
Child Care 2009

The Problem:

- Eligibility requirements to receive child care vouchers are at risk of being changed. Families living at 200% of the Federal Poverty Line or below are now eligible for child care vouchers. Eligibility for a family of three, according to the 2009 Federal Poverty Guidelines, is now an annual income of \$36,620 or less.
- Child care providers are no longer able to get reimbursed for children's absences including sick days or holidays making it difficult for providers to operate effectively and retain qualified staff.

What we want: To ensure working parents that their child/children will be cared for in a safe environment while working, Ohio should increase eligibility for child care assistance. ABLE'S position is to:

- Maintain child care eligibility at 200% of the poverty line.
- Increase reimbursements to child care centers to include holidays and a reasonable number of days to cover absences, sick days and holidays. Child care centers are paid a set fee for the week or month regardless of whether the child is absent or the center is closed because of holidays or snow days.

Background Information:

- Child care vouchers assist low-income families by ensuring children are properly cared for and parents succeed in their transition to work. Families whose incomes fall below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines can receive payment for all or part of their monthly child care expenses.
- In 2004, a total of 31 states, including Ohio cut child care assistance. Ohio accounted for 20 percent of the cuts. (Source: Center for Law and Social Policy)
- In 2005, states had reimbursement rates that were lower than recommended. The rates did not reflect current market prices. In Ohio, child care centers struggling to make ends meet have had to reduce expenses and cut back spending on basic supplies. State cutbacks further aggravated the situation for providers in that their salaries have made it difficult for them to support their own families. (Source: National Women's Law Center)
- Approximately 84,000 of Ohio's children are served by subsidized child care programs each month. (Source: Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services).

Impact:

- By maintaining eligibility at 200% of the FPL, more parents will have access to affordable child care and maintain employment stability.
- By increasing reimbursements for child care centers, child care centers can operate efficiently and have more money to retain qualified staff.

To Get Involved: Your legislators work for you and need to hear your voice. Join together with ABLE and find out how you can have your voice heard. Contact ABLE TODAY! Contact Jason or Carmen at 216- 651-2606 or by e-mail at Jason@able.organizeohio.org or Carmen@able.organizeohio.org.