

County-Level Child Care Costs:

MINNESOTA

Methodology

Child care costs are reported at the county level for infant child care and child care for 4 year olds across the state. To determine the affordability of child care costs by county, we compared the average cost of child care to household median income by county. Affordability was calculated by dividing the average cost of care in that county by the county's median income as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2016 5-year estimates, Table B19126). Then, county affordability was compared to statewide affordability. **Child Care Aware® of America would like to thank Child Care Aware® of Minnesota for generously providing the data needed to complete this analysis.**

Findings

Scott County ranks first in least affordable counties in Minnesota for both center-based and family-based infant care. On average, married couples pay nearly 20 percent of median income for center-based infant care, and 11 percent

for family-based infant care. While nationally, Minnesota ranks number 6 for least affordable center-based infant care at nearly 16 percent, Scott County is one of three counties that outrank both Minnesota and the top five states in least affordable center-based care.

Families in other highly populated counties, such as Ramsey County, also experience unaffordable child care costs. Ramsey County, which ranks second in least affordable center-based infant care, is 3.5 percent more expensive when compared to the state average. Scott, Ramsey, and Hennepin Counties are part of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, where cost of living is slightly higher compared to the rest of the state.

It should be noted that two of the top three least affordable counties for family-based infant child care have smaller populations when compared to the rest of the state. Consequently, these counties have smaller supplies of family child care providers that serve infants.

Table 1:

Least Affordable Counties for Infant Child Care Costs by Type of Care

RANK	COUNTY	AVERAGE ANNUAL COST OF INFANT CARE*	PERCENT MEDIAN INCOME-MARRIED COUPLE WITH CHILDREN	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COUNTY-LEVEL AND STATEWIDE AFFORDABILITY**
Statewide Center-Based Affordability: 15.5%				
1	Scott County	\$17,056	19.6%	4.1%
2	Ramsey County	\$17,992	19.0%	3.5%
3	Olmsted County	\$16,900	16.1%	0.6%
4	Hennepin County	\$18,356	15.5%	0.0%
5	Anoka County	\$15,756	15.1%	-0.4%
Statewide Family Child Care Affordability: 8.3%				
1	Scott County	\$9,672	11.1%	2.8%
2	Itasca County	\$8,372	10.8%	2.5%
3	Pine County	\$7,436	10.4%	2.1%
4	Hubbard County	\$7,592	10.3%	2.0%
5	Aitkin County	\$7,020	10.3%	2.0%

Note: NR = Not Reported (meaning that data is unavailable for a given county); NA = Not Applicable

*Source: Child Care Aware® of Minnesota

**Affordability, or Percentage Median Income, is a comparison of average cost against county median income. The state affordability percentage was subtracted from county affordability percentage. A positive percentage point difference indicates that the average county affordability exceeds the average statewide affordability.

Table 2:
County-Level Costs by Age and Type

COUNTY	INFANT CARE			4 YEAR OLD		
	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**
	Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 15.5%			Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 11.8%		
Aitkin County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Anoka County	\$15,756	15.1%	-0.4%	\$12,376	11.9%	0.1%
Becker County	\$10,348	12.0%	-3.5%	\$9,724	11.3%	-0.5%
Beltrami County	\$11,440	14.5%	-1.0%	\$7,436	9.4%	-2.4%
Benton County	\$11,960	14.0%	-1.5%	\$10,348	12.1%	0.3%
Big Stone County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Blue Earth County	\$9,984	10.9%	-4.6%	\$8,944	9.8%	-2.0%
Brown County	\$8,632	9.9%	-5.6%	\$7,228	8.3%	-3.5%
Carlton County	\$10,816	13.1%	-2.4%	\$9,204	11.2%	-0.6%
Carver County	\$16,276	12.6%	-2.9%	\$12,740	9.8%	-2.0%
Cass County	NR	NA	NA	\$6,500	9.4%	-2.4%
Chippewa County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Chisago County	\$12,532	12.3%	-3.2%	\$10,504	10.3%	-1.5%
Clay County	\$10,452	11.4%	-4.1%	\$9,308	10.2%	-1.6%
Clearwater County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Cook County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Cottonwood County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Crow Wing County	\$8,268	10.0%	-5.5%	\$7,488	9.1%	-2.7%
Dakota County	\$17,316	15.0%	-0.5%	\$13,468	11.6%	-0.2%
Dodge County	\$10,452	10.2%	-5.3%	\$9,204	9.0%	-2.8%
Douglas County	\$9,880	11.5%	-4.0%	\$7,956	9.3%	-2.5%
Faribault County	\$9,100	11.6%	-3.9%	\$8,216	10.5%	-1.3%
Fillmore County	\$8,580	10.5%	-5.0%	\$6,708	8.2%	-3.6%
Freeborn County	\$9,568	12.0%	-3.5%	\$7,696	9.7%	-2.1%
Goodhue County	\$9,880	10.1%	-5.4%	\$8,476	8.6%	-3.2%
Grant County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Hennepin County	\$18,356	15.5%	0.0%	\$13,728	11.6%	-0.2%
Houston County	\$7,384	8.9%	-6.6%	\$6,708	8.1%	-3.7%
Hubbard County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Isanti County	\$10,504	11.5%	-4.0%	\$9,204	10.1%	-1.7%
Itasca County	\$10,140	13.1%	-2.4%	\$7,800	10.1%	-1.7%
Jackson County	\$8,320	10.1%	-5.4%	\$8,060	9.8%	-2.0%
Kanabec County	\$7,020	9.1%	-6.4%	\$6,448	8.4%	-3.4%
Kandiyohi County	\$9,516	11.5%	-4.0%	\$8,424	10.2%	-1.6%
Kittson County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Koochiching County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA

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**Affordability, or Percentage Median Income, is a comparison of average cost against county median income of married couple parents. The state affordability percentage was subtracted from county affordability percentage. A positive percentage point difference indicates that the average county affordability exceeds the average statewide affordability.

Table 2:
County-Level Costs by Age and Type

COUNTY	INFANT CARE			4 YEAR OLD		
	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**
	Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 15.5%			Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 11.8%		
Lac qui Parle County	NR	NA	NA	\$6,240	8.1%	-3.7%
Lake County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Lake of the Woods County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Le Sueur County	NR	NA	NA	\$6,032	6.7%	-5.1%
Lincoln County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Lyon County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Mahnomen County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Marshall County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Martin County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
McLeod County	\$11,232	13.0%	-2.5%	\$8,788	10.2%	-1.6%
Meeker County	\$10,036	11.9%	-3.6%	\$8,736	10.4%	-1.4%
Mille Lacs County	\$9,256	12.2%	-3.3%	\$7,852	10.3%	-1.5%
Morrison County	\$8,164	10.2%	-5.3%	\$6,396	8.0%	-3.8%
Mower County	\$9,204	11.1%	-4.4%	\$8,164	9.8%	-2.0%
Murray County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Nicollet County	\$9,880	10.9%	-4.6%	\$8,684	9.6%	-2.2%
Nobles County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Norman County	\$7,800	9.5%	-6.0%	\$7,020	8.5%	-3.3%
Olmsted County	\$16,900	16.1%	0.6%	\$13,000	12.4%	0.6%
Otter Tail County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Pennington County	NR	NA	NA	\$7,280	8.0%	-3.8%
Pine County	NR	NA	NA	\$9,360	13.1%	1.3%
Pipestone County	\$8,216	11.2%	-4.3%	\$6,448	8.8%	-3.0%
Polk County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Pope County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Ramsey County	\$17,992	19.0%	3.5%	\$13,312	14.1%	2.3%
Red Lake County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Redwood County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Renville County	\$7,332	9.6%	-5.9%	\$6,968	9.1%	-2.7%
Rice County	\$12,272	14.4%	-1.1%	\$10,660	12.5%	0.7%
Rock County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Roseau County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Scott County	\$17,056	19.6%	4.1%	\$12,896	14.8%	3.0%
Sherburne County	\$11,596	9.3%	-6.2%	\$9,724	7.8%	-4.0%
Sibley County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
St. Louis County	\$10,712	12.8%	-2.7%	\$8,944	10.7%	-1.1%

