

# Child Care

## (Subsidy and Regulation)

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### Purpose

The goal is to support low-income families to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency, and to promote high quality childcare.

### Who

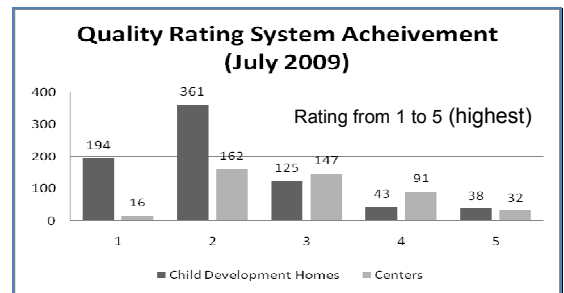
The childcare program provides assistance for:

- Children under age 13 (or up to age 19 if the child has special needs) of parents whose gross monthly income is below 145 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) or 200 percent of FPL if they have a child with a special need. Parents must be working 28 hours or more a week or in school full-time. To be eligible at 145 percent FPL, a family of three may earn no more than \$26,556 in gross annual income.
- Children of parents participating in PROMISE JOBS activities (required for most welfare recipients).
- Children needing protective childcare.

### What

The department:

- Determines eligibility for subsidies and issues payments to providers. In SFY09, an average of 22,987 children were served each month (20,002 children of the working poor, 1,856 children of parents in PROMISE JOBS activities, and 1,129 children in need of protective care.)
- Licenses and regularly monitors 1,500 stand-alone childcare centers. Providers are held to rigorous standards. DHS consultants make unannounced visits annually.
- Registers 5,600 homes that provide childcare for at least six children at any one time, including children of the providers. Record checks and free training are provided to registered providers, but there is no periodic DHS oversight after a home is registered.
- Contracts for the statewide Child Care Resource and Referral system [http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/Consumers/Child\\_Care/LicensingRegs/CCProviderMap.html](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/Consumers/Child_Care/LicensingRegs/CCProviderMap.html) that helps parents find childcare, providers training and technical assistance, and helps communities assess needs for childcare.
- Operates a Quality Rating System that helps providers improve quality and gives parents comparative information regarding childcare. Providers must be either licensed or registered to participate. Participation is voluntary. Achievement bonuses help offset the cost of participating. <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/iqrs/>



### How are We Doing?

- A steadily rising number of childcare providers (448 centers and 761 child development homes) have received ratings in the Child Care Quality Rating System. The highest rating (five stars) has been achieved by 38 centers and 32 homes.
- Legislation in 2007 required the department to pay provider childcare claims within 10 business days of receipt of a correct claim. Virtually all payments meet the standard.
- A phased rollout of a web-based management information system (KinderTrack) is occurring and will enable providers to file claims online, and enable families to apply for subsidized childcare online.