

CHILDREN UNLIMITED FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026-2027 TUITION POLICY
Effective August 24, 2026

Enrollment

To secure a space at Children Unlimited, please return an Application for Registration form with a non-refundable deposit in the amount of one week's tuition per the CU Tuition Rate Schedule for each child attending. This deposit will be applied to your first tuition payment; it will not be returned if you decide not to attend Children Unlimited as scheduled. If you wish to postpone your scheduled start date, you will be expected to pay 80% of your anticipated weekly tuition to hold your enrollment for the first 90 days of postponement. Postponement beyond 90 days will be charged full tuition.

Contracted Hours

Each family contracts with Children Unlimited for a set number of hours of early childhood education per week, between a minimum of 20 hours per week to a maximum of 50 hours per week. Children Unlimited contracts on the half hour (e.g., 7:30 or 8:00, not 7:45) for 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, or 50 hours/week. Hours and times can be different each day but must be the same from week to week (e.g., every Monday 9-2, every Tuesday 8-4, etc.). A child's attendance, sickness, holidays, weather emergencies, etc., do not change weekly tuition as stated on the signed contract until the contract is changed or terminated. Children Unlimited reserves the right to terminate a contract with 5 days' notice should it be determined that commitments and responsibilities on behalf of any child are not being met by the parent or guardian, or if the Director deems that, for any reason, the continuation of the contract is not in the best interest of the child, family, or Children Unlimited.

Your contract remains in effect until your intention to change or withdraw is received in writing. Changes to contracted hours can be made only if Children Unlimited has availability based upon regulated ratios, group sizes, and staffing **and** the duration of the change period is four weeks or more. *We cannot change contracted hours on a weekly basis or "trade" contracted days.*

Although it may be convenient for families to take time off, particularly in the summer, we can only guarantee your space if you continue to contract and pay for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Changes in contracted hours must be for a period of four weeks or more. If you plan to reduce your number of days for a period of time, CU may determine what those days are. For CU to be able to ensure compliance with mandated teacher:child ratios, CU may limit the number of children enrolled in each classroom on each day of the week. Therefore, if you are dropping days, we may not be able to accommodate your 'ideal' schedule.

We require two weeks' written notice to change your contracted hours or to leave our care. If you decide to leave our care, payment of two weeks' tuition is required, regardless of attendance during those two weeks.

We plan our staffing based on contracted hours. If you arrive early, you will be required to stay with your child until the contracted time, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director. All children must be picked up by the contracted time to ensure that proper teacher:child ratios are maintained and that teachers can leave school on time. We recommend you routinely arrive 5 minutes before your contracted time ends so you have time to check in with your child's teacher and gather your things **PRIOR TO** the end of your contracted time and to avoid late fees. Note that the Children Unlimited day ends promptly at 5:00. All children must have left the program by 5:00.

Early drop-off or late pick-up fees are assessed if and when children are in Children Unlimited care before or after their contracted time. The fee of \$10.00 for the first five minutes and \$2.00 per minute thereafter will be assessed. Fees are applied per child. If you have an emergency and will be late for pick up, please notify Children Unlimited immediately. If you are more than 15 minutes later than your contracted pick-up time

without notice, we will attempt to reach you by phone. If we cannot get in touch with you, we will call your emergency contacts to pick up your child.

We will attempt to accommodate any requests for additional hours or days, but due to staffing, ratios, and group size regulations, extra time may be limited. **Requests for extra time must be made at least one week in advance.** Tuition for extra time is pre-paid, non-refundable, and billed at the drop-in rate. All extra time is invoiced in one-hour increments only. Partial hours are rounded up to the next full hour.

We are happy to welcome CU ‘graduates’ back to our program after school and during vacations and summers, provided there is availability based upon regulated ratios, group sizes, and staffing. After-school care is provided for a minimum of five hours per week and is billed at the drop-in rate. If you would like your child to join us for school vacations, please contact the office at least two weeks in advance to enter into a CU contract for required hours. Contracted hours for school vacations will be billed per the CU Tuition Rate Schedule. Any extra time requested and not contracted in advance will be billed at drop-in rates. Tuition for extra time is non-refundable.

Tuition Rates

Based on the number of hours contracted per week, weekly tuition is calculated using the Children Unlimited Tuition Rate Schedule. Children Unlimited contracts for 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, or 50 hours/week. CU’s full tuition rate is the CCFAP state-established tuition rate. Families with more than one child attending Children Unlimited are granted a 10% discount on the older child’s tuition. This discount does not apply to drop-in care.

For ease of payment, tuition is automatically paid electronically via Brightwheel, the early childhood management system. Brightwheel invoices are sent to families on Friday, and tuition amounts are debited from the family’s bank account on Monday (or Tuesday if Monday is a bank holiday). Children Unlimited will generate invoices via Brightwheel to reflect any contract changes, extra time, or any early drop-off/late pick-up fees due to Children Unlimited. If your tuition transaction is returned for any reason, immediate payment of the full tuition amount is expected.

We realize that high quality early childhood education can be expensive for families. Therefore, we encourage all families to apply for the Child Care Financial Assistance Plan (CCFAP) and/or the CU Scholarship Program.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)

The [Child Care Financial Assistance Program \(CCFAP\)](#) is a Vermont program designed to support eligible families in paying for early childhood education for children ages 6 weeks up to 13 years. The program is administered by the Child Development Division (CDD), Department for Children and Families, Vermont Agency of Human Services. Families complete and submit an application to CDD. CDD then verifies the family’s eligibility and, based on income guidelines, determines the weekly share of a state-established tuition rate that the family will be responsible for paying (the family share). CDD pays the remainder of the state-established tuition rate directly to CU.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program Policies

Parents/guardians are responsible for preparing and submitting all paperwork to determine and maintain eligibility for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).

- Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the family share amount to Children Unlimited.
- Family share amounts are automatically paid electronically via Brightwheel, the early childhood management system. Brightwheel invoices are sent to families on Friday, and tuition amounts are debited from the family’s bank account on Monday (or Tuesday if Monday is a bank holiday).

- If CCFAP eligibility changes or expires, parents/guardians are responsible for any increase in family share or for the full tuition amount. If CCFAP funds are paid retroactively by the state, Children Unlimited will gladly credit the account.
- If, for any reason, the CCFAP family share is greater than CU's full tuition rate for the family's contracted hours needed less the applicable CU Scholarship amount, the family will be eligible for CU scholarships.

Act 166 funds are deducted from the CCFAP family share amount. If, for any reason, family share less Act 166 is less than zero, the family share amount will be zero. There are no credits or refunds of Act 166 or CCFAP funds.

Children Unlimited Scholarship Program

Our scholarship program reflects CU's commitment to providing excellent early childhood education to all families while also striving to provide livable compensation and benefits for our community of professionals. CU's full tuition rate is based on the state-established CCFAP tuition rate. We realize, however, that not all families are eligible for CCFAP and that families have varying financial circumstances. The Children Unlimited Scholarship Program is intended to provide financial support for families who do not qualify for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) but who may struggle to afford CU tuition. We have designed the CU Scholarship Program to be simple and confidential.

To be eligible for participation in the CU Scholarship Program, families must:

- Be enrolled at Children Unlimited for the 2026-2027 school year; AND
- Provide CU with documentation showing either:
 - CCFAP eligibility denial* OR
 - CCFAP eligibility approval with a family share amount that exceeds CU's full tuition rate for the required contracted hours less the applicable CU maximum scholarship amount (that is, the amount the family would pay without CCFAP).
 - If your family meets these criteria, you may self-determine if a scholarship would be helpful to your family and, if so, select a scholarship amount that best meets your needs, up to the maximum scholarship amount available. The maximum scholarship amount available based on contracted weekly hours is listed on the attached CU Tuition Rate Schedule. Any unused scholarship funds can be repurposed toward team wages and benefits. In this way, we can work together to provide a strong community of families and educators.

*CCFAP denial letters must be dated after March 22, 2026, the effective date of the most recent income guidelines.

To access the CU Scholarship Program:

- Apply for CCFAP, the [Child Care Financial Assistance Program](#)
- If eligibility is denied:
 - Self-determine if a CU scholarship would be helpful to your family and, if so, select a scholarship amount that is most beneficial to your family, up to the maximum scholarship amount available.
 - Complete the CU contract, indicating the amount of CU scholarship.
 - Submit denial letter to CU with your CU contract.
- If found eligible for CCFAP:
 - If family share is less than CU full tuition less CU scholarship amount, complete CU CCFAP contract; OR

- If family share is greater than what tuition would be without CCFAP (CU full tuition less the maximum scholarship amount for the hours of your contract), you are eligible for CU scholarship. Please contact Heather.

If you do not receive a determination of eligibility for CCFAP from CDD prior to your contract start date, full CU tuition will be owed until determination of CCFAP eligibility is made. CU will credit any applicable funds as necessary.

Act 166 Publicly-Funded Preschool

Children Unlimited is prequalified to partner with the State of Vermont to provide publicly-funded preschool under Act 166 and has entered into agreements with a number of school districts to provide publicly-funded preschool in the 2026-2027 school year. The Act provides for 10 hours of preschool education over a 35-week period for all 3, 4, and 5 year old children not yet enrolled in kindergarten. All eligible children are entitled to Act 166 funds.

Act 166 funds are paid directly to CU by the school districts. Parents are not responsible for payment of these funds and, therefore, the amount is deducted from the family's tuition for those 35 weeks. The 2026-2027 school year will begin on Monday, August 31, 2026, and end on Friday, June 4, 2027. The total amount paid per child directly to CU by the school district for 2026-2027 is \$4,106 or \$117.31/week for the 35 weeks of the public school year. **Families are responsible for payment of the full weekly family tuition payment or the full CCFAP family share, less any applicable sibling discount, any time there is no Act 166 funding, including public school vacation weeks (the 5 weeks of 11/23-11/27/2026, 12/21-12/25/2026, 12/28/2026-1/1/2027, 2/22-2/26/2027, and 4/19-4/23/2027).**

In order to access Act 166 funds for your child:

- Your child must turn 3 prior to September 1, 2026.
- Your child must be registered with the school district in which you reside.

Please note:

- School districts are mandated to pay only for those children residing within their boundaries and who are registered. If your family moves during the school year, both CU and the parent/guardian must notify the school district. You must register your child with the new school district in order to access Act 166 funds.
- CU is required to regularly report attendance information to the school districts. The district may discontinue funding for a child due to excessive absences.
- If Act 166 funding is discontinued for a child for any reason, the parent/guardian will be responsible for payment of all monies due to CU for services rendered.

Children Unlimited contracts for children enrolled in Act 166 preschool, once signed, are in force until two weeks' written notice is given or until June 4, 2027. At that time, you may enter into a separate contract with CU for weeks in which Act 166 is not in effect.