

Only about 3 percent of eligible infants and young children are enrolled in the Early Head Start program. About 900,000 children are enrolled in Head Start programs, about 800,000 in state programs, and another 100,000 in migrant and Indian tribal programs and in the territories. Only about one-half to two-thirds of children eligible for Head Start are enrolled.

Children Enrolled in Head Start

Enrollment by race/ethnicity, 2005-2006 (percent distribution)

	Number of children enrolled, FY 2007	Enrollment in Early Head Start, 2006-2007	Enrollment by race/ethnicity, 2005-2006 (percent distribution)					
			Black	White	American Indian, Alaska Native	Asian, Pacific Islander	Other	Hispanic
Alabama	16,374	933	73.2%	20.9%	0.9%	0.2%	4.8%	3.7%
Alaska	1,583	448	3.5	18.2	61.4	4.5	12.4	3.6
Arizona	13,175	1,829	3.5	46.2	26.6	0.4	23.3	53.0
Arkansas	10,778	944	42.5	45.5	3.2	0.5	8.3	12.1
California	98,353	12,933	11.2	26.1	11.0	5.8	45.8	68.7
Colorado	9,820	1,413	7.9	53.6	2.4	1.2	34.9	60.8
Connecticut	7,076	654	37.5	24.3	0.9	2.0	35.4	36.0
Delaware	2,071	296	52.2	20.8	1.1	0.9	24.9	29.5
District of Columbia	3,403	489	80.1	5.0	2.3	0.8	12.0	18.4
Florida	35,457	3,707	49.8	33.5	1.9	1.6	13.2	31.7
Georgia	23,436	1,874	69.6	19.9	0.0	0.5	9.9	10.9
Hawaii	3,049	585	4.0	13.5	0.4	70.9	11.3	5.7
Idaho	2,943	640	0.7	52.3	9.1	0.6	37.4	35.7
Illinois	39,640	4,037	50.0	23.9	0.7	1.4	24.0	28.0
Indiana	14,213	1,607	25.9	57.1	0.2	0.6	16.2	11.6
Iowa	7,710	1,660	12.6	67.6	0.9	2.0	16.8	14.5
Kansas	8,178	2,836	18.2	48.1	3.4	1.4	29.0	25.8
Kentucky	16,070	1,642	18.9	71.3	0.1	0.6	9.2	4.7
Louisiana	21,592	1,358	80.5	14.6	0.4	2.4	2.1	5.5
Maine	3,871	871	4.2	84.6	2.2	1.5	7.6	2.1
Maryland	10,347	1,412	65.1	19.3	1.3	1.5	12.8	11.0
Massachusetts	12,807	1,351	21.0	34.8	1.7	7.3	35.3	38.2
Michigan	35,067	3,182	36.0	44.5	3.4	1.4	14.7	12.2
Minnesota	10,332	1,866	24.9	42.8	8.5	4.4	19.4	22.6
Mississippi	26,657	1,263	82.7	14.1	1.2	0.4	1.6	1.1
Missouri	17,456	2,347	36.0	52.5	0.3	1.2	10.0	6.4
Montana	2,919	790	0.6	49.0	40.2	0.4	9.9	9.0
Nebraska	5,080	1,341	14.6	54.1	5.8	0.9	24.6	25.0
Nevada	2,754	224	18.7	17.7	20.8	2.3	40.6	50.6
New Hampshire	1,632	360	5.3	84.1	0.6	1.5	8.5	7.9
New Jersey	14,854	1,069	42.6	16.4	5.3	2.4	33.3	37.9
New Mexico	7,279	1,315	2.1	18.3	19.9	0.5	59.2	60.6
New York	48,818	5,762	28.6	33.3	1.7	4.1	32.3	34.8
North Carolina	18,963	1,932	55.7	22.9	4.0	0.7	16.7	18.4
North Dakota	2,353	654	2.6	55.2	35.3	0.7	6.2	2.6
Ohio	37,940	2,567	40.9	47.3	0.4	1.0	10.4	5.8
Oklahoma	13,474	1,855	17.7	44.6	23.4	0.6	13.7	13.1
Oregon	8,814	799	4.8	65.1	4.4	1.7	24.1	45.9
Pennsylvania	35,362	3,696	35.6	47.8	0.4	1.9	14.3	13.4
Rhode Island	3,104	672	24.6	53.4	1.2	3.2	17.6	32.7
South Carolina	12,248	888	84.4	8.0	1.1	0.1	6.4	5.8
South Dakota	2,827	925	2.9	49.6	39.6	1.1	6.9	7.3
Tennessee	16,397	1,283	42.7	48.9	0.2	0.4	7.7	6.0
Texas	67,630	6,320	18.9	33.8	0.4	1.0	45.9	66.8
Utah	5,400	753	1.3	48.3	5.0	2.5	43.0	39.7
Vermont	1,552	429	2.7	87.9	1.7	0.6	7.1	3.2
Virginia	13,518	1,725	51.4	35.5	0.6	2.6	9.9	12.4
Washington	11,278	2,895	8.0	37.7	10.3	5.4	38.5	40.0
West Virginia	7,682	795	8.5	86.0	0.2	0.4	4.9	0.9
Wisconsin	13,538	1,787	25.3	41.5	8.2	4.5	20.4	22.2
Wyoming	1,840	259	2.3	63.6	13.5	1.1	19.4	26.8
United States*	908,412	93,272	32.3	36.4	5.1	2.5	23.8	30.5

