



Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20447

Dear Colleagues:

This *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Report of State Plans FY 2002-2003* provides an overview of State policies and strategies to help low income families pay for child care and to improve the quality and supply of care. This report summarizes information in the biennial plans submitted by States and approved by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for the period FY 2002 to 2003. It describes models and approaches that States are implementing in key policy and program areas, as well as trends and changes that have occurred over time.

By highlighting State innovation, the report illustrates the flexibility that States have in administering subsidies and quality improvements under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). States make decisions in key areas such as provider reimbursement rates, eligibility requirements for families, and parent co-payments. This flexibility is crucial because it allows States to develop policies and approaches that respond to their current circumstances and particular needs.

We hope that this report will be useful to a wide audience—including policymakers, administrators, and researchers. Most importantly, the report is designed to provide technical assistance to the State Child Care Lead Agencies by sharing strategies that other States are implementing. For example, the report describes a variety of State approaches for improving the quality of care—including professional development initiatives, consumer education, and collaborative efforts. This information may help States as they plan activities in support of President Bush's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative to help prepare children to read and succeed in school.

The Child Care Bureau, the ACF Regional Offices, and our technical assistance providers look forward to continuing to assist States with their efforts to support parents' success in the workplace and to promote child development.

Sincerely,

Wade F. Horn, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary
for Children and Families