



# 2020 Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council

**Early Care & Education Needed Now**



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## Mission

We lead and collaborate in planning, coordinating, and advocating for high-quality, affordable, and accessible early care and education for all children and families in Santa Barbara County.

## Vision

We envision a community that values all children and families.

## Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council

Funded by California Department of Education (CDE), Early Education and Support Division

Operating under the authority of Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors and Santa Barbara County Education Office (SBCEO)

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# Introduction

This report provides important data and information for the county and its regions to inform prioritization and planning for early care and education in Santa Barbara County. The majority of the information presented herein was collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant changes have occurred since this time; however, until updated data are available it is not possible to adequately discuss the implications as a result of the pandemic. The heroic efforts of our early care and education providers as well as local foundations have been paramount to the continuation of care during the unprecedented times of COVID-19.

**Early care and education is a critical concern for children, parents, employers, and communities as a whole.**

Extensive longitudinal research reports the positive outcomes for children participating in high-quality early care and education programs: improved school performance, decreased need for special education, increased high school graduation rates, decreased crime rates, and increased earnings in adulthood. These findings are found to be magnified for children of families at the lowest income levels.

For many parents, care for children is an ongoing challenge both in terms of finding reliable, high-quality care that fits their needs, and the affordability of the care they would prefer. There is an increasing need for high-quality, available, and affordable early care and education, and limited capacity to meet this need.

The high cost of living in Santa Barbara County makes it particularly difficult for families to provide the basic necessities of life: food, shelter, and clothing. Problems with child care are a major reason for employee absenteeism and decreased performance, resulting in negative impacts on businesses. For all of these reasons, the entire community garners social and economic benefits when high-quality early care and education programs are available and affordable.

## The Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council

Every county in California has a state-mandated child care planning council funded by the CDE. The Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council (the Council) operates under the joint authority of the County Board of Supervisors and the County Superintendent of Schools. The overarching responsibility of the Council is to plan and coordinate early care and education services, establish local priorities, and develop a county-wide strategic plan in Santa Barbara County. The Council will use findings from this report to create the Santa Barbara County Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2020-2025.

For more information and history go to the website.  
[www.sbceo.org/ccpc](http://www.sbceo.org/ccpc)



# Overview of the Report

Given the critical role of quality for effective early care and education programs, the first chapter of the report addresses the Quality of Early Care and Education in Santa Barbara County. Chapter 2 uses demographic data to paint a picture of the children and families of Santa Barbara County. Chapter 3 describes the need for early care and education services and the availability of programs to fill those needs. Chapter 4 examines the cost of early care and education services, and the need for and capacity of subsidized programs for low-income families. Chapter 5 reports the numbers of special populations of children with exceptional needs and, when available, information about the availability of early care and education services that respond to their needs. Chapter 6 describes programs that support the myriad of local early care and education services. The Conclusion summarizes critical findings of early care and education services in Santa Barbara County.



## Methodology

Demographic data was collected from the United States Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). Additional data was collected from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), SBCEO, and our local agencies.



## Operational Definitions

The term early care and education (ECE) program is used throughout this report to refer to licensed child care programs (operated in a family child care home as well as child care center settings) for children 0-5 years of age. At times the term child care is used interchangeably with the term early care and education. School-age care, also known as after-school care refers to care for children 6 to 12 years old.

There are three primary age groups referred to within this report: infant-toddlers (0-2 years), preschoolers (3-5 years), and school-age (6-12 years).

Transitional kindergarten is offered in the school setting for four year olds who will be turning five after December 2nd of the school year.

**Head Start** is a Federal child care program for children birth to age five from low-income families. Children in foster care, homeless children, and children from families receiving public assistance are also eligible regardless of income.

**State Preschool** is a state-funded program which offers full-day or part-day preschool instruction for eligible three- and four-year-old children, with priority given to four year olds.

**License-Exempt Child Care Programs** operate legally without a license. The license-exempt programs reported in this report are primarily before- and after-school programs run by schools and public recreation programs.



## The Regions of Santa Barbara County

For reporting purposes, the zip codes are grouped into four regions:

- Lompoc Valley (93436 and 93437)
- North County (93254, 93429, 93434, 93454, 93455, and 93458)
- Santa Ynez Valley (93427, 93440, 93441, 93460, and 93463)
- South County (93013, 93067, 93101, 93103, 93105, 93108, 93109, 93110, 93111, and 93117/93106)

# Chapter 1: Early Care and Education Program Quality

Research highlights the critical role of early care and education (ECE) program quality for children's optimal outcomes. Children who participate in high-quality programs are more successful in school, are less likely to need special education services, and are more productive, successful adults. Quality programs have environments, relationships, interactions, and activities to support children's growth and development so to prepare them for success in school and life.

Quality improvement is a continuous process undertaken by programs striving to provide the best opportunities for children's optimal development. Improving the quality of ECE services in Santa Barbara County has been an ongoing effort by individuals, programs, and agencies for many years. The following projects support quality improvement:

- Santa Barbara County Quality Counts
- Family Child Care Steps to Quality Network of Children's Resource and Referral
- First 5 of Santa Barbara County
- Early Care and Education Leadership Development Project
- California Preschool Instructional Network
- California Early Childhood Mentor Project
- Workforce Pathways Stipend Project
- California Collaborative on the Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CA CSEFEL)
- Outdoor Classroom Project
- Child Development Training Consortium
- The Inclusive Child Care Action Team Child, Workforce Leadership & Development, Communications Outreach and Advocacy Team



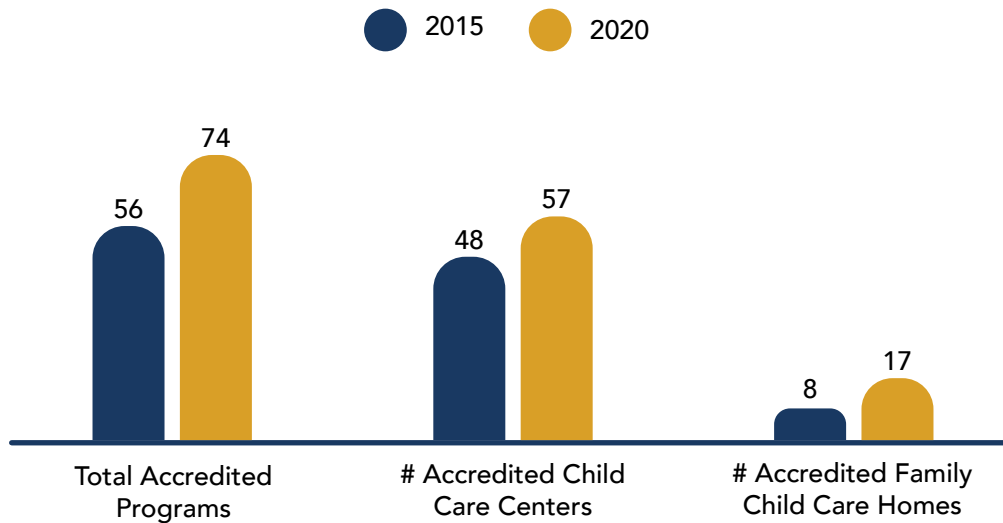
## Accreditation

Accreditation by either the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for ECE centers or the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) for family child care programs is an important recognition of a higher level of program quality. Santa Barbara County has been providing technical assistance and other resources to support accreditation attainment and retention since 2001.

There were **58** accredited child care centers and **16** accredited family child care programs as of June 2020. The total number of accredited programs has increased since 2015 (74 in 2020 vs 56 in 2015). Additionally, as of 2020, there were three family child care programs in the process of becoming accredited. In recent years, several school districts and center-based programs discontinued NAEYC accreditation, yet their quality standards remain high through similarly strong indicators and metrics such as the Head Start Performance Standards and QRIS (Quality Rating and Improvement System). National accreditation continues to be the preferred and valued model for promoting high-quality child development and school readiness.



## The total number of accredited programs has increased since 2015



## Quality Counts

In 2020, there were **88** ECE centers and **50** family child care programs voluntarily enrolled in Quality Counts. These programs are committed to quality improvement and go beyond regulatory licensing requirements to support the children in their care by providing a strong foundation for school readiness.



