

2017 Report on Child Care in Cook County



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2017 Report on Child Care in Cook County FY 2016 (July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016)

Prepared By: Research Department










Illinois Action for Children

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Table Of Contents

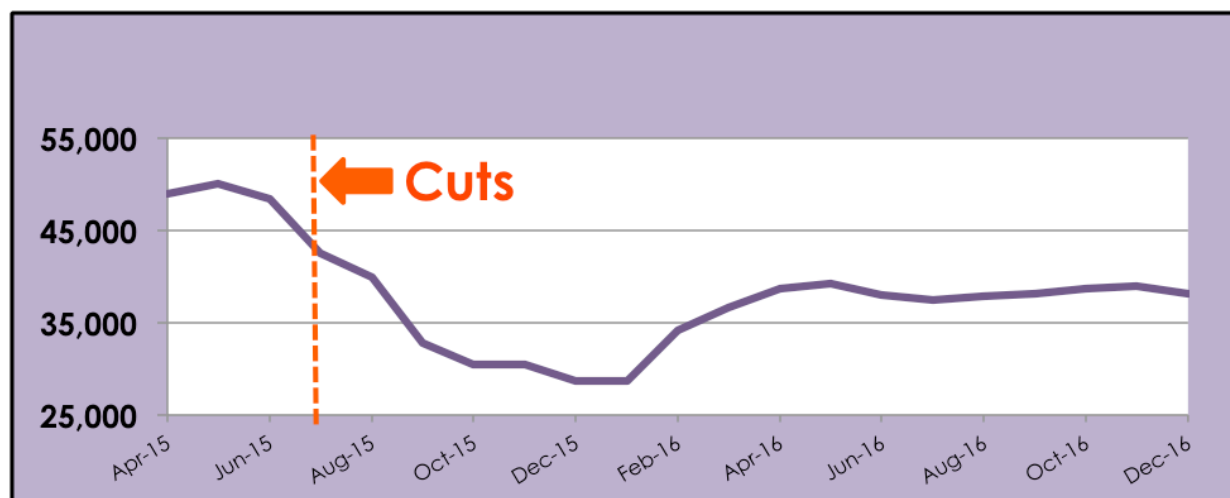
-  Highlights
-  Families and Child Care in Cook County
-  What types of Child Care Are Available in Cook County?
-  Who is Served by the Formal Child Care Sector?
-  How Much Does Child Care Cost?
-  Promoting High Quality Child Care
-  How Well Does Illinois Support Families' Access to Child Care?
-  Who Uses the Child Care Assistance Program?
-  Conclusion and Policy Options

Cook County Child Care in 2016 – Highlights

The year ending June 30, 2016 saw several significant shocks occur to child care services in Cook County. An unprecedented restriction of eligibility in the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) imposed a period of great uncertainty on parents and child care providers alike. This challenge — and the state's continuing budget crisis — reversed Illinois' long-term trend of increasing investments in a robust system of early care and education. In just the second year of the state's efforts to improve child care quality through its ExceleRate Illinois quality rating and improvement system, child care providers faced falling enrollments, unpaid bills and staff layoffs.

On July 1, 2015, an emergency administrative rule change enacted by Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner limited the eligibility of new participants in CCAP. As a result, only 10 percent of otherwise eligible applicants could get approved for assistance. In just seven months, the number of Cook County families participating in CCAP decreased by almost 20,000, or by 41 percent, and the number of children in CCAP-paid care decreased by about 32,000. The most restrictive of these rules were eased in November 2015 and the number of Cook County families participating in CCAP partially recovered as a result. However, parents enrolled in education or other training and employed parents earning between 162 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level have not been restored to eligibility. One year after the restrictions were enacted, CCAP was assisting approximately 10,000 (20 percent) fewer Cook County families with low incomes than before the eligibility cuts and serving 15,000 (18 percent) fewer children.

Cook County CCAP Families Served: Pre and Post Eligibility Cuts



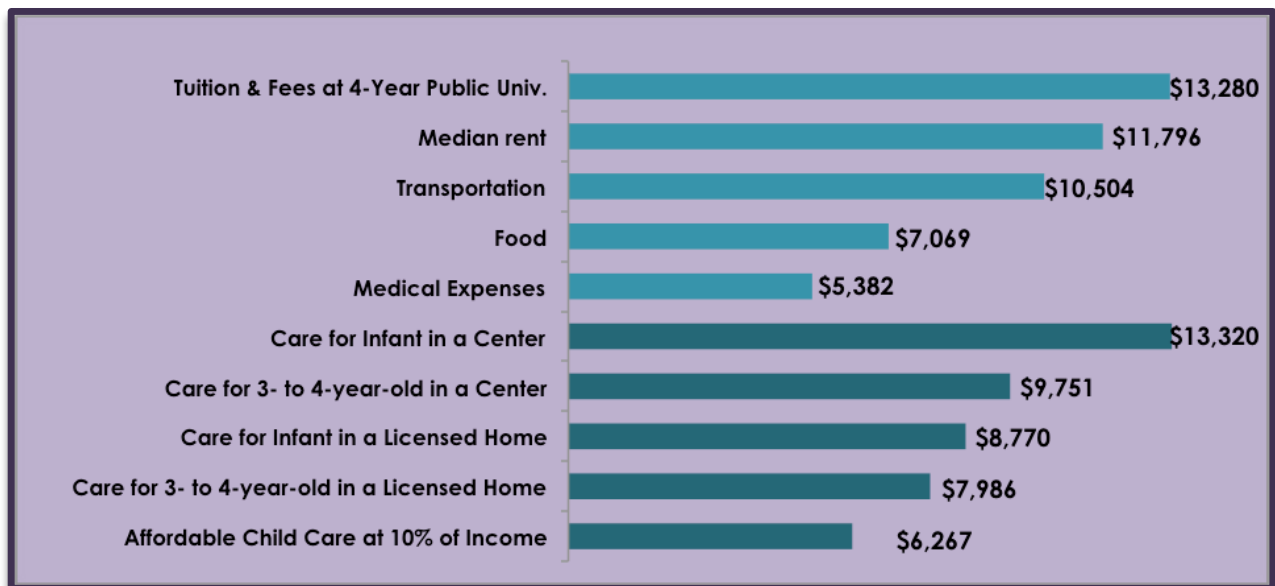
Without CCAP eligibility, many families could not continue their child care and were challenged to stay employed or attend school. Some risked leaving their children by themselves. Child care programs that had been built to serve student-parents and employed parents with lower incomes found themselves with unsustainably low enrollments, and some closed. The number of licensed family child care homes in Cook County, which had already decreased by 10 percent in the previous 11 years, fell an additional 7 percent in a single year. Although more licensed centers received payments for children with CCAP at the end of the year than at the beginning, these centers were actually caring for 21 percent fewer CCAP children at the end of the year.

Each year, CCAP payments to child care providers bring millions of dollars in federal and state funds to some of the most economically-isolated communities in Cook County. Seven months after the CCAP cuts these payments had fallen by 34 percent, and for the year were down a total of 23 percent (\$121 million), enough to remove more than \$278 million from Cook County (\$121 million directly and another \$157 million indirectly).¹

By July 2016, CCAP payments had leveled off at 19 percent below their July 2015 level, which if sustained through 2017 will account for an additional \$254 million in direct and indirect income reductions compared to 2015 — mostly in low-income Cook County communities.

Lower and less stable public supports for the child care sector make it imperative to monitor how Cook County families are faring in meeting their child care needs. Without CCAP in 2016, working parents had to spend a significant percentage of their income on child care expenses – expenses which can exceed the cost of tuition and fees at four-year public universities in Illinois, as well as food, rent, or transportation. The chart below compares these expenses.

Annual Child Care Costs Compared to Other Major Annual Household Expenditures

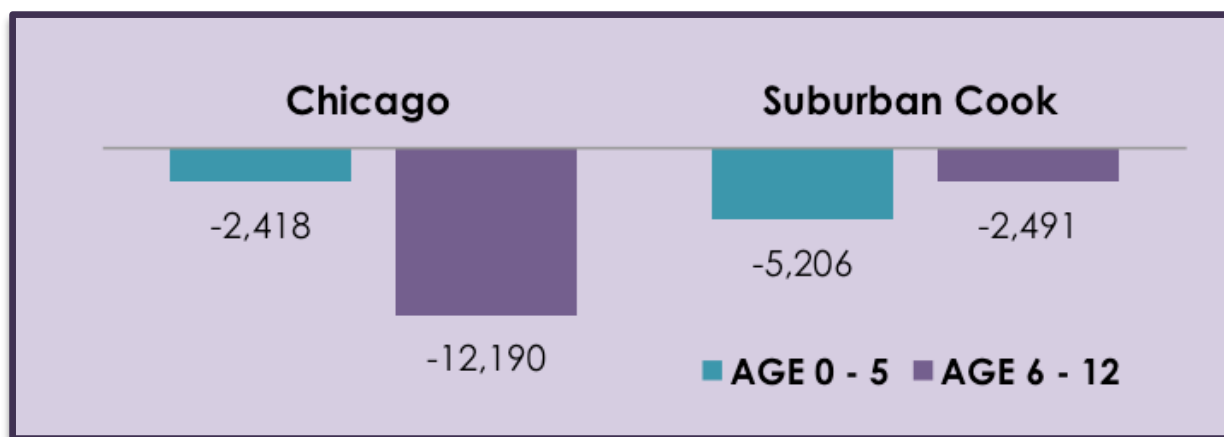


¹ The direct and indirect impacts of outside child care spending in Cook County are multiples of 1.0 and 1.3 of the original spending. These were calculated in 2004 by Paul E. McNamara, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, and University of Illinois Extension from Minnesota IMPLAN SAM Income Multipliers for counties and industries.

Finding high-quality and affordable child care is a critical need but a substantial challenge for many working families in Cook County. We have had some positive news. During the last five years, 6,000 new licensed child care slots have opened in Cook County. That growth, however, has been distributed unequally. Chicago gained almost 80 percent of the new child care slots and suburban Cook County only 20 percent, despite having almost as many children as Chicago.

From 2010 to 2015, the number of children under age 13 in Cook County decreased by 22,300 or about 2.5 percent. A decreasing child population is rarely a good sign for a stable economy or for industries such as child care that serve children. Two-thirds of this decrease took place in Chicago and one-third occurred in suburban Cook County. Most of the Chicago decrease occurred among children age 6 through 12, while the suburban population decreased mostly among children under age 6. Even with a falling child population, however, licensed child care capacity can only serve less than 50 percent of the Cook County children eligible for CCAP.

Change in the Number of Cook County Children, 2010-2015



While declining child population has slightly relieved the pressure for child care, rising child care prices in Cook County make it impossible for some working families to find care that is affordable. In 2016 the Illinois Child Care Assistance program (CCAP) continued to help eligible working families afford child care that they might otherwise be priced out of, particularly licensed family child care and licensed center-based care. CCAP served only one-quarter of all eligible children, however.

Other positive news in Cook County has been dampened by instability in the child care sector.

Under the federal Race to the Top grant ending in mid-2017, the State of Illinois has supported the improvement of quality in child care and has revamped its quality rating system.

The new rating system, ExceleRate Illinois, is designed to promote quality improvement among early learning providers and invest resources into child care programs and staff. It establishes a set of standards for child care providers to help infants, toddlers and preschool-age children in their care develop intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. While many Cook County centers achieved the high-quality rating in 2015 and 2016, progress in reaching state goals was slower than anticipated. Many child care programs reported that the aforementioned enrollment challenges kept them focused on business issues rather than improving or even documenting their quality.

This 2017 report reflects child care data from the year ending June 30, 2016 only. The financial challenges facing Cook County child care programs and parents who need them, however, will extend far into the coming years. At a time when the federal government and the State of Illinois hope to increase parents' access to higher-quality child care, the challenges noted here indicate that simply maintaining the current levels of quality and affordability of child care could well take center stage in Cook County in the years to come.

Introduction: Families and Child Care in Cook County

**Approximately
877,000 children
under the age of 13
live in Cook County.**

Approximately 877,000 children under the age of 13 live in Cook County. A large proportion, and perhaps a majority, of these children receive regular care from someone other than their parents or guardians: from a relative, a friend or neighbor, a family child care home, a child care center, or a park district or other after-school program.

