

**2024**

**Alabama Cost of Child Care Study  
Market Rate Survey & Narrow Cost Analysis**

Office of Child Care Subsidy  
Child Care Services Division  
Alabama Department of Human Resources

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Child Care Market Rate Study and Narrow Cost Analysis Report for the year 2024 serves as a comprehensive analysis conducted by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (ALDHR), specifically the Child Care Services Division (CCSD), in collaboration with Alabama State University (ASU). This report fulfills the federal requirement mandated by the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), aiming to assess the current market rates of child care services in Alabama and to establish subsidy payment rates that ensure equitable access for program-eligible families.

The CCSD oversees the compliance and licensing of child care and home facilities, ensuring they meet minimum requirements. It is also the lead agency for implementing the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and is responsible for developing, implementing, and administering all services authorized under the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP). The mission of the CCSP is to provide low-income families with equal access to affordable, quality child care services so that parents can pursue work, obtain education, and participate in training opportunities without the barriers of affordability to quality care for their children.

The CCDF requires lead agencies to conduct a market rate survey (MRS) and narrow cost analysis (NCA) every three years to assess current child care market rates and set child care subsidy payment rates at levels that provide program-eligible families with congruent access to child care services as families who pay for child care services without assistance<sup>1</sup>. The Office of Child Care Subsidy is responsible for ensuring a MRS and NCA are completed to assess current child care rates and costs to inform adjustments to the subsidy amounts. The purpose of this analysis, which fulfills the CCDF requirement, is to gather data from providers in the state to (a) inform subsidy rate prices that provide subsidy-eligible households with child care in Alabama and (b) provide information on the child care market relevant to the Child Care Subsidy Program. Additionally, the results of the 2024 survey will be used by CCSD to assess the need for changes to the state's child care payments and as a planning tool for other ADHR programs and offices.

ALDHR will utilize the results to provide the public with information regarding child care costs across the state, enabling comparisons of prices across various categories of child care providers and geographical locations. This report, organized in sections, meets all federal requirements and best practices in conducting an analysis. The sections included within this report are intended to provide a comprehensive introduction, explanation of data collection methods, review of data, and presentation of new cost analysis.

A partnership was formed between CCSD and ASU to conduct the MRS and Cost Analysis. The ASU research team conducted a three-part study to collect information regarding child care rates, costs, and the subsidy gap across different provider types, geographic locations, age groups, and engagement in the Alabama Quality Rating and Improvement System. The contracted researchers were responsible for completing the following deliverables:

- Conduct a Market Rate Survey for all child care providers in the State of Alabama to obtain child care rates for children in various age categories and provider types;
- Conduct a Narrow Cost Analysis (NCA) at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of child care rates by provider type in the nine (9) Alabama regions
- Collect and report on several categories: geographic location, type of care, age group of children, and the level the provider participates in the Alabama Quality Rating and Improvement System;

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<sup>1</sup> Child Care Development Fund Final Rule,” Federal Register 81, no. 90 (September 30, 2016): 73, accessed March 2021, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-09-30/pdf/2016-22986.pdf>.



















### SECTION 3: MARKET RATE SURVEY

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) requires child care lead agencies to submit information every three years on payment rates to ensure compliance as outlined in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, when submitting the Market Rate Analysis, the HHS requires the lead agency to submit sufficient information on the estimated cost of care by age span of children, geographical location, and provider type. The HHS recommends doing so by either utilizing market rate survey results or an alternative methodological approach. In this study, the lead agency uses the MRS as the primary method, along with a cost analysis.

A Market Rate Survey (MRS) was administered to providers to determine the fees providers charge for full-time child care. This section documents the distribution of prices in Alabama’s child care markets, which helps maintain equal access and affordability for parents who are Child Care and Development Fund eligible compared to those who are not. The data from the MRS analysis informs the Narrow Cost Analysis (NCA), which guides the decision-making process to reevaluate agency child care reimbursement rates. The MRS data is disaggregated by provider type (day care centers, family child care homes, and group child care homes), geographic location, and age of the children. The report's analysis was based on replies from 1,250 day care centers, family child care homes, and group child care homes (i.e., providers).

Providers were asked to provide monthly or weekly rates for children in the following age categories: under 1 year, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, and school-aged. For providers selecting the monthly option, the monthly rates were divided by 4.3 to convert to weekly rates. The maximum amount per provider for rates for children under 1, 1 year, and 2 years old for each provider, as applicable, was used to determine the average weekly rates for children under 2.5 years old. For the average weekly rates for children 2.5-5 years old, the maximum amount for children 3 years and 4 years old for each provider was used, as applicable. For the average weekly rate for school-aged children, the weekly rates charged during the summer or holidays, as applicable, were used for the analysis. If a provider listed a range of weekly rates for a particular age group (e.g., \$110-\$120), the higher rate provided was used in the calculation.

The MRS revealed that weekly child care rates are the most common way providers charge for care. Providers charging a weekly fee accounted for 86% of the provider participants (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Rate Frequency from Market Rate Survey**

Frequency Type	# of Providers	% of Providers
Weekly	1078	86%
Monthly	172	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1250</b>	

<sup>6</sup> HHS. Administration for Children and Families. Guidance on alternative methodologies and cost analyses for purposes of establishing subsidy payment rates - CCDF-ACF-PI-2018-01 (PDF).





<b>Family Child Care Homes</b>	Toddler 1	\$145	\$165
	Toddler 2	\$144	\$165
	Pre-School	\$141	\$160
	School Age	\$128	\$150
<b>Group Child Care Homes</b>	Infant	\$149	\$172
	Toddler 1	\$146	\$166
	Toddler 2	\$144	\$165
	Pre-School	\$141	\$165
	School Age	\$133	\$155

**Table 11. Day Care Center Weekly Full-Time Rates by Region, Age, and Percentiles**

Age Group		Huntsville	Mobile	Birmingham	Montgomery	Opelika	Tuscaloosa	Fort Payne	Talladega	Dothan	Statewide
Infants	Minimum	\$80	\$95	\$83	\$80	\$105	\$90	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$80
	Maximum	\$354	\$300	\$376	\$325	\$161	\$274	\$225	\$175	\$250	\$354
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$136	\$145	\$154	\$134	\$144	\$130	\$118	\$110	\$126	\$136
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$171	\$154	\$199	\$153	\$150	\$150	\$130	\$130	\$140	\$171
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$205	\$175	\$227	\$175	\$170	\$170	\$148	\$150	\$150	\$205
Toddler 1	Minimum	\$80	\$75	\$87	\$80	\$105	\$90	\$80	\$75	\$100	\$80
	Maximum	\$354	\$300	\$365	\$300	\$279	\$274	\$225	\$150	\$250	\$354
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$135	\$140	\$153	\$133	\$145	\$126	\$114	\$118	\$130	\$135
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$151	\$199	\$153	\$150	\$150	\$125	\$130	\$140	\$170
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$206	\$175	\$221	\$175	\$170	\$173	\$143	\$148	\$150	\$206
Toddler 2	Minimum	\$80	\$75	\$87	\$80	\$105	\$90	\$80	\$75	\$95	\$80
	Maximum	\$328	\$255	\$353	\$280	\$279	\$274	\$225	\$150	\$250	\$328
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$130	\$137	\$150	\$132	\$140	\$125	\$116	\$118	\$125	\$130
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$149	\$199	\$153	\$150	\$150	\$124	\$130	\$137	\$170
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$200	\$165	\$212	\$166	\$160	\$170	\$139	\$145	\$147	\$200
Preschool	Minimum	\$80	\$63	\$69	\$80	\$105	\$81	\$75	\$75	\$65	\$80
	Maximum	\$362	\$255	\$366	\$270	\$279	\$226	\$225	\$150	\$250	\$362
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$126	\$131	\$140	\$125	\$138	\$116	\$110	\$118	\$125	\$126
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$164	\$141	\$184	\$140	\$145	\$147	\$120	\$125	\$130	\$164
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$195	\$160	\$204	\$159	\$160	\$161	\$135	\$146	\$146	\$195
School Age	Minimum	\$69	\$30	\$12	\$35	\$15	\$55	\$36	\$70	\$60	\$69
	Maximum	\$296	\$279	\$250	\$215	\$201	\$190	\$200	\$150	\$250	\$296
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$110	\$110	\$120	\$110	\$125	\$115	\$100	\$100	\$115	\$110
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$134	\$133	\$145	\$130	\$143	\$143	\$120	\$120	\$125	\$134
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$145	\$160	\$150	\$151	\$179	\$126	\$125	\$144	\$170
	Minimum	\$80	\$95	\$83	\$80	\$105	\$90	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$80
	Maximum	\$354	\$300	\$376	\$325	\$161	\$274	\$225	\$175	\$250	\$354

<b>All Ages</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$136	\$145	\$154	\$134	\$144	\$130	\$118	\$110	\$126	\$136
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$171	\$154	\$199	\$153	\$150	\$150	\$130	\$130	\$140	\$171
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$205	\$175	\$227	\$175	\$170	\$170	\$148	\$150	\$150	\$205

