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**CHILD CARE SUBSIDY**

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**FACILITATED ENROLLMENT PROGRAM**  
**2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

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**SEPTEMBER 1, 2019**



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## INTRODUCTION

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The Workforce Development Institute's **Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program** (CCSFEP) provides assistance towards the significant cost of child care for hard-working families, costs that can jeopardize their stability in the workforce and present significant attrition and reliability issues for New York State employers.

WDI implemented the CCSFEP in 2003 with the assistance of the Capital District Area Labor Federation and its Child Care Advisory Committee. The goal of the program is to provide eligible working families with income-based child care subsidies that help offset the high costs, which can consume a large portion of a family's overall budget. The funding is designed to assist families with incomes between 200% and 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) who work a minimum of 25 hours per week and have at least one child under the age of 13. Currently, WDI is serving working families in Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties with incomes below 275% of the FPL.

The program offers families a convenient, respectful process for obtaining financial subsidies, as well as the information critical to accessing quality, developmentally appropriate care for their children. The enrollment process is responsive to the needs of working families, offering a streamlined application process that uses technology and flexibility in enrollment, reducing the need for lost work time for face-to-face meetings.

**This report is intended to illustrate:**

- How the program operates
- What the results have been
- How the program design improves access to child care for working parents
- How the program serves as a critical workforce support

Programmatic details can be found within the corresponding appendices: A: Program History, B: Program Goals, C: Program Requirements, D: Eligibility Requirements, E: Demographic Information, and F: Program Process and Structure.



## SUMMARY

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Since 2003, the WDI CCSFEP has enrolled 6,345 families and has assisted 9,134 children in attending day care, after school, and summer camp programs. While the majority of WDI families work full time jobs, the cost of child care creates a deep financial burden, consuming in some cases, nearly 50% of the family budget.

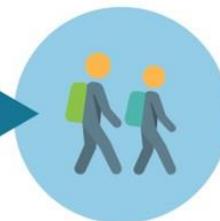
WDI CCSFEP funding is targeted to serve working families with incomes between 200% and 275% of the FPL. However, given flat or decreased funding at the federal, state and local levels over the past several years, local districts have been forced to decrease their maximum income eligibility level for low income child care subsidy cases and increase the portion that families are responsible to pay towards the cost of subsidized child care, resulting in the WDI CCSFEP serving fewer median income families between the targeted range of 200% to 275% FPL.

Many working families' household budgets cannot accommodate the cost of licensed/registered child care without subsidy assistance. The WDI CCSFEP provides a means of improving the quality of care for children while providing access to income-based subsidies for working families with a slightly higher income level.

Access to child care subsidy assistance provides relief in eliminating a predominant employment barrier that many working families encounter. As a result of enrollment in the WDI CCSFEP, families are able to better focus on their job responsibilities and performance. Many report that they were able to improve their attendance and productivity in the workplace. The WDI CCSFEP provides families the opportunity to develop new job skills, increase work hours, earn higher wages and advance their careers. WDI CCSFEP participant survey results are displayed in the following sections: Child Care Providers, Surveys and Implications for Workforce & Economic Development, which can be located on pages 4, 5 and 6, respectively.

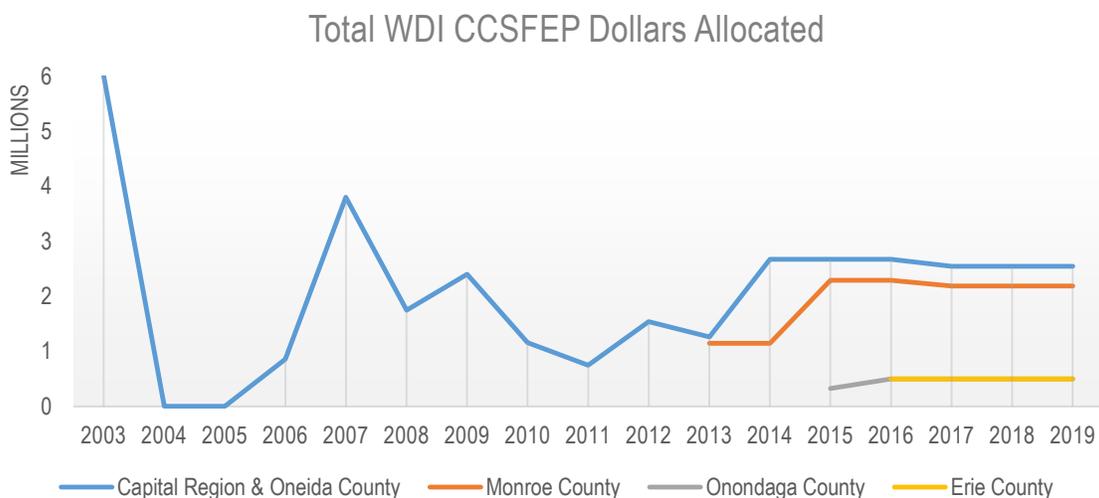
"I wouldn't be able to keep my current job without the funding. Even with both of my kids in school fulltime the cost for before and after school is still extremely expensive. This program has been a lifesaver for my family."

