



Celebrate Fathers—Support Child Care and Parental Leave

Today's fathers play an increasingly active role in raising their children. As we celebrate Father's Day, we celebrate the variety of ways that fathers contribute to their families and examine the crucial family-friendly policies needed to lift up all American families.

Fathers Are Spending More Time Raising Kids

Two-thirds of American families now rely on two incomes, compared to just under half in 1970.¹ As more women have entered the workforce, fathers' care-giving roles have changed. The rates of stay-at-home fathers and single fathers have dramatically increased. In the twenty years leading up to 2011, the rate of fathers with a working spouse who provided care for their children under age 15 increased by over one-third to 30 percent.² Increased engagement by fathers is associated with better language, cognitive, and social development in children.³

With this increased role, however, fathers are also finding it difficult to balance the competing demands of work and family. Fifty-two percent of working fathers say it is difficult to meaningfully commit to both parenting and work, and fathers in dual-earner households now report work-family conflict at a rate that exceeds mothers.⁴ These changing dynamics underscore how important family-friendly policies like affordable child care and paid leave are to the whole family—fathers, mothers, and children alike.

Access to Affordable, High-Quality Child Care

With greater work obligations, families rely even more on the availability of affordable, high-quality child care. High-quality child care programs result in greater educational attainment, employment, and earnings for children. But, right now, child care is eating up a significant slice of parents' paychecks. A typical working family must spend over 15 percent of their income on child care. For single parents, it is even higher—single mothers spend 40 percent and single fathers spend 25 percent. In New Mexico, child care costs \$7,802 a year, which is 16 percent of a family's income and 20 percent of a single father's.⁵

Yet President Trump's child care tax proposal overwhelmingly advantages upper-middle class families at the expense of lower-income ones, the families who most need more affordable care. We know that a comprehensive early learning and care proposal must ensure that care is affordable for low- and middle-income families, provide high-quality preparation for kindergarten and beyond, and meet the needs of 21st century working families.⁶

Paid Parental Leave Benefits Families

In addition to child care, parental leave is important for families, businesses, and the economy overall. Paid family leave makes it likelier that a parent can and will return to work when they have a child, increasing household incomes, reducing labor turnover, and increasing firm efficiency.⁷ For fathers, paternity leave leads to increased care and engagement later in life and increased household gender equity.⁸ But the Trump proposal will not provide the help families need and falls far short of meaningful relief for working parents.

It is past time for the United States to pass family-friendly policies that help fathers and mothers such as promoting affordable, high-quality child care and paid parental leave. As we celebrate Father's Day, we need to remember that we all benefit from policies that help working parents pursue their careers and support their families.

