



YMCA CHILDCARE RESOURCE SERVICE CHILD CARE DATA DASHBOARD

AFFORDABILITY

FOR FAMILIES

Finding affordable child care is a significant challenge for many families, particularly in regions like California, where infant care ranks as the third most expensive in the nation. This financial burden places a strain on household budgets, limiting access to high-quality care for children.

In San Diego, the average family with two young children **spends around 40% of their income** on child care, far exceeding the **recommended 7% deemed affordable** by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.¹

Despite eligibility, **69% of children** ages 0-5 in San Diego County who need child care and qualify for a subsidy **are not enrolled in a subsidized child care program.**²




Between July 2023-March 2024, YMCA Childcare Resource Service has successfully **enrolled 1,859 families for state-funded child care subsidies.** Currently, there are still **3,209 families waiting** on the Centralized Eligibility List for approval.³

The high cost of child care, combined with the substantial number of children eligible for assistance, emphasizes the crucial need for equitable access to affordable, high-quality care. This underscores the importance of providing families with access to information and financial assistance to ensure that child care is accessible to all who need it.

FOR PROVIDERS

Child care rates are driven by market considerations rather than the true cost of quality care, resulting in a strain on both families and child care providers.⁴

The price families pay for full-time care at a licensed child care center only covers **52% of the estimated true cost of high-quality care for an infant and 66% for a preschool aged child.**⁴

	Child Care Center Subsidy Reimbursement Rate ⁵	Family Child Care Homes Subsidy Reimbursement Rate ⁵
Infant Care 	\$1,628.90 per month	\$1,051.24 per month
Preschool 	\$1,198.54 per month	\$987.78 per month
School-Age 	\$965.69 per month	\$744.18 per month

While child care providers are reimbursed for caring for families enrolled in subsidy programs, reimbursement rates fail to match the high and rising cost of providing quality care.

Read the latest report, "Understanding the True Cost of Child Care in California" by Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies [here](#).

1. Economic Policy Institute. "Child care costs in the United States." Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.epi.org/child-care-costs-in-the-united-states/#/CA>.

2. Tinkler, Tessa and Jamshidi, Mehrnoush, "San Diego County Childcare Landscape: An Analysis of the Supply and Demand" (2022). Youth, Education, and Literacy. 5. <https://digital.sandiego.edu/npi-youth/5>

3. San Diego County Centralized Eligibility List. "January 31, 2024." Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://childcaresandiego.com/>.

4. The Center for American Progress. "The True Cost of High-Quality Child Care Across the United States." Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/true-cost-high-quality-child-care-across-united-states>.

5. California Department of Social Services. "Reimbursement Ceilings for Subsidized Child Care." Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://rcsc.adm.dss.ca.gov/index.aspx>.

ACCESSIBILITY

FOR FAMILIES

San Diego County is facing a child care crisis with a lack of available licensed child care slots in the region, leaving far too many families without access to child care.

64% of children in San Diego County under age 5 have working parents. **48% of those families have no available licensed child care option.**²

Our [Interactive Child Care Supply Maps](#) offer insight into the local child care landscape, pinpointing regions of opportunity where there is a gap between availability and need. The largest gaps are considered child care deserts. **41% of San Diego County is a child care desert, highlighting a substantial need for more child care slots across the region.**⁶

FOR PROVIDERS

Child care supply is subject to change over time, as license capacities may increase or decrease and individual programs may open or close. The fluctuations that occurred between July 2023–December 2023, resulted in:

14 fewer
Child Care
Centers

10 additional
Family Child
Care Homes

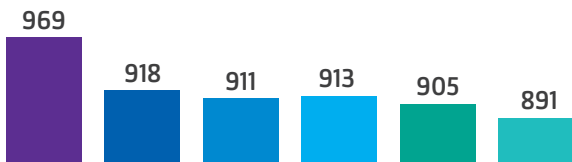
794 fewer
Child Care
Center slots

224 additional
Family Child
Care Home slots

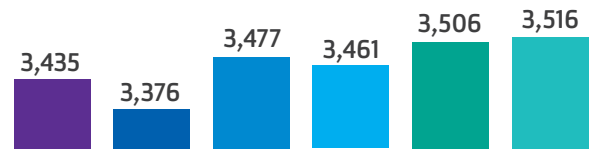
NUMBER OF LICENSED PROGRAMS⁷

JUN 2021 DEC 2021 JUN 2022 DEC 2022 JUN 2023 DEC 2023

Child Care Centers



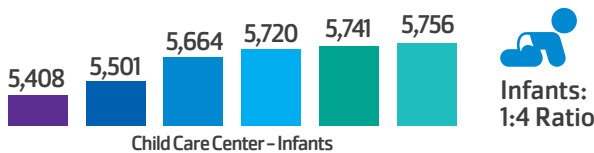
Family Child Care Homes



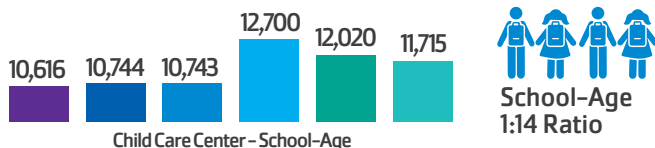
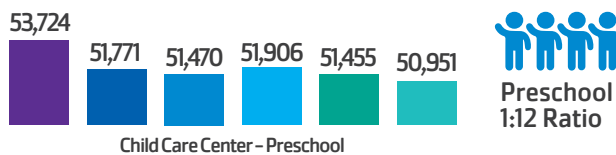
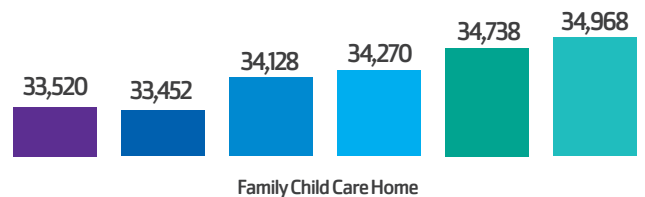
CAPACITY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES⁷

JUN 2021 DEC 2021 JUN 2022 DEC 2022 JUN 2023 DEC 2023

Licensed Child Care Slots at Child Care Centers



Licensed Child Care Slots at Family Child Care Homes



As of December 2023, there are **15 Child Care Centers** and **231 Family Child Care Providers** that are licensed but inactive and therefore not currently providing care. Combined, they are licensed for **2,652 child care slots** in San Diego County. They are included in the data provided on this dashboard because they are licensed. However, there is uncertainty if they will reopen again and the slots are not currently available.⁷

6. YMCA of San Diego County, Childcare Resource Service. "Child Care Supply Map of San Diego County." Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.ymcasd.org/child-care-supply-map>.

7. YMCA of San Diego County Childcare Resource Service. "Resource and Referral Database." Accessed March 13, 2024.

WORKFORCE IMPACTS

TO PROVIDERS

Long-term underinvestment in our child care system has left those who care for, nurture, and educate our youngest children unsupported and undervalued. Child care providers, who are primarily women of color, bear the brunt of this systemic issue, as they are among the country's lowest-paid workers.

The rate child care providers charge is **30% to 60%** less than what it costs to care for a child, which includes staffing and supplies.⁸

In fact, nearly **75% of child care providers** don't even include a wage for themselves⁹

93% of child care providers in San Diego County report trouble hiring qualified staff.²

Child care providers in California make **\$18 per hour** on average.¹⁰

Increasing pay and benefits for child care providers is needed to sustain this essential workforce and strengthen the existing child care infrastructure.

YMCA Childcare Resource Service is delivering targeted business-focused supports to San Diego child care providers, including financial aid, technical assistance, information, resources, training, and educational opportunities.

TO BUSINESSES

The lack of accessible child care options poses significant challenges for businesses, as it can create financial strain and barriers to workforce participation for parents. When parents struggle to find affordable and reliable child care, they are often forced to make difficult choices, such as reducing their work hours or leaving the workforce altogether to care for their children. This not only affects individual families but also has wider economic ramifications, as businesses experience reduced productivity and talent loss. Solving the child care crisis is not only crucial for supporting working families but also essential for fostering a thriving and competitive business environment.

Each year, businesses in the U.S. face a staggering loss of **\$4.4 billion** due to child care-related absenteeism.¹¹

The lack of accessible child care makes it difficult for working parents, especially mothers, to remain in their jobs – contributing to the **25% gender gap in workforce participation** between mothers and fathers in California.¹²

The YMCA's Employer Supported Child Care Benefit Program partners with local businesses and organizations to understand their employee's child care needs, connect them to child care that meets their needs, and in some cases help them cover the cost of child care.

BE A PART OF THE CHANGE

It's important to recognize that child care programs play a vital role in supporting not just children, but also their parents, thereby strengthening our economic resilience.

By continuing to offer free or reduced-cost child care to families and support child care providers, even amidst economic uncertainty, we're demonstrating our commitment to success because we're investing in the well-being of both children and families.

To ensure our communities thrive, we must prioritize initiatives like expanding child care provider capacity, improving access to facilities, and providing robust support for children's mental health, among others. Your involvement is key to making this vision a reality.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Kim McDougal
Senior Vice President of Social Services
YMCA Childcare Resource Service
kmcDougal@ymcasd.org
www.ymcasd.org/crs

8. California Child Care Resource Center. 2023.

9. KPBS. "New data shows child care providers continue to struggle." 2024. Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.kpbs.org/news/politics/2024/01/15/san-diego-child-care-providers-struggle>.

10. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics." May 2022. Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm>.

11. Forbes. "How Unreliable and Costly Child Care Keeps People Off the Job." 2018. Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/aakashkumar/2018/03/08/how-unreliable-and-costly-childcare-keeps-people-off-the-job/?sh=ce0aad45e18a>.

12. Public Policy Institute of California. "Labor Force Participation in California." February 2024. Accessed May 2, 2024. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/labor-force-participation-in-california/>