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**CHILD CARE SUBSIDY**

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**FACILITATED ENROLLMENT PROGRAM**  
**2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Workforce Development Institute's **Child Care Subsidy Facilitated Enrollment Program** (WDI CCSFEP) was implemented in 2003 and is designed to support working families with income-based child care subsidies who would otherwise be ineligible for assistance. The enrollment process is responsive to the needs of working families, providing one on one support and flexibility in enrollment options. The WDI CCSFEP is currently serving working families in Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties with incomes up to 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Since 2003, the WDI CCSFEP has enrolled 7,101 families and has assisted 10,246 children in attending day care, before and after school, and summer camp programs. Many working families' household budgets cannot accommodate the cost of licensed/registered child care without subsidy assistance. The WDI CCSFEP provides a means of improving the quality of care for children and eliminates a predominant employment for families. As a result of enrollment in the WDI CCSFEP, families are provided the opportunity to develop new job skills, increase work hours, earn higher wages and advance in their careers.

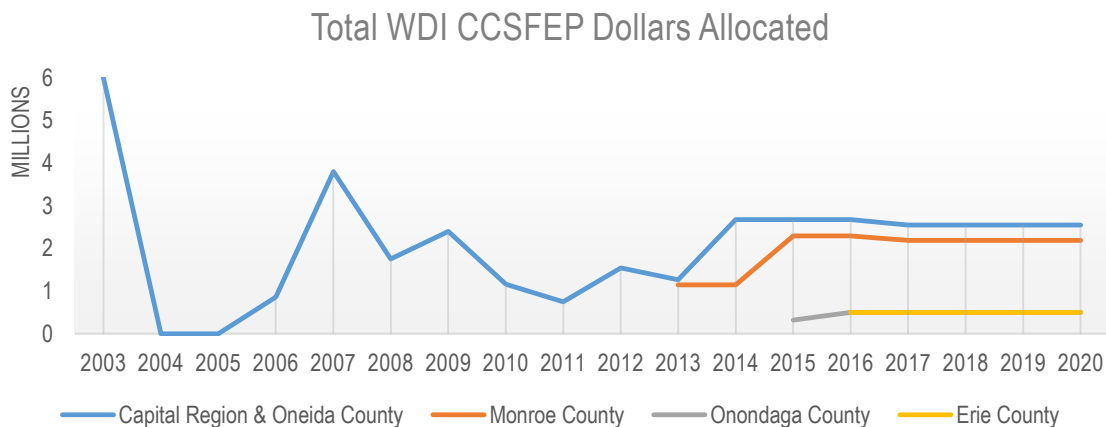
The goal of the WDI CCSFEP is to provide stability for working families through equitable access to quality, affordable child care. ***Without child care, parents can't work.*** As New York State makes the necessary steps to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and schools are limited to hybrid instructional models, child care will serve as the backbone of our economic recovery. Child care is a critical workforce support and the WDI CCSFEP prioritizes improving access to and affordability of child care through eliminating family share inequities and strengthening the child care workforce.

This report is intended to illustrate the impact of the WDI CCSFEP on children, working families and employers. Program initiatives that have improved access to and awareness of child care will also be highlighted throughout the report. Additional programmatic details can be found within the corresponding appendices: A: Program History, B: Program Goals, C: Program Requirements, D: Eligibility Requirements, E: Demographic Information, and F: Program Process and Structure.



