



**Division of Child Care
and Early Childhood Education**

P.O. Box 1437, Slot S-140 · Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

501-682-4891 · Fax: 501-682-2317 · TDD: 501-682-1550



June 12, 2009

Gwendolyn Jones
HHS/ACF
1301 Young Street
Suite 914
Dallas, TX 75202

Dear Gwen:

Enclosed is the Arkansas Child Care Development Fund State Plan for FY 2010-2011. All required attachments are enclosed. We have forwarded a copy of this plan to the Child Care Bureau-Communications Management Center as instructed.

Additionally, an electronic copy has been forwarded to your office for review and approval. If you have questions or need clarification please contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tonya Russell".

Tonya Russell
Arkansas Child Care Administrator



CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN

FOR: ARKANSAS

FFY 2010-2011

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State/Territory for the period 10/1/09 – 9/30/11. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

[Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 04/30/2012]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AMENDMENTS LOG

PART 1 ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 Lead Agency Information
- 1.2 State/Territory Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information
- 1.3 Estimated Funding
- 1.4 Estimated Administration Cost
- 1.5 Administration of the Program
- 1.6 Funds Used to Match CCDF
- 1.7 Improper Payments

PART 2 DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

- 2.1 Consultation and Coordination
- 2.2 Public Hearing Process
- 2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

PART 3 CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

- 3.1 Description of Child Care Services
- 3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care
- 3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care
- 3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families
- 3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

PART 4 PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice
- 4.2 Records of Parental Complaints
- 4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings
- 4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care

PART 5 ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

- 5.1 Quality Targeted Funds and Set-Asides
- 5.2 Early Learning Guidelines and Professional Development Plans

PART 6 HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS (50 States & District of Columbia only)

- 6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers
- 6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Child Care Providers
- 6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Child Care Providers
- 6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Child Care Providers
- 6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements
- 6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements
- 6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

- PART 7 **HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES**
- 7.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories
 - 7.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Child Care Providers in the Territories
 - 7.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Child Care Providers in the Territories
 - 7.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Child Care Providers in the Territories
 - 7.5 Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements
 - 7.6 Enforcement of Territorial Health and Safety Requirements
 - 7.7 Exemptions from Territorial Immunization Requirements

APPENDIX 1 -- PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

APPENDIX 2 -- ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

APPENDIX 3 -- ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

AMENDMENTS LOG

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN FOR: _____
FOR THE PERIOD: 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

Lead Agencies must submit plan amendments within 60 days of the effective date of an amendment (§98.18 (b)).

Instructions for Amendments:

- 1) Lead Agency completes the first 3 columns of the Amendment Log and sends a photocopy of the Log (showing the latest amendment sent to ACF) and the amended section(s) to the ACF Regional Office contact. Lead Agency also should indicate the Effective Date of the amended section in the footer at the bottom of the amended page(s). A copy of the Log, showing the latest amendment pending in ACF, is retained as part of the Lead Agency's Plan.
- 2) ACF completes column 4 and returns a photocopy of the Log to the grantee.
- 3) The Lead Agency replaces this page in the Plan with the copy of the Log received from ACF showing the approval date.

Note: This process depends on repeated subsequent use of the same Log page over the life of the Plan. At any time the Log should reflect all amendments, both approved and pending in ACF. The Lead Agency is advised to retain "old" plan pages that are superseded by amendments in a separate appendix to its Plan. This is especially important as auditors will review CCDF Plans and examine effective date of changes.

SECTION AMENDED	EFFECTIVE/ PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE	DATE SUBMITTED TO ACF	DATE APPROVED BY ACF

PART 1

ADMINISTRATION

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

1.1 Lead Agency Information (as designated by State/Territory Chief Executive Officer)

Name of Lead Agency: Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS)
Address of Lead Agency: PO Box 1437, Slot S260 Little Rock, AR 72203
Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: John Selig
Phone Number: 501-682-8650
Fax Number: 501-682-6836
E-Mail Address: John.Selig@arkansas.gov
Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.arkansas.gov/childcare

1.2 State/Territory Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name of the State/Territory Child Care Contact (CCDF): Tonya Russell
Title of State/Territory Child Care Contact: Director
Address: PO Box 1437, Slot S140
Phone Number: 501-682-4895
Fax Number: 501-683-0971
E-Mail Address: Tonya.Russell@arkansas.gov
Phone Number for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any): 501-682-8947
Web Address for CCDF program information (for the public) (if any):
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport

1.3 Estimated Funding

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. (§98.13(a))

CCDF: \$47,902,893
Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: \$ _____
Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: \$ _____
State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: \$1,886,543
State Matching Funds: \$5,979,788
Total Funds Available: \$55,769,224

1.4 Estimated Administration Cost

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of Federal CCDF and State Matching Funds will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): \$2,788,461 (5 %). (658E(c) (3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

1.5 Administration of the Program

1.5.1 Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Targeted Funds and Set-Aside?

- Yes.
- No. If no, use **Table 1.5.1** below to **identify** the name and type of agency that delivers services and activities. If more than one agency performs the task, identify all agencies in the box under “Agency,” and **indicate** in the box to the right whether each is a non-government entity.

Table 1.5.1: Administration of the Program

Service/Activity	Agency	Non-Government Entity (see Guidance for definition)	
Determines individual eligibility:			
a) TANF families	AR Department of Workforce Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
b) Non-TANF families	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Assists parents in locating care	Statewide Child Care Resource and Referral Networks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Makes the provider payment	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Quality activities	All under DCCECE contract agreements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other:	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

1.5.2. Describe how the Lead Agency maintains overall internal control for ensuring that the CCDF program is administered according to the rules established for the program (§98.11).

The Division has established and maintains internal controls designed to reasonably ensure compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and program compliance requirements. The objectives of internal control pertaining to the compliance requirements for Federal programs are as follows:

- (1) Transactions are properly recorded and accounted for to:
 - (i) Permit the preparation of reliable financial statements and Federal reports;
 - (ii) Maintain accountability over assets; and
 - (iii) Demonstrate compliance with laws, regulations, and other compliance requirements;
- (2) Transactions are executed in compliance with:
 - (i) Laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on a Federal program; and
 - (ii) Any other laws and regulations that are identified in the compliance supplements; and
- (3) Funds, property, and other assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition.

The Division's control environment sets the tone of the organization, influencing the control consciousness of its people. It is the foundation for all other components of internal control, providing discipline and structure. The Division identifies and analyzes risks relevant to achievement of its objectives, forming a basis for determining how the risks should be managed. Control activities have been developed in order to help ensure that management's directives are carried out. Accounting systems identify, capture and exchange information in a form and time frame allowing for the proper identification and segregation of federal and non-federal transactions, as well as a proper allocation of transactions applicable to both. Monitoring activities continually assess the quality of internal control policies over time.

1.5.3. Describe how the Lead Agency ensures adequate personnel, resources, systems, internal controls, and other components necessary for meeting CCDF reporting requirements (658K, §98.67, §§98.70 & 98.71, §§98.100 to 102), including the Lead Agency's plans for addressing any reporting deficiencies, if applicable. At a minimum, the description should address efforts for the following reporting requirements:

a) Fiscal

Control activities applicable to fiscal control include:

- Operating policies and procedures are clearly written and communicated.

- Procedures are in place to implement changes in laws, regulations, guidance, and funding agreements affecting Federal awards.
- Management prohibits intervention or overriding established controls.
- Adequate segregation of duties is provided between performance, review, and recordkeeping of a task.
- Computer and program controls include:
 - Data entry controls, e.g., edit checks.
 - Exception reporting.
 - Access controls.
 - Reviews of input and output data.
 - Computer general controls and security controls.
- Supervision of employees commensurate with their level of competence.
- Personnel with adequate knowledge and experience to discharge responsibilities.
- Equipment, inventories, cash, and other assets secured physically and periodically counted and compared to recorded amounts.
- The Division reports quarterly on Federal Form ACF-696 regarding fiscal activity for the CCDF grant. In addition, after the closure of any applicable grant year the Division files a final Federal Form ACF-696 detailing all revenue and expenditures applicable to the grant.

b) Data Reporting and

The Division reports demographic and financial information regarding children and families served through the Child Care and Development Fund as required by the Child Care Bureau on forms ACF-800 (submitted on an annual basis) and ACF-801 (submitted on a monthly basis).

c) Error Rate Reporting

The Division has automated child care intake, eligibility determination, and case management functions to increase accuracy and timeliness. Automated case management systems perform several functions, including:

- Collecting demographic data;
- Calculating eligibility determination;
- Enforcing program policies;
- Tracking the eligibility periods; and
- Sending notifications to clients and workers.

Workers or clients may enter data into the application. The system verifies the data by integrating internal and external data sources to verify information and perform an eligibility calculation.

The solution addresses the challenges of preventing and identifying improper payments by:

- Eliminating eligibility calculation errors;
- Using system edits to prevent data entry errors;

- Interfacing with other program automated systems to verify eligibility information;
- Tracking eligibility timeframes and triggering recertification notices; and
- Voiding payment authorizations for any non-licensed or closed provider facility.

The Keying in Data Accurately, Reliably, and Efficiently (KIDCare) system was implemented in July 2005 as part of Arkansas' effort to improve program integrity and reduce improper payments in the child care subsidy program.

KIDCare system functionality includes:

- Up-front error checking through built-in edits;
- Interfacing with external data sources, including TANF and the Social Security Administration (SSA) databases;
- Tracking the eligibility period for clients; and
- Excluding payments to non-approved or closed child care providers, even if a participant received services at the facility.

KIDCare maintains interfaces to the systems supporting the State's TANF, Child Support and Social Security Administration (SSA) programs in order to verify Social Security Numbers (SSNs) or other reported income information. Accessing data from other program sources during eligibility determination and re-determination allows workers to reduce the use of fake SSNs, and to verify current reported income.

KIDCare improves the accuracy of eligibility determination through the following system functionality:

- Uses program-specific guidelines to accurately determine eligibility;
- Triggers re-determinations for clients when changes occur that affect eligibility;
- Tracks case status, program and periods of eligibility;
- Provides interfaces with other systems, reduces data entry, maintains data integrity, and validates information;
- Facilitates business processes for workers and supervisors by using system alerts, which are messages sent to workers either on-screen or via email that inform them of required actions; and
- Supports worker activities and provides management with critical data by providing reports and notices.

KIDCare also supports budget management by automatically formulating and allocating funds for 75 counties. The system prevents expenditures that exceed allocated amounts assigned to each local jurisdiction, yielding significant time savings for State staff.

The Improper Payment Report has been completed and reported on the ACF-402. Please refer to Section 1.7 for more information on Improper Payments.

1.6 Funds Used to Match CCDF

1.6.1 Will the Lead Agency use public funds to meet a part of the CCDF Match requirement pursuant to §98.53(e)(1)?

Yes, **describe** the activity and source of funds:

Arkansas State General Revenue and State Public Pre-k Funds are used to support the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) programs for three and four year old children at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

No.

1.6.2 Will the Lead Agency use private donated funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2)?

Yes. If yes, are those funds: (**check one below**)

Donated directly to the State?

Donated to a separate entity or entities designated to receive private donated funds?

a) How many entities are designated to receive private donated funds?

b) **Provide** information below for each entity:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact: _____

Type: _____

No.

1.6.3 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

Yes (**respond to 1.6.5**), and:

a) The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).

b) (20 %) Estimated percentage of the MOE requirement that will be met with Pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 20%.)

c) If the Lead Agency uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, **describe** how the Lead Agency will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

The State's quality Pre-K Program, Arkansas Better Chance For School Success (ABCSS), is licensed and contractually managed by the Lead Agency for the block grant. These Pre-K contracts are with differing entities that include:

- Local School Districts
- Regional Educational Service Cooperatives
- Head Start Grantees
- Community-Based and Faith-Based Non-Profit Organizations
- Universities
- Housing Authorities
- Community Development Corporations
- Hospitals
- Economic Opportunity Corporations

These providers utilize a maximum income limit of 200% of Federal Poverty Level to determine eligibility for working families in this program. Many of the same providers participating in ABCSS also participate in the Child Care Assistance Program. Funding for the ABC/ABCSS program for state fiscal year 2010 will be \$113,775,000.

No.

1.6.4 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirements? (§98.53(h))

Yes (**respond to 1.6.5**), and

a) (30 %) Estimated percentage of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (Not to exceed 30%.)

b) If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, **describe** how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

As with MOE, the State's quality Pre-K Program, Arkansas Better Chance For School Success (ABCSS), is licensed and contractually managed by

the Lead Agency for the block grant. These Pre-K contracts are with differing entities that include:

- Local School Districts
- Regional Educational Service Cooperatives
- Head Start Grantees
- Community-Based and Faith-Based Non-Profit Organizations
- Universities
- Housing Authorities
- Community Development Corporations
- Hospitals
- Economic Opportunity Corporations

These providers utilize a maximum income limit of 200% of Federal Poverty Level to determine eligibility for working families in this program. Many of the same providers participating in ABCSS also participate in the Child Care Assistance Program.

No.

1.6.5 If the Lead Agency indicated “yes” to 1.6.3 or 1.6.4, **describe** Lead Agency efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))

State funded Pre-K Programs receive information about the child care voucher program to assist parents in provision of wrap-around services to extend hours of service to meet the needs of working families. The State funded Pre-K programs are mandated to provide service 178 days annually and 7.5 hours daily. Children of working parents may receive after-care in the same setting or may be transported by the program to another care program. Vouchers are an available option for extending care. The State funded programs are encouraged to offer extended care and care during summer months for working families.

1.6.6 Will the Lead Agency use any other funds to meet a part of the CCDF Match requirement pursuant to §98.53(e)(1)?

Yes, **describe** the activity and source of funds:

State General Revenue

No.

1.7 Improper Payments

Has your State implemented any strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce, and collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)

Yes and these strategies are:

1. Identify Suspicious Activity via Database Checks and Data Mining Techniques

The majority of improper payment referrals are initiated by Childcare Eligibility specialists. Specialists monitor client activity and refer suspected activity for investigation or improper payment collection. Arkansas developed a business intelligence system call Decision Support System (DSS). This system integrates data from division business systems. Arkansas is capable of doing database checks and data mining operations.

DSS is serving two primary purposes. First, executive query and reporting needs and secondly, moved from a reactive reporting mode to a more proactive predictive ability to assist the division in addressing suspicious provider and client behavior. The system is utilizing commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software for executive reporting and data mining needs.

Business Objects was selected to meet the executive query and reporting needs. It provides an integrated query, reporting, and analysis capability to allow users to easily track, understand, and manage the information stored in multiple data sources within and beyond the division.

Data to be analyzed by DSS includes information from the following business systems:

- a. **Child Care Eligibility System:** The Child Care Eligibility System (called KIDCare – Keying in Day Care Accurately, Reliably, and Efficiently) is used to administer the Child Care Assistance Program in Arkansas.
- b. **Special Nutrition Program (SNP) System:** This system is used by the division to administer the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s food programs encompassing the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP); the National School Lunch Program (NSLP); and the Special Milk Program in Arkansas.
- c. **Child Outcome Planning and Assessment (COPA) System:** COPA is used by DHS for oversight and monitoring of the Arkansas

Better Chance (ABC) Program, the state-funded public pre K program.

2. Fully Investigate Suspicious Activity

The DCCECE employs four full time staff members in its Compliance Unit to investigate and analyze provider and client suspicious activity. In addition, the division pays for two full-time fraud investigators, one full-time auditor, and one full-time attorney.

This team of professional and technical experts has the ultimate responsibility to ensure the proper administration of federal and state funds that pay for child care services for children, and to take measures to prevent and deter improper activity.

Over the past several years, this team has fully integrated all of its activities to provide for a more robust operation to address the difficult task of reducing improper payments. Many success stories have been documented as a result of hard work and dedication, and “lessons learned” from past experiences are being applied in current day-to-day practices to enhance the overall strategy being undertaken by Arkansas DHS.

3. Quickly Act on the Results

Improper activity on behalf of providers and clients are quickly acted upon via the following methods after a complete and thorough investigation.

- **Client Disqualification:** A disqualification period occurs when a client is found guilty of fraud or when the client fails to repay a child care overpayment within the established timeframes. Penalties imposed are six months for the first offense; one year for the second offense; and permanently disqualified for the third offense. Clients cannot be reinstated for child care assistance until all monies are repaid.
- **Provider Exclusion:** Department policy allows for providers to be excluded from participation in all funded programs not as a penalty, but rather to protect public funds, the integrity of publicly funded programs, and public confidence in those programs. Provider exclusion is a serious action that is used only in the State’s best interests. Exclusion applies to all participants, related parties, and their heirs and assigns of the participants and related parties. Providers can be excluded if found guilty of fraud, submission of false information, fail to repay funds owed the Department or violate agreements to participate in funded programs or receive grant funds. Additionally, child care providers can be excluded for failing to submit an annual audit or if the Audit Office disapproves the findings of an audit. Exclusion is for a minimum of 12 months, or until all

monies owed the Department have been repaid and all remedial or corrective action has been taken whichever is longer.

- **Child Care License Revocation:** Falsification of any document or the submission of false information may constitute grounds for revocation of the Child Care license. Falsification means the submission of untrue information whether by statement or omission.
- **Criminal Prosecution:** Federal and state prosecution are available in the most serious offenses.

4. Internal Review

DCCECE converted two existing positions within the Eligibility Unit to become Quality Control Reviewers. The two reviewers will conduct 2nd party reviews of existing case files and will conduct random service for billing reviews of child care providers.

- No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
- Yes, and these planned strategies are: _____
- No.

PART 2
DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

2.1 Consultation and Coordination

2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)).

Indicate the entities with which the Lead Agency has a) **consulted** and b) **coordinated** (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in Table 2.1.1.

