

# Child Care in Pierce County



March 2023

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

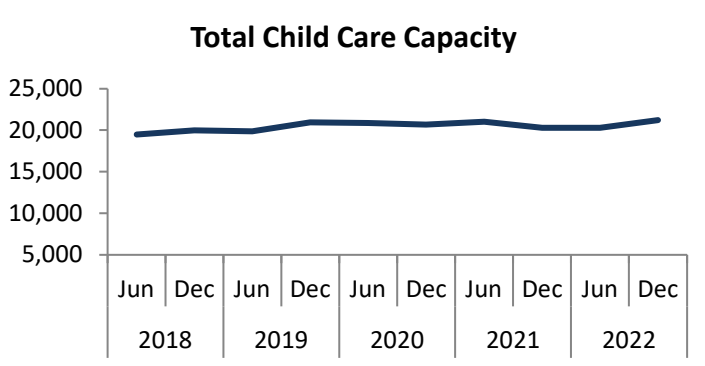
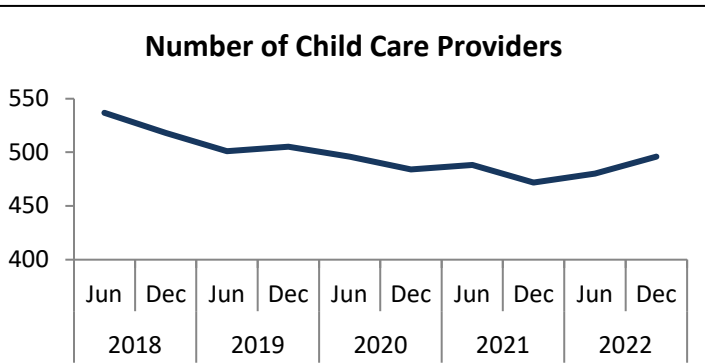
Child Care Aware of Washington provides thorough and independent information and support:

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

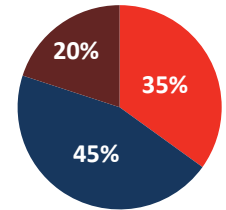
Since 1989, our regional member programs and statewide Family Center have enhanced the quality of child care and helped families by:

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

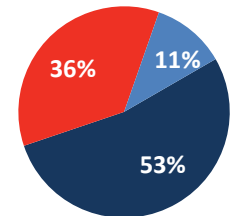
In Pierce County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 537 with capacity for 19,496 children in 2018, to 496 providers with capacity for 21,229 children in December of 2022.\*



## Child Care Provider Type



## State Subsidy



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

## Early Achievers

Early Achievers is Washington's **Quality Recognition 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, 4,225 child care providers participate in Early Achievers.**

Approximately 74% of licensed child care providers in Pierce 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	346
Child Care Centers	139
Family Child Care	161
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	46

Enrollment as of 1/5/2023

## Pierce County

is served locally by  
**Child Care Aware of Tacoma-Pierce County**  
a program of  
BrightSpark  
1501 Pacific Ave Ste 305  
<http://www.brightspark.org>  
253.272.8000

**Demographics**

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

Total Population in 2020	900,700
Change since 2015	70,580
Children under 5 yrs	60,030
Children under 15 yrs	182,109
K-12 Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	132,955
Pre-K-5th Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	63,563

**Economics**

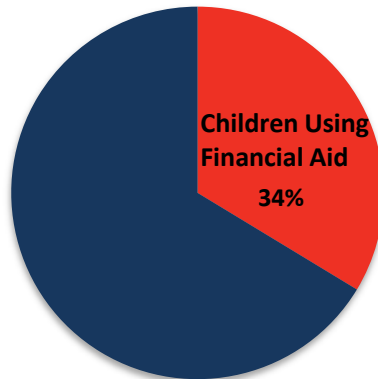
% of children under 18 living in poverty <sup>3</sup>	10%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working <sup>4</sup>	59.8 to 65.4%
Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$80,236
Unemployment Rate <sup>5</sup>	5.1%

**Helping Families Find Child Care in 2022**

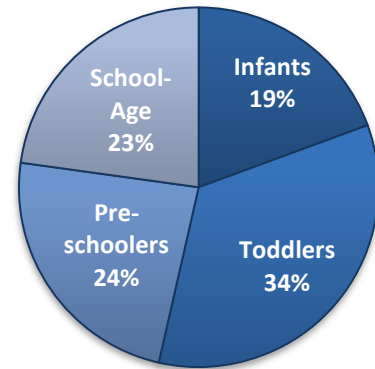
In 2022, Child Care Aware of Washington programs helped 13,579 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Pierce County alone, we helped 2407 families with 3192 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 3406 times.

**Children Using Subsidies**



**Referral Demand by Child Age**



**Compensation in 2022**

Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income <sup>6</sup>	
Child Care Center Teacher	\$37,261
Child Care Center Director	\$40,569
Family Child Care Provider	\$42,462
K-12 Teacher (Statewide) <sup>7</sup>	\$86,889

**Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2022**

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,430	\$1,653	\$1,572	21%
Toddler	\$1,250	\$1,425	\$1,361	19%
Preschool	\$1,030	\$1,220	\$1,208	15%
School Age	\$520	\$650	\$880	8%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,050	\$1,270	\$1,059	16%
Toddler	\$950	\$1,120	\$910	14%
Preschool	\$867	\$1,040	\$847	13%
School Age	\$455	\$622	\$774	7%

**Contact Child Care Aware of Washington**

1001 Pacific Avenue Suite 400  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
253.383.1735

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, 2022

<sup>2</sup>Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card Enrollment, 2021-2022

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2021

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2021

<sup>5</sup>Washington State Employment Security Department; U.S. BLS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2022 (not seasonally-adjusted)

<sup>6</sup>Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, Cost of Quality Survey, 2022

Note: Child care provider income is regional data, not county-specific. Pierce County is in King/Pierce which includes: King, Pierce.

<sup>7</sup>Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Historical Comparison of Statewide School District Personnel, 2022-23

For more information, go to <https://www.childcareawarewa.org>