



IdahoSTARS 2009 Program Improvement Grants

What: 2009 *Program Improvement Grants* for Idaho child care facilities. The 2009 grants will focus on five program practices under consideration for the future IdahoSTARS Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Information from this grant cycle will help IdahoSTARS decide how, or if, these program practices fit into the QRIS. The number of facilities and the amount of money awarded will depend on the number and type of grant applications submitted.

Why: Because child care directors and owners are committed to professional development and quality child care. As a facility director/owner you can apply on behalf of your staff and facility. Grants will include funding to improve specific program practices and may cover expenses associated with training, mentoring, travel, equipment, and materials. Continue reading to find out the specific details of each, of the five, grant opportunities.

When: Applications will be accepted from **February 1, 2009 through March 13, 2009 at 5:00 PM**. All applications with required documents must be received via postal mail in the IdahoSTARS office, located at 1471 Shoreline Dr. Ste. 202, Boise, ID 83702, faxed to (208) 345-6569, **or** emailed to dduskett@idahoaeyc.org. All applicants will be notified by March 30, 2009 of the status of their application.

Who: Only center directors or family home child care owners are invited to apply.

- Individual teachers wishing to be involved must work with their director to apply.
- Directors/owners must be enrolled in the PDS Registry prior to March 1, 2009.
- Directors/owners must be enrolled, but do not have to be eligible for incentives, because this grant will benefit *the facility* (all staff, children, and parents) not the director personally.
- Some grants (Teacher/Child Interaction, Inclusion, and/or Accreditation) may involve individual classroom teachers. When applying for one of these grants, note that **the full-time lead classroom teacher or the primary caregiver in each classroom must be enrolled in the IdahoSTARS Registry as of March 1, 2009 and be eligible for incentives.**

(Remember, IdahoSTARS Registry applications take 4-6 weeks to be processed)

How: Mentors are available through the IdahoSTARS Mentor/Coach program to help complete the application.

- Complete the *2009 Program Improvement Grant Application* that is posted on IdahoSTARS webpage www.idahostars.org or at the Child Care Resource and Referral office in your region.
- If your proposal is selected, IdahoSTARS staff will contact you in March to schedule a short phone orientation about the award.
- Directors **must apply for a first and second choice**. Note that only one of the choices may be awarded. Read the grant descriptions carefully before making decisions for your choices.
- IdahoSTARS administrative staff will review the applications and grantees will be selected based on the merit of the request. Explanations included on the application form should be logical, specific, realistic, and/or feasible for the facility.
- If materials and/or equipment are awarded, items will be purchased directly through the Idaho AEYC office and shipped to the grant recipient unless otherwise indicated.

- Successful grantees must submit accurate receipts for all materials or training not purchased directly through the Idaho AEYC office by the end of this grant cycle.

Owner/directors and other interested child care providers can contact their local CCR&R office for more information on the 2009 Program Improvement Grants and for the next scheduled PDS Orientation, by dialing 2-1-1 and asking for your Regional CCR&R office.

DESCRIPTION OF GRANT OPTIONS

Read the grant descriptions carefully before making decisions.

Inclusion Grant

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion means inviting all children and families to participate in a child care program and intentionally planning for the success of **every** child and family, especially children with an identified disability or more specialized needs. “Children with special needs are supported with opportunities to grow and learn in inclusive settings with typically developing peers while in child care, school and community activities” (Idaho Early Learning Guidelines Draft, p. 12, 2008). Inclusion also considers the diversity and variation that exists among young children and includes, but is not limited to, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, family culture, family structure, gender, abilities and communities. It’s about belonging.

Families with children who have disabilities may have a more difficult time finding child care; therefore, this grant is specifically designed to help child care programs increase their ability to care for children with disabilities.

Goals of this Inclusion Grant are to:

1. Help child care professionals to create an environment in their child care setting to meet the individual needs and abilities of each child and/or family in the setting.
2. Help child care professionals to support all children, especially those with disabilities and other more specialized needs and their families to fully participate in a child care program.

What is included in this Inclusion Grant?

This grant is to support the implementation of a facility’s *Inclusion Self-Reflection* goals. After completing the initial *Inclusion Self-Reflection*, grantees will submit a request for services, materials, and/or equipment to improve inclusive practices. Ideas for grant requests include but are not limited to:

- Utilize the services of one or more professionals who can assist in assessing the needs and helping children to more successfully participate in a classroom

- Utilize the services of a translator in the classroom or during parent conferences, training, meetings
- Create modifications in the classroom(s) or facility to better support the inclusion of children with disabilities
- Create a procedure for tracking growth and development of all young children in the program and reporting that information to parents
- Purchase developmental screening tools such as *Ages and Stages*, *Work Sampling System*, *DECA*, *Bailey*, *Creative Curriculum*, or other screening tools
- Learn about developmental screening tools for use by staff and/or families through training

Requirements for this Inclusion Grant:

- The full-time lead classroom teacher or the primary caregiver in each classroom must be enrolled in the IdahoSTARS Registry as of March 1, 2009 and be eligible for incentives.
- Must agree to conference calls with IdahoSTARS staff as necessary, to coordinate the grant project
- Complete the IdahoSTARS *Program Improvement Grant Application*.
- Directors will complete an initial *IdahoSTARS Inclusion Self-Reflection* for each classroom that will be participating in this improvement opportunity by April 10, 2009.
- Directors will complete a second post-award *IdahoSTARS Inclusion Self-Reflection* by October 10, 2010.

