



Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council (LCCPC)  
Child Care Needs Assessment and Status of Children and Families  
2009-2014

Introduction:

The Local Child Care Planning Council in Shasta County is a collaboration of consumers, service providers, public agencies and other community representatives working together to assess and coordinate the delivery of quality child care services and programs. According to Education Code 8499.5 by May 30<sup>th</sup> of each year and upon approval of the county board of supervisors and the county superintendent of schools, each local planning council shall submit to the California Department of Education the local priorities it has identified that reflect all child care needs in the county. To accomplish this, each local planning council shall conduct an assessment of child care needs in the county no less than once every five years. The Council shall identify data and other information to be included in the needs assessment in order to obtain an accurate picture of the comprehensive child care needs in the county. The Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council has prepared this report not only to satisfy this requirement, but also to help inform child care policies and priorities based on the current status of child care in the County.

The current assessment examined various primary data sources, which collected statistics on the status of children and their families in Shasta County, as well as information on the supply of child care services. Sources for this data include the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council data, Shasta County Office of Education, Early Childhood Services, Resource and Referral, Shasta Head Start, Shasta County Public Health, state and local agencies, and others.

Issues discussed in this report include:

- ❖ The needs of families eligible for subsidized child care;
- ❖ The needs of families not eligible for child care;
- ❖ The waiting lists for programs funded by the department and the State Department of Social Services;

- ❖ The need for child care for children determined by the child protective services agency to be neglected, abused, or exploited;
- ❖ The number of children in families receiving public assistance, including food stamps, Medi-Cal, and assistance from the Healthy Families Program and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program;
- ❖ Family income among families with preschool or school age children;
- ❖ The number of children in migrant agricultural families;
- ❖ The number of children who have been determined by a regional center to require services pursuant to an individualized family service plan;
- ❖ The number of children in the county by primary language spoken pursuant to the department's language survey;
- ❖ Special needs based on geographic considerations, including rural areas;
- ❖ The number of children needing child care services by age cohort

**Geography-**Shasta County is located in far northern California. It is approximately 230 miles north of San Francisco and 160 miles north of Sacramento. The land covers 3,785 miles of widely varied terrain, including rural, and semi-rural and urban populations.



The county is primarily rural, with only two percent of the land use being urban or suburban. This rural portion of the county is sparsely populated, geographically isolated and mountainous, with severe winter conditions that often make roads impassable in winter months. The major portion of the county has a population density of less than seven persons per square mile, and includes two areas designated as medically underserved. The City of Redding, with a 2008 population of 90,033, is the county seat and population center for the county. The entire county has a HPSA (Health Professional Shortage Area) designation except the City of Redding. Shasta County was also designated a mental health HPSA in November 1999 and a dental health HPSA in 2000 for low-income populations.

**Population-** According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the projected population of Shasta County for 2009 is 189,109; the 2000 total population of Shasta County was 163,256. This equals an increase of 11.6% in eight years. The 2008 population projections show the Elderly (65 and older) make up 15.3% of the population, compared to the California average of approximately 10.8%. An additional 19% growth in population is projected by 2020 with the elderly as the fastest growing segment.

The 2008 population projections show that 51.0% of the population is female; 48.1% of Shasta County's population is male.

There are an estimated 76,381 housing units (2008) with an average density of 19.9 per square mile. There are an estimated 69,185 households in the County, 29.7% of which have children under the age of 18 living with them, 49.2% are married couples living together, 12.8% have a female householder with no husband present, and 33.2% are non-families.

Individuals make up 27.4% of all households, and 27.9% of households have one or more people 65 years and older. The average household size is 2.56 and the average family size is 3.06.

**Age-** The median age for residents in Shasta County is 38.4, respectively; considerably older than the California median age of 34.5. With the Baby Boom generation approaching retirement age, nowhere is that more evident than in Shasta County. In Shasta County, approximately 6% or 11,347 of the population are under 5 years of age, and approximately 23% or 43,495 are 19 years old or under.

