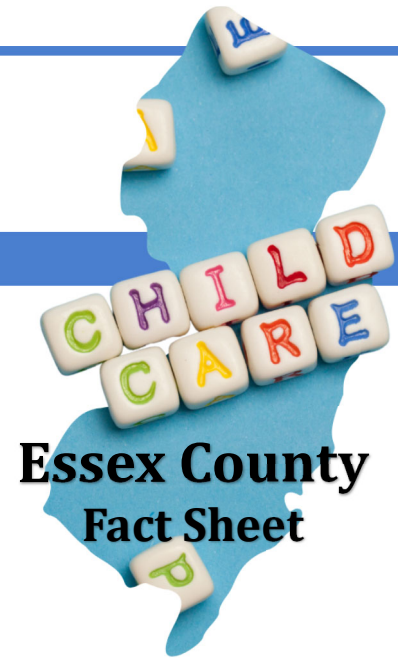


Still No Room for Babies: Child Care Staffing Crisis Impacts Supply of Infant-Toddler Child Care

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 Essex County As of March 2022

Number of Licensed Centers that Provide Infant Toddler Child Care	188
Number of Children Under Age 3	29,907
Children Under Age 3 Likely to Need Child Care Because All Parents Work	21,922
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers are Willing To Provide	6,835
Estimated Number of Slots Licensed Centers Typically Provide	5,604
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Participating in Grow NJ Kids	61
Number of Centers Providing Infant-Toddler Child Care Rated by Grow NJ Kids	16

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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Essex 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
Belleville Twp.	1,218	893	5	121	103	12%
Bloomfield Twp.	1,879	1,377	21	635	476	35%
Caldwell Boro Twp.	241	177	2	60	54	31%
Cedar Grove Twp.	407	298	3	113	98	33%
City Of Orange Twp.	1,405	1,030	6	192	151	15%
East Orange City	2,682	1,966	17	599	447	23%
Essex Fells Twp.	48	35	0	0	0	0%
Fairfield Twp.	197	144	4	134	105	73%
Glen Ridge Boro Twp.	214	157	0	0	0	0%
Irvington Twp.	2,655	1,946	22	766	614	32%
Livingston Twp.	667	489	6	218	196	20%
Maplewood Twp.	858	629	8	293	234	37%
Millburn Twp. & Short Hills	398	292	6	375	355	121%
Montclair Twp. & Upper Montclair	1,054	773	8	348	209	27%
Newark City	12,112	8,878	53	1,881	1,632	18%
North Caldwell Boro	138	101	0	0	0	0%
Nutley Twp.	919	674	5	88	112	17%
Roseland Boro	158	116	5	268	184	158%
South Orange Village Twp.	431	316	5	148	126	40%
Verona Twp.	423	310	1	33	28	9%
West Caldwell Twp.	320	235	2	147	136	58%
West Orange Twp.	1,483	1,087	9	416	344	32%
County Total	29,907	21,922	188	6,835	5,604	26%

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