



2019 Child Care Supply Demand Report

Exploring The Infant Toddler Gap



Infant Toddler Child Care

Many Kansas families, employers and early childhood professionals find the availability of high-quality child care slots in their community falls short of meeting their needs. This is especially true for families searching for infant or toddler care, care for a child with special needs, or care during non-traditional hours. These families often find they have very limited options when selecting care that meets their needs; some families may have no choice at all.

The *2019 Child Care Supply Demand Report-Exploring The Infant Toddler Gap* builds on the two previous reports, *2017 Child Care Supply Demand Report-Child Care Availability in Kansas* and *2018 Child Care Supply Demand Report-The Landscape of Child Care in Kansas*, to continue to examine the shortfall of available child care openings.

Since 1919 Kansas laws have provided health and safety protections for children in out of home care settings. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is responsible for the regulation of child care. Kansas child care regulations are intended to reduce the predictable risk of harm to children and provide the foundation for quality across child care settings.



Licensed Day Care Home (hereinafter known as Family Child Care Homes) - A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of 10 children under 16 years of age. (Children under 11 years of age who are related to the provider must be included in the total.)

Group Day Care Home (hereinafter known as Group Child Care Homes) - A child care facility in which care is provided for a maximum of 12 children under 16 years of age. (Children under 11 years of age who are related to the provider must be included in the total.)

Child Care Centers - A child care facility in which care and educational activities are provided for 13 or more children, 2-weeks to 16 years of age, for more than three hours and less than 24 hours per day including day time, evening, and nighttime care, or which provides before-and-after school care for school-age children.

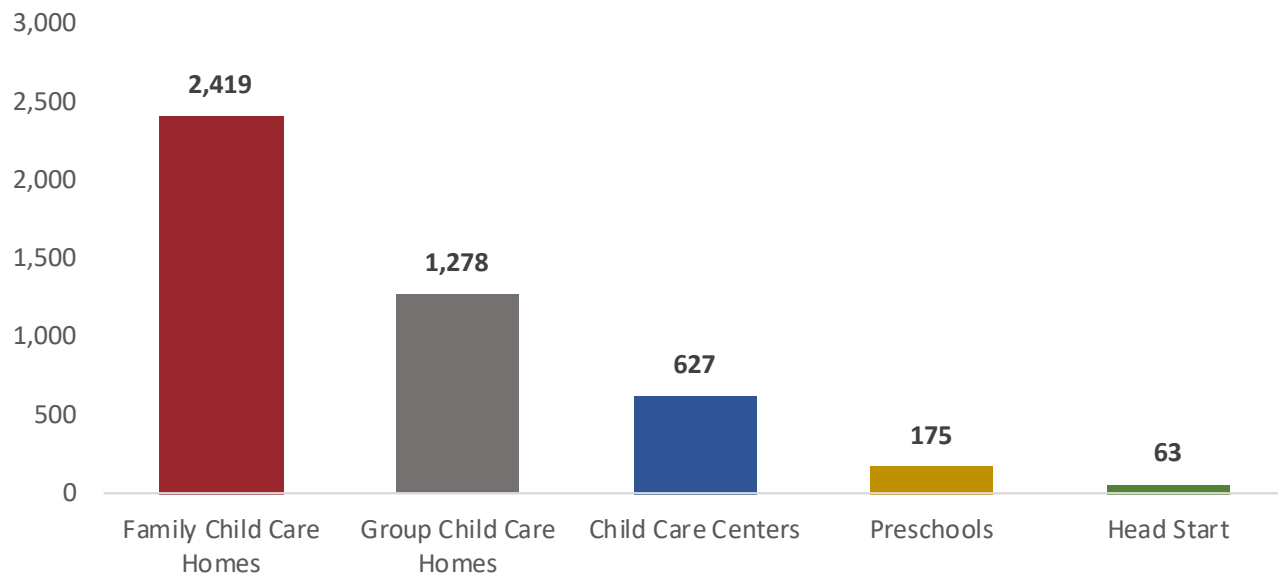
Preschools - A child care facility that provides learning experiences for children who have not attained the age of eligibility to enter kindergarten and that conducts sessions not exceeding three hours per session; that does not enroll any child more than one session per day; and that does not serve a meal.

Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start Programs - Facility that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families.

Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment; Licensing and Regulation for Child Care Facilities http://www.kdheks.gov/bccr/lic_and_req.html

Kansas Data

Licensed Child Care Facilities



Some Head Start Programs & Preschools (typically those associated with a United School District (USD)), are not licensed by the state; only the Head Start Programs & Preschools that are licensed are presented in these charts.

