



Hawai'i KIDS COUNT

E-Bulletin

Happy Holidays from Hawai'i KIDS COUNT!



December 2014 Issue

Center on the Family | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-CTAHR

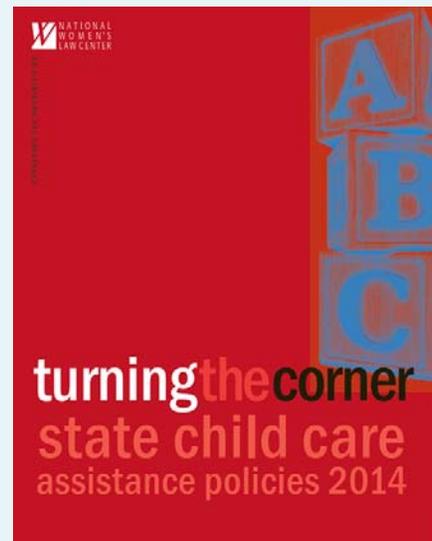
IN THIS ISSUE

Turning the Corner: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2014
Parents and the High Cost of Child Care 2014
America After 3PM

TURNING THE CORNER: STATE CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE POLICIES 2014

Having reliable and quality child care is critical for low-income families with young children. It not only supports parents' productivity at work and allows them to participate in training and educational opportunities that promote financial stability, but it is also important for child development and school readiness. Many low-income families, however, struggle to afford child care. The average fee for full-time care ranges from approximately \$3,700 to \$16,400 a year, depending on where the family lives, the type of care, and the age of the child. Child care assistance can help families with these high child care costs.

The National Women's Law Center monitors trends in child care assistance policies. In their recent report, *Turning the Corner: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2014*, the Center examines five critical factors that determine the affordability, accessibility and quality of assistance for all fifty states and the District of Columbia. The report



finds that families in 33 states are better off under one or more key child care policies in 2014 than in 2013, and only 13 states have families that are worse off now than a year ago. This is the second year in a row in which the situation for families improved in more states than it worsened. The past two years have seen a turnaround from the previous two when the situation worsened for families in more states than it improved. Many of these improvements, however, have been modest, and too many families still cannot receive the help they need to obtain reliable, high-quality care. For example, only one state pays child care providers who serve families receiving child care assistance at the federally recommended reimbursement rate, and long waiting lists still prevent low-income families in many states from getting assistance at all.

Hawai'i specific data include the following:

- Hawai'i is one of 12 states in which the income eligibility limit remained unchanged between 2013 and 2014; 34 states increased the limit to adjust for inflation and three states lowered the limit.
- Hawai'i is one of the 24 states that did not have a waiting list for all years reported; other states had waiting lists or froze intake (turning away eligible families without adding their names to a waiting list).
- Hawai'i is one of the 14 states that allows parents to qualify for child care assistance while searching for a job.

The full report can be accessed here:

http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/nwlc_2014statechildcareassistancereport-final.pdf.

PARENTS AND THE HIGH COST OF CHILD CARE 2014

A second report featured in this month's E-Bulletin addresses the high cost of child care, which continues to place a heavy burden on working families with young children. The annual report by Child Care Aware of America uses 2013 data from a survey of Child Care Resource and Referral State Networks and local agencies to show the average fees that families are charged for child care centers and family child care homes in every state and the District of Columbia. To rank states, the average cost of care is examined in relation to the state median income for families with children. The report examines why child care costs are so high, studies the variation in costs across states, compares child care costs to other family expenses (housing, transportation, food, and college tuition), examines sources that help to pay for child care, and explores creative solutions to expand access to quality affordable care.



Findings show that:

- the cost of child care for two children exceeded housing costs for homeowners with a mortgage in nearly a quarter of states;
- in every region of the U.S., average fees for an infant in a child care center were more than double the average amount that families spent on food; and,
- in nearly a third of states, the average annual cost for an infant in center-based care was higher than a year's tuition and fees at a four-year public college.

The report investigates potential solutions for providing high-quality and affordable child care to families. It recommends a national discussion about the impact of the high cost of child care and promotes best practices for innovative, low-cost solutions that have been successful at local levels. The report includes a call for action for federal and state governments and policymakers to make investments in early care and education that ensure all low-income families have access to affordable quality child care. It also includes a call for parents,

concerned citizens, and early care and education professionals to urge legislators to address the overwhelming cost of child care. Data for Hawai'i include:

- Hawai'i ranked as the 12th least affordable state for center-based infant care. In 2013, the average cost for center-based infant care was \$11,748, which is 42% of the state median income for a single mother and 14% of the median income for a married couple.
- The annual cost of child care for two children (an infant and 4 year-old) attending a center in Hawai'i was calculated at \$20,565. This amount exceeded annual median rent payments (\$16,236) and represented 75% of annual median mortgage payments (\$27,444).
- The average cost of child care for two children represents nearly three quarters (73%) of the median income for single mother households in Hawai'i.

The full report is available for download at: <http://www.usa.childcareaware.org/costofcare>.

AMERICA AFTER 3PM

Since 2004, the Afterschool Alliance has been conducting in-depth research on how children spend the hours between 3 and 6 p.m., when school ends and children are more likely to be unsupervised. Data were collected from each state and the District of Columbia from an online survey of parents with a school-age child. The report examines participation in afterschool programs, the types of activities offered in these programs, satisfaction with program quality, and benefits to the families. The report also looks at children who do not participate in the afterschool programs and the opportunity gaps that occur by income, race and ethnicity for those who would participate if given the chance. During the past 10 years, participation in afterschool programs has increased from 11% in 2004 to 18% in 2014; however, the number of unsupervised children remains high with roughly 20% looking after themselves after school. While participation has increased, the unmet demand for afterschool programs has risen with over 26% more parents indicating they would have their children participate in programs if the opportunity were available to them. The report stressed that a combination of public and private funding at the federal, state, and local levels is necessary in order to increase availability and affordability of these programs. The following are key findings for Hawai'i:



- Hawai'i has the second highest percentage (26%) of children in an afterschool program. The District of Columbia and California also lead the nation, with 35% and 25%, respectively.
- Over one-third (38%) of children not currently in an afterschool program would be enrolled in a program if one were available to them, slightly lower than the national average (41%).
- The vast majority of parents in Hawai'i (93%) favor public funding for programs that provide afterschool opportunities in communities that have few opportunities for children.
- One-quarter (26%) of children in an afterschool program in Hawai'i qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program.

The America After 3PM report is available for download at: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2014/AA3PM_National_Report.pdf.

The Hawai'i fact sheet is available at: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2014/HI-AA3PM-2014-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

SUBSCRIBING:

You may subscribe to this newsletter by sending an email to kcadmin@hawaii.edu with the phrase "Subscribe to Hawai'i KIDS COUNT E-Bulletin" in the subject field.

UNSUBSCRIBING:

If we have reached you in error or if you would prefer not to hear from us in the future, send an email to kcadmin@hawaii.edu with the phrase "Unsubscribe Hawai'i KIDS COUNT E-Bulletin" in the subject field.

ARCHIVE OF E-BULLETINS:

PDF versions of our monthly e-bulletins are available at: <http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/projects/kidscount/ebulletin.aspx>

Hawai'i KIDS COUNT is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support, and we acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in the E-Bulletin are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

CENTER ON THE FAMILY

2515 Campus Road, Miller Hall 103, Honolulu, HI 96822

Phone: (808) 956-4132 | Fax: (808) 956-4147 | Email: cof@ctahr.hawaii.edu

Facebook Page URL: www.facebook.com/HawaiiKidsCount

