



TRENDS IN CHILD CARE • 2024



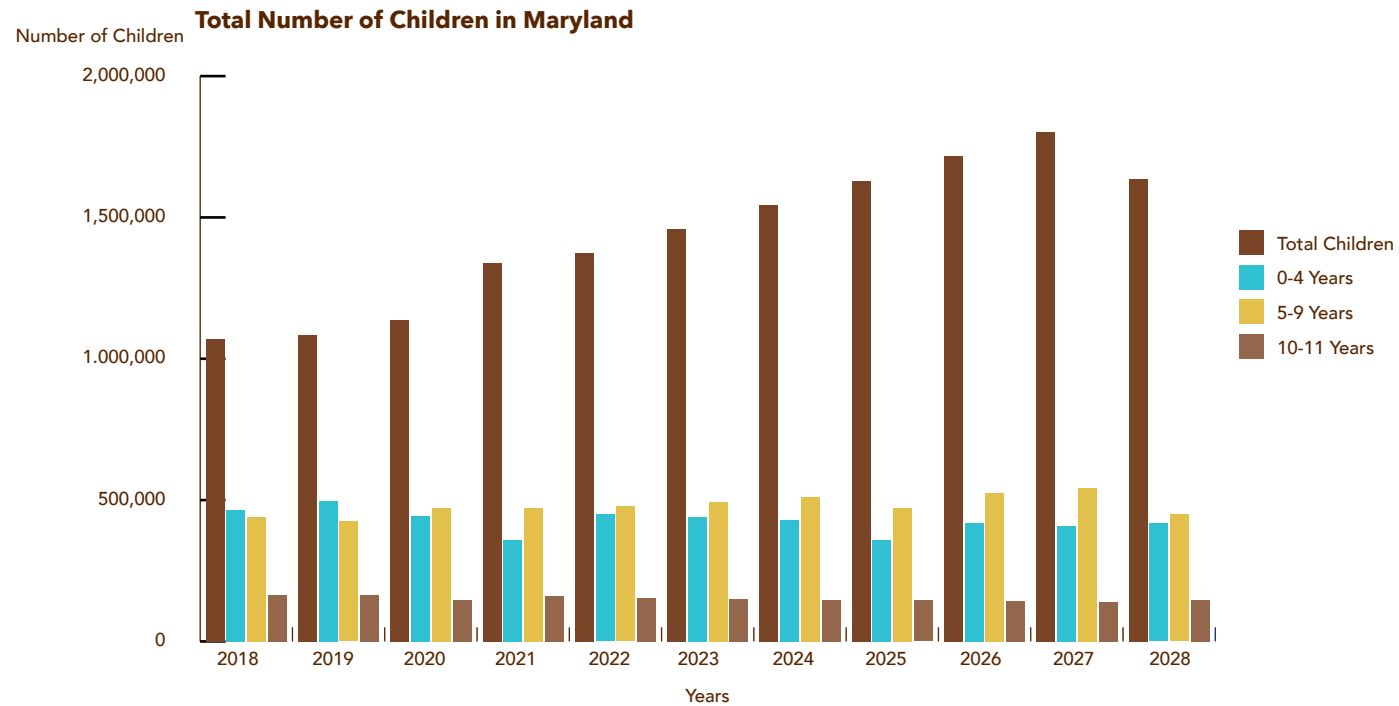
MARYLAND
FAMILY
NETWORK

Studies show that quality childcare in the first five years is crucial. The Heckman Equation¹ indicates that there is a 13% return on investment when disadvantaged children have access to high quality birth-to five programs. “Significant gains are realized through better outcomes in education, health, social behaviors and employment.” In addition to school readiness benefits and health benefits, that long term return on investment includes reduced remediation; increased rates of high school graduation; higher rates of adult employment; contribution to society including paying taxes.

This publication provides a summary of the critical components of childcare (demand, supply, and cost) from 2019-2028. The analysis is based on the data collected by LOCATE: Child Care of the Maryland Family Network and the Maryland Child Care Resource Network. The historical data collected from 2019 to the present is analyzed in the following summary and is used to project the data forecasts for 2024 through 2028. The results of the analysis are presented through a combination of graphs, charts, and text descriptions that summarize the data and interpret the trends.

How many children in Maryland will need child care in the future?

In Maryland, there are 1,372,689 children . Sixty-six percent or more, 905,975 children in 2023 are under 12 and may require childcare while their mothers are at work.²



The chart above² shows the total number of children under twelve in Maryland and groups them into the indicated age ranges. The chart indicates the data collected to date and projects the size of the population from which the future of the total population of children under the age of 12 have mothers in the work force and may require childcare.

