

The State of Child Care in Island County



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Presented to Camano Chamber of Commerce by:
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About Us

Whidbey Community
Foundation

Partners for Young
Children in Island County

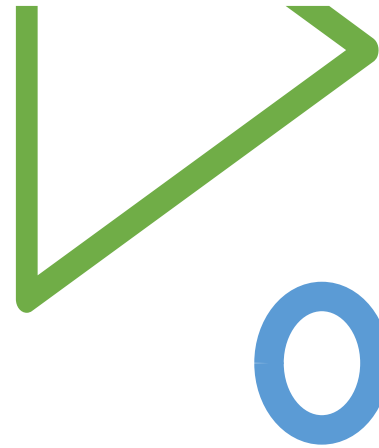


Background

- Funding through a Washington State Department of Commerce Child Care Partnership Grant
- Island County Child Care Partnership Task Force met from January 2021 to June 2021
- Goals – complete a local child care needs assessment and draft recommendations for both state and local policymakers

Why Child Care Matters

- Quality child care is essential to child, family, parent and overall community health
- Accessible quality child care supports gender and racial equity
- Child care is essential for economic health





NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



Race and Ethnicity of Children Under 6

Island County is home to **6,667** young children and their families.

Hispanic/Latinx	1,110	17%
American Indian and Alaska Native	41	1%
Asian	287	4%
Black or African American	240	4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	37	1%
Two or More Races	836	13%
White	4,117	62%
Total	6,667	

