

Highlights of Illinois Child Care Survey

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As a background for deliberations of the Financing Universal Early Care and Education Project, this report highlights information collected on current utilization of early care and education in Illinois. The following text and attached charts summarize data collected by a general population survey of Illinois parents with children birth to 12 years old and an over sample of parents in low-income census tracts of Chicago with children birth to 5 years old. The sample consists of responses from 1,740 parents, including 1,021 parents of children 0 to 5 years old and 719 parents of children 6 to 12 years old. Responses are weighted to appropriately reflect the probability of selection between the two samples in this analysis, resulting in a combined sample that is representative of the state as a whole. We also weight the sample to reflect the age distribution of children in Illinois and annual child care utilization patterns. The survey was conducted from August to December 2002 by the Social and Economic Survey Research Center at Washington State University, under direction of the Human Services Policy Center (HSPC) at the University of Washington. The survey is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Child Care Division.

In this document, information is generally presented either for broad age groups (0-5 and 5-12 years old) or detailed age groups (<1, 1-2, 3-5, 5-8, and 9-12 year(s) old). When information is provided for detailed age groups, 5-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 3- and 4-year-olds, and 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 8-year-olds. When information is provided for broad age groups, 5-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds, and 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds. The primary exception to this convention is Chart 2, which provides the number of children in each type of care based solely on age.

For the purposes of this report, we present information on three broad types of child care: 1) center care, Head Start (HS) or Early HS, 2) Family Child Care (FCC), and 3) Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care. Center care includes HS, or Early HS¹ (when appropriate to a given age group), licensed child care centers, nursery schools and pre-schools, but not Illinois' pre-

¹ Early HS supports a range of models including both center- and home-based programs. For the purposes of this report, we have not made a distinction between Head Start and Early Head Start and, thus, have included Early Head Start participation within the category of center care. Removing Early Head Start from this category would not affect the results as it affects such a small proportion of children.

kindergarten program.² Where applicable, we also provide information specifically on Illinois' pre-kindergarten program. FCC is defined as family child care, day care homes, or family day care where care is provided by a non-relative in the caregivers home. We define FFN care as any regular, non-parental care other than a licensed center, program, or family child care home. FFN care thus includes relatives, friends, neighbors, and other non-parental adult caregivers such as sitters or nannies. The definitions for FCC and FFN care do not distinguish between whether or not the care is or should be licensed according to Illinois regulations and likely some overlap between the two categories exists.

Percent of Children in Child Care

The percent of all children using *any amount* of each type of child care each week is presented in Chart 1 and summarized below:

- ✓ Center care, HS, or Early HS is used by approximately one in five (20%) of 1- to 2-year-olds and more than half (58%) of 3- to 5-year-olds. Whereas only 9% of infants, 9% of 5- to 8-year-olds, and 2% of 9- to 12-year-olds are in center care.
- ✓ FCC is used by between 7% and 19% of children in each age group.
- ✓ FFN care is utilized by approximately half (51%) of all children, and FFN care use is fairly consistent across all age categories, ranging from 46% for 9- to 12-year-olds to 57% for 1- to 2-year-olds.
- ✓ Of 3- and 4-year-olds, 25% attend pre-kindergarten.

Number of Children in Child Care

Chart 2 translates the percent of children in care into an estimated number of Illinois children in each type of non-parental care for any amount of time each week:

- ✓ Of the 1,060,000 children age 0-5, 348,000 spend time in center care, HS, or Early HS; 170,000 in FCC; and 573,000 in FFN care.
- ✓ Of the 1,299,000 children age 6-12, 38,000 spend time in center care, 108,000 in FCC, and 625,000 in FFN care.

Primary Care Arrangements

Information on children's primary non-parental care arrangements is presented in Charts 3a and 3b. The primary care arrangement is defined as the non-parental care arrangement used at least five hours a week and more than any other non-parental care arrangement. Chart 3a presents information on center care, FCC, and FFN care primary arrangements for 0- to 5-year-olds and 5- to 12-year-olds. Chart 3b shows the percent of 3- and 4-year-old children in center care, FCC, and FFN care primary arrangements as well as those with Illinois' publicly-financed pre-kindergarten program as their primary care type. We present the primary care arrangement information for 3- and 4-year-olds separately because pre-kindergarten is not a care option available to all children birth to five.

² Illinois has a publicly financed pre-kindergarten program for poor and at-risk preschoolers. Children participating in this program are typically 3- and 4-year-olds.

- ✓ Center care, HS, or Early HS is the primary care arrangement for one-quarter (26%) of children between the ages of 0 and 5 years old, but is the primary care arrangement for only about 3% of children between 5 and 12 years old [Chart 3a].
- ✓ FCC is the primary care arrangement for only 8% of children age 0-5 and 3% of children age 5-12. [Chart 3a].
- ✓ FFN care is the primary arrangement for approximately 25% of children age 0-5 and 26% of children age 5-12 [Chart 3a].
- ✓ Of 3- and 4-year-olds, approximately 7% have pre-kindergarten, 43% have center care, 8% have FCC, and 17% have FFN care as their primary care type [Chart 3b].

Approximately 38% of 0- to 5-year-olds and 67% of 5- to 12-year-olds are in no single non-parental care arrangement at least five hours per week.

Hours per Week in Care

We present the median number of hours per week children spend in each type of care by detailed age groups in Chart 4a. This information is summarized below:³

- ✓ For young children (age 0-5) in center care, HS, or Early HS, the median number of care hours is 30 hours per week for birth to 1-year olds, 35 hours per week for 1- to 2- year olds, and 15 hours per week for 3- to 5-year-olds. Similarly, the median number of care hours for young children in FCC is 30 hours per week for 0- to 1-year-olds, 35 hours per week for 1- to 2-year-olds, and 28 hours per week for 3- to 5-year olds. The median hours in care for young children in FFN care ranges from 8 to 12 hours per week.
- ✓ For school-age children in center care, the median number of care hours is 24 hours per week for 5- to 8-year-olds, and 9 hours per week for 9- to 12-year-olds. The median number of FCC hours for school-age children is 9 hours per week for 5- to 8-year-olds and 4 hours per week for 9- to 12-year-olds. For both groups of school-age children, median hours in FFN care is approximately 8 hours per week.
- ✓ Hours in care vary by specific age groups for center care and FCC. Older children (9- to 12-year-olds) spend less time in center care and FCC than their younger counterparts. FFN care hours do not vary significantly by age group.
- ✓ The median number of care hours for 3- and 4-year-olds in pre-kindergarten is 16 hours per week.

Charts 4b, 4c, and 4d present the distribution of the number of care hours per week for center care, FCC, and FFN care. The care hour distributions indicate that many children spend less

³ Most children (75%) in FFN care are in that care less than 20 hours a week. However, a small proportion of children (approximately 10%) are in FFN care for a significant amount of time each week—more than 40 hours. These cases increase the mean for all children in FFN care to approximately 15 hours per week, thereby masking the actual distribution of FFN care hours, which is centered around fewer hours. Under these circumstances, the median, which is the number of hours per week at which half the children are in care less than that amount and half the children are in care more than that amount, is a better measure of central tendency than the mean. For example, the median number of FFN care hours for all children is 8 hours per week, compared to the mean of 15 hours per week. The median and mean weekly hours in center and FCC are not significantly different from each other (i.e., the center care mean is 24 and median is 20 hours per week; the FCC median is 15 and the FCC mean is 21 hours per week).

than 11 hours per week in each care type, especially for FCC and FFN care, as summarized below:

- ✓ Chart 4b illustrates that 30% of young children spend less than 11 hours per week in center care and one-quarter (23%) spend between 31 and 40 hours per week in center care. For older children (age 5-12), 38% spend less than 11 hours per week in center care.
- ✓ For young children in FCC (age 0-5), Chart 4c illustrates that 28% of these children spend less than 11 hours per week in FCC and one-third (35%) spend between 31 and 40 hours per week in FCC. For older children (age 5-12), 72% spend less than 11 hours per week in FCC.
- ✓ For young children in FFN care (age 0-5), Chart 4d illustrates that more than half of them (53%) spend less than 11 hours per week in FFN care. Likewise, for older children (age 5-12), 66% spend less than 11 hours per week in FFN care. In addition to any parental preferences for this type of care, consideration in choosing FFN care over center care or FCC may involve the availability of part-time care.

Percent of All Care Hours in Each Type of Care

Taking into account how many children use each type of care and how much time they spend in that care, we compute the proportion of all non-parental care hours provided by each care type. These results are presented in Chart 5 and summarized below. We report information on 3- and 4-year-olds separately because of their potential participation in pre-kindergarten, which is presented as a separate category of care that is not available to older or younger children.

- ✓ Centers, HS, and Early HS provide one-quarter (27%) of the care for all children birth to 12 years old, including 39% of the care hours for all 3- and 4-year-olds and 41% of the care hours for 5-year-olds not in kindergarten. Center care comprises only 3% of all care hours for 9- to 12-year-olds.
- ✓ FCC accounts for 17% of all care hours for all children birth to 12 years old, with the proportion of all care hours in FCC ranging between 9% (for 9- to 12-year-olds) and 25% (for 1- to 2-year-olds).
- ✓ FFN care accounts for 51% of all non-parental care for all children birth to 12 years old and is highest for infants (62%) and school-age children (63% for 5- to 8-year-olds and 88% for 9- to 12-year-olds).
- ✓ Pre-kindergarten provides 20% of all care hours for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Use of Evening and Weekend Care

Approximately 36% of all 0- to 5-year-olds and 31% of all 5- to 12-year-olds participate in some form of non-parental care during evening or weekend hours. Among children who are involved in some type of non-parental care, approximately 52% of 0- to 5-year-olds and 63% of 5- to 12-year-olds are in some care on evenings or weekends. The percent of children participating in evening or weekend care for each care type is detailed in Chart 6 and summarized below:

- ✓ Only 14% of all children in center care, HS, or Early HS are in evening or weekend care, with the use of evening and weekend center care ranging from 6% for 9- to 12-year-olds to 25% for 5- to 8-year-olds.
- ✓ Approximately 36% of children in FCC are in some evening or weekend care, ranging from 28% for 5- to 8-year-olds to 41% for 1- to 2-year-olds.
- ✓ Children in FFN care have the highest rates of evening and weekend care, with approximately two-thirds (65%) of all children in FFN care in some evening or weekend care. Use of evening and weekend care by children in FFN care is relatively constant across the age groups.

The proportion of all non-parental care that occurs during evenings and weekends is detailed in Chart 7 and summarized below:

- ✓ For children in centers, evening or weekend center care hours account for a very small percentage (7% overall) of all center hours.
- ✓ Evening or weekend FCC hours account for about 25% of all FCC hours for all children.
- ✓ Evening or weekend hours as a percent of care hours are highest for children in FFN care, for whom evening and weekend hours account for approximately 41% of all FFN care hours.

Based on the above results, a major consideration in choosing FFN care over center care or FCC may involve the availability or desirability of that care during evening or weekend hours as well as parental preferences for this type of care during non-standard hours.

Children with Special Needs

Information on child care for children with special needs is presented in Chart 8 and summarized below. For the purpose of this report, children with special needs are defined as children who are reported by their parents to have a physical, emotional, developmental, or behavioral condition that affects decisions about their care.

- ✓ Approximately 4% of children age 0-5 and 8% of children age 5-12 are children with special needs.
- ✓ We find no significant differences between the percent of children with special needs in each type of care, with the exception that younger children with special needs are significantly more likely to be in center care, HS, or Early HS than younger children without special needs.

Parent Values and Reasons for Selecting Primary Care Arrangement

Information on parents' ranked values regarding child care is reported in Chart 9. The values questions were asked of all parents regardless of whether or not they use care or what type(s) of care they use. Charts 10-13 report the main reasons for choosing each type of primary care.⁴

⁴ These charts illustrate parent-reported values and reasons for selecting the primary care arrangement. We will conduct a multivariate analysis later in this project to estimate the relative impact of parental

Parents consistently rank two characteristics of child care as “most important,” regardless of the child’s age [Chart 9]:

- ✓ Forty-nine percent of parents with children 0 to 5 years old and 50% of parents with children 5 to 12 years old rank the way the child and caregiver relate to each other as the most important aspect of care.
- ✓ Training and education of the caregiver is identified by approximately 22% of parents as the most important characteristic of care.
- ✓ The number of children per caregiver and the types of activities or programs offered were identified by between 7% and 11% of parents as the most important characteristics of care. Flexible and convenient hours, affordable cost, and convenient location are all identified by less than 5% of parents as the most important characteristics of care.

Parents report a diversity of reasons for choosing center care, HS, or Early HS as the primary care arrangement for their child, and these reasons vary by the age of the child [Chart 10].

- ✓ For children age 0-5:
 - Characteristics of the program⁵ (at approximately 35%) is the most frequently cited main reason for selecting center care, HS, or Early HS, followed by location; knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver; and recommendation of a friend, neighbor, or relative, all at 12%.
 - Approximately 5% of parents report convenient hours or availability and training or education of staff as the main reason for selecting center care, HS, or Early HS.
- ✓ For children age 5-12:
 - Knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver (at 30%) and characteristics of the program (18%) are the most frequently cited reasons for selecting center care, followed location at 12% and convenient hours or availability at 9%.
 - Less than 6% of parents report location or training or education of staff and recommendation of a friend, neighbor, or relative as the main reason for selecting center care.

The main reason for selecting pre-kindergarten as the primary care type is characteristics of the program (37%), followed by location at 26%. Less than 15% of parents identified cost, convenience hours or availability, and knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver as the main reason for selecting pre-kindergarten as the primary care type [Chart 11].

The main reasons for selecting FCC as the primary care type are different than those for selecting center care, with a greater emphasis placed on knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver and a lower emphasis placed on characteristics of the program [Chart 12].

- ✓ For young children (age 0-5) and school age children (age 5 to 12), knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver (at 40% and 69% respectively) is the most frequently cited reason for selecting FCC.

values on choice of care while taking into account how these values might vary by parental characteristics such as education and income.

⁵ Parent responses categorized as ‘characteristics of the program’ include liking the activities, the curriculum, or the program itself.

- ✓ No other main reason for selecting FCC is cited by more than 13% of parents. In other words, except for the predominance of knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver, parents report a variety of different main reasons for selecting FCC.

As with FFC, parents selecting FFN care as the primary care type place greater importance on knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver than parents selecting center care [Chart 13].

- ✓ For young children (age 0-5) and school age children (age 5 to 12), knowing, trusting, or liking the caregiver (at 56% and 50% respectively) is the most frequently cited reason for selecting FFN care, followed by convenient hours or availability.
- ✓ Less than 6% of parents report cost or location as the main reason for selecting FFN care.

Child:Adult Ratios

Parent-reported child:adult ratios for the different types of care are presented in Chart 14a and summarized below:

- ✓ Centers, HS, and Early HS average 5.7 children per adult for children 0 to 5 years old and 5.3 children per adult for children 5 to 12 years old.
- ✓ Licensed FCC's average 3.6 children per adult for young children (age 0-5) and 3.1 children per adult for school-age children (age 5-12).
- ✓ FFN care averages 1.3 children per adult for young children and 1.4 children per adult for school-aged children.