*United States total enrollment includes 99,698 children in the six territories, in Indian tribal programs, and in migrant programs.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Bureau, "Head Start Program Fact Sheet," at <<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/about/fy2008.html>>; National Head Start Association, "Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Congressional District Data for the 2006-2007 Program Year," at <<http://www.nhsa.org/download/research/2007CDDat.pdf>>; and Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) for 2005-2006. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Twenty states have no state-funded prekindergarten programs for 3-year-olds; eight states have no programs for 4-year-olds. Yet research has shown that early childhood programs significantly increase a child's chances of avoiding the prison pipeline, instead helping give him a head start and put him in the "pipeline to success."

Prekindergarten Enrollment: 2006

	Percent enrolled in state prekindergarten programs		Percent enrolled in state prekindergarten programs, Head Start or IDEA preschool program	
	3-year-olds	4-year-olds	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
Alabama	0.0%	1.8%	12.7%	21.6%
Alaska	0.0	0.0	15.6	22.4
Arizona	0.0	5.5	8.9	23.2
Arkansas	10.8	21.4	31.3	48.7
California	5.0	10.8	14.3	26.3
Colorado	3.1	14.6	12.1	28.7
Connecticut	4.5	15.6	14.2	29.7
Delaware	0.0	7.6	11.5	24.1
District of Columbia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Florida	0.0	56.7	8.9	71.1
Georgia	0.0	53.3	11.2	64.9
Hawaii	0.0	0.0	9.9	14.6
Idaho	0.0	0.0	7.6	17.1
Illinois	18.5	26.7	31.8	44.6
Indiana	0.0	0.0	9.7	16.5
Iowa	1.4	4.0	11.6	20.1
Kansas	0.0	15.6	13.7	33.8
Kentucky	10.7	29.3	29.8	60.1
Louisiana	0.0	24.4	21.0	46.7
Maine	0.0	16.3	16.4	40.8
Maryland	1.2	34.0	11.0	46.4
Massachusetts	9.2	10.3	20.2	25.3
Michigan	0.0	16.9	14.8	38.2
Minnesota	1.3	1.9	11.9	18.1
Mississippi	0.0	0.0	27.5	41.8
Missouri	2.2	4.3	15.2	22.9
Montana	0.0	0.0	17.0	26.0
Nebraska	2.0	4.0	14.2	21.1
Nevada	0.4	2.2	6.5	12.8
New Hampshire	0.0	0.0	8.8	12.0
New Jersey	15.1	25.3	24.4	36.9
New Mexico	0.9	8.9	16.0	34.8
New York	0.5	34.6	16.1	54.7
North Carolina	0.0	14.8	8.9	29.6
North Dakota	0.0	0.0	20.2	28.7
Ohio	1.3	3.4	14.9	21.3
Oklahoma	0.0	68.4	15.8	90.0
Oregon	2.6	4.8	14.3	24.1
Pennsylvania	2.2	7.2	15.9	27.2
Rhode Island	0.0	0.0	10.2	19.9
South Carolina	0.6	37.8	19.9	54.3
South Dakota	0.0	0.0	19.8	29.3
Tennessee	1.0	15.6	11.0	32.9
Texas	4.4	45.2	14.5	58.1
Utah	0.0	0.0	7.0	13.6
Vermont	15.6	44.9	30.8	63.7
Virginia	0.0	12.5	8.5	25.5
Washington	1.4	5.8	10.1	20.5
West Virginia	5.1	45.8	23.3	76.5
Wisconsin	0.8	36.1	15.2	53.3
Wyoming	0.0	0.0	21.2	30.5
United States	3.2	21.8	15.0	38.8

