



# Child Care in Whatcom County



April 2022

In most parts of Washington, the number of child care providers declined from 2008-2013, becoming more stable from 2014-2020 although still in decline at a lesser rate. Capacity for children declined from 2008-2013, however due to more family child care closures than center-based care, capacity has risen from 2014-2019. Since the pandemic there has been a net loss of nearly 150 providers and around 1,500 slots. This decline has disproportionately impacted communities based on location. In the net loss of providers, nearly 40% are center-based, representing 60% of the capacity lost.

## Child Care Aware of Washington

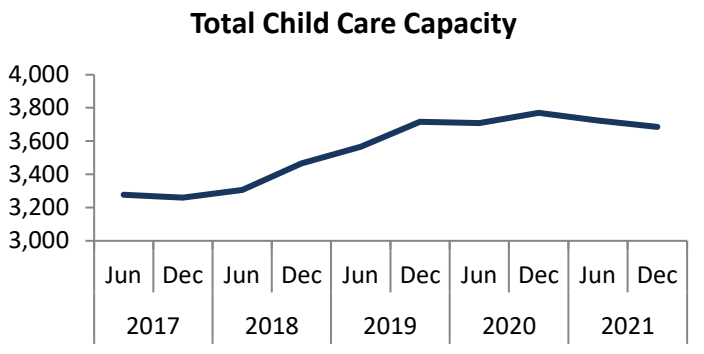
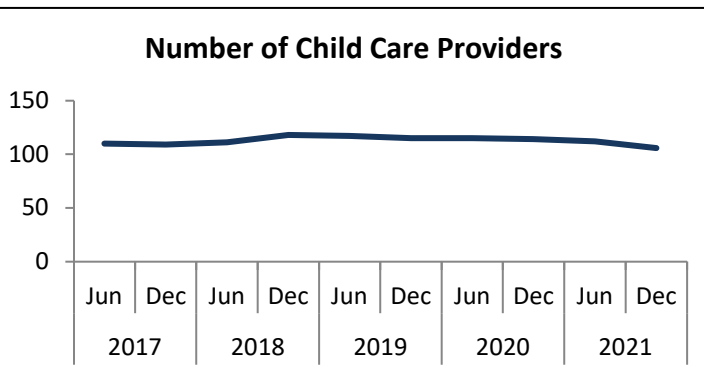
Child Care Aware of Washington provides thorough and independent information and support:

- For families seeking quality child care
- For child care programs seeking to improve quality and
  - For effective policymaking

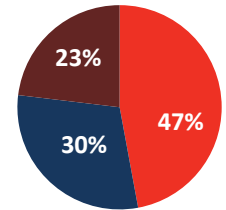
Since 1989, our regional member programs and statewide Family Center have enhanced the quality of child care and helped families by:

- Delivering training, technical assistance, & consultation to child care providers
- Supplying families with consumer education & referrals for child care

In Whatcom County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 110 with capacity for 3,277 children in 2017, to 106 providers with capacity for 3,686 children in December of 2021.\*

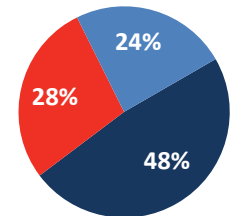


## Child Care Provider Type



- Centers
- Family Child Care
- School Age Only

## State Subsidy



- Accept all ages
- Do not accept
- Accept school age only

## Early Achievers

Early Achievers is Washington's **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)**, which gives training, technical assistance, coaching, awards, scholarships, and other benefits to child care providers **to improve the quality of their care.**

## Statewide, 3,926 child care providers participate in Early Achievers.

Approximately 62% of licensed child care providers in Whatcom County are enrolled in Early Achievers. Early Achievers provides families with valuable child care program quality information so they can make informed child care choices.

## Early Achievers (QRIS) Participation

Total	73
Child Care Centers	30
Family Child Care	23
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	20

Enrollment as of 12/1/21

## Whatcom County

is served locally by  
**Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington**

a program of  
The Opportunity Council  
1111 Cornwall Ave, Ste 200  
<https://www.ccanorthwest.org/>  
888.444.1862 x1227

**Demographics**

**Population<sup>1</sup>**

Total Population in 2020	228,000
Change since 2015	18,210
Children under 5 yrs	11,258
Children under 15 yrs	38,556
K-12 Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	27,577

**Economics**

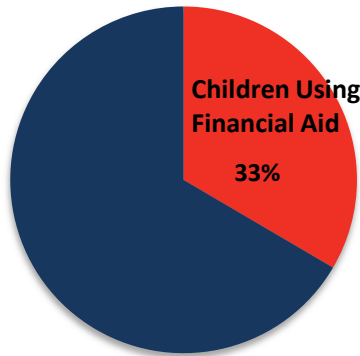
% of children under 18 living in poverty <sup>3</sup>	11.3%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working <sup>4</sup>	58.9 to 65.9%
Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$67,533
Unemployment Rate <sup>5</sup>	5.2%

**Helping Families Find Child Care in 2021**

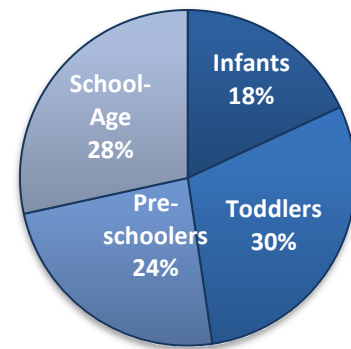
In 2021, Child Care Aware of Washington programs helped 12,580 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Whatcom County alone, we helped 462 families with 601 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 608 times.

**Children Using Subsidies**



**Referral Demand by Child Age**



**Compensation in 2018**

Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income <sup>6</sup>	
Child Care Center Teacher	\$27,096
Child Care Center Director	\$40,956
Family Child Care Provider (Gross Earnings)	\$32,580
K-12 Teacher (Statewide) <sup>7</sup>	\$79,524

**Contact Child Care Aware of Washington**

1001 Pacific Avenue Suite 400  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
253.383.1735

**Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2021**

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,460	\$1,668	\$1,654	26%
Toddler	\$1,413	\$1,517	\$1,482	25%
Preschool	\$1,181	\$1,300	\$1,249	21%
School Age	\$628	\$689	\$946	11%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,083	\$1,210	\$1,192	19%
Toddler	\$1,011	\$1,083	\$1,059	18%
Preschool	\$939	\$1,051	\$1,040	17%
School Age	\$542	\$618	\$867	10%

Data Sources:

Most data is from Child Care Aware of Washington. More data and full citations are available at <https://www.childcareawarewa.org>.

\*Includes licensed child care (centers and family child care) and exempt school-age programs only

<sup>1</sup> Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Superintendent Public Instruction, October Enrollment Report, 2017-2018

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2019

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Washington State Employment Security Department; U.S. BLS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2021 (not seasonally-adjusted)

<sup>6</sup> Department of Early Learning Washington State 2018 Child Care Survey

Note: Child care provider income is regional data, not county-specific. Whatcom County is in DEL Region 3 which includes: Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom.

<sup>7</sup> Office of the Superintendent Public Instruction, Historical Comparison of Statewide School District Personnel, 2017-2018