

DCY BI-MONTHLY UPDATES

September 2025




MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO



DCY SHORT & LONG TERM GOALS

Ohio aims to be the best place in the country to start and raise a family and DCY has outlined the following goals to become a leading state (e.g., top 10 in the country across 3 program areas):




Goal #1:

Maternal & Infant Wellness
Rate of Infant Mortality

Today 6.6 per 1000	Short Term 6.0 per 1000	Future 4.4 per 1000
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DCY wants to make OH a top 10 state in the US




Goal #2:

Early Care & Education
Rate of Children Demonstrating Readiness on the KRA

Today 36.6%	Short Term 48%	Future 60%
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Demonstrating KR Demonstrating KR Demonstrating KR

DCY wants to bring all counties to the 99th percentile of OH counties and improve outcomes by 70%



Goal #3:

Children Services, Kinship, Foster & Adoption
Rate of Children Entering Foster Care

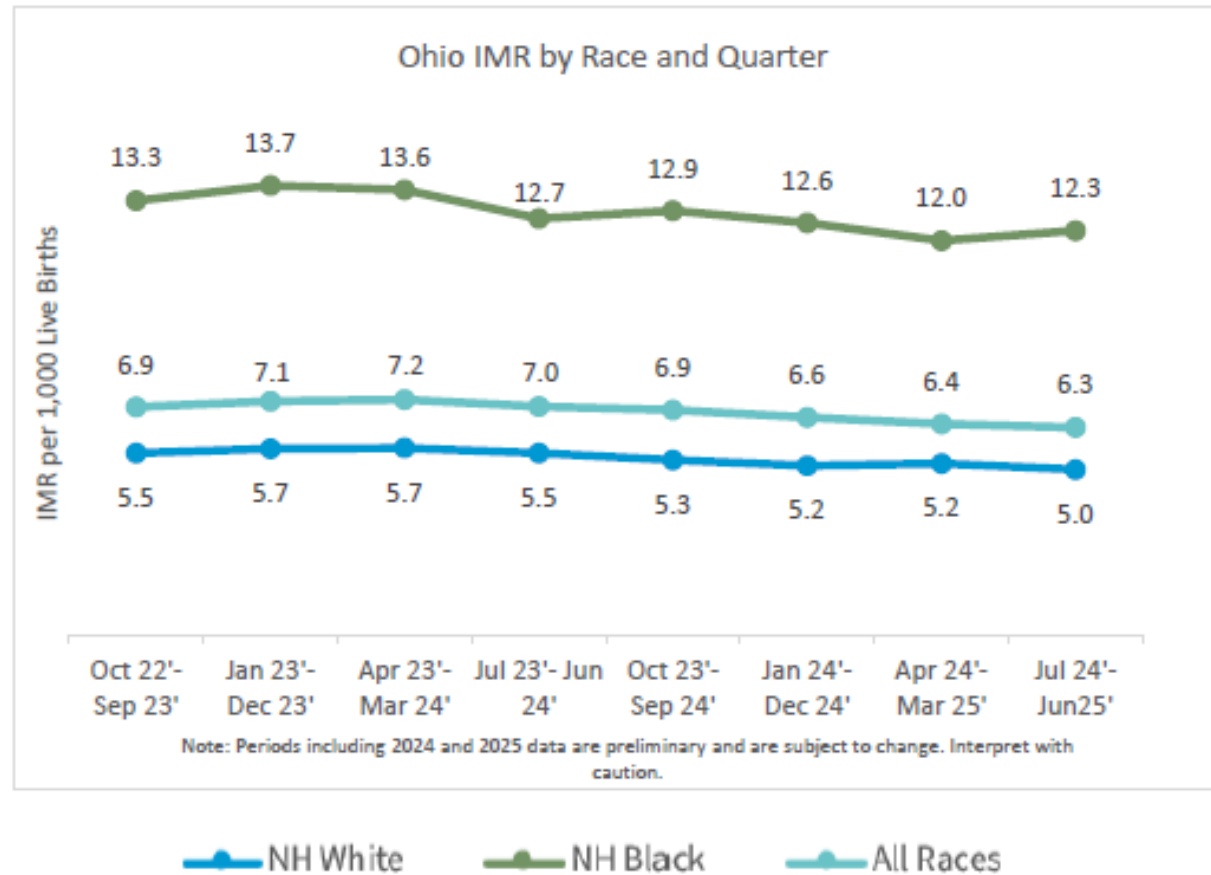
Today 3.3 per 1000	Short Term 2.0 Per 1000	Future 2.0 per 1000
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DCY wants to make OH a top 10 state in the US

