

Child Care in King County

September 2007

Child Care Resource & Referral Across Washington State

Since established by state statute in 1989, the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (Network) has been a key component of the child care infrastructure. The Network is charged with helping parents find child care; educating parents, providers and the community about what quality child care looks like; supporting providers through training and technical assistance; strengthening the child care system at all levels; and collecting data about child care supply and demand in Washington State.

During 2006, the Network's 18 member agencies:

- Handled 117,208 calls;
- Processed 33,701 public referral calls;
- Served 25,073 families and 35,667 children; and
- Assisted 13,874 low-income families find child care.

Child Care Resource & Referral Supports Communities by:

- Helping parents find child care and financing options;
- Improving the quality of child care, early learning and after school programs;
- Advocating for children, parents, and child care providers;
- Increasing the availability of child care;
- Bridging child care and K-12 education; and
- Supporting families to raise healthy children.

Child Care Resource & Referral In King County

Child Care Resources (CCR) hosts the child care resource and referral (R&R) program serving King County. Staff responded to nearly 27,000 calls in 2006 from parents, providers, and community members seeking information and assistance navigating the child care system. R&R staff and consultants are also out in the field: conducting training, collaborating with community partners, and reaching out to families across all income levels, geographic barriers, and ethnic identities to provide them with vital child care consumer education.

Notable highlights of this report:

- The 5-year decline in the number of licensed family child care businesses slowed dramatically, from a rate of 65-75 facilities each year from 2002 to 2005, to a loss of only 14 in 2006.
- The percentage of licensed facilities reporting that one or more staff members speak Spanish increased to 19%.
- Infant care continues to be the most difficult care to find and the most expensive.
- For a family with an infant and a preschooler in full-time care, the cost (\$16,484-\$21,892/yr) represents 25%-33% of the county's median household income.
- Families count on CCR's R&R referral line to help them find child care: 94% of those surveyed would share the phone number with a friend or family member.



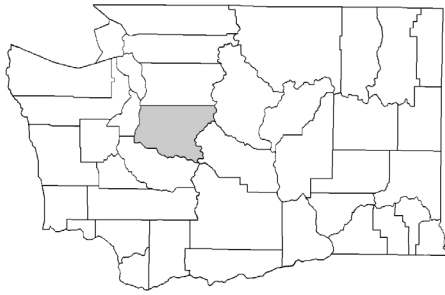
Local Resource & Referral Contact Information:

Child Care Resources
1225 South Weller, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 329-1011
<http://www.childcare.org>

Child Care Resources leads efforts to promote equity for children, community stability, and school readiness.

A Member in Good Standing of the:





People

Population	1,835,300
Change since 2002	61,000
Children under 5 years:	107,437
Children under 13 years	279,286
% of Children under 13 living in poverty	11%
Ranking among WA Counties in rate of child poverty	37
K-12 enrollment	297,128
Children in Care Zone ¹	178,122
Average number children on child care subsidy	12,015/month
Head Start/ECEAP Slots	3,382

Economics

Living Wage ²	\$40,000/yr
Median Household Income	\$65,940/yr
Unemployment Rate	4.1%

Notes:

¹Care Zone is defined as the number of children who live in a single-parent or two-parent home where the parent or both parents are working.

²The living wage measure is based on a family of four and represents twice the federal poverty level income. Twice the federal poverty level is the income cut off for families receiving child care subsidies.

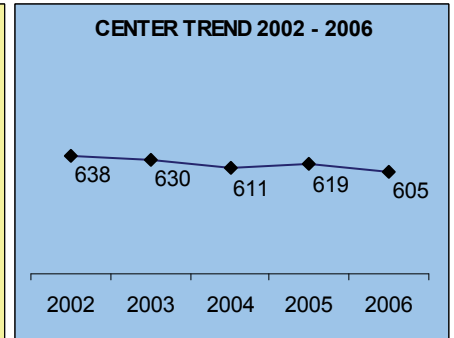
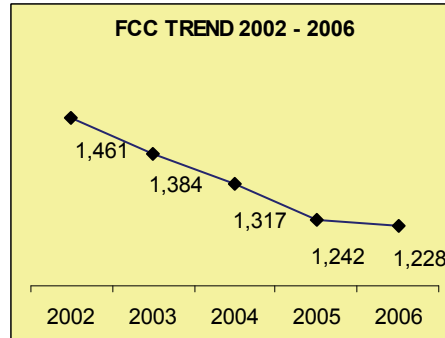
Data Sources for the Report:

American Federation of Teachers, Children's Defense Fund, Department of Early Learning, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Office of Financial Management, Federal Registry, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, U.S. Census Bureau and the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network.