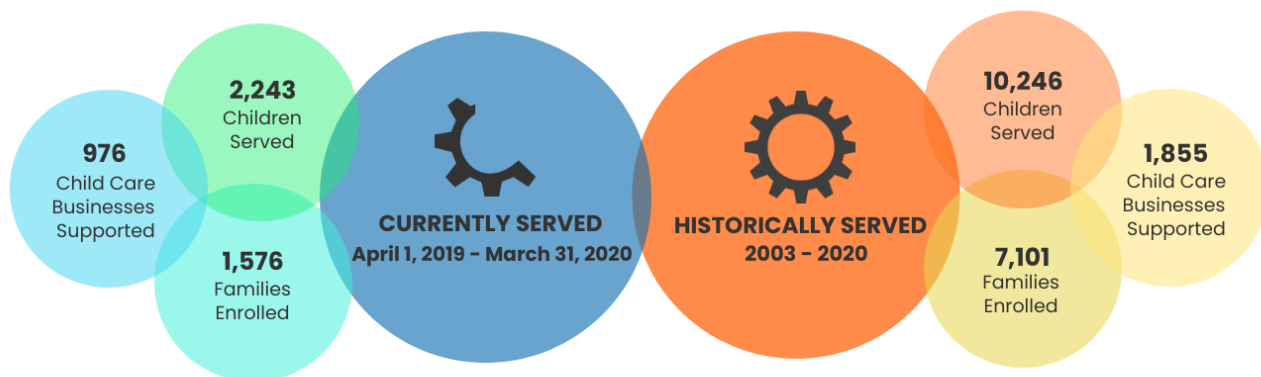
## APPROPRIATIONS

As illustrated in the graph below, WDI's CCSFEP has been funded at a total of \$61,364,444 since 2003. Of this amount, WDI receives 10% to be allocated for administrative purposes (wages, benefits, space, equipment, supplies, etc.). In addition, the county Department of Social Services (DSS) receives a 5% allocation for their administrative services. The remaining portions are allocated directly to the eight participating counties for child care subsidies for working families.



## IMPACT

WDI implemented the CCSFEP in the Capital Region and Oneida County in 2003. Expansion of the program extended to Monroe County in 2013, Onondaga County in 2015, and Erie County in 2016. The image below provides a snapshot of the current and historical impact that the CCSFEP has had on children, families and child care providers in New York State:



## AGES OF CHILDREN SERVED

There are a total of 2,243 children who were served by the WDI CCSFEP across Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties during the reporting period of 4/1/2019 to 3/31/2020. Their ages (at the end of the reporting period) are broken down as follows:

Infant: 370  
 Toddler : 438  
 Pre-School: 555  
 School Age: 880



## CHILD CARE PROVIDERS UTILIZED

One of the primary goals of the WDI CCSFEP is to elevate the quality of child care choices available to working families. WDI does this by providing parents with information on selecting a developmentally appropriate provider. This includes contact information for the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agency and the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) website and its Child Care Provider search capability. The type of child care providers selected by WDI CCSFEP families are demonstrated below:



*Legally Exempt can also include summer camps for school age children.*

WDI continues to be successful in moving children into regulated (licensed or registered) care:

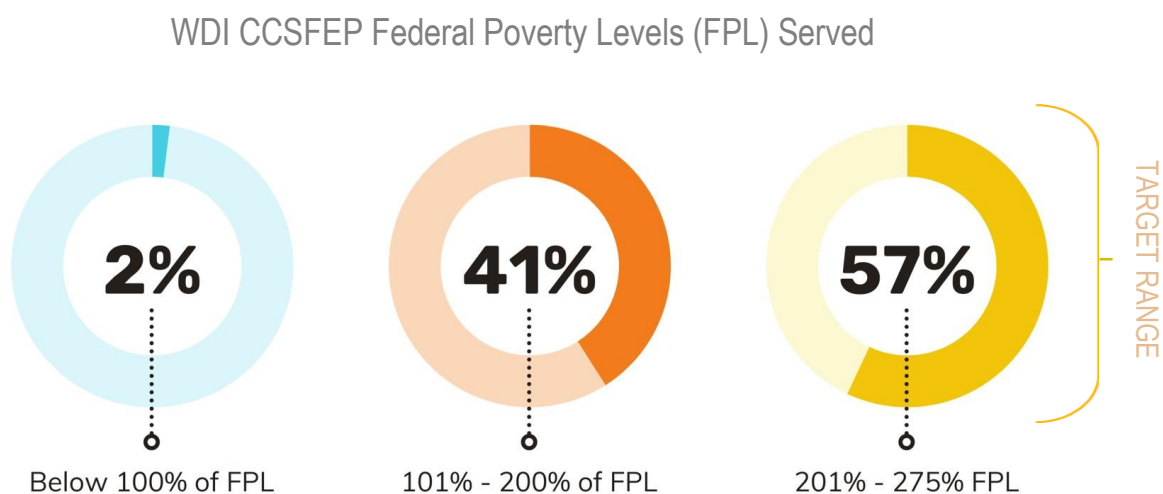
- **80% of placements were in a licensed or registered site**
- **20% of placements were in a legally exempt site**

When searching for child care, WDI CCSFEP parents indicate that cost, hours of operation and location continue to be most important factors considered when selecting a child care provider, followed by flexible scheduling, curriculum, structured environment, staff to child ratio, nutrition, diversity and payment options, respectively.



