

State of Vermont
Child Care Services Division



**Child Care Programs in Vermont:
A Survey of Market Rates and Capacity**

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Executive Summary

Child Care Programs in Vermont: A Survey of Market Rates and Capacity

Market rate and capacity information is used to give policy makers current information particularly in setting rates for child care subsidies and setting policy that increases the accessibility, availability and affordability of high quality child care. Learning Partners, Inc., an early childhood consulting firm located in Barre, Vermont, conducted a survey of market rates and capacity among Vermont child care programs.

The purpose of this study is to provide the Child Care Services Division (CCSD) of the Vermont Social and Rehabilitation Services with current information about the market rates charged to consumers of child care and education services. The study also explored the availability of child care for part time, full time, evening and weekend usage and how the supply of child care meets demand.

In April 2002, 1895 surveys were sent to all registered and licensed programs, including licensed homes, school age programs, nonrecurring care programs and early childhood programs. Between April and September, 964 programs returned the survey and 97 were surveyed by telephone for a total of 1061 participants for a response rate of 56 percent.

It can be concluded that in some ways there is an improving landscape for child care programs in Vermont. Programs indicate that as a general rule, they are serving the numbers and ages of children they desire or prefer to serve. Child care programs are taking steps towards understanding that the child care subsidy is not meant to cover the fees for all programs and they are responding to this by charging families the difference between their program fees and what the subsidy pays on behalf of families. In addition, those programs charging the difference are usually getting it. Programs are not routinely letting subsidy rates dictate the market value of their services. It also appears to be the case that the child care industry is responding to the need of recent years for more care options for school aged children.

There are, however, persistent challenges faced by child care programs, the parent consumers of their services and the organizations that support them. It appears that subsidy rates are moving further away from the market rate for child care. Furthermore, the child care industry continues to have a limited capacity to meet the child care needs of Vermont families. These consumers continue to have limited choice as the wide variability in family need and program offerings puts a cap on the number of programs that will be a good match for a family. Families may need to settle for care they can find rather than care they truly want, whether it be location, type of program, schedule options, cost of the program or the quality of care.

In addition to these broad conclusions, several specific questions were addressed.

What are the current characteristics of regulated care in terms of accreditation, type of business and operating schedules?

Child care is a viable industry in this state, functioning under a wide range of business entities and providing services to families and jobs throughout the state. Approximately 15% of licensed programs and 5% of registered programs are accredited by national standards of quality. The majority of programs are open full time and year round, but with a substantial number open only part time (up to 19%) and even fewer (under 15%) open evenings or weekends. A wide range of options exist to meet the wide range of parent need, but the number of programs available is not equivalent to full time accessibility.

What are the current estimates of the child care capacity as defined by preferred enrollment in the state and within regions? What is the status of child care programs with regard to that capacity?

There are approximately 38,000 full and part time child care slots in the state as estimated from the desired enrollment stated by programs. Not all programs serve all ages or all schedules. Estimates of the number of children currently in care equal 38,000. Most of the child care programs in the state are caring for close to as many children as is desired. However, these figures vary depending on the location, the type of program desired and the age of the child. It is clear that the child care industry will not be able to care for more children unless it creates or expands more programs.

What is the typical number of children in child care on any given day and how long do children typically spend in care?

The current study estimates that of the 38,000 children enrolled in child care, approximately 30,000 children are in care on any given day. Approximately one third of these children are in care for 8 to 9 hours a day, with an additional 7% in care for more than 10 hours.

What are the full and part time market rates for registered and licensed child care programs and do these differ across the regions of the state? What are the 50th, 75th and 80th percentiles for market rates in registered and licensed care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and school age children?

This study converted hourly, daily, weekly and other rates to a standard figure enabling across-program comparisons of the cost of child care for a 42.5 hour full time week and a 25 hour part time week. There is high degree of variability across ages of children, types of program and across regions. The rates in this sample range from a low of \$50.00 to a high of \$300.00 for a full time week. The study calculated market rate averages and 50, 75 and 80th percentiles. When compared to the current child care subsidy rate, the 75th percentile of the market rate is significantly higher than subsidy for all ages, all program types and both full and part time.

What is the availability of weekend, evening and overnight care and are the rates for these different from weekday rates?

Fewer than 15% of programs offer weekend or evening care. Further, not all programs routinely make it known that they offer these additional services though they may serve families on an individual basis. Costs for these services vary widely. Evening and weekend care is not routinely more expensive than weekday care, and in some cases the cost is less.

What is the impact of child care subsidy on market rates? Do programs that accept the subsidy have lower rates and do they have families make up any difference between their fees and the subsidy?

It has been suggested that subsidy rates depress market rate. The current study did not find a relationship between market rates, the proportion of enrolled children funded by subsidy and practices of charging parents the difference between program fees and subsidy. However, it can not be concluded that parents who are eligible for the subsidy find these programs affordable.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Purpose of the study	1
Research questions	1
Methodology	2
Survey development	2
Publicity and incentives	3
Sample	3
Data entry	5
Results	5
Description of the sample	5
Types of programs participating	5
Accreditation status and incentive bonuses	8
Operating characteristics of programs	10
Numbers of children served and capacity	16
Market rate information	24
Rates for full time care	24
Rates for part time care	32
Additional rate information	40
Relationship between subsidy and market rates	42
Conclusions	45
References	48

Child Care Programs in Vermont: A Survey of Market Rates and Capacity

Introduction

In April 2002, Learning Partners, Inc., an early childhood consulting firm located in Barre, Vermont, conducted a survey of market rates and capacity among Vermont child care programs. Market rate and capacity information is used to give policy makers current information particularly in setting rates for child care subsidies and setting policy that increases the accessibility, availability and affordability of high quality child care.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to provide the Child Care Services Division (CCSD) of the Vermont Social and Rehabilitation Services with current information about the market rates charged to consumers of child care and education services. The study also explored the availability of child care for part time, full time, evening and weekend usage and how the supply of child care meets the demand. While it is common to estimate child care capacity in terms of the maximum number of children enrolled full time as allowed per regulations, the current study explored programs' preferred enrollment as a measure of capacity.

Studies of the child care market rarely explore the relationship between the fees of child care programs and the state system of subsidizing child care for eligible families. Program policies for collecting the difference between subsidies and program fees and how this impacts fees are explored in this study.

Research questions

What are the current characteristics of regulated care in terms of accreditation, type of business and operating schedules?

What are the current estimates of the child care capacity as defined by preferred enrollment in the state and within regions? What is the status of child care programs with regard to that capacity?

What is the typical number of children in child care on any given day and how long do children typically spend in care?

What are the full and part time market rates for registered and licensed child care programs and do these differ across the regions of the state?

What are the 50th, 75th and 80th percentiles for market rates in registered and licensed care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and school age children?

What is the availability of weekend, evening and overnight care and are the rates for these different from weekday rates?

What is the impact of child care subsidy on market rates? Do programs that accept the subsidy have lower rates and do they have families make up any difference between their fees and the subsidy?

Methodology

Survey development

Instruments used in past surveys were reviewed and considered in conjunction with the research questions of the present study. Staff members of the Child Care Services Division reviewed draft questions and provided input in the final survey form. Their experience with previous market rate surveys was invaluable.

Questions that were similar to those in previous studies were worded similarly. Since many child care programs participate in the local community child care support agencies' referral program, the questions that were similar to that instrument were worded similarly. There were several questions developed for this study as well. The survey instrument was not piloted since many of the questions had established validity (Child Care Services Division, 2001).

The questions asked did not have to be adjusted for the type of care, so one instrument was used for both registered and licensed programs.

Questions consisted primarily of multiple choice and yes/no questions and the survey was constructed to make answering as easy as possible.

The survey consisted of 4 sections: 1) background information including location, type of program, legal entity, accreditation status and whether the program or staff received CCSD incentive bonuses, 2) operating schedule including open and close times, days per week, weeks per year and whether there were minimum enrollment requirements, 3) number of children served, including preferred, current and subsidized slots, recruitment information, typical daily attendance and typical length of stay and 4) rate information including full and part time weekly rates, charges for additional services and whether the program had parents pay any difference between their rates and the Vermont child care subsidy.

Publicity and incentives

The survey mailing was preceded by an announcement from the director of the CCSD, informing all registered and licensed child care programs of the purpose of the study and urging participation.

To encourage providers to respond, all surveys included an addressed postage paid envelope. Additionally, a \$15.00 gift certificate was awarded to every 25th survey. Gift certificates were to either a book store or discount department store. All identifiable respondents were entered into a drawing for a grand prize award of a \$500.00 gift certificate to the vendor of the winner's choice.

Participants wishing to complete the survey without being identified could send back their completed survey without filling out the top section (their name and address). This made them ineligible for the prizes.

Sample

In April 2002, 1895 surveys were sent to all registered (1286) and licensed (609) programs, including licensed homes, school age programs, nonrecurring care programs and early childhood programs. Between April and September, 964 programs returned the survey and 97 were surveyed by telephone for a total of 1061 participants. This is an overall response rate of 56%, with 53% (685) of the registered programs and 62% (376) of the licensed programs responding. It is the case that not all child care programs in the database were actively operating and while it is not known exactly how many were not, the telephone follow-ups revealed that 10% of programs contacted were not in operation. Adjusting the total number of programs eligible resulted in a 59% return rate.

Approximately one third of those who did not return a survey were phoned and reminded. This revealed 31 programs where the phone was not in operation or the person indicated that care was not being provided and these were considered programs not in operation. There were 110 programs where no one was ever contacted in spite of repeated calls and messages. Reminder calls – where some said they had the survey and some were sent new ones – did not yield a large number of returned surveys as 79 of those who said they would send it in did not. Consequently, surveys were done by telephone for 97 programs. The last of the surveys returned and phone calls were in September.

