Frequently Asked Questions about Start-up Grants

1. **Who can apply for these grants?**

   Any program that is actively providing early learning services to children ranging in age from birth to school age and was licensed for the first time within the past 6 months, or
   - Is soon-to-be licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services or Tribal Government and has been visited by the licensor, or
   - Is a new program (less than 6 months in operation) that exempt from licensing or
   - Is an existing program that is expanding to take more children.

   If licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, a program must have no current negative actions. Licensing violations such as a temporary immediate suspension, suspension, revocation, or a maltreatment finding will prevent the issuance of a grant and/or will cause the withdrawal of a grant.

2. **What kinds of things can my program apply for?**

   Programs may apply for funds to support the start-up of child care and school-age care services through the categories listed in this Guide.

   Please see pages 3-7 of this document for a guide to approved items.

   These grants can be used to cover the cost of materials for outdoor play area fencing or other minor construction projects as required by licensing to ensure child safety or meet other program standards. All materials must be new, and must be purchased from a retail store, not a private party. In the event that a child care program wishes to have the cost of assembly and/or installation covered by a grant, the labor must be performed by a licensed and bonded contractor.

   These grants can be used for technology and software to create, enhance, and maintain business management systems. This includes costs associated with accessing the internet, such as installation or equipment, and website costs for start-up, maintenance, or ongoing subscription fees.

3. **What kinds of things should my program <u>NOT</u> apply for?**

   Child Care Aware grant funds may not be used for:

   - major construction or renovations
   - religious-based curricula or counseling
   - consumable supplies (diapers, wipes, soap, paper products) or office supplies (paper, staples, pens)
   - one-time field trips for children
   - child care tuition (scholarships)
   - items prohibited by licensing
   - used items

   CCDF federal restrictions can be reviewed here: https://ccdf-fundamentals.icfcloud.com/restrictions

   In addition, grants are not allowed to be spent on items considered to be part of the cost of doing business. This includes the following items:

   - accounting and legal fees
   - advertising
   - banking service charges
   - cleaning
   - food
   - insurance

   - licenses
   - taxes
   - rent or mortgage
   - transportation
   - utilities

4. How many grants am I eligible to apply for?

You may receive only ONE start-up grant. A program cannot receive both a start-up grant and a child care services grant in the same fiscal year (July 1 – June 30)

5. How much money can my program apply for?

Family Child Care – up to $2000
Child Care Center / School-age Program – up to $3000

6. If my program receives a grant, are there any requirements that I have to meet?

Your program will need to sign a Participation Agreement that details the requirements. Please read the agreement carefully before signing.

7. If my program is awarded a grant, how will my program receive the money?

All grants are paid on a reimbursement basis and after all requirements are complete.

8. When is this grant available?

On-going, subject to available funds.

9. Why might I want to have multicultural resources in my program if all of the children and families are white, or if all the children and families are the same race?

All children in America are growing up in a multiracial society. Research has shown that children begin to create ideas about race very early on – typically, by ages 3 and 4, children have developed a limited concept of race. Helping all children learn about differences and develop individual and group identities based on personal abilities and interests, rather than based on race, helps them develop unbiased and successful relationships with others as adults. Additional information on this topic can be found in "What If All the Kids Are White: Anti-Bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families", written by Louise Olsen Derman-Sparks and Patricia G. Ramsey.

11. How does my program apply for this grant?

Please contact your local CCA Grants Administrator for additional guidance about this grant funding. You must fill out the application form and mail it to the address listed at the end of this document.

GRANT SPENDING CATEGORIES

The following charts give suggestions for items that you may want to purchase with your grant. This is not an all-inclusive list but will help you identify which spending category to use when describing your proposed purchases on the budget pages of the application.

Health and Well-Being	
Children do better when early care and education programs are safe and healthy, provide nutritious meals and snacks, and offer many opportunities for active play. This foundation allows children to take full advantage of learning opportunities.	

