

Reducing Child Care Costs

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With Community Input

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Earlier draft presented March 12 at city council

Basic Issue

- Child care is crazy expensive, a huge problem
- Cost rose faster than inflation for decades
- New parents often have modest income
- Makes for economic and emotional duress
- Can't work if you can't pay the babysitter
- Daycares are closing due to costs
- Encourages postponing family or not having kids
- Forced pregnancies make matters worse

Contributing Social Problems

- Income inequality and low pay
- Under-supported education, costly student loans
- Unaffordable housing
- War on drugs divides citizens, promotes crime
- War on crime creates single parent families, trauma, poverty
- Inflation shrinks wages and assets
- Car-centric cities increase transportation costs

Underlying Problem

- Modern culture promotes wealth inequality in many ways
- People in control really like this situation
- Government works for rich campaign contributors
- Culture has many practices that support wealth concentration and result in costly childcare

Extended Families

- Great way to raise a family
- Frequently grandparents can't afford to retire and are unavailable
- Merging households reduces need for income
- Some cultures have grandparents do child care while parents work
- This mindset reduces the child care crisis
- Independent mobile workforce separates extended families

Multigenerational Homes

- Grandparents, parents, children live together
- Reduces housing costs
- Reduces childcare costs
- Prevalent in some cultures, uncommon elsewhere
- Getting more popular as income inequality rises
- Often emotionally rewarding, sometimes stressful
- Practical for peaceful, loving extended families

In Home Daycare

- An economical option for daycare
- State registration is optional
- Max of 12 kids including provider's
- Lets families share expenses
- Could rotate children between homes so parents can keep their career. City could facilitate setup.
- See "Registered Family Day Care"
<https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/licensing/registered.aspx>

My Family's Approach

- Kids need your time and love, that is their wealth
- I had a good job in science and computing
- Chose a very frugal lifestyle
- Rejected mainstream consumerism for family
- Closed my business for more family time
- Wife stayed home while kids were young
- Few families can afford that

City Subsidy

- Government should subsidize child care cost
- How expensive to reduce child care cost by 1/3?
- Cost per child is \$715. See "the latest TOOTRiS survey data, the average cost of Child Care in Sioux Falls is \$178.61 per week or \$715 per month."

<https://tootris.com/edu/blog/parents/cost-of-child-care-in-south-dakota-a-breakdown-for-2023/>

- About 12,000 kids. See "According to a June 2023 report from Sioux Falls Thrive and the Sioux Falls Childcare Collaborative the city had 12,260 licensed slots for childcare" from "Four Sioux Falls childcare centers shutting down early next year" on Argus Leader.com

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 \$715 & 1 & 12 \text{ months} & 12,000 \text{ children} & 1 & 1 \text{ thousand} \\
 \hline
 \text{month} & * & \text{year} & * & \text{1000 thousand} & * & \text{1000 million} \\
 \text{child} & & & & & &
 \end{array}$$

City Subsidy 2

- People tell me full time child care costs \$1200 monthly
- For 12,000 children, it would cost \$58 million annually to cut costs by 1/3
- Probably too much for Sioux Falls city budget

\$1,200	1	12 months	12,000 children	1	1 thousand
-----	*	-----	*	-----	*
month	3	year		1000 thousand	1000 million
child					

Supporting City Subsidy

- Pay for child care subsidy with a sane drug policy
- Legalize recreational cannabis via city's home rule charter
- This would also reduce crime, addiction, disease, cycle of incarceration, poverty, homelessness, ...

Other Government Support

- South Dakota government helps a few low income families
- Federal government partially funds state support
- See
<https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/childcareassistance/>

Social Reforms

- Encourage connecting extended families
- Reduce consumerism and income inequality
- Reform government and culture for many reasons including reduced childcare costs
- Address affordable housing through zoning
- Reduce transportation costs via walkability
- Addicts belong in treatment, not prison

More Social Reforms

- Politicians and news media moguls need integrity
- Practical, caring, honest government
- Election reform to reduce campaign costs
- Media reform to create impartial local independent news media

Solution – The Citizen Part

- Citizens need to:
- Understand the issues
- Get politically active
- Change will occur when many informed people

VOTE

- Vote April 9 for city council

Enjoy Nature (Great Bear Park)

