

Child Care Stabilization Snapshot for WISCONSIN

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:

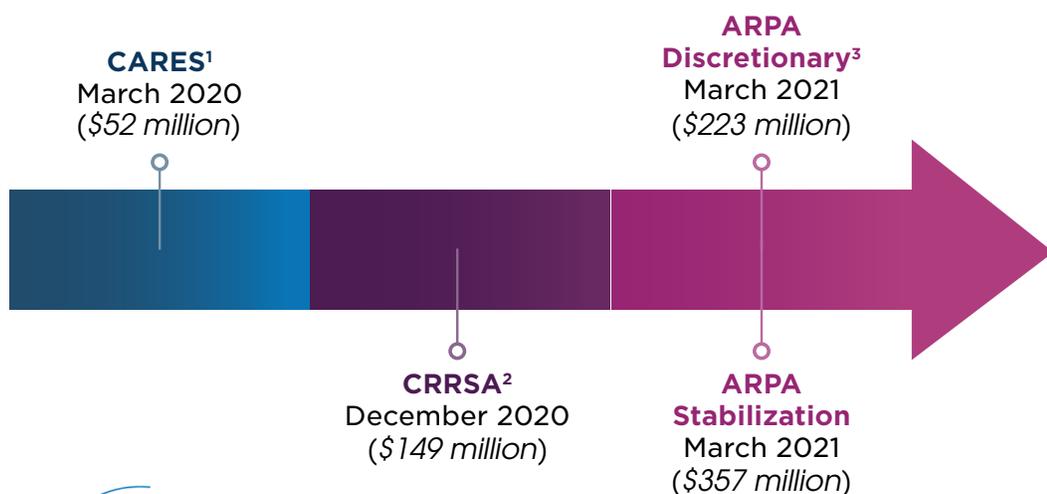
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act
- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

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 Wisconsin 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 Wisconsin: **\$780 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 Wisconsin 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 | 7,900 |
| Center-based programs | 4,410 |
| Home-based programs | 3,490 |
| Other | 0 |
| Average grant amount received | |
| Center-based programs | \$67,100 |
| Home-based programs | \$9,900 |

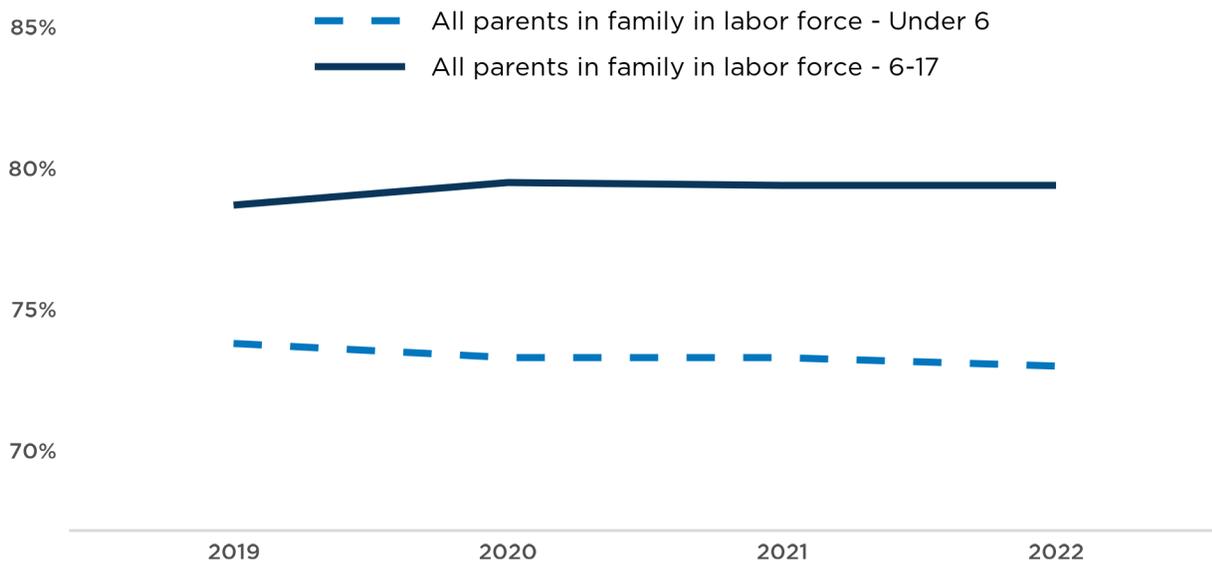
Increase Funding to Supplement or Continue Child Care Stabilization Policies⁶