Families seek child care by asking relatives or friends for referrals, looking at notices and advertisements, and visiting child care centers in their communities. The State of Illinois offers a resource for families in the form of a referral service. Illinois Action for Children administers this service for families in Cook County through its Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Program, maintaining a database of child care providers who register voluntarily to be referred to parents. Child care providers supply detailed information about their programs so that referral consultants can help parents find providers who match their needs and preferences. Referral consultants help inform parents on what constitutes quality child care to better equip parents in evaluating the programs they visit. Most of the data presented in this report are derived from information collected for this service.

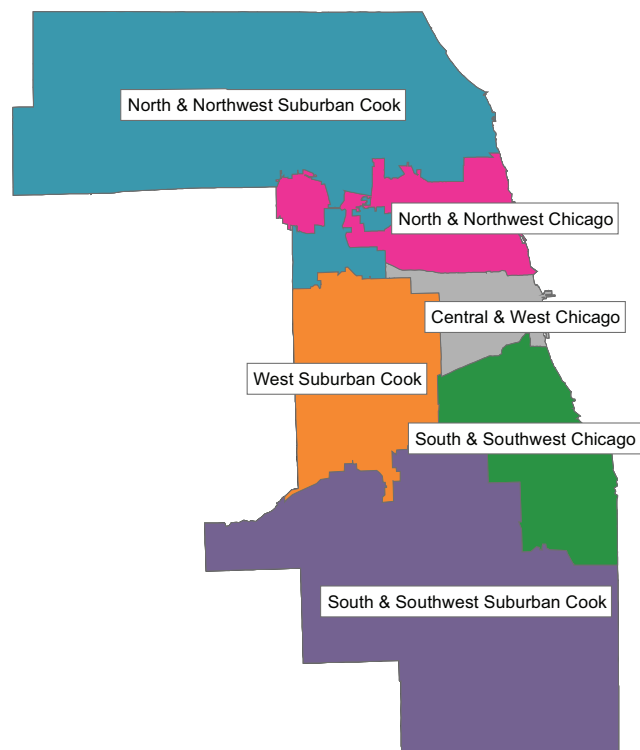
This 2016 Report on Child Care in Cook County examines the availability of child care to families in different parts of Cook County in FY2016, the year ending June 30, 2016. We present the various settings in which child care takes place, the number of children that can be served in each type of care, and the fees that parents pay to different types of providers. Challenges faced by families in relation to the cost of child care and state efforts to subsidize that care are also explored. Finally, we review policy options that could make child care more affordable and accessible to families throughout Cook County.

Examining Cook County Child Care by Region

Throughout this report we divide Cook County into six regions to show how geographic differences can affect parents' success in finding child care.

Appendix 1 provides more detailed definitions of these regions. Appendix 2 provides the sources of data cited in the report.

In addition, Census and child care data for particular communities can be found on the Illinois Action for Children website at www.actforchildren.org.



What Types of Child Care are Available in Cook County?

A family's success in finding quality child care is based on many factors including the types of care available where they live, the child's age and specific needs, the hours of care needed, the amount the family can afford to pay, and the parent's particular preferences. If we assume families have access to all types of child care, we can look at their available options in Cook County.

The reader will note that parents' use of these options has changed substantially in recent years. Some of these changes began years ago and represent long term trends in the economy and child care policy. Other changes have more recent origins, including the state's budget crisis and new emergency rules enacted in CCAP. A later section of this report reviews the impact of these changes in Cook County.

Parental Care

Many families use parental care only. Either one parent stays home to care for the children, or both parents stagger their schedules so one can care for the children while the other works, goes to school or fulfills other responsibilities.

Formal Child Care Sector

Families might also choose a formal child care arrangement in a child care center or a licensed family child care home. Approximately 4,550 child care providers comprise the formal child care sector.

Many home-based child care providers, especially those who provide care as an ongoing profession, choose to become licensed. This means the care provided in their homes is regulated by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and, in some cases, by a local licensing agency as well. Throughout this report, we refer to these caregivers as licensed home providers. In Illinois, a license is required when the home provider is caring for more than three children, including the caregiver's own children.

Licensed Home Care

3,197 homes in Cook County

This is care offered in a person's home and regulated by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Licensed home providers may care for as many as eight children, plus an additional four school-age children during out-of-school time if an assistant is present. Providers with full-time adult assistants licensed as group homes can care for as many as 16 children. The number of licensed homes decreased by 281 from 2015 to 2016.

Parents also have the option of enrolling their child in a child care center. While most of these facilities are licensed by DCFS, centers such as those based in schools or affiliated with religious groups are exempt from being licensed. Center care may include all-day or part-day child care programs, before- and after-school programs (including those provided by park districts and YMCAs), and full-day summer programs for school-age children. Many parents choose center-based child care to give their children a classroom-based early learning experience before they enter kindergarten.

Full-Day Center Care

1,267 centers in Cook County

Child care centers typically offer full-day care to serve working parents. Most are licensed through the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), though a number connected to schools or religious institutions are exempt from licensing (70 known centers). Licensed and license-exempt centers increased by 39 centers in 2016.

School-Age Care

172 programs in Cook County listed with Illinois Action for Children

In addition to school-age care offered through child care centers, before- and/or after-school care is offered by some schools, park districts, and programs such as the Boys and Girls clubs. Most of these programs are exempt from licensing, and this makes it difficult to get a complete count of them. Our count has fallen by 15 programs since the previous year.

Parents who do not need full-time child care but wish to prepare their 3- or 4-year-old child for kindergarten may consider a part-day or part-week preschool program. These programs include private, tuition-based preschools as well as free, public preschools such as Head Start and Preschool for All. Data on public and private preschool programs for the year ending June 30, 2016 are not yet publicly available and are not included in this report. In 2015, Cook County had about 43,000 Head Start and Preschool for All slots.² These were mostly part-day slots and thus were problematic for parents working full-time during the day.

Informal Child Care Sector

Tens of thousands of caregivers provide child care through informal arrangements. Parents who need or want to look beyond parental care may choose a caregiver who can provide care in the child's home, as a nanny does. They may also choose to place their child in the home of someone they know well and trust, such as a family member, close friend, or neighbor. This type of care is often referred to as *Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care*. When operating legally, FFN care providers are not required to have a child care license and are also called license-exempt home providers.

Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) Care

Total number unknown

More than 19,000 of Cook County's FFN providers participated in the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) in FY 2016.

This is care provided by friends, neighbors and relatives in either the home of the child or the caregiver. FFN providers are permitted to care for up to three unrelated children at a time without a license. The number of FFN providers participating in CCAP fell by about 4,100 – 18 percent – in FY 2016.

Parents using FFN care often have a personal relationship with their provider. Families and FFN providers often share a common culture and language as well. Parents also choose FFN care for economic reasons. FFN care is more affordable than center-based care or licensed home care, and many FFN providers are more flexible about if and when child care payments are made. FFN providers are more likely to offer care in the evenings, overnight, and on the weekends when other care is less available and can be more flexible with parents who receive their work schedules on short notice.³

² Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map, downloaded April 21, 2017 from <http://search.iecam.illinois.edu/cgi-bin/iecam/search.asp>.

³ For a more complete discussion of FFN care as it relates to non-traditional work hours, see Cook County Parents, Nonstandard Work and Child Care (Illinois Action for Children Research Brief, Jan., 2016). For parents' views, see Choices in the Real World: The use of family, friend and neighbor child care by single Chicago mothers working nontraditional schedules, Illinois Action for Children, 2013.



Who is Served by the Formal Child Care Sector?

The formal child care sector comprised of child care centers and licensed homes has the capacity to care for approximately 149,000 Cook County children.⁴ As there are about 599,000 children birth-through-12 in Cook County with all parents working only 25 percent of children potentially in need of child care can be served in formal child care settings.⁵ The remaining 75 percent of children in this category may be cared for by one or more of the following: license-exempt child care providers, babysitters or nannies, public or private preschool programs, older siblings or family members, parents or guardians who work part-time or stagger their work schedules, or even self-care.

While not all child care centers report their slots by age to Illinois Action for Children, the data below reflect the capacity of the 81 percent that do.⁶ Note the low number of infant and toddler slots compared to slots for older children.

	Formal Child Care Slots						Children potentially in need of child care		Slots as a percent of children potentially in need of care
	Licensed child care centers	License-exempt child care centers	School-age programs	Licensed child care homes	Licensed homes - additional school-age slots	Total slots	Total children birth through 12	Children birth to 12 with all parents working	
Cook County	93,803	6,843	10,677	24,965	5,883	142,171	874,624	598,786	24%
N & NW Chicago	14,795	1,234	429	3,489	967	18,392	157,774	105,555	17%
Central & West Chicago	13,904	678	1,096	3,595	770	17,218	97,238	65,294	26%
S & SW Chicago	20,785	1,760	1,126	9,803	2,435	28,541	188,493	133,294	21%
Chicago Total	49,484	3,672	2,651	16,887	4,172	76,866	443,505	304,082	25%
N & NW Suburb. Cook	19,924	2,102	5,549	1,521	251	28,077	206,292	137,534	20%
West Suburban Cook	8,141	563	1,017	2,396	511	10,743	92,952	63,429	17%
S & SW Suburban Cook	16,254	506	1,460	4,161	949	20,118	131,875	93,205	22%
Suburban Total	44,319	3,171	8,026	8,078	1,711	65,305	431,119	295,039	22%

⁴ Slots shown represent daytime capacity. Licensed homes have the capacity to serve an additional 16,845 children during evening hours (if they offer care during this time) while child care centers can provide an additional 4,614 evening slots.

⁵ From the 2015 American Community Survey, five-year estimates.

⁶ Comparable data for licensed homes are not reported because home providers have more flexibility in the ages of children they can enroll and the ages they serve change frequently.

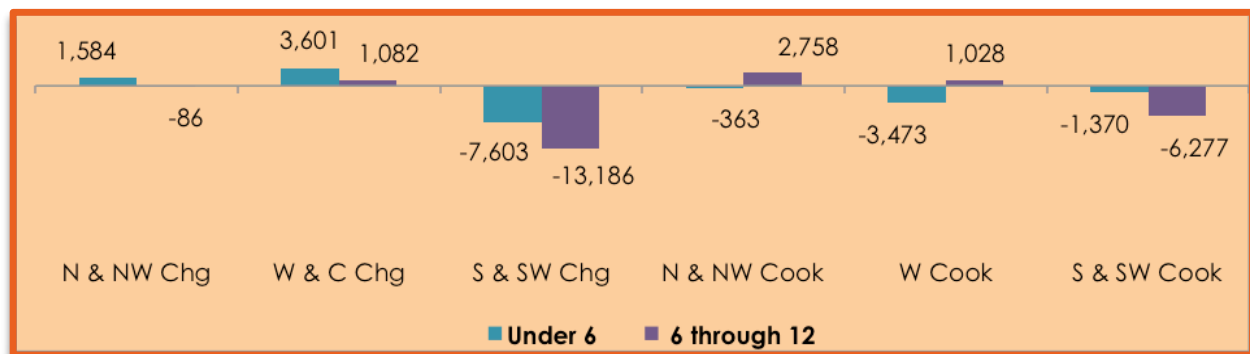


Center Slots	Infant	Toddler	2-year-old	3- to 4-year-old	5-year-old & kindergarten	Before & After School (full & part time)	School Age, Summer
Cook County	6,512	8,039	13,225	20,240	17,483	16,036	19,265
N & NW Chicago	653	928	1,964	2,947	2,598	2,211	3,455
Central & West Chicago	848	1,020	1,910	2,834	2,267	1,687	4,060
S & SW Chicago	1,538	1,856	3,336	4,803	4,181	2,857	6,581
Chicago Total	3,039	3,804	7,210	10,584	9,046	6,755	14,096
N & NW Suburban Cook	1,476	1,800	2,623	4,283	3,836	4,288	3,246
West Suburban Cook	606	729	1,169	1,866	1,758	1,622	530
S & SW Suburban Cook	1,391	1,706	2,223	3,507	2,843	3,371	1,393
Suburban Total	3,473	4,235	6,015	9,656	8,437	9,281	5,169

Trends in Child Population Over Time

The number of children under age 13 in Cook County continued to decrease from 2010 to 2015, though at a slower 2.5 percent pace than the previous year. Most of the decline was concentrated in two areas: South and Southwest Chicago and South and Southwest Suburban Cook.

