



Child Care Services Grant Application Guide

Child Care Services Grants are intended to support, sustain, and increase quality of child care programs. Grants require the completion of an online application and approval of eligible expenditures.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who can apply for Child Care Services grants?

Any program that is actively providing early learning services to children ranging in age from birth to school-age and is currently licensed with the Minnesota Department of Human Services or Tribal Government OR legally license-exempt, which include certified centers. 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 determination where the facility was found responsible will prevent the issuance of a grant and/or will cause the withdrawal of a grant.

2. How and when do I apply for a Child Care Services grant?

Applications for Child Care Services Grants are available on Develop (www.developtoolmn.org) in your Organization Profile beginning September 1 and must be completed by September 25. You must have a registered Organization Profile to access and complete the application in Develop. For programs with no internet access, please contact your local Grant Administrator for a paper application

3. What kinds of things can my program apply for?

Programs are encouraged to use grant funds for quality improvement strategies and activities to increase the capacity of programs to prepare young children for school and life. All materials must be new and must be purchased from a retail store, not a private party.

Programs may apply for funds to support child care and school-age care services through the categories listed in this guide. Each year, the Department of Human Services and Child Care Aware determine grant priorities. This year, the priorities are as follows (listed under the appropriate Parent Aware Category):

Health and Well-being

- Equipment and activities that promote health and fitness in your program

Relationships with Families

- Materials that support the mental health of young children and their families.

Teaching and Relationships with Children

- Materials, activities, strategies, assessment, and curriculum development to promote social/emotional, physical, and intellectual development in all children

Assessment and Planning for Each Individual Child

- Materials that support school readiness, infant through school-age, in areas such as literacy, social and emotional growth, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), including assessment support pieces

Professionalism

- Technology items for professional use including laptops, tablets, desktop computers, printers

Please see pages 5-8 of this document for a guide to approved items.

Learning Support: Materials, activities, strategies, assessment, and curriculum development to promote social/emotional, physical, and intellectual development in all children

Technology: Programs may use grants for technology and software to create, enhance, and maintain business management systems. This includes one-time costs associated with accessing the internet, such as installation or equipment, and website costs for start-up, maintenance, or ongoing subscription fees.

Education, Training, and Relationship-Based Professional Development: Grants may be used for fee-for-service mentoring, coaching, and/or consultation expenses conducted by a Develop-approved RBPD Specialist during the grant timeframe. Funds can also be used for low-cost services that support business development, including business coaching, consultation, leadership cohorts, and technical assistance through First Children's Finance.

Wages for substitutes: Grants may be used to pay wages trainings and/or to cover the costs of substitute teachers or providers so that staff can attend required professional development.

Minor Construction Projects: Grants may be used towards the cost of materials for outdoor play area fencing or other minor construction or renovations to dedicated physical child care space as required by licensing to ensure child safety or meet other program standards.

Examples of allowable minor remodeling:

- Adding or replacing an egress window to the designated child care space to allow children to escape the area in an emergency.
- Replacing flooring in the designated child care space.
- Adding child friendly bathroom facilities to an existing space within the designated child care space.

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 contractor following applicable state and local laws and regulations regarding registration and licensure. See <https://www.dli.mn.gov/business/residential-contractors-remodelers-roofers> for more information.

4. What kinds of things should my program NOT apply for?

Due to a federal rule, Child Care Services (Regional) grants may not be used for the following:

Major Construction or Renovations: Major renovation means structural changes to the foundation, roof, floor, exterior or load-bearing walls of a facility, or the extension of a facility to increase its floor area; or extensive alteration of a facility such as to significantly change its function and purpose, even if such renovation does not

include any structural change. Funds may be expended for minor remodeling of the designated child care space and for upgrading the designated child care space to assure that providers meet state and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements.

Religious-based Curricula, Activities, Materials, or Counseling: Child care programs are allowed to purchase and/or use religious-based curricula or items in their program if they choose, but they must use their own funds; they cannot use Child Care Services Grants.

Expendable Supplies: Expendable supplies (diapers, wipes, soap, paper products), except as it pertains to Personal Protective Equipment (cleaning products, hand sanitizer, masks) used for recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health to keep children and staff safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Food, lodging, or mileage associated with training or conferences.

