

## Definition

*Child Care means the “full range of services used by families to educate and nurture young children--services that also allow parents to work or go to school.”<sup>1</sup>*

Child care is a key factor in household economic well-being as nearly 71 percent of children under age six in Nevada lived with working parents in 1997.<sup>2</sup> Inability to access or afford adequate child care may greatly diminish parents’ ability to maintain employment.

Useful descriptions for Nevada child-care facilities are defined by law and may be found in *Services for Facilities for Care of Children* NAC-432A.<sup>3</sup>

**Child-care center:** any facility in which the licensee regularly provides day or night care for more than 12 children.

**Child-care institution:** a facility in which the licensee provides care during the day and night and provides developmental guidance to 16 or more children who do not routinely return to the homes of their parents or guardians.

**Family home:** any facility in which the licensee regularly provides care without the presence of parents, for at least five and not more than six children.

**Group home:** any facility in which the licensee regularly provides care for no less than seven and no more than 12 children.

**Nursery for infants and toddlers:** a child care facility in which the licensee provides care for five or more children who are under two years of age.

**Preschool:** a facility in which the licensee has established specific goals to enhance each child’s cognitive, social, emotional, physical and creative development.

**Special needs facility:** a child care facility providing care to children in which the licensee has established specific goals to enhance special needs, and in which those children comprise 40 percent or more of the total number of children for whom the facility is licensed to provide care.

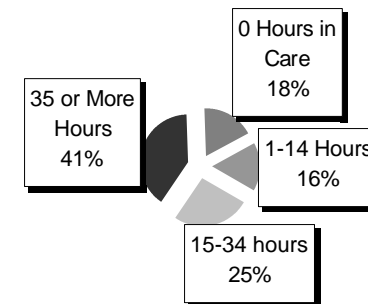
**On-site child-care facility:** an establishment that (1) provides care to the children of employees of a business at the place of employment; (2) provides care on a temporary or permanent basis, during the day or overnight, to five or more children who are under the age of 18 years and who are not related within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity to an owner or manager of the business; and (3) is owned, operated, subsidized, managed, contracted for or staffed by the business (NRS 432A.0275).

2001 Nevada KIDS COUNT Data Book

Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada Las Vegas

<http://kidscount.unlv.edu>

**National Estimates of the Hours Spent per Week in Nonparental Care by Children under Five with Employed Mothers: 1997**



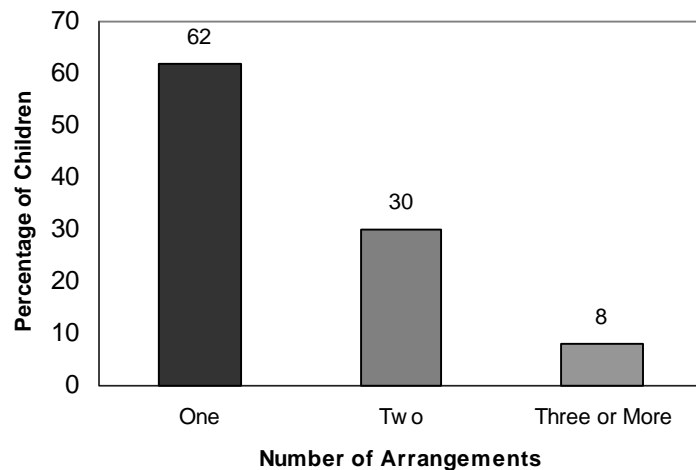
Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America’s Families, “The Hours That Children Under Five Spend in Child Care: Variation Across States,” Series B, No. B-8, March 2000.

