

# San Luis Obispo County

*“Over the past five years, the population in San Luis Obispo County has increased by up to 50 percent in some areas. These increases have created a challenge to keep up with the demand for child care.”* – R&R Counselor

The same spectacular coastline that inspired William Randolph Hearst to build a monumental castle has continued to draw tourists as well as students and young families to San Luis Obispo County. Tourism-related jobs in the city of San Luis Obispo and the coastal towns of Cayucos, Morro Bay, and Pismo Beach often require rotating shifts and weekend work. Some students at Cal Poly also need affordable child care during off hours. But only 1 percent of child care centers – which make up 62 percent of all licensed care in the county – are available during non-traditional hours. Infant care is also in limited supply. According to staff at EOC Child Care Resource Connection, the county’s resource and referral (R&R) agency, provider turnover is on the rise. Several new providers are having difficulty staying in business due to low wages for child care professionals and the rising cost of living.

## Addressing supply and provider turnover

To build the supply and improve the quality of care, the R&R offers trainings, professional development opportunities, and licensing orientations in both English and Spanish (the number of households speaking Spanish or an Asian language each grew by more than 50 percent between 1990 and 2000) and workshops for license-exempt providers to enhance their quality of care. Trainings in CPR, first aid, and preventative health are held monthly. Approximately 300 child care providers have received stipends through Project Reward, a program funded by First 5 of San Luis Obispo County. Partnerships with the local community college ensure that participants will be eligible for stipends.

The R&R partnered with the UCSF School of Nursing to provide outreach and education to families and providers through the Health Linkages Project. Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) funds are helping recruit new providers and train existing providers. In collaboration with the Local Child Care Planning Council, SB1703 funds have been used to improve child care services for children with special needs.

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	217,162	246,681	14%
Total number of employed residents		107,807	
Percent working outside the county		10%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		22%	
Total number of households	80,195	92,732	16%
Speaking English	69,060	77,520	12%
Speaking Spanish	6,470	9,825	52%
Speaking an Asian language	1,197	1,871	56%

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

Total number of children (0–13 years) 40,147

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
4,654	2,395	2,570	2,739	2,776	18,675	3,148	3,190

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 2,039 (14%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 2,270 (17%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup> 23,330

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
2,510	1,100	1,285	1,420	1,385	15,630

## 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> \$5,058

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 36%

Annual median family income<sup>1</sup> \$52,447

Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit<sup>5</sup> \$10,032

Salary of entry-level public school teacher<sup>6</sup> \$29,000

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.

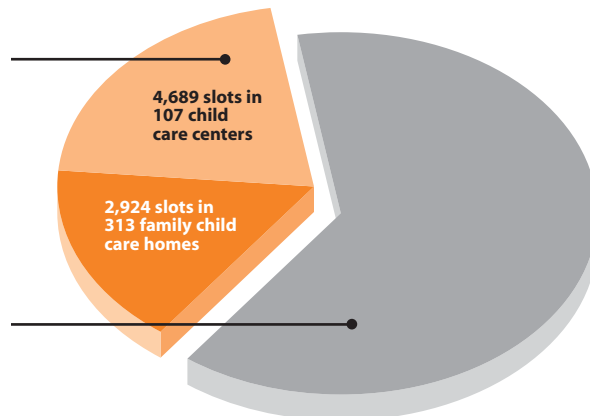
6. California Department of Education, 2002-2003.

**For more information about child care in San Luis Obispo County, call:**  
EOC – Child Care Resource Connection 805-541-2272

# Child Care Supply in San Luis Obispo County

## Licensed Child Care Supply 7,613 slots

Total number of licensed slots	7,613
Percent of slots in child care centers	62%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	1%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	64%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	35%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	38%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> 23,330

Licensed child care is only available for 33% of children with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup>.

- Licensed center-based care available for 2% of infants<sup>1</sup>
- Licensed center-based care available for 58% 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	107	313
	Total number of slots	4,689	2,924 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	62	
	Preschool slots	2,996	
	School-age slots	1,631	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	60%	93%
	Only full-time available	2%	4%
	Only part-time available	38%	3%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	1%	29%

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

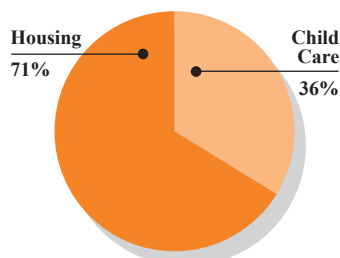
*Type of care:* 47% infant/toddler; 29% preschool; 25% school-age

*Type of facility:* 79% family child care homes; 16% child care centers

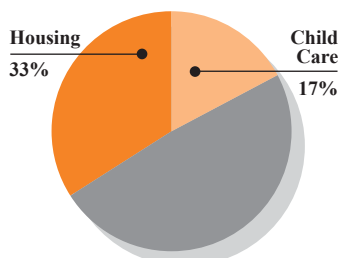
*Schedule of care:* 62% full-time care (0–5 years); 38% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 80% employment; 10% school/training; 7% looking for work

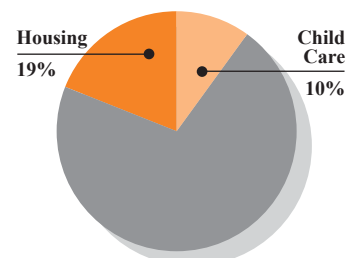
## Portion of Income Needed to Pay for Basic Family Needs: Housing and One Preschooler in a Licensed Center



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



For a Family Earning \$30,000 / year



For a Family at County Median Income \$52,447 / year

- 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.