



Child Care in Whatcom County



July 2023

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.

Child Care Aware of Washington

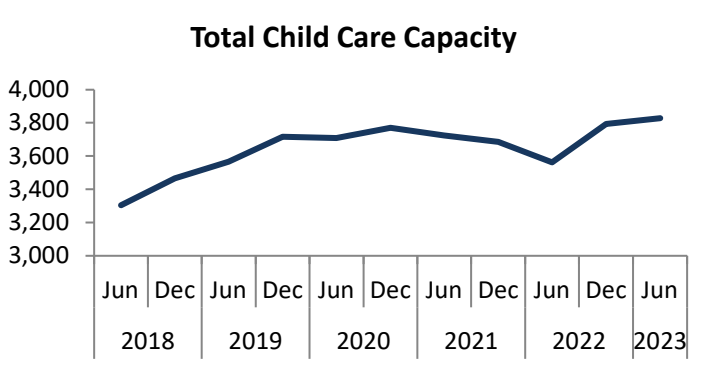
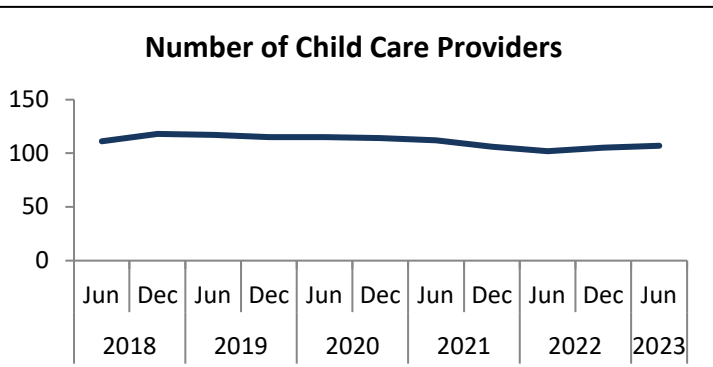
Child Care Aware of Washington provides thorough and independent information and support:

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

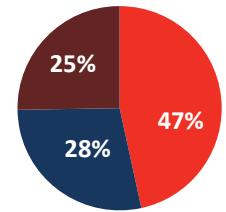
Since 1989, our regional member programs and statewide Family Center have enhanced the quality of child care and helped families by:

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

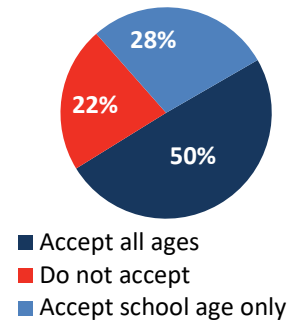
In Whatcom County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 111 with capacity for 3,305 children in 2018, to 107 providers with capacity for 3,828 children in June of 2023.*



Child Care Provider Type



State Subsidy



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 69% of licensed child care providers in Whatcom 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	73
Child Care Centers	35
Family Child Care	21
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	17

Enrollment as of 7/19/2023

Whatcom County

is served locally by
Child Care Aware of Northwest Washington

a program of
The Opportunity Council

1201 Cornwall Ave. Ste. 200

<https://www.ccanorthwest.org/>

888.444.1862 x1227

Demographics

Population¹

Total Population in 2020	228,000
Change since 2015	18,210
Children under 5 yrs	11,258
Children under 15 yrs	38,556
K-12 Enrollment ²	27,434
Pre-K-5th Enrollment ²	12,794

Economics

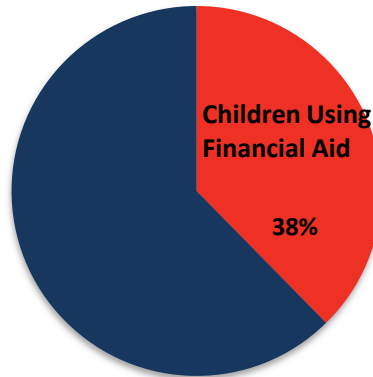
% of children under 18 living in poverty ³	15.3%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working ⁴	69.8 to 76.8%
Median Household Income ¹	\$71,739
Unemployment Rate ⁵	3.8%

Helping Families Find Child Care in 2023

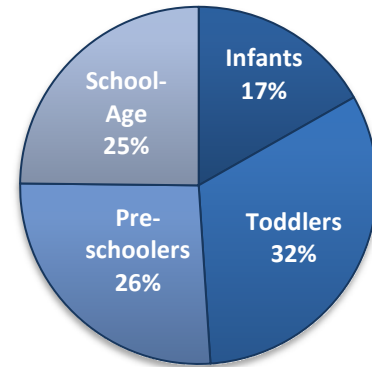
So far in 2023, Child Care Aware of Washington programs have helped 7,613 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Whatcom County alone, we helped 212 families with 279 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 253 times.

Children Using Subsidies



Referral Demand by Child Age



Compensation in 2022

Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income ⁶	
Child Care Center Teacher	\$36,252
Child Care Center Director	\$40,035
Family Child Care Provider	\$36,079
K-12 Teacher (Statewide) ⁷	\$86,889

Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2023

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,671	\$1,727	\$1,919	28%
Toddler	\$1,517	\$1,678	\$1,741	25%
Preschool	\$1,300	\$1,441	\$1,571	22%
School Age	\$425	\$585	\$1,418	7%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,210	\$1,300	\$1,408	20%
Toddler	\$1,082	\$1,229	\$1,280	18%
Preschool	\$1,020	\$1,129	\$1,174	17%
School Age	\$399	\$399	\$1,067	7%

Contact Child Care Aware of Washington

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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

⁵ Washington State Employment Security Department; U.S. BLS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2023 (not seasonally-adjusted)

⁶ Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, Cost of Quality Survey, 2022

Note: Child care provider income is regional data, not county-specific. Whatcom County is in Northwest Washington which includes: Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom.

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