

LEAP Young Parents Cohort Resource Guide: Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

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This document includes the resources and insights that the Urban Institute compiled for Nebraska's young parent work. It is organized in a question and answer format.

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1. What guidance is there for young parents on selecting child care providers?

Guidance on Selection

[Starting Your Child Care Search](#)

The web page from Child Care Aware offers step-by-step guidance and links to resources around getting started with the search for child care, including making a list of providers, doing your homework on providers, calling providers, and taking a tour. It also has updates about COVID implications for the search process. The four main steps are:

- ✓ Get a child care list
- ✓ Do your homework
- ✓ Call providers
- ✓ Take a tour

[Selecting a Child Care Program](#)

This series of checklists from Child Care Aware offer things for parents to look for when taking virtual or in-person tours of different types of care providers. Includes a Pandemic Safety Checklist.

[Matching Your Infant's or Toddler's Style to the Right Child Care Setting](#)

This visual from Zero to Three helps parents think about matching their child's personal style to a child care setting.

Search Resources

[Nebraska Child Care Referral Network](#)

This organization helps families understand their child care options in the state. Includes a search function.

[Nebraska: Understanding and Finding Child Care](#)

This federal resource includes links to multiple Nebraska-specific child care resources, including information on search resources, how to choose quality care, licensing, inspection reports, regulations, criminal background checks, and the afterschool association.

2. What are some examples of community colleges and other postsecondary programs that are providing supports for student parents?

[Find Your Way: A Guide to New England Colleges and Universities for Students with Children](#)

This guide catalogs how colleges in the New England region serve student-parents.

[Find Your Way: A Guide to Mid-Atlantic Colleges and Universities for Students with Children](#)

This guide catalogs how colleges in the Mid-Atlantic region serve student-parents.

[Family-Friendly Campus Toolkit](#)

This toolkit for colleges identifies practices colleges could implement to better serve student-parents. (You'll need to sign up to download the toolkit, but that's just so they can know who is using it. It is free to use.)

- *If you identify some practices you're particularly interested in (see sections B.5a and B.5b), the Urban Institute team can pull some specific examples of institutions leading the way in those areas.*

[Campus Family Housing Database](#)

A searchable national database of colleges that offer family housing on campus, with links to more information.

For Partners

These resources may be useful for partners who are interested in building out their supports for student-parents.

[In Support of Intergenerational Learning: The Two-Generation Classroom as an Approach for Postsecondary Pedagogy](#)

This report describes how a college can effectively educate student-parents *and their children* through an intergenerational pedagogy. Specifically:

“The Two-Generation Classroom is an approach to teaching and learning offered within the general education core to facilitate parent/child intergenerational learning, intentionally designed for and targeting student parents with young children (although non-parenting students may also enroll with a sibling, friend, or other child that they care for). Using hybrid learning designs that allow students to complete “adult” oriented assignments outside of class time, using weekly classroom time for two-generational integrated arts teaching/learning activities, and including a weekly “family homework” assignment, the Two-Generation Classroom approach aims to address and reduce inequity in college access and success for student parents, while ensuring excellence and rigor in the curricula through targeted learning objectives, and differentiated learning and engagement outcomes for adult and child.”

[Aspen Ascend Postsecondary Success for Parents Initiative](#)

This effort from the Aspen institute includes a set of national leaders on student-parent issues, a blog for student-parent leaders, and various funding opportunities that also highlight higher education institutions doing good things in the student-parent space.

[Ohio State University Student Parent Support Symposium](#)

This annual workshop highlights student-parent issues and opportunities in higher education. The website includes recordings and materials from past symposia.

Information about Student-Parents Nationally

[Institute for Women's Policy Research Student Parent Success Initiative](#)

This webpage and initiative from IWPR includes descriptive research on student-parent issues.

3. Are there ways that institutions can help students avoid cliff effects in financial aid and child care when they are working and in school?