### Early Care and Education Workforce

An important indicator of ECE program quality is the educational and professional development level of the program staff. This indicator can be measured by the educational attainment of the workforce and the numbers of the workforce holding Child Development Permits. More advanced training, skills, and competencies lead to higher quality programs for children. Salaries and benefits are critical factors in the retention of a well-educated and professional ECE workforce, which in turn impacts the quality of programs. ECE staff (ranging from assistants to supervisors) in Santa Barbara County earn between \$28,800/year (\$13.84/hour) and \$64,841/year (\$31.17/hour) according to a 2018 workforce survey conducted by SBCEO. Even though the state of California recently increased minimum wage to \$15.00/hour, anecdotal evidence indicates that wages have neither kept pace with the cost of living, nor the increased education levels of ECE professionals.



### Critical Findings

- Program quality has a big impact on children’s ability to thrive and be successful in school and in life, thus quality improvement efforts have been a long-standing priority in Santa Barbara County.
- A long-term commitment of funding from State and private sources is needed to continue and expand the current quality improvement efforts.
- The attainment of a higher education degree for the ECE workforce is an indicator of high-quality in a program. Retention of a well-educated and trained early care and education workforce is compromised by low salaries and lack of benefits. Addressing staff shortages continues to be a priority.

# Chapter 2: The People of Santa Barbara County

## Population

According to the U.S. Census, the estimated total population of Santa Barbara County in 2019 was 446,499, an increase of 5.3% since 2010. County-wide, households are forecast to increase by 38,000 or 25% from 148,900 to 186,900 households by 2050 according to the Regional Growth Forecast 2050 Santa Barbara County. Estimated population change for communities within Santa Barbara County from 2010-2019 are as follows.

### There has been a steady increase in Santa Barbara County's population (2010-2019)

	Population 2010	Estimated Population 2014	Estimated Population 2019	Population Change From 2010 to 2019
Lompoc	42,434	44,013	42,853	1.0%
Santa Barbara	88,410	91,196	91,364	3.4%
Santa Maria	99,553	103,410	107,263	7.7%
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>423,895</b>	<b>440,668</b>	<b>446,499</b>	<b>5.3%</b>

Source: US Census Quick Facts

- In 2019, 22% (98,676) of Santa Barbara County residents were estimated to be under the age of 18 years.
- The number of 0-12 year olds in Santa Barbara County has decreased since 2015 from 77,108 children.
- Of the 71,940 children (0-12 years old) currently living in Santa Barbara County, 23.2% are infants-toddlers (0-2 years old), 22.9% are preschoolers (3-5 years old), and 53.9% are school-age (6-12 years old).

### Number of children by age in Santa Babara County (2018)

Region	Infant-Toddler 0-2 years	Preschool 3-5 years	School-age 6-12 years	Total Children 0-12 years
Lompoc Valley	2,748	2,128	5,967	10,843
North County	7,797	7,848	17,125	32,770
Santa Ynez Valley	1,056	817	2,290	4,163
South County	5,099	5,693	13,372	24,164
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>16,486</b>	<b>38,754</b>	<b>71,940</b>

Source: <https://elneedsassessment.org/NeedsAssessment.aspx>

## Race and Ethnicity

The U.S. Census Bureau defines the concept of race separately from the concept of Hispanic origin. Forty-five percent of Santa Barbara County residents are Hispanic/Latino and 55% are not Hispanic/Latino. The following table shows the proportion of the population of all ages by race and ethnicity in Santa Barbara County according to the 2019 U.S. Census.



### Santa Barbara County population by race/ethnicity (2019)

Santa Barbara County	Percent of All Residents	Percent of Children
African American/Black	1.9%	1.1%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.3%
Asian American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5.5%	2.8%
Hispanic/Latino	45.4%	65.1%
Multiracial	2.3%	3.3%
White	44.5%	27.4%

Source for all resident data: 2019 Census Bureau quick facts Estimates:

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=race&g=0500000US06083&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP05&hidePreview=false>

Source for child data: <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/33/child-population-race/Pie#fmt=144&loc=273&tf=108&ch=7,11,726,10,72,9,73,87&pdist=73>



## Languages Spoken

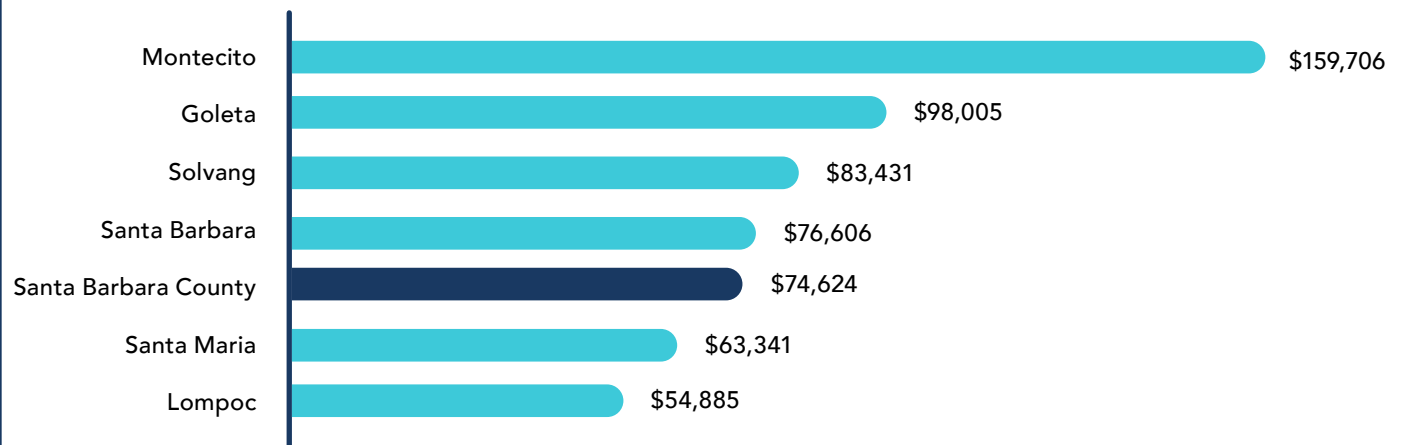
**Sixty percent** of Santa Barbara County residents' primary language spoken in the home is English only, whereas **40%** speak a language other than English (33.1% primarily speak Spanish, 6.9% speak another language).

Source U.S. Census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2018: [shorturl.at/gpJZ2](https://shorturl.at/gpJZ2)

About half (**51.3%**) of all K-12 enrollment in Santa Barbara County are English Learners (EL) and Fluent English Students (FEP) for school year 2019-2020. CDE no longer breaks down these rates by more specific regions. However, school level data is available upon request.



## 5 Median household income in Santa Barbara County varies significantly by region (2018)



Note: The above regions are identified as cities within the data source. Carpinteria is not included.

Source: 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=income&g=0500000US06083&tid=ACSS5Y2018.S1901&hidePreview=false>

## Cost of Living in Santa Barbara County

It costs **\$88,128/year** for a two-working parent family with one preschool-aged child and one toddler in Santa Barbara County to make ends meet according to the Real Cost Measure Household Budget 2019 calculator. The median (average) income in Santa Barbara County is \$81,049 whereas the mean income is \$111,675.