GOAL 1 – MATERNAL & INFANT WELLNESS

INFANT MORTALITY RATE TRENDS

- Preliminary Calendar Year (CY) 2024 data continued to hold steady at an overall IM Rate of 6.6 deaths per 1,000 births.
- DCY anticipates finalization of CY24 data in the next several weeks.
- CY25 data from the first half of the year are showing positive trends, although it is still early and data are preliminary.



PARENTING AND PREGNANCY PROGRAM

Program Definition – ORC 5180.71

- Supports pregnant women and caregivers of children under 12 months
- Promotes childbirth, parenting, adoption and pregnancy supports
- Funded entities must be private, not-for-profit, and not affiliated with abortion services

Funding & Legislation

- Authorized by HB 96, with \$10M/year for FY 2026–2027
- Over 60 applications received, totaling \$45M+ in requests
- 21 entities were selected through a competitive application. A full list can be found at <https://governor.ohio.gov/media/news-and-media/governor-dewine-lt-governor-tressel-announce-nearly-20-million-to-support-young-families-and-advance-infant-health>

Ultrasound & Medical Oversight

- An additional \$2.5 million is available to similar entities to receive Ultrasound machines
- Grantees advised to follow NIFLA best practices and supervised by a licensed physician
- Women not connected to an OB/GYN, should leave with a referral or scheduled OB/GYN appointment
- Next Steps: DCY to identify a vendor to supply the machines and offer training



COMMUNITY & FAITH-BASED INFANT AND MATERNAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

Purpose & Focus

Expand access for community and faith-based organizations to implement community-level projects that improve infant and maternal health outcomes. Strengthen trusted partnerships with Ohio's pregnant women and families.

Key Dates

August 18, 2025 Applications Open	October 2, 2025 Application Deadline
November 1, 2025 Projected Start Date	June 30, 2027 Project End

Target Population

- Pregnant women or families with infants (**12 months**)
- Community-level interventions
- Focus on improving social and health outcomes

Eligible Applicants




- Single application for 10 Maternal and Infant Vitality counties.
- Applicants will coordinate community partners.
- Per year funding maximums by county:
 - \$900,000- Cuyahoga, Franklin and Hamilton
 - \$345,000- Butler, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit
 - \$240,000- Lorain, Mahoning and Stark

HOME VISITING



Total Investment

SFY 25	SFY 26	SFY 26 Increase	SFY 27	SFY 27 Increase
\$56M	\$60M	\$4M	\$63M	\$7M

Model	# of New Slots for SFY 26 and 27	Counties
	452 (26 per county)	Butler, Clark*, Clinton, Cuyahoga*, Fairfield, Franklin*, Hocking, Huron, Lake, Lorain*, Montgomery, Muskingum, Ottawa, Pickaway, Pike, Seneca, Trumbull (17)
	102 (25 per county)	Hamilton, Montgomery, Mahoning, Stark (4)
	370 (33 per county)	Butler, Cuyahoga*, Fairfield, Highland, Lorain*, Mahoning, Montgomery, Perry, Portage, Stark, Summit (11)
Total	924	*multiple agencies



Initiative Details

This funding expands home visiting to more than **9,000** additional children over the biennium and creates a phased approach to expanding the Family Connects model statewide as outlined in the 2024 State of the State.

