



Child Care in King County

September 2008

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 2007, the Network's member agencies:

- Handled 121,327 calls;
- Processed 33,247 public referral calls;
- Served 25,078 families and 35,289 children; and
- Assisted 21,954 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 31,343 calls in 2007 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:

- While overall the county lost 138 licensed child care facilities since 2003, the four-year decline among both centers and family child care businesses reversed in 2007, increasing by 43 over 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 and expensive care to find. For a family with an infant and a preschooler in full-time care, the cost (\$16,900-\$22,958/yr) represents 25% to 34% of the county's median household income.



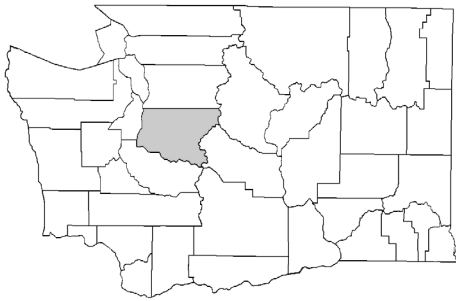
Local Resource & Referral Contact Information:

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.

Proud Member of the:





People

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Population | 1,862,300 |
| Change since 2003 | 82,000 |
| Children under 5 years: | 109,145 |
| Children under 13 years | 281,372 |
| % of Children under 13 living in poverty | 11% |
| Ranking among WA Counties in rate of child poverty | 37 |
| K-12 enrollment | 256,226 |
| Children in Care Zone ¹ | 179,453 |
| Average number children on child care subsidy | 12,015/month |
| Head Start/ECEAP Slots | 4,760 |

Economics

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Living Wage ² | \$41,300/yr |
| Median Household Income | \$67,338/yr |
| Unemployment Rate | 3.5% |

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.

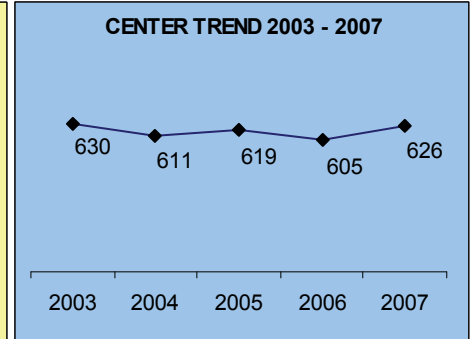
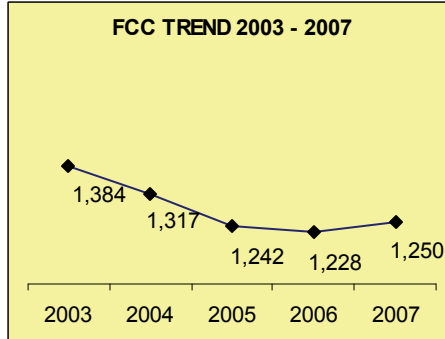
Data Sources for the Report:

American Federation of Teachers, Children's Defense Fund, WA Dept of Early Learning, WA Employment Security Dept, WA Head Start State Collaboration Office, WA Office of Financial Management, WA Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, US Census Bureau, US Dept of Health & Human Services, US Federal Registry 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?

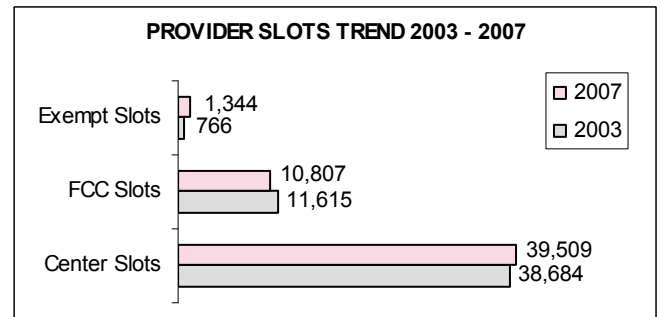
Family child care (FCC) businesses account for 66% of the 1,908 licensed facilities. Since 2003, the overall number of licensed facilities has declined by 7% (or 138), but that decline stabilized in 2007, when the number of facilities grew by 43 over the previous year.



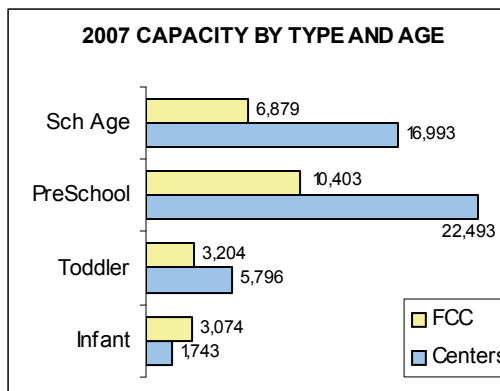
Since 2003, the number of family child care businesses decreased 10% overall (or 134), but there were 21 more businesses in 2007 than 2006. Similarly, there was an overall 1% decline in the number of center facilities since 2003; however there were 22 more centers in 2007 than in 2006.

