



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Franklin County RISE Child Care Scholarships Support Local Families** *Funding from the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and City of Columbus makes child care more affordable and accessible*

**Columbus, Ohio (March 24, 2022)** — Through the [Franklin County RISE program](#), Action for Children is launching scholarships of up to \$10,000 each to families in Franklin County. Approximately 500 students per year are expected to be eligible thanks to funding from the Franklin County Board of Commissioners—adding to the 250 scholarships made available through the City of Columbus. These scholarships—made possible by an innovative cross-government funding collaboration from the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the City of Columbus—are accessible through child care providers for eligible applicants to help offset child care expenses.

“As we reimagine what our child care system is going to look like coming out of the pandemic, some have tried to frame it as a choice between increasing affordability or improving quality,” Franklin County Commissioner Erica C. Crawley said. “As a single mom of twins, I can tell you parents don’t see it as an either/or proposition—and neither does Franklin County. Early care and education is an educational, workforce, and economic issue and must be top priority requiring our investment now. The county’s investment will yield invaluable dividends now and for our community years later.”

County funding for the program includes \$11.4 million in scholarships for families. The funding is intended for those facing the “benefits cliff”—when individuals receive public benefits from the government, earn a raise, and then discover they make too much money to receive the benefits.

Child care is critical for many families, providing tools that prepare children for success. This new scholarship program will serve to:

- + Assist families with child care expenses
- + Support children’s growth and learning
- + Strengthen the Franklin County community and economy

Scholarships are available through licensed child care programs in Franklin County on a first-come-first-serve basis. Parents and guardians can use Action for Children’s child care referral service to find a local licensed provider and start the scholarship application process.

The scholarships follow an earlier announcement of [500 \\$1,000 educator signing bonuses](#), the first element of the new Franklin County RISE Child Care program.

“With educator signing bonuses helping to improve the system’s capacity, it’s now time to focus on the families and their children,” said City of Columbus Mayor Andrew J. Ginther. “This additional layer of support will help cover tuition costs and increase enrollment so that more children and their parents and guardians have access to quality child care.”

“This program is designed to empower families and provide resources they need to take advantage of the many benefits child care offers,” said Action for Children CEO Eric Karolak. “Quality child care delivers a



lifetime return for young minds, so it's exciting to make an impact in our community with our local government partners.”

Each provider may apply for up to six scholarships on behalf of eligible families. Dollar amounts will be determined based on the type of desired child care program and age of the child to be enrolled, as well as the payment policies of individual providers.

Additional incentives for child care providers will also be launched through Franklin County RISE in the coming months. This program will focus \$10.8 million in four funding areas: as many as 750 providers are expected to receive up to \$3,000 per year for supporting low-income families, up to \$10,000 for improving their Step Up to Quality ratings, and up to \$5,000 per year for expanding to non-traditional hours. In addition, RISE establishes a dedicated \$500,000 emergency rental assistance fund for child care workers, with an average of \$3,000 in rental assistance payments per household.

**Families can learn more about the scholarships and how to find a participating provider [here](#).**

#### **About Action for Children**

Action for Children is the local child care resource and referral agency for Central Ohio, and is committed to assuring quality early learning experiences for all children. Our services focus on transforming the lives of children by supporting the everyday heroes who most influence our children's early growth: care givers, educators, parents and guardians.

To learn more, visit [www.actionforchildren.org](http://www.actionforchildren.org).

#### **About Franklin County RISE**

Franklin County RISE is funded by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the City of Columbus, and administered by Action for Children.

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