The major findings of *Children and Families in Shasta County* are as follows:

- The number of children birth to five has increased countywide from 9,643 in 2000 to 10,613 in 2008, according to the figures from the US Census-American Fact Finder Quick Tables. This represents an approximate increase of .09%.
- Between 2000 and 2008, the median household income level in Shasta County has increased from \$34,335. to \$43,836 (inflation adjusted dollars).
- Shasta County has 69,185 households earning \$43,836. or less annually, which is 72% of the State Median Household Income of \$61,154.
- Shasta County is ranked 52 out of 58 of California's counties in the percentage of children in low-income households.
- Shasta County summary of children ages 0-18 years (as of 12/18/2009) on CalWORKs, Food Stamps, and Medi-Cal; the total amount of children is a distinct (non-duplicative) count. For example, a child on Food Stamps and Medi-Cal is listed in both columns, but counted once in the total.

	CalWORKs	Food Stamps	Medi-Cal	Total
Children	7,082	10,889	16,870	18,132

Redding is a medical hub for the rural areas in the far northern California region. Despite this, various barriers to accessing health and social services exist in Shasta County, including lack of insurance, cost geographical isolation, lack of certain specialists, the need to travel great distances (often to Sacramento or

further) when care is not available locally (especially dental services), transportation, and waiting lists. At the same time, changes in Medi-Cal reimbursement rates have created an additional barrier to accessing valuable services. Recently, severe cuts in government and foundation funding have resulted in a reduction of services and staffing at local government and non-profit providers. The continued viability of many low income programs across all sectors of society are at risk for dissolution.

- The data indicates that overall in Shasta County, 11.6% of families are living in poverty. For those families with children less than 18 years old, the percentage increases to 19.3%. Among female heads of household, more than one-third of Shasta County families are in poverty (35.7%) and female-headed households with children under 18 years old, the percentage in poverty is 45.7%.  
In 2000, the poverty status for families was 11.3% and at 18.1% for families with children less than 18 years old. For female-headed households, 32.2% were in poverty, jumping to 39.3% for families with children less than 18 years old. For families with children under 5 years of age in 2000, the number of families was 24%--nearly one quarter—with 53.5% for female-headed households with children under 5 years old. According to the California Resource & Referral Network data, in 2008, there were 3,796 children 0-5 living in poverty in Shasta County.
- Shasta County is ranked lowest, at 58 out of California's 58 counties, in the percentage of children with health insurance.  
As of October 2009, there are 3,968 children enrolled in Healthy Families (Shasta County Public Health).
- According to the Shasta County Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Needs Assessment, the problem of child abuse continues to be a serious challenge for the nation, state and Shasta County. During the first seven months of fiscal year 2008-2009, the Social Services Department of Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) received and processed child abuse and neglect referrals on 2,354 children. Of those referrals, 538 (23%) were substantiated child abuse or neglect cases. While rates of substantiated child abuse cases have been declining in California overall in the past decade, Shasta County has remained significantly higher. Shasta County is now ranked seventh highest in California and first among all counties over 100,000 population.
- The overall rate of domestic violence related calls for assistance in Shasta County increased from 6.5% in 1999-2001 to 7.8% in 2004-2006. This is much higher than the State rate of 5.6% and 4.9 % during the same time periods.  
About 10% of homeless people report domestic violence as the reason for becoming homeless. Of the homeless families in Shasta County, about 14% have children.

- Shasta County's rate of children living in foster care is more than twice California's rate. The majority of these children have parents with a substance abuse issues (Shasta County Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Needs Assessment).
- The estimated number of Hispanic or Latino population (2008) countywide is 7.8% of the population. In 2000, the number of Hispanic or Latino population countywide was 5.5%. Furthermore, the percentage of individuals who speak English-only has declined slightly countywide, from 93.5% in 2000, to 93.4% estimated in 2008.
- Spanish-speaking parents, both monolingual and bi-lingual, seek safe, educational and affordable child care services for their children delivered by providers with whom they can effectively communicate, much like all other parents using early care and education programs. In Shasta County (November 2009), there are 15 bilingual family child care providers.
- In the migrant agriculture world, Shasta County has 138 children 0-18 yrs. located in the Burney, Fall River area of the County (Migrant Education Program 12/2009).
- Over a one year period June 2008 - July 2009, Child Care Resource & Referral dispersed 1180 referrals for families from all income strata. Care was sought for 1529 Infants (0-24 months); 1600 Preschool age (ages 2-5); and 1056 school age. Requests for care during non-traditional hours (evening/weekend care) during this time period was 21% of calls.
- For all children regardless of income, the current data, collected over a one-year period (2008-2009) showed callers requested licensed family child care homes 37% of the time, licensed child care centers 36% of the time, with 27% of callers not indicating a specific choice. However, according to the Early Childhood Services, Resource and Referral, (November 2009), of the approximately 18,000 children in Shasta County that may need child care, approximately 59% of families with children in subsidized child care choose unlicensed child care.
- For families seeking assistance for child care, 60% desired such services near their home. The major reasons for families seeking child care: 76% employment; 9% parent in school/training; and 12 % other parental needs (California Resource & Referral Network 2009).
- Supply of Licensed Child Care in Shasta County (ECS Resource and Referral as of December 2008):