Change in Number of Children by Region, 2010-2015.⁷



Chicago lost more than 14,600 children from its population during this period. Suburban Cook County also saw a net decrease of about 7,700 children. West and Central Chicago showed the largest growth, picking up 4,700 children under 13.

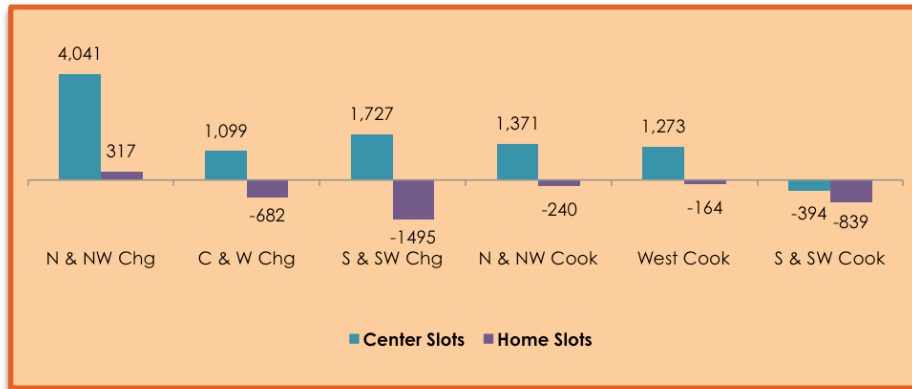
⁷ Data are based on American Community Survey 2010 and 2015 5-year estimates. The 2010 data point reflects data collected during the years of 2006 through 2010, while the 2015 data point reflects data collected from 2011 through 2015.



Trends in Number of Licensed Care Slots Over Time

Over the past five years, the number of licensed child care slots in Cook County grew by 6,014 slots, or five percent. This can be attributed to an increase in licensed center slots; during this period. Licensed home slots declined in almost every region of the county. The bulk of the growth in center slots was within the city of Chicago, where slots grew by 15 percent compared to just four percent in suburban Cook County.

Change in Number of Licensed Child Care Slots by Region, 2011-2016



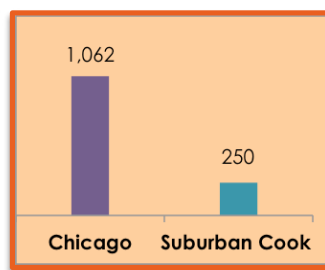
The only region with a net loss of licensed child care slots was South and Southwest Suburban Cook County.

Availability of Infant Care

State licensing standards require high caregiver-to-child ratios for infant care: one caregiver for every four infants in centers and one caregiver for every three infants in homes without an assistant. Organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Public Health Association recommend even more strict ratios of one caregiver for every three infants in child care centers and one caregiver for every two infants in large family child care homes.⁸ As a result, child care providers find it costly to provide infant care and may limit the number of infant slots they offer, opting to provide slots for older children instead, or charge high prices that put infant care out of reach for many parents.

Overall, the availability of infant care in Cook County has improved over the past five years. Similar to the overall trend in licensed slots, the number of infant center slots increased substantially while the number the licensed home slots declined by about 50. The result was a net gain of about 1,300 licensed infant slots in Cook County.

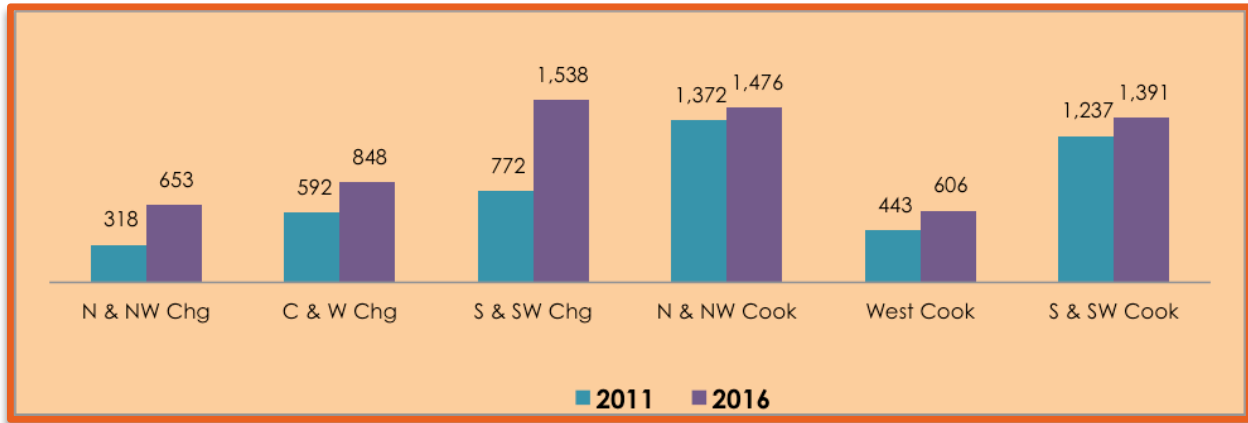
Change in Total Number of Infant Slots in Centers & Licensed Homes



⁸ American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 3rd edition. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. Also available at <http://nrckids.org>.

The Chicago regions, in particular, saw substantial growth in the number of their infant center slots: in North and Northwest Chicago and in South and Southwest Chicago infant center slots doubled, while in Central and West Chicago the number of slots increased by 43 percent.⁹

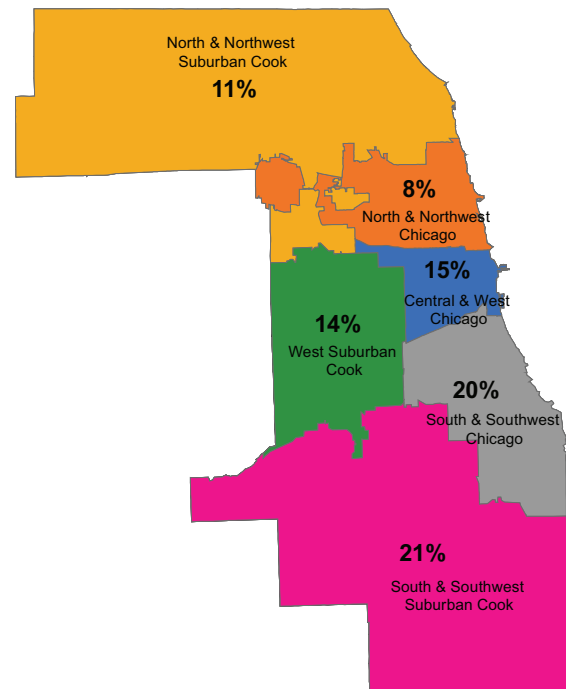
Number of Infant Center Slots by Region, 2011 & 2016



The level of difficulty parents encounter while looking for licensed care for their infants is dependent on the overall number of infant slots available in their community relative to the infant population.

Regions with the greatest availability of infant care have enough slots to serve 15 percent to 21 percent of their infants. These regions include the South and Southwest suburbs, Central and West Chicago, and South and Southwest Chicago.

Parents may have the most difficulty finding infant care in North and Northwest Chicago. Despite doubling its supply of infant care over the past five years, this region has slots to accommodate only eight percent of its infants.¹⁰



Percent of Infants for whom a Center or Licensed Home Slot is Available

⁹ Growth in infant center slots reflects the increase in the number of infant slots reported by child care centers to Illinois Action for Children's Resource and Referral program from 2011 and 2016.

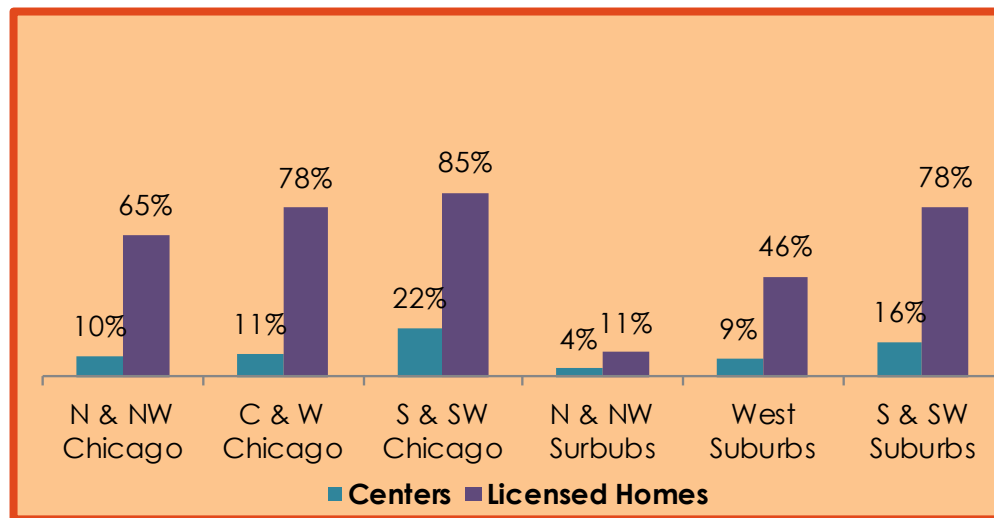
¹⁰ This is meant to be a rough estimate of the supply of and demand for infant care. Not all licensed home providers are willing to care for infants, particularly newborns, and not all parents of infants need child care or desire formal care arrangements for their infants. The number of infants is from the 2015 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.



Availability of Care During Non-Traditional Work Hours

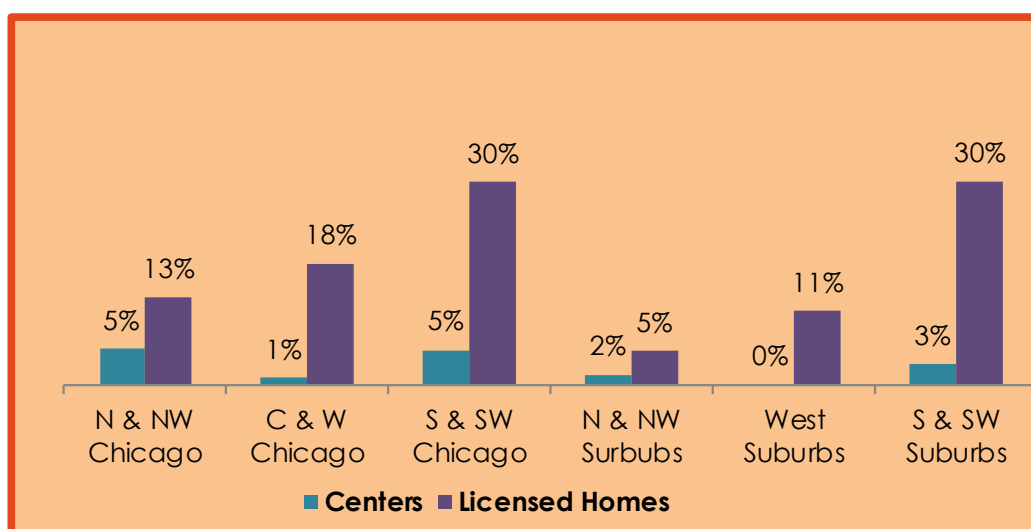
Many families, particularly low-income families, find the availability of child care to be limited during non-traditional work hours. Most child care programs are available only during the daytime on weekdays, but half of part-time employees and one-third of full-time employees work non-traditional schedules that include at least some evening, night, or weekend hours.¹¹ One-half (49 percent) of all Cook County parents using CCAP work at least one hour between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. or on weekends, and 26 percent work at least 16 nonstandard hours each week.¹² Many employees also work schedules that vary, sometimes with little advance notice. Relatively few programs accommodate parents' needs for evening child care, overnight care, weekend care, or care on a variable schedule.

Programs with Evening Care by Region (between 7p.m.-2a.m.)



Licensed homes are generally more flexible than centers in offering care during non-traditional hours. In several regions, most home-based providers are licensed to provide evening care compared to 12 percent of centers overall. However, further study is needed to determine how many of these homes actually offer care during the evening hours for which they are licensed.

Programs with Weekend Care by Region



¹¹ See Working Later in Illinois: Work Schedules, Incomes and Parents' Access to Child Care, Illinois Action for Children, 2006. http://www.actforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MDP_ResearchPublications_PDFs_WorkSchedsCondensed.pdf

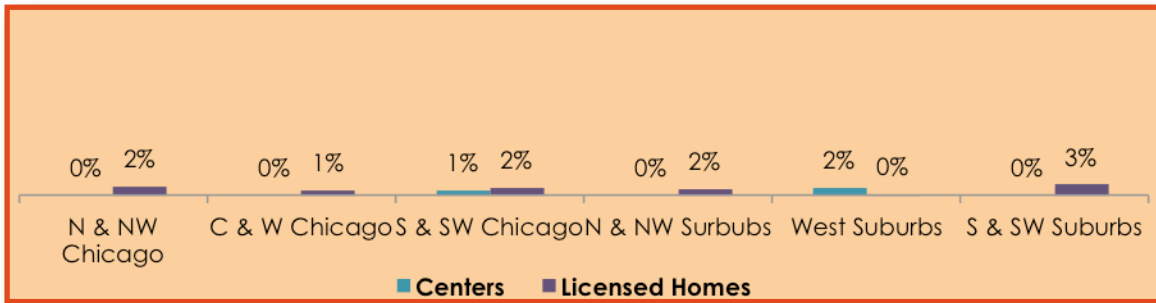
¹² Illinois Action for Children Research Brief, Cook County Parents, Nonstandard Work and Child Care, 2016 <http://www.actforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CCAP-Work-Schedules-Policy-Brief-FINAL-9-14-16.pdf>



Home-based providers are also far more likely than centers to offer weekend care, particularly homes in South and Southwest Chicago and the South and Southwest suburbs.

The availability of weekend care in homes increased in Cook County as a whole. The number of homes reporting that they offer weekend care increased from 8 percent in 2006 to 22 percent in 2016. Very few programs offer overnight care — less than one percent of centers and just three percent of licensed homes in Cook County.

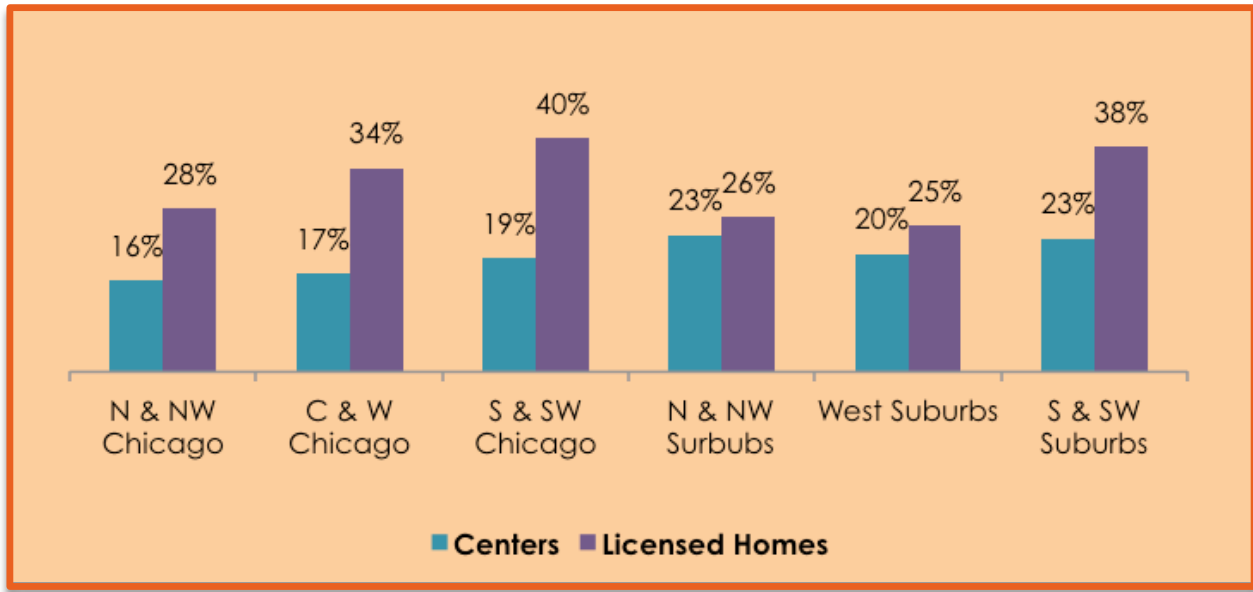
Programs with Overnight Care by Region



Programs offering variable hours of care are important for parents with changing work schedules. However, the majority of programs do not offer care for changing schedules. Only about one-third of licensed homes and 18 percent of centers say they accommodate variable schedules. In fact, many programs require parents to pay by the entire week regardless of whether or not their child attends all week. This policy provides programs with needed financial stability but can cause financial hardship for parents.



Programs Allowing Variable Schedules by Region



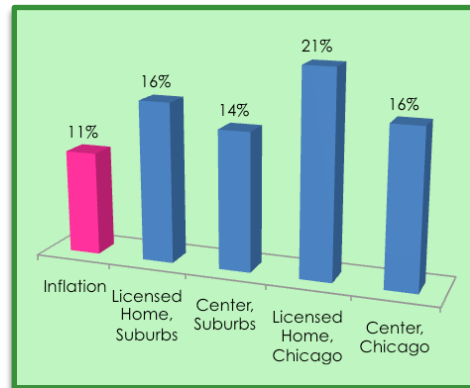
Since non-traditional work schedules often go hand-in-hand with low-income jobs, most families seeking child care during non-traditional hours are also challenged by affordability issues. It is not surprising, then, that many parents turn to family, friends, and neighbors to care for their children. These providers offer a more flexible and affordable alternative as compared to other child care options.



How Much Does Child Care Cost?

The cost of child care in Cook County continues to rise each year faster than overall inflation.¹³

Each year, Illinois Action for Children's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program surveys providers on the rates they charge parents. The tables below present the rates for both licensed centers and licensed homes for the regions of Cook County based on the child's age.¹⁴ The final row of each table shows the maximum weekly reimbursement rate the State will pay on behalf of families eligible to receive assistance via the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).¹⁵



	Infant (6 weeks to 14 months)	Toddler (15 to 23 months)	2-year-old	3- to 4-year-old	5-year-old to kindergarten	Before & After School	School Age, Summer
Cook County	\$266	\$251	\$220	\$195	\$190	\$132	\$172
N & NW Chicago	\$313	\$279	\$229	\$205	\$200	\$142	\$176
Central & West Chicago	\$290	\$273	\$241	\$208	\$204	\$133	\$158
S & SW Chicago	\$220	\$217	\$188	\$164	\$160	\$123	\$151
Chicago	\$251	\$240	\$207	\$183	\$178	\$129	\$159
N & NW Suburban Cook	\$331	\$304	\$275	\$248	\$243	\$154	\$233
West Suburban Cook	\$271	\$252	\$222	\$195	\$193	\$119	\$146
S & SW Suburban Cook	\$234	\$226	\$199	\$174	\$168	\$127	\$158
Suburban Cook	\$279	\$261	\$234	\$208	\$202	\$134	\$180
Maximum amount reimbursed by CCAP for full-time care	\$232.45		\$196.30	\$163.60		\$81.80 (< 5 hrs/day) \$163.60 (5+ hrs/day)	\$163.60

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N & NW Chicago	\$313	\$279	\$229	\$205	\$200	\$142	\$176
Central & West Chicago	\$290	\$273	\$241	\$208	\$204	\$133	\$158
S & SW Chicago	\$220	\$217	\$188	\$164	\$160	\$123	\$151
Chicago	\$251	\$240	\$207	\$183	\$178	\$129	\$159
N & NW Suburban Cook	\$331	\$304	\$275	\$248	\$243	\$154	\$233
West Suburban Cook	\$271	\$252	\$222	\$195	\$193	\$119	\$146
S & SW Suburban Cook	\$234	\$226	\$199	\$174	\$168	\$127	\$158
Suburban Cook	\$279	\$261	\$234	\$208	\$202	\$134	\$180
Maximum amount reimbursed by CCAP for full-time care	\$232.45		\$196.30	\$163.60		\$81.80 (< 5 hrs/day) \$163.60 (5+ hrs/day)	\$163.60

¹³ In the chart inflation is measured by the CPI-U for June 2011 and June 2016 by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; retrieved March, 2017 at <http://www.bls.gov/data/home.htm>

¹⁴ The cost of family, friend and neighbor (FFN) care is not reported as very little data are available on the rates charged by license-exempt providers.

¹⁵ CCAP reimbursement rates in effect from July 2015. <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=75772>



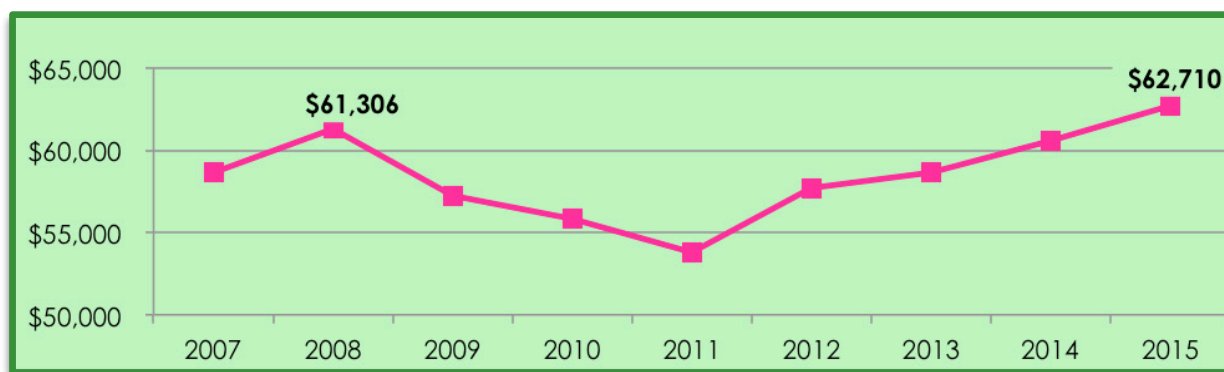
For both center-based care and licensed home care, child care rates typically decrease as a child gets older because it generally costs less for providers to care for older children. In centers, the child-teacher ratio is allowed to increase get older. In licensed homes, providers are permitted to care for additional school-age children beyond the usual maximum capacity if they have a part-time assistant.

The cost of care also differs by geographic area. Following the patterns of supply and demand, care is least expensive in the least economically-resourced parts of the county. This is true of center-based and licensed home care in the South and Southwest regions of Chicago and Suburban Cook County, as well as for licensed home care in the Central & West region of Chicago. Child care is most expensive in the relatively affluent regions in North and Northwest Chicago and Suburban Cook County.

The Cost of Child Care in Context

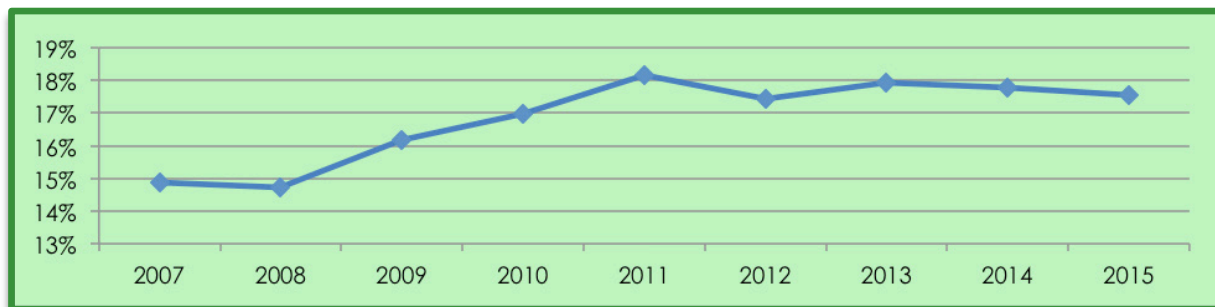
In 2015, the typical family income in Cook County finally reached and surpassed its pre-recession level.¹⁶

Cook County Median Family Income between 2007 and 2015.¹⁷



However, child care costs continued to take larger shares of a family's income, and despite rising family incomes, the child care share of income has not returned to pre-recession levels. For example, average child care costs for a 2-year-old account for almost 18 percent of Cook County's median family income in 2015 compared to 15 percent in 2007.

