

What are Child Care Subsidies?

The Child Care Connection Hawaii (CCCH) and the Preschool Open Doors (POD) subsidy programs use a sliding fee scale for families meeting the income eligibility requirements. The subsidy amount varies based on the family's gross monthly income, family size, type and cost of care, and, for CCCH only, the hours of the caretaker's work activity. The subsidy may not cover the full cost of care, thus families may be required to pay for some of the child care costs.

For families with children under the age of 13 years, the CCCH program provides subsidies to help pay for a variety of legal child care settings including: care provided in the child's home, care by relatives or friends in their home, before and after school programs, and preschools. All child care providers, even if they are not licensed by DHS, need to have child abuse/neglect, adult perpetrator, and criminal history background checks completed in order to receive a DHS child care subsidy payment. This is to help ensure that the child is in a safe setting. Parents will receive detailed information about these requirements during the application process.

CCCH program also provides families with: guidance in selecting a child care provider; information about quality child care programs; and referrals to community resources for help with other concerns.

The Preschool Open Doors (POD) program provides child care subsidies for eligible families for the year prior to kindergarten entry, with priority for underserved or at-risk children. The POD subsidy is used to assist with payments to DHS-licensed group child care homes and centers (i.e. preschools). The program has a time-limited application period established and published each year.

The child care subsidy may be paid directly to families via an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card or via direct deposit to the family's bank account, or a direct payment may be made directly to a licensed child care provider. Families will receive more information about these options during the intake interview.

Each family has different child care needs and preferences. The parent/guardian chooses the child care provider most appropriate for their child. Guidance and materials are provided during the office visit to help make this important choice.