While the response rate is good for survey studies, it would have been preferable to have had more. The response rate seems to have been influenced by the fact that several organizations were collecting information from providers during this time. The phone contacts revealed that many providers had received a number of questionnaires and other inquiries (including one provider who said she had received seven). Nonetheless, the sample size is sufficient to generalize to the

overall population of child care programs in Vermont for most analyses. Exceptions will be noted.

Table 1 shows how many surveys were received from providers in each county.

Table 1. Number of Participants for Each Program Type by County

County	Type of Program					Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered*	Non-recurring	Total % Lic.*	
Addison	15		43 (52%)	1	55%	59
Bennington	28		41 (66%)		72%	69
Caledonia	13	1	49 (63%)		38%	63
Chittenden	104		114 (51%)		69%	218
Essex	5		11 (73%)		71%	16
Franklin	26	1	89 (59%)		71%	116
Grand Isle	2		13 (81%)		67%	15
Lamoille	16		32 (56%)	1	65%	49
Orange	16	2	28 (54%)		62%	46
Orleans	12	1	44 (56%)		65%	57
Rutland	30	1	70 (56%)		62%	101
Washington	34	1	75 (48%)	1	65%	111
Windham	26	1	34 (54%)	1	56%	62
Windsor	35	1	42 (49%)	1	71%	79
Grand Total	362	9	685 (53%)	5	62%	1061

* Percentages show the number received as a percent of the number sent. Total percent of licensed programs combines licensed homes and nonrecurring care with other licensed programs.

As can be seen in the table, the percentage return rate across counties shows some variability, but all are likely to be good estimates of the local population with the exception of licensed programs in Caledonia County. An examination of the programs responding and not responding in Caledonia County revealed that those responding were representative of the types of programs in the area. However, the low return rate and small number of programs in that region could influence conclusions about that area and should be kept in mind.

Data entry

A codebook was developed for the survey and all data were checked for accuracy after entry. Discrepancies between initial coding and checking were resolved with decision rules applied consistently where necessary. Initial descriptive analyses were also used to locate irregularities which were checked and corrected as necessary. In most cases, items unanswered were left blank. Where possible, unanswered questions were completed with known information (e.g., county, licensed capacity), or information that could be verified by other questions (e.g., whether the program was open year-round or some other schedule could often be based on the number of weeks the program indicated it was open).

Results

Part I. Description of the sample

Participants were asked for the location of their programs in four ways -- their town, 5 digit zip code, their school code as used by Vermont Tax Department and their county. Agency of Human Services district areas were not used. The county and town information provided the types of breakdowns desired. In the current report, findings are reported for the whole state or by county. Analyses by town are contained in a supplemental report.

A. Types of programs participating

Participants were asked to indicate the regulatory status of their program, that is, whether it was licensed, licensed home, registered, school age or nonrecurring care. In addition, programs indicated whether they were public school preschools, EEE programs, Head Start or Early Head Start, Montessori or Waldorf, or something else. If none of these special categories were checked, the program was considered to be a typical licensed or registered program offering care and education on a regular basis to the general public.

Programs that do not offer a standard full day or full week program or don't operate on a regular basis were coded as "other." Most of these were part day programs, usually for preschool aged children and are labeled private preschools.

In this report, most analyses were done with four program types: licensed, licensed home, registered and nonrecurring. While nonrecurring care and licensed homes are variations on licensed programs, nonrecurring programs typically have higher rates than most licensed programs and many licensed homes are more likely to have rates lower than most licensed programs.

In Table 2, the breakdown of particular types of programs offered at the participating facilities shows the variety of programs surveyed.

Table 2. Number of Participating Programs of Various Types

	Public School Preschool	EEE Program	Head Start	Mon-tessori/Waldorf	School Age only	Private Presch	General Program	Grand Total
Licensed	26	15	26	11	46	30	208	362
Licensed Home							9	9
Registered					13	2	670	685
Non-recurring							5	5
Grand Total	26	15	26	11	59	32	892	1061

The child care programs in the state operate under a wide range of business entities, as is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Different types of business entities by program type

Type of Program	Type of Business									Grand Total
	Ind*	Part	Nonp	Forp	Emp	Coll	Pub	Rel	Oth	
Licensed	35	3	90	60	6	7	1	3	3	208
Public school preschool							26			26
EEE program			1				14			15
Head Start/ Early HS			22				4			26
Montess./ Waldorf	3		7	1						11
School age Only	2		36		1		7			46
Private preschool	5	1	18	1		2	3			30
Nonrecurring				2	2				1	5
Licensed Home	9									9
Registered	669			1						670
Reg. school age only	13									13
Reg. preschool	2									2
Grand Total	738	4	174	65	9	9	55	3	4	1061

*Key for types of businesses:

Ind = independent proprietor

Forp = for profit corporation

Pub = public school operated

Part = partnership

Emp = employer affiliated

Rel = religious

Nonp = not for profit corp.

Coll = college operated

Oth = other (usually an LLC)

Some programs indicated more than one category, the table shows the primary categories marked. Of those indicating two categories, most notable were 9 of the nonprofits were also religious, 11 of the nonprofits were also multi-site and 8 were parent cooperatives. The three private preschools indicating public school affiliation are programs operated in conjunction with other programs such as technical center or family services.

It appears that the sample for this survey has representation from the full range of programs and business types in the state.

B. Accreditation status and participants receiving incentive bonuses

Participants were asked to indicate if their program was accredited. The question was phrased openly with the options being “not accredited or in the process”, “actively in the process”, or “currently accredited by ____.” The question yielded surprising results, leading to another category of response. A substantial number of programs indicated that they were accredited, listing the accrediting body in such ways as “the state”, “SRS”, “CCSD”, “Department of Education” (usually public school programs or independent schools), “CDA”, and the local community child care support agency. Further, a number of providers working towards a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential indicated they were actively in the process of getting accredited. Those programs indicating “yes” but are not accredited were coded as “not sure.” This confusion around the term “accreditation” and what providers understand this to mean may have implications for their understanding of such things as the quality incentive bonus or credentialing bonus.

Table 4. Accreditation Status Indicated by Programs

Type of Program	No	Not Sure	In Process	Other Accred.	NAEYC, NAFCC, NSACA	Grand Total
Licensed	200	37	71	1	53	362
Licensed Home	9					9
Registered	561	75	44		5	685
Non-recurring	4	1				5
Grand Total	774	113	115	1	58	1061

Overall, 15 % of the licensed programs and 5% of the registered programs in this sample are accredited, a figure similar to the previous market rate study (CCSD, 2001). To get a detailed picture of the characteristics of the programs and accreditation status, this was examined in terms of the more specific program types. Table 5 shows the accreditation status of the various specialized programs.

Table 5. Accreditation Status by Specialized Program Type

Type of Program	No	Not Sure	In Process	Other Accred.	NAEYC, NAFCC, NSACA	Grand Total
Regular licensed	118	7	43	1	39	208
Public school preschool	16	8	2			26
EEE program	9	2	4			15
Head Start/ Early Head Start	12		6		8	26
Montes./Waldorf	4	6	1			11
School age only	25	8	10		3	46
Private preschool	16	6	5		3	30
Nonrecurring	4	1				5
Licensed home	9					9
Regular registered	550	72	43		5	670
Registered school age only	10	2	1			13
Registered part day preschool	1	1				2
Grand Total	774	113	115	1	58	1061

In examining the relationship between type of business entity and accreditation status, it was seen that among licensed programs, it was more likely that accredited programs had not-for-profit status (41 of the 53 accredited programs). The other accredited programs were comprised of 1 independent proprietor, 4 incorporated programs, 1 public school, and 1 “other” (likely a limited liability corporation). Interestingly, of the 9 programs indicating they were college affiliated, 5 of them were accredited.

Providers indicated whether they receive the quality incentive bonus or if they or anyone in their program had received the credentialing bonus. A number of providers wrote in that they did not know what these were, and several others were not sure if they received them or not (possibly because they did not manage the finances of the program). Those who were not sure were coded as not receiving them. Those who indicated they did were coded as yes.

Table 6 shows the distribution of programs receiving either or both bonus. The “No” and “Yes” combinations show the four possibilities of receiving one bonus or the other, both of them or neither.

Table 6. Providers Receiving the Quality Incentive Bonus or Credentialing Bonus

Type of Bonus		Type of Program				Grand Total
Quality incentive bonus	Credentia-ling bonus	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
No	No	289	8	643	5	945
No	Yes	25	1	8		34
Yes	No	24		7		31
Yes	Yes	24		27		51
Grand Total		362	9	685	5	1061

Part II. Operating characteristics of child care programs

The survey contained a series of questions about the amount of time per week that the program offered care and what part of the year the program operated. This information reveals program characteristics to allow a better understanding of how the available child care is able to meet the needs for a wide range of parent choice.

In addition to regular full time week day care, the parent consumers of child care may need or want care that ranges from a few hours a day, a few days a week to care on evenings or weekends. Table 7 details the number of hours per day programs are open.

Table 7. Hours open per day by type of program

Type of Program	Hours open per day					
	1.5 - 2.75	3 - 5.75	6 - 8.75	9 - 11.75	12 - 17.75	18 - 24
Regular licensed	0	9	22	161	16	0
Public school preschool	10	10	5	0	0	0
EEE program	2	5	8	0	0	0
Head Start/ Early HS	0	11	2	13	0	0
Montes./Waldorf	0	0	7	4	0	0
School age only	8	34	3	1	0	0
Private preschool	8	17	4	1	0	0
Nonrecurring	0	0	3	2	0	0
Licensed home	0	0	0	5	4	0
Regular registered	0	2	17	526	105	15
Registered school age only	0	6	0	7	0	0
Registered part day preschool	0	2	0	0	0	0
Grand total	28	96	71	720	125	15

Most programs are open at least 9 hours and registered programs are more likely to be open longer than licensed programs. In addition, specialized programs are more likely to offer specialized schedules than be open full time.

