



# Child Care in Columbia County

October 2010

## Child Care Resource & Referral Across Washington State

These state and county profiles are compiled by the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network (CCR&R Network) in partnership with the Washington State Department of Early Learning.

Established by state statute in 1989, the CCR&R Network connects families seeking child care with licensed providers; supports child care providers by enhancing the quality of their care and small businesses; leverages resources in order to increase the availability and affordability of quality child care; and informs policy makers using data collected statewide in local communities.

During 2009, the CCR&R Network's 11 member agencies:

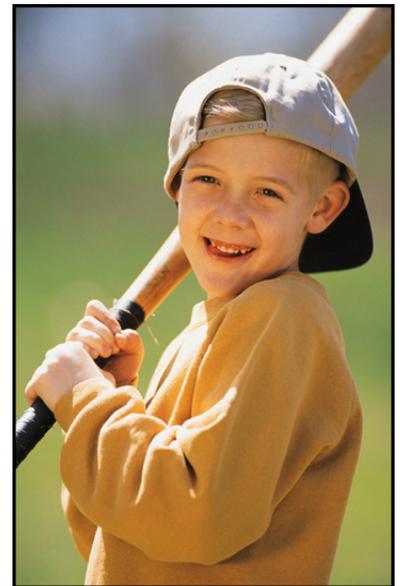
- Handled 90,908 calls;
- Processed 19,806 public referral calls;
- Served 17,908 families and 25,425 children; and
- Assisted 10,190 low-income families find child care.

## Child Care Resource & Referral Supports Communities by:

- Helping parents find quality child care for their children;
- Sharing parenting and child development information with families who seek it;
- Providing training to providers so their care is high quality and their businesses are strong;
- Collaborating with local partners to ensure that child care is available and affordable in every community; and
- Advocating for effective public policies that support families and child care providers.

## Child Care Resource & Referral In Columbia County

Family Care Resources hosts the child care resource and referral (CCR&R) program that serves Columbia County, in collaboration with Walla Walla Community College. In 2009, staff responded to over 7,130 calls in the region from parents, providers and community members seeking information and assistance navigating the child care system. CCR&R staff and consultants are also out in the field: conducting training, collaborating with community partners, and reaching out to families across income levels, geographic barriers, and ethnic identities to provide them with vital child care consumer education.



### Notable highlights of this report:

- In 5 years, the number of family child care facilities fell from 6 to 3, and then rose back to 6 again, resulting in no net change; during this time, the county had no center facilities. Even so, the county experienced an overall gain of 4 potential licensed family child care slots since 2005.
- Infant care continues to be the most difficult care to find and the most expensive, with an annual median cost of \$6,630.
- For a family with an infant and a preschooler in full-time care, the median cost of child care represents 37% of the county's 2009 median household income.

### Local Child Care Resource & Referral Contact Information:

**Family Care Resources  
Community-Minded Enterprises  
25 W Main St., Suite 310  
Spokane, WA 99201**

**(509) 209-2613 (800) 446-2229  
<http://www.community-minded.org/>**

*Our mission: to facilitate and enhance community well being.*



Washington State Department of  
**Early Learning**



*Building Momentum for Children's Success*



**People**

Population	<b>4,100</b>
Change since 2004	<b>0</b>
Children under 5 years	<b>210</b>
Children under 13 years	<b>596</b>
% of Children under 18 living in poverty	<b>23%</b>
Ranking among WA Counties in rate of child poverty	<b>11</b>
K-12 enrollment	<b>540</b>
Children in Care Zone <sup>1</sup>	<b>359</b>
Average number children on child care subsidy	<b>53/month</b>
Head Start/ECEAP Slots	<b>0</b>

**Economics**

Living Wage <sup>2</sup>	<b>\$44,100/yr</b>
Median Household Income	<b>\$35,877/yr</b>
Unemployment Rate	<b>10.5%</b>

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Care Zone is defined as the number of children who live in a single-parent or two-parent home where the parent or both parents are working.