70 Child Care Centers

Infant/toddlers 0-23 months	Preschool Age 2-5 yrs	School Age Age 6 yrs & older
6%	64%	30%

- 209 licensed family child care homes (serving ages 0-12 yrs.)
- 5701 total licensed child care slots
- 62% are child care center slots; 38% are family child care slots
- Average Full-time Weekly Child Care Costs in Shasta County (as of November 2009)

Licensed Child Care Centers:

Infant/toddlers	Preschool	School Age
\$200.00 Mo.	\$135.00 Mo.	\$102.00 Mo.

Licensed family Child Care Homes:

Infant/toddlers	Preschool	School Age
\$142.00 Mo.	\$132.00 Mo.	\$124.00 Mo.

Average annual cost for care in a licensed child care center (as of November 2009):

Infant/Toddlers \$10,400.  
Preschool age \$7,228.

- Number of eligible children waiting for child care assistance (as of November 2009): 550 children—This includes the Centralized Eligibility List and Shasta Head Start waiting list.
- Each year it is the Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council’s responsibility to identify local funding priority areas for child care services for General Child Care and Development Programs and the State Preschool Program for new state and federal funds. In the priorities data, May 2009, for Full Day (0-12 years old, income eligible and parent(s) employed), the following are percentages of the General Child Care and Development Programs unmet needs by zip code:

96001 Redding	87%
96002 Redding	86%
96003 Redding	87%
96007 Anderson	86%
96008 Bella Vista	82%
96013 Burney	94%
96019 Shasta Lake	85%
96022 Cottonwood	83%

96047 Igo	93%
96062 Millville	88%
96065 Mont. Creek	100%
96069 Oak Run	100%
96073 Palo Cedro	92%
96088 Shingletown	92%
96096 Whitmore	100%
99999 Other	87%

- Below are the percentages of unmet State Preschool need as of May 2009 per the Shasta County Local Child Care planning Council's data:

96001 Redding	77%
96002 Redding	61%
96003 Redding	82%
96007 Anderson	73%
96008 Bella Vista	0%
96013 Burney	79%
96019 Shasta Lake	95%
96022 Cottonwood	72%
96047 Igo	100%
96062 Millville	100%
96065 Mont. Creek	100%
96069 Oak Run	100%
96073 Palo Cedro	100%
96088 Shingletown	0%
96096 Whitmore	100%
99999 Other	85%

- Parents of children with special needs typically have difficulty finding and maintaining appropriate care settings for their children. Shasta County has 77 family child care providers and 4 child care centers listed in the ECS Resource and Referral data base (November 2009) that offer services to children with special needs. In 2009, the ECS Resource and Referral received 37 calls specifically for special needs providers; all calls were for requests within the Redding, Shasta Lake area.
- According to Shasta County Office of Education, SELPA Program, over the course of the past five years (2004-2009) enrollments in special education programs have decreased by 3.7 % countywide (4,107 in 2004 and 3,957 in 2009).
- Prior to 2008, Redding has seen an enormous retail boom and has become the economic hub for far northern California. Shasta County's economy is dependent on the professional, scientific, and technical services; accommodations and food service; health care; and retail trade sectors (accounting for 72% of industries in

the county). The economy is less dependent on the manufacturing, arts and entertainment, and real estate sectors. Unemployment in Shasta County is still higher than California and the difference is becoming larger than in past years due to the current economic status of California and the United States. In 2008, the County's average unemployment rate was 10.2%, while California's rate was 7.2%. In October 2009, Shasta County's unemployment rate was 14.7%, compared to August 2009 number of 15.1% unemployment rate (Redding Record Searchlight 10/2009).

