

Subsidized Child Care in Georgia

Childcare costs are the third largest expense for families, after housing and food. Thousands of Georgia parents need childcare to work or attend job training. Because childcare in Georgia can cost as much as \$90 per week for one child (or more in urban areas), it is beyond the means of many low and moderate income families.

The Department of Human Resources helps many families afford early childhood and school age care and education programs through Childcare and Parenting Services (CAPS). Local DFCS offices determine eligibility for CAPS.

Parents or guardians who have limited income and are working, attending school, or in training may qualify for subsidized childcare. Many families enrolled in CAPS are becoming self-sufficient after leaving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (welfare).

- Children are eligible for CAPS up to age 13, or up to age 18 if they have special needs.
- Families who qualify for CAPS choose their own child care providers. The office of Regulatory Services sees that informal caregivers meet basic health and safety standards.
- Most parents or guardians pay some of the childcare costs on a sliding scale based on the family's income and size. CAPS pays the remainder to the child care provider, up to a maximum based on type of care, age of child, and location. The average monthly payment by CAPS is \$190.
- Quality childcare programs reach beyond the minimum health and safety standards required by state agencies. Some of the federal funds allocated to Georgia must be used to improve the quality of childcare and offer additional services to parents. The CAPS program collaborates with agencies to enhance the quality and increase the supply of childcare.

