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April 20, 2026

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**Shapiro Administration Announces Child Care Recruitment and Retention Grant for Harrisburg Child Care Center, Supporting Child Care Workers & Families**

*Bonuses for staff have been disbursed to child care centers and will soon be in child care worker's pockets.*

*Governor Josh Shapiro doubling down on the success of the child care recruitment and retention bonuses and by increasing payments for child care workers in the proposed 2026-27 Budget.*

**Harrisburg, PA** – Today, **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Deputy Secretary for the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Shante' Brown** announced that Follow Me Christian Child Care is the recipient of the largest Child Care Recruitment and Retention Program bonus award in Dauphin County created in the 2025-26 Budget. Grants were distributed to child care centers on April 15 and staff will begin receiving their bonuses soon.

The visit highlights how **Governor Josh Shapiro's [2026-27 Budget Proposal](#)** builds on his Administration's efforts to make child care more affordable and accessible by investing an **additional \$10 million** in the Child Care Recruitment and Retention Program to provide more support to the child care workforce, bringing the total investment to **\$35 million**. The additional funds would increase bonuses for workers at licensed child care centers that participate in Pennsylvania's Child Care Works (CCW) program from a minimum of **\$450** estimated for first round payments to at least **\$630**.

"I am so proud to see the first round of Recruitment and Retention Bonuses going into the pockets of our hardworking child care providers. Early learning and child care programs are an invaluable resource that foster educational and social development for our youngest Pennsylvanians and are a catalyst for a healthy, vibrant economy," said **Deputy Secretary Brown**. "Our dedicated, passionate child care workers are the ones who make that possible, and the Shapiro Administration is proud to make these investments that will support this essential field and strengthen our child care industry and our overall economy."

In the 2025-26 budget, Governor Shapiro secured **\$25 million** in new funds to support child care workers at CCW child care providers with at least **\$450** retention bonuses.

Applications closed for the first round of grants in January, with more than 4,300 child care providers applying. Starting soon, **\$645** bonuses will go out to nearly 39,000 child care workers. Once all retention bonuses are paid, remaining funds will be used to help support child care providers in recruiting staff with one-time incentive payments.

Child care and early learning are critical to child development and set young Pennsylvanians up for success – and a strong child care workforce ensures parents can continue to pursue their careers even after having children. Child care workers are the workforce behind the workforce. However, access to quality child care remains an issue for many Pennsylvania families, and staffing shortages and low wages at child care centers continue to plague an already vulnerable system.

In addition to staff bonus increases to further support Pennsylvania’s child care and early learning programs, the [2026-27 Budget Proposal](#) includes:

- An additional \$7.5 million for the Pre-K Counts program to help providers raise wages and stabilize the early educator workforce; and
- \$2 million for the Head Start State Supplemental program to help providers raise wages and stabilize the early educator workforce.

### **Building on the Shapiro Administration’s Investments in Pennsylvania’s Families and Strengthening the Child Care Workforce**

These investments build on the work the Shapiro Administration has done during the past three years. Since 2023, DHS has invested in access to care by increasing base reimbursement rates for providers participating in Child Care Works to the **75th percentile** of private pay rates for the first time, helping Pennsylvania meet federal best practices and providing greater financial support to child care providers and their dedicated workforce. This allows CCW providers to invest in quality of care and their workforce amid the continued challenges of operating.

Governor Shapiro [signed into law](#) a historic expansion of the **Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit** that increases Pennsylvania’s match from 30 to 100 percent of the federal credit, increasing the maximum benefit from \$630 to \$2,100 per family. In 2024, this increase delivered **\$136.5 million to 218,953 working families**. Last year, Governor Shapiro worked with the General Assembly to create the **Employer Child Care Contribution Tax Credit**, which allows employers who contribute to employees’ child care costs to claim a tax credit of up to 30 percent of eligible contributions, capped at \$500 per employee.

Follow Me Christian’s mission is to empower children to learn confidently and thrive in a loving environment while partnering with parents to ensure each child’s individual needs are met. Follow Me Christian Child Care employs more than 50 child care workers who care for roughly 275 children. In total, these dedicated employees will receive over

\$32,000 from the first round of Child Care Recruitment and Retention Program grants – the largest award for Dauphin County.

“Hiring quality educators that believe in the importance of their work while building workforce stability can be challenging without being able to offer competitive salaries and benefit packages,” said **Follow Me Christian Executive Director Jennifer Granitz**. “We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to bless our teachers with this monetary bonus. Valuing early educators and ensuring that their herculean work is seen and appreciated is essential to teacher retention.”

Learn more about [Child Care Works](#) and find more information on certified child care providers at [www.findchildcare.pa.gov](http://www.findchildcare.pa.gov).

Read more about Governor Shapiro’s [2026-27 Budget Proposal](#).

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