- Yes No

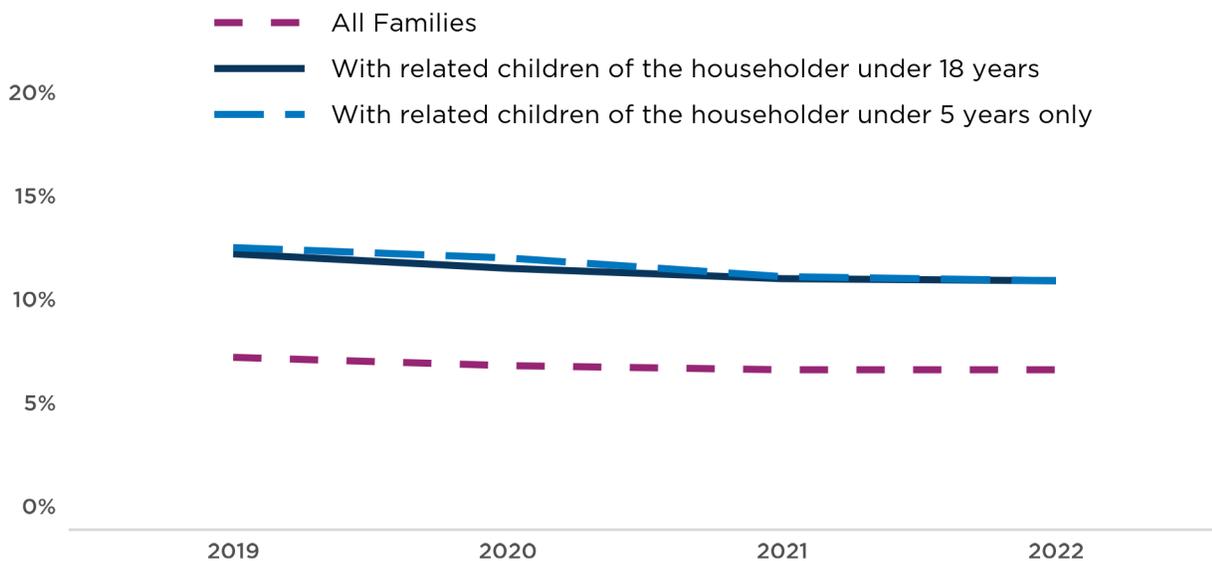
Children and Families⁷

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



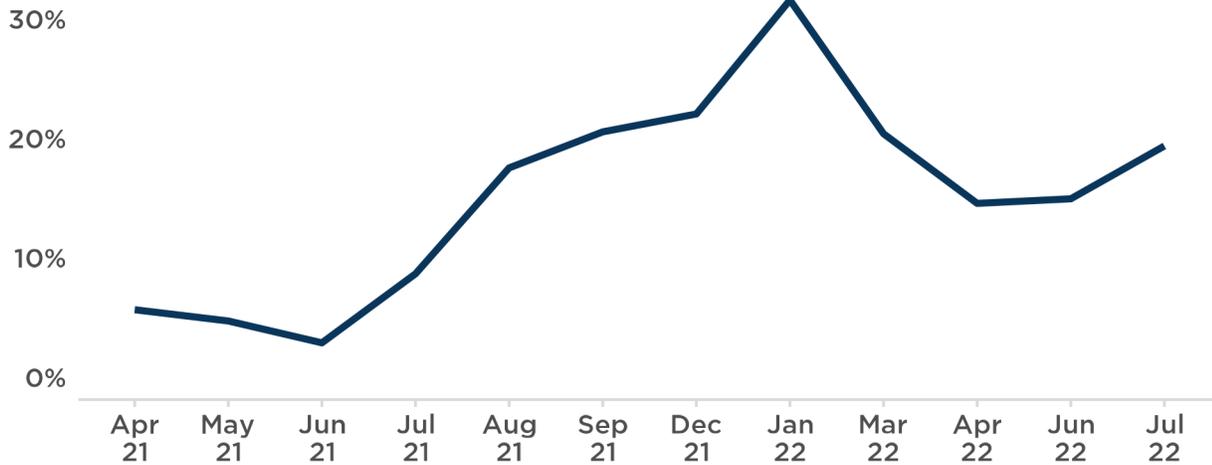
Percentage of families living in poverty



