

Mapping Child Care Supply and Demand in Alaska

A number of tools have been created to examine the supply and demand for child care in Alaska. Each tool provides an important view of where, how, and for whom demand for child care outpaces supply.

The first tool for examining unmet need that was created by Child Care Aware focuses on **infants and toddlers**. This [map](#) uses data from the 2017 Market Price Survey conducted by the State of Alaska Child Care Program Office to estimate the supply of slots in **licensed facilities**. This includes slots in licensed centers, licensed group homes, and licensed homes. For demand, this map uses census data to estimate how many mothers are in the labor force that had a birth in the past 12 months. In order to calculate unmet need, the estimated number of infant/toddler slots in licensed facilities can be subtracted from the estimated number of children under 3 years old with mothers in the labor force. One assumption with regards to this measure of unmet need is that **licensed care** is being sought out for every child under 3 years old that has a mother in the labor force.

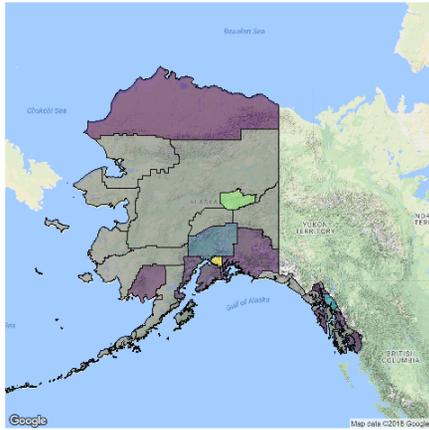
The second tool for examining unmet need focuses on **children younger than 6 years old**. This [dashboard](#) presents the estimated number of children that are in care more generally, not just in licensed care. When considering unmet need, the number of children that are not in need of care, the number of children that are in licensed care, the number of children that are in approved care (unlicensed), and the number of children that are in other forms of informal care are all subtracted from the total number of children in the region. Importantly, whereas the first method provided an estimate of how many **licensed** slots were needed, this method provides an estimate of how many slots for **any type of care** are needed. One assumption with regards to this measure of unmet need is that if children aren't in care, then more slots are needed. However, it's possible that the slots are there, but the demand for the slots is not.

The third tool for examining unmet need focuses on **waitlists** for licensed care for **all age groups**. The first of these maps presents the number of children on waitlists for each age group from the 2017 Market Price Survey conducted by the State of Alaska Child Care Program Office. The second of these maps presents the number of children on waitlists for each age group as a proportion of the licensed capacity of the provider.

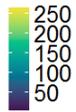
It is important to keep each of these differences in mind when using these maps and dashboards. Given these differences, the estimates from each map are not comparable and should be considered independently of the other estimates. For example, it might be tempting to compare the unmet need for infants and toddlers using the map created by Child Care Aware with the unmet need calculated by the McDowell Group. However, these two estimates can't be compared because the Child Care Aware map calculates unmet need by subtracting the number of **licensed infant/toddler slots** from the total number of infants/toddlers that need care in the region, whereas the data dashboard created by the McDowell Group calculates unmet need by subtracting the number of **slots for many types of care for children under 6 years old** from the total number of children under 6 years old that need care.

	Mapping the Gap™	McDowell Data Dashboard	Waitlist Estimates (2017 MPS)
Age Range	Infants and toddlers	Children under 6 years of age	Split by all age groups
Type of Care	Licensed care only	Licensed, approved, and informal care	Licensed care only
Estimate of Supply	Estimated number of slots in licensed facilities	Number of children in care	--
Estimate of Demand	Census data	Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development	--
Estimate of Gap	Number of children in need of care minus number of slots	Number of children in need of care minus number of children in care	Number of children on waitlist

