

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

- 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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New Jersey Infant-Toddler Child Care

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

County	# of Centers Serving Infants and Toddlers	# of Infants and Toddlers	# of Infants and Toddlers with All Parents in the Workforce	# of Infants and Toddlers Centers are Willing to Serve	# of Infants and Toddlers Centers Typically Served	% of Slots Typically Available for Infants and Toddlers	# of Centers Participating in GNJK	# of Centers Rated
Atlantic	45	8,396	6,112	1,395	1,182	19%	16	6
Bergen	175	26,720	17,662	7,455	5,984	34%	16	5
Burlington	68	12,963	9,294	2,961	2,482	27%	22	7
Camden	100	20,037	15,048	4,236	3,458	23%	27	8
Cape May	16	2,335	1,714	397	359	21%	8	2
Cumberland	23	5,481	3,875	1,182	929	24%	11	2
Essex	188	29,907	21,922	6,835	5,604	26%	61	16
Gloucester	55	8,467	6,452	2,056	1,585	25%	20	4
Hudson	200	29,667	19,729	6,749	5,528	28%	38	12
Hunterdon	20	2,955	2,261	751	595	26%	3	1
Mercer	69	11,884	8,224	2,883	2,286	28%	13	5
Middlesex	129	26,054	16,101	5,138	3,982	25%	40	13
Monmouth	105	17,167	11,398	4,754	3,813	33%	27	7
Morris	106	13,689	9,815	4,566	3,607	37%	36	21
Ocean	92	27,284	15,526	4,107	3,424	22%	24	10
Passaic	106	19,165	12,016	3,874	3,092	26%	35	7
Salem	11	1,931	1,365	242	200	15%	1	0
Somerset	86	9,327	6,296	3,712	2,768	44%	14	6
Sussex	25	3,629	2,355	805	588	25%	7	4
Union	80	19,721	14,436	3,619	2,923	20%	16	6
Warren	21	2,825	1,989	631	471	24%	8	1
Total	1,720	304,277	206,908	68,348	54,860	27%	443	143

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