## 6 Child care represents a significant portion of a family's annual expenses

Real cost measure for a family of four in Santa Barbara County as calculated by United Way (2019)

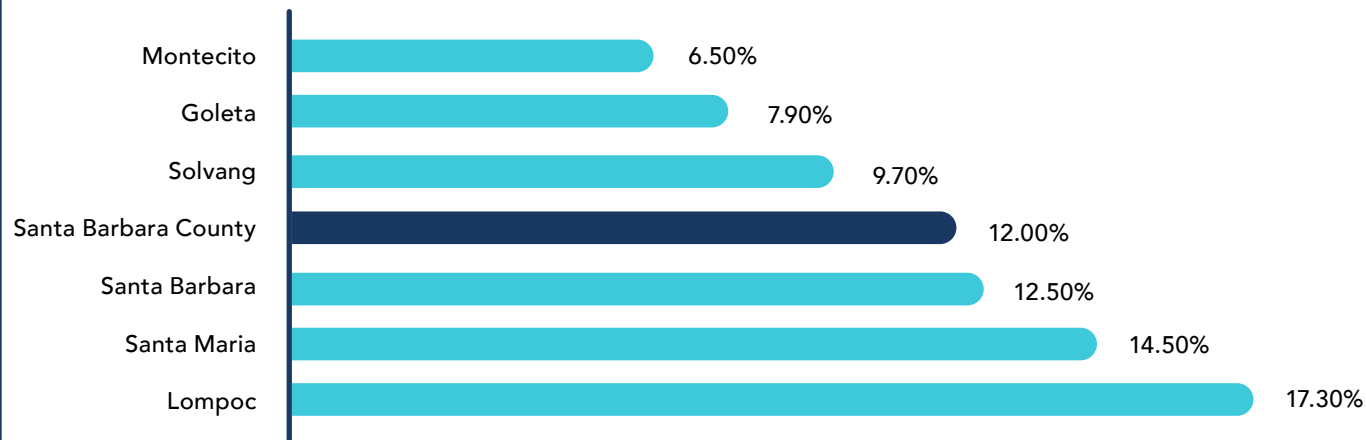
	Monthly	Annually
Child care	\$1,546	\$18,552
Food	\$973	\$11,676
Health care	\$795	\$9,540
Housing	\$1,520	\$18,240
Misc.	\$574	\$6,888
Taxes	\$1,032	\$12,384
Transportation	\$904	\$10,848
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,344</b>	<b>\$88,128</b>

It takes **\$7,344/month (AFTER TAXES)**, on average for a four-person household to make ends meet in Santa Barbara County. A single parent must earn at least **\$37.46/hour** working full-time in order to support two children according to the Living Wage Calculator. For families with two working parents, each must earn **\$20.17/hour** and work full-time to support their household with two children.

Note: This budget estimates the amount of income that households need to cover basic expenses through earnings only, without publicly funded benefits or supports.

Source: <https://www.unitedwaysca.org/realcost/household-budgets>

## 7 12% of people in Santa Barbara County are living in poverty (2018)



Source: 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=income&g=0500000US06083&tid=ACST5Y2018.S1901&hidePreview=false>

## 1 in 5 People in Santa Barbara County Live in Poverty

- **21%** of Santa Barbara County residents are living in poverty according to the California Poverty Measure (CPM) estimates.<sup>1</sup>
- **12%** of Santa Barbara County residents and **11%** of California residents live in poverty according to U.S. Census 2019 estimates.
- **23%** of children aged birth to 17 years old in Santa Barbara County were living in poverty in 2018, according to the CPM. This is the **third highest** rate in California surpassed only by Orange County (24%) and Los Angeles County (25%).
- **43%** of schools in Santa Barbara County have 65% or more of their students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch according to the CDE, 2019-2020. Eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch is another indicator of the economic status of families.

<sup>1</sup> CPM is based on calculations from the California samples of the ACS, along with a number of other auxiliary data sources. The CPM is a joint research effort between Public Policy Institute of California and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality that, unlike the official poverty measure developed by the U.S. Census Bureau, takes into account the cost of living and resources from social safety net programs.





## Public Assistance Programs

As of January 2021, utilization of public assistance has been consistent throughout the pandemic. There has not been a significant increase as anticipated due to COVID-19 at the time of this report. This may be due to the availability of other types of pandemic related special services outside of the traditional public assistance of CalWORKs and CalFresh (including CARES/Stimulus payments, expanded unemployment benefits, moratorium on evictions and mortgages, alternative housing programs available through non-profits and other community organizations, as well as specific COVID-19 relief funding available through the United Way, Santa Barbara Foundation, and other local foundations). This might have helped those who would normally apply for public assistance services, not apply after all, or get help outside of Department of Social Services. The following data represent utilization of public assistance programs prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.



**North County has the greatest number of families using public assistance for each type except Medi-Cal, which is most utilized in South County**

	CalFresh	Housing Assistance	TANF/ CalWORKs	Medi-Cal	Healthy Families
Lompoc Valley	4,054	668	767	4,221	1,636
North County	19,093	951	2,013	1,148	4,898
Santa Ynez Valley	569	28	36	1,019	611
South County	11,589	208	353	11,775	3,515
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>35,305</b>	<b>1,855</b>	<b>3,169</b>	<b>18,163</b>	<b>10,660</b>

Source: CalFresh, CalWORKs, MediCal: Santa Barbara County Dept. of Social Services 2020, Housing Assistance: Housing Authority of Santa Barbara County July, 2020.



## Critical Findings

- County-wide, households are forecast to increase by 38,000 or 25% by 2050. North County has the largest proportion of children 0-12 years old and has experienced the most significant population increases since 2010.
- The ethnicity of the child population of the county is increasingly Hispanic.
- Thirty-three percent of Santa Barbara County residents primarily speak Spanish and about half (51.3%) of all K-12 enrollment in Santa Barbara County are English Learners (EL) and Fluent English Students (FEP).
- The median (average) income in Santa Barbara County is \$81,049 (\$6,754/month) and it takes \$7,344/month (AFTER TAXES), on average for a 4-person household to make ends meet in Santa Barbara County.
- Twelve percent of Santa Barbara County residents live in poverty and 23% of the children aged birth to 17 years old in Santa Barbara County live in poverty.



## Chapter 3: Early Care & Education and School-Age Care: Need and Capacity



Children are enrolled in a variety of settings. This care includes informal care by family, friends or neighbors; licensed family child care homes; licensed ECE centers; and license-exempt school-aged programs. This report focuses on licensed child care programs (serving children 0-5 years of age) as well as state-licensed (or license-exempt) settings serving children 6-12 years of age. Local efforts are in place to help informal care providers become licensed and improve the quality of care.

# The New Landscape for Child Care during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted the demand and capacity for child care. The Santa Barbara County Emergency Child Care Initiative was quickly formed and took immediate action in tandem with local foundations and state resources to respond to the pandemic while offering critical support to child care providers and families during this unprecedented time.

Santa Barbara County's ECE providers heroically responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by immediately pivoting and offering care to essential workers, and eventually expanding care to the general public. ECE programs had to significantly modify how care is delivered in order to meet COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Social distancing and small cohort requirements minimized the number of children a program can serve, thus amplifying the already existing critical shortage for care and financial strain on child care programs.

## Challenges ECE and School-Age Programs Faced During COVID-19:

- Loss of facilities and physical space in schools
- Increased costs from smaller cohort sizes, increased cleaning supplies and PPE, and additional staffing expenses
- Changing parent preferences due to concerns about group settings
- Staff and caregiver concerns about being exposed to COVID-19
- Challenges about safely transporting children
- New health and safety requirements
- Reduced availability of caregivers and staff able to meet the increased hours and the higher risks of illness
- Increased demands on staff who are historically poorly paid
- Lack of staff training, materials, and technology needed to support children's ability to learn and participate in their school's distance learning activities
- Technology challenges/limitations



