

# Methodology and Interpretation of Data

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## Methodology

Data was collected from state and federal agencies, from agency records and surveys, and reflects the most up-to-date data available. Child Care Aware® of Kansas did not engage in primary data collection for purposes of the *Kansas 2010 Child Care Profiles*.

## Data Sources

The state and county data reported in the *Kansas 2010 Child Care Profile* was collected from state and federal agencies and compiled by an independent researcher and staff at Child Care Aware® of Kansas. Data sources utilized for this profile include: the Kansas Department of Health and Environment; the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the Kansas State Department of Education, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the U.S. Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Questions about the data sources should be directed to Child Care Aware® of Kansas 785-823-3343.

## Presentation of Data

Data was presented to allow for multiple means of assessing the status of child care in Kansas.

**Numbers** presented reflect the actual number of times an event occurred. For example, a value of 50 for families inquiring about child care indicates that 50 families called to inquire about child care for their children.

**Average Numbers** presented reflect typical performance for an entire group. An average cost of \$85 per week for child care indicates that when examining what all child care facilities charge, the typical child care facility charged \$85 per week for child care.

**Percentages** presented reflect the portion of the population that displays a given characteristic. For example, 45.5% of families calling to inquire about full-time care for their children indicate that out of the number of families that called for child care, 45.5% of them called for full-time care.

## How to use the reports

- *Obtain information on a specific County.* Access individual county information that defines county statistics effecting child care.

- *Obtain information on a specific region of the State.* Access regional information that defines regional statistics effecting child care.
- *Obtain information about the State.* Access information about Kansas that defines regional statistics effecting child care.
- *Obtain information about the child care workforce.* Detailed information about the child care workforce in Kansas.

## Notes

Although the numbers and percentages reported in the *Kansas 2010 Child Care Profile* can provide useful information that allows counties to determine the status of child care in their locales, please note the following:

***Comparing a specific county to other locales.*** When comparing a specific county to other locales (e.g., your county to another), it is important to ensure that each locale is comparable.

To make an accurate comparison: For example, it might be important to determine whether the *portion* of children in poverty is higher in one county than in another county. Portion, percentages and rates, put groups of differing sizes on the same scale, making accurate comparisons across different locales possible.

***Small counties.*** Constructing county-level percentages that fully portray a situation is difficult for smaller counties. Because of the way percentages are calculated, smaller-populated counties are more susceptible to exaggerated percentages. For example, if a county had 2 of the 5 facilities with a waiting list for available child care slots, the county would show that 40% of the facilities had a waiting list. Although accurate and useful (since it represents the portion of facilities with a waiting list and can be used for cross-site comparisons), the magnitude makes the percentage look dramatic. Because of this issue, it is important for smaller counties to keep in mind what the portion actually represents – in the case of this example, just two facilities.

***Timeliness of data.*** Although the most current data available are reported in the profile, the years reflected by the data vary (some data reflect 2009 Census estimates, whereas other data reflect 2010 Census totals).

## Definitions

- ***Alternate hours:*** child care after 6 p.m. and/or weekends
- ***Full Time:*** 36 hours or more a week
- ***Part Time:*** less than 36 hours a week