

Programs provided by Milestones and their service areas are listed below.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):

Serving the State of MN

Provides financial reimbursement to licensed family child care providers for serving high quality nutritious meals and snacks to children up to the age of 13, which meet the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines. The CACFP plays a significant role in shaping the nutrition and physical habits of children so they grow healthy and strong.

Early Learning Scholarships (ELS):

Serving the State of MN

ELS expands access to high-quality early childhood education programs for children three to five years of age to improve school readiness. Children birth to age 2 are eligible if identified as a priority population. Scholarships provide financial assistance for eligible families to enroll in high quality child care and early education programs participating in Parent Aware.

Early Childhood Learning Events:

Serving the State of MN

Learning events are designed for early childhood educators, care providers, parents, center, and school-based staff. Breakout sessions address developmental milestones, behavior, cognitive development, nutrition, health and safety and much more.

Child Care Aware West/Central:

Serving the 22 Counties of the West/Central District

This program supports early childhood educators—family child care, child care centers, and preschools—to improve the quality of care they provide to young children in the following ways.

- **Grants:** Regional Grants are available to licensed child care programs each year. Applications are available from September 1-25th. Startup Grants are available on-going as funds are available.
- **Professional Development/Training:** Training events are made available at low cost to meet the training requirements and needs of child care programs.
- **Professional Development and Workforce Advising:** For those looking to build their early childhood knowledge and/or work to attain a college degree, staff Advisors are available to support you through that process.
- **Parent Aware Recruitment:** Get your questions about Parent Aware answered and get signed up to participate by connecting with the Parent Aware Recruiter.

Serving Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, & Wright Counties

- **Parent Aware Coaching:** Child care programs can go above and beyond licensing requirements to prepare children for school and life. The one to four star quality rating and improvement system measures best practices as identified by research. Programs go through this process with a Parent Aware Coach to support them.
- **Child Care Wayfinder:** This is your one-stop navigation network for starting and growing child care programs. Navigators offer personalized support and resources to help you succeed.

Outreach:

Serving Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, & Wright Counties

We provide services and supports to families of young children and the adults that care for them, including licensed family child care, child care centers, and Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers. These include:

- **Child Care Liaison:** Assists families with the process of securing child care that meets the family's needs, including county and enrollment forms.
- **Early Childhood Director's Association:** This facilitated group meets regularly to discuss needs of Rule 3 programs, including licensing, policies and procedures, behavioral supports, staff retention, mental health of staff and children, and more.
- **Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) Supports:** Unlicensed caregivers can receive resources, training, and items that help them provide quality care to children.
- **Car Seat Education & Distribution:** With qualifying insurance, families receive a free car seat for their children. Education about the safe use of car seats is provided in English and Somali, as well as other translated languages as needed. Installation assistance is provided on site.
- **Lending Library:** For a low rental fee, a variety of equipment is available that programs can utilize to assist them in their child care. Items include: port-a-cribs, strollers, and more.