<sup>2</sup>The living wage measure is based on a family of four and represents twice the federal poverty level of income.

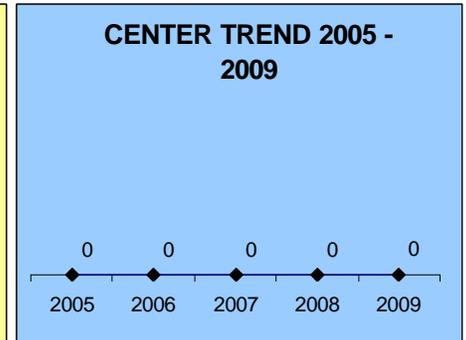
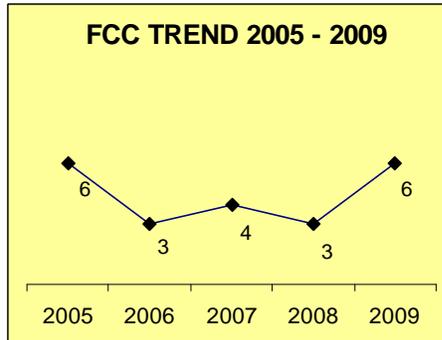
**Data Sources for the Report:**

Kids Count, WA Dept of Early Learning, WA Dept of Social & Health Services, WA Employment Security Department, WA Head Start State Collaboration Office, WA Office of Financial Management, WA Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, US Census Bureau, US Federal Registry, Washington Guarantee Education Tuition, and the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network.

**Licensed Child Care in Our Community**

**How many providers are there in my area by type?**

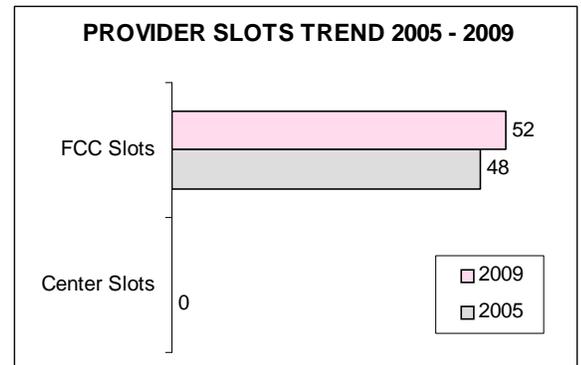
Family child care (FCC) businesses account for 100% of the 6 licensed facilities in Columbia County.



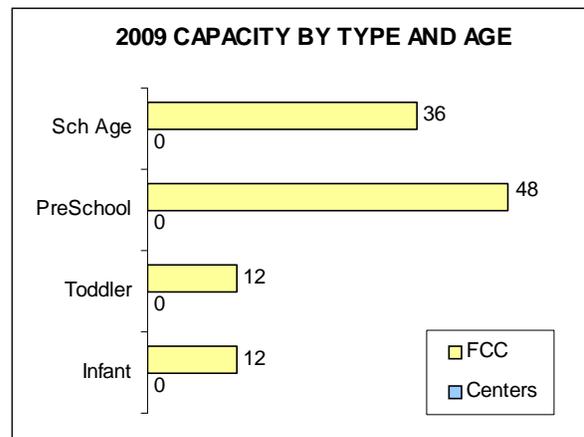
In the past five years, the number of family child care businesses has fluctuated from 6 to 3 and up to 6 again, resulting in no net change. In that time, the county has had no center facilities.

**How has the number of child care slots changed over the last five years?**

In the past five years, the county has experienced an increase of 3 potential licensed family child care slots (8%). During that time, there were no potential licensed child care center-based slots at all. In 2009, the county had a total of 52 potential licensed child care slots, all in family child care homes.



**What is the distribution of slots by type of care and by age?**



Because of a higher required ratio of adults to children under 2 years old in licensed care, there are fewer slots for infants and toddlers than for other age groups.

With no centers to choose from, the number of infant and toddler slots is further constrained for parents seeking licensed care.