Consultation involves the meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. **At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).**

Coordination involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development services, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). **At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with** (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children’s emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, and (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (6) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

Table 2.1.1 Consultation and Coordination

Agency	a) Consultation in Development of the Plan	b) Coordination with Service Delivery
Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Employment services / workforce development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
Public education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
TANF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

Agency	a) Consultation in Development of the Plan	b) Coordination with Service Delivery
Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> * N/A
State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for:		
State pre-kindergarten programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head Start programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (See guidance):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*** Required.**

For each box checked in Table 2.1.1, (a) identify the agency(ies) providing the service and **(b) describe** the consultation and coordination efforts. Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

a. All Entities identified in Table 2.1.1 under Consultation in Development of the Plan

A series of public meetings/roundtable discussions was held in January and February of 2009 in 8 locations throughout the state to solicit recommendations for development of the CCDF 2009-2011 State Plan. Representatives of local governments and other agencies were invited to provide input. An on-line survey was established on the Division web-site to further gather input from all entities listed in Table 2.1.1 and from the general public, parents and providers. The recommendations from the roundtable discussion and the on-line web based survey were considered in the plan development.

b. Coordination/Collaborative Initiatives with Public Health (Arkansas Department of Health)

- **The Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS) Grant**

The Arkansas DHS DCC/ECE coordinates with public health (the Arkansas Department of Health) through the Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative (AECCS) and related activities. DCC/ECE administers the programmatic activities of the ECCS grant, funded by the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Bureau. The designated Title V/MCH agency in Arkansas is the Department of Health. Several staff from ADH participate in various AECCS Workgroups; and Dr. Richard Nugent, the AR Director of MCH, serves as the Co-Chair of the Medical Homes Workgroup, which is working to develop a consistent, user-friendly definition of medical home for wide spread use and a related tool kit. This information will be shared with child care programs to

promote the importance of medical homes and need for every child to have one. The tool kit will also promote the importance of preventive health services such as EPSDT and using the medical home to access these services. The overall purpose of the AECCS Initiative is to increase the health and well-being of Arkansas's young children and their families by creating an integrated service delivery platform for all early childhood services. The AECCS Partnership Council, including representatives from the Department of Health, the Arkansas Department of Education, advocacy organizations, and Arkansas chapters of the American Academies of Pediatrics and Family Physicians guides the work of this Initiative.

- **Access to the Statewide Immunization Registry**

DCC/ECE worked with the Immunization Program at the Department of Health to revise the rules and regulations for the immunization registry (called INC) to allow child care providers' access. Child care providers throughout the state can now receive training provided by the Immunization Program and access the Registry for immunization records of children in their care. DCC/ECE and the Immunization Program are finalizing details to make this training available on line starting in early summer, 2009. Access to INC improves efficiency and effectiveness and helps ensure that children in child care programs are up-to-date on age-appropriate immunizations. Through this partnership activity, DCC/ECE is helping to improve the immunization rates and the health of young children in Arkansas.

- **Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Initiative**

In 2007-2008, Arkansas was selected as one of 17 states and territories to participate in the National Academy of State Health Policy's ABCD Learning Academy. The focus of ABCD was to improve/change Medicaid policies to ensure early identification of children with developmental problems/issues using a standardized screening tool as part of EPSDT screens provided by physicians. The ABCD work was guided by a Core Team (a five member team), which was responsible for day-to-day operations and coordination. A member of the MCH staff at ADH served on the Core Team, which led the development of a statewide spread strategy related to developmental screening. Proposed policy changes included requiring the use of a standardized developmental screening tool (recommended tool: Ages and Stage Questionnaire) and autism screening tool (MCHAT) at ages recommended in the Bright Futures Guidelines and increased reimbursement for the use of these tools as part of EPSDT screens. Other components of the proposed strategy included technical assistance for physicians and their staff and initial plans for improvement in referrals, linkages, and follow up at the community level. Implementation of these policy changes is currently on hold while the Arkansas Medicaid Program seeks funds for implementation.

- **Arkansas State Leadership Workshop on EPSDT**

In November 2007, Arkansas held a state leadership workshop on EPSDT, supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration, MCH Bureau.

DCC/ECE, Medicaid, and ADH/MCH sponsored this workshop, attended by over 40 policy makers, state agency and organization leaders, and advocates. The meeting focused on three topics: (1) building community systems, (2) assuring quality, and (3) maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of services. The discussions and meeting activities produced three recommendations, with consensus from attendees: (1) Increase EPSDT care coordination capacity to support families and providers, (2) Plan for future use of fiscal incentives for EPSDT screen providers, and (3) Mandate use of developmental screening tools. Work on implementation of these recommendations continues through Initiatives such as AECCS, collaborative efforts with the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and partnerships with DCC/ECE and Medicaid.

- **Nutrition and Physical Activity**

DCC/ECE coordinates with public health on programs and activities related to improving nutrition and physical activity in child care programs. ADH is providing support through its CDC-funded Obesity Prevention Grant to 25 child care programs throughout the state to implement NAP SACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care). This nationally-recognized intervention program works to promote and improve policies in child care programs related to nutrition and physical activity. In addition, Health is implementing NAP SACC in fifteen child care programs in three of its public health regions (five sites per region), supported by the Child Health Advisory Committee.

Collaborative Initiatives with the Department of Education

- **AECCS**

DCC/ECE works closely with the Department of Education (DOE) in the ECCS Initiative. Representatives from DOE serve as active members of the AECCS Partnership Council and provide links to the Special Education and Early Childhood units at the Department. In addition, the co-chairs of the Early Care and Education Workgroup are from education: one from the Special Education Unit and one from a local school district. As part of AECCS, this Workgroup collaborates with DOE to help ensure that children will have access to high quality child care and early education programs. Representatives from DOE also participate in the Social-Emotional Health Workgroup and on the AECCS Parent Education/Family Involvement Task Force.

- **Coordinated School Health**

The Department of Education, in partnership with the Health Department, is the recipient of a grant from CDC for Coordinated School Health (CSH). A representative from DCC/ECE serves on the state-level advisory group for CSH to help ensure that school-based pre k programs (serving 3 and 4 year olds) are included in CSH activities and programs. One specific area of focus and partnership activities is healthier lifestyles: improving nutrition and physical

activity. CSH has supported a recommendation for school-based pre k programs to implement NAP SACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care), a nationally recognized intervention for early childhood programs.

Coordination occurs between multiple programs in the public education sector and DCC/ECE. These include:

- DCC/ECE administers the public Pre-K Program on behalf of the Department of Education. Funding for Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program is included in the budget of the Arkansas Department of Education. Through an agreement, the Division provides programmatic oversight of the ABC Program, reporting to the State Board of Education. www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc
- Programs operating under the ABC Program are managed by Local School Districts (LEA's), by Regional Educational Service Cooperatives and by Institutions of Higher Learning. These programs provide matching funds for the ABC program, which include Title I funds, Early Childhood Special Education funds (IDEA), Even Start, and district poverty funding. Programs are collaborative in nature and ensure that high quality services are available to a broad number of children.
- Development of the Kindergarten Skills Checklist and assessment was a joint project of the Department of Education, DCC/ECE, and the School Readiness Indicators Task Force. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment is based on the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Frameworks (Early Learning Guidelines), the Head Start Child Outcome Performance Indicators, HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) Outcomes, and the Arkansas Kindergarten Benchmarks. The Kindergarten Assessment is required of all entering Kindergarten children. The Kindergarten teacher may accept assessments for children who have attended an ABC Program, Head Start Program or a State Accredited/Quality Approved program assessment completed by the early childhood professional.
- Pre K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) Early Language and Literacy Professional Development training contractors include Education Service Cooperatives, Local School Districts, and Universities. Web Site: <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/pdf/prekbrochure2k7.pdf>

TANF/DHS Division of County Operations and Transitional Employment Board

DCC/ECE works closely with the Transitional Employment Assistance Board that was established by state law (§20-76-105) to oversee the management of the State's Temporary Employment Assistance (TEA) for Needy Families Program. The Division updates the Board periodically with statistics and expenditure projections concerning child care services to families who are participating in or

transitioning from welfare assistance. This Board has authority over the transfer of TANF funds. If a shortfall in revenue was to occur that would affect these services, DCC/ECE would work with the Board to consider options such as locating additional revenue, reducing monies budgeted for low-income working families, changing eligibility guidelines or co-payment levels. Web Sites: www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco and www.teaboard.net

Historically, the Division coordinated subsidized services with its sister Division – the Division of County Operations (DCO). The DCO was charged with the actual management of the TANF program for the State. Beginning in July 2005, the DCC/ECE assumed management and administrative responsibility for all subsidized child care, including TANF. The Division now works with the Department of Workforce Services, the state agency responsible for all TANF services.

State Agencies responsible for

State Pre-K Programs

Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program is the state funded early care and education intervention program that is designed to serve children at risk of school failure (Web Site: <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc>). Programs may be either center-based or home-visiting programs. Children must meet income eligibility criteria and be between birth to school entry to receive services.

The ABC Programs are administered by several differing entities that include: Local Education Agencies (LEA's), Regional Educational Service Cooperatives, Head Start; Community Based Non-Profit Organizations (CBO), Universities, Community Development Corporations (CDC), Hospitals, and the Economic Opportunity Corporation (EOC). Coordination and collaboration is seen in all operations. The expected outcome is assurance that programs operate at a level of high quality and fiscal soundness.

In the 2007 Legislative session, an additional \$40 million was appropriated. Current funding for state funded pre-k is \$113,775,000 with projected service for 26,000 children. The Division coordinates state funded pre-k providers and CCDF funding for extended day and summer care for working families.

Head Start Programs

Numerous Head Start Grantees participate and offer both child care voucher and ABC services to eligible children. The blending of these

services provides a wide range of services to all children. ABC programs may serve children from birth to 5 years of age.

The Division serves as grantee for the Arkansas Head Start Collaboration Grant. Cooperation and coordination of services occurs at the state and local levels. Web Site: www.arheadstart.org/

Arkansas Head Start Collaboration project has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Community Action Agencies, the Arkansas DHS Division of County Operations, Community Action; and DCC/ECE to establish a statewide plan for partnerships concerning families and children. Work continues with the following priorities included in the MOA:

- Early Childhood Education Coordination and Collaboration (Head Start, Pre-K, and Other Early Childhood Initiatives).
- Training and Technical Assistance.
- Positive Youth Development.
- Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

Programs that promote inclusion

In coordination with the Arkansas Department of Education's Early Childhood Special Education (part B/IDEA) office and the Division of Disability Services (part C), children with special needs are served in Head Start, the ABC Program, and the Child Care Assistance Program. Additional services may be provided by local school districts or through the regional educational services cooperatives.

Reimbursement for special needs is not subject to the county cap rate. The rates are individually set based on the needs of the child.

The DCC/ECE Division Director serves on the Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention.

2.1.2 Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for Child Care and Early Childhood Programs. Lead Agencies are encouraged to develop an emergency preparedness and response plan for child care and other early childhood programs operating in the State/Territory. The plan should include provisions for continuity of services and child care assistance payments to families and providers in the event of an emergency or disaster. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of your efforts in this area. **Check only ONE.**

- Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps

anticipated and how the plan will be coordinated with other emergency planning efforts within the State/Territory.

- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. Include the plan as Attachment 2.1.2, if available.
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. Include the plan as Attachment 2.1.2, if available.
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment 2.1.2.
- Other. Describe:**

a) **Describe** the progress made by the State/Territory in planning for an emergency or disaster event with regards to the operation of child care and early childhood education programs.

Senate Bill 342 has been enacted into law and will become effective July 1, 2009. This Act mandates the establishment of emergency preparedness procedures for all licensed and registered child care in the State of Arkansas. The Act provides that emergency preparedness courses and workshops will be offered and made available for all providers, that specific indicators of emergency preparedness will be built into the levels of the new Quality Improvement and Rating System that is scheduled to become effective by July 1, 2010 (above minimum licensing standards). The Act also requires that each center/home develop a plan to include a designated relocation site, a procedure for notifying parents of the relocation site and for ensuring family reunification, procedures to address the needs of individuals with special needs, instructions for staff training and reassignment of staff duties, coordination with local emergency management officials and a program to ensure that appropriate staff are familiar with the plan's components. The provisions of this act will be promulgated into the licensing rule base no later than December 31, 2009, and enforcement would follow no later than March 1, 2010. Training in emergency preparedness has already been developed and is being presented on an ongoing basis statewide. The new Quality Rating and Improvement System will incorporate emergency preparedness standards on each level and will be in place no later than July 1, 2010.

b) **Describe** provisions the Lead Agency has in place for the continuation of core child care functions during and after a disaster or emergency.

The Division will work closely with the management and staff at effected facilities to ensure that care is provided in a safe manner during relocation or other emergency actions and to ensure that children are reunited with their parents in the shortest possible time frame.

c) **Describe** efforts the Lead Agency has undertaken to provide resources and information to families and child care providers about ways to plan and prepare for an emergency or disaster situation.

The Division has developed a training module on emergency preparedness and has presented this training to provider groups, at child care conferences and to individual providers. (The training was developed from the NACCRRRA recommendations on emergency preparedness.) This training will continue and will be supplemented by training provided by other sources, including Division contract agents, as a part of pre-application training and as on-going technical assistance.

d) **Describe** how the Lead Agency is coordinating with other State/Territory agencies, private, and/or non-profit charitable organizations to ensure that child care and early childhood programs are included in planning, response, and recovery efforts.

The Division is working closely with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) to insure that plans developed by facilities are safe and take advantage of available local resources. ADEM will also provide technical assistance in determining local and regional risk factors and threats that require unique evacuation plans.

2.1.3 Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. Lead Agencies are encouraged to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood programs. **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of your efforts in this area. **Note: Check only ONE.**

- Planning.** Are there steps under way to develop a plan?
- Yes, and **describe** the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- No.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. Include the draft as **Attachment 2.1.3** if available. **Written plan is not yet available.**
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. Include the plan as **Attachment 2.1.3** if available.
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. Include the plan as **Attachment 2.1.3**.
- Other (describe):**

- a) **Describe** the progress made by the State/Territory in planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2008-2009 State Plan.

Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive System (AECCS) Initiative:

The Arkansas DHS DCC/ECE administers the programmatic activities of the State Maternal and Child Health Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS), funded by the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Bureau. The purpose of the AECCS Initiative is to increase the health and well-being of Arkansas's young children and their families by creating an integrated service delivery platform for all early childhood services. The AECCS is organized around five focus areas, with workgroups representing each focus area/area of concern.

- Early Care and Education: This group focuses on school readiness through quality early learning experiences. During 2006 and 2007, the Early Care and Education Group developed a draft of a quality rating improvement system (QRIS) for infant/toddler and early childhood centers, home care, and afterschool settings. Early in 2008, this draft was presented to DCC/ECE, which formed a QRIS Implementation Team to guide the implementation process and help ensure that necessary components and infrastructure are in place to support the System. This Team developed a QRIS Implementation Plan, with a projected implementation date of July, 2010.
- Medical Homes: The work of this group focuses on collaboration to improve screening efforts in Arkansas, to promote better understanding between early care and education professionals, and to assure that young children receive adequate health care and preventive service such as EPSDT and immunizations. This group supported the efforts to allow child care providers' access to the statewide Immunization Registry and was very involved in the ABCD (Assuring Better Child Health and Development) Initiative to improve developmental screening. Many members also participated in the State EPSDT Workshop and continue to work on efforts to improve EPSDT and developmental screening in Arkansas. This group is currently involved in the development of a consistent-user friendly definition of medical home and a related tool kit and in the state System of Care Initiative, which seeks to improve the behavioral health system for Children in Arkansas. **(Also see 2.1.1.)**
- Social-Emotional Health: The Social-Emotional Health Group worked closely with the Medical Homes Workgroup to address the early identification of developmental delays through the ABCD Initiative. These activities are ongoing. They also worked with DCC/ECE to support the early childhood mental health consultation project and training on social-emotional health for child care providers. The group has begun a needs assessment process to gather data related to social-emotional health from various entities that collect this data. As part of this process, the Social-Emotional Health Workgroup will identify gaps in the data and promote collaboration to fill those gaps, improve access to the data, and use it to help increase and improve services for children and their families who are dealing with social-emotional health issues/problems.

- **Family Support and Parenting Education Workgroups:** To ensure collaboration and strengthen their work, the Family Support and Parenting Education Workgroups joined forces to convene the Parent Education/Involvement Task Force. The Task Force is working to identify and prioritize the needs facing parent educators and to identify competency areas that will help give adequate guidance in the professional development opportunities for parent educators. They are also working to increase parent involvement and leadership through the Community Café Project and Strengthening Families Initiative.

All Workgroups have identified crosscutting issues which are being addressed through the partnerships formed across the entire AECCS Initiative. Shared goals include those for public awareness; access to high quality; parenting supports; and availability of services, with a specific focus on the state's diverse population and recognition of the importance of addressing cultural competency throughout the early childhood system.

AECCS Partnership Council

In 2008, the ECCS Leadership Team and the ABCD Stakeholders' Committee merged to form the AECCS Partnership Council. Members of the Early Childhood System's Team in Arkansas serve on the Partnership Council and participate in planning, development, implementation, and maintaining the AECCS Plan. This merger provided an opportunity to expand AECCS to include more leaders and policy makers involved and interested in children's issues. The role of the Partnership Council is to:

- Provide a communication forum with an early childhood focus.
- Interact with/coordinate strategies and action steps from related early childhood initiatives, including ABCD (Assuring Better Child Health and Development), System of Care/Behavioral Health Commission, and EPSDT Promotion Initiative.
- Build consensus around early childhood policies and priorities, including AECCS five areas of concern.
- Guide the AECCS implementation plans, including components like ABCD and others designed to improve outcomes for children.
- Collaborate with the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission, designated by the Governor as the State's Early Learning Council, on AECCS plans and activities.