Family and Group Child Care Homes are typically sole proprietors who provide child care in their homes. Family Child Care Homes with one provider are licensed with a maximum of 10 children and Group Child Care Homes with two providers are licensed with a maximum of 12 children. The number of Family and Group Child Care Homes in Kansas continues to decrease. Statewide, communities lost 501 programs over the last 3 years. In contrast, Child Care Centers have steadily increased in number during the same time period, gaining 31 new programs statewide. Unfortunately, 38% of Kansas counties do not have Child Care Centers in their community.

Comparison of Number of Programs 2017 & 2019

	2017	2019
Family Child Care Homes	2,915	2,419
Group Child Care Homes	1,283	1,278
Child Care Centers	596	627
Preschools	214	175
Head Start	65	63

17%
decrease in the
number of Family
Child Care Homes

5.2%
increase in the
number of Child
Care Centers



Child Care Capacity for Infants and Toddlers

Kansas parents and families welcomed 36,464 new babies into their hearts and homes in 2017. Whether he or she was a first-born child, or a new sibling, their needs remain the same. They will have physical needs such as food, shelter and a safe environment; and emotional needs, including a nurturing environment to promote healthy social/emotional development. For working parents and families, their new baby may also need care outside of the home in a high-quality child care program.

When considering licensing regulations in Kansas, a Child Care Center can care for up to nine infants in one classroom with three staff. Family Child Care Homes with one provider can care for up to three infants and Group Child Care Homes with two providers can care for up to four infants. The following information shares averages in Kansas of infants and toddlers by child care program type.

- Average number of children, under 3 years of age, enrolled in **Child Care Centers: 16-17**
- Average number of children, under 3 years of age, enrolled in **Licensed Family and Group Day Care Homes: 2-3**

"As a first time mother, I was not prepared for the struggle I was going to face when trying to find a child care provider. I found myself considering leaving my career, and stressing over how to manage financially. I was forced to settle for the first child care that I could find, regardless of credentials or personal preference. The need for more care providers is substantial."

- Parent, Colby, KS

No openings for Infants and Toddlers (18 Counties)

Chase
Chautauqua
Comanche
Decatur
Elk
Gove
Graham
Greeley
Jewell
Lincoln
Morton
Norton
Osborne
Rice
Stafford
Stanton
Wichita
Woodson



Child Care Capacity for Infants and Toddlers

With 70% of Kansas children living in households where all available parents are working, families in many communities are not only struggling to find child care programs with openings, they are also competing with other working families for the same openings, especially when searching for care for infants and toddlers.

In 77% of Kansas counties, there are more than 10 children, under 3 years of age, that potentially need care for each reported child care opening. This painful statistic, hurts even more when considering that families in these counties are not only left without child care options, but they lose the ability to select care that best meets the needs of their child(ren).

Number of Children Under 3 Years of Age Per ONE Child Care Opening						
Up to 10 children per ONE child care opening (24 counties)		11 - 20 children per ONE child care opening (35 counties)		21 - 30 children per ONE child care opening (14 counties)	31 - 40 children per ONE child care opening (8 counties)	40 or more children per ONE child care opening (6 counties)
Allen	Saline	Bourbon	Marion	Atchison	Barber	Anderson
Cheyenne	Sherman	Brown	Marshall	Barton	Ellsworth	Doniphan
Clark	Smith	Butler	McPherson	Cherokee	Finney	Ford
Cloud	Wabaunsee	Coffey	Miami	Clay	Hamilton	Seward
Douglas	Wallace	Crawford	Montgomery	Cowley	Leavenworth	Stevens
Ellis	Washington	Dickinson	Morris	Edwards	Osage	Thomas
Franklin		Geary	Ness	Gray	Riley	
Harvey		Grant	Ottawa	Labette	Wyandotte	
Hodgeman		Greenwood	Pawnee	Meade		
Kearny		Harper	Phillips	Nemaha		
Kingman		Haskell	Reno	Rawlins		
Logan		Jackson	Republic	Sumner		
Mitchell		Jefferson	Russell	Trego		
Neosho		Johnson	Scott	Wilson		
Pottawatomie		Kiowa	Sedgwick			
Pratt		Lane	Shawnee			
Rooks		Linn	Sheridan			
Rush		Lyon				

Counties in each category are listed alphabetically and do not represent a numerical order.