n/a — Data not included in source

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research, *The State of Preschool 2007* (2007), Tables 2, 4 and 5.

About 2 out of 3 mothers of preschool-age children and 3 out of 4 mothers of school-age children are in the labor force. Six in 10 preschool-age children and 7 in 10 school-age children have all parents in the labor force.

Working Parents: 2007

	Mothers in the labor force by age of youngest child (percent)		Children with mothers in the labor force (percent)		Children with all parents in the labor force (percent)	
	Under age 6	Ages 6-17	Under age 6	Ages 6-17	Under age 6	Ages 6-17
Alabama	64.6%	74.6%	62.2%	70.8%	62.2%	69.0%
Alaska	63.9	78.4	61.7	73.7	60.5	71.8
Arizona	58.2	72.6	53.3	65.4	54.6	65.0
Arkansas	67.3	75.2	64.6	73.2	63.7	70.6
California	59.2	71.8	56.2	65.8	56.8	64.6
Colorado	62.9	79.2	59.8	71.4	59.8	70.9
Connecticut	67.1	79.8	64.8	75.0	64.1	73.3
Delaware	66.5	80.7	63.5	74.0	64.1	73.2
District of Columbia	70.3	82.6	63.8	77.9	64.0	75.9
Florida	66.3	78.1	63.4	74.1	64.0	72.5
Georgia	66.6	76.5	63.3	72.2	63.5	71.0
Hawaii	63.2	80.3	60.2	75.5	58.5	72.3
Idaho	58.9	77.5	55.2	67.3	55.9	67.3
Illinois	65.2	76.8	62.6	71.5	62.5	70.2
Indiana	67.3	80.2	64.1	74.9	64.7	73.2
Iowa	75.3	85.2	72.8	80.6	71.8	79.2
Kansas	69.2	82.3	67.4	76.7	67.4	75.2
Kentucky	66.7	74.9	63.4	70.5	62.6	68.0
Louisiana	65.0	73.8	63.1	70.5	63.7	68.2
Maine	67.7	82.1	64.4	77.8	64.7	76.4
Maryland	71.1	81.6	67.9	77.7	67.9	76.4
Massachusetts	68.4	79.6	65.2	75.4	64.8	73.6
Michigan	69.0	77.2	65.6	72.5	64.9	70.6
Minnesota	74.4	83.0	71.7	77.8	70.9	76.4
Mississippi	71.6	73.9	68.9	72.4	67.4	69.6
Missouri	71.1	80.9	68.5	76.7	68.2	74.6
Montana	65.0	79.4	61.0	74.3	60.7	72.1
Nebraska	75.7	82.6	74.2	78.3	74.0	77.2
Nevada	61.9	77.7	58.1	72.0	59.8	70.7
New Hampshire	66.6	82.0	64.4	76.0	65.4	74.4
New Jersey	64.5	77.1	61.9	72.9	61.0	71.2
New Mexico	61.8	73.7	57.4	68.7	58.4	67.9
New York	61.8	76.0	58.5	69.4	58.4	67.6
North Carolina	66.8	78.5	62.9	73.6	63.1	71.7
North Dakota	74.9	85.7	69.2	83.8	69.4	82.1
Ohio	69.9	78.5	67.1	73.9	66.5	71.8
Oklahoma	63.4	74.6	60.2	70.4	61.0	68.8
Oregon	64.4	77.3	62.1	71.3	61.7	69.7
Pennsylvania	66.4	78.1	63.1	72.6	62.7	70.9
Rhode Island	74.2	78.1	71.3	75.6	69.7	72.9
South Carolina	68.7	77.5	64.9	73.7	65.4	71.8
South Dakota	77.0	86.1	77.1	81.7	76.4	80.5
Tennessee	65.7	75.8	62.4	71.8	62.6	70.2
Texas	59.5	73.7	55.8	67.4	56.5	66.2
Utah	53.4	74.2	49.2	63.3	50.3	63.0
Vermont	77.4	85.2	76.4	82.8	76.1	81.0
Virginia	68.0	78.3	64.6	73.5	64.8	72.3
Washington	60.7	76.9	57.4	71.0	57.6	69.4
West Virginia	56.6	69.9	54.3	65.0	53.7	61.2
Wisconsin	75.1	83.5	72.3	79.3	72.1	77.8
Wyoming	68.6	85.9	65.9	82.2	66.2	80.3
United States	64.9	76.8	61.6	71.5	61.7	70.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2007, Tables B23003 and B23008, at http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts=>, accessed September 23, 2008. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

