

# Kern County

**Like many other California counties** that are a mixture of urban and rural, finding child care in Kern County largely depends on where a family lives. In Bakersfield, the county's seat and largest city (pop. 247,000), a range of care exists, but this is not necessarily the case throughout the county. In the mostly agricultural region located at the southern edge of the San Joaquin Valley, where low wages and varying schedules are common, finding affordable licensed care during non-traditional hours can be difficult – especially in child care centers. Only 3 percent of licensed child care centers in the county have care available during evenings and weekends. In addition to the growing need for care during these times, there is a shortage of care for infants and toddlers.

The supply of center-based slots is almost equal to the number of slots in licensed family child care homes in Kern County, however a number of centers closed recently because of the economy. In fact, three employer-sponsored child care centers closed in 2003.

## Efforts underway to expand centers

The statewide California Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) has been effective in targeting high areas of need in Kern County, increasing the number of licensed providers and improving the retention of providers. Outreach by CCIP and an active Latino Family Child Care Association has significantly increased the number of Spanish-speaking providers to care for the growing number of Latino children in the county. Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC), funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, has focused on center-based development. In addition, training for license-exempt providers has improved the quality of care. Through home visits and creative activities that support the development of young children, more than 5,100 exempt providers were trained between 2001 and 2003.

*“Some families prefer center-based infant and toddler care. But finding this type of care is a challenge for many, many families in Kern County, because it is in short supply.”*

– R&R Counselor

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	543,477	661,645	22%
Total number of employed residents		229,733	
Percent working outside the county		6%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		21%	
Total number of households	182,116	208,786	15%
Speaking English	137,284	140,770	3%
Speaking Spanish	35,759	57,550	61%
Speaking an Asian language	3,731	4,876	31%

## The Children<sup>1</sup> 2000

Total number of children (0–13 years) 165,111

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
22,006	10,956	11,041	11,704	11,974	73,930	11,944	11,556

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 20,696 (31%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 15,756 (27%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup> 84,995

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
10,070	5,245	5,285	5,505	6,015	52,875

## 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>	\$4,763
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>	\$39,403
Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit <sup>5</sup>	\$6,528
Salary of entry-level public school teacher <sup>6</sup>	\$29,659

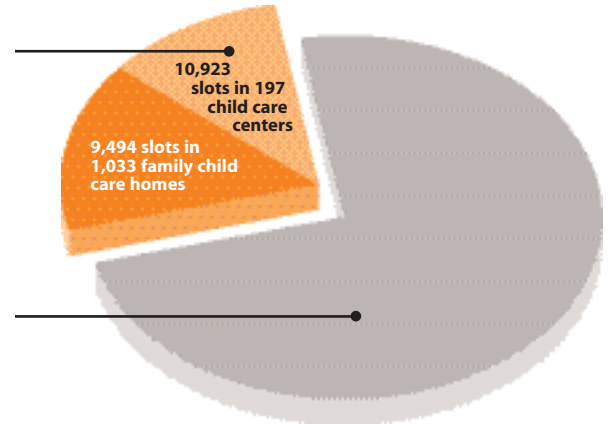
1. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990; 2000.
2. This number reflects children with either two parents or single head of household in the labor force.
3. 2002 Regional Market Rate Survey of California Child Care Providers.
4. California Department of Industrial Relations, Industrial Welfare Commission, 2002.
5.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

**For more information about child care in Kern County, call:**  
Community Connection for Child Care 661-861-5200

# Child Care Supply in Kern County

## Licensed Child Care Supply 20,417 slots

Total number of licensed slots	20,417
Percent of slots in child care centers	53%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	5%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	75%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	20%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	47%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> 84,995

Licensed child care is only available for 24% of children with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup>.

- Licensed center-based care available for 6% of infants<sup>1</sup>
- Licensed center-based care available for 37% of preschoolers<sup>1</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	197	1,033
	Total number of slots	10,923	9,494 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	563	
	Preschool slots	8,218	
	School-age slots	2,142	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	63%	97%
	Only full-time available	13%	2%
	Only part-time available	24%	1%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	3%	54%

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

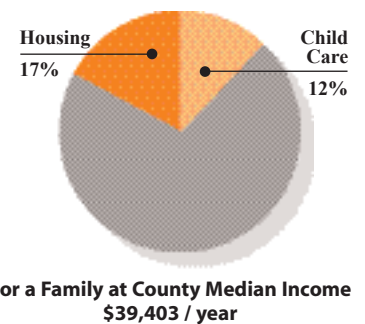
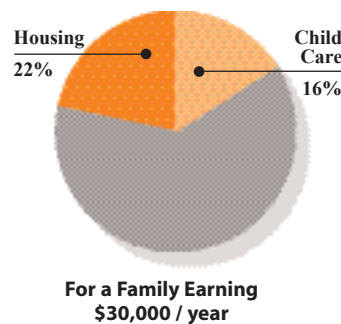
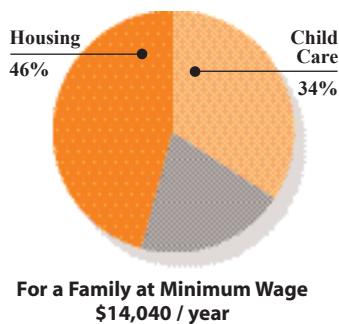
*Type of care:* 25% infant/toddler; 40% preschool; 35% school-age

*Type of facility:* 90% family child care homes; 76% child care centers

*Schedule of care:* 83% full-time care (0–5 years); 21% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 70% employment; 24% school/training; 8% looking for work

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



- 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.
- Children (0–13 years old) living with two parents or with a single parent in the labor force. 2000 U.S. Census.
- 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.
- 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.