



INCREASING ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS



High-quality early care and education (ECE) benefits children, families, and businesses and produces a high return on investment to society. For the past decade, Minnesota has made strides in ECE availability, particularly for children living in low-income families. Since 2013, total investments in Early Learning Scholarships (ELS), Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Voluntary Pre-K (VPK), and Head Start have increased by \$500 million annually. This benefits approximately 50,000 of our youngest learners. Much of this funding is one-time, so it will not be available to families in future years once it has been expended.

The Great Start Scholarships (GSS) framework aims to create an effective and sustainable ECE system that supports the holistic development of young children and facilitates parent/caregiver involvement in the workforce and education.

What is High Quality?

In Minnesota, high quality is determined and developed through the Parent Aware Quality Rating System.

Where does 7% come from?

This guideline was initially recommended by a task force of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2016 and endorsed by the Minnesota Great Start Task Force in 2022.



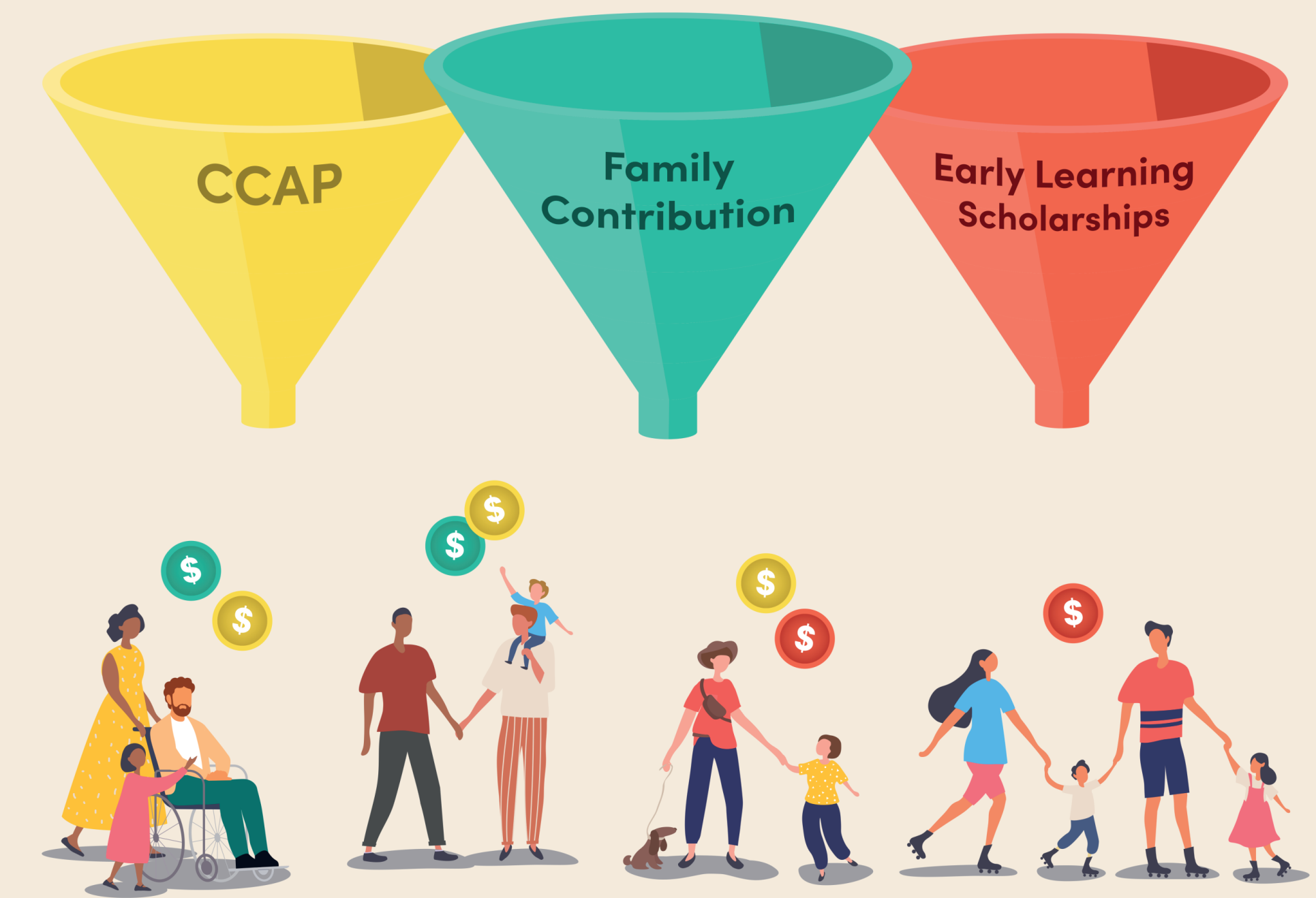
Many Minnesota families find high-quality ECE out of their reach, due to:

High Costs: A University of Minnesota study estimated that 94% of Minnesota families with young children spend more than 7% of their income on early care and education. This estimate comes from the Health and Human Services Department, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program.

