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 Cowlitz County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 46 with capacity for 1,962 children in 2018, to 45 providers with capacity for 2,293 children in June of 2023.*

**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

**Cowlitz County**

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

a program of Educational Service District 112
2500 NE 65th Ave.
www.esd112.org/ece/
877.414.0071

**Child Care Provider Type**

- Centers: 28%
- Family Child Care: 68%
- School Age Only: 4%

**State Subsidy**

- Accept all ages: 59%
- Do not accept: 6%
- Accept school age only: 35%

**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 76% of licensed child care providers in Cowlitz 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>44</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Centers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Child Care</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start &amp; State</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrollment as of 7/19/2023
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 Cowlitz County alone, we helped 72 families with 98 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 87 times.

Children Using Subsidies

Referral Demand by Child Age

Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2023

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

1 Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2022
2 Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card Enrollment, 2021-2022
3 U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2021
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. Cowlitz County is in Southwest Washington which includes: Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pacific, Skamania, Wahkiakum.

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