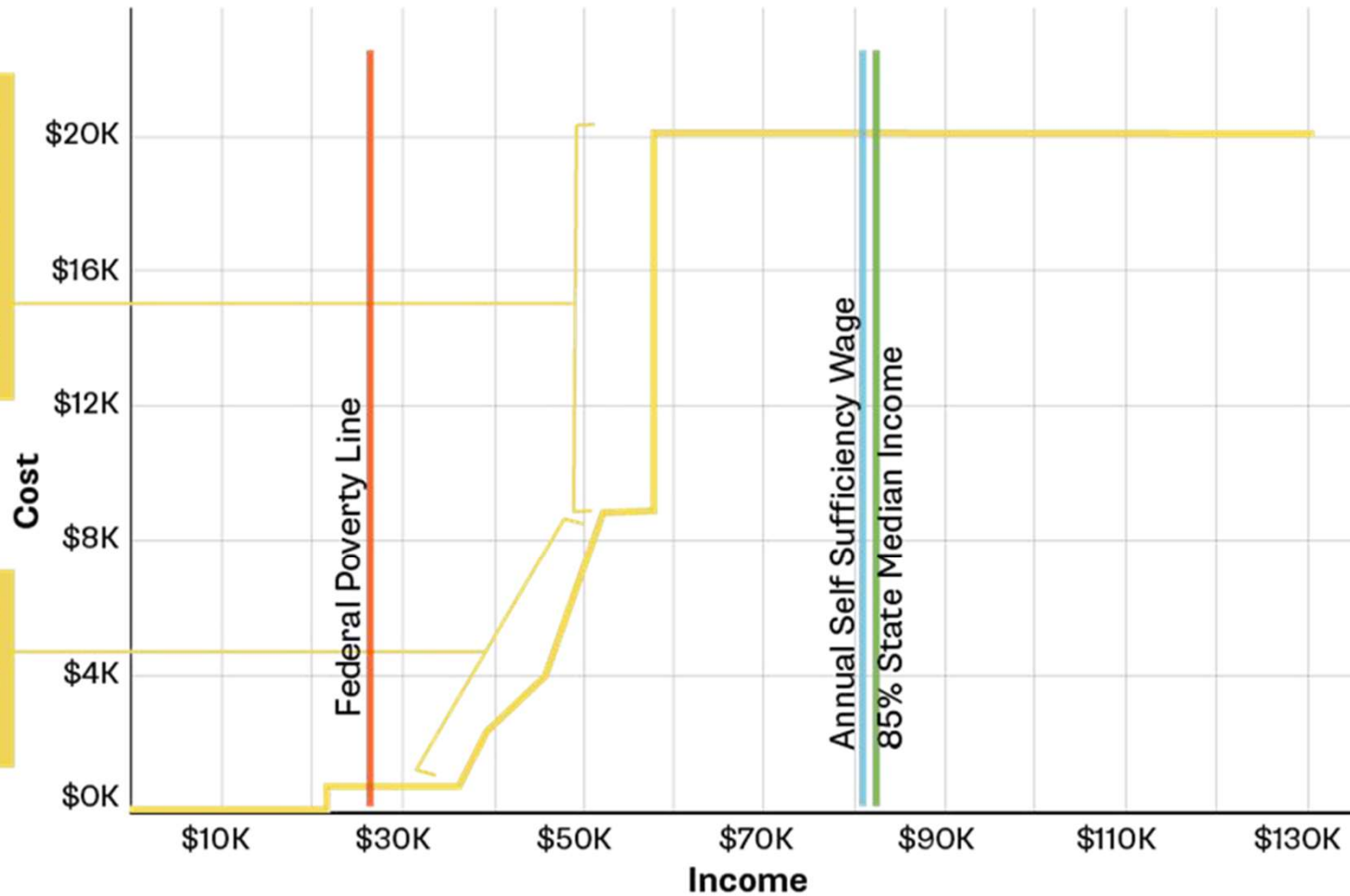
Child Care Affordability

The median income of a family in Island County **\$68,604**. The typical cost of child care is **\$13,000**. The average family in our county pays **19 percent** of their income for one child in child care.

	Median Income	Average % of income spent on child care	If child care cost was 7% of average income
	Island County	Island County	Island County
All	\$68,604	19%	\$4,802
Hispanic/Latinx	\$57,379	23%	\$4,017
Two or more races	\$67,400	19%	\$4,718
White	\$68,909	19%	\$4,824
Other	\$66,458	20%	\$4,652

Percent of Annual Income Spent on Child Care

2 Adults, 1 Preschooler, and 1 Infant



In Island County, a single dollar (\$1.00) more of monthly income, from \$57,624 to \$57,625 increases the cost of child care 125%.

For every \$1,000 of increased income per year, \$500 will go to child care.

A family of four would need to make \$288,343 in order for child care to be 7% of their income.