*Note: This chart does not represent actual enrollment of children in care. The number of slots for all children is overstated in this comparison. It shows each age group filled as if there were no other children in the other age groups. If a slot is filled for one age group it cancels out the potential slot for the other age groups.*

## What languages are spoken?

All providers speak English, and one provider reported having staff who speak Spanish.

Languages Spoken by Providers	
English	100%
Spanish	17%

## How much non-standard care is available in my community?

Most providers offer full- and part-time care during weekdays only. One in six providers regularly offer care during non-standard hours. Out of all providers, 17% offer evening care past 6:30 PM, weekend care, and/or overnight care.

## Economics of Child Care Providers

### What do child care providers earn compared to kindergarten teachers?

2010 Average Salary Comparisons: Kindergarten Teachers and Child Care Providers			
Public School Kindergarten Teacher	Director Child Care Center	Teacher Child Care Center	Family Child Care Provider Business Gross Income
\$48,483/yr \$4,040/mo	\$31,236/yr \$2,603/mo	\$22,968/yr \$1,914/mo	\$31,731/yr \$2,644/mo

Washington's kindergarten teachers earn 55% more than center directors, more than double what child care teachers earn, and 53% more than family child care providers' gross earnings in the region. The substantial wage differential can be attributed to higher educational requirements for kindergarten teachers and relatively low turnover in public schools. The lack of competitive wages makes it difficult to recruit and retain educated child care workers and can have a negative impact on the quality of care.

### How does the child care subsidy reimbursement rate affect provider profitability?

Current state child care subsidy reimbursement rates are one constraint on wages, quality, and financial solvency for providers.

2009 Ranges: Monthly Full-Time Subsidy Reimbursement Rates				
	Infant	Toddler	Preschool	School-Age
<b>Centers</b>	\$624	\$521	\$483	\$427
<b>Family Child Care Homes</b>	\$556	\$483	\$432	\$432

To support the average 2010 salary of a teacher, aide and part of the cost of the director for an infant classroom in a center, a program would need to enroll at least **6.6** of the licensed maximum of 8 subsidized full-time infants. Income generated from the other **1.4** infants would have to cover all other classroom costs including benefits, training, rent and supplies.

In a typical family child care home, one provider might have two infants and four preschoolers. A provider's gross earnings if all the children are on subsidy would be **\$2,841** per month. Out of these earnings, the provider must pay all expenses, including salaries, benefits, taxes, rent, meals, training, equipment and supplies.

## Quality Initiatives

### CCR&R Training & Education

The CCR&R Network provides state-mandated training for providers. In 2009, this CCR&R offered **85 trainings** for the workforce in the region.

**Washington Scholarships for Child Care Professionals** is a scholarship program that provides financial support for centers and school age staff and family child care providers to obtain higher education degrees and credentials in early childhood education. In 2010, **one scholarship** was awarded in the county.

### Quality Rating in Communities

**Seeds to Success** is the voluntary quality rating and improvement system for licensed child care being piloted in Washington. The Washington State Department of Early Learning and Thrive by Five Washington are partnering to test the Seeds to Success standards with the help of **93** voluntary facilities in White Center (King County), East Yakima and in Spokane, Kitsap and Clark counties. In fall 2010, Seeds sites received a baseline rating:

#### Environment Rating Scales (ERS) - Scale of 1 (Inadequate) to 7 (Excellent)

Early Childhood	4.29
Infant/Toddler	3.84
Family Child Care	3.92
<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>Centers: 4.01</b>
	<b>FCC: 3.91</b>

The **3.82 to 4.25** score range on the ERS indicates "minimum to better than custodial care".

#### Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)-Scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high)

	Centers	FCC
Emotional Support	5.12	5.82
Classroom Organization	4.58	5.22
Instructional Support	3.35	3.05

CLASS measures teacher/child interaction. CLASS scores are in the mid-range.

