

Baby Steps Grant Overview

April 5, 2016

APPLICATION DEADLINE

- If center attended the orientation meeting on April 5th:
 - Application is due **Tuesday, April 19, 2016 by 5:00 p.m.**
- If center attended the orientation meeting on April 7th:
 - Application is due **Thursday, April 21, 2016 by 5:00 p.m.**

Applications must be submitted electronically to occitt@utah.gov

Any application received after the designated due dates will not be considered for the grant and will be returned to the program. Applications can be turned in earlier if desired.

Questions regarding the application process can be directed to: kmelville@utah.gov

ELIGIBILITY

Centers must meet the following criteria in order to participate in the Baby Steps program:

- Licensed by the Utah Child Care Licensing Program and currently care for children under the age of 36 months on a full-time basis and year-round;
- Rooms dedicated exclusively to children under the age of two years; and
- Group size limits to not exceed the following:
 - Infant rooms cannot exceed eight children,
 - Toddler rooms cannot exceed 12 children,
 - Two-year-old rooms cannot exceed 14 children.

The following are not eligible to participate in the Baby Steps program:

- Centers holding an Hourly Child Care license;
- Centers providing child care in resort or gym/spa settings;
- Centers holding a conditional license;
- Centers that have already received two or more years of Baby Steps funding;
- Federally funded programs such as Head Start or Military Child Care; and
- Centers suspended from grant eligibility by the Office of Child Care.

REQUIRED QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Administrative Commitment:

The person supervising the infant, toddler and two-year-old caregivers must commit to working with the Infant Toddler Specialist ensuring that quality improvement efforts continue regardless of staff turnover.

The role of the Infant Toddler Specialist is to support the center's director in the training and implementation of Baby Steps goals for their staff. The effective implementation of the goals requires engagement of the center management. As a result, management must do the following:

- Spend time in the classroom with the Infant Toddler Specialist, ensuring implementation of positive changes;
- Provide orientation to new staff, as well as help current staff, understand best practices and the goals committed to by the center;
- Spend three hours with each infant, toddler and two-year-old caregiver during the year and document time spent with provided form;
- Spend five hours with the Infant Toddler Specialist during each year and document time spent with provided form;
- Between technical assistance visits, work to maintain best practices discussed with the Infant Toddler Specialist; and
- **In April of each year, complete a self-evaluation of the infant, toddler, and two-year-old room(s).**

Training:

Center Director:

Each center director must complete the following trainings:

- (1) By the end of the first year, complete at least two Infant/Toddler Endorsement courses; and
- (2) By the end of the second year, complete the Infant/Toddler Endorsement, unless the Center Director has any of the following: (i) the Infant/Toddler endorsement; (ii) Infant/Toddler CDA; or (iii) received college credit for an Infant/Toddler Development Class. In these circumstances, the caregiver will be required to provide documentation including the college transcript or copy of the CDA documentation.

Infant and Toddler Caregivers:

Infant and toddler caregivers must complete the Infant/Toddler Training Endorsement, unless the caregiver has any of the following: (i) the Infant/Toddler endorsement; (ii) Infant/Toddler CDA; or (iii) received college credit for an Infant/Toddler Development Class. In these circumstances, the caregiver will be required to provide documentation including the college transcript or copy of the CDA documentation.

The endorsement requires 40 hours of training. NOTE: Programs may elect to send one full-time caregiver to 40 hours of training, or two caregivers may complete 20 hours of training each year.

The following provides additional information regarding the training requirements:

- If a caregiver leaves the program, the replacement caregiver must finish all training not completed previously.
- Classes are offered through the Care About Childcare (CAC) referral agencies; staff may attend classes taught by CAC agencies in any geographical area.
- Infant/Toddler Endorsement courses can be taken in any order.
- Centers are required to pay caregivers their usual wage for attending training classes. Refer to "Training Funds," discussed below.

- Where a provider would not have access to a CAC training class or would have to drive for more than one hour to attend a class, special arrangements can be made with the Office of Child Care (OCC), Infant Toddler Program Specialist to take an equivalent on-line course. This option is not available in areas where classes are offered regularly, and must be pre-approved.

Centers failing to complete the training requirements according to the policies listed above will become INELIGIBLE the following year. Additionally, the program may be suspended from all grant programs administered by OCC the following fiscal year.

Observations:

Observations using the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ITERS-R) are completed to identify how the Infant Toddler Specialist will assist quality improvement. ITERS-R observations allow the OCC to evaluate the effectiveness of the Baby Steps Program. Participating centers will be required to cooperate with the Infant Toddler Specialist in completing a pre- and post-ITERS-R observation in each infant/toddler classroom. The initial observation will occur early in the grant cycle to establish a baseline observation. A follow-up observation will be conducted approximately two years later.

