

Experiences and Needs of Underserved Groups in Wisconsin Early Care and Education

Read the full report in the [PDG Sandbox](#).

African American

As part of the Statewide Needs Assessment for the Preschool Development Grant (PDG), the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies interviewed families (e.g. parents, grandparents, foster parents) and child care providers from Wisconsin's underserved populations. The interviews were conducted to better understand the specific context, needs, and challenges families and providers face when navigating Wisconsin's early childhood system.

Key Takeaways From the Interviews



- Both families and child care providers identify experiences of antiblack racism in early care and education spaces, which are overwhelmingly white.
- Families have concerns about both physical safety and social-emotional health of Black children in primarily white child care provider spaces.
- Child care is unaffordable for families, but child care tuition is not enough to support child care providers.
- Families can lose financial assistance if they reach a certain income level, which may still be below the poverty line, limiting job advancement and keeping them in poverty.
- State subsidy rules do not make allowances for individual context, like allowing victims of intimate partner violence access to aid without contacting the co-parent.

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19 Interviews Conducted with African American Community Members



*2019 Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) Data Query System



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families



Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies
SCHOOL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

African American Family and Provider Perspectives

Equity and inclusion are central to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) framework for evaluating and transforming early care and education. Questions were developed based on this framework and the core areas of access, affordability, quality, and workforce. Here is a summary of African American family and provider experiences and perceptions related to each of the four areas. For more information, visit [DCF's webpage](#).

» Because child care providers typically don't offer weekend or extended weekday care, families are limited in their employment choices or must turn to informal care.

» Black child care providers need financial resources and support to offer the expanded child care hours that families need, such as evenings or weekends.

» Child care is too expensive for many families.

"I don't know how people can afford it."

"I usually pay more for child care than the County pays for child care. But with the facilities out here, you have to have County funding for child care."

» Families want racially— and culturally—diverse child care providers, but the current provider workforce is overwhelmingly white.

» Child care providers should offer a child and family-centered approach to care that integrates the cultural beliefs and values of the family and community.

"Our children need a loving and safe environment."

» Child care providers often lose subsidy dollars that could come to their programs, because families are not aware of available subsidy programs.

"99% of children in (provider's) facility have an EBT card."

» Some Black child care providers experience racial discrimination, or antiblack racism, when interacting with supervisors, technical assistance providers, or regulatory agency staff.

"[A]s a Black business owner and child provider too, you... got to be cautious."

» Black child care providers face high barriers to workforce participation, while contributing diverse assets that are undervalued or unrecognized.

