

# Child Care in Thurston 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

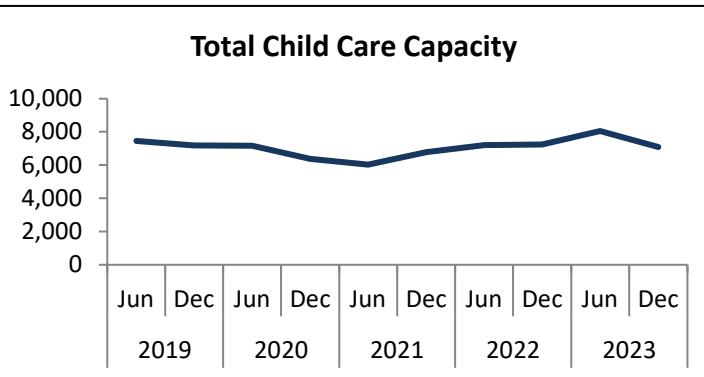
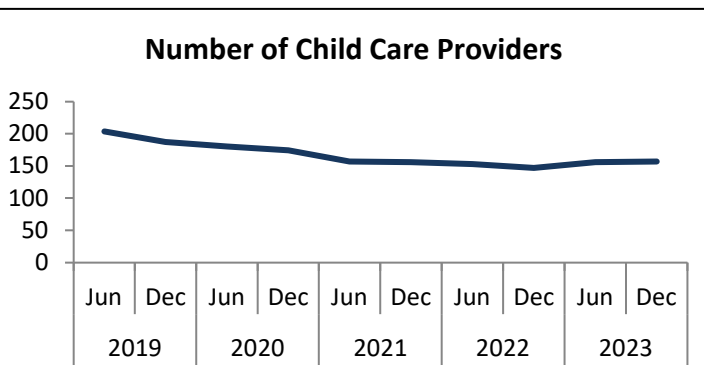
Child Care Aware of Washington provides thorough and independent information and support:

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

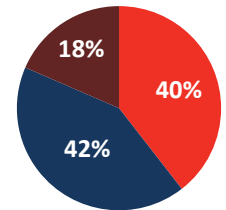
Since 1989, our regional member programs and statewide Family Center have enhanced the quality of child care and helped families by:

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

In Thurston County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 204 with capacity for 7,441 children in 2019, to 157 providers with capacity for 7,078 children in December of 2023.\*

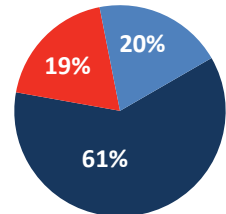


### Child Care Provider Type



- Centers
- Family Child Care
- School Age Only

### State Subsidy



- Accept all ages
- Do not accept
- Accept school age only

## Early Achievers

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 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.

### Early Achievers (QRIS) Participation

Total	113
Child Care Centers	58
Family Child Care	47
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	8

Enrollment as of 3/24/2024

## Thurston County

is served locally by  
**Child Care Aware of Olympic Peninsula**  
a program of  
Child Care Action Council  
3729 Griffin Lane SE  
<http://www.ccacwa.org/>  
800.845.0956

**Demographics**

**Population<sup>1</sup>**

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 <sup>2</sup>	42,125
Pre-K-5th Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	19,268

**Economics**

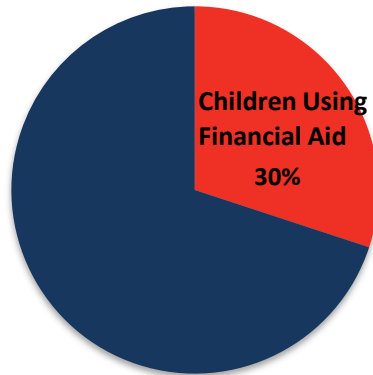
% of children under 18 living in poverty <sup>3</sup>	9.8%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working <sup>4</sup>	66.9 to 72%
Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$81,544
Unemployment Rate <sup>5</sup>	4.8%

**Helping Families Find Child Care in 2023**

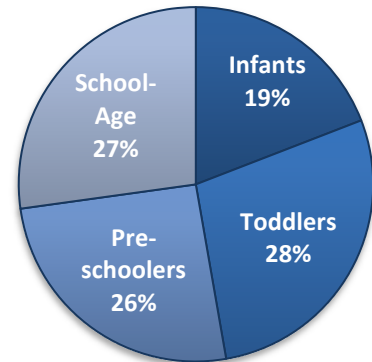
In 2023, Child Care Aware of Washington programs have helped 12,199 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Thurston County alone, we helped 652 families with 825 children in need of child care to search for matching providers 834 times.

**Children Using Subsidies**



**Referral Demand by Child Age**



**Compensation in 2022**

Comparison of Average Annual Salary/Income <sup>6</sup>	
Child Care Center Teacher	\$31,302
Child Care Center Director	\$35,626
Family Child Care Provider	\$40,789
K-12 Teacher (Statewide) <sup>7</sup>	\$91,982

**Contact Child Care Aware of Washington**

1001 Pacific Avenue Suite 400  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
253.383.1735

**Monthly Cost of Child Care in 2023**

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,647	\$1,777	\$1,668	24%
Toddler	\$1,463	\$1,636	\$1,463	22%
Preschool	\$1,330	\$1,432	\$1,251	20%
School Age	\$498	\$650	\$1,088	7%

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	\$1,200	\$1,300	\$1,280	18%
Toddler	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,192	15%
Preschool	\$900	\$1,148	\$1,148	13%
School Age	\$498	\$498	\$975	7%

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

<sup>1</sup> Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2022

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card Enrollment, 2023-2024

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2022

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022

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

<sup>6</sup> Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, Cost of Quality Survey, 2022

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.

<sup>7</sup> 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>