Household alarms and detectors		Transportation safety	
• Smoke alarms • Carbon monoxide alarms • Radon detectors • Lead content detectors (for toys and other child items which could be put in the mouth)		• Appropriate child restraint systems for the ages of the children in care • Safety helmets for children riding bicycles or tricycles • Strollers that meet safety specifications	

Household emergencies		Household safety	
• First aid kits • Fire extinguishers • Choke tubes (for gauging choking potential of small objects) • Disaster kits	• Hand-washing kits and posters • Healthy habits posters • Food group activities • Safety kits and posters	• Safety gates • Appliance locks • Electrical outlet covers • Refrigerator thermometer • Hot liquids thermometer • Window blind and curtain cord tension or tie-down devices • Air purifiers, humidifiers, dehumidifiers • Light fixtures containing shielded or shatterproof bulbs	• Fireplace, heater and wood-burning stove screen covers • Closet door latches to prevent a child from being trapped inside a closet • Locks for cabinets or locked storage units for medicines and cleaning agents • Panic hardware for exterior doors

Child safety		Facilities and operations	
• Child toothbrushes and individual toothpaste containers • Cribs, mattresses that meet safety standards • Cots, mats and linens for sleeping • Highchairs that meet safety standards • Changing tables		• Egress windows • Lead-free environment • Facility improvements such as repairing steps, installing railing if flagged by licensing. • Gates	
• Playground safety surfacing • Large outdoor umbrella • Sandbox covers • Infant bucket swings for outdoor playground swing sets • Swings with soft or flexible seats • Fencing	• Shock-absorbent or loose material such as sand under outdoor climbing equipment • Outdoor play equipment that meets safety standards • Replacement of wooden barriers that contain creosote or arsenic • Guardrails on stairs	• Antibacterial wall dispensers • Secured garbage cans and wastebaskets; hands-free covered waste disposal cans • Purchase of safe plastics that do not contain polycarbonates for serving food • Consultation with a Child Care Health Consultant in Family Child Care Homes for health, safety, nutrition, infectious disease control and/or advice on the care of a child with special needs • Bibs and Eating utensils • Special needs items such as positioning equipment, eating utensils, cups and plates, adapted toys	

Teaching and Relationships with Children

Children do better when early care and education teachers and providers are caring and engaging, have quality learning environments, use a research-based curriculum, and support children's transitions to kindergarten. Teachers and providers make a big difference in children's lives. These practices help build relationships and give children what they need to learn and grow.

Aligned Curricula

These tools align with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) and meet Parent Aware curriculum requirements: ParentAware.org/programs/full-rating-resources/

Room equipment and furniture

- Tables
- Chairs
- Coat, cubby units
- Storage units
- Centers (book, listening, writing)
- Computer table
- Cots or mats
- Classroom activity carpets
- Activity mats and gyms
- Classroom displays

Active Play

- Bicycles, Tricycles,
- Wagons
- Scooters, scooter boards
- Balance beams
- Tumbling mats
- Play tunnels or hoops
- Basketball hoops, balls
- Playground equipment (climbers, swing sets, slides)
- Large unit blocks
- Rocking boats
- Parachutes
- Large motor games (such as bean bag, ring toss)

Manipulatives

- Materials that link, construction sets
- Puzzles
- Beads, lacing sets
- Pegs and pegboards
- Pre-writing stencils
- Pounding benches
- Tools and tool benches
- Block play materials
- Small design blocks
- Sensory materials
- Manual dexterity vests

Science and technology

- Exploration kits
- Nature activities and materials
- Magnifying glasses, microscopes
- Weather charts
- Magnets
- Prisms
- Science kits
- Computers, tablets
- Educational software
- Minerals/rocks

Social Concepts

- Costumes
- Play masks
- Dramatic play equipment
- Dolls, doll houses and furniture
- Other play buildings (e.g., barn, firehouse, school, etc.)
- Animal collections
- Puppets
- Plush animals
- Miscellaneous such as purses, cameras, phones
- Multicultural games, activity kits, craft kits and books
- Bilingual language materials
- Youth cookbooks
- Cooking utensils, pots, pans, and food items
- Woodworking materials
- Posters