Low Access to Care: Revenue limitations mean that educators and other staff who lead ECE programs receive limited compensation and these programs (the majority of which are small businesses) operate on slim or non-existent profit margins. This leads to shortages of programs and educators.

The Current System

Funding and family contributions do not cover the total cost of quality early care and education.

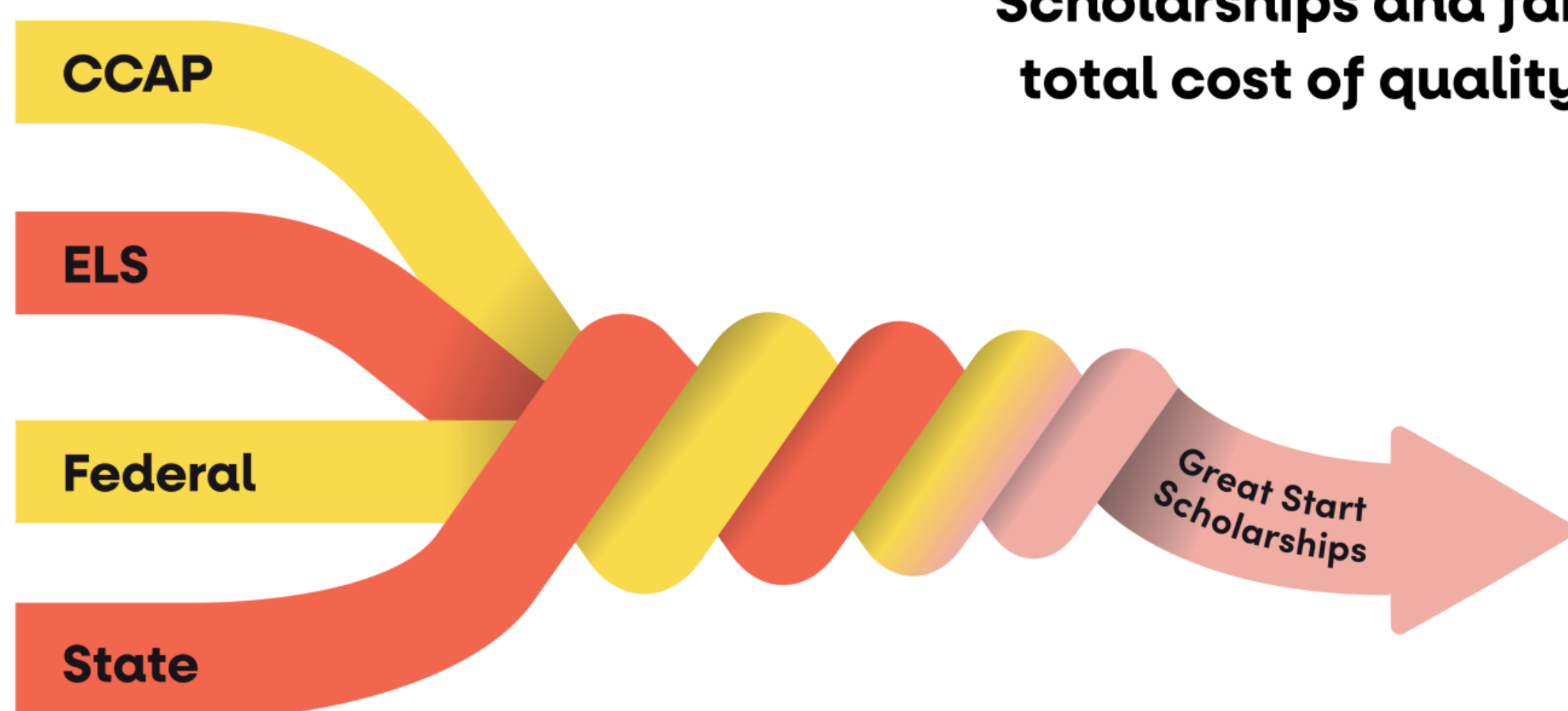


High-quality childcare and early education is expensive to provide, just like high-quality K-12 education. Unlike K-12, however, families shoulder the burden of paying for it. Infant care in Minnesota costs more than tuition at the University of Minnesota.

- Great Start MN

After Great Start Scholarships

Scholarships and family contributions cover the total cost of quality early care and education.



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