

# Supporting Families Together Association: National report highlights financial burden of Wisconsin child care

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[MADISON, Wis., Sept. 24, 2020] [A new report](#) and supplementary interactive [data-website](#) released today by the nonprofit organization Child Care Aware of America (CCAoA) paint the picture of a child care system which places an impossible financial burden on Wisconsin's parents and child care providers. The report addresses the fragile child care system that existed before COVID-19 as well as new pressures that have arisen due to the virus.

While the cost and affordability of child care vary throughout the state by location, race, ethnicity, nativity, child age, and type of care, the average cost of care was \$9,072 per child in Wisconsin in 2019. This is roughly equivalent to the average cost of University of Wisconsin tuition and fees (\$9,104). The cost of infant care is greater than annual average Wisconsin rent (infant care \$10,332; rent \$10,044), and having two children in center-based care is significantly more expensive than the average annual mortgage (child care \$19,200; mortgage \$17,016). A Wisconsin family at the poverty level would need to pay 48% of their annual income to enroll an infant full-time in a child care center, or their 74% annual income for two children. These costs are unsustainable for Wisconsin's parents.

Yet this high cost of care does not mean child care providers are well-paid, or even

manage to break even. The average child care provider income in Wisconsin is only \$23,650. This means a mother working full-time in a child care center would have to spend 81% of her income to enroll her own two children at that center. CCAoA's national report highlights Vernon County, Wisconsin, where a child care provider meeting the minimum health and safety licensing requirements would lose \$4,932 per infant or toddler cared for while accepting state subsidies, and \$859 per 3-or 4-year-old. In order to provide care that would be considered 'top quality,' that same provider would lose \$10,312 per infant or toddler, and \$2,983 per 3-or 4-year-old. Providing child care is expensive, and these costs are rising due to new health and safety precautions related to COVID-19.

Wisconsin is one of only six states with county-specific data included in CCAoA's report. This data can be explored on CCAoA's new online [Child Care Data Center](#).

Supporting Families Together Association (SFTA) is Wisconsin's statewide member association for organizations and individuals committed to making every early childhood a great one. With a core membership of Wisconsin's Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) and Family Resource Centers, SFTA cultivates a system of organizations and professionals across Wisconsin to promote quality, strengths-based, early childhood services in all communities. This is done by providing services and supports to members, including program management, quality assurance and improvement (through the administration of YoungStar), organizational and professional development, systems building and professional networking.