



Parenting Resources

Parenting support for Baystate Health team members.

Baystate Health *y*

- Child Care Solutions
- Parenting Support
- Finances for Families
- Your Child's Emotional & Physical Health
- Your Child's Education

Child Care Solutions

Child Care Programs Limited Basis Reopening Post Pandemic

Child care programs are beginning to reopen in Massachusetts. However, due to [reopening guidelines](#), access to child care programs continues to be limited. See below for support in finding child care providers/facilities as well as alternative options to consider.

Connecticut residents: Many childcare programs have been impacted and as a result of the pandemic have not reopened. To learn more visit the [Connecticut Office of Early Childhood](#) for the latest information.

Securing Care Arrangements for Your Child

In these unprecedented times, securing child care is one of many things that is proving to be more challenging than usual. We encourage you to be as creative as possible in your search for child care. This may mean expanding your search radius around your home or work location, considering a different type of child care than you've used before, leveraging new outlets such as community forums and social media to connect with parents and share ideas on child care solutions. The broader and more creative your approach to finding child care can be, the greater likelihood you will find reliable care for your child(ren).

Get Personalized Assistance from a WorkLife Specialist

Whether you are looking for child care, back-up care, summer camps, before/after school programs, extracurricular programs, or some other care solution, a specialist from WorkLife and EAP Support can help make it easier by doing the search for you. Your specialist will consider your needs and requirements for care and make phone calls to providers to help you find a match. Consider cost, availability, hours of operation, and any other special criteria you need met. For location, consider places close to home and broader, like options close to work. This service is available to all employees at no-cost. If your worklife specialist is not able to find what you need the first time you call, you can resubmit your request at a later date, as the statewide access to child care changes.

Call WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332 and ask to speak with a "WorkLife Parenting Specialist."

Consider In-Home Care Options (even while you are at home!)

Local and national care agencies can help you find verified babysitters and nannies in your area. Many agencies charge fees for these services, so finding the agency that will best meet your needs is an important step. Most agencies conduct basic background checks on all providers. However, depending on your need for further validation, you can also read reviews about the providers, ask for references, and even purchase more in-depth background checks directly through the agency website. Check out national agencies such as [Care.com](#) and [Sittercity.com](#) or find more specialized agencies in your area by calling **WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332 and ask to speak with a "WorkLife Parenting Specialist."**

Consider Baystate's Family & Friend Childcare Share – It Takes a Village

A special group forum has been set up on Baystate's Workplace site to connect Baystate Health employees who need back-up child care in response to COVID-19 related school and daycare closings. The group is called "[It Takes a Village- Employee Child Care Share.](#)" This is a forum for you to let others know if you are looking for a babysitter or have one you can recommend!

Developing Your Child Care Needs Plan

Whether you're working with a WorkLife Specialist to help you find child care or doing it on your own, the process of selecting a child care provider begins by exploring which type of child care to pursue. Depending on your child's age and needs, various types of care arrangements can be considered:

- **Center-based Child Care** – care that takes place in a publicly or privately run facility, typically for children under age 5.
- **Family Child Care** – care that takes place in the caregiver's home, typically for children under age 5.
- **In-Home Care** – care that takes place in your home, typically by a babysitter, nanny, au pair, etc.
- **Back-up Care** – care that takes place during emergencies or when your regular care arrangement is otherwise not available.
- **Preschool/Pre-K** – care that provides school readiness education, typically for children aged 4-5.
- **Before & After School Care** – care that takes place before and/or after school hours.
- **Summer & Vacation Camps/Programs** – care that takes place during summer, winter or other extended school breaks.

The next step in developing a child care plan is selecting the right facility/provider for you and your family's needs. Consider:

- **Your children**—How many, their ages and any special requirements?
- **Your priorities**—What's important to you in a care setting (e.g., age grouping, educational and physical activities, discipline philosophy, structure, etc.)?
- **Your schedule**—When do you need care and how consistent is your schedule?
- **Your transportation**—How will your child get from home to care and back?
- **Your back-up plan**—Who can take care of things in an emergency?
- **Your provider(s)** - Make sure to spend time evaluating the provider/facility. Things to consider: hours of operation, atmosphere, parent/provider communication tools, staff turnover, safety, emergency and security procedures, cleanliness, reliability, discipline philosophy, curriculum, licensure and regulation standing, etc
- **Your budget**—How much are you prepared to spend on care? Ask about cost, payment plan options, sliding fee schedules, overtime/late pickup charges, policies regarding non-payment, state vouchers accepted, sibling discounts, etc.

A WorkLife Specialist can outreach to the child care program options you are interested in, speak with each company, gather the necessary information and provide you a comprehensive packet of information for you to base your decision and next steps.