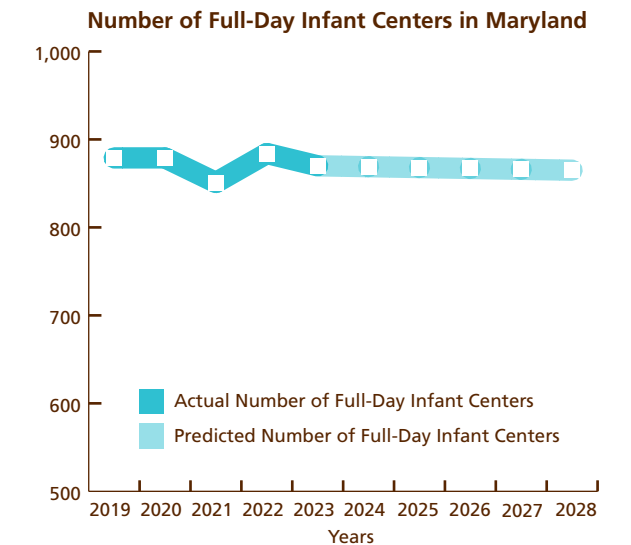
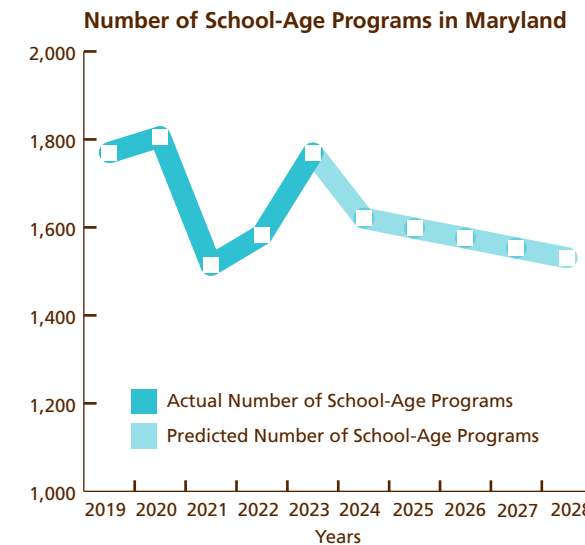
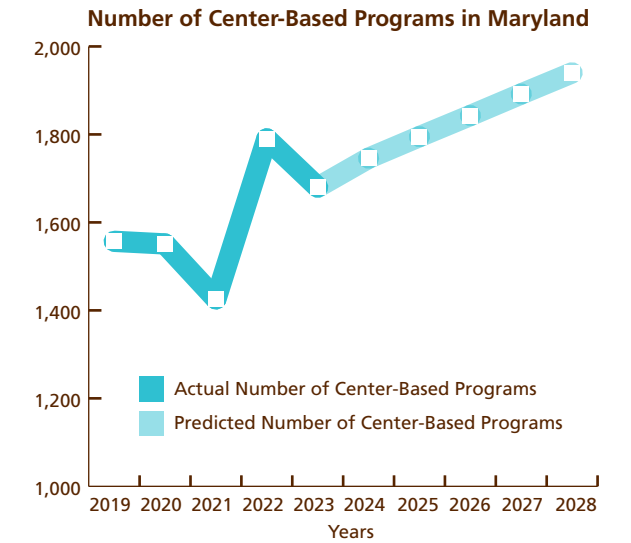
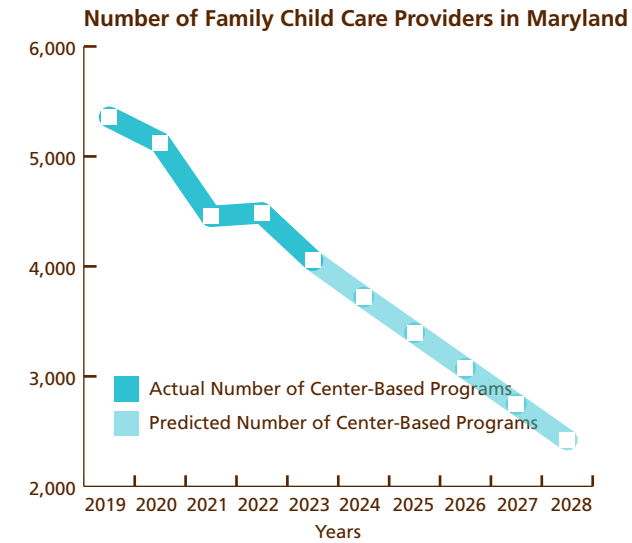
Analysis of the data provides the following trends from 2024 through 2028:

- The number of children in the 0-4 age group is projected decrease by 14%.
- The number of children in the 5-9 age group is projected to increase by 19%.
- The number of children in the 10-11 age group is projected to decrease by 14%.
- The total number of children under 12 in Maryland is projected to increase by 4%

¹Heckman, James J (2016)/ There’s more to gain by taking a comprehensive approach to early childhood development. Heckmanequation.org

²2022 American Community Survey

How many child care providers will there be in Maryland in the future?



The graphs above depict the number of licensed childcare providers in the state of Maryland, including both family providers and center-based programs. Separate graphs indicating the number of school-age programs and full day infant care are also provided. The graphs indicate the actual numbers collected to date and show projections based on this information for the near future.³

The second pair of graphs depicts the growth of school age programs and full-day infant centers in Maryland. The number of school-age programs is projected to decrease from 2023-2028, with a decrease of about 16%. However, over this same period, the number of full-day infant centers in Maryland is expected to stay approximately the same.

