

Child Care Stabilization Snapshot for MONTANA

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:

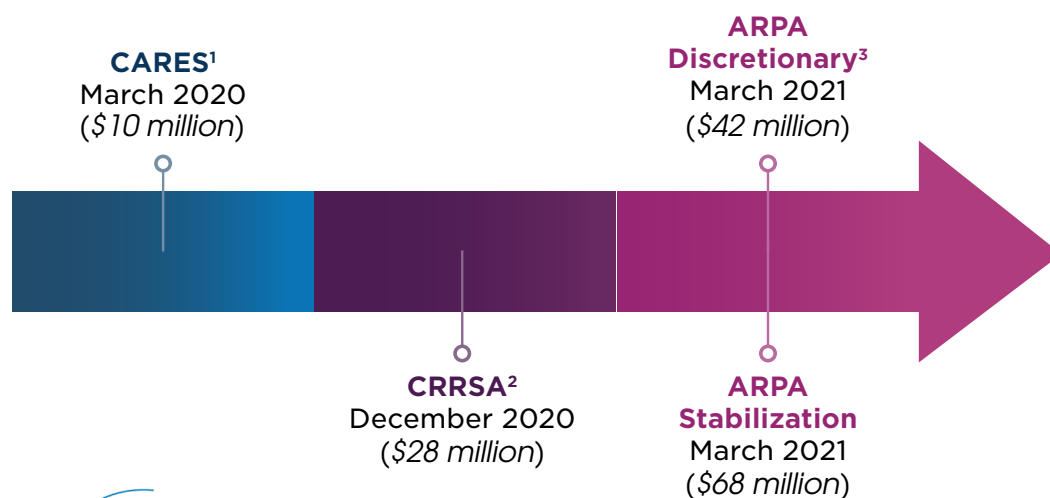
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act
- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

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 Montana 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 Montana: **\$149 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 Montana uses COVID Funds⁴

☒ 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 Care⁵

Number of providers that received a grant	
Total programs	1,110
Center-based programs	385
Home-based programs	725
Other	0
Average grant amount received	
Center-based programs	\$98,800
Home-based programs	\$27,900

Increase Funding to Supplement or Continue Child Care Stabilization Policies⁶



Yes

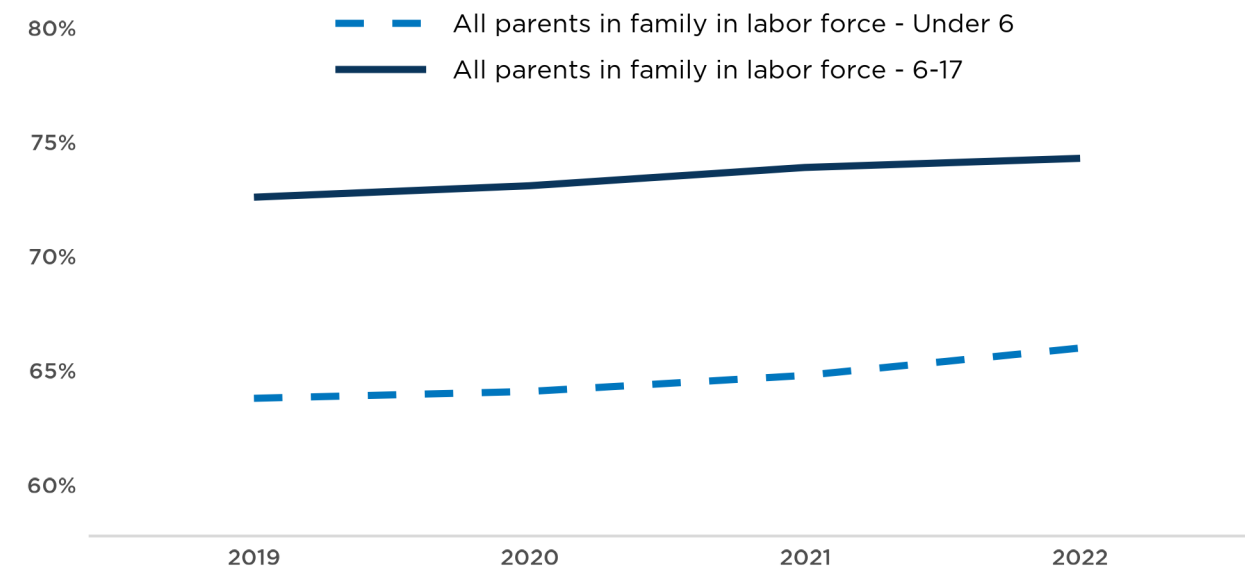


No

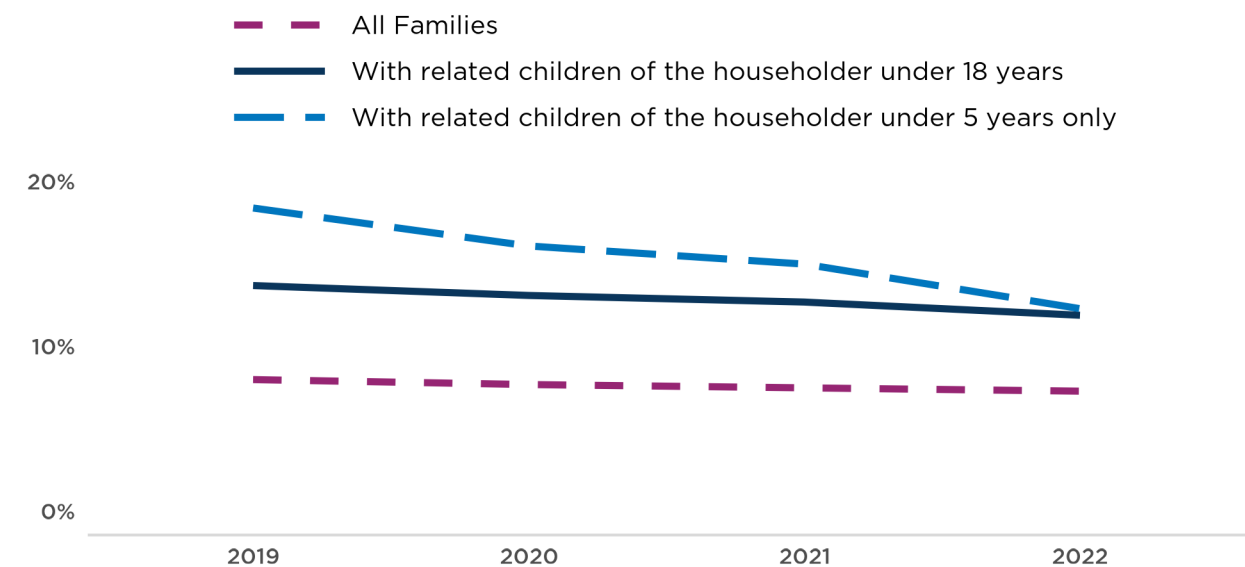
Children and Families⁷

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



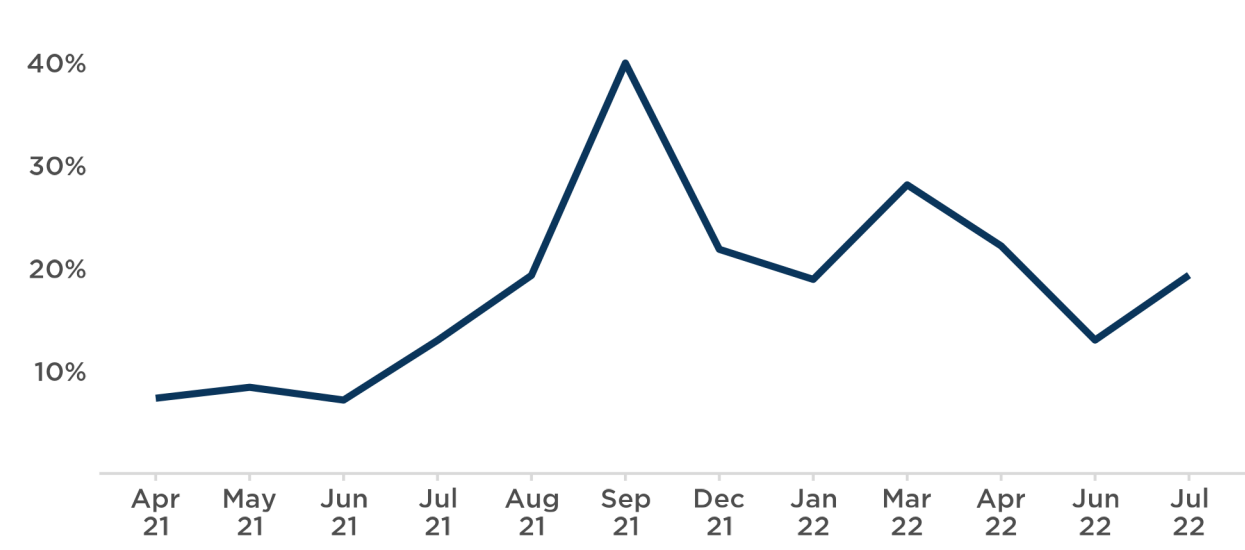
Percentage of families living in poverty