– WDI CCSFEP Recipient Family



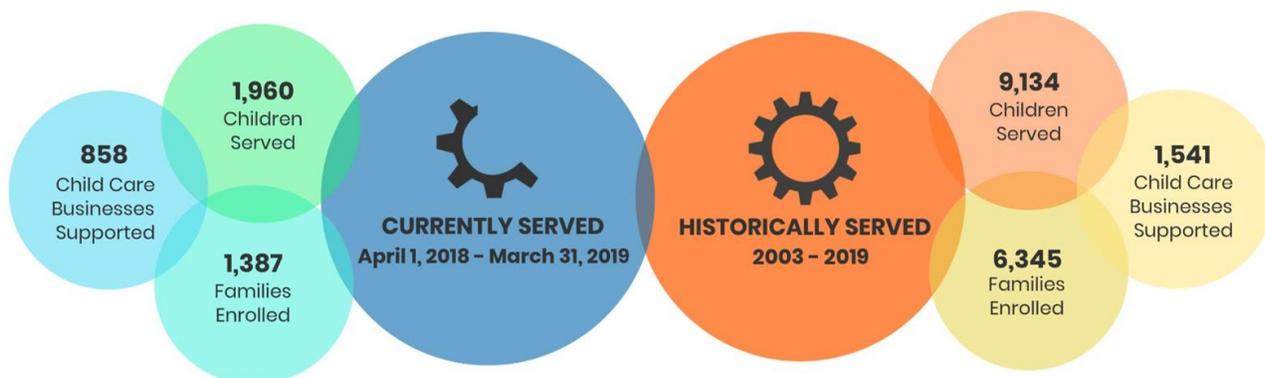
## TOTAL PROJECT DOLLARS ALLOCATED

As illustrated in the graph below, WDI's CCSFEP has been funded at a total of \$55,630,444 since 2003. Of this amount, WDI receives 10% to be allocated for administrative purposes (wages, benefits, space, equipment, supplies, etc.). In addition, the county Department of Social Services (DSS) receives a 5% allocation for their administrative services. The remaining portions are allocated directly to the eight participating counties for child care subsidies for working families.



## RESULTS

WDI implemented the CCSFEP in the Capital Region and Oneida County in 2003. Expansion of the program extended to Monroe County in 2013, Onondaga County in 2015, and Erie County in 2016. The image below provides a snapshot of the current and historical impact that the CCSFEP has had on children, families and child care providers in New York State.



## AGES OF CHILDREN SERVED

There are a total of 1,960 children who were served by the WDI CCSFEP across Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties during the reporting period of 4/1/2018 to 3/31/2019. Their ages (at the end of the reporting period) are broken down as follows:



## CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

One of the primary goals of the WDI CCSFEP is to elevate the quality of child care choices available to working families. WDI does this by providing parents with information on selecting a developmentally appropriate provider. This includes contact information for the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) website and its Child Care Provider search capability. The type of child care providers selected by WDI CCSFEP families are demonstrated below:



WDI continues to be successful in moving children into regulated (licensed or registered) care:

