

Plumas County

Located in northeastern California

where the Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountain ranges meet, Plumas County boasts just one stoplight and over a million acres of national forest. With a population that has remained fairly consistent for more than a decade, efforts to retain the existing supply of child care are just as important as recruiting new providers. Due to the closure of several timber-based businesses, some long-time residents, including child care workers, relocated to other communities. This resulted in the closure of some child care facilities. Also, seasonal employment affects the child care supply. During the summer when jobs are readily available, centers and family homes are often full. In the winter, however, when unemployment rates rise, parents are less likely to need full-time care for their children. As a result, many providers find it difficult to stay in business year-round.

Major employers in the county include the timber and tourism industries, U.S. Forest Service, and government. Many of these jobs require evening and weekend shifts, when licensed center-based child care is not available. Infant care is also limited, with just 3 percent of center slots available for infants and toddlers. And, the need for after school care has increased. The school district lost its latch-key program due to lack of funding, leaving many school age children unsupervised.

Ongoing training encourages retention

As part of its recruitment efforts, Plumas Rural Services, the local resource and referral (R&R) agency, offers monthly licensing orientations and CPR classes. Its annual conferences and spring workshops include training and efforts to retain currently licensed providers. As part of its work with the statewide Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP), R&R staff do door-to-door recruiting to identify new providers. The agency also works with the local Child Care Planning Council, schools, the community college, and health department to build supply and improve the quality of care.

“Our need for child care fluctuates with the availability of jobs. In the winter, jobs are scarce, roads are closed, and demand drops dramatically. This makes it difficult for providers to remain in business. But when the need for child care is high there is never enough care.” – R&R Counselor

The People ¹	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	19,739	20,824	5%
Total number of employed residents		8,287	
Percent working outside the county		13%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		22%	
Total number of households	8,177	9,006	10%
Speaking English	7,421	8,258	11%
Speaking Spanish	353	456	29%
Speaking an Asian language	49	45	-8%

The Children¹ 2000

Total number of children (0–13 years) 3,408

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
355	177	190	207	215	1,659	293	312

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 237 (20%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 193 (18%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force² 1,909

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
160	84	90	110	90	1,375

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 ³	\$5,716
Annual minimum wage of a full-time worker ⁴	\$14,040
Care for a preschooler as a percent of income of a single parent household at minimum wage	41%
Annual median family income ¹	\$46,119
Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit ⁵	\$6,036
Salary of entry-level public school teacher ⁶	\$30,242

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.

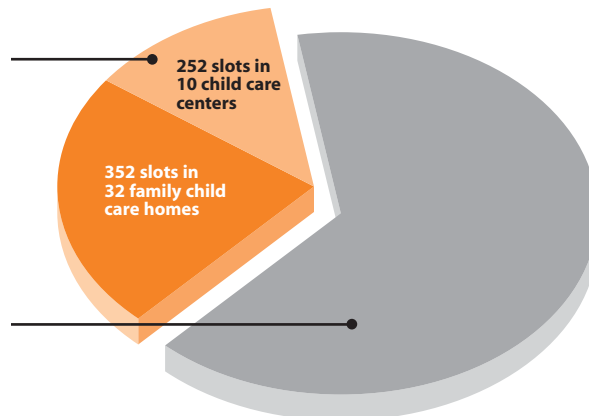
For more information about child care in Plumas County, call:

Plumas Rural Services Child Care Resource & Referral 530-283-4453

Child Care Supply in Plumas County

Licensed Child Care Supply 604 slots

Total number of licensed slots	604
Percent of slots in child care centers	42%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	3%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	92%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	5%
Percent of slots in family child care homes ¹	58%



Children with Parents in the Labor Force² 1,909

Licensed child care is only available for 32% of children with parents in the labor force².

- Licensed center-based care available for 5% of infants¹
- Licensed center-based care available for 62% of preschoolers¹

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

		Child Care Centers	Family Child Care Homes
Facilities	Total number of sites	10	32
	Total number of slots	252	352 ¹
	Infant slots	8	
	Preschool slots	232	
	School-age slots	12	
Schedules³	Full-time and part-time	10%	85%
	Only full-time available	38%	13%
	Only part-time available	52%	2%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	0%	31%

Parent Requests to the R&R⁴

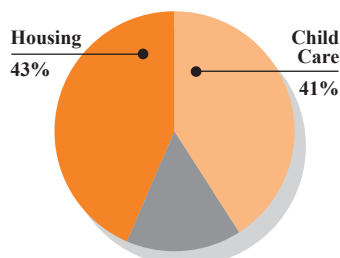
Type of care: 25% infant/toddler; 48% preschool; 27% school-age

Type of facility: 100% family child care homes; 99% child care centers

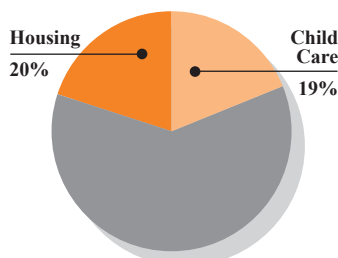
Schedule of care: 62% full-time care (0–5 years); 46% part-time care (0–5 years)

Reasons for needing child care: 92% employment; 3% school/training; 2% looking for work

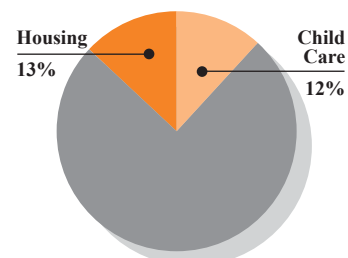
Portion of Income Needed to Pay for Basic Family Needs: Housing and One Preschooler in a Licensed Center



**For a Family at Minimum Wage
\$14,040 / year**



**For a Family Earning
\$30,000 / year**



**For a Family at County Median Income
\$46,119 / year**

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.