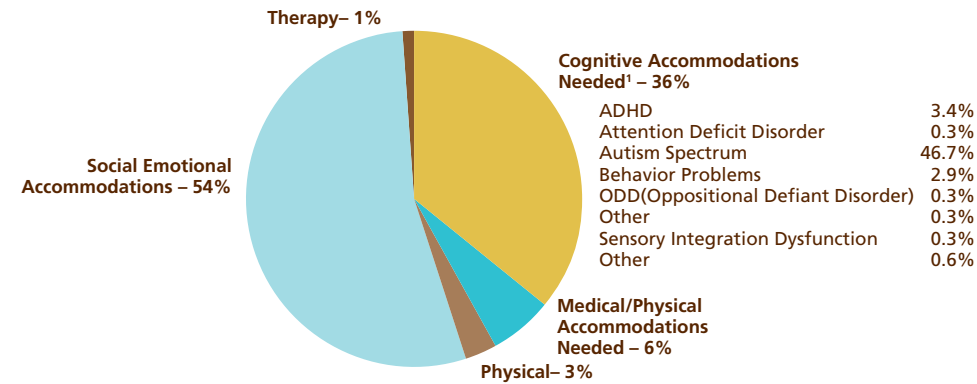
As shown in the first graph, the number of family childcare providers in Maryland shows a projected decrease of about 41% from 2023 to 2026. Over this same period, the number of center-based programs shows a projected increase of 13%.

³Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

Is there a need for child care that can serve children with social/emotional disorders?

The need for child care for children with special needs is substantial, and children with emotional and social challenges comprise a large segment of the population in need of these services.

Accommodations Needed by Children with Special Needs Served Through LOCATE: Child Care



LOCATE: Child Care supports the families of special needs children by assisting them in finding regulated child care providers experienced in caring for children with special needs. Referral specialists work with the parent to determine what accommodations are needed based on the child's and family's circumstances. The specialist then contacts providers with appropriate experience to determine where there are vacancies. Specialists also counsel parents in finding quality child care.

In 2023, LOCATE: Child Care's Special Needs Service provided enhanced child care resource and referral services to the families of 374 children with special needs. The demand for these services was greatest for young children – from birth to age six.

Of the children with disabilities and their siblings served, 75.4% were under the age of six. Only 1.6% of services related to children age thirteen to twenty-one. For the children with disabilities for whom accommodations were required, more than sixty percent (70.6%) served by LOCATE's Special Needs Service had a single disability while the remaining 29.4% had multiple disabilities.⁴

Many children with a disability need some accommodation in child care settings. In earlier years, LOCATE's Special Needs Service had noticed a significant number of children needing social/emotional accommodations. Since 2006, the percentage of children needing social/emotional accommodations has been between 36% to 54.9%

Of the children requiring social/emotional accommodations, over forty-five percent (46.8%) children were identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Maryland Family Network works in partnership with the Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Project. This project of the Maryland State Department of Education addresses the mental health needs of children from birth to 5 years of age. The project's goals are to:

- Promote positive social/emotional wellness practices in early childhood settings;
- Identify and work proactively with children who may have development, social, emotional, or behavioral concerns;⁵
- Refer children and families in need of more intensive mental health services to appropriate support and/or clinical programs;
- Help children remain in stable, quality child care arrangements that support their individual needs;
- Increase teacher confidence and competence dealing with challenging behaviors through training, coaching and mentoring, and
- Build close partnerships with local community resources including Judy Centers, Head Start Centers, health departments, Child Find, Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program, preschool special education, and private consultation providers.⁶

⁴ Numbers include children with developmental delays as well as those with social/emotional disorders. Children with developmental delays often need social/emotional accommodations in the child care setting.

⁵ Includes such conditions as bipolar disorder, depression, emotional problems, mood disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

⁶ Maryland Department of Education, Early Childhood Development, earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/early-childhood-mental-health

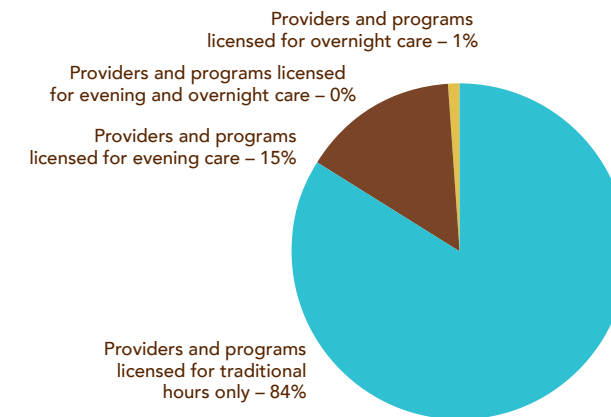
What about non-traditional hours of care?

Approximately 16.1% of caregivers are licensed to offer evening or overnight care.

