

The initial purchases for starting a child care business can be estimated between \$700 and \$1000 per child for preschool age children and between \$1000 and \$1500 for infant and toddler children. In addition, new programs spend between \$125 to \$150 per child for toys, books and curriculum materials with a similar allowance for replacement and new purchases each year. The estimates are for a child care center and a family or group program may be able to start a program for lesser amounts because of supplies they already have for their own children, the numbers and ages of children they will care for, and limitations with space. **Please note you do not have to have all items on this list to open a child care program.**

Keep in mind children's safety when purchasing products for your child care program. If you purchase items from a second hand store, garage sales, or a business that is closing always check with the consumer product safety commission www.cpsc.gov to make sure there has been no recall on the item. Organization plays a key role in every program. Materials with similar use should be placed together in labeled containers so children can use them and put them away independently. A cost effective way to help you accomplish this is by purchasing clear tubs or bins.

It is unlikely any program could open with all of the items listed below. They serve as a guideline to a well-rounded program and providers can use the items they cannot check off to create an action plan for improvement. This is a start-up list only and is not a complete list of items you may wish to provide in your program.

Tips for purchasing toys:

- Will children of different ages enjoy it?
- Will it last?
- Is it safe?
- Can the toy be used in a variety of ways?
- Does the toy encourage cooperation?
- Is it easy to clean?
- Can I make it for less?
- Can I buy a more useful toy for the same money?
- Should I buy books or borrow them from the local library?

Prices for products on the list were taken from discount stores such as Target or Walmart. Be creative in putting together your program. Ask friends and relatives to donate gently-used items. Search clearance aisles. You may be able to make some of the items. Pricing for some categories are combined. Don't feel you have to spend the entire amount. Funding a new program is expensive and you may have to pick a couple items from each category to get started.

Furnishings for routine care, play and learning

- Child size tables and chairs **\$75**
- Low open shelves for toy storage **\$40**
- Soft areas such as rug areas, cushions, a quilt on the floor, bean bag chair **\$40**
- Soft toys such as foam blocks, cloth dolls, stuffed toy animals, cloth puppets **\$40**
- Colorful pictures, simple pictures, posters or photographs **\$25**
- Cubbies, individual storage for personal belongings, blankets **\$80**
- Message board, sign in area **\$10**

Nap/rest areas

- Pack 'n play and sheets for infant **\$60 per child**
- Cots and mats for older children to nap on **\$25 per child**
- Individual bedding (or parents supply)

Meal times

- High chairs **\$50**, booster seats **\$40**, or child-size tables and chairs (priced above)
- Cleaning/sanitizing materials **\$40**
- Bibs **\$10**
- Age appropriate utensils, plates, glasses **\$25**

Diapering/toileting

- Diaper changing table or pad **\$25 for pad**
- Step stools near sink for hand washing **\$20**
- Soap dispensers, paper towels **\$10**

Health/safety

- First aid kit **\$20**
- Fire extinguishers **\$40**

Books for all age groups should include varying races, ages, abilities, animals, familiar experiences and be fiction or factual. Check books out from your local library or purchase books through school book order companies. **\$75**

- Sturdy vinyl, cloth or hard-page picture books for infants
- Books with easy to understand content and attractive pictures for preschool/kindergarten
- School-age books matching the abilities of children enrolled.

Fine motor

- Infants – rattles, grasping toys, busy boxes, nested cups, containers to fill and dump, textured toys, cradle gyms **\$75**

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- Toddlers – shape sorting games, large stringing beads, big pegs with pegboards, simple puzzles, pop beads, stacking rings, nesting toys, medium or large interlocking blocks, crayons **\$100**
- Preschool/kindergarten – interlocking building toys with pieces of any size, manipulatives such as stringing beads, lacing cards, pegs with peg boards, links and gears, small table blocks, art materials such as crayons and scissors, puzzles **\$200**
- School-age – building toys such as Lincoln Logs, small interlocking block building sets; manipulatives such as pick-up sticks, jacks, marbles, small computer games, and art and craft materials such as markers, watercolors, weaving, and puzzles. **\$200**

Art materials Make sure all materials are non-toxic. **\$50**

- crayons
- markers
- pencils
- paints
- three-dimensional materials such as play dough, clay, wood gluing or carpentry
- easel
- safe scissors
- staplers
- tape dispensers

Music **\$100**

- musical instruments
- recorded music
- musical toys
- noise-making toys
- tape players

Blocks Accessories for block play such as small vehicles, people and animals.

- Toddlers – soft vinyl or cloth covered, large cardboard, sensory blocks, small wooden unit blocks **\$50**
- Preschool/kindergarten – wooden, plastic, or hard foam – large hollow, homemade blocks (food boxes, plastic containers) **\$100**

Dramatic play **\$100**

- Infants – dolls, soft animals, pots and pans, toy telephones

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- Toddlers – dress-up clothes, child-sized house furniture, cooking/eating props, dolls and doll furnishings, soft animals, small play buildings with accessories, toy phones
- Preschoolers/kindergarten – in addition to those listed above dress-up clothes to represent work or fantasy themes
- School-agers – interlocking blocks with figures

Math/number materials \$100

- small objects used in counting
- balance scales
- rulers
- number puzzles
- magnetic numbers
- number games (dominoes, number lotto)
- geometric shapes
- number puzzles
- math card and board games
- calculators

Nature/science collections of natural objects such as \$50

- rocks
- seeds
- shells
- nature/science books
- magnets
- magnifying glasses
- prisms

Sand and water play \$50

Containers for sand and water play plus toys for use with sand and water play such as

- shovels
- pails
- small cars and trucks
- floating toys
- plastic containers

Items to promote diversity \$50

Examples of racial/cultural diversity and people of different ages, abilities and gender in non-stereotypical roles in dolls, books, pictures, music tapes or CDs, props, ethnic clothing, cooking and eating utensils.

Active physical play Cost for this category will vary depending on which items you add.

Indoor and outdoor space used for physical play could include items such as:

- Push toys
- Balls
- Sturdy things to pull up on
- Push-pull wheel toys
- Tunnels
- Climbing equipment
- Wagons
- Basketball hoops
- Jump ropes
- Hula-hoops
- Equipment for ball games

Business/record keeping

If you already have a computer your record keeping system can be minimal. If you do not have a computer, check with local businesses such as banks or businesses offices that update on a regular basis. They may have one to donate that would have the capacity to handle a child care record keeping system. Shop around for insurance coverage for your business. Costs generally increase with the number of children you are caring for.

- Computer w/internet service
- Record keeping program
- Filing system
- Insurance

Leading the way for Child Care in North Dakota

Eastern North Dakota 800-941-7003 or 218-299-7026 ~ Western North Dakota 888-223-1510 or 701-223-1510

www.ndchildcare.org