When asked the question of when the program opened and closed, 120 registered programs indicated they were open 12 or more hours, with 15 of these programs open 18 to 24 hours. However, in the question about types of additional services offered, 145 registered programs indicated they offered care after 6:00 PM and 89 indicated they offered overnight care. There are discrepancies in how programs report the availability of some schedules of care.

Based on the hours per day and days per week the program offered care, it was coded according to the type of weekly schedule it operated. Those coded as being full time programs would be able to accommodate parents working more than 30 hours. The categories were a) standard full time week, b) full time week plus evening or weekends, c) 5 or fewer hours 5 days a week (part day), d) 5 or

fewer hours for fewer than 5 days a week (part day, part week) and e) “other,” which generally referred to programs open for full days but not full time.

Table 8. Type of schedule offered by program

Type of Program	Full time week	Week + evening/ weekend	Part day	Part day, part week	Other	blank	Grand Total
Regular Licensed	186	1	5	12	4		208
Public school preschool	1		2	22		1	26
EEE program	2		3	10			15
Head Start/ Early HS	12	1	4	9			26
Montes./Waldorf	8			2	1		11
School age only	1		43		2		46
Private preschool			8	21	1		30
Nonrecurring	3	2					5
Licensed home	8	1					9
Regular registered	598	50	1	5	12	4	670
Registered school age only	6		6		1		13
Registered part day preschool				2			2
Grand total	825	55	72	83	21	5	1061

The majority of programs are open for full time care and the majority of those offering evening and weekend care are registered programs. Not surprisingly, preschool programs were generally part day, part week programs and school age programs were generally part day, full week.

In addition to weekly schedules, programs indicated what part of the year they operated. Table 9 shows the distribution of yearly operating schedules.

Table 9. Yearly Operating Schedule by Type of Program

Type of Program	Year round	School year	Summer only	Other	blank	Grand Total
Regular licensed	165	35	2	6		208
Public school preschool		25			1	26
EEE program		14		1		15
Head Start/ Early HS	14	11	1			26
Montes./Waldorf		10		1		11
School age only	8	31		7		46
Private preschool		26	2	2		30
Nonrecurring	1		3	1		5
Licensed home	9					9
Regular registered	655	6	1	5	3	670
Registered school age only	9	3		1		13
Registered part day preschool		2				2
Grand Total	861	163	9	24	4	1061

Table 9 shows that the majority of programs are open year round. While it is the case that many programs offer full time care on a year-round basis, 17% of programs are not open full time and 19% are not open year round.

To further explore the variety of scheduling options available to families, Table 10 shows the number of days per week programs are open.

Table 10. Number of Days Per Week Open by Type of Program

Type of Program	Days per week open							Grand Total
	2	3	4	5	6	7	blank	
Regular licensed	1		3	201	1	2		208
Public school preschool	1	9	2	13			1	26
EEE program		1	3	11				15
Head Start/ Early HS	1	4	3	17	1			26
Montes./Waldorf			2	9				11
School age only				46				46
Private preschool	1	4	4	21				30
Nonrecurring				2		3		5
Licensed home				8		1		9
Regular registered	1	3	10	604	23	25	4	670
Registered school age only				13				13
Registered part day preschool		1		1				2
Grand Total	5	22	27	946	25	31	5	1061

The large majority of programs (89%) are open 5 days a week, though they do not all offer 5-day schedules as many public and private part-day preschools offer either 2- or 3-day schedules within the 5-day week.

For families needing care on weekends, four licensed programs (1%) indicate weekend hours (though five programs listed weekend rates when indicating additional rates). In addition, 48 (7%) registered programs indicate weekend hours (though 88 listed weekend rates with their additional rates). In spite of the discrepancies in reporting, it is nonetheless apparent that fewer than 15% of all programs offer weekend care.

Although most programs operate full time, there are also a lot of specialized possibilities and it is important to note that even though there are a large number of licensed and registered programs in the state, not all of them offer full time options. This is important when considering the capacity for child care; the number of programs available is not equivalent to full time accessibility.

It is apparent that a wide range of options exist to meet the wide range of parent need. It is surprising that fewer programs list extended, overnight or weekend hours when listing their regular operating schedule than indicate they offer it as an additional service. When assessing capacity it is important to note that programs may not advertise their availability for “odd hour” care even though they do offer that service. It is likely that these programs prefer to provide odd hour care for a limited number of families and do not want to exceed these limits.

In addition to operating schedules, another factor influencing the availability of programs to meet a wide range of need is whether the program has minimum enrollment requirements. Parents needing particular schedules of care may not find them available even in programs that are open during the time care is needed. The number of programs requiring children to be enrolled for a particular number of hours per week is detailed in Table 11. Programs were also asked if they had a required minimum number of days children must enroll (though these need not be full days) and these are detailed in Table 12.

Table 11. Number of Programs Requiring Minimum Hours of Enrollment

	Type of Program				Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
No minimum	235	8	590	5	838
1 - 5 hours	23		21		44
5.5 - 10 hours	55	1	22		78
10.5 - 15 hours	26		12		38
16 - 20 hours	16		14		30
21 - 25 hours	2		8		10
30 - 35 hours	4		12		16
40 - 45 hours	1		6		7
Grand Total	362	9	685	5	1061

Table 12. Number of Programs Requiring Minimum Days of Enrollment

	Type of Program				Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
No minimum	191	7	582	4	784
1 day	3		3		6
2 days	107	1	26		134
3 days	34	1	26	1	62
4 days	11		11		22
5 days	13		34		47
No answer	3		3		6
Grand Total	362	9	685	5	1061

A small number of programs recognized that even though they did not have a minimum requirement, it was necessary for the child to enroll for something. Several programs noted that the enrollment minimum did not imply that the child was required to attend, that is, the parent was committed to the slot regardless of attendance.

As seen in the tables, very few programs indicated that they require full time enrollment. However, a number of programs indicated that they charge only full time rates. In fact, 270 registered programs, 50 licensed, 3 licensed homes, and 3 nonrecurring programs indicated they had full time rates only (and listed no part time rates).

Part III. Numbers of children served and capacity

It is important to recognize that a wide of range of programs exist, including infant only programs, limited-time preschool programs, school age programs with and with out kindergarteners as well as programs that serve a full age range. As with operating schedules, the age of children served by any program influences the ability to estimate Vermont's capacity for child care based on the number of regulated programs.

In this survey, the following age group definitions were used for all programs:

Infant	birth to 23 months
Toddler	24 to 35 months
Preschool	3 years to school entry
Kindergarten	attending Kindergarten
School age	attending first grade or higher

Table 13 shows the number of programs in the sample that accept infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten and school age children. Those who do not accept an age group either indicated that they preferred no children of that age or are not licensed for that age. In addition to the number of programs accepting each age, the percentage for each age is also given.

Table 13. Number and Percent of Programs Serving Each Age

	Type of Program		Licensed Home		Registered		Nonrecurring		Grand Total	
	Licensed		Licensed Home		Registered		Nonrecurring		Grand Total	
Infant	132	36%	7	78%	509	74%	4	80%	652	61%
Toddler	151	42%	7	78%	527	77%	4	80%	689	65%
Preschool	304	84%	9	100%	622	91%	3	60%	938	88%
Kindergarten	145	40%	7	78%	305	45%	1	20%	458	43%
School age	135	37%	6	67%	472	69%	2	20%	615	58%
Total programs	362		9		685		5		1061	

Registered programs are more likely to accept all ages than licensed programs (the small sample of licensed homes and nonrecurring care programs prevents conclusions being drawn for these types of programs).

So that an estimate of the capacity for child care could be calculated, participants indicated the current number of children enrolled as well as how many children of each age they desired or preferred. Many people left the “desired or preferred” section blank. Follow up questions with a large number of these providers indicated that these were left blank because they were content with their current enrollment or had no preference. More providers indicated a preference for their current enrollment than no preference at all. The decision was made that for those providers who did not indicate a preferred enrollment, current enrollment was used rather than the maximum regulatory capacity. Table 14 shows the total number of children each type of program would prefer to serve.

The enrollment figures refer to the number of children enrolled regardless of whether they attended full time or part time. These figures should be interpreted as the total number of children the program can serve. Though this does not reflect the number of full-time equivalent slots, it is important to note that not all children need full time care. Programs that have part time enrollment options do meet the needs of many families.

Table 14. Total Desired or Preferred Enrollment by Age and Type of Program

Desired Enrollment	Type of Program				Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Nonrecurring	
Infant	1168	18	890	78	2154
Toddler	1303	23	1097	50	2473
Preschool	6770	48	1810	45	8673
Kindergarten	1063	13	598	10	1684
School age	2407	27	1540	13	3987
Grand Total	12711	129	5935	196	18,971

The table shows that the greatest capacity is in the preschool age.

These numbers do not reflect the carrying capacity of the state as a whole since not all programs are included. With a 56% response rate and some providers not answering the question, these figures could be thought of as estimating half the carrying capacity of the state. According to these figures, there are approximately 38,000 child care slots in the state. This figure is similar to the CCSD estimate reported in the Windham Child Care Association's Economic Impact Study (WCCA, 2002) of 36,000 full and part time child care slots.

Table 15 shows the total number of children each type of program currently serves.

