

# Childcare price rises are looming, parents warned [IE] <sup>[1]</sup>

News, Irish Times

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**Source:** Irish Times

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 25 Aug 2008

## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Parents have been warned that childcare price rises are looming for thousands of children who are no longer eligible for subsidised care in community-based childcare facilities.

Under a new funding regime which came into force last month, parents on social welfare or availing of the Family Income Supplement are guaranteed entitlement to subsidised community-based childcare.

However, parents on low or middle incomes who are not in receipt of social welfare will have to pay the full cost of childcare places. This, according to community-based childcare providers, means price hikes of anything between 30 per cent and 100 per cent for many parents.

Breda Kenny, childcare co-ordinator at the Finglas-Cabra Partnership, said prices at its local community-based childcare facility are set to rise from 165 to 215 a week.

"It's inevitable that some parents won't be able to afford this and will have to either give up work or work part-time instead," she said.

"It also threatens to undermine the social mix in a lot of community childcare facilities, where you have parents and children of different background mixing together."

Ms Kenny said parents on low or middle incomes who fall just outside the eligibility criteria for subsidised care will be hardest hit.

The Government says the changes mean State funds will be targeted at children most in need of support and will involve even greater levels of funding.

The new funding system will involve 153 million over the next three years - a 16 per cent increase over the old system.

It says the majority of service providers will benefit under the new system. The changes involve the replacement of a system where childcare providers were given grants towards their staffing costs with subventions based on the income level of parents.

The tiered system of charges which now operates means that:

- Parents on social welfare receive a 100 a week subvention for childcare, up from 80 a week;
- Parents on Family Income Supplement have their subvention increased from 30 to 70 a week;
- Low income parents who are above the threshold for the supplement may receive up to 45 a week in subvention.

These new tiered payments came into force last month. The money will go directly to childcare providers.

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- reprinted from the Irish Times

**Region:** Europe <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** affordability <sup>[3]</sup>

availability <sup>[4]</sup>

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