

Licensed Childcare Capacity for Children Under 5

What is it? Why is it important?

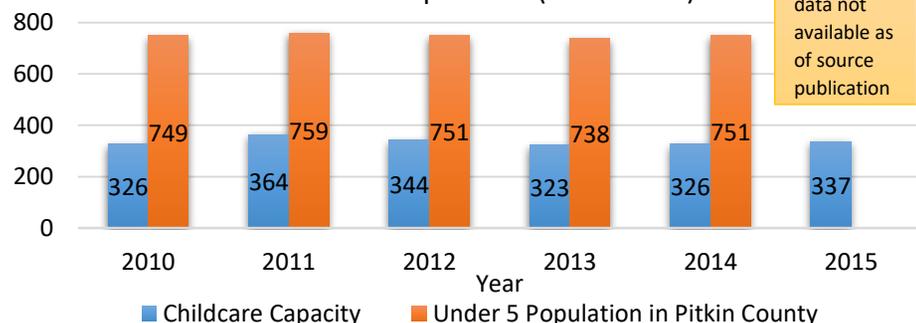
Licensed childcare capacity is the amount of state-regulated center spots available for kindergarten age children (under 5 years) in Pitkin County. Pitkin County population counts are used to give a sense for childcare need. However, the demand for licensed childcare in Pitkin County extends to families who live outside of the county. Many factors impact the need for childcare, including maternal employment, family instability, single parenting, nonstandard work hours, and part-time work.¹ Childcare enables and enhances parents' abilities to work, earn income, and provide basic needs for their families. Investment in high-quality child care and early education strengthens families and creates more productive and livable communities in the long-term.² Kids First aims to maintain and increase capacity for local families in need of childcare.



What does the data/trend say?

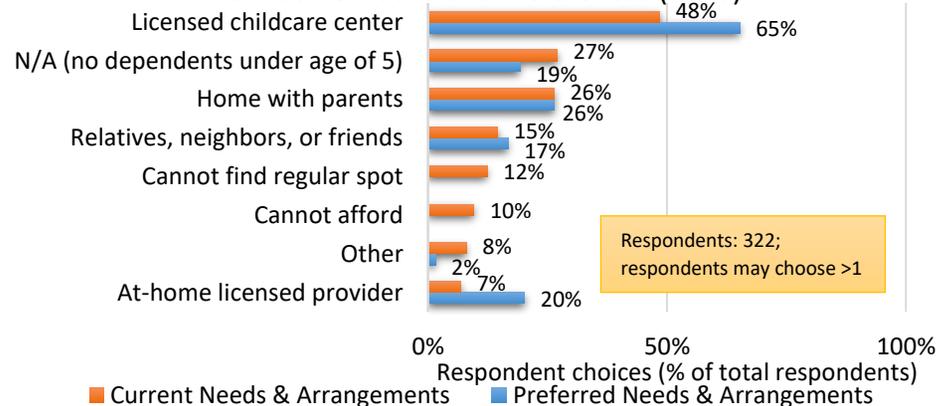
Kids First provided childcare capacity data and survey responses, while population counts were taken from the Colorado Kids Count Report. From 2010 to 2014, children under 5 years old in Pitkin County averaged at 750, while area capacity is averaged at 337 spots (from 2010-2015) (Figure 1).³⁴ This fulfills nearly half of the potential need for childcare in the county annually. Similarly, Colorado licensed childcare spots account for roughly 45% of children birth to age 6 with working parents.⁵ Figure 2 features local childcare needs and preferences from the 2016 Kids First Survey.⁶ Of respondents, 65% prefer childcare in licensed centers compared to the 48% currently served. This may be an indication of an increased need for licensed childcare.

Figure 1. Pitkin County Childcare Capacity & Under 5 Population (2010-2015)



*Different programs are represented over the years due to changing programs and classrooms; **Only licensed local childcare spaces for long-term working families are included

Figure 2. Kids First Survey Results on Current Under 5 Childcare Needs and Preferences (2016)



Targets

There is currently no target set for this measure.

Data Sourcing and Considerations

Population data for 2015 is not available as of the Colorado Kids Count publication. In Figure 1, different programs are represented over the years due to changing programs and classrooms. Only licensed local childcare spaces for long-term working families are included. Figure 2 totals add up to more than 100% as respondents were allowed more than 1 answer choice.

Sources: [1] Bianchi, Suzanne M. "Changing Families, Changing Workplaces." *Work and Family* 21.2 (Fall 2011): n. pag. Web. 6 May 2016. <<http://futureofchildren.org/publications/journals/article/index.xml?journalid=76&articleid=550§ionid=3796&submit/>>. [2] "Unfinished Business." CED, 2012. Web. 6 May 2016. <<http://www.ncsl.org/documents/cyf/CEDUnfinishedBusinessReportpdf.pdf/>>. [3] City of Aspen Kids First Department [4] Ibid. [5] "Ensuring Access to High-Quality Child Care." Colorado Children's Campaign. Web. 6 May 2016. <<http://www.coloradokids.org/issues/earlychildhood/ensuring-access/>>. [6] City of Aspen Kids First Department [Photo] City of Aspen Kids First Department

Licensed Childcare Cost

What is it? Why is it important?

