

Understanding Vermont's Child Care Challenges: The Data

What do we know about Vermont's kids?

According to the Vermont Department of Health, there are **30,478** kids under the age of 5 in Vermont.



Thanks to the US Census Bureau, we know that **71.1%** of Vermont kids under 6 have all parents in the labor force.



That means that there are about **21,670** kids under the age of 5 in VT who are likely to need some form of child care.

What do we know about child care providers?

Between 2010 and 2015, the number of licensed or registered child care and learning (preschool or pre-K) providers in Vermont **decreased by 10%.**



This means that in May 2010, there were 1,659 licensed or registered providers, but in May 2015 there were only 1,498 licensed or registered providers in Vermont.



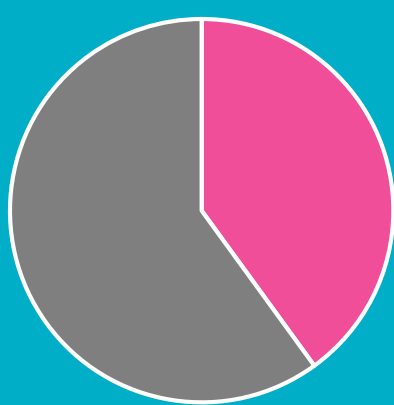
According to VT's Bright Futures Information System, of those 1,498 providers only 1,200 reported providing care for or having the capacity to care for infants, toddlers, or preschoolers.

So what does this mean for families and providers?

Child care is expensive for families...

We know that many Vermont families struggle to pay for child care.

According to the 2015 Building Bright Futures report *How Are Vermont's Young Children and Families?* middle income Vermont families with two parents and two young children are **spending up to 40% of their income on child care.**



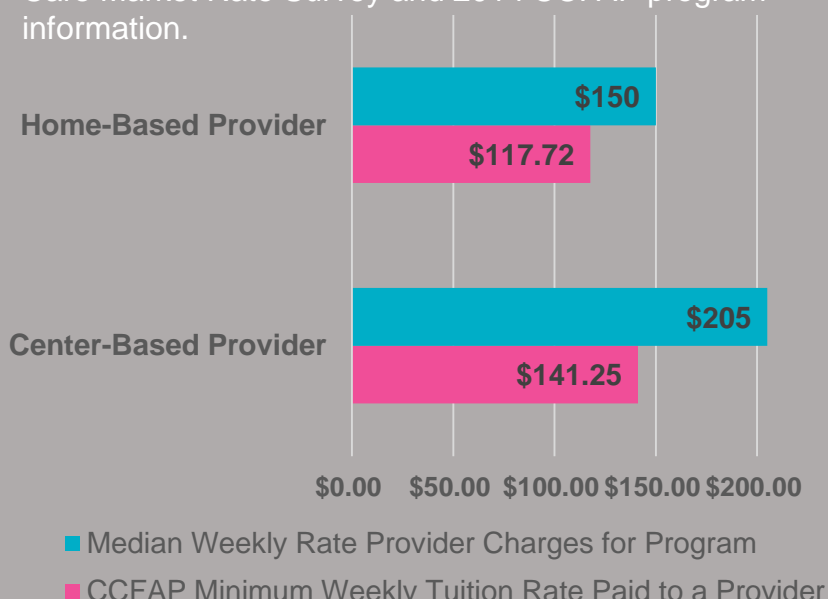
That's over \$19,000 a year—more than the cost of full-time, in-state tuition at a Vermont State College.



And for child care providers...

A big challenge for providers can be the difference in the rate they need to charge families to cover the cost of their programming and what they are paid by the state for children who receive full or partial support through the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).

Let's take a look at full-time child care for an infant. The information we're using is from the 2014 Vermont Child Care Market Rate Survey and 2014 CCFAP program information.



