

Child Care

Definition

Regulated providers is the total number of licensed centers, licensed homes, and certified homes. *Regulated capacity* is the total number of spaces available for children in licensed centers, licensed homes, and certified homes. *STAR-rated providers* is the number of licensed centers, licensed homes, and certified homes participating in Kentucky's voluntary Quality Rating System.

Data in context

All children need nurturing, stimulating environments to grow and learn in their early years. Child care allows parents to work or attend school while children learn and interact with others. Quality child care can also support the rapidly developing architecture of the human brain during the early years of life. During 2005, 61 percent of children under 6 in the United States spent time in care away from their home, either with a relative in a home or with a non-relative caregiver at a child care center, pre-K program, preschool, or Head Start program.¹

In Kentucky, licensed centers, which care for 13 or more children in a non-residential setting, represent two-thirds of regulated providers, as well as the majority of regulated capacity statewide (96 percent). Certified homes, which care for 4 to 6 children, are the second most common type of regulated provider and offer 3 percent of the regulated capacity statewide. Nine counties had only 1 or 2 regulated providers, with the capacity in these counties ranging from 20 to 150 children. Four counties had more than 100 regulated providers.

Child care providers participating in Kentucky's voluntary Quality Rating System earn a rating of one to four stars based on components such as teacher-child ratios, family involvement, curriculum, and teacher training.² Participants are eligible for a one-time financial incentive, as well as technical



assistance to continue increasing quality. On June 29, 2007, nearly 800 regulated child care providers in Kentucky were STAR-rated. The majority of these providers (81 percent) were licensed centers, followed by certified homes (16 percent). Twenty-four licensed homes were STAR-rated. Only sixteen providers received the highest rating (4 stars) statewide. Other forms of quality recognition include accreditation by organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association for Family Child Care.

Parents and caregivers often look to family members, friends, or neighbors to help care for their children. "Family, friend, and neighbor care" refers to arrangements, regulated or unregulated, and not always paid, where children are cared for in a home-based setting.³ Convenience, affordability, home-like environment, and trust are among the many reasons families select family, friend, and neighbor care.⁴ Home-based caregivers serve a critical role for 6.5 million American children (42 percent of all children in child care), yet many could use more supportive training to fully prepare children for future success.⁵ Black families are more likely to utilize family, friend, and neighbor care than White families, and when

Hispanic families select non-parental care, they most often choose this type rather than a child care center.⁶ Communities can offer "learning hubs" with shared resources, create neighborhood gathering sites where families and caregivers can interact, and provide training materials through home visitation programs to address the varied needs of providers and give all children the opportunity to start school on a level playing field.⁷

Across child care settings, quality early learning experiences help all children prepare for future school success. However, research indicates children from low-income families, children of color, children whose parents are not native English speakers, and children with disabilities begin kindergarten with less preparation than other children and are still behind at the end of first grade.⁸ Ensuring children from these subpopulations have access to quality early care and education experiences; working to increase cultural competency among early childhood teachers; and addressing children's holistic needs, such as health and social services, can help prepare all children for a successful start to elementary school.

Data Source: Number of providers and capacity data from Kentucky Child Care Resource and Referral agencies. STARS data from Kentucky Division of Child Care.

Data Note: Number of providers and capacity reports July 2007 data. Capacity data is rounded to the nearest ten. STARS participation data reflect participation as of June 29, 2007.

- 1 Child Trends Data Bank. *Child Care*. Available at <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org>. Accessed September 2007.
- 2 Kentucky Department of Education (2007). *STARS for KIDS NOW (Quality Rating System)*. Available at <http://education.ky.gov>. Accessed September 2007.
- 3 Nelson, D. (2006). "Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care: Strengthening a Critical Resource to Help Young Children Succeed." *2006 KIDS COUNT Data Book*. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Vandivere, S., Pitzer, L., Halle, T., and Hair, E. (2004). "Indicators of Early School Success and Child Well-Being." *Cross Currents*, Issue 3, October 2004. Publication # 2004-24. Child Trends. Available at <http://www.childtrends.org>. Accessed September 2007.

