

# Child Care Stabilization Snapshot for ARKANSAS

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant hardships for working families and for child care providers caring for young children. In response, historic federal investments were made to help prevent an already fragile early care and education (ECE) system from collapsing. Since March 2020, Congress has allocated over \$52 billion to states to help stabilize child care and support families with young children. Specific funding mechanisms have included:

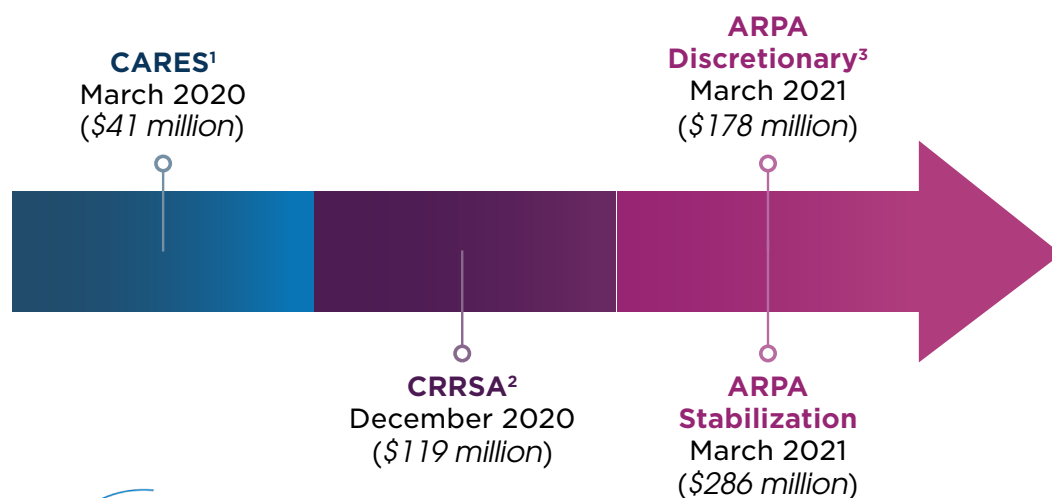
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act
- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Funding was intended to support a range of activities—including expanded access to child care assistance for working families and support for child care providers to avoid closure—to prevent the loss of essential child care infrastructure needed to support families returning to work and children’s learning. As states and territories approach the end of these funds, it is important to track whether families and child care systems are returning to pre-pandemic levels of child care access and supply and what additional investments state leaders may need to avoid future collapse.

This data profile for Arkansas provides a snapshot of the amount of COVID-19 funding received, how it was used, and trends in parental workforce participation, income levels, work disruptions due to child care needs, child care subsidy receipt, child care supply, and wages for child care workers.

Total federal funding for Arkansas: **\$625 million**

## Timeline



Child Trends conducted a national scan of how states used COVID-19 relief funds to support families and child care programs during the pandemic. The scan included policy changes to expand financial support to child care programs, serve more families, provide mental health supports, and improve the referral systems needed to connect families with services. This section highlights these uses, the number of direct grants to child care programs, and the allocation of state funding to supplement federal funding or continue child care stabilization policies.

## How Arkansas uses COVID Funds<sup>4</sup>

- Reduce/Waive family co-payments/fees
- Expand eligibility criteria
- Improve information systems and/or enhanced referrals to help families identify care
- Provide mental health consultation services
- Increase reimbursement rates
- Payment based on enrollment not attendance
- Payments continued during closures
- Financial support to workforce members

## Stabilization Grants Received by Child Care Providers by Type of Care<sup>5</sup>

Number of providers that received a grant	
Total programs	2,695
Center-based programs	2,400
Home-based programs	290
Other	5
Average grant amount received	
Center-based programs	\$103,700
Home-based programs	\$31,200