**Table 12. Family Home Weekly Full-Time Rates by Region, Age, and Percentiles**

Age Group		Huntsville	Mobile	Birmingham	Montgomery	Opelika	Tuscaloosa	Fort Payne	Talladega	Dothan	Statewide
<b>Infants</b>	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$125	\$120	\$90	\$100	\$80	\$100	\$90	\$80
	Maximum	\$240	\$180	\$240	\$190	\$275	\$170	\$175	\$155	\$185	\$240
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$156	\$134	\$150	\$135	\$137	\$115	\$90	\$115	\$100	\$156
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$178	\$150	\$158	\$150	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$121	\$115	\$178
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$200	\$163	\$158	\$160	\$170	\$141	\$100	\$129	\$140	\$200
<b>Toddler 1</b>	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$125	\$120	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$90	\$80
	Maximum	\$240	\$200	\$240	\$190	\$275	\$175	\$175	\$155	\$185	\$240
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$156	\$139	\$150	\$135	\$132	\$115	\$83	\$115	\$100	\$156
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$173	\$150	\$155	\$150	\$150	\$123	\$90	\$121	\$120	\$173
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$199	\$160	\$155	\$165	\$158	\$144	\$99	\$129	\$140	\$199
<b>Toddler 2</b>	Minimum	\$80	\$90	\$125	\$110	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$80	\$80
	Maximum	\$235	\$180	\$200	\$190	\$275	\$175	\$175	\$155	\$150	\$235
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$154	\$139	\$150	\$130	\$134	\$115	\$80	\$115	\$100	\$154
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$173	\$150	\$155	\$150	\$150	\$123	\$90	\$121	\$110	\$173
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$196	\$160	\$155	\$163	\$155	\$144	\$98	\$129	\$133	\$196
<b>Preschool</b>	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$125	\$110	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$80	\$80
	Maximum	\$235	\$180	\$200	\$190	\$275	\$175	\$175	\$155	\$150	\$235
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$149	\$135	\$140	\$130	\$132	\$115	\$80	\$120	\$100	\$149
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$168	\$150	\$150	\$145	\$150	\$123	\$90	\$124	\$110	\$168
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$185	\$153	\$150	\$160	\$158	\$144	\$100	\$129	\$140	\$185
	Minimum	\$100	\$55	\$75	\$75	\$90	\$100	\$20	\$75	\$90	\$100
	Maximum	\$225	\$180	\$180	\$190	\$190	\$145	\$90	\$140	\$130	\$225
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$123	\$120	\$126	\$123	\$120	\$100	\$54	\$78	\$100	\$123

School Age	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$145	\$140	\$144	\$130	\$150	\$100	\$73	\$80	\$110	\$145
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$171	\$150	\$144	\$150	\$170	\$102	\$83	\$110	\$120	\$171
All Ages	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$125	\$120	\$90	\$100	\$80	\$100	\$90	\$80
	Maximum	\$240	\$180	\$240	\$190	\$275	\$170	\$175	\$155	\$185	\$240
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$156	\$134	\$150	\$135	\$137	\$115	\$90	\$115	\$100	\$156
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$178	\$150	\$158	\$150	\$150	\$120	\$90	\$121	\$115	\$178
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$200	\$163	\$158	\$160	\$170	\$141	\$100	\$129	\$140	\$200

**Table 13. Group Home Weekly Full-Time Rates by Region, Age, and Percentiles**

Age Group		Huntsville	Mobile	Birmingham	Montgomery	Opelika	Tuscaloosa	Fort Payne	Talladega	Dothan	Statewide
Infants	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$100	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$120	\$93	\$80
	Maximum	\$300	\$200	\$275	\$130	\$190	\$165	\$125	\$175	\$135	\$300
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$137	\$150	\$109	\$135	\$96	\$88	\$135	\$99	\$148
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$140	\$150	\$118	\$150	\$123	\$100	\$140	\$103	\$170
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$195	\$155	\$174	\$123	\$175	\$130	\$114	\$160	\$111	\$195
Toddler 1	Minimum	\$80	\$90	\$100	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$100	\$93	\$80
	Maximum	\$300	\$200	\$220	\$130	\$180	\$165	\$125	\$175	\$135	\$300
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$131	\$150	\$100	\$136	\$101	\$83	\$120	\$95	\$148
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$168	\$140	\$150	\$115	\$150	\$125	\$100	\$140	\$100	\$168
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$198	\$150	\$169	\$120	\$175	\$130	\$110	\$150	\$115	\$198
Toddler 2	Minimum	\$69	\$65	\$100	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$100	\$93	\$69
	Maximum	\$285	\$200	\$220	\$130	\$180	\$165	\$125	\$175	\$135	\$285
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$129	\$150	\$100	\$136	\$101	\$83	\$128	\$95	\$148
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$165	\$139	\$150	\$100	\$150	\$125	\$100	\$140	\$100	\$165
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$185	\$150	\$165	\$120	\$175	\$130	\$110	\$148	\$115	\$185

<b>Preschool</b>	Minimum	\$69	\$65	\$100	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$100	\$93	\$69
	Maximum	\$275	\$185	\$195	\$130	\$175	\$170	\$125	\$175	\$135	\$275
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$140	\$125	\$149	\$100	\$135	\$108	\$85	\$120	\$95	\$140
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$165	\$137	\$150	\$105	\$150	\$125	\$102	\$140	\$100	\$165
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$185	\$150	\$163	\$118	\$170	\$135	\$110	\$140	\$115	\$185
<b>School Age</b>	Minimum	\$30	\$65	\$90	\$90	\$75	\$90	\$80	\$40	\$95	\$30
	Maximum	\$220	\$175	\$175	\$130	\$175	\$165	\$125	\$170	\$110	\$220
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$120	\$121	\$132	\$95	\$120	\$108	\$90	\$100	\$99	\$120
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$139	\$150	\$100	\$150	\$125	\$100	\$140	\$103	\$148
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$180	\$146	\$155	\$115	\$168	\$135	\$113	\$140	\$106	\$180
<b>All Ages</b>	Minimum	\$80	\$65	\$100	\$90	\$100	\$65	\$80	\$120	\$93	\$80
	Maximum	\$300	\$200	\$275	\$130	\$190	\$165	\$125	\$175	\$135	\$300
	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$137	\$150	\$109	\$135	\$96	\$88	\$135	\$99	\$148
	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$140	\$150	\$118	\$150	\$123	\$100	\$140	\$103	\$170
	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$195	\$155	\$174	\$123	\$175	\$130	\$114	\$160	\$111	\$195







## SECTION 4: NARROW COST ANALYSIS

The methodology for conducting the Narrow Cost Analysis (NCA) includes an analysis to address the cost of higher quality care, as defined by the Lead Agency, using a quality rating and improvement system at each level of quality. It also involves determining the gaps between the costs incurred by child care providers and the Lead Agency's payment rates (see Section 5). Child care rates differ by region in Alabama, the age of the children served, and the provider type. This section of the report offers an analysis of data collected from providers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the costs associated with providing child care in Alabama.

This study utilized a limited cost survey for the narrow cost analysis to understand the cost factors impacting day care centers and family/group homes operating at different quality levels for multiple age groups across the state (ACF-PI-2018)<sup>7</sup>. The Narrow Cost Analysis provided in this report approximates the cost of operating a child care facility based on the responses from the sample of providers surveyed.

### *QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS) INFORMATION*

Under the CCDF, the methodology in this study includes the cost of different quality care levels, as defined by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (98.45 (f)(ii)(B))<sup>8</sup>. The Alabama Quality STARS program is a part of a national systematic approach to assess and improve center, family and group home child care standards. Providers receive a star rating, signifying the quality care standards they meet. The program provides Technical Assistance services to participating child care centers and homes<sup>8</sup>. The Alabama Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) is designed to minimize child care costs for low and moderate-income families and provide opportunities for equal access, affordability, and quality services.

It is imperative that quality service be provided as it benefits parents receiving subsidy reimbursements. The Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Child Care Subsidy disperse reimbursement payments for all levels of child care throughout the State. Higher reimbursements are given to providers who participate in the Alabama Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). The improvement system supports child care centers and homes that provide higher-quality care. Full implementation of the QRIS was launched in the Fall of 2019<sup>9</sup>.

Similar to other rating systems, the QRIS has a set of standards that exemplifies excellence in Child Care Quality far exceeding Alabama's minimum standards. Utilizing a five-star building block rating, with one star representing minimum licensure requirements and a five star demonstrating superior quality child care services. The five stars are constructed and evaluated using the following quality indicator categories:(a) staff qualifications, (b) environment, (c) health and safety, (d) professional development, (e) family involvement and community partnerships. For each of the five STAR levels, there are Alabama Quality STARS standards to be met in each component area.<sup>10</sup>

### *QRIS PROVIDERS IN THE STUDY*

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<sup>7</sup> 45 CFR 98.45 – Equal Access. Retrieved from <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-A/subchapter-A/part-98>.

<sup>8</sup> Alabama Department of Human Resources, Office of Child Care, <https://dhr.alabama.gov/child-care/>. Alabama Quality STARS Excellence Child Care, <https://alabamaqualitystars.org/star-rating-criteria/>

<sup>9</sup> Quality Compendium Website: Alabama State Profile, Retrieved from <https://qualitycompendium.org/view-state-profiles>

<sup>10</sup> Alabama Quality STARS Quality Rating and Improvement Center Guidelines, <https://alabamaqualitystars.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Center-Guidelines-with-covers.pdf>.

































Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$42	\$27	\$21	\$23	\$19	\$46	\$30	\$26	\$22
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**Table 49: Star Level 2-5 Day Care Center Rates by Region for Children Under 2.5 Years\***

DAY CARE CENTERS: Under 2.5 YEARS									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (8)	2-Mobile (6)	3-Birmingham (11)	4-Montgomery (4)	5-Opelika (1)	6-Tuscaloosa (8)	7-Ft. Payne (1)	8-Talladega (2)	9-Dothan (2)
Mean	\$227	\$175	\$237	\$128	\$279	\$171	\$120	\$135	\$131
25th Percentile	\$165	\$153	\$205	\$123	\$279	\$151	\$120	\$128	\$114
50th Percentile	\$213	\$155	\$235	\$130	\$279	\$157	\$120	\$135	\$131
75th Percentile	\$291	\$170	\$274	\$136	\$279	\$161	\$120	\$143	\$148
90th Percentile	\$321	\$226	\$291	\$146	\$279	\$234	\$120	\$147	\$158
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$172	\$151	\$203	\$156	\$153	\$152	\$123	\$125	\$130
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$119	\$19	\$71	(\$20)	\$126	\$9	(\$3)	\$18	\$18
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$175	\$154	\$207	\$159	\$156	\$155	\$125	\$127	\$133
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$116	\$16	\$67	(\$23)	\$123	\$6	(\$5)	\$16	\$15

\*Note: the low number of responses could be impacting the rates for some regions, particularly those who have a Star Level 2-5 rate that is below the Star Level 1 or Exempt rate (e.g., Regions 4 and 7).

Child care rates for children 2.5-5 years old attending Day Care Center follow the same trends as for children under 2.5. The 75th percentile rates are higher than the agency reimbursement rates for all nine regions for all of the exempt and Star Level 1 providers and most of the Star Level 2-5 providers. Regions 3 and 1 have the highest rates, while Regions 7, 8, and 9 have the lowest rates.

**Table 50: Exempt Day Care Center Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

DAY CARE CENTERS: 2.5-5 YEARS									
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Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$158	\$136	\$165	\$135	\$145	\$130	\$120	\$123	\$129
25th Percentile	\$130	\$122	\$121	\$115	\$123	\$113	\$106	\$100	\$126
50th Percentile	\$161	\$133	\$160	\$135	\$140	\$126	\$122	\$130	\$130
75th Percentile	\$189	\$150	\$220	\$150	\$166	\$157	\$130	\$145	\$140
90th Percentile	\$203	\$163	\$232	\$165	\$181	\$159	\$142	\$150	\$145
<b>EXEMPT REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
Reimbursement	\$153	\$135	\$180	\$135	\$140	\$136	\$115	\$120	\$120
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$36	\$15	\$40	\$15	\$26	\$21	\$15	\$25	\$20

**Table 51: Star Level 1 Day Care Center Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

<b>DAY CARE CENTERS: 2.5-5 YEARS</b>									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$168	\$148	\$180	\$148	\$153	\$160	\$126	\$127	\$138
25th Percentile	\$125	\$135	\$142	\$129	\$138	\$146	\$110	\$120	\$125
50th Percentile	\$160	\$145	\$184	\$144	\$145	\$160	\$120	\$125	\$133
75th Percentile	\$190	\$165	\$200	\$160	\$155	\$181	\$140	\$145	\$150
90th Percentile	\$240	\$185	\$239	\$185	\$198	\$185	\$148	\$150	\$166
<b>STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
Reimbursement	\$156	\$138	\$184	\$138	\$143	\$139	\$117	\$122	\$122
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$34	\$27	\$16	\$22	\$12	\$42	\$23	\$23	\$28

**Table 52: Star Level 2-5 Day Care Center Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

DAY CARE CENTERS: 2.5 - 5 YEARS									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (8)	2-Mobile (6)	3-Birmingham (11)	4-Montgomery (5)	5-Opelika (1)	6-Tuscaloosa (9)	7-Ft. Payne (2)	8-Talladega (2)	9-Dothan (2)
Mean	\$207	\$163	\$227	\$113	\$279	\$156	\$98	\$135	\$131
25th Percentile	\$161	\$142	\$189	\$100	\$279	\$148	\$86	\$128	\$114
50th Percentile	\$203	\$144	\$200	\$100	\$279	\$157	\$98	\$135	\$131
75th Percentile	\$246	\$160	\$271	\$135	\$279	\$160	\$109	\$143	\$148
90th Percentile	\$288	\$210	\$311	\$135	\$279	\$172	\$116	\$147	\$158
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$159	\$140	\$187	\$140	\$146	\$141	\$120	\$125	\$125
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$87	\$20	\$84	(\$5)	\$133	\$19	(\$11)	\$18	\$23
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$162	\$143	\$191	\$143	\$149	\$144	\$122	\$127	\$127
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$84	\$17	\$80	(\$8)	\$130	\$16	(\$13)	\$16	\$21

\*Note: the low number of responses could be impacting the rates for some regions, particularly those who have a Star Level 2-5 rate that is below the Star Level 1 or Exempt rate (e.g., Regions 4 and 7).

For school-aged children attending day care centers, the weekly provider rate at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile is higher than the agency reimbursement rate for all nine regions for Star Level 1 providers; however, for Exempt and Star Level 2-5 providers, there are some exceptions. The rates across regions are more similar, not following the patterns from the other age groups.

**Table 53: Exempt Day Care Center Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

DAY CARE CENTERS: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$139	\$113	\$112	\$123		\$90	\$93	\$115	\$132
25th Percentile	\$108	\$90	\$93	\$101		\$85	\$85	\$100	\$120
50th Percentile	\$125	\$125	\$120	\$123		\$90	\$101	\$120	\$135
75th Percentile	\$164	\$127	\$132	\$155		\$95	\$115	\$125	\$140
90th Percentile	\$216	\$159	\$140	\$176		\$98	\$126	\$130	\$152
EXEMPT REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$135	\$130	\$150	\$125	\$140	\$125	\$110	\$119	\$115
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$29	(\$3)	(\$18)	\$30		(\$30)	\$5	\$6	\$25

**Table 54: Star Level 1 Day Care Center Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

DAY CARE CENTERS: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$140	\$130	\$143	\$130	\$140	\$163	\$120	\$114	\$128
25th Percentile	\$109	\$110	\$120	\$115	\$125	\$150	\$108	\$96	\$113
50th Percentile	\$136	\$133	\$150	\$130	\$143	\$170	\$120	\$120	\$120
75th Percentile	\$170	\$143	\$160	\$150	\$151	\$184	\$130	\$125	\$145
90th Percentile	\$195	\$162	\$198	\$165	\$185	\$185	\$140	\$148	\$160
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$138	\$133	\$153	\$128	\$143	\$128	\$112	\$121	\$117

Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$32	\$10	\$7	\$22	\$8	\$56	\$18	\$4	\$28
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**Table 55: Star Level 2-5 Day Care Center Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

DAY CARE CENTERS: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (5)	2-Mobile (4)	3-Birmingham (5)	4-Montgomery (4)	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa (4)	7-Ft. Payne (1)	8-Talladega (2)	9-Dothan (1)
Mean	\$188	\$144	\$173	\$115		\$120	\$120	\$125	\$125
25th Percentile	\$135	\$133	\$130	\$95		\$120	\$120	\$113	\$125
50th Percentile	\$165	\$153	\$187	\$115		\$120	\$120	\$125	\$125
75th Percentile	\$248	\$164	\$200	\$135		\$120	\$120	\$138	\$125
90th Percentile	\$286	\$179	\$218	\$135		\$120	\$120	\$145	\$125
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$140	\$135	\$156	\$130	\$146	\$130	\$114	\$124	\$120
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$108	\$29	\$44	\$5		(\$10)	\$6	\$14	\$5
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$143	\$138	\$159	\$133	\$149	\$133	\$117	\$126	\$122
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$105	\$26	\$41	\$2		(\$13)	\$3	\$12	\$3

\*Note: the low number of responses could be impacting the rates for some regions, particularly those who have a Star Level 2-5 rate that is below the Star Level 1 or Exempt rate (e.g. Region 6).

### Family Child Care Homes Gap Analysis

Tables 56 through 61 present child care rates for Family Child Care Home, including the weekly mean rate and various percentiles, regions, and age groups. All Family Child Care Home providers have at least a Star Level 1 rating; therefore, only the Star Level 1 and Star Level 2-5 tables are included in this section. The child care rates for Star Level 2-5 providers is limited due to the low number of responses from some regions, and the lack of responses from other regions. As a result, the child care rates for Star Level 2-5 by region should be used with caution. Table 26 provides statewide child care rates for Star Level 2-5, which can supplement missing or limited data by region.

For children under 2.5 years old, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for all regions. Region 1 (Huntsville) and Region 3 (Birmingham) have the highest rates, and Region 7 (Fort Payne) has the lowest rate. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, only four of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis.

**Table 56: Star Level 1 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children Under 2.5 Years**

FAMILY HOMES: UNDER 2.5 YEARS									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$170	\$148	\$162	\$148	\$153	\$140	\$95	\$118	\$121
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$136	\$150	\$133	\$134	\$124	\$80	\$110	\$100
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$170	\$150	\$158	\$150	\$150	\$135	\$90	\$120	\$115
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$200	\$163	\$179	\$163	\$160	\$154	\$100	\$124	\$140
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$208	\$177	\$199	\$175	\$200	\$168	\$100	\$131	\$145
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$153	\$137	\$153	\$138	\$143	\$120	\$92	\$122	\$105
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$47	\$26	\$26	\$25	\$17	\$34	\$8	\$2	\$35

**Table 57: Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children Under 2.5 Years**

FAMILY HOMES: UNDER 2.5 YEARS									
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Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile (4)	3-Birmingham (3)	4-Montgomery (3)	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (1)	9-Dothan
Mean		\$160	\$165	\$163				\$155	
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$155	\$160	\$146				\$155	
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$163	\$170	\$165				\$155	
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$168	\$172	\$181				\$155	
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$172	\$174	\$184				\$155	
<b>STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$156	\$139	\$156	\$140	\$146	\$123	\$94	\$125	\$107
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)		\$29	\$16	\$41				\$30	
<b>STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$159	\$142	\$159	\$143	\$149	\$125	\$96	\$127	\$109
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)		\$26	\$13	\$38				\$28	

For children 2.5 – 5 years old, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for all regions. Region 1 (Huntsville) and Region 3 (Birmingham) have the highest rates, and Region 7 (Fort Payne) has the lowest rate. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, only four of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis.

