



Kansas Child Care Subsidies: Perceptions from Providers

2024

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY



United Methodist
Health Ministry Fund

Agenda

- Opening remarks
- Childcare subsidy survey
- Reactions from partners and the field
- Q & A

Childcare Subsidy Survey

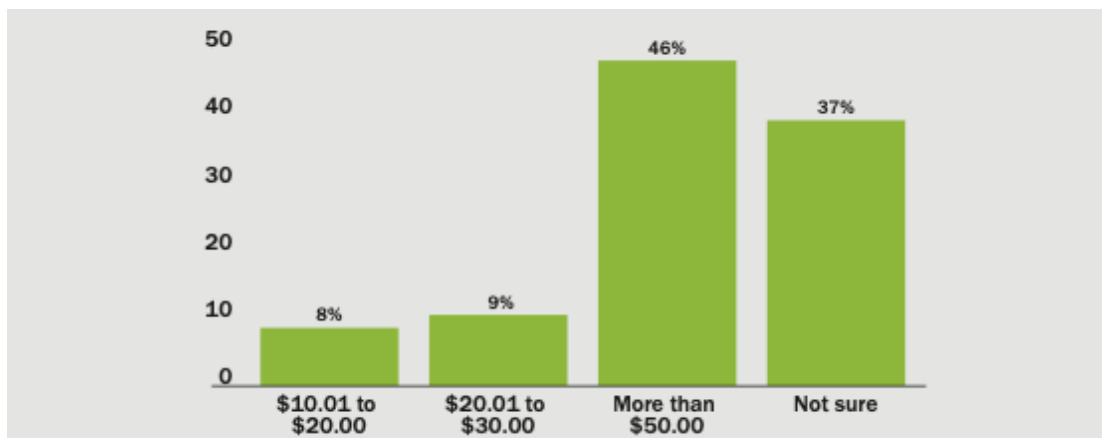
Demographics

- 93 counties represented
- Majority were daycare home or group daycare home administrators
- Many administrators report:
 - Serving between 1 and 5 children ages 0 – 5
 - Serving some children who receive subsidy funding
 - Not serving any children who have special support needs (except social-emotional challenges)
 - That most children in their care are white

Subsidy Participation

- Funding sources
 - 43% report receiving no outside funding
 - 50% report receiving subsidy only
- Program approval
 - 60% report they are currently approved to accept subsidy-funded children
 - 51.8% serve at least 1 child who is subsidy-funded

Payment and Rate Differences



When rate differences do occur, most administrators report a \$50.00 month gap between private pay families and subsidy-funded families.

Barriers to Participation: Programs Never Approved

- Prior negative experiences
- Logistical challenges
- Lack of knowledge
- Financial concerns
- Sufficiency of current enrollment
- Preference for private-pay families

“I don’t want families to have to struggle from waiting on a phone call all day or continuous paperwork that adds to the stress of them just trying to keep their job”
-Kansas Child Care Providers

Barriers to Participation: Programs with Past Approval

- Negative experiences
- Financial issues
- Administrative burden
- Lack of need for qualifying families
- Changes in business structure
- Personal preference

“I don’t want families to have to struggle from waiting on a phone call all day or continuous paperwork that adds to the stress of them just trying to keep their job”
-Kansas Child Care Providers

Increase in Participation

- Higher reimbursement rates
- Payments to provider
- Additional support
- Resources (e.g., Professional development)
- Assistance with subsidy management

"Providers should have someone they can contact directly at any time if there's a question about a family's account."

-Kansas Child Care Providers

Characteristics of an Ideal Child Care Subsidy System

- Streamlined payments and communication
 - Higher subsidy rates and direct payments
- Efficiency and simplicity in administration
 - Simpler application processes and quicker approval times
- Fairness and equitable access
 - Broader range of families served

"Online registration-payment submissions. Access to financial resources (grants)."
-Kansas Child Care Providers

Social Supports

Inclusive Environments & Promoting Equity

“When we have a family who falls into a financial bind, we work with them to come up with a payment plan.”
-Kansas Child Care Provider

- Equal treatment for all families
 - Inclusive practices to promote diversity
- Confidentiality and privacy
 - Maintaining financial records in a confidential way
- Supportive and flexible practices
 - Discounts, payment plans, help with essential needs
- Financial flexibility and support
 - Developing processes that provide flexibility and financial support

Misconceptions and Stigma

- Socioeconomic stereotypes
 - Lack of education, lazy, looking for handouts
- Privacy and equality
 - Families may be judged around financial status
- Behavioral and educational stigmas
 - Assumptions that subsidy-funded children have behavioral issues

"No one besides myself knows who is private pay or DCF subsidies."
-Kansas Child Care Provider

"All payments are kept confidential and private."
-Kansas Child Care Provider

Implicit Bias and Decision Making

- Financial bias and program survival
 - Sustainability of program may impact decision to accept subsidy
- Perceived behavioral issues and stigma
 - Belief that subsidy-funded children have more behavioral issues which leads to decision not to enroll
- Administrative hassles and paperwork
 - Higher administrative burden and paperwork

Collaboration with Agencies and Organizations

- Inclusive policies and open-door approach
 - Acceptance of all children regardless of race, ethnicity, economic background or disability
- Community collaboration and networking
 - Providers collaborate with multiple agencies and organizations
- Cultural sensitivity and educational incentives
 - Programs implement culturally responsive practices



Recommendations

Examination of
administrative
systems

Exploring
alternative payment
solutions

Investigating
alternate fee
structures

Assessing how to
increase support
for providers

Awareness to
dispel myths about
subsidy-funded
families

Reactions from Partners and the Field

Q & A