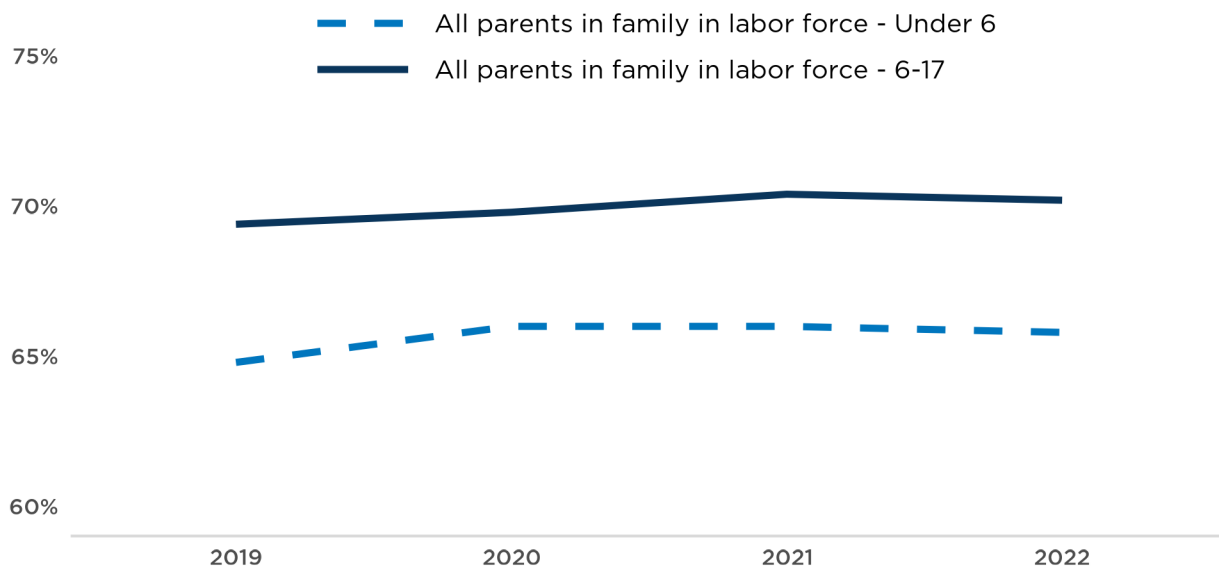
### Increase Funding to Supplement or Continue Child Care Stabilization Policies<sup>6</sup>

- Yes  No

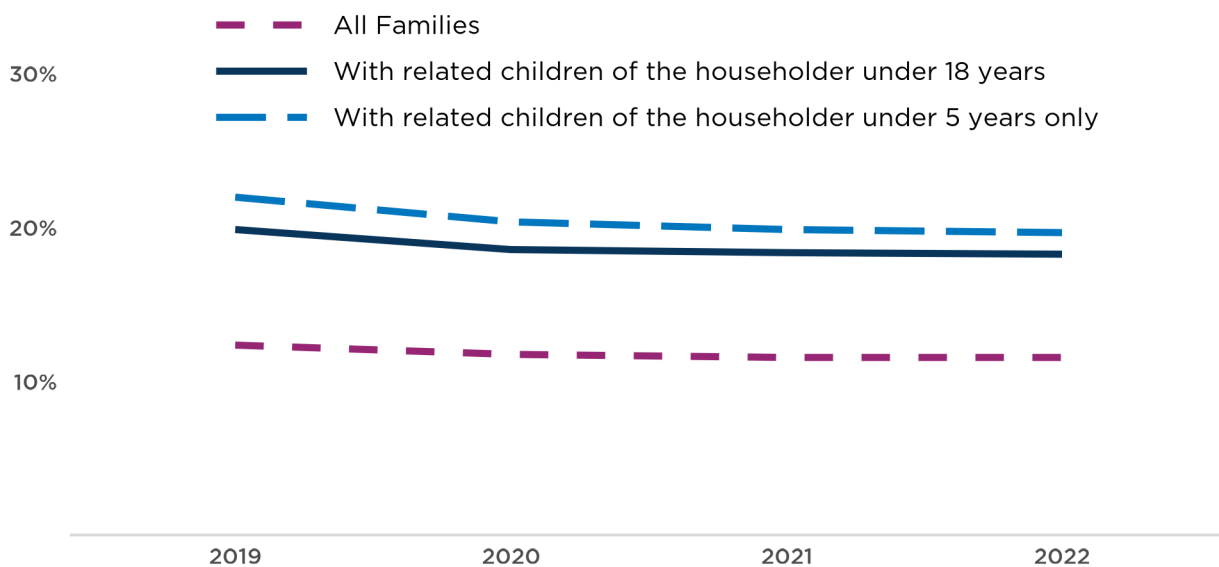
# Children and Families<sup>7</sup>

A key goal of pandemic-era COVID-19 funds was to stabilize the child care industry. Stabilization is defined as the process of reaching a level of child care access and supply that does not fall below pre-pandemic levels. The following charts and tables show changes in families' workforce participation, income levels, work disruptions due to child care, receipt of child care subsidies, child care supply, and workforce wages from 2019 to 2022.