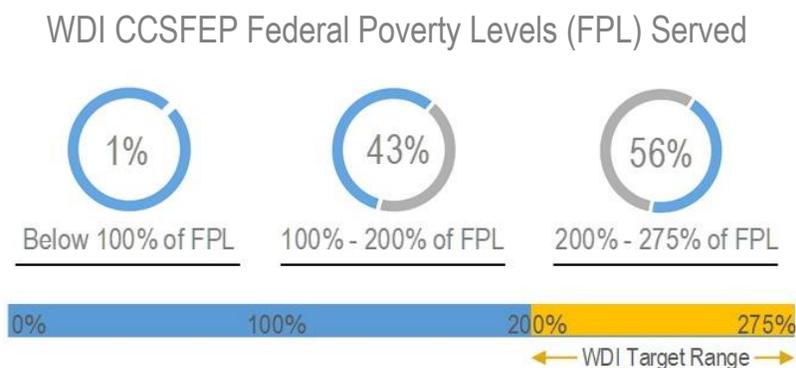
- **81% of placements were in a licensed or registered site**
- **19% of placements were in a legally exempt site**

When searching for child care, WDI CCSFEP parents indicate that cost, location and hours of operation continue to be most important factors considered when selecting a child care provider, followed by level of accreditation, structured environment, curriculum, payment options, nutrition, flexible scheduling and diversity, respectively.



## FEDERAL POVERTY LEVELS OF WDI APPROVED CASES

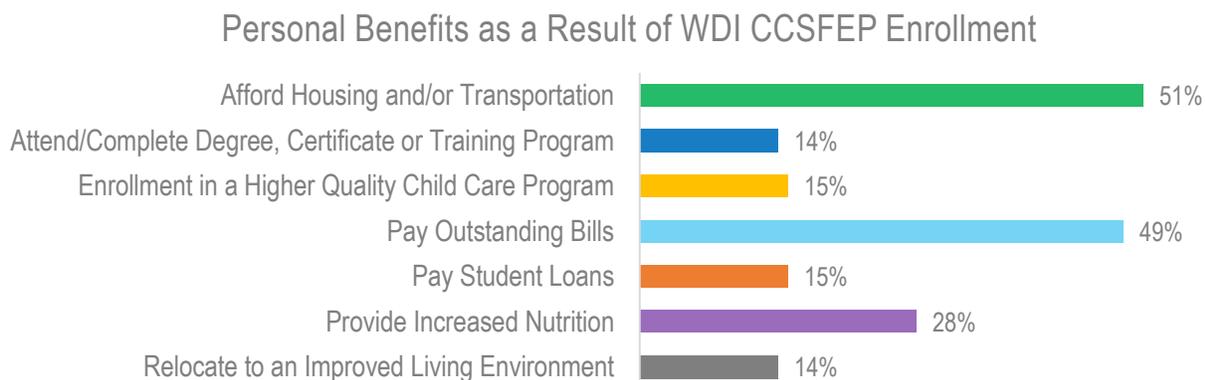
WDI CCSFEP funding is targeted to serve working families with incomes between 200% and 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). However, given flat or decreased funding at the federal, state and local levels over the past several years, local districts have been forced to decrease their maximum income eligibility level for low income child care subsidy cases, resulting in the WDI CCSFEP serving fewer median income families within the target range. The diagram below reflects the reduced FPL levels counties are currently serving:



*FPL Levels for Families Served by WDI CCSFEP during the reporting period of 4/1/2018-3/31/2019  
See Appendix D: Eligibility Requirements for Federal Poverty Income Levels*

## SURVEYS

Electronic surveys are sent by WDI to families who are actively enrolled in the CCSFEP. The results once again highlight the positive impact of enrollment in the program. WDI CCSFEP recipients report the following personal benefits as a result of enrollment:



*See Implications for Workforce & Economic Development on page 6 for professional benefits*



## IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Employers regularly identify access to high-quality, affordable child care as a persistent challenge to their workforce. Public investments in child care offer benefits on two levels: support for the current workforce because it enables parents to work, and support for the future workforce because it enables access to developmentally appropriate child care with quality learning opportunities. It is essential to reduce employment barriers that diminish the labor supply pool and constrain economic growth. Investments in child care offer a compelling strategy for addressing New York State's workforce needs and an opportunity to deliver a prosperous future for our children.