## FEDERAL POVERTY LEVELS SERVED

WDI CCSFEP funding is targeted to serve working families with incomes between 200% and 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). However, given flat or decreased funding at the federal, state and local levels over the past several years, local districts have been forced to decrease their maximum income eligibility level for low income child care subsidy cases, resulting in the WDI CCSFEP serving fewer median income families within the target range. The diagram below reflects the reduced FPL levels counties are currently serving:



*FPL Levels for Families Served by WDI CCSFEP during the reporting period of 4/1/2019-3/31/2020  
See Appendix D: Eligibility Requirements for Federal Poverty Income Levels*

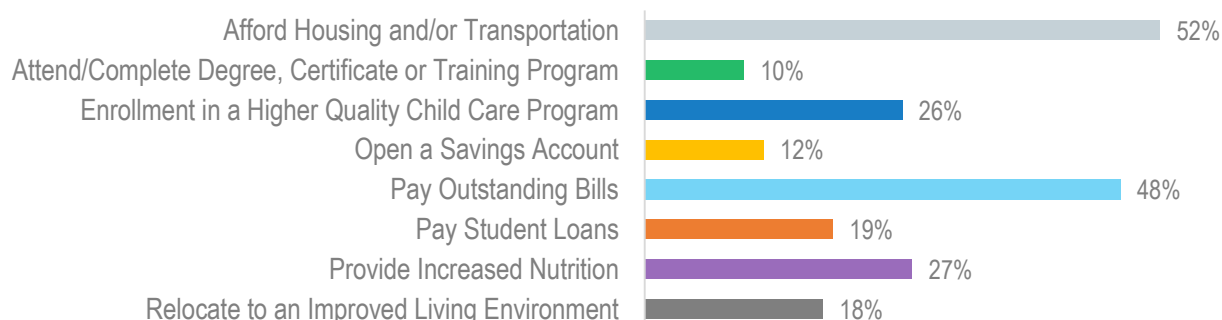
As a result of COVID-19, several counties applied for temporary waivers that increased subsidy eligibility up to 85% of the State Median Income (SMI). This adjustment had a profound impact on working families and allowed the WDI CCSFEP to provide increased support in a time of need. The temporary waivers were implemented in March of 2020 and the resulting impact will be reflected in the 2021 WDI CCSFEP Annual Report.



## FAMILY SURVEYS

Electronic surveys are sent by WDI to families who are actively enrolled in the CCSFEP. The results once again highlight the positive impact of enrollment in the program. WDI CCSFEP families report the following personal benefits as a result of enrollment:

### Personal Benefits as a Result of WDI CCSFEP Enrollment



See *Workforce Support* on page 6 for professional benefits.

If the WDI CCSFEP was unavailable, parents say:

“We would have to eat lower quality food, possibly live in a lower quality neighborhood & it would be more difficult to save any money. Financial difficulties can be a source of great stress & it can cause conflict within the home and family.”

“I wouldn't be able to work & provide for my family. WDI helps me retain my employment while making sure my children are taken care of in properly licensed child care environments.”

“This program has helped me to work without worrying and choose a great child care facility. I would not be able to afford child care if this program did not exist.”

“I would not be able to afford my home, transportation, household bills or groceries. There would also be an emotional impact. I am truly eternally grateful for this program as it has helped enhance our quality of life among many other things!”



## WORKFORCE SUPPORT

Employers regularly identify access to high-quality, affordable child care as a persistent challenge to their workforce. Public investments in child care offer benefits on two levels: support for the current workforce because it enables parents to work, and support for the future workforce because it enables access to developmentally appropriate child care with quality learning opportunities. It is essential to reduce employment barriers that diminish the labor supply pool and constrain economic growth. Investments in child care offer a compelling strategy for addressing New York State's workforce needs and an opportunity to deliver a promising future for our children.

Increasing awareness of the child care crisis beyond traditional stakeholders is a key element to developing solutions that provide stability for working families. WDI has focused on educating employers and collaborating with workforce and economic development entities to design strategies that address regional needs. Through this work with Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) and employer consortiums, WDI has been able to assist with improving access to and affordability of child care in new and strategic ways.

