

# OTSEGO COUNTY CHILD CARE REPORT

2024

CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

*A program of*  
Catholic Charities  
of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties



***The Otsego County Child Care Resource Center***  
*Your child care journey starts here!*

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## Otsego County Data

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### Square Miles

- Square miles = 1,002 which is mainly rural in the central New York region. Otsego County is a heavily rural area with farms dotting the countryside. The county is comprised of 34 municipalities – 24 towns, 9 villages, and 1 city.
- There is one large area of population density in the county, which is Oneonta. Oneonta is home to the State University College at Oneonta and Hartwick College.

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### Population/Households

- Total population estimate = 58,524
- Female householder, no spouse/partner with children under 18 years = 679
- Male householder, no spouse/partner with children under 18 years = 298
- Grandparents living with own grandchildren under 18 years = 561
- Grandparents responsible for own grandchildren = 196
- Total number of estimated children under 5 years = 2,343
- School enrollment: Nursery School / Preschool = 505 / Kindergarten = 358

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### Levels of Education

- Population 25 years and older with a 9th - 12th grade education, no diploma = 5.4%
- Population 25 years and older with a high school diploma or equivalent = 31.3%
- Population 25 years and older with an Associate's Degree = 11.4%
- Population 25 years and older with a Bachelor's Degree = 18%
- Population 25 years and older with a Graduate or Professional Degree = 15.7%

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### Poverty

- Median household income = \$65,778
- Population living below the poverty level = 13%
- Population under 18 years living below the poverty level = 15.8%
- Population under 5 years living below the poverty level = 29.9%

Source:  
2022 American Community Survey  
2023 Opportunities for Otsego Community Needs Assessment  
2020 Decennial Census  
NYS Community Action Association

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## Child Care Resource Center

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Child Care Support Services acts as the Child Care Resource Center Agency (CCRC) for Otsego County. CCRCs are located in counties throughout New York State and are partially funded by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. As the CCRC we offer several services to both parents seeking child care and the child care community.

Our CCRC provides information and referrals to registered and licensed programs for parents who are seeking child care. We maintain a database of providers and programs located throughout Otsego County. This database contains information on each provider and program. Providers and programs are matched with the needs of the parent and appropriate referrals are given. Information is also available on the compliance history of the provider or program, as well as more general information including information on the child care assistance program, information on regulatory requirements, and referrals to other needed agencies or programs.

Our CCRC is a resource to communities in planning to meet the needs of working families with young children. Our staff provide technical assistance to child care programs, businesses and community members seeking information about child care regulations, local child care related data, and best practice in the field of early care and education, either on-site, by phone, email or Zoom meetings.

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## Otsego County Legally Exempt Enrollment Agency

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Child Care Support Services is designated by the State of New York as the Legally Exempt Child Care Provider Enrollment Agency serving Otsego County. We provide assistance, support, inspection and enrollment services for Legally Exempt caregivers providing child care for families receiving child care assistance in Otsego County.

The Otsego County Department of Social Services may provide or pay child care assistance for eligible parents/guardians when the child care provider is approved and enrolled as a legally exempt provider. Registered or licensed child care providers are also eligible for child care assistance payment if selected by the family.

Legally Exempt child care can often be very difficult to understand with regard to regulations, however, there are three main types of legally exempt child care: Family Child Care, In-Home Child Care and Group Child Care. Enrolled providers are also subject to inspections in accordance with NYS Office of Children & Family Services Legally Exempt Child Care regulations. Legally Exempt Family Child Care providers are eligible to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

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## Child and Adult Care Food Program

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Child Care Support Services acts as the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsoring agency for Otsego County. The CACFP is funded by the New York State Department of Health. The purpose of the CACFP is to ensure that children in day care programs throughout the state are receiving nutritious meals and snacks. Participating providers receive reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children in care.

Providers are supported and monitored through visits and trainings by Child Care Support Services staff. Providers are given training on how to plan, purchase and serve nutritious meals and snacks to children in their care.

Funding some of the related costs of child care can help keep parent fees lower and make care more affordable.

# Otsego County Family Child Care, School Age Child Care and Small Day Care Center Registration and Inspection

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Child Care Support Services acts as the Registrar for Otsego County family day care programs, school age child care programs and small day care centers. In this role we strive to ensure that these New York State registered programs meet the minimum standards set forth in the New York State Office of Children and Family Services regulations.

Child Care Support Services is required to conduct inspections on all of the registered family day care programs, school age child care programs and small day care centers in Otsego County each year. Registered programs also receive quarterly monitoring visits from our registration staff to check compliance with the regulations.

As the Registrar for Otsego County we are responsible for investigating any complaints on registered programs or suspected illegal programs in the county. In this role we conduct investigations which may involve Child Protective Services, as well as local police departments.

As the Registrar we receive all initial applications for individuals interested in becoming a family day care program, school age child care program or small day care center. Applications are received by our office and reviewed for approval. Applicants are given technical assistance to properly complete the application and all new programs are inspected to ensure compliance with the regulations prior to being approved for registration.

Every four years providers are required to complete a renewal application in order to maintain their registration. Child Care Support Services reviews and approves these applications for renewal.