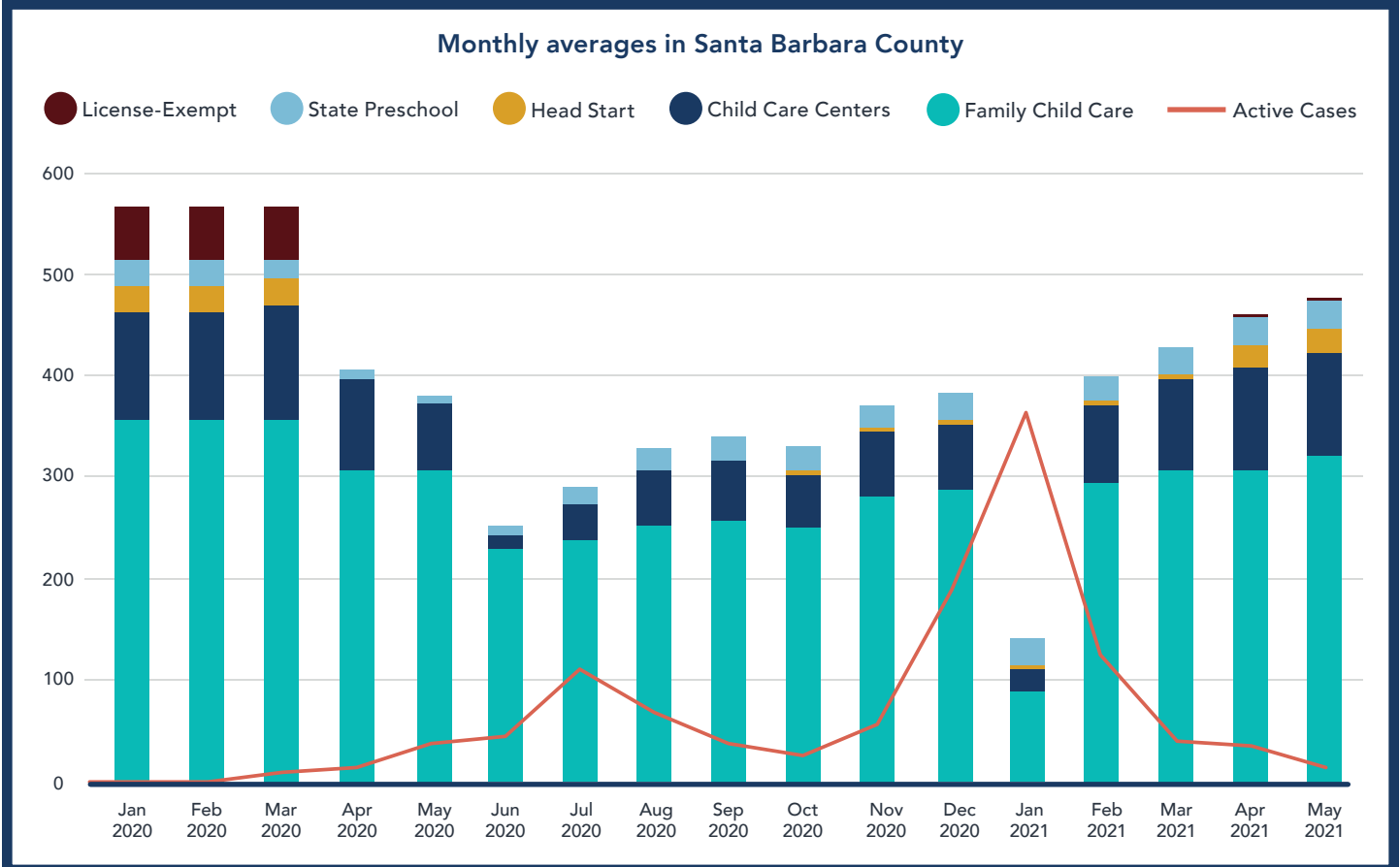
Working parents grappled with weighing their safety concerns regarding group care settings with their needs for care so they could work. They had to juggle three important priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Supporting their family's financial security by working
2. Ensuring the health and safety of their child(ren) and family given the risks of COVID-19
3. Supporting their child(ren)'s education, academic success, and social-emotional well-being in the face of remote learning and care models

While school is primarily designed to provide education to children, it also plays a major role in providing parents with child care. Working parents with school-age children have been faced with the challenge of how to ensure that their children are in a safe learning setting while they work. The pandemic has seriously constrained before- and after-school programs along with the center-based and home-based child care settings that usually provide after-school and child care supports to working parents. Additionally, many schools have only been operating via remote models; thus, the demand for full day care for school-age children has significantly increased. This also created the added responsibility for care providers to support distance learning.



## Open child care programs fluctuate in response to COVID-19 case count and restrictions



Stay at Home orders and COVID-19 rates impacted child care programs’ ability to keep their doors open throughout the pandemic. Open program status does not indicate in-person care or operation at normal licensed capacity. There are several nuances the data do not capture. Many programs solely offered distance learning for extended periods of time and when programs were able to return to in-person care they operated at very limited capacity, caring for a significantly reduced number of children due to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. Based on data available at the time of this report, 19 family child care programs applied for licensed waivers to care for more children, which increased the total capacity these 19 family child care programs could serve from 152 children to 266 children. A few centers also applied for waivers to serve more young children and/or school age children.

Source: Children’s Resource and Referral of Santa Barbara County, May 2021. Data are based on program self-reports. Although status updates are requested from each program, not all note accurate changes. Data regarding licensed-exempt programs are still in the process of being collected and not complete at the time of this report.

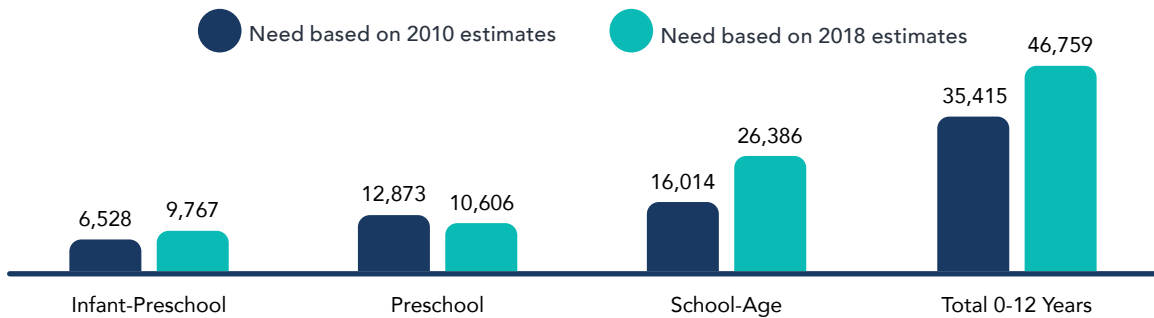


# The Need for Early Care & Education and School-Age Care

According to the American Community Survey Working Families with Children (2018), of the total **71,940** children aged birth-12 years residing in Santa Barbara County, **46,759** were estimated to need child care because their parents were working. Of the children estimated to need care, **9,767** were infants-toddlers (birth to 2 years), **10,606** were preschoolers (3-5 years) and **26,386** were school-age (6-12 years). The following chart demonstrates how the need has increased from 2010 to 2018 for all groups except preschoolers. This data is reflective of the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has increased the need for care, particularly for school-age children due to the lack of in-person school that previously served the dual role as child care for working parents.



## More children needed care in 2018 compared to 2010 for all age groups except preschoolers



Source: Numbers of children, 2010 U.S. Census estimates of need recommendations from Review of Literature and Studies; AIR database, 2018; 5 year estimates, ACS Working Families with Children <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx>



## There is the greatest number of children with an estimated need for care in North County (2018)

Region	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	Total need 0-12 years
Lompoc Valley	1,703	1,239	3,771	6,713
North County	4,421	4,998	11,695	21,114
Santa Ynez Valley	653	475	1,448	2,576
South County	2,990	3,894	9,472	16,356
<b>Total Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>9,767</b>	<b>10,606</b>	<b>26,386</b>	<b>46,759</b>

Source: AIR database, 2018; 5 year estimates, ACS Working Families with Children <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx>

This data is further broken down by zip code for a better understanding of how the need for care varies within Santa Barbara County. See table 12 on page 21.



## Early Care & Education and School-Age Care Capacity

Although the need for care has increased significantly since 2015, capacity has not. From 2015 to 2020 there was a slight increase in overall capacity as well as in infant-toddler and preschool spaces, yet a decline in school-age spaces.

Transitional kindergarten in the school setting has expanded the capacity of care for four year olds who will turn five **after December 2** of that school year. *The Master Plan for Early Learning and Care: California for All Kids* provides a roadmap for building a comprehensive and equitable early learning and care system over the next decade in California and includes phased-in Universal Preschool for all four year olds, starting with highest-need areas.

The following 2020 capacity data does not account for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which required programs to operate at a significantly reduced in-person capacity and eliminated the option of many school-age care options. During the COVID-19 pandemic many programs offered remote only care, or some combination of remote and in-person care.

- In 2015, there were 4,152 spaces within family child care programs, and as of August 2020 there were only 3,990, representing a loss of 162 spaces.
- There was a gain in infant-toddler and preschool spaces within child care center settings; in 2015, there were 6,913 spaces for 0-5 year olds and in 2020, there were 7,758 spaces, representing a gain of 845 spaces.

Note: these numbers are not representational of the true capacity due to social distancing regulations as part of the COVID-19 pandemic.



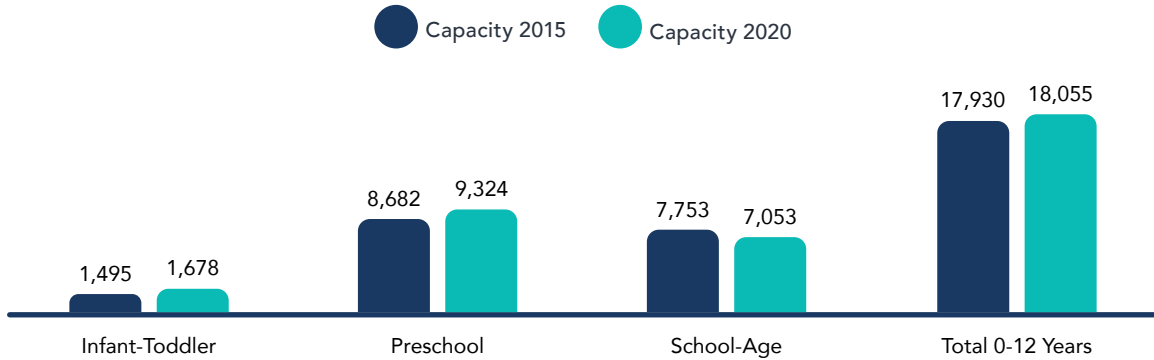


## Estimated number of children needing care by zip code (2018)

Zip Code	City/Area	Estimated Number of Children Needing Care			Total Need 0-12 Years
		0-2 Years	3-5 Years	0-12 years old	
Lompoc Valley					
93436	Lompoc	1,602	1,166	3,549	6,317
93437	Lompoc	101	73	222	396
<b>Total Lompoc Valley</b>		<b>1,703</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>3,771</b>	<b>6,713</b>
North County					
93254	Cuyama	24	17	54	95
93429	Casmalia	7	5	13	25
93434	Guadalupe	209	153	465	827
93454	Santa Maria	1,144	1,345	3,082	5,571
93455	Santa Maria/Orcutt	1,311	1,543	3,533	6,387
93458	Santa Maria	1,726	1,935	4,548	8,209
<b>Total North County</b>		<b>4,421</b>	<b>4,998</b>	<b>11,695</b>	<b>21,114</b>
Santa Ynez Valley					
93427	Buellton	163	119	364	646
93440	Los Alamos	61	44	135	240
93441	Los Olivos	46	33	101	180
93460	Santa Ynez	155	113	343	611
93463	Solvang	228	166	505	899
<b>Total Santa Ynez Valley</b>		<b>653</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>1,448</b>	<b>2,576</b>
South County					
93013	Carpinteria	234	309	749	1,292
93067	Summerland	11	15	37	63
93101	Santa Barbara	459	607	1471	2,537
93103	Santa Barbara	292	386	934	1,612
93105	Santa Barbara	368	476	1160	2,004
93108	Montecito	162	214	518	894
93109	Santa Barbara	156	207	499	862
93110	Santa Barbara	243	321	777	1,341
93111	Santa Barbara	251	333	805	1,389
93117	Goleta/Isla Vista	814	1026	2522	4,362
<b>Total South County</b>		<b>2,990</b>	<b>3,894</b>	<b>9,472</b>	<b>16,356</b>
<b>Total County</b>		<b>9,767</b>	<b>10,606</b>	<b>26,386</b>	<b>46,759</b>

Source: AIR database, 2018; 5 year estimates, ACS Working Families with Children <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx>

### 13 Capacity has remained stable over time with a slight increase in preschool capacity



Source: Santa Barbara County Children’s Resource and Referral, August 2020

### 14 ECE capacity in licensed and license-exempt after-school programs (2020)

Region	Family Child Care Spaces			ECE Center Spaces			Total Spaces			Total Capacity 0-12 years
	Infant Toddler	Pre school age	School age	Infant Toddler	Pre school age	School age	Infant Toddler	Pre school age	School age	
Lompoc Valley	153	306	120	27	760	481	180	1,066	601	1,847
North County	558	1,464	436	65	1,720	2,950	623	3,184	3,386	7,193
Santa Ynez Valley	71	74	28	0	322	480	71	396	508	975
South County	202	416	162	602	4,262	2,396	804	4,678	2,558	8,040
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>984</b>	<b>2,260</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>7,064</b>	<b>6,307</b>	<b>1,678</b>	<b>9,324</b>	<b>7,053</b>	<b>18,055</b>

Source: Santa Barbara County Children’s Resource and Referral, August 2020



There are **18,055** spaces in Santa Barbara County, in licensed centers and family child care homes, and in school-based license exempt programs for school-age children. Overall, the number of early care and education spaces county-wide has increased since 2015 by 125 spaces.

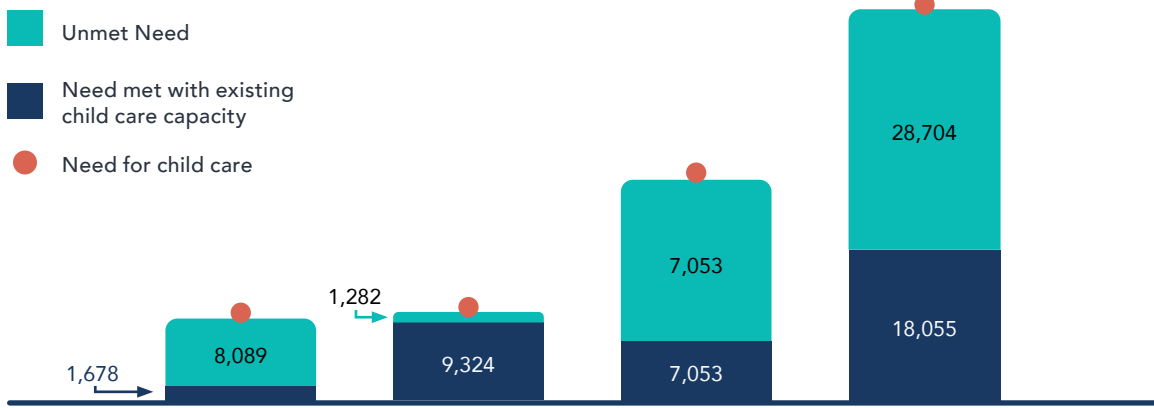
About 52% of spaces are dedicated to preschool-age children, 39% are for school-age children, and 9% are available for infant-toddlers. In Santa Barbara County 22% of the spaces are in family child care homes and 78% are in early care and education centers or school-based programs.

- There are more than two children needing care for every space available in Santa Barbara County.
- There are almost **six children** needing care for every infant-toddler space available.
- There are nearly **four school-age children** (6-12 year olds) needing formal before- and after-school care, for every space available.



### Existing child care capacity meets only a fraction of estimated need (Need Data: 2018, Capacity Data: 2020)

Using 2018 Needs Data and August 2020 Capacity Data



Source: AIR database, 2018; 5 year estimates, ACS Working Families with Children <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx> - Santa Barbara County Children’s Resource and Referral, August 2020



## Critical Findings

- The need for care has increased significantly since 2015, yet capacity has not. The overall capacity in Santa Barbara County has remained stable from 2015 to 2020 with a slight increase in preschool spaces. There are 18,085 licensed and license-exempt spaces for 46,759 children ages 0-12 needing care.
- There continues to be a critical shortage of licensed spaces in Santa Barbara County, particularly for infant-toddler and school-age spaces.
- Transitional kindergarten in the school setting has expanded the capacity of care for four year olds who will turn five after December 2 of that school year.
- Many children are cared for in unregulated settings that are operating without a license and where there is no monitoring of basic health and safety standards or program quality. The quality of any program is critical for children’s positive outcomes.

# Chapter 4: The Cost of Early Care and Education, School-Age Care, and Subsidized Care

## Cost of Care

The cost of care in Santa Barbara County ranges significantly from region, age group, and type of care. Challenges for parents and providers regarding the cost of care have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, parents need help paying for care and providers need financial support in order to keep their doors open while they operate at reduced capacity due to COVID-19 guidelines. Many local foundations have worked together during this pandemic to help offset the financial strain this has caused on both parents and providers. Despite this, expanded access to subsidized care options is greatly needed.

The following tuition rates are from January 2021 (during the COVID-19 pandemic), and range from **\$750 to \$1,800** per month for full-time for infant-toddler care in a center and **\$245 to \$1,816** per month for full-time school-age care. The rates reported are for full-time care (30 hours or more per week), in centers and family child care homes, for infants-toddlers (0-2 years), preschoolers (3-5 years) and school-age children (6-12 years). Regardless of program, age of child, or region of the county, the cost of early care and education services is prohibitively expensive for many families.