The AECCS Partnership Council meets every other month with set agendas and average attendance of 25 (out of approximately 40 members). Additional meetings and/or conference calls are scheduled as needed.

b) Indicate whether there is an entity that is, or will be, responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

EARLY CHILDHOOD COORDINATING ENTITIES

AECCS Partnership Council

The Council will continue to meet on a regular basis to provide advice and support to the AECCS Workgroups and to the overall implementation of the AECCS Plan. During the next year, the Council will also help support an increased focus on children birth to three and increase the focus on social/emotional/mental health of children. This group will assist with and support overall early childhood program coordination in the state through members of the Council and the agencies/entities they represent, including those from the Head Start Collaboration Office, the Department of Education/Special Education, the DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities, and Arkansas Child Abuse Prevention. **(Also see 2.1.3 a.)**

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission:

Coordination and collaboration are key factors in all planning and program implementation in Arkansas. The Arkansas Early Childhood Commission is the responsible entity for ensuring this coordination. The Commission is a governor-appointed group of 24 members. Web Site: <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/aecc/index.html>

1. Advising DCC/ECE on the administration of the Arkansas Child Care Facilities Loan Guarantee Trust Fund.
2. Providing technical assistance in the design of training programs to enhance the skills of professionals in early childhood programs, including the development of an annual comprehensive training plan for providers.
3. Examining the recommendations of national and regional groups and systems producing scientifically proven and cost-effective results used by others to provide child care and early childhood services.
4. Assisting in the development of a comprehensive long-range plan for the expansion, development and implementation of early childhood programs in Arkansas, including recommending the allocation and expenditures of funds appropriated to the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program.
5. Facilitating coordination and communication among state agencies providing early childhood programs to promote non duplication and coordination of services in such programs and recommending a structure for the administration of the currently existing programs and any recommended programs.
6. Advising the Arkansas Department of Education and other appropriate state agencies on the development of programmatic standards for early childhood education programs.
7. Promoting strong local community support for early childhood education programs.

8. Promoting public awareness of childcare and early childhood programs.
9. From the applications submitted, making Child Care Appeal Review Panel selections from persons who meet the qualifications for service and who exhibit willingness and time commitment to serve on the panel.
10. Approving all rules and regulations promulgated by DCC/ECE.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM COORDINATION

1. Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program:

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program is the state funded early care and education intervention program that is designed to serve children at risk of school failure <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc>. Programs may be either center-based or home-visiting programs. Children must meet income eligibility criteria and be between birth to school entry to receive services.

The Arkansas Legislature established the ABC Program with Act 212 in 1991 and an appropriation of \$10 million. The ABC Program continues to expand. In 2003, the Arkansas Legislature passed Act 49, giving birth to a dedicated state Pre-K Program, Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS). The eligibility criterion for ABCSS is income-based. Any three- or four-year old child whose family income was at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level is eligible. The goal is to better prepare Pre-K children in high-risk areas of the state for kindergarten. In the 2009 Legislative session, a total of \$113,775 million was appropriated and DCC/ECE anticipates this funding to allow DCC/ECE to serve approximately 26,000 children at or below 200% of FPL in our state. The expected outcome is assurance that programs operate at a level of high quality and fiscal soundness.

2. Public Education (Arkansas Department of Education, Local Education Agencies-LEA's, Regional Educational Service Cooperatives):

Coordination occurs between multiple programs in the public education sector and DCC/ECE. These include:

- DCC/ECE administers the public Pre-K Program on behalf of the Department of Education. Funding for Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program is included in the budget of the Arkansas Department of Education. Through an agreement, the Division provides programmatic oversight of the ABC Program, reporting to the State Board of Education. Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc
- Programs operating under the ABC Program are managed by Local School Districts (LEA's), by Regional Educational Service Cooperatives and by Institutions of Higher Learning. These programs provide matching funds for

the ABC program, which include Title I funds, Early Childhood Special Education funds (IDEA), Even Start, and district poverty funding. Programs are collaborative in nature and ensure that high quality services are available to a broad number of children.

- Development of the Kindergarten Skills Checklist and assessment was a joint project of the Department of Education, DCC/ECE, and the School Readiness Indicators Task Force. The Kindergarten Assessment Tool is based on the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Frameworks (Early Learning Guidelines), the Head Start Child Outcome Performance Indicators, HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) Outcomes, and the Arkansas Kindergarten Benchmarks. This Kindergarten Assessment is required of all entering Kindergarten children. The Kindergarten teacher may accept assessments for children who have attended an ABC Program, Head Start Program or a State Accredited/Quality Approved program completed by the early childhood professional.
- Pre K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) contractors include Education Service Cooperatives, Local School Districts, and Universities. www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/pdf/prekbrochure2k7.pdf

3. TANF/DHS Division of County Operations and Transitional Employment Board

DCC/ECE works closely with the Transitional Employment Assistance Board that was established by state law (§20-76-105) to oversee the management of the State's Temporary Employment Assistance (TEA) for Needy Families Program. The Division updates the Board periodically with statistics and expenditure projections concerning child care services to families who are participating in or transitioning from welfare assistance. This Board has authority over the transfer of TANF funds. If a shortfall in revenue was to occur that would affect these services, DCC/ECE would work with the Board to consider options such as locating additional revenue, reducing monies budgeted for low-income working families, changing eligibility guidelines or co-payment levels. Web Sites: www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco and www.teaboard.net

Historically, the Division coordinated subsidized services with its sister Division – the Division of County Operations (DCO). The DCO was charged with the actual management of the TANF program for the State. Beginning in July 2005, the DCC/ECE assumed management and administrative responsibility for all subsidized child care, including TANF.

4. Head Start and Early Head Start

Numerous Head Start Grantees participate and offer both child care voucher and ABC services to eligible children. The blending of these services provides a wide

range of services to all children. ABC programs may serve children from birth to 5 years of age.

The Division serves as grantee for the Arkansas Head Start Collaboration Grant. Cooperation and coordination of services occurs at the state and local levels. Web Site: www.arheadstart.org/

Arkansas Head Start Collaboration project has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Community Action Agencies, the Arkansas DHS Division of County Operations, Community Action; and DCC/ECE to establish a statewide plan for partnerships concerning families and children. The first joint planning session was held in April of 2005. Work continues with the following priorities included in the MOA:

- Early Childhood Education Coordination and Collaboration (Head Start, Pre-K, and Other Early Childhood Initiatives).
- Training and Technical Assistance.
- Positive Youth Development.
- State Quality Accreditation.

5. Programs that Promote Inclusion for Children with Disabilities

In coordination with the Arkansas Department of Education's Early Childhood Special Education (part C/IDEA) office, children with special needs are served in Head Start, the ABC Program, and the Child Care Assistance Program. Additional services may be provided by local school districts or through the regional educational services cooperatives.

Reimbursement for special needs is not subject to the county cap rate. The rates are individually set based on the needs of the child.

The DCC/ECE Division Director serves on the Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention.

- c) **Describe** the results or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State/Territory's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS)

Arkansas has received funding for the second phase of ECCS grant funding. ECCS implementation will continue through the next two years. Program objectives and strategies will help build and improve an early childhood system that is both statewide and comprehensive. By working with families and communities, AECCS will help ensure the development of children who are healthy and ready to learn at school entry. To accomplish this goal, Arkansas will

focus on all of the ECCS areas of concern: medical homes, social-emotional health, early care and education, parent education, and family support. **(Also see Sections 2.1.3 a and b.)**

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission

The Early Childhood Commission met on April 22-23, 2009 to re-define and re-develop a comprehensive strategic plan for early care and education in Arkansas. This Commission will have new appointees representing Head Start and Health organizations based on legislation passed during the 2009 Arkansas Legislative Session. The Commission will serve as the Arkansas Early Learning Council and provide guidance across early care programs. The goals of the Commission's comprehensive plan as established at the AECC retreat are to increase the number of infants and toddlers served in quality, licensed programs annually; to increase parental involvement annually in a child's education through research-based models and programs to enhance outcomes and success in school; support implementation of QRIS; create an integrated system of professional development uniting the early childhood sectors-child care, Head Start, pre-k, public schools, early intervention and special education services.

- d) **Describe** how the State/Territory's plan supports, or will support, continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS)

As stated in 2.1.3 c above, Arkansas submitted an application for the next round of ECCS funding and has been awarded funding. Upon notification of grant award, DCC/ECE will revise its AECCS state plan to reflect the changes and updates submitted in the grant application. The AECCS Partnership Council and its activities are included in the grant application and in ECCS plans for the future. The Council will continue to help with and support coordination among early childhood programs. The ECCS grant application included goals for each Workgroup as follows:

- **Early Care and Education:**
 - Children will have access to high quality child care and early education programs.
 - Arkansans will have increased awareness of the significance of high quality early education.
 - Early educators (0-8) will have access to systems that support their ability to provide services to all children.
- **Medical Homes:**
 - Young children will have health insurance.
 - Young children will receive adequate health care and preventive services such as immunizations and EPSDT/well child screenings.
 - Families of children, early educators, and health care providers will have knowledge of medical home and related concepts.

- **Social-Emotional Health:**
Young children will receive developmental screenings including social-emotional health.
Families of children and early educators will have capacity to prevent and manage mental health problems and access mental health services, if needed.
- **Family Support:**
Families will have an increased awareness and access to available support services and resources.
Knowledge of protective factors will increase among providers and parents.
Knowledge and awareness of the Strengthening Families Initiative will increase.
- **Parenting Education:**
Statewide parenting education will improve through the work of the Task Force.
The quality of parent education opportunities will increase for families.

2.2 Public Hearing Process

Describe the Statewide/Territory-wide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description must provide:

- a) Date(s) of notice of public hearing: May 14 - 18, 2009
- b) Manner of notifying the public about the public hearing: Statewide newsletter, website and newspaper
- c) Date(s) of public hearing(s): June 4, 2009
- d) Hearing site(s): Department of Human Services, Central Office
- e) How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s): Website and hard copies are available
- f) **Attach** a brief summary of the public comment process as **Attachment 2.2**.

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

Does the Lead Agency conduct or plan to conduct activities to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs?

- Yes. If yes, **describe** these activities or planned activities, including the results or expected results.

Arkansas Development Finance Authority

Child care loans are available through a joint project with the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (<http://www.arkansas.gov/adfa>). ADFA provides capitol for child care projects and requests a review by DCC/ECE for viability.

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

Partnerships exist between Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families (Web Site: www.aradvocates.org) and DCC/ECE in several areas. The main focus will be supporting the Arkansas Out of School Network (AOSN). The AOSN continues to be funded by the Mott Foundation with the Division as a partner to support expansion of the AOSN and school age/youth development programs.

Arkansas Advocates continues to instrumental in supporting legislation to expand the public Pre K Program in Arkansas. As a co-collaborator with the Arkansas Early Childhood Association they served as the messengers of the need for high quality early care and education for young children. The collaborative group INVEST EARLY will continue as a partnership. Advocates is a partner in the planned Business Summit.

Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral (ACCR&R) Network

- Local Child Care Resource and Referral, (CCR&R) agencies work in coordination with DCC/ECE in several projects. Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/resource.html
- The Governor's Work Life Balance Initiative has a representative from the ACCR&R Network. The local CCR&R's are actively involved in increased business participation in their communities.
- DCC/ECE meets with the local CCR&R staff on a quarterly basis to ensure consistency in service delivery. This has resulted in development of "new baby" boxes, used by the R&R to recruit business participation by offering the boxes to new parents.
- Marketing of the services available through the CCR&R network is completed through use of advertising and displays at statewide professional conferences.
- CCR&R's statewide offer support to DCC/ECE in sponsoring public meetings to share information with the provider community.
- Local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CHILDREN of North Central Arkansas and REACH of Northeast Arkansas) both have active outreach and cooperation from the business community. Both receive financial backing and have business and Chamber of Commerce representatives serving on their Boards. These CCR&R's receive support both financially and from CEO levels to continue the work of the R&R locally.

- Child Care Resource and Referral agencies also collaborate with local United Way organizations to support Success by Six projects. Two agencies have been recipients of the Success by Six projects; one is a current site.
- CHILDREN of North Central Arkansas is partnering with other businesses in the Independence County area to sponsor Imagination Library, the foundation sponsored by Dolly Parton that provides a book a month to children from birth to age 5. This effort reflects public and private donations and is in cooperation with United Way of Batesville Child Care Connections, Inc in the Central Arkansas area sponsors the COLA (Communities Outreach to Legislators in Arkansas) conferences addressing the issues related to early care and education.

Governor's Work Life Balance Initiative and State Wide Awards

The first Governor's Family Friendly Employer Awards were presented on March 19, 2003. This was the result of a recommendation made by the Arkansas Corporate Champions for Children Task Force in August 2000 to recognize Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family. This initiative has become an annual award event with the most recent held May 12, 2009. The initiative took on a re-framing in 2007 with a change in name to reflect the work-life balancing act that effect employees and employers. The Initiative has the following goals:

1. Recognize employers in Arkansas that demonstrate a commitment to policies and practices that address work-life balance.
2. Use the survey of nominees to gather comprehensive information about how Arkansas employers address work-life balance.
3. Distribute business-oriented child care resource guides and information on programs and polices considered best practices, which could be used as models for replication.

An advisory committee made up of a representative from each of the following partners directs the Arkansas Work Life Balance Initiative:

1. Office of the Governor
2. Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
3. Arkansas Business Publishing Group
4. Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Network
5. Arkansas Department of Economic Development
6. Arkansas Department of Education
7. Arkansas Department of Human Services
8. Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCC/ECE)
9. Division of County Operations (DCO)

10. Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
11. Arkansas Department of Higher Education
12. Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce & Associated Industries of Arkansas
13. Arkansas Society of Human Resource Managers
14. Arkansas State University

The Division serves as the lead agency in funding and implementation of the Initiative through an out-source agreement with Arkansas State University.

A panel of five judges makes selections. The first awards ceremony was held in March of 2003 and honored eleven employers as gold, silver, and bronze winners in different sizes of businesses and an overall Diamond winner. It is anticipated that this Initiative will continue to expand and increase business participation in work-life issues. Web Site: <http://www.arkansasbusiness.com/family>

Arkansas Department of Economic Development/Community Development Block Grant

A partnership with the Arkansas Department of Economic Development for distribution of \$900,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds for renovation/construction of child care facilities places the Division in a position of assisting county and local governments during planning stages of determining whether child care is necessary in the community. This involves local business and establishes a strong public-private partnership in increasing capacity of childcare opportunities in many areas of the state. Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport

School Readiness Indicators Initiative-Making Progress for Children

This Initiative encompasses representatives from Higher Education, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Head Start, Arkansas Children's Hospital, University of Arkansas Children's Data Center, Early Childhood Professionals, parents, teachers and school administrators, working together to develop and track indicators of school readiness. The major focus is on indicators of readiness for children, for families and communities and for schools. The identification of these specific indicators and trend analysis allows the state to develop policy changes to address the areas that need improvement. A group of four (4) national foundations supported this original effort in 2003 that included seventeen (17) states. The results of the collaborative effort was presented by the Governor in a press conference in April of 2004, the national report was released in February of 2005. Arkansas continues to track and report on the identified indicators in our report "*Getting Ready for School: Children, Families, Schools, and Communities.*" The publication is available as a state report and reports are prepared for each of our 75 counties. Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/gettingready.html

Arkansas Children's Week

Children's Week events planned at the state level with input from early childhood professionals across the state and are locally supported. Each year a theme is developed for the week. Teacher guidance and activity books, a series of state sponsored training sessions in twenty (20) locations throughout the state and massive public information are shared during the week. The Arkansas Early Childhood Commission sponsors the Outstanding Early Childhood Professional Awards each year, selecting from nominations made by professionals, parents and the general public. These persons are honored for their service to the state on behalf of young children. Web Site: <http://chs.astate.edu/trainingoverview/archildweek.htm>

Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, Affiliated Industries Association, Tyson, and Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

The Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Affiliated Industries Association partnering with Tyson and Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families developed a public awareness campaign for parents about the public Pre K funds available in Arkansas for children in families of up to 200% of Federal Poverty Level. This campaign also provided information regarding other sources for subsidized child care such as Head Start and vouchers for low-income working families. Information from this campaign is still in use. A new Communications Campaign will be introduced in 2010 focusing on Quality Issues and preparing our state for full implementation of the Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Business Summit on Early Care and Education

The Division with partners, Entergy, Arvest Bank, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, University of Arkansas at Little Rock/Institute for Economic Advancement, Arkansas Early Childhood Association and Arkansas State University will sponsor a Business Summit to release a new publication by the **University of Arkansas at Little Rock/Institute for Economic Advancement—Economic Impact of Child Care in Arkansas**. This Summit will also recruit and empower private partners to become involved in our release of QRIS.

AECCS and AECCS Partnership Council

The AECCS plan and AECCS Partnership Council include activities to encourage public-private partnerships. Many of the AECCS strategies include working with private partners such as Arkansas Children's Hospital, the private insurance liaison with the Arkansas Insurance Commission, United Way, AR Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and AR Advocates for Children and Families. **Also see sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.3 a – d.**

Marketing/Public Relations Campaign to Promote Quality in Child Care and the Quality Rating Improvement System

A major component of the QRIS implementation plan is the development of a multi-faceted education and outreach campaign. A Public Relations Team, made

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

up of public and private partners, has been working on a plan with two phases to focus on: (1) early childhood community (state agencies, educational practitioners, school administrators, etc.) to promote and support participation in the QRIS and (2) Arkansas citizens with a focus on the consumer of child care and early education services, such as business leaders, legislators, and the medical community. Partners from the private sector will continue to provide input to the plan. In addition, the private sector will be approached to help provide financial support for the social marketing campaign on quality in child care and the QRIS.

No.

PART 3

CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

3.1 Description of Child Care Services

3.1.1 Certificate Payment System. Describe the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

- a) a description of the form(s) of the certificate (§98.16(k)):

The Certificate of Authorization contains the child's name, parent's name, the days of the week and the time authorized, the beginning and end dates authorized, the name and, license or registration number of the provider that has been selected by the parent. This Certificate can be given to the parent to carry to the provider but normally will be mailed or faxed to the child care provider.

- b) a description of how the certificate permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), §98.2, §98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2))

Upon meeting all eligibility requirements, if the parent does not have a provider selected, they are given a list of vendors that includes those accepting certificates. This listing is accessible by the DHS staff either on-line or by hard copy printed monthly. The listing is also available on the Division's website.

If the parent has selected a licensed or registered provider who is not a participant in the Child Care System, a participation agreement is sent to the provider. If the provider chooses to participate, the voucher eligible child can be enrolled in the program within a week to ten days.

