

# Santa Barbara County

**The high cost of living** in Santa Barbara County's affluent southern coastal cities – especially the county seat – has squeezed many families into the region's less-expensive northern communities. Many family child care providers have been forced out as well. Despite the county's reputation as an enclave for wealthy Californians, many residents can't afford the area's high housing costs. Nearly 20 percent of children 0-5 live in poverty, and according to the Santa Barbara Family Care Center, the local resource and referral (R&R) agency, there are an estimated 5,000 families on waiting lists for subsidized child care. In addition, the growing need for care during evenings and weekends – when many lower-paid service and retail employees are at work – has made licensed child care an impossibility for many families. As a result, more and more families are turning to family, friends, and neighbors. Throughout the county, care for infants and toddlers, as well as for children with special needs, is also in short supply.

## Responding to child care needs

To address the county's child care needs, the R&R works closely with other community agencies to recruit and train providers, with a focus on increasing infant/toddler care. The R&R has also partnered with local colleges and U.C. Davis to offer courses in infant/ toddler care as well as in business skills such as record keeping and marketing. As administrators of SB 1703 funding, the R&R and other community organizations formed the Inclusive Child Care Project of Santa Barbara County to increase the capacity of providers that serve children with special needs. The local Office of Early Care and Education offers stipends through First 5 funding and Compensation and Retention Encourage Stability (CARES) matching funds to support accreditation, professional development, and technical assistance. The R&R, in collaboration with the American Red Cross, offers training on illness prevention in both English and Spanish.

*“Despite significant progress made in recruitment efforts, infant care continues to be the number one need throughout the county. Parents who would normally ask for care near work or home end up trying to find care anywhere it may be available*

– R&R Counselor

The People <sup>1</sup>	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	369,608	399,347	8%
Total number of employed residents		179,445	
Percent working outside the county		6%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		19%	
Total number of households	130,378	136,769	5%
Speaking English	97,289	93,522	-4%
Speaking Spanish	22,110	30,713	39%
Speaking an Asian language	3,634	4,511	24%

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

Total number of children (0–13 years) 78,037

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
10,119	5,068	5,312	5,509	5,538	35,581	5,498	5,412

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 5,641 (18%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 4,585 (18%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup> 43,895

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
4,885	2,380	2,690	2,815	3,045	28,080

## 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>	\$6,164
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>	\$54,042
Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit <sup>5</sup>	\$11,136
Salary of entry-level public school teacher <sup>6</sup>	\$28,000

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.

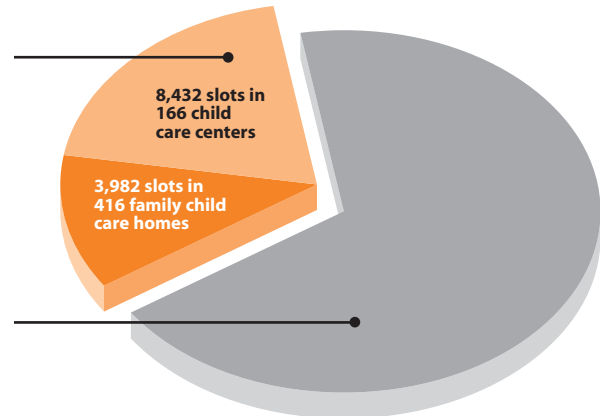
6. California Department of Education, 2002-2003.

**For more information about child care in Santa Barbara County, call:**  
 Santa Barbara Family Care Center 805-963-6631

# Child Care Supply in Santa Barbara County

## Licensed Child Care Supply 12,414 slots

Total number of licensed slots	12,414
Percent of slots in child care centers	68%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	3%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	70%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	28%
Percent of slots in family child care homes <sup>1</sup>	32%



## Children with Parents in the Labor Force<sup>2</sup> 43,895

Licensed child care is only available for 28% of children with parents in the labor force<sup>2</sup>.

Licensed center-based care available for 5% of infants<sup>1</sup>

Licensed center-based care available for 54% 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	166	416
	Total number of slots	8,432	3,982 <sup>1</sup>
	Infant slots	225	
	Preschool slots	5,870	
	School-age slots	2,337	
<b>Schedules<sup>3</sup></b>	Full-time and part-time	70%	86%
	Only full-time available	7%	9%
	Only part-time available	22%	5%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	4%	40%

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

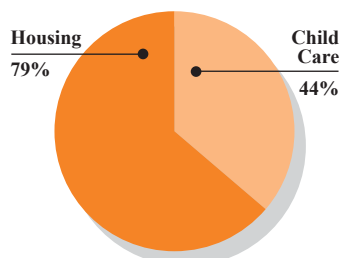
*Type of care:* 48% infant/toddler; 40% preschool; 11% school-age

*Type of facility:* 94% family child care homes; 40% child care centers

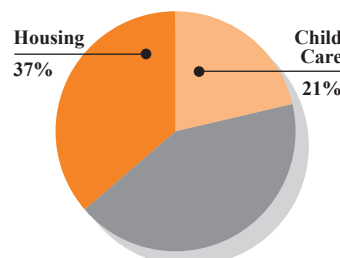
*Schedule of care:* 77% full-time care (0–5 years); 29% part-time care (0–5 years)

*Reasons for needing child care:* 78% employment; 15% school/training; 7% looking for work

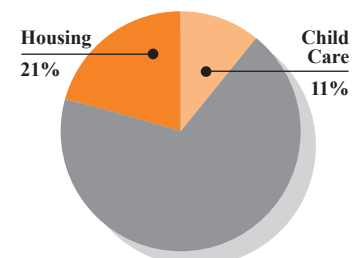
## Portion of Income Needed to Pay for Basic Family Needs: Housing and One Preschooler in a Licensed Center



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



For a Family Earning \$30,000 / year



For a Family at County Median Income \$54,042 / 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.