



MOHAWK VALLEY

CHILD CARE DESERTS

COUNTIES & DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of the six-county Mohawk Valley Region is 486,158 with 53,527 of that population being age 0-9. Across the region, an average of 22% of children live below the poverty line. In the Mohawk Valley, 68.7% of the population of children has all available children in the workforce, and the mean household income is \$68,892.17. The majority of employed persons are in the industry of Educational services, and health care and social assistance (28.8%), with Retail Trade (13.1%) and Manufacturing (10.2%) being the next most frequent industries. The largest employers for the region are Turning Stone Casino, Mohawk Valley Health System, Bassett Healthcare, Airforce Research Laboratory, and Utica National Insurance. The average commute time to work in the region is 25 minutes.

Data from Census Data Center for 2019 and the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council

CHILD CARE SUPPLY

There are currently 346 child care programs that can care for 10,645 children across the region in 4 modalities of care (Family Child Care, Group Family Child Care, Child Care Centers* and School Age Child Care Centers). The supply of child care only covers 19.9% of the population of children age 0-9 in the region. 51% of available slots are within child care centers. Over the past 12 months, 40% of requests for child care were for infants, which have the fewest available slots across the region.

**Center data includes Head Start sites. Data from Child Care Resource and Referral Agency Databases*

CHILD CARE STAFFING SHORTAGES

For this report, the Child Care Council of Cornell Cooperative Extension performed an informal survey of child care centers within the region. Results of this survey showed that most centers have had to close or downsize classrooms due to staff shortages. Due to supervision requirements, child care centers require a certain number of staff to operate. As a result of workforce shortages, at least 53 classrooms across the Mohawk Valley Region have been closed, resulting in a minimum of 601 slots within the current supply of child care closed. These closures have the greatest impact on preschool-aged children, with over 300 slots of the already low supply being closed. Not every child care center was able to be reached to get information for this survey, therefore there may be even more.



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CHILD CARE NEEDS CONCLUSION

Overall, the Mohawk Valley does not have enough child care to meet the need of the region and desperately needs more child care. There is not enough child care to cover even a quarter of the child population within the region. In both rural and urban areas of the Mohawk Valley there are pockets where there is no child care at all. There is a particular need for child care for infants and school age children. Poverty levels within the region are higher than the New York State Average.

Many families commute across counties to work and to child care. Due to the mixture of rural and urban communities, commute time to work is high across the region. When child care is hard to find, this only adds to parent commute times, which are already long.

In some areas in the region, there is a high need for child care offered in hours outside of the standard workday to meet the needs of working parents.

Fulton County Needs: Fulton County is in need of high quality infant and toddler care. Additionally, affordable school age and recreational care opportunities are needed. Communities such as Gloversville, Broadalbin and Perth are of particular concern regarding the lack of child care. Child care for children with developmental concerns is another area of need.

Herkimer County Needs: Because of Herkimer County's shape and rural landscape, child care is particularly scarce. The majority of child care programs exist along the Thruway corridor, the supply of this county is the lowest in the region compared to the population. Additionally, care for infants in this county is particularly difficult to find, with many of the licensed child care programs not serving infants.

Montgomery County Needs: High quality school age care and summer recreation opportunities are in high demand in the county. Some areas of the City of Amsterdam have no care at all and limited care for infant, toddlers and school-age children exist across the city. The development of family and group family child care homes are needed outside of the city as several rural areas show significant need.

Oneida County Needs: Oneida County has the more child care within the county than the other 5 combined, however this supply does not meet the demand for care in any age group. There is a severe staffing shortage in this county, making the existing child care even more scarce. Most programs are full, and some programs have waiting lists of over 50 children.

Otsego County Needs: Otsego county parents often have to travel across county lines to access work and child care, and Infant care is particularly scarce. The recent closure of multiple Family Child Care sites has dwindled the child care supply down even further.

Schoharie County Needs: Schoharie County has the highest supply of child care within the region compared to the population, however the demand for care is still significant. Most of the child care programs are completely full, which makes it difficult for parents seeking care. New programs opening have been matched with other programs closing, so the supply has stayed constant and not increased.