[The EFC Formula: 2020-2021](#)

This resource is a clear description of the federal formula for financial aid. It describes separate formulas for dependent students, independent students without dependents, and independent students with dependents (the group that includes all students who are parents). According to one of our experts in college funding at Urban, the federal aid system is reasonably well designed to have awards decline gradually and is not an all-or-nothing system. Independent students with dependents are treated much more generously than independent students without dependents.

That said, there is no negative expected family contribution, so a student with dependent's full living expenses may not be accounted for. There are some policy issues that could be explored here, but it would take federal intervention.

[Cliff Effect Project in Colorado](#)

We heard similar situations around cliff effects for parents in Colorado (a benefit cliff is the sudden loss of benefits due to an increase in income). The Cliff Effect Pilot in Colorado was implemented legislatively. Colorado is county-administered state and so the participating counties came up with various “formulas” on how to turn the cliff into more of a slope for caregivers who went over the eligibility ceiling (formulas are listed in the appendix of this report). Even with the various formulas, it was hard to completely turn the cliff into a slope without the caregivers more consistently getting increases in pay (rather than e.g., one-time small increase, or sporadic child support income).

- ✓ The cliff impacted a very small % of caregivers; most enrolled in Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) are very low income. The state ultimately didn't continue the cliff effect pilot and increased the ceiling so that fewer caregivers would reach the cliff. Colorado was mostly

exploring this within the legislative/policy pieces of CCCAP so not really other funding mechanisms. It is not clear how using other funds for paying copays/care would affect eligibility for the subsidies.

More detail on Colorado's strategies includes:

- ✓ First, through proposals from the HB-1335 work group, initial income eligibility levels were changed to align with the [self-sufficiency standard](#). This rule change more closely aligns with the lived experiences of families experiencing poverty.
- ✓ Second, related to income exit thresholds, Colorado set the ceiling for receiving CCCAP at 85% of the [statewide median income](#). Increasing the state median income exit threshold reduces instances of the cliff effect and allows families to remain eligible for child care assistance until they have reached a higher level of self-sufficiency.
- ✓ Third, families may only be deemed ineligible for childcare subsidies for limited reasons during the 12-month eligibility period. This policy change ensures that children can consistently attend childcare and caretakers can be successful in their work or school activities.
- ✓ Lastly, Colorado delinked childcare needs from caretaker work or education activity schedules, which allows children to attend child care daily.
- ✓ Collectively, Colorado's policy changes recognize that stability in early childhood is important for children's healthy development, particularly among those who have experienced adverse early childhood experiences.

4. What flexibilities are there around using Social Services Block Grant and other block grant funding to offset childcare copays for young parents in school?

[SSBG Fact Sheet](#)

This fact sheet describes the purposes and uses of SSBG. Services and eligibility requirements vary by state. The Uniform Definitions of Services, which include 29 service categories, provide guidelines to states for reporting purposes. A service category most frequently supported by SSBG includes child care.

- ✓ Experts at Urban don't see a reason why SSBG couldn't or shouldn't be used for this. It is a very flexible funding source. Of course, it would be useful to know what the funds are currently being used for to determine the value of reallocating from one use to another (see the state SSBG plan [here](#)).

Another option is to work within the Child Care Development Fund to see whether the state would waive copayment increases for students. One issue to be aware of is that depending on how steep the sliding fee scale is, it could result in a pretty big shock after they get out of school and lose the special treatment. It may make sense to phase it out gradually after the students graduate so that they don't suddenly face a big increase.

[Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program \(CCAMPIS\) Awards](#)

It may also be good, if not already done, to check on the CCAMPIS child care funding situation in the state, and see whether that is something accessible for this purpose. It looks like the University of Nebraska—Omaha received \$165,940 and Southeast Community College Area received \$103,701 from CCAMPIS in 2019 and 2020.

[For Unemployed Parents, Child Care Remains a Question Mark](#)

This blog post from the Urban Institute explores data around challenges that parents unemployed are facing around child care. It includes suggestions for states around providing care through CCDF for unemployed parents who are looking for work.