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	Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 15.5%			Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 11.8%		
Stearns County	\$12,220	13.1%	-2.4%	\$10,348	11.1%	-0.7%
Steele County	\$11,440	12.9%	-2.6%	\$8,684	9.8%	-2.0%
Stevens County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Swift County	\$6,240	7.6%	-7.9%	\$5,200	6.4%	-5.4%
Todd County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Traverse County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Wabasha County	\$10,556	12.0%	-3.5%	\$8,996	10.2%	-1.6%
Wadena County	\$7,020	11.0%	-4.5%	\$7,020	11.0%	-0.8%
Waseca County	\$8,892	9.7%	-5.8%	\$7,852	8.5%	-3.3%
Washington County	\$17,472	14.0%	-1.5%	\$12,896	10.4%	-1.4%
Watonwan County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Wilkin County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Winona County	\$9,776	11.5%	-4.0%	\$8,996	10.6%	-1.2%
Wright County	\$13,988	13.5%	-2.0%	\$11,180	10.8%	-1.0%
Yellow Medicine County	NR	NA	NA	\$13,000	17.9%	6.1%
COUNTY	INFANT CARE			4 YEAR OLD		
	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**	COST*	PERCENTAGE MEDIAN INCOME	DIFFERENCE TO STATE AVERAGE**
	Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 8.3%			Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 7.6%		
Aitkin County	\$7,020	10.3%	2.0%	\$6,708	9.8%	2.2%
Anoka County	\$8,736	8.4%	0.1%	\$7,800	7.5%	-0.1%
Becker County	\$7,592	8.8%	0.5%	\$6,760	7.8%	0.2%
Beltrami County	\$6,968	8.8%	0.5%	\$6,552	8.3%	0.7%
Benton County	\$7,176	8.4%	0.1%	\$6,552	7.7%	0.1%
Big Stone County	\$7,592	9.8%	1.5%	\$7,020	9.1%	1.5%
Blue Earth County	\$6,968	7.6%	-0.7%	\$6,552	7.2%	-0.4%
Brown County	\$6,812	7.8%	-0.5%	\$6,396	7.3%	-0.3%
Carlton County	\$7,904	9.6%	1.3%	\$7,384	9.0%	1.4%
Carver County	\$9,620	7.4%	-0.9%	\$8,840	6.8%	-0.8%
Cass County	\$6,968	10.1%	1.8%	\$6,812	9.9%	2.3%
Chippewa County	\$5,980	8.4%	0.1%	\$5,616	7.9%	0.3%
Chisago County	\$8,008	7.9%	-0.4%	\$7,228	7.1%	-0.5%
Clay County	\$7,280	7.9%	-0.4%	\$6,708	7.3%	-0.3%
Clearwater County	\$6,812	10.2%	1.9%	\$6,240	9.4%	1.8%
Cook County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Cottonwood County	\$6,240	9.4%	1.1%	\$6,240	9.4%	1.8%

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	Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 8.3%			Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 7.6%		
Crow Wing County	\$7,020	8.5%	0.2%	\$6,708	8.1%	0.5%
Dakota County	\$9,984	8.6%	0.3%	\$8,944	7.7%	0.1%
Dodge County	\$7,696	7.5%	-0.8%	\$7,332	7.2%	-0.4%
Douglas County	\$7,332	8.5%	0.2%	\$6,604	7.7%	0.1%
Faribault County	\$4,784	6.1%	-2.2%	\$4,576	5.8%	-1.8%
Fillmore County	\$7,644	9.3%	1.0%	\$6,396	7.8%	0.2%
Freeborn County	\$6,500	8.2%	-0.1%	\$5,772	7.3%	-0.3%
Goodhue County	\$7,748	7.9%	-0.4%	\$7,332	7.5%	-0.1%
Grant County	\$6,916	9.6%	1.3%	\$6,708	9.4%	1.8%
Hennepin County	\$10,764	9.1%	0.8%	\$9,672	8.2%	0.6%
Houston County	\$6,812	8.2%	-0.1%	\$6,396	7.7%	0.1%
Hubbard County	\$7,592	10.3%	2.0%	\$6,968	9.4%	1.8%
Isanti County	\$7,956	8.7%	0.4%	\$6,656	7.3%	-0.3%
Itasca County	\$8,372	10.8%	2.5%	\$7,644	9.9%	2.3%
Jackson County	\$5,876	7.1%	-1.2%	\$5,304	6.4%	-1.2%
Kanabec County	\$6,604	8.6%	0.3%	\$6,032	7.8%	0.2%
Kandiyohi County	\$6,552	7.9%	-0.4%	\$6,344	7.7%	0.1%
Kittson County	\$5,720	7.3%	-1.0%	\$5,460	7.0%	-0.6%
Koochiching County	\$5,876	6.9%	-1.4%	\$5,200	6.1%	-1.5%
Lac qui Parle County	\$7,176	9.4%	1.1%	\$6,396	8.3%	0.7%
Lake County	\$7,176	9.0%	0.7%	\$6,656	8.3%	0.7%
Lake of the Woods County	\$6,136	7.4%	-0.9%	\$6,136	7.4%	-0.2%
Le Sueur County	\$7,904	8.8%	0.5%	\$7,072	7.9%	0.3%
Lincoln County	\$6,500	8.2%	-0.1%	\$5,980	7.6%	0.0%
Lyon County	\$6,708	7.6%	-0.7%	\$6,448	7.3%	-0.3%
Mahnomen County	\$6,292	7.4%	-0.9%	\$6,136	7.2%	-0.4%
Marshall County	\$6,448	9.9%	1.6%	\$6,292	9.7%	2.1%
Martin County	\$6,292	7.7%	-0.6%	\$5,928	7.2%	-0.4%
McLeod County	\$7,020	8.1%	-0.2%	\$6,292	7.3%	-0.3%
Meeker County	\$6,344	7.5%	-0.8%	\$5,772	6.9%	-0.7%
Mille Lacs County	\$7,124	9.4%	1.1%	\$6,500	8.5%	0.9%
Morrison County	\$6,552	8.2%	-0.1%	\$5,928	7.4%	-0.2%
Mower County	\$6,656	8.0%	-0.3%	\$6,500	7.8%	0.2%
Murray County	\$4,680	5.2%	-3.1%	\$4,680	5.2%	-2.4%