- **SFY 26**
 - 500 additional in on-going
 - 3,500 Family Connects
- **SFY 27**
 - 500 additional in on-going
 - 4,500 Family Connects

FAMILY CONNECTS OHIO (FCO)



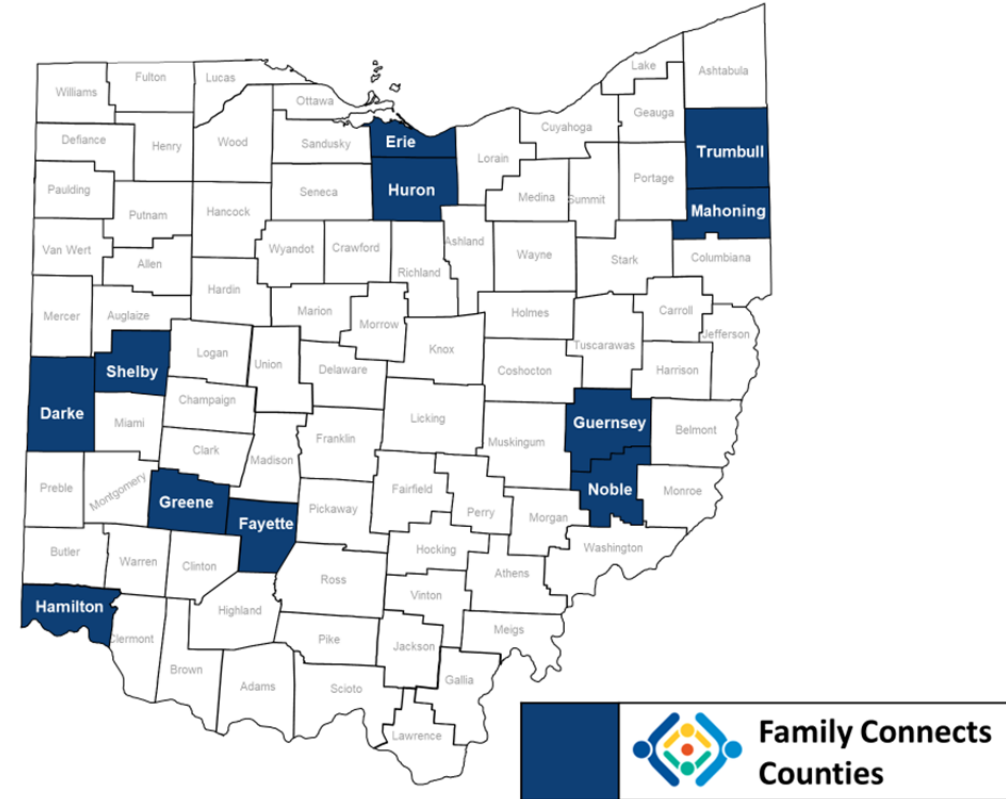
Family Connects International is an evidenced-based universal home visiting model that provides a free home visit from a registered nurse to families with a newborn baby. The nurse will provide a physical for both mom and baby, answer questions about caring for the baby, and provide referrals to local supports for newborns and their family members.

📍 August 2025 Visit Summary

- 53 FCO visits completed across 10 sites.

📊 Participant Feedback

- 100% of families surveyed felt always respected and listened to by their nurse
- 100% of families felt their nurse always explained things in a way they could understand
- 99% of families felt their questions/needs were a priority for their nurse
- 99% would recommend Family Connects Ohio to a friend
- 86% of moms attended their postpartum appointment with their healthcare provider
- 85% of families report being able to make contact with the referral agency provided by their nurse

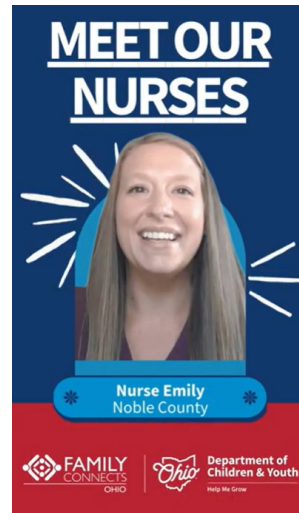


FCO RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

- Bedside Recruitment Expanded
 - Mercy Health St. Joseph Warren Hospital
 - Kettering Main Campus
- Transit
 - Internal and external signage
 - Bus shelter signage
- Traditional & Streaming TV
- Pharmacy bags
- Billboards
- Digital Display
- Social Media Boosted Posts