In 33 states and the District of Columbia, the annual cost of center-based child care for a preschooler is more than the annual tuition at a 4-year public university.

Cost of Child Care vs. Cost of College

	Annual cost for preschool- age child, center-based care	Annual in-state tuition in a 4-year public university	Ratio
Alabama	\$ 4,976	\$ 4,712	1.06
Alaska	7,080	4,422	1.60
Arizona	5,832	4,669	1.25
Arkansas	NA	4,937	—
California	7,477	4,452	1.68
Colorado	7,103	4,634	1.53
Connecticut	8,910	7,151	1.25
Delaware	6,230	7,417	0.84
District of Columbia	10,920	2,670	4.09
Florida	5,720	3,050	1.88
Georgia	5,243	3,851	1.36
Hawaii	5,886	3,930	1.50
Idaho	4,771	4,155	1.15
Illinois	7,500	8,038	0.93
Indiana	6,373	6,284	1.01
Iowa	5,513	6,019	0.92
Kansas	4,446	4,966	0.90
Kentucky	3,960	5,821	0.68
Louisiana	4,211	3,778	1.11
Maine	6,725	6,557	1.03
Maryland	7,159	7,106	1.01
Massachusetts	10,668	7,629	1.40
Michigan	6,863	7,504	0.91
Minnesota	9,204	7,392	1.25
Mississippi	3,794	4,457	0.85
Missouri	4,611	6,320	0.73
Montana	6,108	5,378	1.14
Nebraska	5,100	5,181	0.98
Nevada	6,045	2,844	2.13
New Hampshire	6,500	9,003	0.72
New Jersey	8,274	9,333	0.89
New Mexico	5,479	3,943	1.39
New York	9,391	5,022	1.87
North Carolina	6,756	4,038	1.67
North Dakota	5,135	5,471	0.94
Ohio	5,564	9,010	0.62
Oklahoma	4,706	4,176	1.13
Oregon	9,012	5,598	1.61
Pennsylvania	6,800	9,092	0.75
Rhode Island	7,800	6,698	1.16
South Carolina	4,940	7,914	0.62
South Dakota	5,304	5,077	1.04
Tennessee	5,773	5,009	1.15
Texas	5,564	5,114	1.09
Utah	5,112	3,757	1.36
Vermont	7,056	9,783	0.72
Virginia	7,488	6,447	1.16
Washington	8,364	5,636	1.48
West Virginia	4,902	4,063	1.21
Wisconsin	6,959	6,048	1.15
Wyoming	5,827	2,951	1.97

Sources: National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, *Parents and the High Price of Child Care* (October 2007), Detail Table 1, used with permission; and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2007* (March 2008), Table 321.
Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Income eligibility for the one million families who receive child care assistance ranges from just above the poverty line in Missouri to 275 percent of the poverty line in Maine. The Urban Institute has calculated that 2.7 million people would be lifted out of poverty if child care assistance were provided to all families with children whose incomes are below 200 percent of the federal poverty line (FPL).