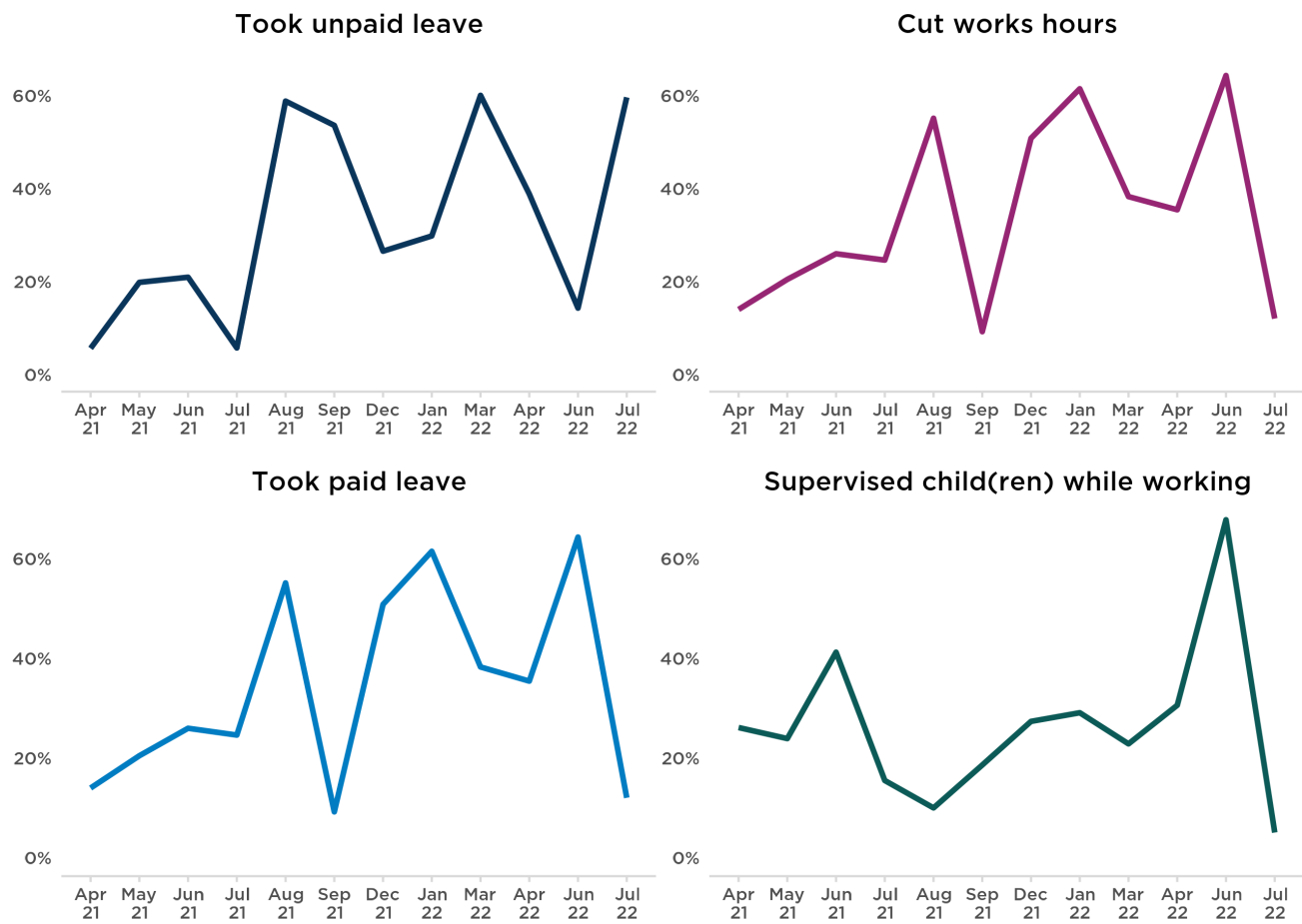
Percentage of Parents Experiencing Child Care Disruptions During COVID-19⁸

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

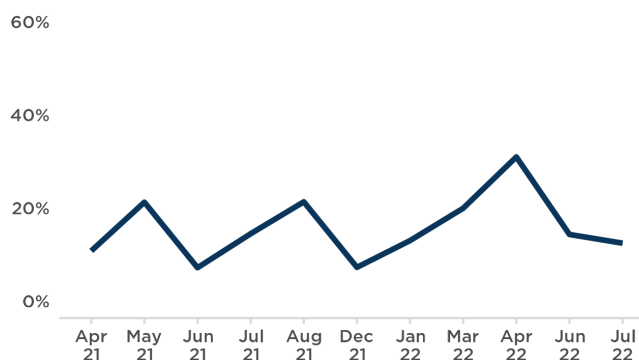
Percentage of parents that experienced child care disruptions