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 808 potential family child care slots or 7%. This decline was offset by an increase of 825 potential center child care slots. Overall, the county has gained 17 potential child care slots since 2003.



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: This chart does not represent actual enrollment of children in care. 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.

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 | 9% |
| Other | 37% |

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

Most providers offer full- and part-time care during weekdays only. Less than a quarter of the providers offer regular non-standard care. Out of all providers, 15% offer evening care past 6:30 PM, fewer offer weekend care (10%), and fewest provide overnight care (7%).

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 (2005) | Director Child Care Center | Teacher Child Care Center | Family Child Care Provider Business Gross Income |
| \$45,722/yr \$3,810/mo | \$33,888/yr \$2,824/mo | \$21,444/yr \$1,787/mo | \$36,269/yr \$3,022/mo |

Washington's kindergarten teachers earn 35% more than center directors, 85% more than child care teachers, and 26% 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.

| 2007 Monthly Full-Time Subsidy Reimbursement Rates | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|
| | Infant | Toddler | Preschool |
| Centers | \$934 | \$780 | \$654 |
| Family Child Care Homes | \$842 | \$732 | \$617 |

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 **\$4,152** 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 2007, the R&R offered 25 trainings for the child care workforce, averaging 11 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, **272** scholarships were awarded in 2007.

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 <i>National Association for the Education of Young Children</i> | 71 |
| School-Age Accredited Programs <i>National AfterSchool Association</i> | 5 |
| Accredited Family Child Care Homes <i>National Association for Family Child Care</i> | 7 |
| Accredited Montessori Programs <i>American Montessori Society</i> | 10 |

Professional Associations

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

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

Providers say R&Rs help:

- 1) Increase parent referrals to fill my openings**
- 2) Increase my quality of care**
- 3) Increase my ability to operate my child care business**

About the Families

Callers to the referral lines are regularly surveyed by the R&R Network in order to enhance our services and inform policymakers. Parents report that R&Rs significantly increase their knowledge of:

- 1) How to choose child care that fits their family's needs; and
- 2) How to identify a quality child care setting.

Families consider a variety of factors when seeking a child care, including practical considerations such as the accessibility of programs to their workplace or home, the cost of care and the hours of operation.

Parents seek child care where:

- 1) The center/home is clean and safe
- 2) The provider really likes children
- 3) Parents feel comfortable with the provider
- 4) Children's individual needs are met

Top three challenges parents identify when seeking child care:

- 1) Affordability
- 2) Inconvenient locations
- 3) Hours that match parents' needs



95% of families surveyed indicate that child care resource and referral staff responded helpfully to their individual questions and concerns.

Affordability for Families

How much does child care cost in my community?

Countywide, the annual median household income in 2007 was **\$67,338**. 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 | 2007 Median Annual Cost for 1 Child | % of 2007 Med. Household Inc. |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Infant | \$13,520 | 20% |
| Toddler | \$10,920 | 16% |
| Preschool | \$9,438 | 14% |
| School Age | \$5,044 | 7% |

| Family Child Care | 2007 Median Annual Cost for 1 Child | % of 2007 Med. Household Inc. |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Infant | \$9,100 | 14% |
| Toddler | \$8,944 | 13% |
| Preschool | \$7,800 | 12% |
| School Age | \$4,420 | 7% |

While the median cost of family child care can be up to 49% less than the cost of care in a center, child care continues to represent a substantial expense 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 34% of the median income.

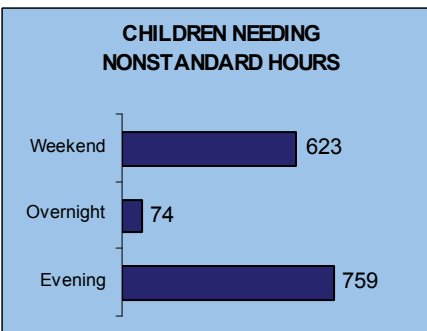
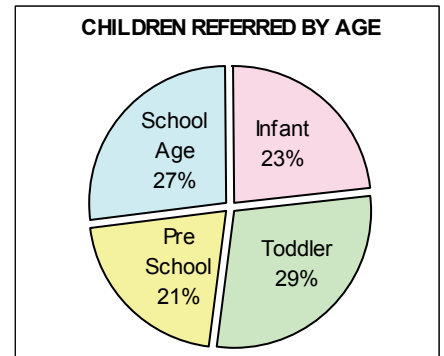
Families Using R&R Services

Who are families that call the R&R Line?

In 2007, **6,986** families received referrals. Two-thirds (66%) of families served were low income. A majority (55%) 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 a majority (63%) of the children *referred* are birth through four years old.



How many children need non-standard care?

There were **1,486** requests for referrals to licensed facilities offering non-standard hour care. More than half (52%) of the requests were for evening care past 6:30 PM, while 43% were seeking weekend care (Saturday or Sunday or both).