The current child care crisis impacts all professional levels within the workforce. WDI CCSFEP families self-identify their professional levels as 33% upper-level, 59% mid-level and 8% entry-level. This data demonstrates the widespread reach of child care issues on both the workforce and the economy. Professional benefits as a result of enrollment in the WDI CCSFEP are reported below:

### Investing in Child Care Supports Economic Growth



Data Sources: America's Edge, Child Care Aware of America & Center for American Progress



## APPENDIX A: PROGRAM HISTORY

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Organized labor, through the New York State American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (NYS AFL-CIO), has long sought to help working families by promoting better working conditions and compensation. They understood that an investment in child care is an investment in our future and fought hard to advocate for increased child care subsidies and expanded income eligibility levels at which families are served. As a result of this advocacy, WDI received funding in the New York State Budget for Fiscal Year 2003-2004, with the support of the New York State Legislature, for a pilot demonstration project in the Capital Region (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties) and Oneida County to serve working families with incomes less than 275% of the FPL. The pilot was later expanded to include Monroe County in 2013, Onondaga County in 2015 and Erie County in 2016.

The New York Union Child Care Coalition (NYUCCC) of the NYS AFL-CIO and the Capital District Area Labor Federation's Child Care Advisory Committee supported WDI in the development of a plan for the pilot project in the Capital Region and Oneida County which was consistent with state and federal law and subject to the approval of the NYS OCFS. The NYUCCC continues to serve as a vehicle through which the program builds support by cultivating diverse partnerships and strives to increase access to child care subsidies for working families in both Upstate NY through the WDI CCSFEP and in NYC through the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE).

## APPENDIX B: PROGRAM GOALS

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The goals of the WDI CCSFEP, as set forth in the legislation and in the WDI contract with the NYS OCFS, are to:

- Improve working families' access to child care assistance through a process that is user-friendly and efficient. The program was designed to make the process of applying for child care subsidies and enrolling in child care services easier for working parents.
- Extend access to child care subsidies to more moderate income working families with children under the age of 13 and earning up to 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); targeting those who earn between 200% and 275% of FPL.





## APPENDIX C: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The activities required by and outlined in the plan include:

- Facilitated enrollment of families in the child care subsidy program: including application assistance, advocacy when appropriate, and contact with DSS
- Delivery of information critical to accessing quality, developmentally appropriate child care
- Enrollment of families up to 275% of the Federal Poverty Level (when funding is available)
- Community outreach to and education of families on child care subsidy eligibility
- Data collection and retention
- Provision of periodic progress reports

## APPENDIX D: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in the WDI CCSFEP a family is required to:

- Reside in Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga or Schenectady County
- Have a child(ren) under thirteen (13) years of age
- Each parent in the household works a minimum of 25 hours per week
- Have a qualifying gross income under 275% of the annual Federal Poverty Level (based on family size)

### Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Guidelines 6/1/2019 - 5/31/2020

Household Size	100% FPL	125% FPL	150% FPL	175% FPL	200% FPL	250% FPL	275% FPL
2	\$16,910	\$21,138	\$25,365	\$29,593	\$33,820	\$42,275	\$46,503
3	\$21,330	\$26,663	\$31,995	\$37,328	\$42,660	\$53,325	\$58,658
4	\$25,750	\$32,188	\$38,625	\$45,063	\$51,500	\$64,375	\$70,813
5	\$30,170	\$37,713	\$45,255	\$52,798	\$60,340	\$75,425	\$82,968
6	\$34,590	\$43,238	\$51,885	\$60,533	\$69,180	\$86,475	\$95,123

*WDI CCSFEP Reporting Period of 4/1/2019-3/31/2020 primarily resides within the 6/1/2019-5/31/2020 FPL range. Updated U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines for child care subsidies in NYS were implemented 6/1/2020.*



## APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Participating county general demographic information on population, age ranges of children and family population by poverty level is provided below. The information included is derived from the 2018 United States Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) results. This provides a general background when reviewing WDI CCSFEP data.