## Percentage of children with working parents



## Percentage of families living in poverty



# Percentage of Parents Experiencing Child Care Disruptions During COVID-19<sup>8</sup>

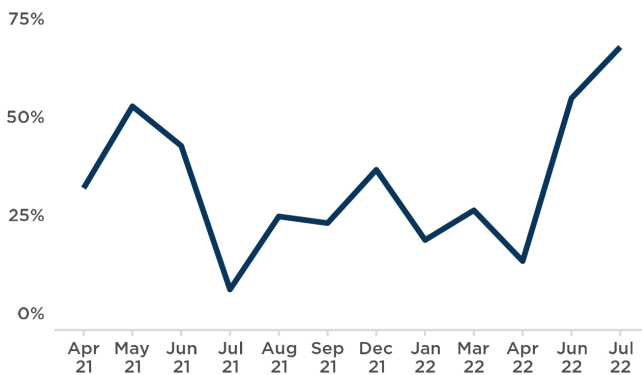
Not all months and years had data available. Only changes between available dates are shown.

## Percentage of parents that experienced child care disruptions

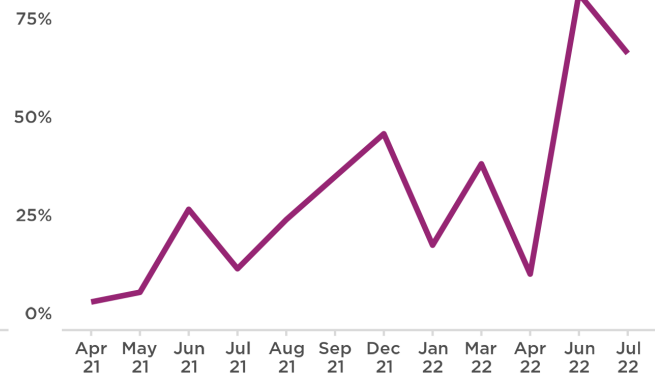


## How parents responded to child care disruptions

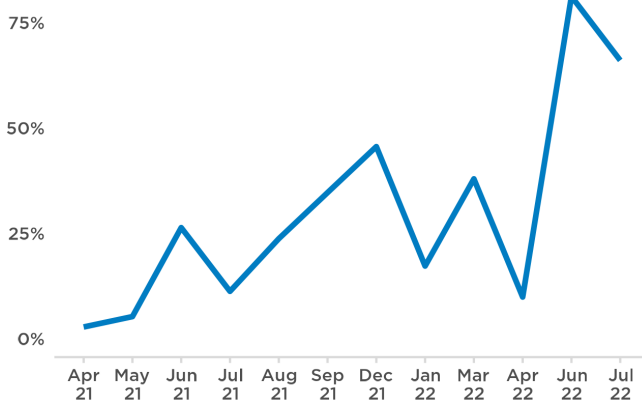
Took unpaid leave



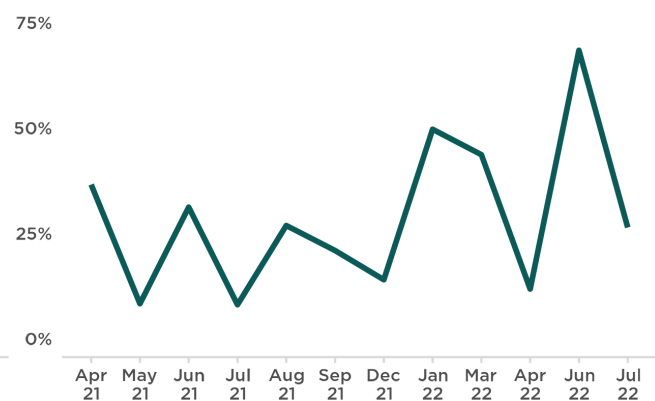
Cut works hours

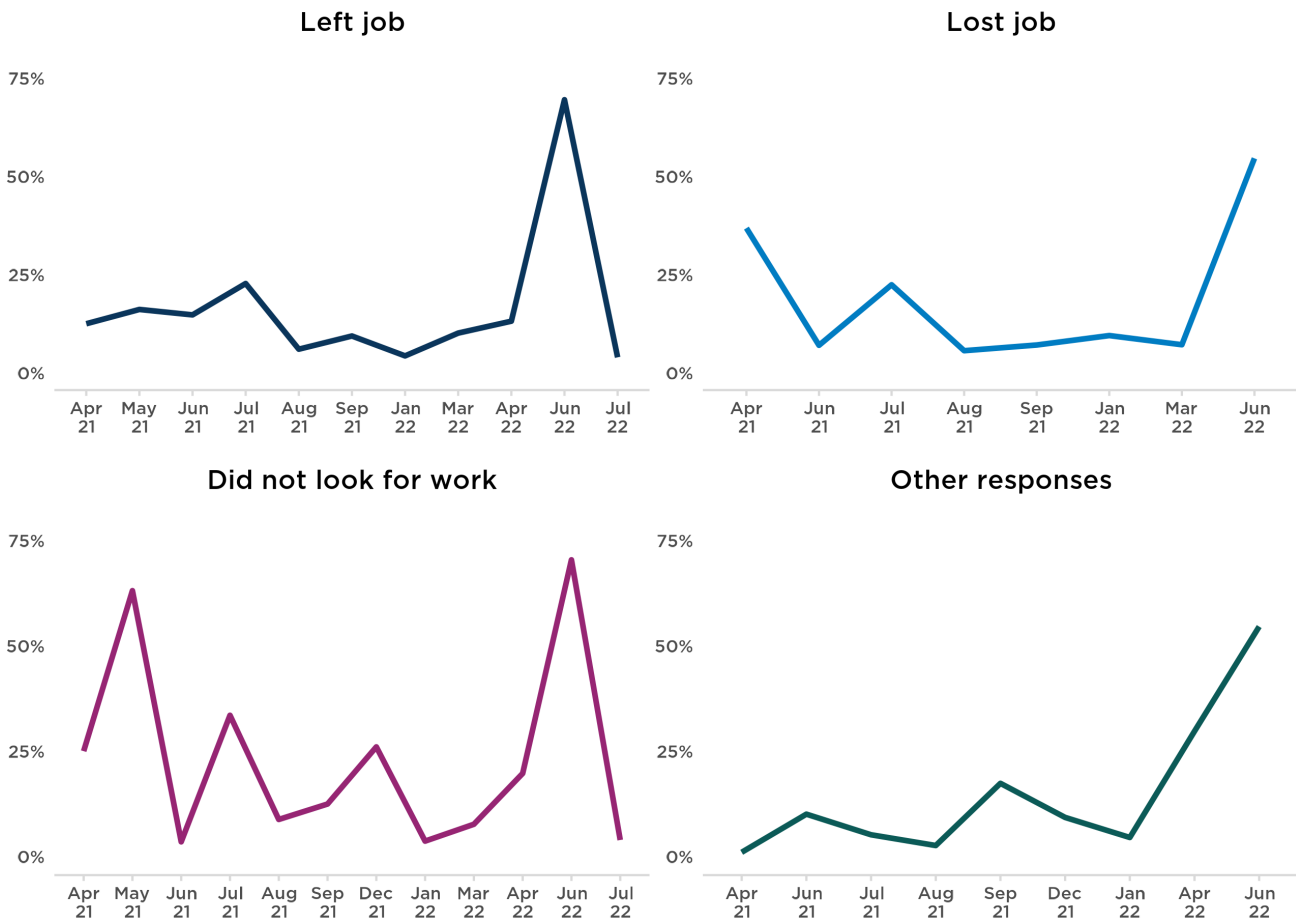


Took paid leave



Supervised child(ren) while working





## Children and Families Served Through CCDBG Child Care Subsidies in Arkansas<sup>9</sup>

	FY2019 (final)	FY2020 (prelim)	FY2021 (prelim)	Difference
Estimated Families	6,100	8,200	16,400	▲ 10300
Estimated Children	8,400	11,000	19,500	▲ 11100
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Latino	9%	8%	6%	▼ -3%
Non-Latino	91%	92%	94%	▲ 3%
Native American/ Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	0%	0%	0%	0%
Black/African American	45%	42%	32%	▼ -13%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	43%	45%	58%	▲ 15%