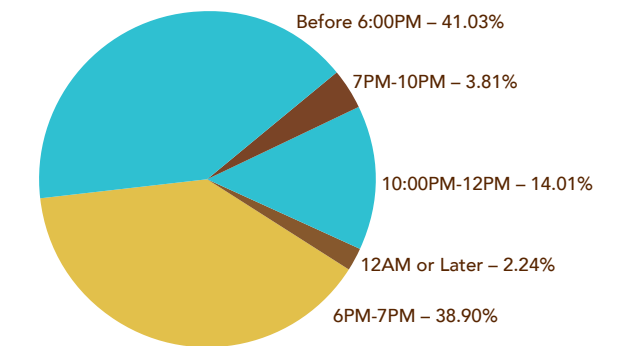


NEED

Child Care Providers and Programs Licensed to Provide Day, Evening, and Overnight Care



Closing Hours of Providers and Programs Licensed to Provide Evening or Overnight Care



Of the caregivers that are licensed for evening or overnight care, about 18% actually offer non-traditional hours of care. In fiscal year 2024, LOCATE: Child Care received requests for child care for 3099 children⁷. Of these requests, 1.2% (40) needed care during evening hours (7:00 p.m. to midnight), and 0.5% (16) needed care overnight (midnight to 6:00 a.m.). The percent of demand for evening care and overnight care dropped slightly from the previous year.⁸

⁷ Includes Community Line, Corporate and Special Needs Services

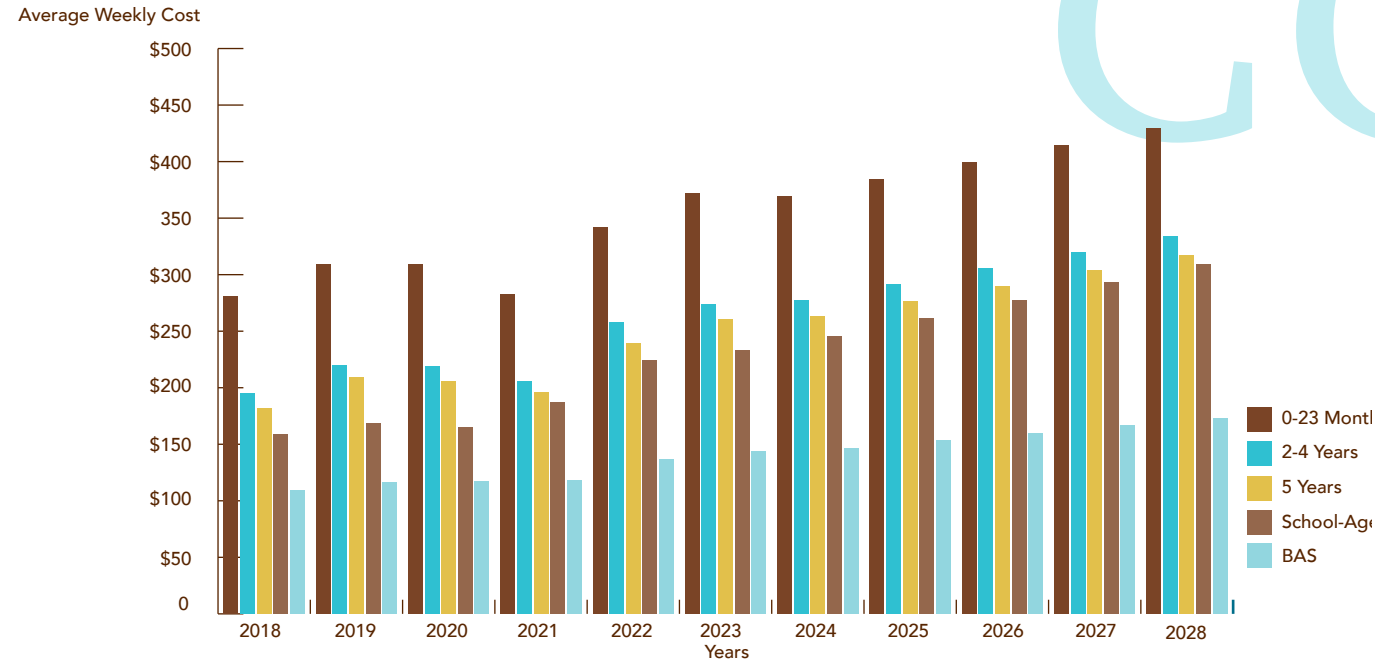
⁸ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

Will the cost of child care continue to grow?

The cost of care has shown, and will continue to show, general growth.

COST

Average Cost of Care in Maryland Center-Based Programs



Average Cost of Care in Maryland Family Child Care Programs



The charts above show actual and projected weekly costs of regulated childcare in Maryland, grouped according to child age. The charts include both the actual cost data collected to date and the projected future costs based on the trends of these data. Analyzing the cost data shows that, childcare costs are projected to increase through 2028 from 13-15%, depending on age and type of care. The cost of care for school-age children in a center-based program has the highest growth rate of any age group or program with a projected increase of 20%; the increase of the rate for 2-4 year old is 11%.

