



A Better Deal on Child Care

Across the country, too many families do not have access to high-quality early learning and care that will help their children thrive without breaking the bank. In today's economy, the majority of married Americans are dual-income working couples, meaning both parents work to support a family. But the cost of child care has increased by 25 percent in the past decade, meaning parents are being forced to choose between going to work and paying for child care. The majority of American households spend more than ten percent of their household income on childcare—and a fifth of households spend more than a quarter of their income, a new report found.

Instead of helping the one percent with a new child care tax cut, Democrats are calling for a Better Deal on the high cost of quality child care:

- **New federal-state partnership to provide universal access to pre-K for low and moderate income 3-and-4 year olds**
- **No family under 150% of state median income pays more than seven percent of their income on child care**
- **More than double the number of children eligible for child care assistance in America**
- **Increase pay for child care professionals who care for our children**

In 33 states and the District of Columbia, infant care costs exceed the average cost of in-state college tuition at public 4-year institutions. These costs make it difficult for parents to provide for their family and save for the future. In order to address the current child care crisis in this country, families need a child care and early learning system that provides high-quality, affordable child care and access to quality preschool programs that will prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond. Payments should be affordable, programs should be high-quality, and the system should work for working families, not just for those at the top.

Democrats believe that we can address the current child care cost crisis by ensuring that no family under 150% of state median income pays more than seven percent of their income on quality child care. Families would pay their fair share for care on a sliding scale, regardless of the number of children they have. Our proposal would also support universal access to high-quality preschool programs for all low- and moderate-income 3- and 4-year olds by creating a new federal-state partnership program. Finally, the proposal would significantly improve compensation and training for the child care workforce to ensure that our nation's teachers and caregivers have the support they need, as well as the children they are caring for, to thrive.