
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: BOYD
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: CHILDCARE STUDY
DATE: 12/20/00
CC: FILE

Per your request, I located the new report on child care services in states which said that Mississippi only served 4% of its children. The Southern Institute on Children and Families established the Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care in 1999 to address issues related to the affordability and accessibility of child care assistance. The task force was comprised of policymakers, administrators, employers, educators and child advocates from 16 states and the District of Columbia.

Table 1 (p. 9) of the report provides data on the number of children eligible to receive childcare subsidies through Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) and the number actually receiving such subsidies. According to the report, 160,000 children in Mississippi were eligible for CCDF under state rules in effect in October 1997 and 7,870, or 4% of those eligible, received subsidies from April to September of 1998. Mississippi did rank lowest among the seventeen states and the District of Columbia, followed by Arkansas at 5% and Texas and Virginia at 7%.

CCDF was designed to help states provide child care assistance to families at or below 85% of the state median income. Page 8 of the report states that insufficient federal and state funds have been appropriated to help families that fall within this target group. Nationwide, only 10% of income-eligible families receive child care assistance. An October 1999 Department of Health and Human Services study showed that not a single state could serve even a fourth of its eligible families. The new report by the Southern Institute shows that underfunding of child care subsidies is even more dramatic in the South. Mississippi is one of eight states that provides subsidies for fewer than 10% of the families who are eligible under the 85% of state median income guideline.

I have the full report and appendix in my office if you want to see it.