### The range of the monthly cost of care varies significantly in Santa Barbara County (March 2021)

Cost of Care	Infant Toddler		Preschool		School Age Centers	
	Centers	FCC	Centers	FCC	Centers	FCC
Mid County	NA	\$1,016 - \$1,100	\$573 - \$1,240	\$760 - \$1,020	\$271 - \$902	\$660 - \$700
North County	\$1,066-\$2,200	\$772 - \$1,500	\$483-1,800	\$700 - \$1,400	NA	\$600-\$1,300
South County	\$750 - \$2,625	\$800 - \$3,000	\$500 - \$1,750	\$680 - \$2,800	\$245 - \$1,816	\$800 - \$1,085

The following table shows the average monthly cost of early care and education in different regions of the county.

### The average monthly cost of care in Santa Barbara County (March 2021)

Region	Infant Toddler		Preschool		School Age Centers	
	Centers	FCC	Centers	FCC	Centers	FCC
Mid County	NA	\$1,044	\$856	\$945	\$492	\$674
North County	\$1,478	\$1,131	\$818	\$1,043	NA	\$888
South County	\$1,619	\$1,173	\$1,123	\$1,082	\$648	\$977
<b>Santa Barbara County Average</b>	<b>\$1,598</b>	<b>\$1,143</b>	<b>\$1,048</b>	<b>\$1,050</b>	<b>\$577</b>	<b>\$882</b>

Note: Based on full-time care.

North County average rates included: Santa Maria, Orcutt, Guadalupe & Casmalia

South County average rates included: Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Summerland, Goleta, Montecito & Isla Vista

Mid-County includes: Los Olivos, Santa Ynez, Solvang, Los Alamos, Buellton & Lompoc

Source: Santa Barbara County Children’s Resource and Referral, January 2021



## Subsidized Early Care and Education Programs

Now more than ever, more options to subsidize the cost of care are needed. Depending on household income and family size, some families are eligible for subsidized early care and education services. There are six types of state or federally funded programs providing early care and education services for children of eligible families in Santa Barbara County.

- California State Preschool
- The General Child Care Program
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs
- The Alternative Payment Program
- CalWorks
- After School Safety and Education (ASES)



## Children Eligible for Subsidized Care

Criteria for eligibility for subsidized early care and education services vary among different programs. For example, the income eligibility for federally funded Head Start programs (currently \$26,200 for family of four) is lower than the income eligibility for California State Preschool Programs (\$84,822 for a family of four); some programs serve only a particular age group; and some programs require families to not only be income eligible, but also for parents in the home to be employed or in an educational or job training program.



## Subsidized Early Care and Education: Need vs. Enrollment

The following chart illustrates the total number of children eligible (based on qualifying need and income) and enrolled in full-day care. This information is from 2018 so is not reflective of enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Population, need, enrollment, and unmet need for subsidized care (based on children who are income eligible and need care) (2018)

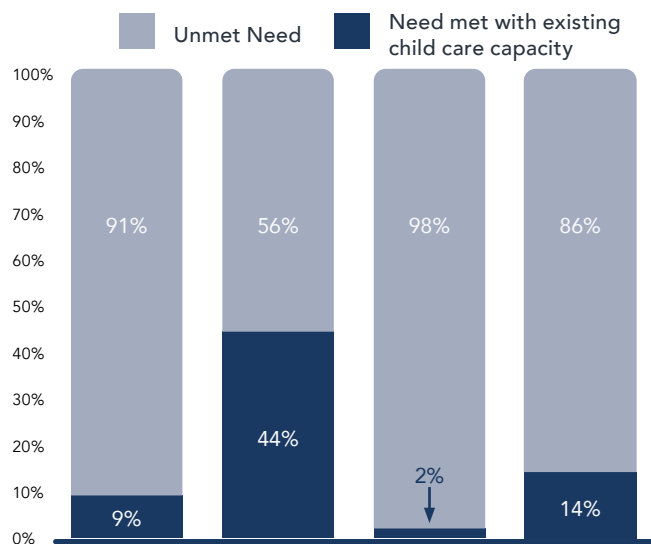
	Population	Enrollment	Need		Unmet Need	
Cost of Care	Number of children	Total enrollment in publicly subsidized programs	Number of children eligible for subsidized child care (income and qualifying need)	Percentage of children income-eligible and qualifying need for care	Number unmet need-based and income-eligibility for care	Percent unmet need for care
0-2 year olds	16,695	616	7,072	42.36%	6,456	91.29%
3-5 year olds	16,480	3,390	7,734	46.93%	4,344	56.17%
<b>Total 0 5 year olds</b>	<b>33,175</b>	<b>4,006</b>	<b>14,806</b>	<b>44.63%</b>	<b>10,800</b>	<b>72.9%</b>

Source: AIR analysis of American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data, five-year estimates, by local. <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx>



## Substantial unmet need for subsidized child care

Need and enrollment in publicly subsidized programs (2018)



Notes: Total enrollment in publicly subsidized programs (for income-eligible and qualifying need for care unmet need report), source: Total enrollment in publicly subsidized programs (income-eligible and qualifying need for care): Total enrollment in publicly subsidized programs includes enrollment in: Title 5 State Preschool Program, Title 5 Migrant Child Care Program, Title 5 Center-Based, Title 5 Family Child Care Home Network, Head Start/Early Head Start, CalWORKs Stage 2, CalWORKs Stage 3, estimated Transitional Kindergarten eligible for Title 5 (enrollment in Transitional Kindergarten is only included for the Preschool Report), and the Alternative Payment program. The estimates of Transitional Kindergarten students eligible for Title 5 for the selected region (e.g., county, groups of counties, or the state) were calculated by multiplying the percentage of children eligible by the number of children enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten. Sources: CDE, CD-801A Monthly Report, October Report for year of reference, by location of family residence. CDE, Transitional Kindergarten Data, Kindergarten TK Program Participation (Census Day), by service location. The American Institutes for Research's survey of all Early Head Start and Head Start grantees, including Migrant and American Indian and Alaska Native grantees. Enrollment in all program options for children are included: center-based full-day, center-based part-day, home-based, combination, family child care, and locally designed. The number of children enrolled in home-based programs is unknown. Enrollment in programs for pregnant women are excluded. Respondents reported enrollment for children in Early Head Start or Head Start in total and were not asked to specify those enrolled in Early Head Start, Head Start, or other or other specific programs separately. Enrollment for October of the year of reference was collected by age and ZIP code of the child's residence.

## The Need for School-Age Subsidized Care

In 2018, there were **38,739** school-age children ages 6-12 years old in Santa Barbara County. Nearly half (**46.7%**) or **18,116** children needed and qualified for subsidized care. The demand for full-day school-age care has significantly increased in 2020-2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Source: AIR database, 2018; <https://elneedsassessment.org/report.aspx>



### Critical Findings

- The cost of care in Santa Barbara County ranges significantly from region to region and by age group and type of care. Challenges for parents and providers regarding the cost of care have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The need for subsidized care far outweighs the availability. Ninety-two percent of 0-2 year olds who are eligible and need subsidized care are not able to access it, and 56% of 3-5 year olds. Nearly half (46.7%) or 18,116 children needed and qualified for subsidized care.
- The high cost of care is prohibitive for many working families who earn just above the income eligibility threshold. In an effort to address this disparity, the CDE updated the eligibility criteria to qualify for subsidized programs from 70% of the State Median Income (SMI) to 85% of the SMI.



# Chapter 5: Special Needs for Early Care and Education and School-Age Care



This chapter describes five special populations of children in Santa Barbara County.

These populations include:

1. Children eligible for special education services
2. Children who are abused, neglected, or at risk of abuse or neglect
3. Children of families who experience homelessness
4. Children of families who are migrant workers
5. Children of school-age parents

According to the U.S. Census, the estimated total population of Santa Barbara County in 2019 was 446,499, an increase of 5.3% since 2010. County-wide, households are forecast to increase by 38,000 or 25% from 148,900 to 186,900 households by 2050 according to the Regional Growth Forecast 2050 Santa Barbara County.



## Children Eligible for Special Education Services

Families with children identified as eligible for special education services through either the Tri-Counties Regional Center or SBCEO have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The following chart represents school year 2019-2020, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since this time there has been a reduction in referrals for follow up regarding concerns due to the limit of in-person care. Challenges of delivering special needs services have been amplified during the pandemic.