Call WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332 and ask to speak with a "WorkLife Parenting Specialist."

Parenting Support

Parenting Support for a Variety of Needs

WorkLife Specialists are available and committed to helping parents and their growing families. Whether you are faced with a specific need for your child or just want to talk through an issue, the Parenting experts through your WorkLife and EAP Support program are available to provide personalized consultations, research and guidance. Some common parenting concerns you may be facing with your child:

- Device Addiction
- Lying
- Puberty
- Bullying
- Improper Eating Habits
- Sibling rivalry
- Coping with difficult times
- Self-esteem/self-image
- Anger and Aggression
- Separation anxiety
- Study/School Habits

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Raising Resilient Kids

Resilient children are prepared for the challenges of the world. They are able to tackle problems, bounce back from setbacks, and cope with hardship. **meQuilibrium (meQ)**, a resilience building platform and mobile app available at no-cost to you, offers 3 "skill" sessions on how to raise resilient kids. The 3 sessions cover: how to model and mentor emotional control for children, how to set children up for success with a growth mindset, and how to model and practice stress management techniques with kids. To participate in these self-directed sessions in meQ, login to your [WebMD portal](#), click "Beat Stress with meQ" from the homepage, then once on the meQ homepage, select "Discover", then "Skills" to find these "Raising Resilient Kids" sessions.

For additional resiliency trainings for parents and families, visit the [Employee and Family Well-being Resources: COVID-19](#) page.

Parenting Children with Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs may experience higher levels of stress because a child with special needs has unique and, at times, demanding needs. A WorkLife Specialist can help by:

- Finding care provider referrals, educational resources, and support programs.
- Exploring health and nutrition resources, therapeutic activities, federal and state benefits, and long-term care options.
- Locating information about IDEA, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Planning and Placement Teams.
- Researching support and advocacy groups, and summer programs for children with special needs.

Call WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332 and ask to speak with a "WorkLife Parenting Specialist."

Family Finances

Financial Coaching

Whether you need help creating a long-term savings plan (i.e. college), figuring out how to manage your debt, or dealing with any kind of financial issue, you can consult with a financial coach. Financial coaching consultants have an average of 22 years of experience in a wide range of financial situations and are ready to give you the advice you need to help you make the best choices on a wide array of financial matter.

The program includes 2 free 30-minute telephone consultations, per issue, per year, and discounted fees if you elect to continue working with a financial coach beyond initial consultations.

Call WorkLife and EAP Support for confidential assistance 24/7/365 at 800-888-6332.



Estate Planning

Receive 2 free consults with an attorney to help you think through how best to protect your family assets. [Call WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332](#). In addition, legal plan insurance is available for purchase, providing low cost access to legal services including will preparation and other estate planning, visit [The Hub> Baystate Healthy>Financial Wellbeing>Legal Services](#)

Paying for Child Care

State and Federal Programs - Depending on where you live, your income and other factors, you may be eligible for state or federal programs and tax credits that help pay for child care. For an overview of some of these programs, check out Magellan's Guide for [Reducing Child Care Costs](#).

Dependent Care FSA - Contribute pre-tax dollars to use on day care, day camp, nursery school and other expenses incurred while you are at work. For more information, visit [The Hub>Benefits>Flexible Spending Accounts](#)

Term Life Insurance

Baystate covers 1x the salary of all full time employees and an additional 1x salary in the event of an accidental death. Supplemental buy-up coverage is available during open enrollment. For more information visit, [The Hub>Benefits>Life Insurance](#)

Whole Life Insurance

Coverage of one to five times salary, with cash value available to you, your spouse, children, and grandchildren. Medical underwriting is required for some amounts. For more information, visit [The Hub>Benefits>BenefitsPlus](#)

529(b) College Savings Plan

A 529 college savings plan is designed to help set aside funds for future college expenses and offers significant tax benefits and an exceptional degree of control and flexibility. Your investments will grow tax-deferred, and withdrawals used for qualified higher education expenses are not subject to federal income tax. [For more information, visit The Hub>Benefits>BenefitsPlus](#)

Employee Discount Center

Save on hundreds of products and services, including cell phone lines, laptop computers, hotels, clothing, groceries and more. Your adult household members can create their own online account to access discounts on their own. Visit [Baystate.Perkspot.com](#)

Local Community Services A Worklife Specialist can help you search for free or reduced cost services like food, housing, government benefits, job training for family members, etc. [Call WorkLife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332](#).