“Every year, working families in the United States lose out on \$8.3 billion in lost wages due to a lack of child care.”

- Center for American Progress,  
*The Cost of Work-Family Policy Inaction*

### Investing in Child Care Supports Economic Growth

The cost of turnover for NYS businesses is equal to 75% - 150% of an employees annual salary	 <b>RETENTION</b>	59% report retention of employment as a result of enrollment	WDI CCSFEP SURVEY RESULTS
On average, employees report 5 to 9 missed working days each year due to child care issues	 <b>ATTENDANCE</b>	54% report improved attendance as a result of enrollment	
U.S. businesses experience \$3 billion in lost productivity annually due to a lack of access to child care	 <b>PRODUCTIVITY</b>	34% report increased productivity as a result of enrollment	

Data Sources: America's Edge, Child Care Aware of America & Center for American Progress



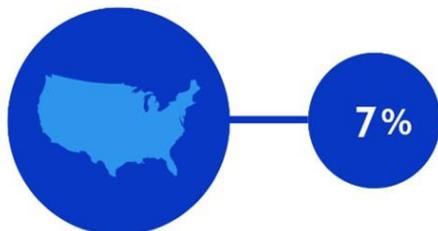
“As a nurse, and my husband a plumbing apprentice we are early in our careers while also raising three little boys. This program provides the opportunity for both of us to continue to work, further our careers, become more financially stable all while knowing our children are in a safe childcare environment during the day.”

– WDI CCSFEP Recipient Family



## CO-PAYMENT CRISIS

In NYS, families receiving subsidized child care are subject to co-payment fees that total nearly a quarter of their annual household income. The amount families contribute towards the cost of subsidized child care vary across the state and are determined by the individual counties. This residential variance can significantly limit a family's access to quality child care and could mean the difference between licensed care and unregulated care for children.

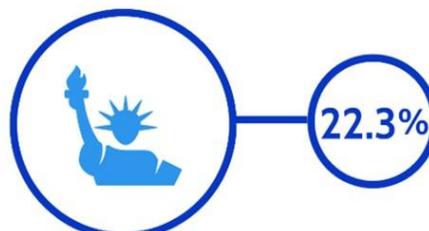


### Federal Recommendation

*Families should pay no more than 7% of annual household income towards the cost of any form of child care*

#### OUTCOME

When quality child care is affordable, it enables parents to work, children to thrive & the economy to grow



### New York State

*Families pay up to 22.3% of annual household income in co-payment fees towards the cost of subsidized child care*

#### IMPLICATIONS

When quality child care is not affordable, it limits access to developmentally appropriate care for children & reduces labor force participation

*Federal Recommendation made by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

In response to the co-payment crisis, WDI collaborated with partner agencies to identify creative solutions that do not require legislative action. In 2018, WDI presented proposals to each local DSS in participating counties with the highest allowable co-payment fees. The proposals included a waiver through the local Consolidated Services Plan (CSP) that caps the percentage of income that is contributed towards the cost of subsidized child care in co-payment fees at 17.5% of annual household income. Onondaga County (2018) and Monroe County (2019) have since submitted and had waivers approved by NYS OCFS, making them the first counties outside of NYC to have introduced this solution.

We extend a special thank you to Susan Antos of the Empire Justice Center. Her counsel and literature were instrumental in WDI's co-payment waiver efforts, and we are continually inspired by her impactful work.

*Co-Payment Disparity Chart by County can be located on the Empire Justice Center website*



## APPENDIX A: PROGRAM HISTORY

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Organized labor, through the New York State American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (NYS AFL-CIO), has long sought to help working families by promoting better working conditions and compensation. They understood that an investment in child care is an investment in our future and fought hard to advocate for increased child care subsidies and expanded income eligibility levels at which families are served. As a result of this advocacy, WDI received funding in the New York State Budget for Fiscal Year 2003-2004, with the support of the New York State Legislature, for a pilot demonstration project in the Capital Region (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties) and Oneida County to serve working families with incomes less than 275% of the FPL. The pilot was later expanded to include Monroe County in 2013, Onondaga County in 2015 and Erie County in 2016.