These ages show slower growth for family childcare programs with 13% growth rate for Birth-23 months and 18% for 2-4 years. Center-based programs increased from 2022 to 2023 in all age categories. The annual average cost of childcare in a center for an infant 0-23 months old is \$19,350⁹ compared to:

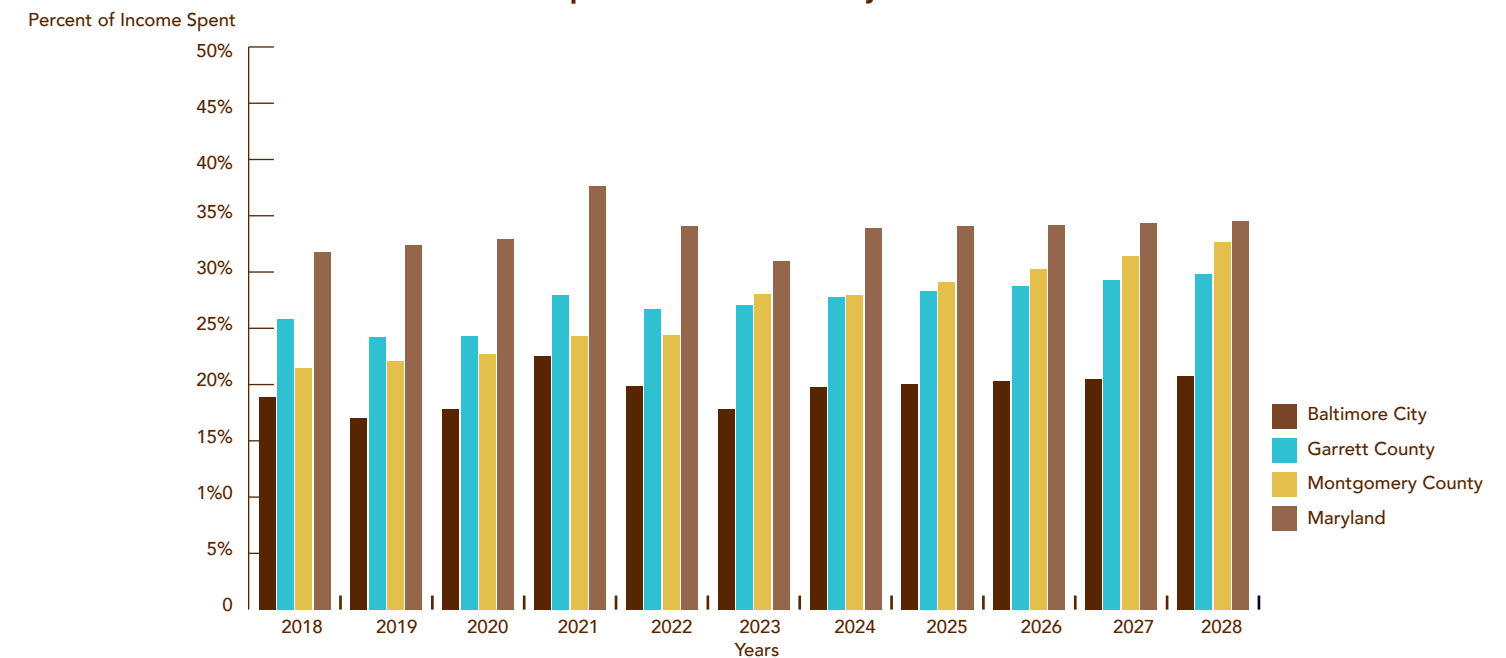
- The annual average cost of in-state college tuition in Maryland for the 2021-2022 academic school year was \$11,505¹⁰
- The average mortgage payment in Maryland annualized is \$26,940¹¹
- The annual car payment for a \$23,000 car loan at 6.96% for 48 months is \$6,876¹²

How much of a family's income is spent on child care?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human services recommends that a parent should not spend more than 10% of their family income on childcare.



Percent of Median Income Spent on Child Care in Maryland



The chart above shows the percentage of income that is spent on childcare by a family using childcare services and projects the spending requirements into the near future. The estimated cost of childcare is the combined average of full-time care for an infant in a family childcare home and a preschooler in a child care center. There are three jurisdictions presented on the chart to represent three different population area types – an urban population (Baltimore City), a suburban population (Montgomery County), and a rural population (Garrett County) – as well as the state as a whole.

The current expenditures are all above the recommended goal of 10%, and all jurisdictions and the state show a projected increase over the next five years. Based on these projections, neither Maryland nor any of the individual jurisdictions are expected to meet the 10% goal by 2028¹³.

⁹ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

¹⁰ University of Maryland College Park in-state tuition 2022-2023

¹¹ American Community Survey 2022

¹² Carvana.com

¹³ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care and the 2010 U.S. census

What about the turnover rate among center-based child care staff?

28% of center-based staff left their positions between January 2023 and December 2023.

In January 2024, Maryland Family Network (MFN) conducted a survey of child care centers in the state to measure the extent of staff turnover. Responses were received from 171 of the centers. The workforce employed by the 171 responding centers numbered 2,251 as of

January 2023 in the ensuing year (January to December 2023), 626 members (28%) of this child care workforce left their positions¹⁴.

The greatest turnover (37%) occurred in the teacher assistant group.