Your Child's Emotional and Physical Health

Child Therapy through Baystate's EAP

Just as with adults, there are times when children need the expertise of a psychotherapist. Child therapy was developed to fill this need. Children most often need to seek therapy after a traumatic event, such as the death of a loved one, or during divorce or other family hardship. But there are all sorts of other reasons children could benefit from therapy. If you have a child who is struggling in any way and they are open to speaking with someone, a therapist will be able to tailor the therapy to their unique needs and the issues at hand.

All Baystate Health employees and their dependents/household members, have access to up to 6 sessions per issue, per year with a counselor, at no-cost. Appointments are available in person, via live video and/or phone, and even via text messaging (age 13+). This benefit is available through the [WorkLife and EAP Support](#) program. [Call Worklife and EAP Support at 800-888-6332 to speak with a clinician who can help get your child scheduled to meet with a therapist.](#)



For Health New England (HNE) Plan Members

Telemedicine through Teladoc™

Teladoc is a telemedicine service that provides around-the-clock access to U.S board certified physician via phone, video/web or mobile app. Common ailments best suited for telemedicine include colds, rash, respiratory infection, ear infections and more. This service can be particularly helpful when your child needs care on during off hours, a weekend, holiday, or away on vacation. Create an account before you need care to expedite your first visit. [To get started, log into your account at www.teladoc.com or call 1-800-835-2362 and request an appointment.](#) The cost is the same as your primary care co-pay or your co-insurance portion for those enrolled in the Baystate HSA medical plan.

24/7 Access to the HNE Nurse Line

Licensed nurses and clinicians at HNE are available at no cost 24/7 to answer health-related questions and help you determine if your child's symptoms warrant a call to the doctor or if it can be managed at home. [Call the HNE nurse line at 866-389-7613.](#)

A Parents (New) Role in Education

We don't know yet what school will look like in the near term, but what we do know is that we need to plan for the possibility of a remote learning schedule for our children. Many parents experienced remote learning for the first time during the 2020 school year. Below are some tips parents have shared to make the experience as successful as possible.

- Create a designated work station for your child. Make sure it is quiet, free from distractions and has a good internet connection.
- Maintain a regular routine. Try to keep the same schedule as when your child was physically going to school – wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, “go to school”, etc...
- Communicate with the school/teacher. If you or your child are having any concerns, make sure you speak up and let someone at the school know.
- Encourage autonomy. Even our youngest learners can benefit from doing things on their own. Teach them how to launch their virtual classroom meetings, set them up with school assignments that they can do alone and build-in check points with them to see how they are doing throughout the day.
- Make time for physical activity, exercise and fun! The idea of “school recess” is two –fold: it allows time for a mental break and physical stimulation. Build in “recess” to your child’s day to keep them physically and mentally at their best. Consider recess for yourself too!

Online Learning Resources

Children are more accustomed to online learning now than ever before, so it might be a good time to introduce resources to help supplement their school learning. Check with your local library or school district for online learning resources. In addition, many companies are offering free online learning tools right now, see [these free resources](#) compiled by the Today show. Search the internet to find a program that best suits your family. Check out these [Virtual Field Trips](#) ideas and other [Learning Resources for Kids](#), from our partner LifeCare. You can also call a WorkLife and EAP Support to help you find resources based on your child’s age, interests, etc. [Call WorkLife and EAP Support for confidential assistance 24/7/365 at 800-888-6332.](#)



Academic Assistance & College Planning

Worklife Specialists are available to provide advice, information and referrals to support your child’s academic needs. Including information to help them best learn at different stages or locate tutors for hire to help with homework and studies. The service can also help locate schools; public, independent/private – from grade school to college. Extensive information on planning for college – testing, college evaluating, locating scholarships, financing and more! [Call WorkLife and EAP Support for confidential assistance 24/7/365 at 800-888-6332.](#)

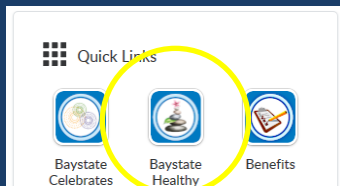
Extracurricular/Enrichment Programs

Extracurricular programs such as sports leagues, arts and music classes and supplementary courses, and other type programs are a great way to feed your child’s passion for learning and encourage well-rounded perspectives. A specialist from WorkLife and EAP Support can help research and locate programs that interest your child and meet your needs. [Call WorkLife and EAP Support for confidential assistance 24/7/365 at 800-888-6332.](#)

For More Information

Visit the Baystate Healthy Website- “Parenting & Pregnancy” Page for full access to these resources and live links (if you are viewing a printed version).

To Access Baystate Healthy from Work



To Access Baystate Healthy From Anywhere

- Visit, www.BaystateHealth.org
 - Scroll to the bottom of the page
 - Select ‘Employee Resources’
 - Select ‘Baystate Healthy’