



NEWS RELEASE



DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC SECURITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MICHAEL TRAILOR, DIRECTOR

DES Announces Increased Investment in Quality Child Care for Arizona Families

PHOENIX – (February 20, 2018) Furthering its commitment to provide high quality child care to Arizona families, the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) announced today the decision to increase the reimbursement given to nationally-accredited child care providers to 20 percent from the previous rate of 10 percent, beginning April 1.

“Our hope is that by increasing our investment in quality child care providers, all Arizona children will have equal access to sound learning environments, particularly during those most formative years of birth to five years old,” said DES Director Michael Traylor. “Early childhood education lays the foundation for a child to be successful in school, relationships, at work and in their communities.”

DES is the lead agency for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Through this fund, DES enters into contracts with child care providers to offer child care services to children of low-income working families who qualify for child care subsidies and to children who are involved with the Department of Child Safety (DCS).

Studies show that children enrolled in high-quality early childhood settings score higher on school readiness tests, are less likely to need special education or be held back a grade, have strong cognitive communications and social and emotional skills, and are less likely to commit a violent crime by age 18. With a clear focus on ensuring low-income families have the same access to high quality child care as all other families, DES is confident this increased investment will provide access to more families access to programs that will prepare children for success.

The increase was achieved by rigorously defining the processes of how children and families are served, and maximizing the use of available financial resources. The stipend opportunity will also extend to *Quality First 4-star rated* providers at 10% and *Quality First 5-star rated* providers at 20%.

Child care continues to be a vital support for parents looking for employment and moving toward self-sufficiency. In addition to the investment in improved quality, the Department has also improved its process for providing child care services to children and families waiting for services. Since July 2017, DES has reduced the waiting list for child care services by 6,529 children, thus providing more work opportunities for low-income parents.

In fiscal year 2017, the DES Child Care Administration served more than 28,000 children; including nearly 12,400 low-income working families and just over 9,300 who had involvement with the Department of Child Safety (DCS).

For more information about the DES Child Care Administration, please [visit our webpage](#).

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