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.

In Thurston County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 201 with capacity for 7,110 children in 2018, to 147 providers with capacity for 7,236 children in December of 2022.*

**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 81% of licensed child care providers in Thurston 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.
### Demographics

**Population**

- Total Population in 2020: 291,000
- Change since 2015: 23,590

- Children under 5 yrs: 15,825
- Children under 15 yrs: 53,261
- K-12 Enrollment: 41,936
- Pre-K-5th Enrollment: 18,869

### Economics

- % of children under 18 living in poverty: 11.7%
- % of children under 6 w/ all parents working: 56.9 to 62.3%
- Median Household Income: $79,769
- Unemployment Rate: 4.6%

### Compensation in 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income</th>
<th>Centers</th>
<th>Median Cost</th>
<th>75th Percentile Cost</th>
<th>State Subsidy Rate</th>
<th>Median Cost as a % of Median Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Center Teacher</td>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>$1,478</td>
<td>$1,630</td>
<td>$1,433</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>$1,255</td>
<td>$1,452</td>
<td>$1,282</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>$1,135</td>
<td>$1,349</td>
<td>$1,181</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$657</td>
<td>$903</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Child Care</th>
<th>Median Cost</th>
<th>75th Percentile Cost</th>
<th>State Subsidy Rate</th>
<th>Median Cost as a % of Median Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$975</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>$950</td>
<td>$1,050</td>
<td>$936</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>$863</td>
<td>$953</td>
<td>$823</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>$251</td>
<td>$377</td>
<td>$704</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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 Thurston County alone, we helped 893 families with 1207 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 1222 times.

**Contact Child Care Aware of Washington**

1001 Pacific Avenue Suite 400
Tacoma, WA 98402
253.383.1735

**Note:** Child care provider income is regional data, not county-specific. Thurston County is in Olympic Peninsula which includes: Kitsap, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Thurston.

**Data Sources:**

- Most data is from Child Care Aware of Washington. More data and full citations are available at [https://www.childcareawarewa.org](https://www.childcareawarewa.org).
- *Includes licensed child care (centers and family child care) and exempt school-age programs only
- Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2022
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card Enrollment, 2021-2022
- U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2021
- U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2021
- Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, Cost of Quality Survey, 2022

For more information, go to [https://www.childcareawarewa.org](https://www.childcareawarewa.org)