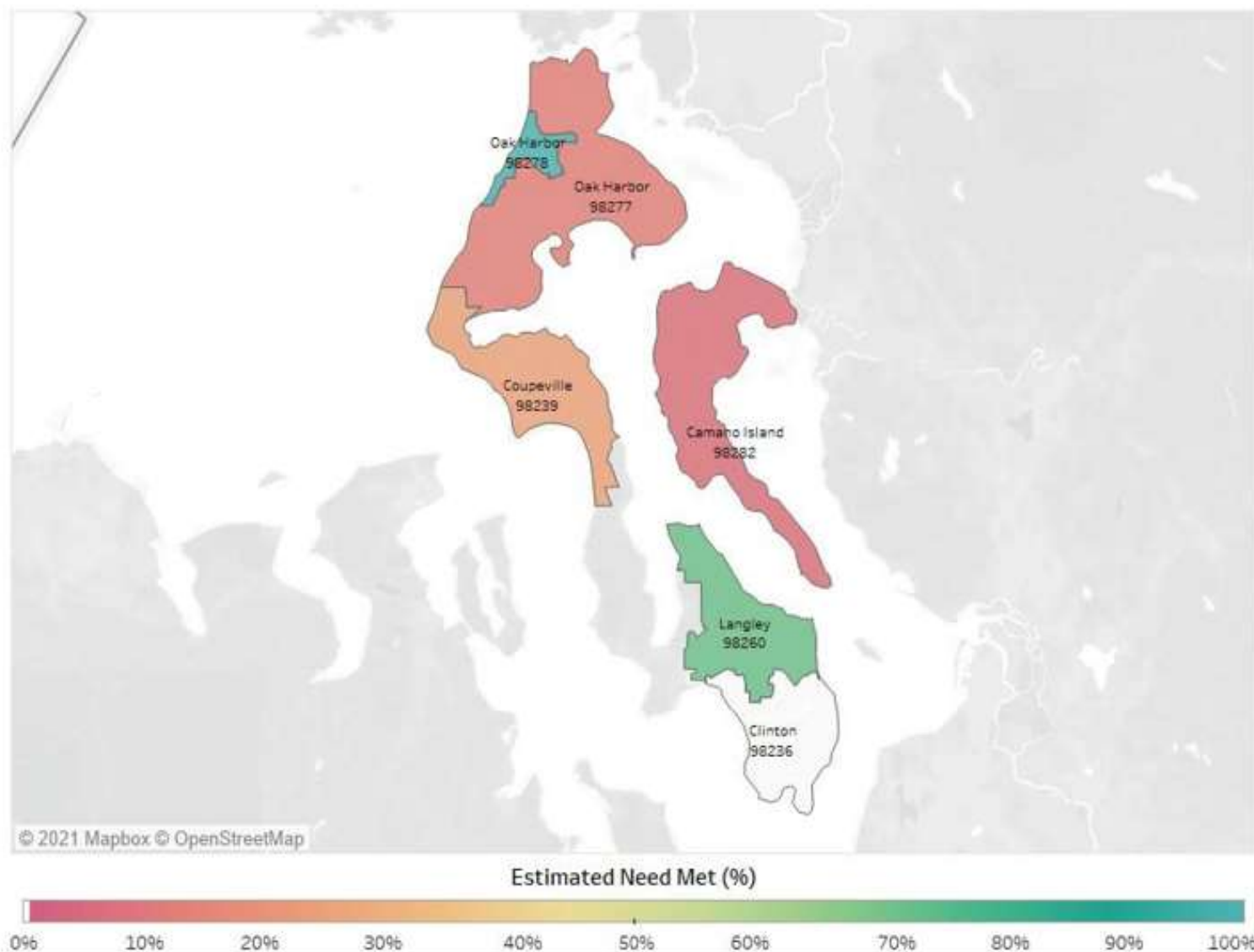
Child Care Access

Island County licensed child care availability **only meets the needs of approximately 11 percent** (550 children) of children under six whose parents are in the workforce and need care.

Geography	Infant/Toddler	Preschool	Total all ages
Total Island County Unmet Need	1,460	880	2,340

Estimated Educators Needed	Infant Teachers	Toddler Teachers	Preschool Teachers	Total
Island County	190	160	110	460

Map 1: Island County Estimated Percent Child Care Demand Met Overall (All Children Under Six [all infants, toddlers, and preschoolers])



Local Survey Results

Parents/Guardians

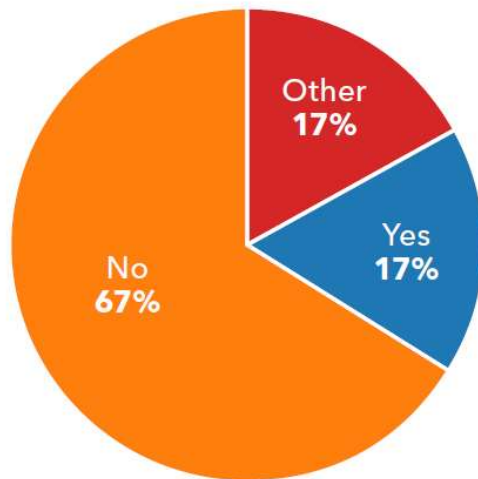
- **61% of families would use licensed child care** if it were to be available, and that for all or almost all families their top priorities in the care of their child are cost (100%), quality (95%), and location (95%).
- More families across demographics agreed that they would **prefer licensed center based**, license-exempt preschool programs, or school-age programs compared to more informal options such as paid or unpaid care by family, friends, or neighbors.
- No (0%) **Latinx parents** and only **37% of Multiracial parents** reported using their preferred child care type, compared to **59% of White parents**.

Local Survey Results

Parents/Guardians

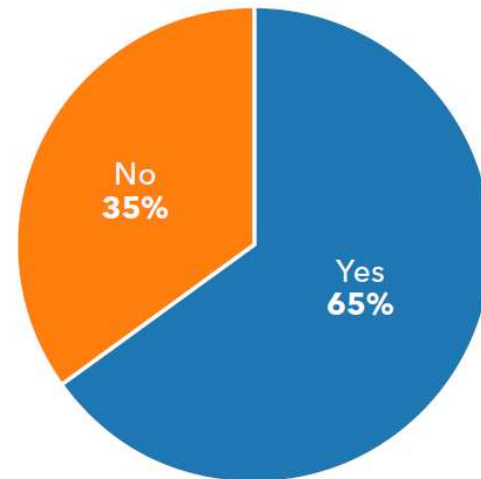
Parent/Guardian Use of Preferred Care for \$20,000 - \$39,000 Income Range

Are you currently using your preferred child care?



Parent/Guardian Use of Preferred Care for \$80,000 - \$99,000 Income Range

Are you currently using your preferred child care?