Licensed childcare cost refers to the cost of state-regulated center care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in Pitkin County. This includes both for and non-profit centers. In 2014, Colorado was ranked the 5th and 7th least affordable state for center-based infant and four-year old child care, respectively.¹ In general, a significant portion of family earnings go toward childcare. Without affordable childcare, parents would be limited in their ability to afford childcare services and other basic needs for their families. This is particularly important given the relative high cost of living in Aspen. In alignment with its founding principle, Kids First aims to offer affordable options for local families in need of licensed childcare.



What does the data/trend say?

Daily licensed childcare costs are provided below for three age groups: infants (0-1.5 years), toddlers (1-3 years), and preschool (2.5-5 years) (Figure 1).² Data below shows rates charged, but does not include any applicable financial aid, from which 109 children in area programs benefit in some form.³ Averaged overall, daily rates from 2010 to 2015 show an increase of 3% on average each year. Following national trends, licensed child care is costlier for infants than toddlers and costlier for toddlers than preschoolers. Figure 2 compares average costs of licensed childcare for infants. In 2014, the average Pitkin County annual infant childcare rate⁴ was 33% more costly than the state average.⁵

Figure 1. Pitkin County Daily Licensed Childcare Center Cost by Age Group (2010-2015)

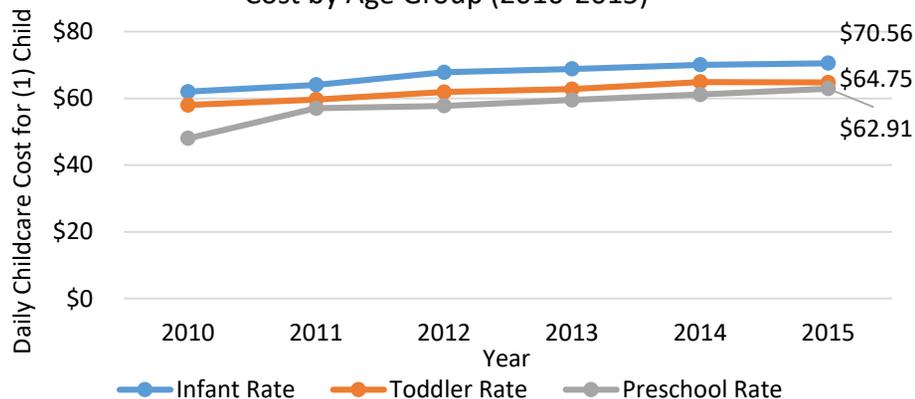
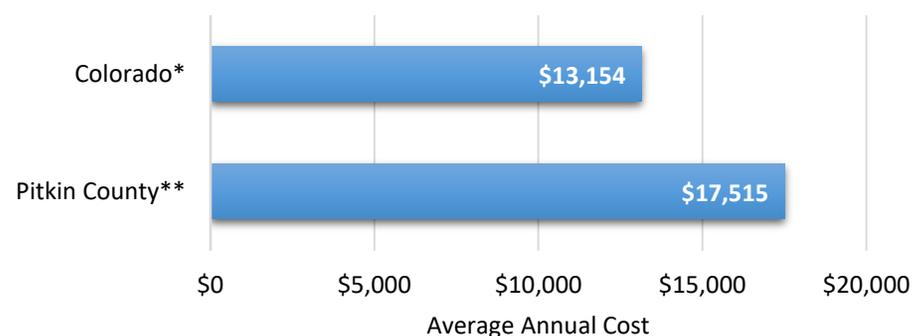


Figure 2. Annual Cost of Full-Time Infant Childcare at Center, Colorado & Pitkin County (2014)



NOTE: *Refers to children under 12 months old. **Refers to children 0-1.5 years.

Targets

There is currently no target set for this measure.

Data Sourcing & Considerations

Childcare cost data is provided by Kids First and includes data from both for and non-profit centers. Data does not include any applicable financial aid. In Figure 2, the term “infant” is defined differently. The annualized county rate is based on average days open (250 days per year). Financial aid is not included in this data. Financial aid attributions are complex and based on a range of factors. A sample calculation may be developed in future iterations of this measure.

Sources: [1] “Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2015 Report.” Child Care Aware of America, 2015. Web. 6 May 2016. <<http://usa.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Parents-and-the-High-Cost-of-Child-Care-2015-FINAL.pdf>>. [2] City of Aspen Kids First Department [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid. [5] Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2015 Report. [Photo] City of Aspen Kids First Department