Parent Leadership Grant

What is Parent Leadership?

Parent Leadership:

- Believes that parents are knowledgeable about their families and communities
- Recognizes that parents can provide valuable insight into beneficial program and community changes
- Succeeds when parents and staff work together to make decisions, sharing responsibility and expertise
- Begins when organizations support the development of leadership skills and eliminate barriers to active and meaningful parent participation

- Is a key component of *Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education*, a quality standard in Idaho's emerging Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for child care facilities
- Is a feature of successful *Strengthening Families* programs and contributes to the prevention of child abuse and neglect

Goals of this Parent Leadership Grant:

1. Help parents discover and use their leadership skills in the facility and beyond.
2. Educate providers about developing parent leadership.
3. Evaluate the current parent leadership practices in the facility.
4. Plan to facilitate parent leadership in the facility, including offering a six-week Community Café series.

What is included in this Parent Leadership Grant?

- All grantees will be expected to participate in two days of training in Boise, Idaho on Parent Leadership.
- Each participating facility will bring a two or three person team, which must include the Director and at least one parent. If a grantee attended the Community Café training that was offered in November 2008, they must attend the first day of training and make arrangements to complete their funding plans at that training.
- Food, lodging, travel expenses, and substitute costs for up to three team members will be covered.

Day 1:

- Define Parent Leadership
- Learn about the four levels of parent leadership
- Explore the barriers to parent leadership
- Learn about shared leadership
- Learn how parent leadership contributes to the prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Conduct a Family Leadership Self-assessment, using a tool developed by the FRIENDS National Resource Center
- Create an action plan designed to engage all parents and facilitate their development into leaders
- Create an action and funding plan to hold a Community Café series in your facility. The series includes six Café sessions over the course of six consecutive weeks, to be completed by July 1, 2009. An award will be made, based on a funding plan to support a Community Café in the participating facility. Expenses may include:
 - On-site child care for Café participants
 - Supplies/books/copies
 - Meals for Café' participants

Day 2:

- Robin Higa, founder and developer of the Community Café, will present on how to conduct a Community Café in your facility.
- Community Cafés are a parent-hosted gathering of parents and partners who participate in a series of guided conversations. These conversations build community wisdom and parent voice to impact policy, practice and action to improve the lives of children and their families. Topics include the five inalienable rights (The Protective Factors) that need to be in place for a family to ensure their child’s wellbeing. Parents and community participants will learn café planning, conversation design, monitoring and evaluation and leave prepared to host their own cafés.
- Participants must submit post-project reports.

Requirements for this Parent Leadership Grant:

- Complete the IdahoSTARS *Program Improvement Grant Application*.
- Participate in statewide conference calls on a monthly basis to provide feedback to the IdahoSTARS Quality Rating and Improvement System coordinator.

Teacher/Child Interaction Grant***What is Teacher/Child Interaction?***

The quality of teaching that a child experiences can vary greatly, even in child care facilities led by teachers with college degrees. Robert C. Piantain, an educational researcher recently commented that “the interactions between teachers and children and what teachers *do* with the materials they have are more important than certificates or degrees”. Positive early childhood teacher/child interactions are important to quality educational experiences that lead to a child’s success.

IdahoSTARS is evaluating the use of a teacher/child interaction assessment tool called *The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)*. This tool is designed to assess teacher/child interaction through multiple observations in a classroom and then provide feedback to the teacher to increase their competency.

Goals for this Teacher/Child Interaction Grant:

1. Measure the instructional and social interactions that are proven to contribute to children’s academic achievement and social competence in the following three dimensions:
 - a) **Emotional Support**: positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for child perspectives

- b) **Classroom Organization**: behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats
- c) **Instructional Support**: focuses on the roles of concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling

To learn more about **CLASS** go on-line to www.classobservation.com. You can sign up to receive a free download of the *CLASS Dimensions Overview* at www.brookespublishing.com/class2007

2. Help new and experienced teachers become more effective

What is included in this Teacher/Child Interaction Grant?

