

# Fund Food with Care: Invest in Working Families

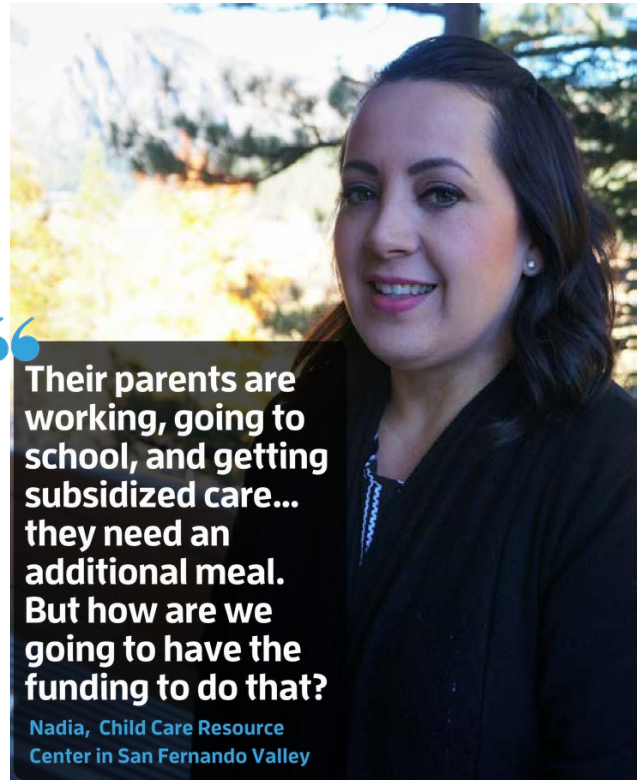


## Opportunity

Nutrition is an essential part of early child development. For decades, California supported access to nutrition in child care by supplementing the federal reimbursement for meals served through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). But in 2012, following the recession, this funding was eliminated for most of child care.

**Following the budget cut, over 20,000 children lost access to healthy meals served through the CACFP.**

Many California parents already struggle to afford their basic needs, including feeding their families. Paying for child care, in itself, can be financially crippling. Child care centers and providers want to help, but limited resources and high costs make it difficult for them to meet the nutritional needs of young children. California can help. Reinstating the state supplemental funds for CACFP will make nutritious food more accessible to young children, while supporting the viability of the child care work force.



**Their parents are working, going to school, and getting subsidized care... they need an additional meal. But how are we going to have the funding to do that?**

Nadia, Child Care Resource Center in San Fernando Valley

## Budget Ask



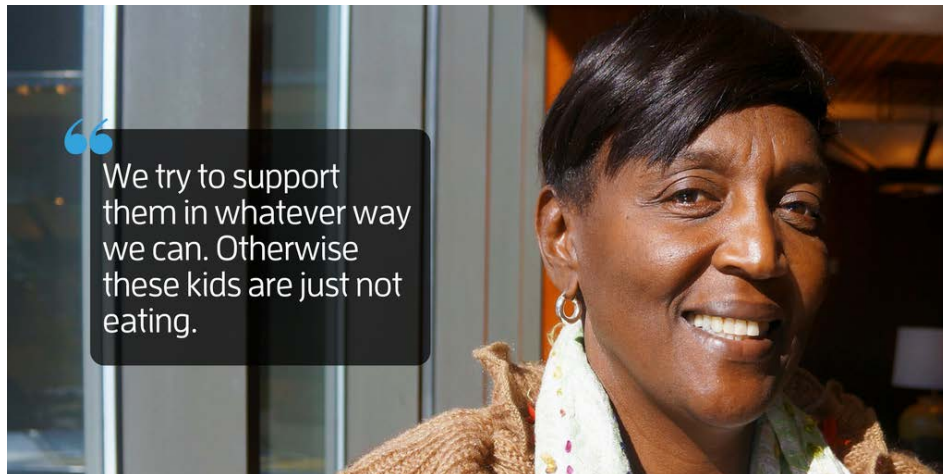
Restore access to healthy food for young, low-income children: reimburse child care centers and family child care home providers for every breakfast and lunch served to eligible children through the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

## Why this Matters

**Supplemental state meal reimbursements increase access to food for low-income children while supporting the viability of the child care work force.** California is a high-cost state. This funding is critical for child care to stay afloat. Early educators want to do what is best for children in their care, but limited finances constrain their ability to provide affordable, high-quality care. Providers and centers are consistently asked to do more with less. In the year following the state CACFP budget cut, centers reported losing on average \$8,270 from their budgets and close to 200 providers dropped off the food program. The majority were in low-income or rural areas. Child care centers and providers need state funding to continue providing quality care and nutrition to low-income children and families struggling to get ahead.

## Jefferson Park

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“We try to support them in whatever way we can. Otherwise these kids are just not eating.”

“Remember these parents are either in school or have a low-paying job. They don’t have to worry just about how to get to work, and how to pay rent. The place these parents live is dangerous in and of itself. So, with everything else, how do they feed their kids?”

Patricia, Nu Building Blocks

## Sacramento

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“Having this peace of mind that the children are well fed, you can really focus on your mission and get your goals straight.”

“My family came as refugees to this country 26 years ago. We didn’t speak English at all and we decided to go to school full time. Day care played a huge role. It has really affected me and my children. That is why I am so passionate to affect others and still am.”

Nadia, Love Little Children

## San Fernando Valley

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“When his foster mom came to us she said I just want him to eat. We helped.”

“We have a new child who is in foster care. When he came to us he had only been exposed to two foods: Cheetos and grapes. When his foster mom came to us she said, I just want him to eat. We helped. It came out of our pocket. We got them connected to services. Now he is eating more food.”

Ruby, Child Care Resource Center