

Why Invest In Early Childhood?



There is a wealth of research and data that connect high quality early childhood experiences to children's readiness for school and later life success. Children's readiness can be assessed by:

- **Physical Well-Being & Motor Skills**
Cutting, dressing self, running, jumping, and being well-rested and well-nourished.
- **Social & Emotional Development**
Positive interactions, self-regulation, understanding and expressing feelings, solve conflicts, empathize with others, taking turns and sharing.
- **Cognition & Language**
Able to observe, ask questions, and solve problems, have an enthusiastic and curious approach to new activities, communicate and understand the connection between letters and sounds.

"Supporting families with the cost of quality preschool and child care will result in a more efficient and productive American workforce in both the short-term and long-term."

(First Five Years Fund: www.ffyf.org)

Good Start Grants

Providing financial assistance for eligible families in Portage County to ensure they have access to quality, affordable child care.

Funded by



For more information contact:

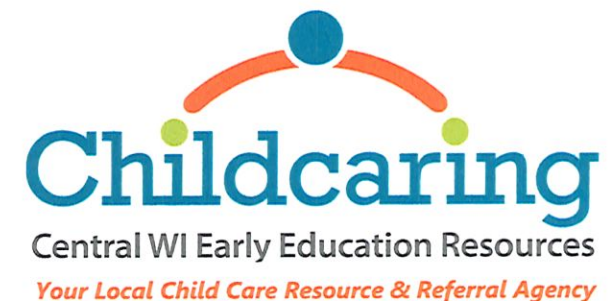
Childcaring, Inc.
Central WI Early Education Resources

**Your Local Child Care
Resource & Referral Agency**

850 Highway 153, Suite F
Mosinee, WI 54455

715.841.9490 / 1.800.628.8534
info@childcaring.org
www.childcaring.org

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About Good Start Grants

Good Start Grants (GSG) will help meet the funding gap, between what child care programs need to charge to offer a quality experience and what families can afford.

Families should not have to choose between affordable care and high quality care - care that provides a safe, stable, developmentally appropriate environment.

GSG also has a positive impact for child care programs. Some families stop working because they can't afford child care, causing some programs to close.

Quality child care programs are a critical piece of infrastructure for successful communities. A strong economy needs great child care: we can't work without it!



By providing Good Start Grants we hope to:

- Improve children's readiness for school and later life success
- Reduce family burdens & financial stress
- Support the early childhood programs and professionals
- Assist communities by contributing to solutions

How does it work?

To qualify, families must:

- Reside in Portage County.
- Have a gross household income at or below 250% of Federal Poverty Level (*families that qualify and/or receive Wisconsin Shares are not eligible for GSG*).
- Participate in an approved activity, such as work or school.
- Choose a child care program that is rated 3 Stars or higher in YoungStar.



Next steps:

- Submit an application to Childcaring. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. Applications are available at www.childcaring.org.
- Once approved, GSG will be paid directly to your child care program. Grant amounts are based on available funding.
- Families are responsible for paying the difference between what the program charges and the GSG portion.



YoungStar, a program of the Department of Children and Families, is Wisconsin's child care rating and improvement system created to improve the quality of child care for Wisconsin children.

YoungStar:

- Objectively measures child care quality.
- Helps parents choose the best child care for their children.
- Supports providers with tools and training to deliver high quality early care.
- Sets a consistent standard for child care quality.

The education that nurturing child care programs provide makes a big difference in the lives of so many children and their families. Maintaining a safe, healthy place for children to learn and grow isn't easy; it takes hard work and dedication.

Child care programs are evaluated and given a rating from 1 to 5 Stars; with 5 being the highest rating.

For more information about YoungStar please visit our website at www.childcaring.org.

If your child care program is interested in serving families receiving Good Start Grants, contact Childcaring for more information.