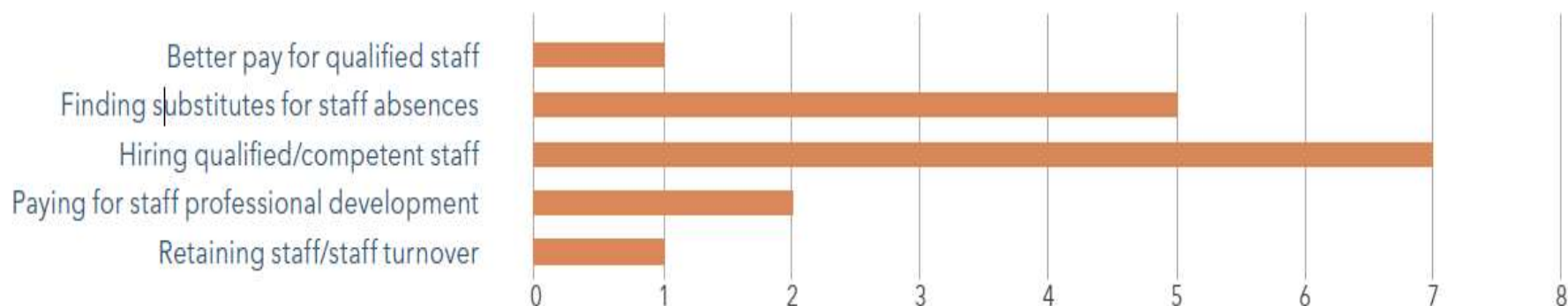


Local Survey Results

Providers

Child Care Staffing Problems

Please indicate which of the staffing problems you currently experience in your business (check all that apply)



“To retain staff, we need to make the jobs better. Offering employment packages and benefits like other jobs – medical, retirement – so that people will think it’s worth it.”

– Island County Child Care Provider



Child Care as Small Business

- Economic Impact
 - \$24,000 cost of quality child care per child
 - \$9,988 max subsidy allowed for at-home child care
 - 75% charge less than or equal to \$9,174
- COVID Impacts
 - 14 child care programs temporarily closed
 - 36% estimated capacity loss of 430 slots
 - 8 child care programs (81 jobs) received a Paycheck Protection Loan

Summary of Needs

- 4,299 (62%) of children under the age of 6 have all parents in the workforce
 - 2,340 (63%) would likely use child care if it were to be available
 - 1,460 (34%) are infants and toddlers, and there are currently a total of 124 child care slots for this age group available in Island County
- There are 288 infants and toddlers currently not served in any way by Early Head Start in Island County
- Approximately 460 additional educators would need to be hired to meet child care needs. This does not include administrative and support staff

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 - Facilities

The Task Force recommends that Island County review its code relating to child care and early childhood education premises and look for creative and affordable ways to leverage existing structures and encourage the development of new child care facilities, including outdoor spaces.

Recommendation 2 - Training and Education

The Task Force recommends a combination of local, regional, and state support to prioritize education, training, and compensation for child care directors and staff.

Recommendation 3 - Funding

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers address the issue of appropriate funding streams for child care programs and providers.

Recommendations

Recommendation 4 - Access

The Task Force recommends that both local and state policymakers prioritize access to high quality child care for all families.

Recommendation 5 - Quality

The Task Force recommends that all providers, both centers and home care, should be required to take part in a quality assurance program, with equity and anti-racist principles centered in the implementation of this requirement.

Recommendation 6 – Additional Local Advocacy

The Task Force recommends local advocacy efforts that focus on the following: integrating child care programs within the public schools system, co-locating child care in workforce housing and other new housing projects, and outreach to the business community about the business impacts of inadequate child care.

Current Focus

- State and local level policy and investments
- Year two Commerce funding to coordinate local work
- Co-location of child care in future building projects – outreach with community organizations, business partners, and funders
- Investment of ARPA funds in child care programs/projects
- Advocating for review of local code to facilitate greater ease in permitting child care operations
- Bringing the Northwest Center for Child Care Retention and Expansion/Opportunity Council (C-RECC NW) to Island County
- Creating an Island County Child Care Provider network with quarterly meetings to provide support to the child care workforce and facilitate access to training
- Creative workforce solutions - Skagit Valley College's Early Learning Program to expand to Island County



QUESTIONS