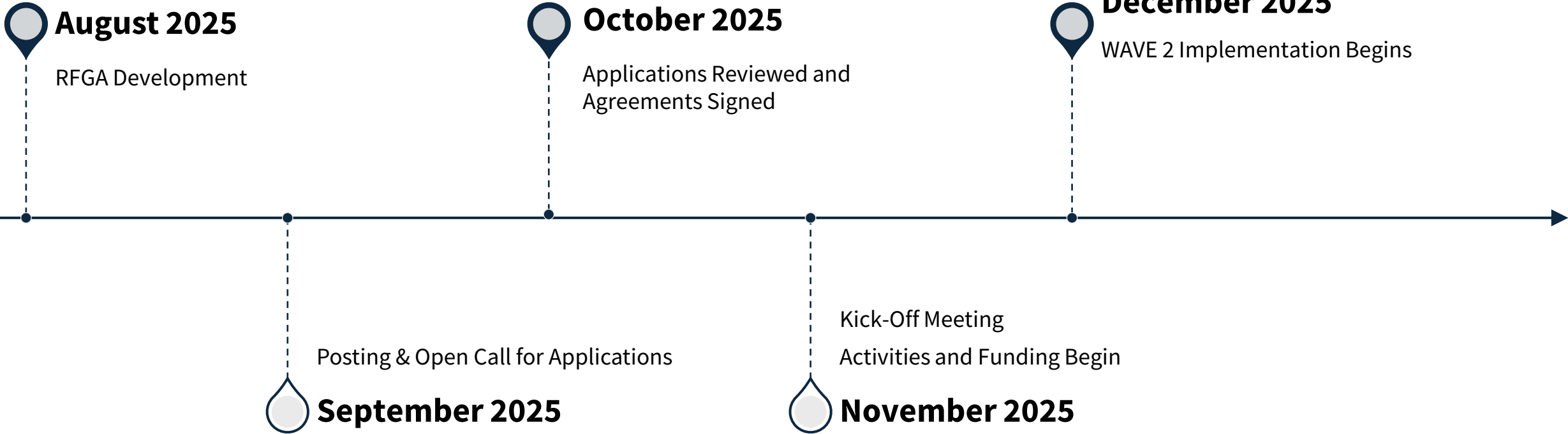


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXHiSchpNpY>



FAMILY CONNECTS EXPANSION-WAVE 2

Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) Timeline



SAFE SLEEP/CRIBS FOR KIDS UPDATE



The Safe Sleep/Cribs for Kids Program partners with local agencies throughout the state and Cribs for Kids®, with a goal of decreasing infant mortality by providing education on safe sleep practices and providing cribs to eligible caregivers.

Crib Distribution Progress: Between October 2024 and July 2025, 9,001 cribs were distributed to 8,737 families— Distribution is currently at 80% of the goal set for September 30, 2025. For a complete list of local partners, visit DCY's website for the listing.



Safe Sleep Materials & Training: DCY has educational materials available for local partners to utilize. For a complete list of materials, visit <https://childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/for-families/maternal-infant-wellness/infant-safe-sleep>

Program Extension & Operations: The Cribs for Kids vendor agreement was finalized, and the crib ordering portal reopened on August 29 for CFK local partners and county Childrens Services agencies.

Cribs for Kids/Safe Sleep Program Counties Served Contact List

The purpose of Cribs for Kids/Safe Sleep Program is to decrease Ohio's infant mortality rate by ensuring infants have a safe sleep environment and families are educated about safe sleep practices. This is accomplished through the provision of funding to organizations that promote safe sleep practices and distribute cribs in their counties to **eligible families**. Program eligibility requirements include:

- Mother must be at least 32 weeks pregnant or have an infant less than one year in age.
- Low-income, as defined as less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Caregivers, including non-custodial grandparents, are eligible.
- Twins and multiple births are eligible.
- Funded agencies will determine if two cribs will be provided to parents residing in separate homes.