Cognitive Development and Perception

- Age-appropriate books
- Storytelling kits and materials
- Materials that promote phonological awareness.
- Materials that promote print awareness.
- Materials that promote alphabet awareness.
- Early language concept activities such as object matching, sorting
- Infant and toddler toys
- Geometric forms and boards
- Patterning activities and materials
- Math awareness materials
- Tactile numbers and tracing activities
- Measurement kits
- Clocks and time activities and materials
- Calculators, money
- Discovery boxes

Sensory

- Music, Headphones, rhythm instruments
- Art supplies including stencils and sponges
- Sand and water tables and toys
- Feely boxes
- Sensory balls
- Sight and sound tubes

Assessment and Planning for Each Individual Child

Children do better when their teachers and providers know them well, understand their levels of development, and use the information to plan instruction. Assessment information is accurate and fair when it is gathered in a way that includes observation in natural settings, and a child assessment tool that is valid and reliable.

Purchase of an assessment tool for use in your program. See list of approved assessment tools on the Parent Aware website: ParentAware.org/programs/full-rating-resources/

- Camera or video camera for recording classroom activities (Does not include special lenses, etc.)
- Journaling materials
- Laptop, tablet, or desktop computer for on-line assessment

Professionalism

Children do better when their teachers and providers have professional preparation that includes higher education coursework, combined with on-going training and support. These qualifications have been found to be consistent predictors of program quality, strong child-adult interactions, quality learning environments, and positive child outcomes.

Learning Opportunities	Professional Resources
- Face-to-face training approved on Develop - Credit-based classes - Online learning approved on Develop - Professional organization conferences approved on Develop	- Textbooks, subscriptions to education and professional journals - Child care association fees - Professional texts - Laptop or tablet for taking on-line courses

Relationships with Families

Children do better when families are engaged in their children's education and development. Building two-way relationships with families helps strengthen a sense of belonging among all children in the program as they experience respect and support for their home cultures and languages.

- Face-to-face training approved on Develop about communicating with families - Technology related to communicating with families (text programs, etc.)	- Bulletin boards - Newsletters - Family events - Parent conferences

Multicultural items and resources

Multicultural items and resources promote healthy social and educational outcomes in children and youth, and help them understand the world they live in.

Websites	Available Items	Useful Search Terms
• Amazon amazon.com • Becker's School Supplies shopbecker.com • Discount School Supply discountschoolsupply.com • Environments environments.com • Hatch: The Early Learning Experts hatchearlylearning.com • Kaplan Early Learning kaplanco.com • Lakeshore Learning lakeshorelearning.com	Multicultural books, music, classroom décor, toys, instruments and activities	Anti-bias, multicultural, diversity, inclusion, world, global
• Culture for Kids cultureforkids.com	Multicultural books, music, classroom décor, puppets, software and activities	Everything is multicultural: Click on their catalog to browse for items
• Grassroots Indigenous Multimedia gim-ojibwe.org/software	Ojibwe language books, activities and resources	No search terms needed, simply click on "products"
• Birchbark Books birckbarkbooks.com/children's'-books	Native American children's books and music	
• National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) store.naeyc.org	Books for providers	Anti-bias, multicultural, diversity, world
• Redleaf Press redleafpress.org	Multicultural books for children and providers	Multicultural, diversity, inclusion, world, global
• The Brown Bookshelf: United in Story thebrownbookshelf.com/our-books	African American children's books reviews and recommendations	

Trainings on Develop

Approved multi-cultural trainings on Develop can be found by using the keyword search (multicultural, diversity, anti-bias, etc.), or looking for appropriate titles under Knowledge and Competency Framework 3.

Requirements (Program Materials as Required by Licensing)

These items may be required by licensing. You should consider purchasing these items if you don't already have them in your program or if they are in poor repair.

