

Taipei to allocate about NT\$200m to childcare ^[1]

Helping parents: The city plans to extend its subsidy for children aged three to four who are enrolled at a private childcare centre to also include

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EXCERPTS

The Taipei City Government plans to budget about NT\$200 million (US\$6.43 million) per year on subsidies for children aged two to three who are enrolled at childcare centers, Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) said yesterday.

The city's Department of Education provides a subsidy of NT\$13,660 per semester for children aged three to four who are enrolled at a private childcare center, Ko said.

However, when the policy was created, there was ambiguity about whether children aged two to three should be considered as falling under childcare or infant care, so subsidies were not provided for that age group, Ko said.

The new plan would extend the subsidy to children two to three years old, he said.

Parents of children aged two and under can currently receive an infant care subsidy of NT\$2,500 to NT\$4,000 per month from the city's Department of Social Welfare if their children are enrolled in an infant care center or are taken care of by a so-called "semi-public babysitter."

As there is an overlap, parents of children aged two to three would be asked to choose either the subsidy for infant care or childcare, according to their needs, Ko said.

The budget for the new policy is difficult to calculate due to the two departments' overlapping subsidies, he added.

Ko last week said on Facebook that while a candidate in last year's local elections had proposed "letting the government raise your second child," another candidate has now proposed the idea of letting "the government raise your child [until] six years old."

He was referring to Hon Hai Precision Industry Co founder Terry Gou's (郭台銘) pledge to provide a subsidy for every children under six if elected president. Gou is vying for the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) nomination for next year's presidential election.

"Having the government fully raise a child is impossible, but having the government help raise a child is relatively possible, and this is what the Taipei City Government has been striving for in the past few years," Ko wrote.

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