

EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there a policy directive or requirement that limits suspension and expulsion of children served by child care providers receiving Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds, commonly known in our state as child care vouchers?

Yes. On November 19, 2014, the President signed the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014 into law. This law requires all states funded by this Act to take action to eliminate suspension and expulsion of children from early learning environments.

What prompted this new requirement for states and programs receiving these funds?

This new requirement was driven by overwhelming data that shows children who are expelled or suspended from early child care settings are more likely to have negative educational and life outcomes. The early years are the best time to promote learning, safety and wellbeing so they can become productive and successful through their lifetime.

What are the consequences if I expel or suspend a child from my facility?

The law requires the state to take action to eliminate suspension and expulsion of children from early child care settings that receive CCDF funds; therefore, the state has the authority to withdraw funds and end Participant Agreements with any child care facility that expels or suspends children. Before funds are withdrawn, the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) will work with providers to educate them about this requirement to avoid disruption of child care services. Corrective action plans will be developed for the facility to address this issue, which will include staff development, education, and training on how to deal with children with behavioral challenges. The Division will determine on a case-by-case basis if funding should be suspended if requirements are not met.

If I am having trouble dealing with a child with behavioral challenges, what do I do?

Child care providers and staff are encouraged to contact DCCECE using our triage or BehaviorHelp response system. This is available at www.behaviorhelponline.org. Once you submit a referral into this system, DCCECE staff will contact the individual who made the referral, obtain more detailed information about the problem, and will provide technical assistance or referral to training or additional resources (such as mental health consultation) to help you.

What other resources or assistance is available now to help me?

A variety of trainings are currently available and additional online trainings have been developed that focus on social-emotional development. You can access handout materials such as one-pagers, fact sheets, and policy templates online at the Better Beginnings website or information can be emailed or mailed to you. Additionally, DCCECE's professional development contractors will provide on-site technical assistance to help you, your staff, and the family support the child.

What can I expect when a technical assistance provider or mental health consultant comes to my program?

Technical Assistance (TA) is provided by a specialized team at A-State. TA is typically short term but is flexible in length. A TA provider will observe in the classroom and work with the teacher on ideas to strengthen his/her classroom environment, relationships with children and use of strategies to build children's social and emotional skills and reduce

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challenging behavior. Mental Health Consultation can be accessed for complex cases. A mental health consultant will make weekly visits to support the teacher, administrators and parents in developing a plan to support the teacher, child and family. Classroom work will focus on supporting safety and identifying opportunities strengthen the classroom environment and teacher-child relationships. We will explore strategies to build children's social and emotional skills and manage challenging behavior that is occurring. Work with parents is designed to support communication and consistently between home and school and identify needs of parents/families that can be addressed by referrals to community partners. Work of TA providers and mental health consultants is focused on building adult capacity to support children and families – not on direct service to the child.

If my center is a recipient of CCDF or ABC funds, can I expel children who are funded privately?

Centers receiving state and federal funds for the care of children should have one guidance/discipline policy that applies to all children in their center. It would be inappropriate to support teachers, children and families differently based on the child's funding source. Centers are asked to use the BehaviorHelp system to support children regardless of the child's source of funding.

If I received support through BehaviorHelp once, can I ask for help in working with the same child again?

Yes. We understand that sometimes changes to the child's situation (a new classroom, changes at home) can result in behavior changes. We will evaluate the specifics of the request to determine what type of training, technical assistance or other support is warranted.