## Training and Professional Development

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Child Care is a profession, and child care providers are required to demonstrate their preparation to care for children, and to enhance their early childhood skills and knowledge by taking required child care training. Our certified trainer is able to offer varied training topics to the child care providers in our community. We also work with other child care resource centers, health care programs, schools and colleges, human service agencies, and businesses to ensure that multiple and varied child care provider training is available. Child care providers are required to have training in the following topics:

*Childhood Development*

*Nutrition and Health Needs*

*Business Record Maintenance & Management*

*Statutes and Regulations Pertaining to Child Abuse and Maltreatment*

*Statutes and Regulations Pertaining to Child Day Care*

*Child Abuse and Maltreatment*

*Adverse Childhood Experiences*

*Program Development*

*Safety and Security Procedures*

*Shaken Baby Syndrome*

## Partnership and Collaboration

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Child Care Support Services strives to support the child care programs, parents, employers and the community in Otsego County. In 2023 - 2024 we partnered, collaborated with or supported efforts through memberships and committees with the following:

*Otsego County Department of Social Services*

*The Otsego Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect*

*Bright Side Up Regional Infant Toddler Center*

*Office of Children and Family Services*

*New York State Education Department*

*National Association for the Education of Young Children*

*NYS DOH CACFP*

*Head Start*

*Building Healthy Families*

*Otsego County Chamber of Commerce*

*Early Care & Learning Council*

## Types of Child Care Available in Otsego County

Listed below are brief descriptions of common types of child care programs in New York State. Each program is regulated by the state Office of Children and Family Services. Staff to child ratios and maximum group sizes are defined in the New York State Office of Children and Family Services regulations.

**Day Care Center** - A day care center means a program or facility which is not a residence in which child day care is provided on a regular basis to more than six children for more than three hours per day per child for compensation or otherwise, except those programs providing care as a school-age child care program as defined below. Day Care Centers are licensed through the Office of Children and Family Services.

Age of Children	Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks to 18 months	1:4	8
18 months to 36 months	1:5	12
3 years	1:7	18
4 years	1:8	21
5 years	1:9	24
School age children through 9 years	1:10	20
School age children 10 to 12 years	1:15	30

**Small Day Care Center** - A small day care center means a program or facility which is not a residence in which child day care is provided to three through six children for more than three hours per day per child. Catholic Charities is the local registrar for Small Day Care Centers.

- A small day care center may provide care for children six weeks through 12 years of age.
- No more than two children under the age of two may be cared for at any one time.
- When any child who is less than two years of age is present, the maximum capacity is six.
- When all children present are at least two years of age, maximum capacity is six.

**Family Day Care Home** - A family day care means a program caring for children for more than three hours per day per child in which child day care is provided in a family home for three to six children. The family day care home may add one or two school-age children. Catholic Charities is the local registrar for Family Day Care homes.

- A family day care home may provide care for children six weeks through 12 years of age.
- There must be one caregiver for every two children under the age of two years in attendance.
- The maximum capacity for children aged 6 weeks to school-age is six.
- An additional two children who are of school-age may be provided care if the additional school-age children attend kindergarten or a school grade level higher than kindergarten.

**Group Family Day Care Home** - A group family day care means a program caring for children for more than three hours per day per child in which child day care is provided in a family home for seven to twelve children of all ages, except for those programs operating as a family day care home, which care for seven or eight children. Group Family Day Care homes may add one to four school-age children. A provider must use an assistant when more than six children are present. Group Family Day care homes are licensed through the Office of Children and Family Services.

- A group family day care home may provide care for children six weeks through 12 years of age.
- There must be one caregiver for every two children under the age of two years in attendance.
- The maximum capacity for children aged 6 weeks to school-age is 12.
- An additional four children who are of school-age may be provided care if the additional school-age children attend kindergarten or a school grade level higher than kindergarten.

**School-Age Child Care Program** - A school-age child care means a program or facility which is not a residence in which child day care is provided to an enrolled group of seven or more children under 13 years of age during the school year before and/or after the period such children are ordinarily in school or during school lunch periods. School-age child care programs also may provide care during school holidays and those periods of the year in which school is not in session, including summer vacation. Such programs must operate consistent with the local school calendar. In Otsego County, Catholic Charities is the local registrar for school-age child care programs.

Age of Children	Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
School age children through 9 years	1:10	20
School age children 10 to 12 years	1:15	30

