

Michigan's Children
For Immediate Release

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Michigan's Children Applauds Gov. Whitmer's Announcement of 'Child Care Relief Fund' to Assist Providers During the Covid-19 State of Emergency

Lansing, Mich. - On Wednesday, April 29, Gov. Whitmer announced the launch of a Child Care Relief Fund to assist child care providers during the Covid-19 pandemic, a move that President and CEO of Michigan's Children, Matt Gillard, applauds.

Gillard and Michigan's Children, public policy advocates serving the best interests of youth and families statewide, released the following statement after Gov. Whitmer's announcement during a Wednesday press conference:

"Governor Whitmer and her administration have a clear understanding that many providers and families are left to cope with many difficulties due to the ongoing pandemic. In the announcement of the Child Care Relief Fund today, the governor made it clear that people are not alone in this fight to keep providers afloat during this difficult time, in her taking swift action to allocate the both federal and state funds, totaling to the \$130 million investment in child care solutions.

Many working families, especially families facing significant challenges, before this crisis struggled to find affordable, quality child care that meets their childrens' needs, and our organization along with our network of advocates are eager to continue working with our leaders to address both short term and long-term child care solutions that are accessible for all our families."

Michigan's Children continues to work collaboratively with federal and state partners by communicating the direct needs of both families and providers to various decision makers, who all played a role in the child care investment announced today. The independent statewide advocacy organization has corresponded with partners and decision makers by delivering [policy recommendations via letters and memos](#), that underlined the sense of urgency needed to provide relief to our most vulnerable children and families and those serving these families and communities at-large.

Interview opportunities with Michigan's Children CEO & President Matt Gillard are available upon request.

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Background

What is the Child Care Relief Fund? The Child Care Relief Fund is a grant program that helps child care providers in Michigan cover costs during the COVID-19 state of emergency. The goal of the program is to help child care providers stay in business and make child care more affordable for Michigan families.

Why is this necessary? Child care providers are a critical part of Michigan's efforts to fight the pandemic and restart our economy. Since the state of emergency was announced, child care providers have been on the front lines making sure all essential workers—from health care workers to grocery store staff—were able to keep serving their communities. Now, as our economy slowly and thoughtfully reopens, quality, affordable child care will be essential to help Michigan keep working. This service, however, has been costly to providers who operate on razor thin margins. These grants are intended to help providers stay afloat so they can serve our communities well now – and in the future. We also know this pandemic has had a significant impact on families, and these grants will be used to make care more affordable for them.

Who is eligible? Our goal is that 100% of child care providers in Michigan receive a grant. Centers, family/group homes, tribal providers, disaster relief child care centers, many GSRP/Head Start providers, and license exempt providers are eligible. Our goal is to support every aspect of our state's child care system.

How much funding is available? Each grant starts with a base amount and additional funds are awarded based on whether a provider is open and caring for essential workers, the size of the provider, and their star rating. Michigan received \$100.8 million in federal funds through our Child Development and Care Block Grant to support this program. We are using additional CDCBG funds that had been previously appropriated to Michigan. All of these funds must be used exclusively to support child care.

How does this program help families? Making care more accessible and affordable for families is the central goal of this program. We're working to provide financial relief now. Every provider who receives a grant is required to take steps to make care more affordable for families during this crisis by lowering weekly rates and eliminating fees to hold a child's spot for at least 30 days after the provider applies for funding. This grant is also taking steps to ensure care is available to families when they return to work and their typical care arrangement.

Where can providers apply and get more information? Visit www.michigan.gov/childcare for more information.