The Director of a child care center or the Owner/Operator of a family or group child care facility must agree to:

- Attend an Orientation to **CLASS**. Transportation, substitute costs, meals, and lodging will be covered by the grant. Directors are encouraged to attend the Orientation closest to their facility location – dates and times to be announced.
- Require **all classroom** staff attend a two- hour training at their facility conducted by an IdahoSTARS **CLASS** Assessor.
- Require at least 75% of the facility’s classrooms with the lead teachers involved in the **CLASS** pre and post-assessments and to work with a CLASS Assessor/Mentor over a 10 month period. Teachers must commit to working with the assessor/mentor to improve his/her interactions with children. Directors must agree to release time for the teachers to work with their assessor/mentor a minimum of one hour/week. All assessor/mentors will be paid from this grant.
- Participate in statewide conference calls to provide feedback to the IdahoSTARS Quality Rating and Improvement System coordinator. Teachers must commit to provide input about their experiences on statewide conference calls when requested.

Requirements for this Teacher/Child Interaction Grant:

- The lead or primary teacher/caregiver in the classrooms assessed must be enrolled in the IdahoSTARS Professional Development Registry and be eligible for incentives.
- Complete the IdahoSTARS *Program Improvement Grant Application*.

Child Care Administration/Business Practices Grant

What is Administration/Business Practices? (Note: Only child care facilities *that are licensed for a minimum of 20 children* may apply).

Strong administration and business practices ensure financially viable programs. Research consistently tells us that strong administrative practices in an early childhood facility are crucial to ensuring high-quality outcomes for children and families. Without quality business administration, high-quality interactions and learning environments at the classroom level cannot be sustained.

IdahoSTARS believes that increasing child care center directors' skills in the administration of the business of child care will enable them to provide the leadership, skills, and knowledge to implement high quality child care. IdahoSTARS may include Administration/Business Practices as a quality standard in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and the information gleaned from this grant experience will be useful in making this decision.

Goals for this Child Care Administration/Business Practices Grant:

- 1) Directors will assess their administration/business operations with a mentor and write an improvement plan for funds to implement upgrades.
- 2) Facilities will improve business practices to ensure program stability and sustainability.

What is included in this Child Care Administration/Business Practices Grant?

- Directors will commit to reviewing the *Program Administration Scale* by Teri N. Talan and Paula Jorde Bloom.
- Complete the self-assessment by May 15, 2009 and submit a written *Program Administration/Business Improvement Plan* by June 1st. The assistance of a mentor/coach is included in this grant.
- This self-assessment will focus on:
 - Human Resources Development
 - Personnel Cost and Allocation
 - Center Operations
 - Child Assessment
 - Fiscal Management
 - Program Planning and Evaluation
 - Family Partnerships
 - Marketing and Public Relations
 - Technology
 - Staff Qualifications
- The *Program Administration/Business Improvement Plan* will be reviewed by IdahoSTARS administrative staff and funds will be allocated based on the priorities outlined in the plan.
- Participate in conference calls with the IdahoSTARS QRIS Coordinator on a monthly basis.

Requirements for this Child Care Administration/Business Practices Grant:

- Only child care facilities *that are licensed for a minimum of 20 children* may apply.
- Complete the IdahoSTARS *Program Improvement Grant Application*.

Accreditation Grant

What is Accreditation? (Note: Only child care facilities that are ***in the process of applying*** for nationally recognized accreditation (NAEYC or NAFCC) or ***who are working to maintain their accreditation status can apply***. This includes child care centers, group child care facilities, and home child care facilities).

Accreditation is a nationally recognized process for family child care facilities through National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) and center-based facilities through National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Facility operations and practices are assessed to measure the quality of the services provided.

Goals of this Accreditation Grant:

- 1) Child care facilities will receive assistance with the accreditation process or receive help in meeting accreditation standards.
- 2) Program quality will improve through the accreditation process.
- 3) Parents will have information to help choose programs for their children based on national standards.

What is included in this Accreditation Grant?

The grant request may be used for:

- Fees associated with the accreditation process
- Equipment
- Facility renovations needed to meet the accreditation standards
- Mentoring
- Training that meets accreditation requirements

Requirements for this Accreditation Grant:

- The full-time lead classroom teacher or the primary caregiver in each classroom must be enrolled in the IdahoSTARS Registry as of March 1, 2009 and be eligible for incentives.

- Child care facilities that are in the process of applying for nationally recognized accreditation (NAEYC or NAFCC) or who are working to maintain their accreditation status can apply. This includes child care centers, group child care facilities, and home child care facilities.
- Complete the IdahoSTARS *Program Improvement Grant Application* that includes the budget request for accreditation.

Budget for this Accreditation Grant: Below is an example of a budget required on the IdahoSTARS 2009 *Program Improvement Grant Application*. Directors can include the budget in a different format, as long as all information is included.

Item	Cost	Date Purchased (or intend to purchase)	Accreditation Standard this item addresses
(example) Kaplan 22 piece music set	\$55.95	Purchase 3/13/2009	NACYC 2.E.01 & 2.E.02
		TOTAL	