

The Oregonian

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# METRO

## Portland

### \$3.2 million slated for child care

A Portland agency has set aside \$3.2 million to help cover child care for about 200 low-income children annually and allow about 10 child care centers to boost training and wages.

The Children's Investment Fund's allocation committee voted unanimously to dedicate \$2.7 million for staff training and facility upgrades at designated child care centers and subsidize child care for about 100 kids. It also earmarked \$500,000 for a Bridges to Housing program that assists homeless families, underwriting child care for 80 to 100 children a year for the next three years.

The grants come as a bonus. Higher than expected tax revenue and cautious spending resulted in the surplus.

"It's gratifying to see these public-private partnerships occur," said City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, chairman of the allocation panel. "It'll make a world of difference to the children."

On Monday, Bridges to Housing announced it would receive \$1 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and \$500,000 from Meyer Memorial Trust, which can only go to housing and related services.

According to Bridges to Housing, 13,000 children were homeless in Oregon during the last school year. This severely hinders academic achievement, said Kerry Tintera, homeless education coordinator for Portland Public Schools.

"Our kids' greatest fear and concern is not knowing where they're going to be sleeping one particular night," she said. "(This allocation) is the whole package. You have the housing. You have the child care so that parents can work, so that you can provide stability and put food on the table. It's terrific. It's needed."

—Steph Yiu