**Table 58: Star Level 1 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

<b>FAMILY HOMES: 2.5-5 YEARS</b>									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$166	\$143	\$152	\$144	\$151	\$140	\$95	\$119	\$117
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$134	\$140	\$130	\$132	\$123	\$80	\$120	\$100
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$165	\$150	\$150	\$140	\$150	\$135	\$90	\$122	\$110

75th Percentile	\$185	\$150	\$163	\$160	\$158	\$154	\$100	\$125	\$140
90th Percentile	\$208	\$168	\$180	\$165	\$190	\$168	\$100	\$131	\$145
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$153	\$133	\$148	\$138	\$141	\$117	\$92	\$122	\$105
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$32	\$17	\$15	\$22	\$17	\$37	\$8	\$3	\$35

**Table 59: Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

FAMILY HOMES: 2.5-5 YEARS									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile (4)	3-Birmingham (3)	4-Montgomery (3)	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (1)	9-Dothan
Mean		\$153	\$161	\$157				\$155	
25th Percentile		\$146	\$155	\$143				\$155	
50th Percentile		\$155	\$170	\$150				\$155	
75th Percentile		\$161	\$172	\$168				\$155	
90th Percentile		\$164	\$174	\$178				\$155	
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$156	\$135	\$151	\$140	\$144	\$120	\$94	\$125	\$107
Difference (75th - reimbursement)		\$26	\$21	\$28				\$30	
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$159	\$138	\$154	\$143	\$146	\$122	\$96	\$127	\$109
Difference (75th - reimbursement)		\$23	\$18	\$25				\$28	

For school-aged children, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for seven of the nine regions. Regions 7 and 8 have child care rates lower than the reimbursement rate. Region 1 (Huntsville) and Region 5 (Opelika) have the highest rates, and Region 7 (Fort Payne) has the lowest rate. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, only three of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis.

**Table 60: Star Level 1 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

FAMILY HOMES: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$149	\$131	\$139	\$140	\$143	\$101	\$64	\$98	\$110
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$123	\$125	\$125	\$128	\$120	\$101	\$54	\$78	\$100
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$145	\$145	\$148	\$135	\$150	\$101	\$73	\$80	\$110
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$171	\$150	\$155	\$150	\$170	\$102	\$83	\$110	\$120
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$190	\$168	\$164	\$165	\$182	\$102	\$87	\$128	\$126
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$153	\$128	\$136	\$131	\$133	\$102	\$92	\$131	\$90
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$18	\$22	\$19	\$19	\$37	\$0	(\$9)	(\$21)	\$30

**Table 61: Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Home Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

FAMILY HOMES: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile (3)	3-Birmingham (1)	4-Montgomery (2)	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (1)	9-Dothan
Mean		\$122	\$130	\$78					
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$103	\$130	\$76					

50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$140	\$130	\$78					
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$150	\$130	\$79					
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile		\$156	\$130	\$80					
<b>STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$156	\$130	\$138	\$133	\$135	\$104	\$94	\$133	\$92
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)		\$20	(\$8)	(\$54)					
<b>STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$159	\$133	\$141	\$136	\$138	\$106	\$96	\$136	\$93
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)		\$17	(\$11)	(\$57)					

### *Group Child Care Homes Gap Analysis*

Tables 62 through 67 present child care rates for Group Child Care Homes, including the weekly mean rate and various percentiles, regions, and age groups. All Group Child Care Home providers have at least a Star Level 1 rating; therefore, only the Star Level 1 and Star Level 2-5 tables are included in this section. The child care rates for Star Level 2-5 providers are limited due to the low number of responses from some regions, and the lack of responses from other regions. As a result, the child care rates for Star Level 2-5 by region should be used with caution. Table 26 provides statewide child care rates for Star Level 2-5, which can supplement missing or limited data by region.

For children under 2.5 years old, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for seven of the nine regions. Region 1 (Huntsville) has the highest rate, and Region 7 (Fort Payne) has the lowest rate. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, six of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis, but other regions have a low number of providers comprising the rates.

**Table 62: Star Level 1 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children Under 2.5 Years**

<b>GROUP HOMES: UNDER 2.5 YEARS</b>									
<b>Region</b>	<b>1-Huntsville</b>	<b>2-Mobile</b>	<b>3-Birmingham</b>	<b>4-Montgomery</b>	<b>5-Opelika</b>	<b>6-Tuscaloosa</b>	<b>7-Ft. Payne</b>	<b>8-Talladega</b>	<b>9-Dothan</b>
Mean	\$199	\$141	\$155	\$111	\$143	\$116	\$101	\$136	\$109
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$148	\$130	\$150	\$100	\$133	\$95	\$90	\$123	\$100

50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$150	\$140	\$150	\$115	\$140	\$125	\$100	\$135	\$105
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$250	\$155	\$169	\$120	\$150	\$130	\$110	\$140	\$115
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$280	\$188	\$180	\$126	\$175	\$136	\$118	\$158	\$127
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$148	\$137	\$147	\$102	\$151	\$128	\$112	\$117	\$102
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$102	\$18	\$22	\$18	(\$1)	\$2	(\$2)	\$23	\$13

**Table 63: Star Level 2-5 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children Under 2.5 Years**

GROUP HOMES: UNDER 2.5 YEARS									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (4)	2-Mobile (3)	3-Birmingham (5)	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika (2)	6-Tuscaloosa (1)	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (3)	9-Dothan
Mean	\$175	\$134	\$181		\$175	\$165		\$140	
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$173	\$129	\$150		\$175	\$165		\$125	
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$175	\$132	\$160		\$175	\$165		\$150	
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$178	\$139	\$175		\$175	\$165		\$160	
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$179	\$142	\$235		\$175	\$165		\$166	
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$151	\$139	\$150	\$104	\$154	\$130	\$114	\$120	\$104
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$27	\$0	\$25		\$21	\$35		\$40	
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$154	\$142	\$153	\$106	\$157	\$133	\$117	\$122	\$106
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$24	(\$3)	\$22		\$18	\$32		\$38	

For children 2.5 - 5 years old, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for all regions. Region 1 (Huntsville) has the highest rate, and Region 7 (Fort Payne)

has the lowest rate. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, six of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis, and others have a low number of providers comprising the rate data.

**Table 64: Star Level 1 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

GROUP HOMES: 2.5-5 YEARS									
Region	1-Huntsville	2-Mobile	3-Birmingham	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika	6-Tuscaloosa	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega	9-Dothan
Mean	\$184	\$135	\$150	\$108	\$141	\$119	\$100	\$134	\$108
25th Percentile	\$148	\$119	\$150	\$100	\$133	\$101	\$85	\$123	\$95
50th Percentile	\$148	\$139	\$150	\$105	\$140	\$125	\$102	\$135	\$100
75th Percentile	\$215	\$150	\$160	\$118	\$150	\$130	\$110	\$140	\$115
90th Percentile	\$251	\$177	\$174	\$125	\$170	\$143	\$116	\$158	\$127
STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT									
Reimbursement	\$148	\$132	\$144	\$102	\$148	\$128	\$102	\$121	\$112
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$67	\$18	\$16	\$16	\$2	\$2	\$8	\$19	\$3

**Table 65: Star Level 2-5 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for Children 2.5 - 5 Years**

GROUP HOMES: 2.5-5 YEARS									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (4)	2-Mobile (3)	3-Birmingham (6)	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika (2)	6-Tuscaloosa (1)	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (3)	9-Dothan
Mean	\$150	\$134	\$153		\$175	\$165		\$137	

25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$140	\$129	\$143		\$175	\$165		\$120	
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$150	\$132	\$155		\$175	\$165		\$140	
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$160	\$139	\$171		\$175	\$165		\$155	
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$166	\$142	\$185		\$175	\$165		\$164	
<b>STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$151	\$134	\$147	\$104	\$151	\$130	\$104	\$124	\$114
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$9	\$5	\$24		\$24	\$35		\$31	
<b>STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$154	\$137	\$150	\$106	\$154	\$133	\$106	\$126	\$117
Difference (75 <sup>th</sup> - reimbursement)	\$6	\$2	\$21		\$21	\$32		\$29	

For school-aged children, the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile rate for Star Level 1 Family Child Care Homes is higher than the reimbursement rate for all regions. Region 1 (Huntsville) and Region 5 (Opelika) have the highest rates, and Region 4, 7, and 8 have the lowest rates. For Star Level 2-5 Family Child Care Homes, six of the nine regions have child care rate data for the analysis.

