the University of Wisconsin Helen Bader School of Social Welfare to host a second institute in October of 2016. Twenty-four agencies attended, and left with the tools to implement cafés. Thanks to SFTA's Mary Alphonse Bradley Grant, six of these Parent Café teams have received seed money for their first café series, expanding cafés to at least six more WI counties in 2017. Cafés in some areas have also grown to include Spanish Parent Cafés and Inclusion Cafés for parents of children with special needs.

Sustainability

Each team hosting cafés has their own plan in place for sustainability, but recruiting and training parent hosts to facilitate cafés is a key factor in making all cafés sustainable. With 105 parents and/or family members trained as Parent Café hosts, cafés are well on track to continue growing in the coming years.

The Numbers

In the 105 Parent Café sessions that have been offered, over 650 parents and/or family members and more than 1,200 children participated. Evaluations indicate parents' knowledge and understanding of the Protective Factors increases following Parent Cafés. This shows parents are not only becoming leaders, they are leaving with the skills to engage with their children in a healthy way and know they have options for support. SFTA is excited to see where this next round of Parent Cafés leads.

Check out the SFTA website for current Parent Café schedules and more.

<http://supportingfamilies.org/families/support-your-family/>





Nutrition Benefits of the New CACFP Meal Pattern

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements (effective October 1, 2017) were recently revised by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The new requirements ensure participants in the CACFP have access to healthy, balanced meals throughout the day.

The new meal patterns are intended to enhance the overall nutritional quality of meals and snacks served in CACFP settings. They are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine), and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the overall health status of this country has shifted from deficiencies in essential nutrients, such as a lack of vitamins A and C, to chronic diseases, such as hypertension, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and even some forms of cancer. Americans are eating diets high in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Also, about 75% of American's diets are low in vegetables, fruits, and dairy. Lastly, about one in three children are overweight or obese, which is often due to poor eating habits and lack of physical activity.

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans provides five overarching guidelines for encouraging healthy eating patterns because of the shift in needs and habits. The

guidelines include:

- Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan
- Focus on a variety of nutrient dense foods
- Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats, and reduce sodium intake
- Shift to healthier food and beverage choices
- Support healthy eating patterns



The new meal pattern will allow for children in child care settings that participate in the CACFP to receive meals with more whole grains, a greater variety of vegetables and fruits, a wider variety of protein options, and less added sugars and saturated fat. The changes to the infant meal pattern support breastfeeding, and increase the consumption of vegetables and fruits and other foods without added sugars. These new meal patterns lay the foundation to help children develop healthy eating habits early in life.

If you are a child care provider not currently participating in the CACFP and would like to learn more, check out the Wisconsin CACFP webpage at <https://dpi.wi.gov/community-nutrition/cacfp>.

MyWICChildCare Feedback from WREA

The Western Region Economic Assistance (WREA) Consortium rolled out MyWICChildCare Phase 1 in October 2016. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) asked WREA child care providers for their feedback on DCF outreach, training, and services. The following is some of what we heard. Thank you to those who responded. This information is very helpful to DCF. DCF will be asking parents and providers across the state about their experiences with MyWICChildCare in fall 2017.