## Research Highlights

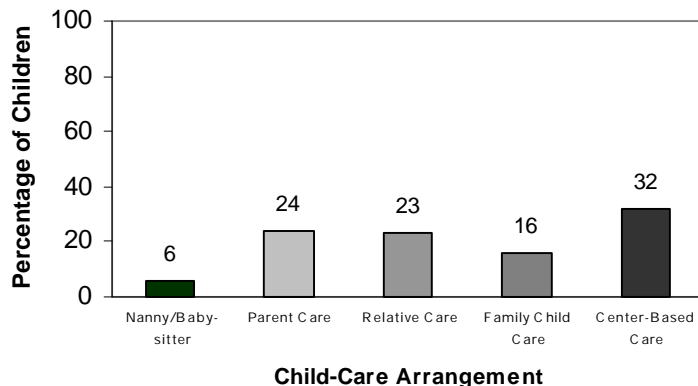
- ❖ Data from the 1997 National Survey of America’s Families, analyzed by the Urban Institute, revealed that:
  - ❖ Forty-one percent of children under five years of age of working mothers spent 35 or more hours a week in child care (see figure above).<sup>4</sup>
  - ❖ Thirty-eight percent of children in nonparental child care were in more than one child-care arrangement each week (see figure on following page).<sup>5</sup>
  - ❖ Seventy-six percent of preschool children with employed mothers were regularly cared for by someone other than their parents (see figure on following page).<sup>6</sup>

# Child Care Continued

**National Estimates of the Percentage of Children under Age Five with Employed Mothers by Non-parental Child-Care Arrangements: 1997**



**National Estimates of the Percentage of Children under Age Five with Employed Mothers by Primary Child-Care Arrangements: 1997**



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

- ❖ Three- and four-year-olds were twice as likely to be found in center-based arrangements than children ages birth to two (45 versus 22 percent).<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ Low-income children (equal to or below 200 percent Federal Poverty Guidelines) were more likely to receive care from a relative or a parent than higher-income children and were less likely to be in center-based care.<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ A survey of families who had left welfare since 1996 revealed that the most often-cited reason for not working (among the unemployed former recipients) was lack of child care.<sup>8</sup>
- ❖ “The high cost of child care puts quality care out of reach for many families.”<sup>9</sup> This conclusion was drawn by the Children’s Defense Fund following a 2000 nationwide survey of local child-care resource and referral agencies on child-care costs. Some additional findings include:<sup>10</sup>
  - ❖ Child-care costs, in all states except one, exceeded the cost of college tuition. For example, the average annual cost of child care for a four-year-old in Reno, NV, was \$4,862 (2000 Children’s Defense Fund data); whereas, the average annual cost of public-college tuition in Nevada was \$1,956 (based on 1997 enrollment data).
  - ❖ Average annual costs for infants exceeded those of children. “The statewide average annual cost of center care for a four-year-old ranged from \$3,380 in Mississippi to \$7,389 in Alaska.” The corresponding figures for an infant ranged from \$3,692 in Mississippi to \$9,509 in Minnesota.
  - ❖ Family home care was somewhat less expensive than center care.
  - ❖ Child-care costs were somewhat lower in rural areas than in urban areas.

## Child Care Continued

### Nevada

- ❖ During January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000, there were 1,065 licensed child-care facilities in Nevada. The two most common types were family home and child-care centers (590 and 352, respectively).<sup>11</sup>
- ❖ Many Nevada families pay 25 percent or more of their gross income for child care as compared with the 10 percent recommended by the Children’s Defense Fund.<sup>12</sup>

- ❖ According to the Nevada Women’s Lobby, because of budget constraints, many caregivers in Nevada have not received adequate training and staff-turnover rates are high, resulting in child care which may lack in quality and consistency. And, paying for quality early education programs now will save paying much more later for costly remedial services necessary to ensure children’s success in school and later in life.<sup>13</sup>
- ❖ Only 6 percent of children eligible for federal child-care assistance in Nevada received it in 1999. The figure for the nation was 12 percent. (The percentage of children served ranged from a low of 3 percent in the District of Columbia to a high of 25 percent in West Virginia.)<sup>14</sup>

### Number of Day Care Licenses in Nevada: 2000

Type of Facility	Licenses
Day-care center	352
Onsite center	7
Child-care institution	4
Family home	590
Group home	33
Nursery for infants and toddlers	5
Preschool	38
Special-needs facility	1
Accommodation	35
Total	1,065
Total Spaces	40,484

Source: Division of Child and Family Services,  
Bureau of Services for Child Care.