The distributions of parent-reported child:adult ratios for center care and licensed FCC are provided in Chart 14b and summarized below:

- ✓ For both young (age 0-5) and older (age 5-12) children in center care, the majority (82% to 84%) are in settings with reported ratios of less than 8 children per adult.
- ✓ For young children (age 0-5) in licensed FCC, 93% of children are in settings with reported ratios of less than 6 children per adult. For older children (age 5-12), two thirds (65%) are in settings with reported ratios of less than 3 children per adult.

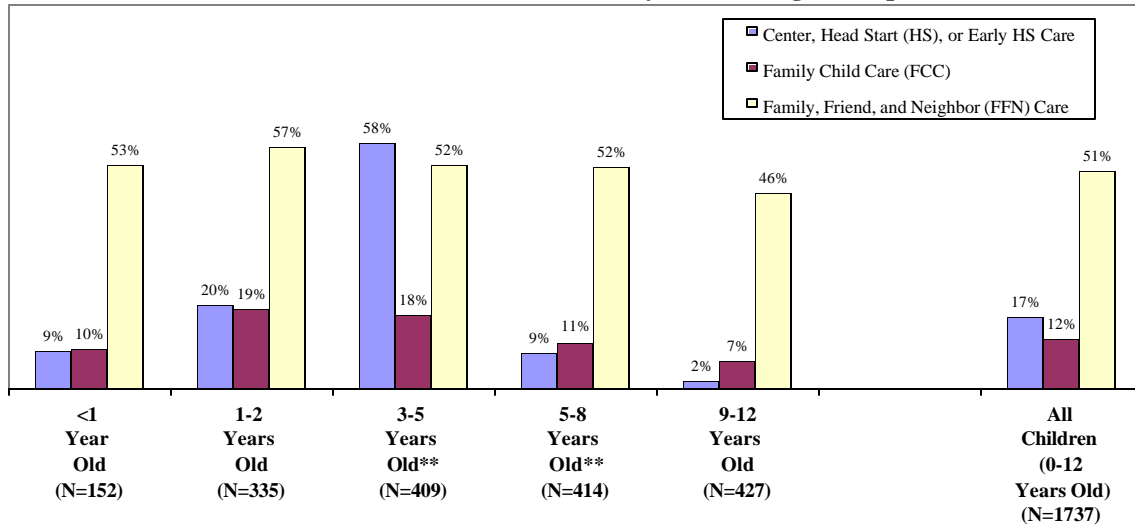
Payment for Care

Information on payment for care is presented in Charts 15 and 16 and summarized below:

- ✓ Among mothers who are employed or in school or training and are income eligible, only 18% report receiving a government subsidy for child care [Chart 15].⁶ Subsidy participation ranges between 13% and 22%, depending on family income level.
- ✓ Parents of infants are less likely than parents of other children to pay for the relative care they use [Chart 16].

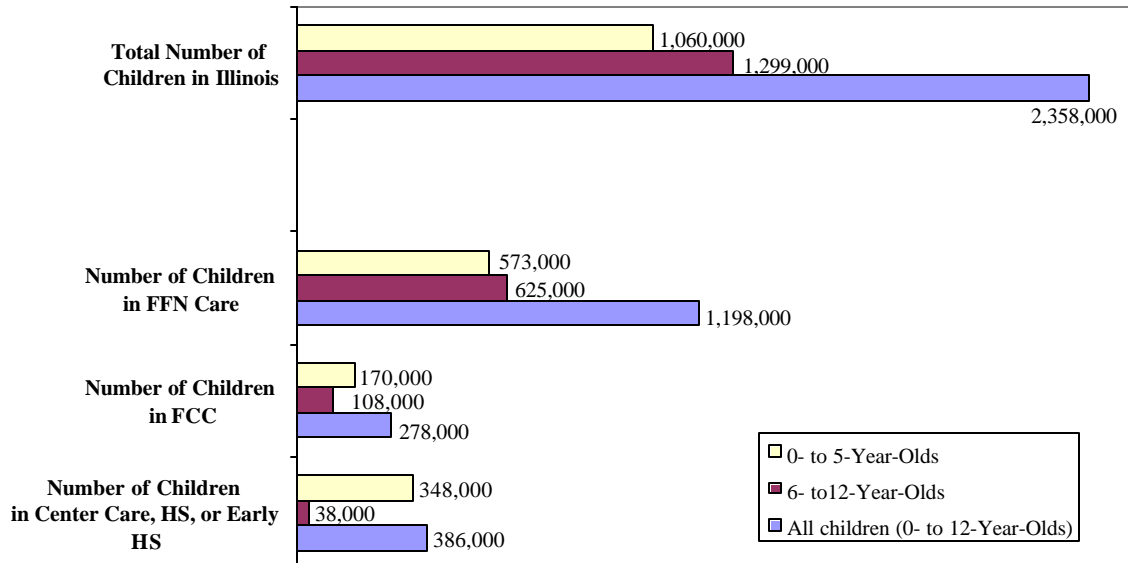
⁶ In Illinois, eligibility is based on income and family size. The values shown on the table indicate the percent of families who obtain subsidies of the total number of eligible families (based on Illinois' family size and income eligibility criteria) in each income bracket.

Chart 1: Percent of All Children Birth to 12 Years Old in Any Amount of Center Care, FCC, and FFN Care* by Detailed Age Groups



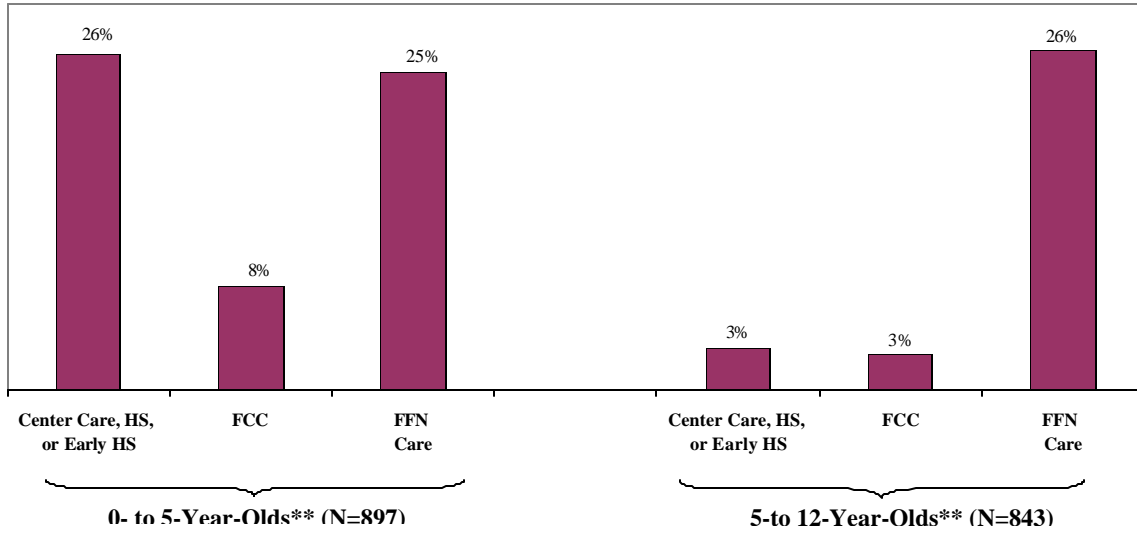
* Categories are not mutually exclusive. In addition to the care types shown, 25% of 3- and 4-year-olds participate in pre-kindergarten.
 ** Five-year-olds not attending kindergarten are grouped with 3- and 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds attending kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 8-year-olds.