**Table 66: Star Level 1 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

<b>GROUP HOMES: SCHOOL-AGED</b>									
<b>Region</b>	<b>1-Huntsville</b>	<b>2-Mobile</b>	<b>3-Birmingham</b>	<b>4-Montgomery</b>	<b>5-Opelika</b>	<b>6-Tuscaloosa</b>	<b>7-Ft. Payne</b>	<b>8-Talladega</b>	<b>9-Dothan</b>
Mean	\$138	\$125	\$135	\$107	\$133	\$117	\$102	\$93	\$103
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$119	\$108	\$131	\$95	\$110	\$101	\$90	\$70	\$99
50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$142	\$139	\$148	\$100	\$135	\$123	\$100	\$100	\$103
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$161	\$147	\$150	\$115	\$160	\$129	\$113	\$120	\$106
90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	\$184	\$158	\$150	\$124	\$171	\$135	\$120	\$132	\$109
<b>STARS 1 REIMBURSEMENT</b>									

Reimbursement	\$140	\$128	\$134	\$100	\$141	\$128	\$92	\$117	\$102
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	\$21	\$19	\$16	\$15	\$19	\$1	\$21	\$3	\$4

**Table 67: Star Level 2-5 Group Child Care Home Rates by Region for School-Age Children**

GROUP HOMES: SCHOOL-AGED									
Region (# providers)	1-Huntsville (2)	2-Mobile (2)	3-Birmingham (5)	4-Montgomery	5-Opelika (2)	6-Tuscaloosa (1)	7-Ft. Payne	8-Talladega (2)	9-Dothan
Mean	\$125	\$135	\$154		\$170	\$165		\$155	
25th Percentile	\$125	\$130	\$160		\$168	\$165		\$148	
50th Percentile	\$125	\$135	\$160		\$170	\$165		\$155	
75th Percentile	\$125	\$140	\$175		\$173	\$165		\$163	
90th Percentile	\$125	\$143	\$175		\$174	\$165		\$167	
STARS 2 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 2 Reimbursement	\$143	\$130	\$136	\$102	\$144	\$130	\$94	\$120	\$104
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	(\$18)	\$10	\$39		\$29	\$35		\$43	
STARS 3 REIMBURSEMENT									
STARS 3 Reimbursement	\$145	\$133	\$139	\$104	\$146	\$133	\$96	\$122	\$106
Difference (75th - reimbursement)	(\$20)	\$7	\$36		\$27	\$32		\$41	

The next section, Section 6: Focus Group Feedback, presents the themes identified from the focus groups with day care centers and family/group home providers.

## SECTION 6: FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

The insights garnered from focus group sessions provide a basis for understanding the multifaceted landscape of the child care industry. This section delves into the narratives and perspectives shared by participants across four one-hour focus group discussions. Split between family/group child care and center-based settings, these sessions offered a platform for child care providers to articulate their motivations, reflect on industry changes, discuss program evaluations such as the Quality STARS initiative, identify operational challenges, and voice their needs for support and resources.

These candid exchanges provide firsthand insights into the intricacies of operating child care facilities in Alabama. By exploring the experiences and challenges encountered by providers, the focus groups endeavored to uncover actionable strategies and recommendations to enhance the quality and accessibility of child care services in the state. The following narrative encapsulates the rich dialogue and invaluable contributions from the focus group participants, shedding light on the realities and aspirations of those at the forefront of the child care sector.

### **Themes Motivation for Being in the Child Care Industry**

Understanding the motivations driving child care providers is vital for comprehending their dedication to nurturing children and supporting families. This theme delves into the intrinsic and personal factors that inspire individuals to pursue careers in child care, shedding light on their passion, commitment, and desire to make a positive impact on young lives.

Across both center and family/group home providers, a common thread emerged regarding their motivations for entering the child care industry. Many expressed a deep-seated desire to positively impact the lives of children and provide essential support for parents. For several providers, their journey into child care stemmed from personal experiences navigating the challenges of finding reliable child care for their own families. Moreover, a significant proportion of participants possessed backgrounds in teaching, fueling their aspiration to actively engage in child care.

### **STARS Quality Initiative**

Providers' decisions to participate in quality initiatives like the STARS program are influenced by a myriad of factors, including perceptions of program benefits, concerns about competitiveness, and financial considerations. This theme explores the motivations and considerations guiding providers' decisions to opt-in to quality improvement programs, offering insights into their aspirations for enhancing the quality of child care services.

### **Decision to Opt-in:**

Participants in the STARS Quality initiative, whether from family/group home or center settings, shared a collective sentiment associating the program with quality and professional excellence. The allure of achieving high star ratings was perceived as a badge of honor, signifying a commitment to excellence in child care services. However, nuances in perspectives emerged between the two groups. While family/group home providers saw participation in the program as a means to enhance reputation and affirm quality, center providers were more driven by competitive considerations. Concerns prevailed among center providers regarding public perception and the potential impact of low star ratings on their reputation.

The financial incentives offered by the initiative garnered praise from both groups. However, some providers expressed reservations, citing the substantial investments required to meet the program's standards, which offset some of the financial benefits.

Most providers in the focus groups were part of the STARS initiative: however, some well-established centers questioned the necessity of participation, relying instead on their longstanding reputation and word-of-mouth referrals. Others were faced with indecision and a lack of information as roadblocks to becoming part of the initiative.

### **Implementation Support**

Navigating the intricacies of quality initiatives requires comprehensive support and guidance for providers. This theme examines the challenges and opportunities associated with program implementation, highlighting the need for streamlined processes, accessible resources, and effective support mechanisms to facilitate providers' success in meeting program requirements.

Participants highlighted disparities in the implementation process, particularly in documentation requirements, assessment procedures, and administrative aspects. While some providers found the process relatively straightforward, others encountered challenges navigating the program's intricacies. Issues with communication with assessors and the absence of formal training for required assessments were commonly cited, underscoring the need for streamlined implementation support mechanisms.

### **Child Care Industry Challenges**

Providers confront various challenges in delivering high-quality child care, ranging from staffing shortages and training constraints to financial pressures and competitive dynamics. This theme explores the multifaceted challenges faced by child care providers, underscoring the need for targeted interventions and collaborative efforts to address systemic issues and foster a more supportive environment for providers.

#### **Staffing:**

While both home and center providers faced staffing challenges, discussions among center providers revealed more widespread and persistent issues. Difficulties in offering competitive wages and the extensive training required for staff recruitment contributed to staffing shortages. The allure of higher-paying positions in sectors like retail and food service posed a significant challenge, exacerbating recruitment woes. The aftermath of COVID-19 further compounded staffing challenges, with an increasing preference for part-time work and directors resorting to unconventional scheduling practices to manage staffing shortages.

#### **Staff Training:**

Providers voiced concerns regarding the logistical challenges of staff training, particularly in accommodating training hours within already demanding work schedules. Suggestions for alternative training methods, such as recorded sessions, were proposed to address these challenges.

#### **Perceived Inequality with Subsidy Payments:**

Providers expressed a collective desire for equitable compensation, irrespective of their service area, emphasizing the importance of fair remuneration for their role in supporting families and nurturing future generations. This sentiment underscored a broader aspiration among providers to earn a sustainable livelihood while upholding high standards of child care.

#### **Rising Cost of Liability Insurance:**

Participants noted the escalating cost of liability insurance as a significant challenge facing child care providers. The increasing premiums for insurance coverage have added to the financial strain on providers, further impacting their ability to sustain operations and invest in quality improvements.

#### Competition with Faith-Based Organizations:

Providers highlighted the competitive landscape posed by centers aligned with faith-based organizations. Many of these centers can offer child care services at a lower rate due to their exemption from certain overhead expenses. Providers expressed concerns about the economic disparity created by this competitive advantage, which can undermine the financial viability of non-faith-based child care facilities.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the themes identified in the focus group discussions, here are recommendations that the Department can consider implementing to address the concerns raised by child care providers:

#### **Streamlined Implementation Support for Quality Initiatives**

- Develop standardized guidelines and resources to facilitate the implementation process of quality initiatives such as the STARS program.
- Offer training sessions and workshops to providers on program requirements, documentation procedures, and assessment protocols.
- Assign dedicated support staff or mentors to assist providers throughout the implementation journey, offering guidance and troubleshooting assistance as needed.

#### **Enhanced Communication and Training for Quality Assessments**

- Establish clear channels of communication between providers and assessors, ensuring timely and effective exchange of information and feedback.
- Ensure assessors provide consistent guidance and resources to minimize confusion with differing information among assessors.
- Offer comprehensive training programs for providers on quality assessment criteria and evaluation processes, including opportunities for hands-on practice and skill-building. **Financial Support**

#### **Initiatives**

- Explore sustaining/adding financial incentives and grants to help offset the costs associated with meeting quality standards, such as providing subsidies for training programs or equipment upgrades.
- Introduce performance-based incentives that reward providers for achieving and maintaining high-quality standards beyond just star ratings. **Addressing Staffing Challenges**
- Implement initiatives to increase the attractiveness of careers in child care, such as offering professional development opportunities and tuition subsidies.
- Collaborate with educational institutions to develop streamlined pathways for individuals interested in pursuing careers in child care, including apprenticeship programs or scholarship opportunities.

#### **Flexible Training Options**

- Offer a variety of training formats to accommodate the diverse needs and schedules of child care providers, including online courses, recorded sessions, and evening or weekend workshops.
- Provide resources and support for providers to access ongoing training and professional development opportunities, ensuring that they have the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high-quality care.

## Support for Business Operations

- Offer technical assistance and resources to help providers navigate business operations, including assistance with tax planning, financial management, and marketing strategies.
- Facilitate peer networking and support groups to enable providers to share best practices, troubleshoot common challenges, and access mentorship opportunities.

## SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

The State of Alabama is dedicated to providing quality child care to low-income families through its subsidy program for child care as well as utilizing its Alabama Quality STARS, Alabama’s Quality Ratings Improvement System (QRIS) for providers to access resources and support that will increase high quality child care based on established standards. This market rate study and narrow cost analysis provide evidence of the increasing cost of child care throughout the state.

Although the subsidy program structure has made it possible for families to receive care based on the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile weekly full-time child care rates, the study revealed most regions have weekly child care rates significantly higher than the agency reimbursement rates. For almost every region, provider type, and age group, the subsidy rates are below the 75th percentile. The impact of this difference results in families being responsible for a weekly out-of-pocket amount, which may be difficult for them to afford.

Participating Day Care Centers in the Alabama Quality STARS program had significantly higher weekly child care rates at the 75th percentile than those not participating. In addition, the weekly average day care cost was higher than the reimbursement rate for Alabama Quality STARS 1 and STARS 2. Therefore, the gap between provider cost and agency reimbursement, particularly for higher quality child care at each level of the Alabama STARS QRIS program, should be examined.

