



Mapping the Gap™: Exploring Child Care Supply & Demand New Hampshire



State Overview

There are more than 53,000 children under the age of 6 in working families in New Hampshire. There are 423 center-based child care programs and 166 family child care homes in the state with overall combined total of 30,887 available spaces for young children. This leaves a deficit of more than 22,000 licensed child care spaces across the state of New Hampshire. This means that 2 in 5 children in working families in New Hampshire does not have access to licensed child care while their parents are at work. For more information about what is happening in New Hampshire, visit their [2017 State Fact Sheet](#).

In New Hampshire, married couples with an infant in child care pay an average of \$12,220 for center-based and \$9,152 for home-based care per year. For families with an infant and four-year-old in child care, married couples pay \$22,152 for center-based care and \$17,784 for home-based care per year. For more information about the cost of child care in New Hampshire and the rest of the 50 states, see our report, [Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2017](#).

Mapping Child Care Supply and Demand Gaps

In New Hampshire, families may be struggling to access care, particularly quality child care. Our key stakeholders wanted to know in what areas of the state might families are struggling to find care, and what information they could have at their fingertips in order to develop solutions for this issue. For each map, we examined the locations of child care providers and children by zip code, including county boundaries for reference.

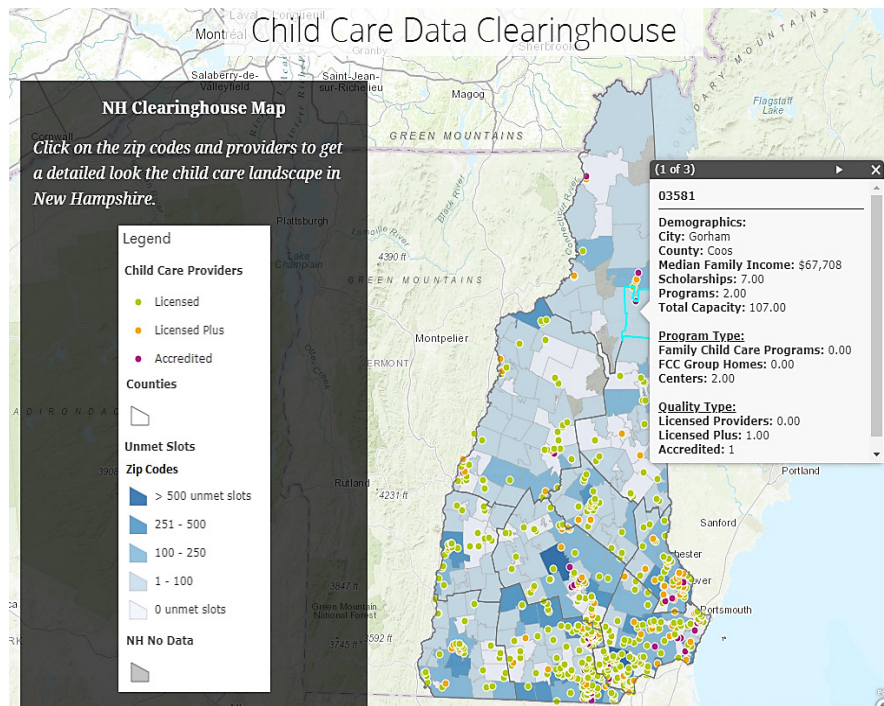
Data & Methodology

The number of children under the age of 6 in each zip code was obtained through the most up-to-date Census data, specifically, the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year-Estimates, B23008: Age of Own Children Under 18 Years in Families and Subfamilies by Living Arrangements by Employment Status of Parents. The licensed child care programs and the number of spaces per center were obtained using data from NACCRRAware with permissions from the license holder in May 2017. These maps do not include data for licensed part-time, school-age, summer care or any license exempt programs. New Hampshire scholarship data were requested from and supplied by the New Hampshire CCDF Administrator's Office.

