

Illinois Child Care Assistance Program Brief

Where Parents Work

June 2024

Overview

Many low-income working parents rely on subsidized child care. The program supports qualifying families in their work or school attendance. Many of these families may be unable to afford market-rate child care. Examining parents' income and employment patterns can guide policymakers to optimally structure subsidized child care to support sustained employment and improve program engagement. This brief series focuses on the work, school, and child care engagement of Illinois families enrolled in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). This brief examines the industries employing parents when their family initiated participation in subsidized child care.

What We Did

We analyzed the labor market participation of parents with subsidized child care cases that opened in the first quarter of 2019. We restricted analyses to households that had not participated in CCAP in the prior 2 years. We used CCAP data from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Child Care Management System (CCMS) joined to wage data reported to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) to examine the industries in which parents worked at the time of entry into subsidized child care.

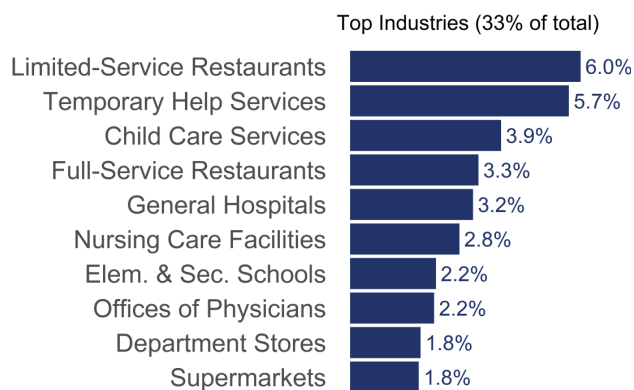
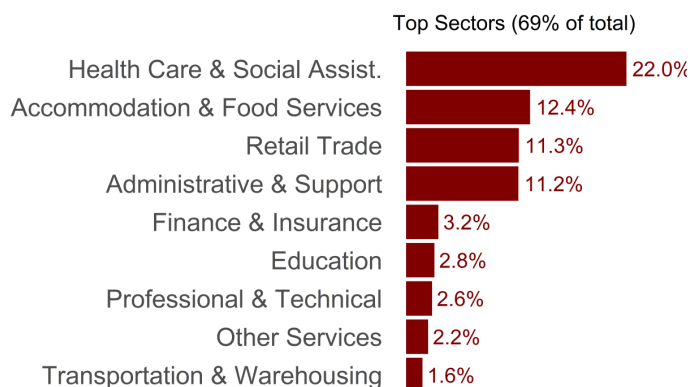
What We Found

About 1 in 5 parents (22%) were employed in the health care and social assistance sector. Other employment top sectors include accommodation and food services (12%), retail trade (11%), and administrative support (11%).

At a more detailed level, the top employment industries for parents are limited-service restaurants (that is, "fast food"), temporary help services, child care services, full-service restaurants, and general hospitals.

These industries often require evening and weekend work and schedules that change week to week. This suggests there is need for nontraditional and flexible child care hours among families utilizing subsidized child care.

Top Employment Sectors and Industries Among Parents Entering CCAP in 2019



Note: 2019 Q1. Sector and industry information are based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code assigned for the highest paid employer for each CCAP case head of household. Sectors are based on the 2-digit NAICS code and industries are based on the 6-digit NAICS code. There are 20 2-digit sector codes and 1012 6-digit industry codes.

Learn More

[Follow along](#) for technical details and methodology, and additional study findings on parental employment within subsidized child care.

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About CCAP

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) in Illinois provides childcare subsidies to low-income families in the state who participate in qualifying employment and educational activities. Eligibility for CCAP is restricted to families with children under age 13 whose household income falls below 225% of the federal poverty line at the time of application (or 275% of the federal poverty line at the time of eligibility redetermination). According to IDHS, in FY2020, Illinois CCAP served 193,715 children and 108,316 families, and distributed subsidy payments to 26,798 childcare providers.

Acknowledgements

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