In 2008, 200 percent of the FPL was \$35,200 for a family of three.

Child Care Assistance

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)/Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) recipients, FY 2006

	Income eligibility limits for a three-person family, 2007			Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)/Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) recipients, FY 2006	
	Annual amount	Percent of federal poverty level	Percent of state median income	Monthly average number of families	Monthly average number of children
Alabama	\$ 20,916	122%	42%	14,700	28,000
Alaska	46,243	215	71	2,900	4,900
Arizona	27,390	160	57	18,100	30,200
Arkansas	35,724	208	83	3,900	5,600
California	43,536	254	75	111,500	175,500
Colorado	21,580 - 37,356	126 - 218	35 - 61	8,900	16,300
Connecticut	37,514	218	50	6,300	10,100
Delaware	34,344	200	55	4,600	7,500
District of Columbia	40,225	234	74	2,600	3,700
Florida	24,900	145	49	67,900	108,600
Georgia	26,560	155	52	35,600	64,600
Hawaii	47,124	239	76	5,600	8,600
Idaho	20,472	119	42	5,400	9,900
Illinois	30,396	177	51	44,500	82,200
Indiana	21,084	123	38	17,300	32,800
Iowa	24,084	140	43	11,100	19,400
Kansas	30,708	179	56	12,000	22,400
Kentucky	24,900	145	52	16,200	28,900
Louisiana	31,836	185	70	23,200	39,100
Maine	47,200	275	85	3,700	5,400
Maryland	29,990	175	41	13,500	22,900
Massachusetts	34,680	202	48	23,900	32,100
Michigan	23,880	139	40	45,000	87,800
Minnesota	29,050	169	44	15,100	27,300
Mississippi	34,999	204	82	19,500	39,100
Missouri	18,216	106	34	19,200	33,600
Montana	24,900	145	53	2,900	4,800
Nebraska	19,932	116	37	7,400	13,100
Nevada	38,124	222	75	3,600	6,000
New Hampshire	31,548	184	46	5,100	7,500
New Jersey	33,200	193	44	26,000	37,900
New Mexico	25,730	150	60	12,700	21,600
New York	33,200	193	58	73,200	123,700
North Carolina	35,592	207	70	39,300	79,900
North Dakota	29,556	172	51	2,500	4,000
Ohio	31,764	185	56	28,800	39,900
Oklahoma	29,100	169	62	14,600	25,000
Oregon	25,764	150	50	11,000	20,200
Pennsylvania	33,200	193	57	47,300	82,800
Rhode Island	37,350	218	61	4,400	7,100
South Carolina	24,900	145	52	11,300	19,700
South Dakota	34,575	201	66	3,100	4,900
Tennessee	29,016	169	60	22,200	42,500
Texas	24,900 - 40,347	145 - 235	52 - 85	68,200	126,200
Utah	30,948	180	58	7,000	13,000
Vermont	31,032	181	51	4,700	6,800
Virginia	24,900 - 41,508	145 - 242	40 - 67	17,200	27,900
Washington	33,192	193	55	32,700	53,200
West Virginia	24,144	141	55	5,600	9,300
Wisconsin	31,765	185	53	16,800	29,500
Wyoming	33,120	193	59	2,900	4,700
United States				1,022,700	1,757,700

Source: Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, "State Child Care Assistance Policies 2007: Some Steps Forward, More Progress Needed," National Women's Law Center (September 2007), Table 1A; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau, Child Care and Development Fund, Table 1, "Average Monthly Adjusted Number of Families and Children Served," at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccbf/data/ccdf_data/06acf800/table1.htm>. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Median wages for child care workers range from \$13,970 in Louisiana to more than \$21,000 in Massachusetts, New York and the District of Columbia. For elementary school teachers, those in South Dakota are paid the least. With a median salary of \$32,950, they make less than half the salary of elementary teachers in New York, whose median salary is the highest in the nation at \$66,300. The average wage of child care workers is less than that of Head Start, preschool, kindergarten or elementary school teachers in every state.