Table 15. Total Current Enrollment by Age and Type of Program

Current Enrollment	Type of Program				Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Nonrecurring	
Infant	1077	15	844	15	1951
Toddler	1196	16	857	11	2080
Preschool	6448	47	1654	33	8182
Kindergarten	1006	12	511	5	1534
School age	2830	27	1528	14	4399
Grand Total	12557	117	5394	78	18,146

In addition to these children in care, registered providers indicated the ages and number of their own children. These programs (representing 53% of registered programs in the state) report a total of 880 of their own children up to the age of 13 years (94 infants, 76 toddlers, 194 preschoolers, 57 kindergarteners and 459

school age children). These figures taken together indicate that about 19,000 children are cared for in this sample, with an estimated 38,000 children in child care statewide. According to these estimates, the number of slots available and the number of children in care are equivalent.

Preschool aged children represented the age that had the greatest number of slots or desired enrollment and this age is also the one with the largest current enrollment. This is consistent with the previous study of capacity (CCSD, 2001)

To further understand capacity and the need for care, the number of children currently enrolled was subtracted from the preferred enrollment, giving the difference between preferred and actual enrollment.

Negative numbers would indicate that a program's current enrollment is greater than what is preferred. Possible reasons for this include serving certain ages because there is a need for care or serving multiple part time schedules when fewer full time schedules is preferred. Positive numbers would indicate that current enrollment is less than preferred. Zero would indicate that the program is operating at its preferred capacity. Table 16 shows the average difference.

Table 16. Preferred Enrollment Minus Current Enrollment by Age and Type of Program

Age	Type of Program				Grand Total
	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Nonrecurring	
Infant					
Average	0.66	0.38	0.07	12.60	0.24
Standard Deviation	1.96	1.06	0.81	26.53	2.35
N	138	8	685	5	836
Toddler					
Average	0.66	0.88	0.35	7.80	0.46
Standard Deviation	2.20	2.03	1.04	13.01	1.71
N	162	8	685	5	860
Preschool					
Average	1.06	0.11	0.23	3.00	0.49
Standard Deviation	4.61	2.32	1.41	6.00	2.85
N	304	9	685	4	1002
Kindergarten					
Average	0.61	0.11	0.13	1.25	0.24
Standard Deviation	2.73	0.60	0.87	2.50	1.50
N	191	9	685	4	889
School age					
Average	1.54	0.00	0.02	-0.25	0.31
Standard Deviation	9.06	1.73	1.50	2.06	4.24
N	167	9	685	4	865

Overall, the average difference is very close to zero, meaning that most programs are operating at desired capacity. The positive sign on most averages shows a tendency towards current enrollment being less than preferred, that is, that there are vacancies. This is most marked in the programs offering nonrecurring care. It can also be seen from the large standard deviations that there is wide variability across some programs, though registered programs show more overall consistency.

This variability can be understood further by examining the difference between preferred and current enrollment across the different counties. Table 17 indicates that in some counties, there are ages and programs where there are available slots – as indicated by the positive numbers. In other counties, the average difference is zero or less, indicating programs are serving more children than they desire.

Table 17. Preferred Enrollment Minus Current Enrollment by Age, Type of Program and County

		Type of Program				
County		Licensed			Nonrecurring	Grand Total
		Licensed	Home	Registered		
Addison	Infant	1.00		-0.07	0.00	0.02
	Toddler	2.17		0.28	0.00	0.50
	Preschool	0.46		0.05	0.00	0.14
	Kindergarten	-0.25		0.21	0.00	0.13
	School age	1.25		-0.02	-3.00	0.02
Bennington	Infant	1.08		-0.24		0.06
	Toddler	-0.07		0.63		0.45
	Preschool	1.33		-0.10		0.39
	Kindergarten	0.08		0.34		0.28
	School age	1.92		0.10		0.51
Caledonia	Infant	0.20	2.00	0.22		0.25
	Toddler	0.60	5.00	0.35		0.45
	Preschool	1.08	-4.00	0.22		0.33
	Kindergarten	0.00	0.00	0.14		0.12
	School age	-2.60	0.00	-0.27		-0.47
Chittenden	Infant	0.29		0.12		0.17
	Toddler	0.75		0.33		0.46
	Preschool	0.78		0.16		0.42
	Kindergarten	0.57		0.09		0.25
	School age	0.77		0.25		0.42

Essex	Infant	1.00		0.09		0.23
	Toddler	0.50		0.00		0.08
	Preschool	1.60		0.64		0.94
	Kindergarten	0.00		0.18		0.17
	School age	-1.00		0.91		0.75
Franklin	Infant	0.10	0.00	0.08		0.08
	Toddler	0.82	0.00	0.42		0.46
	Preschool	0.38	0.00	0.47		0.45
	Kindergarten	0.92	0.00	0.07		0.17
	School age	2.62	0.00	-0.13		0.21
Grand Isle	Infant	0.00		0.08		0.07
	Toddler	0.00		0.85		0.79
	Preschool	-1.00		0.46		0.27
	Kindergarten	0.00		0.00		0.00
	School age	0.00		-0.31		-0.27
Lamoille	Infant	1.20		-0.09	60.00	1.66
	Toddler	-0.17		0.38	30.00	1.05
	Preschool	-1.33		0.19		-0.23
	Kindergarten	1.40		0.13		0.43
	School age	3.00		0.25		0.85
Orange	Infant	1.29	0.00	-0.04		0.22
	Toddler	0.71	0.00	0.46		0.49
	Preschool	1.29	0.00	0.00		0.41
	Kindergarten	0.40	0.00	0.04		0.13
	School age	1.14	0.00	0.57		0.65
Orleans	Infant	1.00		0.34		0.40
	Toddler	1.25		0.18		0.27
	Preschool	3.40	0.00	0.20		0.78
	Kindergarten	2.00	-1.00	0.41		0.51
	School age	24.00	-2.00	0.14		2.48
Rutland	Infant	1.00	-1.00	-0.09		0.01
	Toddler	1.64	-2.00	0.33		0.48
	Preschool	1.85	3.00	0.33		0.78
	Kindergarten	1.14	0.00	0.04		0.22
	School age	-1.62	0.00	-0.31		-0.51
Washington	Infant	0.64	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.19
	Toddler	0.36	1.00	0.32	0.00	0.33
	Preschool	2.13	-1.00	0.33	0.00	0.82
	Kindergarten	0.55	1.00	0.08	0.00	0.19
	School age	-3.14	0.00	-0.16	0.00	-0.62
Windham	Infant	1.25	2.00	0.15	0.00	0.39
	Toddler	0.73	2.00	0.41	0.00	0.51
	Preschool	1.84	4.00	0.09	0.00	0.87
	Kindergarten	1.80	1.00	0.18	0.00	0.54
	School age	6.10	4.00	-0.09	0.00	1.35

Windsor	Infant	0.92	0.00	0.12	3.00	0.35
	Toddler	0.17	1.00	0.12	9.00	0.29
	Preschool	0.03	-1.00	0.19	12.00	0.27
	Kindergarten	0.14	0.00	0.02	5.00	0.14
	School age	0.95	-2.00	0.14	2.00	0.39

As can be seen in the table, school age care shows the highest number of large positive numbers, indicating that in some areas there are openings for this age. It is also the case that few programs have more children than they want to have, even in the infant age. In this sample, providers do not appear to be caring for ages they would prefer not to care for, though it undoubtedly happens in some cases.

Programs are operating at or near capacity, though depending on the location, the type of program desired and the age of the child, some parents will have success in finding child care.

The question of whether programs are usually full revealed that 712 programs (67%) endorsed this statement. When asked about requests for care that could not be met, programs indicated they received more requests for infant and toddler care than other ages. The requests by age are summarized in Table 18. It would appear that there are fewer programs reporting unmet needs for school age child care than the younger ages. Previous studies (CCSD, 2001) have shown a greater need for school age child care. The current study suggests that there is variability across the state (see Table 17) in the need for school age care, and that perhaps the child care industry has responded to this need in some areas.

Table 18. Number of Programs Reporting Requests for Care by Age

	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	Kindergarten	School Age
Number of Programs reporting requests	413 (39%)	281 (27%)	251 (24%)	139 (13%)	159 (15%)

To more fully understand the needs that families have for care, Figure 1 shows the typical length of stay for children currently being served in each type of program. Length of stay in care impacts capacity because it shows how many children are served in full and part day programs. As can be seen in the figure, the greatest numbers of children are in care 8 to 9 hours a day. Furthermore, this care is being provided more often in registered programs. The higher

number of children attending for under 6 hours (under 3 hours and 3 to 5 hours combined) in licensed programs is a reflection of the number of licensed programs (usually preschool or school age care) offering part day programs only.

It is interesting to note that the 1061 programs responding to the survey account for a total of about 14,292 children being cared for on a typical day (an estimated 28,500 for all programs). When the children of registered providers are included, there are approximately 15,000 children in care on any given day in 50% of the programs in the state, or an estimated 30,000 children in child care per day (of the estimated 38,000 in care overall).

