

Opinion: Cutting Pentagon pork could fund free childcare in U.S.

By C. Robert Gibson, Al Jazeera America

The cost of childcare is bankrupting America's parents. But providing free, universal childcare for all parents is easily affordable by simply cutting a small handful of military programs whose absence almost nobody would notice.

Joy Richmond-Smith is a full-time social worker and mother of two small children. Her husband also works full-time, so daily childcare is essential to the couple. In the Boston area, where she lives, Richmond-Smith pays \$400 for four days of childcare per week just for her 3-year-old son. If she were to put her 1-year-old daughter in childcare for two of those days, the cost would jump to \$500 per week. And if she were to pay for both children to have full-time daycare at that same facility, the cost balloons to \$700 per week. Richmond-Smith says her household's childcare costs are more than double the amount she pays for her mortgage.

"These early years of life and brain development are so important," she says. "I'm not skimping on childcare, so I'll pay whatever I need to pay."

Read the whole story