## SECTION 8: APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: DEFINITION OF TERMS

The definitions of associated terms are provided to clarify the meaning of terminology associated with this document and presented herein. The terms are listed in alphabetical order.

**Alabama Quality STARS, Alabama’s Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) programs** – is part of a national systematic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education programs.

**Child Care Center** – a child care facility licensed by the Department or otherwise legally authorized, which receives more than 12 children during the day or night, as applicable.

**Cost** – the value of all resources required to deliver child care services, including salaries, rent, utilities, equipment, insurance, supplies, and other personnel and non-personnel expenses.

**Current Market Rates** - the maximum subsidy payment rates that were effective November 1, 2019.

**Family Child Care (FDC)** – an individual licensed by the Department to provide care as the sole caregiver in a private residence, other than the eligible child’s residence, for no more than six (6) children during the day or night, as applicable.

**Full-time Rates** – reflect the maximum full-time rates for child care services averaging more than 25 hours per week.

**Group Family Child Care (GFDC)** – an individual licensed by the Department to provide care in a private residence other than the eligible child’s residence for at least seven (7), but not more than twelve (12), children during the day or night, as applicable.

**Infant/Toddler** – In the Market Rate Survey, “infant/toddler children” are those from zero to 36 months.

**Preschool Children** – In the Market Rate Survey, “preschool children” are those 37 months to five years.

**Price** – the amount of child care providers in the priced market typically charge parents for the child care of children who do not receive federal or state government child care subsidies.

**School-Age Children** - In the Market Rate Survey, “school-age children” are children five through twelve years old (or through age 18 if the child has a physical or mental disability documented by a licensed physician, psychologist, or psychiatrist).

**Seventy-fifth (75<sup>th</sup>) Percentile** – refers to the subsidy payment level that allows a parent to expend 75 percent of privately purchased child care in a certain area. The private pay rates for all children served within a category of care are determined by examining child care from lowest to highest to determine the 75th percentile. Rates are counted three-quarters of the way up from the bottom (lowest rate) to determine the rate that represents the 75th percentile.

# APPENDIX B: MARKET RATE SURVEY



## State of Alabama Department of Human Resources

S. Gordon Persons Building  
50 Ripley Street  
Post Office Box 304000  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4000  
(334) 242-1310  
<http://dhr.alabama.gov>



October 1, 2023

Dear Provider,

The time has come again for the state of Alabama to reach out to each child care provider to conduct a market rate survey. The Department of Human Resources conducts a market rate study every three years to determine the rate charged per child for reimbursement for care for those that participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program. The Alabama Department of Human Resources, in partnership with a local University, conducts the survey to assist in this determination. We recognize each provider offers a special type of quality care that is different and therefore rates are adjusted accordingly. Because of this, we contact each provider in all child care settings in making our determination. In order to do this, we need your input, even if you do not participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program.

As stated in a previous correspondence, we invite you to complete the survey included, created in partnership with Alabama State University for the Department of Human Resources. Instructions are included on how to complete the survey online as well as submitting the survey via the United States Postal Service. We encourage each provider to complete the survey online. We are looking forward to your responses and assistance in this endeavor.

Thank you for your continued commitment to serving the families and children of Alabama.

Bernard Houston, Director  
Child Care Services Division

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## CHILD CARE MARKET RATE SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

Dear <<FacilityName>>,

The Alabama Department of Human Resources is asking each child care provider in the state of Alabama to provide information about their current rates. DHR will use this information to determine future rates for the Child Care Subsidy Program.

There are two ways for you to complete the Child Care Market Rate Survey for the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

- 1. Online** – the quickest way to complete the survey is to enter your information into the online survey by using the link or QR Code below. If DHR has your email address, then you should have received an email with this link as well. Please use the following Survey Code when completing the online survey:  
**<<Survey Code>>**
- 2. Paper** – if it is difficult for you to complete the survey online, you can fill out the survey below and mail it back to Alabama State University using the enclosed addressed postage paid envelope.

<https://tinyurl.com/AlabamaMRS2023> OR



**PAPER SURVEYS SHOULD BE MAILED TO:**  
Alabama State University  
Attn: Bryn Bakoyema  
Division of Institutional Effectiveness, Strategic Initiative, & Transformation  
P.O. Box 271  
Montgomery, AL 36101-0271

Each provider should only complete the survey one time. If you have any questions about the Market Rate Survey, please contact Alabama State University by emailing [oi@alasu.edu](mailto:oi@alasu.edu) or calling 334-229-6859. Thank you for your participation!

Alabama State University Research Team

# MARKET RATE SURVEY

Survey Code: <<Survey Code>>

**1. Please complete the following information about your facility.**

Facility Name		
Street Address		
City	Zip	County
Phone	Email	

2. How many children in the following age groups do you currently have enrolled at your facility?

Less than 1\_\_\_\_ 1 yr\_\_\_\_ 2 yrs\_\_\_\_ 3 yrs\_\_\_\_ 4 yrs\_\_\_\_ school aged\_\_\_\_

3. What type of rate do you publish and charge the general public for child care?  Weekly  Monthly

4. **Weekly Rate:** If you charge a weekly rate, please enter the full-time weekly rate you publish and charge the general public for child care for the following age groups. If you charge a monthly rate, skip to the next question. *NOTE: Full-time means more than 25 hours per week.*

Less than 1 year old	\$ _____/week	4 years old	\$ _____/week
1 year old	\$ _____/week	School aged children before school care	\$ _____/week
2 years old	\$ _____/week	School aged children after school care	\$ _____/week
3 years old	\$ _____/week	School aged children summer/holiday care	\$ _____/week

5. **Monthly Rate:** If you charge a monthly rate, please enter the full-time monthly rate you publish and charge the general public for child care for the following age groups. *NOTE: Full-time means more than 25 hours per week.*

Less than 1 year old	\$ _____/month	4 years old	\$ _____/month
1 year old	\$ _____/month	School aged children before school care	\$ _____/month
2 years old	\$ _____/month	School aged children after school care	\$ _____/month
3 years old	\$ _____/month	School aged children summer/holiday care	\$ _____/month

6. What registration fee do you charge the general public for a new child? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What rate do you charge for special care children (ex: children with particular needs)? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please provide any further explanation that you may have about your rates (ex: sibling discount, employee discount, etc.)

9. Approximately what percentage of the children you currently serve have their child care fees fully or partially subsidized through the Child Care Subsidy Program? (circle only one)

0%                      1-25%                      26-50%                      51-75%                      76-100%

10. For children using a subsidy, do you charge any fees to parents beyond co-payments? *If yes, please complete the following information about the fee(s).*

a. Purpose of fee: \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Fee Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ c. How often (check one):  Weekly  Monthly  Annually

11. Do you use the subsidy amount to set your rates for the general public? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

12. If you do NOT currently participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program, why do you not participate? (Select all that apply):

- Due to the DHR payment system (reimbursement)                       Administrative burden (too much paperwork)  
 Don't understand how the subsidy works                                       Not many families qualify  
 Reimbursement rate is too low    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. If you do NOT currently participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program, are you interested in receiving information about joining the subsidy program? Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

14. Please share any questions or concerns you have about the Child Care community.

## APPENDIX C: COST ANALYSIS SURVEY

Q1

### Child Care Cost Analysis Survey

In order to receive child care subsidies, all states are required to complete an analysis of the costs of providing child care. The first step was asking child care providers for the tuition and fees they charge. Thank you for providing that information by completing the Market Rate Survey in the fall.

The second step is more detailed and requires understanding the costs of operating a child care facility. Your facility has been randomly selected for this second step -- which requires completing the survey below. We know this survey will take more time, so to thank you for your time, we will send you a \$100 Visa gift card once you complete the survey.

Please complete the survey by Friday, February 9th.

If you have any questions about this survey, please email [ois@alasu.edu](mailto:ois@alasu.edu) or call 334-604-8005.

Thank you for your assistance.

Alabama State University Research Team

Note: the information collected in this survey will only be used for the child care cost analysis, which aggregates all of the information received. Only the research team will see your cost information - it will

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not be shared with DHR nor any other entity.

Q2

General Information

Q3 Name of child care facility and mailing address (for mailing Visa gift card)

Q4 Name, title, email address, and phone number for person completing this survey.

Q5 When do you operate:

- School year (1)
- Summer (4)
- Both school year and summer (5)

Q6 What time do you open and close?

- Time open in the morning (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Time close in the evening (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Q7 Which status applies:

- for profit (1)
- non-profit (2)

Q8 How are your rooms set-up?

- Rooms separated by age groups (includes most child care centers) (1)
- Multiple age groups in the same room (including most family child care providers) (2)

Q9

Staffing & Personnel Costs

*Display This Question:*

*If How are your rooms set-up? = Rooms separated by age groups (includes most child care centers)*

Q10 Please provide the following information for each age group:

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*Display This Question:*

*If How are your rooms set-up? = Multiple age groups in the same room (including most family child care providers)*

**Q12 What is the maximum number of children you are allowed to care for?**

Display This Question:

If Do you offer paid leave or benefits to your employees? = Yes

Q18 Indicate the days of leave you offer to full-time employees, if any?

- Paid holidays (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Paid vacation leave (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- Paid sick/personal leave (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- Paid professional development days (5) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other paid leave (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If Do you offer paid leave or benefits to your employees? = Yes

Q19 Which of the following benefits do you offer to full-time employees? (Select all that apply)

- Health insurance (1)
- Dental insurance (2)
- Vision insurance (3)
- Retirement plan (4)
- Other benefits (5)

Display This Question:

If Which of the following benefits do you offer to full-time employees? (Select all that apply) = Health insurance

Q20 Provide cost information for health insurance benefits.