Cost of Care for a 2-year-old as a Percentage of Median Family Income, since 2007



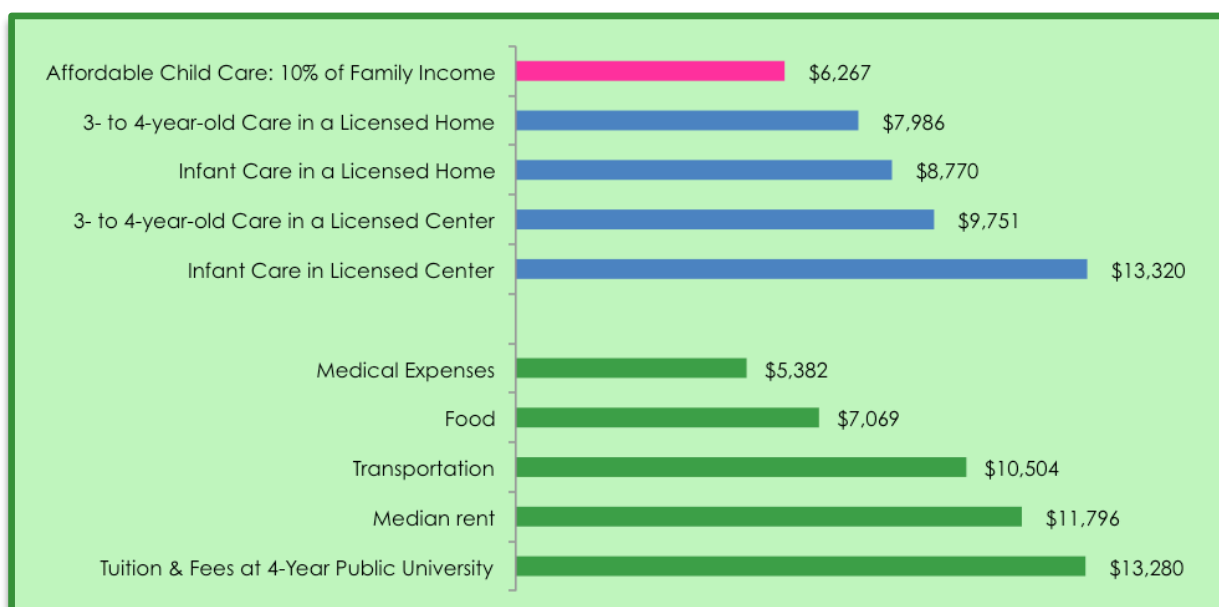
¹⁶ This shows just how damaging the deep 2008 recession was to Cook County families of low and middle incomes. The typical family lost tens of thousands of dollars in income.

¹⁷ Median family income for a family with a child under 18; American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 2007 through 2015.

Child care thus takes substantially more than the 10 percent of typical family income in Cook County that is widely considered the benchmark for affordability.¹⁸ Although child care costs less as a child gets older, the average cost of full-day care for a 3- to 4-year-old still takes 15 percent of a typical Cook County family's income. Families with two children in child care are doubly challenged.

Comparing the cost of child care to other major household expenses reveals that enrolling an infant in a child care center can cost about the same as sending a young adult to college¹⁹ and more than what many families pay for food, transportation²⁰, or rent.²¹

Child Care Costs Compared to Other Major Household Expenditures in Cook County



¹⁸ For example, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services identifies affordable child care as no more than 10 percent of a median family's income. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/fr072498.pdf>

¹⁹ Average in-state tuition and fees at a four-year public institution in Illinois, Trends in College Pricing for the 2016-2017 academic year, retrieved March 27, 2017 at <https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/list>

²⁰ Data on cost of food and transportation represent the average Cook County cost for a family of three comprising two adults and one child adjusted for inflation. Poverty In America: Living Wage Calculator, retrieved March 27, 2017 at <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

²¹ Median family income and rent are from the 2015 American Community Survey 1-year estimates for Cook County.

Why Are Child Care Costs So High?

A 2016 state-by-state, national comparison of child care affordability in the found that Illinois ranks low in affordability in licensed child care, particularly for infant care. Only three states had less affordable infant care in a center than Illinois for a single-parent family, and only seven states had less affordable infant care in a center for a two-parent family.²²

Cook County consistently ranks among the 10 least affordable Illinois counties for child care in both centers and licensed homes.²³

Cook County consistently ranks among the 10 least affordable Illinois counties for child care in both centers and licensed homes.²³

Parents pay more for child care in Illinois because licensed centers and licensed homes must meet quality standards which are substantially higher and more costly in terms of staff and room space than in other states. Illinois requires a lower children-per-teacher ratio than most states. For example, Illinois allows only 10 four year-olds for every teacher compared as many as 14 four-year-olds in other states. Tuition for those 10 Illinois children must pay an entire teacher's salary, which in other states can be covered by lower tuition for as many as 14 four-year-olds. Illinois also has one of the lowest group size standards: only 20 four-year-olds are allowed in a room with two teachers compared to as many as 28 children in other states. In Illinois it takes five rooms to care for each 100 four year-olds, while in other states it takes only four rooms. This leads to more expensive rent costs for Illinois child care providers. Illinois also requires a higher staff credentials than many states. This increases child care staff pay (although Cook County area child care staff still averaged just \$24,380 in 2015).²⁴ Last year's 2016 report on *Child Care in Cook County* detailed these requirements and compared the Illinois standards to those of other Midwestern states.²⁵

²² Child Care Aware of America. Parents and the High Costs of Child Care, Child Care Aware of America, 2016 Report. Retrieved April 17, 2017 <http://www.usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/reports-and-research/costofcare/>

²³ Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA). Illinois Families and the Cost of Child Care, FY 2013 Report. <http://inccrra.com/data-a-reports/reports>

²⁴ May 2016 Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Chicago-Naper-ville-Arlington Heights, IL Metropolitan Division Retrieved April, 2016 https://www.bls.gov/oes/2016/may/oes_16974

²⁵ Illinois Action for Children, 2016 Report on Child Care in Cook County, <http://www.actforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2016-Report-Child-Care-Cook-County.pdf> , p. 16 & 17.

Promoting High-Quality Child Care

Under the federal Race to the Top grant, the State of Illinois has begun a robust push to increase the quality of child care by revamping its quality rating system. The new statewide system, ExceleRate Illinois, is designed “to make continuous quality improvement an everyday priority among early learning providers.” ExceleRate Illinois established a set of standards for child care providers to help infants, toddlers and preschool age children develop intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally while in their care.

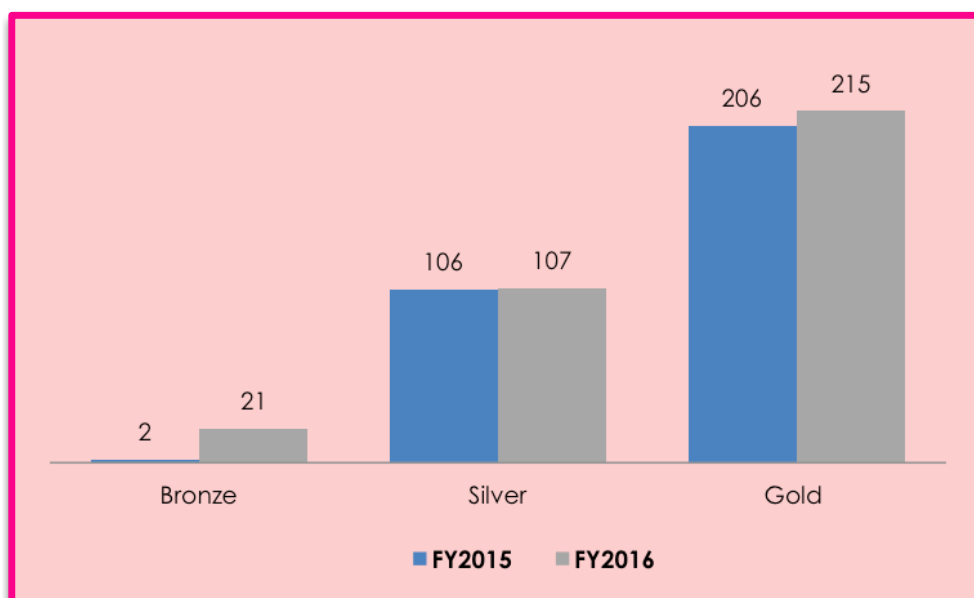
ExceleRate Illinois lays out a framework for early learning professionals to identify opportunities for improvement and to increase their child care practice skills. It awards four Circles of Quality (in order of low- to high-quality): Licensed, Bronze, Silver, and Gold. In addition, ExceleRate Illinois recognizes providers who go beyond the highest Circle of Quality by granting Awards of Excellence in five specific areas:

- Preschool Teaching & Learning
- Infant & Toddler Services
- Family and Community Engagement
- Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
- Linguistically and Culturally Appropriate Practice

Twenty-four (24) percent of licensed child care centers in Cook County were awarded a Circle of Quality in the first months of the new rating system in 2015. A significant number of licensed child care centers entered ExceleRate Illinois with a gold circle of quality in continuation of the high-quality rating or accreditation they had attained in previous years. In 2016, however, progress was more difficult. The number of licensed centers that achieved a quality rating increased by only 29 (nine percent) over 2015.

This would probably not be an impressive accomplishment in a normal year. This was, however, a year of deep financial distress for child care providers in Cook County, as we detailed earlier. Eligibility restrictions sharply reduced CCAP enrollments. Total CCAP payments to Cook County child care providers decreased by \$121 million (21 percent) in FY 2016. It was extraordinary that programs renewed their quality rating — and that some were even able to improve it — under these crisis conditions.²⁶

Number of Licensed Child Care Centers with a Circle of Quality, 2015 & 2016



²⁶ In the year beginning July 1, 2016 ExceleRate Illinois was expanded to include licensed child care homes. In FY2017, the financial uncertainty of 2016 continues and the Illinois Department of Human Services established substantial new health and safety training for providers paid under the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program. The ultimate impact of these conditions upon quality ratings will not be known for some time.



How Well Does Illinois Support Families' Access to Child Care?

The high cost of child care, particularly quality care, limits many families' options when choosing child care arrangements. Without assistance, parents working low-paying jobs may experience financial strain in paying for the very child care that allows them to work or attend school. In recognizing the burden child care costs can have on families, particularly low-income families, federal and state revenue funds the CCAP, which helps families afford child care that would otherwise be too costly.

About the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program

Through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), CCAP provides low-income families with access to quality, affordable child care. Eligible parents must be working or in an approved school or training program and, until recently, have incomes at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level — for example, \$37,320 per year for a family of three.

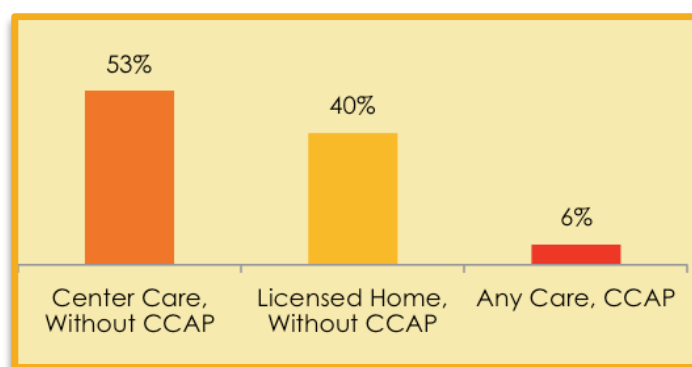
Under federal and state policy, CCAP is designed to give parents the choice of child care that best fits the needs of their family. CCAP reimburses the provider at the established state rate, which varies by region, age of child, and type of provider. Historically, the reimbursement rate to providers in Cook County has been significantly below the federally-recommended levels, especially for infant care and before-and-after-school care.²⁷ Families are required to pay a portion of the cost of care through a sliding scale copayment that is based on family size and income.

CCAP is primarily a system of vouchers for individual families that in Cook County is administered by Illinois Action for Children. Some child care centers, however, have direct contracts with IDHS to serve families eligible for CCAP.

Without CCAP, a single parent earning \$10 per hour would find regulated child care options for her two-year-old prohibitively expensive, taking 40 percent to 53 percent of the family's income.