Multi-Racial	3%	3%	3%	0%

	FY2019 (final)	FY2020 (prelim)	FY2021 (prelim)	Difference
<b>Age of Child</b>				
0 to < 1 yr	9%	7%	7%	▼ -2%
1 yr to < 2 yrs	16%	15%	13%	▼ -3%
2 yrs to < 3 yrs	16%	17%	16%	0%
3 yrs to < 4 yrs	16%	16%	16%	0%
4 yrs to < 5 yrs	16%	17%	16%	0%
5 yrs to < 6 yrs	11%	11%	12%	▲ 1%
6 yrs+	16%	17%	21%	▲ 5%
<b>Copayments</b>				
Families with a Copay	22%	17%	1%	▼ -21%
Mean Copay as Percentage of Income	1%	1%	1%	0%

## Child Care Supply & Workforce Wage Changes<sup>10</sup>

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Difference
<b>Supply</b>					
Center Based - Licensed	1,760	1,713	1,678	1,734	▼ -26
Center Based - License Exempt	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
Family Child Care - Licensed	287	251	239	233	▼ -54
Family Child Care - License Exempt	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
In-Home Care	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
Total Programs	2,047	1,964	1,917	1,967	▼ -80
<b>Wages<sup>11,12,13,14</sup></b>					
Annual Mean Wage	\$21,870	\$23,050	\$24,220	\$26,300	▲ \$4430

## References

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