

CENTER-BASED CHILDCARE IN HAWAI‘I

Fact Sheet 2017

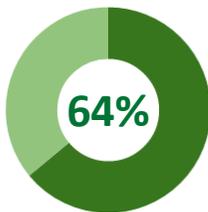
Every child deserves access to enriching early care and learning experiences that meet his or her family’s needs and values. High-quality childcare affects all aspects of a keiki’s development and helps ensure that our young children have a foundation for success in kindergarten and later in life. Reliable, affordable childcare is a necessity for working parents.

Types of Center-Based Care

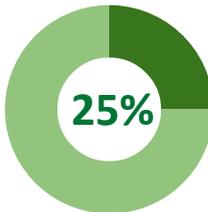
The State Department of Human Services licenses two kinds of group childcare programs. **Infant-toddler centers** serve children age six weeks through two years, and **group childcare centers** serve children age two through five. DOE public preschool and special education preschool classrooms, charter school preschools, and military childcare centers are not licensed by the state.

Availability

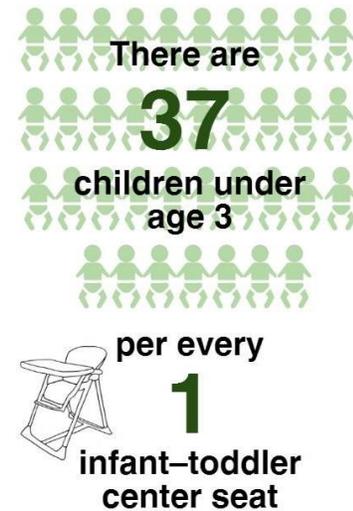
Hawai‘i does not have enough childcare seats to serve our young child population. There is a critical shortage of infant-toddler care. In fact, Kaua‘i, Moloka‘i, and Lāna‘i islands have **no** licensed infant-toddler centers.



Of young children need care because their parents work



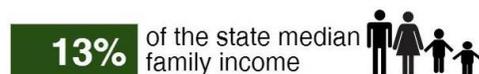
At full capacity, our licensed childcare centers can serve less than one quarter of our keiki



Cost

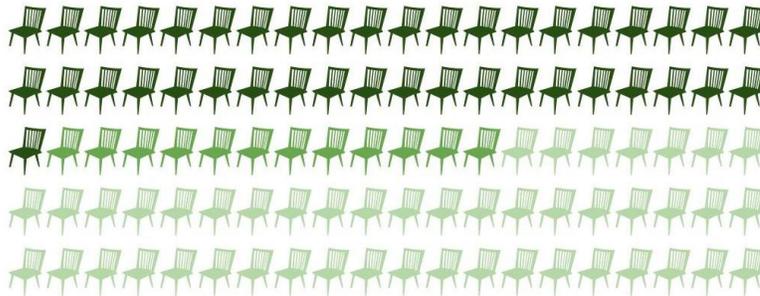
Childcare is a major family expense. On average, full-time center care costs **\$9,553** per year, but tuition can exceed **\$13,000** per year for infant care. The federal government defines “affordable” childcare as 7% of family income; by this criterion, current market rates are not affordable for the majority of parents.

The average cost of center care for **one** child equals



Quality

High-quality childcare can have long-term benefits for academic achievement, health, and earnings. Licensing ensures only that programs meet basic standards for safety, staffing, and activities. Fortunately, many centers seek voluntary early childhood accreditation, a widely recognized indicator of quality. Head Start and Early Head Start centers must meet federal program standards designed to support quality. Still, more can be done to ensure that all centers provide excellent care. Hawai'i is one of only *seven* states that do not monitor and publicize data on childcare quality.



41%
of licensed seats are in
accredited centers

12%
of licensed seats are in
**Head Start or
Early Head Start**

A talented, well-trained workforce is key to delivering quality care. Childcare teachers need access to higher education, ongoing professional development, and adequate benefits and pay.

“I want to pay my teachers as much as I can. It’s very hard to pay them what they are worth because our operating expenses are so high and we try to offer a competitive rate to our parents.” – Center Director



40%
of center directors
report difficulty in
attracting and
retaining qualified
teachers

Policy Recommendations

Action needs to be taken to address availability, cost, and quality in Hawai'i's childcare centers.

- Use federal and state funds to more fully subsidize childcare and reduce co-payments for low-income families.
- Address the needs of middle-income “gap group” families ineligible for state childcare subsidies who struggle to afford the cost of care.
- Provide incentives and supports for more programs to open infant–toddler classrooms.
- Expand public pre-K in areas that are childcare deserts and complement, rather than compete with, existing providers.
- Invest in supports that strengthen the childcare workforce and increase quality in the existing childcare system.