With CCAP, the same parent is responsible for paying six percent of the family's income for child care in the form of a copayment.²⁸ **For many families, CCAP makes child care affordable.**

Percentage of Income Needed for Child Care (single parent earning \$10 per hour with 2 year old)



²⁷ Illinois Department of Human Services. Market Rate Survey of Licensed Child Care Programs in Illinois Fiscal Year 2014. Retrieved February, 2015 from <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=82489>

²⁸ Illinois Department of Human Services family copayment rates effective January 1, 2015. As family income increases, the copayment makes up a greater percentage of family income, as much as 10 percent.

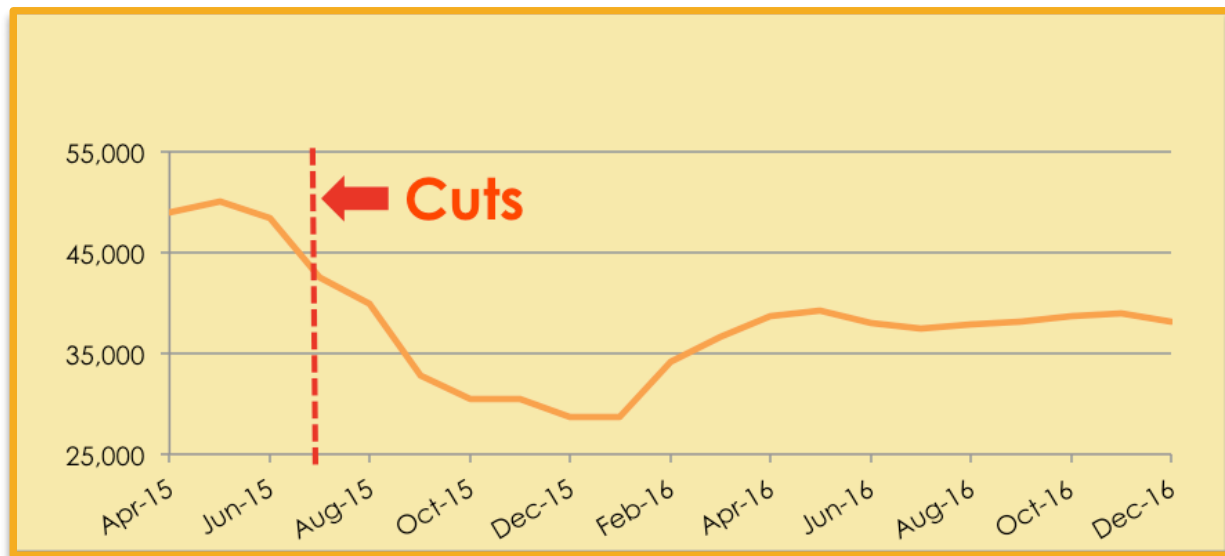
CCAP Denied 32,000 Eligible Children in 2016

Effective July 1, 2015, the Governor introduced an emergency rule process that reduced income eligibility for applicants to 50 percent of the federal poverty level and eliminated eligibility for parents participating in education and training (except for teen parents and TANF recipients). In Cook County the impact of these eligibility cuts has been substantial. By January 2016, the cuts reduced the families being served in CCAP by 20,000 (41 percent), and the number of children served by 32,000 (40 percent).

In November 2015, income limits were restored to 162 percent of the poverty level with the understanding that they would later return to 185 percent of the poverty level. Parents needing child care while they are in school or in non-TANF training were not restored to eligibility. One year after the restrictions, in June 2016, CCAP was assisting approximately 10,000 (20 percent) fewer Cook County families with low incomes than before the eligibility cuts. It was serving 15,000 (18 percent) fewer children. As of this writing, neither education and training nor incomes between 162 percent and 185 percent of poverty have been restored in CCAP eligibility.

The chart shows cuts and partial restoration of families with CCAP. Historically, CCAP has served between 42,000 and 52,000 families in Cook County, depending on the state of the economy and state policy. Since the eligibility cuts, CCAP families fell to about 27,000 and then rose and leveled off between 36,000 and 37,000 – far below historical needs of Cook County families.

Cook County CCAP Families Served: Pre and Post Eligibility Cuts



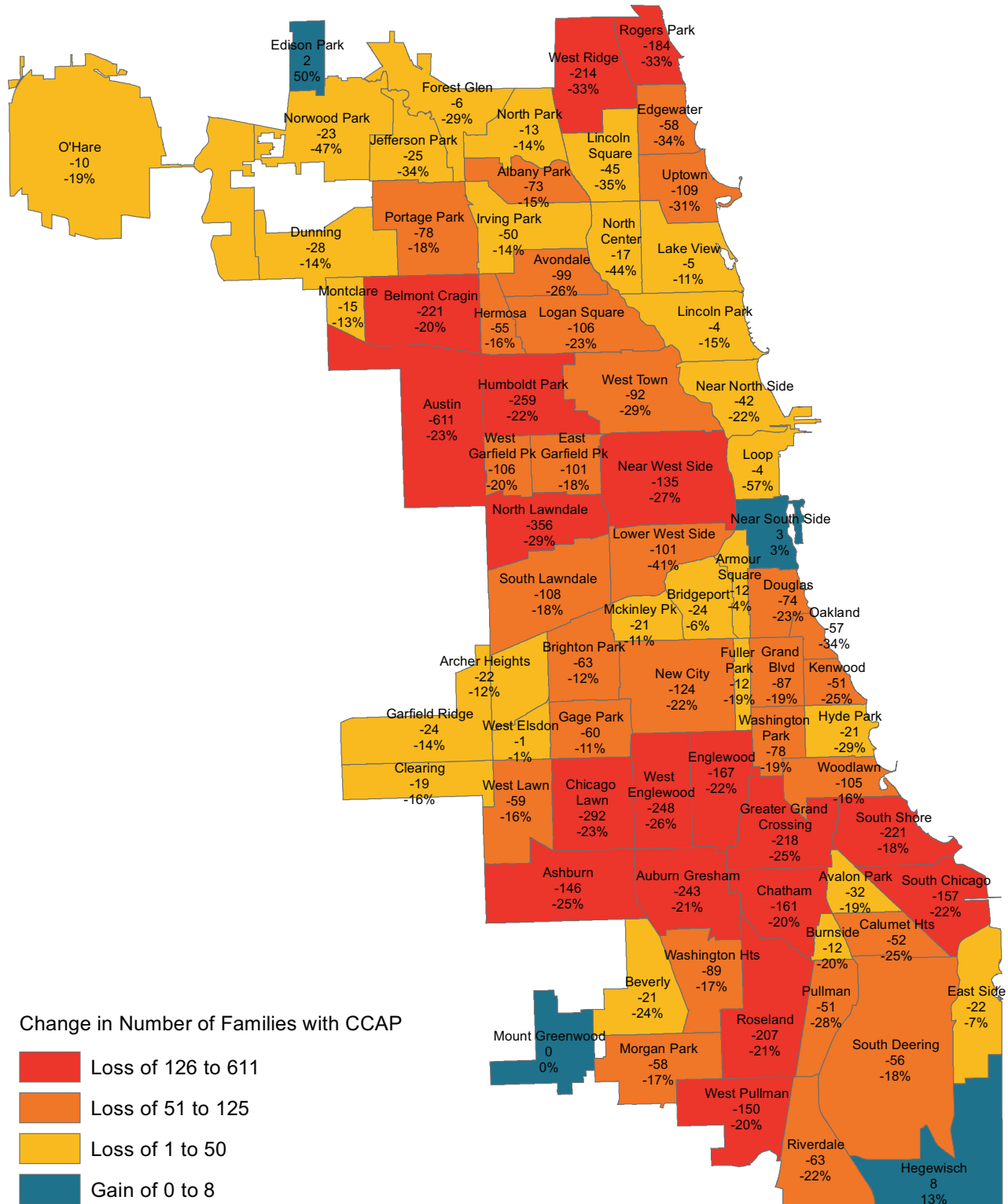
CCAP payments to child care providers bring millions of dollars in federal and state funds to some of the neediest communities in Cook County. These payments had fallen by 34 percent after seven months, and for the year were down 23 percent (\$121 million), enough to remove more than \$278 million from Cook County (\$121 million directly and another \$157 million indirectly).²⁹ By July 2016 CCAP payments had leveled off at 19 percent below their July 2015 level, which if sustained through 2017 will account for an additional \$254 million in direct and indirect income reductions in low-income communities compared to 2015.

These CCAP losses spread throughout almost all of Cook County. In suburban Cook County, nine communities each saw a decline of at least 100 families with CCAP by June 2016. Five were municipalities in the west suburbs: Cicero (with a decrease of more than 200), Maywood, Berwyn, Melrose Park, and Bellwood. CCAP families in four south suburban municipalities decreased by at least 100: Calumet City (decreasing by more than 200), Dolton, Harvey, and Riverdale.

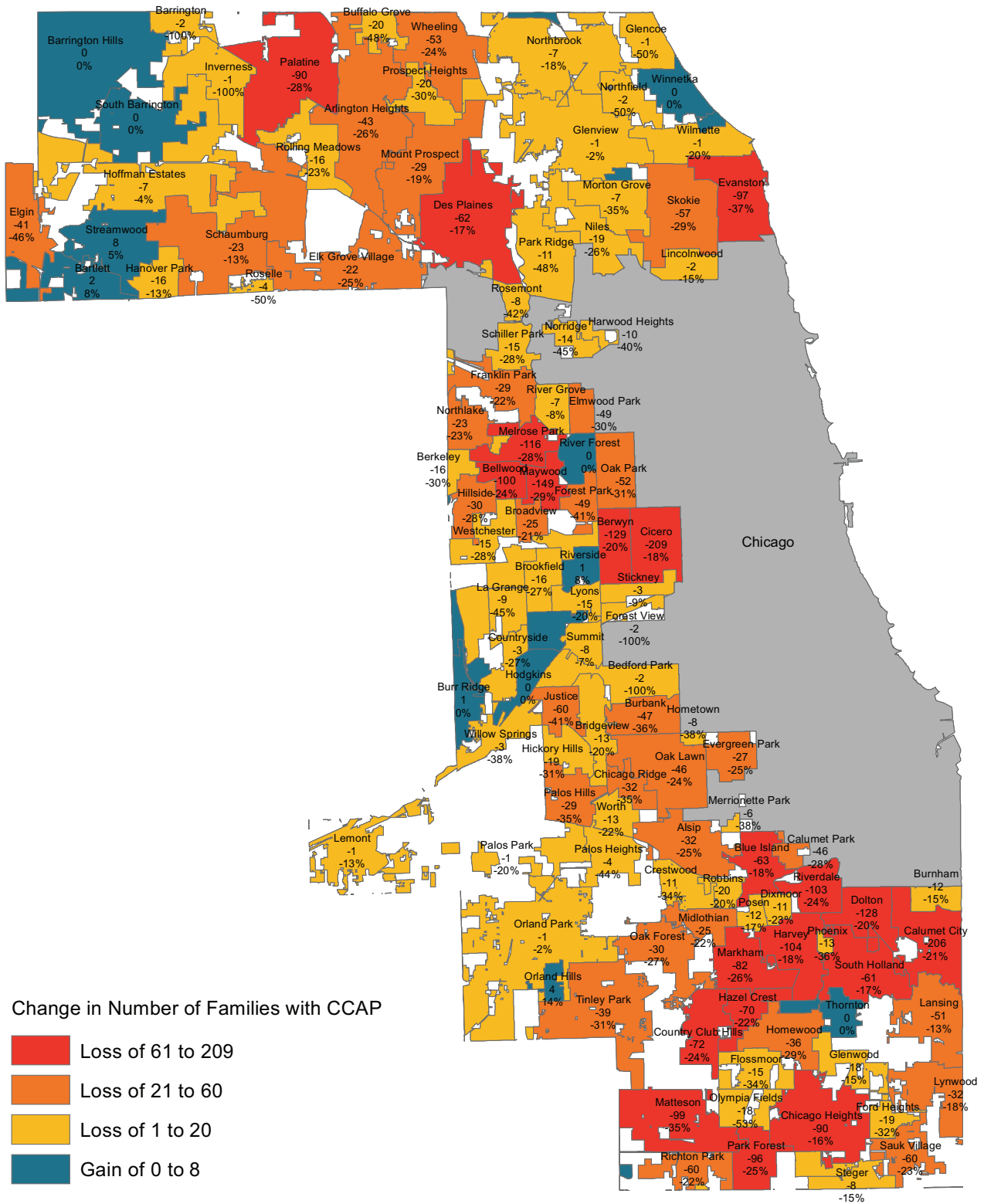
In Chicago, 26 of 77 communities on the North, West, and South Sides each saw a decrease of at least 100 families with CCAP. Six communities on the South Side had declines of more than 200 CCAP families: Roseland, Auburn Gresham, Chicago Lawn (293 CCAP families), Englewood, South Shore, and Greater Grand Crossing. On the West Side, CCAP families decreased by 611 in Austin, 356 in North Lawndale, and over 200 in Humboldt Park and Belmont Cragin. On the North Side, where three communities lost at least 100 CCAP families, West Ridge declined by 214.