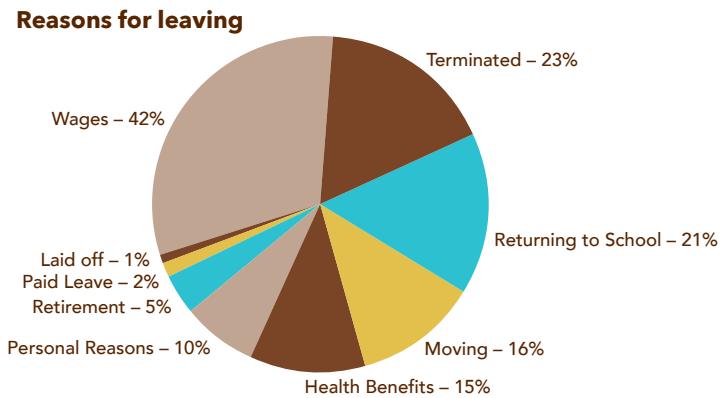
Total Staff and Exiting Staff at Responding Child Care Centers

Staff Level	Number of employees at start of year	Number of employees that left during the year	Percent of employees that left during the year
Director	207	20	10%
Teachers	1159	305	26%
Assistant Teachers	348	103	37%

What factors contribute to the turnover rate among center-based child care staff?

Wages are the major factor affecting staff turnover.

In the survey cited above 171 respondents provided reasons why those in child care left their positions. Some respondents gave multiple reasons. Many responses pointed toward wage related concerns (42% wages, 15% Health Benefits and 2% paid leave), 16% answered that turnover was due to employees who moved and 21% indicated a return to school as a reason. Twenty-three percent reported that employees were terminated or laid off. Of the 171 centers in the survey, only about 14% did not have any turnover during that time period.¹⁵



What about the family child care provider turnover rate?

6.5% of Maryland's licensed family child care providers left the profession last year.

The turnover rate is a source of concern. One outcome of high turnover care is inconsistent care for children who are forced to change from one caregiver to another. In addition, high turnover rates create a less experienced child care workforce. In the year ending in June 2023, 87% of family child care providers who left the industry and responded to our survey had been operating for four or more years with about 49% in operation for 10 years or more. None of the family providers surveyed by MFN had been operating their business for less than two.¹⁶

In 2023, MFN surveyed 60 new family child care providers. As shown below, their primary reason for entering the child care profession was that they enjoy working with children and that they want to stay home with their own children.

¹⁴ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

¹⁵ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

¹⁶ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

What attracts people to a career in family child care?

What causes them to leave?

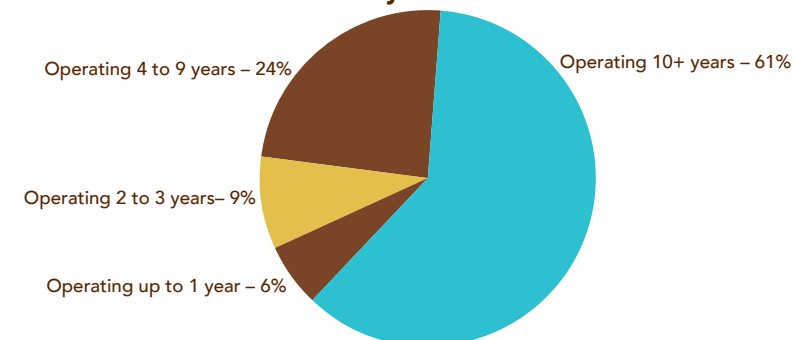
Child care providers enter a career in child care for several reasons. A survey conducted in 2023 indicates that most of the providers surveyed entered the profession (52%) because they enjoy working with children, twenty-five percent wanted to stay home with their children followed up by nine percent who felt there was no quality child care for their own children.

Family Providers surveyed by Maryland Family Network who left the profession did so for a variety of reasons. Fifteen percent indicated burnout as the top reason. COVID was listed as the second most attributed reason while some providers moved or retired. Thirteen percent of providers cited the licensing process or regulations for their decision.

The provider turnover rate represents changes in the child care provider database due to providers leaving the child care profession due to the above reasons. The turnover rate is calculated as the total family providers who left the field between July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 divided by the number of family care providers in June 2022. The total number of family providers has essentially remained the same from June 30, 2022 calculated by the number of providers on June 30, 2023.

Providers surveyed by Maryland Family Network who left the profession did so for a variety of reasons. Fifteen percent indicated burnout as the top reason. COVID was listed as the second most attributed reason while some providers moved or retired. A few providers replied that the licensing process or regulations informed their decision. Unlike previous years compensation was only mentioned when referring to child care scholarship payment issues.

Number of Years Family Providers Have Been in the Field



High turnover in child care can affect the quality of the child care program. Children are prevented from having a secure attachment with the teachers. The result is a negative effect on children's social, emotional, and language development.¹⁷

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Reasons New Family Child Care Providers Entered the Child Care Profession in Maryland

I enjoy working with children	52%
I want to stay home with my children	20%
No quality child care for my own children	9%
Extra income	5%
I decided to leave my prior work situation	5%
I wanted to provide a service to my community	5%
Other (please explain)	5%

Source: Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

Reasons Maryland Family Child Care Providers Leave the Child Care Profession

Burned out on the job	15%
Licensing/Regulations	13%
Other	13%
COVID	11%
Moved	8%
Retired	8%
My family has been touched by personal illness or death other than COVID	6%
Couldn't get enough children to make it profitable	4%
Had to wait too long for Scholarship/ Subsidy payments	4%
Just didn't like child care anymore	4%
My children grew up	4%
Needed benefits	4%
Closed by Office of Child Care	2%
Had difficulty dealing with parents	2%
Have a new job	2%
Needed to make costly repairs to my home	2%

Source: Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

¹⁷ Noriko Porter, [USA] High Turnover among Early Childhood Educators in the United States. Cited Korjenevitch, M., & Dunifon, R. (2010). Child care center quality and child development. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University.