Table: Average Child Care Costs and Share of Family Income

State	Child Care Costs		Family with Children		Single Mothers with Children		Single Fathers with Children	
	Infant Child Care Costs	4-Year-Old Child Care Costs	Median Income	Infant care as a share of income	Median Income	Infant care as a share of income	Median Income	Infant care as a share of income
United States	\$10,476	\$8,469	\$68,260	15.3%	\$25,274	41.5%	\$40,381	25.9%
Alabama	\$5,644	\$4,877	\$53,146	10.6%	\$19,634	28.7%	\$31,786	17.8%
Alaska	\$11,700	\$10,764	\$75,490	15.5%	\$36,504	32.1%	\$42,424	27.6%
Arizona	\$9,993	\$7,845	\$55,568	18.0%	\$26,356	37.9%	\$37,437	26.7%
Arkansas	\$6,074	\$5,057	\$50,342	12.1%	\$20,624	29.5%	\$31,717	19.2%
California	\$13,343	\$9,117	\$66,372	20.1%	\$27,435	48.6%	\$41,301	32.3%
Colorado	\$14,950	\$11,089	\$76,594	19.5%	\$30,010	49.8%	\$48,990	30.5%
Connecticut	\$14,079	\$11,669	\$89,919	15.7%	\$32,063	43.9%	\$45,309	31.1%
Delaware	\$10,396	\$8,308	\$71,574	14.5%	\$28,922	35.9%	\$48,305	21.5%
District of Columbia	\$22,658	\$17,863	\$79,677	28.4%	\$25,219	89.8%	\$65,252	34.7%
Florida	\$8,719	\$6,897	\$52,922	16.5%	\$25,902	33.7%	\$34,889	25.0%
Georgia	\$7,597	\$6,851	\$56,991	13.3%	\$22,919	33.1%	\$35,806	21.2%
Hawaii	\$13,584	\$11,232	\$77,949	17.4%	\$35,754	38.0%	\$51,279	26.5%
Idaho	\$7,385	\$6,527	\$57,327	12.9%	\$21,191	34.8%	\$34,151	21.6%
Illinois	\$13,176	\$9,758	\$70,406	18.7%	\$25,459	51.8%	\$41,227	32.0%
Indiana	\$8,929	\$6,768	\$60,856	14.7%	\$22,356	39.9%	\$37,866	23.6%
Iowa	\$10,015	\$8,433	\$68,737	14.6%	\$25,206	39.7%	\$40,122	25.0%
Kansas	\$11,482	\$8,065	\$65,875	17.4%	\$25,299	45.4%	\$40,759	28.2%
Kentucky	\$7,800	\$7,020	\$53,589	14.6%	\$20,666	37.7%	\$32,859	23.7%
Louisiana	\$5,754	\$4,920	\$54,750	10.5%	\$18,991	30.3%	\$40,698	14.1%
Maine	\$9,677	\$8,455	\$60,534	16.0%	\$25,806	37.5%	\$39,104	24.7%
Maryland	\$14,726	\$10,039	\$88,869	16.6%	\$36,931	39.9%	\$51,234	28.7%
Massachusetts	\$17,082	\$12,796	\$92,016	18.6%	\$29,957	57.0%	\$47,878	35.7%
Michigan	\$10,178	\$8,238	\$61,563	16.5%	\$21,705	46.9%	\$38,188	26.7%
Minnesota	\$14,826	\$11,420	\$80,344	18.5%	\$30,321	48.9%	\$45,387	32.7%
Mississippi	\$5,045	\$4,439	\$44,865	11.2%	\$18,914	26.7%	\$35,711	14.1%
Missouri	\$9,100	\$6,396	\$61,252	14.9%	\$22,993	39.6%	\$38,175	23.8%
Montana	\$9,383	\$8,299	\$64,513	14.5%	\$20,366	46.1%	\$42,188	22.2%
Nebraska	\$9,043	\$7,935	\$68,569	13.2%	\$26,314	34.4%	\$39,290	23.0%
Nevada	\$10,317	\$8,768	\$56,066	18.4%	\$27,355	37.7%	\$35,511	29.1%
New Hampshire	\$12,399	\$10,259	\$86,936	14.3%	\$31,356	39.5%	\$51,573	24.0%
New Jersey	\$11,548	\$9,557	\$90,270	12.8%	\$30,341	38.1%	\$45,450	25.4%
New Mexico	\$7,802	\$6,988	\$49,214	15.9%	\$21,826	35.7%	\$37,637	20.7%
New York	\$14,144	\$11,700	\$67,930	20.8%	\$26,539	53.3%	\$42,215	33.5%
North Carolina	\$9,254	\$7,920	\$55,402	16.7%	\$22,708	40.8%	\$34,266	27.0%
North Dakota	\$8,431	\$7,630	\$78,232	10.8%	\$29,506	28.6%	\$50,154	16.8%
Ohio	\$8,985	\$7,320	\$62,064	14.5%	\$21,951	40.9%	\$38,308	23.5%
Oklahoma	\$6,572	\$5,280	\$54,706	12.0%	\$22,488	29.2%	\$37,387	17.6%
Oregon	\$11,964	\$9,108	\$62,457	19.2%	\$23,950	50.0%	\$40,646	29.4%
Pennsylvania	\$11,978	\$9,119	\$70,403	17.0%	\$25,002	47.9%	\$43,627	27.5%
Rhode Island	\$12,882	\$10,052	\$70,108	18.4%	\$25,435	50.6%	\$44,097	29.2%
South Carolina	\$6,483	\$4,657	\$55,296	11.7%	\$22,571	28.7%	\$36,321	17.8%
South Dakota	\$6,143	\$5,810	\$64,169	9.6%	\$25,785	23.8%	\$38,008	16.2%
Tennessee	\$8,378	\$7,113	\$52,439	16.0%	\$23,100	36.3%	\$33,511	25.0%
Texas	\$9,207	\$7,813	\$60,438	15.2%	\$25,260	36.4%	\$40,387	22.8%
Utah	\$9,183	\$7,167	\$70,800	13.0%	\$28,464	32.3%	\$47,073	19.5%
Vermont	\$11,513	\$10,440	\$75,118	15.3%	\$27,121	42.5%	\$45,831	25.1%
Virginia	\$12,220	\$9,256	\$79,391	15.4%	\$29,997	40.7%	\$45,398	26.9%
Washington	\$13,110	\$9,887	\$72,466	18.1%	\$28,542	45.9%	\$45,465	28.8%
West Virginia	\$8,580	\$7,540	\$53,020	16.2%	\$18,925	45.3%	\$34,490	24.9%
Wisconsin	\$11,750	\$9,598	\$70,739	16.6%	\$26,700	44.0%	\$41,950	28.0%
Wyoming	\$9,110	\$7,841	\$72,858	12.5%	\$30,080	30.3%	\$52,467	17.4%

Source: Child Care Aware 2016 Survey of Child Care Resource and Referral State Networks; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015 one-year estimates, tables B19126 and 19125

¹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/16/fathers-day-facts/>

² <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p70-135.pdf>

³ <http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Paid-Family-and-Medical-Leave-An-Issue-Whose-Time-Has-Come.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/16/fathers-day-facts/>; <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MenWorkFamily-brief.pdf>

⁵ https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/e288a79b-f0ad-4a50-bfdf-a1a2d8e794b5/child-care-report-final.pdf

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/leave_report_final.pdf

⁸ <http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Paid-Family-and-Medical-Leave-An-Issue-Whose-Time-Has-Come.pdf>