- Total monthly premium for individual plan one employee (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Amount of monthly premium paid by employer (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Total monthly premium for family plan for one employee (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- Amount of monthly premium for family plan paid by employer (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Display This Question:

If Which of the following benefits do you offer to full-time employees? (Select all that apply) = Retirement plan

Q21 Do you (the employer) contribute towards the employee retirement plan? Provide information for scenario 1, 2, or 3 below.

- 1. Fixed monthly amount employer contributes for each employee (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Maximum monthly amount employer will match for each employee (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Employer does not contribute to retirement plan (type NA) (4)

Display This Question:

If Do you offer paid leave or benefits to your employees? = Yes

Q22 Provide any notes/explanations about paid leave and benefits. Include any cost information that has not already been provided above.

Q23 How much do you budget annually for training/ professional development for your employees? Fill out one of the scenarios below.

- Annual budget for all staff combined (1)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Annual budget for each staff member (2)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Do not pay for this (type NA) (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q24 Do you pay for substitutes when employees are attending training/ professional development?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q25

Non-Personnel Costs

Q26 Provide the estimated costs for non-personnel items needed to operate your child care program. You can provide either monthly or annual costs, whichever is easier for you.

	Estimated monthly cost (1)	Estimated annual cost (2)	Notes (3)
Rent/ Lease/ Mortgage (14)			
Utilities (15)			
Building insurance (16)			
Repairs & maintenance (17)			
Food & food preparation (1)			
Kitchen supplies (2)			
Educational programs/ activities (23)			
Educational supplies (3)			
Educational equipment (4)			
Vehicles + gas (27)			
Office supplies (6)			
Office equipment (7)			
Health & safety supplies (24)			
Insurance (liability, accident, etc.) (8)			
Postage (9)			

Advertising (10)			
Miscellaneous administrative costs (11)			
Credit card processing fees (12)			
Payroll processing fees (13)			
Professional development fees (18)			
Telephone (19)			
License, permit, & fees (20)			
Government taxes (25)			
Debt service (26)			
Audit (21)			
Miscellaneous costs (22)			

Q27 Use the space below to provide any additional notes about non-personnel costs.

Q28  
Other Questions

Q29 Aside from tuition/fees and state vouchers, do you have any other sources of revenue? If yes, enter the estimated annual amount you receive from each, if applicable.

- Fundraising (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Donations (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Grants (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- External scholarships (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify) (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q30 What percent of children have an unpaid balance that you cannot collect in a typical year?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q31 Please provide any comments you have about the cost of operating a child care facility in the space below.

## **APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

1. How long have you been providing child care at your facility?
2. What motivates you to operate a child care facility?
3. What have been the biggest changes with child care between when you started and now?
4. Are you star rated with the AL DHR?
  - a. If yes,
    - i. why did you decide to pursue a star rating?
      - ii. what was the biggest challenge to earning the star rating?
      - iii. was there anything that helped you in earning this rating (resources, people, business practices)?
    - iv. what do you see as the biggest barriers to a star rating?
  - b. If no,
    - i. why did you decide not to pursue a star rating?
      - ii. what do you see as the biggest barriers to a star rating?
5. During the past year, what has been your biggest challenge in operating a child care facility?
6. How are you working through this challenge?
7. What support or resources do you feel are lacking for child care providers in Alabama?

**APPENDIX E: AVERAGE WEEKLY CHILD CARE RATES BY COUNTY, PROVIDER TYPE, AND AGE**

**Table E-1. Region 1 (Huntsville) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
<b>REGION 1</b>	<b>COLBERT</b>	Center	10	\$135	\$138	\$137	\$133	\$122
		Family	1		\$110	\$110	\$110	
		Group	2	\$144	\$144	\$144	\$105	\$105
	<b>CULLMAN</b>	Center	13	\$123	\$121	\$119	\$115	\$113
		Group	1	\$185	\$185	\$185	\$185	\$185
	<b>FRANKLIN</b>	Center	6	\$138	\$138	\$137	\$137	\$117
		Group	2	\$143	\$143	\$143	\$143	
	<b>LAUDERDALE</b>	Center	14	\$161	\$159	\$152	\$153	\$145
		Family	1	\$140			\$140	
		Group	4	\$130	\$130	\$130	\$130	\$128
	<b>LAWRENCE</b>	Center	1	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$115	\$115
		Group	1	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$115	\$115
	<b>LIMESTONE</b>	Center	6	\$175	\$164	\$164	\$171	\$150
		Family	5	\$178	\$178	\$178	\$176	\$138
		Group	1	\$185	\$185	\$185	\$185	
	<b>MADISON</b>	Center	76	\$215	\$216	\$209	\$198	\$164
		Family	13	\$187	\$185	\$183	\$180	\$185
		Group	20	\$194	\$196	\$189	\$183	\$162
	<b>MORGAN</b>	Center	20	\$156	\$156	\$153	\$141	\$115
		Family	3	\$173	\$165	\$157	\$157	\$120

	<b>WINSTON</b>	Group	2	\$163	\$163	\$163	\$155	\$155
		Center	3	\$127	\$127	\$125	\$125	\$125
		Family	2	\$118	\$118	\$118	\$118	
		Group	1			\$69	\$69	

**Table E-2. Region 2 (Mobile) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
<b>REGION 2</b>	<b>BALDWIN</b>	Center	59	\$184	\$176	\$167	\$162	\$129
		Family	9	\$142	\$144	\$144	\$143	\$137
		Group	6	\$166	\$155	\$153	\$151	\$140
	<b>CLARKE</b>	Center	7	\$130	\$139	\$139	\$131	\$125
		Family	1	\$65	\$65		\$65	\$65
		Group	2	\$90	\$90	\$90	\$95	
	<b>CONECUH</b>	Center	2	\$110	\$110	\$110	\$101	\$125
		Family	1	\$90	\$90	\$90	\$90	
		Group	2	\$65	\$132	\$99	\$99	
	<b>ESCAMBIA</b>	Center	10	\$123	\$120	\$120	\$114	\$106
		Group	2	\$137	\$119	\$119	\$116	\$68
	<b>MOBILE</b>	Center	86	\$155	\$155	\$151	\$144	\$131
		Family	22	\$155	\$157	\$153	\$151	\$133
		Group	9	\$147	\$145	\$145	\$145	\$143
	<b>MONROE</b>	Center	5	\$130	\$126	\$123	\$117	\$100

	WASHINGTON	Center	9	\$142	\$144	\$144	\$143	\$137
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**Table E-3. Region 3 (Birmingham) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
REGION 3	BLOUNT	Center	8	\$133	\$133	\$131	\$128	\$124
	JEFFERSON	Center	147	\$201	\$199	\$193	\$182	\$143
		Family	19	\$164	\$162	\$159	\$152	\$135
		Group	17	\$170	\$162	\$159	\$151	\$142
	SHELBY	Center	30	\$228	\$222	\$216	\$206	\$153
		Family	5	\$166	\$166	\$166	\$166	\$160
		Group	9	\$161	\$161	\$161	\$161	\$153
	ST. CLAIR	Center	6	\$146	\$144	\$144	\$139	\$134
		Family	2	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$130
	WALKER	Center	7	\$121	\$125	\$126	\$126	\$110
		Group	2	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100

**Table E-4. Region 4 (Montgomery) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
	AUTAUGA	10	169	165	157	146	127	10
		4	\$158	\$153	\$160	\$152		4

<b>REGION 4</b>	<b>BULLOCK</b>	2	\$132	\$129	\$129	\$122	\$128	2
	<b>BUTLER</b>	3	\$146	\$146	\$142	\$136	\$105	3
		2	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	2
		1				\$110		1
	<b>CHILTON</b>	4	\$148	\$148	\$148	\$140	\$110	4
	<b>COVINGTON</b>	10	\$125	\$123	\$121	\$120	\$104	10
		4	\$113	\$110	\$110	\$110	\$107	4
	<b>DALLAS</b>	7	\$112	\$111	\$109	\$108	\$120	7
	<b>ELMORE</b>	16	\$161	\$158	\$150	\$142	\$121	16
		5	\$142	\$142	\$136	\$136	\$111	5
		1	\$115	\$115	\$100	\$100		1
	<b>LOWNDES</b>	1	\$153	\$153	\$153	\$138	\$128	1
	<b>MONTGOMERY</b>	74	\$169	\$169	\$163	\$153	\$135	74
		20	\$151	\$153	\$149	\$147	\$134	20
<b>WILCOX</b>	3	\$107	\$107	\$102	\$102		3	

**Table E-5. Region 5 (Opelika) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
	<b>CHAMBERS</b>	Center	8	\$138	\$144	\$144	\$143	\$146
		Family	1	\$90	\$90	\$90	\$90	
		Group	3	\$137	\$137	\$137	\$137	\$112
	<b>LEE</b>	Center	30	\$178	\$174	\$172	\$169	\$154
		Family	7	\$173	\$172	\$170	\$169	\$190

<b>REGION 5</b>	<b>MACON</b>	Group	6	\$166	\$160	\$160	\$158	\$168
		Center	2	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$143	\$107
		Family	1	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150
	<b>RUSSELL</b>	Center	15	\$144	\$143	\$141	\$137	\$127
		Family	1			\$140		
	<b>TALLAPOOSA</b>	Center	6	\$148	\$159	\$158	\$151	\$113
		Family	1	\$90	\$90	\$90	\$90	\$90
		Group	5	\$143	\$143	\$143	\$135	\$133

