



Child Care in King County



March 2024

Statewide during the past 12 years, Washington has gained over 20,000 slots and decreased by 2,000 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 500 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

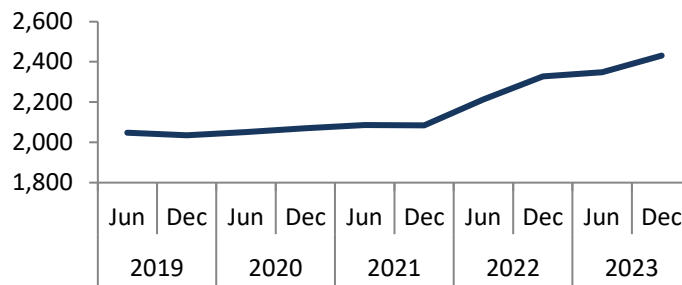
King County

is served locally by **Child Care Aware of King County** a program of BrightSpark

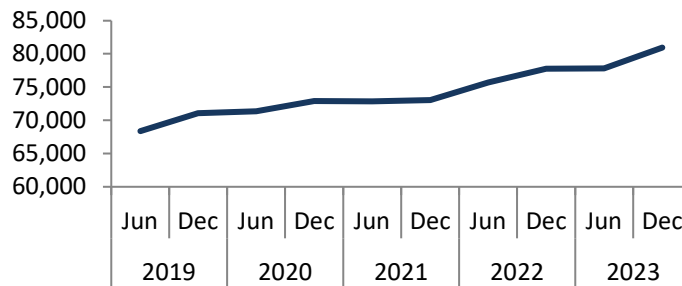
555 S. Renton Village Place, Suite
<http://www.brightspark.org>
 877.543.0059

In King County, the number of child care providers has increased from 2,047 with capacity for 68,392 children in 2019, to 2,431 providers with capacity for 80,979 children in December of 2023.*

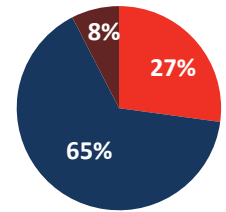
Number of Child Care Providers



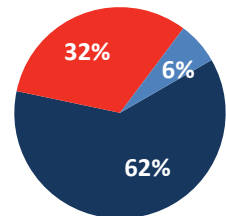
Total Child Care Capacity



Child Care Provider Type



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, 4,628 child care providers participate in Early Achievers.

Approximately 75% of licensed child care providers in King 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	1825
Child Care Centers	462
Family Child Care	1291
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	72

Enrollment as of 3/24/2024

Demographics

Population¹

Total Population in 2020	2,260,800
Change since 2015	208,000
Children under 5 yrs	125,287
Children under 15 yrs	389,427
K-12 Enrollment ²	282,205
Pre-K-5th Enrollment ²	132,332

Economics

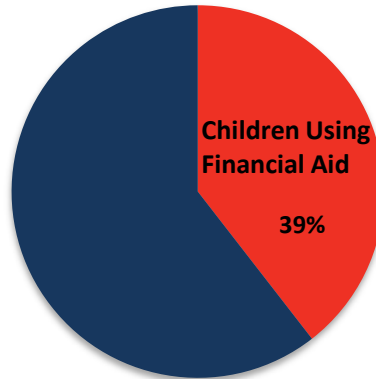
% of children under 18 living in poverty ³	9.1%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working ⁴	76.4 to 83.5%
Median Household Income ¹	\$110,351
Unemployment Rate ⁵	3.5%

Helping Families Find Child Care in 2023

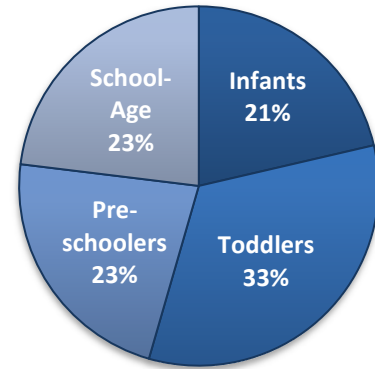
In 2023, Child Care Aware of Washington programs have helped 12,199 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In King County alone, we helped 3558 families with 4413 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 5214 times.

Children Using Subsidies



Referral Demand by Child Age



Compensation in 2022

Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income ⁶	
Child Care Center Teacher	\$37,261
Child Care Center Director	\$40,569
Family Child Care Provider	\$42,462
K-12 Teacher (Statewide) ⁷	\$91,982

Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2023

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$2,375	\$2,865	\$2,462	26%
Toddler	\$2,053	\$2,454	\$2,201	22%
Preschool	\$1,745	\$2,058	\$1,856	19%
School Age	\$433	\$618	\$1,964	5%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,625	\$1,907	\$1,773	18%
Toddler	\$1,516	\$1,800	\$1,625	16%
Preschool	\$1,400	\$1,625	\$1,494	15%
School Age	\$477	\$650	\$1,300	5%

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, 2023-2024

³ U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2022

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022

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. King County is in King/Pierce which includes: King, Pierce.

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>