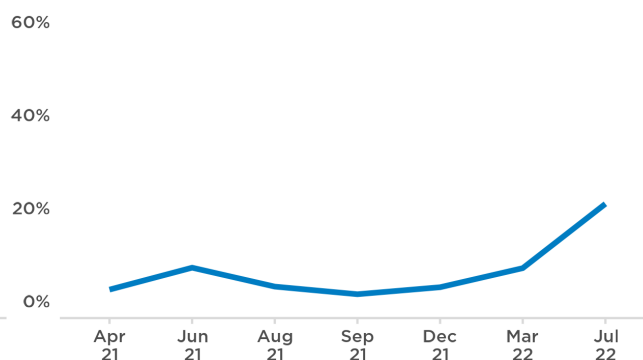
How parents responded to child care disruptions



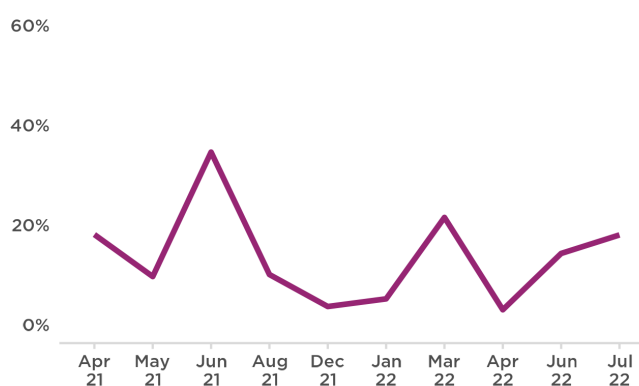
Left job



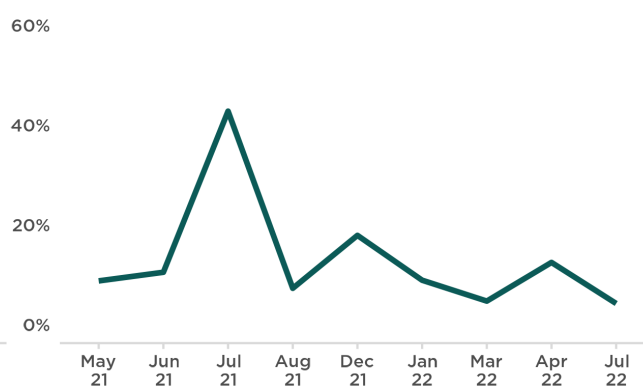
Lost job



Did not look for work



Other responses



Children and Families Served Through CCDBG Child Care Subsidies in Montana⁹

	FY2019 (final)	FY2020 (prelim)	FY2021 (prelim)	Difference
Estimated Families	2,500	1,100	1,700	▼ -800
Estimated Children	3,600	1,600	2,500	▼ -1100
Race/Ethnicity				
Latino	6%	7%	8%	▲ 2%
Non-Latino	89%	89%	86%	▼ -3%
Native American/ Alaska Native	15%	15%	16%	▲ 1%
Asian	0%	0%	0%	0%
Black/African American	2%	2%	3%	▲ 1%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	72%	71%	70%	▼ -2%
Multi-Racial	4%	4%	5%	▲ 1%

	FY2019 (final)	FY2020 (prelim)	FY2021 (prelim)	Difference
Age of Child				
0 to < 1 yr	6%	6%	5%	▼ -1%
1 yr to < 2 yrs	12%	12%	11%	▼ -1%
2 yrs to < 3 yrs	14%	15%	14%	0%
3 yrs to < 4 yrs	16%	16%	15%	▼ -1%
4 yrs to < 5 yrs	15%	15%	16%	▲ 1%
5 yrs to < 6 yrs	11%	11%	12%	▲ 1%
6 yrs+	25%	25%	27%	▲ 2%
Copayments				
Families with a Copay	67%	68%	66%	▼ -1%
Mean Copay as Percentage of Income	6%	6%	6%	0%

Child Care Supply & Workforce Wage Changes¹⁰

	2019	2020	2021	2022	Difference
Supply					
Center Based - Licensed	243	292	295	307	▲ 64
Center Based - License Exempt	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Family Child Care - Licensed	578	616	566	593	▲ 15
Family Child Care - License Exempt	124	109	128	117	▼ -7
In-Home Care	22	29	20	27	▲ 5
Total Programs	967	1,046	1,009	1,044	▲ 77
Wages^{11,12,13,14}					
Annual Mean Wage	\$23,510	\$23,810	\$24,990	\$26,480	▲ \$2970

References

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