Teacher and Child Care Worker Earnings: 2006

	Head Start teachers (mean)	Child care workers (median)	Preschool teachers (median)	Kindergarten teachers (median)	Elementary teachers (median)
Alabama	\$ 18,887	\$ 14,160	\$ 19,940	\$ 39,400	\$ 39,950
Alaska	25,442	20,240	25,250	52,020	55,500
Arizona	23,722	15,520	20,580	35,300	33,620
Arkansas	21,630	14,120	17,330	38,130	38,260
California	29,350	20,540	25,460	51,710	54,160
Colorado	24,081	18,750	23,850	40,680	43,190
Connecticut	28,119	20,340	25,910	56,770	58,260
Delaware	20,399	19,400	24,190	41,690	48,260
District of Columbia	36,096	22,760	27,480	35,250	n/a
Florida	24,953	17,290	20,970	44,270	44,340
Georgia	22,256	15,680	19,080	44,590	46,410
Hawaii	31,297	16,410	24,450	35,410	41,920
Idaho	17,336	16,920	22,140	25,700	44,780
Illinois	28,747	18,550	25,490	38,410	50,000
Indiana	21,824	17,050	20,560	44,310	46,060
Iowa	23,794	15,300	18,910	36,070	35,290
Kansas	24,098	16,510	22,710	38,190	36,950
Kentucky	21,849	15,250	21,270	42,310	41,620
Louisiana	22,419	13,970	17,760	38,360	38,300
Maine	23,155	20,680	22,750	40,080	43,220
Maryland	29,987	20,250	24,150	45,410	49,050
Massachusetts	24,060	21,990	27,050	50,790	56,310
Michigan	25,767	18,760	26,800	49,180	55,800
Minnesota	21,586	18,270	28,110	44,630	45,340
Mississippi	17,891	14,090	19,960	35,350	36,850
Missouri	20,855	16,610	21,130	38,070	37,900
Montana	18,124	16,390	19,450	34,230	34,400
Nebraska	22,460	16,480	21,890	41,790	42,060
Nevada	23,697	16,360	21,870	33,050	35,390
New Hampshire	20,192	18,170	23,680	36,690	46,320
New Jersey	34,746	18,610	29,270	49,500	51,630
New Mexico	22,811	15,800	20,260	40,110	40,230
New York	30,713	21,730	28,170	68,390	66,300
North Carolina	21,694	17,260	18,270	36,690	37,820
North Dakota	24,155	16,270	22,310	37,360	38,640
Ohio	22,824	17,710	20,570	45,860	49,850
Oklahoma	24,467	15,090	18,670	33,030	34,430
Oregon	24,856	17,840	22,100	39,430	46,050
Pennsylvania	24,510	17,290	20,350	47,250	48,530
Rhode Island	24,714	19,420	26,220	59,820	59,440
South Carolina	18,672	15,230	18,830	40,280	40,810
South Dakota	21,850	15,940	25,920	31,880	32,950
Tennessee	22,225	15,220	16,530	38,710	39,290
Texas	25,091	14,540	18,170	41,490	42,440
Utah	19,165	16,090	24,030	37,660	41,090
Vermont	23,074	18,530	25,150	42,460	43,910
Virginia	25,911	16,840	22,090	47,270	51,130
Washington	24,659	18,300	25,040	44,550	49,350
West Virginia	24,200	14,190	20,800	41,480	40,300
Wisconsin	26,188	18,760	20,970	43,060	45,110
Wyoming	22,992	16,320	20,180	40,690	44,570

n/a — data not available

Sources: Center for Law and Social Policy, State-by-State Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) Data in 2006, at <<http://clasp.org/publications/headstartpir2006.htm>>; and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2006 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, State Cross-Industry Estimates, at <<ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/oes/oesm06st.zip>>.

Fifteen states allow child-caretaker ratios higher than the recommended maximum for infants; 31 states exceed the maximum for toddlers; and 35 states exceed the maximum for preschoolers. Seventeen states have no maximum requirements for group size for at least one of the age groups.

