Your child care program may be able to help

- Orange County has a lot of child care programs that offer their own scholarships or determine tuition using a sliding scale. Child Care Services Association (CCSA) has information about which programs provide assistance. However, do not hesitate to ask the child care facility if they can provide you with assistance. Even if they do not have a regular scholarship fund or sliding scale, some centers or homes may be willing to help on an individual/emergency basis.

For more information contact CCSA’s Child Care Referral Line at (855) EARLY-ED (855-327-5933)

Programs are available for children with special needs

- All children, ages 0-5, with special needs can receive special education services. If your child is under three years old with special needs, contact the Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA). If you have a child who is or will be three years old soon, contact the public preschool in either the Chapel Hill-Carrboro or Orange County School System.

For more information about services for children under the age of three, call CDSA at (919) 560-5600.

For more information about services in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools contact the Coordinator of Preschool Disabilities at (919) 918-2156 x 23104.

For more information about services in the Orange County Schools contact the Director of Exceptional Education Programs at (919) 245-4006.

For families, affording quality care is not easy

Quality child care is very expensive to provide. In a good program there are only a few children to each teacher. The environment is stimulating, with lots of fun, child-oriented toys and things to do, and lots of space for children to move around. Meals are nutritious. Well-trained and compensated teachers, toys and equipment, space, and food all cost money. Orange County has the highest rates for child care of any county in the state. In our society most of the responsibility of paying for child care falls on parents. All parents want the best child care that is available for their child. This brochure is designed to help you learn about subsidy programs in Orange County that may be able to help you.

Very few families can afford to pay more than 10% of their gross income for child care. When families have to pay more than 10% of their income for child care, they are having to make sacrifices in other important areas of their household budget. This means that if you are a single parent, receiving no additional child support, and your salary before taxes is $2,000 per month, then it will be hard for you to afford more than $200 a month for child care. But everyone knows in Orange County, and in North Carolina, it is almost impossible to find any kind of child care that costs as little as $200 a month. Parents who have child care expenses and pay federal and/or state income taxes are eligible to receive child care assistance through the federal and state Child and Dependent Care Tax Credits. However, these credits are small, usually come as a one-time tax refund, and often don’t help pay the monthly child care bill. That is why there are special programs to help parents pay for child care.

What’s available to help my family pay for child care in Orange County?

Child Care Services Association
PO Box 901
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
919.967.3272

www.childcareservices.org

CCSA Scholarship services in Orange County are supported by the United Way of the Greater Triangle, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, St. Thomas More Catholic Church, and private contributions.
Government programs can help cover the cost of child care

- **Orange County Department of Social Services** (DSS) manages the largest direct child care subsidy program available to help low-income families (see the Eligibility Table). Child care assistance through DSS is primarily available to families who are working. Priority is given to families who are receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). However, you may also qualify for assistance if you need child care to work, if your family is in crisis or if your child is developmentally delayed or has special needs. In some cases, parents attending a community college or undergraduate school are eligible.

For more information on the DSS Child Care Subsidy Program call (919) 245-2800.

- You may be able to offset some of your child care expenses by filing for federal and state tax credits. When filing your taxes, be sure to check your eligibility for the following credits.

The Federal Child Tax Credit (CTC) may reduce the federal income tax you owe by up to $1,000 for each qualifying child under the age of 17.

The Federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit provides up to $2,100 in tax assistance to parents who pay for child care so they can work or look for work. This federal tax credit will also be used in determining the NC Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. Total expenses counted for the credit cannot be more than $3,000 for one dependent or $6,000 for two or more dependents.

The Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) provides up to $5,751 in tax assistance to working families with qualifying children and incomes of less than $49,078.

North Carolina Rewarding Work Tax Credit grants a state EITC of up to 3.4% of an individual’s federal EITC. This new credit will be available through 2012.

For more information on Federal tax credits visit www.irs.gov. For more information on North Carolina tax credits visit www.dor.state.nc.us

- The **NC PreK Program** is a state funded pre-kindergarten program for children who are 4 years old by August 31 and are at risk to start school with a disadvantage. Children are considered at risk if they have limited English proficiency, an identified disability, chronic health condition, developmental or educational need, or come from a low-income or active duty military family. Priority is given to eligible children who have not been served in any other preschool or child care program.

In Orange County, applications to enroll children in the NC PreK program are submitted to the participating child care centers. The NC PreK program runs on the school calendar, and care is available during school hours. Interested parents are encouraged to apply for fall enrollment in early summer; however, applications are accepted year round.

- **Head Start** and **Early Head Start** are available to serve families with very low incomes. Eligible families receive free child care and a variety of other services designed to meet the medical, dental, nutritional and mental health needs of their children. Early Head Start serves children from infancy through two years old and gives special priority to teen parents. Head Start serves children ages three and four.

To get more information on the NC PreK, Head Start or Early Head Start programs near you, contact Child Care Services Association at (855) EARLY-ED (855-327-5933) to speak to the family support counselor.

### Apply for a scholarship through CCSA

- **Child Care Services Association** (CCSA) provides a private child care subsidy program for families in Orange County. Families receiving a CCSA scholarship are expected to pay for part of the cost of their child’s care. Fees are determined based on a percent of each family’s income.

In order to receive a CCSA scholarship, parents must be working, looking for work or enrolled in school. Children must be enrolled in a 4- or 5-star child care program that is willing to participate. Most of the money is available to children who are residents of Orange County and age birth to five. But some funds are available for children whose guardians live or work in Orange County or who are schoolage.

Scholarships are awarded based strictly on need, with low-income families receiving priority. The typical scholarship family earns about $20,000 per year, but income eligibility limits are set at 75% of median Orange County income (see the Eligibility Table).

CCSA’s scholarship program is made possible by funding from United Way of the Greater Triangle, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Town of Carrboro, Town of Chapel Hill, St. Thomas More, and private contributions.

Scholarships funded through University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are earmarked for students and eligible employees of the University. Income eligibility limits are set by the UNC Chancellor’s Child Care Advisory Council (see the Eligibility Table).

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### North Carolina Rewarding Work Tax Credit

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