

From: [cheryle harrington](#)
To: [Board of Commissioners](#)
Cc: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Childcare Millage
Date: Monday, September 20, 2021 11:59:31 AM

September 20, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

If you are taking the time to read this I hope you strongly reconsider the millage for Leelanau County Childcare service. While I agree we do have programs available for kids, those programs are for kids ages 2 years old and up. Before the start of Covid we had four in home daycares, We are down to two in home daycare for Leelanau County. School programs DO NOT take children under 2 years old. Programs like 4-H are not helpful to parents with younger children. I have two children right now. One is 2 years old and the other is 9 months, my third child is on the way due in November.

I am one of the lucky ones who has childcare with Barb Harfst. She will not however be able to take all of my children until March of 2022 due to the ages. The state limits the number of children a provider can have under the age of 18 months. 2 of my 3 children will be Mrs. Harsfts "under 18 months" I had a childcare provider lined up for my 9 month old when I went back to work as an accountant for The Homestead Resort in Glen Arbor. Julie McDonough closed her doors at the end of August. Also, Jessica Roush has closed her doors. Leaving Barb Harsft and a provider in Lake Leelanau as the only ones available to take children under 2. The other problem with school programs is they do not run in the summer months. Times when I and other parents NEED care.

This Millage was hope and I do feel like it should go to any provider who is caring for kids at an in-home setting. Schools and other governmental agencies have funding, parents trying to find affordable care in the area such as myself and the other 12 parents still looking for care since Julie and Jessica closed their in-home day cares are limited on options. Barb's rates are \$40 per day. My husband and I work 5 days a week for 40 hours each week. Currently I have to work from home as my 9 month old doesn't have childcare in the area and there are no open spots at other centers for almost a year and a half. Back to the cost though. \$40 a day * 5 days a week is \$200 a week. Now I have 3 kids needing care. That's \$600 a week for care. Multiply that by 4 weeks in a month and our daycare bill is \$2400.00. Please tell me how that is affordable for a middle-class family such as ours? This millage should be used to help offset that cost. Families like mine make too much money to apply for any sort of help from government programs. At a \$19.00 per hour job, I am basically just working to pay for childcare. I want to work; I want to be part of the community. Please reconsider what you are doing to the families out here.

Programs in Suttons Bay and Lake Leelanau are out of the way for the people of Maple City, Cedar, Empire and Glen Arbor. I live in Maple City; my husband works for the road commission. We are local and want our kids cared for locally. I have no use for senior services, but I vote for them because they are part of the community. Families with young kids like ours are part of the Leelanau community too. "Poor families" as your article mentioned in the ticker might be able to have more job opportunities in Leelanau County if they can find AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE.

Sincerely,

Cheryle Hall