

Accredited Early Care and Education

DEFINITION

Accredited early care and education is the percentage of nationally-accredited child care centers, private preschools, and family child care homes as of January 2005. Child care centers and preschools are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Family child care homes are accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).

SIGNIFICANCE

Research on early care and education reveals associations between the quality of the program and children's developing skills and well-being. The quality of child care is clearly linked to children's developmental outcomes. The quality of child care is a more important predictor of positive development than the hours in child care, the stability of child care, or the type of child care.¹

High-quality child care and early education is discernible by smaller numbers of children in a classroom or group, fewer children per adult, educated and experienced caregivers, nurturing and dependable relationships between staff and children, and safe and stimulating environments.² Research shows that children in preschool classrooms are better prepared for school

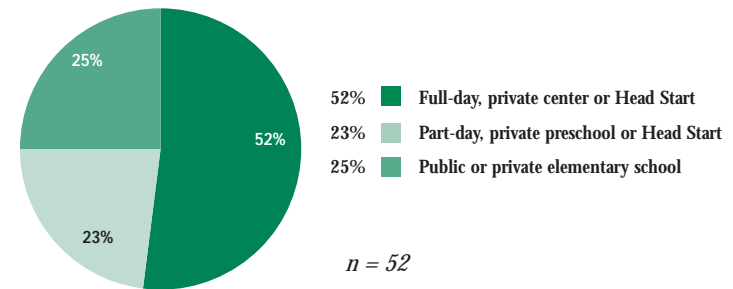
when teachers have at least an associate's degree, and optimally, a bachelor's degree.^{3,4}

Children from all backgrounds who have received high-quality early care and education score higher on tests of both cognitive and social skills in their early school years than children in poor quality care.^{5,6} Low-income children, who receive high quality early education score significantly higher on tests of reading and math from the early grades through middle adolescence and are less likely to repeat a grade. They are more interested in learning, and are stronger in reading, math, problem solving and thinking, and working with others.^{7,8}

The quality of child care can also influence a parent's employment and education. When parents are using higher quality child care, they are more likely to keep their jobs, work more hours, and increase their educational attainment.⁹

Investments in high-quality early care and education programs consistently generate at least a 3 to 1 return on investment or better by reducing public education expenses, lowering criminal justice costs, increasing lifetime earnings of both the child and the parents (and thus increasing tax revenues), and reducing public welfare expenditures.¹⁰

NAEYC Accredited Programs by Type, Rhode Island, 2005



◆ NAEYC accredits full-day and part-day programs in public or private settings. In January 2005, 52% of the NAEYC accredited programs in Rhode Island were full-day, private child care centers or Head Start programs; 23% were part-day, private preschools or Head Starts; and 25% were public or private schools.¹¹

◆ In January 2005 in Rhode Island, 10% of the full-day child care centers or Head Start programs and 18% of the part-day preschools or Head Start programs were accredited by NAEYC.¹² One percent of the certified family child care homes were NAFCC accredited.¹³

Strategies to Improve the Quality of Child Care

◆ The quality of child care is strongly related to the wages, education, and retention of teachers. Scholarship and compensation initiatives can improve child care workforce education and retention, particularly when professional development and education are linked to pay increases.¹⁴

◆ Thirty-four states have developed tiered quality rating systems to promote large-scale quality improvements including child care consumer guides with quality ratings for child care programs, rated child care licensing, and tiered reimbursement policies that provide higher subsidy rates to child care programs that achieve higher levels of quality. NAEYC and NAFCC accreditation are often used to mark a higher level of quality in tiered quality strategies.¹⁵

◆ Enhancing the capacity of child care licensing agencies and making inspection and verified complaint data public has also been used as an effective strategy to improve the quality of child care.¹⁶

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Table 28.

Programs with NAEYC or NAFCC Accreditation, Rhode Island, 2005

CITY/TOWN	PART-DAY PROGRAMS			FULL-DAY PROGRAMS			CERTIFIED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES		
	NUMBER	NAEYC ACCREDITED	%NAEYC ACCREDITED	NUMBER	NAEYC ACCREDITED	%NAEYC ACCREDITED	NUMBER	NAFCC ACCREDITED	%NAFCC ACCREDITED
Barrington	4	1	25%	6	0	0%	8	0	0%
Bristol	1	0	0%	5	1	20%	10	0	0%
Burrillville	1	1	100%	2	0	0%	9	0	0%
Central Falls	0	0	N/A	4	0	0%	44	0	0%
Charlestown	2	0	0%	2	0	0%	3	0	0%
Coventry	2	0	0%	6	1	17%	21	0	0%
Cranston	8	1	13%	24	1	4%	92	1	1%
Cumberland	4	0	0%	4	0	0%	31	1	3%
East Greenwich	3	2	67%	9	1	11%	6	1	17%
East Providence	1	0	0%	18	2	11%	25	0	0%
Exeter	0	0	N/A	2	0	0%	2	0	0%
Foster	0	0	N/A	2	0	0%	1	0	0%
Glocester	1	1	100%	1	0	0%	7	0	0%
Hopkinton	2	1	50%	1	0	0%	2	2	100%
Jamestown	0	0	N/A	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Johnston	1	0	0%	11	2	18%	21	0	0%
Lincoln	1	1	100%	6	0	0%	7	0	0%
Little Compton	1	0	0%	0	0	N/A	0	0	N/A
Middletown	2	0	0%	7	2	29%	5	0	0%
Narragansett	1	0	0%	2	0	0%	0	0	N/A
New Shoreham	0	0	N/A	1	0	0%	0	0	N/A
Newport	3	1	33%	5	0	0%	5	0	0%
North Kingstown	3	0	0%	9	1	11%	13	0	0%
North Providence	2	0	0%	6	1	17%	24	0	0%
North Smithfield	1	0	0%	0	0	N/A	6	0	0%
Pawtucket	3	1	33%	14	0	0%	92	1	1%
Portsmouth	2	0	0%	3	1	33%	6	0	0%
Providence	5	1	20%	48	3	6%	720	1	<1%
Richmond	0	0	N/A	1	0	0%	10	0	0%
Scituate	0	0	N/A	1	0	0%	4	0	0%
Smithfield	0	0	N/A	7	0	0%	7	0	0%
South Kingstown	5	0	0%	9	2	22%	13	0	0%
Tiverton	0	0	N/A	2	0	0%	9	0	0%
Warren	1	0	0%	3	0	0%	6	0	0%
Warwick	2	1	50%	27	3	11%	43	0	0%
West Greenwich	1	0	0%	3	1	33%	0	0	N/A
West Warwick	1	0	0%	6	1	17%	21	0	0%
Westerly	2	0	0%	6	0	0%	2	0	0%
Woonsocket	1	0	0%	10	4	40%	40	0	0%
<i>Core Cities</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>922</i>	<i>2</i>	<i><1%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>187</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>274</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>1,316</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>1%</i>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Data are from Options for Working Parents, January 2005. Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, January 2005, National Association for the Education of Young Children, January 2005 and National Association for Family Child Care, January 2005.

Part-day programs are child care centers and preschool programs that operate for less than 7½ hours a day.

As of January 2005, there were 86 family child care homes listed as “inactive” in the Options for Working Parents database because of a delay with certification renewals. These providers were not included in the table.

Core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

References

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