

# Los Angeles County

*“Los Angeles County has huge discrepancies in the supply of child care, and that difference in accessibility is directly correlated to income. It’s just very difficult for lower income families to find and afford quality care.”*

– R&R Counselor

**More than one million children** in Los Angeles County live in households with working parents, resulting in a monumental demand for child care. The challenges of providing child care in such a large and diverse region are numerous. Long commutes increase the amount of time children are in care. The myriad languages spoken in the county emphasize the need for bilingual providers. The area’s high cost of living – especially housing – forces many parents with infants and toddlers to return to work, but few licensed centers offer care for infants. There are 122,450 children in Los Angeles under two with parents in the labor force and 7,593 slots in licensed centers for that age group. To help parents find quality, affordable care for children of all ages, 10 local resource and referral (R&R) agencies work closely together.

With about a quarter of the county’s children under five living in poverty, thousands of low-income families are eligible to receive child care subsidies, but waiting lists for subsidized slots are long.

## Working together to improve quality

To increase the number of providers who speak Spanish and other languages, L.A.’s ten R&Rs offer trainings, programs, and orientations in the languages spoken in their communities. Collaborations with the County Office of Education and others have helped to build the supply in underserved areas, to improve the quality of license-exempt care, to decrease turnover, and to increase the availability of care for children with special needs. Most specifically, new funding through SB 1703 is enabling the R&Rs to work together to establish a coordinated system to improve the supply and the quality of care for children with special needs.

Most significantly, the county’s First 5 Commission completed a thoughtful plan to implement Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK), a comprehensive effort to ensure the availability of enriched programs for four year olds.

The ability to work in partnership has brought about new training programs, technical assistance including provider home visits, and incentives to enhance the knowledge of child development and build the supply of quality child care.

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	8,863,164	9,519,338	7%
Total number of employed residents		3,858,750	
Percent working outside the county		7%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		20%	
Total number of households	2,994,343	3,136,279	5%
Speaking English	1,759,819	1,542,064	-12%
Speaking Spanish	777,452	1,013,893	30%
Speaking an Asian language	234,429	324,558	38%

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

Total number of children (0–13 years) 2,125,915

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
286,351	145,189	150,148	155,943	158,512	948,208	143,810	137,754

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 221,882 (26%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 179,050 (25%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup> 1,020,525

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
122,450	62,640	66,895	71,915	73,335	623,290

## 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> \$6,181

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 44%

Annual median family income<sup>1</sup> \$46,452

Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit<sup>5</sup> \$9,876

Salary of entry-level public school teacher<sup>6</sup> \$30,922

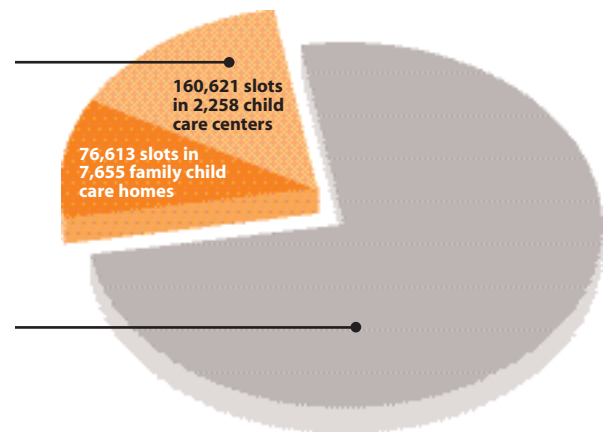
1. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990; 2000.
2. This number reflects children with either two parents or single head of household in the labor force.
3. 2002 Regional Market Rate Survey of California Child Care Providers.
4. California Department of Industrial Relations, Industrial Welfare Commission, 2002.
5.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

**For more information about child care in Los Angeles County, call 1-800-543-7793**

# Child Care Supply in Los Angeles County

## Licensed Child Care Supply **237,234 slots**

Total number of licensed slots	237,234
Percent of slots in child care centers	68%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	5%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	70%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	25%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	32%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> **1,020,525**

Licensed child care is only available for 23% 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 41% 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	2,258	7,655
	Total number of slots	160,621	76,613 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	7,593	
	Preschool slots	113,023	
	School-age slots	40,005	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	74%	92%
	Only full-time available	11%	8%
	Only part-time available	15%	1%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	8%	57%

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

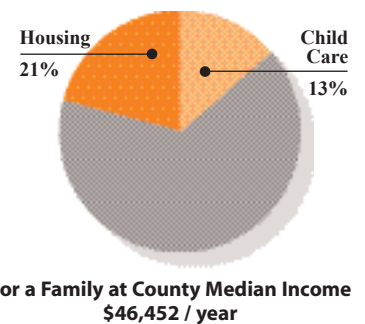
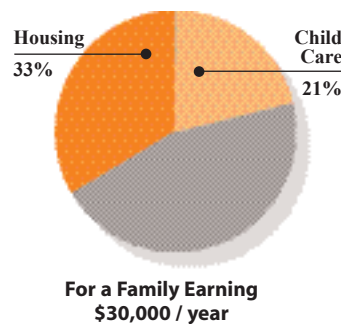
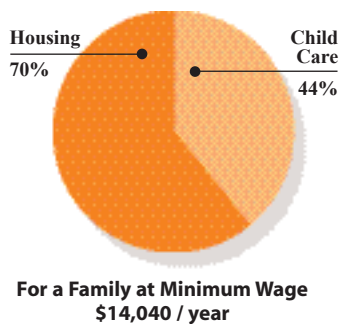
*Type of care:* 29% infant/toddler; 44% preschool; 27% school-age

*Type of facility:* 67% family child care homes; 69% child care centers

*Schedule of care:* 89% full-time care (0–5 years); 18% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 81% employment; 14% school/training; 3% 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.