If the parent chooses a relative provider who has not yet enrolled in the program, a pre-application form will be given to the provider. If the pre-application is completed and returned within ten (10) days, a minimum of information will be gathered which will allow services and payment to begin immediately. The full application must be completed within sixty (60) days after the child begins receiving care. The full application requires a health card, criminal records check, a child abuse central registry check, and a checklist that verifies the health and safety of the child care site.

All types of child care providers participate in the Child Care System Participant Agreement. However, each provider must be licensed or

registered with the state: Child Care Centers, Licensed Child Care Family Homes, Registered Homes and Relative/In-home care are available to the family in each county. Providers may enroll in the program at any time.

- c) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, **estimate** the proportion of §98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts (this may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services), and **explain** how the Lead Agency ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (§98.30(a) & (b)).
- d) **Attach** a copy of your eligibility worker’s manual, policy handbook, administrative rules or other printed guidelines for administering the child care subsidy program as **Attachment 3.1.1**.

Note: If these materials are available on the web, the Lead Agency may provide the appropriate Web site address in lieu of attaching hard copies to the Plan.

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport

*(Please note that the Policy Handbook is under revision.)

3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

- Yes, and **describe** the type(s) of child care services available through the grant or contract, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))
- No.

The agency is exploring the option of utilizing contracts with Head Start, State Pre-K, and other specialized service populations funded for extended day and summer care.

3.1.3 Are child care services provided through certificates, grants and/or contracts offered throughout the State/Territory? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

- Yes.
- No, and **identify** the localities (political subdivisions) and services that are not offered:

3.1.4 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care (i.e., care provided in the child's own home) but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

- Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv)):

Voucher participants who are not licensed are required to be registered as a minimum condition of participation. Registrants must undergo the same background checks as are required for licensed providers and must obtain the same amount of annual training hours. Basic health and safety requirements are the same for registered providers as for licensed providers. There are currently only six (6) relative registered homes in Arkansas. Since federal regulations require in-home caretakers to be paid a minimum wage, there must be enough children receiving child care times the daily rate to insure the provider is paid minimum wage.

- No.

3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

3.2.1 Provide a copy of your payment rates as **Attachment 3.2.1**. The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of: November 1, 2006.

3.2.2 Are the attached payment rates provided in Attachment 3.2.1 used in all parts of the State/Territory?

- Yes.
- No, and other payment rates and their effective date(s) are provided as **Attachment 3.2.2**.

3.2.3 Provide a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

a) The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed (§98.43(b)(2)): October 2008.

b) A copy of the **Market Rate Survey instrument** and a **summary of the results** of the survey are provided as **Attachment 3.2.3**. At a minimum, this summary should include a description of the sample population, data source, the type of methodology used, response rate, description of analyses, and key findings.

3.2.4 Does the Lead Agency use its **current** Market Rate Survey (a survey completed no earlier than 10/1/07) to set payment rates?

Yes.

No.

3.2.5 At what percentile of the **current** Market Rate Survey is the State payment rate ceiling set?

75%

Note: If you do not use your current Market Rate Survey to set your rate ceilings or your percentile(s) varies across categories of care (e.g., type of setting, region, or age of children), **describe** and provide the range of variation in relation to your current survey.

3.2.6 Describe the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the current survey, including at a minimum how payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access to the full range of providers based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey: (§98.43(b))

DCC/ECE collects market rates from all licensed centers and homes in each of the 75 counties within Arkansas. We analyze the data for each:

1. Type of Service (Full Time, Half Time, Part Time, Night Care, and Weekend Care).

2. Type of License (Infant/Toddler, Preschool, and School Age Centers and Child Care Family Homes to Include Licensed Relative and Registered Child Care Family Homes).

3. Age Type (Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and School Age).

A rate cap for each county is calculated based on the 75th percentile. In some areas of the State, rate caps exceed the 75th percentile. The 75th percentile is a simple analysis which allows child care to be purchased in at least 75% of the child care providers in a county at the market rate for that type of care and for that particular age child.

DCC/ECE stabilizes rates to insure Infant and Toddler rate caps are higher than or equal to Preschool and School Age rates in licensed centers and homes. And licensed child care family homes rates are equal to or less than center-based rates. Most registered and relative child care family home rates are equal to or less than the typical licensed child care family home. The purpose for stabilizing the rates is to ensure overall equity and efficiency based on licensing requirements for the different type of child care providers.

Finally, as previously mentioned, rates are collected on an annual basis from all licensed providers whether or not they participate in the Child Care Assistance Program and licensed providers may sign up at any time to participate in the program at any time during the year. Providers who participate in the program are placed on a list that is made readily available to parents who are looking for a child care providers that accept vouchers – thereby giving parents a wide range of choices in the type of providers available.

3.2.7 Does the Lead Agency consider any additional facts to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access? (§98.43(d))

- Yes. If, yes, **describe**.
- No.

3.2.8 Does the State have any type of tiered reimbursement or differential rates?

- Yes. If yes, **describe**:

Differential rates are used for special needs children, infant/toddlers, weekend care, and night care.

(The QRIS Implementation plan addresses tiered reimbursement as an incentive for participating in the Quality Rating and Improvement System, initial statewide implementation of QRIS is anticipated for July of 2010 with initiation of tiered reimbursement proposed to be in effect by July of 2011.)

- No.

3.2.9 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that payment rates do not exceed the amount paid by the general public for the same service. (§98.43(a))

The Division licensing staff ensures payment rates are collected on all child care providers and information is maintained in the licensing data base on an annual basis. Contract Support Staff conduct billing to attendance reviews to ensure

payment rates do not exceed amount paid by general public, Division Family Support Case Reviewers document payment rates; the Family Support/Eligibility staff review rates and finally the providers by signing the 9800 Participant Agreement agree to not exceeding rates paid by general public for children on subsidy.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

3.3.1 Age Eligibility

a) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes. If yes, **define** physical and mental incapacity in Appendix 2, and **provide** the upper age limit 18.

No.

b) Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

Yes, and the upper age is _____

No.

3.3.2 Income Eligibility

Complete columns (a) and (b) in Table 3.3.2 below based upon initial entry into the CCDF program. Complete Columns (c) and (d) **ONLY IF** the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Table 3.3.2 Income Eligibility

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			Income Level if lower than 85% SMI	
			(c) \$/month	(d) % of SMI [Divide (c) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	\$2649	\$2252	\$1589	60%
2	\$3395	\$2886	\$2037	60%
3	\$3770	\$3205	\$2262	60%
4	\$4492	\$3818	\$2695	60%
5	\$5067	\$4307	\$3040	60%

Note: Table 3.3.2 should reflect maximum eligibility upon initial entry into the CCDF program.

a) Does the Lead Agency have “tiered eligibility” (i.e., a separate income limit for remaining eligible for the CCDF program)?

Yes. If yes, **provide** the requested information from Table 3.3.2 and **describe**. **Note:** This information can be included in a separate table, or by placing a “/” between the entry and exit levels in the above table.

No.

b) If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, **indicate** the year used:

Most current year is utilized.

c) These eligibility limits in column (c) became or will become effective on:

July 1, 2008

d) How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? **Provide** the Lead Agencies definition of “income” for purposes of eligibility determination. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

Income can be classified as earned or unearned. The parent/guardian is required to report all income at the time of application, including any income that is anticipated to be regularly received during the certification period. All earned and unearned income of each parent/guardian is counted unless specifically excluded in policy. Countable income from all household parents/guardians age 18 and over (or under 18 and emancipated) shall be considered in the budget.

The following households shall be exempt from income requirements:

- Foster parents
- Parent attending high school full time

Only income currently available on a regular basis shall be considered. Unpredictable income of indeterminate amounts will not be considered in the budget. Countable income is any monetary payment received by the household on a regular basis. This includes earned income such as:

- Gross wages, salaries, and tips
- Stipends (VISTA, Delta Service Corps, Americorps, OJT, etc.)
- Commissions and regular cash bonuses
- Armed Forces pay
- Self-Employment Income
- Piece Rate wages
- In-Kind
- Contractual income

Also included as countable income is unearned income, which includes:

- SSI for the Casehead, not the SSI for the child
- Social Security Payments
- Unemployment
- Workers' Compensation
- Alimony
- Pensions and Annuities
- Contributions

e) Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income (e.g., work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments)?

Yes. If yes, **describe** what type of income is deducted or excluded from total family income.

SSI for the child and Child Support* are excluded from the total family income.

*(All applicants are encouraged to apply for child support; however, child support is not counted in the total family income.)

No.

f) **Describe** whose income is excluded for purposes of eligibility determination.

SSI for the child and child support are excluded from the total family income.

3.3.3 Work/Job Training or Educational Program Eligibility

a) How does the Lead Agency define “working” for the purposes of eligibility? **Describe** the specific activities that are considered “working” for purposes of eligibility determination, including minimum number of hours.
(§§98.16(f)(6), 98.20(b))

The definition of working is to work, to be employed and receive payment for the work either by cash or in-kind, seeking or obtaining employment, making contact with potential employers, applying for vacancies, and interviewing for jobs.

The Department of Workforce Services lists 12 categories of work activities that recipients of assistance may engage in and be counted toward its work participation standards. The 12 listed categories are (1) unsubsidized employment; (2) subsidized private sector employment; (3) subsidized public sector employment; (4) work experience; (5) on-the-job training; (6) job search and job readiness assistance; (7) community services programs; (8) vocational educational training; (9) job skills training directly related to employment; (10) education directly related to employment (for those without a high school degree or equivalent); (11) satisfactory attendance at a secondary school; and (12) provision of child care to a participant of a community service program. All activities must be occurring a minimum of 30 hours per week or enrolled as a full time student for a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours per semester.

b) Does the Lead Agency provide CCDF child care assistance to parents who are attending job training or an educational program?

Yes. If yes, how does the Lead Agency define “attending job training or educational program” for the purposes of eligibility? **Describe**, the specific activities that are considered “job training and/or

educational program”, including minimum number of hours.
(§§98.16(f)(3), 98.20(b))

Attending job training or educational program is defined as activities designed to enhance the employability and self-sufficiency of parents and which lead to employment at the end of the training or education program. Parents must currently be enrolled a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours to be eligible for assistance.

Job readiness activities include classes or workshops where participants can improve their employability skills. Other activities included are substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment (including mental health treatment needed to address domestic violence), or rehabilitation activities.

No.

3.3.4 Eligibility Based Upon Receiving or Needing to Receive Protective Services

a) Does the Lead Agency provide child care to children in protective services?
(§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

Yes. If yes, **provide** a definition of “protective services” in Appendix 2. Does the Lead Agency waive, on a case-by-case basis, the co-payment and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

Yes.

No.

No.

b) Does the Lead Agency provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the Lead Agency considers these children to be in protective services.)

No.

3.3.5 Additional Conditions for Determining CCDF Eligibility

Has the Lead Agency established any additional eligibility conditions for determining CCDF eligibility? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

Yes and the additional eligibility conditions are:

Due to the federal funding constraints with the Child Care Development Funds, the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education implemented several changes to our Child Care Assistance program effective July 15, 2008. Income eligibility which was previously set at 85% of the State Median Income level, returned to 60% SMI. The Division also implemented a five year lifetime limit for families receiving childcare assistance. (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

No.

3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families

3.4.1 At a minimum, CCDF requires Lead Agencies to give priority for child care services to children with special needs, or in families with very low incomes. **Complete** Table 3.4.1 below regarding eligibility priority rules. For columns (a) through (c), **check** only one box if reply is “Yes”. Leave blank if “No”. **Complete** column (e) only if you check column (d).

Table 3.4.1 Priorities for Serving Children

	How does the Lead Agency prioritize the eligibility categories in Column 1?			CHECK ONLY IF APPLICABLE	
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Eligibility Categories	Priority over other CCDF-eligible families	Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families	Guaranteed subsidy eligibility	Is there a time limit on the priority or guarantee?	How long is time limit?
Children with special needs*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	60 month limit
Children in families with very low incomes*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	60 month limit

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

	How does the Lead Agency prioritize the eligibility categories in Column 1?			CHECK ONLY IF APPLICABLE	
	CHECK ONLY ONE			(d)	(e)
Eligibility Categories	(a) Priority over other CCDF-eligible families	(b) Same priority as other CCDF-eligible families	(c) Guaranteed subsidy eligibility	Is there a time limit on the priority or guarantee?	How long is time limit?
Families <u>receiving</u> Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	24 month limit
Families transitioning from TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	36 month limit
Families at risk of becoming dependent on TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	60 month limit

* **Required**

3.4.2 Describe how the Lead Agency prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs, (b) children in families with very low incomes, and (c) other. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

The following groups of individuals are listed in order of the priority they are given in the eligibility process:

1. Special Needs
2. Teens in High School
3. Homeless
4. Low Income with No Fee
5. Low Income who would Pay a Fee

3.4.3 Describe how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

Families who are receiving TANF receive child care in order to allow them to participate in job training activities, assessments, on-the-job training, educational programs, etc., according to the State Plan. Families who are attempting, through work activities, to transition off assistance programs will receive transitional child care for up to three years. The first year of child care assistance is provided at no fee to the family regardless of income. The Second and Third Year the Sliding Fee Scale applies to the family's income. There is a 3-year Lifetime Limit for transitional support.

Low-income working, non-TANF families that are at-risk of becoming dependent on assistance programs are served based on the Sliding Fee Scale and the availability of funds.

3.4.4 Has the Lead Agency established additional priority rules that are not reflected in the table completed for Section 3.4.1? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

- Yes and the additional priority rules are: **(Terms must be listed and defined in Appendix 2)**
- No.

3.4.5 Does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?

- Yes.
- No.

3.4.6 Does the Lead Agency have a waiting list of eligible families that they are unable to serve?

- Yes. If yes, **describe**. At a minimum, the description should indicate:

a) Whether the waiting list is maintained for all eligible families or for certain populations?

All eligible families

The waiting list is maintained by county for all populations. Priority is as described earlier and applications are processed daily by the Central Office Staff to ensure the list is updated in a timely and efficient manner. The families are removed from the waiting list as soon as eligibility is determined, services are available, and funding is available.

- b) Whether the waiting list is maintained for the entire State/Territory or for individual localities?

Maintained for the entire State/Territory.

- c) What methods are employed to keep the list current?

Clients are instructed in writing to submit updated information every 12 months.

No.

3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

3.5.1 The statute and regulations require Lead Agencies to establish a sliding fee scale that varies based on income and the size of the family to be used in determining each family's contribution (co-payment) to the cost of child care (§98.42).

- a) **Attach** the sliding fee scale as **Attachment 3.5.1**.

- b) **Describe** how the sliding fee scale is administered, including how the family's contribution is determined and how the co-payment is assessed and collected:

A copy of the Arkansas Sliding Fee Scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided in Attachment 3.5.1 – Client Fee Chart at 60% of State Median Income.

- c) The attached sliding fee scale was or will be effective as of July 15, 2008.

- d) Does the Lead Agency use other factors in addition to income and family size to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

Yes, and **describe** those additional factors:

No.

3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided as Attachment 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

Yes.

No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) are provided as **Attachment 3.5.2**.

3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: \$18,097

The Lead Agency must **select ONE** of these options:

- ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.
- ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.
- SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. **Describe** these families:

3.5.4 Does the Lead Agency allow providers to charge parents the difference between the maximum reimbursement rate and their private pay rate?

- Yes.

The Family Support Unit Policy handbook states that a provider shall have the option of charging a parent the difference between the County cap rate and the established rate the provider charges for equal services if the provider has achieved their State Quality Approval/Accreditation.

- No.

3.5.5 Describe how the co-payments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) are affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

In Arkansas, the family contribution to the cost of care ranges from 0% to 80% of cost of care. Our state uses a sliding fee scale to determine the percent ranges for co-payment. The amount of co-pay is based on the family size and income.

PART 4

PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice

4.1.1 Describe the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). At minimum, describe:

- a) How parents are informed of the availability of child care services under CCDF (i.e., parental choice of child care services through a certificate or grant of contract)

Parents receive information about CCDF services from Child Care Providers; Arkansas DHS County Office Staff including Child Care Eligibility Specialists, TANF Staff, and Food Stamp Caseworkers; Arkansas Health Department Employees; Employers; Schools; Publications; Newspaper Articles; the DCC/ECE Web Site; and Television Broadcasts. Private, Non-Profit Child Care Resource and Referral staff makes referrals, as well as DCC/ECE licensing staff.

- b) How parents can apply for CCDF services

Applications for Child Care Assistance can be obtained at any county DHS office or by calling a toll free number. Applications are also available on the DCC/ECE Website. Completed applications may be mailed or delivered to any local DHS County Office or the Central Office in Little Rock. The Eligibility Specialist or the TANF caseworker provides individual assistance or accommodations as needed.

See Attachment 4.1.1 – DCC/ECE Application for Child Care Assistance or Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/dcc513.pdf

- c) What documentation parents provide as part of their application to determine eligibility

Arkansas has forty-six (46) Child Care Eligibility Specialists who determine eligibility in their area. Each Specialist covers an area of four to six counties. These Specialists make the determination for assistance for the low-income families who are working or attending school. Eligibility for TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) subsidies is established in the local **Department of Workforce Services office** by their **DWS** caseworker, and then referred to the Division for child care assistance if needed.

- d) How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4

During the employment planning process, if the client cannot arrange child care for any of the definitions described in 4.4, the client receives a deferral from work activities. It is the responsibility of the TANF caseworker to inform the parents who receive TANF benefits of the exceptions due to the parent's inability to locate child care.

- e) What steps the Lead Agency has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

To reduce the length of time on the waiting list, clients can either mail in their eligibility information or have a face-to-face meeting with an eligibility specialist in a group setting. This allows more families to be seen in a shorter period of time with a limited number of workers. By either method, the basic information is collected and then a caseworker determines if the family is eligible to receive child care voucher services. In some cases, evening and weekend interviews were conducted to accommodate work or training schedules.

- f) **Attach** a copy of your parent application for the child care subsidy program as **Attachment 4.1.1.**

Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/dcc513.pdf

4.1.2 Is the application process different for families receiving TANF?

- Yes, and **describe** how the process is different:

Families receiving TANF services are eligible for child care services. Child Care determination is based on the DWS eligibility guidelines for TANF. The Child Care referral is made electronically by a DWS Case Manager to the DCCECE Family Support Eligibility Worker. This is the process for both Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) and Extended Support Services (ESS).

