

Affording Child Care

Child Care Solutions knows working families want safe, high quality and affordable early care and education for their children. Unfortunately high quality child care can be expensive and out of reach for many families. Financial resources and benefits are available to help families manage the cost of child care.

Financial Aid & Community Care Scholarships (see next page for details): Working parents with incomes at or below certain guidelines may qualify for financial aid with their local county Department of Social Services. Onondaga & Cayuga Counties both offer financial aid for eligible parents to help cover the cost of child care. Residents of both Cayuga and Onondaga Counties may also be eligible for Community Child Care Scholarships. The United Way of CNY and the City of Auburn fund Community Child Care Scholarships that can also help defray costs. If you have questions about either program please call Child Care Solutions at 315-446-1220 ext. 303 or toll free at 888-729-7290 ext. 303.

Financial Assistance Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit: If you paid someone to care for a child or a dependent so you could work, you may be able to reduce your tax by claiming the credit on your tax return. This credit is available to people who, in order to work or to look for work, have to pay for child care services for dependents under age 13. The credit is also available if you paid for care of a spouse or a dependent of any age who is physically or mentally incapable of self-care. The credit is a percentage, based on your adjusted gross income, of the amount of work-related child and dependent care expenses you paid to a care provider. The credit can range from 20 to 35 percent of your qualifying expenses, depending upon your adjusted gross income. For more information visit the website: www.irs.gov.

Earned Income Tax Credit: The earned income credit is a refundable tax credit designed for lower income working families and individuals. The amount of the credit varies depending on your level of income and how many dependents you support. The tax credit can even generate a tax refund larger than the amount of tax paid in through withholding.

Employer Programs: Additional help with child care costs may be available through your employer. Inquire in your human resources or finance office to find out if any of the following benefits may be available:

Dependent Care Spending Account: Money is set aside from an employee's gross salary into a nontaxable spending account to pay for child care. Neither the employer nor the employee pays taxes on the amount of salary reduced for child care. The employee is thus able to pay for child care expenses with tax free dollars.

Flexible Spending Plans: Also called a "cafeteria plan", these programs allow employers to offer a range of benefits. Employees choose from a menu of benefits and customize their benefits package. For example, some employees may have health insurance provided by a spouse's employer and may choose a child care benefit instead.

Child Care Vouchers or Reimbursements: An employer may offer workers a child care allowance or subsidy that families can use toward a child care arrangement of their choice.

Child Care Programs: Additional assistance may be available from your child care program. Families are encouraged to ask their provider if any of the following apply.

- Sliding fee scale: fees for this scale are based on income standards set at the program.
- Negotiable Fees: Some programs might be willing to negotiate fees on an individual basis.
- Scholarships: Some programs offer scholarships/accept scholarship funds.
- Multi-child discounts: Some programs offer fee reductions to parents with more than one child enrolled in care.

Head Start/UPK: Some families may qualify for these no cost programs. Call Child Care Solutions at 315-446-1220 ext. 303 or toll free 877-729-7290 ext. 303 for more information.

Military Families: You may qualify for a Department of Defense Military Subsidy. For more information contact Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246 or email: mssp@usa.childcareaware.org



Average Cost of Child Care

Average Weekly Full Time Cost Family Child Care

	Infant (6 weeks-18 mos)	Toddler (19-35 mos)	Pre-School (3-5 yrs)	School Age (5-12 yrs)
Cayuga	\$140	\$132	\$133	\$121
Onondaga	\$165	\$158	\$155	\$145

Average Weekly Full Time Cost Group Family Child Care

	Infant (6 weeks-18 mos)	Toddler (19-35 mos)	Pre-School (3-5 yrs)	School Age (5-12 yrs)
Cayuga	\$152	\$146	\$136	\$129
Onondaga	\$178	\$168	\$165	\$155

Average Weekly Full Time Cost Child Care Centers

	Infant (6 weeks-18 mos)	Toddler (19-35 mos)	Pre-School (3-5 yrs)	School Age (5-12 yrs)
Cayuga	\$193	\$186	\$171	\$143
Onondaga	\$244	\$224	\$211	\$185

Average Weekly Full Time Cost School Age Child Care

	School Age (5-12 yrs)
Cayuga	\$165
Onondaga	\$177



Let's face it. Child care is expensive! Help is Available

Help is available...Onondaga & Cayuga Counties both offer financial aid for eligible parents to help cover the cost of child care. The United Way of CNY funds Community Child Care Scholarships that can also help defray costs. If you have questions about either program please call Child Care Solutions at 446-1220 ext. 303. or toll free at 888-729-7290 ext. 303.

Financial Aid from Onondaga & Cayuga Counties

Family Size	2	3	4
Gross Annual Income Limits	\$32,040	\$40,320	\$48,600

In Onondaga County call the County Day Care Unit at 315-435-5683, ext. 2 for more information or an application. In Cayuga County call the Cayuga County Health & Human Services at 315-253-1580 for more information or an application.

Parents must work 20 or more hours per week and have incomes below the gross annual income limits to qualify. Care can take place in a child care center, family child care home or with a trusted relative or friend. You make the choice.

Community Child Care Scholarships

Family Size	2	3	4
Onondaga County Gross Annual Income Ranges	\$32,041-40,050	\$40,321-50,400	\$48,601-60,750

Please call Child Care Solutions at 446-1220 ext. 303 or e-mail Parenthelp@childcaresolutionscny.org for more information, an application, or a list of eligible programs for the Community Child Care Scholarships

Parents must work 30 hours per week and have incomes within these ranges to qualify. Scholarships are funded by the United Way of CNY.