The following provides additional information on the observation:

- Each observation lasts approximately three to four hours.
- The Infant Toddler Specialist shares the results of the observations with the center director and staff.
- An Infant Toddler Specialist will complete a follow-up observation during the last year of the grant in each infant, toddler and two-year-old room.
- The expectation is that each room will score one of the following:
 - An overall score of 3.50 in each room, or
 - A score of 4.0 overall if the original observation score was 3.0 or higher.

Quality Improvement Goals:

Utilizing the results of the ITERS-R baseline observation and areas of concern identified by the center, goals are established in consultation with the Infant/Toddler Specialist. Centers are strongly encouraged to involve caregivers in setting goals. Once goals are established, the Infant/Toddler Specialist is available to help centers develop a plan to meet their goals.

Goals will be adjusted and evaluated throughout the first year. In grants years two and three, the goals will be established after the director completes an observation and self-assessment in each participating room. These goals will be established in consultation with the Infant Toddler Specialist.

FUNDING DETAILS

Materials and Equipment Funds:

In years one and two, the program will receive funds for the purchase of materials, equipment, and furniture. The maximum amount of funds available for these purchases depend on the number of children in care. Centers must demonstrate a need for the highest amount of funding or it will be adjusted to what is needed. The maximum funding is as follows:

- (1) Infants and Toddlers:

- a. \$2,000 for four, infant and toddler children
 - b. \$3,500 for eight, infant and toddler children;
- (2) Two-year Old Children:
- a. \$1,500 for seven, two-year-old children; or
 - b. \$3,000 for a group of 14 two-year-old children.

NOTE: Materials and Equipment Funds will be reduced for the third year, as specified in the “Materials & Equipment Funds” table below.

Materials & Equipment Funds				
Age Group	Infants / Toddlers		Two-Year-Olds	
Group Size	4	8	7	14
Materials and Equipment Eligibility FY17-FY18	\$2000	\$3500	\$1500	\$3000
Materials and Equipment Eligibility FY19	\$750	\$1000	\$750	\$1000

Allowable and Unallowable Purchases

Funds for equipment and materials will be issued after July 1, 2016 and after programs submit a Materials and Equipment List, approved by their Infant Toddler Specialist. Infant Toddler Specialists may assist the director and staff to select purchases that are durable and most appropriate for each individual environment. Funds can be used to install sinks and make other minor changes to participating rooms, or create or improve a separate playground, specifically designed for children under the age of three. These purchases require prior approval from the OCC Program Specialist.

The limits on equipment purchases include:

- Purchases may only be made from companies or catalogs specializing in equipment for group care of children under three years old.
- Purchases must be age appropriate and safe for children under three years old.
- Purchases must be made exactly as they are listed on the equipment and materials request form. Any changes must be approved through the Infant Toddler Program Specialist at the Office of Child Care.

Unallowable Purchases:

Programs may not use funds to purchase the following:

- Group feeding tables.
- Electronic devices such as computers or tablets.
- Used or second-hand materials.
- Materials and equipment from dollar or other discount type stores.

Training Funds:

Centers will be reimbursed to cover the cost of wages paid to caregivers equal to \$200 per caregiver or up to a maximum of \$400 per room. These funds are available only for attendance at required classes, which include:

- Infant and toddler caregivers: Infant/Toddler Endorsement
- Two-year-old caregivers: Career Ladder Course with two-year-old child development content. “All About Twos” class is strongly recommended.

Interaction/Listening and Talking Incentive (FY19):

Centers will be eligible for incentive funds, based upon improvement scores on the ITERS-R, on either the Language and Talking Subscale, or the Interaction Subscale.

At the end of the third year, infant, toddler, and two-year-old rooms receiving an average score of 4.0 on the Language and Talking Subscale of the ITERS-R will receive a \$500 incentive. Similarly, an additional incentive of \$500 will be rewarded to centers receiving an average score of 4.0 on the Interaction subscale. Incentives will not exceed \$1000 per participating room.

Ongoing Quality Improvement (QI) Funds: Centers will receive ongoing quality improvement funds for each group of children under the age of 36 months, based on average daily attendance between January and April of each year these age groups. In small programs where children between the ages of two and five are cared for in one group, and a mixed ratio is used, the maximum payout in one billing period can be for seven children.

Ongoing QI Funds				
Age Group	Infants / Toddlers		Two-Year-Olds	
Group Size	4	8	7	14
	\$1200	\$2400	\$2100	\$4200

Allowable Quality Improvement Expenses

The remainder of the grant funds may be spent in a variety of ways to help the program reach quality improvement goals. Money may be used to:

- Provide small recognition incentives, or gifts to reward staff for a job well done.
- Support the plan submitted to recruit and/or retain staff.
- Raise wages for infant, toddler, and two-year-old caregivers, or provide other benefits.
- Pay additional staff to attend training.
- Purchase additional furniture, materials and equipment for infant, toddler and two-year-old rooms.
- Create or improve a playground dedicated to children under age three.
- Purchase additional resources for staff, such as books or magazine subscriptions.
- Support families through center activities.
- Permanent improvements to the buildings/grounds may be made with these funds **if prior written approval is obtained from the OCC Infant Toddler Program Specialist.**

INVOICE PROCESS

Grantee shall submit invoices two times a year. OCC will make payments based on the average daily attendance of the designated months.