Child Care Center Regulations¹ Selected Ages, 2005

	Children per Caretaker			Maximum Group Size		
	9 months	27 months	4 years	9 months	27 months	4 years
Alabama	4:1	7:1	16:1	NR	NR	NR
Alaska	5:1	6:1	10:1	10	12	20
Arizona	5:1 or 11:2	8:1	15:1	NR	NR	NR
Arkansas	6:1	9:1	15:1	12	18	30
California	4:1	6:1	12:1	NR	12	NR
Colorado	5:1	7:1	12:1	10	14	24
Connecticut	4:1	4:1	10:1	8	8	20
Delaware	4:1	10:1	15:1	NR	NR	NR
District of Columbia	4:1	4:1	10:1	8	8	20
Florida	4:1	11:1	20:1	NR	NR	NR
Georgia	6:1	10:1	18:1	12	20	36
Hawaii	4:1	8:1	16:1	8	NR	NR
Idaho	NL	NL	NL	NR	NR	NR
Illinois	4:1	8:1	10:1	12	16	20
Indiana	4:1	5:1	12:1	8	10	24
Iowa	4:1	6:1	12:1	NR	NR	NR
Kansas	3:1	7:1	12:1	9	14	24
Kentucky	5:1	10:1	14:1	10	20	28
Louisiana	6:1	12:1	16:1	NR	NR	NR
Maine	4:1	4:1	10:1	10	24	25
Maryland	3:1	6:1	10:1	6	12	20
Massachusetts	3:1 or 7:2	4:1 or 9:2	10:1	7	9	20
Michigan	4:1	4:1	12:1	NR	NR	NR
Minnesota	4:1	7:1	10:1	8	14	20
Mississippi	5:1	12:1	16:1	10	14	20
Missouri	4:1	8:1	10:1	8	16	NR
Montana	4:1	8:1	10:1	NR	NR	NR
Nebraska	4:1	6:1	12:1	12	NR	NR
Nevada	6:1	10:1	13:1	NR	NR	NR
New Hampshire	4:1	6:1	12:1	12	18	24
New Jersey	4:1	10:1	12:1	12	20	20
New Mexico	6:1	10:1	12:1	NR	NR	NR
New York	4:1	5:1	8:1	8	12	21
North Carolina	5:1	10:1	20:1	10	20	25
North Dakota	4:1	5:1	10:1	8	10	20
Ohio	5:1 or 2:12	7:1	14:1	12	14	28
Oklahoma	4:1	8:1	15:1	8	16	30
Oregon	4:1	5:1	10:1	8	10	20
Pennsylvania	4:1	6:1	10:1	8	12	20
Rhode Island	4:1	6:1	10:1	8	12	20
South Carolina	6:1	10:1	18:1	NR	NR	NR
South Dakota	5:1	5:1	10:1	20	20	20
Tennessee	4:1	7:1	13:1	8	14	20
Texas	4:1	11:1	18:1	10	22	35
Utah	4:1	7:1	15:1	8	14	30
Vermont	4:1	5:1	10:1	8	10	20
Virginia	4:1	10:1	12:1	NR	NR	NR
Washington	4:1	7:1	10:1	8	14	20
West Virginia	4:1	8:1	12:1	8	16	24
Wisconsin	4:1	6:1	13:1	8	12	24
Wyoming	4:1	8:1	12:1	10	18	30
Maximum Recommended Level ²	3:1 to 4:1	4:1 to 6:1	8:1 to 10:1	6 to 8	8 to 10	16 to 20

NL — facilities not licensed at the state level

NR — not regulated

¹ There may be some exceptions to these ratio and group size requirements in some states under certain circumstances. For example, some states have different requirements for small centers, classes with mixed-age groups, or different levels of licensing. See original source for details.

² Maximum Recommended Level: As recommended in the accreditation guidelines developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and in the National Health and Safety Performance Standards developed by the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Source: National Association for Regulatory Administration, Findings from the 2005 Child Care Licensing Study, Table N, Center Child-Staff Ratio Requirements in 2005, at <http://nara.affiniscape.com/associations/4734/files/Table_N_Child-staff_Ratios_2005.pdf>, and Table O, Center Group Size Requirements in 2005, at <http://nara.affiniscape.com/associations/4734/files/Table_O_Group_Size_2005.pdf>.