

Still No Room for Babies: Child Care Staffing Crisis Impacts Supply of Infant-Toddler Child Care

March 2023

Having access to a robust supply of high-quality licensed child care near their home or workplace is an essential support for working parents. Licensed child care programs not only offer parents a safe and reliable child care option while they work, but they can also be a valuable source of early education during the critically important first three years, laying the foundation for healthy development and success in school and life. Statewide, more than 207,000 children under age three live in families where both parents work, meaning they will be in need of some form of child care.¹

However, according to a recent survey conducted by Advocates for Children of New Jersey regarding the availability of infant-toddler care in New Jersey, licensed child care for babies is in short supply with only enough space to serve roughly a third of the children that need care because all parents in the household work. Furthermore, although centers report that they have the capacity to serve approximately 68,000 infants and toddlers, they typically serve closer to 55,000, leaving more than 150,000 very young children without the option of center-based care. The primary reason centers reported serving fewer children than they have the capacity to serve is that they cannot find enough staff to work in the infant-toddler room.²

1. 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample

2. Help Wanted! Child Care Staffing Crisis Means Still No Room for Babies, ACNJ August 2022



Infant-Toddler Child Care in New Jersey As of March 2022

Number of Licensed Centers that Provide Infant Toddler Child Care	1,720
Number of Children Under Age 3	304,277
Children Under Age 3 Likely to Need Child Care Because All Parents Work	206,908
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers are Willing To Provide	68,348
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers Typically Provide	54,860
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Participating in Grow NJ Kids	443
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Rated by Grow NJ Kids	143

Recommendations to address the shortage of high-quality infant-toddler child care

- Support an increase of CCDBG by \$4.3 billion in FY24—for a total discretionary funding level of \$12.4 billion.
- Support an increase of \$17.47 billion for Head Start in FY 2024.
- Support the Child Care and Working Families Act and funding that will provide basic grants, similar to Stabilization grants to support child care programs that have fewer children whose families are eligible for child care assistance but are struggling to meet the true cost of care without unduly burdening parents with higher tuition rates.

For more information, visit acnj.org to download a copy of Still No Room for Babies (March 2023) and County Profiles.

Giving Every Child A Chance To Grow Up Safe, Healthy and Educated

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Congressional District #6: Infant-Toddler Child Care Availability As of March 2022

Municipality	Total Number of Centers Serving Infants and Toddlers	Total Number of Infants and Toddlers	Estimated Number of Infants and Toddlers with All Parents in Workforce	Number of Infants and Toddlers Centers are Willing To Serve	Number of Infants and Toddlers Centers Typically Serve	Percent of Slots Typically Available for Infants and Toddlers	Number of Centers Participating in GNJK (NJ's Quality Rating Improvement System)	Number of Centers Rated by GNJK
Aberdeen Twp.	4	657	436	190	150	34%	2	2
Allenhurst Boro	0	12	8	0	0	0%	0	0
Asbury Park City	2	589	391	55	36	9%	1	1
Atlantic Highlands Boro	1	107	71	23	20	28%	0	0
Bradley Beach Boro	0	91	60	0	0	0%	0	0
Carteret Boro	2	969	599	52	49	8%	0	0
Deal Boro	1	41	27	30	26	96%	0	0
Edison Twp.	16	3,198	1,976	670	523	26%	5	3
Fair Haven Boro	0	172	114	0	0	0%	0	0
Hazlet Twp.	3	575	382	149	131	34%	0	0
Highland Park Boro	3	485	300	88	78	26%	1	1
Highlands Boro	0	95	63	0	0	0%	0	0
Interlaken Boro	0	25	17	0	0	0%	0	0
Keansburg Boro	0	310	206	0	0	0%	0	0
Keyport Boro	2	248	165	26	17	10%	0	0
Little Silver Boro	0	176	117	0	0	0%	0	0
Loch Arbour Village	0	6	4	0	0	0%	0	0
Long Branch City	1	1,228	815	37	31	4%	0	0
Matawan Boro	4	335	222	270	210	95%	1	0
Metuchen Boro	7	443	274	266	213	78%	3	2
Middletown/Belford/ Leonardo/ Lincroft, Port Monmouth	12	1,900	1,262	442	336	27%	2	0
Monmouth Beach Boro	0	53	35	0	0	0%	0	0
Neptune Twp & City/ Ocean Grove	7	1,052	699	338	257	37%	4	1
New Brunswick City	6	2,109	1,303	205	144	11%	4	1
Oceanport Boro	0	152	101	0	0	0%	0	0
Old Bridge/Laurence Harbor/Parlin	12	1,749	1,081	474	389	36%	4	0
Perth Amboy City	4	2,370	1,465	70	63	4%	4	3
Piscataway Twp.	9	1,758	1,086	370	259	24%	4	0
Red Bank Boro	4	424	282	126	114	40%	3	1
Rumson Boro	1	145	96	23	23	24%	0	0
Sayreville Boro	2	1,440	890	135	126	9%	1	0
Sea Bright Boro	0	29	19	0	0	0%	0	0
South Amboy City	1	310	192	26	22	11%	1	1
South Plainfield Boro	2	834	515	70	59	11%	0	0
Union Beach Boro	3	172	114	69	61	54%	0	0
West Long Branch Boro	2	220	146	79	66	45%	1	0
Woodbridge/Avenel/ Colonia/Iselin/Port Reading/Sewaren/ South Iselin	12	3,382	2,090	552	423	20%	2	0
All Municipalities	123	27,861	17,624	4,835	3,826	22%	43	16

Number of municipalities in the district that are infant-toddler child care deserts: 21/57%

*An infant-toddler desert is any municipality with more than 50 children under age 3 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there is less than 20% of available slots for infants-toddlers that are likely to need child care because all parents in the home are employed.