- Invoices shall be submitted according to the schedule below.
- The following must be submitted with each invoice:
 - Attendance Record for the target month

- Training Report showing completed training and staff changes.
- If training was completed during the billing period, copies of training certificates and documentation showing how staff wages were paid.
- A proposed spending plan outlining how invoice funds will be spent.
- Receipt Report and receipts for the check sent from the previous invoice.

NOTE: Late invoices may not be processed until the next deadline.

INVOICE SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES

FY 2017	Equipment and Materials Request Forms	Receipts	Invoice 1	Invoice 2
	Due Oct. 14, 2016 Must be approved by I/T Specialist	Due December 15, 2016 Equipment and Materials Receipts	Due February 15, 2017 Based on January attendance	Due May 15, 2017 Based on April attendance
FY 2018	Equipment and Materials Request Forms	Receipts	Invoice 3	Invoice 4
	Due Oct. 13, 2017 Must be approved by I/T Specialist	Due December 15, 2017 Equipment and Materials Receipts	Due February 15, 2018 Based on January attendance	Due May 15, 2018 Based on April attendance
FY 2019	Equipment and Materials Request Forms	Receipts	Invoice 5	Invoice 6
	Due Oct. 12, 2018 Must be approved by I/T Specialist	Due December 14, 2018 Equipment and Materials Receipts	Due February 15, 2019 Based on January attendance	Due May 15, 2019 Based on April attendance

RENEWAL

This agreement may be extended beyond the original contract period for up to two additional years, ending June 30, 2019. **OCC may elect not to renew based on lack of funding, change in program direction and/or the program's performance.** Prior to the contract year starting July 1, 2017, the following items must be submitted with the End-of-Year Report, utilizing forms distributed by the OCC Program Infant Toddler Specialist:

To renew the contract for a second and third year, centers must:

- Continue in good standing with the Utah Child Care Licensing, maintaining a regular license.
- Turn in receipts accounting for 100 percent of the equipment and materials the Center received by the deadline specified in this Agreement (see section INVOICE SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES).

- Maintain the required maximum group size of eight for infants, 12 for toddlers, and no more than 14 for two-year-old rooms.
- Consistently maintain a 4 to 1 ratio for infant/toddler rooms and 7 to 1 for two-year-old rooms throughout the grant period.
- Administration fulfills administrative requirements of five hours with the Infant Toddler Specialist and three hours with each caregiver.
- Meet the annual training requirements and show documentation that staff members were paid while attending class.
- Fulfill quality improvement goals for the first year.

DOCUMENTATION

All required grant documentation must be kept on-site for possible review by OCC staff or State/Federal Auditors. Copies of all paperwork related to the grant must be maintained in a “Baby Steps” folder or binder for four years past the termination date of the grant, or until all audits initiated within the four years have been completed, whichever is later. The documentation includes the following:

- Invoices
- Copies of Goal Forms
- Training Reports
- Attendance Records for the target months
- Sign-in/out sheets/reports for the target months
- Birthdates for all children listed on the attendance record for each target month
- Documents demonstrating training requirements were met. Options include:
 - CAC Certificates
 - Infant Toddler CDA Certificate
 - College transcript
- Documentation showing how staff wages were paid for attending training classes
- Copies of each budget plan and the supporting receipts/documents that show how the center utilized grant funds
- Copies of receipts for all purchases

OUTSIDE ASSESSMENT

- OCC and/or an Infant Toddler Specialist will complete an ITERS-R in each participating room during the first and last year of the project
- Centers will be notified in advance of all observations for the ITERS-R.
- In addition to helping the center program set solid quality improvement goals, the ITERS-R evaluates the effectiveness of the Baby Steps Program.
- ITERS-R Observation data may be used to determine specific outcomes statewide and effectiveness of the Baby Steps program. All personal and identifying information will remain confidential and protected.
- Additional observations may also be scheduled to train new Infant/Toddler Specialists and/or to complete reliability checks.

AUDIT CONTROLS

To fulfill requirements placed on OCC by state and federal auditors, attendance records may be matched to sign in/out sheets or computer records to check for accuracy of the average daily attendance figures. These records will be checked on site. OCC may occasionally make appointments in advance or may make unannounced visits.

REPORTING

Reports must be prepared according to Department of Workforce Services (DWS) report guidelines. DWS will provide training on report format and content at the grant orientation meeting.

- At the end of each year programs must submit the following:
 - End of Year Report
 - Director Assessment Observation
 - Director Assessment Feedback Report
 - Administrative and Caregiver Log
- **All reports and paperwork must be submitted electronically to the occitt@utah.gov email. Other arrangements may be made for programs with extenuating circumstance, but must be made and approved by the OCC Program Specialist.**