

Employee Child Care Guide

April 2025



Need Help Finding Child Care? Arkansas Child Care Aware Can Help You!

Find Child Care

Selecting child care is one of the most important decisions your family will make for your young child. Because your child's first five years last forever, take the time to make the best choice.

For free, personalized assistance, contact the **Arkansas Child Care Aware regional office** nearest you. A referral specialist will help you to identify child care options based on your family's specific needs. [Child Care Aware Area Map](#)

[Child Care Aware of Northwest Arkansas](#)

[Child Care Aware of Northcentral Arkansas](#)

[Child Care Aware of Eastern Arkansas](#)

[Child Care Aware of Central and Southwest Arkansas](#)

[Child Care Aware of West Central Arkansas](#)

When a parent contacts **Child Care Aware** a referral specialist will:

- Discuss the family's child care preferences, including type of care, location, cost, and other variables;
- Describe the type of child care available;
- Explain guidelines for quality child care;
- Search the state database to present families with a list of options;
- Provide current information on early childhood education and best child care practices; and
- Link the caller to other resources such as the Arkansas School Readiness Assistance Program (child care subsidies to make child care more affordable for families).

Are you taking advantage of federal tax benefits to help make child care more affordable?

- There is a federal tax credit for child care expenses that allows a modest credit against individual/family taxes owed.
- There is a business employee benefit that enables employees to set-aside money for child care tax-free that can be used to reimburse some child care expenses. It's called a Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP). Ask your employer if the company has a DCAP or could start one for interested parents.

Need help affording the cost of child care?

For lower wage families, child care assistance is available based on family size and income. To find out more about the Arkansas School Readiness Assistance Program that helps families afford quality child care, visit the Department of Education's [Office of Early Childhood web site](#). Eligible families can earn up to 85% of state median income and still potentially qualify for child care assistance. Families with annual income up to \$61,812 for a family of three, \$73,584 for a family of four, and \$85,356 for a family of five may be eligible for the [School Readiness Assistance Program](#) to help make child care more affordable. For more information about child care assistance eligibility: <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/office-of-early-childhood/school-readiness-assistance-program>

Looking for Child Care?

Download a parent checklist to ask questions of child care providers when searching for care ([child care center check list](#), [family child care home checklist](#)).