

Solano County

While Solano County remains the most affordable region in the Bay Area, it is catching up to its neighboring counties in terms of housing costs and child care demands. Staff at Solano Family & Children's Services, the local resource and referral (R&R) agency, have seen a steady decrease in family child care homes and the closing of some centers. They attribute this to the economy, and families moving out of the county in search of employment opportunities and even lower housing costs. At the same time, several new providers have entered the child care field after losing their jobs in other professions.

Many of the jobs in the service sector, Solano's leading industry, require early morning, evening, and weekend shifts. But care during these hours is in short supply, with only 5 percent of licensed centers and 30 percent of family child care homes offering care at night or on weekends. Infant and toddler care is also limited, with just 6 percent of licensed center slots available for that age group. The R&R says demand for school-age care has increased, and parents want care to include transportation to and from school.

Improving supply and quality of care

Growth in Solano's child care world has always been tied to the availability of training and resources. In recent years, delivery of these services has become a more collaborative effort. The R&R offers numerous workshops and trains more than 1,500 child care providers and parents each year. Licensing orientations in Spanish serve the region's fast-growing Spanish-speaking population, which grew by 61 percent since 1990. Partnerships with the Local Child Care Planning Council and funds from the First 5 Commission allowed for professional development opportunities for 675 child care professionals in 2003. The R&R continues to offer the statewide Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) programs to help recruit, train, and retain child care providers who work with infants and toddlers.

"Families in our county are asking for quality indicators and accreditation. Meanwhile, we're losing child care professionals who are well trained, because of the rising cost of housing and the low wages in the profession."

– R&R Counselor

The People ¹	1990	2000	Change
Total number of residents	340,421	394,542	16%
Total number of employed residents		174,571	
Percent working outside the county		43%	
Percent working non-traditional hours		24%	
Total number of households	113,637	130,440	15%
Speaking English	87,305	93,100	7%
Speaking Spanish	10,470	16,900	61%
Speaking an Asian language	10,408	13,881	33%

The Children¹ 2000

Total number of children (0–13 years) 87,067

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–11	12	13
11,038	5,747	5,977	6,022	6,180	39,430	6,394	6,279

Children 0–5 living in poverty (% of total) 4,007 (12%)

Children 0–5 living in single parent household (% of total) 6,387 (22%)

Total number of children (0–13) with parents in the labor force² 51,640

Under 2	2	3	4	5	6–13
5,755	2,870	3,570	3,145	3,645	32,655

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	\$6,664
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	47%
Annual median family income ¹	\$60,597
Annual fair market rent for a two-bedroom unit ⁵	\$11,700
Salary of entry-level public school teacher ⁶	\$31,350

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 Solano County, call:

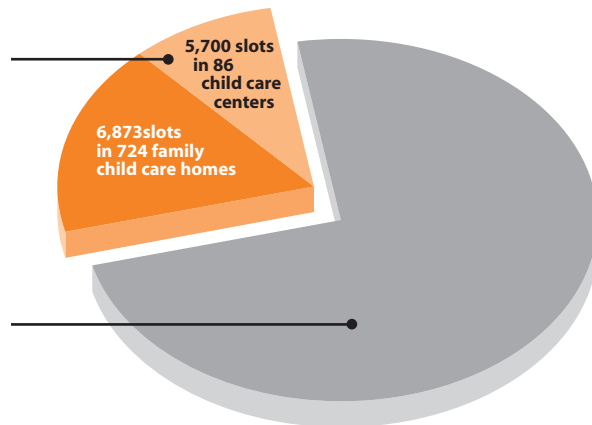
Solano Family & Children's Services

707-863-3950

Child Care Supply in Solano County

Licensed Child Care Supply 12,573 slots

Total number of licensed slots	12,573
Percent of slots in child care centers	45%
% of slots for infants (under 2 years old)	6%
% of slots for preschoolers (2–5 years old)	78%
% of slots for school-age children (6 years and older)	16%
Percent of slots in family child care homes ¹	55%



Children with Parents in the Labor Force² 51,640

Licensed child care is only available for 24% of children with parents in the labor force².

- Licensed center-based care available for 6% of infants¹
- Licensed center-based care available for 33% 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	86	724
	Total number of slots	5,700	6,873 ¹
	Infant slots	370	
	Preschool slots	4,424	
	School-age slots	906	
Schedules³	Full-time and part-time	81%	92%
	Only full-time available	5%	7%
	Only part-time available	14%	2%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	5%	30%

Parent Requests to the R&R⁴

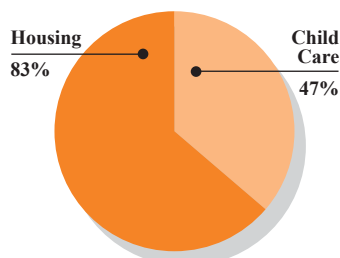
Type of care: 29% infant/toddler; 41% preschool; 30% school-age

Type of facility: 94% family child care homes; 65% child care centers

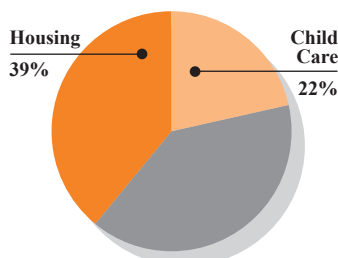
Schedule of care: 77% full-time care (0–5 years); 26% part-time care (0–5 years)

Reasons for needing child care: 77% employment; 7% school/training; 11% looking for work

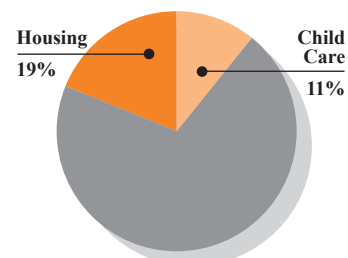
Portion of Income Needed to Pay for Basic Family Needs: Housing and One Preschooler in a Licensed Center



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



For a Family Earning
\$30,000 / year



For a Family at County Median Income
\$60,597 / 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.