- Serving: Adams, Brown, Clermont**
[Adams/Brown Counties Economic Opportunities, Inc.](#)
406 West Plum St., Georgetown, OH 45121
Phone number: 937-378-6041 x 252 or 264
- Serving: Allen, Auglaize, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam, Van Wert**
[Allen County Health Department](#)
219 E. Market St., Lima, OH 45801
Phone number: 419-228-4457
- Serving: Athens, Meigs, Washington**
[Ohio University](#)
1 Ohio University Grosvenor West 032, Athens, OH 45701
Phone number: 740-590-0037
- Serving: Butler**
[Butler County General Health District](#)
301 S. 3rd St., Hamilton, OH 45011
Phone number: 513-863-1770
- Serving: Champaign, Clark**
[Clark County Combined Health District](#)
2685 East High St. Springfield, OH 45505
Phone number: 937-322-2099
- Serving: Cuyahoga**
[Cuyahoga County Health Department](#)
5550 Venture Dr., Parma, OH 44130
Phone number: 216-201-2001
- Serving: Delaware**
[Delaware County General Health District](#)
3 W. Winter St., Delaware, OH 43015
Phone number: 740-368-1700
- Serving: Erie**
[Erie County Health Department](#)
420 Superior St., Sandusky, OH 44870
Phone number: 419-626-5628
- Serving: Fairfield**
[Fairfield County Health Department](#)
1550 Sheridan Drive St., 100, Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Phone number: 740-652-2800
- Serving: Franklin**
[Columbus Public Health](#)
240 Parsons Ave., Columbus, OH 43215
Phone number: 614-645-1762
- Serving: Gallia, Lawrence**
[Gallia County General Health District](#)
499 Jackson Pike, Suite D, Gallipolis, OH 45631
Phone number: 740-441-2018
- Serving: Hamilton**
[Cincinnati Health Department](#)
3101 Burnet Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45229
Phone number: 513-357-7428

Ohio Department of Children & Youth

https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/v1729786232/childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/For%20Families/Infant%20Safe%20Sleep/DCY_Cribs_for_KID_Counties_Served_Contact_List.pdf

GOAL 2 – EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

PAYMENT INCREASE, RATIO, CATEGORY CHANGES TIMELINE

Description	Date
<p>Counties: New Service Authorizations will be available and conversion of existing categories will occur in Ohio Benefits to new categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hourly: up to 9.9 hours • Part-Time: 10 – 32.9 hours • Full Time: 33 and above 	<p>10/25/2025 (viewable 10/26/2025)</p>
<p>Providers: New Category Authorizations Available - Kinderconnect</p>	<p>10/26/2025</p>
<p>Families: Notification of category authorization changes</p>	<p>10/27/2025</p>
<p>Payment: Increased payment rates (market rate) and new payment categories will impact services rendered on or after:</p>	<p>11/2/2025</p>

NOTE: The service week beginning 11/2/2025 can be submitted for payment as early as the week of 11/9/2025 and are swept on 12/7/2025. The first day a payment can be calculated to be issued using the new rates and authorization categories would be 11/16/2025.

CHILD CARE CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Child Care Choice Voucher Program serves families between 146- 200% FPL.