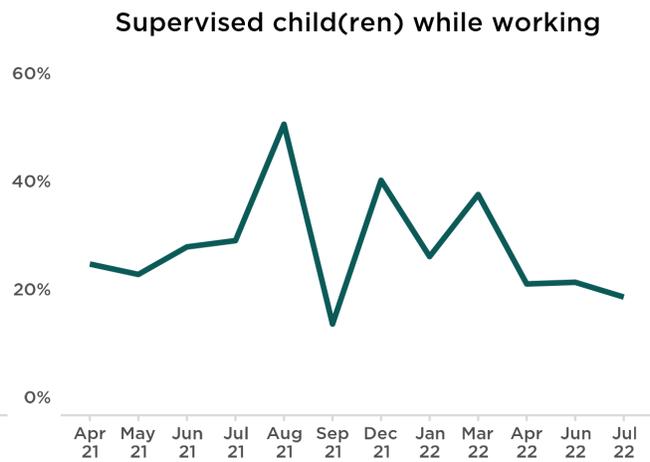
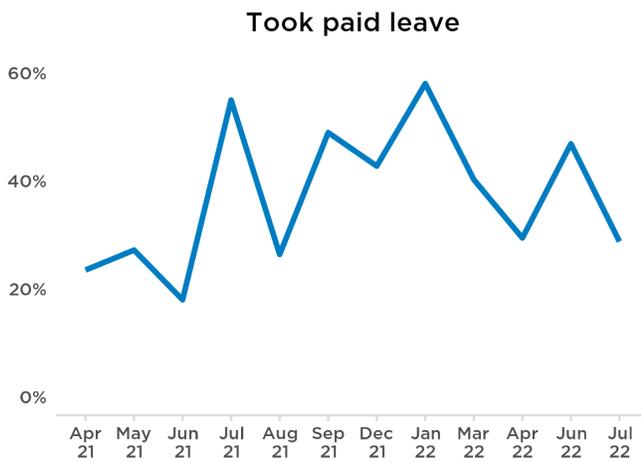
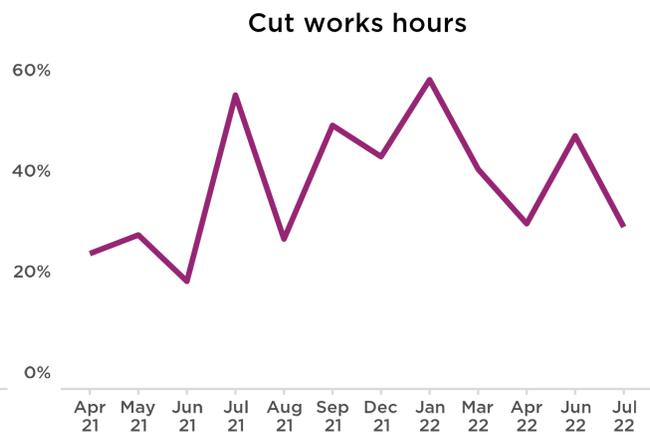
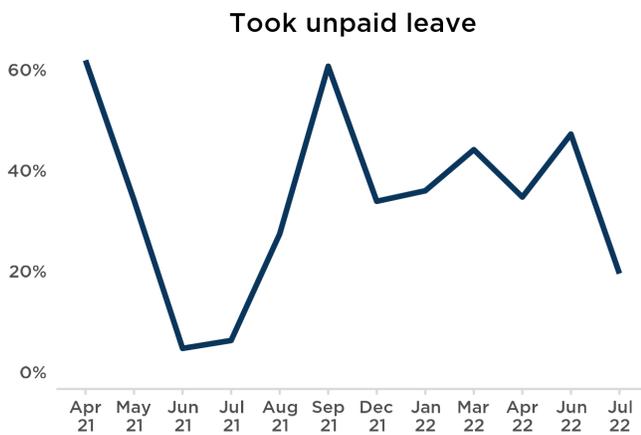
Percentage of Parents Experiencing Child Care Disruptions During COVID-19⁸