Room equipment and furniture

- Tables
- Chairs
- Coat, cubby units
- Storage units
- Centers: book, listening, writing
- Computer table
- Cots or mats
- Classroom activity carpets
- Activity mats and gyms
- Classroom displays

Active Play

- Bicycles, Tricycles,
- Wagons
- Scooters, scooter boards
- Balance beams
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- Play tunnels or hoops
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- Small design blocks
- Sensory materials
- Manual dexterity vests

Science and technology

- Exploration kits
- Nature activities and materials
- Magnifying glasses, microscopes
- Weather charts
- Minerals/rocks
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- Prisms
- Science kits
- Computers
- Educational computer software

Social Concepts

- Costumes
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- Measurement kits
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- Calculators, money
- Discovery boxes
- Infant and toddler toys

Sensory

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- Sand and water tables and toys
- Feely boxes
- Sensory balls
- Sight and sound tubes

APPLYING FOR A START-UP GRANT

Training Requirement: Participate in 12 hours of training, approved by Achieve, which can be found on Develop, www.developtool.org. All required training must be completed before receiving reimbursement for your award. The cost of participating in this required training is your responsibility. However, you may choose to include the cost of the required training as part of the grant application by applying for dollars within the Professional Development grant type.

Tribal programs and providers who are eligible for this grant within both the Child Care Aware regions and MNTRECC tribal district are required to complete a maximum of 20 hours of training if they receive grants in both categories. The Child Care Services Grant training requirement of 12 hours will be determined first. The training requirement for the MNTRECC district grant will consist of the remaining 8 hours, for a total of 20 hours of training. If you are licensed by a tribal government or serve American Indian children, please see www.mntrecc.net for more information about resources, technical assistance and outreach to Tribal Early Childhood Programs provided by MNTRECC.

Two-Year Requirement: If you are awarded a grant, your program will be required to provide active licensed or license exempt child care services in Minnesota for a minimum of two years from the date of your award letter. If for any reason your program ceases to provide active child care services within the required timeframe, you will be required to repay grant dollars on a prorated basis.

Reimbursement timeline.: All documents required for requesting reimbursement must be submitted by April 15, 2020 for Grant Administrator review.

Budget: Be specific on your budget pages. Only items that were approved on your application will be reimbursed. If any substitution needs to occur, this must be approved by the Grant Administrator, (in writing?) prior to making the purchase. A budget change can only occur once in a grant cycle.

Grant payment information: All Child Care Services, paid on a reimbursement basis after all requirements are complete.

Grant Application Review Process. Once you submit application, it will be reviewed by a review committee. An award letter will be sent via email.

Here is a checklist of steps to complete prior to completing your online application. The last page of this guide contains a worksheet to help you organize your request.

- ✓ Create a Develop Membership ID. Directions can be found at www.developtoolmn.org
- ✓ Link your Develop Membership ID with your program's Organization ID. Directions can be found at www.developtoolmn.org
- ✓ Create a "wish list" of items, resources and/or training and explain how these items meet your needs. (A wish list template can be found on the last page of this document)
- ✓ Review the Categories listed on pages 3 – 7.
- ✓ Consider what items you can include to meet the 10% requirement for Culturally Responsive resources.
- ✓ Include a price list for the selected items.
- ✓ Please contact your Grant Administrator, **Charlene Nhotsavang at 651-366-6797** with questions or concerns. You may also send an email to grantsrequest@thinksmall.org.

Application Checklist

Fill out your application form completely in ink. Your application should be neat and easy to read, stapled together in order. Do not submit grant applications in folders or binders, professionally bound or store-bought.

1. Send in one complete packet including the full application with all attachments stapled to it PLUS

2. Keep 1 (one) copy of the completed application form and all required attachments for your records. You will need to refer back to your application form if you are awarded a grant.

3. Mail or e-mail the original completed application form with all required attachments stapled to it.

Mail or e-mail applications and all attachments to:

Email: grantsrequest@thinksmall.org
Drop off or Mail: 10 Yorkton Ct, Little Canada, MN 55117
                         White mailbox in front of the entrance

Your application packet to your Child Care Aware must include:

☐ **Application form**, with all questions completed. (ink or online)

☐ **Copy of your current child care license, if applicable and documentation from your licensor that the items in your grant application are needed to meet licensing requirements.**

☐ **Estimate or bid -** This is required for the professional installation of windows, or construction (as required by licensing), or major equipment assembly projects **where you are requesting that the cost of labor be covered by the grant**. This must be a bid from a licensed and bonded contractor.

☐ **Pictures (ONLY 1 page):** A picture from a catalog or the internet is recommended **only** if the items may be questioned by the reviewers.

WISH LIST

Expenditure	Price	Category	Goal

Total Amount of Requested Items:	