Chart 2: Population Totals for Children Birth to 12 Years Old in Any Amount of Center Care, FCC, and FFN Care*



* Categories are not mutually exclusive.

Chart 3a: Percent of All Children for Whom Each Type of Care is the Primary Care Arrangement*



* The primary care arrangement is defined as the non-parental care arrangement used at least five hours a week and more than any other non-parental care arrangement.

**Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 3b: Percent of All 3- and 4-Year-Old Children in Each Type of Primary Care (N=361)

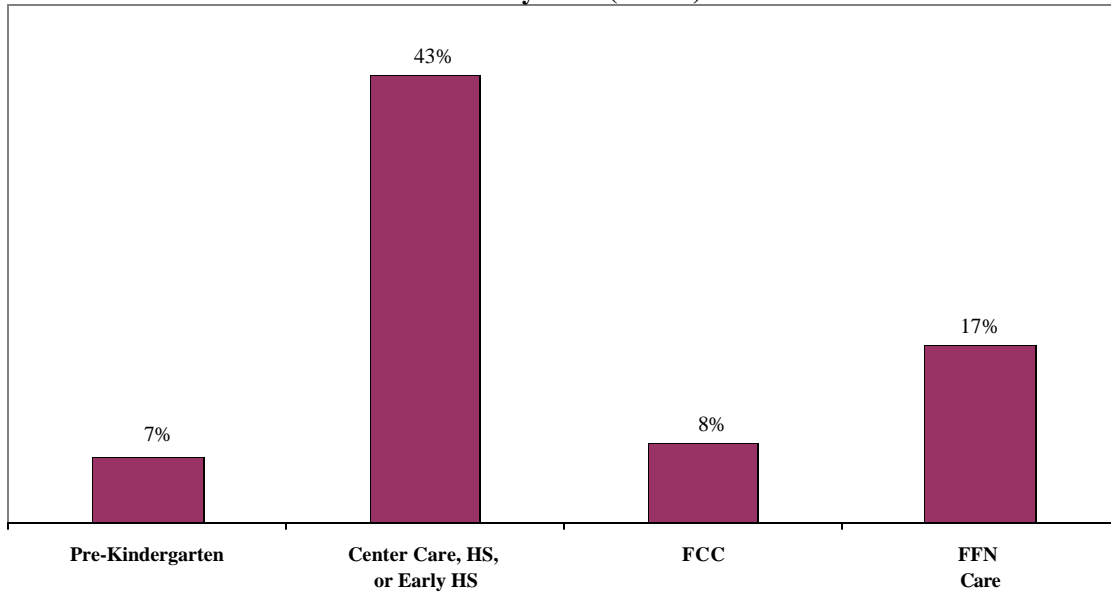
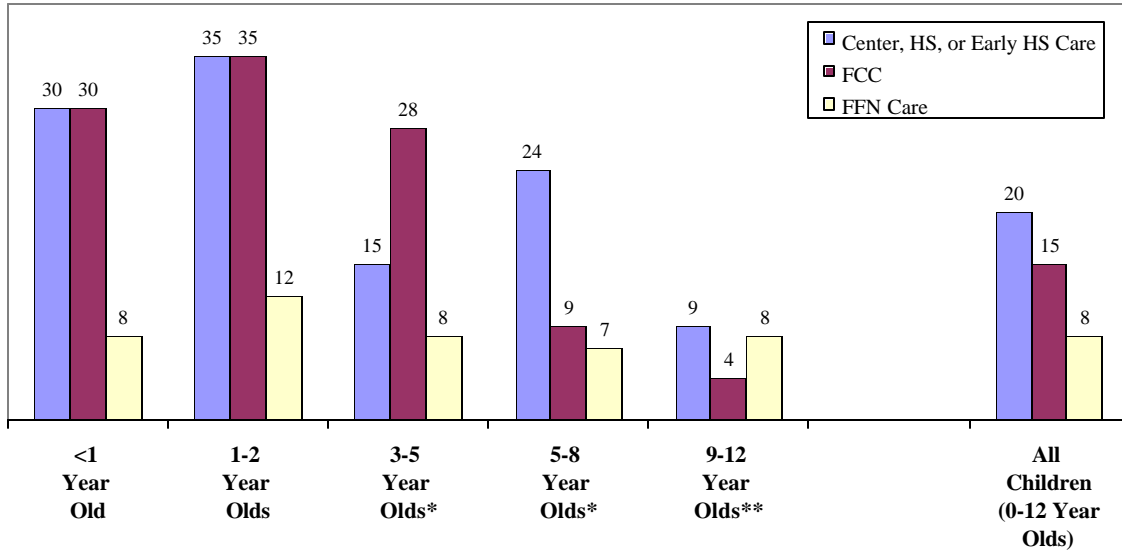
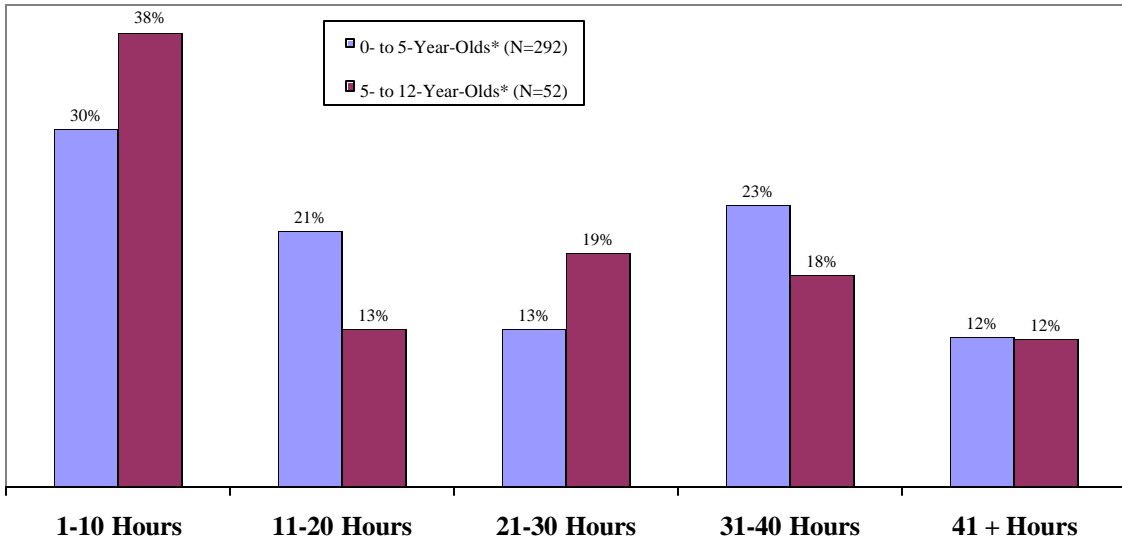


Chart 4a: Median Hours per Week of Center Care, FCC, and FFN Care for Children in Each Type of Care by Detailed Age Groups