Office supplies that are not directly used for early childhood quality improvement activities: Ink and paper used to print invoices for families would not be an allowed use of grants. Ink and paper used to print curriculum, worksheets, or a newsletter for families in the program would be allowed.

One-time field trips for children

Child care tuition (scholarships)

Items prohibited by licensing

CCDF federal restrictions can be reviewed at <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
- Food
- Insurance
- Licenses

5. How much money is my program eligible to receive?

Family providers may purchase items that total up to \$2,000. Center programs may purchase items that total up to \$3,000.

6. If my program receives a grant, what requirements do I have to meet?

Your program will need to sign a Participation Agreement that details the requirements. Please read the agreement carefully before signing. Also see the information on page 10 of this document about how the grant process works.

7. Why is it important to have or culturally responsive resources in my program if all my children and families are of one race?

To receive a Child Care Services Grant, it is a requirement that 10% of your purchases be culturally responsive resources. Research has shown that children begin to create ideas about race very early on – typically by ages three and four. For this reason, it is important to teach all children about differences and help them develop individual and group identities based on personal abilities and interests, rather than race and entitlement. This is crucial in order for children to be able to develop unbiased and successful relationships with others as adults. Additional information in *What If All the Kids Are White: Anti-Bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families*, by Louise Olsen Derman-Sparks and Patricia G. Ramsey.

How to determine if the item(s) is multicultural

1. Items should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Materials, toys, trainings that teach a child about their ethnic culture or another culture
- Materials, toys, trainings that spark conversation between children and providers about cultural identity
- Materials, toys, trainings that reflect ethnic cultures within your community
- Materials, toys, trainings that focus on and reflect the non-dominant culture – that help the children learn about and celebrate differing cultures

2. Questions to ask yourselves when determining if the materials, toys, and trainings is considered multicultural:

- What does this item teach the children in my care about less dominant cultures in our country?
- Does this item explore a culture/cultures or a language/languages other than my/their own?
- Does this item help celebrate cultural diversity?
- How does this item encourage and recognize the cultural differences among the children in my care?

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 it 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoke alarms Carbon monoxide alarms Radon detectors Lead content detectors (for toys and other child items which could be put in the mouth) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First aid kits Fire extinguishers Choke tubes (for gauging choking potential of small objects) Disaster kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand-washing kits and posters Healthy habits posters Food group activities Safety kits and posters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egress windows Lead-free environment Facility improvements such as repairing steps, installing railing if flagged by licensing. Gates 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground safety surfacing Large outdoor umbrella Sandbox covers Infant bucket swings for outdoor playground swing sets Swings with soft or flexible seats Fencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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/](https://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/](https://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

- Face-to-face training approved on Develop
- Credit-based classes
- Online learning approved on Develop
- Professional organization conferences approved on Develop
- CDA
- Early childhood conferences
- Fee-for-service mentoring, coaching, and/or consultation
- Costs of supporting a T.E.A.C.H. recipient

Professional Resources

- Textbooks, subscriptions to education and professional journals
- Child care association fees
- Professional texts
- Laptop or tablet for taking online 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.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face training approved on Develop about communicating with families • Technology related to communicating with families (text programs, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulletin boards • Newsletters • Family events • Parent conferences |
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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. For the purpose of these grants, the terms “multicultural” and “culturally responsive” are used to refer to child care that responds to and reflects the needs of ethnic and linguistically diverse communities.

Websites	Available Items	Useful Search Terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amazon (amazon.com) • Becker's School Supplies (shopbecker.com) • Discount School Supply (discountsschoolsupply.com) • Environments (environments.com) • Hatch: The Early Learning Experts (hatchearlylearning.com) • Kaplan Early Learning (kaplanco.com) • Lakeshore Learning (lakeshorelearning.com) • The Little Black Book Nook (bookshop.org/shop/littleblackbooknook) 	Multicultural books, music, classroom décor, toys, instruments and activities	Anti-bias, multicultural, diversity, inclusion, world, global
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots Indigenous Multimedia (gim-ojibwe.org/software) 	Ojibwe language books, activities and resources	No search terms needed, simply click on "products"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchbark Books (birckbarkbooks.com/children's-books) 	Native American children's books and music	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (store.naeyc.org) 	Books for providers	Anti-bias, multicultural, diversity, world
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redleaf Press (redleafpress.org) 	Multicultural books for children and providers	Multicultural, diversity, inclusion, world, global
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