Nontraditional Hours & Special Needs Care

The current job market, in many ways, differs greatly from the job market previous generations experienced. Families with a single wage earner working an 8-hour workday 5 days a week, have become dual income households often working second or third shifts. In some communities, jobs in industries such as hospitals, retail, and restaurants that operate during nontraditional hours are more common than jobs operating during traditional hours. As the job market changes, family dynamics have evolved but only 2.9% of Child Care Centers and 8.5% of Group Child Care Homes offer care during evening hours and even fewer provide overnight or weekend care.

Nontraditional Care by Program Type

2.9%
of Child Care
Centers offer care
during evening
hours

	Family Child Care Home	Group Child Care Home	Child Care Center
24 Hour	<1%	1%	<1%
Evening (After 6:30 PM)	7.3%	8.5%	2.9%
Overnight (12:00 AM - 6:00 AM)	<1%	1.6%	<1%
Weekend (Friday evening - Sunday evening)	3.4%	3.5%	1.1%
Drop-In	17%	22%	11%

8.5%
of Group Child
Care Homes
offer care during
evening hours

Additionally, child care programs that are developmentally safe, appropriate, and inclusive for children of all abilities is important for every parent and family, especially those seeking care for children with special needs. Special needs are not always easily recognizable and may include development delays, behavior related concerns, or medical and genetic disorders.

Parents and families searching for child care programs, including child care programs that provide special needs care or care during nontraditional hours, may search online at www.ks.childcareaware.org or call 1-877-678-2548 to speak with a Resource Center Counselor for help finding a child care program that meets their unique needs.



Links to Quality

Links to Quality (L2Q) is a quality recognition program in its pilot phase, serving Child Care Centers and Family and Group Child Care Homes. There are 40 child care programs providing feedback to ensure all the materials and procedures operate as planned when the recognition program goes statewide. This program honors the accomplishments of child care programs by building on their strengths, reaching higher quality in their child care program. There are three foundation links that the programs are piloting: Program Leadership, Family Partnerships, and Learning and Development.

Program Leadership: Child care providers will gain expertise on operating a child care business.

Family Partnerships: Child care providers will support and build relationships with their child care families and provide resources to support their child's development.

Learning and Development: Child care providers will design and provide activities to support children's learning and development.

One unique feature of the Links to Quality program are the Learning Communities. Learning communities bring together child care programs within a designated proximity to collaborate. These collaborations are focused on enhancing quality through training, peer-to-peer support, and coaching. The learning community is designed to support the growth, leadership, collaboration, and confidence of the L2Q child care providers as they learn, change, grow, and become champions for quality early childhood education. There are 5 Learning Communities with participants from 17 counties.



Learning Community A	Crawford, Cherokee, Labette, Montgomery
Learning Community B	Wyandotte, Shawnee
Learning Community C	Lyon, Geary, Osage, Dickinson, Saline
Learning Community D	Sedgwick, Butler
Learning Community E	Finney, Ford, Grant, Seward

For more information, please visit <http://ksqualitynetwork.org/>

25

Family and Group
Child Care Homes
participated in the
pilot program

15

Child Care Centers
participated in the
pilot program

285

children served by
participating child
care programs

Kansas State Department of Education

In many communities, school districts provide early care and education opportunities for young children. Families may utilize early learning opportunities in a variety of settings during each day, week and year.

8,864

Preschool-Aged
At-Risk slots are
available statewide
for 2019-2020
school year*

The Preschool-Aged At-Risk Program (also known as the State Pre-K 4 Year Old At-Risk Program and the State Pre-Kindergarten Program) provides school districts with slots for preschool-aged students. Each filled preschool-aged at-risk slot is counted as a 1/2 student (0.5 FTE) in calculating a district's state aid.

Early Childhood Special Education for 3- and 4-Year-Old Students Section 619 of Part B of the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) defines the federal preschool program which guarantees a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities ages 3-5. Under this program, preschool children who have disabilities are entitled to Special Education and Related Services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The IDEA Preschool Program (Section 619) supports education services for young children with disabilities when they turn 3 years old. It addresses individual needs within the context of developmentally appropriate activities, including early learning experiences in language, pre-reading and writing skills, play, and other social emotional areas.

Pre-Kindergarten Many school districts providing services to preschool students are not counted in calculating the district's enrollment and accompanying weightings. These students are included in the "Pre-Kindergarten" category below. They include 3- and 4-year-old students supported by Kansas Preschool Pilot grants. 103 districts and community partners have been awarded \$8,332,317 in Kansas Preschool Pilot grant funding for the 2019-2020 school year.

For more information about public preschool programs in your area, please contact your local school district.