#### Seeds to Success Quality Standard Areas Scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

	Centers	FCC
<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>1.08</b>	<b>1.00</b>

The baseline data shows that children are cared for in facilities with warm and responsive providers. The overall **1 to 1.08** average rating also indicates the need for **quality improvement investments that ensure children receive high quality early learning opportunities that promote ready and successful children.**

In spring 2011, programs will receive a second rating after receiving targeted coaching and professional development. In late 2011, DEL will adopt the final seeds model and expand statewide, depending on funding availability.

## About the Families

Families who access CCR&R services are regularly surveyed by the CCR&R Network in order to enhance our services and inform policymakers. Parents report that they contact their local CCR&Rs for:

- A list of providers (90%)
- Information on child care options (54%)
- Child care payment options (5%)
- Education about what quality childcare looks like (2%)
- Details on child care rules and regulations (2%)

Parents surveyed indicated that CCR&R services helped them understand:

- The steps to take to find childcare (68%)
- What their family needs from a childcare provider (56%)
- The importance of quality child care for their child's development and growth (51%)
- What a quality childcare provider looks like (49%)

**85% of parents surveyed reported that they found child care as a result of contacting their local child care resource and referral.**

*"This is the greatest site and service. Every new parent should learn about this, even if they think they won't need it. Thank you."*

— Anonymous Parent, 2010 Survey

## Affordability for Families

### How much does child care cost in my community?

Countywide, the annual median household income in 2009 was **\$35,877**. The tables below show the annual median price of full-time care for one child by age group and type of care. The median price indicates that half the providers in the area charge more and half charge less than the prices quoted here.

Centers	2009 Median Annual Cost for 1 Child	% of 2009 Med. Household Inc.
Infant	N/A	N/A
Toddler	N/A	N/A
Preschool	N/A	N/A
School Age	N/A	N/A
Family Child Care	2009 Median Annual Cost for 1 Child	% of 2009 Med. Household Inc.
Infant	\$6,630	18%
Toddler	\$6,630	18%
Preschool	\$6,630	18%
School Age	\$3,120	9%
Four-year Public University	2009 Annual Cost for 1 Student	% of 2009 Med. Household Inc.
Student at WSU	\$11,700	33%

Child care represents a substantial expense for families. With no centers in Columbia County, the cost of full-time care for an infant in a family child care home represents 18% of the county's 2009 median household income. Care for an infant and a preschool child would represent over one-third (37%) of the median income, which exceeds the cost of tuition for a student at a 4-year public university.

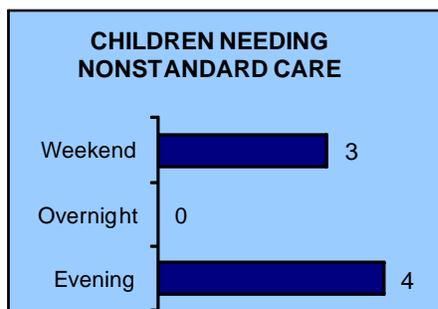
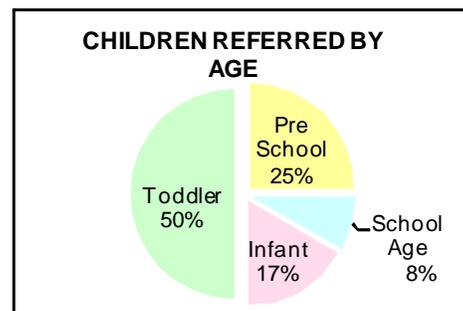
## Families Using CCR&R Services

### Who are the families that call the CCR&R Line?

In 2009, 8 families received referrals. Five of the families (63%) served were low income, and a significant proportion (83%) were headed by single parents.

### What ages of children are referred?

Among the twelve children referred for care, half were toddlers and one-fourth were preschool-age. Two infants and one school age (5-12 years old) children were also referred.



### How many children need non-standard care?

There were 7 requests for referrals to a licensed facility offering non-standard hour care. Over half of the requests (57%) were for evening care (extending past 6:30 PM), and (43%) were for weekend care. There were no requests for overnight care.