**Other forms of legal child care include:**

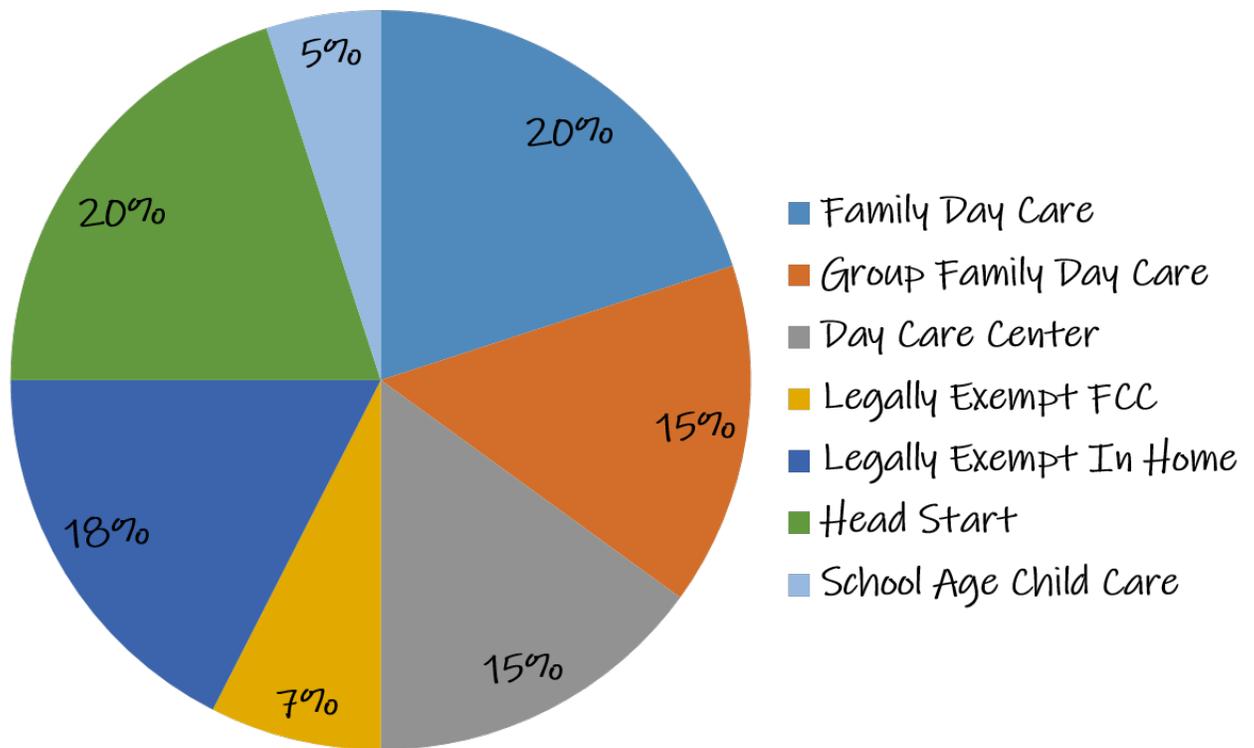
- **Legally-Exempt Child Care** - provide care for one to two children at a time outside of the child's own home in a residence, or within the child's home, by a caregiver who is chosen and monitored by the child's parent/guardian.
- **Nursery Schools/Pre-School Programs** – serve children ages 3-5 years old in a variety of settings for three hours a day or less.
- **Pre-Kindergartens** - usually located in public schools, but can also be found in private schools or day care centers; supervised by the State Education Department.
- **Head Start Centers** - targeted for preschool-age children from low income families; federally funded and usually licensed as day care centers.

**Illegal Child Care Programs**

The Social Services Law 390 states that an individual may not watch more than 2 children in the individual's home, for more than 3 hours per day, if the children are not related to them in the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of consanguinity, without being registered or licensed.

More information on the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Day Care regulations can be found at: [https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare\\_regulations.asp](https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_regulations.asp) or by contacting the New York State Office of Children and Family Services' Day Care Services at (518) 402-3038.

Otsego County Child Care Options



# Report on Needs Assessment for Child Care in Otsego County

Each year Child Care Support Services of Catholic Charities of Delaware and Otsego Counties completes a child care needs assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the gaps that exist in Otsego County for child care and to create a plan to try to fill those gaps that exist. This assessment is completed by comparing the current supply of child care with the demand that exists in the county.

To determine the available supply of child care in Otsego County, Child Care Support Services surveyed all registered and licensed child care programs throughout the winter of 2023-2024. As part of this survey, programs and providers were asked how many openings they currently had. Using that information along with their registered/licensed capacities we are able to determine the utilization rate for Otsego County.

To determine the demand for child care, Child Care Support Services uses the 2022 American Community Survey five year estimates, along with labor force statistics, which states the percentage of parents who are active in the labor force.

Changes in regulations and availability of incentives began a downward trend of registered and licensed programs in Otsego County. The loss of preschool age children to pre-k programs, along with the retirement of many long-term providers without new programs opening to fill the gap also led the steep decline in child care programs.

Additional stressors, including lack of adequate housing to meet state requirements, lack of community awareness and recognition of the important career of family day care, prevent new providers from pursuing the essential small business.

## Otsego County Child Care Trend Family and Group Family Day Care Providers



## Child Care Supply in Otsego County

- There are 20 Registered and Licensed Day Care programs in Otsego County. The total number of potential slots available within those programs is 739. According to those programs sampled, 94% of their slots are being utilized.

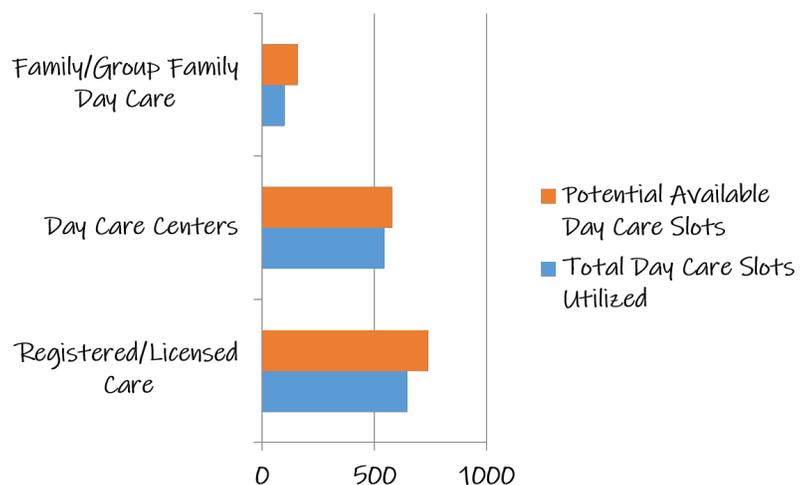
- There are 14 Family Day Care and Group Family Day Care programs in Otsego County. The total number of potential slots available within programs sampled is 112. According to those programs sampled, 90% of their slots are being utilized.

- There are 6 Licensed Day Care Centers in Otsego County. The total number of potential slots available within those programs sampled is 579. According to programs sampled, 94% of their slots are being utilized.