230

districts requested
9,704 slots
for 4-year-old
students

96

of those districts
requested 1,069
slots for 3 year old
students

282

children, age 3-5,
enrolled in public
preschool programs
experienced
homelessness

Number of Children Enrolled Statewide 2018-2019

Special Education 3 & 4 Year Olds	7,206
Preschool-Aged At-Risk	8,064
Pre-Kindergarten	8,273

*All eligible 4-Year-Old students must be served statewide before these funds can serve 3-Year-Old students.

Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start Programs (HS/EHS) programs provide home-based, center-based, and child care partnerships to young children and their families. More specifically, Early Head Start programs serve pregnant women and infants and toddlers (ages 0-3). Head Start programs serve children ages 3-5 and their families. HS/EHS programs partner with schools, child care providers, state and local preschool initiatives, and other community service providers for families, on behalf of those most in need. The HS/EHS initiative seeks to increase the availability of child care and early learning for children 0-5 and to increase the quality of child care for all Kansas children. All services are voluntary for families.

For more information about HS/EHS programs in your area, please visit www.ksheadstart.org

Cumulative Enrollment	Number of Participants
Center-based Part Day (4 days per week)	1,761
Center -based Full Day (4 days per week > 6 hours per day)	1,018
Center-based Part Day (5 days per week)	908
Center -based Full day (5 days per week, > 6 hours per day)	2,437
Of these, the number available as full-work-ing-day enrollment	1,199
Of these, the number available for full-cal-en-dar year	813
Family Child Care	49
Pregnant Women	56

27
HS/EHS programs
provide services
in 83 out of 105
counties

276
total decrease
in the number of
available slots

November 2017- March 2018

4.5%
increase in the
number of
children on the
waiting list

March 2018 - November 2018

Cumulative Enrollment by Child's Age	Number of Participants
Under 1 Year Old	1,076
1 Year Old	1,032
2 Years Old	1,326
3 Years Old	3,111
4 Years Old	3,345
5 Years Old	133

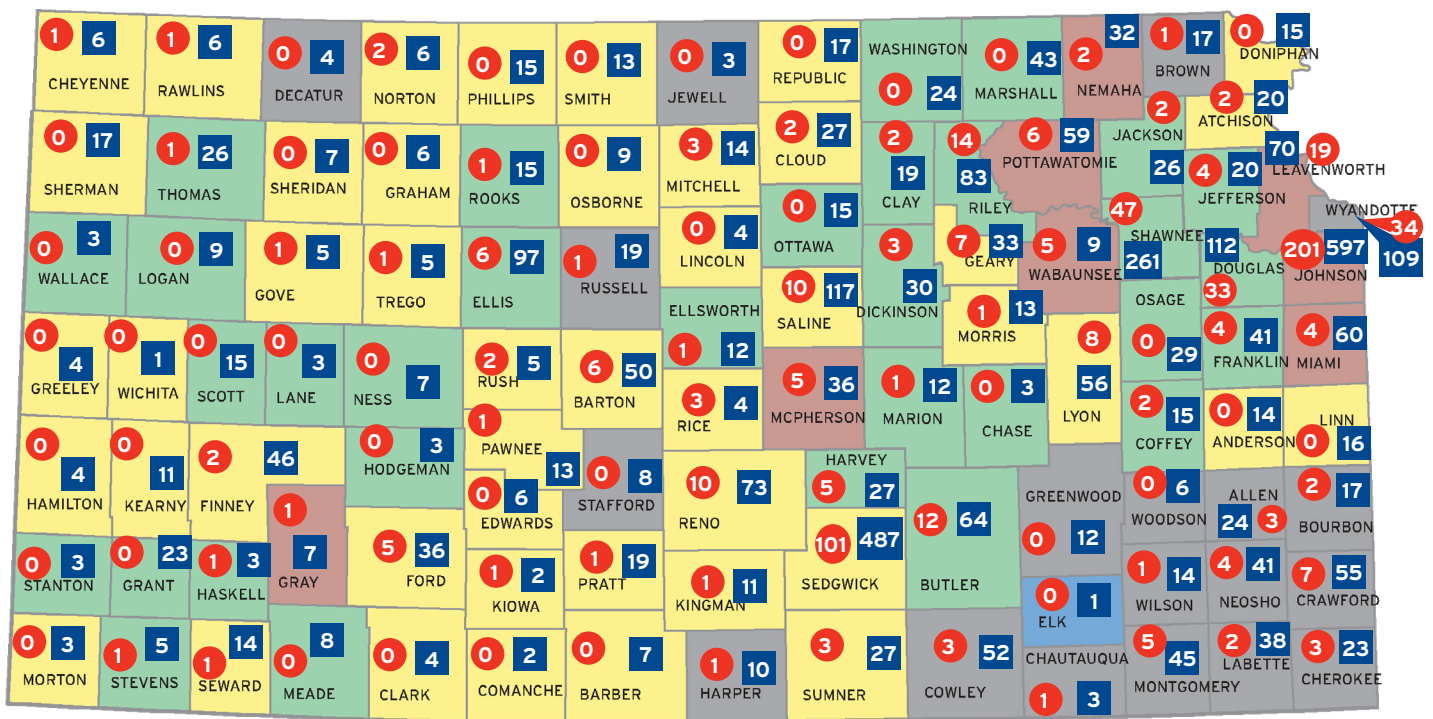
Enrollment Detail	Number of Participants
Total Funded Enrollment	8,114
Total cumulative number of children enrolled	10,023
Children/pregnant women experiencing homelessness	950
Children in foster care	489
Children/pregnant women with income below 100% of Federal Poverty Line	6,828