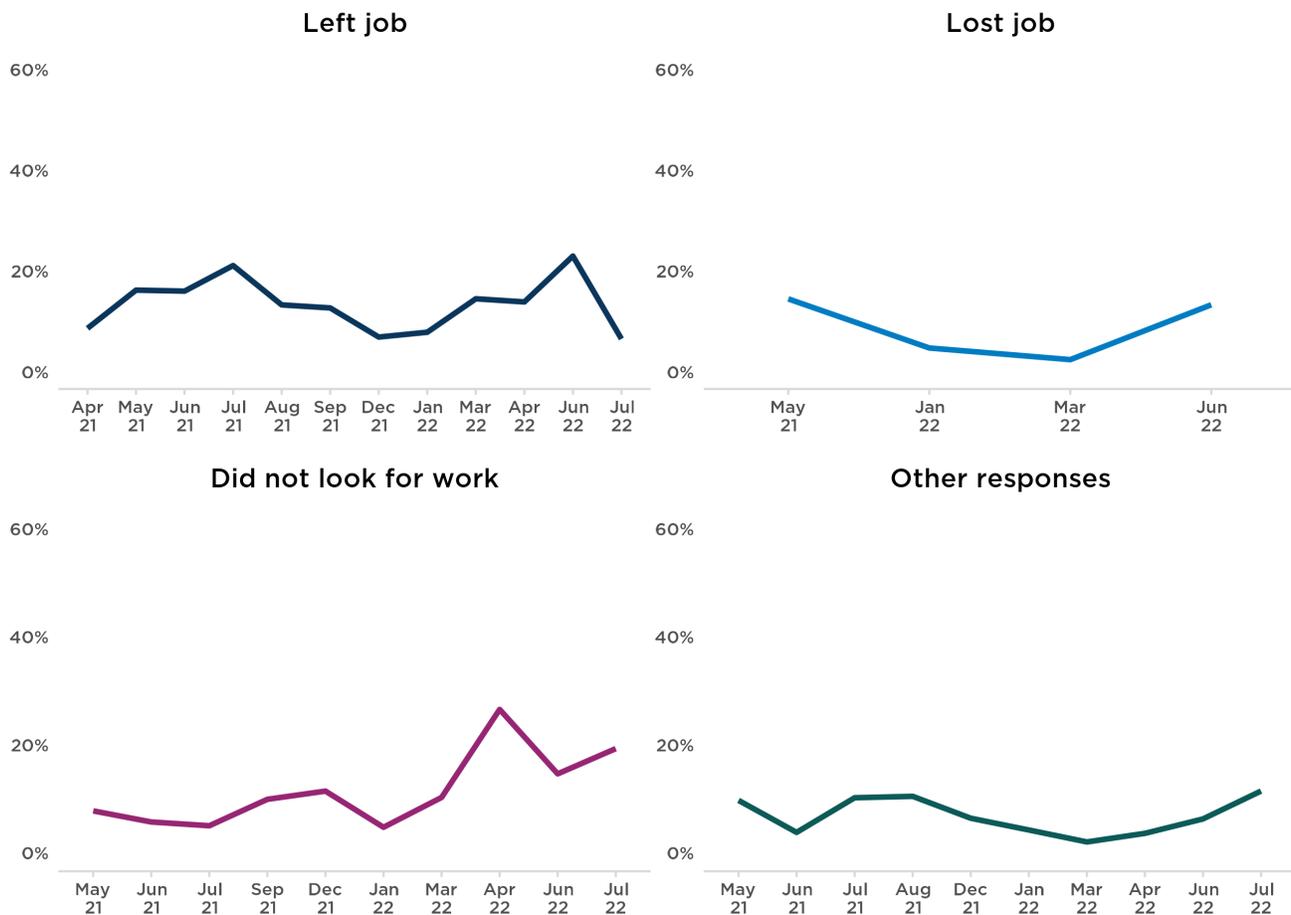
Not all months and years had data available. Only changes between available dates are shown.

