

We compiled our data on the cost of child care using a variety of sources.

The Children's Council of San Francisco (childrenscouncil.org) provided us with a county by county breakdown of the cost of child care centers and Licensed in-home child care. The information is from the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network as of 2007. (rrnetwork.org)

The breakdown is as follows:

Preschoolers:

Child Care Center		Child Care Home
Santa Clara County	\$ 10, 597	\$9020
Marin County	\$ 11242	\$9910
Contra Costa County	\$ 8,739	\$7856
Alameda County	\$ 9,142	\$8066
San Mateo County	\$ 10,572	\$9178
SF County	\$ 10, 190	\$9412
Total	\$ 60,482	\$53,442
6 County Average	\$10,833 /year	\$8907/year
Weekly Average	\$208.33	\$171.28

Infants:

Child Care Home		Child Care Center
Santa Clara County	\$ 9860	\$14454
Marin County	\$ 10419	\$14821
Contra Costa County	\$ 8386	\$12318
Alameda County	\$ 8554	\$12842
San Mateo County	\$ 9178	\$10,572
SF County	\$ 10,049	\$13,300
Total	\$56,446	\$78,307
6 County Average	\$9407.67	\$13,055.16
Weekly Average	\$180.92	\$250.98

No such information is available on the average cost of hiring an au pair or nanny. For that, we called three reputable au pair agencies and 3 reputable nanny agencies. The au pair agencies chosen were recommended by the Children's Council of San Francisco.

Au Pair Care (aupaircare.com)	\$340/week
Au Pair USA (aupairusa.org)	\$341/week
Au Pair in America (aupairamerica.com)	\$350.46/week

These nanny referral agencies were recommended by the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (rrnetwork.org).

Stanford Park Nannies (spnannies.com)	\$16 - \$22/hour
Aunt Anne's (auntannes.com)	\$18 - \$21/hour
Town & Country Resource (tandcr.com)	\$17 - 23/hour

In home child care providers and child care centers are licensed by California Community Care Licensing in the Department of Social Services. (cclid.ca.gov/PG411.htm).

Au Pairs are [regulated by the State Department](#). Au Pairs must work a minimum of 1 year and can be extended to a second year. After that, they are required to return to their home country. It is primarily a [culture exchange program](#).

Nannies do not fall under the jurisdiction of any government regulators. However, if you go through a nanny agency, you should ask how they screen their nannies and if their nannies go through a criminal background check. You can hire a nanny from Craigs List much cheaper, but if you do, make sure you check references and do a background check. Most nanny agencies will do that for you.

As we mentioned, choice shouldn't be the only factor when choosing child care. For additional help, you can refer to information from the [Children's Council of San Francisco](#) and the [California Child Care Resource and Referral Network](#).