

## The impact of childcare costs on parents: share your experience!

### Please complete the Northern Ireland Childcare Cost Survey

Employers For Childcare is asking **all parents** to complete the 2017 Northern Ireland Childcare Cost Survey to share their experience either of accessing childcare or of being unable to do so.

This is the **eighth year** that the Childcare Cost Survey is seeking the views of parents from across Northern Ireland tracking the cost of childcare and the impact that rising costs have on families. It is vital that we hear both from working parents who are currently using childcare but also from those parents who have perhaps left the workforce, or have cut back their hours, due to factors such as an inability to access or afford childcare.

For the first time, we are also **exploring the issues and challenges that are experienced by childcare providers** themselves who are working hard to provide a quality service against a backdrop in which a full Childcare Strategy is yet to be published and funding to be allocated.



## £168 a week for full-time childcare

In 2016 we found that, on average, a full-time childcare place cost £168 per week. This marks an increase of £13 per week since we began measuring in 2010.

In fact, one third of parents reported that their childcare bill was **higher than their mortgage or rent** payments.

A quarter of parents were even turning to **overdrafts, credit cards, loans** from family or friends and even payday loans to pay their childcare bill.

## What is the impact?

Amongst these numbers are the voices of local parents who are concerned about their family's **financial security** and, in some cases, are torn between working to pay for childcare and leaving the workforce.

The impact of high childcare costs can be more than financial. Last year, many parents commented on feeling **additional stress and strain** due to the cost of childcare, whether it is because of the financial impact or due to the choices made because of the cost of childcare, such as changing working patterns which can impact on career progression and family relationships.

We will use the findings of our survey to call on local politicians and policy makers to address the cost of childcare in Northern Ireland. In particular we will be urging for the publication and implementation of the full childcare strategy, with a commitment that adequate funding will be available to finance it.

## How can you have your say?

Please take this opportunity to **have your say**. We have two questionnaires, one for parents and one for childcare providers. Each questionnaire takes **less than 10 minutes** to complete. Please return your response by Friday 30 June.

**Parents:** Click on the link to complete the parent **survey** for the chance to win a family overnight stay for four at **Galgorm Resort & Spa!**

**Childcare providers:** Click on the link to complete the childcare provider **Survey** for the chance to **win an iPad Mini 2!**

For more information contact Aoife Hamilton, Policy and Information Manager at Employers For Childcare to discuss your views: email [Aoife.hamilton@employersforchildcare.org](mailto:Aoife.hamilton@employersforchildcare.org) or telephone 028 9267 8200. You will also find more information on our website [www.employersforchildcare.org](http://www.employersforchildcare.org)

Please share these links with any parents, childcare providers or network organisations that you work with.