



Child Care Subsidy & Financial Assistance

www.qualitycareforchildren.org

Each type of child care financial assistance has different qualifications, like income level, employment status, or residency, so make sure you get all the facts. Some options are:

Subsidized Child Care

The State of Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (**CAPS**) program helps Georgia families pay for early childhood and school age care programs. Subsidized care is available for children from age birth to age 13, or up to age 18 if the child has special needs. CAPS is available in each of Georgia's 159 counties.

Parents or guardians may qualify to receive subsidized child care if they:

- * have a limited income; and
- * need child care to work, attend school, or participate in training.

Families that qualify for the CAPS program can choose their own child care providers. Most eligible families pay a portion of the child care fee directly to the provider and CAPS pays a portion of the fee directly to the provider. The fee is based on the number of people in the family and the amount of income that the family earns.

Funds Available

The Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program has doubled in size since it began in 1991. In fiscal year 1998, 64,000 children received subsidized child care each month in Georgia. At times, eligible families must be placed on a waiting list.

Work Requirements

To be eligible for the CAPS program, the parent(s) or responsible person(s) in the family must work, attend a job training program, or attend GED or high school classes.

- * In single parent families, the adult must participate in work activities an average of 25 hours per week.
- * In two parent families, each adult must participate in work activities an average of 35 hours per week.

Adults who are exclusively attending college to earn a four year degree or graduate degree are not eligible for CAPS. Adults attending college and working may qualify.

Technical school or job training programs are considered work activities because they lead to a specific career or a certificate and are of limited duration (i.e. 12 months).

How to Apply

To apply contact the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in the county where you live.

A staff member at the county DFCS office will know if funds are available to serve additional families and can describe the program requirements.

Georgia Pre-K

The Georgia Pre-K program was established in 1993 and is funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education. Children four years of age on September 1 of the current school year whose parents are Georgia residents are eligible. Because participation in the program is voluntary (**NO COST**) for both families and communities, there may not be enough space for every four year old to attend.

Head Start and Early Head Start

Head Start (4 to 5-year olds) and Early Head Start (Birth to 3-years olds) are federally-funded and comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to five, pregnant women, and their families. They are child-focused programs and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. This program is at **NO COST** for most (but not always) families who have incomes that meet the federal poverty guidelines. Children receive free medical and dental care, have healthy meals and snacks, and enjoy playing.

Multi-Child Discount, Sliding Scale, or Scholarships

Ask child care providers if they provide any discounts for multiple children, sliding scale, or scholarships.

Employer/College Support

Does your employer (or college, if you are a student) provide child care scholarships, discounts to certain programs, or on-site child care at reduced rates?

Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

You may be able to lower your taxes and even get up to several thousands dollars back if you qualify for the EITC. To qualify you must be working full-time or part-time and make less than a certain amount based upon family size. You don't have to owe any taxes to get the EITC.

Federal Child Tax Credit

If you have a dependent child under the age 17, you may be eligible to get the Child Tax Credit, which can be worth hundreds of dollars per child. The income limit for the CTC is much higher than for the Earned Income Tax Credit, but you still don't have to owe taxes to get the Child Tax Credit.

Federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit

If you have a child under 13, and owe federal income taxes, this tax credit can help cover a portion or all of the taxes you owe if you qualify.

Family, Friend and Neighbor Care

Many children are now being cared for by family, friends, and neighbors in home settings. Family, friend, and neighbor care is also known as "kith and kin" care or "informal care," as opposed to the care provided in more formal and professional center-based and family child care markets. An informal provider may care for a limit of 2 children without registering with the state. **Quality Care for Children does not provide referrals for this type of care.**

Metro Atlanta 877-722-2445 · Central Georgia 800-558-4804 · Northwest Georgia 800-308-1825



A Child Care Aware® Quality Assured Consumer Education and Referral Service

Funded in part by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning