

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **\$6.2 Million in Grants Awarded to Expand Access to Quality Child Care**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is pleased to announce the recipients of nine grants totaling more than \$6.2 million to grow the number of publicly funded child care providers and improve the quality of existing providers. The recipients will work with child care providers across the state to create or improve programming, implement staff supports to improve recruitment and retention, and offer training to help them become Step Up To Quality rated or improve their rating. Step Up To Quality is Ohio’s quality rating system for child care providers.

“We are thrilled to be able to offer this assistance to organizations committed to joining us in our mission to improve the quality of early care and education for Ohio’s children,” said ODJFS Director Kimberly Hall. “Step Up To Quality has been proven to have a positive impact on both kindergarten readiness and children’s future literacy skills, both of which are vital for getting the best possible start in life. A young person’s early educational experiences help lay the groundwork for success later in life.”

By July 1, 2020, all Ohio licensed child care programs that receive state funding must participate in Step Up To Quality. As of December, 86% of programs offering publicly funded child care services were quality rated. The following organizations will receive grants to help reach that goal:

- **4C for Children:** \$2,006,045  
*Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Darke, Fayette, Greene, Hamilton, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, Warren Counties*
- **Starting Point:** \$1,201,291  
*Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake*
- **Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services:** \$1,199,525  
*Franklin County*
- **Early Childhood Resource Center:** \$800,794  
*Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit, Trumbull Counties*
- **Child Care Resource Center, Inc.:** \$371,154  
*Erie, Huron, Lorain, Sandusky, Seneca Counties*
- **Action for Children:** \$229,102  
*Delaware, Fairfield, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, Union Counties*
- **YWCA of Northwest Ohio:** \$177,622  
*Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Marion, Mercer, Morrow, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Richland, Van Wert, Williams, Wood, Wyandot Counties*
- **Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development:** \$155,190  
*Adams, Ashland, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Highland, Hocking, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Knox, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Tuscarawas, Vinton, Washington, Wayne Counties*



- **YMCA of Sidney and Shelby County: \$70,163**  
*Shelby and Miami Counties*

ODJFS has implemented multiple initiatives to help providers achieve and maintain Step Up To Quality ratings, including the following:

- Funding incentive payments.
- Reducing licensing application fees.
- Dedicating ODJFS staff to meet with and guide providers through the process.
- Offering free curricula and assessments.
- Paying wage and retention bonuses for child care staff members.
- Hosting workshops where providers can ask questions and receive guidance.
- Creating a mentorship program where rated providers help guide programs that are not yet rated.

All Ohio families can search for child care providers by county, city, ZIP code, program type, and Step Up To Quality rating at [ChildCareSearch.Ohio.gov](https://ChildCareSearch.Ohio.gov).

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*The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.*

