

A year of day care more expensive than a year at public college? ^[1]

Day care costs skyrocket across the nation, new report says

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EXCERPTS

The economy is down, unemployment is up and working parents are struggling more to make ends meet. For those who have young children that need day care, that struggle is even harder. Skyrocketing child care costs hamper parents' decisions.

A study released this morning by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) says the annual costs of child care now exceed the cost of sending a child to college in several states.

Last year in Maryland, families spent an average of \$12,367 to care for one infant. To care for one infant during that same period, families in Connecticut spent an average of \$12,755, \$13,650 in Minnesota, \$13,676 in New York and \$19,000 in Massachusetts, according to the report titled "Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2010 Update."

In fact, the report revealed that in 39 states and Washington, D.C., the average annual day care cost for an infant exceeded the cost of a year's tuition and fees at a four-year public college.

"We do not generally think of child care as that expensive, and families, when they have an infant, are basically on the lower end of their earning power as opposed to a family who's got a child in college," Linda Smith, executive director of NACCRRA, told "Good Morning America."

Pam Tatum, CEO of Quality Care for Children, a Georgia parental resources organization, said parents are "caught in a bind."

"Without child care they cannot work, and unless they work they can't pay for child care," she said.

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