- Head Start programs are not included in this sample.

- There are currently two Registered School Age Child Care Programs in Otsego County with a total capacity of 80 slots.
- There are currently no small day care centers in Otsego County.
- Added to the supply of child care are the enrolled Legally-Exempt child care providers. Currently there are 10 enrolled Legally-Exempt child care providers in Otsego County. Legally-Exempt child care providers may care for up to two children who are not related to them.

Utilization Rates in Otsego County



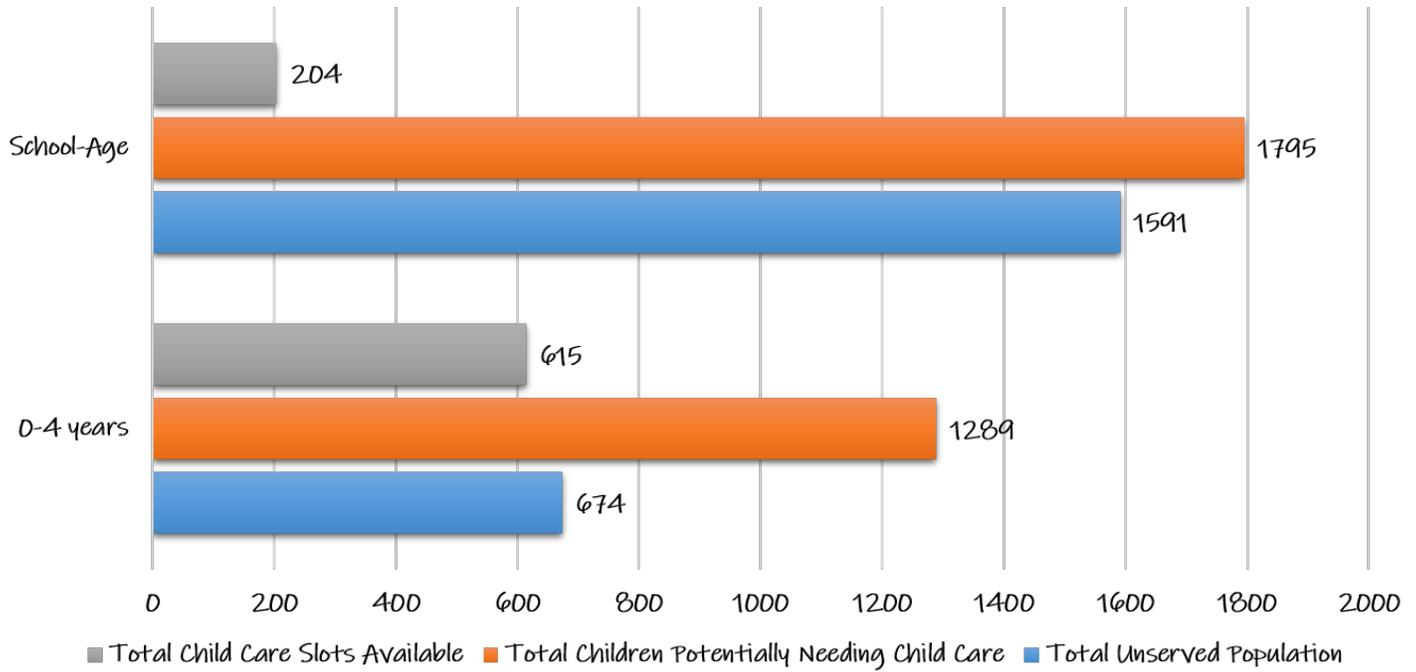
\*Child care supply updated as of time of printing.

## Child Care Availability by Town

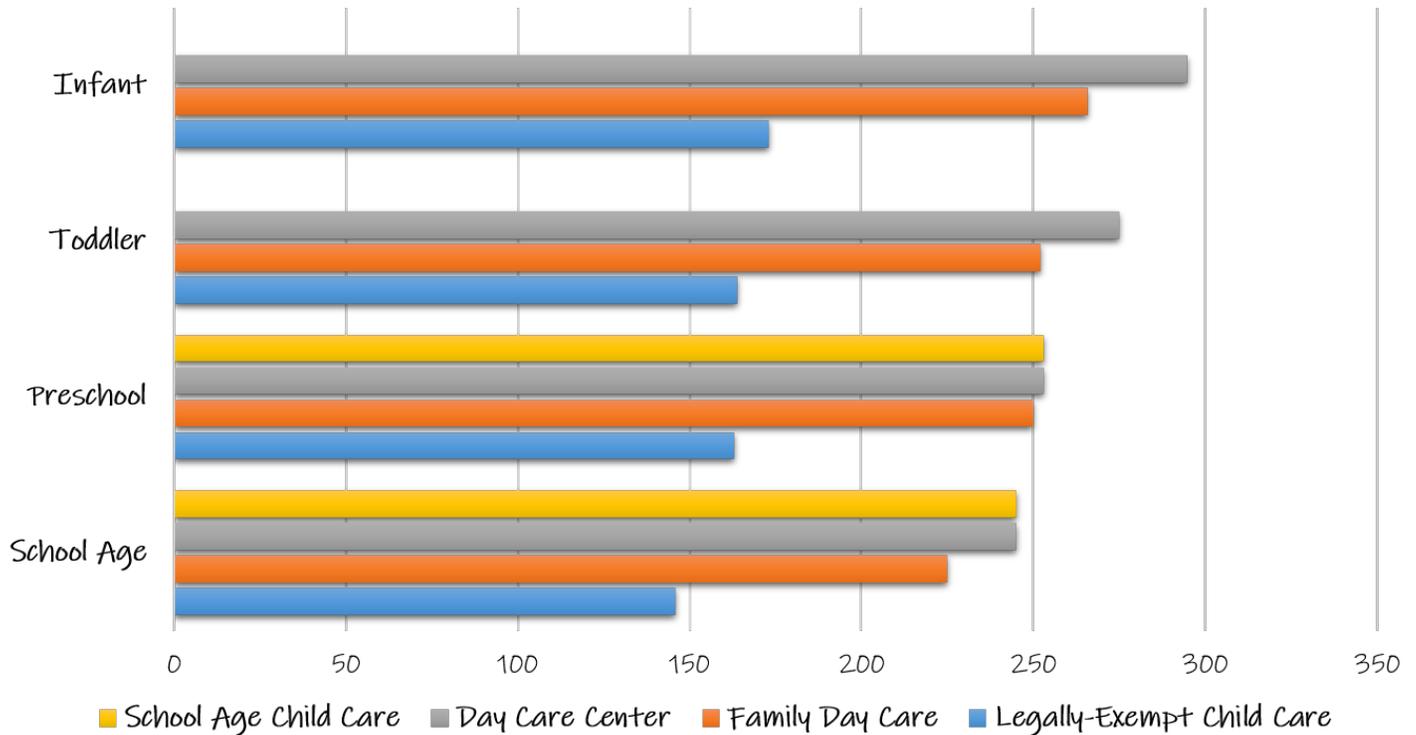
The following chart reflects registered and licensed child care capacities by age and modality in Otsego County. Providers have the option of enrolling any number of children within their given registered or licensed capacity.

