

§ 98.1 Purposes.

(a) The purposes of the CCDF are:

- (1) To allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;
- (2) To promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suits their family's needs;
- (3) To encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings;
- (4) To assist States in delivering high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;
- (5) To assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including State regulations);
- (6) To improve child care and development of participating children; and
- (7) To increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings.

(b) The purpose of this part is to provide the basis for administration of the Fund. These regulations provide that State, Territorial, and Tribal Lead Agencies:

- (1) Maximize parental choice of safe, healthy and nurturing child care settings through the use of certificates and through grants and contracts, and by providing parents with information about child care programs;
- (2) Include in their programs a broad range of child care providers, including center-based care, family child care, in home care, care provided by relatives and sectarian child care providers;
- (3) Improve the quality and supply of child care and before- and after-school care services that meet applicable requirements and promote healthy child development and learning and family economic stability;
- (4) Coordinate planning and delivery of services at all levels, including Federal, State, Tribal, and local;
- (5) Design flexible programs that provide for the changing needs of recipient families and engage families in their children's development and learning;

(6) Administer the CCDF responsibly to ensure that statutory requirements are met and that adequate information regarding the use of public funds is provided;

(7) Design programs that provide uninterrupted service to families and providers, to the extent allowed under the statute, to support parental education, training, and employment and continuity of care that minimizes disruptions to children's learning and development;

(8) Provide a progression of training and professional development opportunities for caregivers, teachers, and directors to increase their effectiveness in supporting children's development and learning and strengthen and retain (including through financial incentives and compensation improvements) the child care workforce.

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