



Hours and types of child care

Fundamental facts from the
2004 Minnesota child care survey



Children average almost 24 hours per week in child care.

- On average, children are in child care just over 28 hours per week in the summer and 22 hours per week during the school year.
- Of all children regularly in child care, 28 percent attend child care full time (35 hours or more per week) and 72 percent attend child care part time.
- Children age 5 and younger, on average, spend about 27 hours per week in child care during the school year, compared with 18 hours for children age 6 to 9.

Friend, friend or neighbor (FFN) care is the most commonly used child care.

- Altogether, 70 percent of households that use child care select some form of FFN care on a regular basis: 24 percent use FFN exclusively and 22 percent use FFN as their primary arrangement but also use some other types of care.
- FFN care is the most common primary arrangement for children ages 0 to 2 (48 percent) and 6 to 12 (50 percent).

- FFN caregivers are mainly grandparents (52 percent), followed by friends (16 percent), other relatives (15 percent) and neighbors (9 percent).
- For children under age 6, the FFN care is more commonly provided by grandparents. For children ages 6 to 12, the FFN care is more often provided by older siblings.
- Families using FFN care prefer care by a family member or someone they trust. They like the flexibility and more individualized attention that their children receive.

Center-based child care is the next most frequent type of primary care arrangement.

- One-third of households use center-based care as their primary arrangement, including child care centers, preschools, Head Start and before-school and after-school programs.
- Compared to five years ago, more preschoolers are in center-based care (60 percent during the school year, up from 41 percent in 1999).
- Families using center-based care like the creative activities, the caregivers' knowledge and ability to meet children's needs.

continued

Three out of four Minnesota families with children under age 13 regularly use some type of child care.

Licensed family child care is the primary arrangement for one in 10 families who use child care.

- Licensed family child care is a more common primary arrangement for infants and toddlers than for older age groups.
- Families using family child care like the creative activities, the caregivers' knowledge and ability to meet children's needs.
- Licensed family child care homes have children for more hours per week during the school year (average of 25.5 hours) than any other type of child care.

During the school year, most children under age 2 are cared for by their parents or FFN; while most children age 3 to 5 are in licensed care during some part of the week.¹

- Of the estimated 203,251 children in Minnesota age 0-2²: 26 percent use no child care, 36 percent use FFN as their primary arrangement and 43 percent use center-based or licensed family child care as a primary or secondary arrangement.
- Of the estimated 191,258 children in Minnesota age 3-5²: 21 percent use no child care, 21 percent use FFN as their primary arrangement and 69 percent use center-based or licensed family child care as their primary or secondary arrangement.
- Children age 5 and younger in licensed care during the school year tend to be in care more hours per week on average than those in FFN care (about 23 hours versus about 12 hours).

¹ These data do not account for the time of day/night when care is provided or the amount of hours per week in child care. They add to more than 100 percent because individuals can use FFN as a primary arrangement and use some type of licensed child care as a secondary arrangement.

² Steven Ruggles, M. Sobek, T. Alexander, C. A. Fitch, R. Goeken, P. Kelly Hall, M. King, and C. Ronnander. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 3.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center [producer and distributor], 2004.

Self care is rising for children age 10 to 12.

- 41 percent of children age 10 to 12 are in self care on a regular basis during the school year, up from 26 percent five years ago, and 42 percent are in self care during the summer, up from 20 percent five years ago.

Family schedules require child care during nonstandard work hours.

- In addition to standard weekday hours during the school year, 48 percent of children are regularly in child care weekday evenings (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.), and 44 percent are regularly in child care on weekends. Family, friends and neighbors are the usual caregivers during these times.
- FFN care is available when families need it; 73 percent of FFN caregivers provide care in the evenings, 51 percent provide care after 10 p.m. and 75 percent provide care on weekends.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Download fact sheets and full research reports—*Child Care Use in Minnesota and Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers*—at www.wilderresearch.org. 2004 Minnesota statewide household child care survey funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and conducted by Wilder Research, Richard Chase study director.

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