

Child Care & Development Fund

By, Donovan Antelope

The Northern Arapaho Nation Child Care and Development Fund program (CCDF) offers child care assistance to low-income Northern Arapaho families on the reservation. The program is overseen by Brenda Hubbard and Cynthia Littleshield and they review applicants and determine if they are eligible for the CCDF program. The CCDF serves 87 families, 157 children and 56 providers.

The program works with different child care centers in Lander and Riverton. The service area includes the Wind River Indian Reservation, Fremont County, and off-reservation areas. The CCDF program provides services through Family Day Home, Relative Care and Center Based Care. Relative Care is when relatives of the CCDF clients provide childcare parents or guardians go to school or work. The Home and Relative Care providers are paid by CCDF for their services.

Home and Relative Care providers are usually family members of their clients that have been contracted by the CCDF to provide child care due to the limited availability of day care providers in the area. If CCDF cannot place their client's children into day care in Lander or Riverton, then they seek out relatives to be child care providers. All potential child care providers are to be registered with CCDF, and be able to provide medical history documents, and pass a criminal background check.

Applicants for CCDF must be employed, or involved with education or training programs and enrolled members of the Northern Arapaho tribe. Children eligible to be placed in child care in the area must be 13 years or younger. All eligibility is determined by family household size and total household income. The clients are also required to have a co-payment, which is to be paid to the child care provider and the co-payment amount is determined by the client's income and family size. High priority clients are TANF clients and CPS child protective cases. CCDF uses a sliding fee scale to determine the co-payment amount that their clients do have to pay. Child fee does allow deductions to help low-income working families qualify for the assistance. Car payments, rent, utilities are considered allowable deductions.

Due to limited availability of day care providers in the area, CCDF is looking to recruit families or other tribal members as home care providers. CCDF has about 56 providers and they are encouraging tribal members in the area to apply

to be registered as a child care provider. Interested parties can contact CCDF at (307) 857-2436, Extension 126.