

Childcare: Your rights and entitlements

Kids

40 Years



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working for you

Support you might require



What financial help is available to me when paying for childcare?

All amounts quoted are current at April 2011 but are subject to change.

Early Years Free Entitlement


Since 2010, children aged three or four are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery education per week for 38 weeks of the year. This can be accessed through Ofsted-registered providers. Disabled children may also be entitled to free childcare from an earlier age. For more information on free childcare for disabled children or if you require support to access training, please contact the Families Information Service.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

There are proposed changes by the government to move to a Universal Credit Policy; for further information on how this and other changes announced to the benefit system may impact in the future, please contact Contact a Family via the freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555 or visit www.direct.gov.uk.

You may be eligible for DLA if your child has a physical impairment or special educational needs.

There are two parts to the DLA:

1. Care component: this is when your child needs help to meet their basic requirements or supervision to keep safe
 2. Mobility component: this is when your child needs additional support to get around
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You can usually claim for the care component when your child is three months old and for the mobility component when your child is three years old.

However, there are some exceptions to this. The care component of the DLA can be used to help meet childcare costs.

Care Component	Weekly Rate
Highest Rate	£73.60
Middle Rate	£49.30
Lowest Rate	£19.55

Mobility Component	Weekly Rate
Higher Rate	£51.40
Lower Rate	£19.55



How to claim

You can claim online or get a claim pack by phoning the Benefit Enquiry Line 0800 88 22 00. This is a confidential freephone service for disabled people and carers. You can call the Benefit Enquiry Line and ask them to send you a claim pack. They can also arrange for someone to help you fill out the form if required. The Benefit Enquiry Line is open 8.30 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday and 9.00 am to 1.00 pm Saturday. Or you can download the claim form from www.direct.gov.uk.

Child Tax Credit

If you have a child or children under the age of 16 or 20 and if they are in full-time education or approved training, which you are responsible for, you may be able to claim Child Tax Credit to help with the cost of looking after them.

You can get extra Child Tax Credit if you are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance for your child or your child is registered blind. If your child is severely disabled and gets what is known as the Highest Rate Care Component of Disability Living Allowance, you may get an additional payment.

The amount of extra Child Tax Credit you get depends on how much care your child needs. In this tax year - 6 April 2011 to 5 April 2012 - you could get approximately:

- £2,800 a year, which is around £53 a week, if your child is disabled
- £3,930 a year, which is around £75 a week, if your child is severely disabled

The amount you get also depends on other money you have coming in. To find out more about how much you may get, use the online calculator at www.direct.gov.uk or call the Tax Credit Helpline 0845 300 3900 Monday to Friday, 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, and Saturday 8.00 am to 4.00 pm.



You could also get help with the cost of childcare through Working Tax Credit. Childcare has to be registered or approved childcare to qualify. This does include childcare provided by nurseries, childminders or out-of-school clubs.

If you are a lone parent, you must work 16 hours or more a week to claim help with childcare costs. If you are part of a couple, usually you and your partner must both work 16 hours or more a week to claim help. You can get help with up to 70 per cent of your childcare costs, subject to a maximum limit in the amount of childcare costs you can claim each week.

If you pay childcare for:

- One child, the maximum childcare cost you can claim is £175 a week
- Two or more children, the maximum cost you can claim is £300 a week

This means that the maximum help you can get for your childcare through tax credits is:

- £122.50 a week for one child
- £210 a week for two or more children

But you won't necessarily get the full £122.50 or £210 a week; the actual amount you get will depend on your income. The lower your income, the more tax credits you can get.

There is no set income limit for help with childcare costs. But as a general guide, if you are a couple with one child and paying £175 a week for childcare, you will still get some tax credits if your annual income is as high as £41,000.

It is important to know that different income limits apply depending on your circumstances; for example, if you have a large family, the income limit could be higher. If you want a better idea of how much

you could claim, there is also an online tax credits calculator you can use www.direct.gov.uk. To make a claim call 0845 300 3900 Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 8.00 pm, and Saturday 8.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Aiming High Grants and Family Activities Scheme

Wakefield Council will fund KIDS to administer the Aiming High Grants and Family Activities Scheme through the Wakefield Early Support Advice Information and Liaison Service (WeSail). Funds are limited and priority will be given to families who do not receive other services. The Aiming High grants and Family Activities Scheme will only be available until March 2012.

Parents can apply for a grant of £150 (or £200 where a child is of secondary school age). Grants can be used for family outings or as payment for registered childcare or holiday schemes or support from registered domiciliary care agencies. Parents must reside in the Wakefield District and care for either a child or young person in receipt of the higher level care or mobility element of DLA, or a child or young person in receipt of medium level care or mobility with three significant needs, to be detailed in application, or more than one child on any level of DLA. For more information, please contact on WeSail 01924 379015.



Support from your employers

Some employers may have childcare schemes.

These include:

1. Directly contracted childcare, where your employer pays your childcare provider directly.
2. Childcare vouchers, which you can use to pay for your childcare and the childcare provider claims back the payment from your employer.

These schemes can help you save money on tax and national insurance contributions. For more information, ask your employer about the childcare schemes they offer.

Employers can support you in other ways:

1. **By supporting flexible working.** After six months of working for your employer you can request flexible working if you have a disabled child under 18 years old. For example, you could ask to work from home occasionally, to vary your working hours or to work more during term time. Your employer has to consider your suggestions but does not have to agree to them.
2. **By allowing you to take time off in an emergency.** Your employer would not have to pay you for this time
3. **By allowing you to take parental leave.** When you have worked for your employer for a year, you are entitled to 18 weeks of unpaid leave to enable you to care for your disabled child.

Contact Us

KIDS Inclusion Service
01924 299 488
enquiries.wakefield@kids.org.uk

Wakefield Families Information Service
0800 587 8042
www.wakefieldfis.org.uk

