

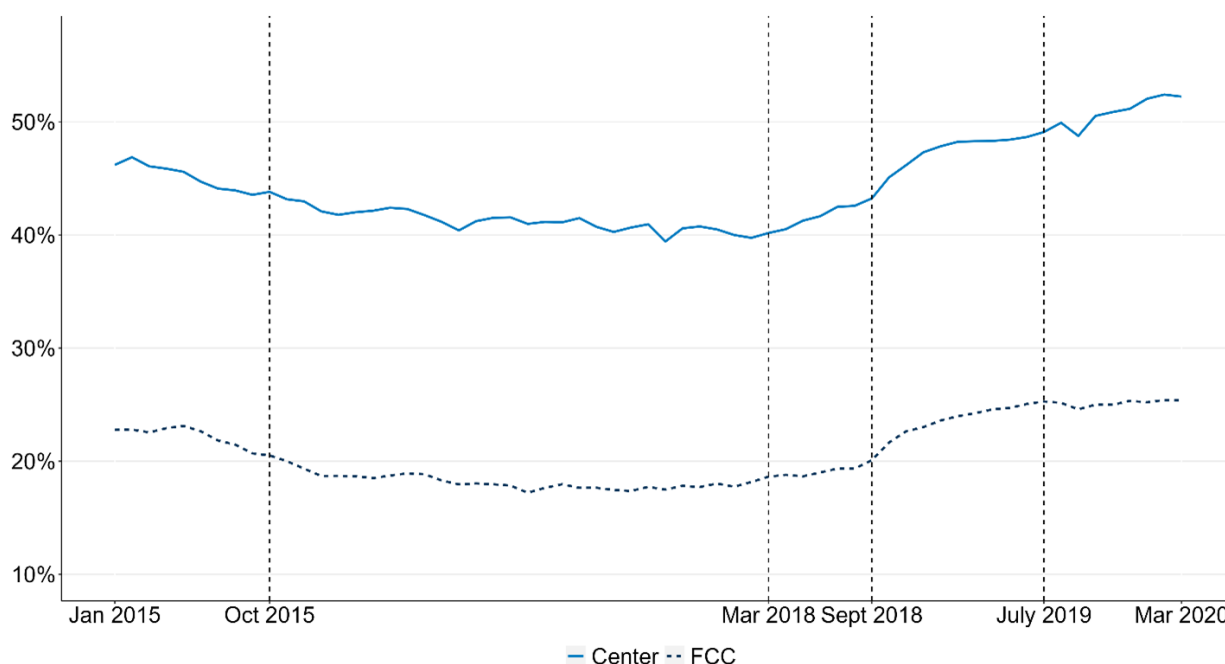
Policy Changes Associated With Increased Access to Child Care Scholarships in Maryland

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Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) implemented several policy changes to the Child Care Scholarship¹ program aimed at improving access to high-quality child care (see Box 1).

Administrative data analyses explored how the child care supply changed during the time period when these state policy changes were being implemented. **We found a significant increase over time in the percentage of providers serving children with a scholarship, corresponding to the period when Maryland eliminated waitlists, increased family income eligibility for scholarships, and raised provider reimbursement rates (Exhibit 1).** Increases in the percentage of providers serving children with scholarships may correspond to the *combination of policy changes* during this time period and cannot be causally attributed to any policy change. For additional information on methods and findings, please see [Appendix 1: 2019 Maryland Child Care Research Partnership \(MDCCPRP\) Detailed Data Collection & Analysis Methods Summary](#) and the [Decline in Family Child Care in Maryland](#) report.

Exhibit 1. Percentage of providers serving children with scholarships



Source: Child Trends analysis of MSDE administrative data.

¹ Maryland refers to child care subsidies funded through the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) as child care scholarships.

Box 1. Estimated impact dates of Maryland’s child care scholarship policies

October 2015: (1) The scholarship application and reimbursement vendor moved from local departments of social services to a statewide centralized system (Aug. 2015), and (2) providers were required to participate in Maryland EXCELS, the state’s quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), to receive a scholarship reimbursement (Oct. 2015).

March 2018: (3) Provider reimbursement rates were increased from the 10th to the 12th percentile of the 2017 market rate survey (Dec. 2017), and (4) subsidy eligibility was opened to families who had previously been waitlisted (Feb. 2018).

September 2018: (5) Provider reimbursement rates were increased from the 12th to the 20th percentile of the 2017 market rate survey (May 2018), and (6) income eligibility for families was raised from 32 percent to 65 percent of the state median income (Aug. 2018).

July 2019: (7) Reimbursement rates were increased to the 30th percentile of the 2019 market rate survey (July 2019).

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