²⁹ See Illinois Action for Children, Economic Impact Report: Cook County, 2006. http://www.actforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MDP_ResearchPublications_PDFs_EconImp2006onepager.pdf The direct (1.0) and indirect impact (1.3) of outside child care spending in Cook County are from Minnesota IMPLAN SAM Income Multipliers for counties and industries, calculated in 2004 by Paul E. McNamara, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, and University of Illinois Extension.

Drop in Families with Child Care Assistance (CCAP), June 2015 to June 2016 in Chicago Community Areas



Drop in Families with Child Care Assistance (CCAP), June 2015 to June 2016 in Suburban Cook County



Illinois Child Care Assistance Program: Eligibility and Use

Forty-five (45) percent of the 875,000 children under 13 in Cook County live in families earning less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level. These families are income-eligible for CCAP under the regular rules. However, only 25 percent of these children are using CCAP. *The percentage of eligible children that CCAP serves fell from 31 percent to 25 percent in just one year.* Again, this unprecedented drop was due mostly to the CCAP eligibility cuts described above.

Factoring in families' employment status reduces the number of children eligible. We estimate that in Cook County as many as 80,000 children under age six and 123,000 school-age children were eligible for but did not use CCAP in June 2016.

	Children Ages Birth to 5				Children Ages 6 to 12			
	Number of Children	Percent in Poverty	Children with CCAP (June 2016)	Eligible for but not participating in CCAP (estimate)	Number of Children	Percent in Poverty	Children with CCAP (June 2016)	Eligible for but not participating in CCAP (estimate)
Cook County	409,454	25%	38,845	80,056	465,170	26%	29,240	123,130
N & NW Chicago	81,826	19%	4,845	14,856	75,948	23%	2,825	20,915
C & W Chicago	48,651	39%	6,018	12,712	48,587	47%	5,366	17,319
S & SW Chicago	86,370	40%	14,701	22,387	102,123	38%	11,749	33,479
Chicago	216,847	32%	25,564	49,956	226,658	35%	19,940	71,713
N & NW Suburban Cook	93,667	12%	2,818	12,916	112,625	12%	1,469	19,685
West Suburban Cook	40,606	22%	3,438	6,970	52,346	21%	2,274	13,200
S & SW Suburban Cook	58,334	21%	7,025	10,215	73,541	22%	5,557	18,531
Suburban Cook	192,607	17%	13,281	30,100	238,512	17%	9,300	51,417

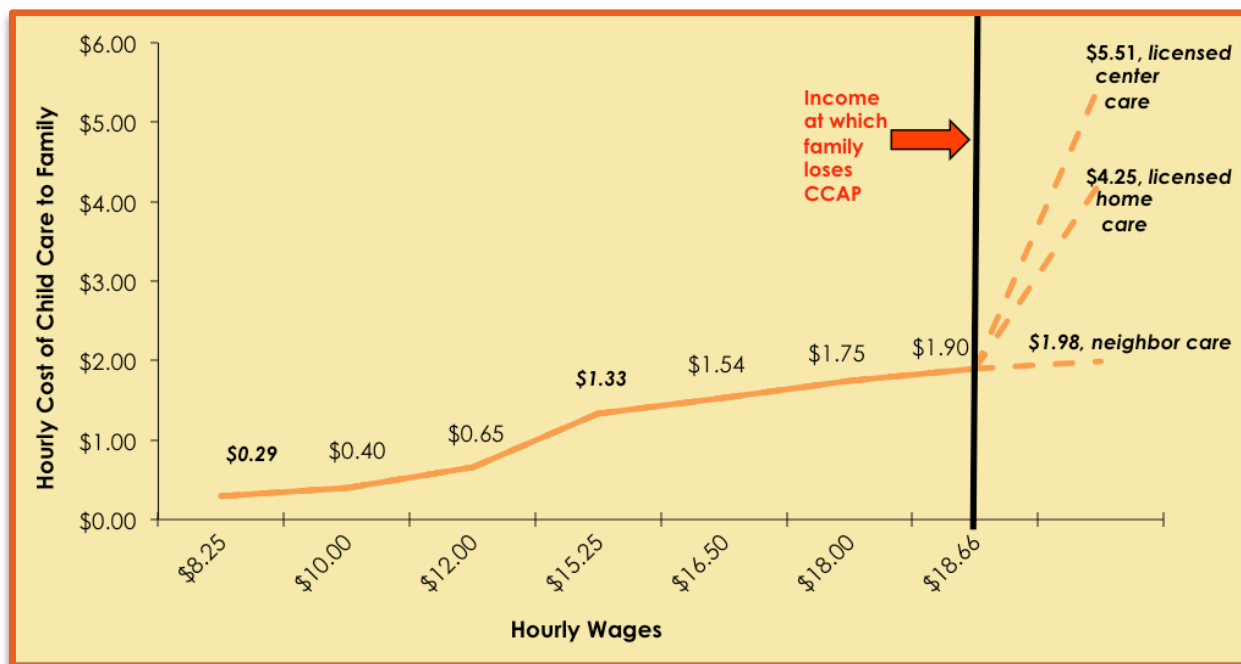
There are other reasons why eligible families might not use this public support. Two-parent families may stagger their work schedules so that they do not need non-parental child care; parents may already have free or affordable child care; families may lack awareness of CCAP; parents or their child care provider may find the CCAP paperwork too burdensome, particularly if they face language or cultural barriers that make applying difficult; undocumented families might avoid government programs; and parents may be paid in cash and have difficulty documenting their income for CCAP.

The CCAP Income Ceiling

While CCAP helps many Illinois families afford quality child care, eligibility is based on a set income ceiling by law (185 percent of the federal poverty level) and when a family earns just over that threshold, they no longer qualify for benefits. This income ceiling may discourage families from earning higher wages out of fear that they will no longer be able to afford the very child care that makes it possible to work or attend classes. This creates situations that contradict the goals of CCAP to support parents who work and make progress toward self-sufficiency. For example, some families decline small wage increases that put them over the limit so that they can avoid paying much more for child care. (See the “cliff” below.) Others lose CCAP and switch to a less expensive care arrangement that disrupts the children’s important bonds with their caregivers. The less expensive child care may also be of lower quality.

The chart below represents the financial effect of losing CCAP for Illinois families who succeed in increasing their hourly wages. In the world of public policy this loss is also known as the “cliff effect.” As its income rises, a family of three can receive CCAP support up to an income of \$18.66 per hour (\$37,320 per year). The green line on the chart shows that the family pays a larger portion of child care costs as their wage rises along the hourly wage line. When their hourly wage rises above the \$18.66 threshold, the family is no longer eligible for child care assistance and must pay the full price of care. For families using licensed care, a 10 cent per hour raise in wages that puts the family over the threshold can result in an increase in the cost of their child care of \$2.35 to \$3.61 per hour.³⁰ It is evident why so many families who reach the “cliff” may turn down small raises and eventually cycle back to CCAP, or switch to less expensive FFN care.³¹

Jump in Child Care Costs When Family Loses CCAP



³¹ Numbers reflect the rise in the cost of care for a two-year old in license home care and an infant in center care, respectively.

³¹ The average cost of FFN care is unknown as it varies greatly by provider and child. For this chart we utilized CCAP reimbursement rates for FFN care.



With CCAP, a family gradually pays more for child care as its income increases. If even a small raise pushes its wages past \$18.66 per hour, the family loses CCAP and hourly licensed child care costs rise from \$1.90 to at least \$4.25 for licensed care. (Infant care in an average licensed Cook County center would cost \$6.66 per hour.)

Currently CCAP restricts new applicants to a maximum family income of 162 percent of the federal poverty level. On the chart, showing that limit would shift the vertical line back from an income of \$18.66 to family income of \$16.33 per hour. Above \$16.33 per hour the family would lose CCAP and the cost of its child care would leap from a CCAP copayment of \$1.54 per hour (\$256 per month) to the full price of \$5.51 hourly for licensed center care or \$4.25 hourly for licensed home-based care. Unable to afford this, many families would opt for a more affordable alternative such as family, friend, or neighbor child care.

Twenty-nine (29) states allow families to earn more than Illinois' limit of 185 percent of the federal poverty level and still continue with child care assistance – reaching as high as 377 percent of the federal poverty level.³² If the CCAP income ceiling were raised from 185 percent to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, an Illinois family of three would receive some assistance paying for child care until their annual income passes \$60,270. When it loses CCAP at that income, the family could better manage the shock of paying more for child care even if the payments rose by \$2.35 per hour or \$3.61 per hour.

The federal Child Care Development Block Grant reauthorization, passed in 2014, begins to address this problem of a cliff. It includes a provision that requires a more graduated phase-out of child care assistance for families whose income increases above state eligibility limits yet falls below 85% of the state's median income. (In 2016, 85 percent of median family income in Illinois was just over \$61,000.) In Illinois, however, this remains unfinished business. Illinois has no current plan for this extension of eligibility when parents earn raises.

³² The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables: Key Cross-State Variations in CCDF Policies as of October 2015, OPRE Report 2013-22, November, 2016. Retrieved March, 2017 at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/ccdf_policies_database_2015_book_of_tables_final_11_23_16_b508.pdf



Conclusion and Policy Options

Even in normal times, parents face few challenges as emotionally and financially stressful as that of finding the right child care for their child. In Cook County, as in almost all counties in the United States, parents' options are limited. This is especially true for low-income parents. While the CCAP gives some families greater access to child care and early learning programs, not all families who need assistance qualify for it, and often even with assistance, these child care settings are too costly. Nevertheless, with more options and with assistance paying for child care, the likelihood is greater that parents will succeed in finding the provider best suited for their child.

The emergency rules of July 2015 and November 2015, however, removed CCAP for more parents — students, many trainees, and employed parents with family incomes above 162 percent of the federal poverty level (\$32,659 for a family of three). The rules have imposed higher child care costs on approximately 10,000 Cook County families each month who need care for 15,000 children so the parent can attend school, training, or work.

Many families' options are also limited by the number of openings that high-quality programs in their community offer, particularly infant care openings. Other families discover that success is not just finding openings but finding them at the right times of day or the week. As many as 50 percent of families work outside the traditional Monday through Friday daytime schedule, yet most centers and licensed child care homes do not offer care in the evenings, overnight, or on weekends.

While this report documents many improvements in the child care options available to Cook County parents as a group, the reality is that many families still do not have realistic options. Advocates and policy makers should consider policy strategies to improve the accessibility of quality child care for all families in Cook County and the State of Illinois. Strategies could include the following:

Remove emergency rules and restore eligibility for all parents in school or training and with incomes between 162 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

Removing the emergency rules of July and November 2015 would restore to 10,000 Cook County families access to child care that is safe, reliable, and a positive support for the development of their 15,000 children. CCAP's coverage of eligible children fell from 31 percent of all eligible children before the emergency rule to 25 percent in June 2016. Removing the rules would raise coverage back to the 31 percent range.

Expand income eligibility in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

There are good reasons to raise income eligibility not only to 185 or 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and even, as in some other states, to 300 percent so that more parents can receive assistance paying for child care. At the child care cliff, parents reach an income limit at which even modest wage increases will make them lose child care assistance, thereby experiencing a sharp jump in their child care costs before they are financially able to shoulder these costs.