*“A better understanding of state-specific child care behavior will help state policymakers effectively target their child care policies and identify the likely impact of policy changes.”<sup>15</sup>*

## Child Care Continued

### Child-Care Costs in Nevada: 2000

<b>Area</b>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Center Care for a 4-Year-Old</i>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Center Care for a 12-Month-Old</i>
Nevada	\$4,862	\$5,850
Rural Nevada (Fallon)	\$4,862	\$4,758
Urban Nevada (Reno)	\$4,862	\$5,850

<b>Area</b>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Family Child Care for a 4-Year-Old</i>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Family Child Care for a 12-Month-Old</i>
Nevada	\$4,680	\$4,940
Rural Nevada (Carson City)	\$4,550	\$4,550
Urban Nevada (Reno/Sparks)	\$4,420	\$4,550

<b>Area</b>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Center Care for a School-Age Child</i>	<i>Average Annual Cost of Family Child Care for a School-Age Child</i>
Nevada	\$2,396	\$2,097
Rural Nevada (centers)/Carson City (family child care)	\$2,037	\$1,797
Urban Nevada (Reno)	\$2,492	\$2,576

Source: *The High Cost of Child Care Puts Quality Care Out of Reach for Many Families*, Children's Defense Fund, 2000.

Statewide findings from the Children's Defense Fund study on child care revealed that the cost of child care for infants in Nevada, as in the nation, was greater than the cost for an older child, regardless of type of care received. However, in comparing types of child care, center care was somewhat more expensive than family care for a school-age child.

In comparing regions of the state, child-care costs for school-age children in the urban areas were higher than in the rural areas, regardless of type of care. Family care in rural Nevada (Carson City), however, was somewhat more expensive than family care in the urban area of Reno/Sparks. This was also the case for center care for an infant. On the other hand, costs were higher for a four-year-old in the rural areas, irrespective of type of care received.

*"The challenges confronting the families who seek to enroll their children in child care are very much like the challenges facing an Olympian track star: every hurdle the runner successfully leaps is followed by another."<sup>6</sup>*  
*Opening a New Window on Child Care*  
*National Council of Jewish Women*

# Child Care Continued

## Child-Care Subsidy Programming

“Dependable, affordable child care is a critical support for all working families; and, such care can be particularly difficult for low-income families to access.”<sup>17</sup> The high cost of child care represents a significant barrier to parents entering and remaining in the work force. Child-care costs constitute a much greater percentage of income for low-income families than for high-income families. Additionally, working poor families are more likely to have nonstandard working hours and inflexible work schedules, making availability a child-care access barrier. Because a primary goal of welfare reform is to increase parents’ work effort, Nevada uses federal and state funds to subsidize low-income parents’ purchase of child care. Such child-care subsidies most commonly take the form of vouchers to clients or direct payments to providers that offset some or all of the cost of care.

The 1997 Nevada legislature consolidated all child-care subsidy programs and placed them within the Department of Human Resources Welfare Division. As a result of the consolidation, the following eligibility system was developed. In general, child-care subsidies will be provided for those families who (1) have applied for TANF and are actively pursuing employment, (2) are receiving TANF assistance and are in a work-training program, (3) are working and receiving TANF assistance, (4) are working but are still at-risk of needing TANF assistance as their income falls below 185 percent of TANF eligibility guidelines and not above 75 percent of the state median income, and (5) are considered in discretionary status such as caring for a foster child or enrolled in an educational program.<sup>18</sup> In Nevada, the child-care subsidy program is “privatized” with one northern (Children’s Cabinet) and one southern (Economic Opportunity Board) nonprofit entity administering child-care subsidy programs.

In Nevada, 8,049 families, representing 14,333 children, received these child-care support services during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2000.<sup>19</sup>

Given that a subsidy may improve a parent’s access to more stable, higher-quality child care, which then may increase the likelihood of sustained employment, research findings highlight the need to ensure eligible families know about and have access to child-care subsidies. A 1998 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report on child-care subsidies found that 10 percent of the 14.7 million children eligible for child-care assistance under federal guidelines, receive them.<sup>20</sup>

## Characteristics of Child-Care Subsidy Programming in Nevada: 2000

	Number	Percent
<b>Subsidy Payment Methods</b>		
Number of children served via grants or contracts	2,682	18.7
Number of children served via direct certificates (payment voucher)	11,651	81.3
Total	14,333	100
<b>Number of Children Served per Type of Child-Care Setting</b>		
Child’s home	153	1.1
Family home	1,695	11.8
Group home	46	0.3
Center Care	12,439	86.8
Total	14,333	100

Source: *State of Nevada Child Care and Development Fund Annual Report*, FFY 2000.