

Child Care Needs Infographic

Talking Points Companion

Following provides additional information that you can share when speaking with a legislator, board member or community member about the information/data provided in the infographic.

Children under Age 6 in Iowa: Following chart provides Woods and Poole Populations estimates for the number of children under the age of 6 in Iowa by year. As you can see from year to year, the number of children in this age range fluctuates.

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
# of children under age 6	233,561	242,954	246,364	244,213	241,690	243,572	236,256

Parents in the Labor Force: With 76% of the households with children under age 6 having all available parents in the labor force, **Iowa ranks #1 among the 50 states.** The national average is 65%.

A report released in October 2014 by the Branstad-Reynolds Administration in collaboration with the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (Georgetown Center) projects that from 2010 to 2025, **Iowa will add 612,000 jobs to its economy, including replacement jobs due to retirement.**

With a high percentage of parents in the labor force, the need for stable, safe, high-quality child care is critical for:

- Parents to work
- Children to develop
- Strong local and state economies

Hours in Child Care: U.S. Census Bureau data indicates that children under the age of 6 are in child care settings an average of 36 hours each week. Keep in mind that this is national data. Iowa's average may be higher. For example, if the parent works 40 hr./wk. (42.5 hrs. when including lunch) plus 30 minutes each way to commute from child care to work and vice versa, the **child is in a child care setting for 43.5 hrs./wk.** This equates to 26% of a child's time in the first 2,000 days is spent in child care.

Brain Development: Research on brain development finds that 80% of the brain's architecture (the connections between the neurons) happens by age 3. In the first few years of life, vision and hearing, language and higher level cognitive (executive) functioning (social/emotional skills) develop at a rapid pace. [Social/emotional skills, also referred to as "soft skills," are such things as communication skills, ability to deal with conflicts, ability to follow rules, problem solving skills, team building, creative thinking, motivation, self-confidence, etc.]

Brains develop based on genetic factors as well as early experiences. "Serve and return interactions" – such as when a baby coos and a caregiver responds – are critically important. [Use the analogy of a game of tennis and the ball traveling back and forth over the net when trying to describe 'serve and return interactions' between a baby and a caregiver.]

Babies’ brains undergo remarkable changes from birth to age 2. Every second there are 700 new synapses that happen in the brain. Since brains are built in stages, with more complex structures built on simpler structures, it’s extremely important to get it right in the early years. *Using an analogy of a house...* A house needs a sturdy foundation to support the walls and roof, a brain needs a “good base” to support all future development. Successful development of brain architecture (building better brains) requires positive, nurturing interactions by caring adults at a young age (which child providers provide a critical role based on the number of hours children are in care). Positive experiences are the bricks that build sturdy brain architecture, leading to improved learning and behavior, as well as, better physical, mental and social wellbeing throughout life.

So if we think about the 700 new synapses that happen per second in the first two years of life, if a parent drops their child off at child care at 8 a.m. and picks the child up at 5:30 p.m., **that child’s brain has changed in more than 23,940,000 ways during that time period.**

Local Data

- _____ # of children under age 6 in your county(ies)
- _____ Unemployment rate in your county(ies) [State Unemployment Rate for the same period of time was 5.4%]
- _____ % of households in your county(ies) with all parents in the household in the labor force
- _____ Data related to the average number of hours children are in child care in your county(ies) [CCR&R may have some of this data or contact child care facilities in your area to get this information.]
- _____ # of child care providers in your county(ies) [Child Development Homes and Child Care Centers and non-registered child care home that care for children that participate in the CCA program] [You can download a list of child care providers in your area that accept CCA using the following link:
<http://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/ClientPortal/ProviderSearch.aspx>]
- _____ Child care providers participating in quality initiatives in your county(ies) [i.e., Child Development Homes and Child Care Centers]
 - _____ QRS Levels 1-2 _____ QRS Levels 3-5
 - _____ NAEYC _____ NAFCC
- What quality improvement supports are being provided to child care providers in your county(ies)?
- What strategies are being used in your county(ies) to encourage child care providers to participate in QRS/increase in quality?
- What are some gaps in services & supports to child care providers in your county(ies)?

Refer to the CCDF Reauthorization infographic for information you can share on the benefits of the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant for children, parents and child care providers.