



## A Review of the Effects of Care 4 Kids Eligibility and Funding Changes in New Britain

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In Connecticut, from 2002 to 2005, funding in Care 4 Kids has been decreased by about \$53.5 million (or 44%). Adjusting for inflation, the reduction was nearly half of all funding -- \$61.5 million (or 47%). Statewide, enrollment in the program has been dramatically reduced. In 2004, 46% fewer children received the help of the child care subsidy than in 2002. This year, the deterioration continues. The FY06 Governor's and Appropriations budgets propose \$1 million less than what is predicted to be needed to maintain current services in 2006.

At the local level, the cost of these reductions is clear. Significantly fewer families are receiving assistance from Care 4 Kids. *In New Britain, the number of kids enrolled in the child care subsidy program dropped by over one-third (1,356 to 847) from 2002 to 2004.*

Number of Children Receiving Care 4 Kids by Age in New Britain<sup>1</sup>

	2002	2003	2004
Infants / Toddlers	409	234	212
Pre-School	365	294	306
School-Age	582	313	329
Total	1,356	841	847

When examining the drop in enrollment in the subsidy program for various types of child care settings, family day care providers were most affected. From 2002 to 2004, the number of children in unlicensed family and neighbor care receiving the subsidy, dropped by 40% (1,038 to 629). The number in licensed family day care homes dropped by over one third (125 to 79).

Number of Children Receiving Care 4 Kids by Setting in New Britain<sup>2</sup>

	2002	2003	2004
Center	193	171	183
Group Home	0	0	0
Licensed Family Home	125	114	79
Unlicensed Kith & Kin	1,038	670	629

As the eligibility threshold was limited and intake closed to many low-income applicants, a wait list was instituted for the first time. *In 2004 to 2005, 606 New Britain families were put on the wait list when applying for Care 4 Kids.* Of the families in New Britain placed on the wait list, only 17% (105) were enrolled. *As such, 501 New Britain families sought help paying for child care but never received any.* Even of the families that were accepted, 20% have already lost eligibility. Families fail to be successfully enrolled due to incomplete applications, exceeding income guidelines, or are ineligible due to other regulatory constraints.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Services Child Care Team, 2005

<sup>2</sup> Department of Social Services Child Care Team, 2005