Kansas Families

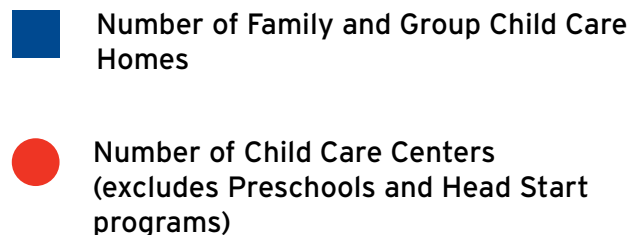
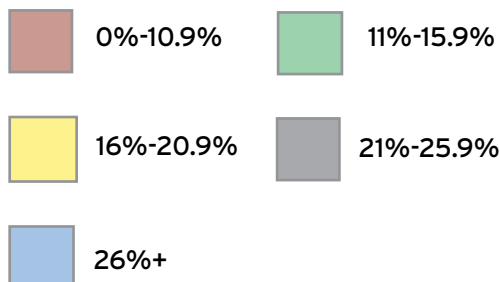
The limited number of child care openings in communities is not the only factor that may impact families' ability to access high-quality child care; high unemployment, high poverty, and out of home placement may also play a role. In addition to these factors, some Kansas families and young children may also be experiencing homelessness. Overwhelmed parents can more easily focus on meeting their goals toward stable housing, employment/training, and other services when their child is safe and receiving quality child care.

For more information about homelessness contact the Kansas Coordinator for Homeless Education and your local Homeless Education Liaison or contact the Kansas State Department of Education at 1-800-203-9462. For information about resources, including child care subsidies and other family wellbeing services, contact the Kansas Department for Children and Families at 1-888-369-4777.

The map below depicts the percentage of children age 0-17 years living in poverty and the number of Family and Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers.



Percentage of Children Age 0-17 Years Living in Poverty



County	Number of Children <6 Years of Age Receiving DCF Subsidy	Number of Licensed Family and Group Day Care Homes	Number of Child Care Centers	Number of Children a Facility is Willing to Accept (Desired Capacity)	Number of Children <6 Years of Age Potentially Needing Care	Extent Desired Capacity Meets Potential Demand
Allen	15	24	3	423	630	67%
Anderson	5	14	0	148	463	32%
Atchison	22	20	2	512	807	63%
Barber	1	7	0	72	240	30%
Barton	35	50	6	797	1,502	53%
Bourbon	28	17	2	335	739	45%
Brown	6	17	1	298	628	47%
Butler	75	64	12	1,572	2,806	56%
Chase	3	3	0	28	143	20%
Chautauqua	0	3	1	37	178	21%
Cherokee	31	23	3	488	739	66%
Cheyenne	0	6	1	86	152	57%
Clark	0	4	0	61	79	77%
Clay	21	19	2	240	375	64%
Cloud	16	27	2	343	485	71%
Coffey	5	15	2	220	365	60%
Comanche	0	2	0	20	64	31%
Cowley	88	52	3	631	1,737	36%
Crawford	70	55	7	1,229	1,879	65%
Decatur	1	4	0	53	165	32%
Dickinson	30	30	3	470	803	59%
Doniphan	4	15	0	131	363	36%
Douglas	185	112	33	3,735	5,355	70%
Edwards	5	6	0	54	94	57%
Elk	1	1	0	8	107	7%
Ellis	31	97	6	1,072	1,678	64%
Ellsworth	0	12	1	197	290	68%
Finney	27	46	2	665	2,552	26%
Ford	40	36	5	535	2,129	25%
Franklin	38	41	4	688	1,328	52%
Geary	54	33	7	719	2,614	28%
Gove	0	5	1	69	113	61%
Graham	0	6	0	71	114	62%
Grant	2	23	0	235	471	50%
Gray	3	7	1	91	237	38%
Greeley	0	4	0	28	59	47%

