

BayStateWorks
Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. - LearningWorks
Community Based Organization Initiative
First Steps Into Childcare Careers Project - Award: \$180,000

Project Focus:

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. will partner with major private and non-profit child care employers to provide TANF recipients with access to professional positions in child care and early education. This project supports the ongoing process of transformation in the work systems of the child care industry, promoting increasingly robust career ladders and stronger employer investment in workforce training.

Collaborators:

Urban College of Boston, Boston Head Start, Child Care Choices of Boston, Arbor Associates, Associated Early Care and Education, Inc., Child Care Careers Institute, JobNet, Boston Career Link, The Workplace, 13 ABCD neighborhood service centers, Boston Health Commission, American Red Cross, Bright Horizons, Inc, Massachusetts Head Start Association, the Massachusetts Association of Day Care Directors, and the Boston Private Industry Council.

Project Goal:

- 29 participants will be placed in employment
- The salary and benefits post-placement will average \$10.00 per hour with benefits
- The job retention 1 year after training ends will be 70%.
- The promotion rate 1 year after training will be 60%

Enrollment Goals:

- 36 TANF recipients will be served

Project Design:

The project will not only prepare workers for their first child care position, but will prepare both worker and employer for the collaborative process of professional development. The following program components will be offered:

- Participants will undergo a comprehensive assessment of academic achievement, job skills and experience, interests and aptitudes and an individual service plan will be developed.
- Participants will be engaged in a 20-week training cycle incorporating job readiness, basic computer skills, occupational skills training in childcare, an internship, and an internship seminar, tailored to varied academic skill levels and job skills/experience.
- Participants who need training in basic literacy/ math, who need English language instruction, or who lack a high school credential will be enrolled in ABE, ESOL or GED preparation through ABCD, or referred to other appropriate educational options.
- This program component provides an opportunity for each candidate to gain hands-on experience (an internship) in a preschool classroom.
- The program is designed not only to equip participants to succeed in their first child care position, but to give them a head start in acquiring the professional credentials they will need to advance in a career. Consequently, teaching combines practical competencies with basic child development theory—and provides the successful graduate with a college-level educational experience.
- Participants develop professional portfolios documenting their experiences, skills, and qualifications relevant to work in the field of early education and care. They include required documents and certifications required by employers.
- ABCD works actively with more than 90 small and mid-sized child care centers in Greater Boston to ensure placement of the participants.
- Following job placement, the project staff will initiate on-site follow-up and retention support with the participant's employer, to track the participant's performance, anticipate and resolve possible barriers to continued successful employment, and promote employer involvement in career planning.