5,226
Families



7,740
Children

Current Data as of September 2025

1,048
Infants

1,493
Toddlers

2,644
Preschool

2,555
School-age

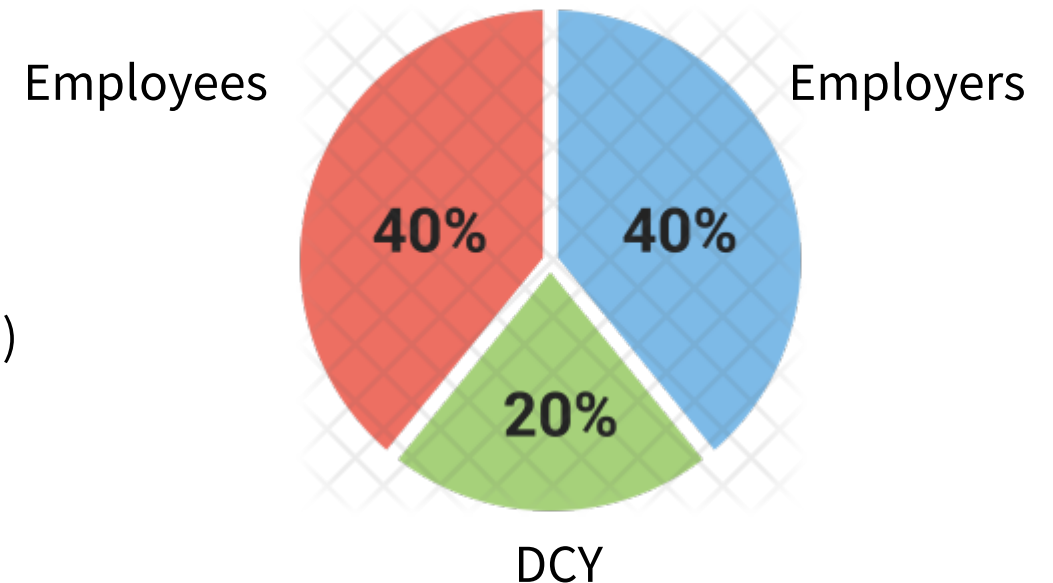
CHILD CARE CRED PROGRAM

Background

- Created by Amended Substitute House Bill 96 (Ohio's 136th General Assembly)
- Administered by the Department of Children and Youth (DCY)
- \$10M allocated for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026
- **Goal: Make child care more affordable by sharing costs between employees, employers and DCY**

Cost-Sharing Model

- Employees pay 40%
- Employers contribute 40%
- DCY covers 20% (as funding allows through June 30, 2026)



CHILD CARE CRED PROGRAM

✓ Eligibility Highlights

- Ohio residents with household income between 200%–400% of the federal poverty level
- Employers must be Ohio-based and select employees for participation
- Child care providers must be licensed or certified under Ohio law and in “open status” with an active DCY Provider Agreement
- Families receiving CCVP, ECE, or PFCC subsidies are not eligible

Timeline & Application

- Funding period: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026
- Applications accepted: Sept 1, 2025 – May 1, 2026
- Joint application required from employee, employer, and child care provider
- Submit to: childcarecred@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov

Questions and Answers

Click [HERE](#)

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT UPDATE

- School districts are in assessment window now (Reminder: Assessment can be given through 20th instructional day of school).
- Schools then have until November 1 to enter data into KReady.
- School districts should have confirmed their destruction of outdated KRA materials using the following form:
[KRA Documentation of Secure Test Destruction](#)
(Available on the Administrator page of Ohio Department of Education and Workforce website)
- For help with the KRA technology, you can go to ohio-k12.help/kready-support/ to submit a help desk ticket or call 844-K12-OHIO (844-512-6446) to set up a help desk ticket.

