

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 Cape May County As of March 2022

Number of Licensed Centers that Provide Infant Toddler Child Care	16
Number of Children Under Age 3	2,335
Children Under Age 3 Likely to Need Child Care Because All Parents Work	1,714
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers are Willing To Provide	397
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers Typically Provide	359
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Participating in Grow NJ Kids	8
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Rated by Grow NJ Kids	2

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

- **Develop creative policy and legislative options aimed at increasing compensation and benefits for child care staff.**
- **Ensure the successful implementation of Thriving by Three, a grant program signed into law in 2022 to incentivize the development of child care programs for infants and toddlers.**
- **Raise the infant-toddler child care subsidy reimbursement rate to enable child care programs to increase salaries that will help to attract and retain staff to work in the infant-toddler classroom.**
- **Consider new options to strengthen and expand New Jersey's family child care system.**

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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Cape May County Infant-Toddler Child Care

Infant-Toddler Child Care by Municipality, As of March 2022

Municipality	Number of Children Under Age 3	Estimated Number of Infants-Toddlers in Need of Care	Number of Centers Serving Infants and Toddlers	Number of Infants-Toddlers Centers are Willing to Serve	Number of Infants-Toddlers Centers Typically Serve	Percent of Slots Typically Available for Infants and Toddlers
Avalon Boro	12	9	0	0	0	0%
Cape May City	80	58	1	11	9	16%
Cape May Point Boro	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Dennis Twp. & Ocean	168	122	1	40	40	33%
Lower Twp. & Villas	534	389	1	8	8	2%
Middle Twp. & Cape	581	423	6	129	129	31%
North Wildwood City	46	33	1	31	14	42%
Ocean City	169	123	1	30	30	24%
Sea Isle City	17	12	0	0	0	0%
Stone Harbor Boro	11	8	0	0	0	0%
Upper Twp. & Marmora, Seaville	344	250	4	132	113	45%
West Cape May Boro	14	10	0	0	0	0%
West Wildwood Boro	13	9	0	0	0	0%
Wildwood City	234	170	0	0	0	0%
Wildwood Crest Boro	53	39	0	0	0	0%
Woodbine Boro	79	58	1	16	16	28%
County Total	2,355	1,714	16	397	359	21%

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