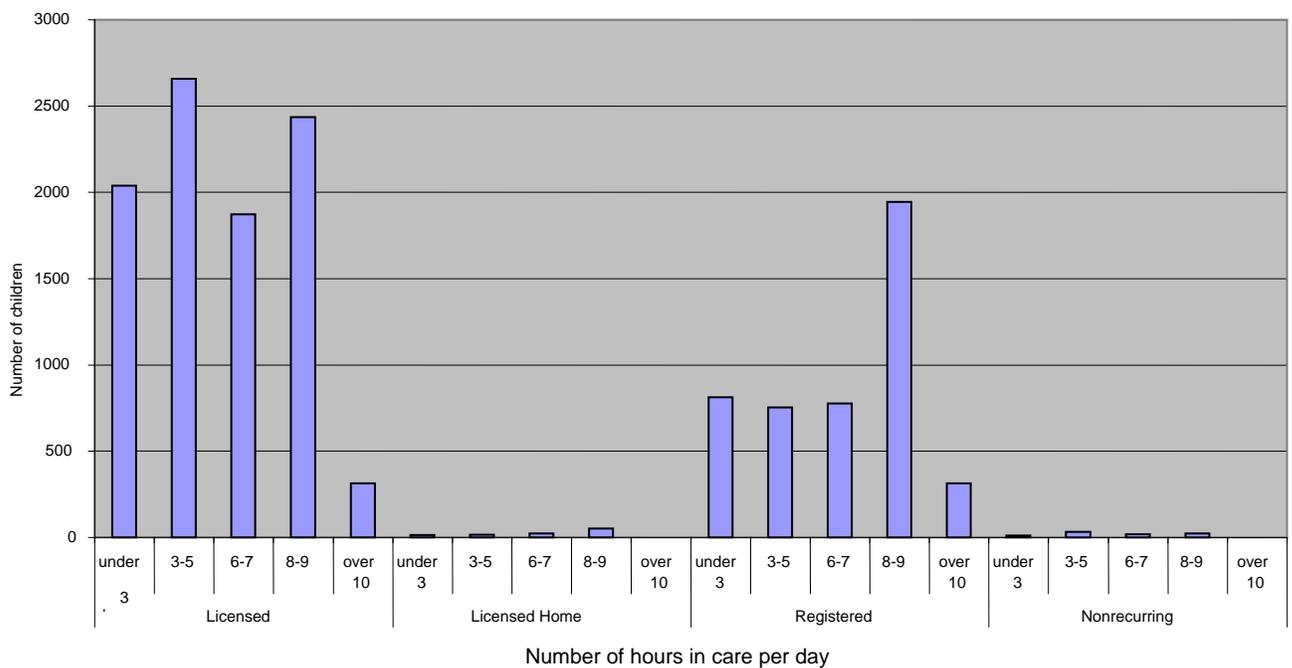


Figure 1. The number of children attending by length of stay in hours

The fact that part day programs are being used at a high rate could indicate that there is a need for these options. However, it could also be the case that parents are using what is available and using unregulated care to fill the gaps. It is difficult to know whether parents are getting the care they want or if they are accepting the care they can find. This is not answerable in the current study since parents were not surveyed.

It is also not known how many children would be cared for in regulated programs if those programs were more available. Parents who are currently using unregulated care, such as neighbors and relatives, might prefer to use registered or licensed programs. It may also be the case that parents are using care that

they would change if other care were available, such as when parents would like a program of higher quality or an otherwise better match to their needs.

It can be concluded that most of the child care programs in the state are caring for close to as many children as is desired. Also, while some programs get requests for care that they cannot meet, a large number do not report this problem. The question of what the carrying capacity for child care is in the state is complex and the answer to that question is complex as well. It appears that the supply of child care and the demand for care are in a dynamic, changing interface that is influenced by a wide range of factors including location, schedule, type of program and age of child, to name a few. It does seem clear that the child care industry will not be able to care for more children unless it creates or expands more programs.

Part IV. Market rate information

A. Rates for full time care

Providers were asked for the hourly, daily and weekly rates they typically used. In order to have a common standard by which to compare all programs, all rates were converted to weekly rates. If the provider used weekly rates, these were used as given. Regular daily rates were multiplied by 5 days. For those using hourly rates, it was determined that an 8.5 hour day would best reflect the weekly payment of a typical family. This was based on the finding (above) that the majority of full time attendees are in care 8 - 9 hours daily. Yearly, monthly and other rates were also converted to weekly equivalents.

If the program had a specific rate for an 8.5 hour day, this was used. Family discounts were not included. In programs with sliding fee scales (based on income, membership, employee status, etc.), either an average rate or most typical rate was used. These techniques allowed the market rate analyses to include the maximum number of programs, thus giving greater validity for comparisons across programs as well as greater accuracy in the market rates.

There is a wide range of ways that providers define full time care. This range is seen in Table 19 which shows the how many programs use any given number of hours as their full time minimum. Although across all programs the average is about 5 hours a day, the variation ranges from zero (no part time rates) to 9.5 hours.

Table 19. Definition of Full Time Care in Hours Per Day

	Number of hours						
Type of Program	Under 4	4 hours	5 hours	6 hours	7 hours	8 or more	Average
Licensed	25	22	36	36	5	4	4.61
Licensed home	0	1	4	3	0	0	5.25
Registered	63	119	109	114	23	30	4.91
Nonrecurring	0	1	0	0	0	0	4.00

While there is variety in how providers define full time care and in how they set their rates, the rates in this section reflect what a family would pay for 42.5 hours of care in any given program. Table 20 shows the average weekly rate for full time care across the state. The number of programs included is somewhat smaller than the full sample because not all programs provide full time care.

Table 20. Statewide Average Weekly Rate for Full Time Care by Age and Program

	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Nonrecurring	Grand Total
Infants N	\$143.20 130	\$103.83 8	\$106.54 610	\$221.33 3	\$113.32 751
Toddlers N	\$135.96 149	\$101.95 8	\$101.17 645	\$213.00 3	\$108.03 805
Preschool N	\$126.86 197	\$100.56 9	\$98.77 655	\$162.00 2	\$105.35 863
Kindergarten N	\$116.99 129	\$97.77 7	\$92.44 576	\$94.00 1	\$96.94 713
School age N	\$108.83 94	\$86.56 6	\$87.72 544	\$60.00 1	\$90.74 645

The 95% confidence intervals on these average rates were about +/- 1.7 in registered programs and about +/- 4.8 in licensed programs, indicating that samples of this size give fairly stable estimates of the population averages. The intervals were slightly larger for school age programs in both registered and licensed programs because of the higher variability of rates in school age programs.

In addition to the average weekly rates, the percentiles were also calculated for licensed and registered programs. Tables 21 and 22 show the percentiles for weekly rates by age, as well as the full time subsidy maximum for comparison purposes. Percentiles were not calculated for licensed homes or nonrecurring care programs because of the small samples.

Table 21. Percentiles for Full Time Weekly Rates in Licensed Programs by Age

	50 percentile	75 percentile	80 percentile	Subsidy
Infant	\$140.00	\$159.50	\$163.40	\$117.10
Toddler	\$135.00	\$150.00	\$155.00	\$117.10
Preschool	\$125.00	\$140.00	\$145.00	\$104.05
Kindergarten	\$115.00	\$130.00	\$135.00	\$104.05
School age	\$105.63	\$127.50	\$130.00	\$104.05

Table 22. Percentiles for Full Time Weekly Rates in Registered Programs by Age

	50 percentile	75 percentile	80 percentile	Subsidy
Infant	\$100.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$96.85
Toddler	\$100.00	\$110.00	\$115.00	\$96.85
Preschool	\$95.63	\$106.25	\$110.00	\$83.80
Kindergarten	\$90.00	\$100.00	\$106.25	\$83.80
School age	\$90.00	\$100.00	\$105.00	\$83.80

It can be seen that the full time subsidy rate is less than the average market rate and falls below the 50th percentile for all programs and all ages. Tables 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27 show the full time rates for infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten and school age care, respectively, by county.

Table 23. Average Weekly Rate for Full Time Infant Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$156.09 4		\$115.64 37		\$119.59 41
Bennington	Average N	\$140.50 11		\$109.97 39		\$116.68 50
Caledonia	Average N	\$108.75 5	\$63.75 1	\$89.92 47		\$91.20 53
Chittenden	Average N	\$150.73 48		\$116.15 96		\$127.68 144
Essex	Average N	\$85.00 1		\$77.27 8		\$78.13 9
Franklin	Average N	\$109.31 10	\$100.00 1	\$102.99 82		\$103.64 93
Grand Isle	Average N	\$135.00 1		\$115.63 9		\$117.56 10
Lamoille	Average N	\$146.00 5		\$109.33 28	\$300.00 1	\$120.33 34
Orange	Average N	\$120.00 4	\$107.50 2	\$102.62 27		\$105.02 33
Orleans	Average N	\$121.05 2		\$94.12 43		\$95.31 45
Rutland	Average N	\$141.15 9	\$110.00 1	\$105.17 65		\$109.56 75
Washington	Average N	\$140.08 11	\$100.00 1	\$100.75 63	\$225.00 1	\$108.07 76
Windham	Average N	\$157.63 6	\$125.00 1	\$130.11 29		\$134.55 36
Windsor	Average N	\$164.99 13	\$116.87 1	\$110.98 37	\$139.00 1	\$125.13 52
Total average full time weekly care for infants		\$143.20	\$103.83	\$106.54	\$221.33	\$113.32
Total number of programs		130	8	610	3	751

Table 24. Average Weekly Rate for Full Time Toddler Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-Recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$148.23 6		\$111.51 38		\$116.51 44
Bennington	Average N	\$132.50 11		\$104.66 39		\$110.79 50
Caledonia	Average N	\$104.50 5	\$63.75 1	\$86.35 49		\$87.59 55
Chittenden	Average N	\$145.02 50		\$110.22 103		\$121.59 153
Essex	Average N	\$85.00 1		\$75.35 9		\$76.31 10
Franklin	Average N	\$105.19 11	\$90.00 1	\$96.29 87		\$97.22 99
Grand Isle	Average N	\$135.00 1		\$101.06 10		\$104.15 11
Lamoille	Average N	\$141.67 6		\$106.01 31	\$300.00 1	\$116.74 38
Orange	Average N	\$126.30 5	\$105.00 2	\$98.17 27		\$102.71 34
Orleans	Average N	\$121.05 2		\$88.84 43		\$90.27 45
Rutland	Average N	\$128.51 11	\$110.00 1	\$100.18 70		\$104.10 82
Washington	Average N	\$130.10 15	\$100.00 1	\$95.09 67	\$200.00 1	\$102.65 84
Windham	Average N	\$142.16 8	\$125.00 1	\$123.21 31		\$127.04 40
Windsor	Average N	\$149.08 17	\$116.87 1	\$105.47 41	\$139.00 1	\$118.58 60
Total average full time weekly care for toddlers		\$135.96	\$101.95	\$101.17	\$213.00	\$108.03
Total number of programs		149	8	645	3	805

