



Childcare Assistance

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) provides financial assistance with childcare costs for families that meet income guideline criteria through several childcare assistance programs.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Families First participants are eligible to receive childcare to assist in completing the approved activity on their Personal Responsibility Plan (PRP). Families must be determined eligible by Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) staff before they can participate in the program.
 - See next page for more information on the Families First Program
2. Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance is available to income eligible-families who are working *or* enrolled in post-secondary education programs. Smart Steps was established to provide childcare financial assistance to eligible families with children ages six (6) weeks until kindergarten. The family is not required to receive other benefits through TDHS to qualify.
 - How to apply for Smart Steps:
 - Apply online. The Smart Steps Child Care Assistance Application is located on this Child Care Services page of the TDHS Website.
 - Print the paper application, fill it out, mail/fax it, or bring it to your local TDHS office
3. The Teen Parent Child Care Program serves teen parents who are enrolled in and attending high school and who meet income guidelines. Assistance may be available for eligible teens living at home with their parent(s) or those who are emancipated and living independently from their parent(s). Written or verbal communication from school staff that the school's requirements are met is adequate verification for school enrollment.

If you have questions about childcare payment assistance or need a paper application, please contact the Child Care Payment Assistance Customer Service Line at: 1-833-740-1440 or via email at CCPaymentAssist.DHS@tn.gov.

To find a childcare provider, visit: <https://accweb.dhs.tn.gov/>

The providers that accept childcare assistance are listed as “Yes” under the childcare assistance column.