

Factsheet: Parents

How can I find affordable, high-quality childcare?

- Child Care Aware has a comprehensive tip sheet for parents containing resources for learning about providers and financial assistance: <http://usa.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Parent-Tip-Sheet.pdf>
- The National Women's Law Center has state-by-state fact sheets on child care assistance policies including: income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance, waiting lists for child care assistance, copayments required of parents receiving assistance, reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving assistance, and eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job: <https://nwlc.org/resources/state-by-state-fact-sheets-child-care-assistance-policies-2016/>

What are some of the barriers to childcare access?

- **Childcare “cliff effect”:** Parents making above 145% of the poverty line in Iowa, or \$11.11/hr, lose all childcare subsidies¹. Because the loss of subsidies makes childcare unaffordable for many low-income families, it forces parents to stay at home and discourages individuals from participating in the workforce, seeking raises, or seeking more highly paid work.
- **Rising costs:** The cost of purchasing childcare has approximately doubled in the past 25 years². It is likely that skyrocketing costs are associated with the rising share of women who do not enter the workforce. The share of stay-at-home mothers increased to 29% in 2012, after declining for decades to a low of 23% in 2009³.
- **Limited supply:** As childcare moved from the home into the formal economy in recent decades, society has been slow to recognize childcare as a public good that should be supported by the public and private sector. Left to its own devices, the private market has failed to ensure a sufficient and accessible supply of childcare.

How can we improve access for all parents who need childcare?

- Parents are an critical voice in advocating for quality, affordable care. Child Care Aware has assembled an Advocacy Toolkit (<http://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/advocacy-toolkit/>)
 - Advocacy is needed to raise the threshold for childcare subsidy eligibility, and to motivate public and private investment in increasing the supply of affordable care (for instance by incentivizing and supporting childcare entrepreneurs)
- Partnerships between public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders are necessary to assess solutions that fit the needs of specific communities and identify the right levels of investment from each stakeholder

¹ Cliff effect statistics and graphic from <https://www.unitedwaydm.org/cliffeffect>

² Care.com - Business case for investing in the transition to parenthood

³ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/04/08/rising-cost-of-child-care-may-help-explain-increase-in-stay-at-home-moms/>