

Nevada child care costs among highest in nation

By Paul Takahashi, Las Vegas Sun

Aaron Trujillo wasn't expecting sticker shock when he started searching for an affordable day care center for his 1-year-old daughter last month.

Trujillo, 30, and his wife both work for a Las Vegas apartment management company and make a combined \$72,000 annually. When his wife returned to her job as a real estate agent in November, Trujillo began looking at putting their toddler, Bealla, into day care.

The Trujillo family looked at three preschools near their central valley home. The first charged \$240 a week. That's \$960 a month – the equivalent of a rent or mortgage check for many Southern Nevadans.

"It was ridiculous," Trujillo said. "That's really not affordable."

After much searching – even checking Craigslist for cheaper child care – the Trujillos settled on a Kidz Kidz Kidz preschool near Tropicana Avenue and Jones Boulevard. The family was swayed by a special deal of \$140 a week.

Still, with their older son Andres, 10, in a Safekey afterschool program and Bealla in preschool, Trujillo estimates he will spend about \$800 a month for child care on his two children. "It's still really pricey," Trujillo said.

His observation is on the mark.

A national study found that Nevada has among the highest child care costs in the country. The Silver State is among 31 states nationally where child care costs could exceed the cost of

college tuition and fees, according to a 2013 report from the advocacy group Child Care Aware of America.

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