- No.

4.1.3 What is the length of eligibility period upon initial authorization of CCDF services?

The length of eligibility is between one and twelve months.

TANF families are assured child care assistance during the time the TANF cash assistance case is open and child care is needed, pending availability of funds. Families who are attempting through work activities to transition off assistance programs will receive transitional child care for up to three years. The first year of child care assistance is provided at no fee to the family regardless of income. The second and third year the sliding fee scale applies to the family's income. There is a 3-Year Lifetime Limit for transitional support.

a) Is the initial authorization for eligibility the same for all CCDF eligible families?

- Yes.
- No and **describe** any variations that relate to the services provided (e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs or differences for TANF families):

4.1.4 Describe how the Lead Agency ensures that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family child care and group home child care, center-based care and in-home care, including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

All applicants for child care assistance are given a copy of Rights and Responsibilities that informs them that they may choose any participating provider. In addition to a written document, caseworkers also verbally inform clients of this right during the eligibility process.

Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/dcc513.pdf

4.1.5 Describe how the Lead Agency reaches out and provides services to eligible families with limited English proficiency, including how the Lead Agency overcomes language barriers with families and providers.

Applications are available online and in county offices. The local Child Care Resource and Referral offices also make the child care voucher application available and can assist in providing interpreter services for persons who are not English proficient. Some DHS offices have bilingual staff that assists on request. A DHS contract for interpreter services allows for appointments to be made for interpreter service to be provided by phone. The Division hopes to have the voucher application translated into Spanish during the next year.

4.2 Records of Parental Complaints

Describe how the Lead Agency maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints about providers and makes substantiated parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32)

Complaints about providers, both child maltreatment complaints and licensing complaints are documented in the Division's computer system and are fully investigated. Founded complaints are posted on the Division's web site and are available for public review. Parents and the general public may call or e-mail the Division and obtain complete complaint results and information and to obtain information on interim and final corrective action measures.

4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings

Provide a detailed description of the Lead Agency procedures for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

Licensing and registration requirements state that parents shall not be denied access to their child for any reason. This requirement ensures that parents have full access to their child at any time during the child's day at the center or home. Failure to comply with this requirement would result in revocation of the license.

4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: Department of Workforce Services

- "appropriate child care": Child care that meets the minimum health and safety standards and guidelines established by the Division's Licensing Rules and Regulations. All care must be provided in a licensed child care center, licensed child care family home, a registered or relative child care family home.
- "reasonable distance": The travel time from the parent's home to his or her place of employment must not exceed more than 30 minutes one way in order to be required to place a child in child care.

- "unsuitability of informal child care": Care that does not meet the developmental needs of the child or care that has been determined not to be in the best interest of the child or parent.
- "affordable child care arrangements": Care provided at no charge to the family for the first year after the family's TANF case closes due to employment assures affordable care. The sliding fee scale is applied after the first year.

PART 5

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

5.1 Quality Targeted Funds and Set-Asides

Federal appropriations law has targeted portions of the CCDF for quality improvement and for services for infants and toddlers, child care resource and referral (CCR&R) and school-age child care. For each targeted fund, provide the following information.

5.1.1 Infants and Toddlers:

Note: For the infant and toddler targeted funds, the Lead Agency must **provide** the maximum age of a child who may be served with such targeted funds (not to exceed 36 months).

- a) **Describe** the activities provided with these targeted funds
(These funds will only serve children up to 36 months of age.)

1. DCC/ECE provides enhancement/improvement grants for quality development of Infant and Toddler Programs. The grant fund designates Infant and Toddler expansion and new development as priority areas for the grants. All applicants for the grant program must provide verification of age-appropriate current immunization status for all children in care as a prerequisite for consideration. (Grants will be restructured with the upcoming QRIS implementation to be effective July 1, 2010.)
2. Training grants for CPR and First Aid are available to licensed child care family homes and centers. Grants are available for two staff per program per fiscal year. (Grants will be restructured with the upcoming QRIS implementation to be effective July 1, 2010.)
3. Scholarships for Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentialing are available to staff in licensed child care family homes and centers. A maximum of two scholarships per program per fiscal year are available. A specialty for Infant and Toddler and Family Child Care is also available.

**(All grants will be restructured with the statewide
implementation of QRIS in July of 2010.)**

4. Technical Assistance/Consultation is provided to Infant and Toddler Programs on request through a contractual agreement with a university. Specialists are available to assist in establishment, development, and improvement of Infant and Toddler child care settings in licensed child care family homes and centers.

5. The Child Care Specialist Certificate has an Infant/Toddler Endorsement of a 60-hour course of study specific to caregivers in infant/toddler programs.
6. The Caregiver Certificate program builds on the Child Care Orientation training and offers as one of six (6) modules, Child Development for Birth to Three.
7. Making First Experiences Count” is a training program offered in three sessions to support the concepts of early brain development. The training is specific to parents, providers and other interested persons and is offered in community settings upon request by Arkansas State University.
8. “Picture This: Infant and Toddler Framework”, a guide for parent and providers to illustrate the developmental learning strands for infants/toddlers is available.
9. Adventures for Toddlers an on-line (free) curriculum linked to the Arkansas Infant-Toddler Framework.

b) **Identify** the entities providing the activities

1. DCC/ECE provides all enhancement/improvement grants to licensed child care homes and centers across the state.
2. Training is provided by instructors certified by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. Instructors are located all across the state.
3. Colleges and universities across the state offer CDA classes.
4. A contractual agreement with Arkansas State University (ASU), Childhood Services, State Resource and Referral Agencies, Child Care Connections and Southern Good Faith Fund provides the technical assistance.
5. The training is offered statewide by Arkansas State University, Department of Childhood Services.
6. These courses are taught statewide by the University of Arkansas/Fayetteville
7. This is offered by Arkansas State University Childhood Services.
8. Developed by Early Childhood Services
9. Researched and written by Early Childhood Services

c) **Describe** the expected results of the activities.

1. Licensed child care family homes and centers across the state will increase the number of slots for Infant and Toddler Care. Programs will also achieve Quality Accreditation or be working toward Quality.
2. Child Care programs will increase the number of staff certified in CPR and First Aid training.
3. Child Care programs will increase the number of staff trained in child development and thus improving the quality of care.

4. Child Care programs will increase the number of slots for Infants and Toddlers and increase the quality of care given to the Infants and Toddlers.
5. Staff learns how to better interact with each individual child and how to make sure the child's activities are developmentally appropriate for that child: the Specialized Training is offered specifically for a certain age group. The student will understand the importance of using materials designed for the infant/toddler and how to use the material to be a more effective teacher of the very young. Individual Professional Development module gives each student the opportunity to develop an individualized plan. The results will be each individual will use their own skills and talents to enhance the development of each infant/toddler.
6. This training will ensure that facilities will be more aware of the results of unsanitary conditions and how to make sure all is done to prevent it, know when a sick child needs to be sent home. Staff will be more aware of how to teach parents to have a healthier and more sanitary home to keep from spreading disease. Facilities will be more able to identify safety hazards in the day care setting and how to prevent injury. Staff will learn how to better handle behavior problems by learning what is causing the problem and knowing how to react, Staff will learn more about the things that are more developmentally appropriate for children and that each child will grow at their own pace. Activities and curriculum will be more age appropriate, Staff will learn more about the growth of the child and how the things that were developmentally appropriate at one stage of growth will change as the child grows both mentally and physically and will enable the staff to have an enhanced ability to prepare children for higher levels of learning.
7. Supporting the concepts of early brain development, the training is specific to parents, providers and other interested persons and is offered in community settings upon request.
8. A guide for parent and providers to illustrate the developmental learning strands for infants/toddlers is available. Parents and providers will be more aware of developmental changes in the child. Posters that address the developmental strands and benchmarks appropriate for infants and toddlers are available for all programs. Family Connections for Infant and Toddlers offers strategies for use in child care settings with emphasis on parental involvement and directly ties to the Infant and Toddler Framework.
9. Curriculum specially designed to give providers information on how to teach the children in developmentally appropriate ways.

5.1.2 Resource and Referral Services:

a) **Describe** the activities provided with these targeted funds

1. Provide services and information, from a data base that consist of day care facilities, to parents in help finding a child care facility that meets their child's needs.
2. Provide resources for child care providers and parents to research and learn how to deal with issues facing children.
3. Deliver trainings on grant writing, family child care business, budgets and other money matters, child care licensing, health and nutrition, safety, mentoring, fund raising, parent education, and program development.
4. Provide a lending library to check out training materials.
5. Help recruit child care providers to meet indentified community needs.
6. Promote collaboration of all providers in the area.
7. Provide Business training and grant writing training
8. Deliver training in Nap-Sacc (nutrition and physical activity) for child care providers

b) **Identify** the entities providing the activities

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/centers/map.html

1. Arkansas State University ACQUIRE Program, Jonesboro, Arkansas
2. Child Care Connections, Inc. Little Rock, Arkansas
3. Jefferson Comprehensive Care, Inc, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
4. Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource & Referral Center, Springdale, Arkansas
5. White River Planning & Development, Inc. dba Children of Northcentral Arkansas, Batesville, Arkansas
6. DCCECE all other locations
7. Plans to further expand both areas served and offering R&R will be implemented as funds are available.

c) **Describe** the expected results of the activities.

1. All parents will have the opportunity to find a child care setting that will ensure the needs of each individual child are met.
2. All child care facilities and parents will have access to training and problem-solving issues.
3. To ensure that all provider's and parent's individual training needs are met.
4. Provide easy access to see that all providers have the materials needs to run a quality program that is developmentally appropriate for each child.
5. Ensure that all parent will have their child care needs met.

6. Make sure that no child is left behind and there is no duplication of services for some, while letting other children fall through the cracks.
7. Assist child care providers in conducting good business practices and in successful grant attainment.
8. Support and expand nutrition and physical activity training for child care providers.

5.1.3 School-Age Child Care:

1. **Describe** the activities provided with these targeted funds

1. DCC/ECE provides enhancement/improvement grants for quality development of School Age Programs. The grant fund designates School Age expansion and new development as priority areas for the grants. (Grants will be restructured with the upcoming QRIS implementation.)
2. Training grants for CPR and First Aid are available to licensed child care family homes and centers. Grants are available for two staff per program per fiscal year. (Grants will be restructured with the upcoming QRIS implementation.)
3. Scholarships for Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentialing are available to staff in licensed child care family homes and centers. A maximum of two scholarships per program per fiscal year are available. A specialty for School age providers is available.

(All Grants will be restructured with the statewide implementation of the QRIS in July of 2010.)

4. Technical Assistance/Consultation is provided to School Age Programs on request through a contractual agreement with a university. Specialists are available to assist in establishment, development, and improvement of School Age child care settings in licensed child care family homes and centers.
5. A statewide School Conference and regional conferences on school-age care are offered annually
6. Monetary support is provided to the Arkansas Out of School Network (AOSN) to support the work of the network in completion of targeted goals of the Mott Foundation grant and the recommendation of the Governor's Task Force on Best Practices for School age and Summer Programs. www.AOSN.org
7. The AOSN has several working groups involved in developing the Quality Rating System requirements, Professional Development system, Core Competencies for youth workers and school-age staff, and the clarification of a governance structure. Training of external and internal assessors in the High Scope Youth Program Quality Assessment tools. HS-YPQA is used as improvement tool to assist programs in increased quality of care for school age children and youth.
8. Consultants and technical assistance are provided to school age programs in working toward Early Childhood Quality Approval/Accreditation.

9. A quarterly activities guide for school-age caregivers, “School-age Links”, is distributed to all school age child care programs. Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/schoolagelinks.html
10. A pre-employment web-based training module is provided for summer school-age caregivers
11. Cooperative efforts between school districts and community based organizations applying for 21st Century Community Learning Center funding allows for outreach and expansion of quality after school programming for children.
12. Scholarships for credentialing for school-age/youth development workers are in planning stage.

2. **Identify** the entities providing the activities

1. Training is provided by instructors certified by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. Instructors are located all across the state.
2. Colleges and universities across the state offer CDA classes.
3. A contractual agreement with Arkansas State University (ASU) Childhood Services provides the technical assistance.
4. DCC/ECE provides all enhancement/improvement grants to licensed child care homes and centers across the state.
5. DCC/ECE provides grants to licensed child care homes and centers across the state for CPR/First Aid Training. Trainers are certified by the American Red Cross or by the American Heart Association.

3. **Describe** the expected results of the activities.

1. Licensed child care family homes and centers across the state will increase the number of slots for School Age Care. Programs will also achieve Quality Accreditation or be working toward Quality.
2. Child Care programs will increase the number of staff certified in CPR and First Aid training.
3. Child Care programs will increase the number of staff trained in child development and thus improving the quality of care.
4. Child Care programs will increase the number of slots for School Age children and increase the quality of care given to the School Age children.

5.1.4 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including targeted funds) during the 1-year period: October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010:

\$2,192,996 (4 %)

5.1.5 Check each activity in Table 5.1.5 that the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the targeted funds for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h)). **CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.**

Table 5.1.5 Activities to Improve the Availability and Quality of Child Care

Activity	Check if undertaking/ will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if non-governmental entity
Comprehensive consumer education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCCECE and Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arkansas Guaranteed Loan Program offered by the State of Arkansas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arkansas State University/Childhood Services, Inc.; DCCECE Licensing and Accreditation Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State Universities and Agencies, Resource and Referral Centers, Private Agencies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCCECE/Apprenticeship sites	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to support a Quality Rating System	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCCECE/ASU Childhood Services, Inc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Professional development opportunities, Universities, Community Colleges, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activities to promote inclusive child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ADE, Early Childhood Special Education, University of Arkansas For Medical Science-Partners for Inclusive Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

Activity	Check if undertaking/ will undertake	Name and type of entity providing activity	Check if non-governmental entity
Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies/Early Childhood Community Mental Health Centers/Partners for Inclusive Communities/U of A Fayetteville/AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Workgroup	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

5.1.6 For each activity checked in Table 5.1.5, a) **describe** the expected results of the activity. b) If you have conducted an evaluation of this activity, **describe the results**. If you have not conducted an evaluation, **describe** how you will evaluate the activities.

Comprehensive Consumer Education

Child Care Resource and Referral Network

The R&R network consists of five local agencies and the state wide office located within the Division: (1) Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center; (2) Children on North Central Arkansas; (3) ACQUIRE; (4) Child Care Connections, Incorporated; and (5) Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Incorporated. These five CCR&Rs provide consumer education to their specific areas. The Northwest Arkansas Child Care Resource and Referral Center also houses the Parent Center and have extensive training opportunities available to parents in the North West area of the state. Local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies operate to support parental access and business involvement in early care issues both locally and on a statewide basis. Monthly reports based on performance indicators are submitted and reviewed. The CCR&R network meets on a bi-monthly basis.

Publications/Advertisements

Kid’s Directory, Northwest AR Kid’s Directory, Little Rock Family, Arkansas Times, Framework for Infant & Toddler Care, Infant and Toddler Family Connection, Infant and Toddler Framework Poster, Preschool Framework Poster, Preschool Framework, Picture This: Infants and Toddlers, Picture This: Preschool, Adventures in Learning for Preschool, Adventures in Learning for Toddlers, Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar (Spanish and English),

Getting Ready for Kindergarten Guide, Family Connection, School Age Links, Beginnings, Helps and Hints for Child Care Family Homes (Most all of the publications are available for print on our website.)

Staff throughout the state provides brochures and other printed materials to voucher applicants, assisting them in making selections that meet the needs of the family.

Arkansas Children's Week

- a. State sponsored activities held locally focus on differing topics that provide information to parents on early care and education issues. The theme for 2009 is "Together We Learn." Brochures and Family Fridge Tags: 10 Ways to Appreciate Your Child" are available for parents. Children's Week Booklets and Planning Toolkits are available to providers. T-shirts are available to everyone at reduced costs. A series of 20 local trainings were held around the state to assist providers in making the most of Arkansas Children's Week.

Activities are held all across the state to provide information to parents on early care and education issues.

Outstanding Early Childhood Professionals from across the state are selected and receive plaques commemorating their involvement with the early childhood community.

- b. Arkansas Children's Week has been celebrated for many years and each year the activities and involvement increase. Providers and parents are given information on differing topics surrounding early childhood education. Records of distribution of printed materials, records of local events and participation by families in Family Play Days are maintained.

Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards

Enhancement/Improvement Grants

1. a. The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education has funds available for Enhancement/Improvement Grants. These grants are available to licensed child care family homes and centers for the purchase of equipment, materials and supplies, and for improving the availability and quality of care. Priority is being given to programs developing or expanding Infant and Toddler care and School Age care and assisting programs in correcting deficiencies. Applications are accessible from our website at www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport.

- b. Licensed child care family homes and centers across the state are increasing the number of slots for Infants and Toddlers and School Age children and also improving the quality of the care given. Receipts are required for documentation of purchases.

2. a. The Division of Childcare and Early Childhood Education offers an incentive grant to programs meeting the Arkansas Quality Approval/Accreditation standards. Grants range from \$600 - \$1200 yearly. Funds can be used in a variety of ways.
- b. Child Care providers are rewarded for their efforts in providing a quality child care setting.
3. a. Training grants for CPR and First Aid are provided to licensed child care family homes and centers to assist them in obtaining certification and complying with licensing requirements. Providers are allowed a maximum of two participants per fiscal year.
- b. The number of child care staff trained in CPR and First Aid has increased.
4. a. Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing grants are available to assist in increasing capability of staff working in child care settings.
- b. Staff are properly trained in child development and thus increasing the overall quality of the child care setting.

ALL GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND INCENTIVES ARE BEING RE-DESIGNED AND WILL BE AVAILABLE IN A SINGLE QRIS INCENTIVE GRANT PACKAGE UPON QRIS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SYSTEM IN JULY OF 2010.

Child Care Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program

DCC/ECE has in place a Child Care Facilities Guarantee Loan Fund Program. This guaranteed loan is available to child care providers in attempts to support them in obtaining bank financing for child care related projects. The loan can be used for new building projects or for renovation needs, in order to make a facility safer and more child-oriented.