For Data Sources and Methodology, visit www.ks.childcareaware.org. The Extent Desired Capacity Meets Potential Demand is a calculation of the Desired Capacity of Family and Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers (excludes Preschools and some Head Start) divided by the Number of Children Potentially Needing Care. Sources: 2013-2017 Census DPO3; Child Care Aware of Kansas, WorkLife Systems, May 2019 Kansas Department for Children and Families April 2019, Kansas Department of Health and Environment Annual Summary of Vital Statistics, 2017

County	Number of Children <6 Years of Age Receiving DCF Subsidy	Number of Licensed Family and Group Day Care Homes	Number of Child Care Centers	Number of Children a Facility is Willing to Accept (Desired Capacity)	Number of Children <6 Years of Age Potentially Needing Care	Extent Desired Capacity Meets Potential Demand
Greenwood	12	12	0	125	215	58%
Hamilton	2	4	0	36	173	21%
Harper	4	10	1	167	266	63%
Harvey	36	27	5	663	1,490	44%
Haskell	0	3	1	46	173	27%
Hodgeman	2	3	0	54	71	76%
Jackson	10	26	2	383	724	53%
Jefferson	12	20	4	398	839	47%
Jewell	1	3	0	25	96	26%
Johnson	575	597	201	22,811	32,068	71%
Kearny	3	11	0	93	136	68%
Kingman	6	11	1	116	295	39%
Kiowa	1	2	1	43	97	44%
Labette	35	38	2	557	907	61%
Lane	0	3	0	21	85	25%
Leavenworth	94	70	19	2,189	3,843	57%
Lincoln	2	4	0	39	110	35%
Linn	7	16	0	163	452	36%
Logan	0	9	0	98	104	94%
Lyon	52	56	8	1,294	1,700	76%
Marion	7	12	1	178	562	32%
Marshall	5	43	0	424	576	74%
McPherson	19	36	5	882	1,319	67%
Meade	0	8	0	71	198	36%
Miami	33	60	4	1,129	1476	76%
Mitchell	1	14	3	244	205	119%
Montgomery	65	45	5	863	1,793	48%
Morris	5	13	1	150	246	61%
Morton	3	3	0	22	172	13%
Nemaha	5	32	2	481	593	81%
Neosho	28	41	4	637	650	98%
Ness	0	7	0	51	137	37%
Norton	3	6	2	178	278	64%
Osage	13	29	0	293	922	32%
Osborne	2	9	0	64	170	38%
Ottawa	5	15	0	239	267	90%

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Pawnee	5	13	1	180	295	61%
Phillips	3	15	0	145	253	57%
Pottawatomie	13	59	6	1,014	1,184	86%
Pratt	6	19	1	204	400	51%
Rawlins	0	6	1	88	105	84%
Reno	89	73	10	1,390	2814	49%
Republic	2	17	0	162	192	84%
Rice	11	4	3	202	491	41%
Riley	74	83	14	1,559	2,962	53%
Rooks	3	15	1	186	353	53%
Rush	1	5	2	86	159	54%
Russell	7	19	1	202	293	69%
Saline	182	117	10	1,717	2,973	58%
Scott	3	15	0	157	249	63%
Sedgwick	1,177	487	101	13,283	29,654	45%
Seward	5	14	1	338	1,881	18%
Shawnee	398	261	47	5,960	10,122	59%
Sheridan	0	7	0	113	98	115%
Sherman	1	17	0	235	245	96%
Smith	5	13	0	120	150	80%
Stafford	0	8	0	57	144	40%
Stanton	0	3	0	55	130	42%
Stevens	1	5	1	80	301	27%
Sumner	20	27	3	577	1,175	49%
Thomas	0	26	1	310	544	57%
Trego	2	5	1	109	160	68%
Wabaunsee	5	9	5	278	290	96%
Wallace	0	3	0	50	108	46%
Washington	6	24	0	256	339	76%
Wichita	0	1	0	15	116	13%
Wilson	7	14	1	218	476	46%
Woodson	1	6	0	58	164	35%
Wyandotte	360	109	34	3,078	10,160	30%
Totals	4,277	3,697	627	84,070	154,871	54%

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"High Needs" County Data



The Kansas Department for Children and Families has utilized the unemployment rate, childhood poverty, and children in out of home placement to identify counties as "high needs". Geary, Montgomery, Neosho, and Wyandotte counties experienced 4.5% or greater unemployment rate, reported 17-32.1% of children 0-17 years of age living in poverty, and 1.2% or greater of the children (as a percentage of the State) are in out of home placement.