### Number of children with IFSPs or IEPs (2019-2020)

Region	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	13-17 years	18-22 years	Total 0-22 years
Lompoc Valley	12	169	695	509	70	1,455
North County	36	404	1,728	1,224	152	3,544
Santa Ynez Valley	10	46	141	114	17	328
South County	39	286	1,265	980	126	2,696
Unknown Zip	0	56	174	0	8	238
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>4,003</b>	<b>2,827</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>8,261</b>

Source: Tri-Counties Regional and Special Education Local Planning Area, SBCEO, 2020

## Children at Risk of Abuse and Neglect

The below table shows the numbers of children at risk of abuse or neglect, by allegations of abuse or neglect, substantiated cases of abuse or neglect, and the numbers of children who were taken into foster care. Compared to the past, the total number of children taken into care has declined from 381 in 1999, a high of 423 in 2001, and 362 in 2004, to 191 in 2019. Since the onset of the COVID-19 there has been a heightened concern regarding the risk of child abuse and neglect throughout the nation due to the increased stress on families.

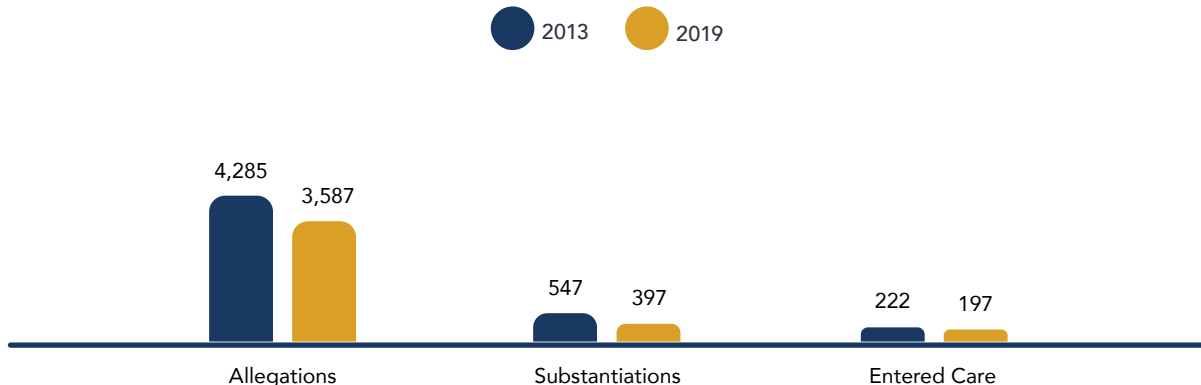
### 21 Children at risk of abuse or neglect in Santa Barbara County (2019)

	<1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	Total
Allegations	380	484	919	1,804	3,587
Entered Care	51	37	40	63	191
Substantiations	87	75	106	129	397

Source: University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research  
 \*Children with Maltreatment Allegations, Substantiations and Entering Care, January 1-December 31, 2019



### 22 Number of children (0-12 years old) at risk of abuse or neglect in Santa Barbara County has decreased since 2013



Source: University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research, 2019



## Children of families who experience homelessness is most prevalent in Santa Maria (2019-2020)

	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years	v	Total
Carpinteria	0	0	36	6	42
Cuyama	0	0	0	0	0
Goleta	0	0	40	0	40
Guadalupe	0	0	130	0	130
Lompoc	0	0	418	136	554
Santa Barbara	0	23	1,000	778	1,801
Santa Maria	0	0	3,652	1,314	4,966
Santa Ynez Valley	0	0	5	0	5
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5,281</b>	<b>2,234</b>	<b>7,538</b>

Source: Transitional Youth Services, SBCEO, 2020

Notes: No accurate 0-5 numbers are available since only K-12 schools are required to make a count. Includes children who, at some point during the year, lived in a) a homeless shelter, b) a hotel or motel, c) were unsheltered (i.e. lived on street, car, campground, garage, shed) or d) were doubled or tripled up with other families out of economic necessity. Over 90% of children counted fall into residence category. Some districts don't identify all their homeless students, so counts are artificially low in Carpinteria, Goleta, Lompoc, and Guadalupe. Lompoc is especially low given its size and poverty level.

**7,538** children were reported as homeless in the 2019-2020 school year, which is less than the number counted in the previous report (9,462). As the notes attest, even the numbers might be under-counted in specific areas of the county, and children under five years of age are likely to be under-reported because the data are based on reports of families with children enrolled in school. Thus, children of families who experience homelessness with no school-age children are not identified through this source.

Of the reported children who experience homelessness, 96% are children of families living in a residence with other families out of economic necessity, which arrangement is defined as "doubled-up." The remaining families lived in a homeless shelter, a hotel or motel, in a car, at a campground, or on the street at some time during the school year. The percent of children in doubled up arrangements is consistent with the percent noted in the last report.



## Children of families who experience homelessness by type of shelter (2019-2020)

	Shelter	Doubled up	Un-sheltered	Motel	Total
Carpinteria	0	42	0	0	42
Cuyama	0	0	0	0	0
Goleta	1	36	1	2	40
Guadalupe	0	128	0	2	130
Lompoc	28	496	5	25	554
Santa Barbara	76	1,681	31	13	1,801
Santa Maria	56	4,848	28	34	4,966
Santa Ynez Valley	0	1	4	NA	5
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>7,190</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>7,496</b>

Notes: Confusion over the definition of "doubled up" sometimes leads to inaccurate counts of this category. Children who are unsheltered (including in substandard housing) are often difficult to identify.

Source: Transitional Youth Services, SBCEO, 2020


Anecdotal reports suggest that the true numbers of children in families sharing accommodations with other families out of economic necessity are much greater than reported. The North County region has the largest number of the families described as homeless, (66% of the county-wide total).

The difficulties and instability experienced by families who are homeless mean that children move frequently, making it more difficult to identify and enroll them in early care and education programs. Even when children are enrolled, their attendance may be short-term and/or inconsistent. Their family circumstances make the benefits of high-quality early care and education services even more critical for these children, yet dedicated spaces are in very short supply.

Three programs in South Santa Barbara County give priority enrollment to children from families who are homeless: Transition House and St. Vincent’s, which also provide shelter services for mothers and their children, and Storyteller Children’s Center. In other regions of the county, there are no licensed child care centers dedicated to children who experience homelessness; however, they are eligible for, and frequently enrolled in, Head Start and state funded early care and education programs.

## Children of Families Who Are Migrant Workers

There are **3,476** children of migrant families which is less than the 4,178 reported in 2015; however, these numbers fluctuate greatly month to month. The numbers of children 0-5 years of age are under-reported because the data is based on reports of families with children enrolled in public schools. North County has 98% of the identified children of migrant families, (a slight increase since the 2015 report of 95% in 2015).

 <b>Children of families who are migrant workers primarily live in North County (2019-2020)</b>					
District	Age 0-2	Age 3-5	Ages 6 to 12	Ages 13 to 17	Totals
Lompoc Valley	3	7	36	11	57
North County	148	466	1,794	1,004	3,412
Santa Ynez Valley	1	1	3	1	6
South County	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>1,833</b>	<b>1,017</b>	<b>3,476</b>

Sources: Migrant Education Program, Region 22 and Region 18, 2019-2020

Finding child care is particularly difficult for the many parents, both migrant and non-migrant, who work in the fields for 12 hours, starting very early in the morning. Center-based and family child care migrant Head Start programs are available for children of migrant families in Santa Maria, Guadalupe and Lompoc. These programs have schedules that more closely accommodate the working hours of the parents. They open at 5:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m. and are in operation from March through October.

## Children of School-Age Parents

School-age parents are at high risk for school dropout and their children are at-risk for a number of health, educational, and social problems.

Although there has been a reduction in teen pregnancies over time, unfortunately services for teen parents also have decreased. The California School-Age Families Education Program (CalSAFE) was a state-funded program providing academic support services for expectant and parenting male and female teens and early care and education services for their children. What was once a Categorical Program, with dedicated funding from the CDE, the CalSAFE program was eliminated with the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). LCFF allows county offices of education and school districts to choose how to allocate this funding. This development has led to a decline in the numbers of teen parents served, but Santa Barbara County is fortunate to still have CalSAFE-type services for these families in Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Santa Barbara.