Town	Type of Care Available	Total Number	Infants 0-2 years	Preschool 3-5 years	School Age 5 years +
Burlington Flats	Family Child Care	1	2	4	2
	Child Care Center	1	-	30	-
Cherry Valley	N/A	-	-	-	-
Cooperstown	Family Child Care	1	2	4	2
	Child Care Center	1	54	66	60
	School Age Child Care	1	-	-	40
	Head Start Center	1	-	15	-
Edmeston	N/A	-	-	-	-
Fly Creek	N/A	-	-	-	-
Gilbertsville	School Age Child Care	1	-	-	40
Hartwick	N/A	-	-	-	-
Laurens	Family Child Care	1	2	4	2
Maryland	Family Child Care	1	2	4	2
Milford	N/A	-	-	-	-
Morris	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4
	Head Start Center	1	-	17	-
Mt. Vision	N/A	-	-	-	-
New Berlin	N/A	-	-	-	-
Oneonta	Family Child Care	2	4	8	4
	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4
	Child Care Center	4	95	250	24
	Head Start Center	2	8	70	-
Otego	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4
Portlandville	N/A	-	-	-	-
Richfield Springs	Head Start Center	1	-	15	-
Schenevus	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4
	Head Start Center	1	-	44	-
South New Berlin	N/A	-	-	-	-
Unadilla	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4
	Head Start Center	1	-	20	-
West Oneonta	N/A	-	-	-	-
Worcester	Family Child Care	3	6	12	6
	Group Family Child Care	1	4	8	4

## Child Care Demand in Otsego County



### Average Full Time Cost of Care in Otsego County (Based on 2022-2025 Market Rates)



# Child Care Referral Requests

Based on parent referral requests, the information below is a summary of the data collected.

## Referrals by provider type (143 requests)

Percentages indicate what type of care parents are seeking for each child.

*\*\* Figures below reflect multiple preferences selected by parents.*

Group Family Child Care	30%	Family Child Care	31%
Child Care Center	30%	Preschool	3%
School Age Child Care	6%		

## Requests by Age of Child (79 requests)

Percentages indicate the ages of children for whom parents are seeking care.

Infants	50.5%	Toddlers	14%
Pre-School	14%	School-Age	21.5%

## Care Type Requests (67 requests)

Percentages indicate the schedule for which parents need care per child.

*\*\* Figures below reflect multiple preferences selected by parents.*

Full Time	43%	Part Time	10%	Both Full/Part Time	15%
Weekend	6%	Snow Days	6%	After School	7%
Evening	3%	Before School	3%	Temp./Emergency	3%
Flexible Hours	3%				

## Special Needs (4 requests)

Percentages indicate what type of special needs are required for the child.

*\*\* Figures below reflect multiple preferences selected by parents.*

Autism Spectrum Disorder	25%	Asthma	25%
Speech/Language Impairment	25%	Other	25%

## Family Composition (38 requests)

Percentages indicate the family composition for the individual requesting child care referrals.

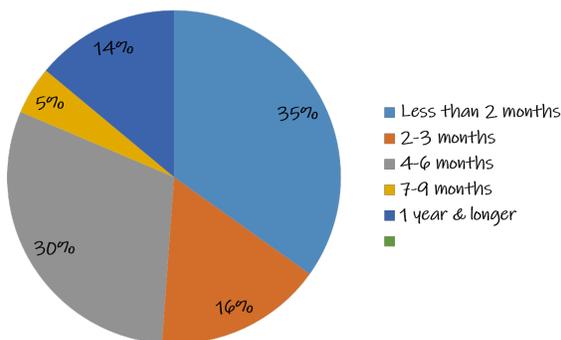
Single Parent	63%	Two Parent	32%
Foster/Guardian	5%		

## Day Care Subsidy Eligibility (53 requests)

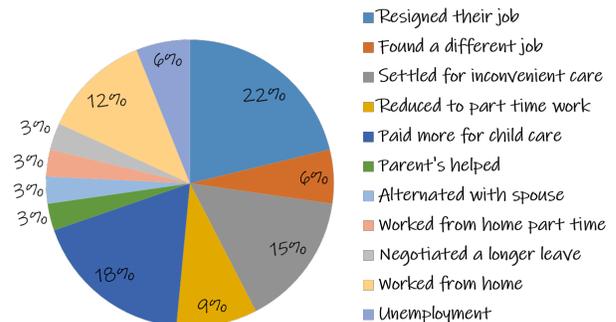
Percentages indicate the eligibility of the parent calling to qualify for Child Care Subsidy through Otsego County DSS.