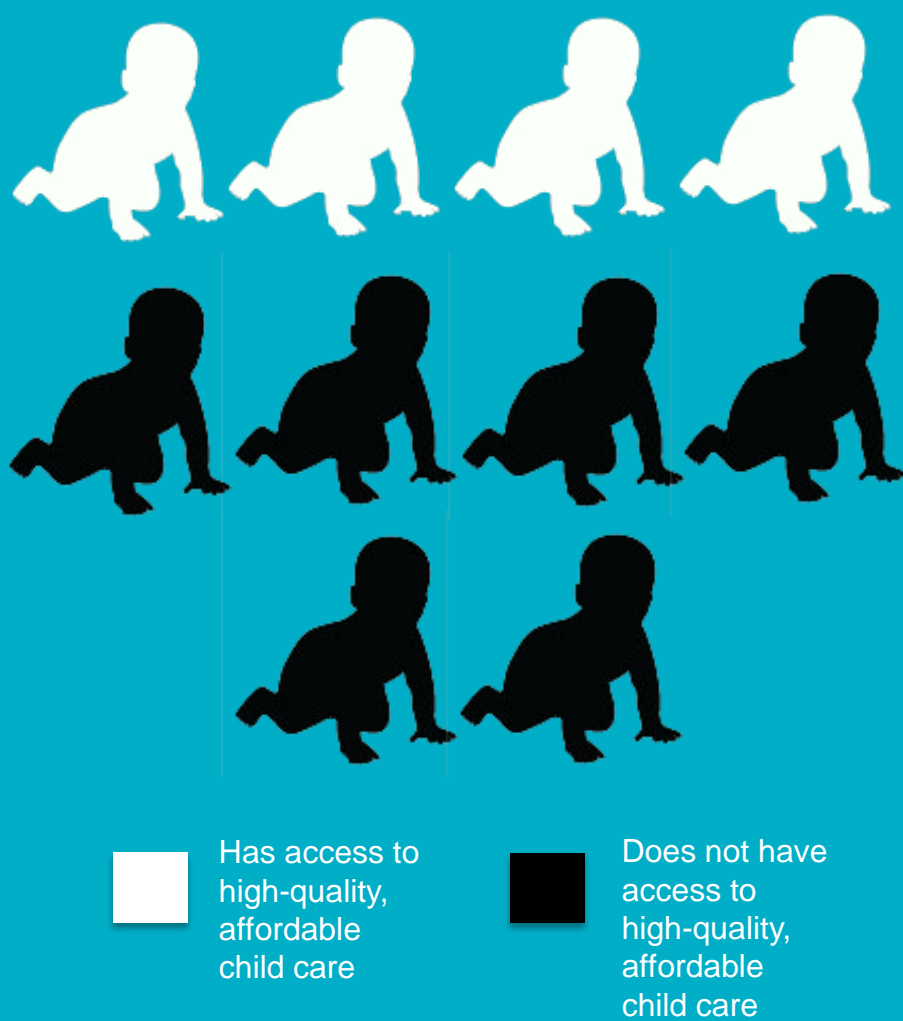
The rate providers need to charge to provide care (the blue bar) is more than what providers are paid by CCFAP (the pink bar). This means providers face a tough choice: do they ask families who are already financially strapped to make up the difference between what their financial assistance covers (the pink bar) and what the program costs (the blue bar), or do they cover the difference themselves?

Are there other challenges?

Yes!

Child care can be hard to find...

Unfortunately, **more than half** of Vermont's infants and toddlers likely to need child care don't have access to high-quality, affordable programs.



And a hard profession to stay in...



The Vermont Department of Labor has projected that between 2012 and 2022, **almost 70% of child care worker positions that become available in Vermont will be due to turnover.** This puts child care in the top 10 occupations in the state with the highest number of openings, on average, per year.

One of the reasons turnover is so high is because the average annual income for a child care worker in Vermont is only \$24,070—often without benefits.

This means that the average child care worker in Vermont makes over \$6,000 LESS than what Vermont's Joint Fiscal Office (a government office that works with the legislature on budgeting) says is a livable annual income: \$30,765, for a single adult with no children who lives with a roommate in shared housing and has to purchase health insurance on their own.

As you can see, Vermonters face tough choices when it comes to child care. Child care needs to be more affordable for families AND child care providers.

And you can help make this happen!

Blue Ribbon Commission

In June 2015, Vermont law formed a Blue Ribbon Commission on Financing High Quality, Affordable Child Care. The commission's job is to determine the hallmarks of a quality child care program and to recommend to the Legislature and Governor strategies to support affordable, quality child care in Vermont. The commission is expected to issue a report by November 1, 2016.

Stay up-to-date on the important work of the commission at letsgrowkids.org.

Take action at letsgrowkids.org!

- Sign the Pledge to support giving every child a strong start
- Watch our new collection of Small Talk interviews with Vermonters who face child care challenges
- Watch our fall 2015 ad about the tough choices parents face because of Vermont's child care challenge



Let's Grow Kids is public awareness and engagement campaign working to raise awareness about the importance of the early years in the lives of Vermont's children. Let's Grow Kids is a project of the Permanent Fund for Vermont's Children.

Data sources:

Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Insights, US Census Bureau, Building Bright Futures, Vermont Joint Fiscal Office

LET'S GROW KIDS
FOCUS ON THE FIRST YEARS