Licensed Child Care in Our Community

How many providers are there in my area by type?

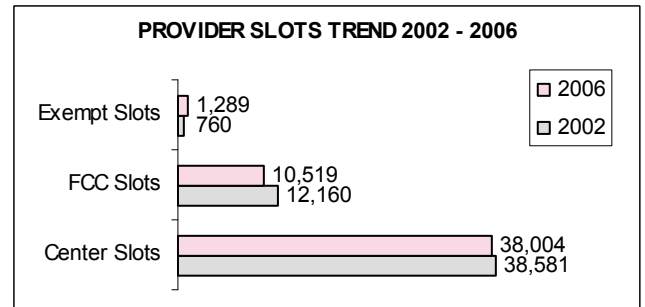
Family child care (FCC) businesses account for 66% of the 1,864 licensed facilities. Over the last five years, the overall number of licensed facilities has declined by a net 266, or 13%.



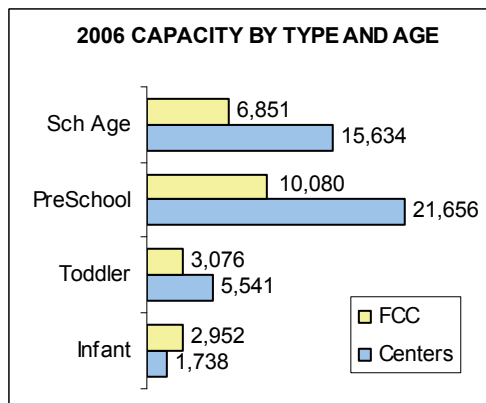
Since the peak in 2002, there has been a 16% decline in the number of family child care businesses, or 233. The number of center facilities has decreased by 5% during the last 5 years. In 2006, there were 33 fewer centers than five years before.

How has the number of child care slots changed over the last five years?

Over the past five years, the county has experienced a net loss of 1,641 potential family child care slots or 13%. The number of potential center child care slots has declined by 1%, amounting to a loss of 577 slots. Overall, the county has lost 2,218 potential child care slots since 2002.



What is the distribution of slots by type of care and by age?



Because of a higher required ratio of adults to children under 2 years old in licensed care, there are far fewer slots for infants and toddlers than for other age groups. In centers, the ratio is highest (1 adult to 4 infants) and the potential number of infants is lowest, making family child care a critical option for working parents of our youngest children.

Note: The number of slots for all children is overstated in this comparison. It shows each age group filled as if there were no other children in the other age group. If a slot is filled for one age group it cancels out the potential slot for the other age group. This chart does not represent actual enrollment of children in care.

What languages do providers speak in my community?

Apart from English, 19% of providers speak Spanish. "Other" includes French (4%), Chinese (3%), Russian (3%), and Vietnamese (3%), but also Japanese, Arabic, Tagalog, Farsi, German, and Korean, among others.

Languages Spoken by Providers	
English	100%
Spanish	19%
Somali	7%
Other	36%

Note: percentages include providers who speak more than one language

How much non-standard care is available in my community?

Most providers offer full- and part-time care during weekdays only. Fewer than one-third (29%) regularly offer care past 6:30 PM, overnight, or on the weekend. Out of all providers, most offering nonstandard care provide evenings (14%), fewer offer weekends (9%) or overnight (6%).

Economics of Child Care Providers

What do child care providers earn compared to kindergarten teachers?

2006 Average Salary Comparisons: Kindergarten Teachers and Child Care Providers			
Public School Kindergarten Teacher (2004)	Director Child Care Center	Teacher Child Care Center	Family Child Care Provider Business Gross Income
\$40,330/yr \$3,361/mo	\$33,888/yr \$2,824/mo	\$21,444/yr \$1,787/mo	\$36,269/yr \$3,022/mo

Washington's kindergarten teachers earn 23% more than center directors, 73% more than child care teachers, and 3% more than family child care providers' gross earnings in the region. The substantial wage differential can be attributed to higher educational requirements for kindergarten teachers and relatively low turnover in public schools. The lack of competitive wages makes it difficult to recruit and retain educated child care workers and can have a negative impact on the quality of care.

How does the child care subsidy reimbursement rate affect provider profitability?

Current state child care subsidy reimbursement rates are one constraint on wages, quality, and financial solvency for providers.

2006 Monthly Full-Time Subsidy Reimbursement Rates			
	Infant	Toddler	Preschool
Centers	\$873	\$729	\$611
Family Child Care Homes	\$692	\$684	\$577

To support the average salary of a teacher, aide and part of the cost of the director for an infant classroom in a center, a program would need to enroll at least **5** of the licensed maximum of **8** subsidized full-time infants. Income generated from the other **3** infants would have to cover all other classroom costs including health benefits, training, rent and supplies.

In a typical family child care home, one provider might have two infants and four preschoolers. A provider's gross earnings if all the children are on subsidy would be **\$3,691** per month. Out of these earnings, the provider must pay all expenses, including salaries, benefits, taxes, rent, meals, training, equipment and supplies.

Professional Development for the Child Care Workforce

Training and Scholarships

CCR provides state-mandated training for providers. **In 2006, the R&R offered 158 trainings for the child care workforce, averaging 16 students in each class.**

Washington Scholarships for Child Care Professionals (formerly T.E.A.C.H.) is a scholarship program that provides financial support for center and school-age staff and family child care providers to enroll in community and technical college degree programs. In King County, **274** scholarships were awarded in 2006.

National Standards for Quality

Training, education, experience and applied knowledge are important to child care quality. Accreditation recognizes facilities who have achieved national quality standards:

Center-based Accredited Programs **94**
National Association for the Education of Young Children

School-Age Accredited Programs **10**
National AfterSchool Association

Accredited Family Child Care Homes **0**
National Association for Family Child Care

Accredited Montessori Programs **8**
American Montessori Society

Professional Associations

Association for the Education of Young Children Chapters: Puget Sound AEYC

Family Child Care Association Chapters: North King, Southwest King & Educadoras Hispanas

Feedback from Providers

What percentage of providers...

Read R&R newsletter	95%
Indicate that referrals help sustain their child care business	50%
Are satisfied with service received from R&R	86%

About the Families

Callers to the referral line are regularly surveyed by R&R in order to better understand what they want and need for children in their care. Often families have difficulty locating child care that meets their basic needs: an accessible location, available the hours needed, affordable, and safe—not to mention a quality program.

How do parents find their child care arrangements?

- 40% through the R&R
- 23% through friends or family
- 23% were still looking for care
- 2% chose to stay home
- 12% through providers, the phone book or other means

What are the top three challenges that parents have in finding child care?

- 1) Openings
- 2) Affordability
- 3) Not able to get help paying for care



97% of families surveyed would share **Child Care Resources'** local contact information with a friend or family member.

Affordability for Families

How much does child care cost in my community?

Countywide, the annual median household income in 2006 was **\$65,940**. The tables below indicate the annual median price of full-time care for one child by age group and type of care. The median price indicates that half the providers in the area charge more and half charge less than the prices quoted here.

Centers	2006 Median	% of 2006
Infant	\$12,896	20%
Toddler	\$10,452	16%
Preschool	\$8,996	14%
School Age	\$4,888	7%

Family Child Care	2006 Median Annual Cost for 1 Child	% of 2006 Med. Household Inc.
Infant	\$8,996	14%
Toddler	\$8,580	13%
Preschool	\$7,488	11%
School Age	\$4,472	7%

While the median cost of family child care can be up to 43% less than the cost of care in a center, child care continues to represent a substantial cost for families. The cost of full-time care for an infant represents 14% to 20% of the median income. Full-time care for an infant and preschool child would represent 25% to 33% of the median income in the county.

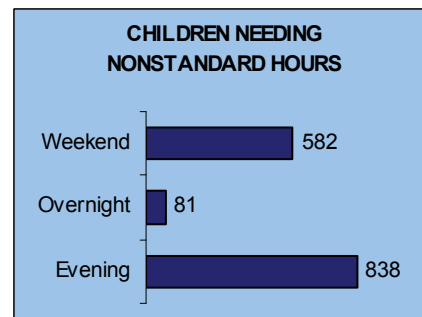
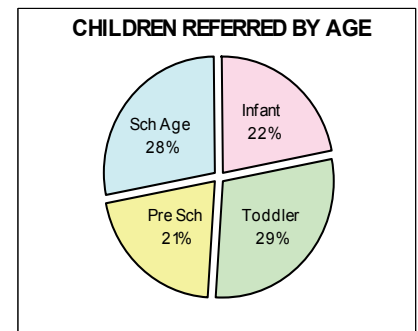
Families Using R&R Services

Who are families that call the R&R Line?

In 2006, **6,570** families received referrals. A majority (56%) of families served were low income. Fifty-six percent (56%) of families were headed by single parents.

What ages of children are referred?

There is an even distribution of children that are referred by age. However, the largest population of children *eligible* for licensed child care are school-age (5 to 13), but nearly three-fourths (72%) of the children *referred* are birth through four years old.



How many children need non-standard care?

There were **1,501** requests for referrals to licensed facilities offering non-standard hour care. More than half (55%) of the requests were for evening care past 6:30 PM, while 39% were seeking weekend care (Saturday or Sunday or both).