Overall Findings

The points on the map show licensed child care programs. The types of licensed child care programs shown on the map include child care centers and family child care homes; providers are grouped by licensed type: Licensed, Licensed Plus, and Accredited. The gradients of blue which cover the state of New Hampshire are divided by zip code. The darkest blue areas illustrate zip codes with the largest gap of unmet need (the difference between number of children living in that area and the child care slots available). The gray areas illustrate areas with no available data. Much of the gray area are rural areas, such as national parks.

Child care programs in New Hampshire are largely located near more populated, urban areas, which can leave substantial gaps in more rural parts of the state. However, even in urban areas, working families may be struggling to find care.



Supply & Demand Spotlight: Coos County, NH

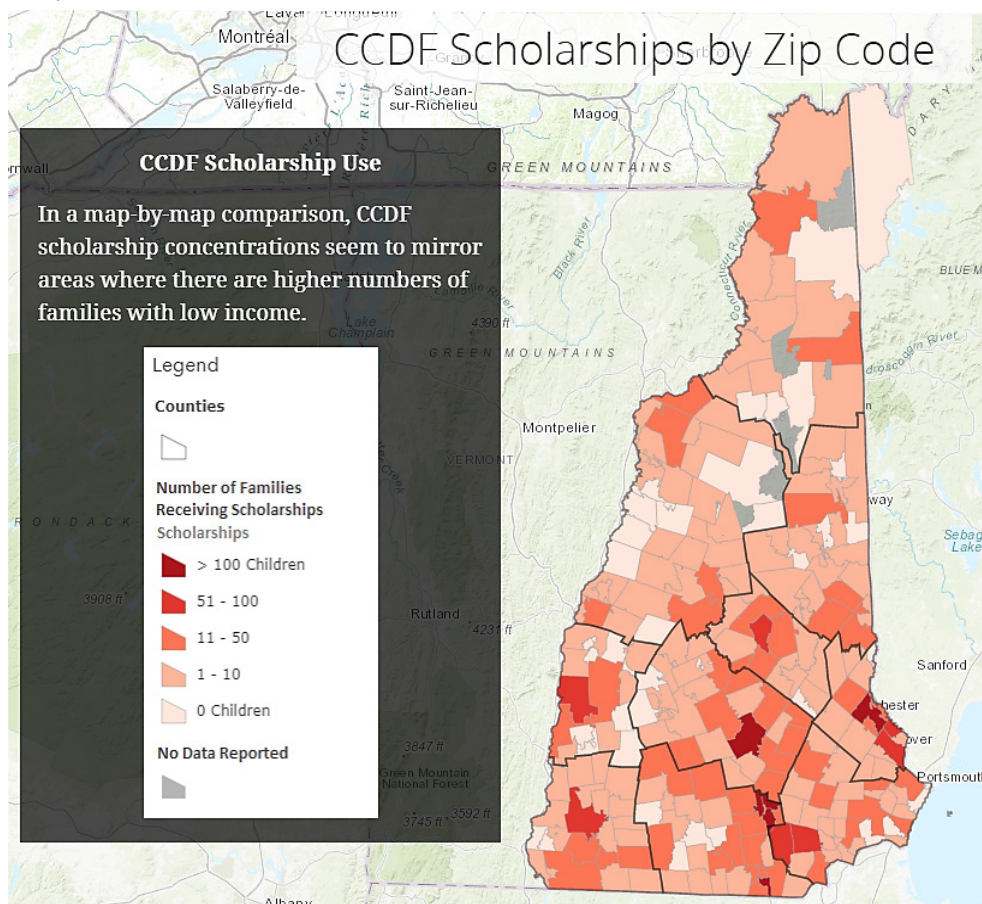
Since 2009, providers in New Hampshire’s Coos County were targeted by a private investment through the Tillotson Fund. This investment focused on increasing the supply of quality, licensed child care programs in a way that could be scaled up for other areas of the state as well. Today 8 out of 11 licensed providers in Coos County are designated as licensed plus or accredited programs. Despite there being few providers in this area, this amounts to 73 percent of Coos County providers at the Licensed Plus or Accredited quality level, more than double the amount in other counties.

