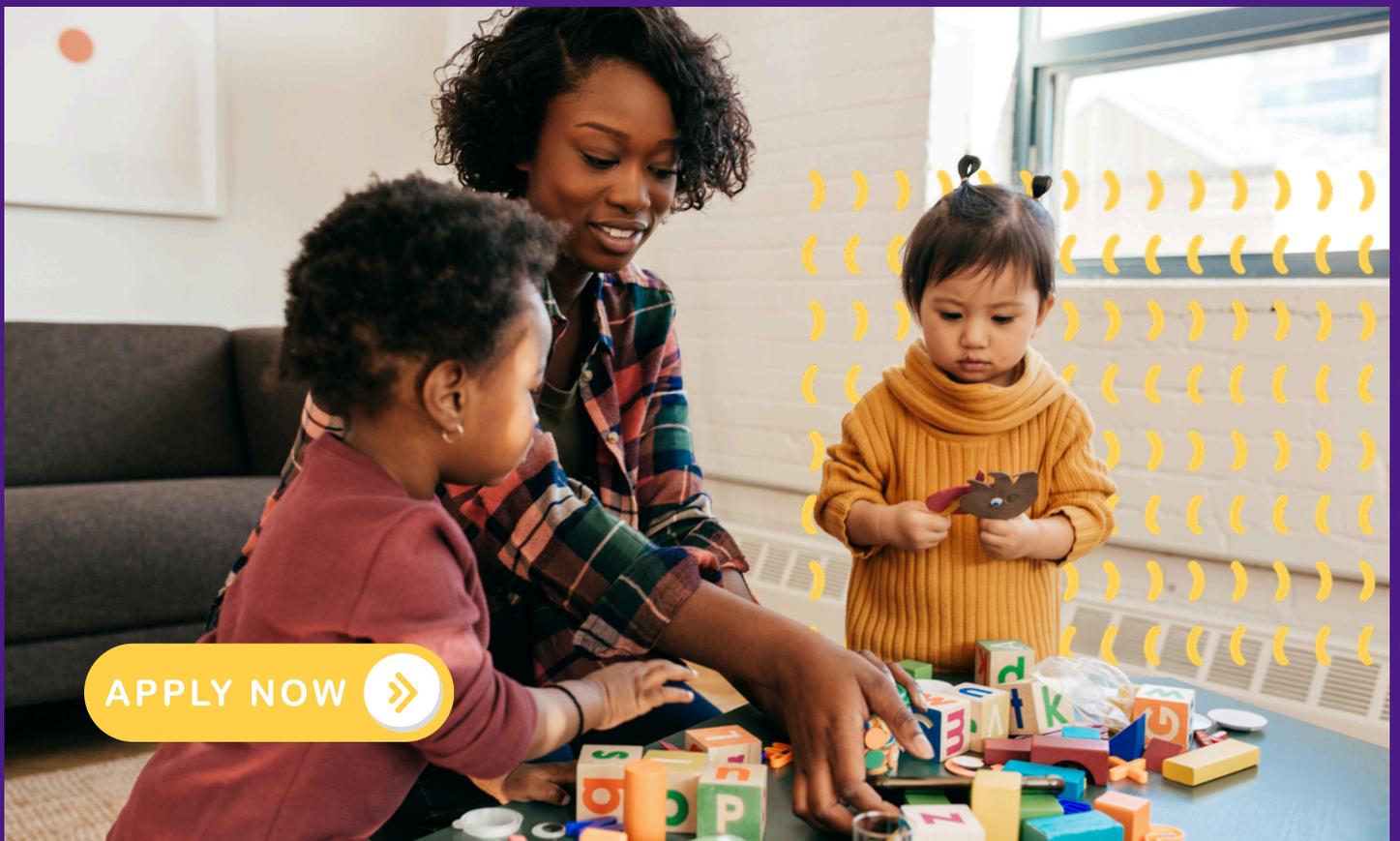




Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator

Limestone County Cohort | Spring 2026



APPLY NOW



Applications Open March 2 - 20, 2026

More information: wفالabama.org/news/ccalimestone



Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator Limestone County Cohort | Spring 2026

About the Program

The Women's Foundation of Alabama (WFA) created the Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator as a critical part of our multi-pronged approach to addressing the child care crisis impacting families nationwide. Through this accelerator, we invest in women business owners, support peer community, and leverage proven business growth strategies to advance sustainable, community-based child care solutions.

Limestone County Cohort

Launching in April 2026, the Limestone County Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator is designed to support center-based and home-based child care providers who are starting or expanding high-quality, thriving child care businesses that meet the needs of working families in Alabama.

Businesses accepted into the cohort will join a community of peers and receive high-quality training and coaching from business and child care experts across the state, along with access to tools, resources, and funding opportunities aimed at strengthening operations and increasing the supply of child care seats in Limestone County.



Program Experience

Participants in the program will receive 12 weeks of business training, individualized coaching, and opportunities to build their professional network.

