



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Families

What is Early Learning SF?

Early Learning SF is an easy-to-use, mobile-friendly website that replaced San Francisco Child Care Connections (SF3C) waitlist system. Early Learning SF is designed to connect families to high quality early care and education programs that help children develop and thrive. Early Learning SF matches families to available early care and education programs, after answering a few questions such as family household income and the type of educational setting you are looking for. Families can then review information about the programs and communicate directly with them to find out more information and begin the enrollment process.

What are the key features of Early Learning SF?

- An easy-to-use web-based waitlist system available in Chinese, English and Spanish.
- A database that matches you to programs that fit your needs.
- Multiple matches that let you choose from a list of programs based on your preferences.
- Financial support for eligible families to help pay for enrollment in participating programs.

How do I get started?

1. Go to www.EarlyLearningSF.org and enter the basic information required to determine if your family is eligible for financial support. If your family is eligible, a text or email will be sent to you with an invitation code to log into Early Learning SF and begin the application process.
2. Once you have logged in, you will need to provide your family's preferences for early care and education programs, such as program setting, location, hours, language, etc. Once you have entered your preferences, the system will find the best available vacancies in early care and education programs that match your family's needs.
3. Once you are provided with program matches, you will have an opportunity to review the programs online and indicate which programs they are not interested in. You can also send a message to the programs or use their contact information to call them directly to learn more about the program and schedule a tour.



What information will I need to apply?

To see if you are eligible for financial support for early care and education services, you will need to provide the following:

- 1) **Family Monthly Household Income):** All income earned by household before taxes. Including, but not limited to, earned income from employment or self-employment, or other forms of income such as child support, cash aid, disability or unemployment compensation.
- 2) **Family Size:** Family size includes the biological or adoptive parent(s) and child(ren) under 18 that live in the same household (excluding children in foster care). If you have a unique family situation, please call Children’s Council of San Francisco, Compass, or Wu Yee Children’s Services for assistance:
 - Wu Yee Children’s Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
 - Children’s Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)
 - Compass Family Services: 415-644-0504 (*for homeless families only*)

The information provided will be used to determine if your family is eligible for financial support for early care and education programs. If eligible, you will be assigned an ECE Enrollment Specialist from either Children’s Council, Compass, or Wu Yee Children’s Services and asked to provide the following information:

- Parent information
- Child information
- Program preferences

What if I need help while using Early Learning SF?

For more information about Early Learning SF or assistance logging in and creating an application, contact one of the following agencies:

- Wu Yee Children’s Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Children’s Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Compass Family Services: 415-644-0504 (*homeless families only*)



What if I do not qualify for financial support for early care and education programs?

If you are not eligible for financial support, and would like to learn more about early care and education options available to your family, please contact Children's Council of San Francisco or Wu Yee Children's Services:

- Wu Yee Children's Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Children's Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)

What if I don't get matched with a vacancy in a program?

Once your family is approved for financial support for early care and education services, Early Learning SF will do the work to find a vacancy in a program that fits your program preferences. If you do not receive a match to an available vacancy, it is possible that there are no programs that meet your preferences at this time and you may want to make your program preferences less restrictive. For assistance with your application or to answer questions about the status of your matches, please contact Children's Council of San Francisco or Wu Yee Children's Services:

- Wu Yee Children's Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Children's Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)

What is a family fee?

Based on your family's size and household income you may be required to pay a family fee, which is on a sliding scale and will not exceed 10% of your monthly income. The family fee differs based on full-time or part-time (less than 30 hours per week). To learn more about the family fees please contact Children's Council of San Francisco or Wu Yee Children's Services or you can [click here](#) to get the latest family fee schedule:

- Wu Yee Children's Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Children's Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)

What types of financial support can my family obtain through Early Learning SF?

Currently Early Learning SF helps match families with children ages 0-5 to programs who have vacancies supported by the following funding types: Title 5 (such as California State Preschool Program), Early Learning Scholarship- Reserved, and Early Learning Scholarship- Voucher.



What early care and education programs are being supported by Early Learning SF to match families to vacancies?

More than 350 early care and education programs in San Francisco have partnered with the San Francisco Office of Early Care & Education (OECE), including licensed Family Child Care Homes and Center-based programs. All programs must be in good standing with California Community Care Licensing and must maintain or be working toward high quality standards. To learn more about the types of early care and education settings, please contact Children’s Council of San Francisco or Wu Yee Children’s Services:

- Wu Yee Children’s Services: 1-844-644-4300 (multi-lingual staff available)
- Children’s Council of SF: 415-343-3300 (multi-lingual staff available)

I’ve identified an early care and education center / family child care home that will accept my child. What should I do?

1. If you know you are interested in specific programs, you may enter the program names in the field on your application called “My Preferred Programs.” Begin typing and the system will suggest names of programs that are currently partnering with OECE. If the program you are interested in does not appear on the list, then it is likely that the program does not currently partner with OECE and therefore would not be a program your family could attend using OECE’s financial support. OECE suggests verifying the preferred program is not an OECE partner with your assigned ECE Enrollment Specialist and asking for similar programs that are partnering with OECE.

If you click the box next to the statement “I only want the program(s) below,” you will only receive matches to the selected program(s). Please note that if the program(s) do not have a vacancy available at the time of your request, you will likely experience a longer wait time before you receive a match to a program.

2. If you are matched with the specific program you are interested in, you will receive a notification from Early Learning SF based on your preferred communication method (email or text). Once notified, you should log into Early Learning SF and communicate with the program and/or you should communicate with your ECE Enrollment Specialist about next steps.
3. If the program agrees to enroll your child and marks your child as enrolled on Early Learning SF, you will receive a notification from Early Learning SF to inform you about this. If you have any questions about this process, you can contact your ECE Enrollment Specialist at any point.



Where can I learn more about child care licensing in California?

The California Child Care Licensing website has online resources for parents and families regarding the licensing process and what to look for when choosing child care. Please visit [CDSS](#) for more information.

Why is early education important?

In addition to the support for hard-working families, early care and education programs prepare children for school—and life—in important ways:

- **Preparing for Kindergarten:** Early education programs help children succeed in Kindergarten and beyond by focusing on the child's overall development.
- **Develop Social Skills:** Children who regularly play in groups learn how to share, express themselves and work well together.
- **Build Self-Confidence:** The skills that children learn early in life make them more confident later—and self-confidence leads to more success!
- **Develop a Love for Learning:** Positive experiences in early care and education programs often translate to a lifelong joy of learning.