Income Eligible at County Level	49%	Not Income Eligible at County Level	51%
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How Long Have Parents Searched For Child Care

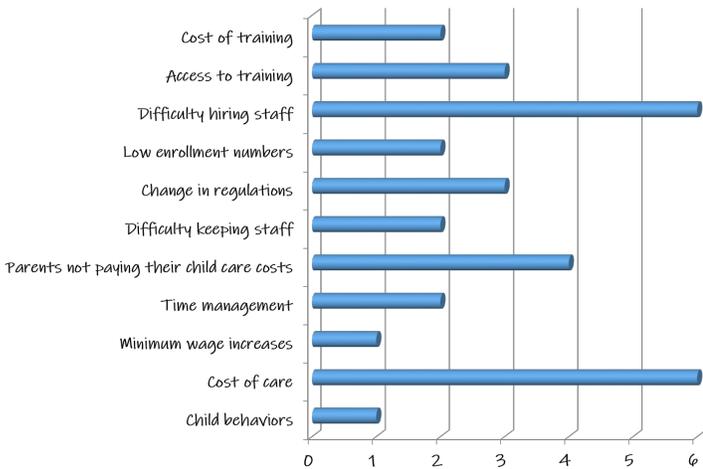


What Choices Have Parents Made When Unable to Find Child Care?



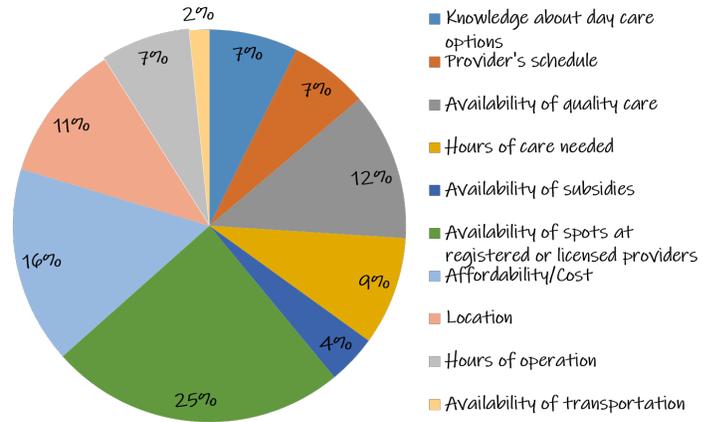
# Obstacles and Challenges Facing Child Care Providers and Families

Challenges Facing Providers and Programs



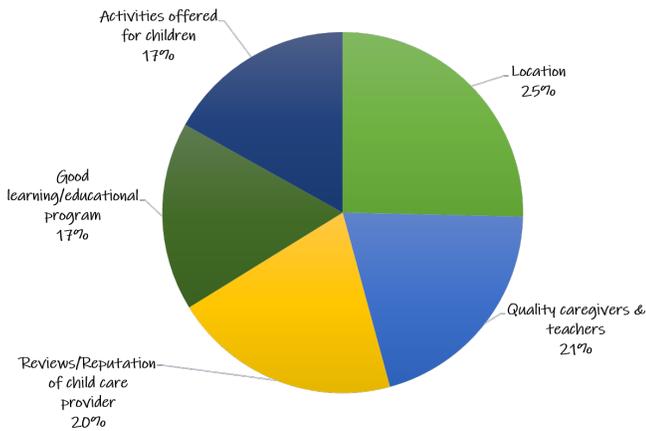
Child care providers continue to face many different challenges in the operation of their programs. Difficulty staffing programs is being felt across the child care system as well as the cost of providing care.

Obstacles Faced in Finding or Using Day Care



The top three obstacles faced by parents in Otsego County during their search for day care for the children are the availability of spots at registered or licensed programs, the availability of quality care, and affordability/cost of child care.

Top 5 Reasons Child Care Arrangement was Selected



While affordability/cost of care is an obstacle in finding or using day care, cost is not one of the top reasons that a parent selected the day care that they are using. According to parents surveyed, of the top five reasons that parents selected their day care they are using, the most important factors that led them to their selection is the location of the child care program, quality caregivers and teachers, the reviews/reputation of the child care provider/program, a good learning/educational program and the activities offered for children in care. For some families, the fact that the child care program they selected was the only care available at the time played a role in their decision.

