

# Child Care in Washington State



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

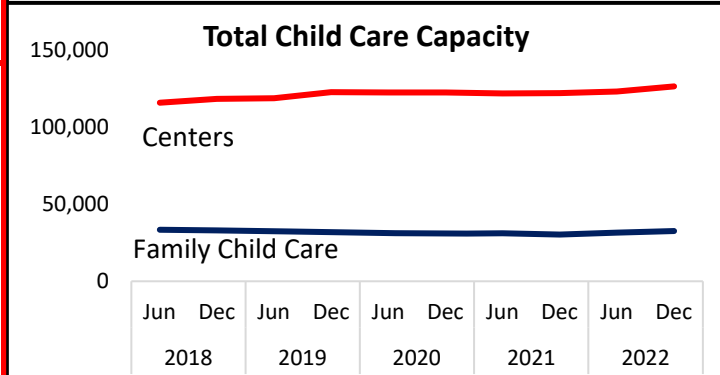
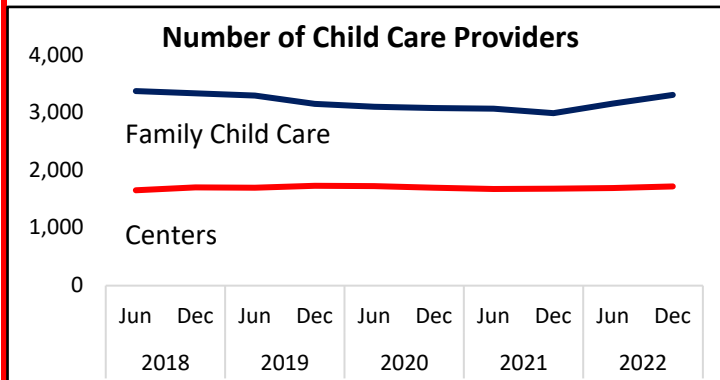
Since 1989, our regional member programs and statewide Family Center have enhanced the quality of child care and helped families by:

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

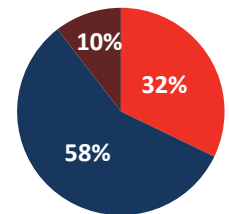
## Washington State

is served locally by six regions  
 Child Care Aware of:  
 Central WA  
 Eastern WA  
 King & Pierce Counties  
 Northwest WA  
 Olympic Peninsula  
 Southwest WA

In Washington State, the number of child care providers has increased from 5,542 with capacity for 175,124 children in 2018, to 5,597 providers with capacity for 193,079 children in December of 2022.\*

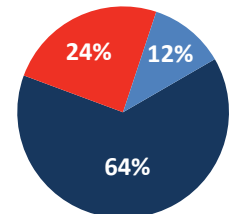


## Child Care Provider Type



- 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 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 73% of licensed child care providers in WA are enrolled in Early Achievers, serving 71,000 children\*. Early Achievers provides families with valuable child care program quality recognition information so they can make informed child care choices.

## Early Achievers (QRIS) Participation

Total	4,225
Child Care Centers	1,244
Family Child Care	2,522
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	459
Enrollment as of	1/5/2023

**Demographics**

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

Total Population in 2020	7,656,200
Change since 2015	594,790
Children under 5 yrs	449,128
Children under 15 yrs	1,422,217
K-12 Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	1,072,685
Pre-K-5th Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	494,143

**Economics**

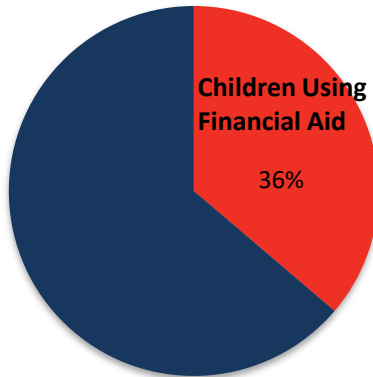
% of children under 18 living in poverty <sup>3</sup>	12%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working <sup>4</sup>	58.9 to 65%
Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$80,319
Unemployment Rate <sup>5</sup>	4.2%

**Helping Families Find Child Care in 2022**

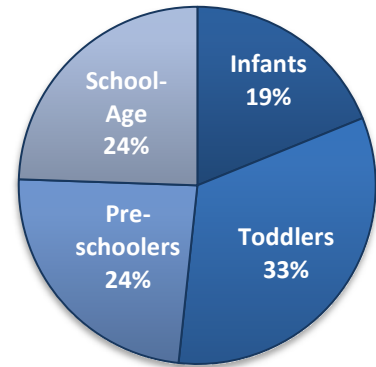
In 2022, Child Care Aware of Washington programs helped 13,579 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Washington State, we helped 13,579 families with 17,801 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 19,226 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	\$33,855
Child Care Center Director	\$37,324
Family Child Care Provider	\$40,716
K-12 Teacher <sup>7</sup>	\$86,889

**Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2022**

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,592	\$1,949	Varies by Region	24%
Toddler	\$1,365	\$1,724		20%
Preschool	\$1,213	\$1,516		18%
School Age	\$433	\$607		6%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,192	\$1,500	Varies by Region	18%
Toddler	\$1,083	\$1,400		16%
Preschool	\$975	\$1,280		15%
School Age	\$451	\$635		7%

**Contact Child Care Aware of Washington**

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**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

<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>