### **Child Care Supports Healthy Families and Healthy Workplaces**

High quality child care is a good investment both in terms of its contributions toward the growth and development of children and for its contributions to our economy. All children need quality experiences in the very early years, a period of very rapid brain development, in order to foster social, emotional and cognitive development. Studies have shown a child's experiences in his or her early years influence future mental development, social adaptation, school readiness, and academic performance.<sup>(1)</sup> Quality Programs for children include developmentally appropriate activities that are also responsive to the diverse cultural needs of each child. Providers of quality programs are engaged with children and families, and relate to children with care and attention. Quality programs include opportunities for children to play, learn at age appropriate levels, and be exposed to reading and creative expression. When children receive these positive experiences, their brains have the best chances to develop optimally.

Quality child care is a good investment for older children as well. Many school-age children have no after-school supervision and spend large amounts of time alone. Studies have shown that after-school hours are when most violent activity takes place thus putting unsupervised children at risk for engaging in undesirable behaviors. As with younger children, after-school programs for school-age children must be of high quality to reap the biggest benefits for both children and society.

Local industry depends upon a reliable and available workforce. Employers and employees often cite inadequate child care arrangements as one of the top reasons for worker absenteeism, tardiness, and job loss. Business benefits from high quality child care and learning program. According to the National Child Care Information Center, a division of the US Department of Health and Human Services, employers who support the child care needs of their employees experience improvement in recruitment and retention, employee morale, productivity, and business image. Two thirds to three fourths of employers found that benefits of offering child care alternatives, flexible schedule, and other family leave policies either exceeded the costs or were cost-neutral.

## Issues of Quality

According to the Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council, child care is considered “quality” when a combination of four critical elements is present.

1. Care is consistent. Children flourish when they receive care from the same caregiver over time.
2. Caregivers are experienced and educated in early child development, with consideration of cultural appropriateness.
3. Learning environments are emphasized. In addition to nurturing care, programs and facilities emphasize learning opportunities that allow children to blossom both socially and cognitively.
4. Parents are respected and supported as the child’s primary caregiver and first and best teacher.

### Key Areas For Consideration:

- **All activities should be considered which will expand funding for those most in need of services.**

Shasta County continues to have low income household ranking of 52 out of 58 California counties. For families with children less than 18 years old, approximately 20 % live in poverty. Approximately 18,132 children 0-18 are on some type of assistance. Shasta County is ranked lowest in all of California in the percentage of children with health insurance. 550 children on the Centralized Eligibility List and Shasta Head Start waiting list for child care services. The average cost of Infant/toddler care is approximately 25% of the county’s median income. Unemployment rate is over 15 %.

As with previous need’s assessments, a large segment of the population which requires services, cannot afford to pay for them; all activities should be considered which will expand funding for those most in need of services.

- **Child Abuse/Domestic Violence continues to be a serious challenge for Shasta County.**

Shasta County ranked seventh highest in California and first among all counties over 100,000 population. Of the homeless families in Shasta County, about 14% have children, while the county’s rate of children living in foster care is more than twice California’s rate. Child Abuse/Domestic Violence continues to be a serious challenge for Shasta County and the Shasta County Local Child Care Planning Council should reflect the Council membership to include these areas of challenge.

- **Shasta County has been able to maintain its supply of child care providers. Public education efforts might be undertaken with the purpose of assisting parents to better understand the components of quality child care.**

With 70 licensed child care centers and 209 licensed family child care homes totaling 5701 total licensed child care slots, Shasta County has been able to maintain its supply of child care providers through targeted recruitment efforts (Shasta County Office of Education, Early Childhood Services, Resource and Referral; Family Child Care Association of Shasta & Tehama Counties, etc.). However, almost 60% of families with children in subsidized child care choose unlicensed child care. Public education efforts might be undertaken with the purpose of assisting parents to better understand the components of quality child care where caregivers are experienced and educated in early childhood development. Further education for the purpose of assisting parents to better understand how the pricing of child care services (i.e., lower costs) to parents is related to lower quality programs and higher rates of turnover given the low wages paid to staff.

Furthermore, although there appears to be sufficient care in general in the County, efforts should be made into the future to continue recruitment of new providers to care for specific age and populations such as caregivers of infants and toddlers, providers for children with special needs, diverse culture/language care, and non-traditional hours care.

Submitted by:

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