Table 25. Average Weekly Rate for Full Time Preschool Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$118.71 9		\$105.78 39		\$108.20 48
Bennington	Average N	\$129.09 11		\$102.81 40		\$108.48 51
Caledonia	Average N	\$103.17 6	\$63.75 1	\$84.45 49		\$86.09 56
Chittenden	Average N	\$135.12 63		\$106.62 104		\$117.37 167
Essex	Average N	\$85.00 1		\$77.71 9		\$78.44 10
Franklin	Average N	\$99.64 11	\$90.00 1	\$94.14 87		\$94.71 99
Grand Isle	Average N	\$108.65 2		\$103.69 11		\$104.46 13
Lamoille	Average N	\$138.00 10		\$105.59 31		\$113.49 41
Orange	Average N	\$121.70 9	\$105.00 2	\$96.27 28		\$102.59 39
Orleans	Average N	\$106.35 3	\$100.00 1	\$84.89 44		\$86.54 48
Rutland	Average N	\$118.89 15	\$110.00 1	\$98.48 69		\$102.22 85
Washington	Average N	\$117.82 20	\$100.00 1	\$92.86 70	\$200.00 1	\$99.53 92
Windham	Average N	\$137.51 14	\$125.00 1	\$120.25 32		\$125.50 47
Windsor	Average N	\$135.43 23	\$106.25 1	\$103.61 42	\$124.00 1	\$114.88 67
Total average full time weekly care for preschool age		\$126.86	\$100.56	\$98.77	\$162.00	\$105.35
Total number of programs		197	9	655	2	863

Table 26. Average Weekly Rate for Full Time Kindergarten Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$100.13 6		\$93.45 37		\$94.38 43
Bennington	Average N	\$117.06 8		\$101.51 36		\$104.33 44
Caledonia	Average N	\$99.63 6	\$63.75 1	\$77.03 46		\$79.33 53
Chittenden	Average N	\$124.33 40		\$99.69 88		\$107.39 128
Essex	Average N	\$85.00 1		\$62.42 8		\$64.93 9
Franklin	Average N	\$91.88 8	\$90.00 1	\$91.46 82		\$91.48 91
Grand Isle	Average N	\$88.65 2		\$86.88 11		\$87.15 13
Lamoille	Average N	\$132.50 4		\$98.70 24		\$103.53 28
Orange	Average N	\$110.75 5	\$105.00 2	\$87.42 23		\$92.48 30
Orleans	Average N	\$90.00 3		\$81.85 42		\$82.39 45
Rutland	Average N	\$125.23 9		\$95.20 60		\$99.12 69
Washington	Average N	\$114.32 14	\$100.00 1	\$86.30 60		\$91.71 75
Windham	Average N	\$135.73 6	\$125.00 1	\$119.54 26		\$122.65 33
Windsor	Average N	\$122.98 17	\$95.62 1	\$92.33 33	\$94.00 1	\$102.45 52
Total average full time weekly care for kindergarten		\$116.99	\$97.77	\$92.44	\$94.00	\$96.94
Total number of programs		129	7	576	1	713

Table 27. Average Weekly Rate for Full Time School Age Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$110.00 3		\$89.04 33		\$90.78 36
Bennington	Average N	\$118.22 9		\$100.91 36		\$104.37 45
Caledonia	Average N	\$96.56 4	\$63.75 1	\$76.40 45		\$77.76 50
Chittenden	Average N	\$110.82 29		\$89.61 80		\$95.25 109
Essex	Average N	\$85.00 1		\$61.17 8		\$63.82 9
Franklin	Average N	\$91.25 8	\$75.00 1	\$85.54 74		\$85.96 83
Grand Isle	Average N	\$73.65 2		\$73.24 11		\$73.30 13
Lamoille	Average N	\$120.00 2		\$92.03 24		\$94.18 26
Orange	Average N	\$108.83 3	\$80.00 2	\$82.12 21		\$85.04 26
Orleans	Average N	\$97.50 2		\$80.06 42		\$80.85 44
Rutland	Average N	\$120.16 8		\$93.89 59		\$97.03 67
Washington	Average N	\$96.43 7		\$82.33 56		\$83.90 63
Windham	Average N	\$130.57 3	\$125.00 1	\$112.05 25		\$114.42 29
Windsor	Average N	\$114.13 13	\$95.62 1	\$89.04 30	\$60.00 1	\$95.79 45
Total average full time weekly care for school age		\$108.83	\$86.56	\$87.72	\$60.00	\$90.74
Total number of programs		94	6	544	1	645

B. Rates for part time child care

For part time care, providers were again asked for the hourly, daily and weekly rates they typically used, which were converted to weekly rates. As with full time rates, weekly rates were used as given and daily rates were multiplied by 5 days. For those using hourly rates, it was determined that 5 hours of care per day would best reflect the part time payment of a typical family. This was based on the full time/part time division as defined by the child care subsidy program of 6 hours and the average cutoff of part time as defined by providers of about 5 hours. If the program had a specific rate for a 5-hour day, this was used. Yearly, monthly and other rates were also converted to weekly equivalents.

The 5-hour day was used for all ages except school age child care for children in first grade and higher. It was determined that a typical part-day stay for a child in school was 3 hours. Most providers listed a separate school age rate and that was used when given. When providers used hourly rates, weekly rates were calculated based on 3 hours of care, 5 days per week for school aged children.

Some providers had part time rates based on fewer than 5 full days and listed a full day rate that was higher than their full day rate if the child attended 5 days. These were not used since they did not reflect the charge for a 5-hour day. However, a small number of programs did not have a part day option but could accommodate 25 hours per week of care with 3 full days. In these cases, the rate for 3 full days was used.

As noted above, a number of programs charge full time rates only, regardless of the child's length of stay. Families using these programs for 25 hours of attendance per week would pay a market rate equivalent to the full time rate. While it is the case that this is the rate for part time care in these programs, it was decided to not include these rates in the part time analyses. By not including them, the analyses reveal information about programs that best fit the definition of part time. Using these programs would result in higher average rates than what is reported here, and this must be kept in mind when considering the true market rate for all part time care.

Another challenge in determining part time rates involves the number of part time programs that operate without a direct cost to the families, such as public school preschools, EEE programs, Head Start/Early Head Start programs, and

community based programs. Some of these programs charge a nominal fee, some charge fees to families that do not fit the target criteria of the program and some charge no fee. If programs indicated that there was no charge to anyone and indicated that they did not receive funds through the SRS subsidy program, they were coded as having rates of \$0.00. If they did not charge parents but did receive subsidy funds, they were coded as having rates equivalent to the subsidy. If they indicated that they had no fees but it was not clear how the system worked, it was left blank. This was done because while it is important to include no-cost programs in the average market rate, it is also important to recognize that even though families can use the subsidy program to reduce their out of pocket expenses, the program itself is nonetheless operating with a fee structure of some kind.

There is variety in how providers define part time care and in how they set their rates; the rates in this section reflect what a family would be charged for 25 hours of care in any given program. Table 28 shows the average weekly rate for part time care across the state. The number of programs included is somewhat smaller than the full sample because not all programs provide part time care.

Table 28. Statewide Average Weekly Rate for Part Time Care by Age and Program

	Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Nonrecurring	Grand Total
Infants N	\$91.79 80	\$56.50 5	\$70.35 340	\$225.00 2	\$74.93 427
Toddlers N	\$87.84 100	\$56.00 5	\$67.51 359	\$225.00 2	\$72.42 466
Preschool N	\$59.19 246	\$58.13 6	\$66.18 378	\$217.50 2	\$63.86 632
Kindergarten N	\$70.92 144	\$39.00 5	\$62.52 400	\$221.50 2	\$65.08 551
School age N	\$51.37 138	\$36.96 7	\$44.02 578	\$210.00 2	\$45.81 725

In addition to the average weekly rates, percentiles were also calculated for licensed and registered programs. Table 29 and 30 show the percentiles for weekly rates by age. For comparison purposes, subsidy rates for half day are included in the last column. School age programs are shown in comparison to the quarter-day subsidy rate (less than 3-hour day). However, many licensed

school age programs receive reimbursement at the half day rate. Both half and quarter day figures can be used for comparison. Percentiles were not calculated for licensed homes or nonrecurring care programs because of the small samples.

Table 29. Percentiles for Part Time Weekly Rates in Licensed Programs by Age

	50 percentile	75 percentile	80 percentile	Subsidy
Infant	\$90.00	\$105.25	\$115.00	\$65.05
Toddler	\$85.00	\$102.47	\$105.00	\$65.05
Preschool	\$67.25	\$85.00	\$91.08	\$58.50
Kindergarten	\$74.38	\$87.00	\$88.50	\$58.50
School age	\$50.00	\$60.75	\$65.00	\$36.80

Table 30. Percentiles for Weekly Rates in Registered Programs by Age

	50 percentile	75 percentile	80 percentile	Subsidy
Infant	\$69.38	\$75.00	\$81.25	\$55.25
Toddler	\$62.50	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$55.25
Preschool	\$62.50	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$48.70
Kindergarten	\$62.50	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$48.70
School age	\$41.25	\$50.00	\$52.50	\$30.70

Tables 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35 show part time rates for infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten and school age, respectively, by county.