The New York Union Child Care Coalition (NYUCCC) of the NYS AFL-CIO and the Capital District Area Labor Federation's Child Care Advisory Committee supported WDI in the development of a plan for the pilot project in the Capital Region and Oneida County which was consistent with state and federal law and subject to the approval of the NYS OCFS. The NYUCCC continues to serve as a vehicle through which the program builds support by cultivating diverse partnerships and strives to increase access to child care subsidies for working families in both Upstate NY through the WDI CCSFEP and in NYC through the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE).

## APPENDIX B: PROGRAM GOALS

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The goals of the WDI CCSFEP, as set forth in the legislation and in the WDI contract with the NYS OCFS, are to:

- Improve working families' access to child care assistance through a process that is user-friendly and efficient. The program was designed to make the process of applying for child care subsidies and enrolling in child care services easier for working parents.
- Extend access to child care subsidies to more moderate income working families with children ages birth to 13 and earning up to 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); targeting those who earn between 200% and 275% of FPL.



## APPENDIX C: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The activities required by and outlined in the plan include:

- Facilitated enrollment of families in the child care subsidy program: including application assistance, advocacy when appropriate, and contact with DSS
- Delivery of information critical to accessing quality, developmentally appropriate child care
- Enrollment of families up to 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (when funding is available)
- Community outreach to and education of families on child care subsidy eligibility
- Data collection and retention
- Provision of periodic progress reports

## APPENDIX D: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in the WDI CCSFEP a family is required to:

- Reside in Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga or Schenectady County
- Have a child(ren) under thirteen (13) years of age
- Be employed a minimum of 25 hours per week (each adult in the Child Care Subsidy Unit or CCSU)
- Have a qualifying gross income under 275% of the annual Federal Poverty Level (based on family size)

### Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Guidelines 6/1/2018 - 5/31/2019

Household Size	100% FPL	125% FPL	150% FPL	175% FPL	200% FPL	250% FPL	275% FPL
2	\$16,460	\$20,575	\$24,690	\$28,805	\$32,920	\$41,150	\$45,265
3	\$20,780	\$25,975	\$31,170	\$36,365	\$41,560	\$51,950	\$57,145
4	\$25,100	\$31,375	\$37,650	\$43,925	\$50,200	\$62,750	\$69,025
5	\$29,420	\$36,775	\$44,130	\$51,485	\$58,840	\$73,550	\$80,905
6	\$33,740	\$42,175	\$50,610	\$59,045	\$67,480	\$84,350	\$92,785

*WDI CCSFEP Reporting Period of 4/1/2018-3/31/2019 primarily resides within the 6/1/2018-5/31/2019 FPL range. Updated U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines for child care subsidies in NYS were implemented 6/1/2019.*



## APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Participating county general demographic information on population, population age ranges, median income and county population by poverty level is provided below. The information included is derived from the 2017 United States Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) results. This provides a general background when reviewing WDI CCSFEP data.

### County Population and Age of Children

County	Total Population	Under Age 5	Ages 5 to 9	Ages 10 to 14
<b>Albany</b>	309,612	15,745	15,966	15,867
<b>Erie</b>	925,528	51,049	51,812	51,626
<b>Monroe</b>	747,642	41,500	42,817	44,487
<b>Oneida</b>	231,332	13,502	14,026	13,588
<b>Onondaga</b>	465,398	26,365	27,992	27,380
<b>Rensselaer</b>	159,722	7,897	8,696	9,229
<b>Saratoga</b>	229,869	11,340	13,368	13,063
<b>Schenectady</b>	155,565	7,996	9,398	9,805

2017 ACS 1-Year Estimates - AGE AND SEX

<https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2017/>

### County Family Population by Poverty Level

County	Total Number of Families	Families Below 100% of FPL	Families 100-199% of FPL	Families 200-299% of FPL	Families Funded by WDI 200-275% of FPL*	Families 300-399% of FPL
<b>Albany</b>	68,390	4,329	7,450	8,821	131	7,748
<b>Erie</b>	231,137	23,722	29,136	32,885	116	33,953
<b>Monroe</b>	182,996	19,460	23,371	24,805	166	25,493
<b>Oneida</b>	55,478	6,606	8,107	7,185	80	8,984
<b>Onondaga</b>	114,875	10,158	16,622	16,841	115	14,794
<b>Rensselaer</b>	37,154	2,507	4,007	3,974	67	4,848
<b>Saratoga</b>	64,100	2,700	5,642	6,901	50	6,630
<b>Schenectady</b>	29,555	2,498	2,955	3,832	52	3,581