Percentage of parents that experienced child care disruptions



How parents responded to child care disruptions





Children and Families Served Through CCDBG Child Care Subsidies in Wisconsin⁹

| | FY2019 (final) | FY2020 (prelim) | FY2021 (prelim) | Difference |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Estimated Families | 10,700 | 11,000 | 9,000 | ▼ -1700 |
| Estimated Children | 17,900 | 18,400 | 16,700 | ▼ -1200 |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | |
| Latino | 11% | 11% | 11% | 0% |
| Non-Latino | 80% | 77% | 73% | ▼ -7% |
| Native American/ Alaska Native | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| Asian | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| Black/African American | 35% | 34% | 34% | ▼ -1% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| White | 21% | 21% | 22% | ▲ 1% |
| Multi-Racial | 6% | 6% | 6% | 0% |

| | FY2019 (final) | FY2020 (prelim) | FY2021 (prelim) | Difference |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Age of Child | | | | |
| 0 to < 1 yr | 7% | 6% | 6% | ▼ -1% |
| 1 yr to < 2 yrs | 11% | 11% | 11% | 0% |
| 2 yrs to < 3 yrs | 13% | 13% | 13% | 0% |
| 3 yrs to < 4 yrs | 14% | 14% | 14% | 0% |
| 4 yrs to < 5 yrs | 13% | 13% | 13% | 0% |
| 5 yrs to < 6 yrs | 9% | 10% | 10% | ▲ 1% |
| 6 yrs+ | 33% | 33% | 34% | ▲ 1% |
| Copayments | | | | |
| Families with a Copay | 79% | 78% | 81% | ▲ 2% |
| Mean Copay as Percentage of Income | 6% | 5% | 6% | 0% |

Child Care Supply & Workforce Wage Changes¹⁰

| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | Difference |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Supply | | | | | |
| Center Based - Licensed | 2,353 | 2,069 | 2,244 | 2,263 | ▼ -90 |
| Center Based - License Exempt | 191 | 176 | 220 | 221 | ▲ 30 |
| Family Child Care - Licensed | 1,559 | 1,423 | 1,450 | 1,455 | ▼ -104 |
| Family Child Care - License Exempt | 561 | 396 | 483 | 488 | ▼ -73 |
| In-Home Care | N/A | 6 | 4 | 4 | N/A |
| Total Programs | 4,664 | 4,070 | 4,401 | 4,431 | ▼ -233 |
| Wages^{11,12,13,14} | | | | | |
| Annual Mean Wage | \$23,650 | \$24,620 | \$25,720 | \$27,050 | ▲ \$3400 |

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