Early Care & Learning Services for Children in Anchorage

**Time in care per child in paid care (average hours per month):**

- **28** for children under 6
- **13** for children 6-12 years of age

**Type of ECL services received varies by age group:**

- **Care at someone else’s home:**
  - Children under 6: 20%
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 18%
- **Care in child’s own home by family, friend, or other provider:**
  - Children under 6: 29%
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 32%
- **Pre-elementary or center-based care:**
  - Children under 6: 56%
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 8%
- **Early Head Start/Head Start:**
  - Children under 6: 4%
  - Children 6-12 years of age: N/A
- **School-sponsored before or after school programs:**
  - Children under 6: N/A
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 31%
- **Other before or after school programs:**
  - Children under 6: N/A
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 22%
- **Other:**
  - Children under 6: N/A
  - Children 6-12 years of age: 5%

* Early Care & Learning (ECL) Definition: ECL services include all types of child care, including formal (licensed, regulated) services and informal (short term, temporary, and other child care) arrangements.

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Most important reason Alaska households use ECL services

- **66%** Allow adults to be employed
- **30%** Provide social interaction, learning, and other enrichment for children
- **2%** Allow adults time for errands and activities outside of work

Note: The above results don’t sum to 100% because some respondents answered: don’t know

Kindergarten readiness

- **31%** Anchorage
- **33%** Statewide

Note: Percent of kindergartners meeting 11 of 13 Alaska Developmental Profile goals.
Ease of Finding Early Care & Learning Services

For children in ECL services, ease of finding services in Anchorage was:

- 15% Very difficult
- 34% Difficult
- 2% Don’t know/refused
- 36% Very easy

Reasons for difficulty finding ECL services:

- 55% Availability/lack of providers
- 46% Cost
- 33% Quality
- 16% Convenience
- 30% Other

Cost of Care

Average annual cost of licensed care in Anchorage for children under 6 years of age: $14,082

Average spending in Anchorage is higher than the Alaska average of $13,775.

Financial assistance is used for 13% of children under 6 and 1% of children 6 to 12 years of age.

Cost of Care as a percentage of household income:

- 16% All households combined
- 22% Single male households
- 13% Married couple households
- 36% Single female households

Early Care & Learning Impacts Employment

- 22% of Anchorage households with children under 13 years of age include at least one household member not employed or working less hours than they otherwise would be because of lack of access to ECL services.
- Employment is restricted for these individuals by an average of 30 hours per week.
- 85% of employers provide no ECL-related benefits.

ECL factors with the greatest impact on household member’s ability to participate in the workforce:

- 58% Cost
- 22% Quality
- 18% Availability

Base: Children in ECL services in March 2019
Note: An average of 4.35 weeks per month was used to calculate average hours per week. Average spending is for paid and unpaid services.

Prepared by McKinley Research for the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council with data collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. October 2021