Geary County

Feedback from the field...

A Geary County Child Care Center and Family Child Care Home stated they do offer infant and toddler care but neither had openings at the time of the interview. The Child Care Center reported they receive calls almost daily requesting infant care and weekly for toddler care, and the Family Child Care Home receives calls approximately every two weeks requesting infant or toddler care.

5.4%

Unemployment
rate

(May 2019)

18.6%

of children 0-17
years of age living
in poverty

1.4%

of children (as a
% of the state)
in Out of Home
Placement

Types of Licensed Child Care Programs

Family Child Care Homes	29
Group Child Care Homes	4
Child Care Centers	7
Preschools	2

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Infant Toddler Openings

Family Child Care Homes	14
Group Child Care Homes	2
Child Care Centers	4

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Offering Care During Nontraditional Hours

Evenings	5
Overnight	2
Weekends	3

Montgomery County

Feedback from the field...

A Montgomery County Family Child Care Home reported she does not offer infant care but does offer toddler care and at the time of the interview, reported openings for toddlers. She shared that she was getting older and was not as comfortable with infant care. She further explained that infant care requires items that take up quite a bit of room and also limits activities she can do with toddlers and older children. She receives calls almost monthly from parents seeking infant care and about every 3 months for parents seeking toddler care. A Montgomery County Child Care Center reported they offer both infant and toddler care and receive requests for infant care monthly and toddler care weekly. The Child Care Center also reported openings for both infants and toddlers.



4.6%
Unemployment
rate

25.2%
of children 0-17
years of age living
in poverty

2.1%
of children (as a %
of the state) in Out
of Home
Placement

Types of Licensed Child Care Programs

Family Child Care Homes	35
Group Child Care Homes	10
Child Care Centers	5
Preschools	4

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Infant Toddler Openings

Family Child Care Homes	11
Group Child Care Homes	4
Child Care Centers	2

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Offering Care During Nontraditional Hours

Evenings	2
Overnight	0
Weekends	0



Neosho County

Feedback from the field...

A Neosho County Child Care Center and Family Child Care Home stated they do offer infant and toddler care but neither had openings for infants and only the Family Child Care Home had openings for toddlers at the time of the interview. The Child Care Center reported they receive calls weekly requesting infant care and 2 to 3 times a week for toddler care and is in the processing of hiring an additional infant teacher but struggle with finding qualified applicants. The Family Child Care Home receives calls approximately every two weeks requesting infant and monthly for toddler care.

4.9%

Unemployment
rate

22.4%

of children 0-17
years of age living
in poverty

1.2%

of children (as a %
of the state) in Out
of Home
Placement

Types of Licensed Child Care Programs

Family Child Care Homes	25
Group Child Care Homes	16
Child Care Centers	4
Preschools	1

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Infant Toddler Openings

Family Child Care Homes	8
Group Child Care Homes	4
Child Care Centers	0

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Offering Care During Nontraditional Hours

Evenings	4
Overnight	1
Weekends	1

Wyandotte County

Feedback from the field...

A Wyandotte County Child Care Center and Family Child Care Home stated they do offer infant and toddler care and the Child Care Center reported openings for both infant and toddler, while the Family Child Care Home only had openings for toddlers at the time of the interview. The Child Care Center and Family Child Care Home both reported they receive calls approximately monthly requesting infant and toddler care. The Child Care Center shared it is hard to maintain employment in the infant room.



Types of Licensed Child Care Programs

Family Child Care Homes	41
Group Child Care Homes	68
Child Care Centers	34
Preschools	2

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Infant Toddler Openings

Family Child Care Homes	13
Group Child Care Homes	22
Child Care Centers	9

Licensed Child Care Programs Reporting Offering Care During Nontraditional Hours

Evenings	11
Overnight	5
Weekends	7

5.3%

Unemployment
rate

24.6%

of children 0-17
years of age living
in poverty

8.5%

of children (as a %
of the state) in Out
of Home
Placement

Exploring the Infant Toddler Gap

Further complicating solutions and challenging the ability to measure impact is the chronic high turnover rate of child care workers. During the previous 3 years, the number of Family and Group Child Care Homes (the only child care program type available in 65 counties) has continued to decline. In addition, regular turnover in any business, including child care programs, ties up vital resources focused on staff orientation and other onboarding needs (in child care these needs would include training requirements and background checks).