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/guaranteed.html

Annual reports from each financial institution are review and an annual summary report is provided to the Arkansas Legislative Council each October.

Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements

The Licensing and Accreditation Unit monitors all licensed centers and licensed and registered homes three times per year on an unannounced basis. Compliance information is reviewed monthly and compliance standards are a part of the Division's Strategic Plan. Benchmarks have been established for critical compliance areas and the goal of a 5% per year reduction in non-compliance is maintained on a continuous basis. Monthly reviews of these

benchmarks help establish training needs and help appropriately direct enforcement efforts.

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)

Conducted for child care programs (all ages) in numerous topics, including preliminary site visits for quality approval status. The T/TA visits are available upon request of the Child Care Licensing Specialists, the Program Support staff and self referral. Quality Approval site visits are scheduled by regional coordinators; these coordinators conduct inter-rater reliability site visits on 10th visit made by each monitor. These visits increase the quality of facilities. Monthly reports of T/TA visits are reviewed.

Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance

Arkansas Children's Hospital

Project SCORE (Strengthening and Creating Opportunities for Reading Enjoyment) and Project SCORE PLUS will provide training sessions in fifteen counties. Target population includes, home based staff in HIPPY, center-based staff in School Districts, Head Start, Private and Faith-based programs, Tri-District Early Childhood staff including therapists and special education teachers in the following counties: Arkansas, Benton, Crittenden, Cross; Jefferson, Johnson, Lee, Logan, Phillips, Pope, Pulaski; Saline, St. Francis; Washington and White Counties. Investigating, Discovering, and Exploring - Math and Science for Young Children (INDEX) and Pre K Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas (Pre K ELLA) will increase provider knowledge of research-based best practices. Monthly reports are collected, evaluations on trainers are submitted and scores on the ERS tools are collected.

Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service

- The Best Care, a 10 hour child care provider training program designed to bring early childhood professionals current information that keeps them up to date on subject matter and methods. Training will focus on four main subject areas: resource management, nutrition and food safety; health and safety; and child development/child care. The ultimate goal of The Best Care curriculum, training, print and on-line materials offer research-based continuing education to early care professional that will encourage high quality care. Training is delivered through the Family and Consumer Science county agents. Evaluations are completed at each session, a pre and post questionnaire is used.
- The Best Care Connected provides web-based training in timely topics including: behavior management, parent involvement, music and movement, cooking with young children, health and safety issues, and inclusion. Best Care Connected is delivered via Educator™, a web-based curriculum application that is highly interactive and effective. It includes extensive

monitoring tools to track student progress and provides another option for professional development.

- Guiding Children Successfully offers 12 hours of verified training through the Guiding Children Successfully video series, the Parenting Journey will be offered to caregivers and parents to extend the training to new customers.
- Arkansas 4H After-school Program will provide training for caregivers in after-school care situations. The target audience includes programs in rural areas and those providing care in summer programs. Topics include: youth development, hands on learning, techniques to use with youth, life skills development, discipline, health, nutrition, program management and designing programs of training to meet individual program needs.

Arkansas State University/Childhood Services

- The Arkansas Governor's Work-Life Balance Initiative: Recognizes Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both family; and work. Employers are recognized, information is gathered through application and surveys for a team of judges to review and make recommendations for those to be honored. A public information campaign on the benefits of family friendly initiatives is included.
- Helps and Hints for Child Care Family Homes and School Age Links for School Age Programs: Bi-monthly publications with topics, themes and activities for use in child care settings.
- Arkansas School-Age Quality Initiative/Awareness Project: An effort to increase the number of quality approved school age programs, through work with directors of programs, use of self assessment study, provision of technical assistance and expanded consumer awareness activities. Support for the Arkansas Out of School Network (AOSN), one state wide conference, 10 regional min-conferences, 6 pre-employment sessions with persons new to the school age field and presentations at other aligned conferences serving school age professionals.
- Director Mentor Quality Initiative: An effort to increase the number of programs obtaining Quality Approval. Mentors are assigned to work with directors of programs (child care, infant/toddler care and family child care) seeking quality approval. Participant's need printed resources, self study guides and additional support and training in their work towards quality approval. Mentors receive additional certification.

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

- **Arkansas Children’s Week Planning Groups:** Periodically meet to make decisions regarding the theme and focus of the week and to plan special events. Parent materials are developed and Family Play Days are sponsored.
- **Arkansas Children’s Program Administrators Orientation:** Orientation is the 18 hour comprehensive course required for child care licensure for all directors of child care centers. Orientation is a basic level mandatory course for all licensed child care directors.
- **Arkansas Children’s Program Administrator Certificate/Credential:** Children’s Program Administrator Certificate is a 60 hour course with topics including effective organization management, effective supervision, staffing, legal and financial management, family and community relations and program development issues. The next step for administrators is the Credential an additional 60 hour approved continuing education. The Credential program is a more individualized program with modules covering topics such as: managing change, mentoring, leadership, performance management, team building, leadership in diversity, managing conflict, financial management, and child centered curriculum.
- **Mentor Endorsement:** This includes a 45 hour course preparing mentors to work with early care professionals in a variety of settings. There are three options for completion: 32 hours on line with 14 contact hours; series of monthly 6 hour seminars or series of Saturday and evening sessions.
- **Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development Registry—TAPP-Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways:** This is a coordinated system to track and promote consistent and on-going professional development and continuing education. The database tracks all approved training, verified trainers and practitioners training levels.
- **Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas):** Delivery of the 30 hour training modules in 10 locations.
- **Pre-Employment Training:** A program to prepare new employees desiring to enter the field of early care. Training is a 30 hour course, available online, on site, on-site with on-line combination. Topics include: Health, Safety and Nutrition; Child Development; Learning Environment; Language and Literacy, Curriculum Development and Professionalism.
- **Child Care Specialist Certificates:** Infant/Toddler; Preschool, Family Child care or School-age education. Sixty clock hours (6 CEU) addressing the specific professional development needs of the age grouping.

- **Wrapping-Up Quality-Infant and Toddler Framework:** A 12 hour curriculum to introduce the Infant and Toddler framework. Each of three 4 hour sessions address: Purposes of the Framework and Elements of Quality Care; Developmental Strands, the Benchmarks and assessment for Infant and Toddler age children. The final session models using Frameworks to create activities related to familiar books for infants and toddlers.
- **INDEX—Investigation, Discovery and Exploring: Math and Science for Young Children** is managed and delivered on a statewide basis. The curriculum is monitored, evaluated and revised on a two year cycle.

Child Care Connections, Incorporated

Technical Assistance to communities and schools interested in expanding services for early care and education programs. Development of materials regarding business management and funding aspects of operating a child care program to assist in partnership efforts. Additional technical assistance in community assessment and packaging fiscal resources for program development will be offered.

Dawson Education Service Cooperative:

Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) Training (30 hour literacy module) for a 6 county region. Dawson Cooperative has partnered with Henderson State University for Investigating, Discovering, and Exploring: Math and Science for Young Children (INDEX).

Early Childhood Services

- **Adventures in Learning**, a set of 12 curriculum resources packets each focusing on an appropriate topic of study and each to be introduced with familiar children's books. The resource packets will be designed so they can be used by preschool directors and teachers who have limited experience and training in curriculum planning and implementation. The packets will be made available on the Division website and in print.
- **Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas):** Delivery of the 30 hour training module in Central and Southwest Arkansas.
- **Adventures for Toddlers:** A curriculum linked to the Arkansas Infant-Toddler Framework and is on-line and available to Infant/Toddler caregivers at no cost.

Southern Good Faith Fund

Through the Arkansas Women's Business Development Center (ARWBDC), a 23 county area in Delta will have available specialized training seminars and one-on-one sessions to support long and short term business counseling and guidance in starting a child care business (both center based and family child care for all ages)

Our Educational Service Cooperative

The cooperative will deliver Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) training in a nine county area to all child care providers. Investigating, Discovering, and Exploring: Math and Science for Young Children (INDEX)

University of Arkansas Board of Trustees (University of Arkansas at Fayetteville)

Beginnings, is a bimonthly publication for child care providers linked to the Early Education Framework (Early Learning Guidelines). The publication is made available on-line.

Child Care Orientation Training (CCOT): CCOT is a ten hour orientation course for persons new to the field of care giving. The course is offered at community and technical colleges. Completion of CCOT allows a person to be eligible for a CDA scholarship prior to 6 months employment in a child care program.

Family Child Care Provider Training (FCCP): FCCP is an 8 hour mandated course for all licensed family child care home providers within their first 6 months of operation. The lessons include: The Profession and Regulations; Business Management; Organizing the Home and Guiding Children through the Day.

Early Care and Education Curriculum Endorsement (ECEC): The Early Care and Education Curriculum Endorsement (ECEC) contain courses on the intermediate level of the spectrum. The Endorsement contains 135 hours of specialized training including: AECE Frameworks (30hours); Pre-K ELLA (30 hours); math and science-(INDEX) 45 hours and Social Emotional development for young children-45 hours)

Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) is administered under the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville umbrella with delivery through both this contract and other contractors. The AECE Frameworks is administered in the same manner. These courses are mandated by Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) guidelines and are included in the QRIS standard matrix.

Social Emotional will be undergoing final revisions under a joint partnership between the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and Childhood Services from July to January.

University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Delivery of Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas), AECE Framework training, Social Emotional and Investigating, Discovering, and Exploring: Math and Science for Young Children (INDEX) in targeted six county areas.

University of Arkansas for Medical Science (UAMS) Partners in Health Science Program

“Healthy Hearts-Health Science and Literacy: Professional Development for all Pre-K Teachers in the State. UAMS Partners in Health Science (PIHS) Program will train pre-K teachers in health science content; all participants will receive tool kit containing equipment and materials (syllabus, stethoscope, plastic heart model and plastic model of normal and atherosclerotic coronary arteries). A pilot training study to explore the feasibility of a bioterrorism curriculum for pre-K teachers will occur. This model combines health science and literacy activities.

UAMS Partners for Inclusive Communities

Welcome the Children uses research based training material initially developed through the Nuestra Familia project and revised based on input from participants and evaluators. Two seven-hour training modules are being used one on “Cultural Diversity” and the second on “Second Language Development and Assessment in Early Childhood”. Ongoing evaluation of the project is conducted by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. To ensure sustainability, community training teams are involved in local areas. The project will establish a minimum of 10 local community teams to support the project.

White River Planning and Development

- Training focused on new family child care providers with one-on-one assistance in basic business and record keeping skills for successful operation of a family child care home.
- The Elements of Successful Grant Writing, a training to be offered statewide targeting early care professionals. Three segments are to be offered: Basics of Grant Writing; Intermediate Grant Preparation and Advanced grant Preparation.

Other

The Division continues to support early childhood organizations and associations in sponsoring conferences and institutes, by furnishing scholarship funds allowing attendance by licensed and registered child care providers. The WEE Workshop, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention, the Arkansas Child Care Providers Association conferences for staff and administrators, the Early Childhood Institute at Arkansas State University, pre-service institute for early care professionals, Family Child Care Providers Conference and the Arkansas Early Childhood Association annual conference are examples. Events recognizing excellence are held in association with these conferences.

All Professional Development Opportunities are registered in the Early Childhood Professional Registry (TAPP) and all trainers are verified. This registration required that each session be evaluated and evaluations are received by the registry. Monthly reports by contractors are submitted to the Division to determine that performance indicators are being met.

Early Childhood Professional Development Registry

The Registry is housed at Arkansas State University's Childhood Services under a contract with the Division. The Registry maintains a practitioner's registry and an approved trainer registry. A registry of all approved training is also maintained and included on a web-site. Participants may register for any approved training session on-line. This web site links to the Division web-site.

Professional Development/training and technical assistance

The Traveling Arkansas Professional Development Pathways (TAPP) Steering Committee provides guidance and oversight to the professional development activities and the TAPP System. **Professional development opportunities are available to early care and education professionals through the TAPP Registry.** Web Site: <http://professionalregistry.astate.edu>

The DCC/ECE solicits proposals for professional development activities and through the Request for Proposal procedure, proposals are submitted and reviewed. The entities that are awarded are listed in the TAPP Registry Training Opportunities

Web Site: <http://professionalregistry.astate.edu> and

The DCC/ECE Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/

a) KeyStone Research Corporation

Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/

Keystone completed the evaluation of the Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways, September 2007. The evaluation purpose was:

- To assess the outcomes for ECE professionals and their quality of care for children
 - To build the capacity of DCC/ECE and the (TAPP) AECPS System to gather evaluative data over time to continuously assess the impact of quality improvement initiatives
 - To determine the implications of the research for policy and practice
- Components of the system evaluated were:
- Registry – Practitioner, Trainer, and Training
 - SPECTRUM – (career lattice)
 - Training Programs
 - Providers of Professional Development Opportunities
 - Practitioners
 - Overall System

Results of Evaluation:

What is working?

- ✓ Positive outcomes related to Environment Rating Scales, Child Interactive Scales and Program Administrative Scales assessments
- ✓ Core set of training developed

- ✓ Registry infrastructure in place
- ✓ Career Lattice established
- ✓ Established capacity for future data collection and process improvement

Recommendations:

- ✓ Consistent use of training titles and number of hours
- ✓ Develop standardized method of registering multi-session training
- ✓ Include degrees, endorsements, certificates and credentials earned on transcripts
- ✓ Use Registry data for reports regarding the delivery of PD opportunities and needs of ECE workforce
- ✓ Establish more incentives and/or requirements for becoming a member of the Practitioner Registry
- ✓ Continue outreach to practitioners and trainers to increase awareness and benefits of the system
- ✓ Explore avenues for more practitioners to take on leadership roles
- ✓ Develop a cycle to collect ERS, CIS and PAS data to document changes over time
- ✓ Continue to support process improvement
- ✓ Look for methods to effectively assess child outcomes as a result of professional development activities utilizing Early Learning Guidelines (Framework) – Benchmarks.

Technical Assistance Availability

Through a contract with the Division, Arkansas State University's Childhood Services evaluators and consultants offer Technical Assistance to child care providers on request of a provider or from referral by child care licensing specialists based on specific identified needs. During the past fiscal year over 1700 site visits or individual training sessions were conducted by the evaluator-consultants. Training and technical assistance is offered by Resource and Referral Offices located throughout the state. This entity is contracted by the DCC/ECE.

Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers

a) Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers

The Arkansas Child Care Apprenticeship Project (ACCAP) continues to operate in the community college system. Child Care programs participating in the apprenticeship program must provide salary incentives for students who successfully complete the program. With a decrease in funds from the AR Department of Work Force Services, the apprenticeship programs have been eliminated in many locations.

b) Results:

One program in Northeast Arkansas continues to offer the Child Care Apprenticeship program through the Department of Labor. Four programs

continue to provide the Teacher Learning Centers for the community early care and education practitioners and students. Funding is provided locally and is built on the foundation that was provided by the Apprenticeship program.

Activities to support a Quality Rating System

The Early Care and Education Workgroup, part of the AR Early Comprehensive Systems Initiative, developed recommendations for a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), including staff qualifications and submitted the recommendations to DCC/ECE. DCC/ECE plans to implement the first three levels of this proposed QRIS in July, 2010. The proposed QRIS contains eight components or areas for evaluation of child care programs, including licensed child care centers, infant and toddler centers, school age care programs and licensed and registered family homes. The latest draft of the QRIS standards is on the DCC/ECE website.

DCC/ECE created a QRIS Implementation Team to guide the implementation process and help ensure the necessary components and infrastructures are in place to support the System. QRIS Implementation Team Workgroups include: Professional Development workgroup to ensure appropriate learning opportunities are in place and available to support the system and to maintain a link with the professional registry system,

The incentives workgroup was established to realign funds to support QRIS. They are developing plans which include parent/provider/employer tax credits, training and professional development mandates, voucher rate increase based on level of quality, scholarships and grants, provider public relations kits, and evaluation of QRIS.

The Policies and Procedures workgroup was established to develop operational policy designed for use by DCC/ECE staff and contract staff in assessing child care programs in determining levels of achievement in the Quality Rating Improvement System.

Professional development for child care program administrators has been developed and implemented beginning in January 2009 through December 2010. Modules include “Getting Ready for QRIS” and training key resource personnel.

An Information Technology support system is currently in development and the target date for implementation is April 2010.

- **Marketing/Public Relations Campaign To Promote Quality in Child Care and QRIS:** The QRIS Implementation Plan includes a component on the development and implementation of a communication campaign to promote quality. A QRIS Public Relations Team has laid the foundation for public education and outreach. An Arkansas firm was hired and has developed a three-year communication plan framework. The firm also produced an eight

minute Flash presentation that will be used as outreach for potential corporate partners and an educational tool for others. This firm is currently in the process of developing a name, logo, theme, theme line, and other related materials for QRIS. They will use focus groups to test the materials, and the results will be shared with the DCC/ECE Implementation Team. Staff from DCC/ECE and the Public Relations Team is in the process of developing an RFP for the first phase of the Campaign. This broad, generic phase will promote the importance of quality in child care and provide information on what to look for in a quality program. It will target parents, state policy makers, and other state and community leaders. This initial phase is expected to be in place in the early fall. The second phase of the Campaign, which will specifically promote QRIS, will be implemented in a time frame that supports the roll-out of QRIS. (Also see 2.3.)

Evaluation/Quality Rating Improvement System

A QRIS Field Study was conducted during September-December of 2008. Based on results from the first field study, a second study was started in the spring of 2009. These studies are being done through a contract with a state university. The purpose of the field studies is to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the QRIS review process and procedures and assess the clarity and feasibility of the QRIS requirements. Activities include a self-study guide, a readiness checklist for programs, a checklist for the assessment team and program directors, design of review processes, technical assistance packet for program directors, process evaluation form to be completed by program directors and assessment team members, and training for participants.

Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development

Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas) is a comprehensive training designed for all early education settings. The components of this training include:

- Social and Emotional development related to literacy
- Creating Learning Environments that are Literacy Rich
- Language Arts
- Promoting Language and Literacy
- Learning about letters
- Environmental Print
- Assessment, Observation, and portfolio

The refinement and revising of the training manual and the training delivery was a result of the evaluation that studied the comparison of teacher behavior and classroom environment in pre and post-training settings.