Table 31. Average Weekly Rate for Part Time Infant Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$90.26 3		\$68.70 23		\$71.18 26
Bennington	Average N	\$93.81 9		\$67.12 32		\$72.98 41
Caledonia	Average N	\$66.50 5	\$31.25 1	\$52.61 24		\$54.22 30
Chittenden	Average N	\$108.15 19		\$86.23 37		\$93.67 56
Essex	Average N	\$31.25 2		\$45.31 4		\$40.63 6
Franklin	Average N	\$76.67 6		\$75.43 41		\$75.59 47
Grand Isle	Average N			\$76.25 3		\$76.25 3
Lamoille	Average N	\$92.63 4		\$67.00 17		\$71.88 21
Orange	Average N	\$76.25 3	\$60.00 2	\$68.42 15		\$68.75 20
Orleans	Average N	\$37.50 2		\$58.30 27		\$56.86 29
Rutland	Average N	\$97.38 6	\$62.50 1	\$70.11 52		\$72.75 59
Washington	Average N	\$107.50 4		\$69.09 20		\$75.49 24
Windham	Average N	\$83.79 6		\$79.03 26	\$375.00 1	\$88.86 33
Windsor	Average N	\$102.46 11	\$68.75 1	\$74.37 19	\$75.00 1	\$83.87 32
Total average part time weekly care for infants		\$91.79	\$56.50	\$70.35	\$225.00	\$74.93
Total number of programs		80	5	340	2	427

Table 32. Average Weekly Rate for Part Time Toddler Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$88.95 4		\$68.96 24		\$71.81 28
Bennington	Average N	\$89.47 9		\$63.99 32		\$69.59 41
Caledonia	Average N	\$61.50 5	\$31.25 1	\$51.99 24		\$52.88 30
Chittenden	Average N	\$103.77 22		\$83.29 38		\$90.80 60
Essex	Average N	\$31.25 2		\$44.25 5		\$40.54 7
Franklin	Average N	\$75.29 7		\$69.20 44		\$70.04 51
Grand Isle	Average N			\$69.58 3		\$69.58 3
Lamoille	Average N	\$90.10 5		\$67.10 18		\$72.10 23
Orange	Average N	\$80.94 4	\$58.75 2	\$65.42 15		\$67.74 21
Orleans	Average N	\$37.50 2		\$56.79 28		\$55.51 30
Rutland	Average N	\$74.08 9	\$62.50 1	\$67.70 55		\$68.50 65
Washington	Average N	\$100.37 8		\$66.71 23		\$75.39 31
Windham	Average N	\$78.56 8		\$75.08 27	\$375.00 1	\$84.19 36
Windsor	Average N	\$99.69 15	\$68.75 1	\$68.70 23	\$75.00 1	\$80.48 40
Total average part time weekly care for toddlers		\$87.84	\$56.00	\$67.51	\$225.00	\$72.42
Total number of programs		100	5	359	2	466

Table 33. Average Weekly Rate for Part Time Preschool Age Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$44.17 9		\$63.86 27		\$58.94 36
Bennington	Average N	\$63.51 18		\$62.62 32		\$62.94 50
Caledonia	Average N	\$31.13 13	\$31.25 1	\$51.30 24		\$43.87 38
Chittenden	Average N	\$69.97 57		\$79.82 41		\$74.09 98
Essex	Average N	\$12.50 5		\$46.75 5		\$29.63 10
Franklin	Average N	\$46.65 18		\$69.72 45		\$63.13 63
Grand Isle	Average N	\$87.50 1		\$78.96 6		\$80.18 7
Lamoille	Average N	\$71.05 10		\$65.14 19		\$67.18 29
Orange	Average N	\$61.39 10	\$58.75 2	\$63.20 16		\$62.24 28
Orleans	Average N	\$25.74 9	\$75.00 1	\$55.86 29		\$49.40 39
Rutland	Average N	\$43.42 25	\$62.50 1	\$66.64 54		\$59.33 80
Washington	Average N	\$61.70 22		\$63.82 28		\$62.89 50
Windham	Average N	\$68.87 20		\$73.47 29	\$375.00 1	\$77.66 50
Windsor	Average N	\$77.99 29	\$62.50 1	\$67.50 23	\$60.00 1	\$72.90 54
Total average part time weekly care for preschool age		\$59.19	\$58.13	\$66.18	\$217.50	\$63.86
Total number of programs		246	6	378	2	632

Table 34. Average Weekly Rate for Part Time Kindergarten Age Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$58.25 7		\$62.55 27		\$61.67 34
Bennington	Average N	\$71.73 12		\$57.01 31		\$61.12 43
Caledonia	Average N	\$55.21 7	\$31.25 1	\$49.62 30		\$50.17 38
Chittenden	Average N	\$79.00 34		\$76.59 48		\$77.59 82
Essex	Average N	\$62.50 1		\$37.29 6		\$40.89 7
Franklin	Average N	\$59.98 10	\$52.50 1	\$66.85 52		\$65.53 63
Grand Isle	Average N	\$87.50 1		\$72.29 6		\$74.46 7
Lamoille	Average N	\$60.63 8		\$64.71 21		\$63.58 29
Orange	Average N	\$74.88 7	\$38.75 2	\$50.66 17		\$56.27 26
Orleans	Average N	\$32.50 3		\$55.16 31		\$53.16 34
Rutland	Average N	\$66.43 11		\$62.88 57		\$63.46 68
Washington	Average N	\$74.63 15		\$59.46 30		\$64.52 45
Windham	Average N	\$75.94 8		\$69.38 24	\$375.00 1	\$80.23 33
Windsor	Average N	\$77.87 20	\$33.75 1	\$64.50 20	\$68.00 1	\$70.22 42
Total average part time weekly care for kindergarten		\$70.92	\$39.00	\$62.52	\$221.50	\$65.08
Total number of programs		144	5	400	2	551

Table 35. Average Weekly Rate for Part Time School Age Care in All Programs by County

County		Type of Program				Grand Total
		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Average N	\$37.75 4		\$41.29 35		\$40.93 39
Bennington	Average N	\$42.44 12		\$40.25 36		\$40.80 48
Caledonia	Average N	\$47.50 4	\$22.50 1	\$40.81 44		\$40.98 49
Chittenden	Average N	\$59.40 41		\$54.69 88		\$56.19 129
Essex	Average N	\$37.50 1		\$33.63 10		\$33.98 11
Franklin	Average N	\$49.99 12	\$45.00 1	\$47.36 78		\$47.68 91
Grand Isle	Average N	\$53.75 2		\$51.77 12		\$52.05 14
Lamoille	Average N	\$49.72 9		\$44.31 26		\$45.70 35
Orange	Average N	\$48.25 6	\$26.25 2	\$35.98 25		\$37.62 33
Orleans	Average N	\$25.83 3	\$60.00 1	\$41.51 41		\$40.88 45
Rutland	Average N	\$49.14 11		\$39.39 62		\$40.86 73
Washington	Average N	\$46.98 11		\$40.30 64		\$41.28 75
Windham	Average N	\$45.43 7	\$45.00 1	\$45.07 24	\$375.00 1	\$55.14 33
Windsor	Average N	\$57.96 15	\$33.75 1	\$43.52 33	\$45.00 1	\$47.69 50
Total average part time weekly care for school age		\$51.37	\$36.96	\$44.02	\$210.00	\$45.81
Total number of programs		138	7	578	2	725

C. Additional rate information

Programs were asked if they offered additional services such as care before 7 AM, care after 6 PM, weekend or overnight care. If it was offered, they were asked if there was a charge and if so, what. In general, the information from these questions needs to be interpreted with caution because of the wide variability in pricing structure used across programs and the range of interpretation of the term "extra charge." For example, if a program indicated that it offered early morning care and there was no additional charge, it is likely that the program was open early in the morning and parents paid the weekly rate. Programs that charge all usage at an hourly rate could offer additional services at no extra charge, yet still charge their usual hourly rate.

The number of programs charging the hourly rates listed below is likely to be higher than what is reported here. Therefore, the following information is best used to explore those programs that do offer additional services compared to those that do not. It is also possible to glean general trends about the cost of these services, though it is not wise to generalize actual dollar amounts.

The distribution of costs for all services shows that there is a wide range of variability. In many cases, the rates for odd hour care are the same as with regular care, however, there were a surprising number of programs that charged minimal fees for weekend or overnight care – including the provider who wrote in that weekend care was “fun time.” Evening and weekend care is not routinely more expensive than weekday care.

Table 36. Provides Care Before 7 AM

Type of program	Not offered	No extra/minimal charge	\$1.25 - \$2.50/hr	\$2.75 - \$3.50/hr	\$3.75 - \$5.50/hr	\$5.75 or more/hr	No answer
Licensed	314	34	4	4	4	0	2
Licensed home	5	4	0	0	0	0	0
Registered	395	223	26	14	18	5	4
Nonrecurring	5	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 37. Provides Care After 6 PM

Type of program	Not offered	No extra/minimal charge	\$1.25 - \$2.50/hr	\$2.75 - \$3.50/hr	\$3.75 - \$5.50/hr	\$5.75 or more/hr	No answer
Licensed	349	6	0	3	2	0	2
Licensed home	8	1	0	0	0	0	0
Registered	536	72	19	24	20	10	4
Nonrecurring	5	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 38. Provides Care Overnight

Type of program	Not offered	No extra/minimal charge	\$1.25 - \$2.50/hr	\$2.75 - \$3.50/hr	\$3.75 - \$5.50/hr	\$5.75 or more/hr	No answer
Licensed	357	3	0	0	0	0	2
Licensed home	8	0	1	0	0	0	0
Registered	592	49	24	9	6	1	4
Nonrecurring	5	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 39. Provides Care on Weekends

Type of program	Not offered	No extra/minimal charge	\$1.25 - \$2.50/hr	\$2.75 - \$3.50/hr	\$3.75 - \$5.50/hr	\$5.75 or more/hr	No answer
Licensed	355	3	0	1	0	1	2
Licensed home	8	1	0	0	0	0	0
Registered	593	42	24	10	11	1	4
Nonrecurring	3	2	0	0	0	0	0

Other questions about additional rates such as extended days and other charges were not included because of unclear definitions across of what is included in these charges.