Hourly Minimum Wage:  
**\$15.00**  
Average hourly cost of care for an infant in a Family Day Care home:  
**\$5.13**

Average monthly grocery bill for a family of four on a "thrifty" plan  
**\$976.00/mo.**

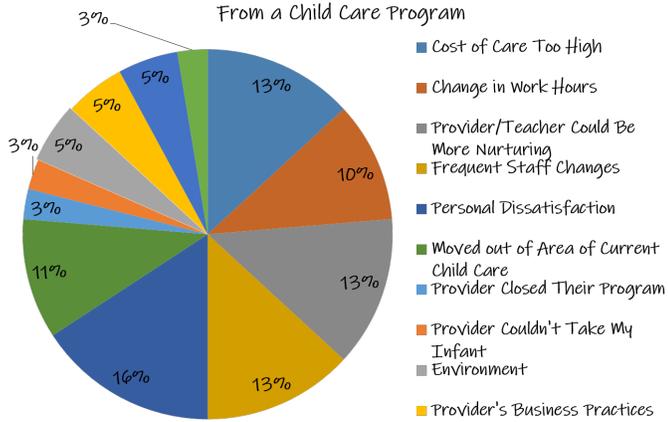
The cost of day care for a child in Family Day Care from six weeks to one year  
**\$13,433.00**  
*(based on current market rates)*

Median household income for 2022 in Otsego County  
**\$65,778.00/yr.**  
*(American Community Survey)*

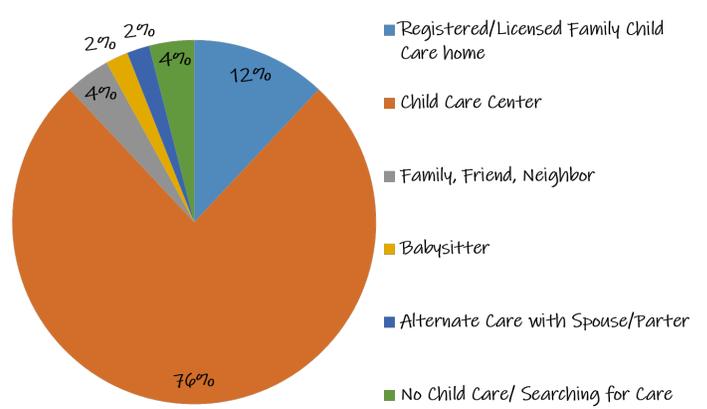
Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom apartment in Otsego County in 2023  
**\$990.00/mo.**  
*(Department of Housing & Urban Development)*

Annual tuition only cost for a NYS resident in a 4 year degree program at SUNY Oneonta  
**\$7,070.00**  
*(SUNY)*

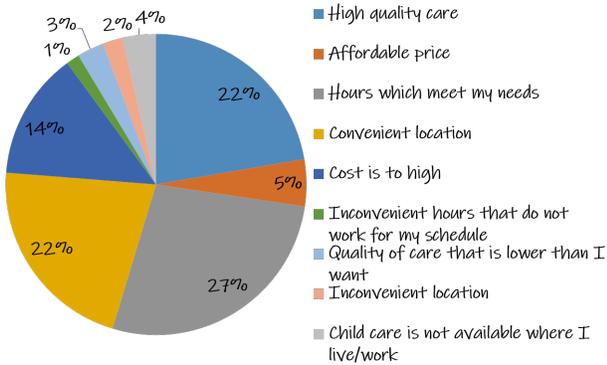
Reasons Parents Have Withdrawn Their Child From a Child Care Program



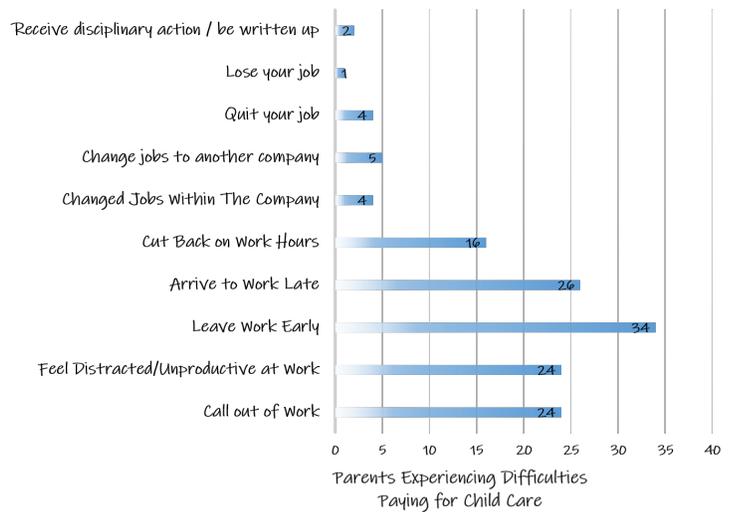
Current Child Care Arrangements



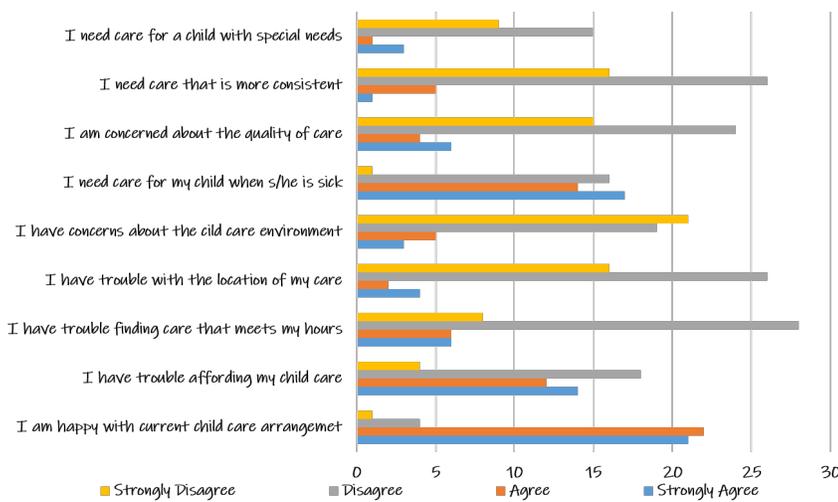
Areas of parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with current child care arrangement



