

# Alpine County

**A sparsely populated,** mountainous region that relies on winter recreation as its primary industry, the ski resort town of Bear Valley is a major Alpine County attraction for tourists. The influx of families with young children has increased the demand for formal child care in the area, especially care for infants and toddlers. While 93 percent of all child care slots are in centers, none of these centers serve children under two.

Throughout Alpine County, child care options are very limited. Choices for Children, the resource and referral (R&R) agency that serves both Alpine and El Dorado counties, notes that many child care slots are only available during the ski season, when the region is populated by tourists and those with second homes in the county. Some families rely on child care across the state line in Nevada, where many of them work. Thirty-six percent of employed residents work outside the county.

## Plans for new facilities

Two facilities are helping to address the need for year-round center-based care in the county. The county's First 5 Commission worked with the Alpine County Unified School District to develop an infant/toddler center and preschool on property the district purchased from a private elementary school. Federal Early Learning Opportunity Act (ELOA) funds, which the county shared with neighboring Mono County, provided funds for a Universal Extended Day Preschool in 2003 and hoped to relocate into the former school. But funding challenges will prevent the program from being offered without cost to families in the future.

Tribal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) has been considering creating a child care center in the building where the preschool was housed before it moved to the former elementary school. An estimated 20 percent of Alpine County's population belong to the Washoe Tribe. They often rely on extended family members to care for their children.

*"There's a strong demand for infant/toddler care in Alpine County. We're seeing growth in the numbers of very young children in Bear Valley, and so the need for formal care has grown more severe."*

– R&R Counselor

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	1,113	1,208	9%
Total number of employed residents		613	
Percent working outside the county		36%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		17%	
Total number of households	458	492	7%
Speaking English	400	436	9%
Speaking Spanish	18	19	6%
Speaking an Asian language	0	3	N/A

The Children <sup>1</sup>	2000							
Total number of children (0–13 years)	193							
	<b>Under 2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6–11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
	28	10	8	15	13	87	16	16
Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total)								30 (47%)
Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total)								21 (43%)
Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force <sup>2</sup>								115
Children 0–5 with parents in the labor force <sup>2</sup>								30
Children 6–13 with parents in the labor force <sup>2</sup>								85

Child Care Cost and Family Income	2002
Average annual cost of full-time licensed care for a preschooler, 2–5 years old, in a center <sup>3</sup>	\$4,800
Annual minimum wage of a full-time worker <sup>4</sup>	\$14,040
Care for a preschooler as a percent of income of a single parent household at minimum wage	34%
Annual median family income <sup>1</sup>	\$50,250
Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit <sup>5</sup>	\$6,504
Salary of entry-level public school teacher <sup>6</sup>	\$36,041

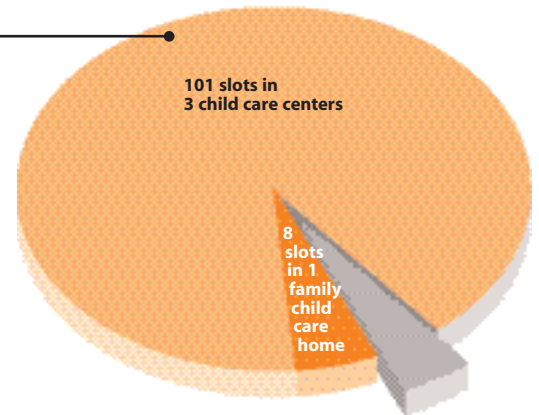
1. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990; 2000.
2. This number reflects children with either two parents or single head of household in the labor force.
3. 2002 Regional Market Rate Survey of California Child Care Providers.
4. California Department of Industrial Relations, Industrial Welfare Commission, 2002.
5. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2002.
6. California Department of Education, 2002-2003.

**For more information about child care in Alpine County, call:**  
 Choices for Children                      530-694-2129

# Child Care Supply in Alpine County

## Licensed Child Care Supply 109 slots

Total number of licensed slots	109
Percent of slots in child care centers	93%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	0%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	72%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	28%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	7%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> 115

Licensed child care is available for 95% of children with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup>.

## Supply of Licensed Child Care and Requests from Parents to the R&R

		Child Care Centers	Family Child Care Homes
<b>Facilities</b>	Total number of sites	3	1
	Total number of slots	101	8 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	0	
	Preschool slots	73	
	School-age slots	28	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	79%	100%
	Only full-time available	0%	0%
	Only part-time available	21%	0%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	50%	0%

### Parent Requests to the R&R<sup>4</sup>

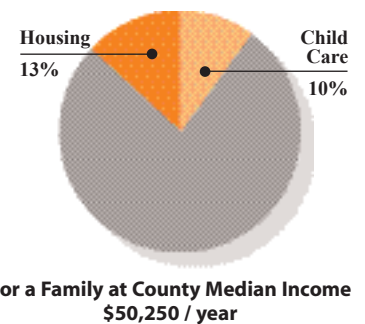
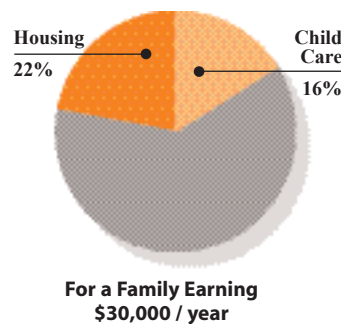
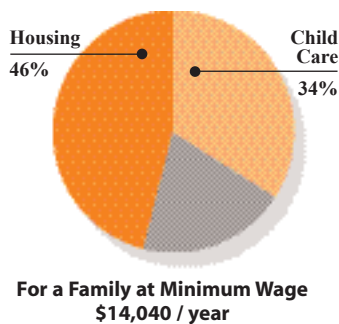
*Type of care:* 33% infant/toddler; 33% preschool; 33% school-age

*Type of facility:* 67% family child care homes; 33% child care centers

*Schedule of care:* 100% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 100% school/training

## Portion of Income Needed to Pay for Basic Family Needs: Housing and One Preschooler in a Licensed Center



1. A breakdown of slots by age is not available for family child care homes because they are licensed to care for children of all ages.
2. Children (0–13 years old) living with two parents or with a single parent in the labor force. 2000 U.S. Census.
3. Full-time and part-time schedules are percentages of total slots. Some centers that are exempt from licensing requirements are included in the percentages related to care during non-traditional hours (evening, weekend, or overnight.) Non-traditional schedules are percentages of total sites.
4. Since some parents find child care without using R&Rs, the calls recorded here do not necessarily represent total demand for child care, although they do reflect trends.