**Table E-6. Region 6 (Tuscaloosa) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
<b>REGION 6</b>	<b>BIBB</b>	Center	3	\$118	\$118	\$118	\$118	
	<b>CHOCTAW</b>	Center	2	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$93	
		Family	1	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	
	<b>FAYETTE</b>	Center	3	\$137	\$132	\$132	\$128	\$100
		Family	1	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	
	<b>GREENE</b>	Group	1				\$170	
	<b>HALE</b>	Center	1				\$100	
		Group	1	\$165	\$165	\$165	\$165	\$165
	<b>LAMAR</b>	Center	3	\$115	\$108	\$108	\$105	\$103
		Group	1	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125
	<b>MARENGO</b>	Center	3	\$138	\$138	\$138	\$138	\$128
		Group	3	\$98	\$107	\$107	\$107	\$130

	<b>MARION</b>	Center	3	\$132	\$125	\$112	\$108	\$90
		Family	1	\$115	\$115	\$115	\$115	
		Group	1	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120
	<b>PERRY</b>	Family	1	\$125	\$145	\$145	\$145	\$145
	<b>PICKENS</b>	Center	3	\$138	\$138	\$133	\$115	\$113
		Family	2	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
		Group	1	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$95
	<b>SUMTER</b>	Group	2	\$110	\$110	\$110	\$110	\$90
	<b>TUSCALOOSA</b>	Center	40	\$169	\$167	\$165	\$159	\$161
		Family	8	\$141	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$101
		Group	1	\$160	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$140

**Table E-7. Region 7 (Ft. Payne) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
<b>REGION 7</b>	<b>CHEROKEE</b>	Center	3	\$105	\$110	\$107	\$107	\$103
		Family	2	\$80	\$73	\$73	\$73	\$80
		Group	1	\$90	\$80	\$80	\$80	
	<b>DEKALB</b>	Center	6	\$114	\$114	\$112	\$104	\$108
		Family	2	\$85	\$85	\$85	\$85	
		Group	1	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$80
	<b>ETOWAH</b>	Center	18	\$144	\$143	\$142	\$138	\$125
		Family	3	\$100	\$100	\$88	\$92	\$20
		Group	2	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$114	\$125

	<b>JACKSON</b>	Center	6	\$127	\$122	\$125	\$121	\$95
		Family	3	\$97	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$65
		Group	1		\$110	\$110	\$110	\$100
	<b>MARSHALL</b>	Center	16	\$126	\$122	\$120	\$117	\$112
		Family	2	\$133	\$133	\$133	\$133	\$90
		Group	2	\$110	\$100	\$100	\$100	

**Table E-8. Region 8 (Talladega) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
<b>REGION 8</b>	<b>CALHOUN</b>	Center	21	\$136	\$137	\$136	\$137	\$124
		Family	4	\$135	\$135	\$135	\$135	\$108
		Group	5	\$141	\$141	\$141	\$141	\$93
	<b>CLAY</b>	Center	2	\$93	\$93	\$93	\$88	\$88
		Group	1		\$110		\$100	
	<b>CLEBURNE</b>	Center	2	\$119	\$117	\$112	\$112	\$115
		Family	1	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	
	<b>COOSA</b>	Group	1	\$170	\$170	\$170	\$170	\$170
	<b>RANDOLPH</b>	Center	4	\$121	\$115	\$113	\$110	\$102
		Family	2	\$100	\$90	\$90	\$103	\$80
	<b>TALLADEGA</b>	Center	19	\$128	\$125	\$123	\$122	\$112
		Family	1	\$122	\$122	\$122	\$122	
		Group	2	\$150	\$125	\$120	\$120	\$140

**Table E-9. Region 9 (Dothan) Average Weekly Child Care Rates by County and Age of Children**

Region	County	Provider Type	# Providers w/ Rate Data	Infant (< 1 yr)	Young Toddler (1 yr)	Old Toddler (2 yrs)	Pre-School (3-4 yrs)	School-Age (5+ yrs)
REGION 9	BARBOUR	Center	5	\$112	\$112	\$104	\$96	\$115
		Family	1	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	
		Group	3	\$96	\$96	\$96	\$96	
	COFFEE	Center	10	\$144	\$144	\$144	\$140	\$128
		Group	2	\$123	\$123	\$123	\$123	\$110
	CRENSHAW	Center	1	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
		Family	2	\$110	\$110	\$105	\$105	\$130
		Group	1	\$105	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$95
	DALE	Center	4	\$136	\$136	\$131	\$129	\$120
		Family	2	\$138	\$138	\$150	\$120	
	GENEVA	Center	3	\$133	\$133	\$133	\$130	\$130
		Group	1	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	
	HENRY	Center	4	\$141	\$141	\$141	\$141	\$136
		Family	1	\$95	\$95	\$95	\$95	
	HOUSTON	Center	39	\$144	\$144	\$143	\$140	\$131
		Family	5	\$138	\$134	\$129	\$131	\$90
	PIKE	Center	4	\$130	\$130	\$130	\$130	\$103
		Family	3	\$105	\$108	\$105	\$108	
Group		2	\$115	\$120	\$120	\$120		

**APPENDIX F: 2021 AND 2024 COMPARISON OF AVERAGE AND 75<sup>th</sup> PERCENTILE CHILD CARE RATES BY AGE, PROVIDER TYPE, AND REGION**

**Table F-1. 2021 and 2024 Comparison of Average and 75<sup>th</sup> Percentile Child Care Rates by Provider Type for Children Under 2.5 Years**

CHILDREN UNDER 2.5 YRS												
Region	DAY CARE CENTERS				FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES				GROUP DAY CARE HOMES			
	2021		2024		2021		2024		2021		2024	
	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
1	\$141	\$165	\$181	\$210	\$138	\$150	\$172	\$200	\$133	\$145	\$170	\$189
2	\$128	\$145	\$158	\$175	\$123	\$134	\$149	\$166	\$115	\$134	\$140	\$151
3	\$159	\$195	\$195	\$225	\$139	\$150	\$162	\$160	\$128	\$144	\$160	\$172
4	\$135	\$150	\$158	\$175	\$127	\$135	\$150	\$165	\$101	\$100	\$111	\$120
5	\$133	\$147	\$162	\$170	\$125	\$140	\$153	\$160	\$130	\$148	\$150	\$175
6	\$127	\$146	\$155	\$174	\$105	\$118	\$129	\$144	\$101	\$125	\$121	\$130
7	\$105	\$118	\$130	\$145	\$86	\$90	\$95	\$100	\$99	\$110	\$101	\$110
8	\$109	\$120	\$129	\$150	\$107	\$120	\$123	\$129	\$107	\$115	\$137	\$150

9	\$114	\$125	\$138	\$150	\$98	\$103	\$121	\$140	\$97	\$100	\$109	\$115
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**Table F-2. 2021 and 2024 Comparison of Average and 75<sup>th</sup> Percentile Child Care Rates by Provider Type for Children 2.5—5 Years**

CHILDREN 2.5 - 5 YRS												
Region	DAY CARE CENTERS				FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES				GROUP DAY CARE HOMES			
	2021		2024		2021		2024		2021		2024	
	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
1	\$129	\$153	\$169	\$195	\$137	\$150	\$166	\$185	\$127	\$145	\$165	\$185
2	\$119	\$135	\$146	\$160	\$119	\$130	\$144	\$153	\$114	\$129	\$135	\$150
3	\$146	\$180	\$180	\$204	\$128	\$145	\$154	\$150	\$127	\$141	\$151	\$163
4	\$121	\$135	\$144	\$159	\$124	\$135	\$146	\$160	\$100	\$100	\$108	\$118
5	\$125	\$140	\$155	\$160	\$122	\$138	\$151	\$158	\$127	\$145	\$146	\$170
6	\$121	\$136	\$143	\$161	\$104	\$115	\$128	\$144	\$104	\$125	\$123	\$135
7	\$99	\$115	\$123	\$135	\$86	\$90	\$95	\$100	\$97	\$100	\$100	\$110
8	\$105	\$120	\$126	\$146	\$106	\$120	\$123	\$129	\$110	\$119	\$135	\$140
9	\$108	\$120	\$135	\$146	\$97	\$103	\$117	\$140	\$97	\$100	\$108	\$115

**Table F-3. 2021 and 2024 Comparison of Average and 75<sup>th</sup> Percentile Child Care Rates by Provider Type for School Age Children**

SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN												
Region	DAY CARE CENTERS				FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES				GROUP DAY CARE HOMES			
	2021		2024		2021		2024		2021		2024	
	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Mean	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile
1	\$118	\$135	\$142	\$170	\$133	\$150	\$149	\$171	\$114	\$137	\$145	\$180
2	\$115	\$130	\$128	\$145	\$100	\$125	\$130	\$150	\$116	\$125	\$127	\$146
3	\$128	\$150	\$142	\$160	\$108	\$133	\$138	\$144	\$118	\$131	\$141	\$155
4	\$108	\$125	\$129	\$150	\$111	\$128	\$132	\$150	\$95	\$98	\$107	\$115
5	\$120	\$140	\$140	\$151	\$117	\$130	\$143	\$170	\$120	\$138	\$140	\$168
6	\$118	\$126	\$140	\$179	\$96	\$100	\$109	\$102	\$105	\$125	\$124	\$135
7	\$97	\$110	\$114	\$126	\$96	\$90	\$64	\$83	\$91	\$90	\$102	\$113
8	\$103	\$119	\$115	\$125	\$108	\$128	\$98	\$110	\$108	\$115	\$118	\$140
9	\$101	\$115	\$128	\$144	\$82	\$88	\$110	\$120	\$93	\$100	\$103	\$106