

Child Care Subsidy Use by Families with Children with and without Special Needs

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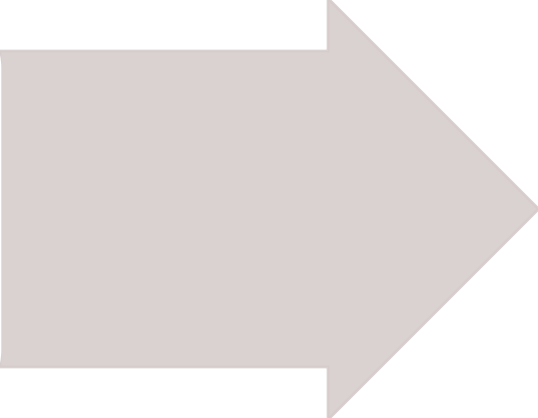
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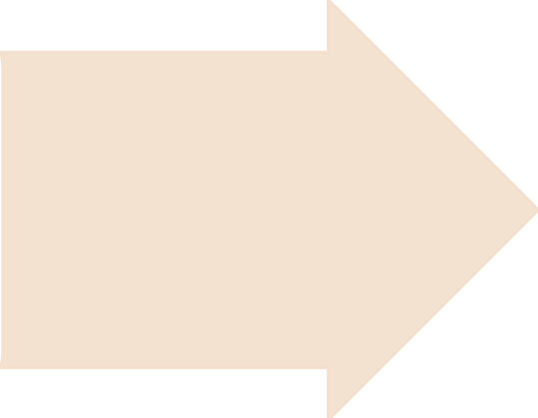
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Research Questions

Do low-income children with and without special needs have different rates of subsidized care throughout early childhood?



What child, family and geographic characteristics predict subsidized care among low-income children with special needs as infants, toddlers, and preschoolers?



Conclusions

Yes. Compared to subsidy-eligible children who do not have special needs, subsidy-eligible children with special needs are significantly less likely to use child care subsidies.

In our data set, we found few consistent predictors of subsidy use for families with children with special needs across infancy, toddlerhood, and preschool.

- Single consistent predictor was marital status.

Policy Implications

CCDBG Reauthorization of 2014 increases the focus on children with special needs

Use of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) to increase training for providers and consumer education for parents

Theoretical and Practice Rationale



Challenges of accessing high quality care
for children with special needs

Method: Data Source and Analytic Sample

Data Source

- Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)
- Nationally-representative dataset of children born in US in 2001

Analytic Sample

- Children eligible for subsidies
- Estimated 1,092,650 to 1,496,550 children throughout early childhood (unweighted n = 2,350 to 4,050)

Study Variables

Subsidy Eligibility

- Parent reported:
 - Welfare benefits
 - Income 130% of federal poverty level

Subsidy Receipt

- Parent reported receiving subsidy

Special Needs Status

- Parent reported IFSP/IEP;
- Medically diagnosed disability; OR
- Cognitive, motor, or social-emotional functioning 1.5 SD below the mean

Ecological Predictors of Subsidy Use

Child

- Race, Gender

Family

- Maternal Education, Maternal Work Status, Home Language, Marital Status, Number of Siblings, Maternal Age, Receipt of Public Assistance

Geographic

- Urbanicity, Census Region

Results: Rates of Subsidy Use

Significant differences in rates of subsidy use between children with and without special needs

- Children with special needs use subsidies at significantly lower rates than their peers without disabilities
- Greatest differences in preschool

Results: Predictors of Subsidy Use

	Infancy	Toddlerhood	Preschool
Race	X		
Maternal Education		X	
Maternal Work Status		X	X
# of Siblings		X	
Marital Status	X	X	X
Maternal Age	X		

Benefit for Research and Policy

First known estimates of subsidy use by families with children with special needs

Highlights challenges for families of children with special needs and states to meet the needs of these families

Future questions:

- Reasons for lower rates of use
- Continued exploration of factors predicting use
- Type of care, quality, child outcomes