[Bridging the Gap Initiative](#)

This is an Urban Institute Initiative focused on supporting the child care needs of parents in education and

training. Urban examined the systems, policies, and practices that affect access to child care for parents with low incomes who are seeking education and training to improve their skills and job prospects. Some relevant reports are:

- ✓ [Framework to help states facilitate access to child care for parents with low incomes in need of education and training](#)
- ✓ [Challenges and opportunities of supporting the child care and workforce development needs of families on TANF \(Hahn et al. 2016\)](#)
- ✓ [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) state eligibility policies and services for families in education and training](#) (full report) – see also the [policy brief](#)

5. What sources of funds could be used to support young parents in education or coaching?

Federal Government Funding Sources

[Arkansas Career Pathways](#)

This write up from the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) details the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI). CPI uses federal TANF dollars to fund academic and support services to help parents and adult caretakers with low incomes (include those who do not receive TANF cash assistance) complete school or technical training. (See also the [snazzy webpage](#).)

[Health Profession Opportunity Grant \(HPOG\)](#)

This webpage from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Family Assistance provides an overview of the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) program. HPOG provides federal grants to organizations to provide education and training for health care occupations that pay well and are in high demand. Funding is available to TANF recipients and others with low incomes. In Nebraska, Central Community College received an HPOG grant, called [Project H.E.L.P.](#)

[Nebraska Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Funds](#)

The Nebraska WIOA state plan includes a description of the state's WIOA youth program, including funding for tutoring, supportive services, adult mentoring, dropout recovery and more (see pages 80-81). It also provides a description of the availability of youth funds (see pages 103, 135) and youth program strategy, design, and eligibility (see pages 136-138). The plan also describes how funds are to be distributed and leveraged for youth with significant disabilities (see pages 215-216).

[SNAP to Skills \(Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Employment and Training\)](#)

This Food and Nutrition Service program provides funding to states to support employment goals for SNAP recipients. States set forth their plans in their annual SNAP E&T Plans. States have considerable flexibility to determine which SNAP participants to serve (including whether participation will be voluntary or mandatory), which specific services – or components – to offer, and who will provide the services (the State, or community colleges, community-based organizations (CBOs) and/or American Job Centers engaged by the State). Flexible funding is available to meet participant needs through the provision of 50/50 match to non-federal program costs. Washington state is a leader in its SNAP to Skills program and use of federal funding.

Other Funding Sources

[“Promise” Programs](#)

This database lists “promise” programs that provide college scholarships and the different ways they are constructed. There is no program listed for Nebraska.

6. What are some models helping facilitate young parents having access to maternity leave?

[State Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Laws](#)

Nine states and the District of Columbia have public paid parental. This summarizes the details of the policies.

[Paid Leave Research](#)

This page collates the research on public paid leave programs. This [policy brief for Montana](#) may be particularly relevant.

7. What models are there for engaging young fathers?

Practice Models

[Responsible Fatherhood Programs + Resources](#)

This page from the National Fatherhood Initiative provides links to several evidence-based programs for fathers and supporting resources. Many programs that are not specifically focused on youth have resources to reach out to youth.

[Serving Young Fathers in Home Visiting Programs](#)

This brief from the Urban Institute summarizes findings from a qualitative research study that explored the strategies five home visiting programs use to engage fathers, as well as fathers' experiences with home visiting.

Other Resources

[Fathers at Work Initiative](#)

This final report on the Fathers at Work initiative explains how the national demonstration was designed to help noncustodial fathers with low incomes become more involved in their children's lives. The evaluation found that the initiative, which provided job training, placement, child support and fatherhood services at community-based organizations, produced benefits for families.

[Activities for Dads & Kids](#)

This page from the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse is a searchable database of resources on activities for fathers to engage in with their children.

[Parenting tips for dads during the COVID-19 crisis](#)

This pamphlet from Wayne State University provides tips for fathers about how to parent during COVID (available in English and Spanish).