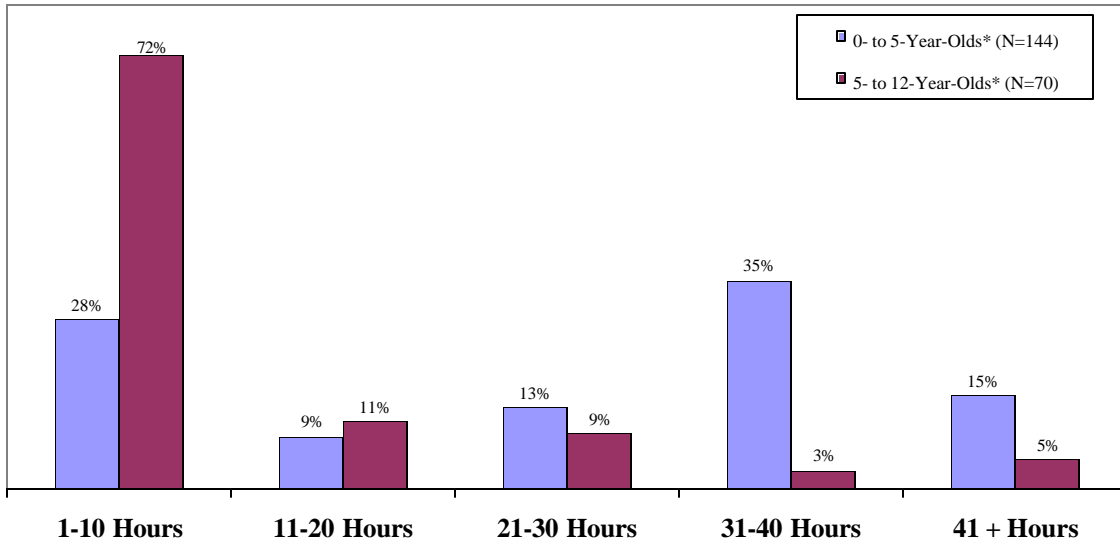
* Five-year-olds not attending kindergarten are grouped with 3- and 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds attending kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 8-year-olds. In addition to the median care hours indicated in this chart, the median number of care hours for 3- and 4-year-olds in pre-k is 16 hours per week.
 ** Value for center care hours is based on less than 10 observations.

Chart 4b: Children in Center Care, HS, or Early HS by Number of Hours of Care Per Week



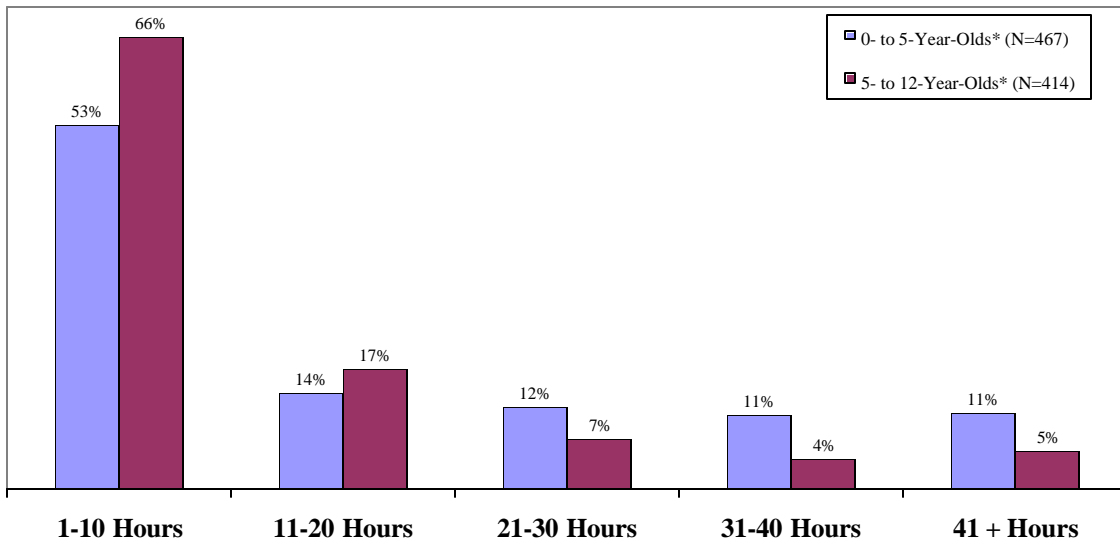
* Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds; 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

**Chart 4c: Children in FCC by
Number of Hours of Care Per Week**



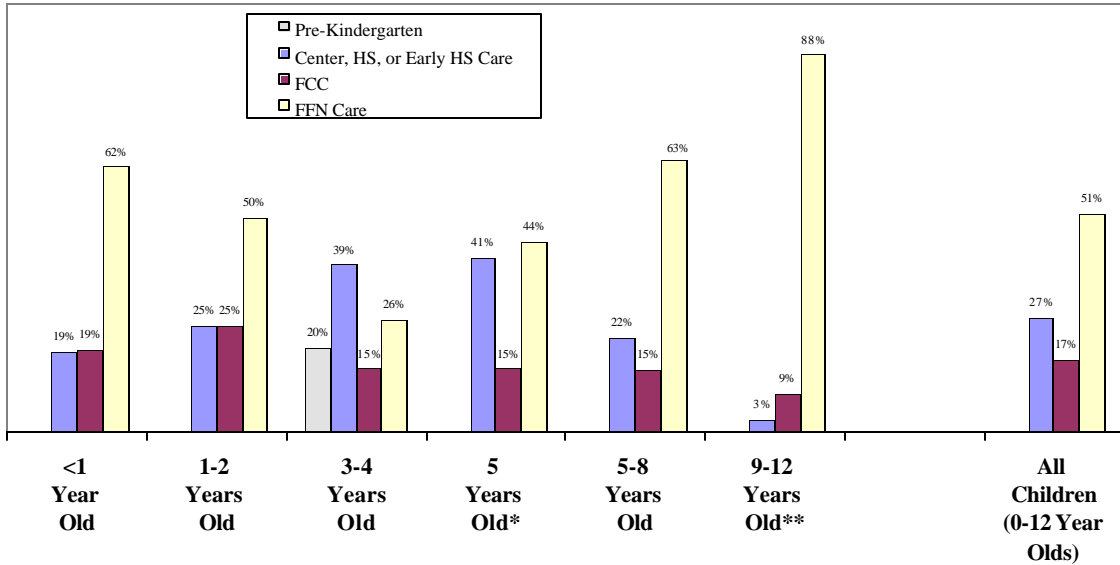
* Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds; 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

**Chart 4d: Children in FFN Care by
Number of Hours of Care Per Week**



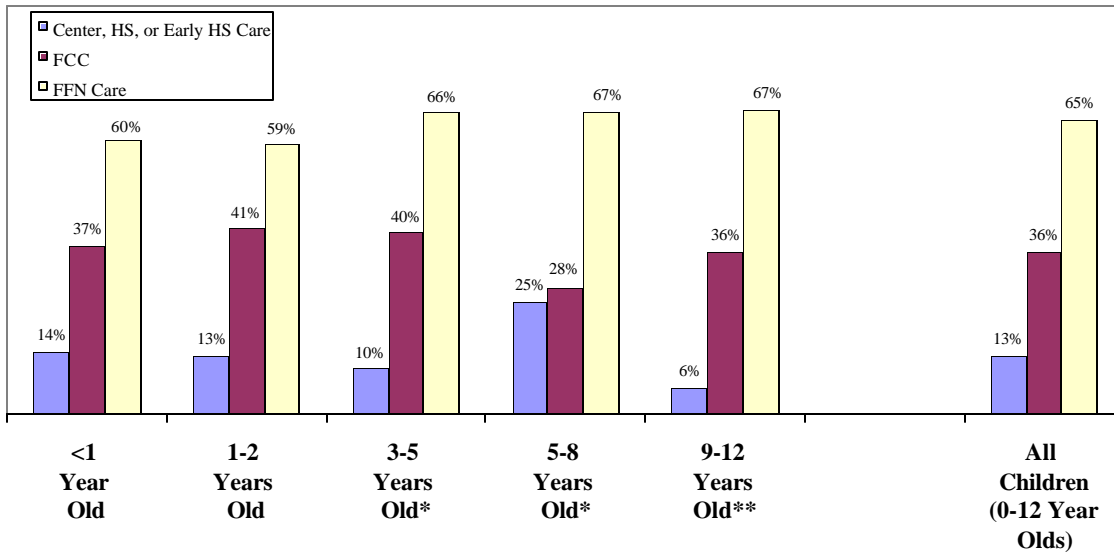
* Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds; 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 5: Percent of All Non-Parental Care Hours in Each Type of Care by Detailed Age Groups



