Statewide during the past 12 years, Washington has gained over 15,000 slots and decreased by 2,300 providers. The increases in capacity are a result of more family child care closures and larger centers opening. Since 2022, Washington has seen an increase of 400 family child care programs and 70 centers. Current gains in providers are encouraging, however we have significantly less providers than 12 years ago. The trend of less providers and more capacity being available at large centers has contributed to child care deserts, as the number of child care locations has decreased. Moreover, communities across the state have experienced differential outcomes in child care availability as some areas experienced greater child care decreases and in some cases lowered capacity.

In Benton County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 137 with capacity for 4,153 children in 2018, to 133 providers with capacity for 4,321 children in June of 2023.*

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

**Benton County**

is served locally by
Child Care Aware of Eastern Washington
a program of
Community-Minded Enterprises
2001 N Division St, Ste. 130
http://community-minded.org/
800.446.2229

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**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, 4,416 child care providers participate in Early Achievers.

Approximately 75% of licensed child care providers in Benton 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.

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**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 (QRIS) Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Child Care Centers</th>
<th>Family Child Care</th>
<th>Head Start &amp; State</th>
<th>Preschool Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment as of</td>
<td>7/19/2023</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Data as of June 2023.*
Helping Families Find Child Care in 2023

So far in 2023, Child Care Aware of Washington programs have helped 7,613 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Benton County alone, we helped 220 families with 324 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 305 times.

### Children Using Subsidies

![Children Using Financial Aid 49%]

### Referral Demand by Child Age

- Infants 19%
- Toddlers 25%
- Preschoolers 24%
- School-Age 32%

### Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></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>Infant</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
<td>$1,476</td>
<td>$1,668</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>$1,300</td>
<td>$1,347</td>
<td>$1,463</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>$1,092</td>
<td>$1,203</td>
<td>$1,251</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>$359</td>
<td>$597</td>
<td>$1,088</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<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>$1,125</td>
<td>$1,284</td>
<td>$1,430</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler</td>
<td>$1,083</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$1,280</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>$953</td>
<td>$1,083</td>
<td>$1,040</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>$433</td>
<td>$585</td>
<td>$867</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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

4. U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2021
6. Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, Cost of Quality Survey, 2022

Note: Child care provider income is regional data, not county-specific. Benton County is in Eastern Washington which includes: Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman.

7. 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