

Merced County

Merced County was one of 13 counties to experience population growth greater than 10% between 2000 and 2004.

The county ranks 4th in the state in percentage of households speaking Spanish at home.

Merced County is one of 13 counties where the percentage of public school children who are English language learners is higher than in the state as a whole (32% vs. 25%).
(CA Dept. of Ed. 2004/05.)

The county ranks 8th in the percentage of child care centers with Spanish-speaking staff; 7th in the percentage of Spanish-speaking family child care providers; and 1st in the percentage of child care centers with staff who speak languages other than English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, or Korean.

The percentage of children living in poverty is the 11th highest in the state.

The People	2000 ¹	2004 ²	Change ²
Total number of residents	210,554	237,155	13%
• Population foreign born residents	25%		
• Population change from natural increase			45%
• Population change from domestic migration			27%
• Population change from foreign immigration			28%

The Children	2000 ¹	2004 ²	Change
Children 0-13	56,488	58,502	4%
• Under 2	7,173		
• 2 years	3,732		
• 3 years	3,681		
• 4 years	4,107		
• 5 years	4,051		
• 6 to 13 years	33,744		
Children 0-13 with parents in the labor force ³	28,950	29,982 ⁴	4%
• Under 2	3,245		
• 2 years	1,465		
• 3 years	1,875		
• 4 years	2,175		
• 5 years	1,995		
• 6 to 13 years	18,195		
Children 0-5 living in poverty	30%		

The Labor Force	1990 ⁵	2000 ¹	Change
• Number of employed residents	68,697	73,346	7%
• Workers with an hour or more commute	2,679	8,318	210%
• People working at home	2,435	2,366	-3%
• People working non-traditional hours ⁶	14,968	16,940	13%
• percent working non-traditional hours		23%	
• People working 35 hours or more	65,311	74,323	14%
• percent working 35 hours or more		79%	
• Men in the labor force	46,789	48,813	4%
• Women in the labor force	31,468	37,865	20%
• Women with a child under 6		14,328	
• percent in the labor force		54%	

The Households	2000 County ¹	2000 State ¹
• Number of households	63,933	11,512,020
• speaking English at home	55%	62%
• speaking Spanish at home	34%	22%
• speaking an Asian language at home	4%	9%
• speaking another language at home	7%	7%
• Number of families with children under 18	29,613	4,208,775
• percent of families with children under 18	59%	53%
• percent of single parent families	27%	26%
• Homeowners with children under 6	16%	14%
• Renters with children under 6	29%	20%
• Residents over 24 with BA or higher	11%	27%

The 2005 California Child Care Portfolio

For more information about child care, call ACCESS at (209) 722-3804.

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

2. California Department of Finance population projections.

3. This number reflects children with either two parents or a single head of household in the labor force.

4. Network estimate based on California Department of Finance (DOF) population projections.

5. U.S. Census Bureau, 1990.

6. Estimate using commute time. Might or might not include weekends.

Child Care in Merced County

		Child Care Centers	Family Child Care Homes ¹
Facilities	Total number of sites	66	401
	Total number of slots (percent)	3,404 (46%)	3,934 (54%)
	Infant slots in centers	178 (5%)	
	Preschool slots in centers	2,785 (82%)	
	School-age slots in centers	441 (13%)	
Schedules ²	Full-time and part-time slots	64%	94%
	Only full-time slots	5%	5%
	Only part-time slots	31%	0%
	Care available during non-traditional hours	0%	62%
Languages	English	100%	95%
	Spanish	73%	51%
	Other Languages	35%	7%

1. A breakdown of slots by age is not available for family child care homes because their licenses are not specific to particular age groups.
2. Full-time (30 or more hours/week) and part-time are a % of total slots. Non-traditional (evenings, weekends, overnight) are a % of total sites.
3. Network estimate based on CA DOF Projections, 2004: either two parents or single head of household in labor force.
4. These types of care are not included in the supply of licensed care available.
5. Some parents find child care without using R&Rs. These requests do not necessarily represent total demand, but they do reflect trends.
6. U.S. HUD. Median rent for a 2-bedroom unit. 2004.
7. Cost estimates 2004/5; 2002 Regional Market Rates with CPI Inflation Factor. Full-time.
8. California Dept. of Education. 2003/4.

Availability of Licensed Child Care

In Merced County, there are an estimated 29,982 children ages 0-13 with parents in the labor force³ and 7,338 licensed child care slots.

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

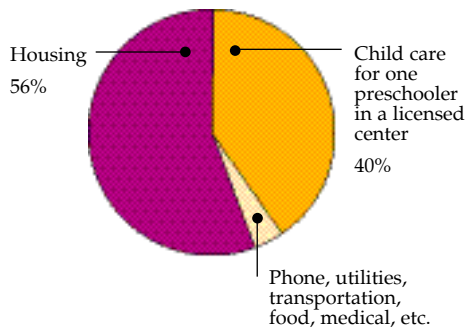
* Some families choose friends and relatives (license-exempt caregivers) to care for their children, and programs for school age children are often not licensed by the state.⁴

Parent Requests to the R&R⁵

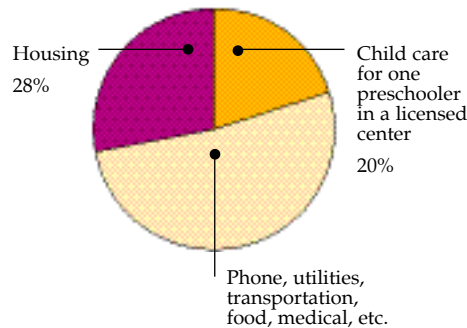
- Type of care requested: 25% infant/toddler; 41% preschool; 34% school-age
- Schedule requested: 80% full-time (0-5 years); 23% part time (0-5 years)
- Reasons for needing care: 69% employment; 34% school/training; 6% looking for work

Child Care and Family Budgets

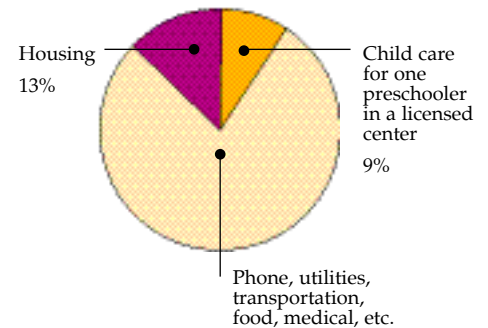
How child care fits into a Merced County family's annual budget (Housing⁶: \$7,932; Preschooler in licensed center⁷: \$5,583)



Annual Income: \$14,040
Families with 1 minimum wage earner
 Care for one infant in a licensed family child care home: 45% of income



Annual Income: \$28,080
Families with 2 minimum wage earners
 Care for one infant in a licensed family child care home: 22% of income



Annual Income: \$63,344
Families with 2 entry level public school teachers working in the county⁸
 Care for one infant in a licensed family child care home: 10% of income