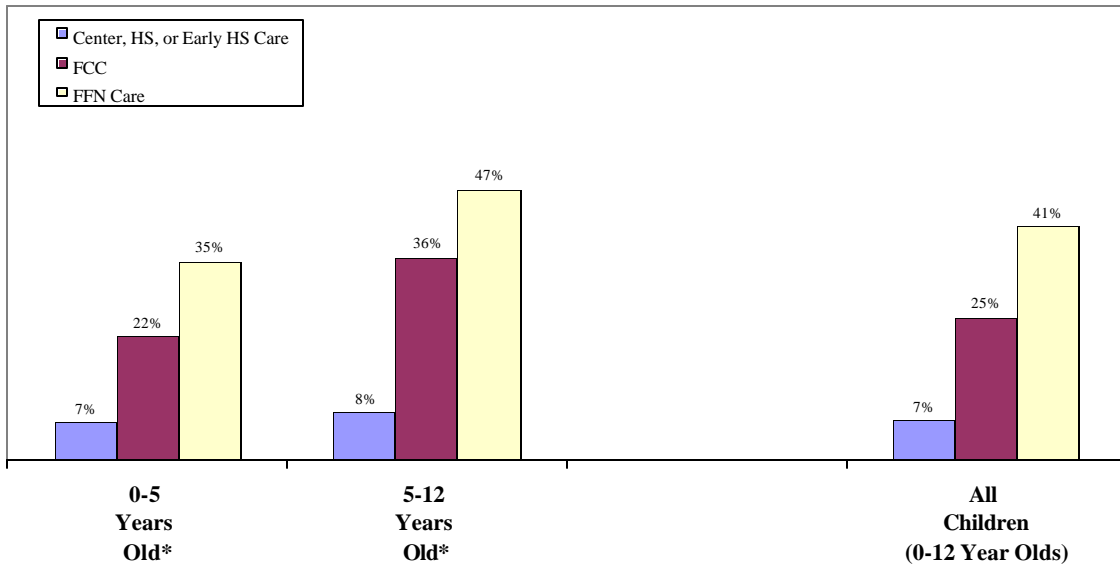
* Five-year-olds not in kindergarten. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 8-year-olds.
 ** Value for center care is based on less than 10 observations.

Chart 6: Percent of Children in Each Type of Care Who Participate in Evening or Weekend Care



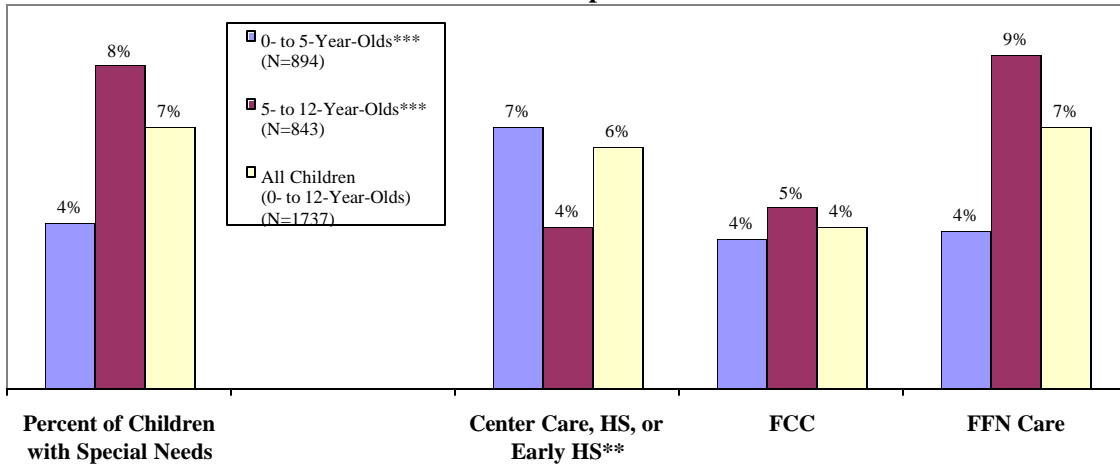
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 3- and 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 8-year-olds.
 ** Value for center care is based on less than 10 observations.

Chart 7: Percent of All Non-Parental Care Hours That Are Evening or Weekend Hours



*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- and 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 8: Percent of Children in Center Care, FCC, or FFN Care with Special Needs*



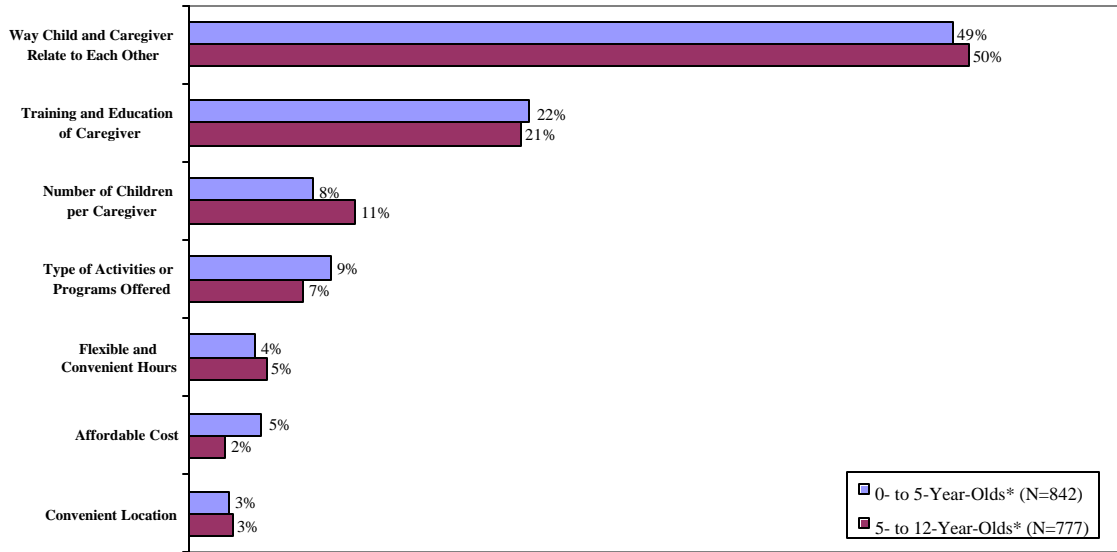
* For the purpose of this report, children with special needs are defined as children who are reported by their parents to have a physical, emotional, developmental, or behavioral condition that affects decisions about their care.

**Differences between children with special needs and those without special needs in the likelihood of using each type of care are significant at $p < 0.05$ for children less than 5 years old (not in kindergarten) for center care, Head Start or Early Head Start.

*** Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds; 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

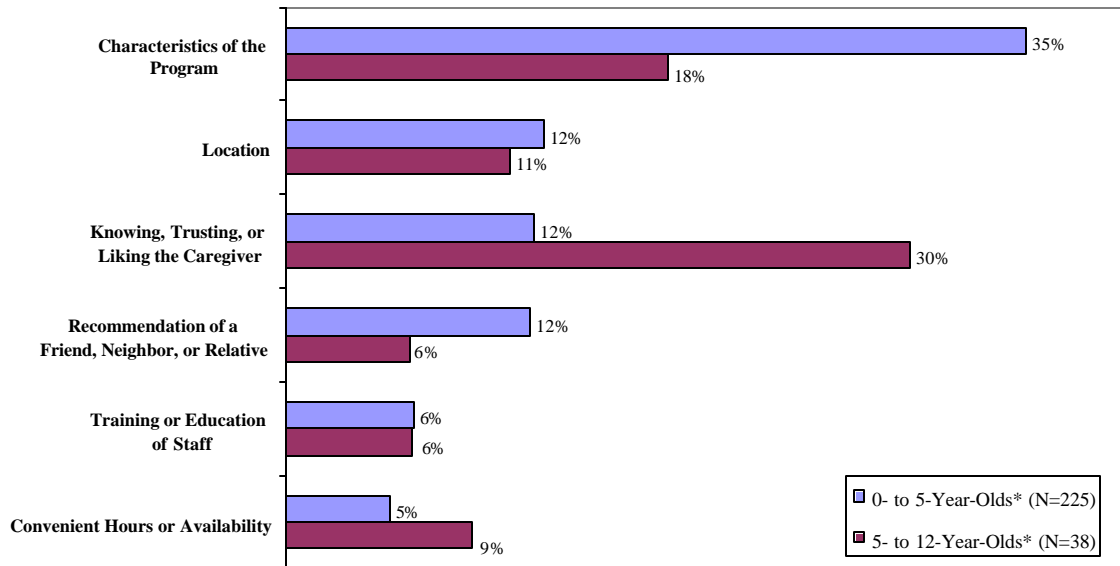
Note: In addition to the values shown, 20% of children in pre-kindergarten have special needs, which is significant at $p < 0.05$.

Chart 9: Percent of Parents Ranking Each Characteristic of Child Care as the Most Important



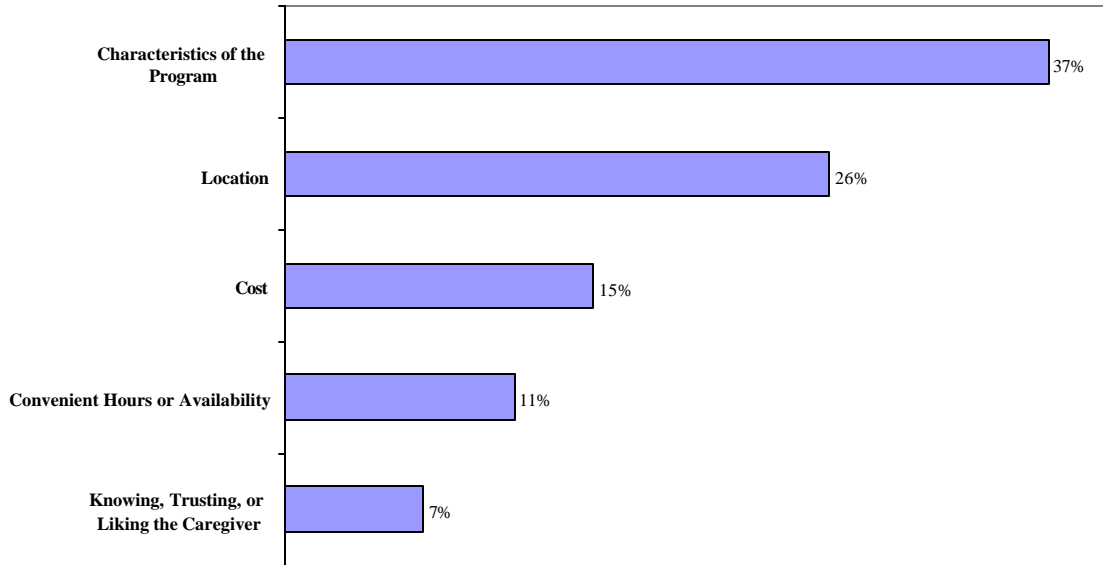
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 10: Percent of Parents Reporting Each as a Main Reason for Choosing Center Care, HS, or Early HS as the Primary Care Arrangement



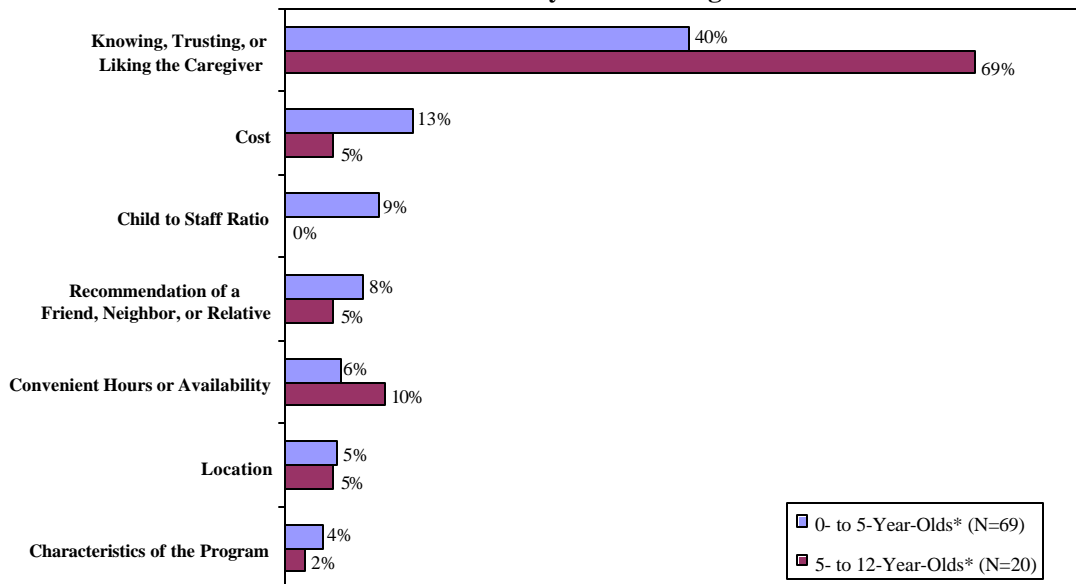
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 11: Percent of Parents Reporting Each as a Main Reason for Choosing Pre-Kindergarten as the Primary Care Arrangement* (N=22)



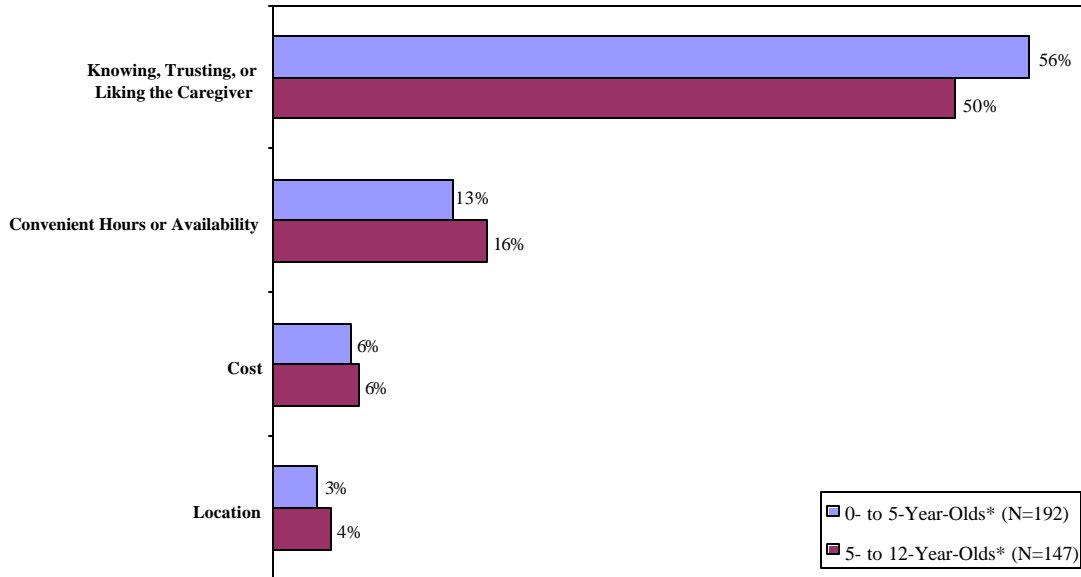
*Pre-kindergarten is applicable for 3- and 4-year-old children only.