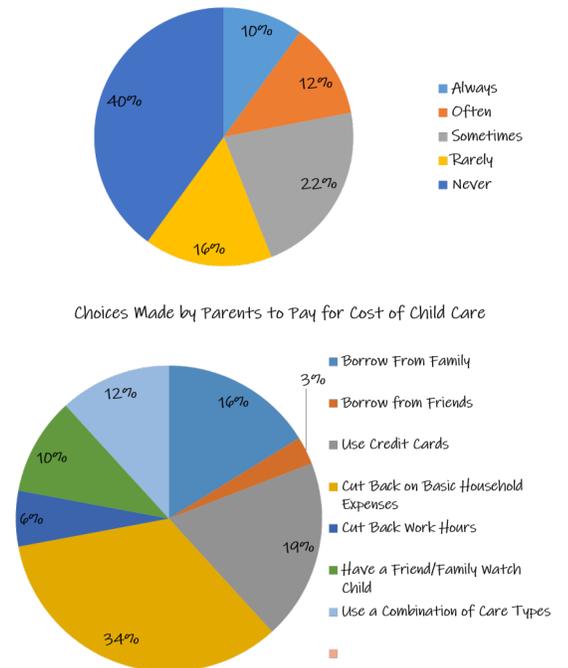
HOW CHILD CARE ISSUES EFFECT PARENT'S JOB PERFORMANCE



Parent Concerns



Choices Made by Parents to Pay for Cost of Child Care



## Child Care Resource Centers

### Community Benefits

A strong child care/daycare network can provide numerous benefits to a community, contributing to the well-being and development of both children and their families. Here's a list of some key advantages:

#### **Early Childhood Development and School Readiness:**

- Supports cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, laying the foundation for future academic success.

#### **Parental Employment and Economic Productivity:**

- Enables parents to work or pursue education, contributing to a more productive workforce.

#### **Community Engagement and Support System:**

- Fosters community connections among parents, creating a support system for resource-sharing and information.  
Reduced Parental Stress:
- Provides reliable and quality childcare, reducing stress related to balancing work and family responsibilities.

#### **Educational Foundations and Socialization Skills:**

- Offers early education and promotes social skills through interaction with peers.

#### **Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Stability:**

- Encourages diversity and inclusion, contributing to community stability.

#### **Health, Safety, and Quality of Life:**

- Ensures a safe environment, promoting the health and well-being of children and enhancing overall family quality of life.

#### **Job Creation and Economic Impact:**

- Stimulates local economies by creating jobs in the childcare sector.  
Long-Term Societal Benefits and Reduction in Disparities:
- Invests in capable individuals, potentially reducing educational disparities and contributing to long-term societal benefits.

### Connecting with the Community

Child Care Resource Centers employ various strategies to engage with the community effectively:

- **Online Platforms:** Child Care Resource Centers maintain user-friendly websites and mobile applications. These platforms offer resources, contact information, and access to online forums where parents and caregivers can seek advice and connect with one another.
- **Community Workshops:** Hosting workshops and informational sessions in local community centers, schools, and libraries helps Child Care Resource Centers reach out to parents, caregivers, and potential child care providers directly.
- **Collaboration with Local Organizations:** Partnering with schools, healthcare centers, and community organizations strengthens the agency's presence. Such collaborations facilitate outreach and ensure that the services are accessible to a broader audience.



## Child Care Support Services Staff

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Rebecca Matthews, Program Director

Vicki Fatum, Program Specialist

Kim Ahearn, Child Care Resource & Referral Specialist

Renee Roof, Child Care Registration Specialist

## Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties Board of Directors

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Teresa O'Leary, President  
Maureen Roberts, Treasurer  
Alice Kane  
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Tom Schermerhorn

Joyce Knuth, Vice President  
Kathryn Culpepper, Secretary  
Jo-Ann Lamonica  
Mary Ann Sturm

Christy Houck, Executive Director  
Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties

For more information regarding this report, please contact:



Child Care Support Services  
176 Main Street, Oneonta NY 13820  
(607) 432-0061 | Fax (607) 431-9303  
[www.CharitiesCCDOS.org](http://www.CharitiesCCDOS.org) | [childcare@charitiesccdo.org](mailto:childcare@charitiesccdo.org)



**CHILD CARE SUPPORT SERVICES**  
A PROGRAM OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF  
DELAWARE, OTSEGO AND SCHOHARIE COUNTIES  
176 MAIN STREET  
ONEONTA, NEW YORK 13820

**We are Catholic Charities, the Child Care Resource Center serving Otsego County.  
Your child care journey starts here.**

**Looking for child care?**

We're here to help families like yours by connecting you to good daycare programs near your home, work, or school. Our job is to make it easy for parents to find trustworthy and caring people to take care of their kids. We know every family is different, so we want to understand what you need. We want parents to feel comfortable and happy knowing their kids are in good hands and will learn and have fun in a safe place.

**Need help paying for child care?**

We can also help you find programs that can assist with paying for child care. We understand that sometimes it can be challenging to manage these expenses, and our goal is to make sure you know about and can access these helpful programs.

**For child care providers**

If you want to start a child care program, we're here to help! We can guide you on important things like getting a license or registration, making sure everything is safe, and planning what kids will learn. So, if you dream of owning your own business and having a great place for kids to play and learn, we are here to support you!

