

# Child Care in Columbia County



September 2024

Since 2012, Washington has gained over 24,000 slots and decreased by over 1,400 licensed 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 over 500 family child care programs and 80 centers. While these current gains in providers are encouraging, Washington still has significantly fewer providers than it did 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. Additionally, communities across the state have experienced varied outcomes in child care availability, with some areas seeing greater decreases in child care options and reduced capacity.

## Child Care Aware of Washington

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

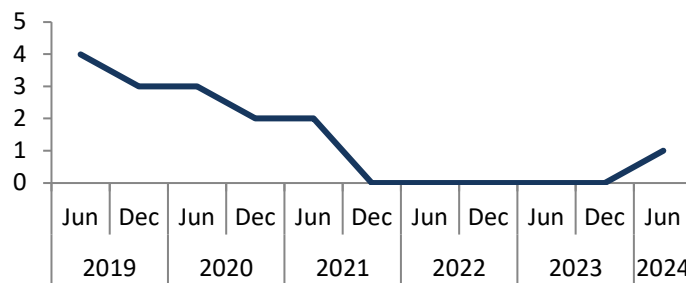
- For families seeking quality child care
- For child care programs seeking to improve quality
- For effective policymaking

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

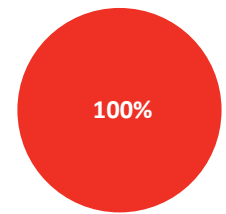
- Delivering training, technical assistance, & consultation to child care providers
- Supplying families with consumer education & referrals for child care

In Columbia County, the number of child care providers has dropped from 4 with capacity for 38 children in 2019, to 1 provider with capacity for 40 children in June of 2024.\*

Number of Child Care Providers

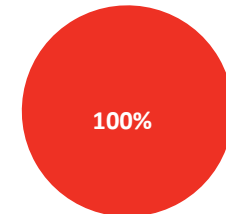


Child Care Provider Type



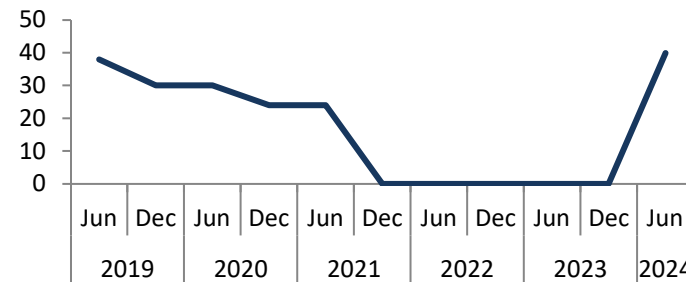
- Centers
- Family Child Care
- School Age Only

State Subsidy



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

Total Child Care Capacity



## Early Achievers

Early Achievers is Washington's **Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS)**, which offers training, technical assistance, coaching, mental health consultation, awards, scholarships, and other benefits to child care providers **to improve the quality of their care.**

**Statewide, 4,811 child care providers participate in Early Achievers.**

Approximately 100% of licensed child care providers in Columbia 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	2
Child Care Centers	1
Family Child Care	0
Head Start & State Preschool Sites	1

Enrollment as of 8/6/2024

## Columbia 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

**Demographics**

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

Total Population in 2023	3,950
Change since 2015	-140
Children under 5 yrs	174
Children under 15 yrs	625
K-12 Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	1,037
Pre-K-5th Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	441

**Economics**

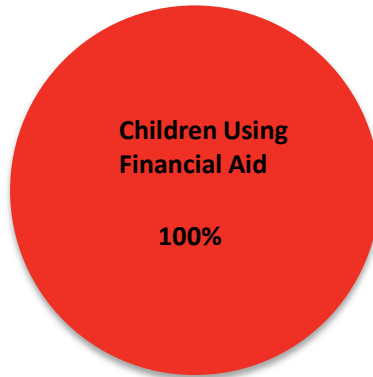
% of children under 18 living in poverty <sup>3</sup>	17.6%
% of children under 6 w/ all parents working <sup>4</sup>	78.1 to 81.5%
Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$62,935
Unemployment Rate <sup>5</sup>	5.1%

**Helping Families Find Child Care in 2024**

In 2024 so far, Child Care Aware of Washington programs have helped 7,065 families find child care providers matching their unique needs.

In Columbia County alone, we helped 1 family with 1 child in need of child care to search for matching providers 4 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	\$32,552
Child Care Center Director	\$34,944
Family Child Care Provider	\$32,493
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 2024**

Centers	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	No Rates Available		\$1,280	N/A
Toddler	No Rates Available		\$1,064	N/A
Preschool	No Rates Available		\$970	N/A
School Age	No Rates Available		\$709	N/A

Family Child Care	Median Cost	75th Percentile Cost	State Subsidy Rate	Median Cost as a % of Median Income
Infant	No Family Child Care		\$1,430	N/A
Toddler	No Family Child Care		\$1,280	N/A
Preschool	No Family Child Care		\$1,040	N/A
School Age	No Family Child Care		\$867	N/A

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. (2023). Small area demographic estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2023-2024). Report card enrollment 2023-2024 school year.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). Small area income and poverty estimates.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). American community survey.

<sup>5</sup> Washington State Employment Security Department, & U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Local area unemployment statistics (not seasonally adjusted)

<sup>6</sup> Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies. (2022). Cost of Quality Survey.

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

<sup>7</sup> Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2023-2024). Historical comparison of statewide school district personnel.

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