Kansas child care regulations establish adult to child minimum ratios. While these ratios restrict the number of openings available for additional children, these limits are necessary and important to help ensure children in child care are safe. When investigating the number of slots your community needs to generate, it is important to consider the desired capacity of child care programs, the number of children a facility is willing to take, which is oftentimes less than their licensed capacity.

Families searching for infant and toddler care in 18 counties will find that there are no openings for children under age 3. The lack of available child care slots for infants and toddlers, creates a variety of struggles for Kansas. Some of these struggles might be harder to see/feel in communities, while others are apparent daily.

Families

With so few licensed slots, families are struggling to meet their child care needs. Difficulties range from unintentional competition among families for slots, a child care plan that is pieced together and lacks consistency, or families are using illegal child care.

Child Care Providers

The lack of capacity also deepens long-standing challenges for early childhood professionals. Early childhood professionals who provide care to infants and toddlers limit their ability to generate revenue. The costs associated with offering infant toddler care, such as wage penalties and limited ability to generate revenue, is not only an obstacle but may also place child care programs at risk of financial insecurity.

Early childhood professionals, working with infants and toddlers, face a sizeable wage reduction compared to educators working only with children age 3-5 that are not yet in kindergarten. The average wage reduction for working with infants and toddlers is \$1.05 less per hour (\$2,184 less annually for a full-time, full-year worker). At every level of educational attainment, the magnitude of the difference increases, resulting in a strong incentive to change jobs to improve their economic status.

According to the Center for American Progress, serving infants and toddlers alongside preschoolers is also key to financial solvency. To offset the high cost of infant care, providers can use revenues from older children to subsidize the costs associated with infant care. As a result, by enrolling infants, family child care providers limit the total amount of revenue they can generate, which can act as a disincentive to accept any infants.

Communities/Businesses

Child care issues have an impact on absenteeism and tardiness in a variety of businesses with parents in their workforce. This loss of productivity negatively impacts operations and the bottom line.



Exploring the Infant Toddler Gap

The Center for American Progress further states that as an increasing number of states and cities make needed investments in preschool, they should consider the impact that these initiatives can have on access to infant and toddler child care (at a minimum for the reasons identified previously). If initiatives only support access to preschool in public school programs, community-based family and group child care programs will struggle to stay afloat due to the loss of revenue from preschool enrollment. This can have a devastating impact on the already limited supply of infant and toddler care.

When discussing a community/county strategy regarding child care shortages (and when reviewing the data shared in this report), it is important to consider:

- How do families/parents move in the region of the state when considering their child care needs? Do families with young children travel to find employment? If so, are they more likely to purchase infant or toddler child care in the community/county where they work?
- Are there zoning regulations in the community that negatively impact the growth of Family Child Care Homes?
- When a community experiences job growth, are child care capacity needs part of the discussion?
- Are there buildings available in the community that could accommodate the licensing standards of new child care programs?
- Are there individuals willing and trained to provide child care in the community? If so, why are they not working in the child care field?



A few strategies arise when considering building and sustaining a child care workforce that is instrumental in preparing children for school and life.

- 1.** Increase the availability of licensed child care slots by exploring a variety of options, such as new provider grants, recruitment stipends, and/or longevity bonuses.
- 2.** Encourage child care programs to serve infants and toddlers by offering slot stipends that will compensate for the higher costs related to providing high-quality care to this population.
- 3.** Expand grants for child care programs to purchase material/equipment that is necessary to care for infants and toddlers. Not having the correct equipment (such as a crib or high chair) should not be a reason to limit this type of care.

Other strategies can be effective in communities - ask questions, be creative, and reach out to partners.



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Remarks

Child Care Aware® of Kansas collects self-reported data about families, children, and child care needs from most clients. In some cases, clients choose not to share demographic information, and clients using the online self-service search are not asked for all of the same information and questions. While the regulatory and licensing data provided is comprehensive, it cannot be considered complete. There is likely some delay leading to some closed facilities being included and some newly opened facilities being excluded. The assumption was also made that child care will be near a family's home.

Sources

- Center for American Progress
- Child Care Aware of America
- Child Care Aware of Kansas, WorkLife Systems
- Kansas Department for Children and Families
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Department of Labor
- Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start Programs
- Kansas State Department of Education
- The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
- U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

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The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies who work diligently to collect the data necessary to share information about the early education field in Kansas and encourage conversations within communities.

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About Us

Child Care Aware of Kansas is the network of four Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies that serve all 105 counties in Kansas. Daily, we provide information, support and resources to child care providers, families, and communities.

For Methodology, go to www.ks.childcareaware.org.