- **Early Childhood Education Framework/Strategies and Activities**

These Early Learning Guidelines (Framework) are the bases for curriculum development that reflect the five developmental strands and benchmarks with strategies and activities. These Guidelines are included in the Quality Rating and Improvement Scale as a requirement for training. These Guidelines have proven to be successful for providing and avenue for observation and assessment of child growth and development.

- **Infant and Toddler Framework with Strategies and Activities**

These guidelines assist in providing early care and educators who work with infants and toddlers a guide to ensure that development is occurring appropriately and as predicted.

- **Family Connections**

Family Connections is a packet of materials designed to connect families and involve families in activities with their children and families at home. The packets include sets of activities based on benchmarks from one or more of the five development learning strands.

Web Site:

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/familyconnection.pdf

- **Adventures in Learning**

Adventures in Learning is a comprehensive curriculum that is on the approved curriculum list and is available online to early care and education professionals. *Story a Month* is a method for telling stories and is available online and compliments the *Adventures in Learning*.

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/adventures

A companion *Adventures for Toddlers* is now on-line and available at no cost to all providers. This comprehensive curriculum is linked to the Infant and Toddler Framework/Benchmarks for children.

Activities to promote inclusive child care

Early Childhood Special Education/Arkansas Department of Education:

DCC/ECE has in place a formal agreement with the Arkansas Department of Education Special Education Unit to ensure that Child Development Association students have training to qualify them to serve as paraprofessionals in local education agencies (LEA).

Welcome the Children

1. Arkansas experienced a 337% increase in the number of Latinos living in the state from 1990 – 2000, (U.S. Census Bureau). Most Latino families move to Arkansas for jobs and become strong contributors to the state's economy. As our newest residents, these families bring a rich mix of culture and language

that varies considerably from the Caucasian and African American ethnic groups that have historically comprised the majority of Arkansas' population. Child care providers, early childhood and elementary educators, and other professionals have been greatly affected by this population growth, but few have received training to assist them in adapting their services to work more effectively with Spanish speaking children and their families.

2. DCC/ECE has addressed this training need by funding the Welcome the Children project, administered by the University of Arkansas Partners for Inclusive Communities (Partners). Using research based training materials, the primary goal of Welcome the Children is to assist child care providers and educators through training and technical assistance to understand cultural issues, learn strategies to support Latino children, and make appropriate referrals for possible developmental delays. Two seven-hour training modules are being presented statewide on “Cultural Diversity” and “Second Language Development and Assessment in Early Childhood.” Additional training modules are being developed to provide information on disabilities, specific methods of observing and assessing Spanish-speaking children for language delays, and effectively using/becoming language interpreters.
3. Training materials are also shared through the project website www.uams.edu/welcomethechildren. This website recently won an Award of Distinction in The Communicator Awards, an international competition honoring excellence in communications.
4. To ensure sustainability, Welcome the Children is disseminating the training through community training teams that consist of child care providers; early childhood and elementary educators; disability and healthcare providers; clergy; family members; and representatives of Latino groups. With in-depth support from project staff, these community teams coordinate local training efforts. Welcome the Children staff provides training, technical assistance, all training materials, and some financial support to assist the teams to present the training sessions to others.
5. Networking opportunities for the community teams is being provided through the project website and an annual conference on cultural issues, where team members will receive additional training and share ideas. Survey information is being collected to identify current practices and training needs to ensure that the training materials developed through the project meet the needs of early childcare providers serving Latino children.

Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children

- The AR ECCS plan contains elements of Healthy Child Care America and continues to promote and expand the role of child care health consultants, called child care health coordinators (CCHCs) in Arkansas. In 2006, DCC/ECE implemented the Early Childhood Health Initiative (ECHI) and contracted with Child Care Connections, one of the Resource and Referral Centers (R&R's) to hire two child health care coordinators. One of the CCHCs resigned in June, 2007, and the other continues to work on ECHI and related activities. During 2008-2009, with support from the Department of Health, each of the remaining R&R's has designated a staff person to serve in a part time CCHC role. Plans are underway to work with the R&R's to designate/hire a full time position that would serve as a CCHC and Infant/Toddler Specialist. Working with Kids First, a program at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, AECCS will support Kids First staff participation in the "train the trainer" program for CCHC's at the University of North Carolina. Upon completion of the training, Kids First staff will train staff from the R&R's. This expansion of the CCHC network in Arkansas will enhance the health activities and components in child care programs, including social and emotional development.
- The AECCS Medical Homes and Social-Emotional Health Workgroups continue to work together to promote and implement the ABCD statewide spread strategy to help identify developmental delays and problems as early as possible. They are also working on ways to improve communication and linkages between a child's primary medical provider, family, and child care providers. The ECCS grant requires an evaluation component and a broad framework is proposed in the application. This evaluation framework will be fully developed if the grant is funded. The ECCS plan for 2009-2011 contains indicators of success for all of the proposed strategies.
- Early Childhood Health Initiative: Recognizing the need and opportunity to work with early childhood programs on critical health issues, DCC/ECE developed the Early Childhood Health Initiative (ECHI). This Initiative aims to increase children's health prospects through coordination of services and programs at the community level and decrease the risk of negative outcomes, particularly childhood obesity. This is accomplished through targeted nutrition and physical activity strategies in child care settings. Through partnerships with the Child Care Resource and Referral Centers, staff designated as CCHCs or child care health coordinators (one full time and five part time) provide technical assistance and training to selected child care programs. A major component of ECHI is the use of NAP SACC, a nationally recognized classroom-based assessment, which includes training modules for staff on nutrition and physical activity. These training modules can also be provided to parents and families. NAP SACC includes the development of an action plan based on the NAP SACC results. Another component of ECHI is Fit Kids, an initiative developed with support from the

WIC Program. Fit Kids includes training to child care providers to increase knowledge and skills related to childhood nutrition and physical activity. Fit Kids Activity Kits are provided as a part of training. These Kits include information on healthy eating habits and physical activity curriculum to use with children in care, as well as information to share with families. ECHI has grown from 5 sites in 2006-2007 to 40 sites in 2008-2009. The Arkansas Department of Health supports this Initiative through its Obesity Prevention Grant. In addition, Health supports 15 of the 40 sites in three of its public health regions through the Child Health Advisory Committee.

- **Early Childhood Community Mental Health Centers**--The purpose of the Community Mental Health Centers Partnership with Early Childhood Programs is to facilitate collaboration between Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) and early childcare programs, including Head Start centers, Arkansas Better Chance programs and programs with high voucher usage. The Division funds three CMHCs (Ozark Guidance Center, Counseling Associates and Mid-South Health Systems) to local sites that partner with at least three childcare programs in their region. The project evaluation was awarded to the University of Arkansas for Medical Science's Partners for Inclusive Communities.

5.2 Early Learning Guidelines and Professional Development Plans

5.2.1 Status of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop, implement, or revise research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) for three-to-five year-olds.

NOTE: Check only one box that best describes the status of your State/Territory's three-to-five-year-old guidelines.

- Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: ____ If possible, respond to questions 5.2.2 through 5.2.4.
- Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: ____ If possible, respond to questions 5.2.2 through 5.2.4.
- Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1, if available.**
- Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Revising.** The State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1.**
- Other. Describe:**

a) **Describe** the progress made by the State/Territory in developing, implementing, or revising early learning guidelines for early learning since the date of submission of the 2008-2009 State Plan. Efforts to develop early learning guidelines for children birth to three or older than five may be described here.

Implementation of early learning guidelines, Early Childhood Education Framework and Infant/Toddler Framework training continues to occur throughout the state.

The training is delivered both in community colleges and in community based program settings and is open to all licensed/registered care providers and parents.

b) If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards or other standards (e.g., Head Start Child Outcomes, State Performance Standards)?

Yes. If yes, **identify standards:**

The Early Childhood Education Framework/Benchmarks are aligned with Kindergarten Readiness Indicators, Head Start Performance Outcomes, Work Sampling Performance Indicators (Arkansas Better Chance Pre-K program) Kindergarten Frameworks and Creative Curriculum.

No.

c) If developed, are the guidelines aligned with early childhood curricula?

Yes. If yes, **describe:**

The Early Learning Guidelines are aligned with the Arkansas developed, Adventures in Learning Curriculum along with approved early care and education curricula, each aligned with the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework and Benchmarks

No.

d) Have guidelines been developed for children in the following age groups:

Birth to three. Guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1**

Birth to five. Guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1**

Five years or older. Guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.1**

If any of your guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (guidelines must still be attached to Plan):

Web Site: www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/pdf/aeceframework.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/generalpdf/infantframework.pdf

5.2.2 Domains of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines. Do the guidelines for three-to-five-year-olds address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

Yes.

No.

a) Do the guidelines for children three-to-five-year-olds address other domains such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, or creative arts?

Yes. If yes, **describe.**
All are included with physical and health combined.

No.

5.2.3 Implementation of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines.

a) **Indicate** which strategies the State used, or expects to use, in implementing its early learning guidelines.

Check all that apply:

- Disseminating materials to practitioners and families
- Developing training curricula
- Partnering with other training entities to deliver training
- Aligning early learning guidelines with licensing, core competencies, and/or quality rating systems
- Other. **Describe:**

b) **Indicate** which stakeholders are, or are expected to, actively support(ing) the implementation of early learning guidelines:

Check all that apply:

- Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care
- Head Start
- Education/Public pre-k
- Early Intervention
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Higher Education
- Parent Associations
- Other **Describe:**

TAPP (Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways/Professional Development Steering Committee, Arkansas Early Childhood Commission, Arkansas Early Childhood Partnership Council, Arkansas Early Childhood Association)

c) **Indicate** the programs that mandate or require the use of early learning guidelines

- Publicly funded (or subsidized) child care
- Head Start
- Education/Public pre-k
- Early Intervention
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Higher Education
- Parent Associations
- Other **Describe:**

The Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) field test model requires use of the AR Early Childhood Education Framework and Benchmarks—Early Learning Guidelines.

d) **Describe** how cultural, linguistic and individual variations are (or will be) acknowledged in implementation.

1. The use of the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework: Benchmarks with Strategies and Activities, is mandatory for all public pre-K programs funded through the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program fund and for the preschool components of the Even Start programs. Additionally, participants in the School of the 21st Century programs require programs to meet the Early Childhood Quality Approval/Accreditation standards that address use of the Framework document. Other programs are encouraged to implement use of the framework to assist in successful transition for children from the preschool setting to kindergarten entry.
2. The Infant and Toddler Framework: Benchmarks with strategies and activities are used statewide. A companion piece Picture This: A Framework for Quality for Infants and Toddlers provides through words and pictures a look at the development of a child from birth to three years of age with special emphasis on quality. Professional Development/training opportunities are offered based on the Infant and Toddler Framework.
3. The programmatic assessment includes use of the State's Early Childhood Quality Approval/Accreditation system. This system provides requirements for programs to meet a level of quality care. Requirements include additional staff education standards, additional training requirements, parental involvement and alignment with the Early Learning Guidelines (Arkansas Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework and the Arkansas Infant and Toddler Framework. Annual visits are conducted to the child care programs using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale appropriate to the type of care provided. (i.e.: Infant and Toddler, Family Child Care Home or School-age care.) Parents choosing to use the Quality

Approved programs received a refundable tax credit on their state income tax.

4. Caregiver Interaction Scale (CIS) has been conducted and these tools are used in the assessment processes.
5. In regard to child outcomes, the Arkansas Early Childhood Curriculum Framework includes a developmental rating scale that identifies the benchmarks for achievement. Assessments are conducted by annually observing children in the child care or home setting and children are ranked as: not yet, emerging and consistently. These assessments are used to establish program goals to ensure continuing development of individual children.
6. Welcome the Children uses research based training material has been revised based on input from participants and evaluators. Two seven-hour training modules are being used one on “Cultural Diversity” and the second on “Second Language Development and Assessment in Early Childhood”. Ongoing evaluation of the project is conducted by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

e) Describe how the diversity of child care settings is (or will be) acknowledged in implementation.

1. The Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care:
This framework is a document to guide the design the implementation of local early childhood program caring for children of infant and toddler ages and was developed to align with the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework and The Arkansas Department of Education Frameworks for Kindergarten.
The addition of the Infant and Toddler Framework provides a clear continuum for development and learning for children from birth to kindergarten and aligns to the Kindergarten Framework. Both framework documents, related printed materials and training/professional development modules all clearly focus on children with special needs, faith-based programs and children of English Language Learning families. These documents include:
 - *Getting Ready for Kindergarten – A Calendar of Family Activities*
 - *Kindergarten Readiness Brochure*
 - *Links for Teachers and Links for Parents*
 - *Picture This for Preschool and Infant/Toddlers*
 - *Adventures in Learning*
 - *The Family Connections*

Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as **Attachment 5.2.3**. If these are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address (guidelines must still be attached to Plan):

www.arkansas.gov/childcare/generalpdf/Framework34.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/familyconnection.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/DHS_RICalendar.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/infanttoddbroch.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/DHS_3to5_framework.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/schoolagelinks.html
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/inftodcon.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/adventures/
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc/
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/gettingready.html

5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines. As applicable, **describe** the State's plan for:

- a) Validating the content of the early learning guidelines
The Early Learning Guidelines align with other program outcomes; Head Start, Arkansas Department of Education, Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Work Sampling System Developmental Guidelines.
- b) Assessing the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines
The ABC outcomes of the children using Work Sampling System and the Professional Development System evaluation of child outcomes indicate both positive and areas of needed improvement.
- c) Assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines
The progress of children is assessed using Work Sampling System, Arkansas Benchmarks and Developmental Checklist, and Kindergarten QUELI.
- d) Aligning the guidelines with accountability initiatives
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc/pdf/longreport.pdf

Written reports of these efforts are included as **Attachment 5.2.4**. If these are available on the web, **provide** the appropriate Web site address (reports must still be attached to Plan):

5.2.5 Plans for Professional Development. **Indicate** which of the following best describes the current status of the Lead Agency's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education. **NOTE: Check ONLY ONE box that best describes the status of your State's professional development plan.**

- Planning.** Are steps underway to develop a plan?
- Yes, and **describe** the entities involved in the planning process, the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- No.
- Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft or planning documents are included as **Attachment 5.2.5**, if applicable.
- Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5**, if applicable.
- Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented, or has been implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.
- Revising.** The State previously developed a professional development plan and is now revising that plan, or has revised it since submitting the 08-09 State Plan. The revisions or the revised plan are included as **Attachment 5.2.5**.
- Other. Describe:**

a) Describe the progress made by the State in planning, developing, implementing, or revising the professional development plan since the date of submission of the 2008-2009 State Plan.

a) Validating the content of the early learning guidelines

The Early Learning Guidelines align with other program outcomes; Head Start, Arkansas Department of Education, Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Work Sampling System Developmental Guidelines.

b) Assessing the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines

The ABC outcomes of the children using Work Sampling System and the Professional Development System evaluation of child outcomes indicate both positive and areas of needed improvement.

c) Assessing the progress of children using measures aligned with the guidelines

The progress of children is assessed using Work Sampling System, Arkansas Benchmarks and Developmental Checklist, and Kindergarten Qualls Early Learning Inventory (QUELI).

d) Aligning the guidelines with accountability initiatives

<http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc/pdf/longreport.pdf>
<http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services.html> – Arkansas Early
 Childhood Professional Development System - KeyStone Evaluation
 Executive Summary pp: 26 -27.

b) If developed, does the plan include (Check **EITHER** yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
Specific goals or desired outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuum of training and education to form a career path	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A system to track practitioners' training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Credentials – Please state for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors' credential, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

c) For each **Yes** response, **reference** the page(s) in the plan and briefly **describe**.

- The plan is still in revision and will include all the “yes” responses marked above. Specific goals or desired outcomes will be addressed for each of the components of the professional development system; TAPP Registry, (Trainer and Practitioner), TAPP Map, TAPP Training Opportunities and Key Content Areas and Competencies.
- Early Learning Guidelines and the Arkansas' Key Content Areas and Core Competencies are linked and will be outlined in the plan. They serve as the foundation for decisions and practices carried out by professionals in all settings and programs and they establish set of standards for early care and education that support the professionalization of the field. Providers, practitioners and teachers may use the competency areas to assess the level of knowledge and skill and identify specific areas of need for future professional development. Directors and Program Administrators may use the Arkansas Key Content Areas to specify professional development requirements for staff job descriptions, as well as develop individual staff professional development plans and policies.

The TAPP Key Content Areas and Definitions

The TAPP Key Content Areas (KCA) are a set of content areas that define what early care and education professionals should know and understand in order to provide quality experiences for children, regardless of the setting in which care and education occurs. The newly revised TAPP Key Content Areas are:

1. Child Growth and Development

Understand how children acquire language and creative expression and develop physically, cognitively, and socially.

2. Learning Environment and Curriculum

Establish an environment that provides learning experiences that meet each child's needs, capabilities, and interests.

3. Positive Interactions and Guidance

Establish supportive relationships with children and guide them as individuals and as a part of a group.

4. Family and Community

Work collaboratively with families and agencies/organizations to meet children's needs and to encourage the community's involvement with early care and education.

5. Child Observation and Assessment

Observe and assess what children know and can do in order to provide curriculum that meets their developmental and learning needs.

6. Health, Safety, and Nutrition

Establish and maintain an environment that ensures children's healthy development, safety, and nourishment.

7. Professional Development and Leadership

Serve children and families in a professional manner and participate in the community as a representative of early childhood care and education.

8. Program Planning and Management

Establish, implement, and evaluate an early care and education program.

- Continuum of training and education to form a career path is framed on the TAPP Map and training opportunities are planned for each pathway and setting. A method for identifying training gaps needs to be developed and implemented.
- Articulation from one type of training to the next is outlined on the TAPP Map and articulation is considered at each level. A higher education work group is working toward articulation plans by continuing the work by making syllabi used to have the same information for same degrees. The CDA Credential already has three common courses among many of the institutions and this work group is building on that foundation to include courses that will be the same for degrees that are very similar.
- Quality assurance through approval of trainers has been developed and is a positive aspect of the professional development system. All credentials from trainers/instructors must be official.