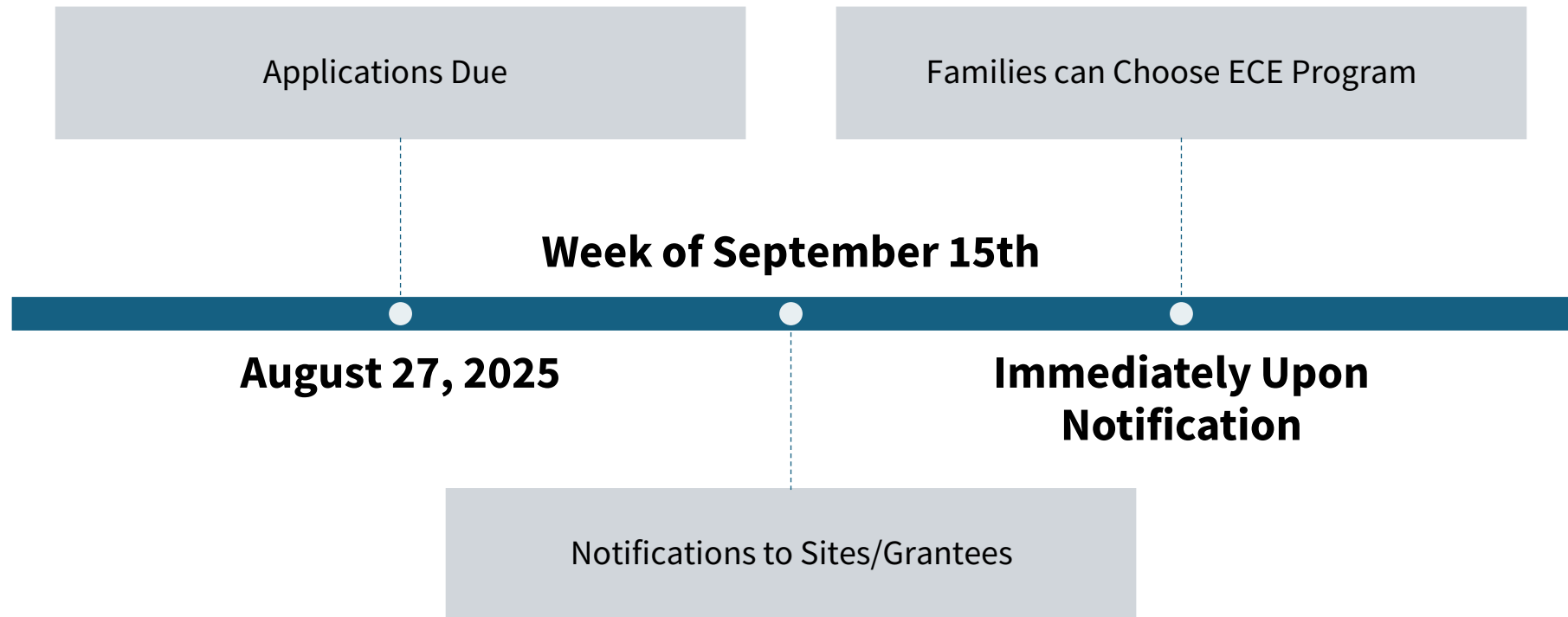
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION- SFY 26 ALLOCATIONS

Program Type	Grantees Part Day	Slot Allocation Part Day	Grantees Full Day	Slot Allocation Full Day
School District/ESC	244	15,152	55	2,511
Charter Non-Public	35	721	13	190
Family Child Care (Type A & B)	36	178	3	5
Child Care	188	6,264	42	965
Board Of DD	4	43	0	0
Totals	507	22,358	113	3,671

Total Number of Slots: 26,029
Total Number of Grantees: 507

ECE ACCESS COUNTY/ELIGIBILITY EXPANSION

- Allows families to choose ECE program instead of PFCC/CCVP eligibility for preschool-age children.
- Sites in 44 counties eligible to apply.



EARLY LEARNING CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT



DCY is investing in the implementation of high-quality curriculum and assessment materials to be used in Early Care and Education settings. An evidence-based curriculum aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards and the Science of Reading will help teacher to develop meaningful activities that promote a child's learning and development.

Key Data & Recent Wins

- 1,546 Programs are in the Creative Curriculum online system
 - 2,604 unique sites
- 7,009 Teachers are in the Creative Curriculum online system:
 - 9,915 Teaching Guides have been added
 - 208,682 Documentation entries have been completed in the Creative Curriculum online system
 - 313 Courses have been completed in Teaching Strategies Professional Development Teacher Membership by Ohio Early Care and Education Professionals
- 44 Curriculum have been reviewed and Approved for Step Up to Quality [SUTQ Approved Curriculum.pdf](#)
- 7 Assessments have been reviewed and Approved for Step Up to Quality [SUTQ Approved Assessment.pdf](#)

Next Steps

- Working with Teaching Strategies and Management Council to finalize the assessment reporting process for use by ECE grant and PSE programs using GOLD Assessment under a non-DCY license.
- Work with Teaching Strategies to build the Ohio Data Insight Report to gather DCY initiative specific data.
- Review an additional:
 - 18 curricula for ELDS and SOR alignment.
 - 9 Assessments for ELDS alignment after all documentation is received.