Mapping Child Care Development Fund Scholarships

New Hampshire families with an infant pay, on average, \$12,220 a year for center-based child care. For a family of 3 at the poverty line, child care would require 52 percent of household income. Even for families considered low income (220 percent federal poverty level), the annual cost of center-based care for 1 infant comprises 26 percent of household income. CCDF scholarships assist families to access care throughout the state that otherwise would be unaffordable.

Data & Methodology

NH Scholarship data were requested from and supplied by the New Hampshire CCDF Administrator’s Office, the Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration.



Overall Findings

New Hampshire families with an infant pay, on average, \$12,220 a year for center-based child care. For a family of 3 at the poverty line, child care would require 52 percent of household income. Even for families considered low income (220 percent federal poverty level), the annual cost of center-based care for 1 infant comprises 26 percent of household income. CCDF scholarships assist families to access care throughout the state that otherwise would be unaffordable.

Child Care Development Fund Scholarships Spotlight: Manchester, NH

Manchester has the highest number of families living at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level in New Hampshire. Manchester, the largest city in the state, also has the highest number of CCDF scholarships being distributed to eligible families. In neighboring cities and towns, such as Concord, Derry, and Nashua, there are pockets of high concentrations of CCDF scholarships distributed to eligible families as well. Families in Manchester, however, only have access to 3 accredited child care programs. These areas are also home to large gaps in child care supply and demand, making it extremely difficult for families to access any child care, let alone high quality options.

Policy Recommendations

Like many families across the country, working families in New Hampshire may be struggling to access quality child care in their neighborhoods and communities. Increasing licensed child care supply in New Hampshire would ensure that all working families have a place to take their children while they're at work; however this is only one piece of the puzzle in closing the supply and demand gap. More has to be done to ensure all families have the option to choose high-quality child care that works best for them. Having the information and resources to examine licensed child care supply and demand across the state is a first step for child care advocates in the state.

In order to address supply and demand gaps and help working families, some next steps could include:

- **Designating funding for early childhood education quality improvement.** For example, a private investment in child care quality in Coos County may have led to this county having the highest proportion of high-quality child care in the state. However, many families in New Hampshire may be traveling outside their own county to access quality child care. Funding to promote quality across the state may improve outcomes for children and families throughout New Hampshire
- **Monitoring the issues.** These maps can serve as a baseline to get a better understanding of the child care landscape in New Hampshire. Although areas of great gaps in child care supply and demand are few, many families may be struggling to access higher quality care. As policy and funding change, the supply of quality child care across the state should be re-examined.
- **Harnessing the power of a collective voice to promote policy change.** Spark NH, governor-appointed early childhood advisory council, targeted positive early learning experiences as a priority in its policy framework, *Children: The Bedrock of the Granite State, A Framework for Action for New Hampshire's young children* (2015). The goal is to ensure that effective learning opportunities are provided to children from birth through the primary grades in all settings, including the home, child care and afterschool programs, preschools, and elementary schools by (a) expanding access to proven and effective early childhood education for all infants, toddlers and other young children through grade three, and (b) increasing opportunities for learning outside the school day, including summer. Available at <http://sparknh.com/resources/framework-for-action/>.

Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs), such as Child Care Aware® of New Hampshire, are uniquely positioned to support the study of and address child care supply and demand issues across the state. In fact, CCR&Rs are specifically highlighted in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 legislation to help identify supply and demand issues and share information with the state to help target funding to address the issues. An increase in funding for CCR&Rs to do this work is crucial. The NH DHHS/DCYF Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration and Child Care Aware® of New Hampshire are at the forefront of exploring and pursuing possibilities to expand quality and improve access for all families throughout New Hampshire

Acknowledgments. The New Hampshire state team collaborated with CCAoA staff to create customized child care supply & demand maps which tell stories about the state of child care in New Hampshire. Special thanks to the following former and current staff of the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration, including Kristin Booth (Former Administrator, Maureen Burke (CCDF Program Specialist), and Claudette Mallory (Child Care Program Improvement Specialist), as well as to Tracy Pond (Program Manager, Child Care Aware® of New Hampshire).