Part V. Relationships between subsidy payments, market rates and payment policies

Child care programs have set full time rates and many families use child care subsidy to assist in the cost of care. Provider rates are generally higher than the subsidy (by definition), so providers were asked whether they charge the difference and if so, how often they were able to collect the difference. These responses are summarized in Table 40. The “no answer” category refers to those who don’t have a policy, who have no experience with the subsidy program or who left it blank.

Table 40. Programs Charging Families the Difference Between Subsidy and Fees

Type of program	Policy						Grand Total
	Don't ask for difference	Ask, rarely pay	Ask, some pay	Ask, most/all pay	Do not accept subsidy	No answer	
Licensed	55	22	51	152	47	35	362
Licensed home	2	1	1	5			9
Registered	99	43	99	378	4	62	685
Nonrecurring	1			2	1	1	5
Grand Total	157	66	151	537	52	98	1061

Half of the programs indicated that they asked parents to pay the difference between their rates and the subsidy and that all or almost all parents paid the difference. Only 15% of all programs indicated that they did not charge the difference or that their rates were not different from the subsidy. Some programs do not accept the subsidy payments for their services though this was noted in only 5% of the programs. A number of these were public school programs that did not accept any payment from or on behalf of families.

These analyses do not reveal the characteristics of the families who receive the subsidy to help pay for their child care and pay the difference between child care fees and their subsidy. It is not known how many families do not use regulated care because of an inability to pay the difference.

To further understand the relationship between market rates and the subsidy, full time rates were correlated with the fee collection data to see if programs with higher fees were more likely to charge the difference and receive it. The analysis indicated that there was no significant relationship between fees charged and this policy.

Other studies have indicated (USA Child Care, March 2000) that child care programs that serve a high proportion of children whose families receive subsidy assistance may have lower rates, that is, that subsidies can depress the market rates. To explore this, the proportion of currently enrolled children who receive subsidy was calculated. It was determined that this proportion statewide across all programs is 25%. This proportion was correlated with full time rates to determine if programs with higher proportions of subsidy-based income had lower rates. There was no significant relationship between these two figures.

Both of these analyses indicate that the subsidy does not appear to have a consistently adverse effect on market rates.

Licensed programs indicated that 18% of the enrolled children received subsidy where licensed homes and registered homes indicated that 29% of enrolled children received subsidy. Since licensed programs tend to have higher rates and fewer subsidized slots than registered programs, this would serve to enhance the inverse relationship between these figures, possibly making it artificially large. The small size of the correlation coefficient did not warrant doing separate analyses.

Although there is no relationship between the fees charged and the proportion of subsidized slots, it is the case that there is variability across the state with some counties serving proportionally more subsidized families and other counties less. A breakdown of these ratios by county can be seen in Table 41.

Table 41. Ratio of Enrolled Children Receiving Subsidy to Total Current Enrollment by Type of Program and County

		Type of Program				Grand Total
County		Licensed	Licensed Home	Registered	Non-recurring	
Addison	Avg. ratio	0.223		0.249	0.000	0.238
	N	15		42	1	58
Bennington	Avg. ratio	0.191		0.333		0.276
	N	28		41		69
Caledonia	Avg. ratio	0.248	0.267	0.337		0.317
	N	13	1	48		62
Chittenden	Avg. ratio	0.151		0.243		0.199
	N	103		112		215
Essex	Avg. ratio	0.014		0.116		0.084
	N	5		11		16
Franklin	Avg. ratio	0.182	0.000	0.307		0.277
	N	25	1	89		115
Grand Isle	Avg. ratio	0.178		0.255		0.245
	N	2		13		15
Lamoille	Avg. ratio	0.314		0.457	0.000	0.400
	N	16		31	1	48
Orange	Avg. ratio	0.215	0.235	0.343		0.294
	N	15	2	27		44
Orleans	Avg. ratio	0.155	0.294	0.315		0.281
	N	12	1	44		57
Rutland	Avg. ratio	0.157	0.167	0.215		0.198
	N	29	1	70		100
Washington	Avg. ratio	0.212	0.600	0.298	0.000	0.272
	N	34	1	75	1	111
Windham	Avg. ratio	0.194		0.286		0.247
	N	25		34		59
Windsor	Avg. ratio	0.142	0.563	0.274	0.207	0.219
	N	34	1	42	1	78
Average ratio statewide		0.180	0.295	0.288	0.052	0.250
Total N		356	8	679	4	1047

Lamoille County shows the highest proportion of subsidized slots and it also has the highest proportion across the state of programs that charge the difference between rates and subsidy and receive it (65%). Essex county has the lowest proportion of subsidized slots and is also the county with the fewest programs that charge the difference and receive it (31%). Essex county also has more programs that either do not charge the difference or have rates the same as subsidy (31%). Rutland county also had more than the average number of programs that did not charge the difference (26%) with fewer that charged the

difference and received it (43%). Though these deviations are intriguing, there is not a consistent pattern of relationship between the proportion of subsidized slots and program practices with regards to obtaining the difference between subsidies and fees.

Programs that charge the difference between their rates and subsidy do not seem to be serving fewer families with subsidy. However, these figures reflect those families who use these programs, yet say little about those who don't. The subsidy program does not seem to have an adverse affect on market rates, but that should not be construed as meaning that parents who are eligible for the subsidy find these programs affordable.

Conclusions

This study presents information about the characteristics, rates and capacity of regulated child care programs in Vermont.

It can be concluded that in some ways there is an improving landscape for child care programs in Vermont. Programs indicate that as a general rule, they are serving the numbers and ages of children they desire or prefer to serve. Child care programs are taking steps towards understanding that the child care subsidy is not meant to cover the fees for all programs and they are responding to this by charging families the difference between their program fees and what the subsidy pays on behalf of families. In addition, those programs charging the difference are usually getting it. Programs are not routinely letting subsidy rates dictate the market value of their services. It also appears to be the case that the child care industry is responding to the need of recent years for more care options for school aged children.

There are, however, persistent challenges faced by child care programs, the parent consumers of their services and the organizations that support them. It appears that subsidy rates are moving further away from the market rate for child care. Furthermore, the child care industry continues to have a limited capacity to meet the child care needs of Vermont families. These consumers continue to have limited choice as the wide variability in family need and program offerings puts a cap on the number of programs that will be a good match for a family. Families may need to settle for care they can find rather than care they truly want, whether it be location, type of program, schedule options, cost of the program or the quality of care.

In addition to these broad conclusions, several specific questions were addressed.

What are the current characteristics of regulated care in terms of accreditation, type of business and operating schedules?

Child care is a viable industry in this state, functioning under a wide range of business entities and providing services to families and jobs throughout the state. Approximately 15% of licensed programs and 5% of registered programs are accredited by national standards of quality. The majority of programs are open full time and year round, but with a substantial number open only part time (up to 19%) and even fewer (under 15%) open evenings or weekends. A wide range of options exist to meet the wide range of parent need, but the number of programs available is not equivalent to full time accessibility.

What are the current estimates of the child care capacity as defined by preferred enrollment in the state and within regions? What is the status of child care programs with regard to that capacity?

There are approximately 38,000 full and part time child care slots in the state as estimated from the desired enrollment stated by programs. Not all programs serve all ages or all schedules. Estimates of the number of children currently in care equal 38,000. Most of the child care programs in the state are caring for close to as many children as is desired. However, these figures vary depending on the location, the type of program desired and the age of the child.

What is the typical number of children in child care on any given day and how long do children typically spend in care?

The current study estimates that approximately 30,000 children are in care on any given day. Approximately one third of these children are in care for 8 to 9 hours a day, with an additional 7% in care for more than 10 hours.

What are the full and part time market rates for registered and licensed child care programs and do these differ across the regions of the state? What are the 50th, 75th and 80th percentiles for market rates in registered and licensed care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and school age children?

This study converted hourly, daily, weekly and other rates to a standard figure enabling across-program comparisons of the cost of child care for a 42.5 hour full time week and a 25 hour part time week. There is high degree of variability across ages of children, types of program and across regions. The rates in this

sample range from a low of \$50.00 to a high of \$300.00 for a full time week. The study calculated market rate averages and 50, 75 and 80th percentiles. When compared to the current child care subsidy rate, the 75th percentile of the market rate is significantly higher than subsidy for all ages, all program types and both full and part time.

What is the availability of weekend, evening and overnight care and are the rates for these different from weekday rates?

Fewer than 15% of programs offer weekend or evening care. Further, not all programs routinely make it known that they offer these additional services though they may serve families on an individual basis. Costs for these services vary widely. Evening and weekend care is not routinely more expensive than weekday care, and in some cases the cost is less.

What is the impact of child care subsidy on market rates? Do programs that accept the subsidy have lower rates and do they have families make up any difference between their fees and the subsidy?

It has been suggested that subsidy rates depress market rate. The current study did not find a relationship between market rates, the proportion of enrolled children funded by subsidy and practices of charging parents the difference between program fees and subsidy. However, it can not be concluded that parents who are eligible for the subsidy find these programs affordable.

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