Note: NR = Not Reported (meaning that data is unavailable for a given county); NA = Not Applicable

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COUNTY	INFANT CARE			4 YEAR OLD		
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	Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 8.3%			Statewide FCC-Based Care Affordability: 7.6%		
Nicollet County	\$7,020	7.8%	-0.5%	\$6,552	7.2%	-0.4%
Nobles County	\$5,824	8.4%	0.1%	\$5,772	8.3%	0.7%
Norman County	\$6,240	7.6%	-0.7%	\$5,720	7.0%	-0.6%
Olmsted County	\$9,100	8.6%	0.3%	\$8,164	7.8%	0.2%
Otter Tail County	\$6,500	7.9%	-0.4%	\$6,292	7.6%	0.0%
Pennington County	\$6,448	7.1%	-1.2%	\$6,084	6.7%	-0.9%
Pine County	\$7,436	10.4%	2.1%	\$7,124	10.0%	2.4%
Pipestone County	\$6,916	9.4%	1.1%	\$6,448	8.8%	1.2%
Polk County	\$6,812	7.8%	-0.5%	\$6,396	7.3%	-0.3%
Pope County	\$6,136	7.6%	-0.7%	\$5,564	6.9%	-0.7%
Ramsey County	\$9,464	10.0%	1.7%	\$8,632	9.1%	1.5%
Red Lake County	\$5,512	6.7%	-1.6%	\$5,460	6.7%	-0.9%
Redwood County	\$6,604	8.0%	-0.3%	\$6,240	7.5%	-0.1%
Renville County	\$6,084	8.0%	-0.3%	\$5,824	7.6%	0.0%
Rice County	\$7,904	9.3%	1.0%	\$7,436	8.7%	1.1%
Rock County	\$5,564	7.2%	-1.1%	\$5,408	7.0%	-0.6%
Roseau County	\$6,084	7.9%	-0.4%	\$5,512	7.1%	-0.5%
Scott County	\$9,672	11.1%	2.8%	\$8,788	10.1%	2.5%
Sherburne County	\$7,904	6.4%	-1.9%	\$6,968	5.6%	-2.0%
Sibley County	\$7,176	7.0%	-1.3%	\$6,604	6.5%	-1.1%
St. Louis County	\$8,112	9.7%	1.4%	\$7,436	8.9%	1.3%
Stearns County	\$6,916	7.4%	-0.9%	\$6,396	6.9%	-0.7%
Steele County	\$6,708	7.6%	-0.7%	\$6,240	7.0%	-0.6%
Stevens County	\$6,760	7.2%	-1.1%	\$6,240	6.6%	-1.0%
Swift County	\$5,928	7.3%	-1.0%	\$5,668	6.9%	-0.7%
Todd County	\$6,188	8.9%	0.6%	\$6,084	8.8%	1.2%
Traverse County	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Wabasha County	\$7,072	8.0%	-0.3%	\$6,656	7.5%	-0.1%
Wadena County	\$6,344	9.9%	1.6%	\$6,292	9.8%	2.2%
Waseca County	\$7,228	7.8%	-0.5%	\$6,448	7.0%	-0.6%
Washington County	\$9,412	7.6%	-0.7%	\$8,528	6.8%	-0.8%
Watonwan County	\$5,720	7.4%	-0.9%	\$5,720	7.4%	-0.2%
Wilkin County	\$6,136	6.9%	-1.4%	\$5,876	6.6%	-1.0%
Winona County	\$6,604	7.7%	-0.6%	\$6,240	7.3%	-0.3%
Wright County	\$8,476	8.2%	-0.1%	\$7,592	7.3%	-0.3%
Yellow Medicine County	\$6,240	8.6%	0.3%	\$5,876	8.1%	0.5%

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