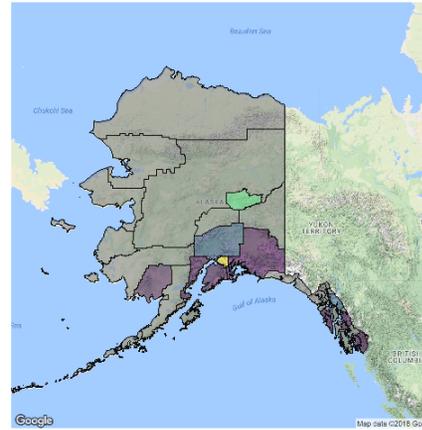
Infants



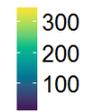
Number of Children Waitlisted



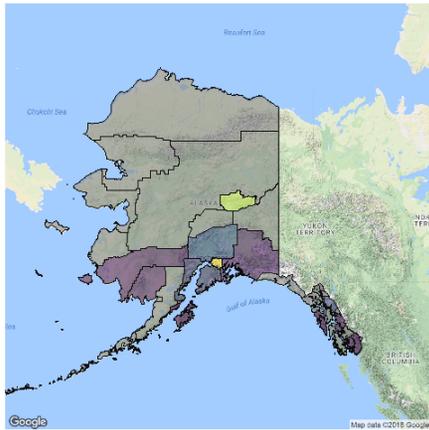
Toddlers



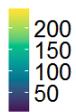
Number of Children Waitlisted



Preschoolers



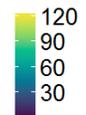
Number of Children Waitlisted



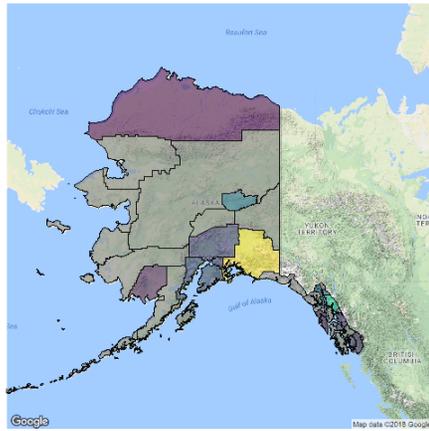
School Age Children



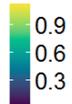
Number of Children Waitlisted



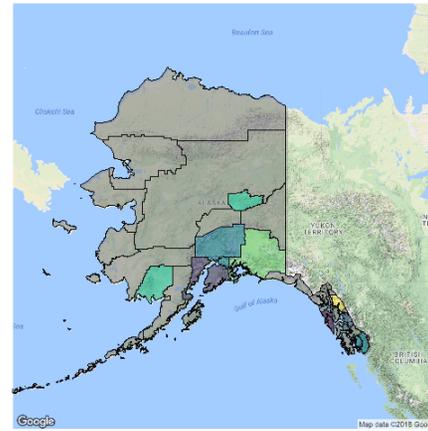
Infants



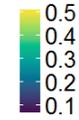
Waitlist as a Proportion of Licensed Capacity



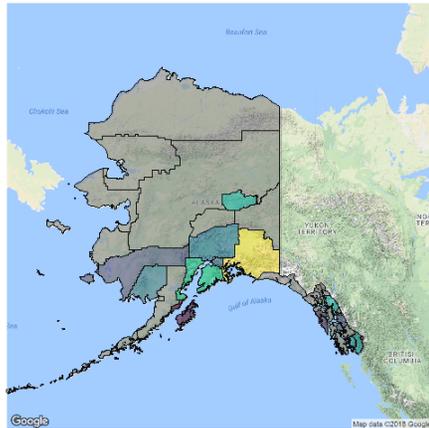
Toddlers



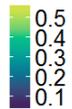
Waitlist as a Proportion of Licensed Capacity



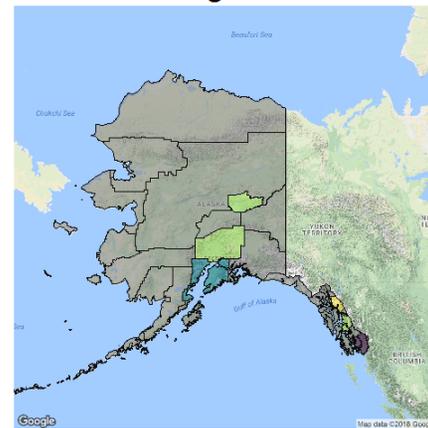
Preschoolers



Waitlist as a Proportion of Licensed Capacity



School Age Children



Waitlist as a Proportion of Licensed Capacity