Regulated providers (number & capacity) and STAR-rated providers

	2007		
	Number of regulated providers	Regulated capacity (number of children)	STAR-rated providers
Kentucky	3,026	175,720	797
Adair	11	500	6
Allen	8	420	3
Anderson	16	910	8
Ballard	4	230	2
Barren	24	950	5
Bath	6	380	2
Bell	16	570	6
Boone	89	6,590	22
Bourbon	12	890	1
Boyd	27	1,990	7
Boyle	16	880	4
Bracken	8	180	1
Breathitt	4	170	3
Breckinridge	14	580	6
Bullitt	48	3,370	12
Butler	7	220	4
Caldwell	7	300	3
Calloway	32	2,020	15
Campbell	73	4,480	24
Carlisle	1	20	1
Carroll	2	70	0
Carter	13	370	3
Casey	4	240	4
Christian	67	2,870	13
Clark	36	2,430	14
Clay	3	60	4
Clinton	7	240	3
Crittenden	4	210	2
Cumberland	8	190	3
Daviess	67	5,220	20
Edmonson	4	140	2
Elliott	3	90	1
Estill	7	260	0
Fayette	226	16,490	42
Fleming	9	370	4
Floyd	14	520	5
Franklin	43	3,170	10
Fulton	2	60	1
Gallatin	4	100	1
Garrard	8	330	1

	2007		
	Number of regulated providers	Regulated capacity (number of children)	STAR-rated providers
Grant	24	870	5
Graves	26	1,350	17
Grayson	16	1,000	4
Green	6	250	3
Greenup	14	900	5
Hancock	4	100	1
Hardin	102	5,300	24
Harlan	13	420	7
Harrison	15	940	3
Hart	5	180	2
Henderson	24	1,690	16
Henry	16	760	5
Hickman	3	130	2
Hopkins	28	1,420	6
Jackson	5	100	2
Jefferson	655	42,700	109
Jessamine	24	1,890	3
Johnson	15	590	7
Kenton	161	8,960	53
Knott	12	470	3
Knox	32	960	5
Larue	16	700	7
Laurel	26	900	9
Lawrence	2	150	1
Lee	3	180	2
Leslie	7	240	0
Letcher	9	420	5
Lewis	9	280	1
Lincoln	8	270	1
Livingston	3	70	0
Logan	9	350	2
Lyon	3	90	0
Madison	49	3,340	10
Magoffin	3	110	3
Marion	10	650	4
Marshall	13	680	4
Martin	1	40	1
Mason	17	820	4
McCracken	41	2,920	15
McCreary	10	350	7
McLean	6	160	3

	2007		
	Number of regulated providers	Regulated capacity (number of children)	STAR-rated providers
Meade	22	690	0
Menifee	2	100	2
Mercer	15	750	3
Metcalfe	2	130	1
Monroe	12	340	8
Montgomery	18	1,380	7
Morgan	8	250	4
Muhlenberg	13	620	3
Nelson	25	2,550	8
Nicholas	8	440	1
Ohio	8	350	8
Oldham	36	3,720	8
Owen	3	110	1
Owsley	2	150	2
Pendleton	11	330	1
Perry	20	860	10
Pike	14	1,050	4
Powell	12	380	1
Pulaski	46	2,050	12
Robertson	1	50	0
Rockcastle	7	170	4
Rowan	25	1,030	2
Russell	16	440	3
Scott	42	2,600	3
Shelby	30	1,570	7
Simpson	10	520	2
Spencer	9	900	4
Taylor	16	650	5
Todd	6	200	4
Trigg	7	280	5
Trimble	5	110	2
Union	11	470	3
Warren	66	4,290	14
Washington	13	470	0
Wayne	27	600	7
Webster	4	60	1
Whitley	28	1,040	9
Wolfe	4	130	3
Woodford	23	1,460	5