Illinois can reduce the cliff effect by raising the income limits CCAP places on eligibility. Lawmakers can return income eligibility for CCAP to its 2011 level of 200 percent of the federal poverty level. They can also restore the goal that IDHS once had to raise income eligibility to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, at least for parents who entered CCAP with lower incomes and with child care assistance have earned raises that carry them to the cliff.

Limit parent copayments in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to 10 percent of income

Parent copayments in CCAP currently do not exceed 10 percent of family income and are thus “affordable” by conventional standards. This policy gives many families high quality child care options that they would otherwise would not have. In the past, however, policy makers have occasionally tried to save the state money by raising parent copayments. This is perhaps even more tempting to try today as the state faces budget shortfalls. Such economizing would, however, have unintended consequences for parents’ choice and children’s well-being. Lawmakers can support families by holding CCAP copayments to 10 percent or below.

Increase access to high-quality child care for families working nontraditional hours

Parents who work evenings, nights or weekends, or who have unpredictable or rapidly-changing work schedules often cannot access high-quality child care programs that are available only during weekday and daytime hours. More flexible IDHS’ eligibility policies could take a child’s developmental needs into account and allow child care outside of a parent’s work or school hours if it supports continuity of care or enables a child to access high quality early learning programs. For example, policies could better support working or student parents in mixing home-based child care during nontraditional work or school hours and center-based early learning programs during the daytime.

Fund tiered reimbursement for providers’ achievement in ExceleRate Illinois

Quality rating improvement systems, such as ExceleRate Illinois, offer standards, guidelines, resources, and supports to help child care providers make sensible changes that lead to higher quality programs. When providers participate in quality rating improvement systems, parents have more high-quality programs to choose from. ExceleRate Illinois is a voluntary program and many providers opt not to participate due to concern that it is too costly to achieve higher levels of quality. Legislators can ensure stable funding for ExceleRate Illinois to provide technical assistance and support for providers in navigating the quality rating system process, and to provide adequately-tiered CCAP reimbursements for providers for achieving higher levels within the system.

Raise provider reimbursement rates to target levels

Providing child care is very expensive for providers largely due to appropriate licensing standards that impose high costs in terms of staff and facilities. This is particularly true of care for infants and toddlers. For many types of care in Cook County, CCAP reimburses providers far below the federally recommended 75th percentile of the local child care market. Providers who need to charge more than this reimbursement amount either must turn down families with CCAP or charge parents the difference. This effectively prices many child care programs out of parents’ reach. By raising reimbursement rates to target levels, lawmakers can ensure that more families have access to high-quality child care.

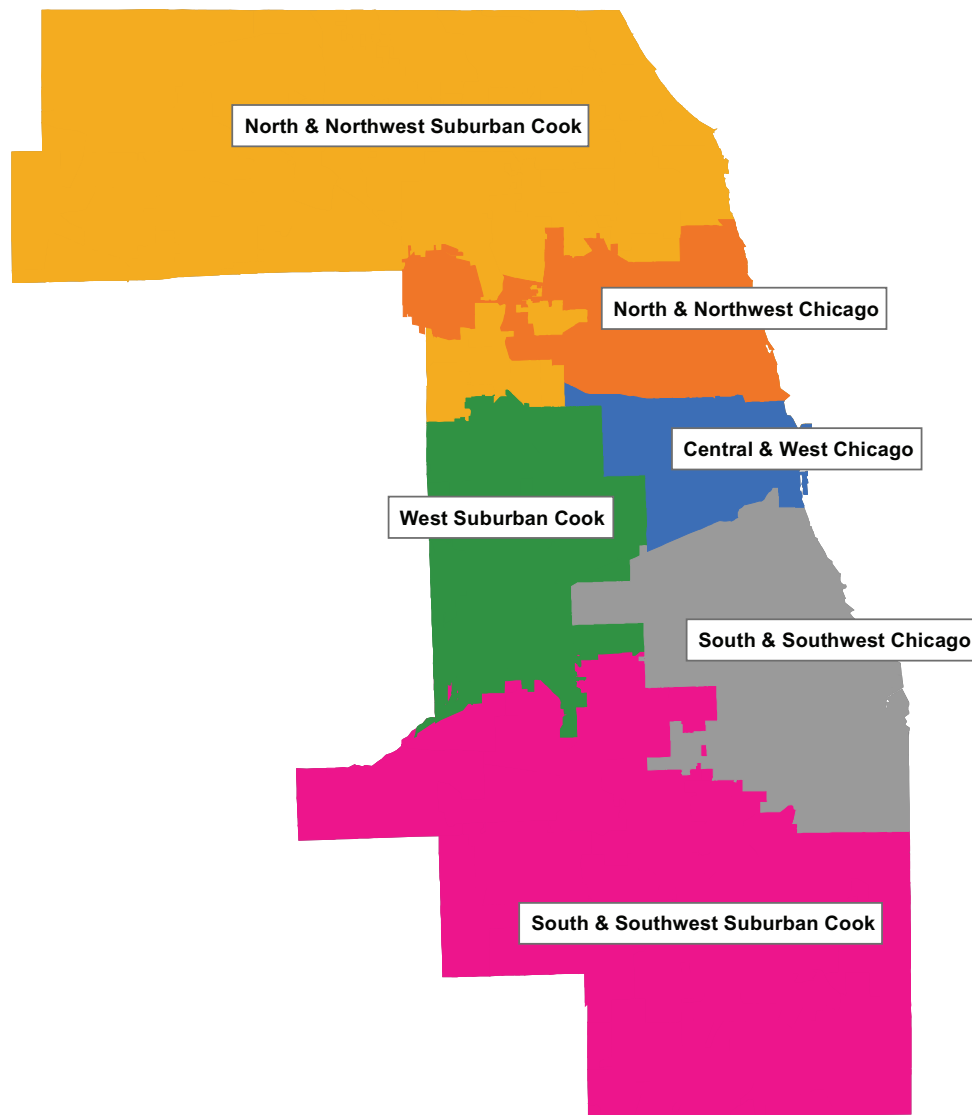
These are just some of the strategies that policy makers could consider to improve Illinois parents’ real child care options, reduce families’ financial and emotional stress, and help ground the next generation of Illinoisans in optimism and opportunity rather than crisis.

Appendix 1: The Six Cook County Regions

This report divides Cook County into six geographic regions: three in Chicago based on the 77 Chicago Community Areas, and three in suburban Cook County based on the suburban municipalities.

When presenting census data for Chicago and Cook County in this report, we built our aggregate units from data for the individual Chicago Community Areas and municipalities. Our aggregate data, therefore, may deviate somewhat from aggregate data provided by the U.S. Census.

Chicago and Suburban Cook Regions



North and Northwest Suburban Cook

Arlington Heights
 Barrington
 Bartlett
 Des Plaines
 East Dundee
 Elgin
 Elk Grove Village
 Elmwood Park
 Evanston
 Franklin Park
 Glencoe
 Glenview
 Golf
 Hanover Park
 Harwood Heights
 Hoffman Estates
 Inverness
 Kenilworth
 Lincolnwood
 Morton Grove
 Mount Prospect
 Niles
 Norridge
 Northbrook
 Northfield
 Northlake
 Palatine
 Park Ridge
 Prospect Heights
 River Grove
 Rolling Meadows
 Rosemont
 Schaumburg
 Schiller Park
 Skokie
 South Barrington
 Streamwood
 Wheeling
 Wilmette
 Winnetka

West Suburban Cook

Bedford Park
 Bellwood
 Berkeley
 Berwyn
 Bridgeview
 Broadview
 Brookfield
 Burr Ridge
 Cicero
 Countryside
 Forest Park
 Forest View
 Hillside
 Hodgkins
 Indian Head Park
 Justice
 La Grange
 La Grange Park
 Lyons
 Maywood
 McCook
 Melrose Park
 North Riverside
 Oak Park
 River Forest
 Riverside
 Stickney
 Stone Park
 Summit
 Westchester
 Western Springs
 Willow Springs

South and Southwest Suburban Cook

Alsip
 Blue Island
 Burbank
 Burnham
 Calumet City
 Calumet Park
 Chicago Heights
 Chicago Ridge
 Country Club Hills
 Crestwood
 Dixmoor
 Dolton
 East Hazel Crest
 Evergreen Park
 Flossmoor
 Ford Heights
 Glenwood
 Harvey
 Hazel Crest
 Hickory Hills
 Hometown
 Homewood
 Lansing
 Lemont
 Lynwood
 Markham
 Matteson
 Merrionette Park
 Midlothian
 Oak Forest
 Oak Lawn
 Olympia Fields
 Orland Hills
 Orland Park
 Palos Heights
 Palos Hills
 Palos Park
 Park Forest
 Phoenix
 Posen
 Richton Park
 Riverdale
 Robbins
 Sauk Village
 South Chicago Heights
 South Holland
 Steger
 Thornton
 Tinley Park
 Worth

North and Northwest Chicago

Albany Park
 Avondale
 Belmont Cragin
 Dunning
 Edgewater
 Edison Park
 Forest Glen
 Hermosa
 Irving Park
 Jefferson Park
 Lake View
 Lincoln Park
 Lincoln Square
 Logan Square
 Montclare
 North Center
 North Park
 Norwood Park
 O'Hare
 Portage Park
 Rogers Park
 Uptown
 West Ridge

Central & West Chicago

Austin
 East Garfield Park
 Humboldt Park
 Loop
 Lower West Side
 Near North Side
 Near South Side
 Near West Side
 North Lawndale
 South Lawndale
 West Garfield Park
 West Town

South and Southwest Chicago

Archer Heights
 Armour Square
 Ashburn
 Auburn Gresham
 Avalon Park
 Beverly
 Bridgeport
 Brighton Park
 Burnside
 Calumet Heights
 Chatham
 Chicago Lawn
 Clearing
 Douglas
 East Side
 Englewood
 Fuller Park
 Gage Park
 Garfield Ridge
 Grand Boulevard
 Greater Grand Crossing
 Hegewisch
 Hyde Park
 Kenwood
 McKinley Park
 Morgan Park
 Mount Greenwood
 New City
 Oakland
 Pullman
 Riverdale
 Roseland
 South Chicago
 South Deering
 South Shore
 Washington Heights
 Washington Park
 West Elsdon
 West Englewood
 West Lawn
 West Pullman
 Woodlawn



Appendix 2: Sources for Data on Child Care Providers in Cook County

Information on Cook County child care providers in this report comes from three different sources:

1. The Illinois Action for Children Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Program
2. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
3. The Illinois Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

The Illinois Action for Children Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program is part of a statewide network of Resource and Referral agencies funded through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). Illinois Action for Children invites child care providers to list their programs on our database and to provide detailed information about their programs such as the rates they charge parents, the number of children they serve per age group, languages spoken, training and education they have received, and other characteristics that help referral staff match parents with providers.

Illinois Action for Children supplements its database with licensing data from DCFS. In this way, we maintain the most comprehensive listing of child care providers in Cook County, though we do not fully capture child care that is legally exempt from licensing or the otherwise illegal care.

The third source of child care data used in this report is CCAP, which provides the best count of known license-exempt child care programs in Cook County.

Child Care Providers in Cook County in 2016: Who is Included

Type of Program	Description
Child Care Centers	Any child care center operating for the full year or the school year and offering some or all full-time care for children under age 5. The center may provide school-age care as well. This category does not include private preschool programs or public preschools such as Head Start-only or Preschool for All-only programs. Park and recreation programs are included if their care is full-time and for the full year or school year. Data are from June 2016.
School-Age Programs	Any center that provides full-year or school-year care for children ages 5-and-over only. Includes before and after school programs and part-day programs for children in kindergarten. Programs may be center-based, school-based or at a park or recreation program. Data are from June 2016.
Summer Only Programs	Any center that provides care only during the summer months. Only centers providing full-time care are included. Ninety-four (94) percent of these summer-only programs are park and recreation programs. Data are from June 2016.
Licensed Homes	Any family child care home that is licensed by DCFS as of June 2016.
FFN Care (License-Exempt Homes)	License-exempt home providers participating in CCAP in June 2016. The number of participating home providers varies from month to month just as the number of participating families varies. These data do not capture the significant number of unknown family, friend, or neighbor caregivers throughout Cook County.

For information on early education slots in Cook County (Head Start and Preschool for All) and on child care and early education slots in regions outside of Cook County, visit the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) website at iecam.crc.illinois.edu.



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