What are the average salaries of child care workers in Maryland?

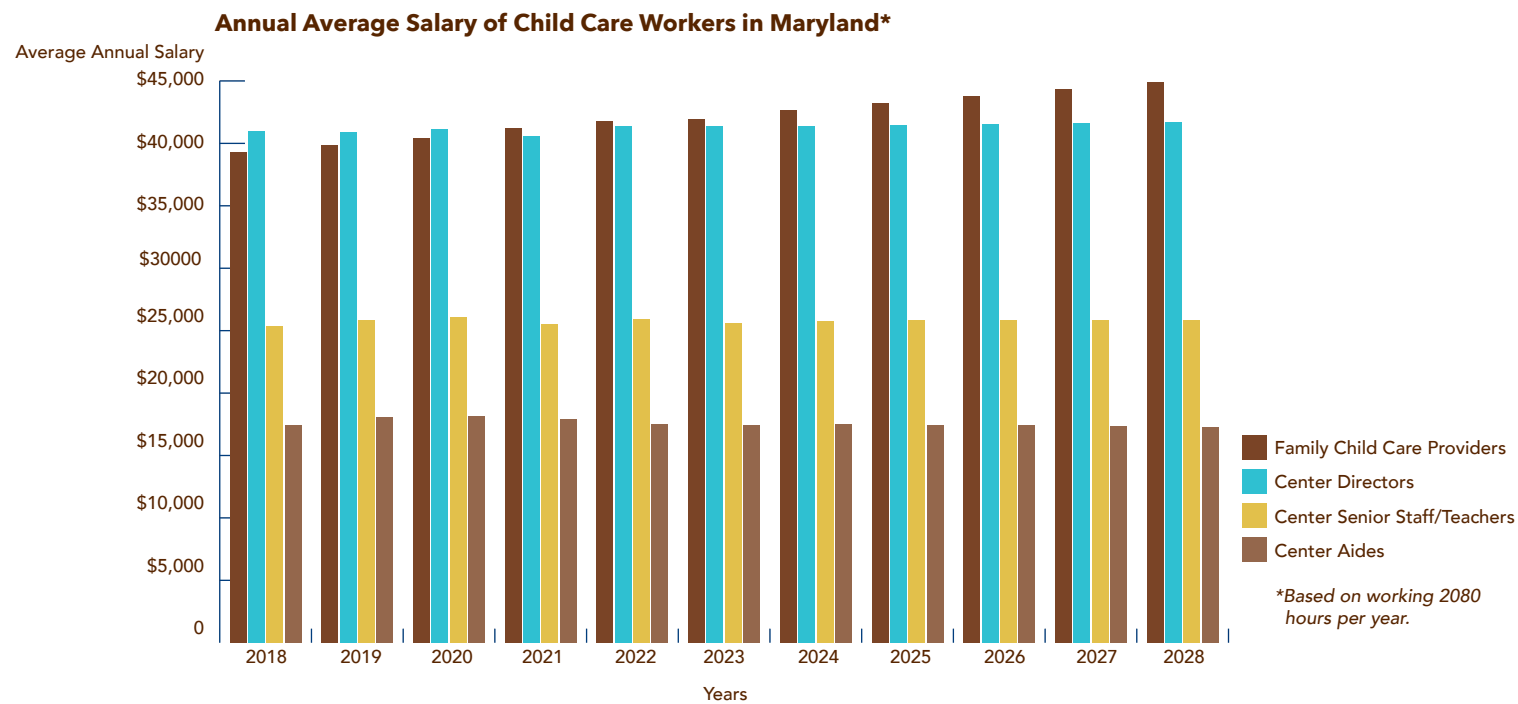
COMPENSATION

The salaries of child care workers are low, when compared to other occupations – ranging between \$8.37* and \$20.16 per hour or annualized to \$17,402 to \$41,936.¹⁸

As a comparison:

A minimum wage worker in Maryland earns \$27,560¹⁹

Fast food cooks in Baltimore, Maryland earn a base hourly wage of \$13.90 annualized to \$28,911 Kindergarten teachers in Baltimore Maryland earn \$79,420²⁰



The chart above summarizes the salary growth of four categories of child care workers. Actual data, collected to the present date, is indicated as well as future projections based on these data. As depicted in the graph, the salaries of all child care workers show a general increase to date with continued projected growth.

Based on current trends, by 2028, family child care provider income is projected to grow by 7%; center director salaries are projected to stay roughly the same and as will aides. Directors' salaries are projected to grow 1%. Center teacher salaries are projected to increase by 1%.²¹ The salary of aides is projected to decrease by 1%.