2017 ACS 1-Year Estimates - RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY LEVEL OF FAMILIES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

<https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2017/>

\*Families actively funded by WDI CCSFEP at the end date of the 2018-2019 fiscal year (3/31/2019)



## APPENDIX F: PROGRAM PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

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### STAFFING

WDI has 5 staff with responsibility for the CCSFEP across the eight counties, including:

- (1) Program Manager
- (3) Full-time Program Associates
- (1) Part-time Program Associate

With direct responsibility for case management for active and applicant families, providing support throughout the application, child care provider selection and recertification process.

- (1) Capital Region Counties
- (1) Monroe County
- (1) Onondaga County
- (.5) Oneida County
- (1) Erie County

#### **Program Manager**

Responsible for overall program management and additional hands-on activities.

#### **Program Associate**

Responsible for data entry, eligibility pre-screening, distribution of application packets, office management, and database management. This position also includes some responsibility for outreach and event staffing.

### COORDINATION WITH COUNTIES

WDI partners closely with Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Departments of Social Services in the provision of service to clients. A working relationship has been established and maintained through the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WDI and the county DSS.

Completed applications are brought to the counties by program staff (usually on a weekly basis) and county caseworkers interact with WDI staff routinely. Reduced or flat county DSS child care funding has continued to have a serious impact, resulting in reduced staffing and a decrease in the number of resident families served.



Federal, state and local funding issues have forced local districts to decrease their maximum income eligibility level for low income child care subsidy cases and increase the portion that families are responsible to pay towards the cost of subsidized child care, resulting in the WDI CCSFEP serving fewer median income families between the targeted range of 200% to 275% FPL.

WDI funding continues to provide assistance to many families below 200% FPL who have found themselves over income for county CCDBG funding because of the lowered income eligibility levels. WDI has worked with our partner counties to provide continued services to as many working families as possible.

### SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

WDI has been able to simplify the application process for families. Many families, however, still view the paperwork and documentation requirements as a barrier. The WDI CCSFEP staff work closely with families and support them throughout the process.

In an effort to simplify the process and remove perceived barriers, WDI incorporated the following into program procedures:

- A streamlined application process
- Affording families the choice of scanning/emailing, faxing, mailing or dropping off the application and required documentation
- Accessible individual application assistance during and after regular business hours
- Communicating by phone or email and not requiring an office visit at any time (although a parent could come to the office if they desired)
- Attending employer, community and organized labor networking events in an effort to broadly disseminate project information

### SUBSIDY

The WDI CCSFEP funding is dependent on annual New York State budget appropriations. As a consequence of the impermanent nature of the funding stream, eligible CCSFEP families receive support with the understanding that it is dependent on funding availability. When funding levels permit, and the family remains qualified, families may re-certify for an additional six months to one year depending on their county of residence.



## FAMILY SHARE

Family co-pays or family shares are determined by the local county using a formula based on family size, income level and a predetermined county approved percentage (10% to 35%).

County	Percentage
Albany	25%
Erie	35%
Monroe	35%
Oneida	25%
Onondaga	35%
Rensselaer	25%
Saratoga	20%
Schenectady	35%

### Family Share Calculation

#### **Step 1:**

Subtract 100% of FPL from Household Gross Income

#### **Step 2:**

Multiply by Family Share Percentage (County-determined %) to generate an annual share

#### **Step 3:**

Divide by 52 to generate a weekly share

The amount of a family's child care subsidy represents the cost of child care minus the family's co-pay or family share. Family Share increases as family income increases. WDI CCSFEP families are differentially impacted by the different multipliers in the family share formula. This residential variance can significantly limit a family's access to quality child care and could mean the difference between licensed care and unregulated care for children.

## FAMILY ASSISTANCE

The WDI CCSFEP does not serve any families who are receiving family assistance. These families are currently served by the local Department of Social Services (DSS) funding.