### County Population and Age of Children

County	Total Population	Under Age 5	Ages 5 to 9	Ages 10 to 14
<b>Albany</b>	307,117	14,893	13,914	17,175
<b>Erie</b>	919,719	50,206	51,537	50,935
<b>Monroe</b>	742,474	40,565	41,752	44,604
<b>Oneida</b>	229,577	12,745	13,780	14,365
<b>Onondaga</b>	461,809	26,513	29,196	24,961
<b>Rensselaer</b>	159,442	8,115	8,189	9,280
<b>Saratoga</b>	230,163	11,871	11,907	13,251
<b>Schenectady</b>	155,350	8,710	8,354	10,455

2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates - AGE AND SEX

<https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2018/>

### County Family Population by Poverty Level

County	Total Number of Families	Families Below 125% of FPL	Families Below 150% of FPL	Families Below 200% of FPL	Families Below 300% of FPL
<b>Albany</b>	72,332	7,168	9,127	14,067	21,957
<b>Erie</b>	230,402	29,808	36,969	53,260	86,030
<b>Monroe</b>	180,738	22,765	29,795	40,974	62,955
<b>Oneida</b>	56,426	9,242	11,121	15,909	25,607
<b>Onondaga</b>	115,176	14,316	17,533	25,016	40,911
<b>Rensselaer</b>	40,079	3,928	4,436	6,914	11,134
<b>Saratoga</b>	60,841	2,669	3,448	7,226	13,270
<b>Schenectady</b>	31,289	2,658	3,877	5,791	10,235

2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates – POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS OF FAMILIES

<https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2018/>



## APPENDIX F: PROGRAM PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

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### STAFFING

WDI has 5 staff with responsibility for the CCSFEP across the eight counties, including:

- (1) Program Manager
- (3) Full-time Program Associates
- (1) Part-time Program Associate

With direct responsibility for case management for active and applicant families, providing support throughout the application, child care provider selection and recertification process.

- (1) Capital Region Counties
- (1) Monroe County
- (1) Onondaga County
- (.5) Oneida County
- (1) Erie County

#### **Program Manager**

Responsible for overall program management and additional hands-on activities.

#### **Program Associate**

Responsible for data entry, eligibility pre-screening, distribution of application packets, office management, and database management. This position also includes some responsibility for outreach and event staffing.

### COORDINATION WITH COUNTIES

WDI partners closely with Albany, Erie, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Departments of Social Services in the provision of service to clients. A working relationship has been established and maintained through the development of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WDI and the county DSS.

Completed applications are submitted to the counties by program staff (usually on a weekly basis) and county caseworkers interact with WDI staff routinely. Reduced or flat county DSS child care funding has continued to have a serious impact, resulting in reduced staffing and a decrease in the number of resident families served.



Federal, state and local funding issues have forced local districts to decrease their maximum income eligibility level for low income child care subsidy cases and increase the portion that families are responsible to pay towards the cost of subsidized child care, resulting in the WDI CCSFEP serving fewer median income families between the targeted range of 200% to 275% FPL. WDI funding continues to provide assistance to many families below 200% of FPL who have found themselves over income for county Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding because of the lowered income eligibility levels. WDI has worked with our partner counties to provide continued services to as many working families as possible.

## SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

WDI has been able to simplify the application process for families. Many families, however, still view the paperwork and documentation requirements as a barrier. WDI CCSFEP staff work closely with families and support them throughout the process.

In an effort to simplify the process and remove perceived barriers, WDI incorporated the following into program procedures:

- An online prescreening process accessible 24/7
- A streamlined application process
- Affording families the choice of scanning/emailing, faxing, mailing or dropping off the application and required documentation
- Accessible individual application assistance during and after regular business hours
- Communicating by phone or email and not requiring an office visit at any time (although a parent could come to the office if they desired)
- Attending employer, community and organized labor networking events in an effort to broadly disseminate project information

## SUBSIDY

The WDI CCSFEP funding is dependent on annual New York State budget appropriations. As a result of the impermanent nature of the funding stream, eligible CCSFEP families receive support with the understanding that it is dependent on funding availability. When funding levels permit, and the family remains qualified, families may re-certify for an additional six months to one year depending on their county of residence. The WDI CCSFEP does not serve any families who are receiving family assistance. These families are currently served by the local DSS funding.

*We need to do better for children and working families. Our future depends on it.*