¹⁸Includes staff who work part time so this may affect the hourly rate it annualizes to \$17,402

¹⁸ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

¹⁹ Maryland Department of Labor, Minimum Wage and Overtime Law, 2020

²⁰ Maryland Fast Food Cook Salaries, Salary.com, 2020

²¹ Maryland Kindergarten Teacher Salaries, Salary.com, 2020

²⁵ Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care

How can the quality of child care be improved?

QUALITY



Over the past several years, programs, both at the state and national level, have been created to improve the quality of child care. These voluntary programs have been credited with developing criteria for improving both child care programs and the skills of individuals working in the child care field. Participation in one of these programs provides recognition to those child care providers or programs that go beyond the minimum requirements of state licensing and regulations.

Successfully meeting the established criteria for programs is recognized by awarding the program a status of "accredited". Likewise, meeting the criteria for individuals working in child care programs is recognized by awarding a status of "credentialed". Documentation of these efforts in Fiscal Year 2023 has been supplied for this report by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Provider Type ¹	Total Participating Staff
Family Child Care Providers ²	1,298
Licensed Child Care Center Staff (Including LOCs) ²	9,616
Head Start Providers ³	718
Early Head Start Providers ³	360

¹The credentialing data only applies to the individual person not employers. It includes all staff that were credentialled in FY 2023 and that were also employed by a provider in FY 2023.

²If a staff member was employed at both a center and a family provider, they will appear in both categories. School providers are a subset of Centers.

³Head Start and Early Head Start providers are a subset of the larger groups (if a Center is a Head Start provider then a staff member may be counted in both).

Maryland Child Care Resource Network

BALTIMORE CITY
Baltimore City Child Care Resource Center
 The Family Tree
 2108 N Charles St
 Baltimore, MD 21218
 tel 410.889.2300
<https://familytreemd.org/bcccr/>

CENTRAL MARYLAND NORTH - BALTIMORE, CECIL & HARFORD COUNTIES
Abilities Network Project ACT
 8503 LaSalle Rd
 Towson, MD 21286
 tel 410.828.7700
<https://anprojectact.org>

CENTRAL MARYLAND SOUTH - ANNE ARUNDEL & PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTIES
Child Resource Connect
 9475 Lottsford Rd, Ste 202
 Largo, MD 20774
 tel 301.772.8420

44 Calvert St, Rm 140A
 Annapolis, MD 21401
 tel 443.782.5001
<https://www.childresource.org>

EASTERN SHORE - CAROLINE, DORCHESTER, KENT, QUEEN ANNE'S, SOMERSET, TALBOT, WICOMICO & WORCESTER COUNTIES
Eastern Shore Child Care Resource Center
 Salisbury University
 East Campus Complex, Ste 500
 Power and Wayne Sts
 Salisbury, MD 21804
 tel 410.543.6650
<http://www.easternshoreccrc.org>

HOWARD COUNTY
Howard County Child Care Resource Center
 Howard County Office of Children & Families
 9830 Patuxent Woods Dr
 Columbia, MD 21046
 tel 410.313.1940
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/children-families/child-care-resource-center>

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Montgomery County Child Care Resource Center
 Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services
 1401 Rockville Pike, Ste 200
 Rockville, MD 20852

tel 240.777.GROW (4769)
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/CYF/MCCCRRC/index.html>

SOUTHERN MARYLAND CALVERT, CHARLES & ST. MARY'S COUNTIES
The Promise Resource Center
 8395 Old Leonardtown Rd
 Hughesville, MD 20637
 tel 240.528.2288
<http://thepromisecenter.org>

WESTERN MARYLAND ALLEGANY, CARROLL, FREDERICK, GARRETT & WASHINGTON COUNTIES
Child Care Choices
 226 S Jefferson St
 Frederick, MD 21701
 tel 301.663.0011

255 Clifton Blvd, Ste 319
 Westminster, MD 21157
 138 W Washington St, Ste 212
 Hagerstown, MD 21740
<https://fcmha.org/how-we-help/child-care-choices/>

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Listen to *The First Five Years* on WEAA 88.9. It's the only radio series in Maryland dedicated to supporting families of very young children.

LOCATE: Child Care

Our free and confidential LOCATE: Child Care service will help your family identify high quality care and guide you through the process of selecting a program that is just right for your family including location, cost, and other considerations

Family Education

The Family Education Service helps adults make connections with educational opportunities such as parenting classes.

Child Care Scholarship

We will assist you in applying for child care scholarship and help you navigate the process including gathering the correct documentation that is needed.

Family Navigation

Parenting can be hard. That's why we've partnered with hundreds of agencies and organizations across Maryland so every family can connect with resources in their community needed to succeed.



Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and Tumblr.



Become a member. Membership supports our advocacy efforts. Member benefits include reduced fees for training and Professional Activity Units for participants in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program.



**MARYLAND CHILD CARE
RESOURCE NETWORK**

The Maryland Child Care Resource Network is a public/private partnership designed to expand and improve child care delivery in Maryland. Maryland Family Network manages the Network and operates as its Statewide Coordinating Entity.



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**MARYLAND
FAMILY
NETWORK**

1800 WASHINGTON BLVD, STE 445
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230-2344
tel 410.659.7701 fax 410.783.0814

marylandfamilynetwork.org