Chart 12: Percent of Parents Reporting Each as a Main Reason for Choosing FCC as the Primary Care Arrangement



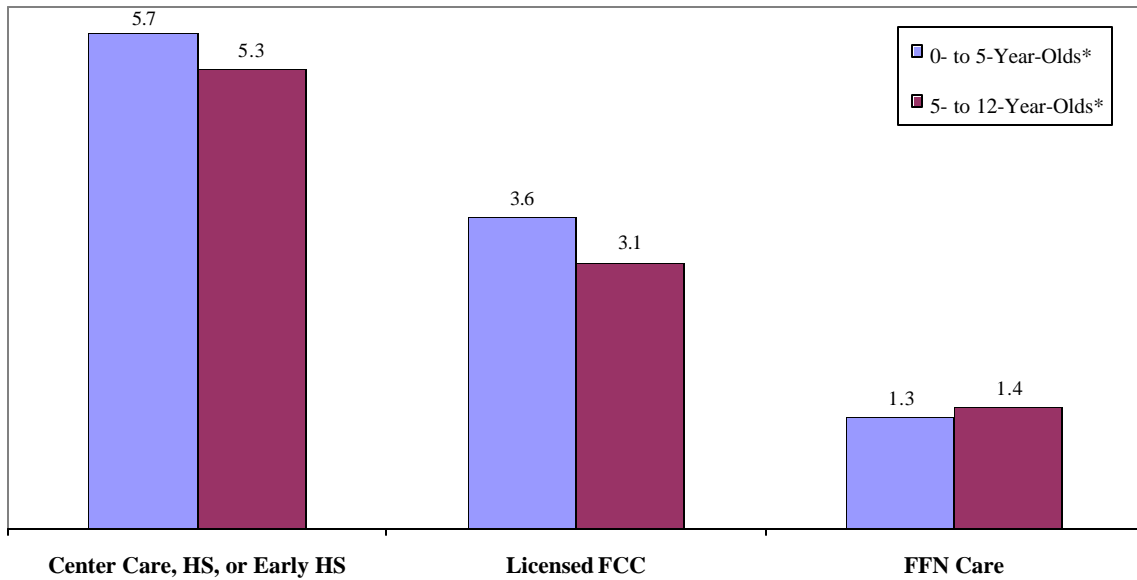
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 13: Percent of Parents Reporting Each as a Main Reason for Choosing FFN Care as the Primary Care Arrangement



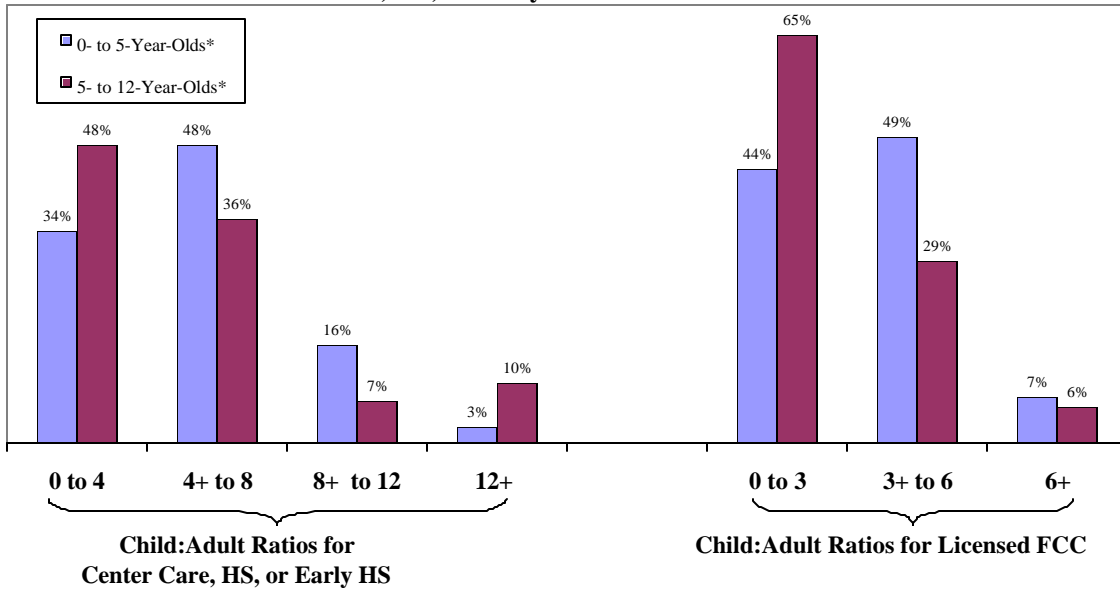
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 14a: Average Parent-Reported Child:Adult Ratio for Each Type of Care by Age Group



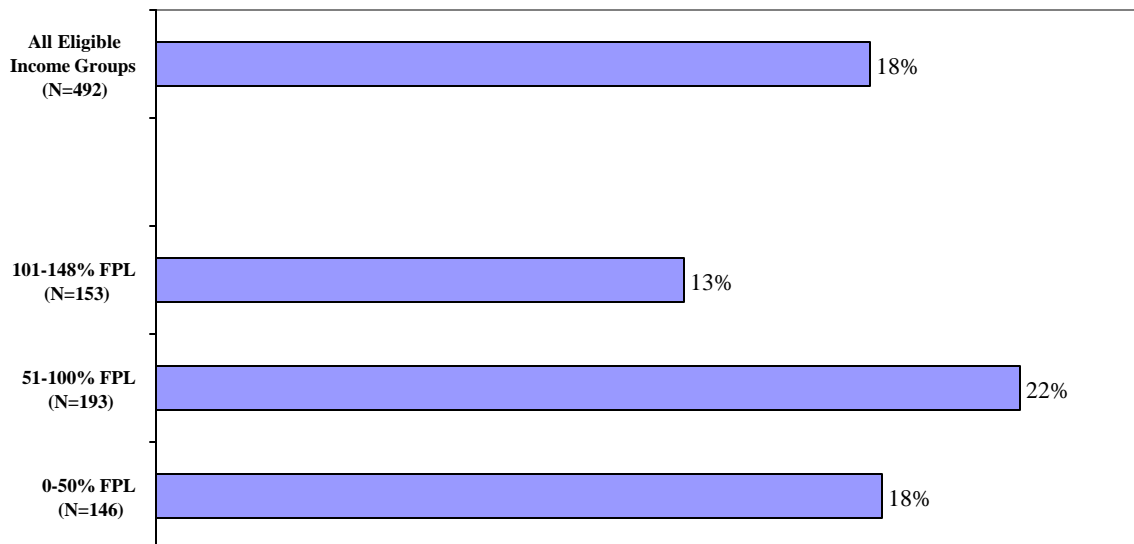
*Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds. Five-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 14b: Distribution of Parent-Reported Child:Adult Ratios for Center Care, HS, or Early HS and Licensed FCC



* Five-year-olds not in kindergarten are grouped with 0- to 4-year-olds; 5-year-olds in kindergarten are grouped with 6- to 12-year-olds.

Chart 15: Child Care Subsidy Participation Among All Mothers Who are Employed or in School/Training by Detailed Income Group (for income eligible families based on family size)



**Chart 16: Percent of Parents Paying
for the Relative Care They Use by Detailed age Groups**