### Teen births increased in 2019 after an all-time low in 2018 in Santa Barbara County (2015-2019)

	2015	2016	2017*	2018	2019
Teen Births (ages 15-17)	97	106	95	85	81
Teen Births (ages 18-19)	280	215	267	204	238
Total Teen Births (ages 15-19)	377	321	362	289	319

\* 4 births to mothers under 15 | SBC Birth Data Source: Cal-IVRS - CDPH Vital Records

Population Estimates: State of California, Department of Finance, State and County Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity, Detailed Age, and Gender, 2010-2060. Sacramento, California, January 2018.



### The majority of teen births (ages 15-19 years old) occur in North County (2019)

	Total Births	Teenage Mother Births	% of Teen Births
Lompoc	799	56	7.01%
Other	549	11	2.00%
Santa Barbara and Carpinteria	1,297	24	1.85%
Santa Maria and Guadalupe	2,620	228	8.70%
<b>Santa Barbara County</b>	<b>5,265</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>6.06%</b>

SBC Birth Data Source: Cal-IVRS - CDPH Vital Records

Population Estimates: State of California, Department of Finance, State and County Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity, Detailed Age, and Gender, 2010-2060. Sacramento, California, January 2018.

CA data: MCAH Division of CDPH: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/Pages/Data/Adolescent-Health-Data.aspx>



## Children Who Are Dual Language Learners

Based on CDE, Data Reporting Office for school year 2019-2020, more than **35,000** children in Santa Barbara County are classified as dual language learners (initial fluent English proficient, English learner, and reclassified fluent English proficient). This is an increase from the 30,000 dual language children reported in the 2015 report.

The great number of dual language learners in our county poses a challenge in ensuring that these children are getting the support they need, and also an opportunity for the children themselves and for our community as a whole. Children who have support in their home language are better able to also learn English. Children can more easily learn more than one language at a young age than at any other time in their lives, and being bilingual or multi-lingual offers a multitude of opportunities to them throughout their lives. Research also shows that bilingual children develop stronger thinking skills.



## Critical Findings

- The number of children with IFSPs or IEPs has increased since 2015 for school-age children and decreased for 0-5 year olds.
- The number of children taken into care due to child abuse and neglect has decreased from 2013 to 2019; however, there is concern regarding the recent increase in the severity of cases during COVID-19.
- Although the number of children experiencing homelessness has decreased in Santa Barbara County anecdotal reports suggest that the true numbers are much greater than reported. The North County region has the largest number of the families described as homeless (66% of the county-wide total). High-quality child care is even more critical for children who experience homelessness, yet dedicated spaces are in short supply.
- Children of migrant families under five years of age are not identified if they do not have siblings in the school system. In 2019-2020, there were 3,476 children of migrant families with 98% living in North County.
- The majority of the teens who gave birth in 2019 were Hispanic and lived in North County. Services for teen parents and their children have decreased. Although the teen birth rate has declined in recent years, teen parents need to be supported in continuing their education, to their own benefit as well as that of their children.
- More than 35,000 children in Santa Barbara County are classified as dual language learners, up from the 2015 report. Children need support in their home language, not just in English.

# Chapter 6: The Early Care and Education Infrastructure in Santa Barbara County

In Santa Barbara County, early care and education services are supported by a network of state and local agencies that work collaboratively to improve the services available to the children and families in our communities. Many of these agencies have responsibilities well beyond early care and education. In the brief descriptions below, only activities directly impacting the early care and education services in the county are described.



- California Collaborative on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) – Teaching Pyramid
- California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing
- California Early Childhood Mentor Project
- California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN)
- Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)
- Child Care Planning Council
- Children’s Resource & Referral of Santa Barbara County
- CommUnify, Head Start and Early Head Start
- The Early Care and Education Leadership Development Project
- Family Child Care Steps to Quality Network of Children’s Resource and Referral
- Family Strengthening Partnership
- First 5 Children and Families Commission, Santa Barbara County
- Institutions of Higher Education
- KIDS Network
- Outdoor Classroom Project
- Santa Barbara County Quality Counts
- SBCEO – Child Development Programs
- Workforce Pathways Stipend Project



## Conclusion and Critical Findings

From beaches to mountains and farmlands to urban centers, Santa Barbara County is one of California's most diverse regions. A stark contrast of high cost of living and low-income population intensifies the diversity making the cost of operating an ECE program – particularly serving more vulnerable families – and paying staff a living wage a primary challenge for our community. The Council continues to track local, state, and federal opportunities to offset these challenges; however, it is unknown how future resources will support the needs of our children, families, and ECE programs.

In 2020-2021, the COVID-19 pandemic spotlighted the importance of child care and the critical need for ECE professionals to be regarded as essential workers. Without child care, businesses were unable to open and parents were unable to work. With the help of extensive local and national financial supports, along with mental health services for families and caregivers, ECE programs were able to persevere through this pandemic and avoid permanent school closures.

Despite Santa Barbara County's challenges, the ECE field continues to promote excellence through increased enrollment in California's Quality Counts. This commitment to improve early care and education services is critical to the well-being of local children and families. Additional investment to expand the number of child care spaces and raise the wages of educators (thereby increasing retention) will dramatically improve and increase the level of kindergarten-readiness.

The following is a summary of critical findings of early care and education services in Santa Barbara County.

### The People of Santa Barbara County

- County-wide households are forecast to increase 25% by 2050.
- The ethnicity of the child population of the county is increasingly Hispanic.
- Thirty-three percent of Santa Barbara County residents primarily speak Spanish and about half (51.3%) of all K-12 children enrolled in Santa Barbara County schools are English Learners (EL) and Fluent English Students (FEP).
- The median (average) income in Santa Barbara County is \$81,049 (\$6,754/month) and it takes \$7,344/month AFTER TAXES, on average for a 4-person household to make ends meet in Santa Barbara County.
- Twelve percent of Santa Barbara County residents live in poverty and 23% of the children aged birth to 17 years old in Santa Barbara County live in poverty.

### Needs for ECE and School-Age Care

- The need for care has increased significantly since 2015, yet capacity has not. There continues to be a critical shortage of licensed spaces in Santa Barbara County with the most significant shortage in infant-toddler and school-age spaces.
- Transitional kindergarten in the school setting has expanded the capacity of care for four year olds who will turn five after December 2nd of that school year.
- Many children are cared for in unregulated settings operating without a license where there is no monitoring of health and safety standards or program quality.

## The Cost of Care and Subsidized Care

- The cost of care in Santa Barbara County ranges significantly from region to region and by age group and type of care. Challenges for parents and providers regarding the cost of care have been exasperated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The need for subsidized care far outweighs the availability. Ninety-two percent of 0-2 year olds and 56% of 3-5 year olds who are eligible and need subsidized care are not able to access it.
- The high cost of care is prohibitive for many working families who earn just above the income eligibility threshold. In an effort to address this disparity, California updated the eligibility criteria to qualify for subsidized programs from 70% of the State Median Income (SMI) to 85% of the SMI.

## Special Needs for Early Care and Education and School-Age Care

- The number of children with IFSPs or IEPs has increased since 2015 for school-age children and decreased for 0-5 year olds.
- The number of children taken into care due to child abuse and neglect has decreased from 2013 to 2019; however, there is concern regarding the recent increase in the severity of cases during COVID-19.
- Although the number of children experiencing homelessness has decreased in Santa Barbara County from 2015 to 2019-2020 anecdotal reports suggest that the true numbers of families sharing accommodations with other families out of economic necessity are much greater than reported. The North County region has the largest number of families described as homeless (66% of the county-wide total). The instability resulting from homelessness makes it more difficult to enroll and keep children in early care and education programs. High-quality care is even more critical for these children, yet dedicated spaces are in very short supply.
- Children of migrant families under five years of age are not identified if they do not have siblings in the school system. In 2019-2020 there were 3,476 children of migrant families with 98% living in North County.
- The majority (92%) of the teen births in 2019 were Hispanic and 71% occurred in Santa Maria and Guadalupe. Services for teen parents and their children have decreased.
- More than 35,000 children in Santa Barbara County are classified as dual language learners (initial fluent English proficient, English learner, and reclassified fluent English proficient). This is an increase from the 30,000 dual language children reported in the 2015 report. Children need support in their home language, not just in English.





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