

# Cowlitz County Child Care Access Report



A Project of the Cowlitz Community Charter  
The Child Care Partnership Grant brought together community organizations, school districts, and child care providers to survey more than 770 Cowlitz County families about their access to child care.

Of the families surveyed,

**6%**  
Need care for  
**Infants**



**17%**  
Need care for  
**Toddlers**



**24%**  
Need care for

**Preschool  
Age Children**



**45%**  
Need care for

**Elementary School  
Age Children**



**8%**  
Need care for

**Children older  
than 5th Grade**

**Licensed child care  
doesn't fully cover  
community demand**

- 12,893 children under the age of 10 in the County
- 1,582 total licensed child care slots
- 197 licensed child care slots open in May of 2021
- 58% of survey respondents said that they could not, or can only sometimes, meet their family's child care needs.



**Informal child care is the  
majority of child care in our  
community**

**58%** of survey respondents use family, friends, neighbors, or other unlicensed child care providers



**58%**  
of the families using informal child care rely on it three or more days per week

## Child care is an economic concern for families

The average annual cost of care for one child is about 17% of the median household income for Cowlitz County

73% of survey respondents said the cost of child care was a significant factor in what type of child care they chose

46% said they have turned down economic opportunities (stopped working or attending school, reduced hours, etc.) due to the cost of child care

42% said they currently or previously received financial assistance with child care

For those that have received financial assistance, 32% turned down a promotion, salary increase, or other job opportunity to avoid losing their child care benefit

## Families with specific needs have a harder time accessing child care

21% of survey respondents have children with one or more specific need (medical, behavioral, developmental, communication, other)

Families with specific needs are more likely:

- To have unmet child care needs
- To be excluded from child care options
- To use informal child care, and rely on it for more days each week
- To have searched for child care in the last year, and spent more time searching

Parents and guardians of children with a behavioral health or developmental need are more likely to reduce their work hours or stop attending school

# More information about the Child Care Partnership Grant online

 [CowlitzCommunityNetwork.com/child-care/](https://CowlitzCommunityNetwork.com/child-care/)



- Summary & Survey Results
- Project Partners
- Sources

Scan with your smartphone

Join the conversation and help find solutions to our local child care crisis



Email: [CowlitzNtwk@CowlitzCommunityNetwork.com](mailto:CowlitzNtwk@CowlitzCommunityNetwork.com)

## Community Focus Groups

Wednesday, June 16th, 6-8PM

Meeting ID: 999 5883 6844

<https://zoom.us/j/99958836844>

Monday, June 21st, 6-8PM

Meeting ID: 926 8541 1276

<https://zoom.us/j/92685411276>

## Family Resources

### The Care Project

Resources for the early assessment, identification, and intervention of childhood emotional, social, and behavioral needs in children aged 0-8, in Cowlitz County

[TheCareProjectApp.com](https://TheCareProjectApp.com)

### Child Care Aware of Washington

A free tool to help families find high-quality, licensed child care near them.

[ChildCareAwareWA.org](https://ChildCareAwareWA.org)

1-800-446-1114

### Help Me Grow - Washington

A free service that connects parents and caregivers to resources in their community.

[HelpMeGrowWA.org](https://HelpMeGrowWA.org)

1-800-322-2588

Focus Group Participants are eligible to receive a Gift Card to one of our local Pizza Parlors!

Tell your story about access to child care at:

[qrgo.page.link/VK8TX](https://qrgo.page.link/VK8TX)



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## More Local Information

The Business Case for Child Care | *Workforce SW WA* | [WorkforceSW.org](https://WorkforceSW.org)  
Child Care in Cowlitz County | *Child Care Aware of WA* | [ChildCareAwareWA.org](https://ChildCareAwareWA.org)  
State of the Children Early Learning and Care - SW WA | *Support for Early Learning and Families* | [SelfWA.org](https://SelfWA.org)



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