The curriculum is delivered through the following modules:

Module	Focus
Module 1	Introduction to Child Care Business
Module 2	Quality Child Care Practices & Curriculum Development
Module 3	Financial Management Fundamentals
Module 4	Funding Opportunities & Loan Preparation
Module 5	Business Planning & Customer Service
Module 6	Understanding Your Digital Footprint
Module 7	Facility Management: Construction & Renovation Innovations
Module 8	Marketing for Child Care Providers
Module 9	Communication, Networking & Mission Statements
Module 10	Leadership Skills for Child Care Providers
Module 11	Human Resources & Internship Programs
Module 12	Pitching Your Child Care Business



Program Overview

Funding Opportunity

At the conclusion of the training program, participants will be eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$25,000 from the Women's Foundation of Alabama to support the launch or expansion of their child care business. Additional details about the funding application and review process will be shared with individuals selected for the Spring 2026 Limestone County cohort.

Time Commitment

Participants must be able to commit 3–5 hours per week to training and program activities.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Have plans to open or expand a child care business
- Be based in or serve children and families within Limestone County

Applicants should demonstrate:

- A clear interest in starting or growing a child care facility
- Defined business goals and a clear articulation of their current business status



Program Timeline

March 2 — Applications Open

March 11 — Informational Webinar

March 20 — Applications Close

March 23 - April 3 — Internal Application Review

April 6 - April 10 — Finalist Interviews

April 17 — Cohort Announced

May 4 — Program Begins

Frequently Asked Questions



Is there a cost to participate in the accelerator?

No. There is no cost to participate. Training, coaching, and technical assistance are provided at no charge to selected participants. In addition, participants will receive a \$1,000 completion stipend to help alleviate barriers to participation.

How much time does the program require each week?

Participants should plan to commit 3–5 hours per week, including scheduled sessions, coaching, and independent work.

Can I participate if I already operate a child care program or work full-time?

Yes. The accelerator is designed for working child care providers and aspiring owners who are balancing full schedules. Program activities are structured to be manageable alongside existing responsibilities.

Do I need to be licensed before applying?

No. Licensure is not required at the time of application. Applicants should have clear plans to open or expand a child care business and be willing to work toward applicable licensing and quality standards.

Does participation guarantee a grant award?

No. Participants who complete the program will be eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$25,000, but funding is not guaranteed and is awarded through a separate review process.

How can grant funds be used if awarded?

Grant funds may be used to support the launch or expansion of a child care business. Specific allowable uses and restrictions will be shared during the program and as part of the funding application.

Are classes held in person, virtually, or both?

The Limestone County cohort will include a mix of virtual and in-person sessions. Session formats, locations, and schedules will be shared with selected participants prior to the program start.

What days and times will sessions be held?

Exact days and times will be shared after selection. Sessions will be scheduled with child care providers' availability in mind.

Will I receive one-on-one support?

Yes. Participants receive individualized coaching in addition to group-based learning.

Frequently Asked Questions



How many participants will be selected?

Cohort size is intentionally limited to support meaningful engagement and individualized attention. Final numbers will be determined by WFA.

What happens if I miss a session?

Participants are expected to attend all sessions and engage consistently. To successfully graduate from the program, participants may miss no more than one in-person session. Occasional conflicts are understood, and guidance on make-up work or recordings may be provided when available.

Can both home-based and center-based providers apply?

Yes. Applications are welcome from both home-based and center-based child care providers.

Can I apply if my business is outside Limestone County but serves families there?

Yes. Applicants must be based in or actively serve families in Limestone County.

What level of business experience is required?

There is no minimum experience requirement. The program supports providers in the planning, startup, or expansion phase.

Can more than one person from the same organization participate?

Typically, one primary participant per child care business is selected.

What happens if I apply but am not selected?

Applicants who are not selected may still receive information about future cohorts and other WFA child care business resources.

How do I make my application competitive?

Strong applications clearly explain:

- Your current business status or plans
- The child care needs you aim to meet
- How this accelerator supports your growth goals
- Your commitment to full participation

Who can I contact with questions?

Prospective applicants are encouraged to attend the applicant webinar, where program staff will answer questions live. For additional questions, please email community@wfalabama.org.

Previous Participants Include:



Amy's Amazing Children



Accelerator Impact

100%

felt better equipped to manage their business finances

92%

felt more equipped to pitch their business to potential founders and clients

100%

felt more confident to expand their business



Spring 2026 Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator



Limestone County | 07



WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF ALABAMA

Gain the tools, funding insight, and expert support you need to build.

Applications open March 2 - 20, 2026

APPLY NOW >>



Questions?

For more information or to ask questions, please contact a member of the Philanthropy & Learning Team:



Zhaundra C. Jones
Vice President of Strategy & Impact

zjones@wfalabama.org



Kaitlee Daw
Senior Program Officer

kdaw@wfalabama.org



Megan Cardenas
Program Associate

mcardenas@wfalabama.org



**WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
OF ALABAMA**

**Steelcase®
Foundation**



mazda

TOYOTA

Thank you.



Phone
(205) 326-4454



Email
hello@wfalabama.org



Website
wfalabama.org



Office Address
2213 1st Ave S, Birmingham, AL 35233