APPLYING FOR A CHILD CARE SERVICES GRANT

Training Requirement: Participate in 12 hours of training, approved by Achieve, which can be found on Develop (www.developtoolmn.org). Training must be completed between **January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022**. All required training must be completed before receiving reimbursement. 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 category.

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.

Culturally Responsive Requirement: To receive a Child Care Services Grant, it is a requirement that 10% of your purchases be culturally responsive resources. In your application, you will be asked to identify which of your proposed purchases meet this requirement.

Participation Agreement: Your program will need to sign a Participation Agreement that details all requirements. The agreement lays out the responsibilities of programs receiving grants. Please read the agreement carefully before signing.

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, 2022 for Grant Administrator review. Grant Administrators have the right to:

1. Ask for clarification (or pictures) of any grant item before approving AND
2. Refuse reimbursement for any purchase that doesn't match the original request or intended purpose

Expenditures: Be specific on your expenditure pages. Only items that were approved on your application will be reimbursed. If any substitution needs to occur, this **must** be approved by your local Grant Administrator, prior to making the purchase. A budget change can only occur once in a grant cycle prior to March 31, 2022.

Grant Payment Information: All Child Care Services Grants are paid on a reimbursement basis after all requirements are completed.

Grant Application Process: Applications for Child Care Services Grants are available on Develop (www.developtoolmn.org) beginning September 1 and must be completed by September 25 in your Organization Profile. You must have a registered Organization Profile to access and complete the application in Develop. For programs with no internet access, please contact your local Grant Administrator for a paper application.

Grant Application Review Process. Once you submit application, it will be reviewed by a review committee. Each application is reviewed by three review committee members and a scorecard is used to rate the applications. Funding is awarded to the highest scoring applications. A denial or award letter will be sent to you on November 1, 2021 via email or U.S mail.

SUBMITTING A PAPER APPLICATION

Fill out your application form completely in ink. Your application should be neat and easy to read and 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 application with all required attachments stapled to it.
2. Keep one copy of the completed application form and all required attachments for your records. You will need to refer back to your application if you are awarded a grant.
3. Mail or email the original completed application packet to:

Think Small
Attn: Charlene Nhotsavang
10 Yorkton Ct
Little Canada, MN, 5117

Checklist

Your application packet must include:

- The application form, including the participation agreement, with all questions completed.
- A copy of your current child care license
- Copies of Knowledge and Competency Framework Learning Records for all lead teachers or the lead child care provider for the last 12 months
- Copy of your Parent Aware Rating certificate (*if applicable*)
- Estimate or bid (*if applicable*). This is required for the installation of fences, windows, or construction, as required by licensing, or equipment assembly projects. This bid must be from a licensed and bonded contractor.
- Pictures (*if applicable*). A picture from a catalog or online is recommended if the item(s) may be questioned by the reviewers.

WISH LIST

This list is intended to help you plan your grant request before entering it into Develop. This is not to be submitted.

Priorities

Health and Well-being

- Equipment and activities that promote health and fitness in your program

Relationships with Families

- Materials that support the mental health of young children and their families

Teaching and Relationships with Children

- Materials, activities, strategies, assessment, and curriculum development to promote social/emotional, physical, and intellectual development in all children

Assessment and Planning for Each Individual Child

- Materials that support school readiness, infant through school-age, in areas such as literacy, social and emotional growth, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), including assessment support pieces

Professionalism

- Technology items for professional use including laptops, tablets, desktop computers, printers

Culturally Responsive resources

- 10% of your total grant amount must be attributed to culturally responsive resources.

Items	item(s) Cost	Category/Priority	Goal	Strategy
		Health and Well-being		
		Relationships with Families		
		Teaching and Relationships		
		Assessment and Planning		
		Professionalism		
		Culturally responsive care		
TOTALS				