[Fatherhood Research and Practice Network](#)

The FRPN offers a series of publications, webinars and technical assistance materials for researchers and practitioners in the fatherhood field.

8. What resources are there on wellness, self-care, and isolation reduction for young parents, especially during COVID?

Here are strategies we compiled from various sources about supporting young parents' mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic, and generally.

- ✓ Provide mental health support
 - Offer therapy
 - Check in regularly to keep open lines of communication – active listening
 - Encourage people to communicate feelings - verbally, in writing, through art

- Give as much certainty as possible
- ✓ Offer parenting and family support
 - Organize meal trains
 - Provide emergency child care
 - Offer virtual lactation consultation
 - Check in with the kids
- ✓ Promote healthy self-care
 - Help people set priorities, expectations, and boundaries for their many responsibilities
 - Parent, teacher, worker, student, community leader, child/sibling/spouse, teammate...
 - May have to make tradeoffs or give something up
 - Strategize how to take 10 minutes a day of alone time
 - Encourage uninterrupted sleep, even for a few hours
 - If possible, limit exposure to news
- ✓ Encourage safe socialization
 - Create supportive communities
 - Organize “social meal trains” – groups doing Zoom or phone calls
 - See if there are ways to offer a physical presence, safely
 - Encourage people to contact (call, text, email) three people per day, just to check in
 - Offer video games, books, or other family activities
- ✓ Find modes of fulfillment
 - Help people give back to the community – perhaps through policy/advocacy work
 - Encourage a grateful attitude

These strategies come from the following sources:

- ✓ [How to Tackle Millennial Loneliness](#)
- ✓ [COVID-19 Has Taken Away the Village: How New Parents Can Cope](#)
- ✓ [Advice for parents who are feeling isolated: ‘Ask for what you need, give what you can’](#)
- ✓ [Parent Voice During a Pandemic: Ascend PSP Parent Advisors Share Their Quarantine Stories](#)

9. What do family-friendly careers/career pathways look like? What are some intentional career/education pathways to recommend for young people?

[Work Context — Structural Job Characteristics](#)

This resource looks at individual jobs along a range of "work context" indicators that may relate to family friendliness.

[Working Mother Best Companies List](#)

This resource may provide some insights into good professions for mothers (and fathers!)

[Understanding Good Jobs: A Review of Definitions and Evidence](#)

A report from Urban researchers about what makes a job "good."

[A Most Egalitarian Profession: Pharmacy and the Evolution of a Family Friendly Occupation](#)

Claudia Goldin has done research on egalitarian professions and highlighted pharmacists as one of the most gender egalitarian.

[Making the Business Case for Employee Well-Being](#)

This resource was written by Urban researchers on why "work-life balance" and good benefits is a good business practice.

[National Fund for Workforce Solutions' Job Quality Initiative](#)

This learning community offers a set of publications about what quality work looks like. The job design framework is a good place to start:



[Chicagoland Workforce Funding Alliance](#)

This page shares some resources and publication about job quality and employer and workforce system

partnerships. For example, the study on stable scheduling ([summarized in Slate](#)) shows the benefits when retail workers can rely on regular schedules.

10. What are some scholarships/funding that can enhance Pell grants?

[Nebraska Department of Education Scholarship Opportunities](#)

Scholarships available to students with certain demographic characteristics in Nebraska.

[MALDEF Scholarship Resources](#)

A scholarship resource guide for Latino high school, college, and graduate students.

[Scholarships Available for All Kinds of Students](#)

A list of scholarships for students of diverse backgrounds at various types of institutions.

[Scholarships for Foster Kids](#)

Lists scholarship opportunities for former foster youth, as well as state-by-state policies to make college affordable for youth aging out of the foster care system (though Nebraska does not make the list).

[FinAid](#)

Includes information on financial aid for college and tips on how to help ease the burden of college expenses.