- A system to track practitioners' training is on the practitioner's Personal Transcript in the TAPP Registry. An identification number is issued to each practitioner and trainer that is a member of the TAPP Registry. The TAPP Transcript will be the bases for the Individual Professional Development Plan that is in process of being developed and will be utilized by programs that will be seeking QRIS status and for personal professional growth.
- Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness is completed by participants completing an evaluation of the trainer. Discussion continues to revolve around how to make the evaluation more effective or develop a new trainer evaluation that may be more effective. Policies are in place for trainers that present ethical issues that need to be addressed. Trainer, consultant and coach competencies are being developed.
- State Credentials – are available for infant and toddler, administrators, and School-Age/Youth and Family, Child Care Homes and others are being developed as the planning and work continue with **cross-sector initiatives**. Legislation passed Act 187 of the Regular Session 2009, to create a Birth through Pre Kindergarten Teaching Credential in conjunction with Arkansas DHS, DCC/ECE and Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Implementation date is January 2010.
- Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers is an area that Arkansas needs to include in the plan for improvement. By utilizing avenues that are in place such as professional development opportunities and referrals may be the strategy for improvement.

d) For each **No** response, **indicate** any plans the Lead Agency has to incorporate these components.

e) Are the professional development opportunities described in the plan available:

Note: Check either yes or no for each item):

	Yes	No
Statewide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe): Home Visitors, Parents, Agency Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

f) **Describe** how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.

Professional Development Opportunities are available in the original plan and are listed in the TAPP Registry. These topics are a part of an endorsement series that include Pre-K ELLA, INDEX (math), SEL (social emotional) and Framework (early learning guidelines).

g) Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

Yes. **Describe**, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.

- Successful completion of these training topics as a group may increase their level on the TAPP Map
- Quality Grants are offered to programs using the Environmental Rating Scale scores – determined by the number and quality of literature and books available to children as well as other indicators.
- With the implementation the QRIS, Individual Professional Development Plan will assist both programs and professionals in working toward advancing toward improvement.

No. **Describe** any plans to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts?

h) As applicable, does the State assess the effectiveness of its professional development plan, including the achievement of any specified goals or desired outcomes?

Yes. **Describe** how the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal is assessed.

- The effectiveness or goals of the professional development plan has been assessed utilizing the results of KeyStone Research Corporation. See attachment: Executive Summary Evaluation, Logic Model and page 29 of summary for established capacity for process improvement efforts. This research team developed research tools and sampling plans, as well as fieldworkers that could gather the Environmental Rating Scale, Caregiver Interaction Scale and Program Administrator Scale outcome data. Ongoing evaluation utilizing some of the same scales will be utilized for this project.

No. **Describe** any plans to include assessments of the professional development plan's effectiveness/goal achievement.

i) Does the State assess the effectiveness of specific professional development initiatives or components?

Yes. **Describe** how specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness is assessed.

- The TAPP Steering Committee and related TAPP Committees are continually in assessment of the professional development components utilizing the NCCIC Tool for assessing status of professional development system and review of the KeyStone research recommendations.
- The TAPP Steering Committee developed a time-line to assist in accomplishing and evaluating goals as the goals were met.
- Focus groups are utilized to collect comments from the field for feedback concerning the professional development system.

As cross-sector training opportunities are developed and implemented into the TAPP System, the effectiveness will be assessed by surveying stakeholder's satisfaction and by including assessment opportunities as planning is organized.

No. **Describe** any plans to include assessments of specific professional development initiatives or components' effectiveness.

j) As applicable, does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape or revise its professional development plan?

Yes. **Describe** how assessment informs the professional development plan.

- The KeyStone Research Corporation has informed the professional development plan revision by outlining the areas of needed improvement. These areas may not be listed specifically in the plan but will be addressed indirectly as needed to improve the overall plan.

No. **Describe** any plans to include assessment to inform the professional development plan.

PART 6

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. **Note: This database typically contains information on licensing requirements for meeting State or local law to operate (§98.40). This database does not contain registration or certification requirements specific only to participation in the CCDF program.**

In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements.

The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

CCDF regulations (§98.2) define the following categories of care:

- **Center-based child care provider:** Provider licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a non-residential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.
- **Group home child care provider:** Two or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.
- **Family child care provider:** One individual who provides child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, as the sole caregiver, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)'s work.
- **In-home child care provider:** Individual who provides child care services in the child's own home.

6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law per the NRCHSCC's compilation? **Note:** Some States use the term certification or registration to refer to their licensing regulatory process. Do not check “Yes” if center-based providers simply must *register* or *be certified* to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State regulatory requirements.

Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.

No. **Describe** which center-based providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

Yes, and the changes are as follows:

No.

6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

b) Building and physical premises safety

c) Health and safety training

d) Other requirements for center-based child care services provided under the CCDF

6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Child Care Providers
(658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? **Note:** Some States use the term certification or registration to refer to their licensing regulatory process. Do not check "Yes" if group home child care providers simply must *register or be certified* to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State regulatory requirements.

Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.

No. **Describe** which group home providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

N/A. Group home child care is not a category of care in this State. Skip to Question 6.3.1

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

Yes and the changes are as follows:

No.

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

b) Building and physical premises safety

c) Health and safety training

d) Other requirements for group home child care services provided under the CCDF

6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Child Care Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? **Note:** Some States use the term certification or registration to refer to their licensing regulatory process. Do not check “Yes” if family child care providers simply must *register* or *be certified* to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State regulatory requirements.

Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.

No. **Describe** which family child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

Yes and the changes are as follows:

No.

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

b) Building and physical premises safety

c) Health and safety training

d) Other requirements for family child care services provided under the CCDF

6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Child Care Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

Note: Before responding to Question 6.4.1, **check** the NRCHSCC's compilation of licensing requirements to verify if **in-home child care** as defined by CCDF and your State is covered. If not, **check** no for 6.4.1. Do not check "Yes" if in-home child care providers simply must *register* or *be certified* to participate in the CCDF program separate from the State regulatory requirements.

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.

No. **Describe** which in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

Yes and the changes are as follows:

No.

6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

b) Building and physical premises safety

c) Health and safety training

d) Other requirements for child care services provided under the CCDF

6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A))

Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following a) describes those requirements and b) identifies the relatives they apply to:

6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

6.6.1 Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d))

Describe how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced, including at a minimum:

a) Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

- Yes, and **indicate** the provider categories subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:

All provider types who are licensed or registered are subject to three (3) unannounced visits per year.

- No.

b) Are child care providers subject to background checks?

- Yes, and **indicate** the types of providers subject to background checks and when such checks are conducted:

All providers, regardless of type, are subject to the same background check requirements. All Owners and Operators, plus any employees who have not lived in the state of Arkansas for the previous 6 years, must have an FBI fingerprint background check.

All owners, operators and employees and volunteers must have a Child Maltreatment background check every 2 years and a State Police criminal record check every 5 years.

No.

c) Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

Yes, and **describe** the State's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

The Licensing/Registration standards require providers to report any serious injuries or illnesses to the Division within one business day.

No.

d) Describe any other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

The Division works closely with the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas State Fire Marshall's Office to insure that all applicable health and safety requirements are in compliance.

6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

PART 7

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES

(Only the Territories complete Part 7)

CCDF regulations (§98.2) define the following categories of care:

- **Center-based care:** Provider licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child in a non-residential setting, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.
- **Group home child care provider:** Two or more individuals who provide child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)' work.
- **Family child care provider:** One individual who provides child care services for fewer than 24 hours per day per child, as the sole caregiver, in a private residence other than the child's residence, unless care in excess of 24 hours is due to the nature of the parent(s)'s work.
- **In-home child care provider:** Individual who provides child care services in the child's own home.

7.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

7.1.1 For all center-based care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- b) Building and physical premises safety
- c) Health and safety training
- d) Other requirements for child care services provided under the CCDF

7.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Child Care Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

7.2.1 For all group home child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- b) Building and physical premises safety
- c) Health and safety training
- d) Other requirements for child care services provided under the CCDF

7.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Child Care Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

7.3.1 For all family child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- b) Building and physical premises safety
- c) Health and safety training
- d) Other requirements for child care services provided under the CCDF

7.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Child Care Providers in the Territories (658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

7.4.1 For all in-home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- a) The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- b) Building and physical premises safety
- c) Health and safety training

d) Other requirements for child care services provided under the CCDF

7.5 Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives may be exempted from health and safety requirements: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care). (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- Some or all** relative providers are subject to **different** health and safety requirements from those described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 and the following describes those different requirements and the relatives they apply to:

7.6 Enforcement of Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

7.6.1 Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) **Describe** how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced, including at a minimum:

a) Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

- Yes, and **indicate** the provider categories subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
- No.

b) Are child care providers subject to background checks?

- Yes, and **indicate** the types of providers subject to background checks and when such checks are conducted:
- No.

c) Does the Territory require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

Yes, and **describe** the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

No.

d) Describe any other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

7.7 Exemptions from Territorial Immunization Requirements

The Territory assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the Territorial public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The Territory exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- Children who receive care in their own homes.
- Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

APPENDIX 1
CCDF PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures (§98.15) that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 109-149)

The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))

PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES IN: **Arkansas**
FOR THE PERIOD 10/1/09 – 9/30/11

- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

APPENDIX 2

ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and/or priority for CCDF-funded child care services, Lead Agencies must **define** the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

- *in loco parentis* – A person having physical custody of the child. The person has assumed guardianship and responsibility for the child. Child care can be provided for this person to enable employment training or education; however, the income of that person (regardless of relationship to the child) will be counted in determining eligibility and setting fees for service.
- *job training and educational program* - activities designed to enhance the employability and self-sufficiency of parents and which lead to employment at the end of the training or education program. Parents must currently be enrolled a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours to be eligible for assistance.
- *physical or mental incapacity (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older)* – A child who has a physical or mental condition which substantially limits one or more major life activities, who has a record of such an impairment, or who is regarded as having such an impairment, and diagnosed by a licensed medical or psychological practitioner.
- *protective services* – Services provided to a family after a child maltreatment report has been founded true or during the investigation to prevent removal of the children. These services are provided as in home services and risk to the child is not imminent so removal is not necessary. Services provided to prevent further abuse or neglect and to strengthen family functioning and overall well being of children. Services are also provided for children in foster care.
- *residing with* – Living with or in a household with a parent or legal guardian or other individual standing in loco parentis.
- *special needs child* – A child whose physical condition has lasted or is expected to last at least two (2) years as diagnosed by a licensed medical or psychological practitioner. A child determined eligible for special services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for whom a current IFSP or IEP exists.
- *very low income* – An income that is at or below 40% of the 2007 State Median Income Scale. Families whose monthly income is at this level would not be required to pay a fee for child care services based on the sliding fee scale.
- *working* – To do work, to be employed and receive payment for the work either in cash or in-kind, seeking or obtaining employment, making contact with potential employers,

applying for vacancies, and interviewing for jobs or enrolled as a full time student for a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours per semester.

- **List and define** any additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility and/or priority established by the Lead Agency:
 - *teen parent* – Any person 17 years or younger who is the parent of a child who lives with that parent. The teen parent must live with a responsible adult, such as their parent, a spouse, or be declared an emancipated minor.
 - *homeless* – Any person who is living in a homeless or battered women’s shelter or who is transitioning out of a shelter, which meets the eligibility requirements and has a child in need of child care services.
 - *low income/no fee* – The total household income received does not require the parent/guardian to pay a fee.
 - *low income with a fee* – The total household income received requires that the family pay a portion of the fee charged by the child care facility. Families who pay a fee do not receive child care assistance until all families on the waiting list who would not pay a fee are served.

APPENDIX 3: ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

CCDF Regulations 45 CFR §98.13(b)(2)-(6) require the following certifications.

- 1. Assurance of compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:**
<http://www.hhs.gov/forms/HHS690.pdf>
- 2. Certification regarding debarment:**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/debar.htm>
- 3. Definitions for use with certification of debarment:**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/debar.htm>
- 4. HHS certification regarding drug-free workplace requirements:**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/drugfree.htm>
- 5. Certification of Compliance with the Pro-Children Act of 1994:**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/tobacco.htm>
- 6. Certification regarding lobbying:**
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/lobby.htm>

These certifications were obtained in the 1997 Plan and need not be collected again if there has been no change in Lead Agency. If there has been a change in Lead Agency, these certifications must be completed and submitted with the Plan.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

List all attachments included with this Plan.

- ◆ Attachment 2.2 - Brief summary of the public comment process
- ◆ Attachment 3.1.1 – Policy handbook (*currently under revision*)
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport
- ◆ Attachment 3.2.1 – Payment rates
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/capratesmap.html
- ◆ Attachment 3.2.3 – Market Rate Survey and Summary of Results
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/rateform.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 3.5.1 – Sliding Fee Scale
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/Sliding%20Fee-60.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 4.1.1 – Application for Child Care Assistance
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/familysupport/pdf/dcc513.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 5.2.1 – Birth to three guidelines/Birth to five guidelines
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/pdf/aeceframework.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/generalpdf/infantframework.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 5.2.3 – Materials supporting implementation of the guidelines
 - ✓ Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/DHS_RICalendar.pdf
 - ✓ Kindergarten Readiness Brochure
www.arkansased.org/parents/pdf/krc_brochure.pdf
 - ✓ Links for Teachers and Links for Parents
www.arkansased.org/parents/pdf/kric_booklet_teachers.pdf
www.arkansased.org/parents/pdf/kric_booklet_for_parents.pdf
 - ✓ Picture This for Preschool and Infant/Toddlers
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/infanttoddbroch.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/DHS_3to5_framework.pdf
 - ✓ Adventures in Learning
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/adventures/index.html (*online only*)
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/advfortoddlers/index.html (*online only*)
 - ✓ The Family Connections
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/familyconnection.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/services/printedmats/pdf/inftodcon.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 5.2.4 – Written report of Voluntary Early Learning Guideline efforts
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/programsupport/pdf/aom2006.pdf
www.arkansas.gov/childcare/abc/pdf/longreport.pdf
- ◆ Attachment 5.2.5 – Revised Professional Development Plan

Attachment 2.2 – Brief summary of the public comment process

The public hearing on the proposed CCDF State Plan for 2009-2011 was held on June 4, 2009 at 10:00 am in the Donaghey Plaza South Building, 7th and Main Streets in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Notifications of the hearing were mailed to all licensed and registered child care providers in the Early Childhood Letter (a bi-monthly newsletter) in the May/June 2009 issue. A printed notification beginning May 14, 2009 – May 18, 2009 was placed in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the statewide newspaper. E-mail notices were also sent to all attendees at the January/February 2009 Community Roundtable meetings and other Early Care and Education Professionals in the state.

The CCDF Proposed state plan was placed on the Division Web site home page with a request for comments at www.arkansas.gov/childcare.

No persons attended the public hearing to provide written or verbal comments. One comment was provided during the public comment period to include the following as a definition of *Special Needs Child*: “A child determined eligible for special services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for whom a current IFSP or IEP exists.” This addition to the definition was made.

Attachment 3.2.3 – Market Rate Survey and Summary of Results

Arkansas 2008 Child Care Market Rate Survey Introduction

Historically, Arkansas has relied on the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies to collect data regarding payment rates. However, beginning with the 2007 market rate survey, the DCC/ECE has utilized payment data existing in its licensing and child care voucher information technology (IT) systems. This ensured that 100% of the licensed provider data was obtained and analyzed in the 2008 survey.

In previous years when relying on the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies we obtained around an 85% to 92% response from providers. The rate and payment data in our licensing and child care voucher information systems is more accurate and efficiently updated in an orderly and timely manner when a provider requests a change be made to individual payment rates.

DCC/ECE's strategic plan called for a market rate survey to be conducted on an annual basis. DCC/ECE collects market rates from all licensed centers and homes in each of the 75 counties within Arkansas.

We analyze the data for each:

1. Type of Service (Full Time, Half Time, Part Time, Night Care, and Weekend Care).
2. Type of License (Infant/Toddler, Preschool, and School Age Centers and Child Care Family Homes to Include Licensed Relative and Registered Child Care Family Homes).
3. Age Type (Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and School Age).

A rate cap for each county is calculated based on the 75th percentile. In some areas of the State, rate caps exceed the 75th percentile. The 75th percentile is a simple analysis which allows child care to be purchased in at least 75% of the child care providers in a county at the market rate for that type of care and for that particular age child.

Attachment 5.2.5 – Revised Professional Development Plan

Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways (TAPP) Plan A Professional Development Plan (2010 – 2011)

Goal:

The underlying goal of the TAPP Plan is to have a system that links what children need to know (early learning guidelines) with what practitioners need to know and demonstrate (key content areas and competencies), a registry system that encourages and supports practitioners to take responsibility for their professional development (career lattice/individual professional development plan) to track and provide practitioners' training (practitioner and training registry), a system for providing verified trainers with backgrounds in the areas they instruct (trainer registry), and approaches to monitor quality of programs and staff and outcomes of children (quality rating improvement system).

What we have:

- Early Learning Guidelines for Infant/Toddler and Preschool
- Key Content Areas and Competencies for early care and education professionals
- TAPP Registry System with system for tracking training for each practitioner, Registry for Training Opportunities and online registration, Trainer Registry and trainer evaluation system
- TAPP Map (career lattice)

What we are developing:

- Quality Rating Improvement System
- TAPP Map with training opportunities that articulate to the next levels
- Credentials, Certificates, and degrees aligned with competencies that support positive outcomes for children to include:
 - Infant/toddler educator
 - Preschool Educator
 - Family Child Care Home educator
 - School Age/Youth educator
 - Trainer
 - Administrators
- Coaches and mentors to work directly with practitioners

What we need to develop

- An evaluation system to determine if the TAPP Registry, QRIS, Early Learning Guidelines, and Key Competencies are making positive impacts for children and educators
- A cross-sector integrated system with other providers of training
- Define competencies for coaches, mentors and trainers.
- Use Key Content Areas to develop metrics for developing training opportunities and determine gaps in training opportunities