

# Lassen County

*“Working with health and human services agencies as well as with the local community college has really improved the supply and quality of care in Lassen County.”*  
 – R&R Counselor

**Located in the far northeastern part** of California on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada, Lassen County has seen its economy diversify from mostly lumber mills to retail, health services, and federal and state governments jobs (including two state prisons). But the faltering economy of 2002 resulted in a loss of jobs, particularly in the forest products industry. This has impacted families’ ability to pay for child care. Adding to their burden is the challenge of finding care during nights and weekends when many parents are at work. There is no center-based care available during non-traditional hours, and less than a quarter of the licensed family child care homes offer care during these times. There is also a need for family child care providers who speak Spanish. Only 3 percent of family child care providers speak Spanish, compared to 43 percent of centers. Also, as is the case with most California counties, care for infants and toddlers is in short supply. Less than 10 percent of slots in the Lassen’s child care centers go to children under two, according to Lassen Child & Family Resources, the county’s resource and referral (R&R) agency, part of the Lassen County Office of Education.

## Partnerships help build supply

A collaborative training program for providers, Compensation and Retention Encourages Stability (CARES), was organized by the local R&R in partnership with the Lassen County First 5 Commission and Lassen Community College. Through this program, more than 50 center- and home-based were able to boost their child development skills and improve their knowledge about health and safety. They were also provided with tools for early education. And the statewide Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) offered training opportunities for new and existing providers.

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	27,598	33,828	23%
Total number of employed residents		9,911	
Percent working outside the county		10%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		21%	
Total number of households	8,545	9,629	13%
Speaking English	7,677	8,632	12%
Speaking Spanish	490	661	35%
Speaking an Asian language	48	36	-25%

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

Total number of children (0–13 years) 5,601

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
639	374	324	342	382	2,627	480	433

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 414 (21%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 379 (21%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup> 3,270

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
315	200	145	170	230	2,210

## 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> \$5,710

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 41%

Annual median family income<sup>1</sup> \$43,398

Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit<sup>5</sup> \$6,168

Salary of entry-level public school teacher<sup>6</sup> \$27,127

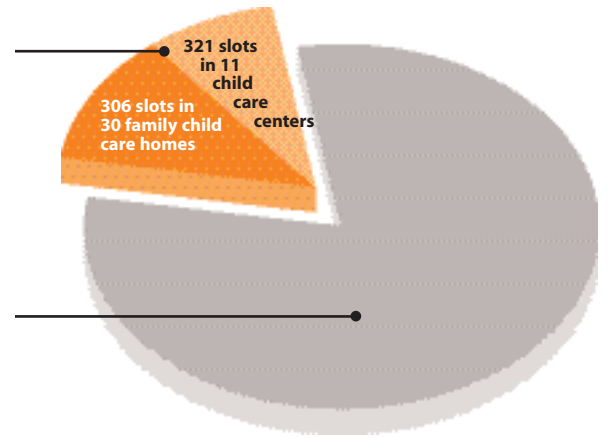
1. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990; 2000.
2. This number reflects children with either two parents or single head of household in the labor force.
3. 2002 Regional Market Rate Survey of California Child Care Providers.
4. California Department of Industrial Relations, Industrial Welfare Commission, 2002.
5.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

**For more information about child care in Lassen County, call:**  
 Lassen Child & Family Resources 530-257-9781

# Child Care Supply in Lassen County

## Licensed Child Care Supply 627 slots

Total number of licensed slots	627
Percent of slots in child care centers	51%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	9%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	70%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	21%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	49%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> 3,270

Licensed child care is only available for 19% of children with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup>.

- Licensed center-based care available for 10% of infants<sup>1</sup>
- Licensed center-based care available for 30% 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	11	30
	Total number of slots	321	306 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	30	
	Preschool slots	224	
	School-age slots	67	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	54%	97%
	Only full-time available	0%	3%
	Only part-time available	46%	0%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	0%	23%

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

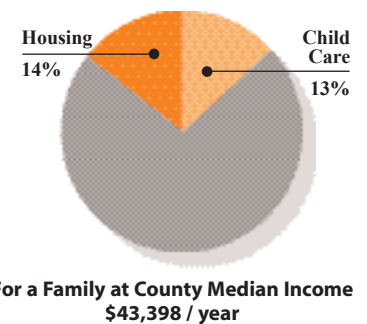
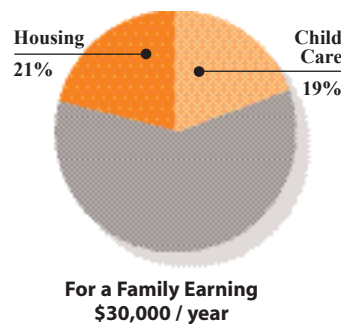
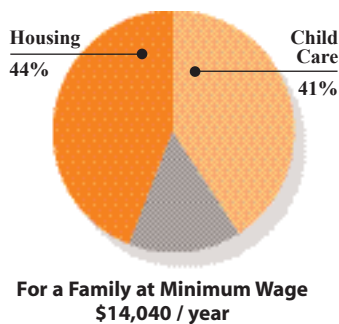
*Type of care:* 25% infant/toddler; 49% preschool; 26% school-age

*Type of facility:* 92% family child care homes; 33% child care centers

*Schedule of care:* 58% full-time care (0–5 years); 50% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 83% employment; 14% school/training; 9% 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.