FAMILY CHILD CARE CURRICULUM

- 619 requests received for Experience Early Learning Family Child Care curriculum and assessment materials.
- To request FCC materials, go to the brightwheel webpage for Ohio and complete the form:
<https://info.mybrightwheel.com/ohio-ec>
- If FCCs have questions, please reach out to the DCY Curriculum and Assessment team at:
ELSR@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov



 brightwheel

 experience
CURRICULUM

GOAL 3 – CHILDREN SERVICES, KINSHIP, FOSTER & ADOPTION

MENU OF SUPPORTS- PHASE 1.0 SUMMARY



Menu of Supports funding opportunity empowers community agencies and treatment foster and approved kinship caregivers to meet emergency needs of youth involved in Ohio's children services system. Through a financial incentive approach, this opportunity will increase the availability of placement options to serve children in need of placement.

Pathway 1: Reopening Treatment Beds

- **56 beds** reopened across 19 residential facilities
- Previously licensed facilities that could not be staffed
- Funding ensured availability for youth placements

Pathway 2: Treatment Foster & Kinship Care Support

- **600** caregivers approved for \$3,000 support
- 429 Treatment Foster Homes
- 171 Kinship Homes
- Direct financial support to maintain youth in home settings

Pathway 3: Placement Stability

- **27 youth** successfully placed from hospital/agency settings
- 11 placed in Treatment FH
- 7 placed in Group Homes
- 9 placed in CRCs
- Addressed critical placement challenges for PCSA cases

NEW CHILD WELLNESS CAMPUSES

SUPPORTED BY:

Children Services
Working Group, PCSAO,
and CCAO

PURPOSE:

Create new placement
and treatment options
to prevent children
from staying overnight
in lobbies, hotels, or
other unlicensed
settings.

GOALS

- Keep children in or near their home communities to maintain family, school, and community connections.
- Reduce trauma and support faster reunification.
- Provide short-term, immediate placements for youth with significant needs when certified placements are unavailable.

FUNDING

- **\$10M per SFY** in one-time state start-up funding.
- **Goal:** Local sustainability after June 30, 2027.

TARGET POPULATION

Children and youth

- At risk of entering PCSA custody.
- Not placed in licensed residential settings.
- Spending nights in unlicensed or inappropriate settings (e.g., hotels, shelters, agency buildings, healthcare facilities).

CONSERVING BENEFITS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

Implementation Timeline

Approximately November 2025: New assessment requirements begin • 180 days: Assessment window after dispositional hearing

Key Requirements

- Assess all children for federal/state benefit eligibility
- Benefits must be conserved for child - not used for care expenses
- Applies to both Title IV-E eligible and non-eligible children

Benefit Types Assessed

- Social Security: SSI, RSDI, survivor benefits
- Veterans Affairs: Disability and pension benefits
- Ohio Pensions: OPERS, STRS, SERS, Police & Fire

State Support & Resources

Comprehensive Toolkit with templates and guidance documents

Training Program including SSA webinars (Next session: September 18)

Technical Support for SACWIS functionality and procedures

RATE CARDS AND MARKET RATE STUDY



With the increased cost of placement care, DCY is working to stabilize and make more transparent, placement costs through a market rate study with a narrow cost analysis, and rate cards.



House Bill 96: Empowering DCY

- Grants DCY authority to establish a Statewide Rate Card for foster care maintenance payments
- Focuses initially on congregate care placements; foster and kinship homes are exempt



Statewide Rate Card Overview

- All congregate care providers must submit a Rate Card detailing services and associated costs
- Implementation planned for SFY 2027



Market Rate Study & Cost Analysis

- DCY contracted ICF Inc. to conduct a market rate study and narrow cost analysis and work begins September 2025
- Study will:
 - Analyze placement cost data from PCSAs and private agencies
 - Examine actual costs incurred by private agencies to deliver placement services



Next Steps

- DCY will meet with the Children Services Placement Crisis Workgroup to review Rate Card and cost analysis plans
- ICF will convene an advisory group to guide the market rate and cost analysis process
- DCY and ICF will hold bi-weekly check-ins to monitor progress, with real-time data updates from the vendor