

funding for child care subsidies and activities to improve the quality and availability of child care. CCDF was created after amendments to ACF child care programs by Title VI of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 consolidated four Federal child care funding streams including the Child Care and Development Block Grant, AFDC/JOBS Child Care, Transitional Child Care, and At-Risk Child Care. With related State and Federal funding, CCDF provides more than \$11 billion a year to States, Territories, and Tribes to help low-income working families access child care services.

The Bureau works closely with ACF Regional Offices, States, Territories, and Tribes to assist with, oversee, and document implementation of new policies and programs in support of State, local, and private sector administration of child care services and systems. In addition, the Bureau collaborates extensively with other offices throughout the Federal government to promote integrated, family-focused services, and coordinated child care delivery systems. In all of these activities, the Bureau seeks to enhance the quality, availability, and affordability of child care services, support children's healthy growth and development in safe child care environments, enhance parental choice and involvement in their children's care, and facilitate the linkage of child care with other community services.

B. The Early Learning Opportunities Act

The Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA) was passed by Congress to award grants to States to enable them to increase, support, expand and better coordinate early learning opportunities for children and their families through local community organizations. The purposes of the Act are to: (1) Increase the availability of voluntary programs, services, and activities that support early childhood development, increase parent effectiveness, and promote the learning readiness of young children so that they enter school ready to learn; (2) support parents, child care providers, and caregivers who want to incorporate early learning activities into the daily lives of young children; (3) remove barriers to the provision of an accessible system of early childhood learning programs in communities throughout the United States; (4) increase the availability and affordability of professional development activities and compensation for caregivers and child care providers; and (5) facilitate the development of community-based

systems of collaborative service delivery models characterized by resource sharing, linkages between appropriate supports, and local planning for services.

The Act provides that if the amount appropriated for this program in any fiscal year is less than \$150 million, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) shall award grants on a competitive basis directly to Local Councils. DHHS is administering the program under this special provision in Fiscal Year (FY) 2003.

C. Early Learning Opportunities Act Grants—Goals and Priorities

In FY 2003, grants will be awarded, on a competitive basis, directly to those Local Councils that can best assess their community needs and create a plan to facilitate the development of community-based systems and collaborative service delivery models.

ELOA grants will be available to Local Councils that have been so designated by a local government entity, Indian Tribe, Regional Corporation, or Native Hawaiian entity. Local Councils will be required to submit the results of a current needs and resources assessment, documenting the needs of the young children and families in their locality, as well as a local plan that addresses the most significant needs. To receive an ELOA grant, the plan must include activities for "Enhancing Early Childhood Literacy," and two or more of the other allowable ELOA activities specified in Part II, F. The implementation plan must describe the outcome measures and an evaluation plan for each proposed activity.

In developing local plans and applications under this announcement, ACF encourages Local Councils to incorporate strategies to promote the involvement of faith-based providers.

D. Definitions

Administrative Costs—means costs related to the overall management of the program, which do not directly relate to the provision of program services. These costs can be in both the personnel and non-personnel budget categories and include, but are not limited to: Salaries of managerial and administrative staff, indirect costs, and other costs associated with administrative functions such as accounting, payroll services, or auditing. **Note:** Not more than three percent of the total Federal share received by the Local Council through this announcement shall be used to pay for the "administrative costs" of the Local Council, including administrative costs of any sub-grantees and third

parties in carrying out activities funded under the grant.

Budget Period—for the purposes of this announcement, budget period means the 17-month period of time for which ELOA funds are made available to a particular grantee (*i.e.*, beginning on September 30, 2003, and ending on February 28, 2005).

Caregiver—means an individual, including a relative, neighbor, or family friend, who regularly or frequently provides care, with or without compensation, for a child for whom the individual is not the parent.

Child Care Provider—means a provider of non-residential child care services (including center-based, family-based, and in-home child care services) for compensation who or that is legally operating under State law, and in compliance with applicable State and local requirements for the provision of child care services.

Early Learning—when used with respect to a program or activity, means learning designed to facilitate the development of cognitive, language, motor, and social-emotional skills for, and to promote learning readiness in, young children (see definition of young child).

Early Learning Program—means a program of services or activities that helps parents, caregivers, and child care providers to incorporate early learning into the daily lives of young children; or a program that directly provides early learning to young children.

Indian Tribe—has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

Local Council—means a Local Council established or designated by a local government, Indian Tribe, Regional Corporation, or Native Hawaiian entity to serve as applicant under this announcement serving one or more localities.

Local Government—means a county, municipality, city, town, township, borough, parish, select board, council of local governments (whether or not incorporated as a non-profit corporation under State law), intra-state district, a general purpose unit of local government, and any other interstate or regional unit of local government. "Local Government" does not mean any of the 50 States, or any agency or instrumentality of a State exclusive of local governments.

Locality—means a city, county, borough, township, or area served by another general purpose unit of local government, an Indian Tribe, a Regional Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian entity.