

Monmouth County: Investing in Child Care is the Pathway to Economic Recovery

In Brief: To achieve economic recovery (and expansion) in Monmouth County, parents with infants and toddlers need access to child care. But, the supply of child care generally and the supply of infant and toddler care in particular falls far short of the need. Currently, the supply of child care for infants and toddlers meets about 17% of the need (i.e., the supply of child care supports about 1 out of every 6 infants and toddlers whose parents are working).

Infants and Toddlers with Working Parents

Pre-COVID, there were 15,191 infants and toddlers in Monmouth County who resided in families where all parents were working (e.g., in married couple families where both parents worked or in single parent families where the head of household worked).

Infant and toddler care was in short supply. The impact of COVID on the child care market has exacerbated that gap across the county.

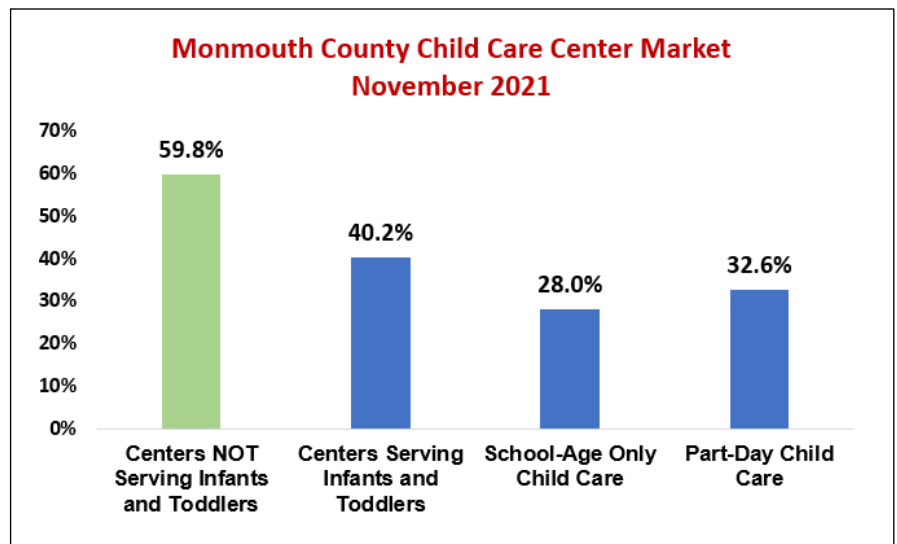
Monmouth County Infants and Toddlers in Working Families						
Monmouth County Geography	Total Infants and Toddlers	Married Couples, Both parents in labor force	Living with Dad, Dad in the labor force	Living with Mom, Mom in the labor force	Total Infants and Toddler with All Available Parents Working	Percent of Infants and Toddlers with All Available Parents Working
Total	23,044	12,060	792	2,339	15,191	65.9%
Monmouth County (Southeast)--Tinton Falls Borough (South)	3,683	1,937	209	477	2,623	71.2%
Monmouth County (Southwest)--Freehold Borough	3,838	1,638	161	330	2,129	55.5%
Monmouth County (East Central)--Long Branch, Asbury Park Cities & Eatontown Borough	4,152	1,030	318	802	2,150	51.8%
Monmouth County (Northeast)--Red Bank & Tinton Falls (North) Boroughs	3,007	1,970	0	0	1,970	65.5%
Monmouth County (Northwest)--Keansburg Borough	4,695	3,258	104	411	3,773	80.4%
Monmouth County (Central)	3,669	2,227	0	319	2,546	69.4%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata

Infant Toddler Child Care Gap

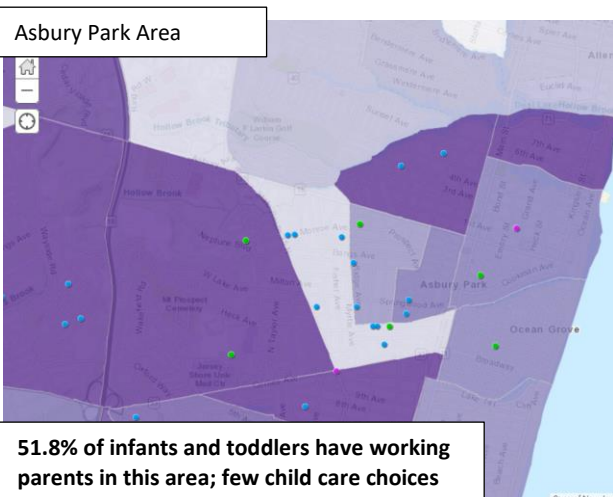
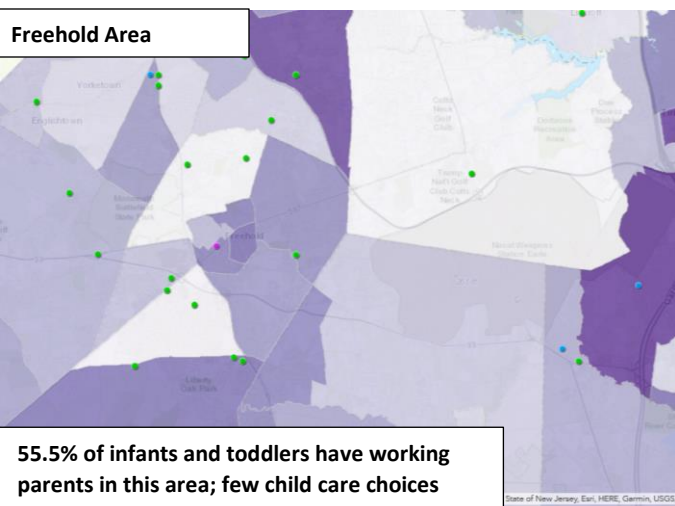
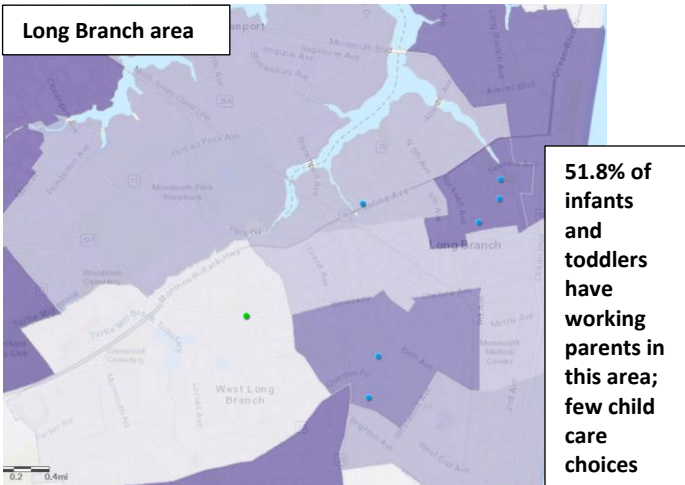
There are several reasons why there is a child care supply gap for infants and toddlers.

- **Child care is a business.** Regardless of the type of child care setting (center-based care or home-based care), more staff are needed to care for infants and toddlers compared to preschool-age or school-age children. This makes child care more expensive to operate, which impacts market decisions for infant and toddler care. While most home-based providers care for infants and toddlers, only 40% of centers do.
- **Staffing.** To keep costs low, centers pay staff working in infant and toddler care lower wages than staff working with older children. This impacts quality and causes turnover.



Source: Child Care Resources of Monmouth County

Monmouth County: Infant and Toddler Child Care



Monmouth County Child Care Supply Mapping

Purple Shading. The shades of purple are darker where the percentage of children in working families is higher. These are Census tracts. Dark purple represents Census tracts where 80% of children are in working families. As the percentage decline, the purple shade becomes lighter.

Green circles = Centers serving infants and toddlers
Blue circles = Registered family child care homes

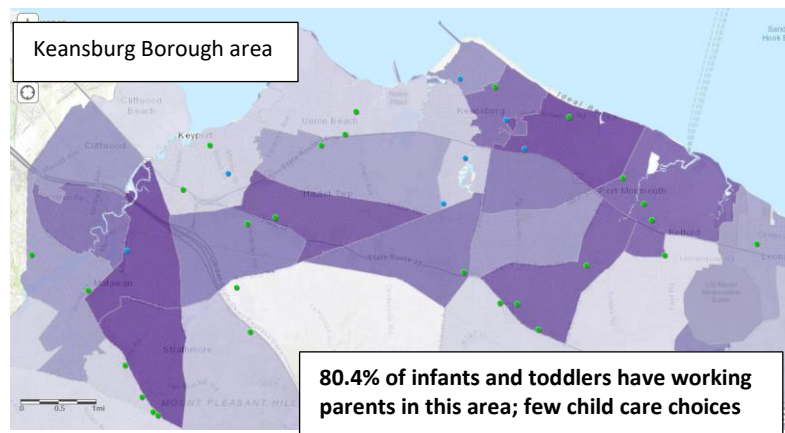
Dot Scarcity. These are child care deserts or neighborhoods with few choices for infant and toddler care.

Monmouth County Supply Gap:

- 2,660 infant and toddler spaces in child care centers or registered family child care homes
- 15,191 infants and toddlers with working parents
- 17.4% of infants and toddlers who may be in need of child care have access to it

What's this mean for working parents and employers?

Most working parents lack access to infant and toddler child care.



Community Child Care Solutions – Building the pipeline and strengthening the quality of the infant and toddler child care workforce

- **Meeting the Needs of Parents.** Expand access to infant & toddler child care for families in center-based and family child care.
- **Strengthening the Quality of Child Care.** Build and support an educational pipeline to increase the number of infant & toddler teachers/staff.
- **Meeting the Needs of the Child Care Workforce.** Support the infant & toddler workforce through compensation and incentivizing credentialing to increase quality and retention.

Note: Child Care Resources of Monmouth County is funded by the NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development